



Not copyrighted, I did it to entertain, but if you steal it and get rich at least remember who really wrote it.

Contains adult situations, drug and alcohol use, violence, bed hopping and sophomoric humor.

In other words, stuff you'd like to do, but never admit at your age!

The Wild game preserve:

Prologue: the doomsday clock.

The end was easy, we even had a year to prepare. In the time we had until everything stopped we learned so much about mankind's real history and the truth about ourselves, we'd have been better off if they'd just pulled the plug on us and let us die, but the aliens were trying to be merciful, that mercy was at times worse than the unplug itself. We discovered we really had no religions, they were created by the aliens to try to reform us and shape our world, we were not even native to Earth, Earth was in fact a race bank and a prison, placed way out from actual civilized worlds to keep them and us safe from each other. A billion years ago, the species of man had an empire stretching from one end of the galaxy to the other, seven thousand years ago, some of the survivors from the war, after the other races united and destroyed us, were dumped here in an effort to "evolve" us into being nice people, it failed. Since our conquerors were actually nice people, just killing us all off was frowned upon. So they took away our toys. Before they EMP blasted the planet, they cured all our major diseases, lengthened our life spans by 25% and boosted our immune systems. We offered to turn in all our nukes and WMDs but that had been tried before somewhere else, some other wild game preserve. we'd just build more, we were good at it! So in the end, factories churned out freeze dried and long term Storable

food and other stuff we'd need rebuilding the world, riots ensued, millions died trying to get just a little bit more, ammunition became a currency unto itself, as did toilet paper. We cried, we begged, we pleaded for more time, we offered deals and swore never to develop space flight, but their minds were made up, and once every 100 years the planet would get a nice, fresh EMP barrage, lasting one week, Mankind would never go to the stars or tinker with nuclear energy again. In fact a week before the day, every bit of refined nuclear material, including our waste, crumbled down to base elements. Nice of them I suppose.

Which brings us to my diary, how it happened and why. The why is we were about to become inter-planetary with the sudden discovery of the gravity well generator drive, said drive could get us to Pluto in hours! It didn't propel a ship through space, rather it jerked it along using its very own artificially generated black hole.

Anyway, for all its worth, day 365. December 21st.
My birthday in fact.

No more begging and pleading, one year from tonight, the world as we know it ends. Formerly Religious factions are already destroying every church, synagogue and mosque in sight, the pagans are having a field day. With every bit of energy being devoted to food and medicine, a loaf of bread is fifty cents, gasoline however is in short supply and recreational travel is banned. I'm devoting every penny to food that keeps. Every night I go out and look at that giant fleet of space ships on our doorstep and give them the finger, I believe they can see me!

New years day January 1st.

More riots, 200 dead in Atlanta alone, 350 in NYC, 500 in Portland. Ammunition and firearm sales are banned. The National guard are shooting looters on sight. Pretty quiet here except for a multi-denominational group of preachers that burned their churches and bibles and celebrated by a drunken orgy and chanting: "God isn't dead, he never was!" And holding what is commonly known as a "Black mass" complete with a naked teenage girl sitting in as the altar with bacon strips as the holy host and whiskey as the communion drink. A large mosque, not to be outdone, had an all pork barbecue and beer on ice and belly dancing with no veils or hijabs! I think the religious types are a bit pissed off they were had.

January 10th.

Every city on earth is on fire, every town, riots, old scores settled, no cops or fire fighters in sight. Food ration points are closed until order returns.

January 15th.

The army restored order today. "Go home or die." they said. Thousands took the latter option, they're being buried in the land fills.

March 1st.

The government announced today that our oil reserves were good up to ten years, maybe more with rationing. Detroit is already downgrading its assembly lines and turning out EMP proof tractors and delivery trucks and old prop style airplanes, so we might still have interstate travel, they are making a few cars and trucks too, junkyards are being emptied and all the pre-90's clunkers are being refurbished.

March 10th.

Food stores closed for good today, once a month, by alphabetical order, you have to go collect three boxes of rations, if you miss your day or don't watch how much you eat, tough shit. Home and community gardens are springing up everywhere. The riots are over now everyone has resigned themselves to what's coming. I traded three bags of rolled oats for a five pound box of cheese, life is good.

March 13th.

China invaded Japan and Taiwan today, they said their equipment will defeat the alien's EMP and they'll control the world in a few weeks.

March 14th.

China ceased to exist this morning, well parts of it. We don't know what the aliens used on them, no explosion or shock-wave or anything, just thirty foot deep, glass filled craters where their capitol cities, military bases and manufacturing centers used to be! Hell, they're not even radioactive! Russia immediately declared it wanted to live in peace with its neighbors and North Korea dumped all its rockets into the ocean and declared all hostilities with anyone over. The Caliphate of new Persia (Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan) closed its borders and declared a week of meditation since we found out our gods were a lie and dissolved all their military except for those watching the border.

March 20th.

I finished my mandatory seventy two hours on the community farm today. I'm lucky, I have a few useful skills so I'm on maintenance for most of it, the rest of the time I worked setting up the canning kitchen putting in the propane stoves and getting the jar sterilization station set up, I just hope we actually have enough jars. I think I'll put in a few more hours helping set up the grain mill, extra work is extra food and supplies. At least the village idiots, winos and urban campers all have jobs now, turning the grain mill and sorghum grinder.

March 28th.

We voted to grow marijuana and brew beer and moonshine on the scraps today. Tobacco got nixed however, the next community over is growing ten acres of it.

April 5th.

Our “benevolent overlords” graced us with their presence today, the big silver disc flew low over our farms looking us over, then after a while came to hover over the empty interstate and about a dozen of them got out and walked our way. Most appeared somewhat or mostly human, the rest were either in space suits because they breathed something besides air, or sat in floating glass spheres. Everyone cleared out and hid. Not me, I was as curious about them as they were us. While an eight foot tall, blonde haired, blue eyed, pasty skinned giant poked our corn with some kind of rod like device, a humanoid lion like being sifted the soil through his clawed hands until he found a worm and dropped it like it had stung him and stomped it while wiping his hands! A gray skinned, bald humanoid female walked up to me. “You do not run from us Terra Human, why?” Bald or not, she was extra cute! “Do I need to? And would it do any good if I did?” I said. She looked me over a few moments. “No, but we mean you no harm, we have noticed your people do not fight, you work together. This is unusual for your species, it interests us, this is like what we had wished your species to become!” She said with a warm smile.

I looked her over, her eyes were insanely blue. “Well, we can fight if we have to, but we’re just common folks, as long as we have enough to live pretty comfortable, we’re generally peaceful. When you get greedy people and get a bunch of thugs behind them in charge, then there’s fighting. You didn’t study us very well did you?” I laughed. She scowled at me. “We have been watching you for three thousand years, I believe we know your race well” She snorted. The lion guy was still wiping his hands... “Tell your big, furry friend worms are pretty much harmless, he’s not been poisoned or anything, some caterpillars and centipedes will sting or bite however.” She turned and “growl woof snort-purred at him.” He looked up and kind of smiled and half bowed to me. “Tell him there’s a wash bucket at the edge of the sun shed if he wants to wash his hands.” I said. She purr-chirped at him and he nodded and went to the bucket. “ANYWAY, Back to what we were talking about...” I said. “Your average human just wants to live comfortable, but then you get those who want to own everything and control everybody, and they seem to attract those that like to fight, then they make the rest of us fight! We get pissing little out of it, but they get more power, more riches, and the fighters get glory and medals, but make no mistake, when they can’t fight anymore, they get treated almost as crappy as us! And don’t get the idea that, when you turn off our technology, there will NOT be a LOT of fighting! We have a saying, the love of money is the root of all evil, and when we’re subdued, the greedy ones in control will try to grab it all! All you’ll do is make life hell for the rest of us! The ones running the show won’t miss a thing!” I growled softly. She looked shocked! “We’ll just end up with a bunch of tribal warlords screwing everything up for the rest of us, it’ll be worse than a thousand years ago in the dark ages!” I told her. She motioned to a Gray standing nearby admiring a squash and said something to him in another language. He pulled out a device from his belt and poked it into his ear, the rest followed suit and turned to look at her. “Some kind of translator?” I mused. She spoke at them for some time, after which, they all babbled among themselves a few more minutes. She turned back to me. “We will stay and watch your group today and study you.” She said with a smile. “Well in that case, have lunch with us if our food isn’t toxic to you.” I said. Nobody took lunch with us, they stayed hid. so our guests sat alone while I dished up this

