

Bugs

By: Megan E. Tripaldi

CHARACTERS:

WORMY – DRAGONFLY's older sibling

DRAGONFLY – WORMY's younger sibling

SLUG – The stranger.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE:

Gender should not affect casting in this show, so change the pronouns to suit your cast accordingly. This play could be done by adults playing children or actual children. The set should be as fluid and easy to move as possible. If you set up the bedroom and have the rest of the scenes lit by flashlights, the transitions should be simple; either way they should be seamless.

Bugs

SETTING: A child's bedroom that has been turned into a fort. An old chest leans against the door, barricading it. Two sleeping bags lay across the space, one of which has several comics strewn across it.

AT RISE: A dim light slowly comes up from a halogen lamp. DRAGONFLY is practicing moves with a sharpened stick. He eventually moves to the floor and reads one of the comics. The doorknob suddenly jiggles. He jolts up and leans himself against the chest holding the stick.

WORMY:

Hello?

DRAGONFLY:

Who's there?

WORMY:

Who do you think? It's me, open the door!

(He relaxes.)

DRAGONFLY:

Sorry, Wormy!

(He struggles with the chest.)

WORMY:

Hurry up!!

DRAGONFLY:

Coming, coming...

(He finally moves the chest. WORMY and SLUG clamor in.)

WORMY:

Jeeze, D what's with the trunk?

DRAGONFLY:

I'm just adding protection.

(He pushes the couch back over the door.)

WORMY:

You know if there are enough of them a stupid trunk won't matter, right?

DRAGONFLY:

It'll delay them...you just wish you thought of it first.

WORMY:

(Smiles at him.)

Whatever. It was a good idea, I guess.

(DRAGONFLY notices the other person, pins them against the wall and holds the stick to their temple with his arm over their throat.)

DRAGONFLY:

Who's the tagalong?

WORMY:

Oh, sorry, this is, uh...Slug? We decided on Slug, right?

SLUG:

(Struggling to breathe.)

Um...yeah...could you - ?

WORMY:

D, can you please?

(DRAGONFLY lets go. SLUG gasps for breath.)

DRAGONFLY:

Hey, I didn't know them.

WORMY:

You'll have to pardon Dragonfly. He's been hit in the head a lot. That's what happens when you do sports.

SLUG:

(Rubbing their throat.)

Jeeze, you hit me really hard...

DRAGONFLY:

At least I'm careful. You could have been one of them. And I didn't hit you.

WORMY:

They are more inclined to strike outside the cities, though, remember, D?

DRAGONFLY:

Right, right...

WORMY:

And he's right.

SLUG:

About what?

WORMY:

He didn't hit you.

SLUG:

He - ? Whatever. So, there's no threat here?

WORMY:

I mean there's always a threat, but the people? Nah. Not that we can see.

SLUG:

Oh.

WORMY:

Yeah. They are all at the borders, trying to catch you on the move.

SLUG:

Oh...

(She wobbly sits.)

Some war...

WORMY:

Yeah, right. You take all the guys with the guns and put them against the guys without the guns and expect a fair fight?

SLUG:

I –

WORMY:

No. Uh-uh. There is nothing fair about that crap. The guys with the guns always win.

DRAGONFLY:

Yeah, we're kind of screwed. Crazy people, radiant people -

SLUG:

Radiant people?

WORMY:

What are you talking about?

DRAGONFLY:

You know, the people that got radiant when they dropped all the bombs...

(He imitates them in a zombie-esque fashion.)

WORMY:

It's radiated, D. Radiation.

DRAGONFLY:

Oh...radiated. Radiated...radiated...

WORMY:

I just call them mutants. Not like we have one name for them we all know. Maybe if TVs still worked we would, but you know. People up here got messed up pretty bad after they dropped the bombs, mostly their brains. Now we have a bunch of people running around like zombies because of the chemicals and stuff.

SLUG:

Mutated zombies...

WORMY:

Kind of. They don't grow extra limbs like you would think a mutant would. It's just their brains that are totally messed up. They get weirdly strong and fast... Military'll probably start collecting them to use as a superhuman army.

DRAGONFLY:

Like X-Men!

(They stare at him.)

Never mind...

(DRAGONFLY looks down. WORMY nudges him, playfully.)

WORMY:

X-Men.

DRAGONFLY:

Well, they are...

WORMY:

What do you think, Slug? Does it make them sound prettier if we call them radiant? Less likely to tear our arms off?

(Pretends to tear DRAGONFLY's arms off, who laughs.)

SLUG:

You really think they'd do that?

WORMY:

What? Tear - ?

(SLUG nods.)

