**Novel**

Our world is at an end. Of that there is no doubt. The land is bare and the cities are ash. What is left of us slowly diminishes and hope fades with each passing day. Not hope for life, for that is long dissipated, but hope for some final act of redemption, some profound atonement for our unforgivable sins.

Slowly but surely, extinction approaches. And it’s not just the fallout that’s killing us, but the inescapable depression that saps our spirit and destroys our will. The endless plume of dust that eclipses sun and darkens the sky only serves as a constant reminder of our eternal failure.

Many have already chosen the easy way - a pull of the trigger or a step into one of the many raging fires and they embrace the fate which the rest of us will inevitably meet in months. Perhaps it was a mistake to open the bunkers so early; perhaps it wasn’t. Certainly, no one complained that their expected lifespan had decreased by seventy days. Life does not seem so precious as it nears its finality.