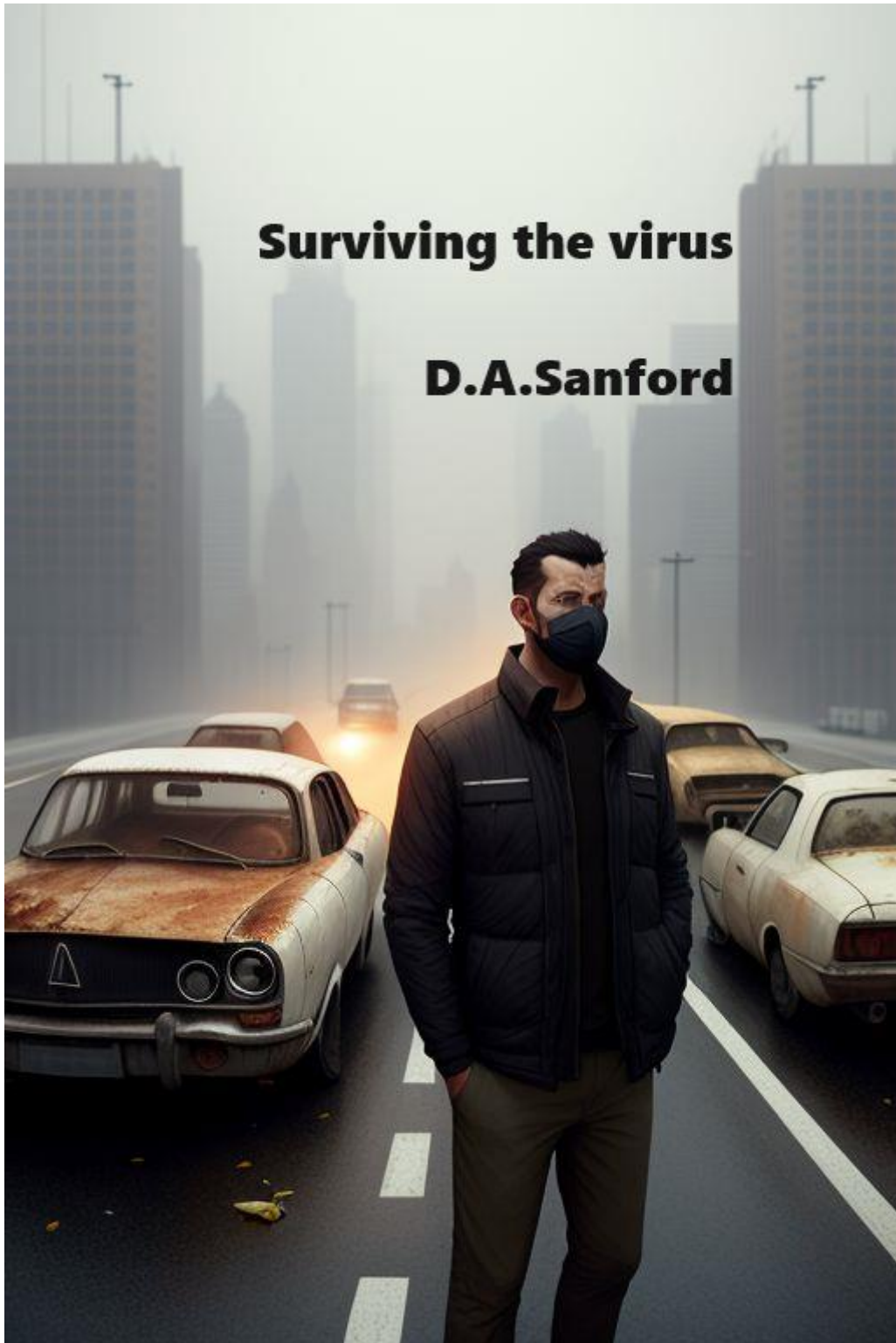


Surviving the virus

D.A.Sanford



Surviving the Virus by D.A.Sanford

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Warning: Contains adult content due to graphic descriptions of any or all of the following:

