“DELIVERANCE”

By

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Based on the novel

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By

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FADE IN:

EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY

Snow covered glaciers stretch as far as the eye can see. Rugged trails, harsh woodlands.

Grass covered plateaus, torn by bodies of water, make out the valleys that connect the glaciers.

Fog vaporizes. Birds chirp.

EXT. WATERFALL - CONTINUOUS

A small but violent waterfall sends foamy white water through jagged cracks in the rocks.

The water rains down into a narrow lake surrounded by fir trees.

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

HELEN and DONNA (both 40s) clamber up a gravel path. The trail leads through a maze of trees.

Dressed in warm clothes they use trekking poles to navigate the terrain.

Mist forms around their mouths with each exhale.

   HELEN
   So what did he say?

   DONNA
   He denied it. You believe that?

   HELEN
   What? You pretty much caught him with his hand in the cookie jar.

   DONNA
   (hurt, but doesn’t want to show it)
   I know. He’s pathetic.

   HELEN
   What are you gonna do?

   DONNA
   I met with a lawyer last week.
HELEN
Divorce?

DONNA
I’m thinking about it.

HELEN
Well, you go, girl.

They climb a small rock formation and jump the few feet to the ground just as --

COYOTES
-- dart away in a hurry. Startled, the women stumble, fall on their butts.

HELEN
Whoa. You okay?

DONNA
I’m all right. Jesus.

No sign of the coyotes.

They look at each other. Their faces grimace. Donna caves. Both burst into laughter.

Helen helps Donna to her feet. They still laugh as they stagger forward.

Donna stops dead in her tracks. The smile on her face vanishes.

Helen sees it too.

WOMAN’S VOICE (V.O.)
(echo)
Please.

Near a tree, halfway buried in the ground, lies a tangled mess of flesh and hair.

Donna takes a step back -- Helen a step closer.

WOMAN’S VOICE (V.O.)
(echo)
Pleeeaaase!

Helen squints her eyes to a narrow line, leans forward.

Features, obscured by soil and vegetation, reveal a human corpse.
A bone chilling scream echoes through the woods, past trees --

**EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE – CONTINUOUS**

-- across mountain tops --

**EXT. SMALL TOWN – DAY**

-- and finally fades as the morning sun creeps its way up over a jagged horizon.

Its rays spill across the two intersections that, flanked by a few dozen small buildings, make up the town’s center.

What the town lacks in size it makes up for in activity.

Several vehicles buzz to and from the town while backpackers run from one sporting goods store to the next.

A hefty SUV rolls through the street and pulls into a packed parking lot near a small diner.

**EXT. DINER – CONTINUOUS**

Four people exit the vehicle, all in their prime thirties. Their city slicker attire stand out like a sore thumb.

The driver, **BERT**, Ivy League R Us, lifts his chin to the sky and snorts in a deep breath through his nose.

BERT

Ah, smell that.

**JONIE**, a blonde petite piece of fit eye-candy, slips a hand into Bert’s. She sniffs the air.

JONIE

I don’t smell anything.

BERT

Exactly.

He leans over and kisses her frostbitten cheek. The two stare toward the horizon at the rising sun.

BERT

Look at that. You don’t see many of those in the city.
Behind them, **TED**, annoyingly good looking -- and he knows it, and **RHONDA**, down to Earth in a bohemian way, exchange glances.

**RHONDA**
Aw, that’s so sweet.

**TED**
Yeah, I’m getting cavities here. Bert, can we haul ass inside, please? I need to take a piss.

Bert sighs as “the moment” evaporates.

**BERT**
Teddy’s gotta go, honey.

**JONIE**
It is kinda cold out here.

**BERT**
Yeah?

She squeezes his hand.

**JONIE**
Don’t worry, won’t be the last sunrise you’ll see on this trip.

Bert runs a hand across her belly.

**BERT**
How’s Junior doing? He’s kicking yet?

**JONIE**
Bert, I’m five weeks pregnant. The baby is about the size of a sesame seed.

**BERT**
Wow. Nice visuals there, honey.

She smiles and retreats to the diner with Rhonda and Ted.

Bert steals a last glimpse at the nearly orange horizon and heads off to join them.

**INT. DINER - LATER**

Warm colors. Cozy booths. Young waitresses run the gauntlet between tables in the packed establishment.
The mood cheerful.

Ted exits the men’s room and maneuvers his way to a booth at the far corner.

On the way he bumps into a vibrant WAITRESS with a healthy set of mammaries and slides her a playful smile.

He reaches the booth and crams down next to the others. Rhonda taps her finger on the table.

    RHONDA
    I saw that.

    TED
    What?

    RHONDA
    You know what you did.

    TED
    What I do?

    RHONDA
    Jonie, you saw it too, right?

    JONIE
    I --

    RHONDA
    She saw what you did.

    TED
    Rhonda, what?

    RHONDA
    It’s the same thing every time. You just can’t help it, can you?

    TED
    What? I’m gonna shout at her for bumping into me?
        (looks over at Bert)
    Help me out here, man.

    RHONDA
    No no, leave my brother out of this.

    BERT
    Guys?

Rhonda and Ted look up.
BERT
The food’s here.

The same vibrant waitress stands at the end of the table, four dishes balanced in her hands.

Ted puts on a straight face, completely unemotional. The waitress hands out the dishes.

WAITRESS
Enjoy.

TED
(detached)
Thank you, miss.

Rhonda stares at the waitress as she tends to the other customers.

RHONDA
(mocking)
Enjoy.

TED
Did you see what I just did there. Totally cool. Swear to God, didn’t even notice her cleavage.

BERT
I did.

Rhonda can’t help but smile. Jonie slaps Bert’s shoulder playfully.

BERT
Come on, it was all over the place.

TED
(looks over his shoulder)
Shit, it was?

Rhonda and Jonie laughs.

EXT. WOODS (CRIME SCENE) - DAY

Well-worn boots trot across the leaf covered ground.

WILL (50s), his face sculptured by exposure to the elements, pulls his parka tight and adjusts his Sheriff’s hat.

CHRIS (30s), Will’s deputy, waits next to a large blue tarp on the ground. He waves Will over.
CHRIS
Morning, Sheriff.

Will hands Chris a Styrofoam cup of coffee.

WILL
What've you got?

CHRIS
A corpse.

WILL
Another bear attack?

CHRIS
I hope so.

Will gives Chris a questioning look. He squats by the tarp and lifts the fabric.

Recoils.

CHRIS
‘Cause if it isn’t, then we’ve got a killer on the loose.

Will regains control. Peeks again.

WILL
Hilary called this in?

CHRIS
Yeah, a couple of hikers found it, halfway buried.

WILL
She around?

CHRIS
Had to send her back down. It was, um...you know.

Will drops the tarp.

WILL
Yeah.

He gets up, pulls a small steel flask from his parka and takes a swig. And another.

Chris gives him a slightly disapproving stare -- not the first time he’s seen the flask for sure.
WILL
What? You’ve got something you wanna say to me, deputy?

Chris let’s it go, looks away.

WILL
Thought not.

He pockets the flask.

WILL
All right, get the D.C.I. guys from Helena up here. Secure the area.

CHRIS
You got it...boss.

EXT. DINER - DAY

The four friends stand by the SUV. Bert slides open the trunk.

BERT
All right, let’s have ‘em.

TED
Dude, you’re taking this safari thing way too serious.

BERT
Come on, we already agreed on this. Remember? A nice recharging trip in a completely stress-free environment. Ring a bell?

TED
Vaguely.

BERT
And that means no cell phones, no laptops, no wi-fi access, iTunes, iPods, i...whatever, no nothing except us and mother nature.

The three of them stare at him like he just proclaimed cancer to be the greatest thing ever.

Finally...

Rhonda tosses her cell phone into the trunk of the car. Ted follows suit with his smart phone and iPod.
Bert nods and chucks his own phone onto the growing pile. He turns and stares at Jonie.

BERT
Honey?

JONIE
Oh, you meant all of us?

Bert nods.

JONIE
Right.

She takes out her cell phone and places it neatly in the trunk.

JONIE
There.

BERT
Jonie?

JONIE
(innocent)
Yes, dear.

BERT
Both of ’em.

Jonie throws her arms in the air.

JONIE
All right, all right.

She flings a second cell phone into the trunk.

BERT
Thank you.

He closes the trunk and taps the lock-button on his car keys.

BERT
Okay, let’s go shopping.

INT. DIRK’S SPORTING GOODS STORE - LATER

The four of them pile into the store. Rows of hunting and fishing apparel take up most of the store space.

A section of rifles, knives and other weaponry catches Ted’s attention.
Bert heads for a line of “outdoor clothes” -- not exactly Milan fashion, but still very functional.

JONIE
No. Way.

**EXT. DIRK’S SPORTING GOODS STORE - MOMENTS LATER**

The foursome exit the store, all wearing thick flannel outfits and vests with the exception of Ted, who dons a camouflage outfit.

Jonie checks out her reflection in the store window.

JONIE
This sucks on so...so many levels.

BERT
Forget it. You look great.

He slaps on a Boonie hat that doesn’t exactly do wonders for his appearance.

JONIE
Christ.

Ted bends and twist in his outfit. Nods confidently.

TED
I could definitely get used to this.

Rhonda fondles him seductively.

RHONDA
You look very macho in that outfit, baby.

He pulls her close.

TED
Me Tarzan, you --
(ssearches)
-- shit, what’s her name?

BERT
Jane.

TED
Nah, that doesn’t sound right. Pam? Angela?
BERT
It’s Jane, trust me.

TED
Whatever.

He slaps a big kiss on Rhonda.

EXT. RENT-A-CORPSE - LATER

A row of severely beaten up used cars line a small lot in front of a tiny office.

Bert feasts his eyes on an ancient and rust-colored...scratch that...rusted Dodge Ram.

TED
Have you completely lost it?

BERT
No, it’s perfect. No G.P.S. No climate control.

TED
No air bags or E.S.P.

BERT
Exactly. It’s perfect.

The salesman, PERRY (40s), slithers closer.

BERT
How much is it?

PERRY
Thirty dollars a day. Plus insurance.

Ted gives the car an inspection tour. He kicks a tire and the front license plate falls off, clangs against the ground.

BERT
I’ll give you twenty bucks for the weekend.

PERRY
Deal.

EXT. DAILY MART - LATER

The Dodge grinds to a halt in front of a buzzing convenience store.
Jonie and Rhonda wait outside with shopping bags in their arms.

The two guys jump out of the car. Rhonda stares at the run-down vehicle in disbelief.

**RHONDA**

Did you guys steal a car?

**TED**

Don't ask.

Bert snatches the shopping bags from their grasp and drops them in the cargo bed.

Backpacks and camping equipment already fill the hold.

**JONIE**

What about our own car? Our really good looking, safe, comfortable car?

**BERT**

I slipped the guy at the diner a couple of dead presidents. He’s gonna look after it.

**JONIE**

Ber-ert.

**BERT**

It’s only for two days.

He cavalierly opens the passenger's side door.

**BERT**

Ladies.

Jonie sticks her head inside the cabin and absorbs the heavily neglected interior.

**JONIE**

You're kidding, right?

**BERT**

All part of the experience.

**JONIE**

Bert, it smells like someone died in there.

Bert reaches into a pocket and yanks out a Wunder-Baum little tree.
BERT
Not for long.

RHONDA
How far is it again?

BERT
An hour. Hour and a half tops.

JONIE
To the cabin?

BERT
No, to where we park the car. From there on we hike.

JONIE
Why don't we just drive all --

BERT
'Cause that's how it works out here.

TED
There are rules to this?

BERT
Oh, hell yeah.

TED
Figures.

The engine sputters, revs, pops and, finally, roars to life.

EXT. WOODS (CRIME SCENE) - DAY
Will lowers the flask from his mouth, cringes as he swallows a mouthful of liquor.

He looks on as coroners remove a body from the freshly excavated hole in the ground and zips it up in a bodybag.

A man and a woman, both dressed in windbreakers stenciled with the words "Division of Criminal Investigation", poke around where the body was found.

They turn over soil, collect samples.

The woman, MAGGIE (40s), stops, bends closer to the soil.

MAGGIE
There's another one here.
Will rushes to the dig and stares down at partly soil-covered arm. His face creases with concern.

Maggie gently scoops out dirt until the features of a dead body lay exposed.

Though the features are unrecognizable, the curly hair that accompany it states that this is a woman.

Maggie gets up, brushes soil off her knees and pulls off her latex gloves.

She sticks a hand out to Will. He grabs it and helps her out of the hole.

MAGGIE
Some place you’re running here, Will.

WILL
Tell me about it.

MAGGIE
That’s the first homicide in, what, four years?

WILL
Six. Any idea how long they’ve been here?

MAGGIE
Not long, days probably.

WILL
How ’bout a cause of death?

MAGGIE
The first one we found was definitely foul play -- (nods at the body in the hole)

-- this one?

(shrugs)

I don’t know yet. We have to get them back to the lab for analysis.

Chris makes his way past trees and meets up with Will and Maggie.

