

THE END OF ALL FLESHSCENE 1

(The porch and front yard of a dilapidated mountain homestead. PA, a taciturn, heavily bearded, middle-aged man sits on the porch plucking out a tune on a banjo. A shot gun rests beside him. MA, his sturdy, cheerful wife, enters dragging the carcass of a wild boar stuck with multiple arrows. Seeing us, she addresses us directly.)

MA

Well, hello there, folks, and welcome to the show! Y'all have had quite a time over the past few years from what I understand and, to tell you the truth, we've had quite a time ourselves. Ain't that so, Pa?

PA

Yep.

MA

You see, we're talkin' to you from the future, your future, or maybe not YOUR future, necessarily, but the world of your great great - or maybe even your great great GREAT grandchildren. I've lost track of time, generation-wise, but no matter. Suffice it to say we're from the future, and the future? Well, it ain't no bed-a-roses, I can tell you that.

PA

Nope.

MA

So, bein' from the future, we figured we'd give you a glimpse or two of what's to come!

PA

Through song.

MA

Some song. Mostly talk.

PA

Then y'all can talk about it later. The future, that is.

(Ma sings.)

MA
 C F C
 WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE CHILDREN THAT YOU BEAR?
 C F
 AND OF THE WORLD WITH ALL ITS CREATURES EV'RYWHERE?
 F C
 WHAT WILL BECOME OF HUMANKIND IN YEARS AHEAD?
 G
 SHOULD YOU FEEL HOPEFUL 'BOUT THE FUTURE?

PA
 C
 OR PREOCCUPIED WITH DREAD?

(As the scene unfolds, Ma sets about gutting, skinning, and otherwise preparing the pig carcass for the smoke house.)

MA
 I'm "Ma", I make most things run around here. That there's "Pa", he's The Patriarch - and, yes, The Patriarchy's still in full swing, even in the future. Turns out when society collapses ancient ways re-assert themselves. Ain't that so, Pa?

PA
 I got a gun. That makes me Patriarch. That and my genitalia.

(Ma sings again.)

MA
 C F C
 WE'VE GOT THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS ON YOUR MIND.

PA
 F
 WE'VE GOT THE LOW-DOWN ON THE FATE OF HUMANKIND.

MA
 F C
 WE THANK YOU KINDLY FOR ATTENDING THIS HERE SHOW,
 G
 BUT WILL YOU THANK US FOR THE TELLING OF THIS STORY?

PA

C
WE DON'T KNOW.

MA & PA

F C
'CAUSE IT'S A POST-APOCALYPTICAL PROGNOSTICATIVE TALE
G C
THAT TRANSPIRES AFTER CRISES OF UNPRECEDENTED SCALE,
F C
LIKE THE ECOLOGIC MELT-DOWN THAT YOU PROBABLY EXPECT
G
'CAUSE THE IMPACT OF YOUR PRESENCE ON THE PLANET
C
WENT UNCHECKED.

MA

A series of melt-downs, to be precise, generation after generation, until we finally arrived here - in the future!

PA

It's a lot of work!

MA

It sure is, Pa. No technology!

PA

No 'lectricity.

MA

No indoor plumbin'.

PA

We use a latrine.

MA

Turns out the future has more in common with the past than it does the present - your time. Because your time?

PA

Y'all had 'lectricity!

(Ma sings yet again.)

MA

C F C
THIS HERE'S THE HOMESTEAD WHERE WE STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE,

PA
 C F
 A MOUNTAIN STRONGHOLD WHERE WE FIGHT TO STAY ALIVE.

MA
 F C
 WE HUNT AND GATHER LIKE THE CAVEMEN USED TO DO.

PA
 G C
 WE ARE A SELF-SUFFICIENT/OFF-THE-GRID/OUT-DOORSY SORT OF CREW.

MA
 Entirely unwired, you might say.

(They sing.)

