

The Glow of the City

It was a big city, one of the only ones left. It had at least a few thousand occupants and what you would expect from a regular city; suburbs big buildings, and a few reactors here and there.

Jeffery was also a regular occupant in the city. He had bottle cap glasses, dark brown hair, a small pointed nose, green eyes, and glowed like everyone else.

The elevator was out of order so he headed down the stairs. On his way down the stairs after breakfast, he began to wheeze. It sounded just like his grandfather before he died of the radiation. He noticed a worn glove. He picked it up and studied it. It had a stitched eye on the top. He thought someone would pay good money for it. He put it in his backpack and continued down the stairs.

While he was on the bus, he noticed Dirty Joe walking and waved to him. Everyone called him Dirty Joe because he had a case of amnesia and forgot his name. No one else knew his name either, but he had a stench about him he could not get rid of no matter how many times he took a shower, so everyone called him Dirty Joe. Soon the bus dropped him off at school and he walked in forgetting about the glove. The school day went by quickly with nothing that stuck in Jeffery's mind. On the walk home (his mom couldn't afford the bus both ways for him) he completely forgot about the glove in his backpack.

While digging through his backpack for his homework that night, he saw the glove crumpled up at the bottom; he picked it up and put his hand in it to smooth it out. He found it to be quite comfortable and left it on as he got out his homework. He sat down on his chair noticing his glow went lower, but he thought it was nothing strange because sometimes it would happen. Then his glow went out completely. He dropped the book and ripped off the glove! His glow slowly came back. He looked at the glove lying on the floor and thought, "Let's try that one more time."

He bent down and picked it up. He put the glove back on and watched as his glow lowered then disappeared yet again. This time he felt the sensation of not glowing. He breathed deeper and felt his mind grow quiet and clear.

He remembered the lesson at school that day; radiation basically makes you glow.

He thought to himself, “This glove drains radiation!”

He was a pretty smart kid so he thought maybe he could make two more gloves with his dad. If they could make more, then maybe they could sell them for cash and people would stop glowing and then stop dying. He turned the glove inside out and saw that there was a layer of cloth buffering the inner mechanisms from his hand. He carefully took the cloth off and looked at the small machine.

He remembered another lesson he had that day. It was about a substance that acted like a magnet to pull the radiation out of your body. It looked like green goop. He looked at the device for some of the substance and, sure enough, he found it. He wanted to use it for the other two gloves, but thought that if he took it out of this glove, it might not work properly. Plus, only using a small amount might not make the new gloves work at all.

He decided he could go to the junkyard for parts and possibly find some of the glorious goop. He told his mom he was going to take a ride on his bike. She agreed, but then said he should be back by the time dad got home.

“Don’t over-tire yourself, honey” she smiled and looked at him with sad eyes.

He took his bike to the elevator and saw that it was working again... once out of the building he began to ride to the junkyard. Wheezing all the way there, he gladly locked his bike and walked to the other side of the junkyard.

As he walked through the junkyard he saw Dirty Joe rummaging through a pile of trash, he also noticed a puddle of green stuff! When he got closer he realized it was the liquid he needed. He reached into his pocket and took out a small bottle with a cap. He scooped up as much as the bottle could hold. Screwed the cap on tight, and continued on. He found tools, springs, and eventually everything he needed.

As he was about to exit the junkyard to go home Dirty Joe walked up to him.

“Hey Jeffery, I’ve been looking for that glove. Where’d ya find it?”

“How do I know it’s yours?” Jeffery asked suspiciously.

“Whoa, chill, Jeffery. I have the pair to it right here” Joe pulled a glove that was identical to Jeffery’s out of his back pocket. “See?”

“Yeah okay... here you go” Jeffery slowly gave Joe the glove. “I thought my dad and I might be able to make copies of them and sell ‘em. How come you never made any copies of the gloves or even use them? I always see you glow.”

“Well, if I always wore them then of course people would notice that I’m not glowing and they’d ask why. I wouldn’t tell them of course. If I did, then I would have big competition in trying to make more of them. Which leads me to explain why I haven’t made more; you know the green stuff on the inside of the glove?”

“Yes?”

“Well that is liquid uranium which is used in power plants. And I can’t get into one of the power plants to get a uranium rod because worked by robots only to prevent another nuclear disaster. Besides, melting the uranium down would take around 350 degrees Celsius.”

“Why didn’t you show the idea to the government?”

“I’m a hobo that might’ve stolen the glove from someone.”

“Good point. Hey! Why don’t you have my dad show his boss? His boss has a lot of influence.”

“What an idea! Of course!”

Joe shoved the gloves into a little satchel he wore to hold all his belongings and they began to hurry to Jeffery’s apartment building. But then the worst thing happened. Someone on a bike grabbed Joe’s bag and took off.

“Someone stop him!” Jeffery screamed on an almost empty street.

“No one’s going to try and stop him. We’ll have to try to cut him off from a back street”

“How Joe?”

“Being a hobo I have to memorize the streets as not to be lost, now come on!”

Joe guided them down through a maze of alleys and turned onto a street. Suddenly he darted back around the corner.

“What happened?” Jeffery inquired.

“He’s coming; I think I’ll jump him.”

“Okay.”

Joe waited for a moment then jumped onto the biker as he sped by the alleyway. “Give me my bag back!” Joe exclaimed as he and the biker fell.

“No! It’s mine now!” He tried to kick Joe off.

Soon Joe wrenched the bag from his hand and kicked him down.

“I’ll call the cops.” Jeffery said with relief.

“Perfect. I will wait here for them you go to your dad and show him the gloves.”

Jeffery left and got home safely. The next day when his dad showed the gloves to his boss and he was ecstatic! Soon enough the gloves were approved by the government.