CHRIS
What’s happening

WILL
We found a second body.
CHRIS
What?

WILL
You’ve gotta get everyone out
knocking doors right away. Start
with the cabin areas and work your
way down.

CHRIS
I’m on it.

He grabs his radio, turns away.

Will takes off his hat, runs a hand through his hair and lets
his gaze slide across the woods in a contemplative way.

MAGGIE
What are you thinking?

WILL
Just...you think there could be
more bodies buried out there?

MAGGIE
Wouldn’t rule it out. We’re gonna
dig around for a while, come back
tomorrow with a G.P.R. crew, see
what they turn up.

WILL
G.P.R.?

MAGGIE
Ground Penetrating Radar.

WILL
Keep me posted.

MAGGIE
You’ve got it.

EXT. PIKE’S TRAIL - DAY

Wearing backpacks and carrying camping equipment, the four
friends scamper up a narrow gravel trail.

Thick vegetation surrounds the path and heavy foliage blocks
out most of the afternoon sun.
BERT
-- like I’m telling everyone; place your money with a discretionary macro or some long term equity hedge and you’ll be fine, trust me.

TED
I do but it would be cooler if I actually understood anything you just said there.

BERT
All I’m saying is that the economy will rebound. Mark my words, your portfolio will do nice business.

TED
Now you’re talking.

BERT
And so will mine.

TED
That matters less to me, buddy.

Ted stops, wipes sweat from his face and sips the beer can in his hand.

Panting, Rhonda slides off her backpack and massages her lower back.

RHONDA
Please tell me we’re getting close.

Jonie, barely sweating, retrieves a bottle of water from her backpack and gulps down a mouthful.

JONIE
Come on guys. Chop-chop.

She marches on ahead.

RHONDA
Being that fit is so not sexy.

Ted stares at Jonie as she continues up the trail.

RHONDA
Right?

TED
They gear-up again and follow Jonie as the trail snakes left and right.

BERT
Hang on, guys.
(waves his beer can)
This stuff's running right through me.

Bert moves off to the bushes as they others slow down. He unzips his fly and lets nature run its course.

Watering the plants, he lets his gaze wander the bushes. The vegetation nearly as compact as a wall, not revealing much.

Bert spots the odd bird hopping around behind trees, the ever cute darting squirrel and --

A PAIR OF EYES
-- staring straight at him.

BERT
Whoa.

Bert stumbles back and falls on his butt. A wet spot quickly forms around his crotch area.

BERT
Aw, man.

He looks up as SPYDER (18), a sinewy kid with drooping eyes, squeezes himself through the trees.

He wears a dirty set of overalls. No shirt -- no shoes. A beat-up soccer ball lodged under his arm.

BERT
You spooked me there, kid.

Bert rolls to his feet and zips his fly.

TED (O.S.)
Yo, Bert? You all right?

Spyder stiffens at the sound of Ted's voice.

BERT
Yeah, I'm okay.

Spyder tilts his head and sees Rhonda and Ted waiting further up the trail.
MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Boy?

Bert turns to see a ragged and unshaven hermit-like man, LEIGH (50s), standing further down the trail.

Leigh taps his walking stick against the ground. Spyder jerks around and runs down the trail to him.

Bert raises a hand at the stranger.

BERT
Hey. How you doing?

Leigh doesn’t respond, his eyes fixed on something behind Bert.

Bert follows his line of sight, sees Rhonda and Ted. He turns to Leigh.

BERT
Hey.

The hermit doesn’t flinch.

BERT
(snap his fingers)
Hey!

Leigh’s eyes glide to Bert.

BERT
That’s my sister, pal.

Leigh moves his jaw around and spits a brownish liquid to the ground.

LEIGH
I ain’t looking at the woman, son.

Bert looks at Ted, raises an eyebrow.

BERT
Oh-kay.

With his eyes locked on Bert, he and Spyder back into the foliage and disappears.

Bert shakes his head and hikes toward Ted and Rhonda.

TED
Making new friends?

Bert turns to look in the direction Leigh and Spyder went.
BERT
I don’t know. Something tells me the kid’s sister knew their dad a little too well.

JONIE (O.S.)
Guys!

Bert looks up and bolts up the trail, Ted and Rhonda hot on his heels.

Further up ahead, the trail widens. The foliage thins out and --

EXT. CAMP SITE – CONTINUOUS
-- reveals a breathtaking vista of clear water and mountains.

Jonie overlooks a river from its rocky shore. Her backpack rests at her feet. Bert spots her, breaths a sigh of relief.

JONIE
We made it.

The four of them gather at the shore and look out over the slow flowing water. The sun glistens on its surface.

Idyllic log cabins dot the shores on both sides at spacious intervals. Plenty of privacy here.

Simultaneously, the four of them breath a deep “Ahhh”.

Ted opens his mouth.

BERT
Don’t talk.

TED
I’m not.

JONIE
Shut up.

TED
I’m not saying anything.

Without warning Bert shoves Ted into the river. He splashes around in the waist-deep water.

TED
Shit, it’s freezing!
The others laugh. Ted regains his footing, tosses his wet hair away from his face and eyes Rhonda with a devious look.

TED
What are you laughing at?

RHONDA
No no no --

Before she can retreat, Ted catches her by the wrist and pulls her into the water. She squeals as he drags her under.

JONIE

She turns to Bert. An evil grin smears his face. He extends his hands like claws and arcs his back.

JONIE
Don’t.

Bert lets out a wicked cackle.

JONIE
Don’t!

He lurches forward, scoops her up over his shoulder and gallops into the water.

Soon the four friends tumble around in the river, cheering and fooling around.

EXT. LOG CABIN – NIGHT

Sprawled out in deck chairs, the four friends sit near a small campfire. Rhonda on Ted’s lap, Jonie’s chair right up next to Bert’s.

The remnants of their meal lie on a plastic table behind them.

A not so insignificant pile of empty beer cans rest between Bert and Ted. Both of them appear more than a little drunk.

Ted snaps open a fresh one and takes a big gulp.

RHONDA
You guys thought about a name for the baby?

BERT
Junior, obviously.
JONIE
In your dreams.

BERT
Hey, it’s either that or Clint.

RHONDA
I still can’t believe I’m gonna be an aunty. I’m so gonna spoil that kid rotten.

JONIE
You’re gonna help me pick out a stroller and colors for the nursery.

RHONDA
Can I?

TED
Thanks a lot, buddy, now she’s gonna wanna have one of her own.

BERT
(sighs comfortably)
This is the life. No big city rush.

TED
Yeah, I gotta admit it’s all right.

BERT
like in the old days.

Jonie leans against Bert's shoulder and gets as comfortable as possible.

JONIE
Here we go again.

TED
What?

BERT
Nothing.

TED
Come on, what?

BERT
Well, I did a little snooping around the family tree and it turns out that our great-great-great--
RHONDA
--great--

BERT
--great-grandfather, you know, way way back, was actually a Native American.

TED
Get outta here.

RHONDA
No, it’s true. A Blackhawk or something.

BERT
Blackfoot, Rhonda. Foot.

TED
Are you saying my girlfriend's a squaw?

BERT
Well, yeah.

TED
Awesome. I like my women exotic.

RHONDA
(smiles)
I can tell.

She rubs her bottom against his lap.

Ted struggles a hand to his pocket and pulls out a folding knife with a wooden handle.

RHONDA
(disappointed)
Oh.

TED
There's a time and place for everything, woman.

RHONDA
That's not what you said at the beach.

BERT
Man, I do not need to hear this, Ted.
A twig snaps behind them. They turn just in time to see Spyder trip through the bushes behind the cabin.

His dirty soccer ball bounces across the rocks and pebbles. Ted stops it with his foot.

TED
You spying on us, kid?.

Spyder looks up at them, a deep sense of nervousness dance across his face in tune with the crackling campfire.

BERT
Hey, I remember you.

Jonie approaches the timid boy.

JONIE
You okay?

Spyder backpedals on all four.

JONIE
It’s okay.

Bert tugs her wrist.

BERT
He’s not, like, all there, I think.

Ted chuckles.

TED
You retarded, kid?

RHONDA
Ted.

TED
What? If he is, he’s not gonna give a shit. If he’s not...
(turns to Spyder)
...all apologies then.

With a swift jerk, Ted rolls the ball up onto the top of his shoe and balances it near the tip.

Spyder’s face lights up with glee. He grunts a laugh.

TED
You like that, huh?

Ted bounces the ball from one foot to the other, juggles it on his thighs. Spyder claps his hands in a childish manner.
Bert looks on impressed.

    BERT
    What the hell?

    TED
    High school.

    RHONDA
    You go, boyfriend.

Ted bounces the ball high into the air and heads it in a wide arc over to Spyder.

The boy catches the ball.

    TED
    And that’s how it’s done.

His three friends hoot and cheer. Ted takes a bow and turns to Spyder with arrogant confidence all over his face.

    TED
    Let’s see what you’ve got, kid.

Spyder cackles.

The ball rolls off his hand and lands on his bare foot.

He balances it for a couple of seconds, his drooping eyes fixed on Ted.

With a majestic swoop, Spyder leaps the ball onto the top of his head.

He takes a few steps forward, moves his neck steadily to fixate the ball on his forehead.

The others stare on in mesmerized disbelief.

Spyder arcs his body and lets the ball roll down his back and, just when it’s about to hit the ground, he heels it into the air.

Ted’s demeanor changes from astonishment to resentment.

Spyder catches the ball on his skinny chest, bounces it onto his knee and back to his foot.

From there the ball moves up and down, side to side while Spyder continues his amazing performance.

He taps off the show with blurry of quick moves, moving his foot over and under the ball while in mid air.
Spyder catches the ball with his hands and receives a well deserved applause from everyone -- except Ted.

Ted looks at Spyder with utter dismay, shakes his head. Bert laughs and slaps Ted’s back.

BERT
Man, you just got owned.

Ted shakes him off.

TED
Gimme the damn ball.

Spyder tosses the ball to Ted and waits with the anticipation of a child.

Ted weighs the ball in his hand, smiles at Spyder and kicks it into the river.

TED
Whoops.

Spyder gasps. His face morphs into a mournful pose as he watches the ball sail away.

Jonie attempts to put her arm around Spyder but the boy squeals and takes off into the forest.

JONIE
Jesus, Ted. Why do you have to be such a jerk?

TED
What? It was, you know, an accident.

Jonie grabs Bert’s hand and pulls him towards the cabin.

JONIE
Let’s go to bed.

Bert scowls at his friend.

BERT
Yeah.

TED
Come on. The night’s still young.

Bert and Jonie disappears into the cabin.

TED
‘The hell’s wrong with them? It’s just a damn ball for Christ’s sake.
He brings a beer to his mouth but Rhonda stops him.

    RHONDA
    I think it’s time to call it a night.

EXT. CAMP SITE – LATER

Crickets chirp in the moonlit night as the river slowly churns the water along.

Something taps the rocky shore (O.S.). The sound grows louder, closer.

A pair of bare feet trudge across the rocks and pebbles, accompanied by a wooden walking stick that hits the ground like a metronome.

Leigh eyes the cabin.

EXT. WOODS (CRIME SCENE) – DAY

A helicopter thunders by overhead. Its rotor blades chop the wind in a frantic rage.

A dozen people dressed in D.C.I. windbreakers mill about the place.

Will joins Chris and Maggie at a small table, observing a monitor. Cables run from the monitor to a computer.

Further away, a D.C.I. agent guides an apparatus that resembles a lawn mower across the ground.

The computer beeps at short intervals.

    CHRIS
    How long ‘til we get a picture?

    MAGGIE
    The computer needs a minute or two to compile and analyze the data.

    CHRIS
    And this’ll show us what’s buried in the ground?

    MAGGIE
    That’s right.

    WILL
    Any luck I.D.’ing the two victims?
MAGGIE
We’re running their D.N.A. through the F.B.I.’s database. It could take some time. What about you guys? You’ve found out anything on your end?

WILL
Not a Goddamn thing.

The computer pings.

MAGGIE
Here we go.

The three of them gather around the monitor. They stare at the screen with a mixture of anticipation and foreboding.

A blurred image pops up. Grey and black shades form an unrecognizable background. White lines roll across the screen.

The image settles.

BEEP
A white shape reveals itself.

BEEP
A human shape.

BEEP BEEP
Another. And another.

One by one, four human shapes come into focus.

MAGGIE
Jesus Christ.

BEEP BEEP BEEP

The sound from the computer grows in intensity and morphs into --

INT. LOG CABIN - BEDROOM - DAY

-- the annoying BEEPING of an alarm clock.

Bert reaches over and silences the clock with a punch.
He squints as the bright morning sunlight bathes his face through the window.

He pulls the blanket around him and rolls over on his other side.

Jonie stirs beside him and slowly comes to life.

    BERT
    'Morning, honey.

    JONIE
    Good mor --

She slaps a hand over her mouth, tosses the blanket aside and hurdles into the bathroom.

Bert grimaces as Jonie vomits (O.S.).

DOWNSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Clean and nicely kept, the main living area sports a spartan interior.

Dressed casually, Rhonda stuffs a bag with perishables and a few cans.

Her arms full, she ducks down behind a counter and retrieves an apple.

A shadow falls upon her.

She looks up.

    TED
    Boo!

Fruit and vegetable fly in all directions.

    RHONDA
    Dammit, Ted. Scared the shit out of me.

Dressed only in boxer briefs, he leans his well proportioned body forward and kisses her on the mouth.

    TED
    Sorry about last night, that was --

    RHONDA
    Stupid?
Rhonda tries to play it cool, fails as Ted lets his hands caress the curvatures of her body, pausing at her breasts.

Ted
You look tired, honey, I should definitely carry these for you.

Rhonda snickers and they embrace in a passionate kiss.

Ted
Whoa.

Rhonda
I know.

Ted
No, hang on.

Ted dislodges himself from Rhonda’s grasp and walks to a wall mounted rifle.

He inspects its dark mahogany handle and lets a finger glide across the scope.

Ted pulls the rifle from the mount and clutches it tight.

Ted
Man, this is so me.

Rhonda grabs him from behind and kisses his neck.

Rhonda
If you’re a good boy I’ll show you how it works.

Ted
Yeah, like I need a woman to show me how a gun works.

Rhonda reaches around his waist and sticks a hand down his boxers.

Rhonda
Then maybe you can show me how this thing works.

Ted stiffens -- probably in more ways than one.

Ted
Yes. Yes I can.
They slide to the floor.

**EXT. CAMP SITE - LATER**

A short and narrow wooden pier stretches from the rocky shore into the river.

Two canoes lie tied to its pillars. Rhonda and Ted load the canoes with equipment, tents and fishing rods.

Bert strolls down the walkway, looking hung-over.

TED
Top o’ the morning.

Bert grunts a reply and looks on surly as Ted puts the rifle in one of the canoes.

BERT
What do you need that for?

TED
We’re going fishing, aren’t we?

Jolie, looking somewhat pale, exits the cabin and strolls down to the peer.

BERT
You feeling all right?

JONIE
Yeah, I’m fine...
(swallows)
...ish.

TED
Then let’s get this show on the road, kids.

**EXT. RIVER - LATER**

Steep rock faces on one side and large forests on the other side enclose the wide body of water.

Bert and Jonie paddle their canoe downstream with Ted and Rhonda paddling shotgun, struggling to keep up.

Seated in the back of his canoe, Ted scrapes the surface with his paddle, making the canoe turn.

Rhonda looks over her shoulder.
RHONDA
You’re doing it wrong.

TED
This shit ain’t easy.

RHONDA
You’ve got to get the paddle deeper into the water.

TED
Hush, woman.

The sun bathes them from a cloudless sky as the canoes glide peacefully through the serene wilderness.

Bert takes off his Boonie hat and runs a sleeve across his face. He tilts back his head, squints in the sun.

Out of the corner of his eye he catches a sight of a figure in silhouette, watching them from high above on the rock face.

Bert quickly shields the sun with a hand and takes another look.

Nothing. Just rocks.

JONIE
What is it?

Bert’s eyes scan the rocky outcropping, shakes his head.

BERT
Thought I saw someone.

LATER

Bert swings his fishing rod, the line zings through the air and plops into the water.

He sits back down in the canoe and chuckles as Ted tries to imitate him.

Ted is, however, not successful and instead entangles himself in the line.

BERT
Need a hand?

TED
Fishing’s for geeks.
RHONDA
What?

Rhonda swings her own rod with beautiful grace.

TED
Nothing.

LATER
The canoes glide towards a sandy shore that opens into a lush green forest.

They turn their canoes and let them slide up on the --

EXT. SHORE - CONTINUOUS
Bert helps Jonie out of the canoe and scouts the surroundings.

Ted and Rhonda joins them and together they haul the canoes up on land.

RHONDA
Looks like a nice place to set up camp.

Jonie looks up at the sky. A mass of dark clouds approach from over the mountain tops.

JONIE
Not sure I wanna be caught out here in the rain.

BERT
Hey, we’re roughing it, baby.

Rhonda grabs some equipment from the canoes while Ted grabs the rifle. He holds it tight against his shoulder and aims down the scope.

BERT
Don’t shoot yourself in the foot. In fact don’t shoot it at all.

TED
Yeah yeah yeah.

Bert helps Jonie unpack a tent.

Ted aims the rifle into the woods. Freezes.
RHONDA
Give me a hand with this.

As Bert helps his sister with the other tent, no one notices that Ted slowly sinks to a knee.

BERT
Where’ you want it?

RHONDA
Let’s put it --

BANG

Everyone jolts.

JONIE
Jesus Christ, Ted.

BERT
‘The hell are you doing, man?

Ted lowers the rifle.

TED
I saw a deer. What’s the problem?

Bert yanks the rifle out of Ted’s hands and throws it to Rhonda.

BERT
The problem is you don’t just shoot a gun off into the woods. You could’ve hurt someone.

TED
What? Come on, I wanted some meat. I’m not that big on fish.

JONIE
Oh, grow up, Ted.

TED
(pissed)
Jonie, I swear to God, if you don’t --

BERT
Did you at least hit it?

TED
‘Course I did.

Bert sighs, shakes his head.
BERT
All right, let’s go get it then.

JONIE
Bert?

BERT
Can’t let it go to waste.

RHONDA
He’s right.

JONIE
Fine. I’m not eating it.

TED
More for me then.

BERT
Let’s go.

The two friends head toward the --

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS
Massive trees shoot high into the air, dimming the sun’s rays.

Thick bushes and moss covered boulders obstruct them as they penetrate further in.

The shore dwindles in the background as the pair negotiate the natural obstacles.

Keeping their eyes poised, they scout the vicinity.

Bert looks back toward the shore. The thick vegetation obscures the view.

BERT
Lotta foliage, Ted. You sure you didn’t shoot a tree?

TED
Sure I’m sure. It moved.

They reach a cluster of massive trees and zigzag through them.

A twig snaps nearby.

They look around.
TED
Over here.

An obscured figure darts past the trees.

BERT
What the hell?

Ted swallows. Bert moves forward, rounds a tree and stalks through the vegetation like a seasoned hunter.

Leaves move to his right. Bert changes direction and plows through branches.

A regular maze, the forest quickly engulfs him. He stops, catches his breath, looks around. No Ted.

BERT
Ted?

Footsteps across the crunchy undergrowth spins him around.

BERT
Ted? Is that you?

No one’s there. Another blurred figure swishes past a row of trees.

BERT
Ted?

No reply.

Bert swallows, no longer his confident self.

The forest doesn’t seem all that lush anymore -- now it’s almost eerie, too many shadows, too many alien sounds.

Bert backs away, tries to retrace his path. More footsteps snap twigs behind him. Bert’s breathing quickens.

Someone is following him.

He takes off and plows aimlessly through the woods.

He stumbles, rolls across the leafy ground, shoots to his feet, picks up his pace.

Bert ducks under branches and spots a familiar face through the vegetation. Ted’s.

Bert rips himself through thorny bushes and stumbles out into a --
CLEARING – CONTINUOUS

Ted stands at its center, nailed to the ground.

BERT
Where the hell were you? Didn’t you here me calling?

LEIGH (O.S.)
Howdy.

Bert jerks around.

Leigh stands across from Ted. A twin-barreled shotgun hangs slung over his shoulder.

A wounded deer – a fawn – lies by his bare feet, suffering.

The hermit moves a large chunk of chewing tobacco around in his mouth and spits through his dark teeth.

Bert clears his throat and reluctantly moves his eyes from Leigh's shotgun to his face.

Leigh tilts his head, inspects Bert closer.

LEIGH
Cat's got your tongue, pardner?

BERT
Hey, what’s up?

LEIGH
Oh, some you win, some you don't.

He scratches his balding scalp with a pair of dirty fingers and scoots away a couple of buzzing flies.

Ted's eyes dart from side to side, scanning the bushes.

LEIGH
(looks down at the fawn)
We don’t usually take ‘em this young. And we for damn certain don’t let ‘em suffer.

Ted winces as Leigh pulls a blade from his side and puts the fawn out of it’s misery.

LEIGH
But I reckon a couple of city slickers like yourselves wouldn't know anything about that.

(MORE)
LEIGH (CONT'D)
(taps the trigger gently)
Would you?

Ted covertly slides a hand to his pocket.

LEIGH
No respect for mother nature, no siree Bob. No respect for other people's property too.

Bert turns to Ted.

BERT
Come on, let's head on --

LEIGH
What's the hurry, pardner? I mean, while y'all here you might as well meet the family.

Ted slowly retracts a clinched fist from his pocket.

BERT
Family?

LEIGH
Spyder? Sami? Y'all come say hi, your hear?

Spyder parts the concentrated mass of green and steps out into the clearing.

He also packs a shotgun.

Bert looks at Ted, grits his teeth.

LEIGH
This here's my boy. We call him Spyder. Ain't that right boy?

Spyder doesn't respond, his stone cold stare fixed on Ted.

BERT
Hey, kid.

LEIGH
He don't talk much. Some kinda thing's wrong with his mouth.

BERT
Sorry to hear that.
LEIGH
Yeah.
   (runs a hand through
    Spyder’s hair)
He’s a good boy though. Never
makes a racket.
   (eyes Ted)
Until last night though. Came home
crying. Ain’t that right, boy?
Woke up everybody.

Ted shuffles his feet.

TED
Yeah, about that...

LEIGH
Uh-huh?

BERT
Look, we’re really sorry about what
happened. We had a little too much
to drink, things got out of hand.
It was just a stupid thing to do.

TED
Well, actually your son did --

A stern look from Bert shuts him up.

BERT
Obviously we’ll pay you for the
ball, that goes without saying.

LEIGH
Oh, we don’t use money around here.

TED
(murmurs)
Surprise, surprise.

LEIGH
Besides, the ball was special.

TED
Really? ‘Cause it looked like a
piece of --

BERT
Ted.
LEIGH
Yeah, his momma gave it to him a long time ago. She ain’t with us no more.

TED
What did you do? Eat her?

BERT
Ted, shut the hell up.

TED
What? I’m gonna stand here and feel bad ‘bout a piece of shit ball. I don’t think so.

He digs into his pocket and pulls out a few dollar bills, throws them onto the ground.

TED
There’s fifty bucks. Go buy your kid a real ball. And a pair of shoes while you’re at it.
(to Bert)
We’re leaving.

Leigh lowers his shotgun.

LEIGH
Oh, I doubt that.

Ted spins around.

TED
What? You’re gonna shoot us over a fucking ball?

LEIGH
Hadn’t planned on it.

TED
Thought not.
(to Bert)
Let’s go.

WHACK
A thick branch splinters against the back of Bert’s head.

He crumbles like stale bread and slumps to the ground unconscious.

A figure moves up from behind.
Ted opens his fist to reveal his knife. He jerks the blade open but stops as Leigh presses the shotgun barrels against his chin.

**TED**

What the hell, man?

Behind him, **SAMI** (30s), bigger, but just as grungy as Leigh, grabs Ted in achokehold and drags him to the ground.

**LEIGH**

Yeah, hold his ass down, boy.

Leigh steps on Ted’s wrist and pries the knife from his hand.

Ted’s eyes bulge in their sockets. He claws at the broad arm pressed against his throat while he rasps for air.

Leigh takes aim and rams the butt of the rifle into Ted’s face.

Ted goes limp. Sami lets go of him.

Blood streams from his broken nose as Ted struggles to keep his woozy eyes open.

Leigh grabs Ted’s cheeks with his hairy hand and squeezes his lips together.

**LEIGH**

Oh, he sure got some purrrdy’ lips on him.

(to Ted)

Don’t ya, big boy?

Sami grunts a laugh and reveals a set of decaying teeth. His face shows unmistakable signs of mongoloid trait.

**LEIGH**

But them’s a little too tiny for my liking.

He slams a fist against Ted’s mouth. Ted reels in agony and clutches his lips.

**LEIGH**

That oughta do it.

Spyder pokes Bert with his foot. No movement.

Ted struggles around onto his stomach and desperately claws himself inch by inch toward the sanctuary of a nearby shrub.
Leigh strolls mockingly alongside him. He reaches down, grabs a handful of Ted’s hair and yanks his head back. Ted groans.

LEIGH
How’d you feel about a bunch o’ strangers desecrating your home? Your family? Year after year they come here and every time they find new ways of messing with us. We mind our own business, why don’t you people?

He pulls Spyder closer, forces his mouth open. Ted sees the deformed lump that was once Spyder’s tongue.

LEIGH
My boy ain’t never hurt no one!

He smashes Ted’s face back in the soft leafy ground and rubs it hard in the dirt.

LEIGH
What would you do, huh? Would you say ‘sure, make yourself right at home, pardner’?

Leigh grabs Ted’s ear and leans close.

LEIGH
(whispers)
Or would you desecrate them?

Ted moans and spits out a lumpy chunk of blood, his swollen lips cracked and messy. Tears streak his smeared face.

