

Among the Darkness

Frozen. I pause as I hear a sudden howling in the distance.
Leaves rustling, twigs snapping in all directions.
Willing my eyes to see further into the darkness that surrounds me like a heavy cloud.
Waiting. Listening to the ice cold wind as it picks up my chestnut colored hair, rustles my clothes, and pierces my skin under the moonless sky.

I try and calm myself and continue to move through the dense forest.
How did I get here? Where is here?
Branches snap, clothes snag. Vines seem to wrap around my legs as I move faster. Faster.

Seemingly, out of nowhere a tall stone wall materializes before me.
I race towards it to see if there is an exit or signs of life.

As I touch the wall a shrill noise resonates from the cold, ragged stones.
Bringing me to my knees, as I try to cover my ears.
Nothing dampens the noise.

Silence!
A deep voice commands, ending the painful shrill.
I look around, but there is no one.
Confused I look up.
Sitting above me on the top of the wall is a large owl.
As I make eye contact with large yellow eyes, the owl's wings spread out covering the entire sky from view.
Next the voices.

You must choose.
To go left or to go right.
Both bring different outcomes.
The choice is yours.

With one flap of his wings, dim lights appeared on the wall near its feet.
The lights traveled down the wall and then split in two as they made their way to opposite ends of the wall.

Slowly I stand.
Looking to the left. Looking to the right.
They look exactly the same except for a dim glowing light at each end.
To the left it was a crimson red.
To the right it was an opal blue.

Which direction is the way out of here? She thought as she contemplated her decision.

[Turn [Left](#) OR Turn [Right](#)]

“Wh-what’s at the end of each path? Which one leads *out* of here?”

Silence followed.

The only response from the owl was its cold stare.

Slowly she headed to the left towards the crimson red glow.

I don't know if this is where I need to go but either way, I can always come back and go the other way--- WHAT?!

Just as the girl looked back to the owl she saw him disappear over the wall as a second giant wall erupted from the ground.

Blocking her way to the other path.

I guess it can't be that easy, now can it?

With only one way to go now I continued forward.

The crimson light drew nearer with each step I took.

Finally the source of the light was within sight.

The light was resonating from a lantern on a small wooded post at the base of a tree.

Below the lantern there were two signs.

One pointed to the left.

The other pointed forward to continue following the wall.

Howling resonated from the depths of the woods.

[Continue [Forward](#) OR turn [Left](#)?]

“Wh-what’s at the end of each path? Which one leads *out* of here?”

Silence followed.

The only response from the owl was its cold stare.

Slowly she headed to the right towards the opal blue glow.

I don't know if this is where I need to go but either way, I can always come back and go the other way--- WHAT?!

Just as the girl looked back to the owl she saw him disappear over the wall as a second giant wall erupted from the ground.

Blocking her way to the other path.

I guess it can't be that easy, now can it?

With only one way to go now I continued forward.

The blue light drew nearer with each step I took.

As I rushed along the wall, the sound of rushing water emerged from the forest.

The source of the blue light was a small river hidden among the trees.

The river was flowing from the other side of the giant wall.

[[Explore](#) where the water is coming from OR [Follow](#) the river into the woods?]

Following the sign, I ran deeper into the woods.
Howling resonated all around me.
Loud odd footsteps were getting closer.
I looked to my left and saw red glowing eyes staring at me as they ran alongside me in the shadows of the woods.
Turning to my right there were even more glowing eyes.

Faster. I need to run faster.

Suddenly a meadow appears before my path.
Running into it there is only a single tree.
The creatures begin to snarl and grunt loudly, not stepping into the meadow.
Running up to the tree I try and climb up it, but it is no use there are no branches to pull myself up.
Looking down I notice a glimmer near one of the trees roots.
Sinking down, I grab at the glimmering object.

A sword....?

On the blade the words *Succumb to fear or wield it* were inscribed.

[Use the [Blade](#) against the creatures OR [Run](#)?]

The howling intensified as I hurried forward, continuing my path along the wall.

The howls continued to get louder.

They were no longer disguised as the wind.

There were animals among these woods and they didn't seem happy.

As the howls and grunts seemed to get closer I quickened my pace to try and escape the noise.

But they continued.

The sound of feet became clear.

I have to get away. Someplace ANYplace!

Looking to my left I saw a tree with branches low enough to the ground that I could climb on them.

Observing the wall to my right I could see that there was a small ledge about half way up the wall that looked to have about enough room to stand on.

[[Climb](#) the tree OR [Scale](#) the wall?]

If this river is coming from the other side there must be some sort of opening at the base of the wall!

This has to be it! There has to be a way out!

Trudging through the water she makes her way towards the spot in the wall where the water is coming from.

