

ISolation

By

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Prologue

Faint sounds echoed throughout the night sky and as the ground shook, his eyes opened, adjusting to what seemed like an eternity of darkness. He coughed as the dust clouds settled. Slowly he propped himself up so his body would not ache so much. The bright orange clothing he was wearing was soaking wet and resembled a dirty brown colour. The ground shook vigorously and the previously faint echoes turned into what seemed like a loud thunderstorm. He was pretty sure the sounds had never been this close to him before. Pretty sure? No, he was certain, he could swear on his life, not that his life was worth very much right now but he was most definitely certain. Was an end finally coming to this endless nightmare?

Suddenly he heard a loud array of footsteps and an explosion of sound erupted from outside. People were screaming and, was that an exchange of gunfire? His heart started racing. He could feel his heart beating in every cell of his being. It reminded him of that feeling he used to get when he got on an airplane, oh how much he hated airplanes, but as much as he hated airplanes he loved this feeling. He never thought this anxious feeling could feel so good...and it gave him hope... hope that he could see their faces again, hope he could hold them in his arms once more, hope that this was all going to be over very soon HOPE... As quickly as the sounds had erupted they stopped, stopped like a deer dead in its tracks just when it realizes it's being hunted and in that split second is planning its escape.

The silence was deafening it seemed like it had never been so quiet before. He could hear his heart beating in his ears, except from that there was total silence. No... NO... NO... NO... NOOOO! Now that the adrenaline had rushed out of his body, his arms numb from bad circulation due to being tied up and propped up for too long gave out. The moment his face met with the dusty rock riddled floor there was a moment of guilt. As the dust filled his teary water filled eyes, the only thought he had in that moment in time was, if he had not borrowed that money from his aunt would everything have been different....

Chapter 1 – A man of his word

Sometimes he wished he had stayed in school longer and persevered, things could have been so different, especially in this economy. The water from the shower was still running while he was brushing his teeth at the sink. He could see the foggy silhouette of his face reflecting in the mirror.

“Babe? Are you still showering?” He heard her call out to him.

“I’m brushing my teeth,” he responded and he cleared his throat.

“Oh come on Daniel! This is the first year since Marlysha was born and we don’t even know if we have to pay back taxes.”

“But it’s cold and I’m freezing my manhood off in here. So, it’s either the water or you are the one that gets to explain to the munchkin why she can’t have any siblings.”

“Oh Daniel stop being so melodramatic,”. He scoffed and mimicked her voice.

“I heard that”, she said in a firm yet humoristic tone. “I am the one wearing the pants in this relationship, because apparently you are not wearing any,” she laughed.

“Well maybe I should take my sexy pants less self to the airport like this. How would you like them apples,”.

“Well...apples don’t really come to mind Daniel, but some other fruit might.”

“You are incorrigible Iboya,” he smiled.

“But I am serious about that water though Daniel. If we want to take a vacation in August, we can use every last bit of money we can save. And if you hurry up we can enjoy a cup coffee together before the baby wakes up.”

Maybe it was better that I did not pursue academics after all he thought. Maybe I would have been somewhere else right now and I would not have had this gorgeous family. He slipped into some clothes and met her in the kitchen where she stood with one cup of coffee in each hand. He wrapped his arms around her.

“Smells good darling,” he whispered in her ear.

She set one down on the countertop for him, “Oh Daniel I love it when u talk sensual to a cup of coffee in the morning.”

“I meant you woman,” he said and he kissed her in her neck. He hugged her extra tight and it was at that moment that faint cries could be heard from across the hall.

“Hold on to that thought someone needs me right now.”

“But I need you too,” he said whilst he batted his big brown eyes with extraordinary long eyelashes.

“Just drink your coffee dear I will be right back.”

She kissed him on the lips and made her way through the doorway. She took a right and walked down to the end of the hallway. She opened the door and entered a pink and white room filled with hello kitty’s everywhere. She slowly walked towards the crib and her eyes locked eyes with the biggest brown eyes she had ever seen. There she stood at a whopping 2 feet 5 inches holding her crib tightly with her little hands and the biggest toothless smile on her face. “Gooooomooooorning munchkin,” she said while the baby stretched out her arms signaling to get picked up.

Meanwhile Daniel was still sipping on his morning coffee in the kitchen. Where has the time gone...28 years, I could not have imagined to be a father at this age he thought. I truly wished I were a kid again though. I love being a father and for once I am in a stable relationship but they got it easy, they just do not realize it yet. Not a care in the world, no bills to pay, no further obligations whatsoever, no grown up problems, just eat, sleep, poop, repeat.

Iboya walked by the kitchen into the living room. “Can you make us some breakfast,” she asked, then said, “In the meantime I will give this hungry little monster some milk.”

“Alright how would you like your waffles?,” Daniel responded.

“I like them just the way like my men, brown and super sweet,” Iboya grinned.

“Can you turn on the News babe,” Daniel shouted from the kitchen whilst their dolce gusto machine rumbled while it made another fresh cup of coffee.

She turned on the TV and she mumbled, “Stupid smart TV’s! They take forever to turn on nowadays. I remember the days when you could turn on the TV and you could just watch TV straight away. I must sound super old right now don’t I,”.

“Yeah you are almost half way up the hill,” he shouted sarcastically.

The smell of freshly baked waffles slowly spread throughout their cozy three-bedroom apartment. That wonderful smell was rudely interrupted by the seven o' clock morning news. "Good Moring it is the 6th of July 2015 today. Welcome to the Channel 1 seven o clock morning news. My name is Abid Hunkar. Our topics for this morning will be, The Greek minister of finance, Yanis Varoufakis, resigns. By resigning according to his own statements, it is his response upon the desire of some of the countries within the euro-zone, which according to him do not wish to negotiate with him at the meetings of intergovernmental platforms in Brussels. Secondly after the No vote from Greece to a referendum, Germany is not yet prepared to negotiate with Greece about a new financial support program. According to the German government the door is open to negotiations but, Greece has not complied too the conditions to negotiate as of today.

And some home news, because of preemptive bag searches of arriving travelers. The customs service at Amsterdam Schiphol Airport caused a tremendous amount of delays, which caused a lot of long lines and extra waiting times. The customs service tries to enforce a new collective labor agreement this way. Followed by some more home news, the renovations on the Binnenhof will cost at least half a billion euro. They would be able to start the renovations in the year 2020 and this could take up to 5 years. And now, some more international news, It appears that the Muslim extremists of Boko Haram, a splinter group of Islamic State, have struck again..."

Clutching a big plate of freshly baked waffles with maple syrup and a fresh cup of coffee, Daniel ran into the living room.

"Here you go sweetie," he said as he sat down on the red big corner sofa. "Can you turn it up please Iboya," he asked, and she turned up the volume.

"At a bombing in a mosque yesterday evening in the city of Jos Nigeria, there were at least 44 fatal casualties and 67 people injured. According to eyewitnesses 2 bombs went off. One was in a packed mosque, and the other in a restaurant for the elite population."

"Are you serious," Daniel exclaimed, "how is this not world news or at least the first segment? Everybody's got his head so far up his ass"

"... DANIEL! your daughter," Iboya said while she glanced up at him while she took a bite of a still steaming waffle.

"Sorry munchkin. Don't listen to daddy, and Iboya, she doesn't even really speak yet..."

"Daniel Jansen I do not care what you do when you are out on the streets, but I will not tolerate this kind of language in this household. Especially not in front of our daughter," Iboya said enraged.

"I am sorry but this society 'we live in' it just gets on my nerves," Daniel said. "The economy is down the drain. The European Union sends 184 Billion euros to Greece, in which a big chunk of that money comes from Holland...OUR COUNTRY. Holland is the cash cow of the United Nations and t'hey", this god forsaking country, take care of everyone in the world except their own people. They tell us the taxes are going down and then they raise it 21%. They force you to have health insurance that they also tell you is going down in price, but that does not really matter now does it? Because they raised the taxes higher then they lowered the health insurance, while 1 in 5 hospitals has a financial crisis. The upper class gets bonuses of 100.000 euros a year, for doing a poor job at running the country if I may add. And then we, the hardworking people, hardly make enough to pay all of our bills. How are we supposed to compensate for that in the long run? And even if we do make more money, the IRS taxes you if you make 'too much money'. I swear, Iboya, the system is broken. A quarter of this country's population is on welfare and even the working class is going to food banks to make it through the month and most of them are working minimum wage. The kids can't get jobs because they force us to work longer for our pensions. And those poor kids they have to take out huge loans if they want to study at all. They are so far in debt by the time they finish, that they will be paying off student loans for most of their lives. The government is purposely feeding into the aging of the population. And then they also have the audacity to initiate budget cuts to the low-income population that needs it the most? It is dead wrong Iboya. The rich are getting richer and the poor are growing dirt poor. And then the prime minister goes out in the media and says that the average household in Holland has an income of 3000 euros a month? I never have and probably never will make the amount that man is talking about. That man has lost his goddamn mind I tell you Iboya. Let alone the fact that the government can spend 80 million euros on two paintings for the Rijksmuseum while the national debt is raised with 480 euro per second...but they can't spend that money on their own people..."

“Daniel would you calm down? If you keep going on like that you might have yourself a heart attack at the tender age of 28,” Iboya said laughingly, “Sorry honey I did not want to interrupt your rant but it is 7:30 and shouldn’t you be out the door by now?”

He looked at the clock as the time switched to seven thirty-one. He walked over to Iboya and kissed her, “I’m sorry babe it’s this financial crisis. It’s stressing me out. But you... you get me. I love you. I will be home by six o’clock. See you tonight.” He turned around, kissed their daughter, and walked into the hallway where he proceeded to put on his jacket and shoes. He grabbed his house keys from the house shaped key holder and walked out the door. He went down the stairs and out the door. It was a beautiful July morning. He walked up to his bicycle and unlocked it. His bicycle was a black and grey city bike with a basket in the front.

He hopped on, took a right, proceeded straight, and took a left on the round about like he had been doing for the last three years. His mind wandered off to how much he had accomplished in those last three years. He met his girlfriend, moved in with her, and they now had a wonderful almost one-year-old daughter. Marlysha was born two and a half months early due to Iboya developing Preeclampsia in the late stages of her pregnancy. Because Iboya was bedridden since the moment she had walked into the hospital she also contracted thrombosis in her left leg. It had been a very tumultuous year for them and the night before, Iboya had asked him what they were going to do about Marlysha’s upcoming first birthday. He had not really slept much the last 48 hours since he had promised her they would go on a much-deserved vacation this year and they would celebrate her birthday big time in a sunny country sipping some cocktails at the beach. But a promise is a promise and he was a man of his word.