

Rift

written by

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1 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

AMBER, (20s) messy hair in ponytail, GOVERNMENT LANYARD swinging around her neck, drives a truck down a scraggly road with one hand, and talks to her SUPERVISOR with the other.

The road goes on for MILES.

BOSS

-the place is called a *Deadzone* for a reason, Amber. No cell, no email, not even a damn fax can get through. They get regular checkups, but they won't know who you are.

AMBER

(Rolls her eyes, sighs)
Wow, not even faxes. Are you sure this is one of our facilities?

BOSS

Oooh, the depth of your ignorance is deep. It gets a lot worse than this out there. But don't worry, this will be an easy job. Get in, grab a pile of reports, get out.
(beat)

I know you want to get out of your office job, and this is the best way to start.

AMBER

So then you think I can start doing some *real* anomaly investigation soon?

BOSS

Yeah, well, uh, we'll see, I think first you'll have to...**static**...and then we can...**static**

AMBER

Hello? Hello?

Amber loses connection and hangs up the phone, and only a moment after the car's ignition SPUTTERS, comes to a COMPLETE STOP. Fuck. Amber HITS the horn.

After collecting herself and a few papers, Amber prepares to make the rest of the journey on foot.

She contemplates leaving her camera behind, looks to the long road, and decides to snag it.

2 EXT. FURTHER DOWN COUNTRY ROAD - LATER

A large depression-era farmstead shivers, ISOLATED in the middle of a dried-up field.

She drags her feet towards the home, whips her camera from around her shoulder, and takes a picture.

A young scout lies in the field, observing Amber with a pair of binoculars.

SCOUT

Fuckin' hell, about time someone noticed.

The scout lifts up his bike and rides out to meet Amber.

SCOUT (CONT'D)

Hey, you're here!

AMBER

Yep. Powered through. The car broke down back that way.

SCOUT

That's weird, they usually make it at least up the drive way. Then we push 'em back on the road. Hey, you know, our newest recruit has some mechanic-y background. She get can ya fixed up real fast.

AMBER

Great. I can grab my reports and we'll take a look. She better be able to save it, I'm still paying the damn thing off. The last thing I need is more debt.

SCOUT

Oh, she's good, trust me.

The scout looks down at Amber's files.

SCOUT (CONT'D)

They not sending the paper anymore?

AMBER

Uh, well they didn't tell me anything about that.

(MORE)

AMBER (CONT'D)

They didn't tell me much of anything, actually. *Get in, get out* is about all I have to go off of.

SCOUT

Hmm, probably better off. We don't read that stuff much these days, anyway.

3 INT. HOUSE - DAY

Amber stands in the living room, where a cork board displays the team's hanging lanyards, people are busy at work. A NURSE is tending to SOMEONE'S wound. Looks like a dog bite. They take quick notice of the newcomers before returning to what they were doing.

SCOUT

Is Harriet around? We got a visitor with some car troubles.

MIA

She's out on her patrol. She'll be back before sundown. Probably.

(to Amber, noticing the badge on her lanyard)

Oh, hello, I was just starting to think nobody out there cared about us anymore.

AMBER

Well, they care enough to send an underpaid office goon, at least. This Harriet, you said she came here recently?

SCOUT

Well, not exactly.

MIA

She's been here, what, six months?

(beat)

You know, you look pretty rough.

AMBER

A long walk from a broken down car will do that to you.

MIA (CONT'D)
 No...it's more than that. You're
 not just physically tired.
 Something's eating away at you.
 (touches her cheek)

AMBER (CONT'D)
 (backing away)
 What're you talking about?

SCOUT
 Hey, you don't have to hide it. You
 don't have to be afraid here.

MIA
 We've seen it. We've seen all of
 it.

Mia motions towards a pile of newspapers, due to be burned in
 the stove/fire.

MIA (CONT'D)
 The Deadzone is probably the last
 safe place these days...Nothing
 happens around here.

HARRIET BIDDLE, Mechanic, SWINGS the door open. She's the
 only facility member that still wears her lanyard.

