

Radio Silence
by
An Apologetic Canadian

EXT. LOG CABIN - EVENING

A lone cabin sits before a white forest. Blankets of snow cover the land and hills in the distance. A warm glow fills the windows as black smoke billows from the chimney. A generator hums next to the cabin.

It's snowing.

INT. LOG CABIN - EVENING

A DAUGHTER, 9 or 10 , sits in front of the fireplace. She plays with her stuffed animals. A rubber snake sits around her neck.

Her FATHER, mid 40's with a scruffy peppered beard and long hair sits at a makeshift radio. He listens to anyone on the other end, headphones pinned to his ears.

He presses a button attached to a microphone on the desk.

FATHER

Is there anybody out there?
Please, if you can hear me, let me
know.

(pause)

Are there any survivors out there?
Hello?

He fiddles with some dials for a moment before giving up. He takes off his headphones and turns to see a snake sitting on the table. He jerks back from shock.

His daughter laughs.

DAUGHTER

Every time daddy.

He smiles and chases after her.

FATHER

Yes, every darn time you get me.

He picks her up and runs around the room. She laughs and pretends to be an airplane.

She finally slides off his shoulders and to the ground. She accidentally knocks over a ship in a bottle on a table. It smashes on the floor.

DAUGHTER

Uh oh, I wrecked it.

FATHER

It's okay. Don't worry about it.

He moves her hair away from her face.

FATHER

You look more like your mother every day. You look just like

(pause)

A buttface.

He forms a claw with his hand and tickles her tummy. She falls to the ground laughing, face turning red.

FATHER

Oh man, all this tickling is making me hungry. Are you hungry?

She nods her head.

FATHER

Okay, go grab some food, I'll shut off the genny and clean up this mess. We good?

DAUGHTER

We good.

EXT. LOG CABIN - LATER

The father has a toque, scarf, boots, long jacket and gloves. He breathes in the cold air.

FATHER

Feels like a storm's comin'.

The snow crunches under his heavy feet as he makes his way to the side of the cabin.

He turns off the solar powered generator and makes his way to the back of the cabin.

A beautiful greenhouse is attached at the back. He wipes away at the frozen window and peeks inside. His daughter's inside and grabs some vegetables. He smiles and taps at the window.

She turns and sees him, smiles back. She holds up some carrots, he nods in approval. She throws them in a basket that already has some kale, potatoes and salad leaves.

He turns to go back to the front of the cabin. The sun sets in the distance.

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

At the dinner table, they enjoy their meal. Outside is a snow storm. The wind wails and the cabin creaks. The patter of hard snow hits the windows.

FATHER

So what did you do today?

DAUGHTER

Umm, I played with Jake -

He looks at the rubber snake at his table.

FATHER

Yeah, I remember.

DAUGHTER

Annnnnnnnd I played with my other toys. I took a nap, played in the snow for a bit and helped make dinner.

FATHER

Sounds exciting.

DAUGHTER

What did you do today?

FATHER

Just some fatherly duties, you know the usual.

He smiles.

FATHER

Hey, wanna sing a song?

KNOCK KNOCK.

Their attention immediately goes to the door.

DAUGHTER

Hell -

He covers his daughter's mouth and shakes his head no.

FATHER

(whispers)

Hide in your bedroom, now.

She runs to her bedroom in the back. He moves towards a rifle which stands in the corner of the room.

KNOCK KNOCK.

VOICE

I know you're in there. I've been watchin' you for the past hour or so. So best not to act like you're not home.

He checks the rifle, it's loaded. He grabs a few more bullets and places them in his breast pocket.

FATHER

What do you want?

He aims the rifle at the door. Slowly moves to be in front of it.

VOICE

To come inside.

Sweat drips from the father's brow. He quickly wipes it and places his finger on the trigger.

FATHER

That's not happening.

VOICE

It's cold outside. I need shelter and food. You seem to have both.

FATHER

I don't know you.

VOICE

Well then allow me to introduce myself. My name is Mendax. What's yours?

FATHER

Mendax? What kind of name is that?

VOICE

It's mine, that's what kind.

FATHER

I can't let you in, not tonight.

VOICE

You willin' to let a man die from the storm on your doorstep?

FATHER

I am. If it means protecting what's mine.

VOICE

I understand. I really do, can't trust people these days. Then again, could you ever really trust anyone you didn't know?

FATHER

Please leave.

VOICE

Leave? That's odd, it sounded like you wanted to meet some new people on the radio earlier.

His eyes widen.

VOICE

We heard your broadcast. Looking for survivors.

FATHER

We?

