

Surviving an apocalyptic event

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The Apocalyptic Scenario Without warning, Iran launches a nuclear weapon targeting the Washington area, and the U. S. military experts say that it will inevitably hit the White House. As the U. S. president is hurriedly carried to safety, CIA strategists propose that they should use the attack to their advantage; by using a secret technology that allows the U.

S. military to intercept a launched nuclear warhead and manipulate it, they should direct it to Beijing. The U. S. will accomplish two goals by this act. First, they will weaken China militarily considering that it has been a threat to the U.

S. hegemony. The second goal will be creating antagonism between China and the Middle East, a situation that will provide the U. S. with a wounded ally in the war against terrorism.

However, China had known about the U. S. capability to intercept and manipulate nuclear warheads. It had also stolen this technology by paying CIA agents huge sums of money. When the U.

S. directs Iran's nuclear weapon to Beijing, the Chinese military re-directs it into space. The nuclear warhead enters the outer space and gets off radar from satellite-aided monitoring devices, and consequently no side is able to control it. All of them keep quiet about the event hoping that it will be forgotten. Meanwhile, the nuclear detonates on Mars; unknown to astronomers, Mars outer crust is made of soft rocks while its mantle is made of toxic magma that vaporizes when exposed to light.

Following the detonation of the nuclear warhead on Mars surface, the toxic magma turns to gas, which spews out into the Earth's atmosphere. The gas is most lethal in regions where it is still day time because of the sun light; its potency under such conditions exceeds that of cyanide. Billions of people die while at work, in vehicles and airplanes, in stadiums and supermarkets, in schools, hospitals and churches. In regions where it is night time, many die of heart attacks and blood pressure. Some take hours to die, but by sunrise, almost all living creatures have been killed by the poisonous gas. The effect on plants is equally devastating; in the Western hemisphere, where it was daytime when the nuclear warhead detonated, all plants turn to ashes, In other regions, they wither and dry up within hours.

The clouds are also poisoned, as a result of which acidic rain kills any remaining plants. No building made of iron or steel material is left standing; they all rust and crumple down as a result of the acidic rain. Bricks and stones dissolve into dust, and any plastic or rubber material melts into a black liquid that vaporizes under the effect of light. Somehow, I survive because I was under medication and I had taken alcohol against the doctor's instructions. I later realize that there is a chemical substance in the drugs I was taking that reacted with ethanol in alcohol to form an antidote of the poisonous gas. The First Day The world is like a vast black desert covered by ash and animal and human carcasses.

I'm naked because all clothes were eaten away by the released gases. The only things I see around are polythene bags. However, anything that was inside had either melted or vaporized. The sun has scorched the carcasses

and turned them into charred that resembles burnt wood. The rivers are tiny streams, and the water has turned into a black thick liquid.

My immediate objective is to find food and then travel to a safe place that has not been affected. On the first day, I stay hungry and thirsty because I'm afraid to eat the animal carcasses that litter the ground. There are no communication lines, no cell phones and, therefore, no means of communication. All vehicles have turned into rusting remains of iron and steel. Consequently, I cannot travel anywhere even if the tarmac roads were not affected. I'm scared because I do not fully comprehend what has happened, and I'm constantly worried that I might come across an alien.

I carry along an iron bar that was once the axle of a truck but has now been reduced to a chip by rust. I hope of meeting someone, but everywhere I go is as deserted as a grave at night. I wander around the neighborhood hoping that I will come across a fridge or a food storage that somehow survived the destruction. However, as night approaches, I come across the only reminder of civilization: a burning log at the edge of what was once a big forest. I sleep near the burning log to keep warm, and in the morning, I'm awakened by a light drizzle.

Week One I have been wondering around for four days sleeping in caves made by spaces once occupied by huge rocks. On day two, I had been so hungry that I had risked eating the charred animal remains. It turns out that they cannot affect me because of the antidote in my body that protected me from the effects of the gas. I do not know what kind of animal carcasses I'm

eating because the sun's rays have burned them beyond recognition.

Sometimes, I do not even know whether I'm eating human remains.

On day six, I came across what was once a green house. I know this because I find synthetic polythene, the only material not affected by the gases. I had cut the polythene using the sharp end of the iron bar I have been carrying into an appropriate size and wrapped it around my body to serve as clothing. I have been walking at least twelve hours a day, and my feet are sore from blisters. On day seven, I come across a skiing camp near a mountain.

Most of the ice has melted, but there is still a thin layer covering the ground. There are puddles of warm water, and I drink as much as I can. However, the water has a nauseating smell, which I suppose is the effect of the gas. I have not come across any means of communication or traveling. At night, I look for a patch of ground not covered with ice to sleep on.

Fortunately, I do not have to worry about freezing because the weather is always warm; the water in the puddles is a degree above lukewarm. One Month Later I have been trekking across a plateau covered with ice for weeks eating animal carcasses and drinking water from melting ice. Strangely, the ice is almost warm because of the effects of global warming triggered by the nuclear detonation. The sun rays are hotter than usual, and I occasionally rub my face with chunks of ice to keep cool. After three weeks, I'm surprised to find a floating hand glove.

