

# This Really is the End

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This Really is the End

**Characters:**

Roxy

Discontented teenager. Dresses punk.

Bruce	A former accountant, mid 40s. He wears a tie tied around his head. The only man left on earth; not sure that's enough.
Roche	Female. mid 20s. One year in the National Guard makes her the leader. Dresses militant.
M.C.	Female, 20s to 30s. M.C. stands for 'Mostly Catatonic.' Roche's partner.
Tara	The newly arrived refugee. Dirty & disheveled. Any age.
Danai	Female, any age. The shaman. Wears a long, blowy dress.

### **The Settings:**

The main action takes place in the group's amateurishly constructed shack. There are minimal furnishings, all made from nature. A tree trunk bench is the highlight. A ramshackle pile of weapons lies by the door.

Action also takes place outside, which should be indicated by lighting.

### **The Time**

The near future.

*At rise, ROXY, BRUCE, ROCHE, and M.C. are inside, seated in a circle on the floor, holding hands. They perform a simple 'om' chant. ROXY is the only one whose eyes aren't shut, and, while she still chants, she clearly thinks this is lame.*

*Lights rise on Danai on the opposite side of the stage. She is shaking a smoking sage bundle as she mumbles something under her breath. There is a loud crack off stage, startling her. She pauses, then gives a big smile. She goes toward the noise. She is offstage for a moment, Then lets out a...*

DANAI

(off) AAAAAAAAAAYYYYYYYY!

*Lights fade on her part of the stage. Back in the circle, M.C. opens her eyes and looks around... she has heard the scream. ROXY notices.*

ROXY

What is it, M.C.?

BRUCE

(stopping chanting) Roxy, damn it!

ROXY

What? M.C. stopped.

ROCHE

Roxy, I know you don't like the chanting... (notices M.C.'s state of worry) What is it?

*They all look at her. She can't believe they didn't hear the scream, and tries to communicate that to them.*

ROXY

(after a moment) Bigger than a breadbox?

ROCHE

Knock it off.

BRUCE

(rising, breaking the circle) Okay, my back hurts, let's just do it when Danai gets back.

ROCHE

She wants it going UNTIL she gets back.

ROXY

She just likes pushing us around

ROCHE

We owe her everything. Show some respect.

ROXY

Ooh, everything. Whatever. The barrier'll still work if the timing isn't exact.

ROCHE

Your generation has no discipline.

ROXY

Whatever, old lady.

BRUCE

Danai should have been back by now.

*M.C. stands. They all look at her.*

M.C.

Didn't... didn't you hear...

ROCHE

What is it, baby?

M.C.

The scream...

BRUCE

You heard a scream??

*He moves to the door and checks outside.*

ROCHE

I didn't hear anything.

ROXY

Drowned out by the oms.

BRUCE

I don't see anything. *(crossing to M.C., aggressively)* What kind of scream was it? Was it one person? Was it a group? Was is them? Have they gotten through??

ROCHE

Back off, Bruce.

BRUCE

We've all suffered here, and we still speak in sentences. Her turn. I'm sick of it!

ROCHE

This is pretty simple, Bruce. Step down.

BRUCE

Maybe you should step up and get your girlfriend to talk.

ROXY

*(crossing to the door)* I'm going to look for Danai.

BRUCE

We should stay together.

ROXY

Then come with me.

ROCHE

No, Roxy. Would you use your head? We stick together. That's why we're still alive.

ROXY

Great, back me up.

ROCHE

Roxy—

*ROXY grabs a weapon and opens the door. She shrieks when she sees TARA standing there with a knife in her hand. M.C. hurries to a corner while ROCHE and BRUCE rush to ROXY's side.*

TARA

Whoa! Whoa! Wait!

*They stare at each other.*

I'm not one of them... please, help me. I haven't seen people in... help me.

*The three look at each other and nod. ROCHE gestures for TARA to come in. As she comes in, they surround her, staying alert.*

ROCHE

How'd you get here?

TARA

I walked... I was chased, but I got away... when I got close to here, I felt the air changing... they fell away from me.

ROXY

*(to ROCHE)* I told you the barrier'd hold.

ROCHE

How'd you survive this long on your own?

TARA

I wasn't on my own until... *(she starts to quietly cry)*

BRUCE

*(relaxing)* Okay, I've never seen one of THEM cry. Or talk. Or do anything much more than come in a room and try to eat everyone. Why don't you put down that knife and we'll talk.

*TARA pauses, then drops the knife.*

TARA

I need to sit down.

ROCHE

So sit.

*TARA sits.*

ROXY

Did you see a little crazy shaman woman out there? Dressed like a nut and shaking a stick, you can't miss her.

TARA

I didn't see anyone.

BRUCE

You're sure?

TARA

I was running, then I slowed down... and I saw your door.

*M.C. comes up to TARA, touches her face, hugs her, then rests her head in her lap.*

ROXY

Okay, she's got M.C.'s approval, good enough for me.