and that, the space suited ones and the ball dwellers contented themselves to poke around the “confab-farm” as we called it. Suddenly a huge rat broke cover and a reptilian guy zapped it with a three foot long tongue! He chewed a second and swallowed it whole and then he chirped and whistled at the gray bald lovely I was serving lunch to a moment. She turned to me and said “Ambassador Xzee says that was delicious, do you have any more?” I looked around. Probably near the grain storage, have all you like, there are literally billions of them on earth. If he can find a breeding pair he’ll have hundreds in a couple of months, if he wants he can have as many as he can carry away, they tend to overpopulate!” I chuckled as I went back to explaining what each dish was as I shoveled it on their plates. Fried squash, okra, green fried tomatoes with onion, corn on the cob with real butter and grits with strawberry jelly and sweet tea to wash it all down. “No meat?” asked the lion guy through his translator. “I thought humans ate meat.” He said, looking downcast. “We do, once or twice a week, there’s always a deer who thinks he can get away with wrecking our crops, we got a nice one this morning and put it in the smokehouse, so Friday we’re having barbecue, come back then. “Bar bah koo? What is it?” he asked without a translator. “Slow steamed meat, covered in herbs and spices and slow simmered until it falls apart and served on a bun or a hunk of corn bread. The cat-man licked his chops and grinned “I will try to be here Friday!” He purred. Just then Xzee came back with a metallic sack full of squirming rodents, his belly was noticeably swelled. He tossed a bag of gemstones to me and cued his translator up. “These are a delicacy! We have trade goods if the council will allow it!” He hissed. “Let me try to get you a live rabbit if you visit again, if you like rat, you’ll love rabbit!” I told him. Just then the gray, bald hotty’s (cell phone?) buzzed. She smiled at me, it was then I noticed she had tiny, sharp, fangs beside human looking teeth and touched my hand “Speaking with common humans was enlightening and delightful and has given us much to think about, after we make our reports we will likely speak again, we must go now.” She sighed. “I think maybe if your people had limited trade with us you might change for the better, we are already seeing changes and we have yet to neutralize your technology yet. I think we will meet again Terra human, what is your name?” She whispered, “Lee Blevins Ma'am, and yours?” She smiled. “Tyleel Hnah, I am commander of my people’s part of the neutralization armada, Yes, we will meet again brave one!” She smiled. I watched them mount their silver disc and disappear back to the colony of daylight stars which was their fleet reflecting sunlight.

“Why was you talking to them Lee?” Asked my neighbor Ralph. “You were acting right friendly with them!” He growled. “I was as curious about them as they are us, besides, did you see the boobs that gray chick had?! Friggin’ huge man! Like honeydew melons and just as firm!” I laughed.

April 9th.

Only Tyleel Hnah, the lion guy and two of his wives and the lizard guy Xzee came back on Friday, I talked most of the rest of the farm co-op into staying and meeting our overlords and we generally had a great time and I introduced Rhul the lion guy and his wives to cornbread and sweet milk, they loved it! Apparently his species never discovered bread!

Near the end, Tyleel Hnah got everyone's attention. "We have noted certain deficiencies in your soil here, so in return for your hospitality we will be giving you fertilize such as we use on dead worlds to make them habitable, it is made of elements found on your world and there is no sign it will harm you or your plants in any way! Simply dissolve one pellet in one hundred gallons of water and put it on your plants when you water them, you will likely see a tenfold increase in production!" and with that, a pair of Grays unloaded what looked to be a hundred gallon drum of the crystal pellets and rolled it into the shed.

Later, Tyleel Hnah and I were sipping mint juleps on my back porch deck and watching the stars wink on around the fleet of hers. "I think I'm getting drunk Lee, Terrans make fine concoctions as well as food, this spice, or herb in this liquor seems to have a cooling effect as well as being flavorful. After we turn your technology back a bit, several of our worlds wish to open trade with your people if you adapt well to your new situation, we'll steer your species into a friendlier more peaceful direction and gradually bring you into our council, it may take a century, but I feel you will see it in your lifetime!" She hiccuped and stared at me with her crazy blue eyes in a way that made me uncomfortable. "Tell me earth man, do you have a problem with differences of race?" She whispered. "Not really, there's good and bad in everybody, crap comes in all colors you know?" I said. "What of my race then human?" she purred. "HUH? You look human enough, despite your being bald and an unusual color, you are a very attractive specimen at that. Why?" She smiled, our species are very closely related Lee, in fact we can interbreed! But we're somewhat different, in your language, you might call us "Homo-Monotreme" My people do not give live birth, we lay eggs." I scratched my head. "I dunno what that means, but eggs are cool I guess. What are you trying to tell me?" I asked. She grinned wickedly. "I only have one hole down there, Is that a problem?" She purred. I felt lost a moment, but I was about half drunk.

"Not really. Why are you telling me all this?" I asked, suddenly feeling somewhat frightened. "Take me to bed Earth man Lee." She said bluntly.

She got up and left sometime during the night, three half-dollar sized blue gems were on her pillow, holding down a note written on something like white plastic, it read:
I love you Lee Blevins, I will return.

April 20th.

We all drove our cars down to the exchange yard and get our brand new government issued hydrogenated fuel powered vehicles, they looked kind of like a cross between a Volkswagen "Thing" and a 70's era Ford "bronco" more a utility vehicle than anything, but it had heat and air and nothing the EMP could hurt and got thirty miles to the gallon on the "new-fuel" the aliens showed us how to brew, it had very little in the way of emissions, but it had a filter you needed to clean or replace ever so often or it would stop running. Good deal for me, my Honda was on its last legs, not so much for the Mustang/Corvette/Mercedes crowd, but gas was going to be a thing of the past after the first of the year except for the military and government.

May 22nd.

The government issued our hunting kits today, a basic, no frills bolt action 7.62X51, 100 rounds of soft point hunting ammo in stripper clips, and two stripper clips of “plinking ammo” it was of carbine length with a plastic stock. Next was a 22 caliber bolt action with an internal magazine and a single shot smooth-bore 12 gauge with a hundred rounds each respectively. All were finished in a flat black, baked on paint. I already had guns, but what the hell, they were free.

May 25th.

The government said that after December first, there would be no more food rations and fuel rations would cease as well until things settled back down and they saw how bad things were going to be, the riots started immediately thereafter.

June 16th.

The riots are petering out, not much for the entitled class to steal, smash and burn anymore. The army and cops just contained them until they got tired and went home, what few that tried to raid the farms or private homes were dealt with by the owners.

June 20th.

I got to see Tyleel again today, She told us that due to the way we “common people” were getting along all over world, cooperating and not fighting and generally minding their own business, the council was debating on whether or not to EMP us at all, but rather put peace keepers here and rebuild our planet into a confederation suited for contact with more civilized and advanced races, it was becoming an opinion that centralized government was actually the root of many of humanity's problems as a species and noted that most of the smaller tribes in the third world never hurt anybody unless they had to. Later Tyleel took me on a flight in her private hover craft and I got to join the “Mile high” club, even though we were actually up in orbit! As far as I know only a few Russians were in the orbital sex club. If you ever get the chance, DO IT!

June 25th.

Ambassador Xzee and ten of his buddies dropped in today, they solved our rat problem for months, they literally vacuumed the little varmints out of their holes into metal mesh bags and carted them away. He said he was going to become insanely rich ranching the varmints when he retires from service. More power to him. He paid me in gems again, no idea what they are, I’m pretty sure the red ones are rubies, the clear ones may be diamonds, no idea what the blue and purple ones are, but I’m pretty sure its pocket change.

