The Chosen

Walking down the deserted streets I have no idea why I should be the one who has been chosen. The shops and restaurants and bars have all been left just as they were. It seems as if I could walk into any one of them and things would be just the same as before.

As I pause in front of Rampo's, I can hear the ringing of the bell over the door, see the smile of old Mr. Rampo, smell the freshly baked bread, touch the fabric of the tablecloth, taste the hearty dark ale.

Now the doors are closed, the curtains drawn. Yet somehow nothing is different. The place is exactly the same. The only thing missing are the people.

It is the same wherever I walk. The buildings are still standing but no one is in them. I pass my own house and look up at the bedroom window. I see you looking back at me, but then realize it is only my imagination. I remember the last time we made love, the urgent tug of your hand on my neck, your warm breath mingling with mine as we kissed.

Why should I, of all people, have been chosen? There is nothing special about me. Nothing special at all. I am completely ordinary. I grew up in a normal family, had a normal childhood and adolescence. I worked at a normal job, got married about the age I was supposed to, lived in an ordinary house, paid my debts and paid my taxes, and never once thought that my life would ever be different.

Now I wander the empty streets, alone, knowing that I will never again share a simple conversation with anyone, never again feel the touch of my flesh against the flesh of another, never again stand in the presence of a single other person.

I am the last human being on earth. There is no point in looking any further. Wherever I go, it will all be the same. I lie down in a doorway and let the shadows of the night climb over me.

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