

Scratched

By

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EXT. CAMPSITE

The night sky is filled with stars. Sounds of a family chatting, fire crackling, and sausages sizzling. The Alton family are in the middle of a secluded woodland. There are three tents surrounding a campfire and a barbecue. RYAN, IZZY, CIARAN, and DIANE sit around the fire, wrapped up in hats, coats, and scarves. CIARAN is holding an acoustic guitar. Next to the fire, HENRY mans the barbecue, grilling some sausages. IZZY leans in towards CIARAN.

IZZY

Ciaran, play another one.

CIARAN

(Light-heartedly)

I've been playing almost an hour - I'm gonna run out of songs!

IZZY

You've still got some more in you, come on! Are you a musician or what?

CIARAN laughs at IZZY's persistence.

CIARAN

Alright, alright.

CIARAN starts to play the intro to 'Lean On Me' by Dean Withers. DIANE puts her hand on her chest and smiles, swaying to the music. They all join in singing the song, except for RYAN, who looks away from everyone. IZZY puts her hand on CIARAN's knee, beaming ear to ear.

IZZY

Come on Ryan, join in!

RYAN rolls his eyes and joins in for the chorus. HENRY continues to grill the sausages, and then puts some sliced onions on the grill. DIANE stands up and hugs him from behind. HENRY sinks into her touch and they sway from side to side for a few moments. He flips the sausages over. DIANE takes a deep breath and smiles.

DIANE

I'm so excited to eat real meat again.

HENRY

Tell me about it. Tired of all that processed long-life crap.

DIANE chuckles and gives HENRY a kiss on the cheek.

DIANE

You're really spoiling us.

HENRY looks over at RYAN, CIARAN and IZZY, who are still singing.

HENRY

It's been a hard year, we deserve a break.

DIANE

We really do...

INT. KELLY FAMILY LIVING ROOM

BRYAN and MAEVE are sitting together, huddled up on a sofa, and AOIFE sits opposite them on an armchair near the window. There is a fireplace at the back of the room. In the centre of the room is a coffee table with a battery-powered radio on it. They have a television mounted on the wall, but it is turned off. MAEVE and BRYAN are drinking tea together, and AOIFE is playing with a Rubik's Cube.

MAEVE

I wonder how Ciaran's doing.

BRYAN takes a sip from his tea.

BRYAN

I'm sure he's grand. He seemed very excited to go, didn't he?

MAEVE

Yeah. I just don't like him being away in times like these..

BRYAN chuckles.

BRYAN

Ye worry too much, love. We've been fine so far, haven't we?

MAEVE

We have. But what about the Murphys?  
Or the Johnsons? The Mills?

BRYAN looks down into his cup of tea.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

And don't get me started on poor Mrs.  
Davies. Went out to get her shopping  
and came back to a dead family and a  
levelled house.

BRYAN sighs.

BRYAN

Maeve, love. I know yer worried, but  
ye can't spend yer whole life thinking  
of the worst.

MAEVE grits her teeth.

MAEVE

(Exasperated)

Life? What life? All I have left is my  
family. God forbid I worry about them!

BRYAN

Maeve...

EXT. CAMPSITE

The family are still singing along to 'Lean On Me'.

HENRY

Sorry to interrupt, Ciaran, but I  
think these are all done!

CIARAN stops playing the guitar.

CIARAN

No problem at all, sir.

HENRY smirks at CIARAN. Everyone comes up to collect their  
food. They then sit back around the fire and start to eat.  
They are silent, engrossed in their food, only making the  
occasional sound of delight.

CIARAN (CONT'D)  
This is seriously delicious, Mr.  
Alton.

HENRY lets out a small chuckle.

HENRY  
Quit with the formalities already,  
we're family!

RYAN purses his lips together and gives CIARAN the side-eye.  
IZZY sees this, and glares at RYAN. CIARAN doesn't notice,  
and smiles gleefully at HENRY.

CIARAN  
Thank you, Henry.

HENRY rubs CIARAN on the shoulder.

HENRY  
You're welcome, son.

CIARAN beams with joy. RYAN glares at CIARAN.

RYAN  
You have a real son over here.

HENRY looks towards RYAN.

HENRY  
I can't call my future son-in-law my  
son?

IZZY smirks at RYAN.

IZZY  
He's just jealous and feels like he's  
being replaced.

RYAN smirks back and crosses his arms.

RYAN  
Am not. That dickhead could never  
replace me.

DIANE's eyes widen.

DIANE  
Ryan! Wash your mouth out with soap.

RYAN

I'm twenty-two years old quit treating me like a child!

IZZY

Then stop acting like one.

RYAN huffs. Everyone ignores him and continues to eat their hot dogs.

INT. KELLY FAMILY LIVING ROOM

Suddenly, there is a rumbling sound, the windows start to rattle, and the lights flicker and turn off, leaving the fireplace as the sole light source of the room. MAEVE whimpers and covers her mouth with her hand. AOIFE is fascinated, and far too excited for the situation that they're in.