Battles, Language, Sexual

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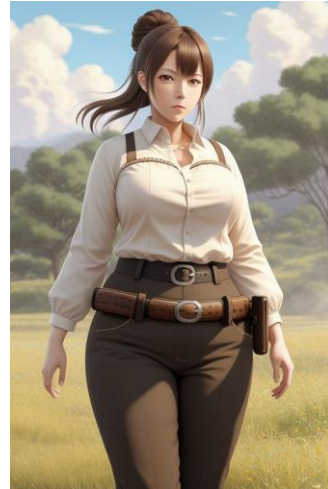
Key Characters



Trevor Jones



Becky Thompson



Jessica Rodgers



Rick Thomas



Cindy Thomas



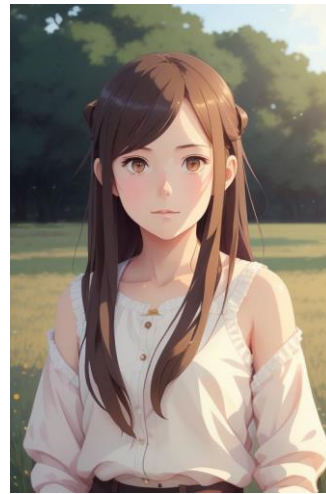
Bob and Lisa age 10



Mary



Amanda



Judy Age 13



Bob and Lisa midteens



Judy Midteen

Chapter 1: How we got here

The global politico was disappointed in the results of COVID. The underpowered virus turned out to be just another from of the flu. The chemical cocktail that they called a vaccine, pushed by everyone, was also a failure. The both became a joke. Only a small number of the population still clings to their masks. They needed something new, more virulent.

Their global mission was to reduce the populations down to the level where they could re institute the feudal lord system. COVID failed so they sent their labs back to work with the orders to create a more virulent strain. They succeeded beyond anyone's wildest dreams.

Only one thing went wrong.

The process is that scientists develop the virus then the vaccine. The virus is done but they are not having any luck with getting anything that will prevent infection so they keep on working.

With all the safety precautions in place, no one figured that one of them wanted to see what will happen in actual conditions. He took an infected animal and let it loose. It lived long enough to infect a few people. The virus, like COVID, is airborne transmitted so those few people infected everyone they even walked by while they coughed and sneezed.

Infected to death was less than 48 hours. Hospitals in that town saw a trickle that overnight became a flood. The hospital personnel were the first to recognize that this was not going to be controlled. There were the dedicated that stayed but a lot of the support personnel left their posts and ran to get out before it was too late.

It was too late.

First that town, then the county, then the country. The virus is doing its created design too well. With in a matter of days a country of multi billions was down to less than two or three thousand.

It spread globally due to modern transportation. Planes were landing with so many dead that they were not allowed to open their doors. Those planes were towed to remote areas of the airport. The problem was that people's survival instinct over road the moral obligation of the greater good sacrifices. Pilots and flight attendants were opening the emergency exits and escaped along with the other passengers that could move.

After a week, the world was in bad shape. Without workers to maintain the electric grids. The grids were failing to the cascade effect. The world has been plunged back into the pre-electric age. No radio, television and the worst, no cell phone or internet. It didn't matter because there is almost no one to use them.

The world population had eighty percent death rate. Of the remaining twenty percent, fifteen percent experienced mutations. There were both mental and physical mutations. The mental mutation is almost entirely feral aggression. The physical was also feral aggression with an increase of strength but far less reasoning.

The remaining five percent were just trying to survive. I, Trevor Jones, am one of those survivors.

It must be a natural immunity, I don't know, really don't care. My only concern is survival. First things first, I have to get out of this city. It already is starting to take on the odor of decay. Disease from the festering bodies won't be far behind.

Fortunately, I love hiking and camping. I have everything I need so it takes no time for me to load up my Jeep and head out. After some detours through city parks and back yards I was able to get to the highway.

People are predictable.

The amount of people trying to escape had clogged the highways out of the city. That made it a bumper to bumper parking lot of rotting bodies with the occasional mutants beating on each other or the few normal idiots, that chose the wrong thing like doing what everyone else is doing, panicking.

