

SNOWPOCALYPSE

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PHOTO: BOB MULE



he snow falls on the ash-covered mountains and gnarled tree stumps. Gray figures fade to white and the landscape takes on an air of purity. But as chimes echo in the distance, I am reminded that this dream will not last long. It's time to start my morning chores. Goodbye my beautiful snow, my beautiful mountains. One day we will reunite.

It's December 1, 145 A.B. (After Burn) and our cave-dwelling colony, Earth Conscience, is not only surviving the post-apocalypse, we are thriving. Almost 10,000 strong with 71 expecting mothers and 23 elders nearing the end of this life cycle, including the son of our tribe's founder, Silius.

Every Saturday night we gather in the pantheon and the elders tell stories of pre-burn days on the Earth's surface. My favorites are Silius's. His parents were snowboarders from a long lineage of mountaineering enthusiasts. He told stories passed down from his ancestors of snowboarding in the mountains of Jackson, WY, and the sensation of powder under your board and over your head; the beauty of snow falling on the trees and the peace it offered the mind.

By 2042 A.D., global warming had won. The Earth's scorching average temperature had risen to 153 degrees Fahrenheit, drying up lakes, frying farms, eradicating most food sources. Dust storms encompassed vast swaths of continents. Mobilized by the Earth's inability to support human life, the Consumer Conscience Tribe had been colonizing Mars for decades and was on its last leg of transport flights by 2049 A.D.

My tribe, however, couldn't bear the idea of abandoning our planet; to move on to the next planet and leave Earth



as a landfill of our past. So we built down, discovering caves and underground fresh water lakes and rivers in the heart of the Nevada desert. By 2051 the dust storms had grown in such strength and magnitude they entombed Earth in perpetual darkness. That spring our tribe retreated to our underground world, cutting off our connection to the outside indefinitely, ready to wait out the apocalypse.

It's December 21, 145 A.B., the mark of Winter Solstice. The surface forecasters are predicting a break in the dust storms, and even a chance that sunshine will peek through the clouds that have enshrouded Earth for 145 years. This means I get to feel sunshine for the first time! Silius has a collection of snowboards he has stashed away for our one-day return to Earth's surface and he said I could use one for the celebration! Words cannot describe the excitement I have to wear a snowboard on

my feet and the ability to express a creative freedom like never before! As our torches guide us to the two feet thick concrete doors that have served as our guardians, I reflect on my intent for the solstice and what I will burn in our sacrificial fires.

I buckle into my snowboard and I realize that snowboarding embodies what once was – an environment that was so pristine and symbiotic. We have learned so much, how incredibly destructive Mother Nature can be when humans meddle with her balance. Hers is a force that shouldn't be reckoned with.

As I feel the edges of my snowboard cut through this soft and seemingly innocent dust, I realize just how far we have to go till the day we can emerge and live on the surface of Earth again. I think of my future children and what world they will live in. I can only dream that they will wake to greet the sun every morning surrounded by family,

fresh water, gardens of food and once again living harmoniously as a creation of Mother Nature. **HB**

Two-time women's pro champ of the Dick's Ditch Banked Slalom, big-mountain shredder Halina Boyd is stoked to join the Jones Snowboards, Nikita Clothing and Shred Optics team this year. Follow her on Instagram @bbombtheoriginal

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