

Two Miles

I wanted two miles, it's all we needed. Every morning we walked at least two miles or I couldn't go on with my day. It's one of our routines. I met with my best friend and walking buddy, Alise, in the parking lot across from the cafe. We were walking two miles whether we felt like it or not. We had our hoodies, water bottles, and were strapped up with our best walking shoes.

The sky was angry with broiling purple clouds while the wind whipped around us. "Do you really think we should walk today? It looks like it could rain at any minute," Alise said as we quickly stretched our legs.

"Oh yeah, we could be done with this in less than an hour, like we always do." I huffed confidently, walking to the end of the block as she followed close by. As we passed shops and storefronts, people were buzzing about, running in and out collecting last minute goods. Others were boarding up windows and closing early.

I wasn't concerned though, we had time. We came up to the middle of the path, it was an East-West direction. We headed West and heard some distant thunder. "I don't know Jane, I think we should just head home. This storm is getting strong fast," Alise said while looking at me, her voice a higher pitch than normal.

"Oh, come on! Don't worry about it," I said to encourage her. "We will be to the end and back long before that nasty storm gets to us. Let's keep going, Alise." We picked up the pace.

Shortly after a quarter of a mile, the wind picked up, the trees along the path looked like frantic car lot air dancers. I walked a little faster thinking I could get this done sooner and still make the two-mile mark.

I had my 2 cups of coffee and my cream cheese bagel to look forward to when I returned home. Delicious hot coffee exactly the way I liked it.

The strong smell of moisture filled our nostrils just about the half-mile mark, making me start doubting my decision. But we persisted on, quickly walking on the asphalt toward the end, only making a few remarks about the weather or the ever-impending doom of the sky.

Then, the sky split open with a loud crack, our bodies jolted. Large droplets of rain started coming down with force. Alise was done, I could tell by the wild look in her eyes as she stared at me in fear, her feet firmly planted, not moving another step.

"Jane, this is not worth dying over. You and your routines!" She grabbed my arm. "We have to go back now and get safe!" She had to yell over the noise of the wind and rain for me to hear her.

"It's not much farther, Alise, let's get it done quickly!" I pulled my arm away and kept going. She did not. "No!"

I stopped and turned to face her. "Why, Alise? We are so close. We just need to go a little bit farther!" I angrily pointed out our destination.

"No, Jane. Look around you! You're insane! I can't do this anymore, if you go on, you're going alone. I'm not risking my life for this stupid walk or goal or whatever it is you're doing. I'm done." She shook her head, turned around, and ran back the other way into the wind and rain, with the storm raging on.

“Fine,” I thought, “I’ll do it myself.” I kept going. I just had to make it, storm or no storm. I pulled my hood over my head, tugged the strings tight, and carried on. “Just another three quarters of a mile, I can definitely make it.” I told myself.

Less than a quarter of a mile left, my feet froze. The rushing sound alone was enough to stop me in my tracks. Big and fast, mud and silt swirling around like quicksand ready to swallow me up, the liquid brown surface was roiling. I could feel the energy in the air. I knew this was it and I had failed. The flash flood had sealed my fate, blocking the way to the end.

I threw up my hands in disgust. “Okay then! I get it!” I yelled into the sky, tears burning my eyes. I already knew in the back of my mind, Alise was right.

I started half speed-walking, half running back the way I came, my head hunkered down into the already soaked hood. I must find Alise and let her know. We can walk together, but not when mother nature is trying to kill us. I hope she’s still my friend.

I realized I can’t control everything. Being stubborn won’t change the weather, and it definitely doesn’t help with friendship. I must take life one step at a time and let faith do the walking.