

Zombie Cataclysm - The Last 24 Hours of Her Life Pt. 1

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She knows the end of the world has come, but there's one more thing she has to do ...

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Fresh off a plane from DC, Ember Burton was tired. The dark, narrow country roads would've felt like they were winding on forever to someone that wasn't familiar with the area. But to her, she had driven the route a thousand times. The return home was a stark transition in scenery for Ember from that which she had been living. A twelve-week internship in DC had provided her with an environmental stimulus like nothing she had lived before. Initially the noise, lights, and busy vibe took her some getting used to. But once she adapted to the "Go, go, go!" lifestyle of DC, she embraced and craved the excitement around her. She turned south and sighed. The farm where she had been born and raised was a good fifty minutes away. She yawned and opened the front windows of the car, letting a chilly air circulate within. She turned up the radio, and even with the noise and the nip to the air, Ember drove down the road on autopilot. A familiar song started and Ember hummed along with the tune. Her mind was anywhere but in the driver's seat—reminiscing her first school dance in the gym at her high school, spending summer mornings picking peas with her mother, trapping with her father, riding the tractor with her older brother Eric. A memory from her most recent time spent at home consumed her, and the song from the radio was replaced with a conversation from her past. "I just don't understand why it's not good enough for you here. This is your home," Eric said. Sitting with her brother and parents at the family's small round dining table, Ember had just told her family about the research internship she had accepted in Washington DC. "Eric, it has nothing to do with that. Yes, this is my home. This will always be my home. But this is too good an opportunity for me to pass up."

In her mind, she turned to her mother. "Momma, you said I needed to do my very best and learn as much as I can. This is a very good thing for me." "It's just so far away," her loving but overly anxious mother said. "Daddy, do you think I'm doing the right thing?" Ember's wrinkled father had a heart of gold that belonged partly to his enduring wife of three decades and his precious daughter. "I think you need to follow your heart, darlin.'" Ember smiled along with the memory. Her father had always put her dreams and desires above his own. She loved him dearly. "It's just so far away," her beautiful, quiet mother repeated. Ember remembered standing and circling the table. She hugged her father, then her brother, before lifting her mother from her chair and giving her a big consoling hug. "It's just for a few weeks momma. I'll be home in time for the Labor Day parade." Ember yawned and her mind returned to the present. She glanced to her left and smiled as she passed the familiar sign that said, "Welcome Traveler ." The huge, faded sign reminded everyone entering the remote town of Glasgow, Montana just how small and removed the country town of 3500 residents really was. The main street in the small town, holding a post office, a pharmacy, a bait and tackle shop, the only bank, and the town mercantile, was poorly lit and Ember chuckled. "Bedtime's still 8 pm around here," she said, freely mocking the lack of nightlife of her hometown. Discomfort in her lower back reminded her that she wasn't in her own car and her smile instantly faded. She questioned her decision to fly to Helena, rent a car, and then attempt the 6 hour drive to Glasgow by herself. She wanted to surprise her family with her unannounced return, and knowing that her mother's upcoming birthday would be celebrated by the entire extended family was a bonus. The question of whether or not her decision was a good one was quickly overridden with thoughts of how she'd return the rental car and Ember wasn't paying attention. From the corner of her eye, she noticed it--a ghostly white figure, hunched over and staggering--on the country road a hundred yards in front of her. "Jesus!" she screamed. She slammed on the breaks and yanked the steering wheel to the left. All four tires on the small rental car locked up, the hot friction against the asphalt causing the tires to hiss and skid. She frantically worked the steering wheel to keep the car on the road. Once the car came to an abrupt stop, she searched in the rear-view mirror for the person that she had almost struck. She climbed from the car. "Hello?" she yelled. She looked around for movement, her focus whipping from one side of the road to the other. "Hello? Is anybody there? Hello?" she shouted. She walked to the far side of the road and inspected a wide, dry irrigation ditch. There was no movement that she could see and she shivered. "Dang, Em, you gotta wake up!" She openly scolded herself. Contributing the vision of a figure crossing the street to fatigue, Ember shook off the encounter and resumed her trek home. By the time she reached her family's farm, Ember had calmed down. Sleepy and irritable, she recklessly parked the rental car behind her small SUV on a large concrete driveway. Without wasting a second, Ember headed for the back door of the large, rambling house she had grown up in. She quietly entered the kitchen, placed her car key on the counter top, and made her way to her parents' bedroom. Ember couldn't see her own hand in front of her face but that didn't slow her down. She navigated the large home easily, like she had done a thousand times before. She leaned into the door and waited to hear the familiar sound of her father snoring. From her pocket, she checked the time on her cell phone and bit the insides of her cheeks to keep from laughing as she remembered that her mother had insisted that her

