

Landfill

Rain poured down and onto the portrait of a land that was doused in a green filter, drowning out its beautiful hues and subbing in earthy gray pavement and sickly blue sky. Normal pitter patter on the glass windows of a home with the sound of fists stabbing at a pillow or mattress as the rain hit the dirt in swift motions.

Alex brushed stringy, wet hair away from her face as she lunged a shovel over her shoulder and swung it down into soft earth. In any normal weather, the ground would have simply splintered, but the water ran through the dirt and grass, causing the soil to give way as the shovel hit the ground.

Pushing the tip of her foot into the shovel's head, Alex pushed down, digging up more dirt and throwing it to the side. As it hit the ground, it made a sound like a stone falling into a pond thick with heavy clay. The act of digging was repetitive. Alex had worked on a farm with her step father her whole life. He had taught her how to use a shovel when planting trees and crops.

She had remembered whining to him, complaining about how she wished they could just use the plow, how if they didn't use the plow, why did they have it? All he did was tell her these were important life skills she needed to learn to work. That she would thank him in the long run. Now she understood. All the work she had put into lifting the shovel over her head every morning had paid off as she beat the ground, forcing it to crumble beneath her. It hadn't taken her as long as she had thought it would. Stumbling into the hole, she held out her arms and waved them around. Her yellow raincoat caught raindrops with a soft pitter patter.

After her mom had died, Alex and her stepfather had to bury her on the farm grounds. They couldn't afford to bury her in a cemetery at the moment. While digging the hole, her stepfather had instructed her to get into it to measure it, making sure her mother's body would fit. She had cried for a long hour and as the sun rose bringing a new day, her step father tossed the wrapped body into the hole and covered it in fertilizer and the old soil.

She would have loved to bury him on the farm beside her mother's grave, but he would not have wanted that. Well, she didn't want it. Her mother seemed to have a strange reaction to being around the man. After leaving a room with him alone, her face would often have colorful marks and bruises, her eyes would tear up, and she'd often yell for Alex, saying things in a slurred manner that Alex would never fully understand.

The day she died, Alex had escaped to her room during a rather nasty brawl between her stepfather and mother. All she had heard was the sound of rushing upstairs and then her step father scream.

It had been a terrible ordeal and when Alex left her room to find her stepfather crying by an open window; she assumed that her mother left him.

Two days later is when he took her out to see the broken, bloodied body of a woman who she later realized was her mother. Shocked at first, Alex didn't know how to react when her step father handed her a shovel and demanded she dig. All she could remember from that moment is she dug. Dug and didn't stop. She didn't know why, she just didn't.

Alex wiped her forehead and stepped out of the hole, tossing the shovel to the side. She leaned over and grabbed the feet of her stepfather beneath the white plastic trash bag she had wrapped him in. With a gasp for air, she sucked in and began pulling the body into the hole. Her eyes squinted and her arms strained. Beginning to hyperventilate, she groaned and swung the

body over, landing it in the hole. It fell with a thud and then a slosh as it sunk into the soft, wet earth.

“Damn you.” Alex whispered.

It was one thing her stepfather had said, standing over her mother’s lifeless body. It must have been a last message, something he wanted her to know before she had left. At a loss for words, Alex repeated it, hoping he’d be able to hear her, wherever he was. It was a great struggle to pick up the shovel, but when she finally did, she began beating the body down with soft hits and began filling up the hole again. Rain was coming down harder now and the mist became fog that blocked Alex from the world around her. Although there wasn’t much that was being missed within the fog as she dug. It was simply the farm, the crops, and the town, which was already far, far from the farm. She wouldn’t be able to see it from the window of her bedroom unless she strained.

She took the shovel with her and the wrapped body, dragging both into the forest, crying already as the rain started around her. She had gotten so far she couldn’t even see the farm, and now she couldn’t even see the surrounding trees.

It was going to be quite lonely now without him.

She would have to get used to it, though. That had come to her mind the moment she saw him swinging from the kitchen ceiling. Left, right, left, right.

If the town were any closer, they would’ve heard her scream.