

**the end and the end and the end**

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*Geena runs in the door, supporting a young woman, TONYA, who has a gash on her head, blood, bruises. Everything is rapid, panicked.*

TEDDY

**What happened? Geena!**

GEENA

There was a mob, people running, guns everywhere I didn't know—[what to do] I didn't know!

TEDDY

Who is this?

Geena are you ok?

GEENA

I'm ok, she's not OK, look at her she's not *OK*.

TONYA

I'm ok, I think I'm ok am I—[ok?]

GEENA

You're not ok, sit down.

*Tonya sits.*

TEDDY

Geena who the hell is this?

GEENA

They were trampling her, there were guns, she needed help.

*Pause. Teddy is incredulous.*

GEENA

I helped.

TONYA

I'm Tonya.

GEENA

Teddy, get this girl a bandage.

TEDDY

Can I talk to you for a second?

GEENA  
**Now, Teddy.**

*Teddy exits.*

TONYA  
Thank you.

GEENA  
The world's going to shit.  
You remind me of my daughter.

TONYA (*laughs*)  
I doubt I look much like your daughter, lady.

GEENA  
You have her...energy.

TONYA  
...thanks.

*Teddy re-enters with bandages, a washcloth.  
Geena takes it and wordlessly gets to work on Tonya's injury.*

GEENA  
Where do you live? Do you need help getting home?

TONYA  
I live in Jersey.

*Teddy and Geena stare.*

GEENA  
You stay with us.

TEDDY  
Geen—

GEENA  
We have food. You can stay in my daughter's room, she's—

TONYA  
Oh, I—

GEENA  
She's in Chicago.

TONYA  
Oh...

...  
...Thank you.

TEDDY  
We need more food.

GEENA  
Then get more.

*Shift:*

A1: It's like this.

B1: I wanna start over.

C1: There's not enough time.

A1: It's like this.

B1: I wanna start over.

C1: There's not enough time.

A1: Can I go back /I wanna go back.

B1: Can I go back /I wanna go back.

C1: Can I go back I wanna go back.

*Two new people enter, PersonA and PersonB. They carry guns. They stare at A1, B1, and C1.*

PERSON A: Are you stupid?

A1: Maybe.

B1: Maybe.

C1: I wanna go back.

*Shift: A1 remains. Joined by Woman1 and Man1.*

A1  
Food falls from the sky. A Woman laughs.

*Woman1 laughs.*

A1  
The man looks up.

*Man1 looks up.*

MAN1  
Don't get hit by a fridge.

WOMAN1  
Can't you appreciate the little things?

MAN1  
I'd appreciate not being splattered on the ground by a fridge.

A1  
The Woman is splattered on the ground by a fridge.

*Woman1 dies.*

MAN1  
But—

*Shift: The Real Prepper. All alone.*

THE REAL PREPPER  
I was actually ready for this.  
Not a lot of other people were.  
Hobbyists. Putzing. It was trendy but.  
Just people looking for a *feeling* that they were ready for something that was never gonna happen  
so they could—*check!*  
Did that.  
Back to reality.  
Back to my four oh one K.  
But I was really truly fully and completely ready.  
I could survive completely on my own.  
And now I do.

*Shift. Seven people stand looking up at the sky as a meteor comes crashing down.*

PERSON 1  
Is this the end?

PERSON 2  
The end of what?

*Boom. Reset. Seven people stand looking up at the sky as a meteor comes crashing down.*

PERSON 1  
Is this the end?

PERSON 2  
The end for who?

*Boom. Reset. Seven people stand looking up at the sky as a meteor comes crashing down.*

PERSON 1  
Is this it? Is this all there is?

PERSON 2  
What more do you want?

PERSON 1  
I want more time.

PERSON 3  
I want more time.

PERSON 4  
I want more time.

PERSON 5  
I want more time.

PERSON 6  
Time doesn't stop just because we do.

*Boom. Reset. Seven people stand looking up at the sky as a meteor comes crashing down.*

PERSON 1  
Is this the end?

PERSON 7  
Come here.

*Person 7 wraps Person 1 in a big hug. Another person joins. And another. And another. They all join. Time slows to a stop. They are in this hug forever. A deep breath. They live inside this moment. Inside this moment is the seed of a thousand moments. The sound of breathing. The sound of laughter, of lullabies, a metronome that slows until we are in a vacuum of silence.*

*Shift: Dallas, Mike, The Real Prepper, Denise, Mina around a fireplace inside a house. The doors are barred. Mike has his arm around Denise. Mina sits as far from Dallas as possible. The Real Prepper cooks meat on the fire.*

DALLAS  
Ice cream

MIKE  
Cold Beer

DENISE  
Air Conditioning

MINA  
Ugh, Air Conditioning

*They high five.*

DENISE  
And a hot shower. All this sweating and dirt is hell on my complexion.

MIKE  
You look good, Mama

DENISE  
Oh, stop

DALLAS  
Skip the shower, ditch the mirrors, too

MINA  
Pass

DALLAS  
How are you thinking about how you look at a time like this?

MINA  
A time like this? What is this time *like*? How is this time different, *really*, from any other time?

*Denise places a hand gently on Mina's arm. Mina smiles at her. Calmer.*

MINA

The only difference I know between now and before is finally. Finally, finally, finally, finally: everyone else is just as scared as me. Which makes me...not scared at all anymore. Not even of the mirror.

*Denise chuckles gently.*

*The Real Prepper pulls the meat off the fire.*

REAL PREPPER

Food.

*They all take some.*

*Shift: Kay. Alone.*

KAY

We're walking back up into the trees, where the boat is, we have the plan, we've had the plan, our bags strapped to our backs, our lives strapped, our hiking shoes on, worn in but not worn out, planned out, we. We walk quietly all I'm thinking about is:

We can turn back any time. My mother doesn't need to wonder where I went. This doesn't have to be real. This doesn't have to be real. This doesn't have to be real. It's not too late.

And we get on the boat and float out in the dark and I hear the water slurp up the side hungry everything like an ache I feel it on my feet my ass the cold the buoyancy light but heavy I just We can turn back anytime this doesn't have to be real all that—not far away I hear a crackle of flame shouting gunshots I think: I can still go back they shush me I wonder why, I'm silent, I'm the grave, I'm the vacuum of the universe, I think silently to myself **WE CAN STILL GO BACK THIS DOESN'T HAVE TO BE REAL** In the trees I hear yelling my husband pushes me into the river I watch them float away.

Silent.

I feel the weight of my boots, my clothes.

I close my eyes.

I hold my breath.

I'm going to count to one hundred and when I open my eyes again I will be back in real life and I will only know the things I want to know.