Oh, well like I said they get all strong, so...we saw two flip a car like it was an empty shell, didn't we, D?

DRAGONFLY:

Took 'em all of ten seconds to flip it! Just – WHAM! You know? I couldn't do that if I tried. Not with just two people. You'd need at least five.

WORMY:

And D, here is super strong. X-Men strong!

DRAGONFLY:

I'm not that strong...

WORMY:

You kidding me? I saw you take out two guys at once during a game back in school.

DRAGONFLY:

No...I was just lucky...

WORMY:

Quit being so modest. You're strong. It's not a bad quality to have these days.

SLUG:

(Annoyed.)

I meant the - ! Ugh, would they really make a - a mutant zombie army?

WORMY:

Wouldn't put it past 'em.

SLUG:

But there isn't any evidence that –

WORMY:

Evidence? Look at all the other crap they've done so far. Why do you think we're in the middle of a war?

SLUG:

I - I don't know -

WORMY:

Exactly. This all came out of the blue. No warning. These people started a war with their own country for no reason. They just felt like it.

SLUG:

Ok, I know. I know all of that, but we haven't seen -

WORMY:

Do you want to know all the gory details of what they've done? Specifics?

DRAGONFLY:

Wormy, come on -

WORMY:

(Getting in SLUG's face.)

I have a list. I can take you back outside and show you. Have you look into the eyes of a mutant right before he bites off your face.

DRAGONFLY:

Stop!

(Beat. WORMY softens.)

WORMY:

These people? They aren't good. The military you used to love and salute is gone. Now they're all just a bunch of killing robots.

SLUG:

There are robots, too!?

WORMY:

I didn't – not real robots! Like...you know what I mean!

SLUG:

Oh.

WORMY:

God...

SLUG:

Sorry.

WORMY:

But they'll still kill you like it's nothing. Like you're just another thing that got in their way.

SLUG:

I didn't know...I haven't seen anyone, I...I didn't know...

WORMY:

Look, I'm sorry if I scared you. But it is scary. This is all a lot to take in. I mean I don't know where you've been the past few months, but it's bad. Like, really, really bad. And I don't think it's going to get better any time soon. That's something we're just going to have to live with. This is the world now. We just have to survive it.

(WORMY crosses to another side of the room. Beat.)

DRAGONFLY:

Don't worry, Slug. We've been here for a long time and we're doing ok. Right, Wormy?

(WORMY nods.)

You'll like it here. Wormy and I got this lifestyle down. It wasn't as hard to get used to as you think it would be.

(Beat.)

SLUG:

Can you tell me something?

DRAGONFLY:

What's up?

SLUG:

Why do we need these names?

WORMY:

I told you already.

SLUG:

Yeah, I know, but *why*?

WORMY:

It's not safe to use your real name.

SLUG:

Why not?

WORMY:

If they catch you with ID on you they can use it to find your family and torture them for information.

SLUG:

What information?

WORMY:

I don't know, just information!

SLUG:

But I don't know anything...

WORMY:

It doesn't matter! They will torture you and then they'll torture everyone you love. Do you want that?

SLUG:

No... But do I have to be Slug? Why not something less...gross?

WORMY:

Nobody is named Slug. It's less noticeable.

DRAGONFLY:

Oh yeah? What about you, *Glow-worm*?

WORMY:

It has worm in it. Worms are gross.

SLUG:

I thought your name was Wormy...

WORMY:

It's more of a nickname.

SLUG:

This is all too weird...

WORMY:

Yeah, well. It's going to be weird for a while now, I think. By the way, do you have any ID?

SLUG:

I dunno...I have my school ID and, um - my YMCA card.

WORMY:

Give 'em.

SLUG:

Why?

WORMY:

You can't be tracked here. You need to destroy all evidence that you exist. Go totally off the grid, you know? Give 'em.

(SLUG reluctantly hands over their wallet. WORMY rifles through it, pulling out several cards.)

SLUG:

Do you have to destroy them all?

WORMY:

What, do you think that you'll need them when society gets rebuilt? Yeah, that's likely...

SLUG:

It's just...I'd like to remember who I was...before...

WORMY:

Look, I get that, Slug I really do. But this will keep you alive. The less there is on you the less they can use against you and the less likely they are to find you. Get me?

SLUG:

Yeah...ok, fine go ahead.

(WORMY crosses to the trunk, nudges it against the door, sits in front of it. She laughs.)

WORMY:

Wow, I didn't know anyone still had a YMCA membership...

SLUG:

I like using the pool...

WORMY:

You're an interesting cat, Slug.

DRAGONFLY:

Heh, cat-slug...

