

TRESPASSER

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Based on the Graphic Novel by
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THE SCREEN IS BLACK

A few seconds of silence before a FLASH:

The sun crests over the untouched Alaskan wilderness. It's December. Snow caps top the sprawling birch trees and scattered riverbeds. A captivating image, but only for a few seconds until we're back to -- BLACK.

ANOTHER FLASH. White flakes fall over deep forest. The wind whistles through the trees. BLACK.

ANOTHER. A lone MOOSE browses the branches of an evergreen tree. BLACK.

ANOTHER. Discs of thick ice move slowly over dark water. A river in the process of freezing over. Life seems barely inhabitable out here. BLACK.

ANOTHER. An innocent WHITE RABBIT moves through snow-covered brush. We stay a little longer on this image, as the rabbit maneuvers between a cluster of twigs. Calculated. Alert. Precise. Then it hops right through a *hidden loophole trap* - caught-- DEAD.

BLACK

Silence in the darkness, until--

We hear the building sound of SNOW CRUNCHING UNDER BOOTS.

Crunch. Crunch.

The word **TRESPASSER** fills the screen.

It's unnerving as the sound grows closer. Menacing.

Then, on one final loud CRUNCH -

WE SNAP INTO--

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN THE ARCTIC REFUGE - DAY

FROM OVERHEAD: TWO PEOPLE WALKING IN A VAST OCEAN OF WHITE. One young, one old. They're dressed in worn snow gear and animal skins. A RIFLE hangs over the young one's back.

This time of year there's only a few hours of sun a day. Time is of the essence as the two figures move through the cold. Their boots piercing the glistening layer of white frost with each step, leaving a trail in their wake.

ON HECTOR RAMOS (40, Latino), the older body - as he scans the sparse forest ahead while trudging through the snow. Hector's handsome, but rough. His eyes suggest that he lives in a kind of exile. The place he was exiled from may or may not exist - and it's okay if we don't know. But we can discern he's no longer the person who left it.

Hector spots something in the distance and stops walking.

RIFLE SCOPE POV: A CARIBOU nuzzles the snow between tall trees. Stoic. Innocent. Seven feet tall but small antlers - a female.

The cross hairs of the scope move around, assessing the area surrounding the animal. It's dark and shaded beneath the trees.

HECTOR (O.S.)
Do it how I taught you.

REVERSE TO REVEAL: MARIA RAMOS (10), the younger body, staring down the scope of a bolt-action rifle. Maria is Hector's daughter, through and through. She's innocent, yet alert. And we're struck by the absence of fear behind her dark eyes.

RIFLE SCOPE POV: The Caribou takes a few steps, moving slowly. A tree in front of it partially-obstructs our vision. The scope stays on the creature as it steps between two trees, into an exposed position.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
Wait...

Though we feel the nurturing quality beneath Hector's request, we sense Maria's annoyance. Something's pulling at her - an impatience perhaps. Then, she--

SHOOTS

And misses. Shit. The Caribou starts to run.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
(annoyed)
Maria.

She ignores Hector as she quickly narrows her aim and--

SHOOTS AGAIN

This one hits the caribou in the leg. It flounders, but not enough to take it down. Fuck.

Hector quickly grabs the rifle out of her hands, aims with the precision of a marksman and - FIRES.

SNAP! - Right in the neck.

The Caribou falls to the ground. Dead.

Hector looks to his daughter, frustration in his eyes...

HECTOR (CONT'D)

You wait till it gets in the clearing. We're vulnerable in the dark... You know that.

MARIA

It was a good shot.

Beat.

HECTOR

...You missed.

Hector holds the rifle out to her - let's get to work.

MOMENTS LATER

A LARGE SAC OF INTESTINES collects cluster flies on the ground. A pool of blood in the slush and snow.

HECTOR (O.S.)

Not a moose but she'll hold us for a few weeks...

Hector skins the dead Caribou with a knife. His precision tells us he's done this a thousand times.

An OLD SNOWMOBILE with a SLED connected to its back, rests a few feet away.

Maria stands guard, rifle in hand. Watching the woods.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

How we lookin'?

She assesses the landscape. The dark crevices in the forest. The sun-lit clearing she should have waited for - only 20 yards away...

MARIA

Clear.

Maria looks at Hector a long beat as he works. His breath visible in the cold air. For a moment, it's as if Maria's contemplating her father's infinite solitude.

Then Hector removes the hide. Shows it to Maria, a good result.

