

VERVE

THE BEAST

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HIGH ABOVE THE ISLAND

The cloud floats past us and we can see it, sitting in the middle of the deep blue ocean. Imperfectly shaped, an awkward, curving splotch of land.

It is lush and green, a steep cliff where it meets the water on one side and a long beach on the other.

It is maybe 3 miles in diameter at its widest point.

CLOSER

As we glide over a tropical forest canopy.

This is the place travel brochures promise and never deliver.

Something rustles a patch of trees.

A FLOCK OF BIRDS erupts from that section of the canopy. They gather, then make their way:

OVER THE SEA

Squawking and rustling the wind with their flapping wings. We watch them FROM BELOW, as they pass over us.

Our gaze lowers.

JUST ATOP THE WATER

As we move up and down with the gently bobbing waves.

The ocean is calm and beautiful in the afternoon sun.

Something slowly drifts into view.

A seat cushion. The kind you see on airplanes.

It passes by us, and the ocean is empty again.

But something else passes by: a glass minibar bottle.

Then a torn scrap of clothing.

Pieces of metal, large and small, torn and jagged.

An open suitcase, spilling its contents into the ocean.

More random pieces of clothing.

Another, larger shape floats by. As it gets closer, we see:

It's a BODY. Facedown in the water amongst the debris.

One or two more corpses bob up and down, farther away from us. None look like they've been in the water very long.

It all passes by and we are alone again for a moment.

And then SHE BURSTS INTO VIEW.

Splashing around as she flails for her life.

She erupts from the surface, gasping for air. Scrambles to keep her head above water.

Looking frantically for something, anything, to grab on to.

She latches onto the corpse. It very quickly starts to sink under her weight and she struggles to stay on top of it.

Finally she spies the floating seat cushion.

She lets go of the body and swims towards the seat cushion with everything she can muster.

It slips out of her grasp the first time she reaches for it and she goes under the surface.

She kicks back up, re-orienting herself to the cushion.

This time when she lunges, she wraps both arms around it.

Panting hard, utterly out of breath, she clings to the just-big-enough flotation device for dear life.

This is JESSICA.

Now that she has something to support her in the water, she looks around, trying desperately to figure out where she is.

It doesn't do much good until she sees it.

THE ISLAND.

Over a mile away. The only land in sight.

Jessica kicks hard against the current, turning towards it.

Each agonizing sweep of her legs shoves her just a little bit closer to the salvation looming in the distance.

THE BEACH

Jessica reaches the shallows, trying to stand in the waist-high water and immediately collapsing. Steadying herself on her hands and knees.

She pulls the cushion with her as she crawls up the beach, through the tide going out.

She slips, accidentally letting go of the cushion.

She grabs after it for a moment, but it's out of her reach.

She watches it float back out to sea - the beach is too close to consider going after it now.

So she keeps wading through the shallows.

It becomes easier, if only slightly, as she gets further and further out of the water.

Her hands dig into the sand less and less the further up the beach she gets, the drier the land becomes.

She passes the line of the shore and finds pure, dry sand.

Immediately, Jessica flops onto her back and breathes deep.

She stays like that for a long moment, just looking up at the sky and breathing. Then:

She starts to chuckle.

And, very slowly: that chuckle turns into full-blown laughter. A mix of pure joy and genuine derangement.

She laughs and laughs as she moves her body around in the sand, reveling in the dry land. Screams with joy:

JESSICA
I'M ON AN ISLAND!!!

She laughs for a few moments longer before it dies out.

Without sitting up, she looks to see the ocean she came from, the beach around her, the thick treeline behind her.

She is totally.

Utterly.

Alone.

It all hits her at once.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
I'm on an island.

SMASH TO TITLE: **THE BEAST**

EXT. THE BEACH - DAY

Jessica pulls herself further up the beach, away from the water. Shivering.

She unzips her RAIN JACKET and pulls it off, then pulls off her soaking wet shirt, shoes, and pants (this is not "sexy beach stripping." This is "holy shit I don't want to die of pneumonia" stripping).

She wrings her clothes out on the sand and shakes her jacket dry as best she can.

Sits on the sand in her underwear, legs pulled up tight to her chest, still shaking even in the warm sun.

We finally get a real look at her: early 30's (let's say 33) average height, long hair, not much meat on her bones. She has a large SCAR on her right shoulder blade, bruises on the rest of her that might be hours old or from days ago.

She sees blood dripping on her knee and touches her forehead - there's a gash. Nothing life-threatening. A few nicks and cuts on her arms and legs. A TAN LINE where the WEDDING RING on her finger used to be.

The sun's not doing its job fast enough. She grabs her jacket and pulls it over her shoulders, holding it tight around her.

Anything to get warm.

She takes her CELL PHONE out of her pants pocket. It's completely soaked. She tries the buttons. . .

It won't even consider turning on. Totally fried.

She throws the phone in the sand.

As she pulls the jacket around her again, her hand finds the INNER POCKET - zipped up tight. Something inside.

Jessica unzips the pocket and takes out an UNSEALED ENVELOPE.

It's a bit wet but remarkably, still intact and legible.

It's to "Lionel & Shane Landry" with an address in Seattle. No return address.

Jessica removes the folded letter from inside the envelope. It's dotted with water, but seems alright.

She doesn't want to read it. Sets it on the sand to dry out and weighs it down with her otherwise-useless cell phone. Pats the jacket's inside pocket, "good boy."

She looks out over the ocean.

Farther out to sea, the current carries away a scattered parade of debris and bodies that weren't as lucky as her.

LATER

The sunset here is rather beautiful.

Jessica puts her now-dry clothes back on. Puts the letter back in her jacket pocket. Just as she zips it closed -

A RAINDROP taps her on the head.

She looks up, to make sure she really felt it.

Two more drops hit her face.

JESSICA

Come on . . .

EXT. TREELINE - NIGHT

The drops have turned into a downpour.

Jessica huddles against the trunk of a tree.

The spotty canopy and her rain jacket don't do much to diminish the misery of the rain.

She hugs her knees and tries not to think about it.

A ROOM NOT HERE

We never get a good look at where we are. We're too close, our vision too hazy. But it is:

Quiet. Calm. Dry.

Warm light on her face, Jessica sits down on the edge of something. A bed?

Her fingers stroke the hair of a LITTLE BOY. No more than 5. He's sleeping.

She leans in close. Gentle.

JESSICA
C'mon sweetheart, time to get up.

EXT. TREELINE - MORNING

She wakes up to warm sunshine on her face.

The rain stopped hours ago, but the ground is still damp.

She stands.

Sees rainwater gathered in the center of a large leaf.
Jessica lowers herself to the leaf and tips it to her lips.

Most of the water spills to the dirt, but she gets some in her mouth.

Just enough to be amazed at how thirsty she was.

She looks out over the ocean again.

Something nebulous rising in the distance.

Smoke? Steam?

From a boat?

She squints, stumbling towards the beach.

She can barely, just barely, make out the outline of something that might be a ship. Miles away at best.

JESSICA
Hey! Heyyyyyyyy!

EXT. THE BEACH - CONTINUOUS

She runs down the sand, screaming as loud as her parched throat will let her.

JESSICA
HEEEEEYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY!!!

They can't hear her, obviously.

She looks around. There has to be a way to get their attention, there has to -

She knows how.

Jessica runs back to the TREELINE, scooping up as many branches and fallen pieces of wood as she can.

Runs back to the BEACH and dumps them on the sand.

Back to the treeline, to find two small stones.

She runs back to the pile of wood and drops to her knees, striking the two stones together at the base of the wood.

Trying to start a fire. Like she's seen in the movies a hundred times.

She can't even get one measly spark.

She knows it, at least a little, but that doesn't stop her from trying again and again and again.

She just needs one little spark, please, just one -

But it won't come. Even if it would, the wood is wet.

Her hands hurt from trying. She stops, dropping the stones.

She looks out at the disappearing ship (if that really even was what she saw).

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Well fuck you too!

She drops back on her ass in the sand. What now?

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Jessica wanders through the trees, marveling at the tropical growth. Vines and tall trees, flora dotted around in the dirt. Sunlight easily poking through the canopy.

She hears a TRICKLE from somewhere up ahead.

EXT. STREAM - MOMENTS LATER

Jessica hurries out from the trees and sees a stream, twisting through the forest floor.

She drops to the dirt and cups her hands in the water, bringing it to her lips.

She sucks it down and does it again and again, drinking greedily from the fresh water.

It's the best thing she's ever tasted.

She drinks until she can't hardly drink any more.

Her stomach growls. Loud.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

She's walking through the trees, looking for food.

She freezes. A few yards in front of her, its back turned - a plump BIRD. Her stomach can see the appeal in that.

She takes one step forward - and the bird promptly freaks, hopping, then flying away at a maddening speed.

Jessica gives chase, running as hard as she can.

She's lost the race well before she trips over a root.

Hits the ground in an undignified lump.

Face in the dirt, just breathing for a moment. Recovering.

She looks up.

A bush covered with BRIGHT RED BERRIES stares back at her.

In half a second she's scrambling on her hands and knees towards it. Picking them and popping them into her mouth as fast as she can, gobbling them down.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

Jessica violently vomits the berries and what little else was in her stomach up onto a tree trunk.

She braces herself against the tree as she heaves again.

Jessica sees a bird the same color as the one she was chasing watching her out of the corner of her eye.

She's not a fan. But she can't do anything about it, because she has to vomit again.

EXT. STREAM - LATER

She washes her mouth out and drinks. Still starving.

She's bringing another handful of water to her mouth when she spots something moving in the water.

Fish. More than a few of them, lazily moving downstream.

Maybe . . .

Jessica grabs for one of the fish, missing by a mile. She throws herself into the river, grabbing for them. They're small and fast and move before her hands even get close.

She keeps trying.

Finally, by sheer dumb luck more than anything else - her hands close around one of the fish.

She tears it out of the water, squeezing it as tight as she can as it wriggles in her grip.

She smacks its head against a rock a couple of times. It wiggles again and then stops moving.

She laughs incredulously at what she just did.

EXT. THE BEACH - DUSK

Striking the two rocks against each other again, trying to start another fire. Jessica gets frustrated quickly when she still can't get a good spark out of them.

Done trying, she drops the stones. Takes a second to breathe, glances at the fish lying beside her.

Screw it. She picks it up and bites deep into its raw flesh, tearing it off with her teeth.

Pulls a couple of thin bones out of her mouth.

Freshest sashimi she's ever had.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Jessica follows the stream inland.

Listening to the hiss and rustle of the forest.

Before long, she comes across:

EXT. THE CLEARING - CONTINUOUS

A small, treeless patch of land. Jessica scans it and sees two things almost simultaneously:

- 1) a small ring of stones set up for a campfire.
- 2) a weather-worn, filthy backpack.

She wants to rush to the bag - but what if she's not alone?

JESSICA

Hello?

No answer. She steps further into the clearing.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

HELLO!

Still nothing.

She goes for the backpack.

It's slightly torn at the top and old - a decade, probably more - but still entirely functional. Jessica fumbles with the plastic buckles as she opens the bag. Pulls out:

A blanket -- a coil of thin rope -- a folding knife -- a plastic bag with a small notebook and pens inside -- a metal water bottle -- a box of matches.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Oh thank god.

She opens the matchbox - empty.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Of course.

She throws the matchbox aside. Looks at the rest of her find.

Jessica opens the plastic bag and takes out the notebook. Thumbs through the pages. Blank - except for a note written in the front of the book.

A name signed at the bottom of the page: CHRISTINA KIM.

Jessica's eyes flicker to the note:

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Washed up here three days ago.
Storm wrecked the boat. Had a life
raft but it's not on the beach
where I left it. Don't know what
happened to it. Not sure exactly
where I am. Southwest of Hawaii is
my guess, but I have no idea how
the storm drove me off course
before I capsized. I'm going to try
and write every day like I said I
would when I got this journal.
Might as well.
- Christina Kim

Jessica flips through the notebook again, looking for more. But there's just the one entry.

Jessica looks around the "campsite." Nothing besides the backpack and the ring of stones.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
HELLOOOOOO!

Still no answer. She looks at the notebook again.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
How long have you been here?

Jessica only hesitates for a moment before shoving everything back in the bag and putting it on her back.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Following the water upstream, looking for high ground.

Jessica comes to a fork - the stream she's been following branches off from a wider river that cuts through the island.

She decides to follow the river.

Takes a moment to marvel at the fish swimming downstream, the colorful birds resting in the trees overhead.

EXT. WATERFALL - DAY

Jessica emerges from the forest to something magnificent.

The WATERFALL, towering above her dozens of meters high, its contents crashing down into the LAKE below, flowing from there into the wide river mouth.

It's stunning.

Jessica marvels, holding her hand under the cascading water.

Sees the staggered rocks running up alongside the waterfall.

She starts to climb.

The rocks are just big enough for her to stand on and pull herself higher.

There's almost a smile on her face.

TOP OF THE WATERFALL

Jessica pulls herself onto the ledge, winded from the effort. Takes a moment to breathe.

Then she stands and looks out over the island.

Oh wow.

The sun's at the perfect angle, golden light bathing the canopy of trees, the pale sand of the beach, the sparkling ocean beyond it.

She looks all around - the river behind her feeding the waterfall, its stony banks, the lush green of the treetops.

She's never seen anything like this in her life.

The beauty hits her at the same time as everything else.

As we swirl around Jessica, we get *QUICK FLASHES* of images from somewhere else, *more feelings than scenes*:

A modest house in a modest neighborhood.

The backyard, the treeline marking its edge. Two BOYS (8 & 6) play in the grass.

Jessica struggles not to let it overwhelm her. We see more:

A GRUFF MAN pushes his way past Jessica, going into the house. He is not gentle.

The boys in the yard keep playing.

Jessica has to sit down.

She lowers herself to the rocks, sitting so that she has a view of the island. Lets the pack slide off her back.

Jessica with the BOYS in the yard, hugging them close. She lets them go and they run to play with friends.

She reaches into her pocket and removes the ENVELOPE. Starts to read the letter:

ON THE PAGE, the first line: "Dear Lionel and Shane . . ."

She cuts herself off, trying very hard not to sob. Takes a moment to collect herself and turns back to the words:

". . . I want you to know that Mommy loves you . . ."

FLASH: The Gruff Man grabs her by the arm. Hard. Pulls her inside. We can see the WEDDING RING on his finger, and hers.

