

WHAT STAYED BETWEEN US



1Earthling

Shared Experience Booklet 01

2026 – 2027

Shared Experience — Booklet 01

Edition 1 - The Storm?? November 2026

Edition 2 - Out In The Dark ?? January 2027

Edition 3 - After The Water ?? March 2027

Edition 4 - They Stayed There ?? April 2027

THE STORM



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They were driving back from town,
the sky turning quicker than it should.
Rose said, "Slow down, there ahead,
someone pulled up by the woods."

She said, "Joe, that's Tom and Mary,
looks like he's changing out a tyre.
We should stop and see if they're alright
before this weather turns worse."

Joe just kept his hands upon the wheel,
said, "I'm not helping him tonight,
not after what he did back then,"
just kept driving through the rain.

Rain was falling harder now,
Tom was slipping in the mud.
The wrench kept turning in his hand,
knuckles split and starting to swell.

Mary sitting in the car,
watching headlights fade away.
"You two were close once, Tom."
He just shook it off.

Rose said, "Joe, we made it home."
Water running through the yard,
wind was pushing at the doors
like it wanted everything.

They were lifting what they could,
stacking things up off the floor,
saying it would pass them by
like it always had before.

But it kept on rising fast,
nothing holding like it should.
Rose said, "I can't see a way,
not from here, not now."

She said, "The Johnsons down the creek,
Old Man Brown beyond the bend.
If it's bad enough for us,
it'll be worse for them."

Then the power cut to black,
and the road just disappeared.

Sound was carrying through the storm,
but nothing sounded clear.

Water pushing through the door,
current pulling at their feet.
Rose was holding onto Joe,
said, "Joe, what do we do now?"

Didn't matter where they stood,
didn't matter who was right.
Didn't think of anything,
just getting through the night.

Then a light came through the dark,
fighting hard against the flow.
A small boat pushing through the current,
closer than it ought to go.

Rose just started calling out,
she saw a way out for them.
The boat barely holding steady,
still it made its way to them.

Didn't call out any names,
didn't have to say a word.
Just held steady in the rain,
and waved them to come in.

They climbed in without a word,
didn't ask or question why.
Light was cutting through the dark
as they pulled away that night.

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OUT IN THE DARK



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Water running down the hill,
scattered lights in the distance.
Engines idling in the night,
people arriving in the dark.

Mary standing by the door,
counting faces as they came.
Didn't ask them where they'd come from,
just waved them further in.

Blankets thrown across the floor,
wet boots lined along the wall.
Voices low against the storm,
no one speaking very much.

Children sleeping where they could,
parents staring at the rain.
The radio just cutting in,
then dropping out again.

Tom was down beside the shed,
water pushing at the ground.
A small boat pulled up on the side,
now shifting at the water's edge.

Mary watching from the door,
didn't call out anything.
He just turned and pushed away,
the motor cutting through the dark.

Didn't stop to think it through,
didn't slow to second guess.
Just the engine in his hands
and the current up ahead.

Nothing left to carry now,
nothing left to hold onto.
Just the engine in his hands
and the dark he's moving through.

The river running past the track,
branches breaking in the flow.
The boat was shifting side to side,
harder than it was before.

Lights were fading further back,
nothing steady in the dark.
Only memory of the road
somewhere underneath it all.

Joe just sitting in the bow,
Rose beside him holding tight.
Didn't say a single word,
didn't need to look around.

They pulled up near the shed,
Rose stepped out into the rain.
Didn't stop to look around,
just moved in with everyone.

Joe paused beside the boat,
looked across and met his eyes.
Then stepped back in and took his seat
as Tom pushed out into the dark.

Didn't turn to look behind,
didn't ask what came before.
Just the sound of water moving
as they pushed out through the dark.

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AFTER THE WATER



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Water settled in the fields,
mud across the lower road.
Fences bent along the creek,
debris caught up in the wire.

Tracks cut deep along the hill
where the cars had made their way.
Engines quiet in the yards,
nothing moving like before.

People working through the day,
clearing what they could away.
No one speaking very much,
just getting on with what remained.

Piles stacked along the fence,
things laid out to dry again.
Someone calling from the road,
others heading over slow.

Tom was working by the shed,
checking what was still in place.
Tools laid out across the ground,
a water line against the wall.

Mary moving through the house,
putting things back where they'd been.
Didn't stop to look around,
just kept moving room to room.

Didn't carry what had passed,
didn't hold to anything.
Just the work in front of them
and the time it took to do it.

A truck pulled up along the track,
people stepping out in twos.
Didn't ask for anything,
just got straight to clearing mud.

Joe was working by the doorway,
mud still thick across the floor.
Rose was working with the others,
buckets moving through the rooms.

Tom just walked up past the fence,
set a roll of wire down.
Joe just nodded once at him,
then they turned and carried on.

Light was sitting on the hill,
water pulling slowly back.
Nothing said about the night,
just the work that still remained.

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THEY STAYED THERE



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A chair still sitting by the door,
a cup untouched upon the bench.
Things not moved from where they were
since the water pulled away.

Boots still placed beside the wall,
a coat still hanging where it was.
Nothing said about the change,
just the quiet in the house.

People coming through the yard,
dropping things and heading on.
Voices lower than before,
staying only for a while.

Mary's name not spoken now,
no one asking where she'd been.
Just the sound of work outside
carried slowly through the day.

Tom was sitting by the door,
hands resting on his knees.
Watching people come and go,
nodding as they passed him by.

Didn't move to join them yet,
didn't say he wouldn't go.
Just remained where he was sitting,
eyes fixed somewhere out ahead.

Didn't carry what was gone,
didn't try to make it clear.
Just the space she'd left behind
and the way it settled in.

Joe just walked up from the track,
set a bag down near the step.
Didn't say what brought him there,
just stayed on and lent a hand.

Rose was moving in the kitchen,
setting things out on the bench.
Didn't call for anyone,
just left something there for him.

Joe just sat down next to him,
neither looking at the other.
Time just passing where they were,
nothing needing to be said.

Light was fading through the trees,
voices thinning in the yard.
Tom still sitting by the door,
Joe still there beside him.

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