HECTOR
(re the hide)
Your room?

She smiles. Yes - that should work.

MOMENTS LATER

Hector quarters the meat with a knife and bone saw. It's a bloody mess. Maria continues to stand guard, gun at the ready. Her breath frosting in front of her.

MARIA
You need a new bone saw...

Hector looks at the old tool in his hand. She might be right.

HECTOR
I'll see what I can find after the winter.

Hector packs the meat as he cuts it. Puts it onto the sled.

MARIA
I want to come.

Hector cuts into the flesh, not looking up.

HECTOR
Too dangerous.

MARIA
I'm not afraid.

She's baiting him.

HECTOR
'Didn't say you were. 'Said it's too dangerous.
(beat)
And too far...

The sound of an airplane distracts. They look up to find - through an opening in the trees - a commercial jet flying 35,000 feet above. A sight they've seen before.

As the plane falls out of view, Maria pushes further-

MARIA
They don't harm you when you cross
the river.

Hector wants to move on from the subject.

HECTOR
I said no.

MARIA
Why would they harm me if they
don't harm you?

He nicks his finger with the knife. Shit. He thinks for a moment, before answering-

HECTOR
The people out there aren't kind to
young people.
(stern)
It's not safe.

He cuts more pieces. An unease now.

MARIA
...No one's out to get us.

There's a change in her tone and Hector notices it.

HECTOR
Because we stay in our own
territory. That's where it's safe.
You know that.

A beat, as she stares at him. In a tightly coiled brood. Hector exhales before looking her in the eyes.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
There's nothing but darkness out
there. No matter what you tell
yourself about the things you've
seen. Remember...

Maria doesn't look at him, not wanting to hear this again.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
I'm trying to protect you.

He truly is. But the old stories don't seem to be working like they used to. All this feels like to Maria is-

MARIA

You'll never trust me to survive on my own.

With that, Hector looks up at her.

HECTOR

I will when you show me you can.

She meets his gaze a beat, then averts her eyes - pretending to scan the forest. An utterly self-sufficient kid, at that age where her biting curiosity is constantly at odds with an intrinsic seed of doubt.

Then, as Maria turns her head - she spots something in the woods and freezes. Upon closer inspection it appears to be the silhouette of--

A WOLF

MARIA

Dad.

Maria points the rifle in the wolf's direction as Hector looks up. Sees the lurking animal.

HECTOR

Don't shoot if you don't have to.

(looks around)

If there's one, there's a vengeful pack waiting.

Hector begins quickly securing what meat he has packed onto the back sled, as Maria stares daggers at the wolf in the shadows.

After a beat, the animal makes a sharp move to its left, now obstructed by trees. Out of sight. Maria's eyes dart around. Where'd it go?

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Three o'clock.

Maria whips her head to the right to find--

THE WOLF - CLOSER NOW. 20 feet away.

She aims the rifle at it and without hesitation--

PULLS THE TRIGGER

...But nothing comes out. Just a single *click*.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 (realizing)
 We used all three.

Panic rushes through Maria as the wolf - GROWLS.

MARIA
 What do I do?

Hector stays relatively still as he talks to Maria with a steady voice.

HECTOR
 Stay calm. Don't move. It can sense your fear. You can't show it.

On Maria, unsure if that's possible.

MARIA
 Not sure I can do that.

HECTOR
 Breathe.
 (as she exhales)
 ...Keep your mind together.

Hector delicately moves his hands to finish securing the meat he's packed onto the sled. Trying not to make any sudden movements as he keeps speaking softly to Maria-

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 (eying the wolf)
 You're gonna be fine. Believe it.

She takes another deep breath.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 See? That's it... Ignore the fear.

Maria keeps her eyes glued to the wolf. Both standing still...

As Hector ties the last knot over the meat, the wolf--

Takes another step toward Maria and - BARES ITS FANGS.

Hector looks over as Maria starts to tremble slightly, still holding the empty rifle at the wolf.

MARIA
 It's gonna attack me.

HECTOR
 Tell it to go away.

MARIA

What?

HECTOR

Tell it to go away like you're the boss.

A beat, as Maria hesitates.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

...Do it.

MARIA

(to wolf, stern)

Go away.

But the wolf just growls, even more savage. It didn't work.

HECTOR

Louder.

Maria inhales and gives it her all this time as she shouts-

MARIA

GO AWAY!

A beat, before the wolf - takes a few steps back...

