

WHAT TO PACK FOR THE APOCALYPSE

Written by

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INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It's get the hell-out-of-dodge time. Piles of back-of-the-closet junk litter the floor. Clothes are draped over the furniture. Essentials lie somewhere in this chaotic mess.

DAISY (early 20s) lies on the couch. She looks pale and sickly. Almost catatonic. No reaction to the glow from a muted TELEVISION.

A reverse shot reveals a NEWS ANCHOR speaking while a VIDEO of RIOTING plays in background. There's a US MAP showing several states colored in various shades of RED. A chyron reads: FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ISSUES EVACUATION ALERT.

BLAKE (early 20s) enters through the front door. Casually dressed, fun hair. He's balancing an iPad and a BOX OF VARIETY CHIPS.

KEITH (early 30s) enters from the bedroom, wearing slacks and a buttoned shirt, carrying cold weather COATS. He shakes his head at Blake's choices.

KEITH

Blake, c'mon. We went over this. No electronics.

Blake drops everything next to a small elementary school-sized BACKPACK. Keith gives the backpack a disappointed once-over.

BLAKE

You said necessities.

KEITH

Well, that ain't it. Forget the chips. Go find some water bottles.

WHITNEY (O.S.)

No, Keith! Remember? No bottled water.

WHITNEY (early 30s), BUSTLES into the room with a pile of plastic TOTES and a CLIPBOARD. She's wearing DENTAL SCRUBS, a tight bun, and a lifetime of exhaustion on her face. She stacks the totes and checks a note on her clipboard.

KEITH

Good point. Those things are terrible for the environment.

WHITNEY

No. They're flimsy, loud, and they don't hold enough water.

She holds up a pair of CAMELBACKS.

WHITNEY (CONT'D)
Can you fill these? They'll carry
two liters.

Keith fills the camelbacks from the kitchen sink. Blake checks on Daisy. No response, even when he takes the REMOTE from her. The TV shuts off. Still nothing.

Whitney gives Keith a LOOK, then goes back to cataloging their provisions.

KEITH
When did you want to leave?

WHITNEY
Soon as the sun hits. We've got a
little time, and I don't want to
drive in the dark. Not after last
night.

Blake points to his gathered supplies.

BLAKE
What car is this going in?

WHITNEY KEITH
The truck. We'll take my Hyundai.

Keith and Whitney turn to each other.

KEITH (CONT'D)
Whitney, I've driven it up to the
trails a dozen times. Never had any
problems.

WHITNEY
Paved roads, right?

KEITH
Well, yeah. Rough terrain, though.
Plus it's all charged up.

Whitney exhales frustration.

WHITNEY
Honey. Darling. *Babe*. How many
charging stations do you think
we're gonna run across?

Keith thinks it over. Whitney's right, but he's not happy about it.

KEITH
Okay. Fine. We'll take your truck.

WHITNEY
Thank you. Blake? Did your parents
say how much room they have?

Blake's put on the spot. He tries to play it off.

BLAKE
Oh. They've got lots of room.
Seriously, our cabin could be like
a resort. And there's satellite. A
fireplace. It's got all the things.

Whitney smells BS, but she shrugs it off.

KEITH
Go find some real food, Blake.
Something with real ingredients.

BLAKE
Bet!

Blake exits by the front door as Keith calls after him.

KEITH
And no chips!

Keith leaves Whitney to her work and returns to the bedroom.
Something CLATTERS off screen.

WHITNEY
What are you doing in there?

More CLATTERING. Keith returns with a FISHING POLE, TACKLE
BOX, and a RUCKSACK slung over his shoulder. Everything looks
brand-new. Never used.

Keith proudly lays his gear at Whitney's feet.

KEITH
I've got the whole set-up here.
Hooks. Fishing line.
Sink...sinkers. Bobbies. Different
lures.

Keith tries to pry open the tackle box, but it's still in the
store packaging. He gives up and reads from the label.

KEITH (CONT'D)
Look, there's bait for all kinds of
fish. This is...it's like I've been
saying.

(MORE)

KEITH (CONT'D)
Getting back to the way things
ought to be. Enough with the
microplastics and Wal-Mart junk
food. No more Grub Hub. That's all
over now. Hard times make hard men.

Whitney's skeptical.

WHITNEY
Okay. But do you know what you're
doing?

KEITH
Hundred percent. All those nights I
binged Naked and Afraid. Alone.
Survivor. I know this stuff. And
when I need help?