July 1st.

The entitled classes almost wrenched the whole thing today by attacking a landing zone, but the aliens are a long suffering and gentle bunch, the minute the American soldiers guarding the place were about to be overrun, there was a loud hum and a pop, and they all just fell over in a sound sleep. The aliens finished what they were doing and left,

leaving the protesters to sleep it off for hours, When they woke up, they were in a detention camp.

July 9th.

Rhul, his two wives a son and daughter arrived today, they wanted to do some hunting, so I engineered a deer hunting expedition, I only took my compound bow since they all were using bows and the son and Rhul had keen pointed spears. Rhul looked over my ancient compound bow with all its cables and pulleys and perked his ears up. "Why do this?" he asked. "Distance and power friend. Watch this!" And with that I took a well used arrow and sailed it at a tree almost a hundred yards distant, it buried itself in the trunk. Rhul sprinted out after it and returned after a moment. "shot far, bit deep. How do I get one?" He asked. "Leave me what you would pay for one and I'll take care of it, come back in a week and we'll see. you'll likely have change coming!" He grinned and purred and filled my palm full of gems. We hit the herd pretty hard and came home with three deer, two fine bucks and a doe. I dropped mine off at the butcher's shed and Rhul and his family loaded theirs into their shuttle. It was then I saw Rhul's daughter staring at me. "You are the one Tyleel Hnah has claimed as her own yes?" She purred. "I hope it is only for fun, she will be leaving after the first of your year. Maybe I will take you. There are few males of my kind in the fleet, mostly only the women of my race fly, our men can not stand the gravity forces. Father is an exception, but even he had to be taken on board in a special pod. It is why one of my mothers always flies us in." She purred. Rhul's first wife barked harshly at her in her language and then adding in English to stop bothering me and load up before the meat got cold. It sank in...Tyleel is leaving me? The realization turned my heart to ice! I guess it wasn't how the cat girl put it, "JUST FUN" I sighed heavily and put in two hours of extra time and arranged for a ride into town the next day to try to get Rhul a bow.

I walked into the pawn shop and dropped what I believed was one of the diamonds on the counter. "Is this real?" I asked. The old man scowled. "That big? It can't be! But..." He put on his jeweler's loop, after a second, his jaw dropped and just hung there open a moment. "Son...IF this is a fake, its the best damned fake I've ever seen! Why... if its real, this is easily a million dollar diamond! Where did you come up with it?" He said, looking down his nose at me. "Some aliens came to the farm and bought some livestock to study, they paid in these!" I said, dumping two more identical stones on the padded, velvet mat. "Alien money, you know we're not supposed to take these or it would wreck what little economy we have left, BUT..." He looked around, we were alone. I'll give you a hundred thousand newbucks cash and whatever you can cart out of the store, I happen to be a diamond cutter! We shook on it and I cleared out his bows, arrows, a 45 automatic, six clips, all the ammo he had, a 44 magnum that begged to go home with me and an M1-A long range target rifle, scope mount and a dozen magazines and 500 rounds of soft point ammunition, and all his knives. I lugged my heavy burden to the sidewalk, phoned the truck driver and promised to buy him a tank of gas and lunch if he'd swing by and pick me up! On the way home, we stopped at the farmer's supply and bought another truck and filled both with seed, insecticide, tools, live traps and rabbit hutches. I could get used to living well again, and the baseball sized wad of gems in my pocket said I would for

some time!

July 17th.

Rhul and his daughter arrived right on time, he almost fell over when I handed him four top of the line bows, a hundred new carbon fiber arrows and four assisted opening hunting knives. "How did you manage all this human? I am amazed!" He rumbled through his translator. "Those gems you use for currency are worth quite a bit to collectors, I traded him outright." I said. Rhul grinned and tossed me another sack of gems. "Go human, become rich! Be one of power, you deserve it!" He purred. His daughter was staring at me again, her tail was sweeping the floor. "A wise male is treasured by my people, just so you know. I would not just leave you behind as Tyleel will do." She purred. Rhul hissed and growled at her and waved her onto his shuttle. "Ah daughters. When they get that age you can do nothing with them but let them chase males or they drive one insane!" He sighed. "A pleasure doing business human, these will become family treasures! We will harvest much game back home using them!" He purred. "In a month or so we will have new kinds of meat to try, more recipes. We are now growing rabbits, hamsters, sheep and goats and are clearing a place for cows, and tell Xzee we'll have more rats as well as rabbits and hamsters in about a month!

August 21st.

A saucer full of Grays dropped in this morning wanting to buy a cow, we explained we couldn't sell her because she was a breeder and we were trying to build a herd, so they settled on a bushel of squash and another of spinach and a quart of fresh butter. They paid in short, gold rods. I was off to see my jeweler friend.

"Well... IT IS gold, but something's been done to it to harden it against wear at the molecular level." He said. "It doesn't melt right or alloy with anything but more gold, I'll give you five thousand for the bag full." We shook on it and I went on my way to cram my new vehicle with all the Storable food I could get in it, with two grand left over, I bought a utility trailer and finished by loading it with seed.

August 22nd.

The damn cow is gone! One guess who. I'll complain to Tyleel if I ever see her again.

September 23rd.

Having to repair the main water pump down at well #1, one of the drunks we use for the more menial jobs thought he could get out of carrying water if he broke the pump. Well yes, he did. he's also out of a place to live this winter, we escorted him out the gate at gun point! Dumb prick.

September 24th.

I was able to Jerry rig the water pump from an old truck to work pumping water until we get the main pump fixed, getting a new pulley will be a real trick, never mind the rubber seals. The damn thing was an antique when we installed it!

September 30th.

Boss man Jones put me on a hundred hours a month today. No big deal, there's nothing on TV or the radio and after December, there never will be again. I really miss Tyleel. I think I'm in love, but it occurs to me she might have a boy toy in every port! I have to stop thinking like that, she said she loved me, she's just busy!

October 3rd.

One of the guys spotted a pump we can gut for parts to fix the well over on the next farm, it's been abandoned since long before the aliens came, time to load up my crew and go get it! Hell, we might find some other goodies left behind as well!

October 4th.

Nice score at the abandoned place, the tool shed was chock full of hand tools, not to mention a small machine shop and the tools that went with it, we'll be clearing it out as well as whatever is in the house. After sitting a decade, part of the roof has fallen in, nobody cares about this place anymore.

October 5th.

The place was just as it had been left, we carted off every bit of the furniture, a gun cabinet full of guns that were only lightly rusted and supply of ammo, a decent gas range and a refrigerator that fortunately only had a jar of mummy pickles in it, the bedrooms were a loss however. Pity, we could have used more clothing. we'll clean out the basement tomorrow.

October 6th.

The basement was full of canned goods nobody trusted, a reloading bench and supply of powder and bullet molds and hundreds of pounds of lead! I wonder if any of the older mechanics remembers how to cast lead bearings? Oh, and there was more tools and an old military trunk. I found a neat sword inside that will clean up nice, it's American made but looks middle eastern, one of the guys says it's a Mameluke carried by Marine officers. Cool! If the former inhabitant was a US Marine, I feel obliged to sort through his trunk and see who he really was.

October 10th.

So I was digging around in that trunk, this guy was something special! He was in Vietnam, Panama, Grenada, and an adviser in the Persian gulf war, tons of pictures. This guy was more bad ass taking a nap than most men will ever be cocked, locked and ready to rock! About mid way through I found the 45 automatic and his diary, the final pages tore me up:

"Mildred is gone, my kids forgot I even exist, the damn government would like to, all of my buddies are dead, I'm alone and going blind, I can't even hunt anymore and the garden has turned to weeds, Mildred would have a fit!

Damned cancer. Why wasn't it me? I took a bath in agent orange once a week in Nam!

Well Betty, I loaded the clip with Black Talons and slid it home and put one up your pipe, now what? Go outside and do the right thing or go to that damned home and wait it out?