father wear a strip across the bridge of his nose to alleviate the rattle of his snore. She cracked the door and peered inside. Moonlight from the window illuminated the room. Ember gasped. The bed where she was expecting her sleeping parents was vacant. She pressed a button on the side of her phone and sighed. "1:30? ... Where are they?" She flicked the light switch on the wall behind her. Nothing happened and she sighed again. And the power's out, she thought, the lack of electricity a common occurrence at the remote farm. Ember turned to the doorway when a noise from the far side of the bed made her stop. A grunt followed by a snap made every hair on Ember's exposed skin stand up. A second grunt was heard and another pop, a pop that sounded like a snapping chicken bone. A wet slurp and a moan accompanied a foul scent. Is that blood? she asked, familiar with the unique, salty smell. She held the cell phone out in front of her and pressed the side button. The bright light from her phone screen illuminated a grotesque scene just a few feet from her. Crouched over what looked like a small piece raw meat was a man. She immediately recognized his dirty overalls. "Daddy?" The man looked up. Fluid drained from his mouth and he snarled. His glassy black eyes, once full of love and brightness, displayed the dead rage now consuming him. He hissed and struggled to stand. He barked, a loud and evil yap that scared Ember and she started to shake. "Daddy, what's wrong? Where's momma?" Fear engulfed Ember, fear like she had never felt before. The man that had always loved and protected her above all others was now growling at her. The voice of reason inside her head told her to run. She turned toward the hall and stumbled on her own feet before making her way through the lightless house to the kitchen. She banged her elbow against the door frame as she exited through the back door. Sitting inside the rental car, she thought of the key she had habitually chucked on the counter top. "Great," she said, her fearful glare never leaving the back door. Ember was upset. Warm tears covered her face and she roughly wiped her cheeks with the sleeve of her jacket. Five minutes passed. The lack of movement off the back of the house relieved her and she contemplated whether or not she should venture back to the kitchen for the car keys. She unlocked the door at the same time the back door of the house flew open. "No way," she whispered and sank deep into the driver's seat of the car. Her wide, unblinking eyes watched the figure stagger across the carport toward her. "Oh my God," she moaned. She frantically inspected her surroundings. There wasn't a source of light, aside from the moon, in sight. She strained to look out of the back of the car while she racked her own mind as to where the keys to her SUV would be. A thump on the window next to her made her jump. Scratching at the window, crimson-tainted fingers made lines down the fogged glass. Through the scratch marks, Ember could see his teeth clank together, over and over, like he was practicing his next few bites. "Daddy, please! Please go away!" she cried. The creature outside the window stopped and leaned in closely to the glass for a better view. "Please ..." The creature reared back and cried out. Red drops of spit hit the window just before his elbow smacked the glass hard. The entire car rocked from the blow. "No!" Ember cried at the same time a second elbow smack shook her again. Over and over he struck the window, and once his blow matched the rhythm of the car rocking back and forth, the glass cracked. Ember frantically crawled into the back seat and scooted to the passenger side. She pulled her knees up to her chest and hid her head. Rocking back and forth, Ember's fearful yelps and whimpers matched the sounds