AOIFE

Do you think that was a bomb?

BRYAN grabs the radio, winds it up, and places it on the table.

RADIO

...just in that Iran has bombed the Southend Army Reserve Centre.

MAEVE gasps.

MAEVE

Jesus, Mary and Joseph!

RADIO

...believed that they are targeting military bases, so citizens are advised to remain calm and shelter in place..

MAEVE interrupts the broadcast.

MAEVE

(Frantically)

Do you think Ciaran will be alright?

BRYAN sips his tea.

BRYAN

He's out in the country. He'll be safer than we are.

MAEVE snaps around to face BRYAN. Tears are welling up in her eyes.

MAEVE

Do you seriously think saying that will help?

BRYAN

Well what do ye want me to say? There's no winning with ye!

MAEVE starts to cry.

EXT. CAMPSITE

The Alton Family sit around the campfire, still eating their hotdogs. After taking a bite, some ketchup and mustard smears on IZZY's nose. CIARAN wipes it off with his thumb and IZZY smiles at him. RYAN glares at them. DIANE leans on HENRY's shoulder and smiles blissfully. RYAN glares at them as well.

RYAN

I don't get how you guys are so happy.

DIANE

What do you mean?

RYAN has a blank look behind his eyes.

RYAN

A bomb could drop on us any minute and we wouldn't know it was coming.

IZZY's eyes widen.

IZZY

Why do you always have to be so cynical? Can't we go one night without talking about the war?

RYAN smiles sarcastically.

RYAN

Oh yeah, my bad. I should just live in sunshine-rainbow-land and skip  
(MORE)

RYAN (CONT'D)  
blissfully across a landmine-ridden  
field.

IZZY rolls her eyes.

DIANE  
Ryan! We're on holiday. Can't you  
relax?

RYAN  
I didn't even want to come.

IZZY smiles angrily and cocks her head to the side.

IZZY  
Well maybe you shouldn't have.

RYAN  
And risk you all dying without me?

DIANE sits up and whacks RYAN on the back of his head. RYAN winces and grabs where she hit. He then crosses his arms and looks away. They awkwardly finish eating their hot dogs. HENRY clears his throat and slaps his thighs.

HENRY  
Well, anyone up for toasting  
marshmallows after this?

IZZY, DIANE and CIARAN nod. RYAN stays still.

INT. KELLY FAMILY LIVING ROOM

AOIFE sits at the edge of her seat, and uses exaggerated hand gestures and facial features as she speaks.

AOIFE  
Ciaran may be safe from the Iranian  
bombers... but he's not safe from the  
big scary animals lurking around the  
woods!

MAEVE's tearful eyes go wide.

MAEVE  
You, bite your tongue!

BRYAN points sternly at AOIFE.

BRYAN  
Stop teasing yer mother.

AOIFE smirks smugly, leans backwards in her chair and crosses her arms.

AOIFE  
Just saying... there's always gonna be danger. You should quit worrying. Just because something bad could happen, doesn't always mean it will.

MAEVE cries harder and she reaches for her phone.

BRYAN  
Aoife! Stop it right now.

AOIFE  
Why? You said the same thing just a minute ago.

BRYAN  
That was different!

MAEVE calls CIARAN and it goes straight to voicemail.

AOIFE  
How so?

BRYAN  
I was just talking about the truth, not creating made-up scenarios to give yer mother a feckin' heart attack!

AOIFE  
Well I don't see how it's any different because both things are making her cry!

BRYAN sighs.

BRYAN  
Yer right.

AOIFE grins smugly and crosses her arms. MAEVE tries calling CIARAN again. BRYAN turns to face MAEVE.

BRYAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, love. I know yer worried.  
And that's normal in times like these.

AOIFE makes a shocked face.

BRYAN (CONT'D)

I was being a feekin' eejit. I'm  
sorry.

MAEVE leans into BRYAN and burrows her head into his chest,  
showing him her phone.

MAEVE

He's not picking up.

BRYAN

That doesn't mean anything. Ye know a  
lot of the phone lines are down.

MAEVE

I know, but I'm so scared...

MAEVE starts to sob. BRYAN strokes her head.

BRYAN

Everything will work out okay, my  
love.

AOIFE

Or will it...

BRYAN

(Sternly)  
Aoife, stop.

EXT. CAMPSITE

AOIFE (V.O.)

Who even knows what's out there.

Everyone is packing up for the night: putting away their camp  
chairs, closing the barbecue, and putting out the campfire.  
HENRY and DIANE giggle and walk back to their tent. RYAN  
walks to his tent, glaring back at his parents. CIARAN and  
IZZY are standing outside of their tent. IZZY waves at her  
family, smiling.

IZZY

Goodnight everyone!

HENRY  
Goodnight, my sweet.

