

**APOCALYPTIC PLAYLIST** // Even though music is entirely absent from the world of this novel, make an apocalyptic playlist for what you've been reading. What five songs would you include? Write an explanation for each song: why would you include it, and how does the song connect to events in the novel? Use specific textual evidence to cite your connections to the text.

Kayla Walker

Lit log #2

The first song that I chose was **Arsonist's Lullaby by Hozier**. *When I was a child / I heard voices / some would sing and / some would scream / You soon find you have few choices*. On page 32, When the man is narrating the story, he says "Within a year there were fires on the ridges and deranged chanting. The screams of the murdered." This informed us that some people resulted in cannibalism because they were not able to find food. The bad guys decided that eating other people was better than facing death. *All you have is your fire / and the place you need to reach*. The fire is repeated throughout the story. On page 83, The man tells the boy "Because we're carrying the fire" The fire represents their hope in finding a new life. A better life. The fire could also represent their humanity. *Don't you ever / tame your demon / but always keep 'em on a leash*. To survive in this world, they have to be some level of crazy but it's important to not let that crazy take hold of them and control their decisions. They are living in a world where people have become monsters in order to survive. The man and the boy have made a point that they would never result in cannibalism.

**Meet me in the woods by Hozier** was the second song that I thought of that related to this book. *I took a little journey to the unknown / and I've come back changed, I can feel it in my bones / Now the darkness got a hold on me*. The man learned how to live in a world where you have to fend for yourself. He learned how to survive in a world that adapted to a "Kill or be killed" mentality. He doesn't kill people unless they are a danger to him or the boy. On page 65, one of the bad guys takes hold of the boy and positions a knife to his throat. "The man fell back instantly and lay with blood bubbling from the hole in his forehead. The boy was laying in his lap with no expression on his face at all." The man had to kill the

bad guy so that he and the boy would live. *There ain't language for the things I've seen / and the truth is stranger than my own worst dreams.* Some of the things he's seen are so gruesome and inhumane that he can't even put into words what he's seen. He knew what the cannibals would do if they caught them. The man knew that they would be kept alive so that the cannibals could eat them as needed. They would be taken apart limb by limb until there was nothing left.

The third song I chose is **Run by daughter**. *So I think we should run / I think we should / Run, run, run, run.* The man and the boy end up stumbling into a family of cannibals' house. When they come out of the cellar that was full of partially eaten people, the boy sees that the family has arrived back home. On page 110, "He turned and grabbed the boy. Hurry, he said. Hurry...Please, he called. Please. Hurry. For God's sake Hurry." The man keeps repeating for the boy to hurry. The man knew that they had to get out of the house. Their life depended on it. *And we will step outside / Checking that the coast is / Clear on both sides / Cause we don't want to be seen now / This is suicide / But you can't see the ropes.* When they make it out of the house, the man realizes that if they try to run down the drive, the bad guys would see them. He decided that it would be safer just to stay on the ground near the trees, so the man pulled the boy to the ground and shielded him from view.

To reflect on the boy and the man's relationship I chose the song **Goodbye John Smith by Barnes Courtney**. The lyrics *You were born too old and afraid to die / cause the light is fading out of your eyes.* The boy was born in a world where he was forced to grow up too fast. He was not able to have a childhood like other children. On page 86, he encounters another boy. "Come back, he called. I won't hurt you. He was standing there crying when his father came sprinting across the road and seized him by the arm...I just wanted to see him, Papa. I just wanted to see him." All the boy wants to do is see the other little boy, talk to him. He was willing to risk what little safety he has just to interact with someone his own age. *I'll give it all / I'll give it all.* The man had a life before the apocalypse. He had friends and a wife. He watched his old life crumble and there was nothing he could do to stop it. However, the boy has always had this life, he doesn't know what it's like to not have to scavenge for food. The world he knows is gray and full of despair. The man has made it his purpose to find a boy a better life.

The last song that I picked was **Youth by Daughter**. *Our minds are troubled by emptiness*. There is nothing for them to talk about. All they can talk about is their survival and hunger. They have always kept their conversations brief. If they decide to talk about earth before the apocalypse, the boy would have nothing to say. It would just be the man talking about his friends and his wife. On page 59, the boy asks about the man's friends from before. "Do you remember them? Yes, I remember them. What happened to them? They died. All of them? Yes, all of them. Do you miss them? Yes, I do. Where are we going? We're going south. Okay." The boy understands that his old life is a sore topic, so he quickly changes the subject so that the dad doesn't have to think about the people he's lost.