

Y2K

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FADE IN:

INT. DINER - DAY

Dime store Christmas decorations stick to the windows, hang from the water-stained ceiling tiles. Holiday music PLAYS.

BERT, 50s, clean-cut, glasses, sits alone in the back corner booth. He folds a piece of burnt toast, dips it into a plate of runny eggs. Bert slurps a string of egg yolk, chomps on the toast, washes it down with coffee.

COUNTER

Bert hands the check to the CASHIER, a portly woman in her 40s. He notices a homemade sign taped to a collection jar.

CASHIER
How was everything?

INSERT - SIGN

A picture of a BLONDE WOMAN, 30s, smiling. Handwritten under the photo in black marker:

MISSING - MARY GARNER Have you seen my Mommy?

BERT (O.S.)
Hmm? Oh, fine.

COUNTER

CASHIER
Doing anything special tonight for
New Year's Eve?

Bert looks up, smiles.

BERT
I never do anything special.

CASHIER
So, you don't believe what they're
saying about Y2K?

She hands Bert two dollars. He places it in the jar.

BERT
You never know.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Bert picks up a can of tuna, reads the label, places it in his shopping cart. He swipes the rest of the tuna from the shelf with his arm into the cart.

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

The hatch opens, Bert stands outside, loads bags upon bags of groceries into the car. Bert pushes the cart away, then reappears with a cart full of gallon jugs of water.

INT. STATION WAGON - LATER

Bert opens the hatch, tosses lumber and 2x4s into the car. He slams the hatch closed.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The back door opens, stands ajar. Soon Bert appears at the door with an armful of lumber. He struggles to get inside, then drops the wood on the floor.

The alarm on his wristwatch BEEPS. He checks the time, turns off the alarm.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

A small television on the counter shows images of PARTY-GOERS in Times Square. Party hats and noise makers.

A power saw BUZZES through wood O.S.

A hammer POUNDS.

Bert walks into the kitchen, opens the refrigerator. He emerges drinking a can of beer. He notices the television, walks over to it, turns up the volume.

REPORTER (V.O.)

It seems like any other New Year's Eve here in Times Square. However, there are some that believe the new millennium will signal the end of days. The apocalypse, if you will. With people taking to the streets - rioting, and looting.

Bert lowers the volume, walks off with the beer.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bert hammers the last nail into a 2x4. Both windows in the room are boarded shut. He drops the hammer, stands back to admire his handy work.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The sound of footsteps ascending stairs O.S.

The basement door opens. Bert enters the kitchen holding a paper plate and plastic cup, tosses them into the trash can.

He walks back to the door, replaces the padlock.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bert sits on the sofa, swigs the last drop from a beer can before crushing it in his hand. He tosses it onto the coffee table amongst a dozen other crushed cans.

He reaches over, picks up a hand gun from the table. He checks the chamber, spins it, then closes it with a loud CLICK. Loaded.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A thin sliver of sunlight pierces through the 2x4s at the window and lands on Bert's eyelids. He winces, shields them.

Bert sits up, holds his head, and groans. His eyes open slowly, notices the daylight creeping into the room.

He stands, walks slowly to the window, peers between the gaps of the wood planks.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

The sound of bolts sliding and locks turning O.S.

The front door creaks open, Bert sticks his head outside. He fights off the bright sun with his hand, steps out onto the porch holding his gun behind his back.

Bert surveys the neighborhood. Quiet. Deserted.

A faint CLICKING noise catches Bert's attention.

It grows louder. CLICK. CLICK. CLICK.

Bert cocks the gun he holds behind his back.

He jumps as something lands at his feet with a THUD.

The Sunday newspaper rolls on the porch, taps his foot.

Bert watches the PAPER BOY, 13, ride down the street on his bike. Baseball cards make a CLICKING sound against the spokes. Bert releases the hammer of the gun.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The newspaper sprawls out across the kitchen table. The headlines are bold and dark.

HAPPY NEW YEAR - WELCOME TO THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Bert sits, stares at the paper. Runs his hands through his hair, over his face.

REPORTER (V.O.)

On a lighter note, by now we all
know the world did not end last night
at the stroke of midnight.

Bert looks over at the television, pushes his chair backwards. The legs scrape the wood floor as he stands.

REPORTER (V.O.)

There were reports of people buying
toilet paper, water, anything they
could get their hands on.

Bert walks to the counter, opens a drawer, pulls out a hammer.

REPORTER (V.O.)

I guess it just goes to show you how
some people --

Bert SMASHES the television screen with the hammer.

The alarm on his wristwatch BEEPS.

Bert's eyes widen. He shudders, turns off the alarm.

Bert sets the hammer on the counter, shuffles over to the pantry, opens the door.

The shelves are stocked full with canned tuna. He takes a can, closes the pantry door.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Bert descends the stairs holding a tuna sandwich on a paper plate and water in a plastic cup. He walks over to a locked door, places the plate and cup on a shelf.

Bert reaches above the door, grabs a key off a hook, unlocks the padlock.

INT. ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door to the dark, dingy basement room opens. Bert stands in the doorway, reaches for the light switch.

The fluorescent light bulbs hum and flicker on.

Bert takes a step inside holding the plate and cup.

A WOMAN lies on a mattress thrown on the dirt floor. Her hands shield her face from the light.

Bert places the plate and cup on the floor.

MARY GARNER, 30s, blonde, lowers her hands, squints. Her face matches the sign from the diner, except for the smile.

MARY

Let me guess. Tuna?

BERT

I'm afraid there's been a slight change of plans.

Bert reaches behind his back, produces the hand gun. Mary moves away from him. The chain around her ankle allows her little room to move.

Bert places the gun on a high ledge. He fishes in his pocket, retrieves a set of keys.

Mary looks up at him, confused.

Bert bends down, unlocks the chain around her ankle. He steps back, motions to the open door.

Mary stands, slowly. Unsure. She hobbles to the door, turns.

MARY

I promise I won't tell anyone.

Bert shakes his head, smiles.

BERT

It doesn't matter.

Mary limps out the door.

Bert sits down on the mattress. He picks up the sandwich.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Mary opens the basement door. She walks as fast as she can into the --

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mary passes the boarded windows, opens the front door. The sunlight hits her face. Her smile returns.

A GUNSHOT explodes O.S.

Mary turns toward the shot. She's all alone in the room.

She turns back toward the door, limps outside.

FADE OUT