

Beyond darkness

by

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**OVER BLACK SCREEN;**

A news report.

FEMALE TV VOICE  
...reports coming in now, confirms  
yet another one of the biggest  
volcanoes in the world erupted  
just moments ago...

INT. CAFE. DAY

Men and women standing, looking up. Scared and confused.  
Their frightened faces bathed in the light of the  
television they are all silently watching.

FEMALE TV VOICE  
...that makes it the sixth major  
volcano to erupt in the last three  
hours...

A young man enters the coffee shop, making his way through  
the people; BLAKE LEGRA (28). Detached, unkempt, scruffy  
beard, dirty face. Blake is a homeless man.

FEMALE TV VOICE (CONT'D)  
...mass casualties are reported to  
be in the thousands...

Blake makes his way to the counter.

BLAKE  
Sir, can I get a new mug? I'm  
afraid this one has seen its best  
days...

Blake holds up a dirty old coffee mug. With his eyes fixed  
on the TV, the waiter gives Blake a new mug.

Blake notices that the waiter's focus is elsewhere.

BLAKE (CONT'D)  
Sir!? My coffee?

WAITER  
Oh sorry...

The waiter pours Blake a cup of coffee. Just as Blake is  
about to take a sip, he looks over at a young girl standing  
a few feet away, watching him.

Blake gives her a wink, she responds with a cute smile.

The young girl, ZARA (12) is standing next to a 40-year-old woman. The woman stares up at the TV, tears rolling down her face.

Blake turns, glancing at the TV without much interest.

FEMALE TV VOICE  
 ...we're yet to find the reasons  
 behind these outbreaks...

The coffee in Blakes mug slowly starts to VIBRATE.

**BLACK SCREEN;**

FEMALE TV VOICE (CONT'D)  
 ...but there are those who argue  
 that these series of events are  
 caused by climate change...

**SUPERIMPOSE; 3 YEARS LATER...**

EXT. LANDSCAPE - CAMPSITE. DAWN

In a dark, barren landscape, through swirls of soft ash and smoggy air a TENT stands alone.

INT. TENT. DAWN

Blake now in his mid-thirties and Zara a teenager, are asleep.

They are both emaciated and exhausted, their faces and hands coated in grim and soot from the blackened landscape around them.

Blake studies a MAP. A map that shows all marked cities on it crossed with a red marker, all but one. Zara sleeps peacefully.

SUDDENLY! Hearing something, Blake instinctively reaches out to touch Zara. The other hand clutches a RIFLE.

ZARA  
 (whispering)  
 Plunderers?

No reply.

ZARA (CONT'D)  
 (whispering)  
 Blake...?

BLAKE  
(whispering)  
Shh...

They listen intensely. It is quiet outside the tent. Pulse racing.

With a firm grip on his rifle Blake sticks his head out from the tent.

POV BLAKE - he sees nothing but a still darkness.

Zara is clinging to Blake, holding on to his shirt.

Blake looks from her firm grip over to a REVOLVER lying next to her backpack.

EXT. ROAD. DAY

A huge dark fog covers what used to be a blue sky. It's supposed to be daylight but it's almost completely dark.

Blake looks at a small COMPASS as he walks along the road with Zara. He's dressed in a filthy old WINTER JACKET with the hood up, a backpack on his back and he's pushing a rusted old WHEELCHAIR with a BLUE IKEA BAG covering their belongings.

Zara is dressed in a similar way. She's playing with things they find along the road, entertaining herself.

ZARA  
Look...

She points to the ground, it's an IPHONE. The display is broken and it's covered with dirt.

BLAKE  
Phones stopped working a long time ago...

ZARA  
I know, but I've been thinking and it probably has some music in it or some cool games downloaded to the memory...

BLAKE  
Leave it...

Blake continues to walk along the road, looking at his compass again.

ZARA

No.

BLAKE

Come on Zara, it's garbage...

ZARA

I can fix it, reboot it and --

BLAKE

And then what?

Blake stops and looks at Zara.

ZARA

(looking in her  
backpack)

I told you, maybe the phone got  
some music in it -- and I still  
got those headphones somewhere.  
It's literally been years since  
I've heard music...

BLAKE

I know you can reboot it and all  
but it's useless, the phone won't  
work and even if it does it won't  
help us survive...

ZARA

Everything little thing doesn't  
have to be about survival...