She has to stop. She can't do this, she just can't.

The flashes begin to coalesce . . .

The Gruff Man - HER HUSBAND - leaves in his car.

Packing. Zipping the bag. Shoving cash into her pocket. A moment's hesitation, then she leaves her ring on the counter.

The AIRPORT. One way ticket to Honolulu. She pays cash.

ON THE PLANE, pushing her bag into the overhead compartment.

In her seat, leg bouncing with anticipation.

Turbulence shakes the plane once, hard. A moment of calm and the passengers shake it off.

The plane rattles violently and doesn't stop.

Jessica's face is nothing but terror as the plane begins to spiral out of the sky.

She holds tight and braces for impact.

The water rushes up so fast.

BACK TO THE PRESENT

Tears flow freely from her eyes now.

JESSICA

I'm sorry.

She's a wreck. She can only wipe so many of her tears away as she looks out over this magnificent island she's stuck on.

EXT. FOREST BY THE WATERFALL - MORNING

Jessica wakes up huddled under her new blanket.

She rises and puts the blanket away.

EXT. RIVER - MOMENTS LATER

She fills her bottle full of clear water and drinks from it.

Stomach growling hard again.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

Among the trees. Jessica wanders.

She spies something in a tree - a bulbous fruit. MANGOS.

She races to them. Picks the lowest-hanging one and bites into it, stripping away the hard skin until she reaches the juicy yellow flesh inside.

As she's eating, she gets an idea.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Jessica cuts ropey vines from a tree. She WEAVES them together, tying them into place with bits of the thin rope from her bag.

Making a NET.

EXT. STREAM - DAY

Jessica approaches the stream, where she caught the fish the day before. Her new NET in hand. She watches the water for the glint of scales.

Sitting down at the edge of the stream, she drops the net into the water, holding it with both hands. Watching and waiting for the next fish.

FLASH: She watches as her Husband leaves the house, fishing gear (and a cooler of beer) in hand.

One comes along and Jessica lunges for it. Her movement is too sudden though, and the fish evades her net.

The next couple do the same.

Jessica gets another one in her net but tries to pull it out of the water too quickly, and it slips free.

As the next fish approaches, Jessica calms herself. Gently lets the net drape into the water along its path.

The fish swims straight into the net, panicking the moment it realizes it's stuck.

Moving quickly but steadily, Jessica gathers the corners of the net together and lifts the fish out of the water.

It flops wildly as she drops it to the ground, threatening to get back in the water.

Jessica tries to grab it, but it's slippery. She settles for pinning it to the dirt as she finds her knife.

Keeping the fish pinned, Jessica shoves the knife into its underbelly, right below its jaw. The fish flops its last.

EXT. THE CLEARING - DUSK

The dead fish rests on a rock. Jessica's trying to start a fire in the little campfire ring. She's got moss and twigs for kindling, but none of it will catch, even though she's able to get a few sparks from the stones.

She thinks for a second. Takes the notebook from its plastic bag. She rips out a few pages and wads them up by the kindling. Tries again.

Nothing, then sparks. Doesn't catch.

JESSICA

C'mon, c'mon . . .

Still won't light, but she's getting better at striking the flint. Suddenly - one of the pages CATCHES.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

YES!

She quickly leans down to gently blow oxygen onto the paper. The fire flickers to life.

She moves the other wadded pages closer to the new flame; they catch, and then the kindling catches, and, finally - the campfire starts.

She sets up two sticks as spit-holders, then takes a third and skewers the fish with it. It's harder than she expected.

LATER - NIGHT

She turns the skewered fish over the flames, roasting it. Smoke rising rapidly from the fire into a cloudy sky. When it looks done enough, Jessica takes the fish off the fire.

Rips into the meat with her teeth. Couldn't care less how it tastes - it's food. She chews and swallows, spits out thin bones and savors her little victory.

She barely notices the flock of BIRDS flying overhead until their squawking becomes horrifically loud.

Something about them seems strange.

The treetops behind her are MOVING - little sways, too big to be the wind . . .

Some sixth sense makes Jessica set the fish down and reach for her pack.

Her hand just closes around the strap when:

SOMETHING BIG BURSTS INTO THE CLEARING.

Instinct kicks in and Jessica grabs her pack and RUNS.

SOMETHING chases.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Jessica's running as fast as she can, barely glancing over her shoulder to see if it's gaining on her. It's dark and a blur and all she can tell is that it's BIG and strong.

IT SCREECHES as it hurries after her, pounding the Earth, it's gaining on her it's gaining -

Jessica's pack snags on a passing tree and she lets it go.

The Thing chasing her is fucking fast.

She can barely see where she's going in the moonlight.

It screeches again. It's more than twice her size. (Don't look back, don't look back) Just RUN.

Jessica slips between two small trees just as the Thing is almost on top of her.

Keeps running as it slams into the trees.

It pushes - and the tree snaps.

Jessica hears the crash as the tree hits the ground.

She still has a lead.

But she can't outrun It.

She sees a RAVINE, just barely catching it in the dark.

She skids into it, hiding against the wall of Earth.

Holds her breath as It gallops along the path she just took -

And goes past the ravine.

Just for a second, she thinks she's safe.

And then It stops. Turns back.

Looking for her.

Still holding her breath. Trying to make herself as small as possible against the wall of the ravine.

It steps closer, its TALONS digging into the wet earth just above her head.

If she ever prayed, now would be a good time.

She doesn't dare to look up. . .

It shifts position again, still looking. Getting closer to looking down into the ravine -

When RAIN starts to fall.

The Thing whines. Keeps searching, but shifts its feet more, like it's distressed.

The raindrops turn into a full-on shower.

Its whine is even more plaintive this time. Distress, annoyance, not pain. It holds out for another moment before it hurries off into the trees.

Jessica waits until she's sure it's gone before she exhales.

Peers over the ditch, the rain smacking her face.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

She finds her pack on the tree it was snagged on. Still intact. She makes sure it's shut tight, pulls on her hood.

EXT. THE CLEARING - NIGHT

Rain smothers the campfire. Jessica looks at the three-toed tracks It left with a mixture of wonder and horror.

What the fuck was that?

EXT. FOREST - MORNING

The rain has stopped.

Jessica drinks from her bottle. Still shaken from last night.

EXT. THE BEACH - DAY

Jessica drags several pieces of wood out onto the sand. They're dry enough.

She arranges them into a bonfire, using more pages from the notebook as starters for the kindling.

The fire smokes more than it burns as the wood dries. Billowing black into the sky.

Someone's gotta see that.

LATER

Finally, the fire's really burning. Jessica puts a couple more pieces of wood on. Sits on the beach to wait.

She tries to take another drink from her bottle but it's empty. Drops it back in the bag. Exhausted. Dehydrated.

Looking out over the ocean, recovering.

She's shaken away from the view by the sound of BIRDS.

Looks up to see them flying overhead.

Jessica looks over her shoulder to see the treetops rustling.

She doesn't wait this time. Grabs her pack and sprints for:

THE TREELINE

She hides behind a thick tree trunk. Peers around it to look.

It steps onto the beach. Even from a distance, dehydration blurring her vision, she can mostly make it out:

It is nearly 10 feet tall.

Its torso is a thick, blunt cylinder, the back end capped off by a scarred nub, like it had a tail, and it was torn off.

Its head is an angular bulb, anchored to its body by a short, thick neck.

It has a short, sharp beak in place of a mouth. No nose. Ears flat on the sides of its head.

Four pitch-black eyes nestled in diagonal slants on its face.

Each of its four spider-like legs ends in a three-fingered hand (like a chicken's). Each finger capped by a sharp talon.

Save for its talons and beak, every inch of it is covered in short, thick black fur.

A BEAST.

It walks straight to the fire, plopping down next to it.

Makes a sound almost like purring.

It likes the heat.

Jessica can't believe her eyes. She must be hallucinating.

She glances away for a moment and sees a small bird staring at the Beast alongside her.

JESSICA

Tell me you're seeing this too.

The bird flies away at the sound of her voice. Jessica takes another look at the Beast, curled up by the fire, still not sure it's real.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Further inland. Jessica moves through the trees with added caution now.

She spots a ROCK FORMATION in the side of a little hill.

There's a small opening in the formation, an ENTRANCE. Just big enough for her to slip through.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

It's dry and sheltered in here, with enough light coming in through the entryway to see by.

There's a ring of stones on the floor, like in the clearing.

She looks around the cave, sees MARKINGS etched on the wall by a stone:

CHRISTINA KIM

|||

Jessica looks around again: spies a small pile of things in the back of the cave. Hurries over.

An extra pair of pants and a couple shirts, more rope, a pack of crackers, and a MATCHBOOK.

Jessica quickly opens the matchbook: 6 left.

She looks down at the rest of the stuff -- dirty and old, but still usable. These must be Christina's things. She'd been using this place as shelter.

Jessica picks up the crackers and sits down against the wall opposite the markings.

She bites into one of the crackers. Stale, but it's food.

She takes the notebook out of her pocket. After a moment, picks up a pen.

She turns past Christina's page and starts to write.

ON THE PAGE: "My name is Jessica Landry."

She hesitates, then scratches out "Landry" and replaces it:

"Jessica ~~Landry~~ Hewitt."

MONTAGE AS SHE WRITES

Her subsequent days on the island. Throughout, we can make out some of what she writes in her notebook:

- ". . . an island in the Pacific."
- Cleaning the cave; organizing all her supplies. Setting out materials for fire-making.
- She fills her bottle from the stream.
- Picks fruit - mangos, papayas, and starfruit.
- Catches fish with her net.
- She watches in awe as TURTLES swim up onto the beach.
- She's getting better at making fires in the CAVE. She uses a match once, then goes back to the flint.
- The next time she fishes, the net SNAPS - one of the struggling fish broke one of the ties holding it together.
- ". . . A Beast . . . "
- She sees the Beast through the trees, hides to avoid him.
- ". . . killed Christina Kim?"
- Jessica repairs her net.

- She finds a long, straight branch. Whittles its end into a sharp point with her knife. A SPEAR.
- She fishes with the spear and net, comes up with dinner.
- She makes fires and cooks in the cave. Getting good at starting fires with the flint.

BACK TO THE CAVE:

That first day inside. Jessica finishes writing. Scribbles her name in the front, under Christina's.

She looks up at the wall Christina wrote on. Picks up a stone from the cave floor.

She carves into the cave wall:

JESSICA HEWITT

||||

Looks to Christina's 3 marks.

JESSICA
First place.

INT. CAVE - DAY

39 tally marks under Jessica's name on the wall.

EXT. STREAM - DAY

Jessica holds the net in the water. Snags a fish.

It tries to flop away as she stabs it with her wooden spear, killing it. Pulls it out of the water.

She kneels down, pack still on her back, extricating the fish from the net.

Looks up for just a moment.

THE BEAST'S FOUR EYES STARE BACK AT HER FROM THE TREES.

Oh fuck.

Jessica falls back in shock as the Beast bursts from his hiding spot, LUNGING AT HER.

Her hand grabs the spear and she THRUSTS UP instinctively.

The point sticks in the Beast's torso as it tries to come down on Jessica, forcing it on its hind legs. It SCREECHES.

Jessica shoves with the spear -- the Beast scrambles, trying to get away.

It manages to twist itself away from the spear, backing up.

Jessica finds her feet. Holding the spear up to ward the Beast off. What she saw on the beach was no hallucination.

The Beast circles, wary. Clearly not used to being hurt by its prey.

It screeches again, stepping closer. Jessica jabs with the spear, forcing it back.

She's terrified. The Beast can sense it.

Her horror grows as she notices its breathing - not through its mouth, but through BLOWHOLES on either side of its torso.

The Beast clicks its beak and hisses. Each of its four eyes blink independently of each other.

Its shuffle-in approaches grows quicker.

Ducking to the side as she jabs.

Jessica recovers her footing before it can get too close, but the Beast swipes and rips the spear from her hands.

Jessica is defenseless -- the Beast lunges again.

She dives behind a tree. Its trunk blocks the Beast, saving her from being crushed.

She RUNS.

THROUGH THE FOREST

Branches whipping at her face and hair as she rushes by them.

She can feel the Beast chasing her.

Looks back for half a second to see if it's gaining on her.

And her foot CATCHES ON A ROOT.

She trips and goes TUMBLING DOWN A HILL.

Narrowly missing a tree, scrabbling for a handhold and finding none -

Tumbling down until -

WHAM! She comes to an abrupt stop near the bottom, her back SLAMMING into a tree. Her backpack absorbs a tiny amount of the impact. She groans, badly shaken.

She tries to move but she can't.

Jessica looks down to see a THIN BRANCH IMPALING HER SIDE, entering through her right lower back and exiting out the front. Just barely missing her backpack.

Jessica gasps in horror, tries to push herself off the tree. She can't. It's too painful and she doesn't have an angle.

The branch isn't thick, but she can't slide herself off it.

She hears the Beast at the top of the hill.

Out of time.

Jessica tries again to push herself off the branch. No luck.

The Beast starts down the hill. Moving cautiously, trying not to lose its footing.

Jessica's out of options.

She breathes in and out quickly, psyching herself up -

And then she THROWS HERSELF TO THE RIGHT, her weight BREAKING THE BRANCH OFF THE TREE. She screams.

The branch still in her side, she staggers to her feet. Holding her wound.

The Beast hasn't stopped.

Not quite able to run, but moving as fast as she can, Jessica hurries through the forest.

EXT. WATERFALL - MOMENTS LATER

Jessica emerges by the lake under the waterfall. The Beast hot on her heels.

Jessica dives into the lake.

Comes back up for air, gasping, doggy-paddling as best she can to the other side. Unwilling to lose her shoes or pack.

She reaches the far bank and pulls herself onto dry land. Looks back to see:

The Beast has stopped on the other side of the lake. It screeches at her.

It dips one foot into the lake and immediately pulls it out, trying to shake it dry. Annoyed and pissy, the way a cat is after getting wet.

Jessica looks on and laughs incredulously. This huge, terrifying creature won't cross a little bit of water.

JESSICA
(it just comes out)
Fuck you, Carl!

The Beast screeches at her from across the lake, pounding its "hands" down angrily. Like a tantrum.

Jessica's surprised herself with the name. Keeps going:

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Yeah, that's right, Carl! That's
your name you big piece of shit!

CARL screeches again as he retreats.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Fuck you, CARL!

Carl disappears into the trees.

