

The world, well what's left of it anyways has evolved into pure mayhem. Chaos, looting, murder, there's no telling what people will do these days. When the virus originally hit I don't think anyone realised the extent of how serious it was going to be, but then it started changing people. Anyone infected became erratic, they seemed to have lost all control over themselves and then right at the height of their aggression, they imploded, dropping dead. That only started ten months ago now, however everything's changed. Medics are yet to find a cure but at this point it's unlikely as hospitals, like the rest of the cities have been left deserted. The only way to survive is to stay constantly on the move. So that's what I've been doing. It's eerily calming driving down a completely deserted highway, cars deserted sporadically at the side of the road. But suddenly I heard the single sound that sent a feeling of pure dread through me. The spluttering of the car engine. Smoke began to pour out of the hood of the car making my eyes sting and leak. "No no no please no" I pleaded with the car as it jolted to a stop. I buried my head in my hands "what am I going to do now" I mumbled to myself. Getting out of the car I tried to decide what I should do, all that surrounded me was a barren desert and a highway that stretched for miles. The highway was a clear choice but too noticeable and the possibility to meet people along the way was too high. So I grabbed my bag with the only belongings I had inside and set out into the vast open sand. The further I walked into the desert the harder it became. The ground shifting from underneath me making me feel as though it was moving me back with every step I took. After what felt like miles I was ready to collapse when I saw a large elevated rock surface. Finally somewhere to rest I thought in relief but as I rounded the corner of it I saw lying on the ground an old man. I stopped in my tracks, afraid to move a muscle. I was hesitant to move any closer, was he dead? Was he alive? A million questions racing through my head just as the body rolled over and looked me dead in the eye. What was only a couple of seconds felt like an eternity as all we did was bore into each others eyes until the old man quickly got up onto his feet pulling out a knife. "You better tell me who the hell are you and what you want kid" he spat out with pure venom dripping from his words. "I only want to stop here for a rest I swear," I panted. "My car broke down and I'm just looking for somewhere safe" I promised. The man lowered his knife and visibly relaxed, "Sorry kid you can just never tell these days and I'm not exactly in my prime years anymore". Upon hearing that I finally got a proper look at the man. He was only about 5'9 and looked in his seventies. On first appearance he looked dangerous and ready for a fight but looking at him again I could see the tired old man he was in reality "Dont worry" I replied "we do what we have to to stay alive". The man chuckled at my comment as if to ease the tension, "you got that right".

As we sat together the man told me of his plans to try to find an army base that is taking people in for refuge and keeping them safe. As he continued I thought how that might be an ideal plan to find somewhere that is actually safe. To not be on the move constantly and be able to stop. To be able to call somewhere home once again. So I agreed to travel with the man until we both got to the base or until something stopped us, we just didn't know what that would be. As the sun started to set and the temperature began to drop we figured now was as good a time as any to start our journey. The man didn't really talk a lot apart from his scarce mumbling to himself but that was fine. You didn't want to forge connections with people in these times because they are generally teared away from you and you're left alone again. It was just easier to not. The sand dragged us back making our walk feel like it was never ending and every two steps you took you got pushed back one. The burning of the muscles in my legs was excruciating but we kept pushing through it until we both collapsed. As I turned to look at my new found travel companion something wasn't

right. He looked the way he did when I first met him, with pure aggression in his eyes. "Hey are you alright?" I asked slightly concerned. "What's it to you" he spat out glaring at me. I began to move back slightly but not before he grabbed my wrist and pulled me closer. "Give me your bag" he barked at me as I just stared in shock. Before I could move he snatched the bag and began to rifle through it, throwing my belongings everywhere. He threw the bag away and turned to me "where is food? I know you're hiding it. Tell me where it is" he snarled. I cowered away from him getting up onto my feet "I don't have any" i stammered "i haven't had any for three days" The man got to his feet and started walking towards me "if that's so, well i might just have to kill you" he hissed pulling out his knife "Like you said we all do what we have to to survive" he said before lunging at me. I quickly jumped back, backing away before I tripped over a large piece of driftwood and falling onto my back. He looked down at me chuckling before running at me the knife held out in front of him ready to strike. I could feel my heart pounding inside me as if it was going to explode and then without thinking I picked up the driftwood and swung it with my eyes shut. I opened my eyes to see him collapsed into the sand, blood pouring from his head. I was frozen in shock unable to move as I watched his lifeless body lie there. What had I just done? I began to make a fire out of the driftwood, still in a state of shock. Once it was made all I could do was sit there. Sitting beside the lifeless body beside me. I was quickly distracted by the stabbing pain of hunger going through my body. As i wondered how many more days i could be stuck here and if i was going to die here a horrid realisation came over me. I looked over to the body. My stomach begging me for nourishment. "We all do what we have to to survive" i whispered to myself getting up. My mind disassociated from my body as I grabbed the man's knife and began to cut. The next thing I can remember is packing up my bag and setting out on my journey knowing that I've given myself a few more days to live by what I've done. The only thing in my mind "we do what we have to to survive" on a continuous loop. As i was lost in my own trance

walking i didn't notice the three huge military vehicles approaching. They stopped in front of me and I put my hands up as if to surrender. A soldier got out from the vehicle pointing his gun at me walking closer to me. He stopped in front of me and held a scanner up to my head. The thing made a small beep noise and the soldier put his gun down. "You're safe now kid" he said "Come on and get in the vehicle" he said walking towards it with me following behind. "How have you managed to survive all this kid?" he turned to me asking out of curiosity. I looked up to him and weakly said "we all do what we have to to survive". As if there was a mutual understanding he smiled sadly nodding before we both got into the vehicle.