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First Class mail

*Regina Asgood  
Elgin, Texas*

*Richard Asgood  
East Omaha, Nebraska*

To Richard Asgood, East Omaha,  
Neb

from Regina Asgood, Elgin, Texas

August 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012

Hello from Austin - haven't heard from you since your last e-mail last year. Praying you're still at this address & are well.

I've got bad news, and there's no use putting it off anymore. It's difficult for me to write this but ~~Carl~~ Carl and Billy are dead.

It happened about a month and a half ago. Carl went on a foray to pick up some water. All the local ponds and the water holes dried up ~~about~~ by mid-May, and there's no way to pump water over from the reservoir now, and no real wells, nothing to speak of. We were hoping they'd somehow get that fixed earlier this year, but

There's a small lake just south of Camp Swift, that old training grounds? There's also Longlake over on the eastern ~~side~~ outskirts of Austin, but we heard that that one was getting a bit low, and we figured the one to the south (Bistro) would be less used. So Carl went down that way one morning to see if he could retrieve us some water. We never saw him alive again.

After a week, Billy up and decided to go down and find him and also, we think, to try and get us some water. We'd all been nervous wrecks after Carl never came home, wondering what happened to him.

It was only 15 miles or so, one-way to the lake, and Carl was never ever good on 2 wheels, but we still expected him back by dark that evening. Whether he'd gotten lost, had a crash or a heart attack, - he always did take after ~~his~~<sup>your</sup> dad, you know - or something worse, we had no idea.

Anyway, Billy left in the wee hours of the morning, is all I can figure. Went off half-cocked, hot head like all you Osgoods. Took that

stupid little bike, he always used, to do tricks with, and his backpack, the shotgun and a plastic 1-gallon water jug.

So then Billy disappeared, and

Carlene and Sera and myself were all alone in the house. And then we WAITED. I didn't let the girls out of my sight for the better part of a week. → ③

5 days later the Sheriff (the local one) show up on a sad-looking Appaloose.

Fat lot of good he was. They found Billy by the side of the road about halfway between here and the lake,

half covered in dirt and gravel. ~~It~~

It appeared to me that he was making his way back, because the jug was full. There were signs of a scuffle, some ripped clothing strewn about. Shotgun was still there "at the scene."

Apparently Billy either tried to scare them away with it or was fool enough to think it'd go off, as "there were pin marks in the priming caps of the shotgun shells." That's what the Sheriff said, anyhow. Said he thought there were most likely half-a-dozen or more of them. They took Billy's bike after MURDERING HIM but NOTHING ELSE

Used to be that getting killed over a bike was something you heard about in the city not out here. How can a bike be so damned important to anyone that they're willing to just up and kill a fellow man for it???

I don't know what we're going to do.  
I can't ~~to~~ imagine staying out here  
after what happened to my husband &  
son. Can't even think about going too  
far from the house yet, it's terrifying.  
My mother and father ~~is~~ are still  
in Houston, but we haven't heard from  
them in almost half a year. Don't think  
we'd be able to swing a move down there  
regardless of whether or not I get over my  
fear ~~of~~ of venturing outside. Still  
haven't sent them a letter - will do that  
after this one. Thinking of asking you  
mama to move in with us. I could use  
another hand around here - can't seem  
to get much done lately - and she's always  
been so lonely in that big house since  
your papa died. She and all her friends have  
been so kind to us. Always have been  
it's true, but even more so since word about  
Billy and Carl got around. At least

a couple times a week they're over at our house,  
bringing casseroles and firewood and cans of  
food and even a taste of water for the  
girls and me.

The girls have both taken things very differently. Sera just shuts herself in her room all day long, only comes out once a day to eat - if there is much of anything to eat. I listen from downstairs to hear whether she's crying or pacing or anything else, but I think she just sits or lies in bed. Don't know how she can stand it day after day up there with how hot it's been. Might be reading, but what, and why?

Bad as Sera seems to be, ~~though~~ Carlene is worse. She'll help me out with the chores, help make food (when we have it), and clean up after herself and me. But she disappears for hours on end.

Talked with one of the gals down the block the other day. Joanna Gilmore, you remember her? She asks about you. Said she was out foraging for firewood a week or so ago and saw Carlene "saunter" out of a thicket. Now this was halfway up to Taylor Rock, almost five miles out of town. I asked Carlene about it and she didn't say much, just that she was visiting

with friends there. I asked her who and she clamped her mouth shut. and I sent her to her room without dinner. 'Course, I took dinner up a couple hours later - It's just too cruel to do that to a child. And child she is - but all the same, I think she's not mine anymore. She's only 14 - and I think I might have lost her already.

I'm not sure ~~if~~ this is the case, but ~~if~~ if there is any upside, it's that the Sheriff's ~~department~~ deputies are patrolling out here a bit more. There's even been talk about Austin sending a few Rangers out. Rumor has it some folks in high places are getting nervous about violence like this so close to the capital city, and that's why the new patrols. I don't know how much law enforcing they'll actually be able to do without firearms, though. Most of them, the Sheriff's anyway, are still so damned fat - despite the crop failures this year - that they look like

A clear mind and conscience is one of the best ways to ensure a peaceful night's rest. Make a list of all the things that are bothering you. Place them in an envelope and put them away to be dealt with tomorrow.



they'd have trouble walking more than a quarter mile at a stretch, much less subduing an angry mob or fending off or getting rid of a determined pack of bandits. People

have been saying there's a bunch of them hiding in some foothills just to the east southeast, and that there are some military deserters in the mix. Really hoping for some

Rangers, so that no one else around here has ~~to~~ happen to them what happened to Carl and Billy

In any event, I'm still sleeping, but hardly ~~with~~ with all the doors and all the doors, = inside and out, locked, and a knife under my pillow.

Why did they have to die?  
What point was there in it?  
Why, in God's name don't the guns work?

Bad enough here ~~to~~ with no cars or lights or telephones or running water,


Just to have all the bullets turn into  
junks so law abiding folks can't protect  
themselves?

We've been hearing rumors down here  
that all this bad business is the fault  
of the Chinese. That they were working  
on some device or weapon and it  
went off accidentally, or even on  
purpose, maybe. I can't say how that  
could possibly be the case without  
it backfiring on them, too, but  
maybe they're cleverer than we expected.  
Haven't heard that they've invaded  
anywhere, though, so that's probably  
a good sign that they're in as bad  
a jam as we all are here. Not that  
I'd wish this on them, not on anybody.

The drought has been so horrible this  
year. Haven't had a lick of rain since  
last February. No cotton, no wheat or  
corn in the fields, just cracked earth.  
The farmers may have not even bothered  
planting anything this year, it was  
so obvious it was going to be  
just terrible. Hardly even any  
weeds growing to hold the dirt together.

So hot and windy, some days its just been an orange blur, just flames whipping by from dawn to dusk. I passed out in the kitchen two days ago while making supper. Dreamed I was in a furnace down in Hell with a whole bunch of Chinamen, but they were all talking Spanish at me but I still couldn't understand it. Woke up, with Sera staring down at ~~me~~ me and screaming, sweating, and with tears in her eyes. Probably afraid she'd lost another...

Had 50 people turn out for Billy's funeral, despite the heat and dust storms. So I heard I couldn't even make it out the front door. The sheriff and deputies still haven't found Carl, but we can only assume the worst at this point.



I'm not sure it'll help - hasn't for the past year, anyhow - but please please pray for us down here, Richie.

Pray to God for rain for us.  
And please pray for your departed  
brother and Godson!

With Love,  
Regina, Carlene, & Sera