I am driving the wrong way on the clear highway. Why do most people choose to follow the rules. There are only a few stranded cars otherwise it is clear as far as the eye can see. It is twenty five miles to the exit that I normally take to get to my cabin.

The only thing that I don't have is some sort of firearm, did not feel as if I needed one at my apartment. I was wrong but can't do anything about it in the city. There are gun stores in the city but I'm not taking the chance. There are a few on the way to my cabin. I do have hunting rifles and side arms locked up in the cabin.

I bought my cabin a while back because it is so out of the way that you have to know about it to find it. Tucked deep in the woods on a dirt path, so small that I can't even call it a dirt road. More like a hiking trail.

The last time I was there, the overgrowth was causing the branches to scrape against all parts of the Jeep Cherokee. That is a good thing for times like this. I don't need to worry about trespassers.

Lucky for me but not for them, the arms dealers near the cabin were among the eighty percent. Ignoring the stench, I was able to take almost every weapon in the small store, along with the ammo to support the weapons.

Now I had dual 1911 45's semi-automatic pistols with extra mags strapped to my hips. I can breathe again.

I also raided general stores for the canned goods and non-perishable foods I could fit into the spaces in the Jeep left from the arms dealer. With hunting for my meat, all I really need is the vegies and snacks. Dried beans, pasta dry mixed and yes, much to my dislike, powdered eggs. Oh, I also got the vitally needed item that I would not be able to live without, coffee!

Starting the drive through the woods to my cabin, I begin to be worried. A lot of the branches seem to be broken. I stop the Jeep, grab my rifle, then I make my way stealthfully through the woods.

Approaching the cabin, I hear what sounds like a drunken party going on. Music is blaring and the sound of voices echoes throughout the forest. Whoever is there is not concerned about being heard.

Now in sight of the cabin, I see a few cars there. Mostly young men but a few young girls. I say young girls because they don't look like they are even sixteen. Some of the men are armed so I know that they have raided my weapons.

Do they know how to use them is the question. It's my cabin and they are trespassing. The rules have been thrown out the window. New rule, when in doubt, assume they will try to kill you.

"What the hell are you doing on my property?" I yell.

Their answer was to start firing in my direction. They were not skilled marksmen. I don't want to do what I must do. I am a marksman, Marine service trained. My first thought is to take down the ones who fired first. There were three who fired, the rest of the armed ones hesitated. I drop the one that was the most accurate. Then moved to the other two.

In the blink of an eye, the other two dropped.

"Drop your weapons and put up your hands. You try to run you die."

Two of the remaining drop their weapons but the rest run. They drop dead before their next step. that caused the others to throw up their hands. The three girls were crying.

"Please don't kill us, they kidnapped us."

The remaining two men are denying it. The look in their eyes say that they are hiding backups. They seem to nod to each other and start to go for their backups. They did not make it. I was trained, one shot one kill.

I emerge from my position. Rifle leveled. I can tell that the girls won't be trouble.

"Please, we'll do anything, please don't kill us."

"If you would, please turn around while raising your shirts so I can see if you happen to have anything tucked into your waist bands."

They do exactly that. they don't have anything.

"Now step away from those bodies and sit down on the ground where I can see you."

They comply. I pick up all the weapons. Yup they are mine. Now that my weapons are back with me, I come over to the girls.

"First and foremost, if you want to live through the day, tell me the truth. How did you get here. and how long have you been here?"

One girl spoke up "We have been here for a day. Those guys said that we could escape the virus by coming with them to this cabin. They said it was abandoned."

She was starting to cough.

I look at them and sadly say,

"The virus has an eighty percent fatality rate it starts with a cough, like the one you have. In no longer than the rest of the day we will know. You have been together so, I'm sorry the three of you most likely are infected. Did anyone of them have a cough?"

She is panicking "Two of them did. They all did not look that well but I thought it was the booze."

"I'm sorry." I say.

With in a matter of 24 hours, two of the three were dead. The third showed no signs of being sick.

She is a young brunet that her hair came to her shoulders. She is between five and a half to six feet tall. Not skinny but a figure that is pleasant to look at.

"What's your name?" I ask her

"Becky Thompson."

