

Once upon a time, in a very, very distant planet there lived Noelle. Noelle and everyone else around her did not have a happy life. There were no schools, roads or cars. Besides humans, all there was were “neuts”. To be more precise, there were the 9 o’clock neuts, the 12 o’clock neuts, the 3 o’clock neuts, and the 6 o’clock neuts.

The neuts were much smaller than humans, but they had extraordinary power. They patrolled every three hours until 6 o’clock in the morning, making sure nothing was out of the place. This went on for thousands of years, with new generations of neuts and humans, until one surprising day.

On that morning, Noelle sat at the table, munching on the few wild berries her family had been able to gather. Her plan for the day was simple and boring: sit on the pre-historic couch and watch the neuts give people dirty looks. Noelle was starving and dying of boredom. Sometimes she felt sorry for herself that she couldn’t go to the counter and get a bag of chips. Sometimes she wished the neuts had kinder hearts, and that neuts and humans were friends. The last time Noelle had been spoken to by a neut, she had been four years old. She could not remember what they had said, but she did remember that it ended happily. She had been extremely lucky because in most cases it those kinds of conversation didn’t end peacefully.

She looked at the family sundial and saw that it was almost time for the 9 o’clock neuts. As she dragged herself to her pre-historic couch for another boring day of watching neuts yap at the poor humans, she saw a wave of neuts going to an incident.

She was shocked by this because the last time she had seen neuts go to incidents in waves was the when there was a cave in at their headquarters. The neuts only went to incidents in waves when something that was theirs broke down. Noelle stumbled back onto the couch, bored and tired.

That night Noelle didn’t have her usual dream. She had a dream that was nothing about food; it was about an escape, an escape from Neutland! She was the captain of the escape along with a, a neut! Noelle awoke in a pool of sweat, she remembered the dream and she shuddered. But there was something about this dream that bugged her. She didn’t know what. Noelle told her mom about the dream and all her mom said was that she needed to get out of the house more often. But Noelle knew. She knew in her heart that the dream was a message, a warning.

For the rest of the day Noelle listened to her mom and went outside for a bit. Neutland looked even worse than she imagined. People were crying in the open, neut gunshots were going off everywhere. It looked like a nuclear war zone. Noelle felt sad and sorry for all the people who had pain. She didn't want to see all these people suffer because of the neuts.

Suddenly Noelle heard a voice. She looked back and saw a neut waving at her to come over. Noelle's heart began to pound and she broke into a sweat. What had she done wrong?

"Listen girl, I don't want to hurt you. I want to help you," said the neut. "I know what we neuts are doing to you, and I want to get you out of here," continued the neut. "I know the locations of all the neut equipment, and space ships." Noelle's heart was pounding. "Here!" The neut handed an access card to Noelle, and before Noelle could say a word, the neut vanished into thin air.

Noelle stumbled into the house, still shocked by what had just happened. She glanced at the access card that had a picture of the neut on it and the locations of the ships. She went up to bed and decided she would think about the access card in the morning. That night she had the same dream as the night before, detail for detail. She awoke once again in a pool of sweat, and the events from the day before came back to her.

Noelle decided that she would test the access card. If it worked, she could escape Neutland! Just that thought was overwhelming. How wonderful to finally escape the control of the neuts! She quickly ran downstairs and gobbled up her share of berries, and then she was out the door running towards the nearest neut security center.

It didn't take long for Noelle to reach the center. She quickly and quietly snuck up to the security scanner and placed the card inside. Almost instantly the doors opened, and Noelle could hardly contain her excitement. She turned and skipped directly to her friend Elaine's house to tell her the news. "You can't be serious!" exclaimed Elaine as Noelle showed her the neut access card. "Finally, a neut with feelings and a heart!"

"We have to start planning the escape" said Noelle.

Noelle and Elaine had decided not to tell their parents about the secret escape, because they might terminate it. They decided that they would escape the following week. Their plan was simple. They would alert the community about the escape one day before, use the access card to enter the security center, override the security database, and takeoff with the neuts' spaceships.

The day of the escape came and Noelle and Elaine were making final adjustments to their plan. Noelle was running frantically around their small community telling everyone about their impending escape. Noelle repeatedly got comments like "The girl is crazy!" and "You're gonna get us killed!" but she ignored all of them and just kept on running. When she finally was finished, she sprinted back to Elaine's house and they began to gear up.

Their gear was somewhat simple. They had a ray gun that they stole from a young neut, the access card, and some green fiber grass in case they got hungry. Noelle and Elaine then had to do the most feared part of the mission, which was to tell their families about the escape. Noelle walked nervously back to her house while Elaine told her family about the escape. She saw her dad on the pre-historic couch napping. "Dad!" Noelle shouted. Noelle's dad woke with a start. "Dad, I have something to tell you," continued Noelle.

"Yeah?" said her dad and she quickly stammered something about their daring escape.

"WHAT! You mean I finally can taste coffee?!" said her dad.

"Yeah, sure I guess," replied Noelle, still nervous.

