

ALL HIGHWAYS LEAD DOWNTOWN

by
Mick Jagger

BLACK

LORI
It's been two years.

INT. BOMB SHELTER - DAY

Drip. Drip. Drip. Drops of water splash onto a map that's laid out onto a table.

A man's hand, complete with brown fingernails, points out various locations on it. It's a map of California.

There's a purple shaded circle drawn around a small area in Southern California and the rest of the map is shaded green.

TY
If Doc's calculations are correct,
the radiation should have
dissipated by now.

Huddled around the table are a group of hermits, all dressed in shaggy, worn out clothes. Their teeth are rotten and their hair is frizzy.

TY APPLE(30s), complete with a frizzy beard, continues to analyze the map.

TY
It may be safe to go out.

LORI APPLE(30s), a once beautiful face now dirty, looks at Ty with anticipation.

PROFESSOR DOC NEWTON(60s), a skinny guy with gray hair, conjures with Ty.

DOC
I say it's now or never. There's
more out there than there is down
here.

TY
Lori?

LORI
We can't stay here any longer.

Ty looks his two colleagues in the eye.

TY
Let's do it.

EXT. BOMB SHELTER - DAY

A heavy, steel door slowly rises from the ash-covered ground. Out pop the three hermits, who shield their eyes from the sun's beams.

Lori practically wraps her arms around her entire head. All three blink repeatedly as they adjust. Ty takes a few deep breaths.

TY
So far so good.

DOC
My word...look at that.

Ty and Lori look in Doc's direction. Across a murky bay are the remains of a city.

Once mighty skyscrapers are now ruins of their former selves. Large chunks of the towers are gone, which leaves the structures open to the misty air.

A few of the buildings have completely collapsed and their remains smother the streets below.

The remains of a bridge is nested at the edge of downtown. The bulk that would travel across the bay is long gone.

The three hermits take it all in.

LORI
We're home.

EXT. BAY - DAY

An inflatable raft is placed on the water and the three head towards downtown.

Remains of small sailboats, cars, and army vehicles can be seen at the bottom of the shallow bay. Some of their tails stick out of the water as the hermits work around them.

LORI
How could man be capable of this?

DOC
We're capable of this because we're a stupid species, Lori. Man has been on earth for about 1.8 million years, not even a fraction of the planet's age. And now we're almost to the brink of extinction.

TY

Almost.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

As they reach land and step out of their raft, they once again check out the city.

The buildings are almost entirely covered with moss. Signs of other life are zilch.

They pass by a small building that reads "San Diego Professional Photography."

DOC

Look at this. Years of development and progress...the greatest country in the history of the world...gone. All in the span of a few minutes!

TY

We can't jump to conclusions yet, Doc. There have to be others here.

LORI

What if there aren't? What if we're the last ones in the city? The state even! We have no idea at the stuff that was going on outside! For all we know, we're the first humans to see daylight since it happened.

Ty looks north.

TY

There's a whole 'nother world out there. I think the sooner we can get out of here, the better.

DOC

The radiation could still be there, Ty. You take one step into one of those radioactive zones...you're a goner.

Ty gets agitated.

TY

So how long do we stay here, huh? Are we just prisoners here for the rest of our lives?

Doc looks down.

TY

Doc, I'm hungry. I'm cold. I'm exhausted. Who knows how many diseases we've got crawling on us. And look, your calculations were correct! San Diego is clear! We have to find the others or at least die trying. I'm not staying in this prison a second longer.

It starts to sprinkle. Lori grows uncomfortable as the drops brush onto her face. The guys see this.

DOC

Lori?

TY

You okay, babe?

LORI

It's raining.

They all look to the sky where clouds hover in front of the sun. Lori rubs the water off.

LORI

Ow. Crap.

TY

Lori...

POP! The raft bursts. Doc turns to a street sign, where the figure "40 MPH" begins to melt.

DOC

We need to find shelter. Now!

They dash down the street as the downpour starts to increase. Their already torn clothes become even more hole-ridden with each drop.

Ty leads the group towards one of the moss-covered skyscrapers. Doc stops them.

DOC

Ty! No!

TY

What? Why?

DOC
These buildings haven't been
maintained in years! You take one
step in there or lean against one
wall the wrong way, it could all
come tumbling down on us!

LORI
Doc!

Doc turns to her. She points to the freeway overpass.

DOC
Come on!

They all run up the street to the freeway as the rain
increases to a pour.

EXT. OVERPASS - DAY

They come to a rest below the overpass and watch as the storm
rages. Doc feels around the concrete.

DOC
I tell ya, Dwight had a hell of an
idea with these here interstates.
For his advertising he should have
said "can survive a nuclear blast
and even a little acid rain!"

Doc looks for laughs but doesn't receive any. Ty reaches
into his backpack and pulls out a granola bar.

LORI
What flavor?