TED
Fuck you.

Leigh puts a hand behind his ear.

LEIGH
What’s that?

With a venomous expression, he kicks Ted in the mid-section. Ted yelps and rolls into a ball.

Leigh turns to Sami and nods.

EXT. SHORE - CONTINUOUS

Vomit shoots from Jonie’s mouth and sprays the rustic bark of a nearby tree.
Rhonda holds Jonie’s hair and gently caresses her back.

   RHONDA
       (looking away)
       There, there.

Jonie spits and catches her breath.

   JONIE
       Why do they call it morning sickness anyway?

She grabs her knees and vomits again. Rhonda grimaces.

   RHONDA
       Yeah, that’s right, get it all out.

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Sami jerks Ted’s limp body over a fallen tree and slams Ted’s chest against the wooden trunk.

Huffing with excitement, the burly inbred climbs on top of Ted and sits on his back.

Ted coughs and gasps for air while Spyder moves around and aims the shotgun at his temple.

   TED
       (panting)
       Don’t.  Please.

Behind Ted, Leigh unbuttons his overalls. The ragged cloth slides down to his ankles.

Leigh’s sinewy upper body displays numerous purple scars, the largest one waves across his chest, beyond his left nipple which is no longer there.

He reaches around Ted’s waist and unbucks his pants.

Ted’s eyes widen in horror. He panics, desperately trying to free himself.

   TED
       No.  No!

Leigh stabs his pelvis forward.

Ted’s eyes pop open and he let’s out a bellowing cry.

His fingernails dig deep into the bark as Leigh pounds him hard from behind.
With a look of frenzy smeared upon his face, Leigh slaps Ted’s naked ass.

He thrusts himself forward again and again. Their naked skin smack together while Ted cries out in pain.

LEIGH
Oh, he be tight, boys!

Sami rocks back and forth on Ted’s back, swings a hand in the air like a cowboy.

SAMI
Yee-haa!

EXT. SHORE - CONTINUOUS

Rhonda stares into the woods, her brow curled in a suspect way.

RHONDA
You hear that?

Jonie, her eyes red and puffy, wipes her mouth and joins Rhonda.

JONIE
What did you hear?

Rhonda reaches out for the rifle.

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Ted’s strength fades with each stab of Leigh’s manhood. Blood and tears drip from his face.

He manages to lift his head and lock eyes with Spyder.

TED
Please...

Spyder gives him a curious look.

Leigh trembles, he increases his speed and howls into the air as he orgasms.

Ted’s arms dangle from his shoulders, a completely vacant look on his face.

Leigh retracts himself and wipes sweat from his upper lip.
He pulls up his pants and trots over to Bert. He grabs him by the shirt and pulls the groggy and dazed man to his feet.

Bert wobbles on jelly knees and tumbles back to the ground.

Spyder leaves his post by Ted and approaches Bert with his weapon raised.

Bert scoots back and covers his face with his arms.

BERT
No. Please.

Leigh pats the young man on the shoulder affectionately.

LEIGH
Good.
(turns to Sami)
Your turn.

Sami slides down Ted’s back and feverishly fiddles with his belt buckle.

LEIGH
Easy, boy.

He helps Sami with his pants. The big man pants like a bull.

LEIGH
There.

With uncontrollable lust, the big man rams Ted from behind.

Weakened, Ted barely moans.

Leigh turns to Bert.

LEIGH
Time to make yourself useful, pardner.

He grabs Bert by the hair and drags his face close to Spyder’s crotch.

LEIGH
You’re gonna do right by my boy.

Spyder cackles.

Ted’s body bounces back and forth as Sami continues the onslaught.

A FLASH OF LIGHT --
-- from within the woods, catches his attention.

Bert sees it too.

Faint sunlight reflects in the rifle scope. Rhonda takes aim.

Ted nods. His teary eyes plead for deliverance.

Rhonda steadies herself.

BANG

Sami’s head snaps back as the bullet impacts him just below the eye.

The back of his head explodes and blood sprays Leigh’s face.

Sami sags to the ground like a rag doll.

    LEIGH

    No!

He raises his shotgun but another shot nicks his arm and spins him around.

Spyder screams.

Bert eyes a chance and grabs a hold of his shotgun. The teen struggles but Bert rips the weapon from his hands.

He trains the shotgun on Spyder. The teen freezes, looks at Bert with timid eyes.

Bert’s finger trembles against the trigger.

    RHONDA (O.S.)

    Do it, Bert!

He takes aim down the barrel but notices Spyder’s young and beaten features.

Bert blinks, shakes his head. He takes aim again, grits his teeth.

And fails again.

    BERT

    Get the hell outta here! Go!

Spyder runs to his father’s aid and drags him to his feet.

Together they scamper through the woods and disappear from sight.
Bert slings the shotgun over his shoulder and runs to Ted.

Rhonda and Jonie break through the bushes. Jonie gasps and covers her mouth at the sight of the violated Ted.

Blood run down his thighs.

Rhonda tosses the rifle aside and runs to her loved one. She catches Ted as he slides down the tree trunk.

She gently lays him down on his back while the others gather around him.

Ted’s whole body shakes and he murmurs off slurry gibberish.

Rhonda cries at the sight and tries her best to cover his naked lower body.

Ted clinches his teeth and pushes her away.

 TED  
 (trembles)  
 Don’t...don’t touch me.

 RHONDA  
 (sobs)  
 Baby...

He rolls over on his side and spasms as he regurgitates. His body convulses again and again as he tries to throw up.

But it doesn’t come.

Instead he clutches his bloodshot eyes and screams at the sky. A drawn-out lung-draining cry.

Desperate, Rhonda turns to Bert.

 RHONDA  
 Do something!

Looking out of his element, Bert kneels next to Ted, soothes his voice.

 BERT  
 Hey, Ted? Buddy?

 TED  
 Get away from me!

He curls up into a ball and cries profusely.
JONIE
He needs to get to a hospital, he’s bleeding.

Ted snaps around, grabs a hold of Bert’s collar.

TED
No! No hospital.

BERT
Ted, please.

TED
No. No one can ever know about this. Ever.

He lifts a trembling hand.

TED
You have to promise me that. All of you.

JONIE
Jesus, Ted, we have to inform the police about this.
   (swallows)
We killed a man.

RHONDA
In self defense.

JONIE
Of course in self defense. But a man is still dead for Christ’s sake.

She pauses, suddenly scared.

JONIE
Maybe they’re gonna come back.

Rhonda retrieves the rifle.

RHONDA
Let ‘em.

BERT
Cool it.

RHONDA
After what they did --

BERT
Rhonda, calm the fuck down!
RHONDA
Shut up! It’s all your fault anyway, why the hell didn’t you help him?

JONIE
Come on, guys?

BERT
What the fuck you think I was doing? Dozing off?

He wipes blood off the back of his head, shows it to Rhonda.

BERT
They had guns, you idiot.

RHONDA
What did you call me?

JONIE
Stop it!

The two siblings stare each other down. Neither flinch.

JONIE
This is stupid. We need to figure out what to do here and this gets us nowhere.

Ted grimaces as he struggles to his feet and fixes his pants with trembling hands.

TED
No police. No hospital. I mean it. If we go to the police or a hospital, they’re gonna ask a bunch of questions. I can’t...

He locks eyes with Bert. They share a guy-moment -- male rape, the humiliation, the taboo, the implied ridicule...

TED
I can’t do that, man.

Bert nods -- he couldn’t either.

JONIE
You’re injured. You need to see a doctor.

TED
No.
JONIE
This macho nonsense has to stop, Ted. You’re not the first person in history to --

BERT
Jonie, enough.

JONIE
No, if Ted had been a woman we wouldn’t even be having this conversation. But because he’s a guy it’s different somehow?

BERT
Dammit, I didn’t say that.

JONIE
Of course you did. Bruised egos aside, we killed a human being.
(turns to Ted)
I understand you’re hurting, but there are people you can talk to about this. Trauma specialists, they can help you through --

TED
I appreciate your concern, Jonie, I really do...
(gets in her face)
...but shut the fuck up!

BERT
Hey!

Bert separates the two of them.

BERT
Cool it! Everyone just cool it!

The four of them stare each other down like cowboys at high noon. Nobody notice the raindrops that hit them from above.

RHONDA
So what’s the plan.

BERT
Look, these hermits or what ever the hell they are, I’ll bet they live in a cave somewhere --

JONIE
Come on.
BERT
-- all I’m saying is that no one
gives a shit about them. Nobody
knows they exist and if one of them
goes missing, nobody’s gonna...

He looks around.

BERT
You know?

RHONDA
Yeah. Yeah, that’s right.

JONIE
We won’t get away with it. It’s
wrong. It’s just plain wrong.

TED
Fuck it!

He runs over to Sami lying dead on the ground and stomps his
punctured skull repeatedly.

TED
Mo-ther-fuc-ker!

Standing in pouring rain, the three other stare on as Ted
desecrate the body.

Ted drops to his knees and digs his fingers into the leaf
covered ground.

He claws out a handful of dirt, tosses it aside and repeats
the cycle at a frantic pace.

Rhonda drops the rifle and helps Ted.

Jonie wipes wet hair away from her face, shakes her head.

JONIE
This is wrong, Bert.

BERT
I know.

They look at each other. And join in.

LATER

Ted drops the final handful of soil on the grave and sprinkle
leaves on top of it.
Dirty and wet, the four of them observe the small man-sized swell that constitutes Sami’s final resting place.

TED
No one can ever know about any of this. Any of it.

Jolie’s eyes shoot daggers at Ted.

RHONDA
No one’s gonna say anything, Ted.

Rhonda looks to Bert and Jolie -- right?

JONIE
Let’s just get out of here.

Ted spits at the makeshift grave.

Bert bends down to pick up the rifle but Rhonda gets to it first.

RHONDA
Might as well be someone who’s willing to use it. Right, Bert?

Bert stares as Ted and Rhonda move through the bushes. Jolie puts an arm around him.

JONIE
Come on, let’s go home.

EXT. SHORE - CONTINUOUS

No longer shielded by the woods, the rain hits them with full force. Lightning rips the grey sky as thunder rolls.

Ted tips his canoe over and empties the rain water out of it.

Foaming water gush by as the river churns it white.

Soaked, Rhonda and Ted push their canoe toward the river just as another lights cracks the sky overhead.

BERT
This is crazy. We’ll never make it back to the cabin. The current’s too strong.

Bert turns as Jonie shouts something to him. The weather drowns out the sound.
BERT
What?

JONIE
I’m not staying here!

TED
Nobody’s staying here.

RHONDA
We’ll follow the current. Where ever it takes us, at least it won’t be here.

JONIE
What about the cabin?

TED
Fuck the cabin.

He rolls the canoe back upright.

Ted drags the canoe to the water. He and Rhonda jumps onboard.

The moment the canoe leaves the shore, the river ferociously pulls it down stream.

EXT. RIVER - CONTINUOUS

Ted hangs on to the railing as the canoe rocks violently.

Rhonda buries her paddle in the white water, desperately fighting to slow them down.

Behind them Bert’s and Jonie’s canoe nearly capsizes from the force of the water.

The river drags them along at a sickening pace. Rhonda and Bert do their best to avoid the dangerous rocks sticking out of the water.

Negotiating the treacherous terrain, Rhonda’s canoe scrapes against the rock face wall spinning it around.

Bert’s canoe shoots by, missing the other by a hair.

He looks back but his own canoe digs deep into the river and sends a wave of water in over him and Jonie.

JONIE
Bert!
He looks up and sees the river cascade downwards. Rocks protrude the water like steps.

BERT

Shit.

Their canoe grates the bottom, bounces over the steps and slams hard into the water.

The canoe wobbles and keels over. Bert and Jonie flail into the gushing river.

Behind them Rhonda fights to straighten the canoe but the current is relentless.

She sees the approaching waterfall.

Rhonda stabs her paddle deep into the river just as a lightning tears through the sky with a BOOM.

The canoe lurches onto its side and Rhonda, Ted and equipment plunge into the water.

The four of them clobber around partly submerged, tumbling down the cascade in the bruising kind of way.

Jonie comes up for air as a canoe speeds by and scrapes her face.

Bert strains to stay afloat in the cacophony of white water but the current drags him under.

Panting for air, Ted spots a small inlet further ahead on his left.

Exerting all of his strength he rips himself sideways toward the inlet but a sharp rock throws him off course.

He struggles in the foaming water, his wet clothes drags him down while his world spins around.

Coming up for a gulp of air he barges into Rhonda and goes back under.

Bert sees a low hanging branch coming up on his left.

He sticks out a hand and grabs hold of it, tearing the skin on his hand in the process.

Jonie’s gurgled scream catches his attention. She barrels towards him.

Bert reaches out, gets a hold of her and with the transfer of momentum, nearly throws her up on the shore.
UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

A thunderous roar engulf Ted as he whirls around in the churning water. Rocks zing past him on both sides.

A jagged boulder approaches on a direct collision course.

Ted empties his lungs in a bubbling scream, braces for impact.

