

B O Y

a science fiction film
by
Mattson Tomlin

5.01.15

NEWS CASTER (O.S.)
Today marks the three year
anniversary of the death of Danny
Drake.

Blurry hand held camera phone footage struggles to focus. A crowd of fifty circle a telephone pole.

The BODY of DANNY DRAKE (Caucasian, 16) is hoisted limply into the air by his neck. The disturbing image quickly cuts to a FEMALE NEWSCASTER.

NEWS CASTER (CONT'D)
This iconic footage was taken by an amateur photographer in Pulaski, Tennessee when the sixteen-year-old was publicly lynched after displaying what locals then called "an unnatural disposition."

Pulling out- the report is unfolding on a TELEVISION anchored in a high corner within the walls of:

INT. FIRST NATIONAL BANK - DAY

MARLA MADNICK (45) eyes the television surreptitiously from behind the teller counter. A CUSTOMER approaches her and she begins to make their deposit. Her eyes continue to dart up to the television.

NEWS CASTER
His murder sparked protests, debates, and endless cries for proof of the existence of what could be a new race of people, what some are coming to call- Ander-Humans.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

MIKE MADNICK (African American, 16) sits in a classroom, bored. MR. SELTZER (30) stands in front of Mike and two dozen teenagers. The chalkboard behind him has the words RACE CLASS GENDER GENETICS on it.

SELTZER
Race, genetic superiority... Guys, these aren't new ideas. This is what most wars have been about. This is what Danny Drake was really about.

Mike's phone buzzes. He looks down to his lap. On the screen-
ANDREA: Hey :)

Mike looks over his shoulder to meet the gaze of ANDREA
 (heart-achingly pretty 16) smiling at him.

SELTZER (CONT'D)

Mike.

MIKE

Huh?

SELTZER

Phone. Seriously. Mrs. Evans can
 hear that thing vibrating in the
 lab downstairs.

MIKE

Sorry.

The class murmurs with delight at Seltzer's catch. Mike tucks
 the phone away.

SELTZER

But this triple helix. The Z-
 Chromosome. We can't racially
 profile this. It's more than skin
 deep. It's not class, it's not...
 Race per se, and yet there is
 already a well developed elitism.
 Born completely out of fear.

A folded up triangle of paper hits Mike's shoe. Mike waits
 for Seltzer to turn away and quickly picks it up, unfolds it.

Are you going to Ross's party tnt? :)

Mike writes below it. **Probably not.** Mike refolds the football
 carefully.

Seltzer turns his back. Mike flicks the note with his thumb.
 The paper football sails over his head and lands perfectly on
 Andrea's desk.

SELTZER (CONT'D)

Genetic purity, versus genetic
 superiority... I mean this was
 Hitler's doctorate, only now
 there's a science behind it.

A student raises her hand.

SELTZER (CONT'D)

Yeah.

The football-note hits Mike's shoe again. He grabs for it, opens it.

STUDENT

How is it a superiority?

SELTZER

Well, for all we know it's a deformity. For all we know it's what makes some people like chocolate and others like vanilla. But there has yet to be a society that doesn't create sides... Except Switzerland.

Mom + Dad don't have to know... Mike smiles to himself. He pockets the note.

EXT. BANK PARKING LOT - DAY

Marla walks out of the bank and towards her car. Across the busy street, a large BILLBOARD is being erected by two workers.

Marla gets into her car, eyeing the billowing advertisement. She can make out - "GET TESTED - and the word FUTURE on the other end. She drives off.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Mike trades books from his bag to his locker in the swarming hallway.

A kid walks by with a bright yellow *Remember Danny Drake* t-shirt on. Mike takes notice of it.

Andrea hops out of the sea of students, leaning on the locker next to his.

ANDREA

So....

MIKE

I'll try.

ANDREA

You're not going to make me go to a party full of boys alone, are you?

MIKE

Alright, alright, alright. Yeah.

ANDREA

Yes?

MIKE

Yeah.

Andrea wraps her arms around him.

ANDREA

I've gotta go to practice.

MIKE

I'll see you there.

She smiles and disappears into the swarming hallway.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

FOOTBALL PLAYERS slam into each other aggressively on the field. They holler back and forth.

Backpack slung over his shoulder, Mike stares out at football and cheer practice taking place on opposite sides of the field.

He watches the Varsity team practice balefully.

Amongst the cheerleaders, Andrea notices him. She waves. He waves back.

A hairy HAND slaps him on his shoulder.

COACH REZNICK

Mr. Madnick.

COACH REZNICK (50s and suave for a coach) comes up behind Mike.

MIKE

Hey, Coach.

COACH REZNICK

You keep coming out here like this, you're gonna give me hope that you might actually join this team one day.

MIKE

Yeah... Maybe.

COACH REZNICK

Talk to your folks yet?

MIKE

Uh... Nope. Didn't get around to it yet.

Coach nods. He's seen this before.

COACH REZNICK

You think it might help if I gave them a call? I've been known to deal with squirrely parents before.

Mike smiles at this idea.

MIKE

I wouldn't want to put you through my dad's speeches. You know uh... Old football accident in the family. His Uncle's cousin's brother. Something like that. He can get pretty passionate.

Coach nods. Waits for another lead... Nothing.

COACH REZNICK

Well. There's always a place here for you, if you can talk your folks into it. I think you'd make a hell of a team player.

Reznick passes Mike and walks towards the field. Mike watches him go. Reznick blows his whistle and the team begins to form a line.

Mike nods, resigned.

MIKE

Yeah...

INT. MOVING CAR - DUSK

SCOTT MADNICK (45) drives in his Subaru down the highway. NPR plays on the radio.

LAWRENCE DRAKE (V.O.)

I just... He was just a boy. And he was so special. And we killed him. That's what we did. As a society we failed him.

NPR WOMAN (V.O.)

That's the voice of Lawrence Drake, Danny's father, shortly after Shawn Miller, Paul Doyle and Andrea Frears were acquitted of the murder of his son.

Scott looks extremely troubled as he listens.

RIVER (V.O.)

I was in total shock. Total shock. The fact that we're not treating these people as humans- I mean, this is the beginning of the fourth reich.

NPR WOMAN (V.O.)

River Dolan isn't alone in the sentiment. Since August 2016, protests and riots have been regularly staged around the world in demand for the rights of these individuals. Despite the public outcries, or possibly because of it, those with the z-chromosome remain few and far between.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike, Marla, and Scott eat at the dinner table together.

SCOTT

I was thinking this weekend we could go to Providence. Do the Fudge Festival.

MARLA

We haven't done that for a few years.

SCOTT

What do you think?

MIKE

Uh... Have to check the ol' schedule, but I think I can make it.

SCOTT

Look at this guy.

MARLA

Junior in High School.

MIKE
Yeah. You know, Coach Reznick asked
me to try out for football again.

MARLA
No. SCOTT
No.

Everyone looks surprised at the synchronicity.

MARLA
I think... That... Is a lot of
contact. And that's not-

SCOTT
He's not letting up, huh? Do you
want me to give him a call?

Mike shrugs. Marla eyes him.

MARLA
Or is he not letting up because
you're giving him a reason to keep
asking?

MIKE
It'd be nice to be on a team.
Normal even-

SCOTT
It's too-

MIKE
I know.

Marla smiles supportively.

MARLA
There are other teams you could
join... Chess?

Mike shoots her a look.

MIKE
What about track?

Marla and Scott exchange glances.

SCOTT
You like running?

Mike shrugs- *not really.*

MARLA
We can talk about that...

Scott nods, seriously considering the new thought.

SCOTT
Yeah. We'll talk about it.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Marla does dishes in the kitchen. A mini television sits on the corner of the counter, playing the news. Marla watches it carefully.

On the TV:

*An open palm print, fingers spread. Three animated ribbons, red, yellow and blue snake their way around the fingers, meeting mid-palm and forming a **triangular helix** that spirals down the wrist..*

COMMERCIAL (V.O.)
The future has always rested on the shoulders of our children. Today we are entering a wondrous new age.

A monarch butterfly crawls out of a chrysalis.

An adolescent ASIAN GIRL smiles before a white background. She holds a butterfly in her open hands.

COMMERCIAL (V.O.)
Have you noticed your child blooming? Get them tested for the unique Z-Chromosome. They are the future. Brought to you by Luna.

A SMILING MOTHER spins with the little girl.

Marla snaps the television off- her reflection can be seen in the dimmed screen. She's not happy.

In the other room adjacent to the kitchen, Marla listens to the sound of Scott and Mike laughing together.

SCOTT (O.S.)
There's no comparison between them. Two different lives.

MIKE (O.S.)
Ray Charles is the king!

SCOTT (O.S.)
Ray Charles had a solid 40 years on him. Sam Cooke died when he was 33. It's just not a fair comparison.

(MORE)

SCOTT (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 I'm not arguing with you, I'm
 saying it's not fair. Put that
 thing on.

Marla smiles, listening to them.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME MOMENTS

Mike is kneeling by a record player. Scott is lying on his back on the floor with a laptop open next to him.

Mike places a record on the turntable and Sam Cooke's *Another Saturday Night* begins.

MIKE
 Then who's the king of soul?

SCOTT
 Jerry Wexler.

Mike and Scott start cracking up.

The laptop spits out a CD. Sharpie cap in his mouth, Scott writes on the CD and tosses it to Mike.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
 Go ahead and learn something, huh?
 Just because Sam Cooke hasn't had a
 movie made about him doesn't mean
 you shouldn't know him.

Mike catches the CD. It read's RAD-DAD-TUNES. He reaches over to a portable YELLOW CD PLAYER. He places Rad-Dad-Tunes on the mount and closes the port.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The lights are off. The house is quiet. Photos rest on the wall. Happy Family.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The dishwasher finishes its last cycle, silently clicking itself off.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

The upstairs hallway is quiet. All of the doors are closed.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - MARLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Marla and Scott are asleep in bed together. Marla bolts upright, shocked out of a nightmare.

She breathes, calming herself. She looks to the clock. It reads 11:17. She looks to the hallway door, shaking herself back to reality.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Marla walks down the hallway. She reaches Mike's door. She pushes it open.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - MARLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The light clicks on. Marla shakes Scott awake.

MARLA
Scott. Scott. Scott.

Scott stirs.

SCOTT
What?

MARLA
He's gone.

SCOTT
(groggy)
God... Damn it.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Scott crouches in front of the freezer. He removes a small black pouch. He unzips it.

He holds a vial that reads **METHOHEXITAL**. He injects a syringe into the top, withdrawing the plunger. He caps the syringe and preps another one.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - MIKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Marla dumps out the contents of Mike's backpack on his bed. She quickly sifts through them.

MARLA
Where are you...

She turns to the pile of clothes on the floor. She dives through the pockets in his pants before getting to his sweatshirt. She reaches into the pocket and removes a note folded like a football.

She unwraps it.

EXT. MADNICK HOUSE - NIGHT

Pulling their jackets on, Scott and Marla get into their Subaru.

INT. SUBARU - NIGHT

Scott's in the drivers seat. He reaches within his jacket and pulls out a capped syringe, handing it over to Marla.

MARLA
We don't need that.

SCOTT
It's just in case.

Marla regards him gravely as he starts the car.

EXT. TOWN STREETS - NIGHT

The car meanders through quiet suburbia. All is quiet. Calm.

INT. SUBARU - NIGHT

Marla keeps her eyes out the passenger window.

MARLA
Let me go in on my own.

SCOTT
We're going in together.

MARLA
It'll be less embarrassing for him.

Marla looks over to him.

MARLA (CONT'D)
He's sixteen, Scott.

SCOTT
FUCK.

Scott bangs his hand on the steering wheel.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
This is not the time to make
excuses and rationalize for him. It
just takes one slip up, Marla!

MARLA
I know! Just calm down.

Scott grimaces, squeezing the wheel.

MARLA (CONT'D)
If you want him to be normal, you
have to just let him be normal.

Scott shakes his head, sitting on his frustration.

SCOTT
Normal.

EXT. ROSS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A wide yard surrounds a newly built lit up McMansion.

High school kids swarm around a house that is vibrating with the bass of house music.

The Madnick's drive down the street slowly, passing smoking kids on the sidewalk.

They park and exit the car, heading directly to the house.

The music from within envelops them. The party comes with an electric fervor- an imminent explosion.

At the open front door, a small group of teenagers stand in the way. They look at the pair, unimpressed. Marla returns their looks with a no-nonsense glare.

They make a path for her.

INT. ROSS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is dark, crowded with kids, hazed with smoke. Yells, whoops, cheers and the sound of shattering bottles barely penetrate the overwhelming beat of music.

Marla cuts through the crowd with Scott close behind her.

They gaze over the sea of kids, looking for Mike. A group of guys are doing body shots off girls with open shirts on a large dining room table. Mike isn't among them.

Marla looks up.

INT. ROSS'S HOUSE - TOP FLOOR - NIGHT

On the second floor, Marla and Scott go down a narrow dark hallway, crisscrossing with kids.

She peeks her head into a slightly open doorway.

On the other side of the room in a wicker chair bowl, Mike and Andrea are making out- his hands cruise smoothly inside her shirt over her back.

Marla steps into the room.

INT. ROSS'S HOUSE - PARTY ROOM - NIGHT

There's a group of kids between them sitting in a circle smoking pot. Laughing, oblivious.

MARLA

Mike.

The music is too loud.

MARLA (CONT'D)

Michael!

He can't hear her. One of the kids in the room taps Mike. He breaks from kissing Andrea and catches Marla's eye over her shoulder.

MIKE

What the fuck?

Andrea turns- stumbling off of Mike in surprise. Mike stays glued to the chair.

Scott takes a step from the hallway into the doorway. Mike catches his angry eyes.

MIKE (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

Mike looks around. The whole room is staring at him. Marla takes a step forward, offering her hand.

MARLA
Come on, Michael-

Mike slaps her hand away and shoots out of his chair. *His CD player falls onto the floor.*

MIKE
This is so fucked up!

Marla grabs onto him, wrapping her arms around his neck in a hug- bringing her face to his ear. She whispers loudly to him:

MARLA
Don't do this. Don't. Don't.

Photos propped up on a nearby bookshelf are vibrating- it's hard to tell if it's from the bass or something else.

Mike stops struggling. They linger like that for a moment. Marla breaks away from him. Mike has hate in his eyes, holding back tears of embarrassment.

MARLA (CONT'D)
It's okay.

She takes a step backwards. Mike hesitates for a moment. He looks back over to Andrea, who stands in the corner, mortified, holding the CD player.

INT. ROSS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Scott leads the way down the stairs. Mike follows with Marla taking up the rear. The music still plays, but the attention is overwhelmingly on them.

