

ASTER. You are unbelievably bored by me, aren't you?

ELLA. No, no, not by *you*...

ASTER. Oh?

ELLA. Just by what you're *saying*.

ASTER. Ah...

ELLA. I think *you* are wonderfully interesting much of the time. Though why you are so...

ASTER. ...obsessed?

ELLA. Exactly...is beyond me. Even if everything you say is true. Which I'm sure it is. Even if we are ravishing the world and destroying the glaciers and the rainforests and the horny owls and / lizards and

ASTER. Spotted owls...

ELLA. whatever, and ruining everything, even if that's ALL true... what are we supposed to do about it? Seriously? Seriously, I want to know.

[REDACTED]  
ASTER. Um...

ELLA. The die is cast. You know? It's *cast*. We went *this* direction. [REDACTED] Big choices were made hundreds of years ago and now...well, there are huge, complex, well-funded, historical and financial forces that were put in motion generations ago, and... well...you can't go backwards, can you?

The world can't go backwards. The government can't go backwards. [REDACTED] I can't go backwards. Nothing can go backwards. *Nothing ever goes backwards.* [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

ASTER. Would you...

ELLA. What?

ASTER. ...want to go backwards?

ELLA. I'm sorry?  
[REDACTED]

ASTER. You put *you* on the list. You said the world, the government, *you*... Would you want to go backwards? (*With significance...*) Do things differently?

ELLA. I just meant...

ASTER. I think I know what you meant. And I think you know what I mean. Don't you?

ELLA. Please don't. I don't think I can take it...

ASTER. You know what's going on here. You're feeling the same things I'm feeling. I know you are. Am I wrong? Am I completely delusional? What's happening here is real. It's *real*.

ELLA. No, it's / not.

ASTER. It is! I have no idea what it is or what it means, but this is the world, this is *life*, this is LIFE, and all I know is I want you so badly I can hardly form a coherent thought or finish / a fucking sentence...

ELLA. (*To us and herself and the universe...*) I can't believe this is my life!

ASTER. Will you meet me later?

ELLA. No.

ASTER. No?

ELLA. No!

ASTER. Why not?

ELLA. *Because you're just another kind of backwards.*

ASTER. No, I'm not!

ELLA. Oh, trust me, you are! I've been where you want me to go and it is not a place I can live. I have to go forward no matter how I feel / about it, even if

ASTER. Why? Whose rule is that? Who says that that's the way it has / to be?

ELLA. I do.  
[REDACTED]