of the thuds against the cracking glass of the front window. “Ember,” a faint voice called. She sat up and looked out the window. Crouched down by the door was a familiar face. “Wyatt?” “Shhh!” he said, ducking until he heard the next thump. “One the count of three, open the door!” “What’s hap ... what’s happeni—” “Ember!” he snapped in unison with another punch to the window. Ember wiped her face and nodded. She grabbed the handle with a quivering hand and waited. “One ... two ...” The car rocked again at the same time Wyatt yelled, “Three!” Ember yanked on the door and jumped from the back seat of the car. She awkwardly fell into Wyatt, forcing both of them to the ground. The glass on the window had finally given way, entangling the wet sleeve of the creature’s shirt with the plastic-coated broken glass. Ember and Wyatt stood. As quickly as they could, they ran down the dirt road away from the house and from Ember’s struggling, sick father. An hour later, they finally stopped running. Exhausted and still upset, Ember crawled to the vertical bars at the far end of a dry cement pipe and pulled her knees up to her chin. She shivered and whimpered. Ember watched as her neighbor and close friend, Wyatt Osborn, worked a makeshift door into the opening of the large cement irrigation pipe. He wrapped a chain around the handle on the pallet before draping it around a few bars of the gate next to Ember and then back. He worked the chain and three huge boulders until he felt the entrance to the pipe was secure. Slowly, he crawled to where Ember was and sat down across from her. He placed the flashlight in his hand on its stand and aimed it at the top of the cyclic shelter. Ember shivered and he reached out and touched the top of her knee. She looked up and Wyatt gazed into Ember’s green eyes. Since their first grade class where they met, he had always had strong feelings for Ember. Wyatt had dated her as often as he could during high school and the years following. He studied her light brown wavy hair, her lightly freckled, perfectly shaped nose, and her hazel colored eyes. He was in love with every inch of her. “Are you okay?” “Was ... was that my dad?” “Yeah. I’m sorry.” “What’s wrong with him?” she asked with a sniffle. “He’s sick. He got the sickness and they weren’t able to give him the antidote in time, I guess.” “Sickness ... an-antidote? What are you talking about?” She shivered hard and Wyatt took off his dirty denim jacket and handed it to her. She opened it and cuddled it, her eyes never leaving his as she waited for his response. “Yesterday, Doc Francis sent out a reverse 911 call saying that a sickness, kind of like mad cow disease, was running rapid through the county. He listed signs of the sickness and said that if anyone showed the signs, a well person was to take them to the clinic. Eight hours later, he sent out another call stating that they were closing the town borders and that the clinic was no longer accepting sick patients. They put blockades up in town and on all three roads leading in and out of the county.” “I drove in from Helena and I didn’t see any blockades.” Wyatt swallowed and said, “I went to see my brother at noon today and he said they were bringing in the National Guard but that the sickness was uncontrollable and spreading like wildfire. That’s the last I heard from anyone. Tonight, the power went out, the phone and cable lines, too. I think the town’s pretty much shut down.” “Where’s my mom? And Eric?” “I don’t know.” “Where’s your family?” “My mom and my sister got sick and my dad took them to the clinic. I haven’t seen them since.” “How does somebody get sick?” “My brother said the CDC announced it was an airborne sickness but then he heard Doc Francis and the CDC guy arguing. Doc Francis said that every person he had treated had been bitten and that he thinks the

