**PROLOGUE**

We had thought that the world would last forever. That humanity would conquer and triumph over mother nature, and move on to broader horizons. When those first bombs dropped, well, I guess the focus shifted from living in a better world to surviving in the current one. Also, making sure that as many things that could survive did; people, books, the entirety of human history. It took a long time to rebuild. And we're the fortunate ones, or so I've heard.

To be fair to the ancients, it has now been a very long time since then. I think I heard an estimate of what our time would have been relative to the old calendar, somewhere around 150,000 ‘AD’ but I could be wrong. Either way, that we've managed to survive for this long as a species, it still amazes me. Not to mention how little we've changed, though we probably owe that to the fact nothing’s really changed environmentally. You could probably take one of us, go back thousands of years, and we'd be able to pass us as "normal."

I sometimes think about the old world, the one from before the first nukes. About how things were, as a whole. Sure there are stories, but I had always wanted to see it. Despite the centuries of peace, if things keep going the way they have been, I guess I will be able to see it.

Don't get me wrong, things are still going great – at least on the surface. But like they say, all good things must come to an end. Damn though, can't believe we lost another sat-com array. Not too many of those left. Crime rates are rampant all over the board, and arrest rates are not keeping up. That's leaving out class I crimes. Worse off, more damn puritans keep popping up. Tensions are already high enough – we don't need them, especially the ones that love going on killing sprees.

Remember what I said about survival? They estimated the survival odds of those first bomb victims, at least in our area: 11% overall. I've been thinking about survival lately, probably because our survival is at threat, *my* life is at threat. Huh, it feels kinda funny, saying that. I really hope his plan works, otherwise, we'll have to continue this conversation in the sky, figuratively, of course.

For now, this is Jessica Ansi, economist, signing off. May the gods watch over us.

P.S. - And Alex, try not kill anyone next time, alright? You know he doesn't like it when you do.