DIANE  
Night, darling.

RYAN doesn't say anything, unzips his tent and goes inside. CIARAN sees this and sighs. IZZY gives him an understanding look. CIARAN unzips their tent, and waits for IZZY to enter before he does. CIARAN enters and zips the tent back up.

INT. CIARAN AND IZZY'S TENT

AOIFE (V.O.)  
Maybe he's not picking up because something's got him!

CIARAN and IZZY are in sleeping bags next to each other, cuddling. Next to them is a lamp and a Swiss Army knife. CIARAN leans over to turn off their battery-powered lamp, and then wraps his arm back around IZZY.

INT. KELLY FAMILY LIVING ROOM

MAEVE covers her mouth with her hands. AOIFE smiles wildly.

AOIFE  
I mean, there's plenty of foxes in the forest...

MAEVE calls CIARAN again, her panic increasing.

BRYAN  
Aoife!

INT. CIARAN AND IZZY'S TENT

There is a rustling noise coming from outside. CIARAN opens his eyes.

AOIFE (V.O.)  
Or he could get bitten by a snake!

Sounds of footsteps get progressively louder. CIARAN shoots up and turns on the lamp, revealing a small shadow on the tent wall. IZZY wearily opens her eyes. She looks confused.

IZZY  
Are you okay...?

CIARAN nods, and puts his hand on her shoulder, rubbing it with his thumb, before getting out of his sleeping bag and standing up.

AOIFE (V.O.)  
Maybe a deer will get loose and  
trample him!

MAEVE (V.O.)  
No!

The shadow on the wall gets bigger, and there is a growling noise outside. IZZY's eyes go wide and she starts breathing quickly. CIARAN grabs his Swiss Army knife and walks over to the tent door.

IZZY  
(Hushed)  
Wha-what are you doing?

CIARAN  
(Hushed)  
Going outside.

IZZY  
(Hushed)  
What? Stop! You could get hurt.

CIARAN  
(Hushed)  
I won't.

IZZY  
(Hushed)  
Ciaran!

CIARAN unzips the tent.

AOIFE (V.O.)  
Or maybe a wild boar will come and  
maul his face off!

BRYAN (V.O.)  
I'm being serious! Stop this at once  
young lady!

EXT. CAMPSITE

CIARAN pushes the flap open and shines his light on HENRY who

is jumping at him and yelling with his hands in a claw-shape. CIARAN screams and pulls his knife backwards.

CIARAN  
Jesus Christ!

HENRY laughs and puts his hand on CIARAN's shoulder, who sighs with relief.

INT. KELLY FAMILY LIVING ROOM

MAEVE is hyperventilating with tears streaming down her face. AOIFE chuckles.

AOIFE  
Come on mum! You know I'm just joking around with you. Nothing like that would ever happ-

A naked human-looking CREATURE lunges through the window and rips AOIFE's head off before she can finish her sentence. MAEVE and BRYAN get splattered with her blood and they scream.

EXT. CAMPSITE

HENRY folds over with laughter, slapping his thighs. He speaks between laughs.

HENRY  
I can't believe you fell for that!  
What did you think I was some kind of monster?

CIARAN  
Something like that.

HENRY recovers from his laughing fit.

HENRY  
You're a funny one, boy. Alright, go back to sleep. And apologise to Izzy for me for waking her.

IZZY (O.S.)  
(Half-shouting)  
I don't forgive you.

HENRY and CIARAN both laugh.

HENRY  
Goodnight then, lad.

CIARAN  
Night, Henry.

HENRY smiles and CIARAN goes back into the tent and zips it shut.

INT. ALTON FAMILY CAR

They are one of very few cars on the motorway. HENRY is driving, DIANE is in the passenger seat, and IZZY is in the middle seat sandwiched between CIARAN and RYAN. RYAN is looking out of the window. Outside, cell towers and trees have been knocked to the ground, and the roads are full of potholes.

HENRY  
So, Ciaran. How did you find your first trip with the family?

RYAN rolls his eyes. CIARAN smiles.

CIARAN  
It was amazing. It's nice to reconnect with nature.

DIANE  
Isn't it just? And to get away from the stresses of life for a little while...

CIARAN  
Tell me about it.

DIANE  
You must be missing your family, though.

CIARAN  
Yeah, I am.

CIARAN smiles to himself.

CIARAN (CONT'D)  
Can't wait to give them a big hug when I get back.

IZZY lays her head on CIARAN's shoulder and nuzzles into him.

IZZY

Aww, you're so sweet.

CIARAN kisses IZZY on her forehead. RYAN feigns throwing up. IZZY smirks and elbows RYAN in his side. He chuckles and whacks her over the head. She punches him in the thigh, giggling.

DIANE

Stop it, you two!

EXT. OUTSIDE KELLY FAMILY HOME

They pull into the Kelly Family's driveway, open the car doors, and get out of the car. HENRY walks over to the boot of the car, opens it, and hands CIARAN his rucksack.