"How old are you, Becky Thompson?"

"17. I'll be 18 at the end of this month."

"Well, Becky Thompson, age 18, since you are showing no signs of the virus, it's almost safe to say that you are immune. Welcome to the new world. I will invite you to stay, which is with no strings attached, or you can take one of their cars and go. I'd advise you to stay. I'll teach you how to survive. What's your choice?"

"I'll stay. What I saw out there on the news, it looked worse than it was here. I'll stay"

"Good. you can clean up the mess they caused in my cabin or you can help me get rid of these bodies. which will it be?"

"Cleaning"

I use one of their cars to drive the remains down to the ravine that is miles away for disposal. I never asked Becky their names and she never questioned what I did with them. By the time I finished, she had cleaned up the cabin.

"Looks good. Now there should be paper and a pencil in that desk. Get them. I'll say items and you write them down. We are making a list of goods we need to scavenge. I have some that I gathered on the way here but we will need to replace all the stores I had here. They wasted a lot of essentials. We will travel to get these things. I say we because there is safety with two or three but any more is a mob."

"We need...."

I dictate a long list. Those guys must have been here longer before they got the girls. They wasted most of the food. Picture this, you are in a survival situation and you have food fights.

Survival or suicide both start with s but so does stupid.

"Toilet paper streamers, Stupid."

"Can I ask one thing?" Becky asks.

"Go ahead"

"Why did you kill all those men? Doesn't it bother you?"

"It bothers me but I can't let it get to me. If I had chased them off, I'd be looking over my shoulder waiting for them to ambush me. Killing them is a matter of self-preservation. There are a few, a very few that will be like you."

"Survival has rules. The first is trust no one at first. You must err on the side of caution. The world is now the wild, wild west. The majority of people want what you have and won't hesitate to kill you to get your stuff. That's why those men had to die."

"Food fights!" I shake my head.

I think she understands. Old society rules do not apply now.

"That looks like the essentials. We'll take the Jeep. Do you know of any out of the way stores around? Also, hardware stores. We need a few 55 gallon drums to store gas for the generator and the cars."

"There is a generator here?" She questions.

"Second rule of survival is, keep your eyes open. Observe your surroundings at all times."

Pointing to the switches on wall and the lamps, I continue.

"Most times, it is the obvious that escapes our vision. Those men were truly idiots. The gene pool is better without them."

I walk over to the outside wall of the cabin. With the keys that were behind a hidden door by the fireplace, I unlock the outside door. There was the generator panel. I pour in new gas, flipped the switch to the on position and it came to life.

"Now we have well water. we can flush the toilet. By the way, thank you for cleaning it out, Idiots. You think that if there is a flush toilet there has to be a pump. A pump that needs electricity. See where I am going."

"I need to open my eyes" Becky replies.

"Correct! You're learning. Let's get our supplies. Do you know of an out of the way general store?"

"Yes I do."

Chapter 2: Life in a cabin

Sure enough, Becky knew of an out of the way market. She worked there up until this started to go down. This was a small town cross between a grocery store and hardware store. but more grocery.

We were able to replace almost all of the things wasted. There was more than the Jeep could carry. I commented that we would need to come back for a second run.

Becky smiled, "Know your surroundings you said. Wait here."

She goes in the back. I hear the back door open and close. Then to my surprise, she pulls up to the front of the store in one of those new tall delivery vans. She gets out and tells me

"They would not let me drive this. It's mine now. Let's fill it."

The size of the van vs. the size of the store, we can take almost everything needed and some that we really didn't. Waste not want not, we did load chips, cookies, beer, soda and other non-essentials. I took all the ground coffee.

With the van we now could go and get those drums. We found them at the feed and grain. They had a modest selection of clothes so we both grabbed all that would fit us including boots socks and underwear. I insisted that Becky take more of larger sizes just to have them.

We probably will be in the cabin for at least a year. Enough to let the mutants die out, if they do. All I can hope for is that they starve out.

The final thing, you can't have enough weapons.

"You're from this area. Any gun stores or gun nuts in this area." I ask Becky.