Keith holds up his PHONE, showing Whitney a list of VIDEO
TUTORIALS.

KEITH (CONT'D)
All the experience I'll need, right
here.

Whitney WANTS to say something. She wants to say it *so bad*.
But she keeps it to herself.

WHITNEY
Fine. Put it by the coats.

Daisy stirs and groans.

KEITH
Poor kid. Hope she feels better
soon.

WHITNEY
What are we planning to do about
her?

Keith adopts a self-righteous pose and looks down on Whitney.

KEITH
What are we *planning*?

WHITNEY
Don't look at me like that. Her
pulse is erratic, and her skin
feels cool and clammy. Remember
what they said on the news?

KEITH

Babe, you work at a Dentist's office. In billing. How would you-

WHITNEY

What does that have to do with it?

KEITH

All I'm saying is neither of us are really qualified to diagnose her symptoms. Or say whether she stays or goes.

WHITNEY

It's my truck. So I'm a little qualified.

(quietly)

Honestly, if I had my way I wouldn't even want Blake with us.

KEITH

Except it's Blake's family we're running to for shelter. My folks are back east. So unless you want to look for your parents down in Mexico, he's our safest bet.

WHITNEY

Yeah, look where the safest bet's got me.

Whitney didn't mean to said this OUT LOUD. Keith definitely heard. He sulks for a beat, then takes his backpack into the bedroom. Sounds of drawers yanked open and slammed shut.

Whitney tries to focus on packing. She WINCES at the racket Keith is making.

Blake enters, swinging a plastic shopping bag stuffed with RAMEN NOODLES, SALTINES, and GRANOLA BARS.

His nonchalant air grates on Whitney.

BLAKE

This stuff doesn't go bad, right?

Whitney clenches her fists, ready to pop off on Blake. But Keith returns with his backpack, so she stifles this too.

WHITNEY

What else did you find?

BLAKE

Spill, Keith! What do you got?

Keith slowly reveals a SWISS ARMY KNIFE. Still in the box.

KEITH

The Pioneer X. Top of the line. 33
separate functions. Amazon says
this blade is the pride of the
Swiss Army.

BLAKE

Bussin'

KEITH

I've been waiting to bring this
along on my next trek into the
wilderness.

Whitney GROANS at 'wilderness', but before she can say
anything, Daisy starts coughing. Blake rushes to the couch.

Daisy's coughs start small, but intensify. She holds out her
hand. There's BLOOD.

Blake is like a deer in the headlights.

BLAKE

I'm gonna go get...something for
that cough.

He makes a hasty exit. Keith moves to comfort Daisy. She sees
her bloody hands, and realization hits. She won't make it.
Tears come.

Keith can't deal with tears.

KEITH

No, don't. Okay? Just try to rest.
We'll be on our way soon. Meet up
with Blake's parents. They've got a
real nice cabin. And a big, comfy
bed for you. All soft and warm.
Better than this lumpy old couch.

Keith tries to smile. Can't. Daisy turns away. Muffled
sobbing from the couch.

Keith rises. He's face to face with Blake.

BLAKE

What the hell did you say?

KEITH

I was just telling her.
Everything's going to be okay.

BLAKE

Don't even go there. She's not interested in what you have to say.

Whitney lets out a long, loud breath. She's had enough.

WHITNEY

He's only trying to help. You ought to give it a shot.

Blake turns on Whitney. She's staring back at him. Keith takes a half step, then hesitates. He doesn't want in the middle of this.

BLAKE

Aren't you kinda over obsessing about like, being in control all the time?

WHITNEY

Yes, Blake. I'm very tired. I'd love it if people could manage themselves. Instead?

Whitney rips through Blake's snacks. A ramen package goes flying. Then a granola bar. She HURLS a bag of chips at Blake. He DODGES just in time.

WHITNEY (CONT'D)

Instead, I've got chips. And bottled water. Saltines. Whole world's about to eat us alive, but that's okay. We've got granola!

BLAKE

I'm sorry, it's all I could find!

WHITNEY

And I'm sorry that your parents cabin is the only safe place we could find. So look at that. Now we're both sorry.

Daisy groans and shudders. An *unnatural* movement. Blake doesn't notice- too busy arguing with Whitney.

BLAKE

Yeah, keep dragging me. It's all going down and I don't have a ride. All good, I got it sorted already. Parents ghosted me, why not you?

WHITNEY

Stop with the 'victim' crap. At least your folks are somewhere you can find them.