**What do you want me to do Millie?
Major Richard Daniel Dorsey USMC over and out!"**

Poor old guy, I wish I'd have known he was even over there, if we could have been friends we could have talked for hours about here and there, I bet it would have been really educational. I notice Betty was still in your trunk, I guess Mildred talked you into the slow way out. R.I.P old soldier, I hope you got where you wanted to be. Further down there was a bottle of famous grouse scotch. What the hell, and I popped the seal and toasted Major Richard Daniel Dorsey with a deep pull and a sincere salute.

October 13th.

Tyleel came for a visit today! She carried a special case with her like one would carry fragile equipment in, she opened it to reveal a light tan egg the size of a casaba melon. "Remember the last time we met and we had some fun in orbit?" She whispered. "guess who's a daddy?" Wow! Just wow! She let me hold it in the sunlight and I felt movement inside, it was warm and the texture was not unlike flesh, having a soft shell. Me, a father at my age! Go figure. We talked all the rest of the day about our possible futures together and that night slept with the egg between us, It isn't often I feel happy, but I was then. We spent two days of bliss together and then she dropped the bomb on me...

"Lee, I'm going to have to go home with my people soon, but I have some good news for you, We and the people of Lyra have a custom in common, at times we share our mates with friends or family members to keep the men loyal and spread good genes you know? It makes for good status on worlds where we females far outnumber the men. I'm loaning you to Rhul's daughter Mhrr while I have to be away to "Hold my place" as you would say while I have to be away, It will only be a year, maybe two at the outside most and she's going to be here without any "companionship" at all. Rhul agreed to it and has offered you a tidy sum to see to his daughter's needs since she isn't required to carry on the clan bloodline and has her sights set on a career with galactic anyway, having children would wreck that! I'm already where I'm going or this would be a real setback for me! But luckily I have a large family and they will help us raise our child until its old enough to be with us full time."

I just looked at her... "Maybe you'd better explain that again, I can be a bit thick when it comes to new concepts, all I got was that you're whoring me out to a chick with claws and fur and her daddy is paying my gigolo tab so she don't get knocked up and wreck her future as a paper pusher." Tyleel smiled and nodded. "Pretty much, but between now and when I leave I intend to wreck your bed at every opportunity until you get sick of me!" she giggled. "Not happening baby, just be careful we don't have a Mk II of Junior here before you leave! By the time we get done your friends will all be asking why you're walking funny!" I laughed. Tyleel's response was to dive on me! "Promise Earth-man?" she laughed as she dug into me like a Sunday dinner!

October 20th.

The rush is on, crops coming in, meat being cured and stored, grain and seed being put up, produce being canned, everything is running wide open in two shifts seven days a

week and everything wants to break at once, at least I got the water pump fixed and up running now that its not needed anymore until spring. Field one is clear, we burned it off and plowed it under, winter crops going in starting tomorrow!

October 25th.

Man, I hurt all over, the hydraulic wood maul quit, the canning jar sterilizer broke, the fan in the smokehouse went down, the weld I put on the windmill broke, and half my crew are down with some kind of bug we brought back from the last trip to town, fortunately the Doc brewed a small quantity of Methadrine for medical use. Two milligrams and some home-brewed willow bark aspirin in my sport drink and I finished everything! I'm glad I'm off tomorrow, come hell or high water!

October 26th.

Did I just say something about a day off? I already have 120 hours in this month and Boss Jones came beating on my door at 6:00 AM begging me to come fix the grain grinder, some idiot dropped their hand scoop in it. I told him: Fine, but next time my days off roll around, I won't be anywhere to be found, and since I'm twenty hours over my time already, I want double pay in my ration book and it better be there on payday or I'll take ALL my time off at once, no matter who's out sick!

October 28th.

Guess who has the mystery bug? Guess who can't stand up without falling down or puking all over myself? God I hurt all over and I have the shakes but oddly no fever or respiratory distress.

October 31st.

I got my trick and my treat last night, Tyleel and Mhrr showed up to "play around" and let me get to know Mhrr better. Mhrr took a reading of my breath with something that looked like a cell phone and said "You have Delton influenza, we can't have that breaking out on earth, after all, we brought it here! Untreated it can get extremely nasty, we'd better send for a med-tech unit now before someone dies!"

November 3rd.

Mhrr shot some kind of mist up my nose and in just a few hours, I felt fine, then they inoculated everyone else in our commune. Meanwhile, a type of ship I had never seen before sprayed the town after telling everyone what they were doing, and even if they were sick, to come outside and get a dose. I woke up late that night, Mhrr was standing at the foot of my bed leering at me like I was lunch! "You owe me pretty Earth man, I may have just saved your life! I won't collect now, you rest. It would not be proper without Tyleel's consent now anyway, poor class. But no mistake golden maned one, I will very soon!" She purred.

November 5th.

Several more outbreaks of the Delton flu around the world, all centered around landing areas. The aliens came and sprayed the infected areas with little fuss. People are starting

to like and even trust our visitors more, they even dissipated a hurricane that was going to plow into the East coast as a cat 5, damn nice of them!

November 10th. There was a world wide demonstration today, mostly in deserts but on top of tall buildings as well with signs saying stuff like:

Stay with us, we're ready to learn from you, We love ET, Alien chicks are hot!, take me with you! and a few said Spare my DSL connection, I'll do whatever you say! And one said: "Abduct all the fat people!" I had to laugh at that one since middle age blessed me with about fifty pounds I could stand to lose. Our benevolent overlords graced most of them with a fly over and some dumb chick in San Francisco flashed her boobs at them like they were rock stars, I wonder if she was aware most of the aliens were matriarchies and the pilots were probably women? "San Francisco?!" most likely. What was I thinking?

November 15th.

The barns are full, the smokehouse too, over three thousand quarts of canned vegetables stored in the insulated house. My winter job is to move in and keep a fire going at all times the weather gets below freezing, other foods are evenly distributed between the other families and groups, if they let them freeze, they're out of food! Around 9:00 that night, a kind of delegation arrived to see me, Tyleel, Rhul, Xzee, the blonde giant and a tall Gray with a mantis like being I had yet to see before. Tyleel hugged up to me immediately. "Lee my love, we need advice on a grave matter, and since we have come to know you as being wise and honest about things concerning your world, we came to ask your opinion. It has come to our attention that there are several underground cities of massive size into which many of your leaders, their servants and armies are retreating into to avoid our removal of your advanced technologies and indeed, ride it out in comfort, presumably to re emerge after we leave and restore themselves to power. What shall we do about this?" She asked. She was shocked at the wicked grin I got. "The very ones that necessitated your coming here to dial things back you might notice." She nodded and smiled. "Well." I began. "one thing would just be to weld the doors shut, but they'd dig out eventually, another would be to bore holes down to them and slowly fill the bunkers with water and run them out that way, but the waste of resources would be appalling! The best way is to find a skunk, its an earth animal that sprays a horrible stench to defend itself, and replicate the smell, its easy to do, it's hydrogen sulfide and a few other things to make it extra nasty! if you sprayed it in fast enough, before they plugged the hole or shut any bulkheads or airlocks they would stampede out of there, then you guys could slip in and defuse all their dangerous toys and all the food and machinery would be intact, you'd have to use space suits though, that stench lasts for weeks and it tends to cling to everything it touches. "Tyleel grinned broadly, displaying her tiny, sharp fangs. "And where can we find a skunk?" She chuckled.

November 16th.

THE GREAT SKUNK HUNT OF THE APOCALYPSE!

Well, we got the skunk, three in fact! But not before it treated us to a sample of its noxious weapon when Rhul decided it was a harmless beast and picked it up! He's out back now

in a cow water trough soaking in tomato juice, poor guy. They won't let him back on the shuttle until the stink goes away! The lovable idiot is lucky it didn't bite him or he just might have gotten rabies!

November 17th.

Our "rightful lords and masters" hidden in their underground vaults got a very nasty wake up call this morning as they were simultaneously attacked with skunk piss. They came swarming out of their bunkers like ants from a kicked hill, and with their wealth and weapons left behind, they were just as broke as the rest of us had been, and just as screwed when the lights went out in a little over a month. Once everyone had vacated, the aliens collapsed the entrances. The greedy little bastards would stay broke too!



December 5th.

The day I dreaded had arrived. Tyleel and Had spent the majority of our time together since the day the elite got stink-bombed, she ran her job of commanding her ships through a kind of laptop computer. Three days ago our child was born or should I say hatched? Other than a gray tint to his skin, having all his teeth in and those crazy blue eyes, he could pass as full human, Tyleel says he will likely stay bald or at least have very sparse hair. he'll be on solid foods in a month she expects.

ANYWAY, I kissed my alien lover and child goodbye and she went to Washington DC for one last public function and to address the world.

It had been decided that in the spirit of fairness, that only non humanoid beings would make up the peacekeeping forces and that they would be here for a century observing us and making sure all hell didn't break loose, and if we were very good and behaved, there would be no more EMP barrages and we would be brought into the galactic council and

be allowed to pick up where we left off and have free trade with the other member planets of the council, but in the here and now, Rhul's people would act as police, Xzeel's as military, and they would be coordinated by the preying mantis-like Xsi'Ha'Neel.

December 6th.

There were a few more demonstrations world wide, some bidding our space cousins goodbye or as in Asia, welcoming the "Celestial dragons" to their midst. And the countdown is officially on for "Doomsday."



December 9th.

I woke up around 3:00 AM with Mhrr standing at the foot of my bed, her tail was swishing slowly as she stared at me. "It's time my golden maned one, Time to thank me for saving you from the Delton Flu!" She purred as she began to undress. "Now wait a minute Mhrr, have you noticed we're not the same species? I mean I like you and all but..." She scowled "So what? Are you racist? Or do you think I'm just another cat?" She hissed. "Tyleel is not of your world, I notice you have no problem with her!" Mhrr spat. "Alien or not, she IS human, or at least human enough we interbred!" I stammered. "Precisely golden mane. My position would be injured if I had a child to raise! And due to my position, I may satisfy my needs as I see fit without judgment from my clan or people by tradition, and I choose you to satisfy that need Lee of Terra, now scoot over!" She purred as she slid in next to me, the wall had me pinned and I was trapped! She took my hand and moved it over her body. "See? I am made like a female of your race Lee, do I

disgust you primate?" My mind was saying "Let me out of here! But something else made me look under the cover, very human and in the right place, fur or not! What to do?! She straddled me and slid herself down. "Having a lover like you will make much status for me Lee, now do what a man does for a woman Terran!" She growled in my ear. "I am quite pleased you are not like the men I see on your internet! Very scary." She purred. I thought about what she meant a minute. Then it hit me! "That's why they're on the internet kid!" I laughed.

Bah. I did it, I'm not proud of it, but I did it.

I kind of want to do it again!

December 19th.

In two days we take a little trip into the 19th. Century, there have been several mass suicides and obviously riots and a few obligatory demonstrations begging the aliens for more time or not to EMP us into the horse and buggy days. I don't understand it, we will still have electricity, still have cars, radio, and even local TV and continental internet, we'll just have to use redesigned computers and televisions, back to something between a vacuum tube and a transistor. We will all be equal in technology and wealth for the first time in history.

December 20th.

It was a long day, we were all on edge, some prayed to anyone out there who was listening, some got high or drunk, a lot more killed themselves. I just sat in my armchair, looking out at the city, sipping rum and Mocha on ice and remembering the past year, Hell. My past life that was about to go away forever... At the stroke of midnight, there was a flash in the sky and briefly a prickling sensation on my skin as the city went dark in a wave. I watched as the wave of extinguishing lights came my direction, then... BLACKNESS.

December 21st. My birthday.

I awoke to the sound of generators running. Why? What went wrong with the solar panels and storage batteries? Day off or not, I'd better go see.

Well, the EMP took out the regulator and the converter box, a quick raid of some of the abandoned homes will get us a new fuse box and I think one of the older generators out in the shed has a converter box that was made in the 70's. Anything with a microchip in it got toasted. Good thing the aliens fixed everyone with a pacemaker or it'd have been a genocide! Back to work.

The wild game preserve

And the lights went out all over the world...

Nobody thought things would fall apart as fast as they did, but gangs of raiders and cattle rustlers and god knows what else are already forming and setting about their bloody work, Last night a group of twenty men stormed the south gate and tried to make off with our cattle, fortunately the gunfire and hell raising attracted our attention, not to mention our neighbors, with whom we have several pacts of mutual aid and by the time it was

over, half of the rustlers were dead., the rest were hog tied. When we unmasked them, their leader turned out to be the same drunk who busted our water pump! His buddies are slated to turn the grinders or do other menial labor ten hours a day until their debts and damages are paid off, we left the pump killer hanging in the woods for the coyotes.

March 10th.

The cattle and livestock are beginning to breed, soon we'll have meat to trade on and the surplus canned foods left over from winter as well. The next commune/ farm over is run by the Black family, that's their name, the Blacks. Down near the river is a fishing/farming outfit run by the White family who are, go figure? Black. The wood cutting family up the road is named McNeely, distant relatives of mine by marriage, they've been trying to get me to move up there with them for some time because I know a little bit about welding and blacksmithing, but life here is sedate, and moving is a pain in the ass, their idea of fun is a drunken cook out followed by brawling, shooting, and more drinking. I'm not into getting my lip swelled for the hell of it, BUT I'm headed there now to try to fix a drag plow that broke because they were using a four wheel drive "monster" truck for a tractor. they're paying me in ammo and their home-brewed larger. What I don't drink, I can trade.

I pulled up to the compound, the boys were out front with their shotguns pulling guard duty and already half drunk, Uncle Fred and his brother "the Verge" (Virgil) were cooking an entire deer over an open flame on that spit I made for them years ago, I waved at them, Aunt Dee, Cousin Steve, his morbidly obese better half Ronnie, and three daughters and set to work grinding decades of rust off their plow and welding the two joints together, then I decided that it wouldn't stand up to Fred's "Experiments" and reinforced it with two outer plates. Along about noon, Aunt Dee brought me lunch, deer meat and stewed tomatoes on corn bread with cheese melted on top and a huge glass of ice cold buttermilk, hillbilly pizza! Around dark, as I was loading up to head back home, I heard them, a huge pack of coyotes or wolves howling, they had made a kill. Steve ambled up to me, he was carrying a light-mounted, scoped AR-15. "I pity you guys raising cattle, I ain't ever heard so many of the varmints out here before, that one pack we shot up had twenty or thirty in it. They moved on after that, but I think they're headed your way, just guessing!" He drawled, offering me a pull on his bottle. "Thanks bro." I said, accepting the drink. I'll tell boss man Jones about the mud dogs in the morning. Gotta' bail bro, better round up your critters and kids for the night! I'll see you again in a few days." I said as I climbed into my utility truck.

April something?

Its easy to lose time these days. Nobody seems to really care as long as we remember the months and seasons for crops and livestock. I just put a new incubation/ brooding shed in for the Whites down the road, Half a winter wood supply and five gallons of Mama White's famous pickled eggs for my hard work. I think her sister Jasmine likes me, she kept on showing up right as I'd take a break and talk or give me water, I'm not sure how her brother in law would take a white boy almost twice her age dating his sister in law though, we smoked a joint together once after the monthly blackjack game, but I don't think he likes white folks much, not that it matters, my heart belongs to Tyleel and Mhrr

shows up like clockwork every Saturday evening. I'm not real comfortable about our difference in species yet, but she's far from unattractive and a very appreciative lover and she always leaves me tokens of that appreciation in the form of gems, those linked gold rings her people use between themselves or oddities from other parts of the world, one time she gave me three hundred pound sacks of Japanese rice and a head sized jade Buddha, I can only wonder how she came by it! Maybe I'll mention I always wanted a Samurai sword?