SLUG:

How do you know all of this stuff, anyway?

WORMY:

We saw.

DRAGONFLY:

After our –

WORMY:

After it started.

DRAGONFLY:

Yeah. We thought we'd find people.

WORMY:

Our people.

SLUG:

And...did you?

(WORMY and DRAGONFLY look at each other.)

WORMY:

We didn't...not.

SLUG:

I -

DRAGONFLY:

So, did you get the stuff, Wormy?

WORMY:

Most of it...some of the stuff you requested was gone long before I got there.

DRAGONFLY:

Let's see it, then!

WORMY:

Patience.

(WORMY sets down the cards and digs in a bag, pulling out several cans of food; some peas, condensed soup, condensed milk, et cetera.)

SLUG:

What a haul...

WORMY:

Eh, it's not as good as I was hoping for. D, here had some unusual requests.

(Pulls out a bag of dried cranberries.)

DRAGONFLY:

You found them!

WORMY:

Don't eat those all at once! That was the last bag I could find.

DRAGONFLY:

Oh, thank you so much, Wormy, I've been craving these!

WORMY:

That's probably why they're called craisins.

(DRAGONFLY laughs, opens the bag, and grabs a handful.)

SLUG:

Actually it's because they're dried cranberries. Like raisins are dried grapes? They just added the C-R because, you know...cranberries. Craisins. Get it?

(Beat. They both stare at SLUG. DRAGONFLY slowly holds the bag out to Slug who grabs a handful and turns away.)

WORMY:

Here, give me the rest of the bag. I'll save it for you.

DRAGONFLY:

I'll be fine...

WORMY:

I don't trust you.

DRAGONFLY:

Come on - !

WORMY:

Every time you get a bag you say you'll save it and then five minutes later it's gone. I'll keep it safe for you, ration it. Get me?

DRAGONFLY:

Fine, here.

(Hands the bag reluctantly to WORMY.)

WORMY:

You'll thank me for this later.

(SLUG moves to the window and looks out from between two boards.)

You ok, Slug?

SLUG:

It's snowing.

WORMY:

Don't tell me we're having a nuclear winter.

DRAGONFLY:

(To SLUG.)

Just read a book about that.

SLUG:

No, it's the end of December.

WORMY:

No way. You been keeping track? Last time I checked it was the beginning of September...

DRAGONFLY:

Explains the drop in temperatures.

WORMY:

It does...So, Slug what day is it? We miss Christmas?

SLUG:

Yeah. It's the 28th.

WORMY:

Damn...first time I ever missed Christmas.

DRAGONFLY:

I already got my present.

(Holds up his handful of raisins. WORMY goes to him, kisses him on the head and ruffles his hair. She moves to the window.)

WORMY:

Let me see that snow.

SLUG:

It's not a lot, but it's more than I've seen in a while.

(Beat. They all stare out the window for a moment.)

You know I would have thought California would be worse.

WORMY:

Than here? Nah, everyone's got bomb shelters from Ohio on.

DRAGONFLY:

Uncle Rick said that, I think...

WORMY:

Names!

DRAGONFLY:

Sorry...

WORMY:

You'd think New England would have prepared better, but then again how can you prepare for this?

DRAGONFLY:

You can't.

WORMY:

Makes me think everyone out west must have known...

SLUG:

What part are we in?

WORMY:

Huh?

SLUG:

Here. What part of New England –

WORMY:

You're telling me you know the date –

SLUG:

And time –

WORMY:

The date and time, jeeze, and you don't know where you are?

SLUG:

Priorities, I guess?

WORMY:

Heh. You're in Maine.

SLUG:

Maine!? I only meant to go as far as Rhode Island...Massachusetts at the furthest.

WORMY:

Well, what do you intend to do about it? Go back out there?

SLUG:

Well...yeah. I'm not supposed to be here.

(Moves to the door. WORMY steps in the way.)

WORMY:

You know that's not happening right now.

SLUG:

What's stopping me?

WORMY:

You saw what it was like. If I didn't find you –

SLUG:

I made it this far on my own.

WORMY:

You got lucky.

SLUG:

I got more than lucky!

DRAGONFLY:

Y'otta listen. Wormy knows what -

WORMY:

Thank you, D I got this.

DRAGONFLY:

I'm just trying to help -

SLUG:

Nobody asked your opinion. Nobody wants it!

DRAGONFLY:

Hey...

WORMY:

Do not talk to him that way.

SLUG:

What are you going to do? Shove me back outside? You said yourself -

WORMY:

I do not want you speaking to him that way, do you understand?

(Beat.)

SLUG:

Sorry, Dragonfly.