Mike keeps his eyes to the ground as they go down the stairs.

He passes by ROSS ELROY (18) and a group of FOOTBALL JOCKS who laugh among themselves.

ROSS
Run home, Forrest!

They start to mockingly cheer and applaud Mike.

The Madnick's reach the front door and walk out. It closes behind Marla with a SLAM:

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The front door SLAMS behind Scott as the last one into the house.

It's quiet. The clock on the wall tick. Tick. Ticks.

Marla sits on the arm of a couch. Mike sits in the middle of the couch, holding a couch pillow. Scott stands, crossing his arms.

SCOTT

I was thinking about what I was going to say to you when your mother first told me you were gone... And then I thought about it on the way over to your little party, and then all the way back... And I still don't know what to say to you right now.

MIKE

I get it.

SCOTT

No, I don't think you do. Someone who gets it wouldn't be sneaking out in the middle of the night like this. Someone who gets it would show some fucking responsibility my friend.

MARLA

Scott-

MIKE

Okay. I'm sorry. It won't happen again. Just give me a break.

SCOTT

A break. Sure. A break. I can just give you a break for sneaking out of the house, going to a party, doing drugs? Are you INSANE?

MIKE

I had it under control!

SCOTT

I AM SURE! Pot and alcohol have done wonders for your self control Michael! Abso-fucking-lutely! That must be the key your mother and I have been missing all these years!

Mike stands abruptly.

MARLA

HEY-

MIKE

Everyone goes to parties! It's normal! Everyone gets to go out, and gets to have girlfriends and drink and try out for the football team! I just want to be NORMAL! For five fucking minutes!

Scott gets in Mike's space, grabbing his face with his hands, holding his head. Marla goes to them, trying to pull them apart.

MARLA

Scott- guys, let's just step back-

SCOTT

GET THIS THROUGH YOUR HEAD. YOU ARE NOT. NORMAL. YOU DO NOT GET FIVE MINUTES OF PRETEND BECAUSE THAT'S WHEN YOU'RE GOING TO SLIP UP FOR REAL AND THEY'RE GOING TO HANG YOU IN THE STREET OR CUT YOU OPEN IN A LAB! UNTIL YOU ARE DEAD!

Mike pushes Scott: **hard.**

MARLA

MIKE!

MIKE

STOP IT! SHUT UP! SHUT UP!

Scott stumbles backwards as if he's been shot. The color drains out of his face and his eyes go black.

He struggles to breathe- the skin on his face seems to be *peeling off of him* as he vomits on his shoes. *His knees buckle, but he remains standing, as if hung from an invisible noose.*

A gut-wrenching crunch. *Scott's teeth break out of his head. He collapses- his teeth remain suspended in the air above him for a moment, before falling on his body.*

Marla is frozen fucking tension. She stares at Scott's body.

The lamp next to her begins to *rattle*. The pictures on the walls begin to shake. *The whole house is vibrating.*

Mike has tears streaming down his face. The veins in his forehead are dark. He looks *fucking petrified*.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Mom?

The lamp next to Marla explodes. The light bulbs in the room begin to shatter. Marla reaches into her back pocket and removes the syringe. She sticks it directly into Mike's neck.

His eyes roll back in his head and he collapses next to Scott.

BLACK.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SECONDS LATER

The lights are out. Shattered glass everywhere. Marla drops to her knees, bent over Scott, shaking. Crying.

Marla looks over to Mike, limp on the ground.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - MARLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Marla opens the closet door. She bangs her fist on a wooden panel on the wall. It budes. She pushes it- a secret cabinet.

She takes out a small wrapped washcloth. She unfolds the washcloth, revealing a gun.

She looks into the chamber. It's loaded. She closes the chamber.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Marla walks on broken glass from shattered family pictures.

She stops at Mike's body.

The only sound is the tick. Tick. Tick. Of the clock lying on its side on the floor.

She pulls the hammer back, pointing the gun directly at Mike's head. Her arm shakes. She stands, frozen.

An eternity goes by.

She watches Mike breathe.

Tick. Tick. Tick. The sound of the clock grows louder.

The gun quivers in her hand. The hollow chime of the hour change begins to ring. She lowers the gun and collapses in place.

Silence.

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

Marla hoists open the garage door, flashlight in hand. She goes to the near wall and grabs a shovel.

EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

The shovel breaks earth. Marla digs.

She strips down to a tank top. Keeps digging.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike remains collapsed on the floor. Scott's body has been moved.

Marla is on the other side of the room, dragging him with great difficulty.

EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

Marla rolls Scott into the hole in the yard. He lies face up. One of his eyes remains open.

Marla reaches down and closes his eye.

MARLA

I'm not going to lose him.

She kisses her fingers and places them on his forehead. She silently cries.

EXT. BACK YARD - DAWN

The ground is flat and packed where the hole was. Marla is haggard and covered in dirt. She sits on the ground and has a lit cigarette between her lips, an inch of ash hangs off of it.

She puts the cigarette out and goes into the house.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Mike opens his eyes. He is lying on the couch, a blanket covers him.

The record player is playing *Drown in My Own Tears* by Ray Charles lightly.

The carpet is gone. The room has been swept clean.

He sits up. Footsteps come from the kitchen. Mike leans over. Marla is dressed for work. She walks into the doorway, seeing Mike is awake.

MARLA

Hey.

Mike nods slightly, dazed as reality comes back to him.

MARLA (CONT'D)

This wasn't your fault.

MIKE

Whose was it then?

MARLA

Can I come over there?

Mike nods. Marla goes to him. She sits.

MARLA (CONT'D)

When you were five we saw the first signs of this... Part of you. And... God it scared the fuck out of us. Me especially. It really did. You think you can kind of handle anything, but then your kid is so much stronger than you... I didn't know what to do. But your father did.

Mike is starting to lose it. Marla wraps her arm around him, shushing him gently.

MARLA (CONT'D)

We did our best. He did his best. He was so scared for you. All the time. Michael, we've tried to give you that normal life. This was our best shot. And now it's over. You know that, right?

MIKE

Yeah.

MARLA

You and I are going to have to be a team if you want to survive.

Mike falls into her. For a moment, a reprieve from the conversation. Marla softly sings along to *Drown In My Own Tears*. She leans down and kisses Mike's head.

MARLA (CONT'D)

I have to take care of something at work. I'm going to call in sick for you and your father. If we leave this afternoon we'll have the whole weekend as a head start before anyone notices that we're gone.

Marla stands up and begins to leave.

MIKE

What did you do with Dad?

MARLA

Try not to think about it. Keep the music on, okay?

He nods.

MARLA (CONT'D)

There are two duffle bags in the upstairs hall. Get packed when you're ready.

Marla steps towards the door.

MARLA (CONT'D)

I love you.

She leaves.

The clock remains shattered on its side on the floor. It tick. Tick. Ticks to 8:30.

EXT. MADNICK HOUSE - MORNING

Mike stands at the foot of a conspicuous patch of dirt in the back yard. He looks up to the sky, tears flooding out of his eyes.

He sinks to his knees and runs his fingers through the dirt.

MIKE

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm fucking sorry.

He says it over and over, babbling incoherently. He catches his breath. It's quiet.

The wind blows the trees above him. A sharp *DING* rings out. He takes another deep breath. He reaches into his pocket and takes out his phone.

On the screen- **Andrea: You okay? :(**

Mike stares at the screen. He types. **no.**

Andrea: Where are you?

INT. FIRST NATIONAL BANK - DAY

The television displays a butterfly leaving a chrysalis.

Marla sits at a computer.

On the screen, she looks at the bank accounts for *SCOTT MADNICK*. \$21,900. She pulls out a withdrawal slip from her desk.

Marla begins to write herself a check for \$9,999.

The mute television screen mounted on the wall outside the vault flashes to a title card that reads BREAKING NEWS.

A shot of people running frantically into a parking lot. A small SWAT team ushers the runners towards them.

A REPORTER stands in front of a large glass and brick building speaking emphatically to the camera.

Marla looks up to the television. The color drains out of her face. She stands up

A co-worker comes out behind her, eyes glued to the television.

A title bar comes up on the bottom of the screen: Unknown Attacker at Athena High School.

CO-WORKER

Doesn't your kid go there?

EXT. BANK PARKING LOT - DAY

Marla scrambles across the parking lot holding a canvas shopping bag. One of her heels breaks. She ditches both of her shoes and keeps running, removing her suit jacket as she gets into the car.

She drops the bag into the seat next to her- it's got small stacks of new bills in it- \$9,999 worth in \$20s and \$50s.

She peels out of the parking lot, passing the glimmering Luna billboard.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Marla cuts across lanes, honking her horn. A light shifts to yellow. She hits the gas, speeding through the light as it changes to red.

Marla has her cell phone wedged against her ear with her shoulder. It goes to Mike's voice mail.

MARLA

God damn it!

She takes a hard left against the oncoming traffic and speeds through another intersection.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

A line of police cars and vans are blocking off the road. Several news vans have set up camp with the high school on the hill in the background.

A small army of parents and teachers have already assembled.

Marla pulls over at the edge of the cacophony. She steps out of the car.

COP

Miss- you can't park here.

MARLA

My son goes here!

COP

Please move your car.

Marla looks past the cop. A parent has his arms around a girl covered in blood.

A group of students are huddled around each other, crying.

A father holds his son's bloody hand as he's loaded into the back of an ambulance.

The voices of the crowd envelop her, all saying different things: *shooter, a bomb, an explosion- there was glass everywhere.*

Marla gets back into her car, speeding back the way she came.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - DAY

Marla bursts through the front door.

MARLA

Michael?

Nothing.

Marla runs up stairs.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

She passes Mike's room. It's empty. The duffle bags on the floor have been packed.

Marla goes to her room.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - MARLA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Marla strips off her work clothes and changes into a black tank top and jeans. She pulls on a jacket.

Marla unzips her duffle bag on the floor- verifying the gun is inside it. She closes it up.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The clock ticks on the floor.

Marla stands at the foot of the stairs leading to the front door, four duffle bags strapped to her. She looks around the house in a moment of quiet.

She steps out of the house, closing the door behind her.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Marla drives the Subaru down a heavily wooded street. She begins to slow down.

MARLA

Please be here...

She pulls over.

EXT. ABANDONED GAS STATION - DAY

An abandoned gas station sits in the sunlight. Its boarded-up windows have been vandalized over the years. A full layer of ivy has grown over the garage doors.

Marla steps out of the car.

MARLA
I'm here! Michael!

Birds chirp. Silence.

Then- Mike steps out of the nearby woods. His eyes are bleary, swollen, his face is caked in blood. He has his headphones on. He pulls them down around his neck.

Marla lets out an involuntary sigh of relief. She leans against the car. Mike goes to her. He hugs her.

MIKE
I'm sorry.

MARLA
What happened?

MIKE
-so fucking stupid-

He's holding something in his hands. Marla grabs his wrists- it's his *Yellow CD player*. The lid pops open, revealing a spinning disc. The disc slows to a stop revealing the words- *Rad-Dad-Tunes*. Mike closes the lid again.

MIKE (CONT'D)
He gave it to me.

MARLA
Were you seen?

Mike nods. Marla snaps into focus.

MARLA (CONT'D)
Look at me. We've lost our head start. They're going to come for us now. And fast. It's time. Okay?

Mike is shaken from his tears, seeing her severity. He nods and breaks away from her. He gets into the passenger's seat.

Marla gets into the car. Their doors slam in sync. The Subaru hits the road, kicking up dust as it goes, leaving the presence of the Gas station.

FADE OUT.

COACH REZNICK (O.S.)
I was down in the cafeteria, on the mezzanine for lunch duty, it was second lunch, so mostly juniors and seniors.

FADE IN.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

CAMERA POV. COACH REZNICK speaks to an OFF-CAMERA INTERVIEWER. The interview has a Ken Burns documentary feel to it. He is uncomfortable on camera.

COACH REZNICK
The mez links up with two hallways that go into the belly of the school, and it was from that East hallway I started to hear 'em shouting, and... They were shouting 'fight'.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Fight?

COACH REZNICK
Yes sir, just over and over you know, uh... *Fight fight fight* like kids do.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
And what then?

EXT. STREET - DAY

A car tire runs over a cell phone.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Coach Reznick has been replaced with a MALE STUDENT (15) with blonde hair, a little chubby.

STUDENT
-Probably like twenty kids in there, and they were all crowding around in a circle like.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Did you see who was fighting?

STUDENT

It was a lot of people. Like five or six.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

Can you name any of the people you saw fighting?

STUDENT

Joe Curly was in there.... And... I don't know if I should say. Are they gonna get in trouble?

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Mike is lying down in the back seat. Marla drives slowly, watching her speed. A cop cruiser passes them.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

A BIOLOGY TEACHER sits in the hot seat. His arm is in a sling and he has a black eye- the eyeball itself is bloodshot red.

BIO TEACHER

-What any teacher would do- what we have to do. You break up the fight. So I start tugging kids away from each other, and I'm blowing this whistle. And that's when... The walls start to shake.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

Shake.

BIO TEACHER

Oh yeah. Like an earthquake. Whole hallway was just buckling in on itself.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Mr. Seltzer sits in the seat. He has no bruises or marks on him

SELTZER

He was a smart kid. Normal kid. Did his work, I mean... Averagely. He's sixteen years old. Obviously he's going to act out a little... But I don't. No. I don't know.

(MORE)

SELTZER (CONT'D)

I don't see him planning something like this.

EXT. GAS STATION - DUSK

The subaru is parked on the far edge of a remote gas station. Marla is carefully unscrewing the license plates off of the car parked next to them.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

A male STUDENT speaks towards the camera.

STUDENT

He didn't really hang out. But he got along with people fine.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

Why didn't he hang out?

STUDENT

Just didn't. I don't know. I didn't hang out with him.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

An African American PRINCIPAL speaks to the interviewer.

PRINCIPAL

I know that his parents were very... Protective.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

Did you ever meet them?

PRINCIPAL

A few times. Nice people, but there was something... Reserved about them.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

You know they're missing?

PRINCIPAL

Yes. I do know that.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

Do you think Michael did something to them?

PRINCIPAL

I have no way of knowing that.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

But what does your gut say?

PRINCIPAL

... My gut tells me... That they were wound really tight about something. That's all I feel comfortable saying, I really didn't know them, I'm sorry.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

A Female STUDENT (18) sits at the chair. She wears a neck brace. She is crying.

STUDENT

-Ross was just hitting him, over, and over, and Andrea tried to pull him off. She was screaming... And Mike stood up everything started shaking... We just ran. We just ran.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

To the Mezzanine.