The boulder fills his view as --

A HAND

-- grabs him from above and yanks him out of the water.

EXT. SHORE - CONTINUOUS

Sprawled on a sandy shore, Ted coughs up water. He quivers from hypothermia, his face bruised and battered.

JONIE (O.S.)
No...no...oh my god, no.

BERT (O.S.)
Breath, dammit!

Ted gasps for air and rolls over on his side.

Bert bends over Rhonda’s lifeless body and gives her mouth to mouth.

Rhonda’s cheeks balloon as Bert blows air into her lungs.

Jonie cries as Bert quickly moves to Rhonda’s chest and performs C.P.R.

Bert’s hands work fast. He pushes the chest down at a frantic rhythm.

Ted gets to his knees, tugs Rhonda’s outstretched hand in his, kisses it.

Blood reddens the sand beneath Ronda’s head.

Bert puts an ear to her mouth. An air of desperation covers his face. He returns to her chest.

BERT
Come on!

Jonie slumps to her knees and holds Ted close as he continues to kiss Rhonda’s hand, mouthing inaudible words to himself.
Bert checks her pulse. Checks it again.

Tears fall from his face onto hers. He kisses her forehead and gently closes her eyes.

JONIE
No. Bert, no.

Ted screams and hugs Rhonda’s body close.

TED
Come on, Ronnie. You can do this, you can beat it.

Her lifeless body dangles in his arms.

TED
Don’t you leave me, Rhonda. Don’t you fucking leave me.

His words dissolve into a long cry. Jonie hugs him close and together they sob.

Bert stares at his dead sister with vacant trance-like eyes, as if the grim reality is yet to hit home.

He looks down, sees the blood on his hands. The rain does its best to wash it away but the blood remains.

Ted lies next to Rhonda’s corpse. His head rests in Jonie’s lap. She caresses his hair.

BERT (O.S.)
All this because you got your ass wiped by a kid?

Jonie and Ted turn to Bert. His eyes, his whole expression, ooze hatred. He glares at Ted.

BERT
You fucking child.

JONIE
Bert, please. We’re all hurting here. Let’s not --

BERT
(chokes back tears)
Look at her. Look at her!

Bert massages his temples, grimaces in internal agony and then --

-- sees something.
He tilts his head, bends closer to Rhonda’s face, studies it closely.

Bert turns Rhonda’s head to the side, leans even closer.

   JONIE
   What is it?

Bert holds up a hand and silences her.

He spots a small black puncture wound on the back of Rhonda’s neck.

Another one at the base of her skull.

He rolls her body onto its side.

Several small circular wounds don the back of her shirt around the shoulder area.

   BERT
   Jesus.

He lets go of the body and springs to his feet like a Jack In The Box.

He turns, his eyes dart, scouts the area.

   TED
   Bert, what the hell is it?

   BERT
   Hide.

   JONIE
   What?

   BERT
   Hide, dammit!

Bert pushes Jonie towards the cover of a low rock formation. He grabs Ted’s shirt but Ted jerks himself loose.

   TED
   What the fuck?

   BERT
   She was shot.

Question marks don Ted’s face.

   BERT
   She didn’t hit her head. She was fucking shot.
Jonie bunkers behind the rock formation as Bert shoves a catatonic Ted down next her.

Bert peeks over the rocks. He scans the forest on the adjacent shore, the rain obscures most of his view.

JONIE
Shot?

Keeping his eyes peeled on the other shore, Bert nods.

Jonie quivers in the relentless rain. She lets her gaze fall on Rhonda’s body.

JONIE
(panicking)
Oh, my God. They’re after us, Bert.

BERT
Keep your Goddamn voice down.

JONIE
(hysterical)
You’ve got to get me out of here.

Bert kneels down beside her.

BERT
Dammit, I will. But for all I know that toothless piece of shit is out there waiting for us. So just cool it and let me figure something out.

He returns to his vantage point.

The thick vegetation on the other shore shakes -- could be movement in the woods -- could just be the wind.

A faint whistling from within the woods.

Another but different whistling responds from somewhere else within the forest.

Bert squints in its general location. Leaves stir about. He bites his lip.

The outline of a blurred figure appears behind the trees.

A HAND
-- parts the branches.
JONIE (O.S.)
What’s going on?

The hand stops. Retracts.

BERT
Shit.

He slides down next to Jonie and Ted.

BERT
We gotta leave. Now. They know we’re here.

Jonie’s staccato breath quickens.

JONIE
Oh, no.

Ted calmly shakes his head.

TED
I’m not leaving Rhonda behind.

BERT
I hate it too but we gotta go.

Bert points to a narrow canyon-like crevasse in the rock face partly hidden by bushes. He nudges Jonie forward.

BERT
Go through there. Go.

Jonie hesitates.

BERT
Come on.

JONIE
I don’t wanna leave you.

BERT
We’ll be right behind you. Now go.

Jonie takes off and disappears into the crevasse. Bert pulls Ted onto his feet.

Another whistling, this time closer by.

BERT
Ted, let’s go.

He grabs Ted by the wrist and pulls him to his feet. Ted jerks his arm away.
TED
Get your fucking hands of me.

WHAM

Bert whacks Ted across the face, grabs him by the collar and yanks him close.

BERT
You listen. I would love to leave your sorry ass for dead here. But I can’t do that. That’s not who I am.
(points to Rhonda’s body)
And that’s not who Rhonda was.

Ted swallows, ridden by grief.

Bert pushes Ted towards the crevasse.

BERT
Now go.

EXT. CREVASCSE – CONTINUOUS

With the setting sun low on the murky horizon, the three of them burst through the rain along the narrow trail.

A wet and uneven surface makes it a perilous run.

The echo from a howling yell chases them from behind. Ted stops and looks back.

TED
They’re hunting us.

BERT
Ted, no. We gotta keep going.

TED
If they touch her --

Bert yanks him back on track. With Jonie on point they sprint through the crevasse which unfolds into a wide --

EXT. GORGE – CONTINUOUS

Jonie stops and catches her breath. She looks around at the desolate rock basin.

Pools of water form in the rain, some small -- some not.
JONIE
It’s a dead end.

Bert does a three-sixty and spots a jagged trail ascending the precipices. Trees and bushes provide ample hiding places along the way.

BERT
There.

He heads for the base of the cliff, sizing up the climb. The rock face towers over them, the evening sky dwindles behind it.

TED
Are you kidding?

BERT
It’s doable.

JONIE
I don’t know.

BERT
No, we can do this.

TED
Bert.

BERT
One step at a time, guys. It’s not impossible. We stay close, get down low and --

TED
Bert, stop it.

BERT
-- move carefully, I’m telling you it is totally --

TED
Stop it!

BERT
What?

TED
Enough of this running shit. I say we make a stand. Right here, right now.
BERT
This ain’t the fucking O.K. Coral. They have guns, we don’t.

TED
Fuck that. It’s an old guy and a kid.

BERT
You’re assuming it’s just the two of them.

Ted contemplates this.

BERT
Hey, I want these bastards dead as much as you do but I’ve got a baby on the way, Ted. I can’t risk that.

Ted blinks tears from his eyes.

Bert takes a careful step up the rocky mountain side. He reaches out for Jonie.

BERT
Come on.

Jolie bites her lip, looks to Bert and then to Ted.

BERT
Come the fuck on!

Startled into action, she grabs his hand and he hoists her up onto the jagged trail. Bert pushes her forward and turns to Ted.

TED
I’m not leaving her, man.

BERT
Dammit, Ted, don’t make me repeat myself.

Ted’s eyes tear up.

TED
You saw what they did to her. To me.

Bert sticks out his open hand.
BERT
We’ll come back for her. Okay, buddy?

Ted gives the crevasse a last look. And grabs Bert’s hand.

EXT. SHORE – LATER
Rhonda’s lifeless eyes stare up at the darkening sky, her hair decorated with crusted blood.

A walking stick punctures the sand next to her head. A dirty pair of bare feet follow.

EXT. CABIN AREA – DUSK
Officers from the Sheriff’s Department question different tourist but only get shrugs and head-shakes in return.

Meanwhile --

EXT. LOG CABIN – CONTINUOUS
Chris approaches the four friend’s cabin. He spots the leftovers on the table, the beer cans next to the deck chairs.

He moves to the front door and knocks. No answer. He cups his hands an peeks through a window -- sees nothing.

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE – NIGHT
Panting hard, the three friends hike up the treacherous trail.

Teeth clatter in the night, lit by a murky moon. The rain now a light but annoying drizzle.

Jonie stops and hugs herself.

JONIE
I’m freezing.

BERT
We have to keep going.

Behind them, Ted grimaces in pain.

TED
I can’t, man.
He sucks air through his teeth and groans.

JONIE
Bert, please.

Bert squints in the dark and scans the gorge below them, sees nothing.

BERT
Okay. Wait here.

He moves up the trail.

Carefully, Ted sits down. Jonie scoots close to him and breaths into her hands for warmth.

JONIE
You okay?

Ted straightens as a pang of pain shoots through him.

TED
No. You?

JONIE
Trying to cope but...

TED
Yeah, I know.

Jonie squeezes his hand.

JONIE
I’m sorry for yelling at you back there.

TED
No, you were right. You’re both right, you and Bert. I mean, if I hadn’t --
  (pounds a fist against the surface)
-- Goddammit.

JONIE
It’s okay, Ted. It’s okay.

TED
No, it’s not. It should have been me.

JONIE
Don’t say that.
Pebbles trickle down the trail. Both of them stiffen.

Bert drops down next to them.

    JONIE
    Jesus Christ, Bert.

    BERT
    Sorry. Look, we need to find some place where we can hold up for --

He spins around as AGITATED VOICES reach them from somewhere below them.

He squints, tries to locate the voices.

    BERT
    Did you hear --

BLAM

A muzzle flare lights up the night like a strobe light.

Lead pellets ricochet off the rocks behind them. Ted and Jonie scoot down low.

    BERT
    Whoa.

BLAM

A second hailstorm of tiny slugs tear through the night.

One catches Bert’s arm and jerks him around. He cries out in pain and wobbles, losses his footing.

Jonie throws out a hand in desperation as Bert slips and disappears over the edge.

    JONIE
    No!

Jonie throws herself at the lip but Ted grabs her and pulls her back to safety just as --

BLAM

-- another shot bounces off the rock face.

CRUNCH

Bert screams out in nauseating pain (O.S.).
JONIE

Bert?!
She tears herself loose of Ted’s grasp and crawls to the edge and peers down.

Bert lies about ten feet below her on a jagged outcropping.

JONIE

Bert!

He cries out violently in the night and clutches his right leg.

Jonie narrows her eyes, sees the cause of pain.

Bert’s splintered femur sticks out of a tear in his pants.

JONIE

(on the brink of tears)

Bert.

His bloody fingers tremble as they fumble around the wound.

BLAM

A slug explodes against the rock near Jonie, chips of shrapnel tears across her face.

JONIE

Stop it!  Stop it!

Bert looks up at her, on the verge of unconsciousness, his face pale, his eyes placid.

Jonie turns to Ted who sits hunkered against the wall, his arms clutched against his chest, trembling.

JONIE

Help me.

He looks up with shell-shocked eyes.

JONIE

Please.  I can’t do this alone.

BLAM

Ted jolts, scared out of his mind.

JONIE

(pleading)

Help me.
Ted swallows and turns away. Jonie snakes closer, grabs his arm.

JONIE
He’ll die if we don’t get him out of there so help me!

Her outburst rips him out of his catatonic state.

TED
What do you want me to do?

JONIE
We have to get down to him.

She slides back to the rock lip and sticks her head out over the edge.

JONIE
Bert, we’re coming for you.

Bert acknowledges her with a tired blink of his eyes. He strains to breath, the air rasps in his throat.

Jonie searches for a way down while Ted reluctantly follows behind her.

She finds a jagged precipice, doable but dangerous, that leads down near to where Bert lies.

She points to it. Ted shakes his head.

BLAM

Jonie swings her leg over the lip and finds her footing on the hazardous rock face.

Her shoe slips. She grasps the edge tightly and struggles to find support.

She does and regains her footing.

Moving cautiously, Jonie slowly descends to the --

OUTCROPPING - CONTINUOUS

Jonie lands next to Bert and throws her arms around her.

JONIE
Bert.

His face a sickening pale, he squirms and grimaces in pain.
BERT

My leg.

JONIE

Can you move at all?

Bert shifts the weight of his leg, clenches his eyes shut and fights back the pangs of agony. Fails.

Ted arrives. He stares at the bloody piece of femur that stick out of Bert’s pants.

TED

Jesus.

BERT

(weak)

You have to straighten it out.

TED

What?

BERT

Pop it back in.

TED

I can’t do --

JONIE

Do it!

TED

How?

BERT

Grab my foot. Pull it towards you. Hard.

TED

Christ, man, I can’t --

JONIE

Come on.

TED

Okay. Okay.

He grabs a hold of Bert’s ankle with both hands. The injured man moans and sucks in shallow breaths.