(Stare down.)

DRAGONFLY:

'S ok...Um...What else did you get, Wormy?

WORMY:

Lots of canned vegetables, some peaches...condensed milk.

DRAGONFLY:

Wow, that's more than we've had in a while.

WORMY:

Yeah...I didn't get as much water as I would have liked to.

SLUG:

How much?

WORMY:

Only a gallon.

DRAGONFLY:

We'll be ok with that for now, right?

WORMY:

We have to ration within an inch of our lives, but we'll be ok.

SLUG:

So eventually, you know, you'll have to get back out there, right?

WORMY:

Eventually. I don't think I can make another run for about two days? I don't know...

SLUG:

It was pretty brutal out there...

WORMY:

You didn't even see the worst of it. Before I found you –

SLUG:

I know, I know.

WORMY:

It's just better if we stay here for a while. Let things die down.

SLUG:

Or just die...

(There is an awkward silence. SLUG is back at the window, peering out.)

WORMY:

You still thinking about leaving now?

SLUG:

No...it's just, I had people waiting for me.

WORMY:

We all have people waiting for us ...if we're meant to find each other it'll happen.

(WORMY deals out a game of Uno. SLUG reluctantly joins.)

SLUG:

Is that what happened with you two?

DRAGONFLY:

Nah, we are always together.

WORMY:

All of this started and...we decided it's better to stay together no matter what. D, here is the muscle and I'm the stealth.

DRAGONFLY:

Just like always.

SLUG:

What happened to the rest of your family?

DRAGONFLY:

We don't talk about that.

SLUG:

But –

DRAGONFLY:

I said we don't talk about it!

(Kicks the trunk.)

WORMY:

Easy, D, easy...

SLUG:

I didn't mean to –

WORMY:

He's still sensitive about it.

SLUG:

So they're...gone?

WORMY:

Yeah. We were here and...there was just this banging and...

(She trails off. Beat.)

SLUG:

I'm so sorry...

WORMY:

Yeah. Yeah, no, it is what it is.

SLUG:

So the other people, the people you were looking for?

WORMY:

The rest of our family. We saw them get taken. Big trucks, and guys with really big guns. D and I hid in a tree.

SLUG:

And you just...saw it all happen?

DRAGONFLY:

'S why we don't have IDs, you know.

WORMY:

They can't find us like they found them.

DRAGONFLY:

I like to think they are still alive.

WORMY:

But we don't know. It's probably better that way.

DRAGONFLY:

What about you, Slug?

SLUG:

What about me?

DRAGONFLY:

You got any family?

SLUG:

Um...yeah, well...maybe.

WORMY:

Maybe?

SLUG:

That's who I was supposed to meet in Rhode Island.

WORMY:

Oh...sorry. Was there a lot of 'em?

SLUG:

No, just a few.

WORMY:

Any siblings?

SLUG:

No. Cousins mostly.

WORMY:

Are you close with them?

SLUG:

Um...not really. We see each other at Christmas and Thanksgiving and stuff.

WORMY:

I see.

SLUG:

I know it seems stupid, but they're the only family I have left...it just seems like they're who I should be with.

WORMY:

It's not stupid.

(Beat.)

WORMY (contd.):

Look, we'll see if we can get you to the bridge later, but we have to wait.

SLUG:

Yeah, for what? For more terrifying things to jump out?

WORMY:

Well, that's gonna happen no matter what.

SLUG:

But what's the difference if we left after dark?

WORMY:

After dark it's a bloodbath. We came pretty close to getting caught here the other night, didn't we, D?

DRAGONFLY:

It's true. We were coming back from a supply run and there was a couple of 'em in our front yard fighting over a dead guy. *Mutants*, right Wormy?

WORMY:

Right.

SLUG:

A...dead guy?

DRAGONFLY:

'S what I said.

SLUG:

What were they fighting over?

WORMY:

Who got to eat him, play xylophone on his ribs...what do you think?

SLUG:

I, um...I didn't realize it was that bad up here...I mean, I knew it was bad, but -

WORMY:

What, you haven't seen any cannibals yet?

SLUG:

Um...no. It was mostly looters...a couple of, you know shootings, but nothing like...

WORMY:

Well, welcome to Maine.

SLUG:

So...what exactly happens after dark?

DRAGONFLY:

They hunt.

WORMY:

If you aren't armed to the teeth then you're basically dead.

DRAGONFLY:

'S true.

SLUG:

So...so what, they sleep during the day?

WORMY:

No. They're just easier to spot. Can't surprise you.

SLUG:

Oh...

(Beat. SLUG looks terrified.)

DRAGONFLY:

So, Slug.

