

OUTSIDE

Written by

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INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The front room of the house has been transformed into a bunker. The windows are boarded up, and sealed with tape to block out all light. Tinned goods, boxes, bags and bundles of supplies and equipment. Four camp beds with sleeping bags, bedding, blankets and a few pitiful personal possessions. Everything stashed to get as much in as little space as possible.

There is one main door outside. It is sealed with an improvised electronic lock (light currently green). All other interior doors are sealed and unused.

There are three important pieces of equipment in the room.

The LAPTOP has a large countdown (60 seconds) and a series of red flashing symbols on the screen.

The air filtration and primary power UNIT looks like a repurposed air conditioner.

The secondary power CRANK is connected by cables to the door, the laptop and the unit.

NELL is winding the crank. The faster she winds the brighter the lights burn. As long as she winds the door light stays green.

EADIE is shining a flashlight inside the unit and working the controls. It can't be restarted unless the crank is wound, and currently is not working at all. Eadie's left leg is bandaged.

MIKE monitors the laptop. The controls are not responding.

They are dressed for cold weather; scarves, coats, multiple layers; mismatched, scrounged and stolen. They move with the urgency of a team that have faced life and death together, and are facing it again.

NELL

Mike? How long has she got?

MIKE

50 seconds.

EADIE

Something's happened. She's not coming back.

NELL

Skip the hypotheticals, Eadie. Are the filters on-line?

EADIE  
No. No filters, no primary power.

MIKE  
37 seconds. Jackie will make it.  
She always does.

NELL  
I should go out and get her.

MIKE  
We need you on the crank or the  
door won't unlock.

NELL  
Take over the crank.

EADIE  
It's too late, Nell.

Suddenly, the air filtration unit shudders into life. EADIE hits the button and it begins noisily pumping air.

NELL  
Eadie, the door! She'll be coming  
in fast.

EADIE rushes to stand by at the door. NELL keeps working the crank.

NELL (CONT'D)  
Mike, anything on sensors?

MIKE  
Still nothing.

EADIE  
If she fixed the filters why aren't  
the sensors back up?

NELL  
Time?

MIKE  
5... 4... 3... 2... 1...

They stare at the door. The countdown goes negative. They keep staring, not wanting to believe it. Eventually, MIKE reaches up and stops the clock.

EADIE  
Nell. Nell!

NELL

What?

EADIE

You can stop now.

NELL

Oh.

NELL stops turning the crank. The green light on the door turns red. The room lights dim when she stops winding the crank and for a moment they all wait, wondering if the lights will go out altogether.

NELL (CONT'D)

Ok, looks like primary power's running back through the unit.

EADIE

(Goes to the unit)

I'll check

NELL

Mike?

MIKE

Jackie could still be alive.

NELL

The sensors, Mike.

MIKE

(Checks the laptop)

No. No sensors, no comms. We have to go get her.

EADIE

She's already dead.

MIKE

You don't know that.

NELL

Eadie, if the sensors are out, is there any way we can tell if the filters are fully functional?

EADIE

Not from in here.

NELL

How long can we survive if they aren't?

MIKE

It depends how bad it is. 24  
hours? Probably less.

NELL

How would we know if it's affecting  
us?

EADIE

We wouldn't. It could be affecting  
us now.

BOOM,BOOM,BOOM. Three long, loud knocks on the door. They  
stare.

MIKE

Jackie made it! Open the door!

NELL

Primary power's up. Why isn't she  
using her code key?

EADIE

It isn't her.

BOOM, BOOM, BOOM. MIKE rushes to the door.

MIKE

Crank the door!

NELL

Get your gun, Eadie.

EADIE limps over and gets her gun from beneath her bed. NELL  
takes position on the crank.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

NELL starts the crank. The lights burn brighter. EADIE  
raises her gun at the door. The door lock turns green. As  
soon as it does, MIKE jerks open the door with all his  
strength.

Someone falls through the door. NELL catches them, and MIKE  
slams the door shut. The door lock turns red. EADIE still  
points the gun.

