

Why We Left

It had been fifty-four years since the Earth ended. It's been fifty-four years since we were forced to escape to planet Mars after exhausting all of Earth's resources. Molly Jones was not born then. Fifteen years ago she had been born. She had a normal childhood like all her other friends. She was at the top of her class and the perfect daughter. Everyone followed the strict rules: no one can have more than one child, your partner will be chosen for you, everyone is assigned their career depending on their school performance, everyone must wear the same age appropriate clothing. These were just the beginning of the rules. Molly had light brown hair with golden highlights that always perfectly fell into curls that she had no control over, and her electric green eyes that elders say them reminded them of the grass that had grown on planet Earth. Molly's parents always told her, "The risk of death is less if you follow the Empire's rules." This was true, although as Molly got older she discovered that nothing is what it seems.

were this turquoise color that she had never seen before. They were magical.

"Is it ok if you show our new student around the school at lunch?" said her teacher, Miss Connor, with a little annoyance in her voice saying it a second time.

"Yes, of course. Miss Conner." Molly replied, feeling embarrassed. Her teacher then gestured to a seat next to Molly and he took it. Miss Connor continued with the lesson on the periodic table of elements. Molly started to take notes in preparation for the test next Monday.

"Hi my name is James, James Miller," the new boy with the blue eyes said trying to not be heard by the teacher.

"That's nice, but as your first piece of advice I would suggest taking notes because there is a test on Monday." She said with attitude in her voice, while still trying to catch up on her notes.

"Oh I see your one of *those* girls." Molly stopped her writing and put down her pencil to stare at him.

"One of what girls?" she responded, sounding offended. He continued a little more cautious than the last time.

While sitting in class pretending to listen to the teacher, Molly wondered what it must have been like to live on earth. She wondered what it would have been like on the dead planet that was discarded like an old newspaper- what the fields of flowers must've felt like or looking up at the sky and seeing pine trees shoot up hundreds of feet in the air. Molly was a girl who followed the rules and never got into trouble. She knew that everyone's interest was piqued at the thought of earth. However, her teacher never talked about what it was like to live on Earth before everything happened. Molly just wanted to know what it was like- the people, art, music, everything. That is what she wanted more than anything in her life.

"Molly is that ok?" asked her teacher, shaking Molly out of her trance. She shook it off and replied.

"What?" Looking up, she noticed that there was a boy standing next to Miss Conner. He had hair so black it was like staring into the night sky- she was almost surprised she didn't see any stars. His eyes

"I am just saying you're one of those girls," he said with emphasis, "that cares way too much about her grades and never has time for anything else and who always plays it safe and never takes a risk." Molly just stared at him for a little while in disbelief in what she had just heard.

"Well maybe if you and any other people that have made snap judgments actually got the time to know me you might think differently!" She then went back to her notes.

"Sorry" he said sarcastically.

She responded with an "Whatever".

"Sorry" he said again, more sincerely.

"It's fine" she said. "I really overreacted. I am just really stressed about Monday. I'm Molly Jones." she said as she smiled at him.

Soon it was lunchtime and they had already exchanged all of their information to each other. She would have never guessed that both his parents worked at the Empire Tower, or that his favorite color is green. By the time the lunch bell rang James was probably the closest friend she had ever had. They sat down on a bench by the classrooms.

you have never done before, and you better show up!" For the rest of lunch they continued becoming better friends and Molly couldn't stop thinking about what will come on Sunday.

Saturday crept by so slowly, but then Sunday finally arrived. Molly woke up thinking of all the potential new experiences that James had promised to bring that day. She went down stairs, still in her pj's, and found her mother making pancakes and her father reading his favorite book for the millionth time. She sat down and started to wolf down the pancakes that her mother had just put in front of her.

"Slow down, princess," commented her father, "we wouldn't want you to choke to death." This caused her to become more cautious of how fast she was consuming her food.

"Sorry father, I am just really excited about meeting up with James today!"

"We know sweetie." chuckled her mother, having listened to Molly talk about nothing else since her first meeting with James. She finished breakfast and went back up to her room and put on her assigned clothes, black leggings and a gray long sleeve shirt. She examined herself in the mirror one last time and looked at the clock which said

"Ok, you know everything about me now." said James, "It's only fair that you tell me something about you. I want to know who Molly Jones is. Where does Molly Jones like to hang out? What is the biggest rule Molly Jones has ever broken?" He said this last part in a very sarcastic voice which caused Molly to spit up some of her water.