SLUG:

Hmm?

DRAGONFLY:

What are you going to do if you find your family?

SLUG:

I don't, um...I don't know. Form a plan? Go somewhere?

WORMY:

Where?

SLUG:

I don't know, somewhere far away? Maybe hijack a boat?

WORMY:

You don't think the military will be watching the water?

SLUG:

I just thought...

WORMY:

They're guarding state lines. At the bridge from New Hampshire to Maine there's a freaking barricade. I'm amazed they didn't see you.

SLUG:

Oh, I was...um...I took back roads.

WORMY:

They're everywhere, though. Every road is guarded.

SLUG:

I was in the woods, mostly...Uno.

(DRAGONFLY and WORMY throw down their cards. SLUG crosses away from them.)

WORMY:

There's mutants to worry about. Rabid dogs. I'm amazed that you're alive right now.

SLUG:

Like I said...I was just lucky...

WORMY:

I guess so. But you can't go back that way now, nobody is that lucky twice.

SLUG:

Maybe I should get, I dunno struck by lightning or something? Right? Heh...

WORMY:

And you're gonna go back down, right?

SLUG:

Well, yeah, I gotta go back.

WORMY:

So how do you expect to get back across the border?

SLUG:

I, um...I don't know, I hadn't thought that far into it.

WORMY:

Ok, well what if you are that lucky and you do make it to your boat. What if you get caught? What will you do then?

SLUG:

I...I don't...

WORMY:

They'll catch you. You know they will.

SLUG:

Then I'll just surrender! They can't kill me if -

WORMY:

So, you'd rather be enslaved by psychotic, power hungry jar heads than expose yourself to cannibals and radiation?

SLUG:

Well, what's wrong with that?

WORMY:

What's wrong with that? Are you seriously...oh my god!

SLUG:

This isn't going to last forever! It will end when people realize –

WORMY:

What? That they're right and we're wrong? We can surrender and everything will be ok?
Screw you...

SLUG:

That's not what I –

WORMY:

Please!

SLUG:

Wars end! People take sides, it's what they do!

WORMY:

This isn't a war like we learned about in school. This isn't even a war anymore; this is a,
a genocide. Remember learning about that?

SLUG:

This isn't the same thing –

WORMY:

It is so the same thing! If you go out there and expose yourself to them as a civilian they
will kill you. Just like they do to every civilian who claims to be on their side. And they
won't just kill you. They'll torture you just for fun and then kill you when they're bored.

SLUG:

But I...I heard that they don't torture you if you surrender...

WORMY:

How...how stupid are you!?

(Beat. SLUG looks at the floor.)

I'd honestly rather be a mutant.

DRAGONFLY:

Same.

SLUG:

I don't want to be a mutant...

WORMY:

Well, then. There's your answer. Don't go outside. Don't surrender.

(Pause.)

SLUG:

I'm sorry.

WORMY:

For what?

SLUG:

I don't know, I just...I feel like I have a reason to be sorry.

WORMY:

If you didn't do anything then you have nothing to be sorry for. You didn't do anything now, did you, Slug?

SLUG:

No, I –

WORMY:

Then you have nothing to be sorry for.

SLUG:

But earlier, when we were arguing –

WORMY:

Look, if we got caught up in arguments every time they happened we'd end up killing each other to get some peace. Really. It's ok.

DRAGONFLY:

Yeah...I don't think you could do anything wrong if you tried, Slug. You don't seem the type.

(WORMY looks sideways at him.)

SLUG:

Oh, I've done plenty I should be ashamed of...

DRAGONFLY:

I don't believe you.

WORMY:

D.

(He looks at her. She raises an eyebrow at him. He looks at the floor.)

SLUG:

Um...can I have some water?

WORMY:

Sure.

(She pulls out a small cup and pours. She hands it to SLUG who gulps it down quickly.)

When's the last time you drank?

SLUG:

I don't know...a day, maybe?

WORMY:

Anything to eat?

SLUG:

I had some fruit a couple of days ago...

WORMY:

Where did you find fruit?

SLUG:

It was on a tree. In a field somewhere...probably New Hampshire, now that I think about it. Just this one, lonely apple just hanging there behind this cluster of leaves. Out of sight enough...but I saw it. It was like the universe was giving me a...Christmas present...

(Beat.)

WORMY:

Jeeze...

DRAGONFLY:

That's beautiful, Slug.

WORMY:

Wait, it's almost January, how the hell is that possible?

SLUG:

What?

WORMY:

There's no way that there would be a ripe apple on a tree this time of year. It's too cold.

SLUG:

Oh, um...I...mean a couple of months, months, not days.