BLAKE

Look, I've told you a million  
times, if we find something and it  
doesn't help us survive it will  
only distract us...

ZARA

I'm keeping it --

BLAKE

Shh...

Blake sees something down the road, behind Zara.

It's a MAN running -- for his life. He's being chased by a  
TRUCK.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Come here...

Blake and Zara leave the road, they HIDE themselves and  
their belongings behind a TREE not far from the road.

They watch from behind the tree as a -- GUNSHOT echoes around the forest and the man being chased falls to the ground, holding his leg.

The truck stops behind him, six HODDED MEN get out. Their all ARMED, with guns, baseball bats, hatchets, and pipes. A man in a BLUE JACKET looks to be in charge, he walks slowly over to the injured man.

INJURED MAN  
Look I told you, I don't have  
anything more to give you...

MAN IN BLUE JACKET  
Then why did you run?

INJURED MAN  
Because...

Zara whispers to Blake.

ZARA  
We have to help him

BLAKE  
We can't do anything

ZARA  
We need to do something

BLAKE  
We can't...

The armed men on the road laugh.

Blake turns to leave.

BLAKE (CONT'D)  
Come now, we got lucky, they  
didn't see us...

ZARA  
Lucky?!?!

BLAKE  
Come...

Zara remains, she gives Blake a mixed look between disappointment and disgust.

BLAKE (CONT'D)  
Now!!

After a short standoff, she shakes her head and follows Blake.

As they quietly leave -- a SHOT is fired. The injured man falls to the ground, executed.

EXT. CAMPSITE - LANDSCAPE. NIGHT

They are camped in a hidden spot on a small landscape. A dull light from their campfire glows against the dark sky. They're completely quiet as they eat beans out of a small can.

BLAKE  
There's nothing we could have done...

Zara ignores Blake.

BLAKE (CONT'D)  
You know that right...?

ZARA  
No, but I understand.

BLAKE  
So why are you not talking?

A moment of silence.

BLAKE (CONT'D)  
Sometimes I worry about you. At some point, you'll --

ZARA  
Don't, I can take care of myself.

A beat.

BLAKE  
Even if we in some miracles way got that man out of that situation it could easily have ended up with him robbing us, maybe even killing us...

ZARA  
You don't know that...

BLAKE  
Yes, I do. You have to look after yourself in this mess of a world, -- not taking stupid chances has got us this far.

ZARA  
And what is this?

BLAKE  
Alive and still looking for a good  
home...

ZARA  
You still think it's out there?

BLAKE  
Yes...

Blake looks at his map protruding from the backpack.

EXT. OLD RAILWAY LINE. DAY

They walk along a railway line surrounded by nothing but  
forest.

ZARA  
Oh, look...

Zara points to an abandoned TRAILER parked alone in an open  
landscape not far from the railway line.

ZARA (CONT'D)  
I bet it has a stove --

BLAKE  
A stove?

ZARA  
Yeah, I can hot-wire the phone I  
found, you know...to charge it?

Blake gives her a skeptical look.

BLAKE  
You still on that phone?

ZARA  
I told you, I'm dying for some  
good music, maybe a good game  
too...

Blake is hesitant.

ZARA (CONT'D)  
Please?

BLAKE  
Sure, let's just check it out  
first, we leave the wheelchair  
here, but you cover it...

Zara gives Blake a big smile.



EXT. LANDSCAPE - TRAILER. DAY

Approaching the trailer, Blake walks quickly and stealthy, ready, listening to the silence, straining to hear.

Zara walks just behind him, nervous but armed with her revolver.

Blake opens the door and -- is completely empty.

INT. TRAILER. DAY

Inside the badly damaged trailer, Zara sees something that gets her attention.

ZARA

Yes! I can definitely charge the phone on that one, it's going to take some time but we're not going anywhere right?

She's already on the dirty floor, taking out equipment from her backpack. She's happy and exited. Blake seems pleased by it.

BLAKE

We can't stay too long...

ZARA

I know -- (mimics Blake) it's way too vulnerable...

They share a warm moment, both really pleased.

BLAKE

Looks like this place been deserted -- I don't think we're gonna find much but I'll still have a look around and then go back and get our stuff...

Blake heads out.

ZARA

Blake, sorry for yesterday, I get what you're saying, you're keeping us alive. It was hormones or whatever...