The water becomes deeper and deeper and the current becomes stronger.

Once she makes it to the spot where the water is coming out of she dives down into the water to see if she can find the opening.

Spotting the arched opening she swims against the current into the space where the water is coming out.

As it becomes darker and darker the further she goes into the opening she reaches in front of her and feels a cold, round, metal object.

Holding onto it she feels around some more.

Only to realize that there are bars blocking the way to the other side of the wall.

After yacking and pulling and trying to find some kind of lever to open the barred off exit, she has to go back out of the tunnel for air.

Gasping for air as she reaches the surface and shivering from the cold, she realizes that she will have to follow the river away from the wall next.

As she made her way down stream, it only grew colder and colder.

Her wet hair stung her back as the wind blew through her.

Eventually she had to stop.

She could no longer feel her feet.

Sitting against a tree she tried to warm her feet by rubbing them and wrapping them in a layer of clothing.

Snap.

Looking up she saw, across the river, a figure emerge from the darkness.

It stood on two legs, but probably not much taller than she was.

The build of a young man.

A person?!

[[Call out](#) to the person or [Stay quiet](#)?]

She quickly stood up, ignoring the stabbing pain from her feet and waved at the newly discovered person.

“Are you trapped here too?” she called out.

Noticing the girl, the man looked over at her.

He then began closing the space between them by running towards the river.

With two leaps they made it over the rushing current by using rocks that slightly emerged from the depths of the water.

Landing on the girl’s side of the river, the man crouched and watched the girl.

The girl shifted her weight on her feet and then to her surprise the man spoke first.

“How did you get here?”

Who sent you here, do you remember?”

Surprised by the questions she explained,

“I don’t know how I got here. All I remember is running and finding that tall wall.”

The boy spoke.

“So you are just like the others.”

In response to the girls confused look he explained.

“You’re not the only one to get stuck here.

We have a whole camp of guys just past these trees behind me.

All of them also don’t know how they got here.

Though you’re the first girl to show up here... but we’ll have to discuss that later.

I’d be best to get back to camp before any of the monsters appear again.

I already had to fight off one and I’d prefer to avoid them if I could.

Can you walk?”

“Y-yeah... I think so.”

Slowly she made her way towards the boy.

Slowly the boy led the girl towards the path over the river he took earlier.

“Good. I’m glad I found you before anything really bad happened.”

The two then made their way over the river, towards the camp of stranded boys.

[THE END](#)

If I try and search the water, with how cold both the water and the air is, I would most likely become sick or get hypothermia... It's probably best to avoid the water for now.

As she made her way down stream, it only grew colder and colder.
The longer she went the harder it was for her to continue at a rapid pace.
She got to the point where she had to stop.
So she rested under a tree just to catch her breath.

Snap.

Looking up she saw, across the river, a figure emerge from the darkness.
It stood on two legs, but probably not much taller than she was.
The build of a young man.

A person?!

[[Call out to](#) the person OR [Stay quiet?](#)]

She quickly stood up, ignoring the fatigue of her feet and waved at the newly discovered person.
“Are you trapped here too?” she called out.

Noticing the girl, the man looked over at her.
He then began closing the space between them by running towards the river.
With two leaps they made it over the rushing current by using rocks that slightly emerged from the depths of the water.

Landing on the girl’s side of the river, the man crouched and watched the girl.

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Though you’re the first girl to show up here... but we’ll have to discuss that later.
I’d be best to get back to camp before any of the monsters appear again.
I already had to fight off one and I’d prefer to avoid them if I could.
Can you walk?”

“Y-yeah... I can manage.”
Slowly she made her way towards the boy.

Slowly the boy led the girl towards the path over the river he took earlier.
“Good. I’m glad I found you before anything really bad happened.”

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[THE END](#)

Holding up the blade, the girl aimed the blade at the creatures circling the meadow.
With this movement, one of the creatures emerged from the shadows into the meadow.
The creature in front of her was not one she had seen before.
With red glowing eyes it stood on two legs but had the body of a wolf.
Huge white fangs were prominent on its menacing face.

Standing her ground, shaking slightly, she waited for it to make its move.
Her heavy ragged breathes seemed to flow across the meadow towards the creature in waves.

After seconds the creature lunged in for the attack.
Bracing herself for impact she angled herself to do a quick dash towards the creature.
Using the force of the creatures lunge and her own added speed she was able to cut the creature slightly on its side.
With a yelp, the creature called the others into the clearing, surrounding the girl.

As if all at once they all leapt at the girl.
Letting out bellowing growls as they closed the space between themselves and the girl.

THE END

Realizing she has no chance of beating the creatures with a weapon she has never used before. She begins to run past the tree in the center of the meadow with the sword in hand.