She nods, wiping her tears.

STUDENT

It's got a glass roof. The glass just started falling on us. It was like raining knives.

INT. MOVING CAR - NIGHT

Mike and Marla drive along the highway. Mike wears headphones, staring out the window somberly. Marla looks at him out of the corner of her eye. Her eyes go down to the CD player in hands. He's white-knuckle clutching it.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The red tail lights of the car disappear on the highway, like little blinking red eyes.

They're gone.

INT. BACK ROOM - DAY

The INTERVIEWER remains hidden. In his hands he holds an iPhone, a video is queued up to it. He presses play.

A crowd of students in a hallway fight. Chants of FIGHT FIGHT FIGHT are peaking the phone's speakers.

A distinct metal creaking noise rings out. Lockers begin to fly open. People start screaming.

The crowd begins to disperse. The person holding the camera begins to run, the camera catches their feet making long strides.

The light opens up as the recordist reaches the mezzanine. There's a sudden BANG followed by the sound of glass shattering. More screams. The camera looks up. Glass is raining down.

The video ends.

The INTERVIEWER puts the phone down on the table, his face still hidden. A CREEPY AGENT dressed in GREY (*Mister Grey*) takes the phone and puts it in an evidence bag. Another Agent sits at a desk.

INTERVIEWER

This didn't get uploaded to youtube or anything did it?

AGENT

No.

INTERVIEWER

Good. Who's next?

Past the interviewer, through one-way glass, ANDREA is being led into the interview room.

AGENT

Girlfriend.

INTERVIEWER

Okay.

The Interviewer exits the Back Room, passing Mister Grey.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Andrea sits in the chair. One of her eyes is swollen shut. She has bandages around her neck and shoulder. Her one good eye has tears coming out of it.

The Interviewer - DAVID KLYCE (40) enters the room. He wears an FBI badge around his neck. His hair is slicked back, buzzed on the sides. His sleeves and collar are all the way buttoned, covering tattoo sleeves.

He's friendly, casual, relaxed.

KLYCE

Andrea? My name is David Klyce. I'm going to ask you a few questions if that's okay with you.

ANDREA

Yeah.

KLYCE

Okay... Let's see here... How long have you known Michael Madnick?

ANDREA

Since fifth grade.

KLYCE

That's what, six years?

She nods.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

And you two were dating?

ANDREA

I guess.

KLYCE

Just kinda seeing each other on the side kinda thing? Or was it a little more serious?

ANDREA

We wanted it to be.

KLYCE

What got in the way?

ANDREA

His parents.

KLYCE

You know em?

ANDREA

Not really. They weren't so into the idea of him dating.

KLYCE

Yeah? Why? What are they scared of?

ANDREA

I don't know.... Uh... Just...

KLYCE

It's okay. Just take a deep breath. You know you're not in any trouble right? They told you that?

ANDREA

Yeah.

KLYCE

Okay. You're doing great... You know, I had a sister... Miranda. Two years younger than me. And I'd be out, drinking and driving, not come home... No problem. But Her? Total lock down. I think that's pretty normal. To watch out for your daughters, let your sons run wild... Right? So why was Mike different?

Andrea's eyes shift for a moment.

ANDREA

...No just... I don't think they wanted him to have a girlfriend.

KLYCE

Ohhh. Too young to be dating. That whole thing. Right? Yeah. I heard that one.

She nods. Klyce nods too.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

Were you and Mike intimate?

Andrea shifts uncomfortably.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

Do you know his parents are missing?

She nods.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

And you know he's on the run now?

She nods.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

So answer the question.

ANDREA

Yeah. Sometimes.

KLYCE

Okay. Cool. I've talked to some other people. And I heard about the party last night. Sounds like mom and dad were a little psycho, right?

ANDREA

They didn't have to embarrass him like that.

KLYCE

Might have pushed him over the edge? If someone treated me like that, it would push me over the edge.

ANDREA

I don't know.

KLYCE

Tell me about this morning.

ANDREA

He wasn't in history in the morning. I texted him and he was just freaking out, he wasn't even making sense.

KLYCE

And then he showed up at the school. Why do that?

ANDREA

I had his CD player.

KLYCE

CD player... What do you make of that?

Andrea doesn't know what to say.

ANDREA

I don't know.

Klyce smiles at this. He closes the folder of questions in front of him.

KLYCE

Part of my job is to ask questions. The other part of is to figure when people are lying. That's a big part.

ANDREA

I'm not lying.

KLYCE

I don't think you are. But I also don't think you're telling me the whole story. That's called lying by omission.

Klyce stands. Andrea jumps at the sound of his metal chair scraping the floor. Klyce walks behind her, leans over to whisper in her ear.

ANDREA

I want a lawyer.

KLYCE

No, no, no. You're confused about where you are. This isn't Law and Order, and I'm not talking to you in between trips to the donut shop. You think you know who I am because you've seen TV. You don't have a fucking clue. I'm the real deal, girl. I think you know that Michael Madnick wasn't like us. And I know you think you're protecting him. Doing him some good... But you're not. If you don't start giving me something here... I'll make sure you never see the sun again.

Andrea has tears streaming down her face, shaking, trying to keep herself calm.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

The door slams on Andrea, crying in her seat. Klyce stands in the empty hallway, removing a phone from his pocket. He puts it to his ear.

KLYCE

I'm sure now.

EXT. MADNICK HOUSE - NIGHT

Work lights surround the entire house. Black SUVs and trucks line the street.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The entire house is *crawling* with people. Three forensics agents are walking around the living room with UV lights, marking blood spatter patterns.

Behind them, more agents are taking the photographs off the walls.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - MARLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

More agents are photographing the rooms carefully before disassembling the dresser drawers.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - MIKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Two agents carefully check Mike's bed and clothes with a Geiger counter that clicks intermittently.

EXT. MADNICK HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT

Klyce paces back and fourth, lighting a cigarette.

A forensics team is carefully shoveling scoops of dirt to the side, gentle like archeologists.

FORENSICS

We got one!

Klyce goes to them.

The forensics agents use dusters to wipe away dirt off the face of dead *Scott Madnick*.

Klyce stares at the body.

KLYCE

Keep digging.

The forensic continue dusting off Scott's body.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

See if the Mom's in there with him.

INT. MEDICAL EXAMINATION ROOM - NIGHT

Klyce is sitting on the edge of the room on a metal bench, mostly in the dark. His sleeves are now rolled up, revealing ornate Japanese-style tattoo sleeves fully covering both of his arms.

Across the room, two Medical Examiners are preparing an autopsy on Scott Madnick.

Klyce lights a cigarette.

EXAMINER
You can't smoke in here.

KLYCE
Oh, right. Sorry.

Klyce chuckles, taking a deep drag from his cigarette. He watches as the examiners start an electric saw and drive it into Scott's bare chest.

KLYCE (CONT'D)
CD player...

INT. MEDICAL EXAMINATION ROOM - LATER

Scott lies dead on the examination table.

EXAMINER
What ultimately killed him was
internal hemorrhaging.

Klyce is standing over the body next to the two Medical Examiners.

KLYCE
Bleeding.

EXAMINER
Dysbarism.

KLYCE
I don't know what the hell that is.

EXAMINER
There was an extreme change in
ambient pressure. The whole body
went through Barotrauma. That's why
his teeth are gone.

KLYCE
What causes that?

EXAMINER

I mean... Diving. If you're a scuba diver, it's like ten steps up from the bends.

KLYCE

He wasn't in the water though.

EXAMINER

Barotrauma comes through shock waves too.

KLYCE

Shock waves.

A phone rings. Klyce reaches into his pocket and picks up.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

Uh-huh.

His eyes widen.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

You're kidding.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Klyce is led down a hallway by a POLICE OFFICER.

POLICE OFFICER

She said she saw the commercials.

KLYCE

Is there a father?

POLICE OFFICER

No. To be honest, I wouldn't be surprised if this wasn't even the real mother.

They stop in front of a one-way observation window. Sitting at a table with a cup of coffee in front of her is BETH (48) looking haggard, wired and showing rotted meth-teeth.

KLYCE

She have any I.D?

POLICE OFFICER

Yup. And a rap sheet a mile long. Beth Elmas.

KLYCE

Drugs.

POLICE OFFICER
And some hooking, and a little bit
of disturbing the peace.

KLYCE
I'll bet. You mind?

POLICE OFFICER
We called you.

KLYCE
Thanks for that.

Klyce goes in.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Beth chews on her nails distractedly. Klyce walks in, tucking his badge in his back pocket. He is salesman friendly.

KLYCE
Mrs. Elmas, may I call you Beth?
I'm Henry Addison, I'm with the
Luna Corporation. I hear you saw
our Ad.

BETH
Yes, I did. I... I believe my
little girl has that three chrone-
zone thingy they talk about on the
television.

KLYCE
Have you had her tested?

BETH
That shit costs money.

KLYCE
So what makes you think she's Z-
positive?

BETH
I heard there was a reward.

KLYCE
... There might be. If your
daughter had the right combination
of genetic elements.

BETH
How much is the reward?

Klyce over his shoulder, then leans close to her.

KLYCE
Ten million dollars.

Beth's eyes grow wide, a big shit-eating grin on her face.

KLYCE (CONT'D)
Shh-shh-sh.. We don't want that getting out you know. If people knew we'd have everyone coming in claiming they'd struck gold, right?

BETH
Right, right, I hear you honey.

KLYCE
So what makes you think your girl is our girl?

BETH
... She sees things. She'll look into your soul and pull it right out you. Show you visions. And she talks to *spiders and the like*.

Beth nods emphatically. Klyce nods back.

KLYCE
I can't wait to meet her.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Klyce steps out of the interrogation room. The hallway is abandoned, save for Mister Grey.

Klyce nods towards the interrogation room. Mister Grey gives him a nod back and slinks towards the room.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Dirty little bare feet dangle off of a chair, swinging happily.

Klyce enters another interrogation room. Sitting with a juice box in hand is ESME (8) dirty blonde matted hair and wearing pajamas. She hasn't been bathed in weeks. She sips her juice intently.

KLYCE
Hi. My name is Henry. What's your name?

Esme looks him over.

ESME
Your name is David.

Klyce smiles at her, genuine warmth. *He likes her.* He sits.

KLYCE
That's right, it is.

ESME
And your mommy is Carol, and your daddy is John, and you don't like talking about him.

KLYCE
... That's right too.

ESME
I know lots of things.

KLYCE
Do you know why you're here?

ESME
Beth brought me here to get money. But you're not going to give her any...

Esme considers.

ESME (CONT'D)
I don't think you're going to help her at all.

KLYCE
You're... A very smart little girl. What's your name?

ESME
Esme.

KLYCE
It's very nice to meet you, Esme. I've really been looking forward to meeting someone like you. I think you can help me-

Klyce stops. A little orange spider crawls out of his sleeve and onto the table. He and Esme look at it.

Klyce slams his palm on top of it. He raises his palm. The spider is gone.

ESME
Are you a bad man?

Esme looks at him, level headed. Klyce returns the gaze.

KLYCE
Why do you ask?

ESME
You stuck a gun in the man's mouth
and he was crying, and he said he
didn't know where Miranda was. And
you think he was telling the truth.
But you shot him anyway.

KLYCE
... That's right.

ESME
Bad men kill people.

KLYCE
Do you think I'm a bad man?

Esme looks him up and down.

Three little orange spiders crawl out of Klyce's sleeve.
Klyce looks at them, unfazed.

ESME
I think you do some bad things.

KLYCE
I do a lot of bad things, Esme. But
I do it to make the world a better
place. For girls and boys like you.
Am I lying?

ESME
... No.

Klyce opens up his palm. The three little spiders go to him.

KLYCE
I can tell that you're a very
special girl. I want to take care
of you. Give you a better life. I
was thinking you could come with
me.

The spiders crawl back into Klyce's sleeve. He smiles at her,
genuinely friendly.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

I think we could make a really good team.

INT. FARMER'S MARKET - DAY

A television hangs suspended from the ceiling in an upscale farmers market.

On the TV: Protestors picket outside of a courthouse.

NEWS REPORTER

Last week a dramatic showdown took place outside of a Maryland courthouse as the District Court began deliberations on if people with a Z-chromosome are to be recognized as human beings under the Constitution.

Police in Riot Gear stand behind plastic shields on the courthouse steps. Across from them, protestors hold signs and march in a circle. They're organized- non violent.

One of the protestors, LUKE (40s, African American) stands with a bullhorn speaking to the protestors.

LUKE

Racial oppression is rampant in this country and genetic oppression is close behind. We're not talking about it and I want to talk about it. Deny people their rights as human beings because of their genetic differences, is a dramatic step backwards, and it is coming.

The news report continues on the TV.

LUKE stands underneath the TV, chewing solemnly on an apple, watching himself speak.

A ten-year-old BOY stands close to him, looking up at the television. Luke glances over at him. The Boy stares at him in wonder. Luke gives him half a smile. The Boy smiles back.

The Boy's mother notices her son's interaction with the stranger and tugs him along, giving Luke a dirty look. Luke bites on his apple.

INT. MOVING VAN - DAY

Rain drizzles. Luke drives down the road. RIVER (25) sits in the passengers seat next to him, singing along with the radio. She has a cut up yellow shirt that says *Remember Danny Drake* on it.

EXT. LUKE'S HOUSE - DAY

The banged up MINIVAN pulls up in front of a small house. Luke and River get out.

The van has an assortment of bumper stickers on it- *We're All Humans, Green Peace, and Coexist, and REMEMBER DANNY DRAKE.*

Luke and River go to the trunk of the van and retrieve grocery bags.

INT. LUKE'S HOUSE - DAY

River hums an anthemic tune as she puts away the groceries. Luke puts down his grocery bags on the counter.

He stops. Pauses. Something is strange.

On the counter sits an electric kettle. There's a light, simmered steam coming out of the spout. Luke touches the side of it. As soon as he does - a SCREAM.

He turns.

River has her hands over her mouth. In the hallway leading to the belly of the house stands Marla, holding a cup of steaming tea in her hand.

RIVER
What the fuck!

Luke is wide-eyed.

MARLA
Hi Luke.

RIVER
Did you fucking BREAK INTO THIS
HOUSE? GET OUT!

LUKE
Shut up.

River is surprised. Luke stares at Marla in a daze.

LUKE (CONT'D)
... Hi Marla.

RIVER
You know this chick?

LUKE
Yeah. I do. Actually.

MARLA
It's been a while.

LUKE
Some time.

MARLA
(off River)
They're getting younger, aren't they?

LUKE
I'm just getting older.

RIVER
I'm right here, lady.

