

Dead Air

A group of backpackers break into an abandoned bunker, only to discover that some echoes of history are better left buried.

**INT. STAIRCASE - ABANDONED BUNKER - DAY**

A rusty metal door. Silent. Still.

We pull back, descending the crumbling steps, revealing the interior of an underground hallway.

Daylight streams through a crack in the concrete, illuminating decades of dust and decay.

**BANG!**

A sharp impact from outside rattles the stillness.

**BANG! BANG!**

The door quakes as something heavy smashes against the outside handle.

LEXI (O.S.)  
Jesus, Logan. Can't we just-

**BANG! BANG! BANG!**

With the final impact, we hear the clatter of a PADLOCK falling to the ground outside, followed by cheers.

LOGAN (O.S.)  
YES! Let's goooo!

A kick from outside. The door doesn't budge.

LOGAN (O.S.)  
Damn.

Another kick. Useless.

LOGAN (O.S.)  
Oh come on!

EVA (O.S.)  
Try pulling maybe?

The bunker door SWINGS OPEN, revealing:

An OLD GROWTH EUROPEAN FOREST and FIVE YOUNG ADULTS.

They stand at the overgrown doorway, peering down the stone steps into darkness, equal parts curious and wary.

LOGAN (21, good hair, perma-smile, the human equivalent of a golden retriever) steps inside.

LOGAN  
 Try *pulling*— (laughs)  
 Eva, you magnificent genius. Where  
 would we be without you?

LEXI (O.S.)  
 Enjoying cheap beer back at the  
 hostel like normal tourists.

LEXI (20, lacrosse scholarship, two visible tattoos, zero fucks) brushes past him. She takes a few steps down, pausing at the edge of the darkness.

LEXI  
 (gesturing down the steps)  
 Well, *ta da*. We're inside. What  
 now, birthday boy?

LOGAN  
 Lex, c'mon. Don't do that.

LEXI  
 Do what?

DANTE (O.S.)  
 Steal everyone's joy.

DANTE (21, dark curly hair, Ivy League jock energy) slips inside. He squeezes Logan on the shoulder and hands him a MAG-LITE FLASHLIGHT—bright red, obnoxiously large.

DANTE  
 If Logan wants to urbex on his  
 birthday, then that's what we're  
 gonna do. Happy birthday, bud.

LOGAN  
 (thrilled)  
 Dude—seriously? Thank you!

He clicks it on. A powerful beam cuts through the dark. Dante clicks on his own light. Together, they walk down the steps.

LOGAN  
 Damn, this thing is a *monster*!

The final two members of the party, ANYA and EVA, step inside.

ANYA (18, French, laissez-faire attitude) exchanges a look with Lexi.

ANYA  
 Urbex?

LEXI  
 "Urban Exploration." They pull  
 this crap all the time back in  
 Chicago.

ANYA  
 And you don't approve?

LEXI  
 I tag along sometimes...  
 (still stung from Dante's  
 earlier comment)  
 And I don't "steal joy," I just am  
 not in the mood.

ANYA  
 (empathetic)  
 I also did not expect to be  
 breaking into an old war bunkers  
 today.

EVA (18, German, quiet and funny, book-smart) climbs in and  
 pulls out her own flashlight.

EVA  
 Is that what we're doing?

She clicks it on.

EVA  
 I thought we were granting your  
 cousin's birthday wish for "Uber-  
 Fun Excitement and Adventure" that  
 is obviously not dangerous or  
 creepy at all.

She grins at Lexi and hands her an extra flashlight.

LEXI  
 (sighs)  
 I guess that's what we're doing.

The boys call from the bottom of the steps.

LOGAN (O.S.)  
 Yo, y'all coming? This is crazy  
 down here.

**INT. MAIN ROOM - ABANDONED BUNKER - DAY**

The girls walk into a medium-sized room cluttered with dusty  
 desks and RADIO EQUIPMENT.

Flashlights sweep across the concrete walls, illuminating tangles of wires and dials.

Dante runs his hands over a LARGE RADIO RECEIVER. He flips some switches, turns some dials...

DANTE  
This stuff is so old.

ANYA  
Where did you hear about this place?

DANTE  
Reddit. But Eva's the one who knew where to look.

LOGAN  
(grinning)  
Our new friend's a local. Lucky us!

EVA  
My grandparents lived nearby. I remembered the antenna outside from when I was little. But every time I asked about it, they would change the subject. I never understood why.

LEXI  
I think I do.

Lexi shines her flashlight on a section of the wall. The other beams join hers, illuminating a LARGE, FADING NAZI SWASTIKA.

DANTE  
Whoah.

LOGAN  
Oh. Yikes.

They stand there for a beat, feeling overwhelmed by the history of this place. An energy that was there all along, but now has a name.

DANTE  
...Were your grandparents Nazi's?

LEXI  
Dante!

DANTE  
What? It's a fair question.

EVA  
I think we should go.

LOGAN  
But we just got here.

ANYA  
(to Eva)  
Are you okay?

EVA  
No. This was a mistake.

LOGAN  
What do you mean?

EVA  
This feels disrespectful.

DANTE  
To who? *Nazi's*?

EVA  
To the *dead*. A grave is a grave.

DANTE  
I don't see any bodies.

Dante gestures around them. He's right. No remains. No bones.

LEXI  
I'm with her. This place is  
fucking evil, dude. Don't you feel  
that?

Dante shrugs, moving on to another piece of radio equipment, flipping switches and twisting knobs at random.

DANTE  
So we just run away because the  
vibes are bad? Yeah, *Nazi's* did  
bad shit. It's called "history."

EVA  
It's not *your* history.

Dante meets her gaze.

DANTE  
We're *Jews*. It most certainly is.

Eva doesn't know what to say to this, so she says nothing.