Jessica shudders. Puts her hand to her bloody, impaled side.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

She can still walk, but it's harder every step.

Stops for a moment to steady herself against a tree. Looks down at the wound.

She has to keep moving.

INT. CAVE - LATER

Jessica squeezes through the opening. The stick briefly catches on the outside. She gasps at the pain.

Makes it all the way inside. Drops her pack by where her jacket already lies on the floor.

She needs more light.

She opens the matchbook - three left.

Jessica grabs some of the moss and wood from the corner of the cave and sets up a fire. Lights it with a match.

MINUTES LATER

The fire's going now, enough light to really see by. She touches her side tentatively, hisses in pain.

She's got to get this stick out of her.

Jessica takes a hold of the stick where it exits her front. Only room for one hand to grip it.

Steels herself.

This is gonna fucking hurt.

FLASH: IN HER BEDROOM. Jessica goes flying hard into her dresser, hitting her shoulder and head hard.

Jessica YANKS the stick straight out with a horrible scream.

Drops the bloody thing and curls up, clutching her wound.

A HOSPITAL ROOM. A DOCTOR hovers behind Jessica, looking at the gash on her shoulder blade (where her scar is now). The wound on the back of her head already treated. Jessica refuses to look at the Doctor or the NURSE in front of her.

Moaning, Jessica pushes herself off the floor of the cave.

Without the stick plugging it up, the wound bleeds freely.

Jessica pulls off her shirt.

Using her teeth, she tears it into long strips.

Hands shaking.

She presses one of the strips hard against the wound, trying to staunch the bloodflow.

The Nurse helps the Doctor apply sutures to Jessica's shoulder blade. Jessica shakes and tries to wipe away tears.

She takes another strip and wraps it all the way around, tying it on her left side to hold the bandage in place.

The Nurse lays a gentle hand on hers. Jessica pulls away.

She grits her teeth and tries not to scream out loud as she tightens the bandage.

Shivering, she drags her jacket to her and puts it on.

Drinks some water.

Shivering's worse. Shock getting to her.

Jessica finds her blanket and pulls it over her as she lies down by the fire.

INT. CAVE - MORNING

Jessica wakes up in a puddle of her own blood.

She sits up, pulls the bloody blanket off her and peels off the blood-slick rain jacket.

The bandages are soaked through. Not enough to stop the bleeding, clearly.

FLASH: The Doctor finishes the last suture. Places a bandage over the wound. Blood immediately spotting it.

The Doctor sits down in front of her. Notes the additional bruising on Jessica's arms. She won't make eye contact.

DOCTOR

You need to talk to someone,
Jessica.

JESSICA

It was my own fault.

The bloodflow is slow, but steady.

Jessica's shaking badly again, and she starts to cry as she looks down at herself.

She's going to die if she can't stop the bleeding.

She's going to die if she can't stop crying.

Jessica sniffs hard and looks around for salvation.

IN THE HOSPITAL: Jessica sits on the bed as the Nurse opens the door, letting an OLDER WOMAN (60's) into the room.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Mom?

JESSICA'S MOTHER

Hey Peanut.

Jessica tries not to break down - her Mother being here makes it harder. Mom sits down next to Jessica, takes her hand.

JESSICA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Come home with me. We'll figure it out.

JESSICA

I can't. He's sorry. He promised he'll be better.

Hearing Jessica say it breaks her Mother's heart.

Jessica sees the knife by the dull remains of the fire.

So that's the plan.

Jessica struggles to stand. Finds more firewood and some moss, trying to keep them from getting too wet with blood.

She sets up the fire again. The embers aren't going to catch.

She picks up the matchbook. Two left.

Takes one out. Tries to strike it. It won't light.

Tries again. Thank god -- a little flame.

She holds it to the moss -

And the match goes out.

Once chance left. She takes out the second match, as careful as she can possibly be. The shaking makes it so hard . . .

She strikes the match. Nothing.

Again.

Nothing.

Again -

And it LIGHTS.

She holds it to the moss and the moss CATCHES.

The fire's started.

She almost starts crying again.

But she picks up the knife instead.

Sticks the blade in the base of the flames.

She peels off the bloodsoaked bandages. Grabs a "fresh" strip of shirt and mops away some of the blood.

Drinks, pours some water on the wound. Mops more blood away.

She puts pressure on the wound as she pulls the knife out of the fire.

The blade is so hot it's cherry-red.

She gets ready -

And then she PRESSES THE BLADE TO THE FRONT OF HER WOUND.

Jesus Christ it BURNS.

She screams so loud she almost drowns out the sound of searing flesh. Almost.

She lifts the hot blade away. The front of the wound cauterized and sealed.

But she's not done yet.

FLASH: (after being thrown into the dresser) Jessica forces herself halfway up off the floor of her bedroom, blood flowing from her shoulder blade and head.

The smell of her flesh cooking rises to her nostrils. She can feel herself fading as she brings the knife to her back.

And CAUTERIZES THE ENTRY WOUND.

She doesn't scream this time.

She can barely drop the knife away from her as she:

BLACKS OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Jessica slowly wakes up.

She manages to push herself upright and look at her wound.

It's blackened and horribly painful to the touch.

But the bleeding has stopped.

Jessica takes a rag tear and gently cleans the wound with a little water. Drinks a couple big gulps. Still a little left in the bottle.

Ties a bandage around herself with the last strip.

She opens the inner pocket of her rain jacket. The plastic baggie with the letter inside is still there - blood on the outside, but the letter is safe. She presses it to her forehead a moment, before putting it away again.

Jessica looks up at the tally wall. All the marks she's made.

She gets to her feet.

Walks to the wall, picks up the stone.

She makes one more mark.

One more day.

EXT. CAVE - DAY

The morning is bright and beautiful.

Jessica shields her face from the sunlight as she emerges from the cave, one hand clutching her side.

EXT. STREAM - DAY

She finds her way to the water, kneeling by its bank.

She fills her bottle and drinks, sweet relief as the cold, clean liquid trickles down her throat.

When she's drunk all she can, she fills and caps the bottle.

Takes the bloody rags out of her pack and washes them.

Red trails trickling into the flow.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Changes her bandages. Drinks by the fire. Eats a starfruit.

LATER

She pulls the blanket over herself to sleep.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Deeper in, on higher ground. Jessica caps her water bottle after a swig and puts it in her pack. She's still stiff.

She turns around to look over the ocean.

Doesn't believe her eyes at first.

Holy shit.

There's a SAILBOAT on the beach.

EXT. FOREST - MINUTES LATER

Jessica moves as fast as she can through the trees, heading for the beach. Holding her side, ignoring the pain. She has to get to that boat, she has to . . .

She's so focused on getting there that she doesn't see HIM step out from behind the tree in front of her.

WHUMP! Jessica smacks into him, goes tumbling to the ground -

Her head hits the tree with a SMA -

BLACK.

HAZY, IN AND OUT -

Treetops swaying as she passes under them.

Hands fumble, grasping her arms and legs.

Half-dragging her along.

DIPPING BACK TO
BLACK. INTO:

IN A HOUSE

Curled up tight on the couch. Eyelids fluttering open and closed. Too many empty beer bottles on the coffee table.

A small hand shakes her bare ankle.

CHILD

Wake up, mommy . . .

She tries to force her eyes open.

INT. SAILBOAT - DAY

Jessica's on a bed. A real bed. She takes a moment just to feel it, her head on a soft pillow, her fingers tracing smooth sheets . . .

She realizes she doesn't know where she is. Half-panicking, she tries to sit up. The pain from her side stops her.

She looks down at her torso to see her wound has been wrapped with a real, clean bandage.

Feels another bandage on the back of her head where she smacked it on the tree.

She feels the bed ROCKING. Grips it for stability only to realize it's not the bed moving, it's the entire room.

She's trying to sit up again when a YOUNG MAN (early 20's, athletic) opens the door.

CHOI

Oh.

Jessica tries to get to her feet. CHOI hurries over:

CHOI (CONT'D)

No no no, lie back. It's okay, you're safe.

(yelling out the door)

Tom! She's awake!

Choi turns his attention back to Jessica, who stares at him in awe and confusion. He gently guides her back onto the bed.

CHOI (CONT'D)

Lie back, yeah? I promise it's more comfortable.

JESSICA

Wh - where am . . .

CHOI

You're on a boat. My boat.

JESSICA

How?

CHOI

You ran into me. Literally. You hit your head, you were hurt and we didn't know what else to do, so we brought you back here. We're gonna get you to real dry land and get you to a hospital.

Jessica tries to hold it back, but she starts to cry.

CHOI (CONT'D)

What, what?

JESSICA

Thank you.

Tears stream freely down Jessica's face as she half-cries, half-laughs in relief.

TOM (O.S.)

Way to go Choi, you already made her cry.

Jessica looks up to see TOM (early 20's, beach bro) step into the room with a bottle of water and some food.

CHOI

Really?

TOM

Just sayin' man.

Tom comes over and hands Jessica the water and crackers.

TOM (CONT'D)

Figured you might be hungry. Or thirsty. Or both. Y'know.

Choi helps her sit up a little so she can sip the water.

JESSICA

Thank you.

TOM

It's no problem, really.

CHOI

What's your name?

JESSICA

Jessica.

CHOI

Jessica. Hi. I'm Choi. That asshole's Tom.

TOM

Hey!

JESSICA

Hi asshole Tom.

The boys both laugh. Jessica smiles too.

CHOI

Glad someone thinks this is at least a little funny.

There's a brief silence while Jessica sips some water and nibbles at a cracker.

TOM

I'm gonna head back up and see if I can reach Mark again. Holler if you need me.

CHOI

Sounds good.

Tom exits. Choi pulls up a seat next to the bed. More silence as Jessica keeps eating, until:

CHOI (CONT'D)

Were you - were you living on this island?

(Jessica nods)

For how long?

JESSICA

Forty . . . Forty-three days. I think.

CHOI

Damn. How'd you get here?

JESSICA

Plane crash.

CHOI

Flight 1384?

Shocked, Jessica nods, "how did you know?"

CHOI (CONT'D)

Holy shit. It was on the news like, every day. Flight 1384 from Seattle to Honolulu. Veered off course to avoid a storm and never arrived. No one knew what happened to it until they started finding bodies.

JESSICA

They're looking?

CHOI

They were. With, y'know, the currents, the storms all over the area . . . they called it off before they even found all the bodies. Thought everyone was dead. How did you survive the crash?

JESSICA
I don't know. Luck. A fluke.

CHOI
Well, I'm glad we found you.

JESSICA
Not as glad as I am.
(then)
How?

CHOI
Sheer dumb luck again? We're, uh,
we're on a boat trip around the
Pacific. Hawaii, some of the
Pacific isles, "explore the world"
and all that? Anyway, we sprung a
teeny leak between Kingsman Reef
and Hawaii, and this was the
closest bit of land, so we pulled
in to fix up. Decided to wander for
a bit and well . . .

He gestures to Jessica, "this happened."

JESSICA
How long was I out?

CHOI
Couple hours.

JESSICA
Where are we headed?

CHOI
We still - I mean Hawaii probably,
but I'll check for a closer port
after we cast off . . .

JESSICA
We're still on the island?

CHOI
Yeah.

JESSICA
Why?

CHOI
Mark's still looking for your
friend Carl.

Oh fuck.

CHOI (CONT'D)

You were muttering about him in
your sleep, so Mark volunteered to
go find him . . .

Ignoring the pain, Jessica tries to get out of bed. Choi
intercepts her, trying to guide her back down. Her words come
out jumbled, a little delirious, panic setting in -

CHOI (CONT'D)

Hey hey hey, what's up,
what's -

JESSICA

How far are we in the water?

CHOI (CONT'D)

What?

JESSICA

How far out to sea are we?

CHOI

We're not, we're, we're basically
running up against the beachhead.
We lost our anchor so we had to get
a rope up to the treeline to keep
us steady. Don't worry we can still
cast off, we just gotta push a -

Jessica's face falls. She forces herself upright -

CHOI (CONT'D)

Woah, calm down, just tell me -

Jessica gets past Choi, to the door. She grabs her backpack
from the corner.

JESSICA

He's coming for us we have to go -

CHOI

Who's coming, who -

JESSICA

Carl.

CHOI

I don't understand . . .

JESSICA

He's going to kill us all.

EXT. SAILBOAT - MOMENTS LATER

Jessica pulls her backpack on as she makes her way on deck, She spots TOM standing behind the control console. As Choi described, a rope stretches from the bow to the treeline, anchoring the boat to a tree trunk. The bow of the modest sailboat is practically on land.

Jessica heads for Tom and Choi follows.

JESSICA
Start the boat!

TOM
What?

JESSICA
Cut that rope and start the boat -

TOM
Choi, what's she talking about?

CHOI
I don't - I don't know -

JESSICA
He's going to kill us if we don't
leave!

TOM	CHOI
Wait what?	Jessica, please - Mark's going to find your friend -

Amongst the commotion, a flock of birds overhead catches Jessica's eye.

She looks at the forest, the trees rustling not too far back from the beach -

JESSICA (CONT'D)
He's here.

CHOI	TOM
Jessica, please -	She's crazy.

The SCREAM gets their attention. All of them whip around towards the beach -

TOM
What the . . .

A MAN comes hurtling from the treeline, running as fast as he can down the beach -

CHOI

Mark?

Carl BURSTS ONTO THE BEACH behind him.

The men on the boat stare dumbfounded as Carl overtakes Mark, knocking him to the sand with one swipe of his arm.

Mark tries to crawl to the boat.

Carl places one of his claws on the back of Mark's head. Presses his full weight down; shoving Mark's face into the sand -- until his skull collapses with a WET CRUNCH.

Carl looks up from his kill, finally noticing the humans staring at him from the SAILBOAT, frozen in horror.

His eyes track the rope attaching them to the tree.

CHOI (CONT'D)

CUT THE LINE!

Tom runs for the ax by the bow, but he's too late.

Carl grabs the rope and PULLS, dragging the boat ONTO THE BEACH and knocking everyone onboard off their feet.

With a screech, he bounds for the boat.

Jessica starts scrambling towards the stern.

Carl hits the front of the boat with a CRASH, knocking everyone back to the deck as they panic. He's not big enough to crush the boat in one blow, but the impact does damage.

Tom skids to a halt near the bow.

Jessica keeps moving back.

