

HUMANITY REDEMPTION IDEA

Written by

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A BLACK SCREEN

We hear fire crackling leaving a faint homely echo. A little girl, VALENTINE, gives off heavy raggedy breaths.

INT. CAVE - MAIN CHAMBER - NIGHT

The body of a man, only a few feet away from Valentine, lies still with an arrow in their head, and a small, engraved knife illuminated by the fire resting just away from his hand. Blood pools from his head ever so closer to Valentine.

An old, wrinkled hand, GRANDFATHER's hand, stops the blood with a rag from reaching her.

Valentine's blood-speckled face looks up at Grandfather. He wears a soaked raincoat and lays a crossbow to the side.

GRANDFATHER

I'm sorry you had to see that,
sweet pea. It had to be done
though. Who knows what would have
happened to you?

Grandfather drains the rag over a bowl. He soaks the rag again and repeats the process.

GRANDFATHER (CONT'D)

I was just running out of red too.

Grandfather places the bowl behind him next to a clutter of brushes and paint tubes. Above the mess on the cave walls is an unfinished mural, so far depicting [something hella negative that illustrates his psyche].

Grandfather picks up the dead man's knife and wipes it. He looks up, noticing Valentine staring at the mural, her breath slowed down.

GRANDFATHER (CONT'D)

Not very cheery is it? Don't worry,
it doesn't have to be. It just has
to be something to keep you sane.
Not much of that going around these
days.

Grandfather laughs at his joke. Valentine stays silent.

GRANDFATHER (CONT'D)

It's alright. You don't have to
talk. I'll do the talking for both
of us. You'll learn soon enough
anyhow.

Grandfather's head perks up as he hears the sound of someone dragging something from a different chamber. He puts the knife behind him.

GRANDFATHER (CONT'D)
They're late.

FATHER and MOTHER, enter the chamber dragging in a dead elk by the antlers. They're both soaked head to toe despite their own rain jackets. Mother carries a sidearm.

GRANDFATHER (CONT'D)
You're late.

MOTHER
I know, but it was Cabel's first hunt-

Mother turns her head to see the scene before her.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Oh my god!

She drops the elk and rushes toward Valentine.

FATHER
What?

Father turns around.

FATHER (CONT'D)
Holy shit.

He drops the elk and follows suit.

Mother and father both hold and caress Valentine.

MOTHER
(frantic)
Oh, you poor baby.

FATHER
(To Grandfather)
What happened?! Where's Betty?

GRANDFATHER
I told you. You're late, and she's asleep in the other chamber. Ignorant to all of this.

FATHER
You didn't think to warn us before we got in here?! Jesus, there's still blood on her.

Father grabs a rag from his pocket and wipes away the blood.

MOTHER

It's okay baby.

CABEL, looking to be 12-years old with a huge grin on his face enters the chamber with a small longbow on his back and a compound bow that's too big for him in his hand. His grin fades quickly.

FATHER

Don't look, Cabel. Just... don't look.

GRANDFATHER

Cabel.

Cabel turns to see his grandfather motioning him over to sit in his lap. Cabel hesitantly does as he's told.

CABEL

I'm a bit too old for this, grandpa.

GRANDFATHER

(feigning confusion)

You are? Since whe- Oh! That's right. You had your first hunt today didn't you? Well, it certainly looks like a success. Is that your kill?

Cabel tries and fails to hide his smile.

CABEL

It is.

GRANDFATHER

Well I'll be damned. Looks like someone has officially become a man today hasn't he?

Cabel sheepishly grins nodding his head.

GRANDFATHER (CONT'D)

That's right. Hey, I know you've had a long day, but I need help with something only a man can do. Do you think you're up for it?

CABEL

Tell me!

GRANDFATHER
 I knew you'd come through.
 (pointing to the body)
 Do you see our little intruder
 right there?

Mother's head looks up, staring daggers into Grandfather.

MOTHER
 Dad.

GRANDFATHER
 (To Cabel)
 He's gotta get moved out of here so
 I want you-

MOTHER
 Dad.

GRANDFATHER
 - grab him by the legs while I get
 his-

MOTHER
 Dad! Jesus! He's too young for
 that.

GRANDFATHER
 Too young? Well he's a bit too
 young to be killed so the sooner he
 learns the better. Same goes for
 Valentine.

FATHER
 Do not bring her into this. She's
 six! I'll help you move him. NOT
 THEM.

Valentine watches as her father gets up from grasping her.

GRANDFATHER
 You're setting them up for failure,
 you know that?

FATHER
 Just grab his legs.

Valentine's eyes fall on the body. Her father's legs obscure
 her view as they count to three and lift.

INT. CAVE - SLEEPING CHAMBER - LATER

BETTY, along with the rest of Valentine's family sleep on individual wicker matts. A few small candles work as nightlights. Valentine is still awake. Her expression barely changed from the previous encounter. She stares at Grandfather's empty matt.

INT. CAVE - MAIN CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Grandfather tends to his mural, using the campfire as his light source.