Jonie leans in close to Bert, caresses his face.

JONIE

It’s okay. I’m here.
Bert locks eyes with her, his look determined, ready.

TED
All right. On three. One --

BERT
Just do it.

YANK

Ted pulls so hard that he jerks Bert across the rocks. The femur pops back in with soggy PLOP.

Bert’s eyes pop wide open, his face reddens. A scream gags in his throat, the pain too much for his vocal cord.

Jonie squeezes his hand as the numbing pain courses through his body.

JONIE

Breath.

MUZZLED VOICES

Jonie and Ted squeeze themselves against the ground.

Bert groans.

Jonie slaps a hand across his mouth, drowns out the sound.

Voices sound off close by, still too muffled.

Jonie holds her breath.

Ted scans the area above them with terror painted across his face.

The voices glide closer.

ABOVE THEM – CONTINUOUS

Bare feet negotiate the trail. Nostrils sniff the air.

OUTCROPPING – CONTINUOUS

Ted swallows, presses himself closer to the rock face.

In a drawn out moment of excruciating silence, the three friends wait for the inevitable moment of discovery.

It doesn’t come.
They hear Leigh above them as he clears his throat and spits.

A brownish gooey chunk lands eerily close to Bert.

They wait, holding their breath, too scared to make any sort of movement. Finally --

JONIE
I think they’re gone.

The three of them breath again.

TED
(re: Bert)
What do we do with him?

TRAIL – LATER
Jonie leads Ted, who strains with Bert hunched over on his shoulder, along a new stretch of mountain trail.
She spots an opening in the rock face, peeks inside.

JONIE
In here.

EXT. WOODS (CRIME SCENE) – NIGHT
Massive floods light the excavation. Several law enforcement officers roam about or watch as the dig progresses.

Will and Chris watch from a distance as D.C.I. officers lift a dirt covered body from the ground and place it on a white sheet.

CHRIS
What in God’s name happened here?

Will sips coffee from a Styrofoam cup. His eyes drifting, along with his thoughts.

Chris notices his vacant expression.

CHRIS
Sheriff?

WILL
Yeah?

CHRIS
You all right?
Will (nods at the dig)
What do you think?

Chris nods: “I hear ya”.

Chris
Did the Mayor get a hold of you?

Will
Uh-huh.

Chris
What, um, what did he say?

Will empties the cup with a final gulp, stares on as the coroners hoist another dead body from the ground.

Will
That this is very bad for business.

Chris
I’ll bet. Anyway, we’ve been through most of the upper areas, no one’s seen or heard anything.

Will
You’ve talked to everyone?

Chris
A couple of the cabins were empty. I mean, we know someone’s staying there, they just weren’t home.

Will
So they could be out there somewhere.

Chris
Yeah.

Will contemplates for a second before --

Will
Get a search party out there right now. I want them found and brought back.

Chris
Sheriff, we’ve got over one million acres of forest, rivers and mountains, I don’t know where to start. It’s dark now...we can’t --
WILL
We’ve got six corpses here that say we can. Make it happen.

CHRIS
Okay. Okay.

He takes off as Maggie strolls over to Will. Dirty and tired.

MAGGIE
We just pulled out the two last bodies.

WILL
Lemme’ guess, no I.D. on ‘em?

MAGGIE
‘Fraid not. Look, there’s no need for you to wait around here all night. This’ll take a while.

WILL
I’m gonna stick around. The two last bodies, any women among them? A blond maybe?

MAGGIE
No, they’re both males.
   (curious)
Why?

WILL
No reason.

Maggie doesn’t buy it.

MAGGIE
Will?

He looks away.

WILL
It’s nothing, Maggie. Really.

INT. HOLLOW – NIGHT

Jonie tighten a torn piece of shirt around Bert’s injured shoulder. He winces.

Two lean branches flank both sides of his broken leg, kept in place by more strips of torn shirt.
JONIE
You’re a mess.

Bert, drowsy, barely breaks a smile.

Bert and Jonie sit at the opening, arms around each other, losing the battle to keep warm.

Behind them, in the dark and rocky alcove, Ted lies on his side with his back to them, curled up in a fetal position.

His eyes closed, his breathing deep.

BERT
You should try to get some sleep.

JONIE
Could you?

Bert stares down at the pitch black gorge below them. He can hear faint sounds from down there.

Whether they are natural or not...

BERT
I think we’ll be safe here for the night. Tomorrow we’ll find a town. People.

He rubs Jonie’s trembling fingers, kisses them. He looks over at Ted, looks down.

JONIE
What is it?

BERT
It’s just...

His voice quivers.

JONIE
Your sister?

Bert clears his nose and wipes tears from his eyes.

JONIE
There was nothing you could’ve done to save her.

She kisses his cheek.

JONIE
You did everything you could.
BERT
I didn’t really.

JONIE
What do you mean? Of course you did.

Bert’s eyes go distant. Something painful urges itself out of him.

BERT
When they attacked us, me and Ted, in the woods --

EXT. WOODS - DAY (FLASHBACK)
Ted screams out in pain as Leigh thrusts his manhood back and forth.

Bert lies on the mossy ground, apparently unconscious.

BERT (V.O.)
-- I...I wasn’t quite out.

His eyelids slowly glide open.

LEIGH
Oh, he be tight, boys!

A sense of deep unfiltered fear pass in front of Bert’s eyes.

TED
Please...

Bert shuts his eyes just as Spyder looks over his shoulder at him.

SAMI
Yee-haa!

INT. HOLLOW (PRESENT)
Sami’s deranged yell still echoes through Bert’s head as he runs a hand through his hair. He turns to Jonie.

BERT
I was...scared. You understand?

He wipes away more tears.
BERT
It wasn’t because I was unconscious
that I didn’t help my friend. It
was because I was terrified that
they might do the same to me if...

He looks away, guilt-ridden.

Jonie puts a comforting hand on Bert’s thigh, kisses him
again.

He leans into her and she embraces him as he quietly sobs.

Behind them on the ground, Ted’s eyes slide open.

Wide awake.

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS
Flashlights dance around in the thick forest as the search
party proceeds. Dogs bark, sniff the ground.

EXT. SHORE - CONTINUOUS
Police officers fan out across the pebble shore.

EXT. RIVER - CONTINUOUS
Park Rangers sail along in motor boats, floodlights sweep
across the water.

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - CONTINUOUS
Winds travel across the jagged surface. Crickets chirp under
a blanket of darkness as night turns into --

INT. HOLLOW - DAY
Bert’s eyes pop open and frantically looks around, confused;
“where am I”?

A sharp pang of pain in his leg contorts his face...and then
he remembers.

He realizes that he is all by his lonesome. No Jonie. No
Ted.

Panic sets in.
Bert struggles to get onto his one good leg. Fails. He slides down on his butt, winded, groans in pain.

A SCRAPING SOUND from outside freezes him. He holds his breath, drags himself away from the opening.

The sound moves closer. Someone’s coming.

Bert looks around for a weapon, finds a good-sized rock. He picks it up, raises it above his head, ready to strike.

His timid breaths echo against the rock walls -- too loud.

A shadow passes the opening. Bert tenses. Every fiber in his body ready to strike out.

And then --

A PAIR OF LEGS

-- dangle from the top of the opening. Hoarse breathing. A groan followed a --

THUMP

-- as Jonie lands in front of him.

Bert breathes a deep sigh of relief and drops the rock.

BERT
Jesus. I almost hit you over the head.

Jonie holds up a hand -- “hang on” -- and catches her breath.

BERT
Where’s Ted?

JONIE
(winded)
That’s the thing. I don’t know.
He was gone when I woke up. I went looking for him. Nothing.

BERT
He wouldn’t just take off.

JONIE
Well, I can’t find him.
EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - CONTINUOUS

Ted staggers across a jagged ridge in the morning sun. Even though his face is in tatters and dirty, his eyes are focused.

TED
(to himself)
I can only trust you, Ronnie.

He’s coming apart.

TED
Only you. Always you. No one else.

Taking a different route than the day before, he crosses another outcropping and reaches an edge.

Ted slows down, squats and looks down at the shore where they left Rhonda’s body, several hundred feet below him.

Rhonda’s body is nowhere to be seen.

Ted’s nostrils twitch. His jaw muscles tighten. Anger, the feral kind, builds in his eyes.

He swings a leg over the lip and descends the precipice.

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - CONTINUOUS

Jonie peeks over the rocks and takes in the gorge below them.

Nothing.

BERT
I think I know where he’s headed.

JONIE
Rhonda?

Bert nods solemnly.

JONIE
What about those...people, Bert?

BERT
I don’t think he planned that far ahead.

JONIE
We have to go after him.
BERT
No.

JONIE
He’s gonna get himself --

BERT
No! You’re gonna go find some help.

JONIE
I’m not leaving you.

BERT
Yes, you are. I can’t get down this mountain and you can’t carry me, so, you’re gonna go out there and you’re gonna find some help.

JONIE
What about --

BERT
You’re gonna get to the police and get us out of here.

JONIE
What about Ted? We can’t just leave him out there.

BERT
First things first, all right?

JONIE
Okay.

BERT
And you don’t take any chances what so ever. No matter what happens.

He glides a hand across her pregnant belly.

BERT

They look at each other. An uneasy moment for both of them.

BERT
Do you understand what I’m saying?

Jonie kisses his cheek -- she does.
EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - LATER

Jonie jumps from rock to rock at a hasty tempo. She looks back at frequent intervals, making sure no one is following her.

She slips, slides down a jagged passage, bumps her knee, gets back up and presses on.

EXT. MEADOWLAND - LATER

Jonie negotiates a small ridge and spots a run-down cabin in the distance.

She picks up her pace, crosses the soggy grass field and heads for --

EXT. RUN-DOWN CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Jonie runs towards the shack-like structure and --

-- something catches her foot.

She tumbles to the ground and slides across a muddy patch.

She looks back, spots a wire on the ground that runs from the cabin and off deeper into the landscape.

Jonie quickly inspects it -- a telephone wire?

She moves closer to the cabin on cautious feet.

The cabin is built on short poles, which leaves a partly grass infested crawlspace underneath it.

No apparent activity inside the cabin. Jonie presses her face against a small and stained window, peeks inside.

A semi well-kept interior, nothing fancy but --

-- AN OLD FASHION TELEPHONE ON A TABLE

Jonie’s eyes light. She taps the window.

        JONIE

        Hello?

No answer.

She moves around to the front of the cabin and moves up the steps to a small porch.
The wood creaks beneath her feet as she minces to the door, knocks on it.

JONIE
Anyone? Hello?

Nothing.

She tries the door handle. Locked.

JONIE
Dammit.

INT. HOLLOW - CONTINUOUS
Bert nods his head, sleepy, pale. He jerks his head back upright, massages his face, forces himself to stay awake.

He looks down at his injured leg, blood crusted around the tear in his pants.

His eyes go drowsy again, the eyelids heavy. His head sinks to his chest while his eyes glide shut and --

-- they pop back open. He takes a deep shivering breath as the barrel of a shotgun comes to a rest on his left cheek.

Leigh squats beside him.

LEIGH
Howdy, pardner.

Bert doesn’t dare to move anything but his eyes.

LEIGH
You didn’t really think we would let y’all just stroll on outta here, did ya?

Bert’s fingers gently feel the ground next to him, covertly searching for a rock.

Leigh nods at Bert’s wounded shoulder.

LEIGH
Yeah, I knew I hit ya, boy. Just couldn’t find ya in the dark.
(points to his eyes)
Them ain’t as good as they used to be.
(spits on the ground)
(MORE)
LEIGH (CONT'D)
Good thing I waited around though, huh? Saw your lady friend leave a while ago.

Bert stiffens.

LEIGH
That’s right. I know where she be headed too. Won’t be too much trouble tracking her down.
Spyder’s real good at that, believe you me.
(shrugs)
Might even have caught her by now.

Bert’s mind races.

LEIGH
I ain’t gonna lie to ya, son. I will hurt her. Badly.

BERT
She hasn’t done anything to you, man, you let her go.

LEIGH
But she means the world to you, don’t she? Like my son did to me.
(leans closer)
I will take my time with her.

BERT
You sick fucking freak, you already killed my sister. Killing all of us won’t bring your son back.

LEIGH
True. But it’ll feel right.

WHAM --

EXT. RUN-DOWN CABIN - CONTINUOUS

-- Jonie rams the door with her boot. The wood moans a bit but not much else.

She tries again. Same result.

Jonie steps back, distraught, winded. She moves to a window, gives it measuring look. Small but doable.

She pries off her jacket, wraps it around her hand and raises her arm, ready to strike.
Freezes.
Something catches her attention out of the corner of her eye.
A figure on the horizon.

SPYDER
Jonie gasps and ducks down out of view. She sneaks a glimpse around the cabin -- did he see her?

Maybe not -- but he’s definitely coming her way. And he’s armed.

Jonie moves to the opposite end of the porch, takes the wooden railing in a quick leap and lands on the ground.
Without a moment of pause, she rolls into the --

CRAWLSPACE
-- underneath the cabin and lets the grass conceal her.