LUKE
It's okay. River. This is Marla.
She's... Someone I used to know.

MARLA
Pleasure.

LUKE
Why are you here?

MARLA
I need your help.

RIVER
You could have called first. We
have a phone.

Luke and Marla completely tune out River.

LUKE
You need my help.

MARLA
That's right.

A beat.

LUKE
I haven't seen you in two
decades... And you're breaking into
my house asking for help?

MARLA
Beggars can't be choosers.

Marla looks back into the dark hallway. She nods towards it.
Luke braces himself as he hears footsteps.

Mike pokes his head from around the corner.

MARLA (CONT'D)
This is Michael. This is my son.

Luke is shell-shocked. He looks from Mike to Marla and back
to Mike.

MIKE
Hey.

LUKE
... He's... He's not... *Mine?*

Marla laughs.

MARLA
He's sixteen and adopted. I think
you're safe.

LUKE
Okay... What is it you need my help
with?

Marla puts a hand on Mike's shoulder.

Behind Luke, the fruit and vegetables begin floating out of
the grocery bags. Oranges begin to circle Luke's head. River
lets out a yelp.

The oranges drop to the floor.

MARLA
We're in a little bit of trouble.

INT. LUKE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - LATER

Mike stands in the dark hallway by himself.

He listens to the voices of Luke and Marla talking behind the
nearest closed door.

At the other end of the hallway, River peeks her head around the corner, smiling at him.

RIVER
So you can push stuff around with
your mind, right?

MIKE
Yeah.

RIVER
I bet the girls love that.

MIKE
What?

River raises her eyebrows with delight.

RIVER
Oooh, never mind.

She disappears back into the other room, giggling to herself.

INT. LUKE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM- SAME

The room is a mess. Covered in piles of papers, documents, stacks of boxes. Luke lives like he's a PhD student, the messy kind.

MARLA
We first noticed when he was five.
It was just little stuff, you know
doors closing on their own, fragile
things would break when he cried.
We actually thought the fucking
house was haunted for a while. And
then the science and the news
caught up. And then people got
scared.

LUKE
They have a way of doing that.

MARLA
I saw you a couple of times. That
March in Indiana.

LUKE
Yeah, that was a lot of grief.
You'd think we were advocating for
the civil rights of lobsters.

MARLA
Always the revolutionary.

LUKE
You haven't told anyone?

MARLA
(gravely)
No. Not after Danny Drake.

Luke nods. Understandable.

MARLA (CONT'D)
He was thirteen when that happened.
It wasn't anything like it is now.
What I saw this week...

Marla shakes her head.

MARLA (CONT'D)
...I've never seen anything like
that.

LUKE
Marla. No one's seen anything like
that. Danny Drake was a... A mind
reader at best. Michael's...

MARLA
He killed his father.

LUKE
What?

Marla has tears in her eyes.

MARLA
It was over as soon as it started.
He didn't mean to. I keep trying
not to think about it but I can't
not think about it.

She looks to Luke.

MARLA (CONT'D)
It's fucking terrifying Luke. I'm
not sure I know how to help him.

Luke nods, understanding the gravity. His mind clearly
churning. He goes to her. He puts his arms around her.

LUKE
I'll help you. I'll help you both.

EXT. MADNICK HOUSE - AFTERNOON

The door to an SUV opens. Klyce reaches into the back seat and returns with Esme sitting on his hip.

She looks to the door. Mister Grey is standing in the doorway to the Madnick house.

ESME

He has to go.

Klyce looks to her. Esme looks at him petulantly.

ESME (CONT'D)

He won't stop screaming. I can't hear anything else.

Mister Grey looks at them stoically. Klyce indicates with his head. Mister Grey puts on a pair of sunglasses and clears the doorway as Klyce carries Esme towards the house.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

The Living room is covered in tape, markings, plastic bags covering the furniture. It's been wrapped up in a giant forensic analysis.

Klyce kneels against the wall, carefully watching Esme as she walks around the room.

ON ESME: Echoes of voices. An indistinguishable mix, tones of Mike, Marla and Scott's voices.

Esme walks over to record player sitting on the floor. She puts her hand on it.

She turns. Over her shoulder:

Mike and Scott sit on the floor of the living room together, the record player between them. They're singing along to Try A Little Tenderness by Otis Redding, laughing as they have a hard time matching his pitch.

Esme watches them in wonder.

Scott has a deck of cards in his hand. He flips them around.

SCOTT

Don't worry about the weight-
there's no weight to these things.
Just stop thinking for a second.
Listen to Otis, baby.

Eyes closed, Mike is deeply in tune with the beat.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
It makes it eeeeeasier to bare!

A card from the top of the deck begins to float in the air. Scott watches it with pride. He keeps singing along to Otis as more cards begin to float in the air.

Esme takes her fingers off the record player. She looks to Klyce.

ESME
 The boy's daddy tried to help him.
 He didn't have any idea what he was
 doing. So he kind of did okay.

Esme gets up. Walks out of the room. Klyce follows her.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - MARLA'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Marla lies in her bed, tears pouring.

Esme watches from the doorway, entranced, trying to understand. She goes to Marla.

Esme puts her hand on Marla's face.

ESME
 She's a good mommy.

KLYCE
 What?

Klyce stands in the doorway. Esme turns to him.

ESME
 She has a secret upstairs. She's
 thinking about it.

Klyce looks to the ceiling.

KLYCE
 Show me.

INT. MADNICK HOUSE - ATTIC - AFTERNOON

The attic is dark and dusty. There are piles of boxes being catalogued.

Esme goes to a stack of photos laid out on the floor. Her toe is touching a college photo of Marla and Luke.

ESME
Luke will help me.

KLYCE
What?

ESME
She says that. Over and over and
over.

She looks up at Klyce.

ESME (CONT'D)
That's Luke.

KLYCE
That's Luke?

Klyce bends down and picks up the photograph. He stares at young Marla and Luke in it.

KLYCE (CONT'D)
Hi Luke.

He beams at Esme.

EXT. LUKE'S HOUSE - DUSK

The sun dips below the horizon as the cover of night begins to fall.

INT. LUKE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME MOMENTS

Mike, Marla, River and Luke sit around a coffee table. River carefully rolls a large joint. Music plays in the background.

LUKE
Have you heard of the underground
railroad?

MIKE
Sure.

LUKE
Alright, smart guy. What is it?

RIVER
Here we go.

MIKE
It was bunch of people helping
slaves escape slavery.

LUKE

It was an extremely complex network of agents managing routes and safe houses to facilitate slaves escape to free states, and it is one of the only major examples of a successful, nonviolent underground resistance in our nation's history.

MIKE

Right.

LUKE

Now. The Norwegians. Took this idea and created their own underground network to help the Jews escape the Holocaust and added a vast network of resistant groups all along the Norwegian coast. Farmers, shepherds, fisherman: all freedom fighters.

River takes a puff of the newly rolled blunt and hands it to Luke, who starts smoking it.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Fast forward 80 years to today. We have the beginnings- *more-* than the beginnings of a police state.

RIVER

God damn right.

LUKE

Corporations are treated as people, people are treated as inconveniences... And people like you... Aren't even thought of as human. I believe, and I'm not alone in this, that there's going to be a time, and it's not far from now... Where the legislators of this country are going to turn their backs on you, and say you are not a human being, and therefore not protected by our Constitution, and therefore a threat to them. To us. To their... "Freedom." And then they will hunt you down and cut you up and make money off of you, and if they can't make money off of you, they will erase you. And that will be the story of you.

Luke exhales. He sees he's freaking Mike out a little. He passes him the joint.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Heavy, right? Have some medicine.

MARLA
He's not smoking that.

LUKE
Mom! It's not like he hasn't done it before.

MIKE
It's fine.

MARLA
I'm not watching my sixteen year old smoke pot.

LUKE
This is my house.

MARLA
This is my son.

LUKE
Okay, okay, we're all very old and very responsible and let's all continue talking about how awful the world is turning out and not have any fun. You're right. Mom.

Luke withdraws the joint and hands it back to River.

MARLA
So what's your point?

LUKE
What?

MARLA
About the Underground Railroad.

LUKE
Right-right-right. The point is. Here we are on the precipice of your impending political doom and we have foresight. One of the rare occasions in history where we can be ahead of the curve!

MIKE
There's another Underground
Railroad.

Luke points at him, beaming.

LUKE
Sharp! You bought yourself a sharp
kid.

MARLA
Who?

LUKE
What do you mean?

MARLA
Who runs it?

LUKE
It's an Underground Railroad. It's
people like me that run it.

MARLA
Stoners.

RIVER
Cashiers, bankers, hairstylist.
Protestors, freedom fighters.
Anyone who believes in a better
tomorrow.

LUKE
Couldn't have said it better.

MIKE
Where does it go?

Luke smiles.

LUKE
It will take you far from here
Michael. A place where you can be
safe. And maybe. Eventually. Join
your people.

The idea really hits Mike. *His people.*

MARLA
I am his people.

Luke smiles apathetically.

LUKE
Lift oranges with your mind often,
do you?

MARLA
No.

LUKE
Well. There are others. Like you.
Probably. And one day you'll find
each other. Everyone needs a
promised land.

MARLA
How does the system work?

LUKE
I make a phone call and a van picks
us up. We go to the first safe
house. They chart out a plan. And
we go...

Luke regards Marla.

MARLA
Sounds a little simple.

LUKE
... well. Not really. I can't say
anyone has ever done it. I
certainly haven't. I just have a
number and I call it, and we see
what happens.

Marla doesn't look satisfied.

LUKE (CONT'D)
I know the people at the other end
of this number. We can go there,
see if there's any organization to
it at all, and if you don't like it
we can figure something else out.
Okay?

MIKE
Mom.

Marla looks to Mike.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I think we should do it.

LUKE

And you. If I can spot you from twenty years ago, you should do something with that hair.

River is high, giggling. Mike looks to Marla, unsure.

INT. LUKE'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Marla wipes steam off the mirror. Her hair is cut short, bleached blonde. She looks strikingly different.

On the counter are her folded clothes and gun. She sets the gun aside and begins to dress herself.

INT. LUKE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Marla comes down the stairs and into the kitchen. Mike and Luke are laughing together, looking over a book.

MARLA

What is going on down here?

LUKE

Look at you, blondie!

MIKE

You had dread locks?

MARLA

OHHHH-boy.

Marla steps over to them. In Luke's lap is an old photo book. He shows it to Marla. A photo of Luke with his arm slung over Marla's shoulder, both of them covered in mud. Marla has ratty dread locks.

MIKE

It looks like there's a dead rat on your head.

MARLA

It was the 90s.

MIKE

White folks and dread locks.

LUKE

Can you believe how young we look? We're babies! Look at this one-

Luke flips the page. He reveals a photo of Marla in her underwear chained to a large tree.

MIKE
What the hell?

LUKE
I was doing a save the rainforest project and we took all of these pictures of hot girls tied up in their underwear to get people to come to the protest.

MIKE
"Hot girls"

LUKE
Shit boy, hadn't you heard? Your mom was a fox.

Marla smirks at this. The phone rings.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Hang on.

He puts the photo book in Mike's lap and goes to the phone. Marla sits next to him, paging through it.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Thanks

Luke hangs up.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Nine.

Marla looks over at the clock hanging over the door. It reads 7:30.

INT. LUKE'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - MUCH LATER

It's dark. All of the house lights are off. Luke stands by the front door. River is standing next to him. He kisses her. Looks her in the eyes. He whispers.

LUKE
Two days. Maybe three.

RIVER
Call me?

LUKE
Probably not.

River eyes Marla in the other room.

RIVER
I don't really like her.

LUKE
That's because you're jealous.

Headlights shine onto Luke and River for a moment. Luke looks out the window.

LUKE (CONT'D)
It's time.

Marla sits up. Mike is asleep on the couch next to her. His headphones are on. The CD player spins Rad-Dad's Tunes. She touches Mike and he sits up. They're dressed, packed, ready to go.

Luke opens the door. They exit. River closes the door behind them.

EXT. LUKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A black windowless van idles in front of the house, the headlights turned off. The side door slides open. A shadowy MAN (SIMON) waits for them in the back.

MAN (SIMON)
Get in.

LUKE
It's okay.

They hesitate. Luke brushes past them and gets in. Mike follows. Marla hesitates one more moment, then gets in.

INT. MOVING VAN - NIGHT

The van is pitch black. There's a metal grate separating the front two seats and the rest of the van. Little lights from the dashboard and the headlights give little clues as to who is in the van with them.

No one speaks.

MARLA
Where are we going?

MAN (SIMON)
Better you don't know.

MARLA
Better for who?

MAN (SIMON)
For us.

Marla takes Mike's hand. She whispers in his ear.

INT. MOVING VAN - NIGHT - LATER

The van bounces down a muddy dirt road.

EXT. MOVING VAN - NIGHT

The van bounces up and down the dirt road, splashing mud. It goes up a slight incline in a field.

Up ahead, buildings sit on the horizon. A silo and a farmhouse.

The van pulls up to the edge of the farmhouse and stops. The driver gets out of the car.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Marla opens her eyes. She watches as the driver goes to a metal gate and unlocks it. The DRIVER (PAUL) swings the metal gate open, then gets back into the van. Continues driving.

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

The van pulls up into the center of the Farm complex. Simon opens the door.

MAN (SIMON)
We're here.

Marla, Mike, and Luke follow.

The Farm is eerily quiet. There are no signs of animals. Nearby, the Farmhouse emits a glowing yellow light.

INT. FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

Simon leads the four into the Farm House, Paul takes up the rear. They enter a large room with a long wood table which could easily seat twenty.

Simon holds up a walkie talkie to his mouth.

MAN (SIMON)
We're here.

He turns to Marla.

MAN (CONT'D)
I know you're packing a gun. I'm
gonna need it.

LUKE
She doesn't have a gun, why-

MAN (SIMON)
Gun.

LUKE
Hey-

Marla stares him down.

MARLA
Why?

MAN (SIMON)
Give it to me.

The air turns unfriendly. Marla takes a step backwards,
guarding Mike.

Simon grabs at Marla, pushing her up against the wall and
spinning her around. Luke shouts- Paul pulls out a pistol and
points it at him.

LUKE
Marla!

The gun in Paul's hand goes off- a loud BANG. He screams,
dropping the gun. The fingers on his hand have been blown
off. Simon turns-

-Mike is pointing his index and middle finger directly at
him. The kitchen is *shaking*.

MIKE
GET AWAY FROM HER!

Simon steps away. The room is vibrating worse. Wood is
splintering.

Marla rushes to Mike and takes the headphones from his neck
and puts them over his ears. She reaches for his player and
hits play.

