

## A Windy Night

The sound could almost be mistaken for a terror-filled shriek as it drives itself relentlessly against the other side of the thin wall you lean against. Reminding yourself that the wind is out there and you're in here does little to comfort you – you can still feel the chill seeping through, creeping along your skin and lifting goosebumps in an instant wherever it touches. If you hold your hands over your ears tightly enough, you can almost block out the sound, but through the cracks in the walls you can still see the dark sky exploding into pale yellow light each time a lightning bolt streaks across. You can squeeze your eyes shut, but you'll still feel the entirety of the small wooden structure rumble with each roll of thunder – and of course, you'll still be tightly bound by the persistent cold.

Had there been another option for shelter in the vast woods you were wandering around, maybe you wouldn't be sitting in a dilapidated old shack, praying it won't be blown down by the storm. Praying that you'll be safe for the night.

And praying that no one will find you.

Maybe the worst part of the wind is how it drowns out all other sounds. If someone tries to approach the shack, you won't hear them. No matter how hard you strain your ears, all you can hear is that horrible shrill whistling through the tree branches overhead. Seated firmly in the corner furthest away from the door, your knees pulled close to your chest and your bare feet planted solidly on the damp concrete on which you sit, you remain so still that you might not even be breathing.

If someone had been following you while you stumbled through the brush and trees, you wouldn't have heard them. If they were watching you tuck yourself away inside of the abandoned shed, you wouldn't have seen them. Now you have to pray that anyone on your tail would have been similarly blinded by the raging storm.

The wind picks up. The door bursts open.