HENRY

There you go, lad.

CIARAN smiles.

CIARAN

Thank you. And thank you all for having me. It was lovely.

DIANE puts her hand on CIARAN's shoulder and rubs it with her thumb.

DIANE

You're welcome any time, love.

CIARAN smiles again. IZZY holds CIARAN's hand. They walk to the front door. CIARAN rings the doorbell. There isn't an answer. He rings it again. CIARAN furrows his eyebrows.

CIARAN

They said they'd be home.

He knocks on the door. Still no answer. He knocks harder. DIANE and HENRY look at each other and purse their lips. CIARAN chuckles awkwardly.

CIARAN (CONT'D)

I guess they forgot I was coming today.

CIARAN lets go of IZZY's hand, looks under the doormat, and grabs a key. He chuckles and shows off the key. He puts it in the door and unlocks it.

CIARAN (CONT'D)  
(Awkwardly)  
There we go.

He opens the door. IZZY's eyes widen with shock.

IZZY  
Oh my God.

The Kelly family are all deceased and covered with blood. AOIFE's decapitated head lays next to her body, and she is missing her right arm. MAEVE's torso has been ripped open and her organs are exposed, her guts spilling out. BRYAN is missing both of his legs and his dismembered arms lay beside him with bite marks taken out of them. There is blood splattered all over the walls, ceiling and floor.

IZZY (CONT'D)  
What the fuck.

IZZY takes small steps backwards. CIARAN freezes, staring at his deceased family. HENRY, DIANE and RYAN rush towards CIARAN and IZZY.

IZZY (CONT'D)  
(Tearfully)  
What the fuck. What the actual fuck.

DIANE gasps when she sees the scene in front of her. IZZY starts crying and turns around to hug DIANE. RYAN takes one look at the scene, turns away, and vomits. HENRY's mouth hangs agape in disbelief.

CIARAN drops down to his knees and continues to stare in horror. DIANE calls the police but they don't answer. RYAN retches and heaves. IZZY continues to cry into DIANE's shoulder. HENRY steps in front of CIARAN and closes the door.

INT. ALTON FAMILY LIVING ROOM

RYAN, IZZY and CIARAN are sitting around the fireplace listening to the wind-up radio.

RADIO  
...don't have much information on what these creatures are, but please avoid being bitten or scratched in case of potential infection...

The radio dies. RYAN winds it up again and sets it back down, chuckling to himself.

RADIO (CONT'D)  
...never seen anything like this before.  
They are resistant against most  
weapons including firearms...

RYAN laughs harder.

RADIO (CONT'D)  
...you see one of these creatures,  
report it and run as far as you...

RYAN's laughing turns maniacal. IZZY snaps to look at him.

IZZY  
The fuck are you laughing at?

RYAN  
It's just- I-I fucking knew it! The  
holiday it was too nice, too-too safe  
for this fucking world. I knew  
something would go wrong! I knew you  
were all being blind!

RYAN laughs more.

IZZY  
Really? You're saying I told you so  
right now?

RYAN's eyes widen.

RYAN  
Well I did, didn't I?

His laughter starts turning into hyperventilation. IZZY grimaces at him. DIANE comes into the room holding a mug of hot chocolate. She side-eyes RYAN, but decides to ignore him.

DIANE  
Here, Ciaran.

She passes him the hot chocolate.

DIANE (CONT'D)  
Let me know if you need anything else.

CIARAN gives her a small nod and holds his hot chocolate, staring forward, not taking a sip. DIANE leaves the room. IZZY lays on CIARAN's arm.

IZZY

Ciaran...

CIARAN continues to stare forward blankly, not reacting to IZZY's affection. She starts rubbing his arm. HENRY enters the room with wooden planks tucked under his arm and a nail gun in his hand. He sets the planks down on the floor, then picks one up to barricade across the door with one hand, whilst nailing it in with the other.

RYAN

Do you really think that's enough to keep us safe?

HENRY

Well it's better than nothing.

RYAN

The radio just said not even guns can stop those things!

He picks up another plank for the barricade.

HENRY

So it's best to keep them out in the first place.

RYAN

They're still going to break in and kill all us all!

CIARAN starts to breathe heavily. IZZY puts her arm around him.

HENRY

Well, what help is sitting there, panicking, and listening to the radio?

RYAN

It's keeping me informed!

HENRY

If you don't get up and help you'll be one hell of an informed corpse.

RYAN snaps out of it, takes a deep breath, and gets up.

RYAN

You're right.

HENRY smiles at him, and hands him a wooden plank. He holds it in place while HENRY mans the nail gun. IZZY turns towards them.

IZZY

Do you think that they're... zombies?

RYAN

I don't know what they are. But they sound fucking terrifying. I can't believe that this is happening- that *zombies* might be real.