WORMY:

Uh huh...

DRAGONFLY:

Still, it's a beautiful story, Slug. Like the universe really was giving you a Christmas present...

WORMY:

Wouldn't be a Christmas present, though if it was a few months ago...

SLUG:

The days...they're bleeding together. You must know what that's like...

WORMY:

Sure do...

SLUG:

And I'm still really thirsty.

DRAGONFLY:

Ok, you can have some.

SLUG:

Thank you!

WORMY:

D!

DRAGONFLY:

Come on, Wormy, just one cup? It won't kill us.

WORMY:

It might.

DRAGONFLY:

Please?

(Beat. WORMY stares at him.)

WORMY:

Fine. One more cup for at least a few hours, no more. Got me?

SLUG:

Yeah, of course...

WORMY:

And go slow. It isn't easy to find clean water, so you have to savor it.

SLUG:

I will, I will. Thank you...

(She takes the cup gingerly and takes a sip, savoring it. It's like heaven. She takes a second. WORMY and DRAGONFLY watch her; DRAGONFLY enamored, WORMY suspicious. She finishes and passes the cup back to WORMY.)

Thank you so much...

WORMY:

No problem.

(Beat.)

SLUG:

Can I ask you something?

WORMY:

Not if you don't say it.

SLUG:

Um... why did you bring *me* back here?

WORMY:

Well, I don't know...probably just...you didn't seem threatening, I guess?

SLUG:

Oh, thanks...

WORMY:

I mean, non-mutated, non-military...you seem like you're on our side, you know?

SLUG:

Yeah...

(They smile at each other. DRAGONFLY leans forward tries to kiss SLUG. WORMY jumps up and pushes SLUG away.)

Ow...

WORMY:

What did you do that for!?

SLUG:

I...I'm sorry, I –

DRAGONFLY:

Wait, Slug –

WORMY:

What do you think you're doing!?

SLUG:

I didn't –

DRAGONFLY:

I just thought you'd –

WORMY:

Don't touch him - !

SLUG:

Just took me by surprise –

DRAGONFLY:

I'm so, so sorry –

WORMY:

Stop, stop...wait...D, why did you do that?

DRAGONFLY:

I don't know...

SLUG:

It's fine. Seriously.

(DRAGONFLY stares at her and goes for it again. She pushes him off.)

I didn't mean do it again!

DRAGONFLY:

I'm sorry, that was weird...

WORMY:

Tell me about it...

DRAGONFLY:

I just thought...I don't know it seemed like...you get lonely...

WORMY:

You have me.

DRAGONFLY:

I mean for...you know...

WORMY:

Oh...

SLUG:

Let's just drop it, ok?

(Beat.)

Look, I was alone, too. I was scared. It had been months since I'd seen a single living person. I was living in the woods, sleeping in trees...I thought for a while how lucky I was not to run into anyone...but after a while you just miss people, you know? So, I understand, Dragonfly. I do. It's hard to go so long without seeing another person. You guys are truly lucky to have each other. I wish I could have had the same luck...

(Beat.)

WORMY:

How long?

SLUG:

What?

WORMY:

How long were you alone?

SLUG:

Three months and twelve days before you found me.

WORMY:

Wow.

SLUG:

Before you saved me.

WORMY:

Hang on...hang on a hot second...

DRAGONFLY:

What, Wormy?

WORMY:

You keep track of the date -

SLUG:

And time.

WORMY:

The date and time...you've somehow been keeping them straight, right?

SLUG:

Right. Why?

WORMY:

But you couldn't remember when you had that apple...

SLUG:

I -

DRAGONFLY:

What are you saying, Wormy?

WORMY:

Something isn't right here.

SLUG:
You've - I've - this isn't -

WORMY:
Spit it out, what are you trying to say?

(Beat. SLUG is very quiet.)

SLUG:
I...I'm so sorry...

WORMY:
What?

SLUG:
I'm sorry -

WORMY:
For what?! What have you done, Slug? What do you have to be so sorry for?

(SLUG begins to cry.)

WORMY:
Oh, Jeeze.

SLUG:
I'm sorry...I'm so sorry -

WORMY:
I knew it.

SLUG:
I didn't mean to -

WORMY:
What did you do?!

Don't cry, Slug.

DRAGONFLY:

D!

WORMY:

Sorry...

DRAGONFLY:

I can't do it...

SLUG:

Do what?

DRAGONFLY:

What are you talking about?

WORMY:

They're tracking me.

SLUG:

Who?

DRAGONFLY:

(Beat. WORMY gets it. DRAGONFLY doesn't.)

Who?

