



## **Plain Text - Day 22**

Wiley Davis

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**Categorie(s):**

**Tag(s):** "plain text"

### CHAPTER 3 - The Beach

Before light Zoe gathers small sticks for the fire. Her waking is robotic, automatic, instantaneous, and the springs of the truck quiver with her sudden energy. She pulls on her pants and boots, sliding off the edge of the tailgate, and disappears into the darkness behind.

By this time I am up, easing my way into wakefulness, a solar-powered beast with pre-Sun movements that are slow to gain speed. I too pull on my pants and boots in the darkness, an ox tromping the grass. I kneel by the night's fire and search for hot coals with a pointy stick, looking for redness in the black. There is no method to it, just blind movement of the stick and observation, a churning of the soot in search of spark. This is the first repetitive act that lost its tedium, the first ritual for which I didn't think, here we go again, and I am glad this reminder occurs first thing, before bad habits settle in.

Zoe returns just before sunrise with a skinny armload of dry sticks. She sets them down next to the fire and sits, watching while I break them into smaller sections and add them to the fire, building it into something lively. I fill my small kettle with water from a plastic jug we keep in the bed of the truck and place it across the three rocks I've put amidst the coals for this purpose. When the water boils, I add coffee grounds and stir until the water turns the right shade of brown. Then I pour the coffee through a filter and into our cups. As we sip hot coffee the Sun comes up.

What is it like? Zoe wants to know.

Overwhelming, at first, I tell her.

I should hope it stays that way, she says.

Yes. You should.

Zoe has never been north. She's never lived in the devs, never known the poxie, never met her mother.

## From the same author on Feedbacks

*Segue (2008)*

A segue. A short story about a transitional moment.

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*A Fabrication: and other stories (2008)*

7 short stories.

*Plain Text - Day 1 (2009)*

In a world of free food and networked living, something interesting is happening down in Baja. A fifteen year old girl named Zoe, her biologist father, and a coastline of drugged-out fishermen help us reconcile the conflict between physical reality and virtual freedom.

*Plain Text - Day 12 (2009)*

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*Plain Text - Day 2 (2009)*

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*Plain Text - Day 3 (2009)*

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Plain Text - Day 4 (2009)

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Plain Text - Day 5 (2009)

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Plain Text - Day 6 (2009)

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Plain Text - Day 13 (2009)

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