IZZY looks at CIARAN.

IZZY

A lot of crazy shit has happened in the last twenty-four hours...

CIARAN continues to stare forward, trying to steady his breathing. RYAN quickly wipes a tear from his eye before anyone can see it. HENRY passes the rest of the planks to RYAN.

HENRY

Board the windows for me, will you?

HENRY pats RYAN's shoulder and leaves the room before RYAN can answer.

INT. ALTON FAMILY GARAGE

DIANE and HENRY are sorting through a messy, disorganised garage filled to the brim with miscellaneous items. There's camping gear, a significant supply of canned food and bottled water, gardening tools, and boxes of old toys from RYAN and IZZY's childhoods.

DIANE

In times like this I'm grateful for your paranoia.

DIANE picks up a 24-pack of tinned soup.

HENRY  
With the world in the state that it's  
in, can you blame me?

HENRY grabs an axe.

DIANE  
I really can't.

HENRY  
If you prepare for the worst, the  
worst can't happen.

DIANE smiles and looks at HENRY lovingly.

DIANE  
Why'd you always have to be so wise?

HENRY sassily tucks his hair behind his ear and smirks.

HENRY  
I can't help that I'm the way that I  
am.

DIANE giggles and leaves the garage. HENRY grabs a crossbow.

INT. ALTON FAMILY LIVING ROOM

RYAN is finishing up boarding the last window. HENRY enters the room wielding an axe, a baseball bat, a crossbow, and a chainsaw. He balances the axe against the wall, lays the chainsaw on the floor, and passes the crossbow to IZZY, who is still sitting down next to CIARAN.

IZZY  
Always knew this would come in handy  
one day.

She stares at HENRY pointedly.

HENRY  
Alright, alright, I'll quit whining  
about how much your lessons cost.

IZZY and HENRY chuckle. HENRY picks up the baseball bat.

HENRY (CONT'D)  
We didn't have much in the garage. We  
might have to use knives.

RYAN

No chance, that's too close contact!  
We'd risk getting bitten or scratched.

HENRY grabs the nail gun.

HENRY

We don't have anything else.

HENRY starts shooting nails into the bat. RYAN looks like he's in thought.

IZZY

I'm just hoping they'll leave us  
alone..

RYAN puts his hand on IZZY's shoulder.

RYAN

Brave of you to have hope.

IZZY stares into her lap. RYAN gets up and heads to the kitchen.

INT. KELLY FAMILY KITCHEN

DIANE is rummaging through the fridge, which doesn't have light inside of it, looking for any food which is still edible. RYAN enters and grabs a kitchen knife.

RYAN

You're not gonna use this are you?

DIANE

Nope. Just be careful carrying that  
thing!

RYAN nods and takes the broom from the corner of the room. DIANE sees this, and gives him a questioning look. RYAN exits the room.

INT. ALTON FAMILY LIVING ROOM

IZZY draws her weapon and points it at a 'target' on the wall made from a circle of nails. HENRY stands behind her, watching intently. CIARAN is still sitting on the floor. IZZY closes one eye and aims. She lets go and it hits outside of the target. She slumps down with defeat. HENRY pats her on the back.

HENRY

It'll come back to you, just keep trying.

She purses her lips together and nods. She draws her weapon again, and misses by an even greater margin.

IZZY

Come on!

RYAN enters the room, proudly showing off a makeshift spear that he's made out of a knife, a broom, and some duct tape.

RYAN

What do you think?

IZZY

That's sick.

RYAN grins cockily.

HENRY

Does it work?

RYAN nonchalantly stabs into a pillow on their couch.

RYAN

You tell me.

HENRY throws his hands up.

HENRY

Woah, woah! Don't destroy the furniture!

RYAN

We're in a potential zombie apocalypse and you're concerned about the furniture?

DIANE (O.S.)

(Shouting)

Did something happen to my furniture?

IZZY

(Shouting)

Ryan stabbed it.

DIANE (O.S.)

(Shouting)

Ryan!

RYAN flails his arms in frustration.

RYAN  
 Seriously? This is our biggest concern  
 right now?

HENRY points at RYAN with a stern look on his face.

HENRY  
 You watch how you talk to your mother,  
 mister!

RYAN glares at HENRY, purses his lips together, and takes a deep breath. He looks away and tuts.

INT. ALTON FAMILY LIVING ROOM

Everyone except for DIANE are sitting on pillows around the fireplace, listening to music playing on the wind-up radio. The sofa is now barricaded against the door.

They each have a weapon within arm's reach: IZZY has her crossbow, RYAN has his makeshift spear, HENRY has an axe, CIARAN has a chainsaw, and the nail-covered bat is next to an empty pillow reserved for DIANE. The music stops, RYAN picks the radio up and rewinds it, and it starts playing again. DIANE enters the room with two bowls.

DIANE  
 I hope you guys don't mind the  
 concoction of flavours.