Little Ol' Me by Otis Redding starts. Marla wraps her arms around Mike, clutching him, rocking him back and fourth, her eyes squeezed shut.

Luke has taken cover underneath the long table. He stares up at them.

The vibration goes from a constant into a pulse. It lingers there for another moment, then stops altogether.

The room is silent. Marla breaks away from Mike. His eyes are red, full of tears.

She smiles, breaking into laughter of relief, putting her hands on his face. They hug.

A slow clap starts.

Marla and Mike turn.

At the other end of the long table is a group of six people. Leading the group is HARRIET (50) and GARRETT (55) both salt-and-pepper hippies. Harriet is clapping.

HARRIET

Amazing. Just. Amazing.

LUKE

Jesus Christ, Harriet.

Luke goes towards the group. Harriet calls over to Simon and Paul

HARRIET

Simon? Is he okay?

Simon is on the ground, cupping Paul's bleeding hand.

SIMON

No he's not okay! He's blown off his hand!

HARRIET

Well that serves him right, we didn't bring these people here to shoot them, did we. Can you guys take care of him please? Thank you.

Several of Harriet's posse go to Simon and Paul's aid, picking him and his fingers up. Harriet and Garrett speak with Luke in low mumbles.

MARLA

Hello! You're in charge here?

Harriet approaches Marla, trying to get hold of the situation.

HARRIET

That was *extremely* unnecessary, we have a strict no guns policy for visitors.

MARLA

I can see that.

GARRETT

Why don't we start over, if we can try to. I am Garrett. This is Harriet. You're in our home and we welcome you.

LUKE

This is Marla and Michael Madnick.

HARRIET

Michael. It's very nice to meet you. We've been waiting for a very long time.

Harriet extends her hand to Michael only. Michael shakes it.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

You'll have to forgive the cloak and dagger of it all. But we've never met a genuine Ander-Human as far as we know. We're all a little nervous. I'm afraid we will have to insist about the gun.

Marla isn't happy about it.

MARLA

Are you worried about your safety?

HARRIET

We're worried about everyone's safety.

LUKE

It's alright.

Marla produces the gun. Garrett takes it and walks off with it.

HARRIET

We're so glad you're finally here.

INT. FARM HOUSE - WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Marla and Mike sit on a couch in a living room. The walls are coated with tattered political posters, newspaper clippings, magazine covers, all related to the politics around the third helix. Harriet, Garrett and several others make a crowd in the relatively cramped room.

There are photos of children and teenagers pinned around a map, different colored sharpie lines and pins connecting them.

HARRIET

It's wasn't a stretch of the imagination that Danny Drake wasn't the only Ander-Human out there. There's probably hundreds more. But they're either too scared to come out, rightfully so- or they don't know what they are yet.

GARRETT

You've seen the ads? The Luna Corporation ads? 'Our Children are the Future' right?

MIKE

Yeah, they're everywhere now.

GARRETT

It's an angle to get you to identify yourself. Create parental concern, convince mommy to test her kids out of concern. Or personal gain. It's the red scare all over again.

HARRIET

There have been others. Suspected. Not many. A lot of it falls under urban legends, but the internet helps substantiate some of it. We want to help them, but we can't exactly put out a commercial like Luna does.

MARLA

You know that Michael was involved in an accident at his high school?

HARRIET

Law enforcement is looking for you, but as best as we can tell, they don't have a read on where you're headed. We'd like to keep it that way.

Harriet puts a map down on the coffee table in front of them. She points to it and speaks almost exclusively to Mike.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

Things are better for you in Canada. For one, they don't lynch their citizens. But we've been setting a pretty low bar in this country.

MARLA

Canada.

HARRIET

There's a network of people like us out there. We'll help you get there. We'll start off by getting you out of the state. From there, we'll stop in the White Mountains then cut East. Someone else will take you across to New Brunswick. That's the easiest place to do it.

MARLA

You've done this before?

Silence. Nothing.

MARLA (CONT'D)

You guys don't really expect us to risk ourselves on a theory, do you?

GARRETT

You're right. A lot of it is theory. We have... Contacts that we trust. Like Luke trusts us, and so on, and so on. It's not a perfect system. But it's something. For your boy, it's something to fight what's otherwise inevitable.

HARRIET

Others have done it.

MIKE

How many?

HARRIET

We couldn't say. I'm sorry. We've heard of a few. Maybe ten. It's not exactly something we're inclined to keep records on.

MIKE

What happens if we get to Canada?

HARRIET

You start over.

MARLA

Just like that, huh?

Marla and Harriet lock eyes.

HARRIET

I know you're looking out for yourself and it's totally normal to be skeptical. But we're in this just as much as you.

MARLA

I'm not so sure I agree.

Silence. Garrett breaks the moment-

GARRETT

We have to make some arrangements. It should only take us a day. If things go smoothly, we'll be able to get going in two nights. You'll stay here in the meantime.

Marla and Harriet are still locked in eye contact.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

...Is that okay?

MARLA

Yeah. That's just fine.

INT. FARM HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Marla and Mike are in a small room with two twin beds separated by a night stand. They sit on their respective beds, backs to each other as they change.

MARLA

What do you think?

MIKE
About these people?

MARLA
Uh-huh.

MIKE
I think they're weird.

Marla nods.

MIKE (CONT'D)
But I think they want to help us.

MARLA
You don't go anywhere without me,
okay.

MIKE
I know.

MARLA
I mean it.

MIKE
Mom. I won't.

MARLA
Okay.

A knock at the door. Luke pokes his head in.

LUKE
Everything alright?

MARLA
Fine. Thanks. Good night.

Luke hesitates.

LUKE
Can I talk to you for a second?

Marla gets up, goes to the door.

MARLA
Be right back.

INT. FARM HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Luke and Marla stand outside the door.

LUKE

Look just... I'm your friend. Try to keep it together, alright?

MARLA

What?

LUKE

The thing with the gun, the attitude... You haven't been putting on a friendly face.

MARLA

Should I be?

LUKE

These guys are the real deal. They're here to fight for your son. Marla. They will *die* for him. You understand?

MARLA

Alright.

LUKE

Okay?

MARLA

Yeah. Alright.

LUKE

I'm sorry. I know you've been through a lot. I'm just trying to look out for you.

Marla softens at this.

MARLA

Okay. Thank you. Good night.

She backs into her room, leaving Luke in the hall.

Luke looks down the hall, which ends at a stair case. Peeking up, just visible from the stairs is Harriet, staring at him.

INT. FARM HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Marla lies down in bed. She turns off the light. She twists her wedding ring on her finger. She closes her eyes.

INT. FARM HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING

Marla opens her eyes. Surprised- it's as if no time has passed. She sits up. Mike is gone, the bed is unmade. She springs up and exits the bedroom in her bare feet.

INT. FARM HOUSE - MORNING

Back in the room with the large table, Paul, Simon and another man are eating breakfast. Marla looks down to Paul's hand. It's wrapped up in bloody dark brown gauze. He gives Marla a dirty look.

SIMON

Your boy's outside.

Marla goes out the front door.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - MORNING

The door slams behind Marla as she heads towards the silo. Music is echoing across the farm - Joe Tex's *The Love You Save (May Be Your Own)* blares loudly and openly. It's oddly unsettling.

A small crowd has amassed on the outside of the open silo, about twelve people.

Garrett sits by a set of speakers playing the music. Harriet is in the front of the group that is gathered around Mike.

MARLA

Michael!

She stops.

Mike is floating. About a foot off of the ground. He's got happy tears flowing down his face. It's shocking- he actually looks at peace for once.

He opens his eyes and his feet touch down on the ground gently. The crowd is full of excited energy, chattering amongst themselves. Harriet goes to Michael and puts her hands on his face, kissing him on the cheek.

HARRIET

Music is a lubricator! It cuts through your defenses and gets to your emotional truth. Did that feel good?

MIKE
I hadn't done it like that before.

HARRIET
You're going to get much better.

MIKE
I feel tired now.

HARRIET
You need to rest, child!

Harriet looks at Marla, beaming.

HARRIET (CONT'D)
Had you seen that??

Marla is less impressed.

MARLA
No.

HARRIET
You are a miracle.

She hugs him. Mike smiles. The crowd is moving in further. Hands are touching Mike.

Mike wipes the tears from his eyes, still smiling.

Marla is outside of the crowd. Garrett stands next to her.

GARRETT
We've never seen anything like him.

MARLA
No one's seen anything like him.

Quiet as the crowd continues to touch Mike. Mike rises a foot or two higher once again.

MARLA (CONT'D)
Where's Luke?

GARRETT
He had to leave before dawn.

Marla wasn't expecting that.

MARLA
He didn't say anything to me.

Garrett keeps his eyes on Mike and Harriet, never looking towards Marla.

GARRETT

It wasn't an expected departure. We didn't need him here.

He steps forward towards the crowd.

Marla stands on the outside of the group, alone. She can't help but smile at Mike's expression, floating in the sky.

INT. FARM HOUSE - WAR ROOM - DAY

The Farm House is empty. Music still echoes outside through the open windows.

Marla steps into the War Room. She goes to the board with the faces of children and teenagers. At the top of the board is Danny Drake.

Below him are a dozen other faces of various ages and races. They each have a newspaper article or two pinned under them, headlines like *CHILD FALLS FROM FIFTH STORY WINDOW, UNSCATHED* and *SOURCE OF EXPLOSION UNKNOWN*.

A map of the United States has pins and circles in a dozen cities scattered all over.

HARRIET (O.S.)

Danny Drake will always be their martyr.

Marla jumps. Harriet is staring at her.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

That was his gift to them.

MARLA

Some gift.

HARRIET

He may not have been as willing as Christ supposedly was. But that doesn't mean the result will be any different. He was that first spark. Something people could rally behind.

MARLA

You people seem to have a real interest in this.

HARRIET

Oh... Marla. It's the future. They are Gods among men.

Marla chuckles. Harriet isn't laughing.

MARLA
You're serious!

HARRIET
I think you underestimate him.

MARLA
No. I know exactly what my son can do. But I keep in mind he's a sixteen year old boy.

HARRIET
He's well spoken. He's handsome. And with a little more work, he could be very important.

MARLA
To who?

HARRIET
There's a movement coming. Things are going to start happening that you can't protect Michael from, and he's going to have to stand up for himself. And... If you wanted, you could stay here. We could give Michael and of course you shelter as we prepare.

MARLA
I know you guys are tied up in a whole whirlwind of politics, but this is a child, this is my child. And I just want to get him to safety. Luke said you would help us.

HARRIET
We'll do everything we can. For him.

Harriet puts a hand on Marla's shoulder comfortingly and walks out.

EXT. LUKE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

A knock at the door. River opens it. Klyce stands in the doorway. He wears a T-shirt with a stencil of Danny Drake, shredded jeans. His tattoos are showing- he looks like a different person.

RIVER
Hey.

KLYCE
Hey! Uh...

Klyce looks around, confused.

KLYCE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, maybe I have the wrong house, I was looking for Luke?

RIVER
No, you're right, this is Luke's house.

KLYCE
Oh, you're his uh, wife?

River laughs. She turns on the flirt to the handsome guy with the tattoos.

RIVER
I'm River.

KLYCE
Oh, you're *River*, of course you are.

RIVER
Who are you stranger?

KLYCE
I'm Chris.

RIVER
Chris?

KLYCE
Luke and I went to college together. Got in a whole mess of trouble back in the day. He ever mention me?

RIVER
He's kept you a secret.

KLYCE
Is that right?

RIVER
That's right.

Klyce gives her a devilish smile.

KLYCE
Luke around?

River fakes a pout, shaking her head.

RIVER
Nope. Not around.

KLYCE
Uh-huh. And what are you doing now?

RIVER
I don't know.

KLYCE
You don't know? Well, I was wondering maybe I could come in for a second, just leave Luke a little note for when he gets in?

River looks Klyce up and down.

RIVER
Chris, right?

KLYCE
Yeah, that's right.

RIVER
You really know Luke?

He gives her a big toothy grin.

KLYCE
Why would I lie?

INT. FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

A group of fifteen sits around the long table. Marla sits at the table between a few women. Mike sits a few seats down from her, laughing at something Garrett is whispering as he points across the table with his spoon.

Marla glares over to Harriet. Harriet catches the look. Marla eases the tension in her face and gives Harriet a polite smile. Harriet returns it.

She returns to eating. Her eyes glance over to Mike. She waits a moment. They make eye contact. She shifts her eyes to the opposite end of the room for a moment and raises two fingers slightly.

She gets up and goes around the corner.

The laughter in the other room continues. She waits. She waits.

Mike rounds the corner after her.

MIKE
What?

MARLA
I don't like what I'm feeling.

MIKE
What?

MARLA
This doesn't feel right.

MIKE
They're just weird.

Marla's eyes dart around the corner. Harriet is looking at them, still smiling.

MARLA
Are you okay?

MIKE
I'm okay.

MARLA
You're sure.

MIKE
Mom!

MARLA
Okay.

Mike hesitates, seeing she's really upset.

MIKE
Look... We'll be moving again tomorrow. They just want to take care of us. It's okay.

He hugs her.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Okay?

MARLA
You sound like your father.

She stops. Mike is frozen, upset- the feeling is caught in his throat.

MARLA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry-

Mike shakes his head.

MIKE

No. That's good. I like that.

She hugs him again.

HARRIET (O.S.)

Everything alright?

MIKE

Yeah!

Mike breaks away from her and goes back around the corner to the dining room.

INT. FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

Marla sits back down at the table, this time next to Mike. Simon comes around with a bottle. He begins pouring the bottle into the cups around. The air around the table is light, jovial, extremely conversational. Marla tries smiling, starting to lighten up.

Simon runs out of liquid in the bottle just short of Mike and Marla's cups.

SIMON

Hang on.

He shuffles off for a moment and returns with a second bottle. He begins pouring.

Mike takes a drink. He downs the whole thing.

Marla sips it. She pushes the cup away from her, crinkling her nose.

Laughter erupts.

INT. FARM HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mike is passed out on the bed. Marla is on her bed, watching him. She closes her eyes. They open again. She closes them again.

The door to the bedroom opens.

A set of hands grab her. She opens her eyes, *instantly* begins to fight. A body is on top of her, mounting her. A gloved hand covers her mouth, the other hand starts slapping her on her forehead.

SIMON

Shh! Stop. You make a sound I'll slit that kid's throat. You hear?

Marla nods. Another figure comes around. It's Paul his right hand is taped up. He holds his gun with his left hand.

PAUL

She's supposed to be unconscious.

SIMON

I *know*.

PAUL

Did you give it to her?

SIMON

Just shut up.

