

First Name Hollingsworth
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code
Phone Number
Email

About Number words

WHERE THERE'S SMOKE

By Sundance Hollingsworth

The luggage bumped against the carpet and fell against the wall. He'd managed the essentials—basic tech and clothing—but the distribution of weight in the plump bag was uneven. He hadn't had much time. The fire marshal let him in for only a moment, long enough to grab these few items.

He sniffed his jacket. He smelled like smoke, his baggage smelled like smoke, his hair smelled like smoke, all of his clothes smelled like smoke, and soon enough the hotel suite would smell like smoke. He closed the heavy door and bolted it, crossed to the sleeper couch and sat. He'd only ever stayed in motels so this was definitely an upgrade. The unit had a small living room and kitchen that was separated from the bathroom and bedroom. The layout reminded him of a U-turn and under different circumstances he would have to admit it was nice but he wasn't here by choice.

The fire had started on the floor level apartment, got into the walls. It had taken around forty-five minutes for the firefighters to put it out and by that time all of the first floor and second floor had been rendered completely uninhabitable. It was an amount of damage that was almost unimaginable and if he hadn't seen it for himself he'd think it was a set for an apocalyptic movie. His own apartment had suffered enough smoke damage to darken the walls and nearly everything had been completely soaked in an effort to contain the fire to the first two floors.

He buried his head in his hands and wept.

The groceries were light, enough for a meal or two, and he unloaded them into the fridge. He placed the bananas and three apples on the countertop and uncorked the bottle of wine. He tended to be a beer drinker but insurance was footing the bill on this one so he decided to treat

himself. That and a bottle of wine felt more pleasant than a six pack. He grabbed an apple, poured a glass, and settled into the couch to watch mindless television.