She passes the bowls to IZZY and CIARAN. IZZY smiles, and CIARAN barely looks up to acknowledge DIANE.

DIANE (CONT'D)  
 I had to use everything in the fridge  
 before it goes off.

IZZY  
 I'm sure it'll be great, mum.

DIANE smiles and goes back to the kitchen to get the other bowls. IZZY tastes a spoonful of her soup.

IZZY (CONT'D)  
 Mm! It's good! Ciaran, you should try.

CIARAN doesn't respond. IZZY tilts her head and tries to look at his face, but he just stares at the floor.

IZZY (CONT'D)  
Baby, you need to eat.

RYAN snatches CIARAN's bowl. IZZY looks up at RYAN with a shocked look on her face.

RYAN  
What? If he's not gonna eat it I will.

DIANE enters with three more bowls, balancing one on her forearm. She hands one to HENRY, and goes to give one to RYAN but notices he already has one. She furrows her eyebrows at RYAN, and puts his bowl down by CIARAN's feet. HENRY starts to eat.

HENRY  
It's delicious, dear.

DIANE  
You don't have to lie.

HENRY  
I'd never lie to you, my love.

They continue to eat their food for a few moments. Suddenly, something bangs on the door. Everyone stops eating and they turn around to face the door, apart from CIARAN, who remains frozen. RYAN grabs the wind-up radio and turns it off. The banging sound is clearer. IZZY puts her food on the floor.

IZZY  
(Hushed)  
Do you think it's a zombie?

RYAN  
(Hushed)  
Nah, I bet it's a Jehovah's witness.

IZZY makes a disbelieved face at RYAN's sarcasm.

HENRY  
(Hushed)  
Hopefully it won't be able to get in,  
but hold on to your weapons just in  
case.

Everyone except CIARAN nods and they put down their food and grab their weapons. The banging noise gets louder. IZZY's breathing quickens, and she grabs onto CIARAN's arm for comfort. CIARAN grits his teeth together.

IZZY

(Hushed)

Do you think it'll come in?

HENRY

(Hushed)

Don't panic, Izzy.

IZZY

(Hushed)

How can I not panic?

HENRY

(Hushed)

Because everything is going to be fine. As long as I'm here, you're safe.

IZZY nods. The banging gets louder, and a human-looking hand manages to break through the door. IZZY draws her crossbow. HENRY holds his axe high above his shoulder. CIARAN doesn't react. The CREATURE punches through the door until it creates a hole, large enough for it to crawl through.

RYAN

Holy fuck.

The family are too stunned to move as the CREATURE crawls through the hole and stands upon the sofa. It is human-looking and completely naked, but has a dead, hollow look behind its eyes.

HENRY

Shit.

IZZY starts shooting arrows at it. Most of them don't hit, but when they do, the CREATURE doesn't flinch. HENRY plunges his axe into the CREATURE's neck. The CREATURE tries to grab HENRY.

DIANE

Look out!

DIANE approaches the CREATURE from behind, and hits it over the back of its head, knocking it to the ground. RYAN smiles maniacally and starts stabbing the CREATURE in the chest and stomach while it's down. It swipes at RYAN's legs and he lunges backwards, falling to the ground.

IZZY

Are you okay?

RYAN

Don't worry about me!

They back away from the CREATURE as it stumbles back onto its feet. HENRY charges forward, swinging his axe at it and manages to slash its chest multiple times. The CREATURE stumbles backwards. RYAN pierces the CREATURE from behind through the heart. RYAN looks back at CIARAN, who is sitting in the same position, unmoving.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Ciaran, what are you doing, man? Help us?

CIARAN looks incredibly panicked, but he is frozen and unable to move. IZZY backs into the far corner of the room and aims at the CREATURE's head. DIANE, HENRY, and RYAN continue to attack the creature.

IZZY

Everybody, down!

They all duck, and IZZY shoots her arrow, piercing the CREATURE directly in the middle of its forehead. It flops down to the ground. IZZY smiles, proud of herself.

HENRY

That's my girl!

DIANE runs up and hugs IZZY. RYAN kicks the body of the CREATURE. It doesn't move. RYAN smiles.

RYAN

I-I can't believe it.

HENRY joins in the hug.

IZZY

Get in here, Ryan!

RYAN joins the hug. They stay there for a few moments before pulling apart. IZZY starts looking at her arms and legs.

IZZY (CONT'D)  
Did anyone get bitten or scratched?

RYAN  
I don't think so.

They all check themselves and each other for scratches.

HENRY  
Seems we're all good.

IZZY looks over at CIARAN, who is still sitting, staring into nothingness. She approaches him, kneels and hugs him from behind.

IZZY  
Are you okay?

CIARAN doesn't react.

RYAN  
I'm sure he's fine. Fucker didn't do anything to help.

IZZY rolls her eyes. HENRY sits back down in his spot and slaps his thighs.