sickness is spread from infected saliva.” “So this sickness ... they have a cure for it? Is it too late for my dad?” “I don—” A bang on the wooden door made both Wyatt and Ember jump. Ember whimpered and Wyatt scooted next to her and wrapped his arm around her to comfort her. A moment passed and then a second thump was heard. Faint growls and scratches against the wood gave both Wyatt and Ember the chills. “Is it him? Is it my dad?” she begged. Wyatt shushed her. “Sick people seem to follow noise and light.” He reached for the flashlight and turned it off before refocusing on Ember. “We need to be quiet now.” The scratching intensified. Whatever was on the other side of the door shook the wooden entrance hard and Ember couldn’t control herself. “This is it. I’m going to die. I’m going to die!” Wyatt held Ember close and they waited for the monster outside the shelter to leave. A grueling hour passed and the thumps, scratching and growls from outside the door hadn’t subsided. Wyatt tried to console Ember but she was a mess. Talking without regard to the situation, Ember was dangerously loud. “I’m going to get bit then get sick! And there’s no one to cure me! This is it! I’m going to die tonight!” “Ember, you need to be quiet so it’ll go away,” Wyatt whispered. “It? You mean my dad! That’s my sick dad out there!” Ember roughly wiped her face with the top of her hand. “I never got to see the Pacific Ocean. I never went to Disneyland. I never got to leave the country, or ride a zip-line, or sing Karaoke! And I want to! I want to do all those things!” “I have regrets too Ember, but we don’t need to speed this up!” Wyatt quietly snapped. Ember sniffled. “You have regrets?” Wyatt nodded and stared into Ember’s eyes, hoping that she’d concentrate on him long enough to calm down. “I do. I regret not spending more time with my grandpa and I’m sad I didn’t play more catch with my brother. I regret not teaching my nephew how to tie fly’s.” He sighed. “And ... the biggest regret I have ... is that I never told the girl that I love how I feel about her.” Ember swallowed hard and shuddered. She wiped her nose. “Who?” Wyatt was instantly uncomfortable and it showed. He quickly diverted. “Is that it? Do you have any other regrets?” Ember’s head fell to her chest and she shamefully whispered, “I’m a virgin. I’m going to die tonight ... a virgin.” The wooden entrance bounced hard, rattling the chains and moving two of the big boulders at the base of the door. Wyatt crawled to the entrance, replaced the rocks and tightened the chain before he returned to Ember. He sat close to her and wrapped his arm around her, comforting her in what he was sure to be the last moments of their conscious lives. “Who is she, the girl you’re in love with? Do I know her?” Wyatt reached for the flashlight. He turned it on and aimed it at the ceiling near them. “You are her,” he whispered, gazing lovingly into her eyes. “What?” Ember could see Wyatt’s cheeks blush. She envisioned his muscular body under his dirty clothes, something she had seen a hundred times before, and then refocused on his ocean blue eyes. He whispered, “I’ve been in love with you since the first grade, Ember.” He turned her head slightly so he could face her straight on. “I love you.” Ember shivered, but it wasn’t a reflex produced by fear. Butterflies like she had never felt ravaged her from the inside out. She swore her heart skipped a beat. Wyatt leaned into her and Ember didn’t move. He lovingly smiled before he kissed her, softly and gently. And like the growling and banging against the makeshift door, the passion between them intensified quickly. Wyatt kissed her cheek, her neck, and her forehead. His tongue swiped her parted lips and the instant it entered her mouth, Ember found it and sucked it vigorously. The bulge in his pants became uncomfortable. Wyatt’s hold

on Ember tightened and he pulled her down next to him. He kissed her again, the kiss passionate and hot. His hands moved around her body, pulling on her shirt for access to her breasts. He moved her bra and grabbed her firm, natural tit, giving it a gentle squeeze that made Ember purr. Frantically, the both worked to remove her blouse and bra. His wet mouth moved from her lips to her breasts. He licked her left nipple, flicking it with his tongue and Ember had never been so aroused in all her life. Goosebumps covered her entirety and she loudly moaned. Wyatt moved to her other erect nipple and sucked it into his mouth. Ember sighed and arched her back, the tingling sensation in her nipples causing moisture to form in her panties. Wyatt took his time sucking, licking, and caressing her breasts. He kissed the skin just above her belly button and glanced up at her. Her cheeks were flushed, her chest rising and falling sharply with each breath. Ember ran her fingers through Wyatt's longer, dark, curly hair and giggled when his fingers brushed the sides of her stomach. A loud bang against the door echoed through the tunnel but she didn't flinch. Wyatt knew she was lost in the moment and he wasn't going to squander a second of his last minutes alive with her. He unfastened the button and unzipped her jeans. Without being prompted to do so, Ember lifted her hips off the ground and helped Wyatt push her jeans and panties toward her feet. His hand was shaking as he slipped it in between her legs. Her skin was warm and soft and Wyatt was certain he had died and gone to heaven. His fingers leisurely neared her mound and stopped. He waited for signs that what he was doing was ok, and when he felt her legs fall open, he rubbed her mound with his opened hand. "Mmm," Ember hummed. Wyatt was gentle with her swollen, untouched privates, massaging her pussy lips before gently spreading them to touch her wetness. He carefully dipped his pointer finger in her hot sex and used her own moisture to massage her clit. Her love nob seemed to stiffen by his touch and he couldn't help himself but to lean down and tap it with his tongue. "Ohh," Ember sighed. Wyatt moved in between her legs after removing her jeans completely. Even with just the dim glare of the flashlight, he could still see the perfect, virgin pussy of the girl that he loved in front of him. He kissed her clit and inhaled a huge pocket of her sweet musk through his nose. Ember's pink pussy called to him. He swiped his tongue, wet and flush, from the bottom of her unscathed slit to her hood. She pulled on Wyatt, pulled on his skin until his face was near hers. "I want you to be make love to me now." The chains rattled and Wyatt peered over his shoulder then quickly back at her. "Now?" "Please, Wyatt. Please don't let me die a virgin." He positioned his body comfortably on top of her. He helped her slide her hand down the front of his pants, and when her small hand wrapped around his long, thick cock, he groaned. Ember's expression was unnerving and Wyatt studied her intensely. Ember tried to smile to reassure him, but she couldn't hide the apprehension she felt. He leaned over and gently kissed her. "If you need me to stop ..." "I'm fine," Ember whispered. She sharply inhaled and added, "I'll be fine." "Are you ready?" "Yes," Ember sighed with a single nod. Wyatt worked to free his throbbing dick by pushing his jeans down and over his knees. He slowly moved on top of her and Ember could feel the desire he had for her in between her legs. They gaze intently into each other's eyes. Wyatt pulled on the small of Ember's back. The tip of his rock hard prick entered her and stopped when it touched the membrane that reminded him of her purity. Ember was breathing hard and her eyes were closed. Even with the growling monster trying desperately to