It actually worked.

Hector hops on the snowmobile. Pulls the choke three times.

HECTOR

Get on.

Maria slowly backs away from the wolf, gets on the snowmobile and holds onto her father's back as they - ZOOM OFF.

The machine speeds out from under the trees and into the clearing, as Maria looks back to see--

The wolf running after them.

EXT. NARROW PATH - SECONDS LATER

The golden sunlight glistens on the snow, as they whip into a narrow path lined with tall trees.

Maria holds on tight to Hector as she keeps her eyes trained behind her. Beyond the meat, tightly secured on the back sled - the wolf's still running. Moving fast. Picking up speed.

HECTOR (O.S.)

Shit...

Maria turns her head to see they have another threat--

THREE MORE WOLVES on their left. Running out of the woods, straight for them.

Hector speeds up and swerves the snowmobile off the path for a moment, cutting around a tree to fend them off.

And it works...

The three wolves join the first one, running after the sled from behind as it gets back on the path. Maria's watching the wolves as the front one LUNGES FORWARD and it almost seems like he's going to make it onto the sled. The snowmobile just barely beating these wild animals.

MARIA

Can you go faster?

Hector looks down to confirm - he's flooring it...

HECTOR

No. But they'll run out of steam soon.

Then, Maria looks to the right and is startled to see--

ANOTHER WOLF!

Coming out of the woods like a bat out of hell.

MARIA

DAD!

Just as Hector turns, the wolf - LEAPS INTO THE AIR!

And lands directly on the back sled. Clutching the rope-tied pile of meat. SNARLING AT MARIA - only a few feet away. Fuck!

She lets out a SCREAM.

MARIA (CONT'D)

What do I do!

Hector thinks-

HECTOR

(no choice)
Unhook the meat.

On Maria - Can she even do that?

She looks down. The back sled is connected by two ropes. If she reaches down, the wolf might bite her.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Do it. Quick.

Maria stifles her fear and - *reaches her hands down*. Starts untying the rope. The wolf's saliva dripping from its fangs as it stares her down.

She's almost got the first side, when--

The angry wolf BITES AT THE AIR!

But she pulls her hand away just in time, untying the rope in the process. One side of the sled unhooked, causing it to fall back another foot.

Now's her chance. Maria quickly works the other side as the wolf tries to steady itself and move forward, to the corner where her hands are.

She's almost got it when - IT BITES AT HER AGAIN!

This time causing her to JOLT BACK. She almost tumbles off the snowmobile, but Hector reaches his arm out, blocking her fall.

She's got no time to think. She reaches her hands back down to the rope and grasps it in her hands.

The wolf bares its fangs and GROWLS at Maria. She looks into its eyes with horror for a brief moment, before it--

LUNGES AT HER HANDS AND BITES!

But it just misses her flesh - BITING THE ROPE INSTEAD - and inadvertently cutting itself loose as--

THE SLED COMES FREE, falling into the distance as they speed off.

Maria grabs a hold of her father and breathes as she watches their fresh meat, now surrounded by wolves, fall out of view in the distance...

EXT. BEAR TRAP - DAY

The sun's fading. Hector stops the snowmobile in front of a thick wooded area. He looks to Maria. Defeat in her eyes. Knowing that was all her fault.

HECTOR
(the silver lining)
'Wasn't a moose...

He's letting her off the hook.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
Maybe we got something else.

She nods.

Hector waits as Maria hops off the snowmobile and treks 20 feet up a low slope.

WE FOLLOW HER. The crunch of her feet. The gun on her back. We can feel the adolescent frustration with each inhale of cold breath.

Then she reaches her destination-

A STEEL BEAR TRAP, lying in the snow. Rusty and empty, but intact. Nothing.

She treks back to Hector, bested. With a simple shake of her head, she signals nothing's caught in the trap.

As she hops back on the snowmobile, Hector takes a long look at her. A stare-down to cut the tension. This is his common tactic for Maria's angst.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
(listen)
I know you wanna do things your own
way... But you gotta take my lead
for a while longer, okay?

As Maria looks into her father's eyes, studying him... The careful viewer may notice in the background - *something falling from the sky*, deep in the distance, through the tall trees -- A *BLACK ROUND OBJECT* - maybe the size of a large Eagle. It's unseen by Hector and Maria as it falls out of view, making no sound.

Maria looks up at the fading sun, then back down to Hector, giving in with a nod-

MARIA
(okay)
Let's go...