MA & PA
 Am C
 WE'RE LIKE PEOPLE FROM THE BIBLE,
 Am C
 LIKE NOAH AND HIS CLAN,
 Am C
 LIVIN' ON A MOUNTAIN TOP,
 G
 LIKE HOW FOLKS LIVED
 BEFORE THE AGE OF
 EVEN ANCIENT
 HISTORY BEGAN!

PA
 But we're talkin' 'bout the future, now. Not the past.

(Ma sings once more.)

MA
 C F C
 HERE'S HOW HUMANITY WILL MAKE ITS FINAL STAND.

PA
 C F
 WE HOPE YOU LIKE THE SHOW, THE ACTORS, AND THE BAND.

MA
 F C
 AND IF YOU FIND THE TALE TOO FOOLISH OR TOO CRUEL,
 G
 YOU CAN LEAVE, BUT WE WILL KEEP YOUR CASH,

PA

C

NO REFUNDS IS THE RULE.

ALL(onstage & off)

F

C

'CAUSE IT'S A POST-APOCALYPTICAL PROPHETIC SORT OF PLAY

G

C

THAT TAKES PLACE LONG AFTER SOME FORGOTTEN GLOBAL JUDGEMENT
DAY

F

C

WHERE THE FINAL FOLKS TO WALK THE EARTH DEVISE A FINAL
SCHEME

G

TO REVITALIZE OUR SPECIES -

C

C7

AT LEAST THAT IS THE DREAM!

(END SONG. BOY, a strapping young man, enters
carrying a bow, arrows, and a bucket of water.)

BOY

Got yer water.

MA

This here's "Boy". He's our son.

PA

My heir.

MA

He does a lot of the heavy liftin' around here.

BOY

Can I go see my lady now?

PA

That girl ain't no lady.

BOY

Lady enough fer me!

PA

You do yer labors, then we can talk about yer "lady"!

BOY

I already hunted and gathered! What else I gotta do?!

PA

You defyin' The Patriarchy, Boy?!

BOY

What good are ya, pluckin' yer banjo all the live long day while Ma and I do all the work!

PA

I do the work - - of governance!

BOY

"Governance"?!

PA

I tell y'all what to do! That's governance!

MA

You run along now, Son, I'll tend to the hog!

(Ma pushes Boy offstage as he and Pa bicker.)

BOY

I won't be governin' like you when it's my time, I can tell you that much!

PA

Keep talkin'!

BOY

Ain't gonna be no Patriarchy, neither! Gonna be gender equality!!

PA

Keep talkin' and I'll wash yer mouth out - with buckshot!

MA

I said you run along!

(Boy exits in a hurry.)

PA

That girl's been puttin' ideas in his head.

MA

They're young, Pa, governed by their gonads as much as anything.

PA

Nothing like gonads to get you in a heap of trouble.

MA

Gonads got you in trouble with me once upon a time.

PA

Best trouble I ever got into.

MA

And you still got trouble, as far as I can tell.

PA

I'll take it, as long as I'm takin' it with you.

MA

Aw, Pa.

PA

You and me survived the last days of The End Times. We cleared out them drifters what were occupyin' this here abode when first we stumbled upon it, gentrified it into our own mountain sanctuary, and then raised a family in it!

MA

That we did.

PA

Who'd a thunk it'd be *us* survivin' this long? We come from artists 'n' intellectuals if you go back far enough.

MA

It's still in our blood - - somewheres.

PA

But our line devolved over the generations, collapsin' as society collapsed, forcin' our forefathers and fore... mothers to retreat from the cities and the towns until we became the survivalist caricatures y'all see today.

MA

Must-a been nice, being artistic 'n' intellectual.

PA

Nice! It was a catastrophe!

MA

Now, Pa, don't you go down-talkin' Progressivism again.

PA

Them progressives is what brought us to this point of poverty and degradation! I'll down-talk 'em all I want!

MA

I suppose you will.

PA

How do you imagine Mankind endured long enough to get to the point where their idea of progress was even conceivable?!

MA

I'm guessin' you'll be tellin' us.