NELL gets a look at the figure she is carrying, yells in  
shock, and steps back.

It is not Jackie.

JOHN falls to the centre of the room. He is nearly naked, freezing cold, and too weak to lift himself from the floor.

NELL (CONT'D)  
What the fuck?

MIKE  
John? John, is that you?

NELL  
You know this guy?

MIKE  
It's Jackie's husband.

EADIE  
That's impossible.

NELL  
How do you know?

MIKE  
I was at their wedding. It's him.

MIKE kneels down next to JOHN but doesn't get close enough to touch.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
John? Can you hear me? Where's Jackie?

JOHN  
(Struggling to speak)  
Outside. She's outside. You have to go to her.

EADIE  
She's dead. And that's not her husband.

MIKE  
Are you insane? Use your eyes!

NELL looks from one to the other. Then she drags a blanket from the nearest bed, wraps it around JOHN, and helps him sit. JOHN appears barely conscious.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
I'm going to get Jackie. Crank the door, Nell.

NELL  
How are you still alive, John?

MIKE

Jackie's still out there - we don't have time for questions!

JOHN

Close. Jackie's close.

MIKE

Wind the crank.

EADIE

If you go out there alone, you'll die.

NELL

We'll all die if the filter isn't working. Someone has to go out to clear the sensors.

EADIE

Then I should go with him.

NELL

No. If the unit fails I need secondary power to restart, and I can't restart the unit and run the crank at the same time. I don't think John's fit to help me and we don't have time to wait.

MIKE

And I'll be faster on my own.

EADIE

(A moments thought.)  
You want me to work the crank?

NELL

No. I can go again. Watch him.  
(Nods at JOHN)

MIKE pulls on his gloves and stands by the door. NELL goes to the crank. EADIE keeps her gun on JOHN. JOHN stares in to space.

NELL (CONT'D)

Check times?

NELL and MIKE look at their watches.

MIKE

Three minutes

NELL

Check

EADIE

You may not have the time to rescue Jackie and clear the sensors.

MIKE

Fuck you, Eadie.

EADIE

Just be ready to make a choice.

MIKE

Just make sure you open the door when I come back.

NELL

Ready!

She starts the crank. The lights burn brighter. The door lock goes green.

NELL (CONT'D)

Go!

MIKE glares at EADIE, then opens the door, dashes through, and slams it shut behind him. NELL releases the crank. The lights dim and the door lock turns red. She goes to John and tries to look him in the eyes.

NELL (CONT'D)

Eadie, grab the first aid kit.

EADIE keeps her gun on JOHN.

NELL (CONT'D)

John, are you ok?

JOHN

I was looking for you.

NELL

John? John, how did you survive?

He slumps forward. NELL eases him to the floor, then looks at EADIE who still hasn't lowered her gun.

NELL (CONT'D)

For Christ's sake Eadie.

NELL gets the first aid kit, and starts looking through several items, including a knife.



Suddenly, the lights drop, leaving them in near darkness.

NELL (CONT'D)  
Have the filters stopped?

EADIE  
(Goes to the Air  
Filtration Unit)  
No. It's something else. Main  
power?

NELL  
(Goes to the laptop)  
No. It's the filters. Something  
jammed in the inputs?

Smoke starts slowly coming out from the air filtration unit.

EADIE  
It's backing up!

NELL  
Can you stop it?

EADIE  
Not from in here.

NELL  
Can Mike?

EADIE  
Not a chance. No time. No comms  
to tell him.

NELL  
Ok, then I've got to go out.

EADIE  
I'll go.

NELL  
Eadie, your leg.

EADIE  
You can't fix the filters anyway.  
Do you trust me?

NELL  
(Beat)  
Yes. How do I stop the smoke?

EADIE  
You have to shut down the unit.

NELL

Without the unit running primary power will go out, and your code key won't work. How will I know when to open the door?

EADIE

Open the lock in exactly three minutes. I'll be there.

NELL

(Checks watch)  
Don't be late.

EADIE

Don't let the lights go out.

NELL

Ready?

Nell starts the crank. The lights softly come back up. The door lock turns green.