INT. HOLLOW - CONTINUOUS
Leigh scopes Bert’s leg wound, grimaces and --

LEIGH
That had to hurt.

-- prods it with a finger.
Bert yelps and shoves Leigh’s hand away.

BERT
Don’t you fucking touch me.

Leigh’s face morphs into a vicious sneer.

LEIGH
Shut your Goddamn trap.

He jerks the shotgun harder against Bert’s face.

LEIGH
You killed my boy! And you don’t get to do that! You come out here, to my home, with your fancy mouth, thinking you can do --

BERT
Look, we didn’t --
LEIGH
Shut up! All of you, you’re all the same.

Bert finds a rock, clutches it in his hand.

Leigh stands.

LEIGH
Get up.

BERT
I can’t.

LEIGH
Stand the hell up!

BERT
Why the fuck should I?!

LEIGH
‘Cause I wanna see you fly.

Leigh grabs Bert by the collar and yanks up to his feet.

Bert screams out in agony, staggers back, leans against the rock wall.

LEIGH
You scream a whole lot for a man, you know that?

Bert feigns a fall and slides forward. Leigh reaches out for him --

-- Bert seizes the opportunity.

He swings the rock at Leigh’s head --

-- Leigh ducks.

It misses.

Bert stumbles to the ground, yelps. Leigh presses a naked foot against the back of his head.

LEIGH
I gave you a chance to end it quick and painless. Guess what?

He raises the butt of the shotgun.

LEIGH
That chance came and went, son.
WHACK

He rams the rifle into Bert’s face, knocks him unconscious.

**EXT. DERELICT CABIN - CRAWLSPACE - CONTINUOUS**

From her vantage point underneath the cabin, Jonie makes out Spyder through the tall grass, as he gains on the cabin.

She spots the shotgun in his hands, tenses up.

Spyder, very close now, stops and gives the cabin a quick once over.

Jonie ducks as low as humanly possible into the grass, holds her breath.

Spyder proceeds closer until his feet are the only things visible.

Jonie follow them as the move slowly around the cabin, she twists her body with each step, keeping the feet in her line of sight.

They stop at the steps to the porch and take them two at a time.

The wooden floorboards creak above her. Jonie rolls with the sound --

-- stops, bites her lip.

She sees her jacket on the ground next to the crawlspace, exposed and revealing.

She quietly stomachs her way towards the edge of the crawlspace, the jacket within reach.

Jonie brings up her hand, reaches out for the jacket and --

-- retracts it as Spyder’s feet land next to it.

His hand pulls the jacket out of view, he sniffs it (O.S).

Jonie scoots backwards, away from the opening but --

-- cringes as a big fat multi-colored CENTIPEDE creeps across her hand, up along her arm.

Its gazillion tiny legs rolls across her shoulder, around her neck, into her hair.
Jonie, frozen in a petrified pose, clenches her eyes shot and fights back the unbelievable urge to scream.

Her hair waves along her scalp as the centipede creepy-crawls on to the top of her head.

It peers its head through her hairline, its antennas wiggle around.

Jonie shudders, struggles to keep calm.

The centipede glides down her forehead, balances on the bridge of her nose and --

-- falls to the ground. It scurries through the grass and disappears as if nothing ever happened.

Jonie takes a deep trembling breath. Looks up.

SPYDER’S GONE

She checks left, then right.

No Spyder.

Jonie breaths a sigh of relief just as --

HANDS

-- lock around her ankles and yanks her out --

EXT. DERELICT CABIN - CONTINUOUS

-- screaming. Jonie twists around just in time to see the butt of Spyder’s shotgun racing towards her face.

SMACK

And everything goes --

BLACK

A moment of silence, then --


The light returns and reveals --

EXT. WOODS - LATER

-- Jonie, hanging over Spyder’s shoulder as the kid marches through the forest with his weapon in his free hand.
Her eyes blink open underneath a nasty bruise on her forehead.

Dizzy, her arms hang limb from her shoulders as she bounces up and down.

She shakes the cobweb, comes around for real and struggles against Spyder’s arms.

The teen grabs the back of her shirt and pulls down. She lands on wobbly feet and Spyder quickly shoves her to the dirt.

He puts a finger across his lips -- shut up -- he motions the shotgun -- or else.

But Jonie doesn’t cower.

   JONIE
   Why are you doing this? Do you even know?

Spyder’s face twitches.

   JONIE
   This has gone too far. No one has to get hurt. Not me, not you.

No reaction from Spyder.

   JONIE
   (changes tactics)
   You like playing soccer? I know a place, close to where I live, were young kids like yourself go and play. They have these huge fields with goal posts. It looks like a lot of fun.

The kid softens a bit, interested.

   JONIE
   Wouldn’t you like to try that...
   (searches)
   ...sorry, I don’t know your name.
   I’m Jonie. What’s your name?

Spyder talks but it sounds like someone talking with a whole potato in their mouth -- weird.

   JONIE
   I’m sorry I--I don’t...

More gibberish from Spyder.
Jonie sees the lump in his mouth that was once his tongue.

JONIE
What --
(points to his mouth)
-- happened? Did someone hurt you?

Spyder’s demeanor changes.

JONIE
Who hurt you? Who did that to you?
Was it...your father? Did he --

Spyder hurls himself at her and screams unintelligible slurs in her face.

Jolie recoils, taken aback by the outburst.

The intensiveness of Spyder’s fury builds. Spit chases his guttural threats. Veins throb on his neck, his face red.

A punch snaps Jonie’s head back. Blood spurts from her nose.

She blocks more punches with her arms, takes another blow to the face.

Spyder raises the shotgun, grabs it like a bat and swings it towards Jonie’s head as --

TED
-- tackles him to the ground.

The two of them struggle for a bit before Ted gains the upper hand and opens up a nasty can of whoop ass on Spyder.

Again and again, Ted unleashes Mike Tyson’esque haymakers, oblivious to the fact that Spyder is already unconscious.

JONIE
Stop.

He doesn’t.

JONIE
Ted, stop! He’s just a kid.

Ted snaps around. His maniacal eyes shut Jonie up.

This is not the Ted she started out the weekend with. This is someone else.

Ted gets up and wipes blood off his bruised knuckles. Jonie sticks out a hand for him to help her up with.
He ignores it.

JONIE
Where have you been?

No answer. Jonie gets up.

JONIE
Bert’s all alone up there. He needs us.

Ted shrugs -- “so”?

JONIE
What do you mean? What’s wrong with you?

Ted grabs Spyder, tries to shake him back to consciousness.

TED
Come on, wake the fuck up.

JONIE
Please, Ted.

TED
Wake up!

Spyder comes around. Ted stands, grabs Spyder’s shotgun and presses it against the kid’s forehead.

TED
You’re gonna take me to her, you piece of shit. You hear me?

JONIE
Her? Rhonda’s dead for Christ’s sake. Bert’s alive and he needs our help.

TED
So did I!

Jonie realizes -- he knows.

TED
So did I...

JONIE
Ted...

Ted drags Spyder to his feet and shoves him forward.
TED
Take me to her.

Spyder stumbles but moves deeper into the woods with Ted on his trail.

Jonie contemplates, unsure what to do. She looks around. Everything looks the same and nothing looks familiar.

She hesitates but decides to follow Ted.

EXT. INLET - DAY

Will squats next to a mangled canoe that lies capsized on the muddy cove.

His eyes trace a path along the shore where various camping equipment is scattered about.

A deputy pulls a tent from the water, turns it over, studies it.

Will straightens as his walkie-talkie buzzes.

CHRIS (V.O.)
You copy, Sheriff?

WILL
(into walkie-talkie)
Go ahead.

CHRIS (V.O.)
We’ve found another canoe about three hundred yards further down.

Will sighs.

WILL
(under his breath)
Goddamnit.

(into walkie-talkie)
Get the divers out. Put everyone, you have in the water and...

(heads towards his truck)
...contact Parker’s Bay, tell ‘em to be on the lookout for floaters. I’m gonna head up-stream and make sure we didn’t miss anything.

CHRIS (V.O.)
Got it.
EXT. SHORE – DAY

Leigh puts down Bert on the ground with a groan.

LEIGH
Reckon I can trust you not to run off.

Bert massages his swollen cheek as Leigh heads on down to the river and scoops a couple of handfuls of water into his mouth.

LEIGH
We’ve been here for generations. My father. His father.

He stares at the serene forest around them.

LEIGH
The Indians get casinos and what do we get? A boot in the ass.

He turns to Bert.

LEIGH
That ain’t right.

Bert doesn’t take the bait, he just keeps his eyes peeled at Leigh.

LEIGH
But what would you know about real life anyway?
(tURNS TO THE FOREST BEHIND BERT)
Y’all come on out now, girls.

Bert jerks his head around in time to see SERENA (30s) and BETTY (20s), both clad in shabby severely out-of-style dresses.

Both of them sinewy and ugly – in the inbred way.

LEIGH
Take him.

Bert doesn’t even manage to fend for himself before strong hands grab his arms and haul him into the forest.

Leigh gulps down a final handful of water and follows the others.
EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Spyder leads Ted and Jonie at gunpoint. He casts covert glances left and right as they maneuver through the woods.

Ted, focused, keeps close to Spyder with Jonie cautiously in tow.

Spyder stops and points up ahead. Ted steps forward and squints at the vegetation, doesn’t see anything.

TED
What?

Spyder points again and this time Ted spots a bit of smoke obscured by leaves and branches.

He nudges Spyder in the back with the shotgun, forces him forward.

They squeeze by trees and bushes until they reach a small --

CLEARING - CONTINUOUS

An old pot sizzles over an open fire. A broth of some kind boils inside it. Clothes, hung out to dry, sway from thick branches.

Ted and Jonie glance around at the deserted opening.

TED
What is this place?

JONIE
I think this is where they live.

She gasps as leaves part near an impossible-to-see cave entrance. **LAURA** (16), a dirty girl, steps out into the clearing with a baby on her arm.

She freezes in her spot, her frightened eyes dart from Ted to Jonie. Spyder calms her with a hand gesture just as Ted grabs him by the neck.

TED
Why did you take us here? Where’s Ronnie?!

The baby in the girl’s arms breaks out into a high pitched cry.

TED
Shut that kid up!
Spyder yanks himself free of Ted’s grasp and stare at him with murder in his eyes.

Ted tilts his head - gets it.

TED
The kid’s yours, isn’t it?
(shakes his head)
Fucking freaks.

He aims the gun at Spyder’s face.

TED
Where’s Ronnie? Talk!

JONIE
He can’t.

Spyder nods to the side. Ted follows the direction with his eyes, spots a leaf covered shape partly hidden by trees.

TED
(swallows)
Is that...

Spyder nods.

TED
Jonie, check it out.

JONIE
Ted, please.

TED
Check it!

Jenie staggers towards the shape, kneels and scoops the leaves away.

Rhonda’s dead eyes stare at her. Jonie covers her quivering lips.

JONIE
(fights back tears)
It’s her. It’s Rhonda.

Jenie pushes herself to her feet and accidently dislodges the body. More leaves slide away --

-- exposing Rhonda’s left arm, which has been severed at the elbow.

Jenie yelps.
TED

What?

Jonie’s eyes glide from the bloody stump to the pot -- -- and she keels over and regurgitates violently.

TED

What the fff...

He spots the carnage, blood drains from his face. It returns with a vengeance as he turns to face Spyder.

TED

(raises the shotgun)
You mother --

BLAM

A shotgun blast strikes Ted at the hip. He crumbles to the ground with a squeal.

Leigh steps out into the clearing, Serena and Betty behind him with --

JONIE

Bert!

-- in their arms.

Spyder makes a run for it but Ted trips him with his hand, grabs his ankle and drags him close.

He jams the shotgun against the back of the kid’s head as Leigh readies a second shot.

Leigh, in turn, aims his weapon at Bert.

JONIE

No.

She runs to Bert but a backhand from Serena sends her tumbling across the ground.

Bert struggles, in obvious pain, against the hands that hold him. To no avail.

LEIGH

Let my boy go.

He presses the barrel harder against Bert’s back, letting Ted know he means business.
Ted looks from Leigh to Jonie and finally to Bert. The two men lock eyes for a drawn out moment.

Bert, unable to read Ted’s expression, turns to Jonie. He sees her bruised face, her tear-streaked cheeks...her pregnant belly.

He nods to her. Offers her weak smile.

BERT
(mouths the words)
No matter what.

JONIE
(almost inaudible)
No.

Impatient, Leigh grabs a handful of Bert’s hair and eyeballs Ted with unveiled anger.

LEIGH
Let my boy go or I kill this fella right here.

A faint hint of a smile twitches Ted’s lips.

Bert sees it. So does Jonie.

TED
Then kill him.

Leigh’s eyes flicker.

Bert grits his teeth and, with a pain-defying burst of energy, throws himself backwards and rams his skull into the base of Leigh’s jaw.

BERT
Go!

Leigh keels towards the ground as Jonie springs to her feet and races into the woods.

