вогонь!

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by Dystopia_Addict99

Summary

crossposted

sorry for shitty summary, didn't write down the one from ao3 onto my Google doc so yeah :[

Misha Bachynskyi directly witnessed something incomprehensible during the Chernobyl nuclear accident.

4 months later, he woke up in Uranium City, halfway across the globe from his old home.

Although Misha soon finds that there's something wrong with Uranium City; when he finds that Penny Lamb had the same experience as him, they go digging for answers. But a mysterious infection is coming. Wil the St. Cassian's choir figure out the true secret of Uranium City, or will they perish to the disease.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Chapter 1

Sleep was a struggle for Misha; he was convinced he was an insomniac. Especially today. The ceiling of his apartment was almost perfect, but slightly off looking from age. Or the fact that Misha was slowly going insane from staring at it for 4 hours. Mihsa looked at the wall across his small room, seeing a kylym with a couple of deer on it. Misha's mother had kept it with her since before he was even born; when you're barely living paycheck to paycheck, you learn to keep everything you can for as long as possible. She chose the one specifically with the deer because she thought of it as a good omen, so according to her logic, seeing it every day would boost that omen. Misha closed his eyes, and mentally thanked whoever in the Soviet government let him and his mother move here from their bum fuck town in rural Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast. In some way, he missed the small town, specifically running around in the fields or playing in the banks of the Cheremosh. Although he didn't miss the tiny home he used to live in, and the розкладачка *(folding cot)* he had to sleep on.

Misha tossed and turned: "чорт забирай! *(Literal Translation: 'Devil Take It!' Or 'Dammit!')* " he grumbled.

Swiftly, Misha rolled to the side and swung his legs over the mattress he had slept on; his feet landed flat on the ground. He walked towards the main room. In the room, there was a TV sitting on a small table. Trying to get a sense of the time, Misha turned the TV on. He tried to browse the programmes, but the TV only displayed static. *Probably past midnight.*

Quickly, Misha grabbed a lunchbox sitting at the kitchen counter and exited the apartment. Would he wake anybody up? Maybe, as Misha could clearly hear the thumps of his feet touching the concrete floor. The lights on the roof of the hallway buzzed; there was one that was completely burned out. After his hand reached the cool grooves of the wooden door, Misha then turned the doorknob and opened the door to the stairwell. The stairwell itself smelt like stale cigarettes; Misha's thoughts wandered as he slowly walked down the steps.

I'm hungry. Misha heard footsteps on the floor above him. *Is someone doing drugs?* They got louder. *Yo, nobody's doing drugs, this isn't Odesa.* Misha quickened his pace, and the stairwell slowly got darker as he went past the floors. *This is wack*. Misha was on Floor 10, and the concrete slabs that made up the walls of the cramped stairwell became suffocating. *Is someone chasing me?* Misha could hear heaving breathing; he was unsure whether it was from himself, the footsteps above him, or both of them. *Go!* Misha ran, turned the corner, ran, turned the corner, and ran again as he spiraled down the stairs.

Floor 9

The footsteps became louder and faster.

Floor 8

The handrail of the staircase cut Misha's hand; chips of paint fell off of it to reveal the brown core underneath

Floor 7

For a split second, Misha saw a shadow in the corner of his eyes.

Floor 6

Misha saw a shadow in the corner of his eyes.

Floor 5

Misha saw a shadow.

Slowly, Misha turned his neck and looked behind him.

But there was nothing.

Creepy

When Misha got to the bottom of the stairwell, he licked the cut on his hand and swallowed the bitter taste of blood in his mouth, feeling it go down his throat. As he exited his apartment complex, Misha stared at the uniform buildings in front of him, which had tacky agitprop posters adorning them. The posters themselves were bright red; they displayed atoms, Vladimir Lenin, and a seemingly determined looking factory worker. Misha sure as hell knew his mom never looked that determined. Underneath the images of each poster was vague phrasing underneath, promoting worker valor or Communism. Maybe Misha would have appreciated the artistry of the posters if he knew this was the last time he would see them.

Misha looked around the neighborhood. It looked almost liminal, and the roads and the streetlights on them looked to go on forever on the flat terrain. The apartment blocks themselves looked identical, with the only difference being the signs and posters on them. There were barely any cars on the roads, that was to be expected from the time of day it was.

A pink blush spread on Misha's nose and cheeks; he shivered from the freezing air around him, hot air spreading out of his mouth like steam out of a kettle. Why he decided to come here in a shitty T-shirt and jeans was beyond him. He did have a beanie covering his head, so Misha had some warmth on his body. The smell of wet concrete permeated through the air, as almost every building in Pripyat seemed to be made of it. Bright lights radiated out of every building; they hurt Misha's eyes. Pripyat was truly the city of the future.

As Misha walked further on the never ending road, the lights grew dimmer and more sparse, until the road eventually entered a forest. The forest around him was a dark shroud in the night, the only point of light was the moon above him, slightly waning. The trees reached to the sky and curved its arms above the road, trying to shield it from the sparse nightlight above. Misha wondered if the sight was some sort of omen. His inherited premonitionist tendencies were getting the better of him. The air changed to a sharp, crisp scent, with an undertone of pine resin and minerals.

The trees were crooked, branches jaggedly spreading in all sorts of directions. Misha felt uneasy walking through the forest. *The trees, are they another omen? Nah, I'm being paranoid right now.* There were large multicolored cylinders in the distance; Misha saw tall barbed gates around the gray complex of buildings. There were a couple of soldiers guarding the entrance. Squinting his eyes, Misha could faintly see a sign near the soldiers. It read, "V. I. Lenin Nuclear Power Plant" Misha was here. He heard conversation in the distance. *Shit! They really still have guards at this plant in the middle of the night?*

Misha could faintly see an outline of a human and a gun held by its side, illuminated by the light of a cigarette. On a primitive instinct, Misha stumbled into the woods before they could see him.