EADIE

I'll be back.

EADIE pushes the door and propels herself out. The door slams shut behind her. NELL goes quickly to the unit and powers it down (the lights go down as soon as she releases the crank, and the door lock turns red). The pump stops and the smoke with it. NELL stands up. She's alone with JOHN.

JOHN moans.

NELL shakes herself out of her reverie and blinks heavily. She grabs some clothes for John.

NELL

Here. Put these on.

JOHN

I'm cold.

She starts rubbing his hands in her own. He makes no move to put on the clothes.

NELL

Are you ok? Do you want me to help you put those on?

JOHN

Cold.

NELL

We'll be alright once the unit's back up. Just try not to breathe too deeply.

JOHN

Give me your coat.

NELL

What?

JOHN

Give me your coat. I'm cold.

She takes off her coat and puts it over his shoulders, over the blanket. Then she stands up and stands back, confused by what she has just done.

NELL

How did you survive, John? How did you find us?

JOHN

Jackie found me. I was looking for you.

NELL

But how is it that you are still alive?

JOHN

Give me your scarf as well.

She unwinds her scarf and hands it to him. He stands up to take it, letting the coat and blanket slide from him. He lets the scarf hang in his hand as she stumbles back.

JOHN (CONT'D)

The others aren't coming back.

NELL

Who are you?

JOHN

You sent them outside. They can't get back in.

NELL

What are you?

JOHN

There's a knife in the first aid kit.

NELL

No.

JOHN

Take out the knife from the first aid kit.

NELL

No.

JOHN

Take out the knife and put it through your heart.

Nell shakes her head. She looks at her watch like she can't remember why. Then she goes to the first aid kit and gets out the knife

JOHN (CONT'D)

It's only a matter of time. The filters aren't working. Better to do it now.

NELL

It's only a matter of time.

JOHN

Take the knife.

NELL

The filters aren't working.

JOHN

And put it through your heart.

NELL

Better to do it now.

Suddenly the lights come up. JOHN blinks, confused.

With a shout NELL lunges at him with the knife. But the smoke has made her weak and confused, and he just steps out of the way. He likes that. He's smiling for the first time.

But NELL's attack was a feint! With him to one side, she rushes to the crank. She drops the knife and winds with all her strength. The door lock turns green.

JOHN

Ask not what your country can do for you...

NELL  
 (Still winding the crank)  
 Come on!

JOHN  
 But what you can do for your  
 country.

He walks over and crouches down beside her. He puts his arms wide around her, offering her the knife.

NELL  
 (With all that's left of  
 her strength)  
 Please.

BOOM! The door slams open. EADIE drags herself over the threshold, MIKE slumped under her arm. She holds the door open. JOHN rises. BANG! EADIE fires her gun. JOHN is thrown back. NELL stops winding the crank. The door lock turns red.

With an inhuman shriek JOHN leaps at EADIE. EADIE fires again. JOHN grapples her. She drops MIKE then loses the gun. NELL picks back up the knife and stabs JOHN. He shrieks again. Not human. NELL and EADIE throw him outside, and slam the door behind him.

EADIE  
 Get the crank!

Exhausted and confused, NELL goes to the crank and starts to wind it. EADIE is heading directly to the unit.

NELL  
 Jackie?

EADIE  
 Dead. Just outside. It killed  
 her, then used her body to jam the  
 filter inlets.

EADIE activates the unit. This time there's no smoke and the lights come all the way up. EADIE goes over and switches the laptop back on.

EADIE (CONT'D)  
 The sensors are back up. They were  
 switched off from the outside.

NELL  
 What happened to Mike?

EADIE

He tried to get to Jackie before clearing the sensors. I did warn him.

He'll be ok.

Will you?

NELL

I don't know. What did we do wrong?

Boom! Boom! Boom! On the door. They both look. MIKE still doesn't move.

EADIE

We didn't have to do anything wrong.

She sits down, exhausted, against the vibrating unit.

EADIE (CONT'D)

How many more days until morning?

NELL

I don't know.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

FADE OUT