Thinking fast, Choi hustles to one of the emergency boxes on deck and pulls out a FLARE GUN. Grabs for the loose flares -

Tom SCREAMS as Carl brings his arms crashing down on the boat, HAMMERING INTO HIM. Hurt, he barely manages to roll away from the next strike.

The anchor-rope snaps free as Carl's fist crushes the bow.

Tom starts dragging himself towards the ax.

WHAM! WHAM! More pounding crushes the deck further and further, the final blow knocking a hole straight through it.

The sailboat starts to slip back into the water. Trying not to get wet, Carl hooks his talons into the hole he smashed and HAULS THE BOAT FURTHER ONTO LAND (the front half is fully on the beach).

Choi finally loads the flare gun, aiming it at Carl. FIRES!

The flare hits Carl over the eye -- the Beast howls in pain and turns away, trying to rub the burning out of his eye.

Tom reaches the axe.

Jessica sees her chance.

As Choi reloads, Jessica grabs him, pulling him with her -

JESSICA

Come on!

Choi doesn't resist as she drags him -

OVER THE BACK OF THE BOAT

Plunging them both into the shallow water.

Their heads dip in and out of the water as they scramble to get to the beach.

Carl doesn't see them - he's focused on the ship again, smashing it to bits in his fury -

Tom swings the axe at him, CUTTING Carl's arm -

Carl retaliates by slamming Tom into the deck. He loses his grip on the axe.

Choi and Jessica make it to the edge of the beach and Choi helps Jessica stand up so they can run for the treeline -

They look back just in time to watch.

ON THE BOAT, Tom gets to his feet, tries to jump clear -- but Carl's talon catches the back of his calf, ripping it open -

Tom collapses to the deck with a cry, smacking his face against the railing and knocking teeth out on the way down.

Carl's talons rip into his back, pulling him closer -

The Beast opens his beak wide, revealing dozens of RAZOR-SHARP TEETH extending from inside his gums -

And he CHOMPS DOWN into Tom, SHAKING HIM LIKE A TOY, tearing flesh loose and BITING DOWN AGAIN -

JESSICA

Carl.

CHOI

That - that can't be real -

JESSICA

We need to keep moving. He'll be looking for us. Especially you.

(off Choi's look)

You hurt him.

INT. CAVE - LATER

Jessica starts a small fire. Choi watches from the wall.

CHOI

Where'd you learn to do that?

The kindling catches in earnest and Jessica steps back.

JESSICA

Taught myself.

It starts to rain outside. Jessica's comforted by the sound. Sits by the fire.

CHOI

Are we safe here?

JESSICA

He hasn't found this place yet. And he won't be looking any more tonight.

(off his look)

The rain.

(he doesn't get it)

He doesn't like getting wet.

CHOI

Does it hurt him?

JESSICA

No. He's . . . He's like a kid who doesn't want to take a bath. He just avoids it.

CHOI

What is he?

JESSICA

I don't know. He was here long before I was.

Choi looks over at the tally wall.

 CHOI
Who's Christina?

 JESSICA
She was here before me too.
 (re: backpack)
That was hers.

 CHOI
And now?

Jessica's look tells him everything. Silence. She notices the cut on his leg.

 JESSICA
Here.

She picks up one of her makeshift bandages and binds his leg with it. As she does:

 CHOI
Were you going home?

 JESSICA
What?

 CHOI
When your plane crashed.

 JESSICA
No.

 CHOI
Where is home?

 JESSICA
Seattle.

 CHOI
Do you have a family?

Jessica finishes with the bandage and backs off to tend the fire. Clearly not a subject she likes.

 JESSICA
Yes.
 (Choi's look says "go on")
Two boys. Lionel and Shane.

 CHOI
How old are they?

JESSICA
Eight and six. I had them young.

CHOI
You miss them?

JESSICA
Yeah.

CHOI
Were they . . . Were they on the plane?

JESSICA
No.

CHOI
That's lucky.

JESSICA
What about you? You must have a family out there.

CHOI
Yeah. Mom and dad and two sisters.

JESSICA
Older or younger?

CHOI
Younger. I was gonna see them in a week. Hadn't been home in like, a year. I didn't go home last summer and Tom and Mark and I, we were taking this post-grad trip, y'know, before we all got desk jobs and shit.

(breaks down as he continues:)

A week, a week and we were gonna be back in the Bay and they're dead, they're fucking dead, they're fucking dead, they're fucking dead. I'm never gonna see my family . . .

Choi sobs into his arm, a total wreck. Jessica looks on with sympathy. Not quite sure if she can help.

After a few moments, she crawls over to Choi and wraps him in a hug. He keeps crying into her shoulder.

FLASH: Jessica on the floor of her house. Fresh bruises on her. Blood from her shoulder, the gash we've seen before.

Mascara-smearred tears. A POP SONG plays on the radio in the background . . .

Lionel comes up to his mother and sits down next to her and hugs her. Shane does the same.

Jessica pulls Choi closer.

THE SONG mixes with Jessica's sobs as her boys hug her close. They're frightened. She starts to SING ALONG to the radio to calm them down . . .

In the present, Jessica sings along with her memory. It's a little rough as she finds her voice, but it's comforting.

Jessica's voice reassures her boys as she calms herself too -

And, as Jessica keeps singing to Choi, her voice matching the tempo and tone of the past more and more . . .

The SONG BLEEDS INTO THE PRESENT. Its full pop arrangement blasts in the barren cave as Jessica sings, hugging the sobbing young man close, giving him what little comfort she can as the rain falls outside.

EXT. STREAM - DAY

Choi fills the water bottle from the stream.

He glances over at Jessica, who's washing her face. She grimaces, a little unsteady, holding her side.

CHOI

There might still be supplies on
the boat. And if the radio still
works . . .

Jessica nods, "okay."

EXT. THE BEACH - DAY

Blood mottles the sand where Mark's body was yesterday.

The SAILBOAT, half-sunk on the beachhead. Carl has torn it to pieces, ripping a gaping hole in the hull and crushing the mast into the deck. Blood and a fluttering scrap of clothing are the only signs of where Tom died.

CHOI

Where are their bodies?

Undeterred, Jessica starts towards the boat. Choi follows.

INT. SAILBOAT - CONTINUOUS

Water has invaded the boat's guts.

Jessica and Choi search the small cabin and main area, opening the cabinets and boxes that haven't been torn apart. Most of what they find is ruined.

Choi pulls out the GPS unit, smashed to bits. The RADIO too - both broken beyond repair.

Jessica finds an intact FIRST AID KIT. A hand-crank powered FLASHLIGHT. She gives the flashlight a whirl - still works.

All of the food has been thoroughly soaked.

BELOW DECK, Jessica finds two spare gas canisters in a LOCKED CAGE. She tries to open it, but the door won't budge and she can't get the lock off. Leaves it.

Choi picks up a tackle box and fishing line from his CABIN. Grabs a blanket too.

Jessica puts the spare clothing she finds in her bag.

EXT. SAILBOAT - CONTINUOUS

They meet on the deck. Choi hands Jessica the fishing line.

JESSICA

Radio?

Choi shakes his head "no." He looks over the blood-soaked slats where Tom died. Something catches his eye - he kneels down and picks TWO OF TOM'S TEETH from the wood.

Overwhelmed, he suddenly drops them. Trying to hold back the horror and whatever bodily reactions come with it.

Jessica lets him stay there for a moment.

EXT. TREELINE - DUSK

They leave the wreckage behind, taking all they can carry with them into the forest.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Using the first aid kit, Choi helps Jessica change her bandage by the fire (she's already changed his). She winces as he finishes tightening it.

JESSICA

Thank you.

She puts her shirt and jacket back on. Notices Choi shivering, even though he's by the fire. Hands him a blanket. He pulls it over his shoulders, but he's still cold.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

You get used to it.

Jessica picks up a stone. Offers it to Choi. He doesn't get it; she gestures to the tally wall. "Mark your name."

CHOI

I don't want to get used to it.

He won't take the stone. Jessica goes and marks another day on the wall for herself.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

The fire's burnt down to just a flicker while Jessica slept. A POP-WOOSH jerks her awake as RED LIGHT floods the cave.

Jessica jumps to her feet -

EXT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

She hurries outside to see Choi reloading the FLARE GUN. The first flare he fired hangs high in the night sky, casting red light down onto them.

JESSICA

Choi!

Ignoring her, he finishes reloading and fires a second flare.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

What are you doing?!

CHOI

Someone out there will see the flares and they'll come get us -

A RUSTLING from the trees gets Jessica's attention. She cuts Choi off by grabbing his wrist and yanking him back towards the cave with her -

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

She pulls him inside and rushes to stomp out the fire.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

It's sprinkling. Jessica stands upstream, knee deep in the water. She's holding a stick with FISHING LINE tied to it in her hands - a makeshift fishing rod.

Choi watches intently as Jessica gets a BITE -

JESSICA

Oh!

CHOI

Okay, slowly now, slowly . . .

Jessica starts to reel the flopping fish in, bit by bit, until it's close enough for her to pull it out of the water. She pins it to a rock and kills it with her knife. Looks up at Choi, smiling.

CHOI (CONT'D)

You're getting the hang of it.

JESSICA

I think I like my net more.

CHOI

Once you get good at this, you'll come around.

JESSICA

Still a ways to go.

She gestures to the three fish at Choi's feet as he helps her out of the river.

CHOI

I've had a lot of practice. I'm surprised you never learned to fish before, I thought that was like, a big thing in Seattle.

JESSICA

My husband fished. Never showed me how. But he went fishing to drink with his buddies and get away from me, so . . .

Jessica realizes she's said more than she meant to and starts to gather up the fish and supplies.

CHOI

You have a husband?
(no response)
(MORE)

CHOI (CONT'D)

I mean, you've just never mentioned him -

JESSICA

Yeah. I had a husband. Now I'm here, and it's an improvement.

She grabs the last fish and marches off. Choi follows.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

CHOI

I was just curious, okay? I didn't mean it in a bad way.

She ignores him. Choi spots a bush covered in RED BERRIES.

CHOI (CONT'D)

Hey hey hold up!

Jessica turns to see Choi gathering up a fistful of the red berries she tried to eat on her first day here. She's about to say something as he pops a few into his mouth -

But she doesn't. Choi chews and swallows.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Jessica cooks the fish over the fire. Sounds of Choi VOMITING just outside the cave.

The fish is just done cooking when Choi enters, wiping his mouth. He sits by the fire. Jessica offers him a fish.

CHOI

I can't.

JESSICA

You should eat. It'll help.

CHOI

I don't think I can keep it down.

JESSICA

You can. Those things are nasty, but they go through your system quick.

CHOI

Wait, you knew? And you let me eat them?

JESSICA

I'm sorry. I was angry.

CHOI

Because I asked a question?

JESSICA

Let's just get some sleep.

CHOI

I don't want to sleep! I want my friends back, I want my life, I don't want to be hungry and eat berries that make me puke and be stuck on an island with a monster out of a fucking fantasy!

JESSICA

The first week was the hardest for me too.

CHOI

Did you ever even try to escape? You won't make a bonfire -

JESSICA

I did. Carl saw it.

CHOI

A raft then, you build a raft and take it out -

JESSICA

And die of starvation in the middle of the ocean. If I don't drown first.

CHOI

You don't know that! You haven't tried! The two of us, we could gather wood from the boat and rig something -

JESSICA

You think I want to be stuck on this island any more than you?

CHOI

You're the one who said it was an improvement.

(she hesitates)

Back there, you -

JESSICA
I know what I said.

CHOI
Well is it?

Jessica's look is his answer.

CHOI (CONT'D)
You can't really mean that. You
can't -

JESSICA
So why ask?

CHOI
Because -

JESSICA
"It can't be that bad," right?
Everyone says that. They say it so
much you start believing it.

CHOI
You must want to go home.

JESSICA
I don't want to be here.

CHOI
Your kids -

JESSICA
What about them, Choi?

CHOI
Don't you care about them? You get
on a plane and you don't come back,
how do you think they feel? Doesn't
that matter? Every day they wake up
thinking that Mom is never going to
come home, that she's dead, and you
could get back to them if you just
fucking tried -

JESSICA
Stop talking.

There's a violence in her voice that silences him. Choi turns away, ashamed.

Jessica softens, just a little. She reaches for her jacket. Opens the inside pocket, finds the plastic baggie with the letter. Opens the letter.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Dear Lionel and Shane.

Choi turns as Jessica's voice catches. He sees the letter and waits for her to continue. When she does, she struggles to keep her voice steady, slipping as she goes.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

I want you to know that Mommy loves you. That's the first thing. The second thing is that I'm sorry. I'm sorry I did this to you. I know you don't understand, but I had to leave. I had to go somewhere far away and I can't come home just yet. Maybe not for a while. I wish I could hold you close and tell you why with my own voice, but I can't. I can't come home to you because I can't come home to Daddy. He's probably very mad right now and I need you to know that he's mad at me, not you. I stayed for as long as I could because I love you both very much. But I had to leave before something really bad happened, so that Daddy and I can figure things out. I'll call you when I can. I love you. Be good. Please, be good. Love, Mommy.

She folds the letter and returns it to its home. Choi watches her with something new in his eyes. Jessica turns away for a long moment, pulling herself back together from the inside.

CHOI

Jessica -

JESSICA

I abandoned my boys. Plane crash or no. I left, I left them with him, and it doesn't matter if I planned to come back someday or not. And if I had to, I think I'd do it again.

CHOI

I shouldn't have said that.
I'm sorry.

Jessica takes a beat before she turns back. Offers Choi the stone again, the tally wall. He hesitates.

CHOI (CONT'D)

I'm not giving up.

JESSICA
I'm not asking you to.

He's still deeply upset. Jessica keeps going:

JESSICA (CONT'D)
I was alone. For a long time. I told myself that my husband loved me, because those were the words he kept saying. I told myself he would stop, he'd get better. But he didn't and he wouldn't, and for a moment, just a moment, I was able to run and I knew I had to go somewhere he would never find me. So I put an ocean between us.
(then)
This is where we are. Sometimes you just . . . Survive.

Jessica moves close to Choi and pulls him into a hug. Forgiving him. Silently telling him it'll be all right, that they'll get through this together. Choi holds back a sob.

After a long, comforting moment, the embrace ends. Tears fall from Choi's eyes as he picks up the stone.

Choi goes to the wall and carves his name, marks his days.

CHOI

|||||

He stands there, taking it in. Accepting it. Then he picks up the flashlight and water bottle.