ROCHE

Roxy, I'm going with you. Bruce, you sit with the blond. She's not on the list for conjugal visits. I don't trust her yet.

BRUCE

Yeah, that was right at the top of my list of things to do, impregnate her. Go. I'll watch her.

ROCHE

*(indicating M.C.)* Watch her for me.

BRUCE

Yeah.

*ROXY and ROCHE grab weapons and leave.*

TARA

I'm Tara.

BRUCE

Hah. Yeah, manners do go out the window in the end of days, eh? Bruce.

TARA

The quiet one on my lap is M.C.?

BRUCE

That's not her name. Mostly just Roxy calls her that. We don't know her real name.

TARA

Why M.C.?

BRUCE

Stands for Mostly Catatonic.

TARA

Roxy is the little angry one.

BRUCE

That's a good description.

TARA

And the boss is—

BRUCE

She's not the boss. She's just the... you know, the leader.

TARA

Subtle difference.

BRUCE

That's her girlfriend on your lap.

TARA

She goes for catatonic?

BRUCE

Well, they're not like a couple, but Roche is a dyke, and when we found M.C., they just became tight. If it was before...

TARA

And who are you, Bruce?

*He looks at her. Lights crossfade to ROXY and ROCHE looking out over the audience.*

ROXY

This is weird. The witch is reliable... reliably weird and annoying, but she never disappears.



ROCHE

At least we're not overrun.

ROXY

Yeah.

ROCHE

Shield's still working.

ROXY

Yeah.

ROCHE

Can't you just pretend to care if you live or die?

ROXY

I'm through pretending, Roche.

ROCHE

We didn't do this to you. We're all in this together.

ROXY

Can we skip the pep talk? Look... *(facetiously)* I'm being a good soldier, looking around for Danai—

ROCHE

I'm saying can you try not to make things worse for the rest of us—

ROXY

There is nothing worse than here. I survive on twigs and branches so that I can have the privilege of living in fear of being killed by the homicidal remains of the human race and trying to breed with a guy older than my dad was. Why oh why can't I just be a happy little soldier in the your army? What could it be?

ROCHE

We may be all that's left!

ROXY

Are we really worth saving? So I didn't see zombies coming, that was a twist, but anyone who didn't see that the end was around the corner was kidding themselves.

ROCHE

You're wrong.

ROXY

War, disease, corruption. You know that some man in a suit caused this by having some man in lab coat create it. You know it. If this is mankind's last stand, it probably is safe to say that it ends here, no matter what we do. I don't need this. I'm here, I'm doing what I'm told. So aye aye, captain, lets look for the witch who keeps us alive. I'll do it. But you don't tell me what I care about.

*The two exit and lights crossfade to the TARA and BRUCE. She watches him intently. M.C. watches TARA.*

TARA

I would think that being the only man in charge of repopulating the world would be appealing, Bruce.

BRUCE

Oh yeah, lucky me. Just what I always wanted.

*He pauses, then removes the tie from around his head.*

I had a good life, back in San Francisco. I worked for Morgan Stanley Dean Witter. It was mindless paper shuffling, but it paid well. Nights, I would go to the Red Oak Room... space age wall hangings on classic old wood... everyone there was beautiful and rich. I had so many lovers... AIDS left us having to use condoms, but life was still great. I remember once we were playing a game of 'what would hell be for you.' I came in second with some made up story about being stuck in the back of my uncle's Ford for eternity. I wasn't being creative enough. Because this, the last three years... this is hell. They take turns. Every day, once in the morning, once in the evening. Twice a day I have to leave my body, and imagine San Francisco... which leads to remembering all my friends, all my dead friends. And what am I doing this for? To keep the human race going? My people are already gone. I always knew I was a part of a community, but it wasn't the human race. I never felt welcome there. My people are gone.

*TARA moves to him and puts her hands on the side of his head. He looks up at her. The lights rise, very bright... M.C. stands, scared, and rushes from the room. Blackout. The lights come up on ROCHE and ROXY. They are still looking for DANAI, avoiding each other. After a couple of uncomfortable moments...*

ROXY

I've got something.

*ROXY pulls out the dress that DANAI was wearing.*

ROCHE

Where is she? No need for a snappy comeback. That was rhetorical.

ROXY

I wasn't gonna... okay, yeah, I was.

*Slight smiles. M.C. comes on and rushes to ROCHE.*

M.C.

Come back.

ROCHE

Baby—

M.C.

Come back.

ROXY

Separation anxiety?

ROCHE

Roxy, come on.

M.C.

*(to Roxy)* I don't need you. You're useless. You're a quitter.

*M.C. pulls ROCHE off after her, leaving ROXY looking stung. Lights crossfade back to the cabin, which is empty. ROCHE and M.C. enter and look around.*

ROCHE

Oh, what the hell is going on. Bruce! Bruce!

M.C.

They were right there.

ROCHE

What happened, baby?

M.C.

My name is Margaret.