One of the soldiers pointed his gun before returning it to his side, seeing nothing: “Чё за хуйня? *(What the fuck?)”* he muttered.

Leaves clung to Misha's clothes as his body dragged across the forest floor. He lost his grip on his lunchbox as it flung a couple meters away from him; the friction caused his beanie to pull off his hair. Slowly, Misha raised his head and placed his knees on the floor; red liquid dropped onto a leaf below. *Whatever*.

He was far too used to nosebleeds from the juvenile shenanigans he did outside of school.

The nuclear complex and gates outside towered above Misha, and there was a break from the dark forest around him. The wind rustled as Misha scaled the tree next to him, fingers rubbing against the rough bark. He pivoted and sat on a thick branch, getting a better view of the nuclear plant. The lunchbox was about 8 meters below him, he glanced at it as he wondered what reactor his mother was in. *Hopefully she's having a good shift.*

Curls in Misha’s hair rustled in the wind as a strong breeze gushed past him. *That's the third omen. As Мама said, the third omen is the one that confirms that something strong is coming.* Misha shook his head as he conversed with himself. *Why am I believing in her superstitious*

theories? Misha looked at the forest, trying to find an escape route. *I shouldn't escape, I should go save my Мама if something bad happens*. The guards laughed as if nothing was happening. *Why didn't they know?* Only Misha knew about the omens. He wanted to yell at them, warn them, anything. *But then I'd get arrested, and I'd probably be locked up in a psych ward for being crazy. Something like that.*

Once again, Misha saw a shadow in the corner of his eyes.

Misha's breathing hitched, as he felt a tingling sensation on his shoulder.

He looked back at the guards, checking if they also felt it. But of course, they didn't, as they kept laughing.

They never felt it.

They never knew it.

They never sensed it.

They never saw it.

Only Misha did.

As quickly as Misha had seen it, the shadow had disappeared along with the tingling. *Yo, I'm sure I'm going crazy.*

Maybe this was one of those weird fever dreams he always had. Leaning over to the trunk of the tree, he grabbed a piece of bark and pressed it into his hand, fully expecting it to defy reality. But, the bark only appeared to go slightly into his hand from a dip in the skin, and it was uncomfortable. Misha wasn't dreaming. Which meant he was probably going insane, or

maybe not. Somehow Misha believed in the latter. Misha moved his body weight, trying to shimmy himself off the tree. *I probably should go back to sleep*.

Just as pressed his hand to the bumpy bark on the exterior of the trunk, the low groan of a primordial beast loudly rumbled; birds flew away as Misha quickly got back on the branch. Misha's hair stood upright on the nape of his neck. His premonition was correct. Something is terribly wrong in the reactor, and his mother would be directly affected. Misha's heart went into overdrive; the sweat from his palms seeped into the tree bark as Misha waited for the inevitable to happen. Yet it didn't. Minutes passed as he sat comfortably on the branch. Several scenarios flashed through his mind, the plant exploded, it caught on fire, a giant monster came and killed his mother. Again, and again, and again, they played. Misha wondered if anything was actually going to happen at this rate.

The universe answered his question, as it did.

A beam of blue light shot outside of one of the reactors, piercing the sky above them. It was ethereal, it shouldn't be possible. But it is. The guards to the left looked confused, as several buildings caught on fire. The air smelled heavily of ozone and metal, as Misha felt a small fire cover his body. It was the end of Misha’s world, and his Mama was probably dead.

But Misha couldn't accept that, could he?

Misha leaped onto the fence, barbed wire digging through the flesh of his hands. Misha winced as his hair, neck, torso, clothing, and other limbs got slashed. The fence squeaked as Misha violently shook himself back and forth, pulling the barbs deeper into his skin. Almost every part of Misha's body felt the pain of metal invading flesh. *Мама is suffering, yet I can only think of my own pain. Selfish.*

The shadow was right there wasn't it? Watching him suffer. Misha pulled his body to the right, trying to face the shadow. *It's not there? Why? Why is it not there? That shouldn't be possible.* But for the third time, it disappeared, and Misha felt a flood

of agony fill his arm. One of Misha's arteries burst. Or veins. Misha certainly didn't care about the difference in the situation he was in right now. Red filled everything.

The lunchbox was red.

The fires around him were red.

Misha's flesh was red.

Misha’s shirt was red.

The fence he was caught in was red.

The blood that sprayed out of his arm was red.

The rage that he felt inside him was red.

Tears rolled down Misha's neck, stinging his wounds. *Why am I crying? Men in The Thing didn't cry, no?*

Smoke pooled from the nuclear plant. Screams were heard from the now crumbling buildings. Misha threw up, and the sickly brown color of vomit mixed with the blood on his skin. A smell of iron, sulfur, and pure filth wafted through the air. Misha felt disgusted, degraded, disturbed, even. The guards previously below Misha weren't there anymore. Layers of static and light invaded the Earth as the sky parted. ***It*** came down from the light above the sky, reaching out to Misha. He looked at it in pure, twisted vulnerability.

They never felt ***it.***

They never knew ***it.***

They never sensed ***it.***

They never saw ***it.***

Only Misha did.

Misha woke up, laying on a bare mattress in a basement he had never seen before.

End Notes

the AO3 shutdown got me tweaking, sidenote but the tagging system for this website is so cool I #love

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