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### *Waiting Game*

My name is Theresia, but no one has ever called me that except my father. People call me Tessa, it seems to fit me more but my father still calls me Theresia, sometimes I think it's to piss me off. My father's name is Eric and my mother's name was Anna; she died when I was two. I don't really remember her. My life so far had been plain until the summer I went to England. I had finally made my father go insane with my rebellious outbursts, so he decided to send me to an old friend's house in the middle of nowhere. The day I left California my whole life changed; maybe it was because of the war, but mostly everything changed because of Bellamy, Lucas, Rosie and especially, Will. I had the best of times with them, but the war had left all of us scarred one way or another. So here's my story.

I had finally landed at the airport in England about twenty minutes ago and I was already annoyed with their stupid accents. I hated my father, how could he send me here? Elizabeth, my dad's old friend was supposed to be here, but obviously, she had more important things to do. I started playing with my blonde hair and leaned back on the hard plastic chair. Suddenly, a boy about twelve with brown hair and freckles stood in front of me. "Pardon me, are you Theresia?" he said. "Uh...yeah, who are you?" I said annoyed. "My name is Bellamy, I'm here to pick you up and take you home," he said. I got up, grabbed my suitcase and started walking towards the entrance. Bellamy followed me without saying a word. When we got outside, he walked in front of me and lead me to the parking lot to an old blue jeep. "Where's your mother?" I said. He walked towards me and grabbed my suitcase with his scrawny arms and threw it in the trunk.

“Mums out of town but she’ll be back in a few days.” He said in his thick English accent. “What! Who’s going to drive?” I said. “I will,” he said calmly. “You, please you’re like twelve.” I said sarcastically. “I’m fourteen and not to mention your only ride,” he sighed. I rolled my eyes at him and muttered whatever, as I got in the car. He started the engine and we began to drive past soldiers and onto a narrow road. After thirty minutes I turned towards him and said, “By the way, it’s Tessa not Theresia and how much longer until we get there?” “About an hour more, so you may fall asleep, if you want Tessa.” I slouched back on the worn out seat and looked out the window to the endless sea of trees, I watched the sun's light beam on the leaves as the shadows danced on the ground below. A wave of exhaustion began to descend over me and I felt the world drift away into nothing.

I woke up to a soft shake and I opened my eyes to see Bellamy smiling awkwardly at me. “You’re drooling,” he said. I wiped my hand across my mouth embarrassed only to realize there was nothing there. “Ugh, you lied to me.” I said accusingly. “I did, and now we’re here,” he said smiling. Here turned out to be a farm in the middle of a vast forest. The red door of his house opened and two blonde kids ran outside. They looked alike, twins maybe-- although the girl seemed taller than the boy and they looked about nine. “Hello Theresia, I’m Rosie and this is Lucas my brother,” she said smiling widely enough for me to see she was missing a tooth. “It’s Tessa, if you don’t mind I just want to go inside and be alone for awhile.” Her smile deflated and honestly I felt bad for being such an ass to her, but I wasn’t in the mood to chitchat. She showed me my room and left me alone for the rest of the day. I hadn’t eaten but I didn’t care, I liked to make myself starve, it made me feel in control of myself. It made me feel strong. I had been here for five weeks and so far everyday was the same. The only thing changing was the

news of the sixth World War happening; you'd think by now everybody would have their you know what together and learn from the last five wars.

I also met William. He was the eldest of the siblings with light brown hair and pale gray eyes that seemed so full of knowledge for someone who was only seventeen. That summer I fell in love with Will, but falling for him wasn't like falling at all. It was like walking into a house and suddenly knowing your home. I also learned to love the twins and Bellamy. I wasn't Tessa the plain lonely girl anymore, I was Tessa, someone's girlfriend, someone's friend. A month after the war began we were separated, Rosie and I were sent to a safe camp. Lucas was shot in the chest when they found us hiding in the barn. He was only nine, he would never have his first kiss, he would never marry or have children. Will and Bellamy were sent to fight in the war. Bellamy never came back. He would never go to America and eat a Twinkie like I promised him. All these simple things, all these nevers, all these promises we would never keep. For a while, tomorrow was not promised and sometimes I didn't care if it was, but then I thought of Will. His soft hair, kind heart and his wise words. I promised him I would go back to the barn as soon as I could and that I would protect Rosie, and I did, I went back after the war was over. So did he, but he was different.

He had fought all six months in the war and I know he must have seen things the Devil himself would never dream of. He had thick rugged scars on his back and he never talked. He shut the world out and let the pain build inside him until a year had passed and he finally cried in my arms and let the pain go. After that, everyday I told him memories I had of us together, memories of the time we all went swimming in the lake a few miles from the barn. The nights we would all go outside as a family and watch the stars shine through the dark blue blanket. I healed

him slowly and let time wash away all the pain. I waited patiently for him to come back from the lonely abyss he had fallen in. Rosie healed too, I sang to her at night when she had nightmares and she comforted me when I dreamed of the nights I was abused by the men at our camp. I never told her about it, but I think she heard me cry at night when they would leave.

Elizabeth never came, and I never heard from my father again. We were all in a waiting game after the war, always waiting to see what would happen next. I like to write now. I sit by the lake and write about my pain and this is how I heal myself. I think a lot here too, like how sometimes we put too much passion on the biggest dreams and priorities in life that we fail to love the simple things. We search so much for the right choices or care about starving yourself like I used to because I cared more about being thin. I used to think the world was ending if I gained a pound, but it isn't until you're really suffering that you realize there are bigger problems in the world.

The war happened when I was sixteen and now at eighteen, I still feel like it happened yesterday. I know now that life isn't about searching for the things that can be found. It's about letting the unexpected happen and finding things you never searched for. If I could go back and stop the war, I wouldn't. Will won't say so, but I know he wouldn't either. I see Will walking towards me and he sits down next to me by the lake where we first kissed. I grab his hand and we watch the water flow freely as nature's music fills the air around us. This is how I live now, I do not know what tomorrow may hold, but with him by my side I don't care. "I love you, Will" I say to him. I don't expect him to answer back but like I said, life is full of unexpected things. "I love you."