get to her, the world around her seemed to disappear. All she could hear and feel was him. Wyatt was still watching Ember's face closely. What he was about to do was her choice, and when he noticed the corner of her mouth turn up, he knew it was what she really wanted to have happen. Wyatt lifted his hips and then moved in, his thick, hard cock ripping the membrane at the entrance of her hot wet pussy and stretching it. Ember yelled out, her yelp a mixture of pain and pleasure. Wyatt had never heard such a sound before, and it turned him on like a madman. Her insides were tight, and after cautiously pulling himself in and out a few times, Wyatt finally fully penetrated Ember. "Oh, oh ... Wyatt!" Ember cried as their bodies began to work together. Just like the creature outside, Wyatt grunted and moaned. His body moved against hers with gentle friction that they both could feel. Ember was made for me, he thought to himself, and he opened his eyes and looked at her. Her neck glistened with sweat and her cheeks were flushed with desire. Ember's moans started to match each thrust, and Wyatt could feel his climax building. "Em," he whispered. He stopped moving and swallowed hard before he said, "Open your eyes." Her eyes fluttered open and she looked up at Wyatt. His eyes were full of tears, and as he moved his body into hers again, Ember could see the love he felt for her flow from him through his tears. He plunged again and the orgasm, her first, was ready to make its grand entrance. Warmth from deep inside her quickly grew into a churning, convulsing tornado of passion. "Oh! Oh, yes!" she said, basking in her first orgasm, knowing it would more than likely be her last. Wyatt panted and said, "Fuck yes," when Ember's pussy constricted around his aching prick. He screwed in deep, just once more, before he hit a sexual peak he had ever experienced before. He cried out, "Oh God!" and his body shivered after the explosion of desire. Ember, focused on the new sensations she was feeling, also quivered. Her emotional control was gone. Tears rolled down her cheeks and she pulled on Wyatt, as if she could mesh her flesh with his. Wyatt worked to catch his breath, and he and Ember slowly rolled on their sides. After taking a few moments to calm down, Wyatt kissed Ember's forehead. "I can't think of a better way to spend the last moments of my life." Ember sniffled and wiped her cheeks with her free hand. She couldn't believe what she had been through that day, what she had seen at her home, or what was haunting them outside their shelter. The one thing she was certain of, as she kissed Wyatt's neck, was that she wouldn't have changed a thing about her first sexual experience. She was suddenly sad that it would be not only her first, but her last, too. The chains holding the door in place suddenly snapped and the wooden door slid into the pipe a foot. Wyatt covered Ember's head with his arms to shield her but she pushed him back. She touched his chin with her fingers and said, "I love you, Wyatt." "I love you, too, Em." She buried her face in his neck and wrapped her arms around his chest tightly. Wyatt covered as much of her as he could, neither one of them willing to let go of the other while they waited for the last night of their lives to come to an end. To be continued ...