WORMY:

You've got to be kidding me...

DRAGONFLY:

Who, Wormy?

WORMY:

(She's struggling to remain calm.)

Who do you think, D?

DRAGONFLY:

Oh...

SLUG:

I made a deal with them.

WORMY:

What kind of deal?

SLUG:

If they spare my family I'd join them. I'd look for people who didn't get hit by radiation. I didn't know that - I didn't know that they'd -

WORMY:

What the hell!?

SLUG:

I'm sorry, I'm sorry -

DRAGONFLY:

What do they want with people?

SLUG:

They told me that they're gathering up more people to become soldiers...they said they wanted to end the war -

WORMY:

Yeah, end the war by killing anyone who left that isn't one of them!

SLUG:

They told me it would be peaceful -

WORMY:

And you believed them!?

SLUG:

I, I, I -

WORMY:

They want a complete and total takeover, don't you get that? Once they have everyone who isn't mutated from the radiation they will have won, *don't you get that?!*

SLUG:

I...I didn't think...

WORMY:

No, you didn't!

(She makes sure the blinds are closed.)

Do they know we're here?

(SLUG nods, still crying.)

How?

(SLUG lifts up her sleeve revealing a small tracking device stuck to her forearm.)

Oh my god...

DRAGONFLY:

You've been wearing that this whole time?

SLUG:

I'm so...I'm so...

WORMY:

Don't say you're sorry!

(Takes a breath to calm down.)

Have they heard everything we've been saying since you got here?

SLUG:

No it...it just tracks your location...they don't know about you. Wormy, I didn't know what they were doing, I really didn't know...

WORMY:

That explains it...that explains how you made it from the south to here... You stupid idiot...!

SLUG:

Please...I didn't know, I didn't –

WORMY:

Well, congratulations, Slug. You just made a deal with the devil.

SLUG:

You have to believe me, I didn't –

WORMY:

And you haven't just ruined our lives, your whole family is probably dead.

SLUG:

No! No, they promised me! They promised –

WORMY:

Well, they lied!

SLUG:

I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry, I'm so -

(DRAGONFLY hits SLUG over the head. SLUG is knocked unconscious. DRAGONFLY takes the tracker off and stomps on it until it's smashed to bits.)

WORMY:

Good work, D.

DRAGONFLY:

That could have been bad.

WORMY:

It still might be.

DRAGONFLY:

But now they won't come here, right?

WORMY:

Who knows?

(Starts digging through SLUG's things, finding a notebook. She reads.)

Oh...look at this.

DRAGONFLY:

What is it?

WORMY:

Date, time, mile marker...she's keeping track all right.

(She flips to another page and looks at it in horror.)

DRAGONFLY:

What?

(He reads over her shoulder.)

"Two survivors." Wait, does that mean - ?

WORMY:

Us.

DRAGONFLY:

What does this mean?

WORMY:

She was looking for people. For them.

DRAGONFLY:

So, you think they know where we are? Because of the tracker?

WORMY:

They may have gotten a signal. I'm not sure, but we have to get out of here before they –

(There is a loud bang at the door.)

Crap!

DRAGONFLY:

What was that?

WORMY:

Let me check.

(She creeps toward the window and peeks out carefully. She ducks back down quickly.)

Crap. Crap, crap, crap, crap –

DRAGONFLY:

What is it?

WORMY:

Get down, get down!

DRAGONFLY:

What's out there?

WORMY:

Looks like they found us...

DRAGONFLY:

Oh, god...oh, no...

WORMY:

I don't know what to do...I don't know what to do; what do we do? I can't, I can't, I can't

–

(She starts hyperventilating.)

DRAGONFLY:

Calm down, it's ok, just...think, breathe...it's ok.

WORMY:

Ok. Ok, ok, ok...

DRAGONFLY:

Put your head between your knees, remember?

WORMY:

I remember...I remember, I remember...

DRAGONFLY:

We can do this...just think.

WORMY:

Ok, um...uuugh, I don't know, D...

DRAGONFLY:

You can do this, you're strong –

WORMY:

No I'm not –

DRAGONFLY:

Yes, you are. Remember that kid that stole my bike? That guy who used to beat up all the kids in the neighborhood, John Krowski. And you went up to him and got right in his face and told him to give it back. And he said why, and you said you'd beat him up. And he didn't believe you, so you said you'd call the authorities and they'd arrest him. And he didn't even know what "authorities" meant, but it sounded so scary to him. And he was so scared of *you* 'cause he said you had...what was it?

WORMY:

Crazy eyes...

DRAGONFLY:

Crazy eyes! He didn't mess with us or anybody else after that. You were the protector of the neighborhood! You weren't afraid of anything.

