



# LIVING IN THE NUT

Story Two

Dark Side of the Moon

Despair and hope can come in equal measure when the world you know comes to an end

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The satellite feed keeps going in and out. About a month ago in our review of the dead earth, a signal came through. Someone out there was still alive. At first, it was a simple pre-recorded audio message. Almost like someone was broadcasting help to the stars. Drake was on duty when the message came in, and he responded with a call out saying who we were but not where we are. He also recorded the message, and it was a good thing because as soon as he spoke the message stopped. Of all the jobs we have people do I would have said this was one of the lowest in priorities, but the Fine Brothers wanted this job, and they own the nut. Not knowing how people would react we tried to keep it a secret so by the end of the day everyone knew. A day later and there were hundreds of volunteers, but the three people that were already doing the job did it for the last two years so it wouldn't be right to take them off now.

A month went by with nothing, then a voice, *“hello... .. Is there anybody out there?”* A woman named Tracy was on the job. With permission of the brothers, she was broadcasting the static channel openly to the Nut until the voice asked its question. The voice sounded feminine, but as a man with a light voice, I know better than to judge. Tracy said back to the voice, *“hello out there.”* A few moments of silence then another older voice asked, *“who is this are you real?”* Tracy replied, *“we are the Nut, and we are as real as real can be.”* After some more silence the voice came back saying, *“oh my god we aren't alone.”* She said her and a few others were in the Granite Mountain Records Vault in Utah, but it might as well be on the dark side of the moon. There were no plans for going out at long distances. We had no way to get the nearly eight-hundred miles to where they are, and they are in trouble. The older voice said her name was Margaret and all together they had forty people living inside a records vault and were running out of food with no way to grow more. The facility was designed to safeguard the seeds, records, and teachings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints also known as the Mormons. It was a miracle they found enough supplies to live for so long.

Two years ago, Margaret and a group of people were taking a tour of the vault after donating a sizable sum to its care and maintenance when the dark matter hit Europe. A survivalist group nearby had a plan to take the vault over just in case something just like this happened, so they had a truck with enough survival food for sixty people for one year in a semi

waiting. They were able to ration out the freeze-dried food making it last the two years, but they were now running out, and no one knew what they were going to do. A young girl named Addie had found a shortwave radio spending her days playing around with it when she contacted the nut. A call went out over the nut's version of Twitter known as the Nuttery demanding we act to rescue them, but another thread talked about letting them die. Any trip that far away would be like the moon trips back in the late 1960s but with technology from the stone age. But the biggest problem was the radiation that boiled to death the last person to step outside in nine minutes. Margaret said they had enough food to last maybe a month even with drastic rationing. The Brothers said they would work on the way to get to them calling for every department head to a meeting in the penthouse. While I was a department head, I was left out. No one wanted the no guy in the meeting.

The signal faded as a storm moved overhead and life returned to normal in the nut. People ran in the other direction when they saw me and raved about my writing on the Nuttery. This was about the time when the one-hundredth baby was born in the nut. Going back to the beginning the youngest person to enter the Nut when the world ended was four. Her name was Trinity. Six months later, more than a few women were pregnant. Long times with little to do in cramped quarters created a moment where people came together for comfort. One of the brothers called it despair sex. The number of births couldn't make up for all the deaths, but it could eventually keep humanity going. The first baby was born in section five, level five and was named Hope. A month later Hope was killed by her mother Charity committing murder-suicide not seeing a future for Hope. During the riots in the first year, ten of the fifteen children including little Trinity were accidentally killed.

Two days went by without a word until the Brothers came up with a plan that had a slight chance to work but would cost the lives of the team that would go. Among the many ways people came to the nut, there was a jet. In radiation suits, the team could load food and fly to the Granite Mountain Records Vault. The suit didn't work the last time someone stepped out. The pilot would have to walk from the small door down to the parking deck, prep the plane and fly seven-hundred miles. They would also have to carry enough food for forty people to justify their

sacrifice. Gregg Fine said how there was going to be a door on the base of the control room that while never built was ruffed in with removable steel and led plates. Building out a door would not only give us access to the plane but access to the parking lot which might not be as radioactive. This would also give us access to the door sensors and just maybe replacing them after they redlined back two years ago and never dropped. To test the outside, we built a drone.