CHOI
We'll need water for the morning.
And I wanna rinse the vomit taste out of my mouth.

Jessica starts to get up too, but Choi gestures "it's okay."

CHOI (CONT'D)
I know the way to the stream. It rained earlier, he won't be out. I . . . I think I need the walk.

JESSICA
Okay.
(then)
Choi? I'm sorry about the berries.

Choi nods, accepting her apology. Jessica settles back and picks up her notebook as he cranks the flashlight and steps out into the night.

After a moment Jessica stops writing, closing her eyes with the pen pressed to the page. Allowing herself hope.

Before she hears the SCREAM.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Jessica sprints towards the blood-curdling howl, ignoring the branches ripping at her skin -

Running towards the glow that could only be the FLASHLIGHT -

Another scream pierces the night and is abruptly cut off.

Jessica runs harder.

She reaches the glow and skids to a stop -- the flashlight and water bottle lie in the dirt in front of her.

Jessica picks up the flashlight as it starts to flicker -

CHOI (O.S.)

Jessica . . .

Jessica whirls to Choi's voice -

The flickering light finds him LYING IN THE DIRT, BLOOD STREAMING FROM HIS FACE AND TORSO.

CHOI (CONT'D)

Help . . .

Jessica can't even move before Carl's TALONS PIERCE CHOI'S BACK and YANK HIM INTO THE DARKNESS.

JESSICA

NO!

She runs after them, following the trail of blood, racing -

But even carrying Choi, Carl's too fast.

The blood trail grows spotty and all of a sudden she can't find it anymore.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

CHOI!!

She spins around looking for a sign of him, anything - but she can't find the trail again.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

CHOI!!!!

She's lost him.

EXT. WATERFALL - NIGHT

Jessica weeps atop the waterfall.

Broken, exhausted, finished. She can't stop the horrible sobs from wracking her body.

Not an ounce of hope left.

Slowly, she stands.

Shuffling her way to the edge.

She looks over.

If she jumped towards the rocks, the fall could kill her.

Maybe that wouldn't be so bad.

It's not like she has anything else left.

Jessica starts to slide one foot over the edge.

She can let go now.

All it takes is one little step into thin air. Then she won't have to fight anymore.

She looks, one last time, at the world in moonlight.

Glances down across the waterfall and sees him.

Carl. Watching from below, his eyes gleaming, egging her on. Waiting for her to do it.

She meets his gaze.

And it fills her with rage.

She's shaking with it.

Jessica steps back from the ledge.

JESSICA

FUCK YOU!!!

She's not going to die tonight.

She'll live just to spite this motherfucker.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
FUCK!!! YOU!!!

A feral snarl on her lips as she screams it.

From far below, Carl looks up at his adversary.

He almost seems to be grinning.

INT. CAVE - VARIOUS (TIME PASSING)

Jessica opens up her notebook. She writes, and continues to write over what follows:

- She uses supplies from the med kit to patch herself up. Her wound is healing - still ugly, but on the mend.

- She lays out her supplies, taking stock of everything she has. Not much at all - the flare gun (with no cartridges), flashlight, fishing line & tackle, what's left of the med kit, rope, water bottle, scattered clothing, two blankets, and her precious pen & notebook.

- ON THE NOTEBOOK: she's writing something about Choi.

- She makes a second, larger net from vines.

- Makes another, better wooden spear.

- She marks time on the wall.

She finishes writing and considers her notebook.

JESSICA
Better than a volleyball.

EXT. CAVE - DAY

A new day. Jessica shoulders her pack and spear and exits her shelter, heading towards the stream.

EXT. STREAM - DAY

Two nets are set up in the river, TRAPS. There's a smaller fish in one of them. Jessica takes it, thwacks it against a rock to kill it, and strings it to her bag. Easy.

EXT. TREELINE - NIGHT

Sitting comfortably against a tree, Jessica cuts slices from a mango and eats, looking out over the moonlit beach. Movement in the water catches her eye.

TURTLES. More than a few, making their way up the beach.

Jessica keeps eating her mango, watching as the turtles dig NESTS and lay EGGS in the sand. A strange, beautiful ritual in pale moonlight.

She's finished the whole mango by the time they're done.

She waits until the last turtle slips back into the ocean.

EXT. THE BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Jessica walks to one of the turtle nests. Digs in the sand and comes up with two ping-pong-ball size EGGS.

She considers for a moment, then slips the eggs into the side pouch on her pack. Fills the hole she dug back up.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Morning. Jessica takes the turtle eggs out of her bag.

They're still a little slimy - she has to wash them off. But the shells crack easily, and she slurps up the contents. Smiles - a new taste. She hasn't had any of those in a while.

They give her an idea . . .

EXT. STREAM

She goes to her nets - unhooks one and takes it with her.

EXT. THE BEACH - DAY

Jessica moves in an arc down the beach, watching a second batch of turtles nesting. Net and spear in hand.

Most are clustered a fair distance away, by their eggs. One straggler, however, is moving up the beach closer to Jessica.

She considers it - this big sea creature minding its own business, moving without regard to her - before she attacks.

She whips the net over the turtle, yanking back and catching it by surprise.

The turtle SNAPS, trying to bite and wriggle its way free.

Struggling mightily against her.

Flipping her spear around, Jessica jabs at the turtle with the blunt end, trying to force it into its shell.

They struggle for a moment longer, and then Jessica manages to dig her spear under the turtle and, with no small effort, FLIP IT ONTO ITS BACK.

The turtle panics, its flippers flailing, wailing.

Jessica drives her spear deep into its belly. The turtle goes into shock, craning its head - looking at her as it dies.

A momentary pity creeps into Jessica's eyes. She glances across the beach, to the other turtles laying eggs.

Then she starts to haul her kill off the beach.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Dragging the turtle back to her cave.

She hears Carl before she sees him.

Jumping to her feet, Jessica readies her spear.

Carl emerges cautiously from the trees, circling her.

Jessica wards him off with the spear. He stays just out of range. Hissing.

But he starts to encroach on her, testing the boundaries.

Jessica jabs with the spear to force him a step back and pulls the FLARE GUN from her bag. Levels it at Carl.

Carl recognizes it instantly. Hisses, nastier this time. Still circling. Looking for his chance.

As they pace around each other, Jessica realizes he's not going to back off. And while he may not know the flare gun is empty, she can't just threaten him with it forever.

So slowly, she starts to back up. Still keeping the gun aimed at him. But leaving the turtle carcass behind.

Carl advances on the turtle in response.

Jessica stops as Carl drags the turtle and net toward him with one hand.

Suddenly the Beast scurries away with his prize.

Jessica releases a heavy breath and lets the flare gun drop.

She sees the TRAIL OF BLOOD the turtle left on the ground as Carl dragged it . . .

EXT. FOREST - LATER

Jessica follows the blood trail. It leads her uphill, on a path around the waterfall.

EXT. ROCK FORMATION - LATER

Past the waterfall, upstream a little ways.

The blood trail leads to the entrance of a LARGE CAVE.

CARL'S LAIR.

Jessica looks it over with apprehension - and curiosity.

INT. CARL'S LAIR - CONTINUOUS

Jessica peers into the long, dark tunnel leading deep into the cave. Takes the flashlight from her bag, cranks it.

Turns it on and shines it into the Cave.

The light flickers, unsteady, over the uneven path down.

She takes the first step tentatively, like she's afraid the floor will fall out from under her.

Starts her descent into the darkness.

She watches her footing with every step. Freezes when she kicks a loose rock and it rattles down the tunnel.

The flashlight goes out, plunging the path forward into darkness. Jessica cranks it again - the whirring noise amplified by the tunnel's walls.

She keeps going.

FURTHER IN

A curve in the tunnel. Jessica's about to step around it when she hears shuffling, movement from around the corner - Carl.

She ducks into an **ALCOVE** in the cave wall and covers the flashlight with her hand.

The shuffling passes. Jessica takes her hand off the flashlight and sees what's just behind her in the alcove:

BONES. A big pile of them. Mostly birds, a few turtle shells.

The light fades. She cranks again, praying Carl can't hear.

She turns the corner and finds herself in:

THE CAVERN

A ceiling hollowed out of the stone, 30 feet high. Rock formations jutting from it at off angles. No place for light to sneak in. A tiny bit of condensation falls from a stalactite, drip drip, onto the floor.

Jessica's careful as she enters. Scanning for Carl. She makes her way slowly around the perimeter.

The flashlight goes out. **WHIRRRRRR** as she cranks it.

The beam sputters back to life, illuminating the space just ahead - and the **GIANT SKELETON** in front of her.

Jessica gasps, just a little, as she realizes what it is.

The skeleton is huge, shaped like Carl, but nearly three times his size. The only difference is the bones of a tail, tucked next to the body.

Jessica steps forward, almost in awe.

The whole skeleton is displayed with a sort of reverence, like a shrine. Carl's mother, maybe?

She places her hand against its forehead.

Then she hears him.

Jessica hurries to hide behind the skull. Turning the flashlight off, plunging herself into darkness.

She can hear him dragging something.

A pause as he stops moving. Then: **TEARING FLESH**.

Jessica tries not to breathe.

She peers between the bones, and as her eyes adjust to the dark, she can just barely see:

Across the cavern, Carl strips the meat from the turtle shell and shoves it into his mouth. His talons are bent back, revealing a pair of 3-fingered SECONDARY HANDS in his forearms - which he can use for fine motor work.

Carl shoves another handful into his mouth and suddenly stops. Like he can sense her.

Jessica can't move a muscle.

Carl almost turns. But -- he goes back to the turtle.

She needs to find a way out of here.

She covers the flashlight with her hand and turns it on. Nothing. It needs more juice.

Jessica takes the handle and tries to crank it slowly - but that won't give her any power. She has to go faster, which means she has to go louder.

She doesn't have a choice. She cranks - a few revolutions, as fast as she can. The flashlight comes to life and she quickly covers the beam with her hand.

Carl's stopped chewing.

Jessica peers out from the skull to see the Beast looking around, searching for the source of the noise. He's blocking the way she came.

She takes a risk, turning back and letting a crack of light loose, looking for another exit.

She sees an opening (one just big enough for Carl) in the cavern wall 20 yards away. It could be another path out, or it could be a dead end . . .

The flashlight beam flickers. She doesn't have much time.

Jessica slips out from behind the skull, as fast and quiet as she can, letting a crack of light loose to see by. Carl's turned the other way.

She gets past the skeleton before the flashlight dies again. She can't see a thing.

Jessica hugs the wall, feeling her way along it. She can sense Carl turning behind her. She has to hurry -

Her pace picks up, and with it her steps get louder . . .

Carl takes a step in her direction -

Her fingers find the edge of the OPENING -

She throws herself around the corner.

SIDE TUNNEL

She covers her mouth, staying as silent as she can.

SHE CAN HEAR HIM PASSING BY THE TUNNEL. His shuffling footsteps, his talons scraping on the rock. The wet hiss of his blowholes sucking air.

And then he moves on.

Jessica waits a moment longer before she finally exhales.

She feels her way down the tunnel.

FURTHER IN

She cranks the flashlight to life again. Looks ahead of her to see the tunnel twisting and curving. No way to tell where it leads. Not that she has a choice.

She turns a corner and sees, just around the next bend: a sliver of DAYLIGHT. A way out.

As she hurries towards it, her foot catches on something. She stops. Turns the flashlight to the floor.

A HUMAN FOOT. An old, ratty shoe, flesh decomposed around an exposed ankle.

Jessica looks up the leg to a SKELETON. Placed against a dip in the wall like a trophy. The flesh is mostly rotted away, what little remains shrivelled around the skeleton. Wisps of hair and the shreds of clothes. Jessica looks at the faded tag on the skeleton's jacket -- handwritten on it:

C. KIM

She's found Christina.

Something's against the wall next to Christina too. Jessica turns the flashlight and reveals:

Three more bodies. MARK (she assumes, his head is crushed), TOM (Carl's bite lacerating his torso) -

And CHOI.

ON Jessica as she stares with crushing horror at what Carl did to her friend's body. She lets the image burn into her.

Then, determined, she starts back towards the light.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Jessica makes another mark on the tally wall. There are at least a few hundred now. She traces Choi's few lonely marks with her finger.

MONTAGE - TIME PASSING:

Jessica writes in her diary throughout, as she:

- Hunts using traps and her spear.
- Snags a fish, a bird gets away.
- Hides behind a tree as Carl passes by.
- Picks fruit.
- Fishes in the stream.
- Cuts her hair with the knife.
- Bathes in the river.
- Makes fires with the flint rocks. Cooks fish and birds over the it.
- Marks time on the wall - over a year's worth of marks.
- From below, Carl snarls at her as she stands atop the waterfall. Jessica thinks for a moment, then throws one of the FISH dangling from her back to him. He tests it - a new food. Then he gobbles it down - and retreats.
- From a distance, Jessica watches as Carl PICKS FRUIT with his SECONDARY HANDS, eating it skin and all.
- More marks on the wall.
- In a downpour, Jessica wanders the island freely.
- When it's sunny, she RUNS FROM CARL. DROPS A FISH as she runs -- he stops chasing her and picks it up. Jessica turns back to see him standing there, staring at her. A GAME. She keeps running.
- She throws more fish to him from the waterfall. He fetches.

- From the Beach, she gathers the old anchor-rope from Choi's boat. Uses it to make more nets.
- The turtles return. Jessica steals some of their eggs.
- She catches another turtle with her net and spear.
- Cooks the turtle meat over the fire. A feast.
- The sun sets on the beach. Beautiful.

END MONTAGE.

INT. CAVE - DAY

More and more tallies on the wall. Months later? Years? It's impossible to know for sure because the tallies trail off near the bottom, with one word scrawled by them:

||| . . . **FUCK**

Jessica wakes with the sunlight. She's thinner than before - not emaciated, but nowhere close to properly fed. Dirtier, clothing worn and torn. Her shoes, now useless tatters, discarded in a corner. Even her rain jacket has a hole in it. But she looks strangely at ease.

EXT. STREAM - DAY

She washes in the stream. Might be her first bath in weeks. A nasty scar marks the healed wound in her side.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

She scales a tree and picks the last two starfruit from it. Gets down and starts eating one. Puts the other in her backpack for later.

EXT. STREAM - DAY

Jessica checks her rope-and-vine nets. Empty.

