Nick Altier

**Twine 3**

(font: "water")[(text-size: 2)[''One More Twist'']] //By Nick Altier// <div id="trigger">[[Begin|Start]]</div> <!-- Script to set up water header --> (set: num-type $waterLevel to 0)''Rodney Sheridan:'' Rodney, or Rod, is a post-apocalyptic scavenger that explores the ruins of a bombed out Chicago to stay alive. Since he was left to live alone at age 15, Rod had worked as a mechanic's apprentice until the bombs fell a few weeks before his 23rd birthday. Rod acclimated quickly to his new life in the wasteland, having learned to take care of himself since he was young. Additionally, his technical skills proved valuable in finding and securing resources to keep himself alive. After a year and a half in the scavenger lifestyle, Rod has secured sustainable ways to remain fed and warm. His looted reserves of clean water run low and he needs to secure his last required resource to [[survive|Walking to Plant]].After seeing that there are no patrols guarding this section of the fence, [[Rod decides to cut through the fence|Cut Through]] [[Rod prepares to climb the fence|Climb It]]Rod pulls some cutters out of his bag and quickly cuts a gap in the fence big enough to slip through but small enough to not be noticeable in the darkness of the night. He slides through the gap and stalks towards a [[large building|At The Door]] next to a large water vat.Rod tosses his bag over the fence and takes a few steps away. He springs forward a few steps before bounding up the fence, swinging his legs up and over, and dropping down onto the other side. He picks up his bag and stalks towards a [[large building|At The Door]] next to a large water vat.Rod walks up to a door tagged with a messy “PCG”. He tries twisting the doorknob and to his surprise, the door opens right up. “Some secure project,” he mutters. He walks into the vast room in front of him. The large lights dangling from the ceiling dimly illuminate the catwalks and machinery of the plant floor. He spots a wall lined with pipes and valves across the room and hugs the wall to [[cross towards his target|The Pipes]]. All of the pipes have been labeled with the districts that they send water to. All but the Pullman neighborhood pipes had been disconnected. After a quick scan of the remaining pipes, Rod finds the label for his neighborhood and approaches the pipes. He drops his tool bag beside him and rummages around for the necessary equipment. After finding everything he needs, it only takes a few minutes to repair the pipes to a state that he can connect them to the primary water supply. [[Rod takes a moment to wipe his brow, looking at the glint of his pistol at the top of his tool bag|Surprise]]As Rod lifts his wrench to activate the pipes' valve, he hears light footsteps come from the catwalk behind him. He shoves his lamp in his bag and sits still, hoping to remain unoticed. A minute passes, the only sound in the room coming from the water bouncing off the vat walls and the squeaks of a few swinging lights. Suddenly, a click is followed by a beam of light that shines on the wall in front of him. "Drop the wrench." [["Shit..."|What Are You Doing]]"I said drop it," shouts the voice from the catwalk. Rod balances the wrench on the valve bolt and takes his hand off it. He slowly turns towards the light source and squints at the source of the light, a flashlight fixed to a rifle. [["Cali, I swear this is a misunderstanding."|Misunderstanding]].''Cali Pullman:'' Cali is the youngest of the four Pullman siblings, the leaders of the "Palace Car Gang". Of little importance to the world before the bombs fell, the Pullman siblings quickly rose to provide the brutal leadership that some wastelanders needed after the world went to hell. While her two eldest sisters run the gang from the old Pullman administrative buildings, Cali and her brother, George, were sent to oversee the water purification project at the old water reclamation plant. While Cali is the youngest of her family, she is the smartest and most effective of the bunch. Her older siblings sit content in their power and status while Cali actively pushes for the expansion of their influence and strength in the area. She may not have the respect she deserves, but she knows that without her, the Palace Car Gang would stagnate and [[fall|What Are You Doing]]."Is it now? Please enlighten me," Cali said. "I'm here doing maintenence, George hired me three weeks ago to help with the purification project," Rod said, a drop of sweat running down his forehead. [[Rod takes a small step backwards towards the pipe behind him, his wrench on the valve is now in reach|Bullshit]]"If I recall, George //tried// to hire you," Cali calls out, "And you said, oh what was it, 'Kindly fuck off'?" "Not sure that rings a bell..." Rod starts. "Cut the crap, Sheridan," Cali interrupts, "Now tell me what you're doing here." [[Rod takes a deep breath and explains what he is there for.