The drone was named Hope by the people that built it and insisted the video footage would be available across the net. Hope was built with ten sensors to test for radiation, oxygen, pollutants and anything unknown. I wanted to ask how do you test for the unknown, but I figured they were just spinning up hype. While they tested the drone, the door was built. The plan was to build the door in place just outside of the hole and slowly work it into place while trying to keep the exotic radiation out. A ten-foot section would be fitted with worker drones inside removing and cleaning the wall segments until the steel and led sleeve would be in the hole creating a door to the parking lot. Two days later and the door was open into a vault with an awful discovery.

Sometime during the final moments before the door closed a couple got trapped in a vault not knowing they would have no way to escape on their own. From what we could tell they suffocated long before dying from something else but well dead is dead. Their bodies were almost mummified from the lack of oxygen and dry air. We did what we could for them while preparing to send Hope out to see what's left. Yes, I called the stupid drone Hope. Using the passcode, we were able to open the outside door and let the drone out. The deck was dark but with little of the deadly radiation levels seen outside. All the outside seals held leaving at least the bottom level safe. The Jet was on the ground level in a special hanger. We scanned and searched each level using Hope until we could confirm it was clear and ready. After the plan was sent, we would close off the top layer and open the main door giving us more room to spread.

Three people volunteered to go even though they wouldn't survive. The plane could fly there, and they could fly in the special radiation suits but so much time out in the unknown radiation would eventually kill them. We packed the plane with as many supplies as we could

including a kit that would help them grow their own food. Another drone was sent out the smaller door to check if the strip was clear. Luckily, we didn't name this drone because it made it just long enough to check the strip before it went down. The plane would take off just as soon as the doors opened. We knew everything was riding with this flight including our hopes and the lives of those people so very far away. About a month from the first contact we closed off the upper floor then the two doors and let the plane fly. The outside doors opened. The pilot a man named Tyson Deacon said the sky was a strange red with pink clouds. The plane's engines revved up, and the plane moved about twenty feet before it slowed down. Communications from inside the plane died.

A strange thumping sound came from a distance then the plane revved up again and exploded just inside the door. The full tanks turned the plane into a massive bomb smashing down into the guarded lower level exposing it all to the exotic radiation and in an ironic turn, smashing the drone named Hope. Before the radiation took out the cameras, we could see the roof of the parking deck burning then collapse. The fire found long dead cars turning them into raging explosion machines destroying everything near them until nothing was salvageable. In a few minutes, we watched a month's work die along with any hope of helping those people all those miles away.

We called out to Granite Mountain, but at first, no one answered. This went on for two days until a woman called out, *"hello..... Please for the love of God can anyone help us?"* speaking to her we learned about their little group. Her name was Nancy, and she was Addie's mother. They were on a private tour of the vault when the end came. A group of men showed up with supplies and guns taking over Granite Mountain killing all the members of the church including her husband. She and her three children lived in a perpetual state of fear from these men. She said, *"about a month into it one of them came into our room and told me he was my new husband, and I was his property. He sent my son to work for the others while he had his way with me in front of my girls. I later found him touching Addie. I told him if he ever wanted me again, he would have to stop, but he beat me."* Their only hope was us, and we couldn't help.

A few days later the last call came from the Mountain. We were told the survivalist group took a vote and decided to eat the children starting with her daughter the six-years-old Britney. She. Nancy described how four men came into her room. One man held her down while another held Addie. The other two took hold of Britney ripping her dress off. A man named Jeb pulled out a cattle bolt stunner and put it to her head saying, *“I done saw this on a movie once.”* Addie turned her head, but the man holding her told her he would cut her eyelids off if she didn’t watch so they had to watch them kill Britney then slice her throat and field dress her body. She said, *“the man holding Addie put his hand down between her legs and said he would eat her raw if he could.”* There was a crashing sound then a voice came over the radio. A male voice saying, *“you think you so special. We are coming for you, and when we get there, we will eat you all.”*

I remember going to Gregg Fine and trying to get another trip authorized, but I think what I really wanted was for him to say no because it would mean I tried without having to do anything. I remember saying how it wasn’t the dark side of the moon. This represented hope and hope is all that we need, all that is now, all that is good and everything under the sun. We can’t let our fear eclipse our hope. We sent people to the moon using tin cans and paperclips how can we let a little fear stop us from going to the dark side of the moon. Gregg said, *“There is no dark side of the moon, in fact, it’s all dark.”*