BLAKE

I mean, yeah. Maybe.

A beat. Now Blake has Keith and Whitney's full attention.

KEITH

Maybe? Are they there or not?

BLAKE

I don't know for sure. I guess, yeah. Okay? Yes. They're probably up there. Dad always said: when it hits the fan, that's where we'd go.

KEITH

And there's enough room?

BLAKE

Sure thing, Keith. Plenty of space. And feel free to bring all your 'survivalist' junk. They'll totally dig that. Probably want you there more than me.

WHITNEY

Look around. You're not the only one with problems here.

Blake waves Whitney off and returns to Daisy's side. Keith offers a consoling pat, but Blake pushes him away.

Keith moves in to whisper with Whitney.

KEITH

Feel better?

Whitney shifts to Keith like she's targeting him. He's taken aback, but stands his ground.

WHITNEY

I don't. Not really. One sick kid. One stupid kid. And a man child who thinks he's gonna turn into a pioneer overnight.

KEITH

Can you maybe calm down, just a little?

WHITNEY

Calm down? I'm trying to get us out of here, while you act like we're packing for another camping trip. You keep going on about fishing, but the truth is, you've never once seen real wilderness. Do you understand where we're headed? What it's gonna be like?

Keith's hand instinctively reaches for his phone, but he stops himself.

WHITNEY (CONT'D)

Your phone. Really?

KEITH

Whitney, please. Let's not.

WHITNEY

Oh, let's. Because maybe I'm not asking the right questions. Maybe I'm just afraid to ask what else you're hiding in the closet.

Keith stares at his knife-still in its box. Surveys his gear. It's all still in the box. His expression hardens- at least he's bringing *something*.

KEITH

Ask whatever the hell you want. But just remember, all we've got keeping the whole world from eating us alive, is each other.

Silence as reality, spoken out loud, hits them both HARD. Whitney backs down.

WHITNEY

Look, I didn't mean to-

Daisy erupts into another coughing fit. Blake reaches for her, but Daisy VOMITS blood. He RECOILS. Daisy is horrified.

Blake backpedals to Keith and Whitney.

BLAKE

I don't know what to do. Should we like, take her somewhere?.

Keith and Whitney share a LOOK. Keith flails for another answer, ANYTHING but the one percolating through his mind.

Fear and shame haunt Whitney's face- she already knows.

Blake looks to each in turn. Slowly, the truth dawns on him.
They're not bringing Daisy.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
(progressively emotional)
No. No. NO. NO. **NO**. no

Keith takes Blake by the shoulders. Tries to say something comforting. Something rationale. He comes up short.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
I'm not leaving her.

KEITH
So we all stay?

Blake's eyes are wild with emotion. He turns to Daisy, then to Keith. Something crucial within him breaks, and he sags beneath Keith's grip.

It's too much for Whitney. She breaks into tears and FLEES to the bedroom.

Blake quietly rages. Keith pulls him in close.

BLAKE
(muted scream)

Daisy stirs. Blake lets go of Keith and wipes his eyes before going to Daisy.

She's staring up at him, affection creased with pain. He takes the remote. Daisy reaches for him, but he pulls back. Her hands fall away.

The affection dies, leaving only pain. She would weep if she weren't so exhausted.

Blake aims the remote, tears running down his face.

The TV flickers to life. The News Anchor looks devastated. The US map behind him shows more states colored in RED.

Blake gags. He covers his mouth and races outside. Carefully avoiding eye contact with Daisy, Keith packs his bag.

Whitney appears at the bedroom door. Keith opens his arms. Beckons to her. They embrace. Whitney shakes from sobbing.

Blake returns. Whitney's tears grow louder as we zoom in on Blake's helpless anger quietly DYING to guilty resignation.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Keith and Blake strap down the last bit of cargo to the back of Whitney's TRUCK. They're both dressed for the outdoors in jeans and flannel shirts.

Whitney approaches, tears in her eyes. Keith gently pulls her close while Blake turns back for a last look.

BLAKE

Is she warm enough?

WHITNEY

I put on an extra blanket.

BLAKE

TV still on?

WHITNEY

Left the remote.

The three share a long, reluctant beat before they enter the truck. Whitney starts it up and the truck drives away.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

The TV flickers over a lifeless apartment. The News Anchor has left the desk. The US MAP is now entirely RED.

As electricity fails, the TV switches off. Then the lights. A gentle SIGH rises, then falls to silence.

FADE TO BLACK.