|The Thing Is]] (text-colour:#307ffd)[[[Rod twists the wrench behind him to reconnect his water supply.|Shootout]]]"I need water, that's what," Rod said. "You seem to have the only supply in the area, or so I hear." "So you're a scavenger and a thief now," Cali says. "I'm surviving," Rod snaps. "Something that isn't a problem for us as of late," Cali said smugly. [[Rod calls back to Cali...|Easy For You]] (text-colour:#307ffd)[[[Rod twists the wrench behind him to reconnect his water supply.|Shootout]]]The pipes behind Rod rattle as water surges through them. While Cali is initially stunned by the sound, Rod dives for the pistol in his bag. He fires three shots at Cali, slings his bag over his shoulder and sprints for the door. Bullets from Cali's rifle wizz by, forcing Rod to take cover behind a nearby outcropping. Rod and Cali exchange shots, alerting nearby gangers of Rod's intrusion. As backup approaches, Rod fires a few more shots at the catwalk, the final two catching Cali in the shoulder and stomach. [[Hearing her gun fall to the floor, Rod dashes for the exit.|Escape?]] <audio src='WaterRushing.mp3' autoplay> <audio src='ValveTwist.mp3' autoplay>Upon reaching the door, the booming voice of George Pullman echoes behind Rod. "Cali? Cali! (text-style: 'rumble')[I'll kill you for this!]" George booms, "The Pullmans don't forgive and never fucking forget! We know where you live, boy, there's nowhere to run!" George's words chase Rod out of the building. His heartbeat overpower all sounds following the slam of the door behind him. He runs. Past the fence. Through the streets. [[Back to his home|Nowhere to Run]].Rod slams his door and chucks his bag into the corner of the entryway. After finally stopping to catch his breath, he walks towards his kitchen. He picks up an empty plastic water bottle and turns on his faucet. Clean water fills the bottle. He sets it on the table next to him. The water ripples as [[two heavy knocks fall on his door...|End1]] <!--=><= (after: 1.5s)[=\_\_\_\_\_ (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_]|(text-color:#21211F)[\_\_\_\_]|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_]|-->=><= <img src="FullBottle.png" width="63" height="200" style="vertical-align:middle"> <img src="FullBottle.png" width="63" height="200" style="vertical-align:middle"> <img src="FullBottle.png" width="63" height="200" style="vertical-align:middle"> <img src="FullBottle.png" width="63" height="200" style="vertical-align:middle"> <img src="FullBottle.png" width="63" height="200" style="vertical-align:middle"> [[End|Title]]"I can't imagine it would be, playing Godfather and all." "And what is wrong with that? Without our little gang there would be none for you to steal. And we will keep thousands alive, more than you and your backyard garden ever could," Cali states. "And thousands under your 'protection' I know," Rod said, "Lots of subjects forever grateful to the mighty Pullmans." "Rod, do you remember the months before my family took control of the neighborhood?" Cali asks. [[Rod thinks back to the time right after the bombs fell|Order]] (text-colour:#307ffd)[[[Rod twists the wrench behind him to reconnect his water supply.|Shootout]]]"Chaos," Rod said. "That's right," Cali says, "people needed purpose and we gave it. Looters organized into scavenging parties. Private caches turned to ration depots..." "And four wannabe aldermen into district dictators," Rod said. "Not everyone is the noble self made man you are, Rodney. Some people have the common sense to work to better the world." [["And some have the sense to stay in their little part of it."|The Self]] [["And what does that better world look like?|The Masses]] (text-colour:#307ffd)[[[Rod twists the wrench behind him to reconnect his water supply.|Shootout]]]"How long do you think your safe haven can really last?" Cali asks. "With this water, I think I'll be set for a few months, maybe a year or two, without a need for anything major. More than I could say for your gang if you ever took a week off," Rod said. "We control the most land in the area.." "And that all rests on what you can offer your gangers next. And I don't mean your siblings, I mean you Cali. I get why Pullman Park isn't doing as well as it was a few weeks ago, you've been working here. The caches are dwindling and everything in the area is picked over. Your little peace is falling apart." "My sisters have it handled." "They haven't done anything but sit there since you left," Rod declares, [["Face it...