Rhul dropped by today and asked if I wanted to go deer hunting with him, he was carrying the compound bow I bought for him. I couldn't look the guy in the face and really couldn't say much around him, it was like I was ashamed of the relationship his daughter and I had developed. He finally called me on it.

"Are you angry or feeling ill my friend Lee? We usually speak of many interesting things on the way to hunt. What is wrong? May I help?" He purred in his bass voice. "Rhul..." I said. "You know your daughter is sleeping with me right?" I whispered. His ears went up! "Ah, yes. This is so. You do me a great favor Lee, you prevent many scandals! How do I thank you for this? Do you need money? I will gladly pay you for your man-service to her!" He purred. I almost fell over. "How is your lovely daughter screwing a human PREVENTING a scandal Rhul? I'd think you would be ashamed of the fact or even angry at me!" I stammered! The big guy just smiled and slowly shook his head. "My daughter is of fairly great status, to have a child out of wedlock is a shame to us, it taints the bloodlines, breaks ties, gives outsiders the opportunity to mock, and as a professional of some considerate rank, it would destroy her career and shatter her status as a planetary security commander! But her virginity is not required to seal a pact by marriage to another house, nor being third daughter, is she required to carry on our family's name and titles. There will be no offspring from her amusement with you Lee, and to have an off-world lover provide her service gives her status among her peers and averts the tragedy of waking up to one of my own daughters attempting to mate my son or myself!" He sighed long and heavy. "Our race does not have a fraction of the control yours does when it comes to breeding, we lose all sense of right and wrong and our instincts drive us mad! And our females are far more aggressive than your own, when they require service, they literally hurt until they get it! It makes them act foolishly and indiscreet in the eyes of other species and they can get violent during the breeding times if no male is present! This is not something we normally discuss with other species, but it is how nature has made us, we are not ashamed mind you, what is, is. But be aware Lee, because of this, you are considered an extension of the family, and I personally am grateful!" And with that, he rubbed his face on mine. "If you ever need a favor I can supply, only ask! He purred.

All the herds of deer were apparently up in the hills, but we got a turkey and a Canadian goose and generally had a good time. On the way back Rhul said:

"It is a pity you are not of Lira, you would make a fine son in law and give me strong, wise daughters and sons for grandchildren! We shall hunt together again soon friend, yes?" He purred. "Any time I'm not working is a good time to hunt!" I said. "Have you ever been fishing like we do on Earth?"

April 15th. Yeah, I found a calendar!

We had trouble out of raiders again today, but our guards were on the ball and drove them off with gunfire, our only casualty was Boss man Jones, He'll live, but we're going to need a new leader while he recovers. Me and a few of the guys from the other communes are loading up our heavy guns and try to track the raiders back to their lair and finish the job, we can't have them regrouping and rearming and hitting us again.

Well shit. We found the raider camp alright. A bunch of half starved young women and malnourished kids crying over their lost menfolk. Why didn't they try to trade with us or work for food? I'll tell you why. They were all part of the "entitled" generation, they had no useful skills. Without computers, welfare, the internet, or warm body jobs, they were doomed. We rounded them up and took them with us, if they can adapt, they can stay, if not, we'll put them on the road in the spring. The age of self responsibility is well upon us and freeloaders get left by the side of the road.

May 1st.

There was an unusual hum in the air today, it took a while to realize what it was, but somebody, somewhere had a power plant up and running again! After a few minutes, someone checked the radio, sure enough! Three stations within range were running, and that meant land line telephones and internet would soon follow if enough computers had been shielded well enough from the EMP, you could hear the cheers and celebratory gunfire all through the mountain side and valley.

We had some problems out of the newcomers today, one of them stole a pistol and ammo, but fortunately, the wrong ammo! Best we can figure he was going to shoot somebody that was beating his time with one of the women. We gave him a bag of food, a knife and a bed roll and told him to get out.

May 3rd.

The gun thief turned up at the White's last night and tried to steal a chicken. Mr. White shot him dead thinking he was a coyote. Yeah, right. And I'm going to marry Jasmine with him as my best man.

May 5th.

Full day. Still no word from Tyleel, I made some fish traps for the Whites out of some stainless steel mesh they "found?" in one of the local factories, put a new hose on the hydraulic wood maul, changed rings on my shop press, and still found time to sharpen half the axes and whatnot for everyone else in the area.

Where are you my love Tyleel?

May 9th.

Mhrr came by for our usual "date" I got a real education in what she actually does for a living when one of the raiders we took in gave her lip and threatened her with a stick. Let me describe Mhrr, She's slim and about five feet tall and as polite as one could ask

for, except when she's in bed, then she curses like a sailor! Anyway, this guy starts in on her about how they ruined his life and blablabla and takes a swing at her! I grabbed an axe and started over to cave his skull in, I'd took half a step when there was this brown and black blur and his ass went flying through the air to land with a crunchy sounding "THUD" with her holding his arm back in a half Nelson, you could hear muscles beginning to tear above his screaming, and the whole time she was speaking calmly into his ear...

"To assault peacekeepers is not lawful, I understand your pain, but it was for your own good, I will forgive you this time with only a warning, but do not do this again." With that, she let him go and walked right up to me. "He is new to your people, why does he act this way?" She asked. Before I could speak, the idiot grabbed his stick and charged her, but by the time I had readied my axe, she had extended her arm and it was like he hit a brick wall and just collapsed unconscious in his tracks. She stood over him and shook her head. "I wished him no harm, why did he persist? Now I have to make a report!" She sighed. I rubbed her ears. "Let us deal with him, a night in the milk house ought to calm him down, he broke our laws as well. What did you do to him anyway?" I asked. She held up her palm to reveal a dime-sized crystal and metal disc embedded in her palm. "Peacekeeper psionic amplifier, I made a force wall and he ran head long into it!" She purred. "Cool, I'll be back in a few minutes, wait in the bedroom." And Tony and I drug the half conscious idiot to the milk house, where I promptly gut punched him a few times, and choking him, brought his face to mine. "She does a lot of good here for the communes, if you look at her wrong again, or act up, you're a dead man!" I told him flatly and shoved him face down into a cooling trough, Tony planted a number twelve boot in his butt while he choked and thrashed around in the water. "Yeah!" Tony added, we're on their good side, we're staying that way! If you don't like it, you know where the gate is!" and with that, we locked him in for the night.

May 10th.

I woke up to Mhrr nuzzling my neck. "You are becoming much more to me than a play mate Lee, IF Tyleel does not return and become life-mated to you, I will dispute her claim to you and take you for myself!" She purred. "Uh...What? Now wait a minute Mhrr! I mean, we have fun and I hope you enjoy it as much as I do, but I'm pretty sure I love Tyleel, we have a child together after all, I intend to help her raise him as best I can!" I said flatly! Mhrr scowled at me. "What makes you think you have any say in the matter? This is woman business! Besides... a MALE helping raise a child? Such foolishness you humans believe in! Not even Tyleel's people have such silly practices and you are almost the same species! Men watch over the family lands, make babies and do man service when needed!" She scoffed. "Where humans got the idea a male should be anywhere near a child before hunting age is beyond me! Such foolishness. Now hush silly thoughts and do me man-service once more before I go!" She hissed.

Oh I did her "Man-service" all right, if she had been human, I'm pretty sure the cops would be paying me a visit for a violent sexual assault, but just my luck, she loved it! She lay under me with her eyelids fluttering and trembling, gasping for air, I thought I had gone too far and hurt her for a minute, but then she grabbed my face in a clawed vice and licked and kissed my mouth and purred deeply. "I understand now, you human males

need to be put in your place before your potential is unleashed! Now I know I will be challenging Tyleel's claim on you!" She growled as she released me. "I will be taking you home with me earth man!" I rolled off to one side and lit up a joint. "Don't I get a say in this? Maybe I don't want to leave earth!" She chuckled warmly. "Silly male, too many choices have damaged your mind, but I will heal you!" She purred. I took a deep toke and stubbed it out. "I'm property?" I thought to myself. "What did I get myself into now?"