BLAKE

You're not old enough to blame it on hormones you know...

ZARA  
I'm not? PMS?

They share a quick laugh.

BLAKE  
I won't be long...

ZARA  
Okey.

Zara gets busy prepping her phone with her equipment.

EXT. WOODS. DAY

Blake walks through the woods alone. As he walks, carefully examining his surroundings he spots -- AN ABANDONED CAR.

Blake slowly walks over to the car. He wipes the glass and peers into it. He swings the door open and climbs inside, pulling the door shut behind him.

INT. TRAILER. EVENING

Zara's keeping busy with her phone. Already taken out her headphones and placed them next to the stove.

The phone is connected to the stove through some wires. Really hot-wired. Nothing happens for a few seconds. Then suddenly the display comes alive.

ZARA  
(cheerfully)  
YES!!!

INT. ABANDONED CAR. EVENING

Blake looks around inside the car, old magazines, and trash. He checks behind the seats where there is a bag of useless equipment.

Blake puts his hands on the steering wheel, drifting away in his thoughts.

In the background, a distant -- SOUND OF A VEHICLE!

Terrified Blake snaps back to reality, he gets out of the car.

INT. TRAILER. EVENING

Zara is lost in her new toy, going through photos and listening to music with her headphones.

SUDDENLY! She hears something fall to the floor inside the trailer.

POV ZARA - everything seems ordinary in the trailer.

She get's up, opens the door and steps out, listens -- nothing but WIND.

EXT. OLD RAILWAY LINE. EVENING

Blake searches for the wheelchair. He runs over to where they'd left it, hidden behind some trees next to the railway line.

POV BLAKE - Some of their backpacks lie open on the railway line, next to the wheelchair on its side, all contents spilled out, mostly plundered. There's no vehicle in sight.

Blake furiously searches through the empty backpacks, searching for his map.

SUDDENLY; the sound off TWIGS snapping, BRANCHES being broken around Blake.

Out from the woods, onto the railway line, a GANG appears, surrounding Blake.

A gang of HOODED MEN. Two are armed with rifles but most of them have baseball bats, hatchets, and pipes. It's the same road gang from earlier. The man in the blue jacket appears from among them.

The armed ones point their guns at Blake. Helpless and at a disadvantaged Blake gets disarmed.

MAN IN BLUE JACKET

Sorry for your stuff here, but you know times are --

BLAKE

You can take it, just give me back my map and leave me the hell alone...

MAN IN BLUE JACKET

Oh, that's not nice...

Man in the blue jacket turns to a gang member.

MAN IN BLUE JACKET (CONT'D)  
Was that nice?

The gang member slowly shakes his head.

MAN IN BLUE JACKET (CONT'D)  
(to Blake)  
You know what we do to rude  
people?

Blake spots Zara standing behind a tree, she's armed with her revolver. He gestures her to stay back. She ignores him, shifting cover and getting in position.

MAN IN BLUE JACKET (CONT'D)  
I'm talking to you boy!

BLAKE  
Alright, just take the fucking  
stuff and let me go...

MAN IN BLUE JACKET  
Once we let a guy live after we  
robbed him, a poor bastard really  
but you know what this ungrateful  
son of a bitch did? He came after  
us and killed two of my men. So we  
have a policy, no one survives.

Man in the blue jacket quickly raises his rifle and --  
SHOTS Blake in the STOMACH.

Blake falls to his knees, holding his hands helplessly  
around his wound.

MAN IN BLUE JACKET (CONT'D)  
Oh, that got to hurt...

The gang members laugh.

Blake is bleeding heavily but he keeps his eyes locked on  
Zara behind her tree. His look begging her to stay put.  
They look at each other in an emotionally moment, Zara with  
tearful eyes. She obeys.

Another SHOT. Blake falls to the ground -- DEAD.

The gang goes back into the woods, leaving Blakes dead body  
behind.

Zara still standing behind the tree with her revolver in  
one hand and her phone in the other. She watches as the  
gang leaves.

She lets the phone and the revolver slip out of her hands, then moves over to Blake's body, crying, devastated.

She mourns for a couple of moments, crying intensely over her loss.

In the background, she hears the sound of a vehicle leaving.

The phone lies next to the revolver on the ground.

After a couple of moments -- Zara gets up, takes up her revolver and leaves the phone on the ground.

**FADE OUT;**

**THE END.**