Betty reaches out for her but Bert shoulders her aside just as --

-- Leigh’s shotgun goes off and tears half of Bert’s skull apart in a spray of blood.

Ted squeezes his own trigger and empties both barrels into Leigh’s chest.

Spyder lets out a gurgled scream and runs to his dying father.
Ted slumps to the ground, winces and grabs his wound. He looks up into the obscured sky. Smiles.

Spyder shoves Betty and Serena away and kneels next to his father.

The old hermit coughs up chunks of dark blood but before he can utter a word --
-- he dies.

Spyder’s jaw muscles tremble as he straightens. He looks to the Laura with the crying baby. Then to Betty. Then to Serena.

The oldest of the women retrieves Leigh’s shotgun and gives it to Spyder.

SERENA
You’re the Pa now.

Betty nods. Laura kisses the baby on the forehead...and nods.

Spyder accepts the rifle and heads off after Jonie.

As he leaves, Serena picks up a thick branch from the ground, throws it to Betty and finds another one for herself.

Together they move over to Ted.

He stares up at the sisters.

TED
What?

The first swing hits him in the face. So does the following twelve.

EXT. WOODS – CONTINUOUS

Jonie sprints for her life, tears mixed with desperation crowd her eyes.

She dashes between trees, oblivious to the thorns that cut into her skin.

Jonie stops, catches her breath, gets her bearing. Trees everywhere.

She looks back as the sound of Spyder’s pounding feet reaches her.
Not wasting any time, she charges on and plows through a hoard of Poison Ivy.

She rounds a large tree and leaps behind it into the cover of a sprawling bush.

Jonie scoots down as low as possible as Spyder charges by and disappears from sight.

She waits a few seconds before venturing a peek.

Nothing.

She gets to her feet and heads off in a new direction.

ELSEWHERE

Spyder screeches to a halt. He checks the ground for tracks, doesn’t like what he sees.

He turns, looks to where he came from... and doubles back.

BACK WITH JONIE

Jonie struggles forward, the forest thicker now. She stops as she hears something. Something that doesn’t belong here.

A CAR ENGINE

Fueled by new hope, she gives it another burst and spots a truck through the vegetation.

She staggers closer, weak and winded.

JONIE

Help.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Will’s truck sits in the sun, parked close to the forest with its engine running.

INT. WILL’S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Will uncorks his steel flask and takes a good swig. He doesn’t notice the woman taking shape behind the trees at the edge of the forest.

Jonie waves her arms as --
EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

-- Spyder grabs her from behind and jerks her out of sight.

INT. WILL’S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Will’s head snaps around at the commotion to his left, catching just a glimpse of the action.

He leans closer to the window – did he just see something? A woman? A blond woman?

The forest reveals nothing.

He keeps his eyes on the woods. Nothing happens. Will sighs and pockets the flask. He shifts the truck into gear and pulls out.

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Jonie struggles against Spyder’s powerful grip. She bites down on the hand that covers her mouth, drawing blood in the process.

Spyder hisses and smacks her a hard one on the side of the head.

More in rage than anything else, Jonie swings a punch at Spyder. The blow lands cleanly on his nose and snaps his head back.

It’s difficult to see who’s the more surprised, Spyder or Jonie.

Never the less, Jonie goes for seconds and swings another punch.

Spyder drops to one knee and Jonie takes off blindly into the woods.

EXT. PIKE’S TRAIL - DAY

Will parks his four-by-four near the trail-head. He gets out and casts a suspicious glance at the beat-up Dodge Ram parked a bit away.

He walks over to the vehicle, puts a hand on the hood to check for any engine heat.

Will looks through the dirty windows, sees a Wunder-Baum little three dangling from the rear view.
But not much else.

He grabs his walkie-talkie.

WILL
(Into walkie-talkie)
Chris? You read me?

CHRIS (V.O.)
Go ahead, Sheriff.

WILL
(Into walkie-talkie)
Run a plate for me, will ya? It's Four-Romeo Six-One-Six-Bravo-Alpha.

CHRIS (V.O.)
Copy that. I'll get back to you.

Will wipes sweat from his brow, stares up the trail that fades into a murky darkness.

He trots up the trail, spots a tossed aside empty beer can, picks it up.

A twig snaps to his left.
Will turns towards the sound. Sees nothing. Moves on.
Leaves rattle behind him.
He stops.

WILL
Anyone there?

Silence. The eerie kind.
He looks around. The thick vegetation hides everything.
Without moving his eyes, he slides a hand to the holstered revolver at his side, flips off the safety strap.

Another twig snaps.
One foot in front of the other, he slowly nears the leafy thicket.
Will reaches out, grabs a branch, part the leaves.

CHRIS (V.O.)
Sheriff?

Spooked, Will jumps.
WILL
Shit.

He catches his breath.

WILL
(into walkie-talkie)
What?

CHRIS (V.O.)
You better get up here right now.

WILL
You’ve got an I.D. on the car?

CHRIS (V.O.)
No. On the victims. I’m with the coroners --

WILL
I’m on my way.

EXT. WOODS – DAY

Jonie jumps across a fallen tree trunk, slips and slides down a short hill. She looks back up and spots Spyder.

He aims his shotgun at her. Instinctively she throws herself off to the side before he can squeeze off a shot.

She regains her footing and tumbles forward. She spots the river to her left, plows through an opening and runs out onto the --

EXT. SHORE – CONTINUOUS

Pebbles crunch under her feet as she storms across the shore, desperately looking for help.

She finds nothing.

Defeated, Jonie’s legs stops moving as she stares around at the wide deserted area.

JONIE
No...

Spyder tackles her to the ground.
EXT. PIKE’S TRAIL - DAY
Will gives the trail a final look and turns back.

A WOMAN’S SCREAM --
-- spins him around. His eyes quickly scan the trail: where did it come from?

ANOTHER SCREAM --
-- this timer further away.

Will rips his revolver from it’s holster and sprints up the trail.

He pulls right, tears through the bushes and heads into --

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS
As if nature deliberately does its best to slow him down, the branches slap him in the face, claw at his uniform.

MORE SCREAMS
Will reels sideways, regains his balance, throws caution to the wind and barrels ahead.

His hat flies off, tumbles around in his wake. He spots two tiny figures through the foliage. One chases the other.

His vision obscured by the leaves, Will sees, what looks like a woman, tumble to the ground.

The other person jumps her.

SHE SCREAMS
Will leaps over a fallen tree trunk --
-- slips and careens across the ground. He lifts his head.

The two figures struggle.

Will pushes himself off the ground and ignores the trees that bounce him from side to side as he fights his way through.

With his eyes locked on the two figures, he exerts his final strength in a violent burst of energy --
-- crashes through the last branches and reaches --
EXT. SHORE - CONTINUOUS

Will sees the two figures that still struggle. He whips out his gun and skids across the rocky surface.

WILL
Get the hell off her!

A preppy TEENAGE BOY -- not Spyder -- reels around, surprised.

He spots Will’s revolver, throws his hands up in utter fear.

The stylish TEENAGE GIRL -- not Jonie -- staggers to her feet, the smile on her face evaporates.

EXT. DIFFERENT SHORE - DIFFERENT DAY

Jonie fights for her life. She claws and bites at Spyder but the droopy-eyed kid is much stronger than he appears.

He belts her across the face, blood shoots from her mouth. His strong hands close around her face.

Jonie tears at them as Spyder places his thumbs over her eyes and --

-- presses down.

Jonie lets out a bone chilling scream.

EXT. SHORE - DAY (PRESENT)

Will moves closer to the two teenagers.

TEENAGE BOY
Please don’t hurt us, sir.

TEENAGE GIRL
We didn’t do --

WILL
Did he hurt you?

TEENAGE GIRL
What?

WILL
Did he hurt you?!

TEENAGE BOY
We were just --
WILL
Shut up!
    (to the girl)
Did he hurt you?!

TEENAGE GIRL
    (on the brink of tears)
No. No. We were just messing around. He's my brother. Please don't hurt us.

Confused, Will lowers the revolver.

WILL
Brother?

He looks off to the side as MOM and DAD come running towards them from their cabin.

DAD
What's going on here?

Will holsters his weapon, holds up his hands.

WILL
A big misunderstanding, sir. I'm sorry, I thought...

Mom hugs her children tight who both cry in her arms.

WILL
...I'm terribly sorry.

DAD
You're sorry? You threaten my children at gunpoint and you're sorry?

WILL
I...

Dad shakes his head in disgust. Huddled together, the family makes its way back to their cabin.

EXT. DIFFERENT SHORE - DIFFERENT DAY

Spyder gets up, looks down at Jonie who screams profusely.

She grabs her spongy eyes, while blood runs through her fingers.

Spyder jerks her to her feet and picks up the shotgun from the ground.
Jonie staggers around, blind. She frantically holds up her hands in front of her, waves them from side to side.

    JONIE
    Please. Don’t hurt me anymore.

Spyder just stands there, head tilted, observing her in a peculiar way.

    JONIE
    Please.

She grabs her belly.

    JONIE
    Pleeease!

Spyder raises his shotgun, aims it at Jonie’s stomach. Takes his time. Leans into it.

    BLAM

**EXT. SHORE - DAY (PRESENT)**

The blast from the shotgun still echoes through the air as Will bows his head, still confused but also ashamed.

Will runs a hand across his face, shakes his head, defeated.

He grits his teeth and kicks a stone towards the river.

His eyes follow the stone through the air but come to an abrupt stop as they focus upon --

**SPYDER**

-- who observes him from the opposite shore.

Will squints, returns Spyder’s stare.

The scrawny kid smiles in a odd, even eerie way. He raises a hand and sends Will a mock salute.

And disappears into the woods behind him.

**INT. WILL’S TRUCK - LATER**

Will grips the steering wheel tight, as the truck thunders along the road.
EXT. CLEARING - NIGHT (FLASHBACK - SERIES OF SHOTS)

-- The same clearing where the four friends buried Sami.

Spyder digs a shovel into the loose soil.

-- Serena looks on as Spyder shoves Bert’s corpse into a
freshly dug grave.

-- A shovel load of soil hits Jonie’s face.

EXT. MORGUE - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Will’s truck screeches to a halt at a grey one-storey
building. He jumps out of the vehicle and heads for the
entrance.

INT. MORGUE - AUTOPSY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will punches a set of metal sling doors open and enters the
tiled room.

Chris looks up, hands him a few sheets of papers and speaks
to him (M.O.S.).

Will ignores him and heads to the row of steel gurneys along
the wall.

A male FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST points to a particular cluster of
sheet covered bodies. He also talks to Will (M.O.S.).

Will moves closer to the gurneys, grabs a sheet, pulls it
back.

SAMI

Will moves to the next gurney --

LEIGH

On to the next --

RHONDA, her features scrubbed clean, peaceful.

And the next --

TED, bruised, not pretty.

Moving on --

BERT, a train wreck.
And finally --

JONIE, her eyes closed. Forever sleep.

Will recognizes her, bites his lip, covers her back up.

**INT. BERT AND JONIE’S APARTMENT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

Panoramic windows overlook the Manhattan skyline. A modern style interior topped off with expensive furniture, a big flat Screen TV and a fancy stereo.

Bert, Jonie, Ted and Rhonda sit around a dining table -- the few leftovers from their meal in front of them.

Ted leans back, taps his belly and lets out a satisfied sigh.

**TED**

Jonie, that was absolutely delicious.

**JONIE**

Thank you.

Bert, his tie loose at the collar, grabs a bottle of wine from the table -- their second -- and offers it around.

**TED**

A canoe-trip?

**BERT**

Well, yeah.

**TED**

Why?

**BERT**

Because...you know, the last four years we’ve been to the Caribbean, Vegas --

**TED**

Vegas was awesome.

**BERT**

Yeah, but we never really get to unwind, you know?

He looks over at Jonie, slips his hand into hers. She smiles.
BERT
Or spend some quality time
一起。总是这么...这么
匆匆。

特德轻轻地挠着下巴，不太相信。

BERT
我不知道，我只是想这次
我们可以把它做得稍微
不同。

特德？
皮划艇？

BERT
不仅仅如此，还有钓鱼，徒步。
只有我们和大自然。我们
把手机留在家里 —

特德？
慢着慢着慢着，没有手机？

BERT
是的。

瑞安对这个想法逐渐产生了兴趣，点了点头。

瑞安？
你知道，这听起来有点好。
(对琼尼)
你认为呢？

琼尼
嗯，这——
(咯咯笑)
——不同。

特德
不同意味着坏，对吧？

琼尼
不，只是不同，特德。

特德仍然不太相信。

瑞安？
来吧，会很有趣的。

特德
定义有趣。
He looks around at the rest of them, still a little sceptical.

BERT
What do you say, buddy?

Ted reluctantly nods.

TED
Yeah, okay. What the hell, right?

Bert raises his glass. The rest follow suit.

BERT
To...

TED
Canoeing?

JONIE
To us.

RHONDA / BERT / TED
(together)
To us.

Their wine glasses meet above the center of the table with a reverberating clink.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END