

Silly Land very Short Story

Not so Silly Struggle by Hijcknician75.app (@fishyfry75)

The men in the shack worked in silence as they gathered their belongings and changed into warmer clothes. Knocking broke the silence, the girl from the other night opened the door slightly, looking regretful—but still she had anger behind her eyes.

“Grant...? Can I talk to you?” She asked, averting her eyes.

Grant nodded his head and followed her out into the snow.

“I talked to Rusty, I’m sorry I excluded you from the group.” She fiddled her fingers, “I—“

“Thank you...” Grant responded, unknowingly interrupting.

“I’m not done.” She said firmly. “I understand it was an accident, a misunderstanding, *but* you killed my brother.” She looked over her shoulder for a second. “I’m sorry for how I acted, but we can’t ever be friends.”

“I never thought we would, it’s sad that we had to be in this situation.”

“It’s your fault.” The girl quickly rebutted.

“Clearly some hostility, still.” Grant said under his breath.

“Shut up, I just wanted to say I’m sorry.”

“Yeah, you kinda ruined that already.”

“Whatever, asshole.” The girl stormed off.

Grant entered the shack again with a slight grin and grabbed his bag.

“Grant! Over here!” Rusty waved him down.

Grant walked towards Rusty, past the crowd of people boarding wagons and horses. Many of them carrying heavy bags or objects. He wanted to help but thought best not to. Grant looked up at Rusty, who’s pulling up a lone child to bring on his horse.

“Looks like you’ll be walking this one.” Rusty chuckled. “Still not trusted enough to ride with anyone, and we already don’t have enough horses.”

“It’s...fine.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yeah...” Grant slumped down into the snow as the rest of the group prepared for their venture. He pulled out a cigarette from his coat pocket and lit it.

Time passed as they began their trek, but not before Rusty could speak.

“Looks like everyone’s ready, so let’s not waste another moment, we *will* make it safely.” The whole group lit up, and everyone started moving—moving even closer to society.

Grant stood up from where he had been sitting, and followed the group. A woman beside him caught his eye, she was holding her infant child on one arm and a large sack over her shoulder. He spoke up to her, “Excuse me, may I help you?” He tilted his head at her sack.

“Y-Yea—” She hesitated, realizing who was asking her—unsure whether to trust him or not. She froze. Grant could see the fear in her eyes.

“I’m sorry, forget I asked.” Grant turned around, losing hope he could gain any form of trust.

“No. Wait.” The woman grasped at him, “Please.” She held out the sack to Grant. He smiled. He took the sack with as much kindness he could muster onto his face.

“Thank you...”

“No problem.” Grant said, feeling a wash of relief, being able to help someone out. His act catches Rusty’s eye, who nods in approval.

Further along their route, spirits that were once high, slowly depleting as they tread the snowy path. Suddenly, a man drops dead, the group recoiled—he had been shot. Panic rose, and many screamed. Another shot was taken, this time a woman was hit in the leg.

“Shit!” Grant dropped the sack onto the snow and started shooting into the trees, as do the rest of the armed members do. The other half of the group scattered for cover behind trees and rocks, as Grant, Rusty, and the others returned fire at the obscured shooters in the trees.

“Stay calm everyone! Just—just stay behind cover!” Rusty shouted. The gunshots mixed with the screaming and crying was deafening. Ruffling came from the trees as one of the attackers fell down the branches.

“I got one!” Said a man, not long before being shot himself. Another body fell from the trees, and another. The attackers had dwindled to simply one man left, and Grant saw an opportunity—if he could get the last shot, he could be praised for saving the group—that is, if he hadn’t been shot in the chest. He fell to the ground gasping for air. He could hear the cries, the cheers. Rusty rushed over to him and grabbed him, applying aid—but he had already faded from consciousness.

“Hey... How are you feeling?”

Grant opened his eyes, confused, and lying on a bed. He looked around the dimly lit bedroom. “W-where are...” He grunted, leaning his head back down, his head throbbing.

“Slow down, you’re not dying, but you’re definitely not okay.” Rusty let out a smile before he quickly swiped it away. “You need to rest.”

“I—is everyone,” Grant tried to form a sentence, “Is everyone... okay?”

“Only one of our guys died... You saw it... Everyone else though, you got the worst of it.” He turned his gaze towards the door, “They’re recovering though, I’d be more worried about yourself.”

Grant grunted again as he lifted his body to get up.

“Hey! No, no!” Rusty rushed to push Grant back down into the bed.

“Get me... F-food.” Grant asked begrudgingly.

“I’ll get it for you—Just stay here, okay?” Rusty exited the room. The air was noticeably warmer, likely the effect of the many bodies occupying the floor below. He walked across the overlook, pass the rooms holding other injured men, and went downstairs. Many of the women were setting up shop with their children, while the men rejoiced in triumph.

“Can I get a plate please?” Rusty asked the group preparing meals for the rest. “I’m bring some food for Grant.” A woman provided a plate with a nod of acknowledgment and returned to work. Turning around, the girl jumped him. “Jesus! Lottie, you scared me.”

“I just don’t understand what you see in him.”

“Can we not talk about this here?” Rusty lowered his voice, a tad desperate to end the feud between her and Grant.

“Fine.” Lottie led them outside. Rusty shivered a bit. “I’ve seen the way you look at him, you don’t want to help me, or my brother. You just want to get into his pants.”

“What! No I—”

“Don’t deny it!” Lottie interrupted. “Tell it to my face!”

Rusty backed away, searching for the doorknob behind him. “I—I really got to get this food to him.”

“Say it!” She yelled desperately. “Tell me!”

Rusty began panicking, frantically looking for the knob.

“Don’t make me do it! I’ll do it!”

Rusty swung the door behind him before rushing upstairs.

“What... took you so long?” Grant asked, while lifting himself up slowly.

“Eh? Don’t worry about it.” Rusty pants out, heart beating fast. “Here!” He hands over the plate.

“Why are you hands... so cold?”

“I was outside.”

“Why—“

“Doesn’t matter, can I sit with you?” Rusty asked.

“P-please.” Grant scooted over, making room.

“Heh, thanks.” Rusty moves along the bed and lays down besides him. “So, what happened with you before all this? You had a pretty big house yeah?”

“I lived there with—with my wife... She wanted to move out into the mount...*ains*.” Grant choked on his words, trying to keep air going through his lungs.

“You had a wife!? I’m so sor—” Rusty tried to back away, but Grant grabbed his arm and pulled him closer than he was before.

“No, it’s not... not like that.” Grant struggled to get the words out still. “We parted ways due to... differing opinions...”

“Like what?”

“We were... We weren’t who we were looking for.”

Rusty stared at Grant, “Well, who are you looking for?”

“Not...sure—maybe you can help.” Grant pulled Rusty’s hand up to his chest, opposite from his wound.

The both of them get flustered. Rusty cuddled against Grant and laid his head upon his shoulder...

Grant opened his eyes again to the sound of Rusty, but much unlike the other times. Rusty was on the floor in this underwear, gasping and struggling.

“Fucking DIE!” Lottie was standing on top of him, pulling a heavy rope around his neck.

“No!” Grant jumped from the bed, landing face first into the floor boards.

“You bastard.” Lottie pulled the rope from under Rusty and starts kicking Grant while yelling profanities. She then wrapped the rope around his neck and started choking him.

Two men came rushing through the door, an audience behind. Had put two and two together, they grab Lottie and pull her away.

“Get your FUCKING hands off of me!” She swung her hands and feet, trying to fight off the men.

Multiple audience members rushed to the sides of Grant and Rusty. They shook Grant back, trying to bring him back to consciousness, but once again, he had faded.