HENRY  
I reckon we should get back to our food.

IZZY gestures with her head towards the body of the CREATURE.

IZZY  
Are we not gonna take care of that?

HENRY makes puppy-dog eyes.

HENRY  
It'll get cold.

IZZY chuckles. The CREATURE starts wriggling on the ground. IZZY stares in horror.

IZZY  
What the fuck.

HENRY, DIANE, and RYAN turn around to look. The CREATURE pulls itself up and kneels. The wounds on its chest have healed up. The CREATURE stands. It grabs the arrow in its skull, pulls it out, and throws it onto the ground.

DIANE

Holy shit.

IZZY covers her mouth with her hands and whimpers. HENRY swings his axe back over his shoulder, and RYAN draws his spear. HENRY charges at the CREATURE and slashes it from its left shoulder to its right hip. He plunges the axe into the CREATURE's skull, and it becomes stuck. The CREATURE's head starts to leak brown, mushy, brains. HENRY looks at the CREATURE with shock and fear, and it reaches out to grab him.

DIANE hits it with her bat and it turns towards her. DIANE starts to retreat in fear. RYAN stabs it in the back with his spear. IZZY draws her crossbow, aiming for the CREATURE's eyes.

IZZY

Ryan, watch out!

RYAN ducks out of the way, and he lands next to CIARAN.

RYAN

You're seriously just gonna sit there?

CIARAN doesn't respond, his breathing gets faster. RYAN gets back on his feet.

RYAN (CONT'D)

You're the one with a chainsaw, for fucks sake.

IZZY is shooting arrows at the CREATURE. It turns towards her and starts approaching. HENRY grabs the CREATURE by the axe lodged in its head and slams it to the ground. RYAN runs back to help, stabbing the creature repeatedly, while HENRY struggles to pull the axe back out of its head. RYAN turns back around to face CIARAN.

RYAN (CONT'D)

You're gonna sit there and let another family die?

HENRY manages to pull the axe out.

HENRY

Leave him be, Ryan.

CIARAN's breathing gets heavier. The CREATURE scurries to its knees and launches at HENRY. DIANE pulls it off of him and whacks it in the head repeatedly with the bat. Its head is completely caved in, but it still gets back onto its feet.

DIANE

(Horrificed)

What the fuck? Is this thing invincible?

The CREATURE swipes at IZZY. HENRY pushes her out of the way, and her crossbow falls to the ground. He plunges his axe into the CREATURE's torso. IZZY grabs her crossbow again and takes aim.

RYAN

We're dying here, Ciaran! You're gonna let your girlfriend die?

IZZY

Ryan, stop it!

DIANE joins in swinging at the CREATURE, but nothing seems to be taking it down. RYAN stabs its stomach.

RYAN

What do you even have left to lose?

IZZY

I said stop!

The CREATURE whacks DIANE, HENRY and RYAN out of the way, and they hit the ground hard, wincing. The CREATURE starts to walk towards IZZY.

IZZY (CONT'D)

Oh shit...

Frantically, IZZY starts shooting arrows at the CREATURE but it is completely unbothered, continuing its approach. RYAN gets back onto his feet and tries to distract the creature, stabbing and slashing at its skin. HENRY and DIANE get up and try to grab the creature out of the way.

Suddenly, a chainsaw revs and everyone turns around to look. CIARAN stands behind them, gripping onto his chainsaw. The

CREATURE towers over IZZY, who is crouched against the wall. She tries to draw an arrow but her hands are too shaky. CIARAN runs towards the CREATURE.

CIARAN  
(Yelling)  
Get out of the way!

The family move to the side. CIARAN makes himself a barrier between the CREATURE and IZZY, and cuts it in half from its shoulder to its hip. The top half of the CREATURE slides off of its body onto the floor, and then the legs collapse. Everyone stares at CIARAN in awe, except from RYAN, who smirks.

IZZY  
Oh my God.

RYAN  
I can't believe it.

RYAN slings his arm around CIARAN's shoulder, while CIARAN stares at the CREATURE's body, processing what he has done.

RYAN (CONT'D)  
Congratulations on not being completely pathetic.

IZZY  
Ryan, now is not the time.

CIARAN breaks out of RYAN's embrace with his shoulders and holds his hand out for IZZY. She takes it and pulls herself up.

They stare at the CREATURE in silence. It slowly starts to regenerate, with the top half growing new thighs and the bottom half growing a new torso. Their faces contort into horrified expressions.

IZZY (CONT'D)  
Throw it in the fire, quick!

HENRY and RYAN each grab half of the body each and haul it into the fire. Everyone gathers around to watch the body as it burns, and the regeneration comes to a halt.

RYAN

Looks like we need to find a  
flamethrower.

IZZY drops down onto the floor and lays down, recovering from  
the adrenaline. CIARAN sits beside her, his hands shaky.

