

“*Don't look back...*

“Don't look back. Keep running.”

There were two of them, a man and a woman; it was the man that had spoken, in his deep, gruff voice. They were both dressed in tattered, torn jeans and t-shirts, and the girl sported a dull gray sweatshirt with the name of some random gas station printed on it in bland letters. The man's greasy brown mane, entangled with leaves and twigs from the vast forests they'd traversed through, was almost as long as the woman's blond hair and his face was unshaven and covered in filth. They were both covered in filth; they were dirty from head to toe, mud covering their shoes – or what was left of them – and pant legs from wandering through dark, unknown mires. Both of them were covered in scrapes and bruises, the worst of them being a large gash in

the man's right leg; this severe wound caused him to limp as he fought with all his might to keep running forward. Always forward. The pair never backtracked, never gave what they left behind a second glance. It was onward and upward, on toward a new future.

The woman stopped and sat down on the side of the dusty dirt road, resting her head on her knees and closing both eyes. The man slowed and turned to look at her with concern, went to stand next to her. “Is it safe?” she asked as he approached, her fatigue and pain clearly showing in her trembling voice.

The man glanced up at the setting sun behind them. It was the first time he

had looked back since they began running. He didn't like the feeling of it.

Quickly he searched the horizon and then turned back to look at his companion. “I can see them. They are far

aged to suck into their lungs. And as they ran the man spoke.

“We'll run forever if need be. They'll never capture us; never bring us back to that horrible place.” He turned and

...Keep RunninG.”

off in the distance, but if we stop to rest they will surely catch up. We must keep moving until we can find an effective shelter.” His voice dripped with hatred. Hatred for the pain of his partner, hatred for the situation they were in, and, most of all, hatred for the people that caused it.

So they ran. They ran and ran. Ran until their feet bled and their bodies shook with the rasping gasps of air they man-

looked sideways at the woman. “We're free,” he said with a forced smile, knowing in his heart that it was a lie. He knew that nobody is ever truly free of the pain and misery of the dark world around them.

L.A.M.P. Winner
3rd Place Prose

by Charlie Sokolovsky

RUNNING

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Mosae 2011

Strings Attached

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