

Destination  
By Alex Grosvenor

Dear Ram,

*Me and the kids miss you so much. The kids always tell me how they miss you so dearly and they would also tell me how bad they want to play with dad again. The kids miss how you would always pick them up from school and tell me they would get so happy when they see you when you pick them up. I miss you so much my dear. I can't wait to see you soon.*

*With all my love,  
Hindustan*

Ram puts the envelope under the cash box, then a guy comes into the store and greets Ram and Ram greets him back.

So he walks up to Ram and asks Ram, "Do you guys have Dr. Pepper?"

Ram replies, "Yeah, we do. It's in the first fridge to the right over there." Ram points to the right of the store.

"Thank you, sir." This guy in Ram's store goes to the fridge and gets his Dr. Pepper, then he walks up to the counter.

"How's it going?" Ram asks. "You're from the Cueva Cantina, aren't you?"

"Yes sir. My name is Tiago. Nice to meet you. I've never met the owner of this place, is that you?"

"Name's Ram. Yeah, I'm the owner of this place."

"You've been busy selling gas?"

"Yeah, I have been selling that gas and beverages, snacks. I guess I do ok."

"Yeah, seeing as you're the only gas station here I see wh—" An ambulance passes by with its sirens loud. "Dios mio, I've been seeing a lot of trips to the hospital, more than usual. The hospital would never be this busy in the past. I heard that there have been a lot more people going to the hospital because of the radiation lately. This town used to be more peaceful when I first came here from Mexico. It was very peaceful until the meteor hit. This town has gone to hell ever since the children started going missing, now there's a drug crisis and we have a hole in the middle of the damn town that we can't afford to fill up."

Ram looks at his cash register, wondering if Tiago is going to pay him. "Yeah, ever since that meteor hit our town has been falling apart."

"What do you think about the underground?" Tiago reaches into his pocket and pulls out his wallet.

"I don't really go down there to be honest," Ram says. "I've only been down there once to go down to the gun store."

Tiago opens and takes a sip of his Dr Pepper. "It's nice down in the underground with the meteor down there too."

"Yeah, I heard it's nice in the underground, and I want to go see the meteor. It would be wonderful to see in person."

"You've never seen the meteor in person? That's crazy. You should go down to the underground and see it."

"I definitely will go see it soon, but is there anything cool about it that you know about?"

"It's really big in person, probably the biggest meteor I've seen. There is something cool about meteors. Some meteors have a rare metal that is all green, but it's worth a lot of money."

"Oh, really like how much money are we talking about?" Ram asks.

"Per pound, it's like 20k," Tiago says.

"Holy smokes, that is a lot of money and it could fix a lot of my problems," Ram says.

"Don't get your hopes up. It's a really rare metal to obtain, and I'm surprised nobody dug up the meteor yet."

"Thank you for the information, but you're kinda holding up the line." Ram points to the customers who have come in behind Tiago.

"I'm sorry about that. Well, I'll head my way now. Have a good one, Ram, nice talking to you."

"Nah, you all good. It was really nice talking to you, Santiago. You have a good one as well."

Santiago leaves the store and then Ram starts ringing the other people that were waiting in line. As he rings everyone up, Ram thinks about what Santiago said about the metal in the meteor. Ram wonders what it is called; he didn't get to ask Santiago that. Ram is thinking about how much money the metal is worth. He could do so much with the money.

He could bring his family over. He could put it in the business because his gas station isn't doing so well. It's been so slow for Ram.

So he starts researching the metal on his computer at the gas station but some girl with black scarf wants to check out. After he rings her up, he gets back to researching.

At first he can't find what the metal is called. It's hard for him to find out. After thirty minutes, he finds a website with the information he needs.

The metal is called the metallic iron. He sees what it looks like— green and very shiny. The website also says that it causes radiation which could cause harm to people. The article that Ram clicks on said that when you have the radiation in your body you can get very sick like coughing up blood, throwing up, diarrhea. Maybe that's why everyone is getting sick and why the hospital has been so busy recently. Everyone is getting sick from the metallic iron. Ram is surprised by what he's found.

All that research that Ram did for the Metallic Iron took an hour and thirty minutes. When he checks his watch, it says 10:30. In 30 minutes Ram is going to close the store. While he waits, Ram sits on the chair behind the counter, chilling and thinking how he can get the metallic iron and how to get to the meteor without people noticing.

Ram closes up early so he can think up a plan for the next day to get the metal as fast as possible so he can get his family here.

As he's back sitting on the chair, thinking, and he remembers that he has a tunnel in his gas station in the back in the office by the filing cabinet. The former owner told Ram that the tunnel leads to the underground, but Ram didn't want to check out the tunnel when he got the gas station.

Now Ram is wondering where the tunnel leads to. Maybe he can use the tunnel to sneak his way in and out.

Ram makes up his mind to give it a try and starts getting ready to go down the tunnel.

Ram is quite nervous to go down the tunnel because he doesn't know what is in the tunnel or where it leads to. He moves the filing cabinet out of the way. Then Ram sits down and swings himself down to the tunnel .

As soon as he steps foot in there, Ram starts sweating and his heart is beating fast because of how scared Ram is. He starts crawling down the tunnel, dirt getting into Ram's hair and clothes. Ram is about halfway there when he sees that there are a bunch of rocks that are barely hanging off this ceiling.

Ram says to himself, "I have to be careful of those rocks where they can fall on my head and then I'll be trapped and die in the tunnel."