DANTE  
 (off Lexi's annoyed look)  
 What?

LEXI  
 Why are you being such an asshole?

DANTE  
 Well excuse me for—

Dante hits another switch at random, and—

EVERY RADIO SCREECHES TO LIFE.

A thick, ear-splitting STATIC floods the room.

The party covers their ears in pain.

LEXI  
 Turn it off!

DANTE  
 What?

LEXI  
 TURN IT OFF!

Dante searches for the OFF switch while covering his ears. He's panicked, overwhelmed.

The static grows louder. Underneath the growing din we hear... voices?

Anya begins to SCREAM.

Roaring in frustration, Lexi grabs Logan's new Mag-lite and SMASHES the receiver. It's sturdy, German-made, and stubbornly clings to life.

Lexi KEEPS SWINGING, again and again, until the machine finally SPUTTERS OFF.

The bunker calms, and the static fades.

LOGAN  
 Is everyone okay?

LEXI  
 No!

DANTE  
 Fucking Nazi's.

LOGAN  
 Amen. What the hell was that?

EVA  
Some kind of power surge?

DANTE  
Or maybe it was *g-g-ghosts*...

LEXI  
I am so over this. Can we PLEASE  
just go back to the hostel?

DANTE  
C'mon, you don't want to hang out  
with some ghosts?

LEXI  
Nazi ghosts? Hard pass.

EVA  
Where's Anya?

The party looks around. No trace of Anya. Dante paces the room.

DANTE  
(calling out)  
Anya?

LOGAN  
Did she go back upstairs?

A flicker to the side of the room. One of the SMALLER RADIOS crackles to life, emitting a WAVERING TONE; like a submarine beacon calling from the deep.

Dante and Eva consider the old machine, looking it over.

DANTE  
Uh...?

EVA  
A Volksempfänger.  
(off their blank looks)  
A radio. My grandparents had one.

She turns the dials, modulating the frequency of the tone, introducing some static.

LEXI  
That's fascinating and all, but  
shouldn't we find Anya first?

The static from the radio morphs into a WARBLLED SCREAM.

Everyone freezes. No way.

That was ANYA'S SCREAM.

DANTE  
Anya? Where are you?

Anya's scream repeats.

LOGAN  
Anya! Are you okay?! We're right  
here!

EVA  
We need a transmitter. Here!

She switches on the transmitter next to her, and the bunker  
SCREECHES TO LIFE AGAIN.

The ear-splitting STATIC returns.

The underlying voices we heard earlier are back, more  
distinctive this time.

LOGAN  
Not again!

Lexi moves to SMASH the transmitter-

EVA  
Wait!

The static shifts into DISCORDANT TONES as Eva searches for a  
clean frequency. She zeroes in on one, and the room calms as  
the noise coalesces into MORSE CODE.

DANTE  
What happened to Anya? Go back to  
Anya!

Eva manipulates the dials again, searching for another quiet  
channel.

DANTE  
Anya?

Eva points at the microphone in front of the transmitter. He  
presses the button, shouting into the mic.

DANTE  
Anya?!

LOGAN (over radio)  
NOT AGAIN!

Oh, fuck.

Eva, Lexi and Dante look around, frantic, confirming that yes, Logan is indeed no longer in the room.

LEXI  
Uh uh, NOPE! I'm gone.

She moves towards the exit.

DANTE  
You're just going to leave them?

She stops.

LOGAN (over radio)  
*DID SHE GO BACK UPSTAIRS?*

DANTE  
(to Eva)  
What the hell is happening?

EVA  
I don't know!

LEXI  
(to Eva)  
How do we bring them back?

EVA  
I DON'T KNOW!

The room lights up again, the STATIC returns.

DANTE  
What are you doing?

EVA  
Nothing! I didn't touch anything!

LEXI  
Find another channel!

Eva manipulates the dials again, eventually zeroing in on another voice... speaking in German.

TELEPHONE OPERATOR (over radio)  
(in German, not subtitled)  
*ZENTRALE, ZENTRALE, HIER  
FUNKSTELLE ADLER. FEINDBESCHUSS  
SCHWER, VERSTÄRKUNG DRINGEND  
BENÖTIGT! KOMMEN!*

The message repeats.

DANTE  
Who is that? What are they saying?

Eva is too shaken to answer. She recognizes the voice...

LEXI  
Eva! What the fuck is happening!?

EVA  
...It's a distress call.

DANTE  
From who?

EVA  
From...

She chokes on the words, unable to give voice to the impossible.

LEXI  
(shouting)  
EVA!

The message STOPS.

TELEPHONE OPERATOR (over radio)  
...EVA?

The room EXPLODES into STATIC once more, the chaos of it all ripping apart the fabric of reality. Lexi falls to the floor in agony, gripping her ears to block out the sound. Eva sits at the receiver in shock. THE SOUND NO LONGER AFFECTS HER. She adjusts the dial again, calming the chaos.

Lexi rises, shakes off the discomfort, immediately notices—  
Dante is GONE.

LEXI  
What the fuck did you do?!

Lexi grabs Eva from the chair and SHOVES HER AGAINST THE WALL.

LEXI  
What are you doing to us? Bring them back!

EVA  
I didn't... I can't—

LEXI  
You brought us here! This wasn't Dante's idea, this was YOU! What is this place? Who are you?

The equipment comes to life again, and with it, the static.

LEXI  
You fucking bit-

She's GONE.

Eva chokes a sob, unsure of what to do next. The Volksempfänger crackles with static, calling to her.

TELEPHONE OPERATOR (over radio)  
(in German, not subtitled)  
*EVA? BIST DU DA?*

Choking back tears, Eva sits at the transmitter station and speaks into the microphone.

EVA  
(in German, subtitled)  
Hallo, Opa.

**THE END**