FURTHER UPSTREAM

She sees one of her nets wriggling. Hurries to it. Quickly kills the fish inside and hangs it on her pack.

EXT. THE BEACH - LATER

She sits on the sand and looks over the ocean like she's done a thousand times.

Removes the notebook from her pocket.

Flips through the pages.

She's filled almost all of them.

The ENVELOPE falls out of the front of the notebook. The old letter to her kids. Jessica picks it up.

Considers it for a long moment.

She puts the envelope back in the front of the notebook.

She flips to one of few blank pages in the back. Uncaps a pen, wets it with her tongue and scratches it on the corner of the page until ink comes out.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Jessica shoves her water bottle, flashlight, rope, and jacket, everything she needs for the day, into her pack. Carefully places her NOTEBOOK in the side pouch.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Jessica scans the trees. Spies some mangos, somewhat high up.

She takes a VINE-WOVEN SLING from her pack and slips it on. Leaves her pack and starts climbing. Reaches the mangos quickly, picks them and puts them in the sling.

She's on her way down when she hears the rumble. Tries to hurry. She drops to the ground -

And CARL COMES HURTLING out of the trees, SLAMMING into her and bowling her over.

Jessica yells and rolls out of the way of his next blow, getting to her feet and bringing her knife to the ready.

They circle each other; Carl makes a few exploratory swipes and Jessica slashes at him with the knife. Neither going in for a serious attack.

Jessica tosses one of the mangos to him. It rolls to a stop in front of Carl but he doesn't take it. Jessica tries again, but this time Carl flicks it out of the way.

He wants to play a different game.

They circle until they've almost traded places.

Then Carl stops.

Jessica see's what he's standing over: her pack. No -
Carl SNATCHES UP THE BACKPACK and rushes off with it.

JESSICA

NO!

She chases him, running as fast as she can.

But he's gone. She can't catch up.

Rage shoots through Jessica, as mad at herself as she is at Carl. She punches a tree:

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Stupid stupid stupid!

She starts to regain her composure. Looks at her bloodied hand, the skin torn from her knuckles.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

The only things left are firewood, her blanket, and a few dead fish strung up in the corner.

Jessica paces by the fire. Thinking furiously. She needs that pack. Her notebook's in there.

She glances at the fish.

EXT. CARL'S LAIR - DAY

A dead fish lies on a rock, ten yards from the entrance.

ON JESSICA, hiding in the brush a little ways away. She hasn't slept a wink - watching and waiting.

She sees his legs emerge from the cave first, pulling his body out into the sunshine. Carl stretches and yawns in the warm air. Scratches his face with his forearm, like a dog.

Carl stops when he sees the fish. Approaches it, wary.

He pokes the fish, just to make sure it's dead.

Carl bends the talons on one forearm back, exposing his secondary hand. Picks up the fish.

And then he sees the second one. Maybe 15 yards away.

He starts towards it.

Jessica's body tenses with anticipation.

Carl picks up the second fish. Looks around until he sees a third. He hurries toward it, excited.

He's taken the bait.

Jessica HURRIES over open ground from the brush to the entrance to Carl's lair, looking over her shoulder to make sure Carl hasn't turned back.

INT. CARL'S LAIR - CONTINUOUS

Jessica hurries down the tunnel, rounding the first corner and immediately slowing her pace.

She can barely see in front of her.

Determined, she walks as quickly as she can, her arms in front of her face to try and guide her.

She nearly runs into a wall. Starts to feel her way along it, her pace picking up.

Carl could come back at any moment.

She comes to the second turn, the entrance to the main cavern. She can hear the drip-drip of condensation falling from the ceiling.

She steps into the main cavern, totally blind.

Each step unsteady.

Slowly, she lowers herself to her hands and knees. She can move faster like this, sweeping the area in front of her with her arms, searching for her bag.

One hand slips in a puddle of something she prays is water.

This is taking too long. He's going to be on his way back with the fish. She won't even see him as he kills her.

Jessica picks up the pace, sweeping her arms wide.

Moving deeper into the cave.

Deeper.

Deeper.

The edge of her finger swipes against something. Jessica stops. Sweeps again.

The material rustles as she touches it. HER PACK.

Jessica hurriedly drags the it to her. Feels the side pocket, her notebook - thank god, it's still there.

She finds the top and undoes the snaps and drawstring.

Shoves her hand into the bag, fishing around. C'mon, c'mon -

Yes! She pulls her flashlight from the bag and fumbles for the handle. Cranks it with a whirrrrrrrrrr -

Clicks it on just in time to see CARL BARRELING TOWARDS HER.

Jessica dives out of the way, Carl's arm just missing her. He skids to a halt.

Jessica's already on her feet, slinging the pack over her shoulders and racing towards the exit, the flashlight's bouncing beam going everywhere.

She hears Carl charging again. Ducks.

This time, she didn't quite move fast enough.

Carl clips her, sending her spinning and tumbling to the ground. The flashlight falls from her hand. She scrambles to pick it up again, get to her feet.

Turns to see Carl blocking the exit.

He's moving in slowly, thinks he has her trapped. Talons clacking on stone. Taking his time. Still playing.

Jessica looks back to the other OPENING in the cavern wall. Her one shot.

She takes out her water bottle. Removes the cap.

Runs for it.

Carl chases.

He nearly intercepts her just before the opening, but Jessica splashes the bottle's contents in Carl's face.

She hurries by him as he mewls and shakes the water off, buying her just enough time to duck into the:

TUNNEL

Jessica runs though its twists and turns as fast as she can.

Carl close behind. He doesn't have to squeeze much to fit in here, but he can't stretch out to his full length, and that slows him down.

The flashlight fades and Jessica cranks it on the run.

Flying by the bodies of Christina and the boys from the boat.

Carl's foot crushes their outstretched legs as he passes.

Jessica hurries towards the sliver of daylight.

Carl still gaining.

She reaches the other end of the tunnel - the crack in the wall that she can just barely fit through. Her pack blocks her and she takes it off, shoving it ahead of her.

Jessica squeezes through the crack.

Carl's just around the corner.

She's almost there -

Carl's arm reaches for her -

The FLASHLIGHT slips from her hand -

And Jessica falls through the other side!

MAIN TUNNEL

Jessica scrambles to pick up the pack as Carl tries to grab her through the crack. He can't reach.

With a screech, he turns around, looping back.

Jessica runs through the tunnel.

EXT. CARL'S LAIR - CONTINUOUS

For 50 yards after she clears the cave entrance, Jessica appears safe. Running for no good reason.

Until Carl comes roaring out of the tunnel behind her.

Jessica pushes herself, running as fast as she can.
Turns to the river and starts to run parallel to it.
Carl's gaining, quickly.
Jessica sprints along the river. A hundred yards ahead -

EXT. WATERFALL - CONTINUOUS

Jessica flashes a glance over her shoulder to see Carl bounding closer and closer.

Her eyes turn back to the fast-approaching waterfall.

She can't turn to the forest.

She'll never make it in time.

One other option.

Jessica pours on extra speed.

50 yards.

40.

Carl picks up his pace too -

30.

20.

10.

He's almost on top of her --

With one final burst as she reaches the edge of the waterfall, without hesitation, Jessica yells -

AND JUMPS.

The world SLOWS DOWN as Jessica realizes just a millisecond too late that she's miscalculated.

Instead of hitting the water, she's going to hit the GROUND. The impact certain to kill her.

CARL LEAPS AFTER HER.

Swinging his big arm -

He SMACKS Jessica in the side -

The blow CHANGING HER TRAJECTORY JUST ENOUGH TO SEND HER TOWARDS THE LAKE.

TIME CATCHES UP to her almost before she realizes.

Arms flailing, legs kicking, the water hurtling towards her.

Jessica points her toes and straightens her body like an arrow just in time.

SMACK! She hits the water and slices through it, plunging deep. The pack YANKING up on her armpits. Almost tearing.

A DULL THUMP from above, as Carl hits the ground.

Slowly, she comes to a natural halt.

Starts to swim back up.

Jessica breaks the surface and shakes her hair from her eyes.

She turns to look at Carl, lying at the edge of the lake. The impact didn't kill him, but it hurt - moving seems painful.

He makes eye contact with her as she realizes.

He just saved her life.

The realization makes Jessica's blood run cold.

Carl watches as she starts to swim downstream, away from him. The pack safely on her back.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Jessica lays all of her soaked things out by the fire to dry.

She takes her notebook from the pack and opens the plastic baggie it's encased in -- breathes a sigh of relief when she feels it's still dry.

She glances over the tally wall, all the time she's spent here and stopped keeping track of. The two other names on the wall that weren't as lucky as she was.

FLASH: her Husband throws her into the dresser.

Sometime after that (her shoulder is bandaged), he holds her close in bed, kissing her forehead. A genuine warmth to it. Jessica accepts it, pretending this is all there is.

She puts the notebook in her jacket pocket.

Curls up with her blanket and goes to sleep.

INT. CAVE - MORNING

A noise she doesn't quite recognize wakes her up. Faint, somewhere in the distance.

Takes a moment to rouse herself. The embers of the fire still faintly glowing, her belongings laid out and dry.

She listens to the noise more carefully - an animal? Whatever it is, it sounds distressed.

She pulls the blanket off and puts on her jacket. Knife in her pocket. Leaves everything else behind.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The distressed sound is louder now. More insistent.

Jessica scans the forest as she walks towards the noise. She sees nothing.

The noise gets more intense as she gets closer and she recognizes it as bleating. An animal in pain.

She keeps heading towards it.

She's maybe 100 yards from her cave.

The bleating is so loud now she must nearly be on top of it -

It's coming from behind the tree in front of her.

Jessica takes out her knife. Circles around the tree in a wide arc, until she sees what it is:

A TURTLE. Placed against the tree, crying out. Its shell SPLIT, blood welling from it. Flippers slashed to ribbons.

Jessica realizes the turtle for what it is too late.

A trap.

She turns back and sprints for the cave.

Hears the crash as she's running.

EXT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

She comes flying out of the forest, stumbling to a stop and gasping at what she sees:

Carl has CAVED IN the entrance to her home, bringing rocks down over the opening and blocking it off.

With everything she has inside.

JESSICA

No, no, no . . .

She hurries to the cave and tries to pull the stones away.

She can toss aside some of the smaller ones.

But the big rocks are immovable.

She'll never get back inside.

Jessica SCREAMS into the stones.

A beat, and then:

JESSICA (CONT'D)

You'll never let me leave.

When she looks up again, only rage is left.

EXT. THE BEACH - DAY

Jessica stalks towards the scuttled sailboat. Only the jacket on her back and the knife in her pocket.

She picks up a heavy stone.

INT. SAILBOAT - CONTINUOUS

It's drifted into the shallows, in far worse shape than we last saw it. Waterlogged, the wood rotting from the inside. Rust creeping along its iron parts.

Jessica carries the rock to the engine area. The heavy lock on the gate between her and the FUEL CANISTERS.

She raises the rock and brings it down hard.

The lock stays intact. So she does it again. And again.

Again and again without pause until the lock breaks.

She rips the door open.

She tries to pick up both fuel canisters at once. But they're too heavy. So she grabs one and hauls it off the ship.

EXT. THE BEACH - CONTINUOUS

She throws the canister down and goes back for the second.

INT. SAILBOAT - CONTINUOUS

The second canister is lodged in place, stuck on something Carl broke when he wrecked the boat. Jessica struggles to pull it free and finally does.

EXT. THE BEACH - CONTINUOUS

She drops it on the beach with the first.

Looks up the long hill ahead of her.

The path to Carl's Lair.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Jessica hauls the gas canisters through the forest.

It's slow going. She forces herself to keep moving. When she moves one canister 50 yards, she goes back for the other.

And so on.

No matter how much her body protests.

Single-minded fury on her face.

EXT. FOREST BY CARL'S LAIR - LATER

She finally drags the second of the gas canisters to a thick patch of brush at the edge of the woods by Carl's cave.

Takes care to hide them from view.

EXT. THE BEACH - DUSK

The sun is halfway done setting by the time Jessica gets back to the beach.

INT. SAILBOAT - CONTINUOUS

She boards.

Takes one last look around at the thing that might have been her salvation.

Then she takes the stone and bashes a hole in the fuel tank.

Hammers away until it splits open and gasoline spills all over the floor, into the water.

EXT. THE BEACH - MINUTES LATER

Jessica tears strips of fabric from the bottom of her shirt. Ties each around a long stick. Torches.

She rapidly strikes two new flint stones together until she gets sparks. Lights the kindling she's set up and holds the torches to it until they start to burn.

She carries them both down the beach.

And throws one onto the gasoline-soaked boat.

The flames start to spread instantly.

Jessica doesn't wait to see. She takes the other torch and heads back up the beach, towards the woods.

Flames lick the boat's insides and spill out the top, turning the whole thing into a giant FIRE BEACON.

You could see it for miles.

EXT. WATERFALL - NIGHT

Darkness has fallen.

Jessica reaches the top of the waterfall and looks back to the beach. The fire burning bright.

She can see Carl ON THE BEACH, silhouetted in orange. Rejoicing at the flames.

She tears herself away from the view.

EXT. FOREST BY THE WATERFALL - NIGHT

Jessica picks up the first of the gas canisters.

EXT. CARL'S LAIR - CONTINUOUS

She rolls the can down the tunnel.

Goes back for the second.

She leaves it by the tunnel entrance.

INT. CARL'S LAIR - MOMENTS LATER

Lit by the flickering torch, Jessica hurries down the tunnel until she finds the where the canister came to a rest.

Grabs it and drags it with her.

She hauls it all the way to the center of the cavern.

Picks up a rock and smashes it down on the metal can until she's knocked a hole in it.

Leaving the torch in the middle of the room, Jessica spreads the gas everywhere.

On the floor. Over the moss growing on the walls.

On the SKELETON Carl arranged with such reverence. She considers the skull for a second before SMASHING IT IN with the canister for good measure.

In the SMALLER TUNNEL, Jessica pours gasoline on Christina and the boy's bodies.

Back in the CAVERN, Jessica drags the still-leaking canister with her. Picks up her torch.

Up the tunnel.

She lets the last of it out not too far from the entrance.

EXT. CARL'S LAIR - CONTINUOUS

She drops the empty canister as she exits. Turns to the second can of gas.

She KICKS it, hard, down the tunnel.

Listens to it bang against rock as it rolls.

Her grip tightens around the torch.

She's ready.