"Why are you so nervous? You're about to attempt the first and only escape from Neutland!" exclaimed her excited father. "So, Noelle, when do we leave?"

"Tonight," replied Noelle

"Noelle! Start packing!"

"Actually, Dad, I already finished packing, and so has the rest of our community," said Noelle.

Noelle's dad was speechless. He ran upstairs to tell the rest of the family, while Noelle sprinted out the door the second her dad disappeared upstairs. She didn't even stop to hear her mom's reaction.

As Noelle neared Elaine's house, she was worried. What if her friend's parents grounded her? What would she do? She didn't wait to find out. Within seconds she was in Elaine's room.

"How did it go?" asked Noelle.

"Perfect, my parent's reaction was the opposite of what we feared!" exclaimed Elaine breathlessly.

"In that case, let's get ready!" exclaimed Noelle, her nervousness returning.

Noelle and Elaine waited and waited until they could wait no more. They got up and began to memorize their plan, word for word. That pretty much took up the rest of their day.

Noelle and Elaine were ready, geared up and watching the clock. It was nearing 10:00PM, way past the last neut patrol. Noelle had observed the neut facility for several days, and they had figured out that the neuts all went to sleep at 11:39PM *exactly*. They planned to set out at 11 o'clock so they could reach the neut faculty by 12 o'clock, which would guarantee that all the neuts, except the guard neut, would be asleep.

It was now 11 o'clock, and Noelle and Elaine were ready, but would the community come?

There was a murmur of soft voices growing from outside. Noelle peeked through the window and almost fainted. The entire community had come! Noelle skipped downstairs in delight. Elaine followed closely behind. Together they greeted the community quietly, and quickly went over their plan. There were some unanswerable questions like "What happens if we fail?" and "How do you know if this will work?" but Noelle and Elaine ignored all of them.

The community slowly and quietly made their way towards the neut facility, and as they neared, Noelle checked out the premises. Once Noelle knew that everything was clear, they signaled the rest of their community. Noelle removed the access card from her pouch and scanned it. The doors opened instantly, and there were murmurs from the community.

“Shhhhhh!” exclaimed Noelle. The community crept down the dim hallway, and there were no neuts in sight. They eventually reached the neut sleeping facility, and this was the place where they had to be the most silent. The community inched forward,

quieter than they had ever been before. The thought that one person's mistake could mess the plan up and make their lives even worse horrified Noelle.

As the community passed the last corner of the neut sleeping facility, everyone gave a silent sigh of relief. Now all that stood between them and victory was a...

"FREEZE!"

The community turned around in shock. There stood the very neut that had helped Noelle and her friend get this far.

"You really thought that I would give you a chance to leave? You really thought that I would destroy Neutland?" asked the neut, not waiting for a response. "Well, this escape ends here!" said the neut.

"NO!" exclaimed Noelle angrily.

Noelle drew her ray gun after noticing that the neut did not have one of his own. The neut was taken aback, "W-where did you get that?" stammered the neut.

Noelle and Elaine didn't answer. They grabbed the neut by his arms and dragged him towards a closet. Noelle and Elaine locked the neut inside, and threw the key in a nearby incinerator. They quickly but quietly ran back to their community, and everyone was still there, and they knew that these two girls were going to save them after decades of suffering.

As the entire community traveled further and further into the facility, they faced more and more challenges, but when they reached the tunnel that led to the neuts' ships, the community's excitement was uncontrollable. Elaine could hold her excitement no more, "FREEDOM!!!" she bellowed. Then there was a BANG! and a loud siren went off.

"Elaine!!" exclaimed Noelle trembling. The next thing she knew was that they were surrounded by neuts.

The neuts got closer and closer to them and when Noelle screamed "Attack!", not one soul moved. Even Noelle and Elaine could not find the nerve to move.

Without warning, a huge ray blast came at the neuts. All of them were instantly disintegrated! Everyone looked up and there stood the neut who had betrayed them earlier! Everyone instantly knew that he had come back as an ally, not an enemy. The plan had worked, only the last step was left: ESCAPE!

The community was boarding the only neut spaceship left at the pad, as the sun was steadily rising. In the distance Noelle could see the neuts looking inside their houses demanding answers of each other. The humans knew that this was the last time they would be seeing the neuts!

The community sailed along through space and weeks passed. The people relied on the neuts' luxurious food and water. They kept on flying with no planets in sight until one day when Noelle shouted, "A planet! A planet!" Everyone exploded with joy. They danced and partied until they reached the planet.

Noelle and Elaine decided to go first, and as they stepped off the spaceship, they were filled with excitement. There wasn't a neut in sight, just humans. The rest of the community rushed off the spaceship and they were greeted by friendly people. The people gave them homes, coffee, food and welcomed them into their society.

The community slowly fit in with the others, the kids went to school, the adults had jobs, and there weren't any dictators like the neuts. Everyone enjoyed their new lives, but no one would ever forget about the Neut Dynasty and the cruel life they used to endure in Neutland.