

"We need more decisions around here, and less theorizing."

"Shut the fuck up, Fred, when you say that every ten fucking minutes it doesn't accomplish anything."

"Fuck you!"

"Guys, shut the FUCK up! Jesus FUCKING Christ. You're making the fucking baby go apeshit."

Everyone was silent for a while while they observed the screaming baby.

"Glenn's right."

"You're right, Glenn."

"Shut the fuck up. Gladys, you gotta do something about that baby."

"Glenn, there's nothing I can do. Every time you guys start shouting like that, it upsets her."

Everyone was silent for a while, except for the baby.

"Let's recap."

"No!"

"FUCK NO!"

"Shut him up!"

"Shut the fuck up! FUCK!"

Everyone was silent for a while, except for the baby.

"Guys, we need to- just please be calm, give me a few minutes- we need to recap."

Everyone was silent for a while.

"Good. Okay, look. Listen. Look- what's it been? Six days? Six and half days?"

"Six."

"Six days."

"Yeah, about half a day over six days, depending on when you count from."

"Six days. It's been more than six days. More than six fucking days. We haven't heard a fucking thing. Nothing. And we haven't heard anything from Nathan or Hal. I know none of us wants to talk about that, but we have to. It's been- what-five days since Nathan left?"

"Yeah."

"Five days."

"Monday- he left Monday, right?"

"Monday morning."

"Monday morning. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, it's now Saturday evening, right? Yeah, the twenty-first, right?"

"Yeah, early on Saturday evening, the twenty-first."

"So it's been more than five days since Nathan left, which means three days since Hal left."

Everyone was silent for a while.

"Guys, it's been more than five days since Nathan left, and more than three days since Hal left! And we haven't heard shit from- anything! We have absolutely no idea what's going on, but we know those things."

"EMP attack."

"Shut the fuck up, Chris."

"You can tell me to shut the fuck up, but that's not going to make it not a leading possibility, jackass."

"Guys-"

"Shut the fuck up!"

"Look! Jesus. Let. Me. Finish. The recap."

Everyone was silent for a while.

"Fucking say the words, Glenn, what's it matter, we've heard them all a million fucking times."

The baby made noises.

Everyone was silent for a while.

"It matters because we're all still hiding here in this office."

Everyone was silent for a while.

"And that's pretty fucked up, man. And we've got to do something about this situation, because we're almost out of food and water. And I've gotta tell you, this is so fucked up, I want to make sure we've figured out what the hell is going on so that when we do decide what to do next, we make a smart decision."

"So fucking say the words, Glenn."

"At around 9:45 in the morning on Sunday, the power went out. Everything. Dead. No lights, no plugs, no computers, no Internet. Cell phone networks went down too. No calls, no data. Land lines went dead too. Radio too- dead. Everything- dead. Every goddamn thing, dead. After about an hour, we tried the cars. Electronic locks were all dead. For the people who were able to get in with old fashioned keys, the ignitions- dead. All of them. Not even a hint of turnover. Chris tried to hotwire one of the cars- nothing. Then Fred pointed out that there were no airplanes in the sky, like in the afternoon of 9/11. And that's when the first of the theories was born. We talked about terrorist attacks. We talked about the blackout of 2003. We talked about conspiracy theories, Dick Cheney and 9/11, Obama, the Illuminati, anti-semitism and anti-Zionism and Israel and Palestine. We talked about TWA flight 800, false flag operations, Rupert Murdoch and News Corporation, Michael Moore, Oliver Stone. Sarah Palin. And then we had the first raised voices, the arguing, the nerves. And then the first recap. So we went back to the beginning-"

"That's enough, Glenn."

Everyone was silent for a while.

"We went back to the beginning. Back to that morning, at around 9:45. And we retold the tale, but then stopped and went back a little further. We talked about why we were all at the office on that particular Sunday. We each talked about our reasons for coming into the office, and then it didn't take us long to realize that our circumstances- all together in this weird unique no-power confinement at our closed office on a Sunday- we realized that our circumstances made it difficult for us to easily find anyone else to get information from. We talked about where the best place to walk to would be. We all walked about three quarters of a mile from the parking lot to the campus entrance, and stood there for at least an hour waiting to flag down a passing car. None came. And then we had the second raised voices, and arguing, and nerves. And then the second recap."

Glenn looked around to see if anyone was about to protest.

Everyone was silent for a while.

"And we had the second recap, and then basically we went back inside and gathered stuff to snack on, and then we basically agreed to spend the night, try to make the best of it, and then see what happened. And at that point, don't forget- at that point on the first day, the night of the first day, we all pretty much assumed the power would probably snap back on at any moment. Or at least, that maybe some authorities of some sort would swing by the campus to check on things and spread some news. And certainly, affiliated friends and relatives would quite likely come by the office to regroup."

Everyone was silent for a while.

"So Nathan volunteered to leave the next morning, when nothing had changed. He was going to walk as far as he needed to to find someone. He figured worst case scenario, he'd make it to town, which is only about 10 miles from the office campus, and then everything would be explained, and he'd get back to us immediately to loop us in. And at that point, don't forget, it was still possible that everything would just snap back on at any moment, or authorities would come patrolling by the campus, or a friend or relative would show up with a story."

Everyone was silent for a while.

"Over the next day or so, we had a few more raised voices, more arguing, more theories. It was decided that we'd give Nathan one more day."

Everyone was silent for a while.

"And then Hal went on Wednesday."

Everyone was silent for a while.

"And now it's early Saturday night."

Nothing.

"So there's our recap."

-Jeff Solomon

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