IZZY

Is it definitely dead this time?

RYAN

Think so.

IZZY

Thank God.

IZZY puts her head in CIARAN's lap and snuggles into it. He  
hesitantly puts his hand on top of her head, stroking it.  
HENRY grabs his upper arm, and when he looks at his hand,  
there is blood on it. HENRY winces.

DIANE

Darling?

DIANE looks closely at HENRY's arm and gasps. IZZY suddenly  
sits back up.

IZZY

What's wrong?

RYAN looks over, sees the wound, and closes his eyes.

IZZY (CONT'D)

Dad? What is it?

HENRY stares at his hand, processing what he is seeing.

IZZY (CONT'D)

Are you okay? Dad?

DIANE starts crying and turns away from everyone.

IZZY (CONT'D)

Tell-tell me what's wrong.

RYAN looks at the ground.

RYAN

He got scratched.

IZZY

No. No, he didn't. That couldn't- No.

HENRY continues to stare at his hand. IZZY gets up and grabs RYAN, shaking him.

IZZY (CONT'D)

Now's not the time for jokes, Ryan!  
You're not fucking funny!

RYAN shoves her off of him.

RYAN

I'm not joking! Why the fuck would I  
joke about something like that?

IZZY starts hyperventilating.

IZZY

Dad, you're gonna be okay. It's gonna  
be... It has to...

IZZY sinks to her knees and starts to cry. CIARAN puts his arms around IZZY, and she buries her head in his neck.

IZZY (CONT'D)

Ciaran. It's gonna be okay, right?  
Tell me it'll be okay. It has to be  
okay.

CIARAN strokes IZZY's head. HENRY snaps out of his daze and turns to look at RYAN.

HENRY

You know what has to be done.

RYAN looks shocked. DIANE snaps back around.

DIANE

What? What are you saying?

HENRY looks down towards the ground.

HENRY

We don't know how this spreads. And I...  
I feel strange.

He looks at RYAN.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I won't be able to take myself out in case I turn. And I trust no one else to do the job.

RYAN nods understandingly, and grits his teeth. IZZY's cries turn into sobs. She looks up from CIARAN's, now soaked, shoulder.

IZZY

Dad... No, please.

DIANE gestures frantically.

DIANE

There-there has to be another way. There will be a cure. We will find it! I-I can't lose you.

HENRY smiles sadly.

HENRY

And what would you do with me in the meantime?

He chuckles.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I mean, that fucker was strong, I'm not sure a restraint would keep me down. And I won't be me anymore. What would stop me from attacking you?

DIANE's eyes widen. HENRY sighs.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I won't let that happen.

IZZY

(strained, through tears)  
Dad... please...

DIANE starts pacing.

DIANE

What if it wasn't from the zombie? It could've been a nail or something. And who says the virus is even contagious! We don't-

HENRY reaches out to hold DIANE.

HENRY

Baby.

DIANE sinks into his touch.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I have to protect this family. I'm not taking any chances.

DIANE cries into his chest, gripping onto him.

DIANE

I can't lose you...

IZZY

Dad...

Tears start to fall from HENRY's eyes as well. They stay in this hug for a few moments. RYAN stares at the floor. DIANE pulls away from the hug and slaps HENRY.

DIANE

You're not leaving me!

HENRY

I don't have a choice. If I become a zombie, I might hurt you all!

DIANE looks at HENRY silently.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I have to go, and you have to stay. You have to keep the kids safe.

More tears well up in DIANE's eyes.

DIANE

You better find me in the next life. You hear me!?

She pounds on his chest.

DIANE (CONT'D)

Do you fucking hear me!?

HENRY pulls DIANE back in and kisses her on the forehead.

HENRY

That goes without saying.

DIANE looks at HENRY lovingly, her eyes full of tears. She burrows her head into his chest. He strokes her head.

HENRY (CONT'D)  
I think it's time.

DIANE  
No... I'm not letting go.

HENRY  
You have to.

She pulls back and looks into HENRY's eyes. IZZY whimpers and holds on to CIARAN.

DIANE  
I'll become a zombie with you.

HENRY chuckles softly.

HENRY  
You know I'll never let that happen.  
Now let go.

DIANE  
No. Stay... We'll find a cure.

HENRY breaks free from DIANE's grip and cups her cheek. He looks over at IZZY and CIARAN.

HENRY  
Ciaran, promise me you'll take care of  
my baby girl.

IZZY cries harder, tucking her face into CIARAN's neck. CIARAN nods at HENRY.

CIARAN  
Of course, Henry.

HENRY smiles.

HENRY  
Come on, then , Ryan.

RYAN picks up his spear. HENRY holds the door open for RYAN, before stepping outside himself.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I love you all. I will always be with  
you.

HENRY closes the door. IZZY sobs even harder. CIARAN rubs  
IZZY's back. DIANE slides down the wall, with a defeated,  
grieving look on her face.