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Silent Snow

Linea Cutter

Nova Southeastern University

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Silent Snow

Author Note

I am a fan of the classic Twilight Zone series, and I wanted to give this story a similar feel. The message I am seeking to convey in “Silent Snow” is that in times of darkness, when things may seem like they won’t get better, we cannot simply lie down and give up. If we do, when times of opportunity arise, we might miss them.

Silent Snow

Estelle's paintbrush, dripping with pearl white paint, glided back and forth across the soft pinewood.

The color reminded her of the luscious snowflakes that used to fall from a light blue, beautiful sky. The snow used to fall in blankets year round. She remembered the time she had her first kiss, standing under a snow covered pine tree, with flakes gently falling and sticking to her moist eyelashes.

That was a distant memory. Luke, the boy who had shared her first kiss, now knelt silently beside her on the rough pavement of their town square, daubing broad strokes of green paint over another pinewood box. She could barely make out his silhouette against the dark, misty sky. The soft whispers of the townspeople, and the sound of rough paintbrushes being scraped across wood, could be heard throughout the square. As she stared down at her own box, she couldn't help feeling a sense of longing for what might have been.

Although it was high noon, the sky was pitch black. When the snow, ominously, had stopped falling, the sky had progressively grown darker, until one day, it was completely black. The townspeople had fused all of their candles together in order to make three towering pillar candles that served to illuminate the sky for a time. Now, there was only a single pillar candle left, and it was down to its last couple of hours.

The townspeople loaded the pillar candle onto a wagon. Then the wagon led the long, solemn procession to the large meadow, just outside of the town. Everyone carried his or her own box, except for the children. Their boxes, painted bright colors of yellow, blue, and pink, were loaded onto a cart that trailed behind the candle wagon.

Once at the meadow, the digging began. Luke offered to dig for her, but Estelle wanted to take part in the experience. They both decided to shovel a single hole in the ground, large enough for both boxes to lay side by side.

As the last rays of light shone from the candle, the townspeople laid their boxes inside the freshly unearthed holes. Headstones were placed while mothers laid their children in small, brightly painted boxes, and put the covers on top. Everyone climbed into their own box, shutting the covers behind them as they laid down. Estelle and Luke followed suit. Estelle slid her arm through the hole Luke had carved out of her box, and she grasped his waiting hand. This is how it would end. Pure darkness enveloped the sky as the candle sparked and flickered, its last moments expiring. "Better to die than to live in a world of

darkness,” thought Estelle, as she dozed off into a quiet slumber.

The bell of the shop door jingled. The old man behind the counter looked up from the ancient, tattered magazine he had been reading. “Hey Pauly! What can I help ya with today?” he called out. The small boy, who had just entered the store, stomped his snowy boots on the floor as he scanned the dusty old shelves of the shop. “Hmm, um, I’m not really sure yet. Just lookin’ for a Christmas present for my sister.” “Well I am sure you will find something, Pauly. There are plenty of things that a girl would love in this old thrift shop. If you search hard enough, I am sure you will find a treasure,” the old man replied.

Pauly searched through the old boxes and shelves. Most of the items were familiar to him, as he frequented the store several times a week. After rummaging around for a couple of hours, he was at the brink of giving up. “Connie is going to be mad at me,” he thought to himself, “Looks like she isn’t going to get a present from me this year.” As he was entertaining these defeatist thoughts, he leaned against an old closet door. The door, which he had always assumed led to the janitor’s closet, gave way and he found himself sitting on the floor of the closet entryway. He turned around to survey his new surroundings. The closet was packed with more items, which he had never seen in his many visits to the store. “I found the treasure!” he called out to the shopkeeper as he surveyed the shelves of old dust-covered odds and ends.

The shelves stretched up to the ceiling, and being a very small boy himself, he decided that he would scale them, starting from the top and working his way down, until he reached the bottom shelf. As he put his foot on the bottom shelf, it gave way, clashing to the ground under the weight of its heavy items. “You okay, Pauly?” the old shopkeeper croaked from the front counter. “Sure thing!” yelled Pauly. He hoped nothing was broken as he surveyed the pile that had fallen to the ground. He picked up an old, dust-covered snow globe from the ground, and examined it to make sure that there were no cracks in it. He dusted off the glass with his shirt sleeve and stared at it. It had not cracked, but he was puzzled by the scene inside. He saw an empty town with a very large graveyard next to it. “Since when did they make snow globes for Halloween?” he thought as he placed it on the third shelf of the closet. He grabbed a Raggedy Anne doll that he had spotted in the pile, and headed to the front to purchase it. He closed the door behind him, leaving the closet in darkness.