TY
Apple crisp.

GRRR. The three hermits freeze. GRRR. Ty gulps and looks
around.

TY
We're not alone...

A MUTATED HOUND DOG emerges from a hole in the overpass.
It's furless for the most part, lacks a left eye, and has two
tails between its legs.

It snarls at them, digging its freakishly long canines into
its gums and causing them to bleed.

LORI

Doc-

TY

Want a cookie? A treat?

Ty attempts to hold the granola bar out to the dog, but Doc pulls him back.

DOC

Ty, don't.

TY

It's life.

DOC

Look at it. That's New World life.

GRRR. Suddenly THREE MORE MUTATED HOUND DOGS emerge from the hole, all almost identical to the first.

The hermits swallow. Ty exchanges his glance between the dogs and the rain outside.

TY

Doc-

DOC

I know. You and Lori need to get out of here. Slowly make your way for the outside.

TY

What about the rain?

DOC

We were just in it and we didn't die. Just find shelter. Do you have the map?

One of the dogs barks and startles the people. It's a thunderous one with a combo of snarling and hissing.

TY

Yeah, I got it.

DOC

Go north, stay close to the coast. This highway passes through LA, Sacramento-

Another one of the dog barks. The hermits tremble in fear.

DOC
-Portland, Seattle and all the way
up to Canada Hopefully they did
better than us. Stay on it!

LORI
Doc-

DOC
Go! Now!

The lead dog takes a few steps toward Doc. Streams of bloody drool fall from its mouth. It barks once more, which prompts Ty and Lori to take off into the rain.

DOC
How could we have done this?
All of the dogs pounce onto Doc at once.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

Both Ty and Lori wrap blankets around their heads and rush into the city. A few moments later, the hound dogs rush out from the overpass and chase after them.

LORI
Give them the granola bar!

Ty tosses the granola bar to the dogs, who ignore it and continue the chase.

TY
Shit!

Ty looks back, where the dogs appear to gain. As he faces front again, he sees THREE MORE DOGS coming right for them.

TY
Left, left, left!

They turn left onto another street, where FOUR MORE DOGS lock onto them.

TY
Right, right, right!

Trapped in a triangle, Ty and Lori run into one of the skyscrapers.

INT. SKYSCRAPER - LOBBY - DAY

They dash into the lobby. Ash and rubble are everywhere. They slide to the ground the duck behind a lobby counter.

Silence. They peer around the counter to the entrance, where the pack of dogs quietly enter and sniff around.

The lead dog wags both of its tails and runs off into the lobby.

Ty and Lori turn back around and rest. Ty puts his finger to his mouth. Lori nods.

A few moments go by and they peer back around the counter, where the dogs have all flopped onto the ground.

Ty and Lori turn back around the corner and smile. As they complete their turn, they come face-to-face with the lead dog, who snarls at them.

It's blood-red eye stares them down as blood drips from its mouth.

BANG! A column toward the entrance shatters into a million pieces, startling several of the dogs in the immediate area.

The lead dog turns around for a second, which allows Ty and Lori to make a run for it. Several more columns fall and the walls start to crumble.

TY
Up, up, up!

They run through an empty doorway and into a stairwell and climb up a story.

INT. SKYSCRAPER - SECOND FLOOR - DAY

They burst onto the second floor. Moss grows everywhere and the wind from outside seeps in through the empty windows.

The building shakes. The sound of scrapes and crumbles are heard.

Ty and Lori run to the window and look outside; a pile of rubble on the street below, but not a long fall.

TY
Baby, we gotta jump!

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

The dogs race up the stairs.

INT. SKYSCRAPER - SECOND FLOOR - DAY

The dogs enter the area just as the building starts to shake uncontrollably.

TY

Jump!

They both leap out of the building.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

They crash into the pile of rubble below but quickly get back to their feet and run off.

INT. SKYSCRAPER - SECOND FLOOR - DAY

The dogs look at each other as the floors start to split apart.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

The building collapses into the ground with a mighty bang. A mushroom cloud of dust shoots off into the sky.

Ty and Lori watch the spectacle and then head back towards the freeway.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

The rain has stopped and the sun is out again. Ty and Lori stand in the middle of the freeway.

LORI

Doc said to go north. And if I remember correctly, I believe this one does just that.

TY

What if we run into more of those things?

LORI
We probably will. But we have to
make an escape now before God knows
what else comes out of the shadows.

Ty nods.

LORI
I'm not living in this prison
anymore.

He smiles.

TY
Then let's go.

The two start off up the freeway hand-in-hand. They walk by
a sign which reads "ENCINITAS 26. OCEANSIDE 37. LOS ANGELES
120."

LORI
I always hated LA.

TY
Yeah, I wasn't too big on it,
either. Think we'll have any
trouble with traffic?

They smile.

FINAL FADE.

THE END