(Music for "Hateful" begins.)

PA

By adhering to a few simple rules, that's how! Woman obey yer man! Boy respect yer father! Don't waste food! And whatever you do, don't go changin' gender norms!

MA

Those'd be the rules.

(Pa sings - to us, the audience.)

PA

**E
I KNOW YOU THINK IT'S HATEFUL
TO ADMIRE ANCIENT DAYS
BACK WHEN HUMAN INTERACTIONS WERE
PRESCRIBED BY ANCIENT WAYS.**

A

**THE ROLES WE HAD TO PLAY WERE PRE-
DETERMINED AND WOULD LAST**

E

**TILL THE DAY WE DIED, THAT'S HOW
THE WORLD WAS RUN BACK IN THE PAST.**

B

**I BELIEVE THOSE WAYS WERE GOOD,
THOUGH YOU THINK THEY'RE A SHAM!**

E

**SO, IF ANCIENT WAYS ARE HATEFUL
WELL, THEN, HATEFUL'S WHAT I AM.
HATEFUL!**

MA

Now, Pa, you ain't hateful - not *that* hateful, anyway.

PA

Not to you, maybe. But to them?

MA

Can't speak for them.

PA

It's a hate born of insecurity! 'Cause deep down they know, they are in conflict with their essential nature!

MA

I'm too busy battlin' regular nature to take on my own.

(Pa sings again.)

E

**IN PRE-HISTORIC TIMES OUR
SPECIES STRUGGLED TO SURVIVE
THEN EVOLVED SOME SIMPLE PRINCIPLES
THAT HELPED MANKIND TO THRIVE.**

A

**SINCE WOMEN HAD THE MAMMARIES,
THEY TENDED TO THE HOME**

E

**WHILE THE MENFOLK WENT OUT HUNTIN'
WHICH REQUIRED THEM TO ROAM**

B

**LIKE PREDATORY LIONS,
NOT A GENTLE LITTLE LAMB!**

E

**IF YOU THINK A LION'S HATEFUL
WELL, THEN, HATEFUL'S WHAT I AM! OOOH..!**

A

E

THAT'S THE WAY WE LIVED FOR TENS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS TILL

A

E

THE SCIENTIFIC AGE BROUGHT REVOLUTION

A

E

SCIENCE GAVE US FREEDOM AND AN OCEAN OF TEARS

B

**BECAUSE WHILE OUR JOYS BEGAN TO SWELL
OUR POPULATION DID AS WELL
AND TURNED OUR HEAVEN INTO HELL
DESPITE OUR EFFORTS TO DISPELL**

E

THE LAWS OF EVOLUTION!

MA

So, yer sayin' Progressivism led to overpopulation?

PA

I'm sayin' Progressivism is- WAS the final, fatal delusion that put them last few nails in the coffin of Humanity!

MA

Sounds like yer the one who's deluded. But how would I know - I'm deluded, too!

(Pa sings to us again.)

F

AND SO WE COME TO YOUR TIME
WHEN PROGRESSIVE PEOPLE RULED
AND THE APPETITE FOR ANCIENT WAYS
OF SOCIALIZING COOLED.

B,

AT FIRST THINGS WERE AMAZING,
EV'RYBODY WAS CAREFREE.

F

BUT, IN TIME, THOSE CHANGING GEN-
DER NORMS LED TO CATASTROPHE.

C

YOU CAN TRUST ME, YOU CAN DOUBT
ME, I DON'T GIVE A DAMN!

F

EITHER WAY YOU'LL THINK I'M HATEFUL
BECAUSE HATEFUL'S WHAT I AM!

B,

FOR THOSE ANCIENT WAYS I'M GRATEFUL!

C

F7

AND, SO, HATEFUL IS WHAT I AM!

(End Song.)

MA

Now, Pa, you keep talkin' catastrophe and hatefulness and you just might end up frightenin' these good people away!

PA

"Good"?!

MA

They're payin' customers, ain't they?

