

The End [The Run Series, #7: Alternate Ending]

by Hunter Bird

This is the winning student entry from ReadWorks' 2021 #HowTheRunShouldEnd Writing Contest.

Dennis felt his head zoom toward the steering wheel, then everything went black. The car spun out into a ditch.

"Wake up, Dennis!" yelled Jeremiah. When the truck hit the ditch, it made a really loud bang. "That was really loud," said Jeremiah.

"Yeah, we have to get out of here. The zombies will be here any minute," said Mac. They moved Dennis to the passenger side then tried starting the car, but it wouldn't work. They went to look at the engine when they saw Anna laying on the ground, unconscious.

"We can't just leave her here!" cried Jeremiah.

Sadly, Mac said, "We have to. We can't afford another accident like this again."

Jeremiah whined, "We have to take her!"

"No," said Mac sternly.

"I won't leave without her," said Jeremiah.

"If we don't leave now, we'll be surrounded by zombies," said Mac.

"Then let's load her in the bed," pleaded Jeremiah.

"I already said no. We can't have this happening again," said Mac.

As they were arguing, the zombies started surrounding them. They didn't realize until they were twenty feet away in all directions. "Great, now there is no getting out of this," said Mac.

They stood there, ready to die, when they started to hear bluegrass music.

"What's that?" said Jeremiah.

"I don't know," said Mac, confused about where the music was coming from.

Then, they saw a truck flying down the road towards them, loudly playing bluegrass music. "Who's that?" asked Jeremiah.

"I don't know, but let's be prepared for anything," said Mac.

Right when the zombies were about to attack, they stopped. They started to disperse. Then the truck drove up to them. It was Petey Coltrain!

"Good thing I heard your guys' truck crash, or y'all would be dead meat," said Petey, chuckling.

"Thank you so much," said Mac, relieved.

"No problem. Now, let's get out of here before they come back," said Petey.

As they were talking, Dennis woke up. "What happened?" asked Dennis.

"Well, Anna kicked you in the back of the head. Then we crashed into the ditch. Zombies started surrounding us..." Mac said.

"Then Petey saved us!" said Jeremiah, happily.

"Is Anna okay?" said Dennis.

"We don't know. She's still passed out over there in the grass," said Mac.

"Okay. Let's load her in the bed of Petey's truck," Dennis said. All four of them helped to get Anna into the bed of his truck.

As they were driving, Mac asked "So, how did you make all the zombies disperse?"

"I figured out that bluegrass music makes them think they are human," said Petey.

"That is crazy," said Mac, amazed.

They pulled into the parking lot of Petey's radio station. It was barricaded with boards on the windows and doors. Out in front of the building were frisian horses (logs with spikes drilled into them), which were really good for keeping the zombies from breaking in. "Wow," said Mac, surprised, "you are really prepared."

"Well," said Petey, "I used to be a boy scout, so that is how I knew how to barricade this place up, and before I learned about the bluegrass music trick, we were fighting the zombies."

Mac replied "We?"

"Yeah, there are about 20 people inside there," said Petey.

"You found that many survivors?" asked Mac.

"Yep, well, technically they found us, from the music we played on the radio," replied Petey.

They walked into the station and saw everyone hanging out listening to bluegrass. Dennis and Jeremiah started to introduce themselves to everyone while Petey and Mac took Anna to a lab where there were two other people. It was Ann and Bucky Greerson!

"Oh my god! You guys are still alive!" exclaimed Mac.

"Yeah! A week after you guys left, we saw a massive herd of zombies running right for the house," said Bucky, "so we grabbed as much food and supplies as we could and left."

"Where is everyone else?" asked Mac.

"They are all upstairs. But we shouldn't be worrying about them, we need to be worrying about her."

What happened?" Ann said, while pointing at Anna.

"Well, she sent a radio message, and we found her, but she was being chased by zombies, and they cut a gash in her leg," explained Mac. Ann told Mac and Petey to lay her on a bed so she could inspect the gash.

"Good thing we have been working on a cure. And that the infection didn't spread too fast, we should be able to treat her," said Ann. They treated her, and her leg started to heal and lose the purple color.

After a week Anna's leg was fully cleared and she could finally walk on it. They all went up to the top of the radio station and watched the sunset.