WORMY:

I was lying to him, D...

DRAGONFLY:

So? You're still strong. No matter what. And I'll be here. We can be strong together, ok?

(She looks up at him. She smiles.)

WORMY:

Thank you.

DRAGONFLY:

'Welcome. Now what are we going to do?

WORMY:

Ok, um. Um, um, um....Oh! The back. We can get out the back and into the woods if it's clear.

DRAGONFLY:

Don't worry, I can handle anything.

WORMY:

We got this, D. Right? Tell me we got this.

DRAGONFLY:

We got this.

WORMY:

I hope so...

DRAGONFLY:

(He takes her shoulders.)

Wormy. We got this.

WORMY:

You better be right, D...

DRAGONFLY:

It'll be ok, we can make it through this.

(He stands. A red sniper dot appears on him.)

DRAGONFLY:
We still have each oth –

WORMY:
D, get dow – !

(A shot is fired through the window. DRAGONFLY is hit. He goes down. WORMY screams. Pause.)

WORMY:
...D? Are you ok? D!? Dragonfly!?

(She shakes him.)

Ben! Benjamin! This isn't funny, answer me, Benjamin!! BEN! NO! Oh god, no...no, no, no...

(She cries over him. Another bang.)

Ah, god! Ahhhh....

(She sits up and pours water over SLUG.)

Wake up. Wake the hell up! Get up!

(She pours water over her face. She chokes and wakes up.)

SLUG:
Oh...ow...

WORMY:
You up? Good.

(She exits to the other room, crawling.)

SLUG:
What happened?

(WORMY reenters with a small crossbow and arrows and begins loading it.)

Where did you get that?

(She notices DRAGONFLY's body.)

Oh my god...what happened to him..? Dragonfly! Can you hear -

(WORMY points the crossbow at her.)

Wormy, please...

WORMY:

You screwed everything up, Slug.

SLUG:

I'm sorry, I didn't know....

WORMY:

Shut the hell up! You need to listen to me very carefully now. You killed my brother –

SLUG:

I didn't –

WORMY:

I said shut up! Now. You are going to leave through the front door.

SLUG:

Wormy –

WORMY:

You are going to open that door, look them straight in the eye, and say, “There's nobody here.”

SLUG:

Please, I –

WORMY:

I'm not finished! I don't want to hear your voice again until I'm finished! Get me!?

(SLUG nods.)

You're going to say, "There's nobody here. You killed the only person here." Do you understand? If you do nod.

(SLUG does.)

Ok. But first you are going to go down to the basement and open the storm doors. They are unlocked. You will wait for me to leave and then you will lock them behind me. Does this make sense? Nod.

(SLUG does.)

Now. If you do not follow these instructions I will shoot you in the forehead. Do you understand?

(SLUG nods.)

Good. Go.

(SLUG exits. WORMY peers out the window.)

Oh man...

(She continues gathering rations. When she picks up the raisins again she stares at them for a long time. She tucks them into DRAGONFLY's pocket. SLUG reenters, looking terrified.)

What the hell, why aren't you in the basement?

SLUG:

They're everywhere. The house is surrounded. There is no getting out of here alive.

WORMY:

Oh no, no, no, no –

(She throws the bag of rations.)

SLUG:

I'm so sorry, Wormy...this is all my fault, I –

WORMY:

You think!?

SLUG:

I was so scared, I –

(WORMY throws the notebook at them.)

Please, it's not what you think –

WORMY:

You could have killed me; you could have told us you were being tracked. But you didn't!
You decided to ruin our lives as well as your own! You...stupid...gah!

(She hits her. Beat.)

SLUG:

How many times can I say I'm sorry, Wormy - ?

WORMY:

Not enough!

SLUG:

You have to understand I didn't know what they were like, I - I just wanted my family
back –

WORMY:

And how likely do you think that is, hmm? How likely is it that you are ever going to be
reunited with your family again?

SLUG:

I thought you'd understand. They mean everything to me -

WORMY:

So did he. Didn't save him, though, did it?

SLUG:

I'm so sorry, Wormy...I'm so, so sorry -

WORMY:

Taylor.

SLUG:

What?

WORMY:

My name is Taylor.

(She pushes her and holds her up. A shot is fired through the window. SLUG dies. There is another bang from outside the window. WORMY crouches on the ground and grabs DRAGONFLY's hand. The banging becomes faster, louder, and more frequent. She kisses DRAGONFLY's hand and loads the crossbow. She stands, walking toward the window, weapon out in front of her. A red dot from a sniper scope appears on her. Blackout.)