HARRIET
 Afternoon, everyone.

SCOUT
 Anything to report?

HARRIET (CONT'D)
 A whole lot of nothing. Maybe even
 more nothing than usual! But I
 picked up dinner on the way home.

Harriet slaps a dead rabbit onto the table, adjusts her
 clothes, and looks at Amber.

HARRIET (CONT'D)
 Ah, hello. Took them long enough.
 I'm Harriet Biddle. And I believe
 you're my replacement.

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EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Harriet and Amber set off down the road, Amber holding a large bag or case presumably full of reports. The silence is long and awkward.

AMBER

So you really just decided to stay here for the last six months? And now expect me to pretend like this is normal?

HARRIET

No. None of *this *motioning towards the air** is normal. All I want is for you to let me live my life. Trust me, the fact that they sent you means nobody cares about what happens to me.

AMBER

Well unrelated to that really offensive tone you took, surely I'm gonna have to report this.

HARRIET

Fine. Go ahead. Like I said, they don't care. And neither do I.

They arrive at the car. The hood pops open, Harriet tinkers. Amber looks over her shoulder, occasionally snaps a photo. Harriet stops, thinking carefully about her next action, and looks at Amber.

AMBER

Ok...What's really going on around here?

HARRIET

(sigh)

None of the others are supposed to say much, protocol gives them...comfort, but obviously I don't give a shit anymore or else you wouldn't be here. The Deadzone isn't *just* a boring radio silence bubble, although it certainly is that. Occasionally, very occasionally, you can...see things. Rifts. Visions, if you will. They sent people here to try keep track of them, in case we can learn something.

(MORE)

HARRIET (CONT'D)

The others haven't seen much more than an occasional plentiful bean harvest. But not me. I saw something.

AMBER

Saw what?

HARRIET

I don't know exactly...it was so real, yet I can't begin to describe it. All I know is that it scared the hell out of me.

(beat)

These things rarely make sense.

(beat)

I was too scared to tell anyone back home, and I figured everyone around here was already scared enough as it is.

It was the seventh vision that convinced me to stay. They got worse every time I came.

Amber quietly thinks over everything Harriet has told her. Reflects on the story of the visions, the fears the people of the facility have shared with her, and her own unfulfilled life.

AMBER

I'd like to see this vision myself.

HARRIET

(lowering the hood)

Well that's perfect. They always seem to happen right here.

AMBER

(interrupted)

That would explain why my phone and car both died at the same-

A RED GLOW covers their faces, eyes widen. Sounds of screams, fire, destruction ring through. Utterly completely terrifying. A bead of sweat runs down and panic sets in.

Finally, the light fades to dust. Quiet, except for their breathing.

AMBER (CONT'D)

Was that...our world?

HARRIET
(ignoring her)
I've never seen it that bad.

AMBER
Is this going to happen to us?

HARRIET
I don't know. It could be our
future, it could be someone else's.
It could be nothing.

The two lean against the car as they try to get their breath
back.

HARRIET (CONT'D)
If this has any chance of
happening, I can't stay here.

AMBER
What?

HARRIET
I have to go back. I'll never be
able to live with myself if I just
stay here and carry on while the
rest of the world goes to shit.
I'm going to go back with you.

AMBER
Go back?! Why would you want to go
back to THAT?
(beat)
You can keep the car. If the world
ends up looking like that, I want
no part of it.

HARRIET
You don't want to help?

AMBER
Help? I work in a damn office.
I'm not doing anything out there
that helps me or anyone else.

HARRIET
It doesn't have to be that way.

AMBER
I guess you've been here a while
because apparently you've forgotten
how the real world works.

Amber doesn't look at Harriet. The two stand there for a moment.

HARRIET

Fine, hand me the keys.

Amber pulls the keys out of her pocket, looks at them for a second, and then tosses them to her.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

Someone will be back soon.

(beat)

If you change your mind.

AMBER

(walking down the road)

If there's even anyone left by then!

Harriet looks at her walking down, hops in the car. With a determined look on her face, she turns the car around and drives back to the real world.