

# Post- Apocalyptic Road

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“They sat for a long time.They sat on their folded blankets and watched the road in both directions.No wind.Nothing.After a while the boy said there’s not any crows are there?”



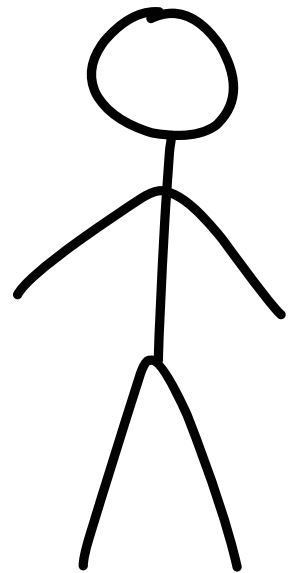
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“Sketched upon the pall of soot downstream the outline of a burnt city like a black paper scrim”



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“The man looked up.A small figure distant on the road,bent and shuffling.He stood leaning on the handle of a grocery cart.Well,he said.Who’s this.”



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“The man watched him. Real life is pretty bad?What do you think?Well, I think we're still here. A lot of bad things have happened but we're still here.Yeah.You don't think that's so great.It's okay.”



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“The road crossed a dried slough where pipes of ice stood out of the frozen mud like formations in a cave. The remains of an old fire by the side of the road. Beyond that a long concrete causeway. A dead swamp. Dead trees standing out of the gray water trailing gray and relic haggmoss. The silky spills of ash against the curbing. He stood leaning on the gritty concrete rail. Perhaps in the world's destruction it would be possible at last to see how it was made.”



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“He stayed three days and then he walked out to the road and he looked down the road and he looked back the way they had come. Someone was coming. He started to turn and go back into the woods but he didnt. He just stood in the road and waited, the pistol in his hand. He'd piled all the blankets on his father and he was cold and he was hungry. The man that hove into view and stood there looking at him was dressed in a gray and yellow ski parka. He carried a shotgun upside down over his shoulder on a braided leather lanyard and he wore a nylon bandolier filled with shells for the gun.”



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“He waited in the road and when the man came out of the woods he was carrying the suitcase and he had the blankets over his shoulder. He sorted through them and handed one to the boy. Here, he said. Wrap this around you. You're cold. The boy tried to hand him the pistol but he wouldnt take it. You hold onto that, he said.”



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“On their backs were vermiculate patterns that were maps of the world in its becoming. Maps and mazes. Of a thing which could not be put back. Not be made right again. In the deep glens where they lived all things were older than man and they hummed of mystery.”