PAUL

She isn't supposed to fucking be awake.

SIMON

On three we're getting up and going outside, you understand?

Marla nods

SIMON (CONT'D)

One... Two...

He gets off her silently. Marla rises. Two guns are on her. Marla looks over her shoulder. Mike is fast asleep, snoring.

They lead her to the hallway.

INT. FARM HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Simon is in front of her, facing her walking backwards. Paul is behind her. Marla walks slowly, her hands out to her sides, palms up.

MARLA

What are we doing?

SIMON
SHHH! SHUT. UP.

They are heading towards the stairs.

MARLA
He's not going to do a god damn
thing for you if he thinks you hurt
me.

SIMON
SHUT IT.

Simon takes one step down the stairs, backwards.

Marla slams her foot directly into Simon's face. He falls backwards down the stairs. His gun goes off- shooting Paul in the chest.

Shouts comes from the other end of the farmhouse.

Marla falls down the stairs on top of Simon. She goes for his gun. He grabs at her.

They wrestle, Marla has the upper angle and the leverage. She twists the gun down. It goes off, blowing a hole in Simon's shoe.

He howls like a wolf.

Marla is up. Running up the stairs, over Paul's body and back down the hallway. Yelling in the distance. Someone is ringing a dinner bell.

INT. FARM HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Marla hops into the bedroom and pushes her bed against the door, blocking it. She runs to Michael.

MARLA
Michael!

She shakes his whole body, violently.

MARLA (CONT'D)
Mike! Wake up!

She slaps him across the face. He does not wake. There are people outside the bedroom. Pushing on the door. Bumping the bed.

She grabs a glass of water from the middle table. She pours it on his face.

Mike sits up with a start- Marla goes flying back into the wall across the room. Mike pants in terror, coming out of his drugged sleep.

MARLA (CONT'D)
WE HAVE TO GO.

Mike gasps, looking to the shaking door.

MIKE
Okay-

Marla goes to the window. She opens it.

MARLA
Come on!

Mike grabs his CD player off the night stand. Marla ushers him out the window first. As the door begins to splinter open, Marla hops out.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

They fall out the second story window. It's not an easy fall. Mike makes it graceful. Marla hops up with a limp.

By the barn are three vehicles. A Jeep, the Van, and a Toyota.

MARLA
Check them for keys!

Marla goes to the Toyota. It doesn't even unlock. Mike tries the Jeep.

MIKE
Keys!

From within the farmhouse, lights are turning on. A few people step outside. Marla points a gun at the door.

MARLA
GET THE FUCK BACK INSIDE!

She shoots over them, hitting the side of the farm house. She points the gun down to the Toyota and shoots one of the tires. She does the same with the van.

Mike is at the wheel of the Jeep. Marla hops in the passengers side.

They begin to drive.

Garrett, Harriet, and a gaggle of others step out. Garret gets into the van. It starts. He begins driving after them.

Mike drives down the Farm House road. Ahead of them is the metal gate.

MARLA (CONT'D)

Watch out!

Before the Jeep has a chance to make an impact, the gate splits apart. Marla looks behind them. The Van is struggling on the dirt road with one flat tire.

They veer off the road and onto another one. The headlights of the van growing distant.

Marla gasps for air. She's covered in Simon's blood. She reaches over to Mike and begins touching him.

MARLA (CONT'D)

Are you hurt? ARE YOU HURT?

MIKE

No!

The Jeep is so open. They're sitting ducks, covered in bloody pajamas.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Where are we going?

Marla closes her eyes, calming her nerves.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Mom!

MARLA

Uh- I- Uh... Just keep driving.
Don't stop.

The wind blows her blonde hair.

MARLA (CONT'D)

Just don't fucking stop.

She takes a deep breath. She begins to cry. She covers her face.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The Jeep cruises down the highway.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAWN

The sun is rising. The Jeep is parked on the side of a forested road.

Marla is kneeling by a creek at the side of the road. She splashes water on her arms, on her chest, washing off the blood.

She goes to the drivers seat of the Jeep.

MARLA

Move over.

Mike complies. He looks exhausted.

MARLA (CONT'D)

How's your head? Are you okay?

She grabs his face. He shakes his head away.

MIKE

Fine. I'm fine...

Mike is pissed.

MIKE (CONT'D)

... I feel foggy.

MARLA

They drugged you.

MIKE

Yeah.

MARLA

...

She studies him.

MARLA (CONT'D)

What is it?

Mike laughs in spite of himself. He shakes his head in disappointment.

MIKE

I just really wanted that to work. You know? I just wanted something that wasn't... Fucked up.

He closes his eyes, fighting back tears.

MIKE (CONT'D)
It's starting to feel like we
should give up.

Marla slaps him across the face. His eyes open. Shocked.

MARLA
Stop it.

She points an angry index finger at him, holding back a sudden rage.

MARLA (CONT'D)
You stop it... You don't need Luke.
And you sure as shit don't need the
fucking Manson family or any
Underground Railroad or anything
else. Because you have me.
Michael... I don't have the
answers. All I know is that if
anyone touches you I will fucking
cut them in half.

Silence. Marla lets out an exhausted breath.

MARLA (CONT'D)
That's the best I got, kid.

Mike nods, sobered.

MIKE
I love you.

Marla softens. She puts her hand on his face, wiping the tears off his skin. A sad smile.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Where are we going?

MARLA
... Home, baby.

She puts the Jeep into drive.

MARLA (CONT'D)
We're going home.

EXT. FARM - MORNING

The silo is on fire. Harriet, Garrett and half a dozen others are on their knees in a row their hands behind their heads. Mister Grey stands over a dead body at the end of the line.

The farm is teeming with government agents, guns drawn.
Lockdown.

Klyce walks confidently towards the farm house with Esme in his arms.

Harriet watches Esme as she and Klyce pass. They lock eyes for a moment.

INT. FARM HOUSE - WAR ROOM - MORNING

Klyce puts Esme on the ground as he approaches the board of data in the war room. Esme looks around.

ESME

They're gone already.

KLYCE

How long?

ESME

This morning.

Klyce rips a photograph of a kid off the wall, looking at it carefully.

INT. GOODWILL - DAY

Marla walks into the Goodwill. Outside, Mike sits in the Jeep. The television in the corner plays the news.

She goes to the back and she grabs two T-shirts. A third for good measure. She grabs a pair of jeans. A pair of shorts.

She walks back out towards the door.

CASHIER

Excuse me!

She bolts. Marla hops into the Jeep. It peels out onto the road.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Dressed in their new Good-Will clothes, Marla stands by the gas pump.

She looks to Mike, who studies the pump carefully. He opens his hand.

The hose jerks momentarily. Gas begins to flow. She smiles at him.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The Jeep weaves through traffic. Marla changes the station, listening to the radio.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

The Jeep crosses state lines into Vermont.

EXT. BACK WOODS ROAD - NIGHT

The Jeep drives down an old road, hitting every pothole along the way.

The Jeep passes a rusted mailbox that reads MA_NIC_.

INT. MOVING JEEP - NIGHT

Mike sleeps in the back seat. Marla pulls the Jeep to a stop. She looks out the windshield.

An old wooden house sits in the woods. The paint is peeling and the siding is coming down.

Marla looks back to Mike then gets out of the Jeep.

EXT. SUMMER HOUSE - NIGHT

Marla walks up rotted stairs and onto the front porch of the house. She looks under a mossy door mat. A small key sits on the ground.

She picks it up and opens the door.

INT. SUMMER HOUSE - NIGHT

The door creaks eerily. Marla steps into the house. Shadows and moonlight criss-cross. Her eyes track across the room. She stops.

Most of the furniture is covered in white sheets. A sole armchair sits uncovered, the white sheet sits on the floor next to it.

BRUCE (O.S.)
Are you out of your fuckin' mind?

Marla jumps.

A FIGURE stands in the adjacent doorway. The Figure moves and hits a nearby light switch. A small lamp turns on, revealing BRUCE HALL (77, denim, flannel and a military buzz cut.)

BRUCE (CONT'D)
Oh you look surprised. Well. Keep that up! You should be surprised that the Feds aren't putting a couple of holes in your tits.

MARLA
What are you doing here, Dad?

Bruce scowls.

BRUCE
Me? This is my god damn house!

MARLA
No. You live in Revere.

BRUCE
I've had cops, feds, and news reporters knocking on my god damn door for the past 48 hours because of you, what do you think I'm doing here? I'm hiding! How do you know you weren't followed?

MARLA
I wasn't followed here.

BRUCE
How sure are you of that?

MARLA
I'm SURE, Dad. Okay! I'm sorry I'm such a fucking inconvenience, I didn't think you would be here!

BRUCE
You didn't think period! Going to your summer house? That's the first place I'd look!

MARLA

I don't have anywhere else to go!
You wanna kick me out, kick me out,
but I'm taking what I came here
for!

He considers. Nods.

BRUCE

You look like you need a drink.

INT. SUMMER HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is spare, extremely kept. Black and white photos hang on the wall. A deer head is mounted with fishing hats hanging from the antlers.

Bruce pours Marla a glass of whiskey.

BRUCE

You see the news?

MARLA

I've been a little busy.

He chuckles.

BRUCE

Yeah. Well. They figured it out.

MARLA

What?

BRUCE

That it's the two of you. For a while they just thought it was just your little niglet.

Marla glares at him.

MARLA

Your grandson's name is Michael.

Bruce nods.

BRUCE

I thought you said he'd never be my grandson.

MARLA

Yeah, well. You didn't exactly welcome him with open arms, now did you.

BRUCE
Uh-huh... So what's the plan here,
dandelion?

MARLA
The plan?

Marla sighs. Then she laughs, shaking her head.

MARLA (CONT'D)
Ah, yeah. The plan. The plan has
gone to hell a couple of times,
Daddy. I don't know. The plan is to
disappear.

BRUCE
This isn't exactly 1975. It's a
little harder to do that nowadays.

MARLA
I had just under ten grand in cash.
I had a gun. I had a head start. I
had the tactical advantage. I lost
it. And I've been playing catch up
ever since.

Bruce nods.

BRUCE
So you need money.

Marla shrugs, tears welling in her eyes.

MARLA
Can you pretend for five god damn
seconds that I'm your daughter and
you love me?

She shakes her head at him.

MARLA (CONT'D)
I will die before they take my kid.
I will die before they take my kid.

She locks eyes with him.

MARLA (CONT'D)
I will die before they take my kid.

MIKE (O.S.)
Mom-

They look to the front door. Mike is letting himself in.

MARLA

Come here.

He does.

MARLA (CONT'D)

Michael Madnick, meet my father,
Bruce Hall.

Bruce eyes Mike uncertainly. Mike does the same.

MIKE

Hey.

BRUCE

Boy, that's how you say hello to
your grandfather?

MIKE

Boy?

He looks to Marla.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Ma, You didn't tell me grandpa was
in the Klan.

Bruce laughs with appreciation.

BRUCE

You might be my grandson after all.
Alright then. Alright.

Bruce extends his hand. Mike shakes it.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Michael.

INT. SUMMER HOUSE - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Marla stands in the guest bedroom. At the foot of the bed is a wooden chest. She opens it up, revealing a pile of linens.

She removes the layer of linens, uncovering a rifle and a shotgun.

She sits on the bed with the shotgun. On the night stand is a faded wedding photo of her parents- Bruce wears a Marine's uniform.

INT. SUMMER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike peels through a stack of records stacked on a shelf.
Bruce watches him carefully.

BRUCE
You like music?

MIKE
Old stuff. Sam Cooke. The
Pretenders. Joe Tex.

BRUCE
You sound like your dad.

MIKE
Doesn't sound like a compliment.

Bruce chuckles.

BRUCE
No. I guess not. Always found him
to be a little peculiar. What's he
been doing while you and your
mother have been carving your place
in the ten most wanted?

MIKE
He's dead.

Mike takes a record out of its sleeve. He places it on the
player.

BRUCE
I didn't know that.

The music starts playing. Johnny Cash's *The Man Comes Around*.
Mike closes his eyes, letting himself slip into the music.

MIKE
It was my fault. I lost control.

Gracefully, as if underwater, dozens of small items begin to
float into the air. Pens, extra pairs of glasses, loose
change, a pack of cigarettes- they all engage in an aerial
ballet.

Bruce watches in amazement. The pack of cigarettes opens, the
cigarettes all spill out. The paper and tobacco split apart
from each other, and the papers snake around each other.

They form a perfect paper sphere, which floats in front of
Bruce. He opens his hand and the paper sphere rests gently in
his palm.

MIKE (CONT'D)
But I'm working on that.

The Johnny Cash song comes to an end. All of the floating items hit the ground with a crash.

Silence. Bruce clears his throat.

BRUCE
You gonna fix my cigarettes?

EXT. SUMMER HOUSE - NIGHT

Marla sits on the back porch, looking out into the woods. She cleans the shotgun and rifle like it's second nature. She finishes and goes inside.

INT. SUMMER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike is asleep on the couch. Bruce sits at the table, carefully rolling cigarettes.

BRUCE
That's some kid you got there.

MARLA
Yeah. God he's so tired.

BRUCE
Being an outlaw will do that.

MARLA
Mm.

BRUCE
When are you going to head out?

MARLA
I was thinking tonight. I don't want to give you any more trouble.

BRUCE
Probably smart.

MARLA
Yeah.

BRUCE
You expecting to use that shotgun?

MARLA

I was expecting to be in a cell
getting water boarded by now.

BRUCE

No, you'll give em a good run
before it gets to that.

MARLA

Doing my best.

Silence.

BRUCE

Think you actually have a shot?

MARLA

I don't have a choice.

INT. SUMMER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME MOMENTS

Mike lies on the sofa asleep- the conversation inaudible,
instead replaced with low echoes of far off voices swirling
around.

Mike's eyes open. He sits up- turns to Marla.

MIKE

Mom.

MARLA

We have to go.

She turns to Bruce, panicked.

MARLA (CONT'D)

I can't move my legs.

INT. MOVING SUV - NIGHT

ESME opens her eyes. Klyce sits next to her in the back seat.

ESME

Take Michael and run.

INT. SUMMER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME MOMENTS

Mike sits up.

MIKE

What about you?

MARLA
I'll be fine-

INT. MOVING SUV - NIGHT - SAME MOMENTS

ESME
- Just go.

Klyce speaks into a walkie-talkie.

KLYCE
They're moving.

INT. SUMMER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike puts Marla's arm around his shoulder. He pushes to lift her up.

Marla lets out a scream. The chair rises with her.

Mike's eyes go to the window. Headlights can be seen coming through the woods.