|You Are It]]"It looks like people, I guess," Cali answers, "And they are fed, clothed, healthy." "That is a lot to ask for," Rod said. "I know that. But it is impossible to ask for without my family and the gang," Cali responds, "You see them as dictators but without strength we can't pull together the resources needed to actually improve things. It is a cruel world, but I plan to make it a better one." [["So where does that put me and my water?" Rod asks|In Line]] (text-colour:#307ffd)[[[Rod twists the wrench behind him to reconnect his water supply.|Go]]]"You're the order and power that you want, not the whole family." Cali pauses for a moment. [["Why do you stay?" Rod asks|Why]] (text-colour:#307ffd)[[[Rod twists the wrench behind him to reconnect his water supply.|Go]]]"Because they need me. We're family, we take care of each other," Cali stutters. "Yet here you are, stuck managing the most important project in the city with no assistance but your brute of a brother that, let me guess, hasn't done any getting the plant up and running besides //hiring// new workers." "And I shouldn't have done my job becuase of that? You wouldn't have water either if I didn't, Rod." "I'd be in better straights if you didn't do it only for your family." [[Rod waits for Cali to speak.|Leave Them]] (text-colour:#307ffd)[[[Rod twists the wrench behind him to reconnect his water supply.|Go]]]Rod leans for his pistol as the sounds of rushing water catch Cali off guard. Before he grabs the handle he hears, "Just go," from Cali. "I didn't see you, alright?" she continues. "You, yeah ok. Thank you," Rod said. Rod quickly tosses his things into his bag and moves towards the exit. Upon reaching the door, he looks back and sees Cali standing in the same spot as before. Her shoulders rise and fall as she takes a deep breath then she resumes he patrol of the room with a perfectly feigned ignorance of the new flow of water. [[Rod opens the door and exits the building|Going Home]] <audio src='WaterRushing.mp3' autoplay> <audio src='ValveTwist.mp3' autoplay>qRod walks back the way he came, again finding no guards to hinder his progress. He treks through the streets until returning to his home. He enters the doorway and places his tool bag on the bench in his entryway. He makes his way into the kitchen and picks up an empty plastic water bottle. [[Rod turns on the faucet|Safe]]Clean water flows into the bottle. "What is her game?" Rod thinks to himself. He drinks his water, unsure of what to do next with his [[success|End2]]. <!--=><= (after: 1.5s)[=\_\_\_\_\_ (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]| (after: time+350ms)[=|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_]|(text-color:#21211F)[\_\_\_\_]|(bg:#307ffd)[\_\_]|-->=><= <img src="FullBottle.png" width="63" height="200" style="vertical-align:middle"> <img src="FullBottle.png" width="63" height="200" style="vertical-align:middle"> <img src="FullBottle.png" width="63" height="200" style="vertical-align:middle"> <img src="FullBottle.png" width="63" height="200" style="vertical-align:middle"> <img src="FullBottle.png" width="63" height="200" style="vertical-align:middle"> [[End|Title]]"I don't know what I would do if I left," Cali says. "You'd survive, like we all do," Rod answers, "better than we all do." "With what? I made sure everything in the area belonged to the Palace Car Gang." "Not everything, I have a good place built up despite your best efforts." "And you would be willing to give up your precious independence if I let you take that water and went with you?" [["I'd be willing to share it"|Together]] (text-colour:#307ffd)[[[Rod twists the wrench behind him to reconnect his water supply.|Go]]] "I'll consider it, but for now, get your water and get out. We never saw each other." "Cali, thank you." "You were never here so don't thank me." Rod turns around and grabs the handle of his wrench. (text-colour:#307ffd)[[[Rod twists the wrench and lets out a sigh of relief as he hears the water rush through the pipes.|Walking Back]]]Rod collects his things as Cali's footsteps ring out as she walks away. He walks out the door and escapes the premises unhindered by any other gangers. After walking a few blocks, he makes it home. He enters the doorway and places his tool bag on the bench in his entryway. He makes his way into the kitchen and picks up an empty plastic water bottle. [[Rod turns on the faucet|A Visitor]] <audio src='WaterRushing.mp3' autoplay> <audio src='ValveTwist.mp3' autoplay>A stream of clean, albeit murky, water fills the bottle. Rod takes a sip and takes a moment to reflect on his success. He is shaken from his thoughts by three knocks on his door. He smiles and grabs a second water bottle to fill before he goes to [[answer the door.|End4]] <!