The Ever So Slightly Reveal

Post alien invasion, a prison barge holds a secret for humanity.

They came.

We fought.

We lost.

The Maeve like to mimic human traits. I told one to go fuck itself a couple years ago. It gave me the finger (if you can call that slimy, knotty branch-thing a finger).

I'm just trying to move through the hallway. I've been on this prison over a year and I still don't even know these fat fucks in front of me.

Everyone's a prisoner.

Everyone's morbidly obese.

Nobody really cares.

I can almost touch the sides of the hallway when I raise my thick arms out. The door to the outside is maybe thirty feet away. and there are like twenty people between me and that door. I'm pushing on, stepping on, sweating on, and breathing on each one of them.

Most of them hold oversized cups of cereal they slowly shovel into their mouth.

The stale air reeks of human stink. Most of the people have been on this prison just as long as me and between the boredom, the heat, and that carb shit they feed us; are pretty lethargic.

"Come on, move."

"It ain't no better out there," someone tells me.

I have to slide between two massive women that together take up the whole hallway. They have the Burnt Halo rash from being below deck too long. They stare at the wall, not hearing me. The one on the right looks like she's got a glimmer of fight left in her. So I slice my fingernail across the burnt forehead of the one on the left. She screams, spills her cup of cereal and let's me by. They both curse at me as I walk outside.

"I spilled my Batchy you asshole."

"Fuck off lady, they never run out of that shit, you'll be fine."

Jesus Christ. I breathe in the outside air. It's not much better than the inside air.

The same stench from below deck wafts over the deck of the ship with the slow, hot breeze.

The deck of the cruise ship is jammed with oversized, overfed, under stimulated people. They are mostly shoulder to shoulder on the deck and walkways under make shift tents or tattered umbrellas or even thin face coverings.

The sun blazes relentlessly in the ever cloudless sky.

Reed told me this ship used to take maybe 4,000 people out on a cruise decades ago. But now he thinks there is probably 20,000 people on this thing, gorging themselves on cheap kibble and protein shakes; hiding from the sun with just nothing to do. Most everyone just lays around. Fat, lazy. Confined to this floating prison.

This is what losing looks like.

The Maeve just came out of the night sky and simply took over.

The Maeve like to mimic human traits. My dad said in the middle of a killing field, one of the Maeve actually yawned, inadvertently showing off its jagged teeth.

They just steamrolled through the world. Most countries did everything they could do to defend themselves, but it didn't really matter. Maeve were spotted in Mexico, the US nuked Mexico. They took over England so Russia and the US both nuked England. India nuked themselves at one point trying to hold them off. They all were just trying to somehow get ahead of the invasion. In the end, humans might have killed more humans than the Maeve.

The Maeve like to mimic human traits. In a containment camp, we lost a football on the other side of the fence. When we asked to get it, it just shrugged its spiked shoulders.

China was the only country still left since they surrendered and made some kind of deal. The Chinese spent their resources making the cheapest, easiest-to-transport food, Batchy. And the protein shakes. I guess even aliens have a responsibility to keep their prisoners alive. Some say the Chinese negotiated the prisoners well being. Who knows, there is no communication anymore. Just rumors and songs and sometimes writings on various walls and notes.

This may be the first prison with no guards. Probably because anyone jumping over the side is shark food fast. I know, I've seen it myself. So we just all hang out, eat, drink and do a lot of nothing. Mandy thinks they drug the food to keep us apathetic. Maybe they do, I don't really care.

She leaves today. The embedded countdown clock in her arm hit zero today. I went below deck to see if I could find her sister in the sea of overgrown humanity that dwells down there. Just overwhelming down there with too many people. Most with Burnt Halos.

Below deck the salt air over the years has eroded the coating on the fluorescent lights. So the UV rays that the fluorescents give off isn't shielded much anymore. People down there can come up with more of a sunburn than being on deck. And because their heads are closer to the lights, they get that sunburn on the top of their head worse than anything else. Creating kind of a red halo.

The Maeve have picked up on human traits. When I was transported here, I asked how long I'd be here. It just rolled all three of its eyes.

The boat docked and the transport plank went across. Probably about forty -people came off. Mandy was one of maybe a 100 going back to the mainland. She hugged me tight. We said our I love yous and I watched as she walked the board across.

The Maeve guards watched, weapons ready. Stoic. Their oversized eyes seemingly frozen. Their jutting jaw, still.

Then one moved. Ever so slightly.

The Maeve like to mimic human traits. As Mandy was walking with the rest of the group, one of the Maeve . . . licked its lips.

It hits me hard.

My stomach sinks.

My head wants to explode.

I was wrong all this time.

This wasn’t a prison.

It was a feedlot.

I need to tell someone.

Someone that cares.

Or not.