It is made of thick wool material and covered by a translucent waterproof material. When I examine it, I realize the covering is made of polythene and nylon. A few paces ahead, I almost stumble on a human body covered in
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mountain gear. I notice it is that of a middle aged man. I feel for his pulse, and I'm relieved on finding he is still alive. I drag him to a drier ground and make him lie in such a way that he is exposed to the sun.

I search inside his bag also made of waterproof material and find another pair of gloves, a hunting knife, and a cell phone that has no signal. The battery is almost down, but the screen is clear. I had forgotten about the date, and I see that it is June 14, 2027. I give the man a piece of the carcasses I have been carrying, and after swallowing some bites, he dozes off. When he wakes up again, he tries to speak but I cannot understand his language.

It sounds Slavic, but I cannot tell whether it is Russian, Polish or Ukrainian. However, we use gestures to communicate, and I learn that he was among a skiing team from Uzbekistan (I learn of his country of origin from the map in his bag). I learn that he became unconscious after inhaling the gas. We find the bodies of his friends, but all of them had died by drowning under the melting ice. However, most of their gear had survived because they were buried under ice. I throw away my polythene and put on the mountain gear taken from one of the bodies.

We also find snacks in the waterproof bags buried under ice, which we pack and carry with us. We use the skis to travel along the ice surface. For a month, we sleep under the shelter of overhanging ice kept dry by the mountain gear we are wearing. The phone's battery has died out, but we are able to estimate time and keep track of dates. For defense, the only things

we have are two hunting bags (I had discarded the iron bar because it was heavy).

For the direction, we have a map and a compass. We eventually come to dry land with patchy vegetation. However, there is no sign of habitation around. We deduce that we are in a region that was not affected seriously because it was on the far side from Mars when the nuclear detonation occurred. We come across occasional wild fruits that we survive on. The First Year We have been trekking for months, and my friend has learned a few English words like go, food, water, ice, fruit, and sleep.

When he mentions food, I know that it is time to sit down for a snack or to look around for fruits. From our map and calculations, we deduced that South America should be the least affected region because of its position when the detonation occurred. There is no single sign of technology surviving, and we feel like we are in the Stone Age. After months of travelling on a South Westerly direction, we come to the edge of the Caribbean. The water has a darkish color, and it is covered with dead fish. There are few standing buildings, but no survived human beings.

We move from one crumbling building to another looking for food until we come to a collapsed food factory. Finding our way between human bodies, we stack as much food as we can into polythene bags. Our intention is to have enough food supply in our journey across the Gulf of Mexico to South America. For the next few months, we sleep in the basement of the food factory as we plan our route. Five Years For months we row our boat across

the Gulf of Mexico. The water is calm because the detonation altered the climate.

The skies are clear because the nuclear gases interfered with atmospheric conditions to prevent moisture from condensing into clouds. The moon is always bright to aid visibility at night, and we use the stars and the compass for navigation. There is no communication with the other world. When we want to sleep, we just let the boat float aimlessly, and whenever we wake up, we find that we have drifted some degrees off-course. When we eventually land in Guatemala, we find a desolate land without any living human beings. We find charred remains of cars, which exploded when the nuclear gas reacted with gasoline.

No cell phone is working because the servers are down either because there is no one to keep them running, or they were affected by the nuclear detonation. All electric lines have rusted, and the first city we come across is in total darkness in nightfall. However, some buildings have solar panels, which provide the only source of light and heating. We still have to wear our mountain clothes because light materials like cotton and silk were destroyed. We continue our journey on foot sleeping in survived buildings and eating any food we can find. After Ten Years Although there are cars on the roads and the cities we pass through, we cannot drive any because all stored gases and petrol ignited after the nuclear detonation.

Many buildings and vehicles were destroyed this way. Most plants have remained stunted while others have withered and become extinct. When we come to Colombia, the first sign of life we find are horses wondering around.

However, we soon realize that only horses survived. By now, my friend has learned enough English, and he points out that perhaps horses have a certain gene that makes them immune against the effects of the poisonous gas released by Mars.

They become our only means of transport in our journey further south. We stop in cities along the way to replenish our food supplies, and sometimes sleep in tunnels. I had heard of the Mbuti Pygmies, one of the indigenous communities living in the heart of the Amazon Rain Forest. However, we had not expected to meet them so soon. After Colombia, we had come to the source of the Amazon River, and we had followed it further to the east.

When we saw smoke rising above the canopy of the forest, we could explain its cause because we were sure that the nuclear effects had not reached down here. We went to investigate, but we were ambushed by half naked pigmies wielding wooden spears. We were brought to a camp where we found many of their kind oblivious to what has happened to the outside world. Using sign language, we are able to explain our problem, and they soon realize we are harmless. The eldest orders the women to give us food.

In a way, we resemble them because we are wearing tatters, and our beards are long and dirty. We decide that we cannot move on because we learn that the land beyond is inhabited by poisonous snakes and wild animals. Besides, the undergrowth is so thick that we cannot move. We start a new life among the natives of the Amazon with the horses as the only living evidence of the world we left behind. There is no sign of technology here, but we teach them how to make simple huts using wood and branches.

We use wild herbs for medicine while various plants together with wild animals provided food. We occasionally go fishing in the Amazon River. We know that this is not the kind of life we wanted, but it is safer here. In our hearts, we hope and wait for another Vasco da Gama or Columbus to make another voyage and discover us, a race waiting for civilization to find them.