--=><= |=== (after: 1.5s)[=\_\_\_\_\_ (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_|(text-color:#21211F)[\_\_\_\_]|\_\_| ===| (after: 1.5s)[=\_\_\_\_\_ (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_|(text-color:#21211F)[\_\_\_\_]|\_\_|-->=><= <img src="FullBottle.png" width="126" height="400" style="vertical-align:middle">(text-color:#21211F)[\_\_\_\_\_\_]<img src="FullBottle.png" width="126" height="400" style="vertical-align:middle"> [[End|Title]]"Well that depends, if you'd be willing to accept our job offer, you would be first in line." "And if I refuse again?" "Then you'll wait in line like the rest." [[Rod pauses for a moment.|What About]] (text-colour:#307ffd)[[[Rod twists the wrench behind him to reconnect his water supply.|Go]]]"Wonderful, but I'm going to need to see you step away from that valve." Rod looks back at his wrench on the valve and takes three big steps forward. "Alright, I'm coming down, stay right there" Cali said. Rod watches as Cali slings her rifle over her shoulder and climbs down from the catwalk. She approaches Rod and extends her hand. Rod extends his and Cali meets it with a strong shake. "Welcome to the family then, Mr. Sheridan." "Let's hope I don't regret this," Rod mumbles. [[Rod turns to collect his tools. He pulls his wrench off the valve.|Clocking Out]]Rod slings his bag over his shoulder and strolls out of the building. He exits the same hidden way he entered, still unsure about how safe walking out the front gate would be. After a peaceful walk back home, he goes inside and tosses his tools to the side. [[Rod walks into his living room and sits on the couch.|Water?]]From the couch, Rob spots an empty water bottle on the table in the kitchen. He stands up and walks over to the bottle. He then walks into his kitchen and places the bottle underneath the faucet. [[Rob turns the faucet handle...|End3]] =><= (after: 1.5s)[=\_\_\_\_\_ (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_| (after: time+350ms)[=|\_\_|(text-color:#21211F)[\_\_\_\_]|\_\_|=><= <img src="EmptyBottle.png" width="63" height="200" style="vertical-align:middle"> [[End|Title]] Rod walks down a crumbling street as the last beams of light fade below the horizon. A large plot of vats and warehouse type buildings stand before him. He has made it to the water reclamation plant. He approaches a chain link fence then stops and drops his toolbag beside him. [[Rod scans the fence|Fence]]''Water'' After the bombs fell, clean drinking water became an increasingly rare resource. The plentiful fresh water from Lake Michigan and the local river systems became dangerously irradiated. The safest water supplies in the city came from isolated supplies away from ground zero and packaged water. After a little over a year, those supplies are running out and unless a supply of safe water can be found, everyone in the area will slowly [[die out|The Thing Is]]."Would it just be me that gets moved up?" Rod asks. "Doesn't have to be, I run the plant after all," Cali says. "My neighbors, the couple next to me and the kids down the block, could you guarantee them water too?" "I think I can swing that, I take it you're in?" [[For now at least"|Hired]]Rodney Sheridan steps through a mostly picked over convinience mart. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a key. He steps over a door marked "Employees Only" that lies off its hinges on the ground. He reaches a large metal door in the back room that leads to the walk-in freezer. The freezer has been inactive for months but the lock is as strong as ever. [[Rod unlocks the freezer door|In The Freezer]]In the freezer, Rod spots a week's worth of canned food and two large bottles of water. He collects the supplies and puts them in his empty toolbag.(set:$waterLevel to 2) He sighs as he looks at the completely empty shelves in the room. [[Rod walks out of the freezer and locks it again|Screech]](text-style:"shudder")[[[//Screech//|SLAM]]] [[//SLAM//|Someone is Here]]Rod freezes for a moment after hearing a car pull up and doors slam. The car is parked out front. He spots a counter he can hide under. He also could slip out the back door and hopefully remain unseen as he escapes. [[Rod hides under the counter|Hidden?]] [[Rod exits through the back door|Out Back]]Rod closes the cabinet door under the counter enough to hide himself but not too much that he can't get a small view of the back room by the freezer. He sees George Pullman walk into the back room from the storefront. Cali Pullman then enters through the back door to meet him. "This is the door," Cali said. "Maybe I shouldn't have told Jack to wait in the car. I'll go get him and an extra crowbar," George announced. Cali stays as George walks back to the car. Rod shifts his weight in his hiding spot and a can in his bag clanks on the ground. [[Rod holds his breath|Hey Rod]]Rod slips out the back door undetected by the car's passengers walking in through the front. He walks towards the break in the grarled bushes at the back of the lot. "Hey, Rod." [[He turns to looks at the source of the