*ROCHE is floored.*

ROCHE

Uh... I'm sorry, but I'm... just... why now? It's been years.

M.C.

I wanted to tell you. But you, the world... I could only see it through a haze. A gauzy haze. I still felt your love. It shined through. But I couldn't shine back to you.

ROCHE

I knew, baby. Margaret.

M.C.

Nothing mattered. That was nice. But I'm here now. I'm really here now.

ROCHE

Why?

M.C.

Because it's ending.

*Lights crossfade to ROXY, on her knees, not moving.  
TARA comes in behind her.*

TARA

Did you find her?

ROXY

No, just her... hey! Back up. Who the hell are you?

TARA

I told you—

ROXY

You're lying.

TARA

I suppose I am.

ROXY

I... what?

TARA

But really, what does it matter, right? I could be the Satan himself, and you'd welcome me as a change of pace. I heard you earlier.

ROXY

You weren't here.

TARA

No, I wasn't. But I felt you, and I listened. When was it that you first gave up? When there were all those crazy reports on the news. When the communication systems began to die. When you saw one of them for the first time. The first time someone you loved died.

ROXY

When we got here, and I realized there was nowhere else to run. That's when I should have died.

*TARA moves to ROXY*

Hey, what are you doing? I've got a space bubble here!

*TARA puts her hands on ROXY's temples, who begins having some sort of vision.*

What... oh, no... no, really?

*ROXY crumples to the ground. TARA kneels over her and brushes her hair out of her face. Crossfade back to the cabin.*

M.C.

You don't have to believe me, and I can't explain to you how it is I feel it, but it's ending. Our witch was never really with us. She started it all, and brought us here. As a last meal. We're dessert.

ROCHE

Margaret, you're talking crazy now. I can't finally find you, and lose you right away.

M.C.

Just because something doesn't make sense to you doesn't mean it's not right.

ROCHE

Pull it together! Damn you! How can you... look, I KNOW, OKAY, I KNOW. It's horrible. Countless people dead... maybe everyone, I don't know. Does it matter? The number is so huge that I can't understand it. Every single life mattered. None of those people deserved to die. But when I try to think of all of them... it's like, when there used to be money, I wouldn't pay seventy cents for a candy bar... I only bought them on sale, forty cents or less. But twelve thousand dollars or eighteen thousand dollars for a car was about the same thing. So many people... and they all add up to a number I can't comprehend. And all I can do is keep fighting. Look... stay here. Lock the door behind me. I'm going to get Roxy and we can regroup.

M.C.

Don't leave me for the end!

ROCHE

I'll be right back.

*ROCHE storms off, armed. M.C. sadly watches her go.*

M.C.

Already gone.

*Light crossfade again. ROXY's clothes lie on the stage. ROCHE enters and sees them lying there.*

ROCHE

Oh no.

*She picks it the clothes. TARA enters behind her.*

TARA

Ready for your turn?

ROCHE

Oh, I am SO ready.

*ROCHE turns on her and prepares to fight.*

TARA

Going to fight to the last?

ROCHE

This isn't the end.

TARA

You're right. It's the beginning. It's time for you to come back to me, Roche.

ROCHE

What are you... no, you know what, never mind!

*ROCHE lunges at TARA, who easily grabs her by the hand and throat from behind.*

TARA

Danai brought you all here for me. I listened to the man, then the girl declare their lack of love for this life. And you, who claim to value it so, you only really are hoping that you can beat it back to your will. You're going home, coming back to me.

*ROCHE begins to sink down into the earth. M.C. enters.*

M.C.

Danai brought you?

TARA

*(without looking at her)* Yes. She thought she'd be you, the last one standing. The new creator. But that's you.

ROCHE

Baby...

M.C.

But why this? I understand taking the world back from us—

TARA

I was never yours.

M.C.

But what's wrong with you? "I want all these people off the planet. I know, I'll raise the dead ones and have them eat the others!" It's sick.

TARA

It just looks that way to you. I think nuclear reactors are sick. Different points of view, you see.

ROCHE

Baby.

*ROCHE falls to the ground.*

TARA

This was the part where humanity had to admit they weren't worthy of me, of the life I provide them. And they did. He never felt like a part of humanity, the young one realized what she was and hated it, and the warrior just fought without thought. And now it's your time. Time for you and the child you carry to start fresh. I have provided you with an Eden. Again. The first time it was borne out of love. So of course it turned rotten. This time we will start with you, and your pain, despair and loss. And hopefully this time mankind will bear good fruit. I'll be back to check up on you. Teach your children well of me, and of my wrath. I am the world, and you are nothing to me.

*TARA exits. M.C. sits with the expired ROCHE*

M.C.

Some other time, we might have been happy, Roche. We might have been friends. You would have known my real name all along... You know the worst part about that nickname, about M.C.? My last name is Catherine. Margaret Catherine. I'm going to name the baby after you. Boy or girl.

*Lights fade. End of play.*