"Fine," she said, wiping the water off her face, "My parents are both caregivers for the elders in the Elder Home. My favorite color is blue. I love to read and I want to be to work at the Empire when I get older to learn about the beautiful and perfect Earth. Finally, to answer your last question, I would have to say that I have never broken a rule. His face looked so shocked, and he just sat there staring at her

"What?" Molly said looking confused as to why he was staring at her so oddly.

"I just find that very hard to believe that you have never broken at least one rule, there are millions to choose from." he chuckled a little at his previous statement.

"Sorry if I am not a daring as you." she said.

He suddenly got very serious, "Ok, we are going to hang out Sunday at the fountain in Town Square at 9:00 a.m. to do something

8:55, so she grabbed her green army jacket and her gray bag then headed out the door to meet James at the fountain. Molly had her hand on the door knob when her mother asked her what time she would be back.

Molly didn't recall James telling her how long their little adventure was going to be, "I will be home before dinner," Molly said, hoping that would be all the time it would take.

"You better be." commented her father as she opened the door.

"Remember that rules are there for a reason," said her mother in a very concerned voice, but Molly was already out the door.

"Are you ready to go?" He asked as her pointed towards the exit of the park.

"Of course." They both started walking to the end of the park.

"So by any chance can you tell me where we are going?" She asked.

He laughed "Nope".

It was 10:00 am when they finally reached their destination. Half way through the walk she realized where the where going. She was not surprised to look up at the formidable Empire Tower. The only thing that still remained a mystery was why they were here. James brought her to a door hidden behind some moss growing on the side of the building. It lead them to an abandoned hallway inside the Empire Tower.

“Wow!” Molly said with a little anxiety in her voice.

James reassured her, “Don’t worry, I have been in this hallway a million times and have never gotten caught before.” Hearing this from him made her feel a little better. Molly followed James as they continued down the hallway in silence making sure that no one could hear them. They entered a room that she had never seen during her second grade tour of the Empire Tower.

“What is this room?” Molly asked as she look around, astonished at all the files that were everywhere.

James answered, “This, my dear Molly, is the room of Earth. It contains every single piece of information from the beginning to the end.”

"Oh, and it is completely illegal to be in here," he added.

"Oh my gosh, so this is what you meant by 'we will do something I have never done before'! I am torn whether I should be completely terrified or excited." responded Molly.

"Thank you!" She then hugged James in gratitude.

"Don't thank me too much we only have an hour to read."

"Then let's get started!" Molly said with enthusiasm.

After an hour had passed all she had found out was about global warming that tore the earth's atmosphere apart, the terrible fires in California that had started from downed electrical lines, and all the natural disasters like the 1906 earthquake and the tsunamis that hit Florida and Puerto Rico. With every page her faith in humanity started to fade away. By the end she realized that she was wrong about everything. The Earth she had always thought she would want to be part of suddenly felt so different. The only emotion she could think of was sadness.

"We have to go!" shouted James.

"Not yet, I need to finish these files!" Molly said.

"No, we need to go they are coming!" James shouted again but it was too late. The doors flew open to reveal James' parents.

James' parents started firing their guns before they had identified who was standing in the room. Bullets continued to fly, and six bullets had flown over their heads before the seventh hit Molly in the shoulder. Her cry of pain was the sound that helped his father finally identify that these intruders were young kids, and that one of them was his son. Both parents lowered their guns and stopped, and then James ran over to the collapsed and crying Molly on the ground and gathered her in his arms.

"Molly, I am so sorry that I ever brought you here I should have just. . ." he was hushed by Molly and she said, "All I want you to do is promise me one thing?"

"Anything!" he replied. Molly struggled to continue.

"Promise me that you will never let anything that happen to Mars like what happened to Earth. Never let anyone harm our planet and if

someone tries, do whatever you can to stop it because we don't have another planet."

"Of course!" said a scared and shaking James who was on the verge of crying.

"I love you," he said "The moment I met you I knew you were the one that I loved." Molly stared up into James' eyes,

"I love you too. . ." but those were the last words that Molly ever spoke because at that moment, her life became nonexistent and was just waiting for James to join her again in heaven.