voice|Hey Cali]]"Hey, Cali," Rod said. "That looks like a pretty full bag you have there," Cali said. "I wouldn't say that, hardly enough to share in my opinion." [[Rod slowly walks towards Cali|Good Luck]]"Not particularly. Hope you find something good in the freezer." Rod walks towards the bushes as Cali goes inside the mart. George and his lackey stand in front the freezer door. It hangs open and bits of metal sprinkle the ground around it. [[Cali stares into the empty freezer|A Successful Trip]]Rod places some cans of food into his a paper bag as he approaches the dilapidated building he calls home. He stops two doors before his building. He knocks on the door. [[Rod waits to hand the bag to his neighbors|Hey Neighbor]] [[Rod drops the bag at the door and walks home|Time to Sleep]]Cali walks towards the counter after hearing the can. She grabs the ajar cabinet door and swings it open. "Hey, Rod." "Hi, Cali," Rod grunted out as he slides out of his hiding spot. "And here I thought the the easy pickings in here were already picked. Yet that's a pretty good haul you have there," Cali said. "I wouldn't it's a 'good haul', hardly enough to share in my opinion." "Do tell where you scraped up enough to fill the bag." [[Rod tosses a can of food from his bag to Cali|I'll Be Going]]"I think that'll remain a mystery for now," Rod said. "For now," Cali says back. Rod walks out the back door and towards a break in the grarled bushes at the back of the lot. George returns from the car with Jack and three crowbars. The two get to work hacking at and prying open the door. One rain of metal later and the heavy door creaks open. [[Cali and George stare into an empty freezer|A Successful Trip]]Rod walks into his house and begins emptying his haul into the kitchen cabinets. Everything has been put away besides the two water bottles. Rod's dry mouth jumps to the forefront of his mind. He could get into some of his water before going to sleep. [[Rod decides to go to sleep thirsty|Waking Up]] [[Rod drinks one of his water bottles and goes to sleep(set:$waterLevel to $waterLevel-1)|Waking Up]]''\*KNOCK\* \*KNOCK\* \*KNOCK\*'' [[Rod wakes up to the knocks on his door|Go Downstairs]]Rod grabs his pistol from his bedside table and walks downstairs. He makes his way to the door and presses an eye to the peephole. He spots George Pullman with Jack and another Palace Car Gang member standing on his steps. Rod tucks his gun into the back of his waistband. [[Rod opens his front door|There's a job]]"We have a job for you," George said. "Not interested," Rod interrupts. Georges scans the building's crumbling front and looks past Rod to see the broken window at the end of the hallway. "I'd reconsider that," George said. "Did you come here just to insult me or actually to convince me?" "We need more maintenence workers at the water reclamation plant and you have the skills we need." "Reclamation plant? What are you doing there?" [[George smiles|Purifying Water]]"Making drinking water." Rod's eyes widen in shock. George's gleam after seeing the shock in Rod's. "How?" he said. "We run everything around here, Rodney," George said, "People that want to survive know that we're the ones to work with. Can I take your amazed expression as a yes?" [[Rod politely declines the proposal|Decline]] [[Rod rejects the proposal and shoos George away (Draw Weapon)|Antagonize]]Rod regains his composure and returns a calm expression to his face. "I'm afraid I'll still have to decline your offer," Rod said. "I'm not interested in being another lackey," he continues, now looking at Jack. "Suit yourself, but don't expect to be treated so kindly when you come to use desparate and dying, Sheridan," George barks back. [[Rod stays silent|No Water]]Rod takes his gun out from behind his waistband and lowers it too his side. "Not a chance, Pullman," Rod said, "Now if you wouldn't mind, fuck off." "If you're going to threaten me, you better bring a bigger gun next time," George barks at him. [[Rod glares at George|No Water]]George and his Palace Car lackeys trudge away and Rod steps back into his home. He walks into the kitchen. He looks at the (if:$waterLevel is 2)[two water bottles](else:)[water bottle] next to the cabinets stocked with cans. His head drops to the pile of empty bottles in the corner. Not too long ago he could place one under a his faucet and have enough water to survive and then some. Sadly there was no department to pump water anymore... [["How are they distrubiting the drinking water?"