

Letter From the End

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TEEN SHORT STORY WRITING CONTEST: HONOURABLE MENTION – GRADE 7 TO 9

“Aug, 7, 2372

As I write this letter, I spy, just beyond the horizon, a wave of scarlet clouds billowing over the sea, casting the room in a reddish shade. I am sitting outside on the balcony of a great manor in Banff, one of the only regions that have managed to stay afloat.

This letter is addressed to no one in particular. And after tonight, this letter will be gone; dissipated into a million atoms just like the rest of us. But, this late afternoon, secluded and alone, I found myself taking out a pen and paper to write down a story. Truthfully, it is to settle my own nerves; selfish I know. Although, regardless of how much I write, this pen can not etch away my mistakes.

I've lived the life I wanted to live, and a few lifetimes more. Ancient and long-forgotten I have nothing left to give this world. Yet I continue to take from it. The repercussions of my actions have persisted till this day; rotting the world like a pest. In my past life, I was many things. Politician, entrepreneur, president, but a wise man was none of them. I had great power and plentiful money, though I did nothing of it. I was clearly drunk on power, unable to rationalize.

However, all those around me were doing the same, and so I fit right in.

And now, with nearly all dead from unnaturally natural causes, there are not enough resources to protect ourselves from this incoming ball of destruction. Everyone has already given up.

How did we get here? Well, it was a collective effort. Humans are quite selfish creatures: 'If there isn't any smoke in my lungs, the air must be clear!' sort of mentality.

There are approximately 1 billion people left on earth. The rest have already perished. Maybe if we had worked as a collective force,

we would be able to do something now, anything to stop this meteor.

Although I do not remember much of my presidency, I vividly recall the day a secretary burst into my office, soaking in rain water and sweat. Her name was Nicole; she is now long gone of course.

That day in particular had been quite rowdy, crowds gathering outside on the streets, furious about the state of the country. She had slammed opened the doors to the office and walked right up to my desk, staring me down.

“Sir, this has gone on long enough. We have to do something. Vancouver is going underwater! Granville Island is already fully submerged.”

I had just sat there staring blankly into her face.

“You’re the president! You must do something!”

Foolishly, I had waved her off and gone back to whatever it was I was doing, and that was the end of that. Nicole quit a couple days later. Gone, like a gust of wind that only stays for so long. Just long enough to warn of the incoming storm.

Outside, it is now dark; a combination of soot and oil. Surely if one were to go out now, they would die instantly. But what's a few hours? The end is near anyways.

I feel this unexplainable emotion brewing in my chest. A mixture of guilt and sorrow. The little ones especially. Maybe it is better to die young, avoid the complications of old age and part with only the happiest of memories. I do not remember my childhood. I am far too old.

My heart no longer beats on its own. Expensive machines and medical advances of all sorts, my body is not mine anymore. I live on so I do not die. There is no future to look towards. No more hope to be had in this world. And its blood is on my hands.

Maybe if I was wiser. Maybe if I had listened to Nicole. Maybe if I hadn't been president. Then, maybe, there would still be a tomorrow.

All my money has done for me is afford to keep me alive, but even that is now useless.

At this moment in time, I can clearly make out sobs coming from the other side of the manor, echoing through the empty hallways and landing in my ears. My family. They have all gathered to be amongst themselves during their last moments. All but me.

I, too, desire to join them. Embrace them in my arms and cry with them at the end. Tragically, we are separated by an untamable barrier of guilt. A stone wall submerged in vines left untouched by both sides. Regardless, I long for my family, though I am the reason for their demise.

They've begun The Final Counting.

Once they reach zero, this letter and I will be no more. This is my final goodbye."

He laid down his pen and retreated from his words; fearful of his honesty.

"60..."

The old man leaned back on his tattered leather chair, awaiting death. Welcoming it. He stared out the window one last time, taking in the vast landscape, hoping to store it in his memory.

His heart ached of guilt and sorrow, although he didn't dare flinch, for he knew he deserved it.

Suddenly, a lighthearted voice cried out.

“Grandpa!”

“50...”

A young girl appeared in the middle of the doorway. When he saw her, her face lit up like a million fireflies. Her smile shone through, like a bright light at the end of a dark and gloomy tunnel.

She ran over and jumped onto his lap, embracing him between her petite arms.

“40...”

He looked down, grateful for the little child in his arms. Her eyes gleamed into his, youthful and full of hope. But it only made him miserable, that she wouldn't see the sunrise ever again

“10...”

A tear trickled down his face. Even at the last moment, he was filled with regret.

“Five,”

“Four,”

“Three,”

“Two,”

“One-”

The end of Earth.