I wasn't done screwing my life up today.

I went fishing to clear my head, nothing on the farm needed attention for once, so it was time I drowned a worm or two and maybe get a catfish for dinner. I wish fish was all I caught! I packed my ice chest with a bottle of tequila and some of the McNeely home brewed beer and a little bag of weed and some pork chop and egg sandwiches and headed out, daylight was in full bloom and the fog was burning off rapidly as the birds began their daily chorus, when I arrived, I broke out a cold pint of some kind of muscadine juice spiked tea the older ladies made and a pork chop and egg sandwich and decided which fishing spot I wanted. The over crop would be in the sun soon, but the crappie and sun grannies were thick around the edges, but if I wanted catfish, I'd have to go to the bridge half a mile up stream. Aw, screw it, it was a three mile hike getting here! And I settled in on the big flat rock on the creek to fish and get a day long buzz on, the morning's events had left me in a sour mood.

Along about ten o'clock I heard bushes moving and leaves crushing behind me to the left, I reached inside my jacket and gripped the 45 I got from the old Marine's steamer trunk

named "Betty" and clicked the safety off. Suddenly Jasmine White emerged from the bushes wearing a jogging suit. "Why hello there Lee! I wasn't expecting to run into nobody up here this time of the year! You fishing? It too cold to be swimming up in this part!" She grinned. "Guilty as charged Jasmine, I'm hoping to get myself a catfish, but I'll fry anything." I said, gently returning the hidden pistol to safe. "Are you fishing too?" I asked, noting all she had was a small fanny pouch and a blanket. "Naw baby, I come up here to get me some sun and smoke me some weed and I don't like how my damn brother in law looks at me when I sunbathe, he done been in jail over some white girl he dated and made her give it up, he says he got set up, and maybe he did and maybe he didn't, but I know what that look mean when a man give it to you! My sister can love him all she want to, but I think he smell like an old gym sock, and he's mean to boot! No sir, don't want him touching me, so I sneak up here and get me some sunshine and relax where he can't be looking at me with them googly bug eyes! You all don't mind do you Lee? I won't scare the fish!" She said softly. "Sure Jasmine, I'll be moving up to the bridge in an hour or so anyway. Want to burn some weed and have a beer until then? I got plenty." Jasmine grinned and laid down a blanket and proceeded to strip out of her jogging suit to a bright yellow bikini! "OH MY GOD!" I thought. I knew she was pretty, but I really wasn't prepared to see so much beautiful ebony skin at once! "Tyleel loves me, Mhrr thinks she does, I care about them too! Tyleel had my baby, this is that same buck toothed thirteen year old black girl who used to bum money from me and beg rides to school when it rained, I can't look at her like this! Think of Tyleel and Mhrr!!! think of the fish!" The big, slimy catfish I was after swam through my mind briefly before sprouting breasts and turning into Jasmine White! I bit my lip and stared intently into the water, doing my best to blank my mind! It was working until she said:

"Hey Lee, you mind rubbing some of this oil on my back big man?"

Dear god...

"Hey, you OK pops? you're looking pale, even for a white man! You mind huh?"

I bit my lip and trembled. "You know your brother in law would kill me on the spot if he saw me doing that!" She cursed bestially under her breath a moment and ended with a growl. "He don't own me, I'll gut that Motherf***er! Why don't y'all fire up that joint with me Lee? Calm down. Besides, that drunk ass fool ain't moving til well after noon, and good luck him coming all the way up here let alone do no work!" I did as she asked, damn me. Three tokes later I was oiling her up and trying not to even think about what I was doing! "And what would the school board think of you up in the bushes getting high with a grubby old man twice your age and getting oiled up like a prized hunting rifle?" I laughed. I was getting high and forgetting my stress. "Screw them tight ass hypocrites, I ain't no substitute teacher no more, and they don't own me no way! All they ever want me to do is tell the kids America sucks, being a Commie is where it at, and White folks is all garbage! That shit makes me sick you know, because I know better! I done seen it with my own two eyes! If you smart and you work, you go places, ain't nobody hold you back but you and what you let in your head!" I nodded and hit the reefer before passing it back. "But THE MAN is real, or was. I think our alien friends fixed him but good!" I laughed. The scent of woods, water and sun tan oil combined with the feel of warm sun and cold wind on my face was hypnotizing me and I was feeling no pain, nor thankfully anything else at the moment and was getting into watching the morning sun play on the

ripples in the creek. “You going to break into that tequila Lee? We probably won’t see no more for years if ever.” She said seductively. I reached into my ancient ice chest and produced the bottle, a shot glass, two lemons and some salt. We roached the joint and I started to pour a shot... “Aw screw that dinky thing Lee, I ain’t too good to drink after a white man.” Jasmine laughed. we’d passed the bottle back and forth maybe three times in silence when she asked me:

“What’s all this I hear about you and one of the alien women getting busy up at your place?”

“TWO actually. I got one pregnant, so after she had my son, she left me with the captain of the cat folks army and split, I think its mostly just good fun, she talks like she owns me though! It seems the women run things there and men just do what they’re told.” I sighed. Jasmine parked her fists on her lush hips and cocking her head at me, stuck her lower lip out. “And how’s that shit working out for you Lee?” I held up the half empty fifth and shook it back and forth. “It just does. Before they came along, I wasn’t looking for nobody because nobody was looking for me, I was raised alone, I figure I’ll die that way too. Something in my gut says Tyleel isn’t coming back and I’m not real sure I like the way things are going with Mhrr, I mean, I don’t mind being her man-whore, she pays good and she’s not bad in bed either, but so help me, I expect her to snap a collar on me any day now!” Jasmine nodded and smiled. “Been there big daddy, been there...Tell me something Lee, how long we known each other?” I had to think. Ever since your family moved in down here, maybe fifteen years?” I mused. “I remember the first time we met, the chain on your bike broke and I fixed it for you.” She put her finger on my lips. “A long time huh? Tell me Lee, where are any other black folks living around here, especially with a young man my age?” She said silently. I shrugged and shook my head. “I was raised like you Lee, I didn’t have much contact with men of color until I went to college, and you know they wanted just one thing right? Getting all sweaty with your homeboy in the back of a BMW is one thing, doing it while four of his boys watch and wait their turn is something else you know? That shit ain’t me. you was the only man ever give me any respect in all that time, and I was figuring I’d be like you, live alone, die alone, but free, you know?” Her voice was starting to crack. Was it the weed? “But hell, here we sit old man, not so old making two women from outer space happy huh? I think after fifteen years we ought to know each other pretty good huh?” I nodded dumbly. What was she getting at? Suddenly, she reached behind her back and the bikini top came off in one fast blur!

OH, GOD!

OH, MY GOD!

OH, MY DEAR GOD!

OH... Oh well. I can shoot myself later.

May 15th.

Rain. it’s raining in my head too. What the hell have I done to my life? I took another drink of god only knows what proof McNeely home brewed beer and oiled “Betty”. I noticed that some time, far in this weapon’s past, someone had engraved the image of that ancient cartoon character on the smooth walnut grip, time and many coats of oil had faded it almost into obscurity and it made me wonder why some G.I, possibly the former

owner, had christened his weapon “Betty Boop” I dug into my special tools and picked out a fine point engraver and a jeweler’s hammer.

After retracing the obscured lines, I made them a bit deeper and rubbed in some black leather dye and fiddled about a few hours until it dried, then sanded off the ancient finish and then stained and re coated them in wood finish. Later on, I admired my work. “Not too bad for a guy who used to do fliers for punk rock bands in high school.” I thought.