When Ram starts seeing a little bit of light, he starts crawling a bit faster so he can see what's at the end of the tunnel. Ram is relieved that he made it at the end of the tunnel. He sees the Cueva Cantina straight ahead, then to the left Ram sees the meteor. He is excited by what sees so he starts looking for a path to go there.

Ram is scouting out the meteor, and he sees that there are guards that are keeping people from doing stuff to the meteor. Ram analyzes the guards' movements, where they walk around and how long they stand there for.

He notices that the guards stand for 10 minutes and walks away for like 30 minutes. That is his only window to get the metal so he can get his family united.

Ram goes back up to the gas station. When he gets back, he checks his watch and sees that it is 11 p.m. and forgot to clean up the store so he started cleaning and he got done around 11:24.

Once he puts all the cleaning supplies away, he starts getting ready to leave, then he walks to the office and starts packing his things. When he sees his family photo, he starts getting emotional because of how much he misses his family and how he wants them to be together.

Then he wipes his tears away and locks in, determined to follow through on his plan. He leaves the office and locks the gas station up so nobody breaks in. Then he starts walking to his house by the church.

So he's almost to his house but he takes a wrong turn because Ram forgot that he was supposed to take a right on Lincoln Drive. He ends up by the church.

Ram sees in the corner of his eye that the church door is a little cracked open. So he goes over there and opens the door. It seems like someone was at the church at one point because there's a moldy trunk onto floorboards.

Ram reaches the moldy trunk with his hand and sees that there is a torn scrap of paper with an official logo for a company on the right corner, a strange hunk of rock, and a pair of worn old lead gloves, large enough to fit the hands of an adult man.

The scrap paper has a date from before the meteor hit the town. Ram is in shock that he found this. This scrap of paper gives Ram a sign to dig up meteor.

So Ram takes the scrap of paper, the strange rock, and a glove. Then he shuts the door and starts heading home.

Once Ram gets back home, he goes straight to bed because he had such a long day from going down a tunnel to going to a church and finding objects.

When Ram wakes up, he does his morning routine and gets ready for the day. As he does all that, he decides that he is not going to open the store today. He's going to try to get the Metallic Iron. So Ram sits down in his dining room and starts thinking of a plan.

After fifteen minutes go by, he has a full plan. Ram is going to the gas station and go down the tunnel. Once he reaches the end of the tunnel, he'll wait about 15 minutes so the guards go away. Then he has 30 minutes to get the metallic iron. Once Ram gets the Metallic Iron, he will go back to the tunnel and return to the gas station. Then he will sell it to a metal company.

Ram gets all his stuff he needs for his little adventure. Then he walks out the house, closes the door behind him, and starts walking to the gas station. When Ram gets to the gas station, he lays out his things in the office and starts to get ready to go down to the underground. Ram prays before he steps foot on the tunnel.

Ram starts crawling through the tunnel, getting his clothes dirty in the process. Ram sees a bunch of bugs crawling around the tunnel, so Ram starts to crawl faster. He doesn't want bugs on his clothes. When Ram starts to see light he knows that he is getting near the end of the tunnel. At the end of the tunnel, he scouts out the guards, waiting in the tunnel until the guards leave.

So 7 minutes go by and Ram sees that the guard is leaving. Ram hops down to the ground and starts running because he only has 30 minutes until the guard comes back. Ram starts a stopwatch so he can check how much time he has.

Ram makes it, puts his backpack down, opens it to get his pickaxe out, and starts mining the meteor with 20 minutes left in the timer.

Ram is digging and digging. Suddenly he starts to get frustrated because he's thinking about his family, motivating him more, but he's finding nothing. Ram is starting to think that this is a mistake. If he gets caught, he would get in trouble and it would be all for nothing.

It's starting to wind down to the last minute and still nothing. Right now, he is starting to give up, but then he sees something green and shiny.

Ram rubs his eyes. He can't believe what he has found.

Ram is reminiscing about the Metallic Iron that he dug up, but then, out of nowhere, this guard screams, "Hey what are you doing here?"

The guard runs towards Ram, screaming at him. Ram panics and starts mining out the Metallic Iron. He is getting closer and closer, but the Metallic Iron wouldn't budge at all.

He keeps on pulling and then it pops out, making him go back a little because of how hard he was pulling.

Ram puts the Metallic Iron in his backpack, and then guard tries to grab his arm to pull him, but Ram makes him let go and bolts out of there.

But the guard is still behind Ram, still trying to catch up to him.

Ram is starting to get frustrated at the guard because he is still getting chased. Ram sees the tunnel and gets ready to get into the tunnel as fast as possible.

Ram gets to the tunnel and starts crawling fast. Ram looks but the guard is still behind him. The guard starts pulling on his leg so the guard can get Ram.

But Ram remembers that there are rocks that are loose. So he looks up and punches the ceiling so the rock will fall on top of the guard.

It works. The rocks fall on top of the guard and he lets go of Ram's leg so Ram starts to crawl back up.

Ram gets back up to the gas station and opens his bag and sees the metallic Iron. He picks it up and gets so happy. Now he can get his family over to the United States. Then he starts crying because he gets to see his family again once he sells the metallic iron.

Ram sells the metallic Iron the next day to a metal company in Texas.

Two weeks go by and Ram is checking his mail at the gas station. He sees the metal company's name on it and he gets excited and opens it. It's a check for 10 thousand dollars.

Ram stands up and dances with excitement. Now he can bring his family to Aurora Springs so they can be back together as a family.