"Down this road are both in the same store. The owner has a gun store and lives in the house next door. He always claimed that he could form his own army with what he had in his store room."

"Sounds good but let's go on the supposition that he is one of the survivors. We park a distance from the building. Then creep up to it and observe. It will be good practice for you. You tell me what you see."

"Remember the flush toilet. Look for the obvious. Open windows, the trash cans, smoke and smells. We need to determine is there life in there or is he dead. Know this, from what you have told me, he is not the type to abandon his stash. Alive or dead, he will be in there or in the store. Alive we try to trade. Dead we clean him out."

"I understand" She replies.

As planned, Becky stops the van where she feels is a safe distance from the gun store.. I turn the Jeep around and then she does the same with the van. If the owner is there we do not want to have to drive by if we need to flee. Once that's done we slowly creep up to the store site.

If you did not know that there was a store out here you would not find it.

This is a wide road. Two lanes, you can tell that this was once a main road that slowly died due to the highway passing this whole section. The only people, outside locals, that would use this road would be vacationers looking at the scenery.

The reason I bought the cabin was the scenery. Large tracks of nothing but forest broken by old houses. The rolling hills afforded excellent vistas. Looking down into the valleys, you can see forest as far as eyes can see.

Some of the forest is being harvested by the local lumber mill but not like the strip loggers. They are thinning out the old trees. That will allow the younger trees to thrive.

Every once in a while, the only evidence that there is a town in the area is the church steeple poking out of the green leaf carpet that is the tops of the tree canopy.

The store is set in a carved out clearing. The house is the typical two story white with green shutters. The real one's that you would close during a storm not those plastic decorations. The house was here before the store. Some family long ago may have had a farm. The land could have been cleared but now it is back to the old growth. Only the area around the house was cleared.

The store is definitely newer. Cinder block construction. Maybe forty foot square. There are large windows on either side of the door and have metal security bars over them. The door is the typical recessed entry way. That too had security fencing. I get a chuckle at the flag sign. It says

"Jack's rod and gun." Below that are two lines that I like. First line says, "If it needs killing," and the second says "Jack's can do it." In the world before the virus, I would have stopped. Now though, it tells me to be cautious. I don't need killing. Good flag though.

Now behind the cover of the bushes,

"Describe what you see to me," I whisper to Becky.

She describes the store first.

"The door security gate is closed and the bars on the windows are still in place. I don't see any movement but I would not just try to go in."

"Why?" I ask

"It looks small so there will be plenty hidden areas."

"That's correct. Someone could barricade themselves in there. It would be a hard time to get them out of there. Now what about the house?"

"There are a few windows open. All facing the store. I don't see any sign of movement. Trash looks like a bear got at it. The can is tipped over and bags of trash are torn apart. The doors are shut."

"Anything else?"

"There is no smoke smell or cooking for that matter but there is a smell of decay. Something is rotten."

I point to a corpse on the ground closer to the house and the car in the parking area.

"What do you think now?"

"Could be the owner but could be someone else."

"Is the body near the house or near the store?"

"It looks like the person was going towards the house."

"What you just told me is that I really need to be cautious. I would, for our safety, assume that the dead man was going up to the house and the owner shot him from the open window. Until we take a close look at the body, which is not going to happen now, we need to assume that the owner is alive, in the house and possibly watching. Err on the side of caution."

I tell her that what we are going to do is back off a little to where we can barely see the house. I'll yell and fire off a round from the woods across the road from the house. That will draw the attention of the owner. Alive he should be by one of the open windows.

"If he fires, I want you to get into the van and go to the grocery store. I'll meet you there. We will abandon this store. Do you understand what we are going to do?"

I get a firm yes.

"If there is no response from the house, I'm going to shoot at the front door. You are not to come out until I say it is okay. Shots from the house, you run, no shots from the house, you wait."

I get a nod from her then I go back a little bit more, cross the road and disappear into the brush.

"In the house" I yell and fire a round into the air. No response. Again, per the plan, I fire another round. This time hitting the door. Still no response. I make my way back to Becky.

"Now we approach the store but putting the store between us and the house. This side only has a small window with bars. Could be a bathroom window. He could be in the store."