Jessica tosses the torch into the small puddle of gasoline she left by the entrance.

It catches instantly, tracing its way down the path she made on her way back up.

Jessica starts to run away, back to the brush.

The fire hurries down the gasoline trail.

Jessica makes it to

THE BRUSH

And turns back just in time.

BOOM! An EXPLOSION! Flames lick at the entrance of the cave.

ON THE BEACH

Carl turns to the noise.

He sees the red-orange glow at the top of his hill.

Starts bounding towards it.

BACK WITH JESSICA

She can hear him howling.

She watches as the flames somehow keep growing brighter, hotter. Like something's adding to them.

CARL HURTLES THROUGH THE TREES TOWARDS HIS HOME.

Jessica stays hidden as Carl comes skidding out of the trees, his eyes on the fire. He seems to freeze, just for a moment, before he starts running for the cave. Limping from his fall off the waterfall.

He's 20 yards away when:

BOOOM! A SECOND BLAST ERUPTS, far bigger than the first.

The fireball flares out, nearly touching Carl.

Jessica must have set off some sort of natural gas.

The Beast screeches, the sound tinged with deep distress.

He's not just agitated - he's panicking.

Keeps shuffling to the cave and forced back by the heat.

Forces himself a few steps into the tunnel and pulls away when fire wraps itself around his forearm.

He freaks, shaking his arm, desperately trying to put it out.

Smothers the flames with his body and moans.

He stands, unsteadily.

Turns to the cave with a plaintive HOWL, realizing his home is utterly destroyed.

Jessica's never seen Carl like this.

And she's enjoying it.

A sick smile on her face, the flames reflected in her eyes.

HIGH ABOVE THE ISLAND

The two raging fires, BEACONS, billowing smoke and red ash into the night.

EXT. FOREST - MORNING

Curled up on the ground, Jessica stirs herself awake. The smell of smoke heavy in the air.

The cave is still burning. Carl is nowhere to be seen.

EXT. WATERFALL - DAY

She slowly makes her way down the steep, wet path. Exhausted, dehydrated, weak.

Goes to the lake's edge and drinks from the water. Splashes some on her face and arms, wiping away soot and dirt.

Something on the rocks by the waterfall catches her eye.

Takes her vision a moment to focus, make out what it is.

Her FLASHLIGHT.

Just sitting there on a rock.

How the hell did it get there?

Jessica stands, water dripping from her. Approaches slowly. She stumbles, losing her footing, the world spinning just a little. Stops to orient herself.

She looks around, wary. Did she drop the flashlight when she jumped and not remember? She can't think clearly.

There's no ominous rustling of treetops, no birds flying fast away, no sign of Carl.

She's too out of it to consider anything except how much she needs that flashlight.

In her haze, Jessica reaches . . .

Her fingers wrap around it . . .

She gives it the gentlest of tugs . . .

She feels it go immediately, and just a moment too late.

The rope tugs, the branch moves, the stone FALLS - all so fast she doesn't have time to register what's happening until the ROCK COMES SMASHING DOWN ON HER HAND.

Jessica screams. Loud.

Her left hand is pinned up to her wrist beneath the rock.

When the first wave of agony passes she tries using her free hand to push the rock up. But it's too heavy; she can only budge it a millimeter.

She tries pulling her hand free. The pain is incredible. But it jerks her fully back to reality.

She struggles in vain against the boulder, tugging and pushing and wriggling.

But she can't move an inch.

Jessica stops, trying to breathe, to come up with a plan.

There's a thin gap between the boulder pinning her hand and the boulder to its left. If she can get her hand to that, maybe she can pull it free.

She hears the birds. Sees them overhead.

She looks across the river to see Carl standing there, a sick satisfaction in his eyes at seeing Jessica in his trap.

He's not playing anymore.

He growls and starts to bound up the hill to the waterfall, running the long way around to get to her so he doesn't have to swim in the river.

Jessica doesn't have much time and she knows it.

She remembers the knife in her pocket.

Quickly, she slashes the top of her forearm, a bit above what's trapped. Not deeply, but enough to bleed freely.

She puts the knife away and squeezes at her arm, forcing the blood out, spreading it down her arm to her wrist. Making sure to get it all over, seeping into the crack between her hand and the rock. Lubricant.

She tries to wiggle her hand into the gap.

The pain sets in, hot like fire.

But her hand moves. The smallest bit.

She squeezes more blood out and tugs again.

She can hear Carl running. He could be halfway up the hill.

Whatever progress she's making, it's not fast enough.

Jessica pulls out the knife again and opens the cut in her arm wider, increasing the bloodflow.

Pockets the knife and leverages her free hand against the boulder weighting down on her, pushing as she pulls.

Yells as the pain gets worse.

She isn't making progress.

Her hand is barely sliding, wedged tight, far too tight.

He's getting closer.

Jessica tugs again and again, desperation setting in.

Snot and blood and tears dripping down her.

She realizes she's never getting out in time. Not this way.

Another glance at the gap, so close, she just needs a little more leverage . . .

She hesitates for just a moment, steeling herself.

Then she twists, BRACING HER FOOT against the boulder, nearly hyper-extending her arm as she tries to get the right angle.

Anger and desperation and pain tumble out of her in a roar as she SHOVES OFF WITH HER FOOT -

The slick blood between her hand and the rock squelches -
Her shoulder and wrist groaning in protest -
Jessica screams as she keeps pushing -
A POP as her WRIST DISLOCATES -
Her foot pushing the boulder up almost far enough -
She pulls back just a little more -
And with a HORRIBLE CRACK of bone -
HER HAND SLIPS FREE.

Jessica smacks to the ground on her back, clutching her hand to her. Her wrist dangles unnaturally. PINKY AND RING FINGERS BROKEN, bent almost 90 degrees. Her THUMB crushed against her palm, dislocated. Skin torn from the rock. She can't move it.

She cries, half in relief, half in pain. Doesn't have time for more than a moment's break. Pain forcing clarity.

She forces herself to her knees. Takes off her belt and uses it to make a sling for her arm.

Stands unsteadily. Taps her back pocket to make sure the knife's still there. Picks up her jacket from the riverbank.

Blood dripping from her cuts, Jessica stumbles along the river as fast as she can, into the forest.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The trail of blood follows her.

She's fading.

EXT. RIVER - CONTINUOUS

Where she and Choi fished. She crosses where it's shallow, the water whisking away her dripping blood. Covering her tracks just enough.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

Far enough. Jessica can't take it anymore. She collapses to her knees, ducking out of the sling.

She probes her limp wrist. Seems dislocated, not broken.

She takes it in her good hand. Readies herself.

Then, she sharply YANKS her hand and arm in opposite directions, SNAPPING HER WRIST BACK INTO PLACE.

It hurts more than pulling free from the boulder.

She tries to move her fingers. Excruciating. She gets a wriggle from the unbroken ones.

She grabs her thumb. Jerks and it POPS back into place. She needs a moment to recover.

Then she turns to her RUINED, BROKEN FINGERS.

One at a time, she PULLS THEM BACK INTO PLACE.

Shuddering as she tries not to vomit from pain.

When she recovers enough, she takes the drawstring from her jacket's hood and uses it to tie her broken fingers to her good ones. A makeshift splint.

Puts the sling back on. Stands.

Keep moving.

HIGH ABOVE THE ISLAND

The beacons still burn.

EXT. FOREST - HILL - NIGHT

Moonlight gives her just enough to see by.

Jessica makes it to the plateau at the top of a large hill, not too far from the beach. She can't keep walking anymore.

She sits down against the trunk of a tree, finally catching her breath. God she's cold.

Fire. She needs a fire.

Jessica gathers small rocks and arranges them in a rough circle. Puts moss and twigs in the middle.

She finds flint stones. Awkwardly tries to start the fire with them using her one good hand.

She can't get any sparks.

Repositions herself. Tries again. Shaking.

Furiously trying to get anything, just a little bit -

And she's able to get a few hot sparks to spring onto the moss -- where they immediately fizzle and die.

The moss is too damp.

Jessica crumples the moss in her fist, hanging her head.

No. Not now. She can't cry now.

She finds the notebook in her back pocket. Still in its plastic bag. The pages still dry.

Shaky, Jessica removes the notebook from the bag. Opens to the back, the last two blank pages. Rips them out, crumples them into little balls. Places them near the flint.

Strikes the stone again. A SPARK -- the paper catches -- Jessica quickly blows a little air on it, feeding the flames -

But the paper burns up before the moss or twigs can catch.

The fire needs more fuel.

The next page has her handwriting on it. She hesitates.

FLASH: Jessica enjoys her last hot meal in her cave.

She rips the page out and sets it in the moss.

The paper flares and starts to burn out quickly. The twigs still not catching.

She rips out another few pages and adds them to the fire.

Jessica marks time on the wall. Draws water from the stream.

The fire isn't burning fast enough. She adds more pages.

The fireball erupts from Carl's cave.

Her husband throws her down.

She pulls the branch out and clutches her side as it bleeds.

Jessica starts to rip at the notebook in a frenzy, tears streaming from her eyes.

The fire and her pain and her memories flash and swirl around her as the pages burn -

She tucks her boys into bed.

Her husband leaves the house with his fishing gear.

Choi shows her how to fish.

She and Choi share a meal by the fire.

She hugs Choi close as she sings to him.

Carl lunges from the wilderness.

Her Husband holds her close and warm and lovingly.

The plane spirals toward the water.

Her oldest child leads her by the hand to the backyard.

The doctor sits across from her. Says things she can't hear.

She finds the bodies in the cave.

Her Mom visits her in the hospital.

She marches away from the burning boat with fury on her face.

She washes up on the beach.

She makes her first mark on the wall.

Jessica tears the last page from the notebook and hurls empty husk into the BLAZING FIRE. It hurts more than her hand.

As the heat from the flames surrounds her, Jessica lowers her head and sobs. Only a few moments pass before:

A DROPLET OF RAIN HITS THE BACK OF HER HEAD.

She doesn't look up.

The rain starts to fall harder, faster.

The drizzle becomes a shower. Smothering the fire she just burned her memories to build. One last insult.

A WOOSH overhead. Jessica looks up, against the rain -- two small lights, so small she can barely see them, red and green, blinking in the sky. Moving fast. A plane?

No. It can't be. No one came before. No one's coming now. She's seeing things.

Head back down. The weight of it all. All this time, and she's going to die here, broken and beaten in the rain.

She can hear HIM APPROACH. Branches snapping underfoot.

IN THEIR BEDROOM. Her Husband approaches. Grabs her.

The hissing growl from his throat.

Close. The other edge of the plateau.

He THROWS her against the dresser, hard. Her shoulder SPLITTING as it hits the edge. Collapsing.

She doesn't want to look.

His feet in front of her. Bleeding, she pushes herself halfway off the floor (the POP SONG on the radio). We've seen this moment before -- but this time it keeps going . . .

He takes a step forward - and she stops. Lowering herself, prostrate, submissive. Beaten.

She can't be like that again.

She won't.

So -- slowly -- she raises her eyes. And FACES HIM.

Carl, furious, stands at the edge of the trees, growling and soaked in the rain. Still hurting from his fall. Looking at his adversary with death in his eyes.

Jessica ducks out of her sling. Pulls the little knife from her pocket, opens its blade.

Unsteady -- she STANDS.

Breathing heavy. Her own fury building.

No.

She's not going to lie down for him. If he wants to kill her - he's going to have to do it the hard way.

JESSICA LETS LOOSE A FERAL ROAR -

JESSICA
AAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!

CARL CHARGES.

Jessica meets him head-on.

Carl swipes with an open claw and Jessica swings with the knife, driving it deep into his palm.

As he pulls back she presses in, slashing at his leg.

His next swing catches her and sends her tumbling.

She rolls in the mud and gets to her feet.

Carl turns to face her and his foot slips in the mud - he pitches to the side before he can recover, weakened from his fall and unprepared for the wet ground -

Jessica drives in, stabbing at his side.

Carl howls and bumps her, knocking her into a tree -

She drops the knife --

He lunges -- Jessica ducks out of the way and narrowly avoids him as he smashes into the tree.

Jessica scoops up the knife and backpedals out of his reach.

He turns to her, bleeding, nearly blinded by rage.

They feint in and out, advancing a step, retreating. Giving and taking ground equally.

Each looking for the opening. The killshot.

Carl swipes and Jessica slashes.

The rain beating down.

Water carries blood with it, drip drip, to the forest floor.

Black fur glistening, wet hair swinging in front of her eyes.

Fingers curl around the knife.

Talons dig into mud and slice air.

Bared teeth flash in moonlight.

They move at the same time.

Jessica ducks under Carl's attack, hurtling to his belly.

Her knife stabs deep.

Carl scrabbles, trying to retreat, to get her out from under him, but she keeps pushing in, pumping the knife in and out of him as fast as she can - a dozen little cuts.

Carl jumps forward, knocking Jessica over as he finally escapes the attack.

She rolls over quickly to face him.

Screaming, she CHARGES.

Carl reacts a moment too late.

Jessica stabs him in the shoulder -- tries to pull out the knife to do it again -

It's STUCK.

Carl grabs Jessica with his other arm and HURLS HER ASIDE.

She hits the ground hard, rolling to a stop.

Carl JUMPS ON HER -

She grabs a BRANCH -- the forearm of her broken hand bracing it-- and JAMS IT INTO HIS BEAK as he bites down.

Jessica pushes up with all her strength.

For a moment, it seems like she's stopped him.

But then Carl FOLDS BACK HIS TALONS TO EXPOSE HIS SECONDARY HAND, grabbing the branch and RIPPING IT FROM HER GRASP.

Jessica barely manages to roll to the side before his beak slams into where she just was.

She dodges another bite -- scrambles to the branch -- swings -

The branch smacks Carl on the side of the head. He barely seems to notice, advancing . . .

Jessica swings again, hitting him on the ear -

And he STAGGERS a little - enough for Jessica to roll out from under him and find her feet again.

She puts distance between them, turns around just in time -

As Carl SLAMS INTO HER, DRIVING HER BACK -

He PINS HER TO A TREE -- his beak drives in to bite -

And Jessica thrusts out with the branch, just in time -

The branch just barely holds Carl's jaws back -- the trunk of the tree anchoring it as she pushes with her good hand on the other end, trying to lever him away -

But he's too strong.

His arms pinning her in place.

His beak inches closer.

The horrid hiss and click of his mouth in her ear.

