

SOMEBODY WAS HERE

A Ten-Minute Doomsday Exploration

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CHARACTERS

HOLOGRAM GIRL—A hologram of a young girl running hastily through dilapidated streets

MARGO—A survivor; curious, to her detriment

REED—A survivor; closed off, protective, hardened

SETTING

An abandoned desert town/city

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES

Hologram girl can be played by a real person OR a video/projection/puppet/etc.

You can create the video viewed by Margo however you would like. Go nuts!

A gentle sunrise on a barren wasteland. Buildings in the distance. There's something familiar about this place. Maybe you've seen it in a movie. Maybe it just reminds you of . . . something.

A girl runs through a dirt street, past buildings with peeling and faded blue paint. There is something . . . not right here. The girl's hair seems to twist with its own mind, and her feet don't quite hit the floor as she flies through crumbling rock.

A hidey-hole, somewhere in the dark-but-not-quite-dark. A window. A man sifts through piles of artifacts, things he must assess the value of. What can be thrown off the proverbial ship? What must be salvaged to make the voyage ahead?

He looks up in time to see the girl fly past his window. He recoils, uses the windowsill for cover. He doesn't know what he's hiding from. She's not real, anyways. He shakily stands, watching as the hologram statics, shorts, and disappears.

MARGO

Anything?

The man starts and turns.

REED

No. Nothing.

The piles of objects seem offended. Nothing? They've come this far. You really think that this is nothing?

MARGO

I don't understand how this shit stays still long enough to get dust.

REED

Not much reason to move, or things to move it.

MARGO

I guess. Still, you'd think . . . I don't know. That something would look different. We're different. Everything is. But somehow this isn't.

REED

I don't want to think about it.

MARGO kicks a few things around, breaks something fragile. Ouch.

MARGO

There.

REED
What?

MARGO
Now somebody was here.

REED
Huh. Yeah, I guess so.

The pair travels outside the building. The sun is almost up. REED peels blue paint off the outside wall, slowly. The running girl, a terrifying mirage, flies past once more.

MARGO
What do you think she's a memory of?

REED
The way she's hightailing it, I don't think I want to know.

MARGO
You never want to know.

REED
And you always do.

MARGO
Aren't you the least bit curious about . . . anything?

REED
Getting curious here just gets you hurt. Or gets you nothing. Lots and lots of nothing here. You know that.

MARGO looks around. They stand in silence for a few moments, looking at the sunrise. The girl, looping once more, comes racing down the dirt road. She runs through MARGO, who doesn't flinch. MARGO looks behind her, the direction the girl came from.

MARGO
She's something.

REED
An old hologram. Security footage or something. Probably not anything we want to see.

MARGO

I want to. I . . . feel like I need to. I don't know why. Something here just feels . . . I don't know. Familiar? There's something here.

REED

Last time I got that idea in my head I saw . . . well, you know what.

MARGO

I'm bored, Reed. And tired. And . . . BORED. Please, for once. Can we do something that might be the LEAST bit interesting?

The pair stare at each other for a while. Longer than is comfortable. MARGO walks away, in the opposite direction of the hologram. After a moment, REED reluctantly follows.

We can see now that this city, town—whatever you want it to be, really—is in a canyon. We're in the desert. It's getting warmer and warmer, the light more red. It doesn't look like sunlight.

We expect to find something large and ridiculous and futuristic and apocalyptic, but that's not what happens, not at all. MARGO finds that the source of the hologram is small. A cell phone, perhaps solar powered. She crouches down to take a closer look, gently picking it up. She presses a few buttons, REED glancing intermittently over her shoulder and around the area, holding an improvised weapon close to him.

A video begins to play. We see it projected in the sky, on MARGO and REED's faces.

The girl, running. The camera follows her. The sounds of . . . well, we can't tell. It sounds . . . bending, crumbling but not, something trying to destroy and only somewhat succeeding. Heavy breathing. Red-orange light. The ground is rolling like waves, but the ocean is miles away. The girl trips. Someone screams. The video pauses. The triangle "play" symbol hanging ominously in the middle of the screen.

REED

Jesus.

Silence.

MARGO

How has nobody found this before?

REED

Few of us left learned a long time ago to keep our heads down. 'Cept you of course.

A moment of sunlight, desert heat, disbelief, a weird form of sadness.

MARGO

I've never . . . seen it before.

REED

God willing, you'll never see it again.

REED goes to grab the phone from MARGO, who snatches it back.

MARGO

No.

REED

Give it to me, Margo.

MARGO

Just because you're scared doesn't mean I am. I want to see the rest.

REED

Trust me, you don't.

MARGO

What do you know? You weren't there either.

REED

No, but I know enough to know you don't want to see it, and I sure as hell really don't.

MARGO

Then look away. Go over there. You can brood and whatever else. I'm watching this.

REED

You're so fucking stubborn.

MARGO

And you're not my fucking dad.

Beat. REED turns away and goes to sit on a faraway rock. Or is it a . . . bench? Regardless, it is used as a bench now.

MARGO takes a deep breath and presses play again.

The video lurches to a start. The girl continues running, around bends, past bright blue-and-white buildings. Other people are running around her. Dust everywhere, cracks in the earth, screaming in earnest now. Something in the sky isn't right. Something, we can't tell what, is very VERY wrong. A loud, blood-chilling scream, the camera operator falls, and—

Darkness.

MARGO looks at the black screen, stares at it for a while. For a long while. She looks up, and it is night. Stars abound in the sky. REED is still sitting on his bench, cleaning his weapon or taking inventory of his backpack.

MARGO

And we never saw it coming.

REED

We couldn't've. It was the one thing we weren't prepared for.

MARGO

Everyone always expected us to destroy ourselves. Instead . . .

REED

Yeah. Instead.

MARGO looks longingly, forlornly, into the sky.

MARGO

Do you think we could have known?

REED

No. How could we have?

MARGO

It's just so . . .

Silence.

REED

I know. That's why I told you not to watch.

REED stands, collecting his things and his thoughts.

REED (cont)

Time to head back.

MARGO

Yeah, I know.

REED

And give that to me. Captain will want to see it.

MARGO reluctantly hands over the phone.

MARGO

Don't tell him I watched it, okay?

REED

I won't.

The pair heads off into the canyon beyond. Lights in the distance, bright ones. It's beautiful, unimaginable, and, well—different. It's an amalgamation, something thrown together in haste and out of necessity. All at once the lights get brighter and brighter until they are blinding and then—

Blackout.

FIN.