|Realization]]Pullman Park is around 4 miles north of the plant. There's no way they are driving water back and forth, the trade in value for all the fuel just wouldn't be worth it. And the expense of couriers would be too high for loads that large. They must have hooked up to the old piping system. And if they're distributing water through the city's pipes... [["Then I can access it too"|Leaving]]Darkness begins to fall as the evening comes. Rod walks out his front door with his tool bag. The bag holds the tools he will need to direct water to his home and his pistol. As he begins his trek to the water reclamation plant, he hears a commotion behind him. [[Rod turns to look|The Children]]Three children are calling out his name as they run towards him. A fourth child, smaller than the rest, is held on the back of the eldest. Rod jogs to meet them. It has been a while since he has seen the four kids. They moved into a building a little down the block a few months ago but ever since helping them settle in, he hadn't spoken with them. They were very adept scavengers for their age. The children reach Rod and the eldest crouches down so they friend can remove the small child from her back. [[She stands back up and pleads with Rod|Begging]]"I...well..." [[Rod hands them a bottle(set:$waterLevel to $waterLevel-1)|Thank You]] [[Rod keeps his remaining water|I'm Sorry]]"Here you go," Rod said. "Thank you so much, Mr. Sheridan," the sister responds. She takes the bottle to where her brother is lying in and tries to get him to drink. Rod turns and resumes his journey to the reclamation plant. [[He needs water even more now|Walking to Plant]]"I'm so sorry," Rod said as he begins to turn away from the tragic group in front of him. He spots the sister's eyes attempt to weep, only seeing two pitiful tears fall slowly down her cheeks. As he walks, Rod hears the party run towards another house on the block, no doubt hopeful that there is a kind soul that can spare their precious water. [[Rod continues on, more desparate than before|Walking to Plant]]<!--Img Original Size - 220x700-->(unless: (passage:)'s tags contains "no-header")[Water Remaining: [(if:$waterLevel is 2)[<img src="FullBottle.png" width="31" height="100" style="vertical-align:middle"> <img src="FullBottle.png" width="31" height="100" style="vertical-align:middle">](else-if:$waterLevel is 1)[<img src="FullBottle.png" width="31" height="100" style="vertical-align:middle"> <img src="EmptyBottle.png" width="31" height="100" style="vertical-align:middle">](else:)[<img src="EmptyBottle.png" width="31" height="100" style="vertical-align:middle"> <img src="EmptyBottle.png" width="31" height="100" style="vertical-align:middle">]] - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - ]"Mr. Sheridan you have to help us. My brother got stuck while searching for water coolers in the crumbling offices two blocks over. He's small so he's a great scout and..." A dry tear falls out of her eye and stops almost immediately on her dirty cheek. "Please, do you have any water? He was stuck in there for two days and we drank the last of what we had." [[Rod looks down at his bag|Savior?]]After a moment, the front door peeks open and a blue eye peeks through the crack. "Oh, it's you." The door opens wide and Rod smiles at the man behind it. He is a wiry man in his late thirties. His clothes hang loosely on him. "Hi, Mark," Rod said, "I've got something for you." [[Rod hands Mark the bag|Thanks Friend]]"Thanks, neighbor," Mark said, "I haven't been scavenging in a few days. We were getting a little low." "You always are," Rod said. "We've been a little busy fixing the place up recently I guess." Mark's face formed a nervous smile as he let out a small laugh. "Mark, who is it?" said a voice from inside the house. [[Rod looks past Mark into the hallway|Expecting]]A woman walks down the hallway towards the door. Her face is as gaunt as Mark's but her belly doesn't match it. It looks like the baby is still on the way. "Rodney, what a nice surprise," she says when she reaches the door. "Here to drop off some food for you two," Rod said, "It's late so I'll leave you be." Mark lifts the bag towards his wife and she grabs it to take a look at the contents. She looks up and smiles at Rod. "Thank you so much, Rod. We both really appreciate the help you give us." [[Rod smiles at her|No Prob]]"Don't mention it, Grace," Rod said. "One of these days we'll have you owe us a favor," Mark said. "I'd ask if I needed anything," Rod said, "You two keep yourselves healthy now." Rod turns as the couple says goodbye and walks down the stairs. [[He walks home alone|Time to Sleep]]"Looks like more than what was on the shelves of the store last time I was here. I brought George and a crowbar along this time to take a look at that back freezer." "An operation like yours doesn't have the tools to just unscrew the hinges? Well, I suppose you also need to tire out the dog on jobs like this to keep him calm. So no need to bother doing things the easy way." "Very funny, would you like to come inside and say that to him?" [[Rod tosses her a can of food|Through the Bushes]]