INT. MOVING SUV - NIGHT

Esme stares straight ahead-

INT. SUMMER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME MOMENTS

Mike stares straight ahead - as if they've locked eyes. He grits his teeth.

INT. MOVING SUV - NIGHT

VIOLENT FLASHES OF RED WHITE AND BLACK, A CACOPHONY OF ELECTRIC FEEDBACK. An atom bomb goes off in Esme's head.

She squeezes her head in pain at the sensory shock.

INT. SUMMER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Marla's legs are free, she stumbles over Mike. She grabs the duffle bag and shotgun with one hand and Mike with the other.

Bruce goes to the front door. Opens it. A blinding white spot light shines on him. Bruce raises his hand in front of his eyes. The spotlight turns off.

Bruce looks down to his chest. It's covered in moving red dots.

EXT. BRUCE'S HOUSE - BACK - NIGHT

Marla and Mike bolt out the back door. Mike stops.

MARLA

Come on!

MIKE

I can stop them.

MARLA

Michael!

He speaks deliberately but peacefully.

MIKE

We're not going to get away.

He turns back to the house. Focused. He throws his arm skyward.

A single panel of wood rips itself off the side of the house and flies into the sky- as if gravity were reversed.

EXT. SUMMER HOUSE - NIGHT

Klyce and two dozen AGENTS stand out front, assault rifles pointed at the front of the house.

AGENT

Put your hands on your head and turn around.

Bruce complies.

BRUCE

There's no problem.

It's alarmingly quiet. Klyce stands shielded by the open door of an SUV.

Out of the darkness, a jagged piece of wood flies through the sky and crashes into the SUV windshield, lodging itself halfway through it.

Another piece of wood comes flying through the sky.

The agents look around at each other. Klyce looks into the back seat of the SUV where Esme still sits strapped in.

Klyce looks to the sky. *Hundreds* of jagged pieces of wood are coming towards them like arrows. Klyce dives head first under the SUV as they begin to land.

The agents all scatter- guns fire - several get hit by the hailing boards- a plank drives itself straight through an Agent's thigh.

Klyce crawls up towards the open SUV door. Esme is gone.

He turns, another board narrowly missing him.

KLYCE

Esme!

He stands. Planks continue hailing down around him.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

ESME!

EXT. SUMMER HOUSE - BACK - NIGHT

Mike continues his focus- the precision is gone. Boards crash into each other. Others fly a few feet into the sky only to come crashing back down onto the ground without launching over the house.

Marla watches the veins in Mike's forehead throb.

MARLA

We have to go!

MIKE

I can do it-

MARLA

Michael!

She grabs his shoulder and yanks him. The boards in mid-air take a sudden left turn into the woods.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Marla and Mike run. Marla hears a singsong voice humming. She stops.

MARLA

Can you hear that?

MIKE

What?

A low rumble builds.

The ground between Mike and Marla SPLITS open. Marla jumps backwards away from it.

All over the ground splits apart- Mike gets lost in the rubble. Large chunks of earth begin to float in the air while others fall into the abyss- carving out a singular path for Marla to follow.

MARLA

No! No-no-no!

She runs along it as the forest around her falls away, panicked as the environment around her collapses. She begins to fall into one of the earthquake chasms.

-It's all gone-

Marla is on all fours, low to the undisturbed ground. No earthquake chasms, no floating rocks.

Behind her, gunfire. In front of her- a little girl with piercing blue eyes.

Marla sits up, looking towards the gunfire.

ESME (V.O.)

They won't hurt him.

Marla jumps at the voice in her head.

ESME (V.O.)

They need him. But they don't need you. If you try to save him now, you'll be a dead mommy.

Marla looks past the treeline, trying to get a clear view of what's happening- she can't make it out. People are shouting in the distance. There's a large metallic groan and a crash.

She takes a step towards it.

ESME (V.O.)

If you come with me, I can help you.

MARLA

Then help me now!

ESME (V.O.)

Dead Mommy, Live Mommy.

The sounds from the treeline have died down. Marla stares towards the lights, pained.

ESME

We have to go now.

Beams of light are shining their way- the Agents are closing in.

Marla walks in the opposite direction, back towards Esme. Esme holds her arms in the sky.

ESME (CONT'D)

Pick me up?

Marla takes this in- then does. Esme wraps her arms around Marla's neck.

ESME (CONT'D)

Wait.

Marla stops.

Several AGENTS with flashlights come into view. They are accompanied by Mister Grey. They point their flashlights directly onto Marla, scanning the surroundings.

ESME (CONT'D)

Wait.

AGENTS POV: They shine their lights onto empty woods. They go deeper in, passing empty space.

Back to MARLA: Mr. Grey walks right up next to her, inches away, oblivious to her presence. Esme clutches onto Marla, visibly threatened by his presence.

INT. SUMMER HOUSE - NIGHT

Klyce steps through the house. Bruce lies on the ground, floundering, clutching his shot stomach in pain. Klyce walks around him on his way to the back yard.

EXT. SUMMER HOUSE - BACK - NIGHT

Mike looks drained - sickly. He flails his arms back and forth. The few strips of wood on the side of the house fly off lamely, lacking the same drive of the initial attack.

Agents are beginning to close in on him- dozens of red dots dance on his chest and head.

Mike throws out his arm sending an invisible force towards one of the Agents, sending him to the ground.

Mike flails.

From behind him, an Agent tags him with a taser. Two electrified lines shoot into his side. Mike buckles, vomits, and collapses on the ground.

Instantly, he's surrounded.

Medical Technicians wire him with IVs hooked to colored bags.

Klyce wanders through the back yard, surveying the damage.

Pieces of siding are lodged into the yard. A shattered toilet lays on its side. The back of the house has been completely stripped of its siding.

Klyce looks over Mike. Then up to the woods. He walks to the treeline, looking into the darkness.

KLYCE

ESME!

He waits. Nothing.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

Marla Madnick!

Nothing. An Agent approaches him.

AGENT

We've got a squad starting a sweep.
They're not far.

KLYCE

We're not going to find her out
here.

He looks back over to Mike.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

She'll have to come to us.

Mike's eyes flutter under the sedatives.

BLACK.

FADE IN.

MIKE struggles to open his eyes. Voices swirl around him, phrases he picks up out of the darkness. *When he wakes - talk about - replication - scan him again - unlike anything we've -*

Mike fades back into the darkness.

INT. UNDERGROUND BUNKER - DAY

Mike opens his eyes. Or- he would, if he could see. A metal visor covers the top of his face and wraps around his skull like a helmet.

He takes deep, shocked breaths.

He's strapped at a 80 degree angle on a metal table- metal covers most of his body, as if he has been built into a suit/table. The parts of him that are exposed are hooked up to heart monitors, IVs and electric wiring.

Mike pushes against his constraints. They don't budge.

MIKE
Help! HELP! HEEEEELP!

Mike does his best to move. He can't. The metal groans. There's zero budge. The tubes hooked up to him fly out of their sockets.

He screams over, and over, and over and over.

INT. UNDERGROUND BUNKER - LATER

Mike is in the same position. His lips are cracked. He talks to himself incoherently.

SPEAKER
Calm.

Mike licks his lips.

SPEAKER (CONT'D)
Calm.

MIKE
Yeah. Calm.

The metal visor splits in half and retracts into the helmet.

WHITE LIGHT pierces Mike's eyes. He squints, trying to adjust. His eyes focus.

A Robotic arm is in front of him. It's tri-pronged. The central prong has a camera lens. The other two prongs have large needles sticking out of them, pointed directly at Mike.

SPEAKER

Michael.

The speaker voice echoes in the concrete box.

MIKE

Yes?

SPEAKER

In the eyes of the United States Government, you are a criminal. You are a terrorist. And you are a genetic abomination... But you and I know better. Don't we?

MIKE

Where's my mom?

The camera lens shifts.

EXT. IHOP - DAY

An IHOP sits in the corner of a run down parking lot. Half a dozen cars are parked in front of it. A woman with three screaming children exits the front door.

INT. IHOP - DAY

A waitress walks through the restaurant with two menus. She approaches two ANCIENT LADIES sitting across from each other.

WAITRESS

Can I get you two ladies anything?

One of the ladies looks particularly suspicious. She looks to the other lady, then back to the waitress.

OLD LADY 1

Coffee.

WAITRESS

Okay. And you, sweetie?

OLD LADY 2

Orange juice please!

WAITRESS

One coffee, and one orange juice. I'll be back in a minute to take your orders.

The waitress steps away from MARLA and ESME, sitting across from each other. Marla's shot gun rests propped up against the window next to her.

Esme stares at her happily.

The waitress returns, placing the coffee in front of Marla and the orange juice in front of Esme.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

Did you decide on what you'd like to order?

ESME

I'd like some pancakes please.

WAITRESS

Do you want our double stack? It comes with a side of eggs.

ESME

Ummm.. Yes. Yes, I'd like that very much.

WAITRESS

Okay. And for you, honey?

MARLA

Um... I'll have the same.

WAITRESS

Sure.

Marla looks back to Esme, still beaming at her. She takes a sip of her coffee.

MARLA

Where are your parents?

ESME

My mommy gave me away to Mr. David because she thought she'd get money.

MARLA

Who is Mr. David?

ESME

He's the man who has Michael. I don't think he's a very good man.

MARLA

Where is Michael?

ESME
I don't know.

MARLA
But you could find him.

ESME
I could.

MARLA
Will you.

ESME
Mmmm. Depends.

MARLA
On what?

Esme shifts around, a little embarrassed.

ESME
Onnnnn... If you'll be my mother.

MARLA
What do you mean?

ESME
You're a good Mommy and that's why you want Michael back. But now I don't have a Mommy, and I thought you could be my new one.

MARLA
But I'm not your mommy.

ESME
You're not Michael's mommy either, but you still feel like you are. Right?

Marla nods.

MARLA
Yeah. That's right.

ESME
Can you feel like you're mine too?

Marla looks at her. Piercingly earnest blue eyes stare back, hopeful, excited.

BLACK.

INT. UNDERGROUND BUNKER - DAY

The metal body cage opens. Mike collapses onto the ground.

The overhead lights go out, leaving Mike in momentary total darkness.

He struggles to stand. In front of him is a metal door with no knob or window. He goes to it. He presses his hands against it. He begins to push.

The metal groans and flexes. It does not give.

He takes a step back. He holds up his hand. The metal begins to vibrate in rapid percussion, like machine gun fire. Mike lets out a scream. The door does not budge.

The lights go out again.

A bright, blinding image of a CNN interview between two commentators pops on screen. The two commentators are in a heated argument.

CNN MAN

-You're avoiding the question. Are people with a triple helix, what we're calling *ander-humans*, protected under the Constitution-

CNN WOMAN

To be protected by the Constitution you have to be human, and right now, the term 'human' is... In flux.

The screen flickers. A BYSTANDER on the street is being interviewed.

BYSTANDER

I mean this is science fiction shit is what it really is. You'd think it was like cool, but it's... I mean, people are getting killed. Real people.

Another flicker, another BYSTANDER.

BYSTANDER 2

You vaccinate your kids against measles, you check for genetic anomalies. If your kid has the measles, don't send them to school with my kid.

(MORE)

BYSTANDER 2 (CONT'D)

If your kid has whacked out genetics- I mean, it's not rocket science, guys.

Another flicker. It's the face of MR. SELTZER, the high school sociology teacher. *The footage has switched from news footage to Klyce's interview tapes.*

SELTZER

When I heard about what happened to his father... I mean, I was in the room with him every other day for a year. To be that close to that kind of evil-

COACH REZNICK has replaced him.

COACH REZNICK

He was a quiet kid, one of those loner types. I really felt I did what I could to try to bring him out of shell. You see kids like that all the time. Feel bad for em really. Never know what kind of demons they're hiding-

Another flicker. Mike stands up with difficulty. ROSS is on screen, pulling his best good student routine.

ROSS

I was shocked, honestly. You know, you try to be someone's friend invite them to parties... But he hurt a lot of people, and I think he deserves whatever happens to him next-

An elderly woman on screen.

WOMAN

-Always knew he was up to no good-

Another. The Principal.

PRINCIPAL

-I really got the sense that his mother was pulling his strings-

The images are flickering faster, cycling through the cast of characters from Mike's previous life in high school, accompanied by momentary sound bites of disparaging negativity.

-Andrea's face appears, flushed with color and crying, she speaks.

ANDREA

-He was a great guy. I thought he was a great guy... But he killed his dad. And now all of this... It makes me wish I had never met him. Now I'll always be the girl who dated Michael Madnick. And that's going to ruin my life.

The projection ends. The lights flick back on.

Mike stands solemnly, shaken. Behind him, on the far side of the room, Klyce stands with his hands in his pockets.

KLYCE

This is how the world sees you.

Mike whips around, startled.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

Not just the world. Your teachers. Your family. Your friends... People who loved you. They see you as a monster.

Klyce holds up his hands - *I mean you no harm.*

KLYCE (CONT'D)

And every time you go out into the world and make a scene you tell the whole world that they are right. Mind if I take a seat?

Mike looks around. There are no chairs in this white bunker. He makes no gestures. Klyce waits a moment, then ambles down to the floor. He sits cross-legged in front of Mike.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

You think when the first Homo Habilis stood up the Australopithecus weren't a little freaked out?

A beat. Klyce smiles.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

I was reading about evolution a few minutes ago, I didn't just have Australopithecus on the tip of my tongue. Had to practice that one. Please. Take a seat.

Mike hesitates, then sits across from Klyce on the floor.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

There's no manual on how to handle when this happens with a species. We fantasize about it. We make movies and comic books about becoming Gods. But when you're in the real world?

He whistles.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

It's just going to get messy. I'm not the boogie man. I'm not the government bad guy and there is no conspiracy to kill you. The truth of the matter is you are a walking bomb. It's not your fault, but it's true. You are dangerous to yourself and others. You got a raw deal. You don't deserve any of what has happened to you or your family. But that's what it is. Michael? Meet me halfway here.

MIKE

What do you want?

KLYCE

I want you to see the situation clearly. I'm the only person who can truly protect you. And I mean that openly, honestly, and with an entire world of love and respect. I'm the guy.

INT. MOTEL - DAY

Esme lies face down on a motel bed, carefully coloring in a coloring book. She colors a cartoon tarantula bright orange. On the bed next to Marla is a brand new RED CD PLAYER, still in its package. Marla carefully cleans the shotgun.

ESME

You won't need that.

MARLA

Why not?

ESME

The bad people will be too busy shooting at the *creepy crawlies*.

MARLA

... I think I'll take them just in case.

Esme continues coloring, unperturbed by Marla's conclusion. Marla watches the funny little girl.