His four eyes so close she can see her reflection in them.

The two HOWLING in each others' face.

A final confrontation.

Even with the tree as an anchor, Carl is too strong for Jessica. His beak inching closer to her neck. His teeth extending inside of it, ready to bite . . .

She sees her knife. Still buried in his shoulder.

Within reach.

But she can't grab it with her bad hand.

A last-ditch effort if there ever was one.

Now or never.

Jessica lets go of the branch -- ducking to the side -

Carl's beak CLAMPS DOWN ON HER SHOULDER, TEETH GNASHING DEEP -

She sacrifices it to get her good hand around the knife -

Pulling it from his shoulder with all her strength -

Carl bites down harder, trying to rip her arm from her body -

She tears the knife free -

AND DRIVES IT DOWN TO THE HILT IN CARL'S EYE.

The Beast screams, dropping her. She hits the ground hard.

Too tired, in too much pain, to push herself to her feet.

Carl flails wildly, in agony he's never known.

She can't get out of the way in time.

One of Carl's legs hits Jessica -

FLINGING HER OVER THE EDGE OF THE HILL.

She goes tumbling -

A disorienting, dizzying whirl down the slope -

Until she comes to a rest -

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HILL

Halfway concealed in the brush.

She groans. Everything hurts.

From the top of the hill, Carl screeches, still flailing around for her.

Jessica can't keep her eyes open anymore.

FADE TO BLACK.

DARKNESS. SILENCE. THEN: A LOW WHIRRING, CHOP CHOP CHOP, STEADY AND GETTING LOUDER . . .

FADE IN:

EXT. FOREST - BOTTOM OF THE HILL - DAY

Jessica comes to slowly. Waking to a horrid WHIRRING.

Trying to push herself awake, using the tree she's lying against to get into a sitting position. Still out of it.

She peers around the tree to look over THE BEACH -

WHERE SHE SEES MEN.

THE COAST GUARD. A SEARCH PARTY. A HELICOPTER OVERHEAD.

It takes her a moment to believe her eyes.

The search party fans out, looking for her. They must be.

She's just barely hidden from their view by the brush. Struggling against the pain to stay upright.

She opens her mouth to shout out -

But she stops herself. Stays silent. Torn, conflicted. Not sure what she wants to do.

The rescue she prayed for is right before her eyes. But *he'll* be there if she goes home.

Carl will be here if she stays. But she can fight Carl.

Jessica nearly tears herself apart trying to decide.

COAST GUARD #1 (O.S.)
We've got someone!

Jessica barely turns her head in time to see the two COAST GUARD OFFICERS that pick her up, making the choice for her.

She's too weak to resist.

COAST GUARD #1 (CONT'D)
Jesus . . .

COAST GUARD #2
(into radio)
Female, 30's, multiple injuries, we
need to medivac her right away.

They half-drag, half-carry Jessica onto:

EXT. THE BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Where the rest of the coast guard squad awaits them. A few officers shepherd them towards the HELICOPTER, which lowers a cradle for Jessica.

They shield Jessica's eyes from the sand kicked up by the helicopter blades. She's practically collapsed into them by the time they get her to the cradle and settle her in.

She can barely keep her eyes open. They strap her down.

JESSICA
Carl . . .

She's barely audible. The coast guards tighten the last strap and give the officer in the helicopter a thumbs up.

The winch turns and the cradle slowly starts to bring Jessica up to the helicopter.

It's really happening . . .

She turns her head for one more look at the forest.

Sees the trees swaying. The birds taking off from the canopy.

He's coming towards the noise.

Carl emerges onto the beach, in full view of a dozen coast guard officers. The knife still stuck in his eye.

All of them stop in their tracks, completely unable to believe their eyes.

Carl stares back, confused by all the people.

He SCREECHES.

One of the coast guards FIRES at Carl with his sidearm.

Carl jerks back and howls as the bullet hits his leg. He's too big for the shot to bring him down, but it stings.

He starts to advance on the coast guards, menacing.

They all start to open fire!

More shots miss than hit - Carl may be a big target, but he's shuffling quickly - the pain enough to keep him at bay.

As she watches, the strangest look comes over Jessica's face. Hate and pity and, maybe . . .

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Stop . . .

A hint of compassion?

Carl sees Jessica in the cradle. Tries to get to her. But he can't, not with the officers firing at him.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

You're hurting him.

No one can hear her.

The bullets force Carl back to the treeline.

His eyes locked on her, howling.

Jessica's losing consciousness. Fading.

The cradle reaches the chopper and two officers haul Jessica onboard. Strap her down. She can still hear his howls, even as she stares at the ceiling of the chopper . . .

JESSICA (CONT'D)

You're hurting him . . .

The helicopter starts to fly away from the island. All those years growing smaller and smaller behind her.

Carl's cries echo in her ears.

She should be overjoyed. But she doesn't know how to feel.

So she closes her eyes.

FADE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

TV's on. Some reality show.

CLICK. The channel changes to a home improvement program. Click. A cooking show. Click. NCIS reruns. Click. Sports. Click. Nature programming.

From the hospital bed, Jessica looks up at the TV, trying to find something interesting about it. She clicks to change the channel one last time. Still nothing.

She turns the TV off.

Her wounds have been dressed, an IV in her good arm. Her broken hand in a cast. She's been bathed and her hair is combed. Not her first day here.

But she's still pale, too thin, her eyes sunken. A bland tray of food sits by her bed, untouched. She looks like she felt better when she was dying on that island.

A NURSE enters. Jessica glances out the window as the Nurse changes her IV and, disappointed, takes away the tray.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Some days later. Jessica looks more or less the same. She keeps staring at a bouquet of flowers on the table nearby - the note "From the Kim Family."

She sometimes glances at the DOCTOR as he speaks.

DOCTOR

We can't do much about the scarring on your shoulder and side. But, with physical therapy, you should eventually regain 80% or more mobility in your hand. Considering the shape you were in when you were admitted, your recovery is remarkable. I'd still like to keep you here for a while, so we can keep up the regiment of fluids and antibiotics and monitor your recovery.

(no response)

Mrs. Landry?

Jessica turns to the Doctor.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
You're very lucky.

JESSICA
Lucky . . .

THE SUIT (O.S.)
Yes. Lucky.

Jessica looks up at the NEW VOICE and we realize we've

JUMPED TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A different day, later on. A MAN IN A SUIT stands by Jessica's bedside, taking notes as he talks. There's something off about him.

THE SUIT
The doctor tells me you'll be well enough to go home in a few weeks.
(no response)
He also tells me you've been eating more. And speaking.

JESSICA
(*fuck off*)
Yes.

THE SUIT
Mrs. Landry - Jessica. I know you don't like talking to me about this. But we need your help in understanding what happened on that island. The woman whose body you say you found, Christina Kim? She's been missing for nearly 12 years. She was sailing across the Pacific when her boat vanished. How long do you think she survived there?

JESSICA
Three days.

THE SUIT
That's all?

JESSICA
He didn't play with her.

THE SUIT

Are you sure it was the Beast that killed Miss Kim? It couldn't have been starvation, or injuries from the storm that marooned her?

JESSICA

He made her a trophy.

THE SUIT

A trophy you burned. You've seen things that shouldn't exist. That can't exist, as far as anyone outside this room should be concerned. Do you understand what I mean?

JESSICA

You don't believe me?

THE SUIT

You misunderstand. We believe you. A dozen Coast Guards saw the Beast with their own eyes. But right now, we need to control the narrative around that island. And that narrative does not have room for a monster.

Jessica processes what she's being asked to do.

JESSICA

Christina Kim was injured when her boat went down. Died of her wounds.

THE SUIT

That's good. That's very good.

Satisfied, The Suit turns to leave.

JESSICA

Did you find him?

THE SUIT

The Beast?

Jessica nods.

THE SUIT (CONT'D)

Not yet. We're combing the island, looking for its body.

JESSICA

What?

THE SUIT

Nothing could survive the number of bullets it took on the beach.

JESSICA

He's still alive . . .

THE SUIT

We'll find it. You have my word.

(then)

Do you have any idea what it wanted with you?

(off her look)

It killed four other people that we know of within days of their arrival on the island. But you survived for more than four years.

JESSICA

How long?

There's genuine shock in her voice.

THE SUIT

We're just trying to understand why it killed them but not you.

JESSICA

I don't know. I fought.

(then)

He liked me.

The Suit doesn't quite know what to say to that.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Another day. Jessica wakes up to an OLDER WOMAN (60's - we've seen her before) sitting by her bed.

JESSICA

Mom?

JESSICA'S MOTHER

Hey Peanut.

She takes Jessica's hand.

JESSICA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

They told me you weren't supposed to have any visitors until you woke up, but I got them to make an exception. I wanted to see you first.

HUSBAND/CARL

Hey baby.

JESSICA'S MOTHER

Carl.

HUSBAND/CARL

Don't worry, Mrs. Hewitt. It's alright.

CARL looks at Jessica, the boys at her bedside.

HUSBAND/CARL (CONT'D)

What, no smile for me?

Jessica won't look at him. The kids can see something's wrong, but they can't tell what.

JESSICA

Mom, can you give us a moment?

Jessica's Mother nods, stands.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Take the boys.

JESSICA'S MOTHER

C'mon kiddos. Let's give your Mom and Dad a minute.

Carl ruffles Lionel's hair as he passes by, Jessica's Mother leading Lionel and Shane out of the room. The door closes.

Jessica's nearly shaking as Carl pulls up a stool.

HUSBAND/CARL

Everything's gonna be just fine, baby. I promise.

He reaches out and PUTS HIS HAND ON HER ARM.

Jessica's eyes finally meet his.

The smirk disappears when he sees the rage in her eyes.

His grip tightens, just a little -

And JESSICA FUCKING LOSES IT.

With a yell she leaps off the bed, tackling Carl out of the chair to the floor.

She PINS HIM with her legs and POUNDS on him, OVER and OVER -

Carl yells as blood bursts from his broken nose, too stunned to fight back.

Jessica keeps punching, swinging at him with both arms now, more than a decade of pain and repression and hate coursing through her fists -

ORDERLIES hurry in, grabbing Jessica, trying to pull her off Carl -- she fights against them, continuing her assault.

She BITES, SINKING HER TEETH INTO HIS CHEEK -

Jessica HOWLS and breaks into a feral grin as they finally pull her away . . .

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

She's handcuffed to the bed. Carl long gone. His blood still on her mouth. Jessica doesn't show an ounce of regret.

The Suit, Doctor, and a FEMALE SHERIFF are outside her room - she can see them talking about her through the window in the door. Her Mother as close to them as they'll let her be, listening.

After a moment, the FEMALE SHERIFF slips in, closing the door behind her.

They regard each other for a moment. Then the Sheriff unlocks the cuffs. Jessica doesn't try anything. A moment of trust.

The Sheriff sits down on a stool. Her voice is understanding:

SHERIFF

The Doctor told your family that you were "in shock." That you needed more time to adjust after the island. That by the time you're well enough to be released, with counseling, you'll be alright to go home with your husband and children.

(then)

I heard how your husband spoke about you.

Jessica knows what she means.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

He says he won't press charges. Just wants you to come home and "make things normal."

JESSICA

The boys can't stay with him.

SHERIFF

They can stay with your Mother for now. If I didn't know better, I'd say she was happy to see Carl with a chunk bitten out of his face.

JESSICA

After?

SHERIFF

There'll be a custody battle. It'll get ugly. And after . . .

(she gestures, "this.")

I don't know if you'll be able to convince a court to give you full custody.

JESSICA

Can I see them?

SHERIFF

I don't think that's possible right now. I'm sorry.

ON Jessica as she absorbs this.

JESSICA

I didn't tell them I loved them.

Realizing. Feeling it overwhelm her. She knows the choice that's coming and fights back tears.

SHERIFF

But if you go with your husband, none of that happens. So I'm sorry, but I have to ask: do you want to go home with him?

Finally, with pain and steel in her voice:

JESSICA

No.

FADE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A week later, maybe more. Jessica is upright now, in street clothes. Her bad arm in a sling. She looks stronger. Ready.

Her Mother enters.

JESSICA'S MOTHER

Hey Peanut.

She goes over to her Jessica. Pulls her into an embrace. Jessica can just barely return it.

ON Jessica's Mother just long enough to see her reaction, the complicated swirl of emotions behind her eyes.

A Nurse enters with a wheelchair. Jessica's Mother lets her embrace go and gestures to it.

JESSICA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

They want you to leave in that.

Jessica shakes her head. Walks out of the room under her own power. The Nurse knows better than to try and stop her.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

They're just faces in the crowd here, Jessica in the middle of the row and her Mother looking out the window.

TURBULENCE briefly rattles the plane. Jessica grabs her Mother's hand and squeezes it tight.

Her Mother returns the squeeze, comforting.

INT. AIRPLANE - LATER

The plane finishes its descent. Taxiing to a stop.

CAPTAIN (O.S.)

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to
Seattle . . .

Jessica finally lets go of her mother's hand.

I/E. CAR - SEATTLE ROADS - DAY

Overcast, the sky just hinting at rain. Jessica watches the city pass by from the window of her Mother's car.

JESSICA'S MOTHER

They wouldn't let you and the boys both stay with me so I found you an apartment. It's not too far away. I thought you'd want to see the boys first before going there though.

Jessica turns on the radio - pop music. Flicks through a few stations but can't find something she likes, so she turns the radio off again, and they drive in silence.

EXT. JESSICA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

A nice house, just outside of the city. Close enough to have a good view of the bay. Trees all around.

Jessica's Mother parks in the driveway. Gets out and opens the front door of the house.

Jessica is slow to follow.

Her mother steps inside, but Jessica stays on the porch.

JESSICA'S MOTHER

The boys are inside. They're excited to see you.

(no response)

Alright. Take your time.

As her mother goes into the house, Jessica turns to look out over the trees, out past them to the bay . . .

Longer than maybe she should.

She can HEAR HER KIDS inside the house, talking excitedly, coming to the door, but her gaze stays fixed . . .

The grey clouds in the sky.

The treetops swaying gently.

Maybe a little more than just the wind would cause.

A low rustle that could be wind, or the faintest of growls.

Jessica watches as a flock of birds take flight, rising from the trees at the edge of the woods and gliding overhead.

She knows.

Jessica lowers her gaze to the edge of the woods.

An indescribable sensation gathering behind her eyes.

CUT TO BLACK.

END.