

Part the Fourth

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A couple days ago, when Georgia first asked how she could get a vaccine for her sister, Sam had hesitated to tell Georgia the truth: that many of his neighbors had tested positive for the newest strain of coronavirus, that the local health authorities had deemed his neighborhood — one of the few black neighborhoods in the city — a lost cause, and that he'd been planning to steal a couple of the next batch of vaccines from the Galt's neighborhood to give his own a fighting chance. Georgia didn't seem like the kind of twenty-year-old up for a robbery. Sam himself had only come to the conclusion he had to steal the vaccines after seeing so many of his neighbors die.

"Let's review the plan one more time," Sam had suggested as they got in the Super Value delivery vehicle. "You'll call your friend who lives in *The Woods*, say we're making a special delivery and that you're running late, and ask your friend to let you in. Once we're in, we'll pull up to the vaccine delivery vehicle, and while they're making a vaccine delivery, we'll steal a couple vaccines out the back of their truck." "Exactly," Georgia confirmed, before pulling out her phone and calling Sophie.

As the phone rang for the sixth time, Sophie finally picked up. "What's up?" Georgia hesitated; she'd always been awful at lying. "Hey. Sorry to bother you, but I'm in a rush to finish my shift, I forgot my pass, and I need to get home so my mom can go to work; would you mind calling the guard hut to let me in?"

Sophie was confused. "Why are you out delivering groceries today? It's vaccine delivery day. Aren't all other delivery services closed for the day?"

Georgia nervously continued with the script Sam and she had decided on. "But my boss called me in — she said someone in your neighborhood requested a special delivery. I *have* to deliver their groceries before I can go home."

Sophie hesitated: "I don't know. I can try... but I'm not sure if they'll let you in. You know how paranoid people are before the newest round of vaccinations. It's a felony to get in the way of vaccine delivery."

Georgia knew Sophie needed a nudge before she'd let them in. "I know, I know... it's just that one of the families in *The Woods* is hosting a banquet, and we need to

deliver the groceries for it. I left my pass at the store and if I have to go back, the produce will spoil, my boss will fire me, and I won't be home in time for my mom to make her shift. Please Sophie—" It pained Georgia to continue, but she knew she had to: "For an old friend?"

Georgia knew Sophie only picked up because she felt guilty about what had happened to Georgia's family. She knew Sophie couldn't bring herself to make Georgia's life worse than it already was. Finally, Sophie relented.

Over an hour later, Sam pulled the delivery vehicle up to the guard hut before the gates, but the guard looked surprised to see them. "Sorry — no non-vaccine deliveries today." Georgia started to panic, as her mind jumped to the logical conclusion: of course, Sophie had lied to her; how could she have expected any better. Sam went ahead with the plan. "We're here for a special grocery delivery. One of the residents, Sophie Clarke, should've called ahead of time."

The guard checked his clipboard and glanced at his notes. "My mistake. I'll let the Clarks know you're coming. Just be fast."

The gates lifted. They were in! Sam slowly drove down the main road of *The Woods* as Georgia looked for signs of the vaccine delivery vehicle. "There! At the end of the cul-de-sac." Georgia pointed.

Sam spotted the white armored car in the distance and drove towards it. As Sam pulled up, Georgia realized this was their only shot; the vaccine delivery man was

making his way towards the delivery pod for the house across the street, and the armored car's trunk was open. The vaccines were in plain sight—now was their chance to steal a couple without anyone noticing. But before Sam had made a complete stop, Georgia realized there was one giant hole in their plan.

"Georgia!" Sophie exclaimed through her mask, waving from outside her house's gate.

What were the chances... the vaccine delivery car happened to be stopped across the street from the Clarke's mansion.

"Now what?..." Sam asked, exasperated. Sam was risking his stable job for a chance to save his dying neighbors, now only to lose both. They didn't have time to distract Sophie or to come up with a new excuse for stopping near the vaccine vehicle. "I guess we have to improvise," Georgia said, with a slight smile.

Just then, Sophie approached the passenger side of the grocery van where Georgia was sitting as the van stopped, but before she could get a word out, Georgia swung her door open, shoved Sophie to the ground, and ran for the back of the vaccine delivery vehicle.

As Sophie lay flat on the pavement, her head bleeding, Sam realized Georgia's next move. They weren't just stealing a *couple* vaccines anymore; they were taking the entire delivery vehicle filled with them. Georgia closed the back of the truck and dashed towards the

open driver-side door. As she stepped in the vehicle, she saw the delivery man turn around. Sam had ditched the grocery van and was now making a run for the passenger-side of the vaccine delivery vehicle. As the vaccine delivery man sprinted towards the vehicle and caught the attention of the guard hut security, Georgia and Sam closed their doors. Sam glanced at Georgia, was shocked at how ruthless she had become, but thankful that she'd salvaged the heist. "I didn't know you had that in you," he admitted.

As Georgia pulled away, she could see Sophie's silhouette slowly fade into the background in the rearview mirror. The guard hut security had started to lockdown the community, and the gates were closing fast.

"Floor it!" Sam yelled, and Georgia slammed the gas. The armored car they had commandeered practically flew out of the cul-de-sac towards the entrance. She sped towards the entrance of *The Woods* as the gates began closing. As they approached the gates, they knew the gap between the gates was too small; they weren't going to make a clean exit. Georgia jammed the gas pedal down and braced for impact.

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The End