FOOTSTEPS on the roof. He looks up, aims his rifle as well. He switches between the door and the ceiling.

VOICE

Oh, pardon me, did I forget to mention I'm not alone?

BANG.

The front door jerks open a bit, but the lock keeps it shut and safe.

BANG.

The door jerks again, this time the latch loosens.

FATHER

I have a gun and I'll shoot.

SHATTER.

The glass from the greenhouse in the back breaks.

VOICE

Do you lock that door to your greens?

He quickly turns around, rifle in hand and aims it towards the back door leading to the greenhouse.

The back door swings open. A GROTESQUE MAN, tall and lanky stands in the doorway.

BANG.

The grotesque man falls back, hole in his forehead, blood spills out onto the floor.

Smoke rises from the rifle. The father is in shock. He quickly reloads.

TUMBLING. THUD.

Black soot, ash and smoke erupt from the fireplace. A BURNT WOMAN rolls out, slightly on fire.

She stands up and screams, runs after him. She grabs hold of him and they crash through the window.

He drops the rifle inside, while they both tumble through the window outside.

EXT. LOG CABIN

The burnt woman screams in agony while thrashing at the father. A pair of hands pull her off of him. It's MENDAX, covered head to toe in human skeleton remains.

He smiles, a few rotten teeth that are left show through his lips.

MENDAX

How bout a song for me?

INT. LOG CABIN

The burnt woman crawls through the window and walks towards the door. She unlocks it.

Mendax and the father walk in, the burnt woman turns around and sees the daughter with a rifle aimed towards her, her finger on the trigger.

BANG.

The burnt woman flies back through the open door.

The daughter is startled, she drops the rifle as tears fall off her cheeks. Mendax goes for the weapon.

The father grabs a nearby wooden chair from the dining table and slams it over Mendax's head. He falls to the ground.

The father jumps on top of Mendax and they wrestle. Mendax reaches under his skeleton armour and pulls out a knife.

He stabs the father in the side. Stinging PAIN shoots up his side. He immediately jerks up as he feels the coldness of the blade pierce his skin and blood stains his shirt.

Mendax pulls the knife out and stabs him again.

He stops fighting.

The daughter runs over to them with a shovel in her hand. She plunges in towards Mendax's throat.

It nearly slices his head off.

He spits out blood, specks hit her face.

Mendax's arm drops to the floor with a THUD. Eyes roll to the back of his head.

The father falls as well.

The daughter turns him over to his back, blood pools around him.

DAUGHTER

Daddy, what do I do? Tell me, just
tell me what to do?

He points to the emergency medical kit under the couch. She runs towards it and races back.

DAUGHTER

What do you want me to do?

He can barely speak. He points to a small bottle labelled morphine. Then he points to a syringe.

She nods and takes the syringe and plunges it into the bottle. She takes out a full syringe of morphine and hands it to her father.

He plunges it into his arm, it releases into his bloodstream. Tears hit his face, not his tears, but hers.

DAUGHTER

Daddy, what next? What do I do next?

He raises his hand to her face, blood smears her cheek.

FATHER

Hush....little baby....don't say a word...Papa's
(cough)
Gonna buy
you...a...mock....ing....

DAUGHTER

Daddy?

No response. His eyes are fixated on her face, a faint smile on his lips.

DAUGHTER

Dad please. Don't go. I need you.

She lays her head on his chest, she sobs uncontrollably.

INT. GREENHOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING

In the corner of the greenhouse is a makeshift cross.
DADDY etched into the wood.

She's covered in dirt and dry blood.

She digs a small hole near the cross. She places a single seed in the dirt and closes it back up.

DAUGHTER

Something living will grow there.
It might be stupid to think a part
of you will be in that, but, it'll
give me someone to talk to. I'll
try my best daddy. I'll make you
proud.

She plunges the shovel into the dirt.

EXT. LOG CABIN - EVENING

Two dead bodies sit in the snow. She struggles greatly with the third, but finally manages to get the grotesque man outside.

She walks over to the generator and turns it on.

INT. LOG CABIN - LATER

The girl sits at the makeshift radio. She hunches over the table, headphones pinned to her ears. She listens to the static and fiddles with the dials.

A wooden ship sits on the desk next to her, she's fixed what was once broken.

Frustrated, she slams the headphones on the table and walks away. She cries as she paces the room.

DAUGHTER

I can't do this. I can't. I'm
sorry, I'm not strong enough. I'm
not.

She falls to the ground on her knees, holding her face.

The static on the radio twitches. Mumbling through the headphones. Words are spoken.

VOICE OVER RADIO

Hello? Is anyone out there?

CUT TO BLACK: