# Still alive?

I was almost about to fall, as I grabbed the long handle of the glass door. I pushed through it and could barely hear it close behind me.

I had been running for so long, every inch of my body was throbbing violently. Only the cool metal in my hand was still. I stopped and turned towards the glass door.

My own reflection startled me. My dirty and ragged clothes were barely hanging down my now skeleton like frame. My hands and feet had been reduced to bones. My roughly cut hair was sticking out in every direction. I was pale, sleep and food deprived. The only reason I am standing right now is because of the rapidly pumping adrenaline and my stubborn heart.

But I am still alive.

I pointed his weapon towards the glass door from where I knew he would emerge any second. But this time I have his weapon. He had promised to kill me slowly, to watch me as the light fades away from my eyes. But if he could see me right now, he’d know that my eyes are now brighter than ever before. Because right now, he has nothing.

And I am still alive.

I pointed the gun at my own reflection. I aimed towards my own head. That’s where his heart would be, I guessed. Usually when someone holds a gun for the first time, it is expected that their hands will shake. And I couldn’t even remember the last time I ate or drank. I was hyperventilating from all the running. But my hands didn’t shake. Because tonight will be the last night he gets his way.

Tonight, it’s either him or me.

And then I saw him through the door, as he turned the corner. A hint of fear trickled down my spine. The gun almost slipped from my sweaty hands, but I steadied myself as I saw him limping towards the glass door, towards me.

He was shouting something at me, as he came closer, but all I could hear was the frantic loud beating of my heart. I knew he could see me holding the gun pointed at him, but he didn’t care. He knew I was just trying to scare him. How foolish of me!

But he didn’t know that I’ve been waiting for this precise moment for a whole month. He didn’t know that I had already dialed 911 in his phone before running out of the basement. He didn’t know that the police must have tracked the location of the call by now.

I was waiting for him to reach the door before I shoot. But just before he did, I saw him reach for something in his back pocket.

He had another gun?

I squeezed my eyes shut and then I squeezed the trigger.

The sound of two extremely loud gunshots at the same time exploded in my ears.

And then nothing.

# Still Running?

I opened my eyes to the dim light right above me. I could hear the constant beeping of some medical machines beside the bed I was lying in. But when I tried to turn my head to look at them, the stitches on my right shoulder burned.

Heavy bandage was poking through the hospital gown near my shoulder blade. I don’t know if there was a broken bone or not, but it sure as hell hurt a lot.

The whole past month came back to me in a flash, and I felt like I needed to get out of here immediately. I could recall everything till the time I pulled the trigger but nothing after that. I had no idea where he is.

He could be sitting right outside this little hospital room, waiting for me to come out.

I pulled out the saline channel, some stickers from my chest, and the tiny clip on my right index finger monitoring my oxygen. My body felt really sore as I was trying to get out of the bed without making too much noise. The alarming sounds of the machines weren’t helping me much.

I was searching for some way to turn these machines off, when I heard some shuffling outside the door on the opposite side of the room. I think I saw some shadows move under the door too.

The heavy breathing was making my stitches hurt. I needed to calm down.

The other door on the left side of the room seemed less risky. As I was tip-toeing towards it, the noise behind the other one grew louder. I should have waited for a while more to find out who was actually behind it, but I could not.

I had my fair share of being trapped in tiny rooms.

The door opened smoothly and I walked into the middle of a long corridor. It looked like a normal hospital corridor. It was well-lit, very clean, smelled like a hospital too. But it was completely deserted.

The silence seemed to be suffocating my ears.

I didn’t know where to go; both the ends of the corridor looked identical. I randomly chose the left one and started walking fast towards it. I kept hoping some nurse would turn around the corner so that I could ask her something.

But no-one came. The sound of my bare feet on the smooth floor felt oddly loud.

One part of my mind kept warning me against opening any of the doors I was passing on both sides; another part was scared of what I would find when I turn the corner; and the other part was still curious about who was there outside my room.

I turned back to see if there was anyone behind me for the fifth time. And then I reached the corner.

I gingerly peered towards the right, the only direction in which the corridor turned, and to my relief, found the elevator at the end of it.

But I also heard the sound of someone opening a door behind me. I looked around for a brief second to see that it was the door of the room I was in, and also heard the sound of terrifyingly familiar shoes. I ran towards the elevator.

I could feel my heart thumping in every part of my body. My feet hurt and my stitches felt stretched.

The doors of one elevator slowly opened wide in front of me.

But soon the sound of my footsteps was joined by the sound of those shoes, hungrily running after me. I could hear everything – from the sound of his panting to the sound of the rustling of his clothes.

I didn’t need to turn around to know who was running behind me. I didn’t need to see Satan to recognize him anymore.

I was almost at the end, when a large dirty hand landed on my shoulder and tore away some of the bandages. Pain seared through my right arm and my back, but I could not stop. I heard him grunt in disappointment.

But the doors were starting to close. I was almost there.

I turned slightly sideways to fit through the closing doors. My right foot was already inside the elevator, but the strings fastening my hospital gown was in the hands of my pursuer.

I felt a sharp pull and the doors shut close.