"Why don't you fire a round through that small window." She suggests.

"Now you are thinking." I take aim and in an instant the window shattered.

"Please stop firing Don't shoot me."

We are startled. The voice is coming from the house and it sounds female.

"My father is dead. He died from the virus"

"We won't shoot. Come on out but make sure that we can see your hands. Then we will show ourselves"

Coming out of the house is another young girl. Becky recognizes her.

"That's Jess. She was in my class. We graduated together," Then she yells

"Jess, it's me Becky I'm coming out"

I stop her and loudly say, "She is not coming out."

Becky tells me that it is the owner's daughter, Jess Rodgers.

She's 18, long brown hair, mid five foot tall, a little overweight, mostly in the hips but also attractive. She grew up around weapons acts tough but is actually insecure.

The reason Becky did not tell me was that Jess was at her mother's place in the city. She is not supposed to be here.

"The unexpected needs to be expected. All the information known needs to be told. Now I won't let you go out there. Tell her to come over here" I say

"Jess, you need to come over here to the store." Becky tells her.

Jess was almost to the store anyways.

"Becky, why were you shooting at me. I almost returned fire. Who is that with you?"

"This is Trevor Jones, he owns that cabin way back in the woods. He saved me from some men that took three of us women to that cabin. Their all dead, the virus. You were supposed to be in the city."

"Your father is not the 'most friendly' even when you know him. We had to see if he was alive We knew that he would shoot first then ask questions. Shooting was the way to see if he was alive."

Jess says "I was going to go but my mom called saying that she did not want me to come until the virus thing calmed down so I stayed home."

"It is a good thing that you did not go." I told Jess, "The city's dead. The only ones left were the mutants. Listen, we need to get into your store and what you have in the house. What we offer is a room in the cabin to ride out the mutants. You have to know that it is only a matter of time until a group comes along to take what you have. You will be taken by force also."

Jess gets a serious but worried look.

She asks Becky, "Has he touched you?"

"He is nothing but kind. He has made no advance on me."

"What will it be? Let us take some of the arsenal and leave you here to fend for yourself or come with us and we take everything. Which will it be?"

"I'll go with you. Come into the house."

I tell them both that we needed to bring over the van and the Jeep. Jess walks with us. She obviously does not want to be alone. She rides with Becky and within minutes we are back at the house. As we walk up to the house, we pass the body.

"My father," Jess says, "That's as far as I could drag him"

"You want me to bury him?" I ask.

"No. He always said that all I needed to do is drag him into the woods. Animals need to eat. I think he would be happy just to be left here."

"Okay then, let's see what you have."

I am truly amazed. You name it, he had it. He was right, he could form his own army. From small arms to RPG's, mortars grenades, as I said you name it he has it. We will really need to make two trips with the van. Uniforms and such, with the exception of boots in our size and military gloves, can stay here as stores but the weapons will have to go with us. They can't be allowed to fall into the wrong hands.

"Do you know of any other vans in town?" I ask.

Jess informs me that there is a dealer that is a few miles from the store. There are a few vans there.

We get into the Jeep. There are quite a few SUV size ones but it is the two that are like the one we already have that interest me. We find the keys in the office. Also, the keys to the gas pump.

"Here's the plan" I tell them "We fill up these two along with the Jeep. We are going to fill these with everything we want from the house and store. We drive the three vans to the cabin. Then come back for the Jeep later. These vans can make the perfect mobile storage units."

It took the better part of the day to load from the house and store but we now have all that were weapons other than the odd souvenir bow and arrows. If we need the other items we can come back. We will need to visit the other store in the near future to get Jess some clothes but for now she has most of her clothes packed and in the van.

It was quick to the turnoff but we took it slow coming up to the cabin. There are now a lot of scratches on all the vans but we made it here. It was turning dark so I started the generator. The water started to heat up.

"Showers would be ready in around an hour."

Both girls were happy. There are two bedrooms in the cabin. The two will need to sleep in one room and I will take the other.

I cook something up while they are showering. We eat, they go to bed and I keep watch until I fall asleep.

It's morning when I wake to the smell of something being cooked for breakfast by both girls.

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