

## Dystopia to Utopia

"Screech!" We spin out towards an empty field but he refuses to hit the brakes. My heart pounds almost in sync with the blaring rock music filling the air around us. I can feel every breath I take burning the inside of my throat, and the wind pushing against me through a large hole on the right side of the windshield. Neither of us are old enough to drive, but with the world in the state that it is, the law is just a fading set of ideas, having less relevance to our situation every day. I wince as I hear a blood curdling scream coming from somewhere behind us. I try to hold back, knowing that what I'll see will only cause me pain, but my reaction is instinctive. My head shoots back only to see another innocent being turned against their will. *They were weak.* I tell myself. *If they can't manage to survive, they aren't worth it.*

I wasn't always like this. I had functioning emotions once. I was the geeky type. All I ever did was read, and listen to music. I had short dyed hair that changed colors as often as I changed moods, and a nose piercing that made me look like the minotaur. I still have the piercing, but my hair has gotten a lot shaggier since then, and my dark roots are starting to show. I had a good life. My parents treated me right, but I lost them. I had a nice house, but it burned down along with the rest of my memories that were locked away inside it. I was a nice, caring person, but none of that matters now. *They don't care about "nice".* All *they* care about is your uninfected blood, and your mentally sane thoughts. I spent my whole life reading about heroes, and now that it's just me and my brother in a world of nothing but villains, it's time for me to become one.

My older brother is my best friend. He's 15 years old, and would have been in the 10th grade, if there still was one. His features are kind, like his heart. A smile is always on his face, but his bright, green eyes are cloudy with the burdens that were forced upon him at such a young age. His hugs are warm, but his skin is as pale as ice, and his hair a cold shade of brown. The contrast between his features make him hard to miss, like the child of night and day. Like me, he was geeky, but he's always been more on the shy side. Where as I have always been loud and not afraid to speak my mind, he can go days without saying a word. But during those days he would observe the world around him, and with the data he collected, he could come up with some of the craziest ideas. That brain of his is pretty amazing, but he gets distracted so easily that it doesn't always work when you

want it to. His lack of height and weight used to make it easy for him to slip by without notice, but he hit a growth spurt recently and now he has to slouch to maintain his quiet attitude. He takes good care of me, and I return the favor gladly.

We've been on the run for what feels like years, but in reality it's only been a few months. It feels like we were put in a movie about a zombie apocalypse, or world war 3, we're currently the two characters who live the "raid stores, kick butt, and keep movin'" kinda deal. It works for now, but eventually we need to make a plan. There are others like us out there, but considering the virus only changes your sense of morality, you can never know who to trust. It's called Croatoan, but I refuse to call *them* by any name. Names are for people, and without humanity, they can no longer be categorized as anything of the sorts. Hell, even dogs get names, but a dog would never kill someone just because they like the way a person looks when they're dead and lifeless, laying mangled and ripped to shreds at your feet. It spreads through the blood, and turns humans into demons... literally. And right now we have a problem at hand: *They* have caught up with us.

I reach for G's, my brother's, homemade weapons, but just as I brush my fingers against the cold, black, metal, the window shatters into a million tiny daggers. I feel the dripping of my own blood down my fingertips and pull it back quickly before they take advantage of my open wound, and infect me with their own. I kick the demons reaching through the windows and grab the makeshift weaponry with my left hand. (good thing I'm ambidextrous) I attack the leftover monstrosities, which won't kill them, but I succeed at slowing them down and G slams on the gas, pushing us further and further away from our own demise. We manage to evade their attempts to corrupt our souls as others did theirs, or so I thought.

I turn to face the driver's seat, but pause momentarily to take a breath of air, and fill my lungs to their fullest capacity. My eyes close in the process, allowing my mind to clear, and my heart rate to calm. My lids flick open and I start to speak, in an overwhelming need to congratulate my sibling on the quick escape, but stop when I realise that I have to tilt my head down to see the person sitting beside me. He looks about 9 years old. He has filthy blonde hair, a torn shirt, and reeks of sweat and mischief. Time seems to slow down and a grin spreads across his blood stained face. His eyes become

dark, like someone was dropping a black curtain over a set of once shining golden marbles, and I jump.

It took me only a second to realise that this particular boy, was no boy at all. He was a monster sent from the oven of a basement we call hell, and I wasn't planning on joining him for dinner back home. The door of the car was falling off anyway so all I had to do was fall to get where I am now. I wonder where that is. I dust myself off and choose a direction. Then I run. I set out for a colony, G and I have heard of them, but never quite felt the need to join one, but I can't survive alone, so a group of other survivors seems like a really great place to be right now. I stare at my feet refusing to look back, and not daring to look ahead. I may not have a plan, but at least I have a goal. One goal that I will do anything to reach. So the question is, how the hell am I gonna get my brother back.

*Author's Note: I know that I use some grammar that is not quite correct, but this story is written from the first person, and it is narrated by Luna's inner voice, it is important to her character to speak this way.*