Within seconds of her running the creatures around the meadow began to stir and run towards her.

The creatures that lay before her were not ones she had seen before. With red glowing eyes it stood on two legs but had the body of a wolf. Huge white fangs were prominent on its menacing face.

While running, one of the creatures lunged at her. Without thinking she swung the sword in the direction of the attack and made contact with the creatures face, knocking the creature back. Continuing to rush forward she tried to escape the still active creatures. But it was too late... they already had her surrounded.

Freezing where she, she looked around at all of the glowing eyes around her. Falling to her knees in defeat she speaks.

“How... *How* did it end up like this?”

As the last word rolled off her tongue, the creatures made their last move creating silence in the forest.

THE END

Quickly I made my way to the tree.

Hurry.

I need to get up quickly.

Faster!

After climbing about ten feet up the tree, the sounds of the howls grew immensely.
The creatures weren't far off now.

Higher! I need to get HIGHER!

Suddenly, from below, the sound of claws digging into bark resonated in the air.

Looking down the girl saw the creatures.

With red glowing eyes they stood on two legs but had the bodies of wolves.

Huge white fangs were prominent on their menacing faces.

She continued to climb higher in case they tried to jump up towards her.

Then it went quiet.

There was no more struggling, barking at each other.

The only sound that could be heard was the faint sound of bark being pulled at by claws.

Looking down, she saw exactly what she had hoped wouldn't be possible.

They were figuring out how to climb the tree.

Slowly one of the creatures was making his way up the tree towards her.

Climbing higher she tried to find another means of escape.

But without and close tree branches from other trees she was stuck.

Stuck waiting for the moment that creature finally made it up to her.

[THE END](#)

Quickly I made my way to the wall.

The stones that made up the wall had been constructed in a way that it was easy enough to grab ahold of them and climb up.

I just need to get to that ledge up there.

Once I do that I should be fine until these animals get bored and leave.

After putting a good amount of distance between the ground and herself the creatures emerged from among the trees.

With red glowing eyes they stood on two legs but had the bodies of wolves.

Huge white fangs were prominent on their menacing faces.

The creatures yelped and howled as they tried to jump at the girl on the wall, but they couldn't reach her now she was too high.

Just a few more feet and I'll be at the ledge.

Just a little further.

With her next movement to grab a stone to pull herself up with, the stone she grabbed onto broke off.

Dangling by one arm, she tried to find another spot to grab onto.

After many moments of struggle she finally found a holding and continued toward the ledge.

After finally reaching the ledge and standing on the ledge, she waited.

Waited for the creatures to get bored and realize that they couldn't reach her at this high.

After hours of waiting, the sun appeared to be beginning to rise over the trees and the creatures reluctantly left the wall and disappeared back into the dense forest.

At the height the girl was at she was almost at an equal level with the trees of the forest.

Allowing her to see out among the forest.

In the very distant corner of the forest she could see small smoke plumes billowing up towards the sky.

Civilization?

I suppose I'll never know until I check it out.

The girl then headed back down the stone wall to head in the direction of the smoke, hoping to find people with answers as to why she was trapped here.

And what these creatures were.

[THE END](#)

*I can't be sure that that truly is a person.
I'll just have to wait and see to be sure.*

As quietly as she could she tried to crawl around the tree to avoid being seen.
But in the process a twig snapped under her knee as she attempted to crawl out of sight.

At the noise the man looked over towards her.

“Who is that??” he yelled.

With no response from the girl, he began closing the space between them by running towards the river.

With two leaps they made it over the rushing current by using rocks that slightly emerged from the depths of the water.

Landing on the girl's side of the river, the man crouched and watched the girl.

The girl stood up onto her feet and to her surprise the man spoke first.

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THE END

Production Statement

The process that I used when creating this hypertext story was that as I wrote aspects of the girl's journey in the story and I came across a part that would require a choice, I let the reader choose what the girl would do in different settings. I tried to do that as much as possible to create a reader led adventure. The point that I was trying to get across when making this was that this type of writing very much explains the way that we use digital text. We read then click on whatever is next to be clicked on to let the information keep coming, if we want more. It is extremely reader oriented in that it requires the reader to set up the next step to be worked on. Generally people won't read all of the digital text in depth, they will just skim it and continue which I feel can be represented by my short story. In it you don't have to read it in depth and you get to skip around to different parts in the story. Something that I learned about this subject for one thing is that writing short stories can be extremely difficult because.... WRITER'S BLOCK. But I also learned that stories like this are kind of fun to make and read because the reader gets to choose what the character in the story does as opposed to having the characters have a predestined path planned out explicitly by the writer. While some of the options for the reader led adventure didn't last very long, others could go on for quite a while depending on the choices that you pick.