

**Archives: Part I**  
**by Mohammad Khan**

Dear Quinn,

Many thanks for your letter about Orion.

We have kept our position at Fort O'Neil as instructed as we monitor the base intently from the forest. Not much activity on these parts, everything is dead. The grounds ahead and behind us lie gray and ruined from the fighting before. I haven't seen anything from the base yet but the stories the others tell terrify me.

It's been a silent few days. When it rains, the water mixes with the soot filling the mud and turning into a black goo.

To cut down on resources, we began rationing a quarter piece of bread each and a small can of water. Low on food, water, gasoline, even the rats have left us to die.

Makennen says we're almost ready to take on the base about 3 miles away. I won't be able to write again until afterwards.

I still talk with Old Henry and Henry still speaks of the days when there were people everywhere, free to wander, free to do anything. The others leave him alone to his archaic thoughts but I indulge him. Least I could do, he's the only one left who was there before it happened. The scorched outlines in the ground were those unlucky enough to be near ground zero. And the soot flying through the air are those from the incinerators. I can't imagine the freedom he saw. I could lie in my daydream forever until the stench of burning flesh reaches my nose and the smog of the incinerator from the base fills the sky.

Once, when Makennen and I stood post, knee deep in mud, keeping watch, I could hear from the base the hollow cheers mixed with the scream as people entered the incinerator. Do you think they realize their loss in humanity? How could they do this to each other?

The wind blows the soot off the scorched earth. Sometimes I wonder if we'll ever see the green patches Henry's seen. I still keep our photo with me at all times, it's the only proof that I was here. I hope my legacy doesn't become soot flying in the wind.

I haven't seen the sky in months. I switch to the South posts near Fort Aires in a few days after we take the base. I can't wait for the sunshine again.

Take Care,  
Alonso

**Archives: Part II**  
**by Mohammad Khan**

Dear Alonso,

Spectacular to hear that you are making the best of murky conditions. I do hope you stay well in days leading up to your attack on the base. We need food and water, and rid those scum from earth. .

I apologize, but haven't seen Maria or anyone from your family since I traveled here a few days ago. I haven't been able to obtain any news anymore.

New arrivals are always surprised by the collaboration they see here. No fear and only love. We've regained our humanity here.

There's not much sunshine here either. We get rations and other news distributed to us each by messengers on horseback. Can't have too much in case we're discovered and have to move again. We each get a small room with a dirty cot and a shelf for books. The rotting wooden floors reek of mold and the rats scurry underneath.

My neighbor Harold, a scrawny, aging man, with weary eyes, was separated from his family. He's originally from a small camp and had to escape once it was invaded by the cannibals. A swarm had invaded and quickly captured everyone including his family and took them to their base. Harold was able to hide and run. He said it was like escaping a death camp.

I fear the horrors that await you as you take their base.

Do write back as soon as you can. I can't bear to lose everyone.

Your friend,

Quinn



**Archives: Part III**  
**by Mohammad Khan**

Alonso,

Are you alright? I did not receive news of your attack on the base. I hope you have been receiving mine. A few of the people who've been at the Orion for years are getting anxious from the tremors. Another earthquake or explosion, no one knows.

Harold died of wounds from the fissures. The earth tears at the seams and rumbles constantly. I worry it's a premonition of darker days to come.

There are rumors of plants growing again and life returning, but the leaders of Orion won't say. They urge us to stay within the compound and not to break through the walls, but their plea falls on deaf ears. No one here knows what's going on.

Is it true? Is there growth out there?

The committee told us to wait for a few days for an event they call the resurgence of life. Some say it's their final plan to bring back humanity, others say it's nothing but smokescreens and they want to keep us calm before it all ends.

I'll keep searching for Maria and the rest of them no matter what. You have my word.

I hope to hear from you again soon, my friend,

Quinn



**Archives: Part IV**  
**by Mohammad Khan**

Quinn,

It's over.

Makennen and I and others took the base, but they were prepared. The cannibals captured everyone, but I was able to escape. The shrieks of the men dampened into the dead silence of the world. I don't think we're winning this war. Not this time.

I escaped into a ditch in the forest some miles away and now lie dying in the muck along with the bones of the lucky ones who died away. The stench of burning flesh looms in the air like a predator hunting for prey.

I'll keep this letter tied to my chest for anyone who finds my body and they'll send it to you.

Never seen it before, but it is quite beautiful here among the grayness. I wonder who was here and left their shadow ingrained in the earth as their only proof of existence. The soot circles me like vultures waiting for the animal to die.

Find hope in these last moments, it's all we have left.

Alonso