INT. UNDERGROUND BUNKER - DUSK

Klyce approaches Mike with a bag.

KLYCE

We had some of your things...

He reaches in. He pulls out the CD player. He hands it to Mike. Mike takes it carefully. Klyce hangs onto the headphones.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

There's some good music on that.

MIKE

Yeah.

KLYCE

I know what happened to your father.

Mike is quiet.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

You've gone through a terrible thing. No one should have to go through what you've gone through.

MIKE

Okay.

KLYCE

What?

MIKE

You don't have to sell me.

Mike makes eye contact with Klyce. He grips the CD player tightly.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I want to get better.

Klyce hands Mike the headphones.

KLYCE

Okay. Let's see what we can do for you.

EXT. FACILITY - NIGHT

The facility looks like a corporate headquarters. A long driveway is guarded by a security booth before a tall gate. A black SUV pulls up to it.

The Guard in the booth looks into the SUV.

KLYCE and another Agent are in the SUV. Klyce smiles at the Guard, extremely friendly.

KLYCE

Hello!

The Guard nods.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

We're going into our office.

The Agent in the drivers seat gives Klyce a sideways look.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

In that building.

The Agent hands the Guard a piece of paper. It's a folded up piece of paper colored with crayon that says "OFFISHAL". The Guard looks at it, hands it back to the Agent with a nod.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

Thanks!

The gate opens.

Marla and Esme drive through the gate in the run down Jeep. Marla takes a deep breath. Esme is in the passengers seat, a pleasant smile on her face. She's having a great time.

INT. UNDERGROUND BUNKER - NIGHT

Several medical technicians surround Mike, who sits complacently on a metal bench.

A technician slips a needle into Mike's arm. He winces.

Klyce watches as Mike's blood begins to flow down a long white tube, turning it red.

INT. FACILITY - LOBBY - NIGHT

Klyce and the Agent walk towards the elevators in the lobby, passing another guard.

The Agent presses the elevator button. Nothing happens. Agent taps it again.

Klyce looks at it.

KLYCE

Hey!

AGENT

Shh!

KLYCE

Excuse me!

The Security Guard looks up.

GUARD

Yes?

KLYCE

This elevator isn't working.

GUARD

You need to swipe your card.

The Agent and Klyce look back to the elevator. Sure enough, a swipe lock is by the buttons. Klyce holds up a card in his hand, flabbergasted.

KLYCE

I guess it's not working!

Klyce takes a step towards the Guard.

Marla watches, shotgun in hand, sweating, as Esme toddles over to the Guard.

ESME

Can I borrow this?

The Guard hands her the card.

Klyce takes it from the Guard, smiling appreciatively.

KLYCE

Thank you!

Klyce walks back to the elevator.

Esme swipes the card. The elevator opens with a polite *ding*.
Marla and Esme walk in. The doors close.

INT. FACILITY HALLWAYS - NIGHT

The elevator doors open. In front of Marla and Esme is a long white hallway, seemingly endless.

Another agent crosses the hallway at one of its intersections. He's followed by several people wearing scrubs.

Esme takes Marla's hand.

ESME
He's close to here.

They walk down the hallway together.

The hallway intersects with many other halls. It's a maze of white walled connections.

They pass several more people who take no notice of them.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

A bald SECURITY GUARD stares at two dozen monitors. He blinks behind his glasses. He leans forward.

On one of the screen, a Woman with a gun and a little girl are walking down a hallway.

SECURITY GUARD
Hey, are you seeing this?

A FAT SECURITY GUARD looks up. The Security Guard points at the screen.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)
Look.

FAT SECURITY GUARD
Holy shit.

INT. FACILITY HALLWAYS - NIGHT

A piercing BEEP! Rings out, like an exclamation point. The Beep continues, every ten seconds. Marla looks around.

MARLA

They found us.

Radio squawking can be heard. Marla turns. She lowers her shotgun to hip level. She points it straight down the hallway.

ESME

Wait...

Esme focuses ahead of the gun barrel. Two Government Agents round the corner. They run straight for Marla and Esme and pass them.

Marla watches them run down the hallway.

INT. SECURITY ROOM

The Bald Security Guard is screaming into a microphone.

SECURITY GUARD

SHE'S RIGHT BEHIND YOU!

On the monitor, the two Agents stop. They turn-

INT. FACILITY HALLWAYS - SAME MOMENTS

-Marla raises her shotgun. The Agents look back at *Klyce and The Agent*.

Esme holds up her hands.

The Hallway starts to rumble.

The two Agents turn, looking behind them. Around the corner at the opposite end of the hallway, a twelve foot tall Neon Orange Tarantula scurries towards them.

The Neon Orange Tarantula's legs bumps the walls, shattering the concrete, it's elbows hit the ceiling, punching holes and taking out overhead lights.

The Agents shoot at it, unloading their clips. The Neon Orange Tarantula keeps coming.

Panicking, Marla picks up Esme and begins to run away from the monster.

They pass half a dozen Agents rounding the corner and coming face to face with the monster.

The Agents all begin shooting, mostly hitting each other. Blood spatters across the hallway walls. The Neon Orange Tarantula hisses and spins in the narrow hallway-

-the Agents are alone in the hallway, shrieking and shooting at each other, ducking under giant spider legs that aren't there.

INT. UNDERGROUND BUNKER - NIGHT

A door opens. Mr Grey is at the door. Klyce looks over his shoulder to him. Mister Grey approaches. He whispers in Klyce's ear. Half a dozen Agents enter the room behind him and line up on the wall.

Klyce looks back to Mike. There are three full packets of blood on the medical table next to him, being carefully packed into a metal refrigeration unit labeled MADNICK.

The Medic sticks another needle in Mike's arm.

MIKE

What's that?

KLYCE

Just another test. We want to do a CAT scan. See how your body works. It's okay.

Yellow fluid begins to go IN to Mike's other arm. He watches it, then looks up at Klyce.

Mister Grey presses his finger to his ear. He steps out of the bunker.

INT. FACILITY HALLWAYS - NIGHT

Marla and Esme round a corner.

Mister Grey rounds the opposite corner.

He comes face to face with Klyce and... Himself. They stand, frozen.

Mister Grey draws his gun.

BANG.

Marla falls to the floor. Esme screams.

Marla grabs at her bleeding shoulder.

Mister Grey stops. The hallway is vibrating behind him. He turns. The Neon Orange Tarantula cannonballs down the hallway towards him.

Mister Grey turns his back on the Neon Orange Tarantula. He aims his gun back towards Esme's projections of himself and Klyce - who lies bleeding on the floor-

He takes aim at the Esme-Mister Grey.

Marla grabs her shotgun and pulls the trigger- sending Mister Grey flying on his back.

The hallway is quiet now.

Esme stands in the bloody hallway, hiccuping tears. Marla sits up. She puts her arm around Esme, turning her away from Mister Grey's body.

MARLA

Look at me, baby. Look at me.

Esme does.

MARLA (CONT'D)

Where is Michael?

Esme points.

ESME

He's with Mr. David now. He's mixed up.

MARLA

Mixed up?

ESME

He thinks he'll be safer here.

Esme looks at Marla gravely.

ESME (CONT'D)

I don't know if it's true.

Marla uses the shotgun as a cane to push herself to her feet.

MARLA

Let's see if we can sort him out then.

INT. UNDERGROUND BUNKER - NIGHT

Mike is lying on his back. He struggles to keep his eyes open. They close. They open again.

Klyce is standing over Mike. Behind him, the door opens. His eyes rise in time with the *ch-chick* of the shotgun gauge being pumped.

Marla stands behind him, sweating, bleeding, full of rage. Shotgun leveled directly at him.

MARLA

Back the fuck away from him.

Klyce turns towards Marla, obliging her. He sees Esme hanging by the door, peeking her head out at him.

KLYCE

Hi.

She hides from him.

MARLA

Don't.

KLYCE

She and I are friends. You're not going to come in between friends are you?

Marla keeps her eyes trained on Klyce. There are six agents pointing their guns at her.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

So. Dramatic.

MARLA

Unplug that shit. Michael! Get up!

Mike opens his eyes. He looks up.

MIKE

Mom?

MARLA

We've gotta go, baby. I know you're tired, but you've gotta get up.

The Agents take a step closer in. Marla turns one of the guns towards them.

KLYCE

Wait, wait, wait. Let's just cool down for a moment.

Klyce sits down next to Mike and helps him sit up. He keeps his eyes on Marla.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

This is the part where we shoot each other up and there's a big mess and no one walks away happy. But Mike and I have been talking. And... He's decided he wants to stay here. Isn't that right, Mike?

MIKE

... Yes.

MARLA

Michael, get up.

KLYCE

This is the woman who kept you safe. And she did the best she could. And it wasn't good enough.

Klyce leans into Mike.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

You murdered your father, Michael. You practically blew up your school. And this woman's master plan was to take to Canada?

Klyce let's out a hearty laugh.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

Forgive the United States Government if we don't feel like you are the solution. But hey.

Klyce stands up, hands up.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

Boys, put the guns away.

The Agents trade glances.

KLYCE (CONT'D)

Seriously. Put them away.

They lower their guns.

KLYCE (CONT'D)
 If you want to go back out there
 and blow up another girlfriend, or
 a baby, or your mother, go RIGHT
 AHEAD!!

His voice echoes loudly. A deafening silence follows.

KLYCE (CONT'D)
 Or. Stay here and get professional
 help.

MARLA
 Your father and I were both ready
 to die to keep you safe. I'm not
 leaving unless we walk out of this
 place together.

KLYCE
 But that's the POINT. Here he is
 safe. Out there, they'll string him
 up like Danny Drake after he blows
 up a bus of children. You know I'm
 right about that.

Mike looks up to Marla. Eye contact for the first time. He stands up, dizzy, drained. He goes to her. He wraps her arms around her.

MIKE
 I'm staying here.

He backs away from her. Defeated, Marla drops the shotgun. She buckles to her knees, exhausted. She lets out a cry.

She reaches into her pocket. She pulls out her red CD player, wired to a mini portable speaker.

MARLA
 It brings a tear-

Silence. Marla is crying- hard to understand what she's saying.

MARLA (CONT'D)
 Into my eyes-

She extends the words, she's hawing the words.

MARLA (CONT'D)
 When I begin to realize,

Klyce looks from Mike to Marla.

KLYCE

Enough.

The Agents grab Marla. They begin to take her down.

MARLA

I've cried so much! Since you've
been gone!

Marla hits the player. The speakers burst into the middle of Ray Charles's *Drown In My Own Tears*-

Mike shakes at the sound of the music.

In the corner of the room, Esme's eyes narrow with anger.

A tiny orange spider comes out from one of the Agent's sleeves. He shakes at it. Another cone crawls up from under his neck line. He swats at it.

In an instant, little orange spiders are crawling all over the agents. They begin to swat at themselves, tearing at their clothing, peeling it away.

Nails go into their faces, their chests, drawing blood. Klyce included. They're all on the floor, writhing in fear and agony.

Mike limps towards Marla. He helps her get up. Together they struggle to get towards the door.

Covered in spiders, Klyce sits up, forcing himself through the sensations. He watches as Mike and Marla head towards the door.

KLYCE

No-

Beet-red, groaning through the pain, Klyce grabs at a gun on the floor.

Esme screams.

Marla turns.

It happens so fast.

She pushes Mike, stepping in front of him. The bullet goes straight into her. She rocks back into Mike.

Mike looks up. He raises his hand. Klyce's skin begins to peel. The song only gets louder.

The gun in Klyce's hand begins to disassemble in the air. The parts scatter in ten different directions. The skin on his hand fillets itself off- his fingers all the way down to the bones.

Mike screams, a deafening scream. Klyce is losing skin, rapidly.

The sound of Mike's scream dissipates. Only Ray Charles now.

Mike closes his eyes. His outstretched hand becomes a fist.

Klyce collapses on the other side of the room. He's red, swollen, half of his skin is missing- like a burn victim. He sputters and coughs.

The Agents continue tearing at themselves.

Mike is holding Marla in his arms. The music sounds hollow and tinny to him now. Marla's cold eyes look past him.

Esme comes up to him, bleary eyed.

ESME

She didn't have time to say anything. She had so many thoughts for you.

Mike nods at this. He squeezes Marla tight.

Esme wraps her arms around Mike's neck.

ESME (CONT'D)

We should go now.

Mike nods. He picks Esme up. Holding her to his chest. They begin to walk.

INT. FACILITY HALLWAYS - NIGHT

A SWAT TEAM, armed with riot gear, gas masks, night sticks and assault rifles storms down the hallway, past a pile of dead bodies.

They turn the corner to the bunker.

The room is empty, save for half a dozen government agents with their clothes torn to shreds, a sniveling man covered in tattered burned skin and bloody tattoos, and the body of a dead woman.

Klyce stares at the silver refrigerator box, MADNICK scrawled on the outside.

EXT. PIER - DAY

A FERRY is docked in a foggy pier. It honks loudly.

INT. FERRY - DAY

A television sits in the corner by the ceiling in the cafeteria of the ferry. On the TV: A Newscaster speaks emphatically.

NEWS REPORTER

New York, Virginia, and Tennessee have become the first states to decree that those testing positive for a z-chromosome are what they're calling *ander-human*, and therefore are not protected by the Constitution.

An OLD couple appears on screen.

OLD MAN

It's not that they don't have rights, I just don't think they should have our rights-

NEWS REPORTER

The sentiment isn't shared by all. Daniel Drake's mother had this to say-

MRS. DRAKE (40s) appears on the screen surrounded by family.

MRS. DRAKE

Ignorance killed my son. But today the lawmakers are doing worse to his memory and who he was than anything anyone did to his body.

NEWS REPORTER

The issue is expected to go to the supreme court within the next year. And yet, evidence of these *ander-humans* is becoming increasingly rare, which begs the question- have they all gone into hiding, or are there simply none left?

An old couple sits at a table, side by side. An elderly white lady and an old African American man. The Old Man has headphones around his neck. They stare up at the television with tired eyes.

The Old Man stands up. He goes out to the Ferry Deck.

On the Ferry Deck:

Esme walks up to Mike, who looks over the railing. In the distance, the shore is getting further away. The intercom makes an announcement about the trip to *Halifax*.

Esme reaches down into her backpack. She returns with a *headphone splitter*. She sticks her hand into his pocket, pulling out his CD player and plugging in the splitter.

MIKE

Hey. I won't let anything happen to us.

She smiles at him.

ESME

Me either.

She hits play. Sam Cooke's *A Change Is Gonna Come* starts playing. Esme takes Mike's hand and squeezes it.

The ferry disappears into the fog.

FADE OUT.

*