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I took “Betty” to see a friend of mine who knew 45 Automatics to see when she might have been made, after a minute, old Ben took a drink of bourbon and said: She’s a parts gun Lee, Frame was military, late 50’s, early 60’s, the barrel and slide are newer, maybe mid 90’s or millennium made, some of the parts inside were swapped off about the same time for match grade stuff, funny thing, he kept a military trigger, doubt it was what she came with though. Whoever did the build knew his stuff however, this gun was built for business, but sadly, not very collectible. Ought to serve you well if you do your part.” He chuckled. “Well, since collecting stuff just became a thing of the past, that’s just what I wanted to hear.” I said. “Something I can bet my life on.” Ben nodded. “Might want to get some newer ammo then, Black talon hasn’t been produced in going on thirty five years except in small batches for security outfits. I’ll swap you some flying ashtrays, fifty rounds, for that box of twenty five, they were made right after things got running again after the plague of 21’ screwed things up for a decade. How about it?” I nodded. “Back in a few minutes then. Think they’ll work in my Springfield?” I asked. “No problemo.” He grinned, they’ll eat anything.

May 20th.

Winter is officially over, it hit 85 degrees today. Not the best day to be in the top of a windmill changing belts on the generator, but what the hell, it makes me important, which

means I get away with things others don't. Boss man Jones is up and around on that customized cane I made him, that bullet he took in that raid left his right leg a bit slow. He's been watching me like a hawk lately, wonder whats up? Harvey and Tony came wandering up just as we were packing up the tools. "Hey Lee, come look at the big still won't you? That leak just got worse!" Called Tony. I sighed heavily and told Billy to go fetch my gas welding kit and some silver Soldering rods and meet me at the brewing shed. Everybody needs a Billy, he's mildly retarded but knows enough to fetch what I need and be actually helpful in most areas, in a few years I hope he can take my place, I'm getting too old for this crap. If not, Wayne will. That kid has a knack for electronics and is better than me really, but when it comes to metal work, not so much. Billy can weld better and his welds look like chicken poop, but they tend to hold most times.

I met Billy at the brewing sheds. He was grinning and pointed to the fact he brought everything I asked for. I rubbed his head and praised him, he loved that stuff! Then I poked my nose around the corner, Harvey and Tony were standing there looking at a six inch crack in "Big Bertha's" copper belly, our hundred gallon still we made all of our trade alcohol in. "You guys got her drained yet? I can't fix it while its full of sour mash and sugar cane mush!" They looked at each other dumbly. "Drained? You never said drain her." Said Tony. "I was dumb enough to think you guys had the common sense to know to, my bad. Alcohol is explosive guys, remember what we brew in the other shed in the steel still? Yeah. Drain her off and let her air a bit, holler at me an hour after you're done, I'm headed to the kitchens to see what Maude has left over, later guys. Billy trotted off behind me giggling "Dumb dumbs. I know better than that!" he mumbled to himself. "Yes you do Billy, that's why you're my helper and they play with rotted food and cow poop in the methane lab." Actually, the methane lab needed some pretty swift science and brewing know how, but it made Billy feel good to hear that stuff. We ambled up to the community kitchen, Maude was out front smoking a handy roll cigar. "We ain't got much left boys, what there is, is pretty dried up, just take whatever, no charge, just avoid the chicken salad, its been out since noon, its dog feed." She said.

Well, lets see. The mashed potatoes aren't bad once you stir them up, neither is the fried okra covered in chicken gravy, likewise the fried chicken got a gravy bath, I loaded up on slaw, it was still cold, and smothered a quarter pone of corn bread in melted butter and finished with a quart sized mug of peach iced tea. After our late lunch, we shared a joint and ambled back to the brewing sheds to fix Big Bertha. Simple job really, they had run it too hot again and a seam split, we were done in a half an hour. On our way back we stopped at the dog lot to let them remember we're all in the same pack. Thirty dogs, all coming from a timber shepherd and a weimaraner, these mutts would likely top the scales at 120 pounds fully grown, we turned these blue eyed beasts loose in the fenced in areas after nightfall in case of coyotes or raiders, so far they were worth their weight in gold! We had a little secret signal, right before we fed them, we would clap twice, that let them know we were friends and food was on the way, if you didn't clap, YOU were likely the meal if they didn't know you! I saw two of these bad boys rip into a pack of ten coy-dogs, by the time they fled, four had been ripped to pieces and the rest were wounded to one extent or the other, our mutts were not to be messed with!

June 1st.

Hoo boy. What a damned mess, where to begin? Probably at the start.

Jasmine White showed up at the main gate this morning on her bicycle with a bed roll and a back pack, half out of her head and screaming for me, Mhrr hadn't left yet so she was right on my tail as I ran to see what the hell was going on, it seems her brother in law got drunk and cornered her while her sister was in bed sick and had his way with her, well that kind of pissed everyone off, but the communes and farms have a common law: "What happens on your territory is your problem!"

Fair enough, but Jasmine wanted sanctuary, no more, no less, which we gave her, but not before she'd hugged and kissed me like a long lost lover, hell. Maybe I was? That left me to face Mhrr to explain "Who she was to me?" Before I could get started, her drunk brother in law pulls up with some of his buddies waving guns around and threatening to kill every honky in the place if we didn't turn Jasmine back over to him, thirty guns aimed at his head made him rethink his demands and he left in a cloud of dust and curses, swearing we would never get another fish out of his creek until hell froze over! Anyway, I explained to Mhrr that Jasmine and I had known each other for years and on rarest occasion, we were more than "Just friends" Oddly Mhrr just smiled and nodded. "That is fine Lee, but always remember who has spoken for you!" Was that a hint of a threat in her voice? Hard to tell. The day just kept getting worse. Around noon Jasmine's sister Monique and her three kids pulled up, she was covered in blood and very, very pregnant! She said that her drunk such and so and something rapist of a husband was dead and in hell where he belonged and if she and her kids could stay in our confab farm, since the place was legally hers, we could take as many fish as we liked and add her property to our territory! Well that was agreeable. We all noticed there was a twelve inch butcher knife stuck in her belt, it was immediately apparent this lady took no shit from anyone!

June 5th.

Council meeting tonight, hate these things. If you owned land in the confab or had the right skill sets, you were on the council, I met both requirements, lucky me. Everyone else filed petitions. The first order of business was to seat Monique on the council and fill her in on her duties and privileges. Second was a trade deal between us and the Swain/Shaw farms up the road and get use of a fishing pond at the edge of their territory in exchange for small game hunting rights on ours and trade some hemp and flax for some machine shop equipment Old man Swain had in his factory. And finally, Boss man Jones stood up and announced that at the end of the month he was abdicating due to his wounds. Well crap, I liked him, he was easy to negotiate with, then he dropped the bomb...

"I nominate Lee Blevins as my replacement, all in favor say "Aye." he said. "Now wait a minute Dave, I don't..." I began. "AYE!" Said everyone in the council unanimously. Well shit. Now I'm stuck with it. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Jasmine peeking in a window, grinning, at another window was Mhrr, also grinning. What the hell ladies? I'm too old to play this Alpha male game! Can't I just go fishing and fix busted stuff?

Please?

No?

screw it.

I DO NOT want this job!

July of the next year.

Sorry it took so long to get back to this, I've been busy.

I don't know the exact date so bear with me, it is some time in July however.

We decided not to celebrate the fourth of July, no point. America and nations in general are a thing of the past, now it's the age of the commune, the confab, and the city-state, with millions of family run farms and outposts dotted all around the world between them. Someone managed to get a couple of 60's and 70's era communication satellites up into orbit, so we have television again, albeit only eighteen hours a day, and E-mail on a very slow kind of internet. The age of nation states has ended, the time of super powers is gone and the era of tribes has returned, but in a more civil and enlightened form, without organized religion, politics and mass media to fuel hate and leaders to take advantage of it, things are quite nicely boring. Sporting events seem to be the norm for solving disputes, or games of chance arbitrated by a disinterested third party. For the first time in its history, mankind is forgetting how to wage war, Oh sure. We have raiders, rustlers and malcontents, but they tend not to last very long when their victims gang up on them. The environment is healing nicely as well and species near extinction are making dramatic comebacks. More later, Jasmine and Mhrr are waiting for me, we're going to the landing zone to meet Tyleel and introduce Jamar to his half brother Lhi (Lee. LOL) Afterwards I'm going fishing with Rhul and Billy, we intend to have a fish fry.