Hector nods and pulls the choke three times to start the engine.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

A LOG CABIN covered in military netting is nestled under a large oak tree. A small plume of chimney smoke rises through the tree branches above.

The door of a STORM SHELTER sticks out of a small mound to the left of the cabin. An OUTHOUSE to the right.

If it weren't for the light created by the moon and snow, you'd barely notice the property.

Hector opens the door of the cabin from the inside and two husky dogs - BELLE and FINN - follow him out.

He places a bowl of scraps on the wooden porch and the dogs eat their dinner.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Hector sets a plate of homemade tortillas and a bowl of stew in front of Maria, on a small table against the wall.

Maria perks up.

MARIA
Tortillas?

A peace offering.

HECTOR
For my favorite daughter on her
tenth birthday...

MARIA
I'm your only daughter.

He kisses the top of her head.

HECTOR
Happy Birthday...

Hector sits across from her. His sleeveless shirt exposing a FORCE RECON MARINE TATTOO on his arm. A lantern illuminates their faces.

The first floor of the cabin is one open space that serves as a living room, kitchen, and dining room. A futon on a cot acts as a couch and bed. Two homemade wooden chairs sit before a fire in the fireplace. It's all very primitive. Everything is a collection of necessities gathered over years.

Maria takes a bite of food. The tortilla's tough.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
I messed it up.

MARIA
No. It's good.

Hector takes a bite. He definitely messed it up.

HECTOR
My mother's were better.

Maria thinks, then asks-

MARIA
Were you sad when she died?

HECTOR
My mother?
(nods)
Yeah.

MARIA
How old were you?

HECTOR
'Little younger than you.

Maria plays with her food a moment, not eating it.

MARIA
'She get sick like mom did?

Hector shakes his head, not wanting to indulge.

HECTOR
Different kind.

MARIA
How?

Hector hesitates before elaborating-

HECTOR
...Your mother was an 'addict'.

Maria doesn't know what that means.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
...She put drugs in her body.
That's what made her sick.

MARIA
Why would she do that?

HECTOR
I don't know.
(beat)
...Sometimes it's hard to keep
yourself from doing what you know
is wrong out there.

A beat, as Maria registers Hector's discomfort in the subject.

MARIA
Am I gonna get sick?

HECTOR
(shakes head)
You can't get sick like that. Not
here...
(and)
Besides - nothing's gonna take you
down... You're a survivor.

Maria smiles. When Hector says it, it feels like gospel.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
Took you 30 days to heal a broken
arm last year... I haven't even
done that.

A beat. A sweet moment. Until something about it turns sour.
A sadness hangs in the air between them.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
...Your mother loved you, kiddo.

Maria nods, she's heard this before.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
I'm sorry you can't remember her.

Maria looks down at her food. An awkward silence as she eats.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
'Think it's time?

Maria looks up, registers what he's referring to and nods
with a sceptical smile.

MARIA
A present?

HECTOR

(nods)

'Course.

(teasing her)

Now I know you said no more toys.
But I thought another doll would be
so great.

On Maria: You didn't.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

You can never have enough dolls...

MARIA

It's not a doll.

HECTOR

Oh, yeah? How do you know?

MARIA

Because you always hide the toys on
the top shelf of the shelter and I
didn't see one this year...

On Hector: She's too smart for her own good.

HECTOR

Well I guess you don't know about
my other hiding spot...

(then)

Close your eyes.

Maria closes her eyes as Hector removes something from his
pocket.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Like I said, I know how much you
still love playing make believe...

On Maria: Oh, boy - this is gonna be a shit gift.

HECTOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Open.

She opens her eyes to see--

A TACTICAL FOLDING KNIFE on the table. 'USMC' engraved on its
side.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

...But seeing as you're wise beyond
your years, I thought it was time
to give you something more
useful... Something of mine.

Maria smiles. Ecstatic. She opens the knife, revealing the SHARP BLADE.

Her eyes light up. It's exactly what she wants.

She hugs her father.

MARIA
I love you, dad.

Hector holds her tight.

HECTOR
I love you too, kiddo.

A LITTLE LATER

Hector pulls an old, battery-powered BOOMBOX off the shelf. Grabs a CASSETTE: **'The Classics for Kids'**. Puts it in the tape player and presses 'Play'.

'Blue Moon' by Elvis Presley - PLAYS.

Hector and Maria sit on the chairs in front of the dwindling fire. The dogs lay on the floor in their usual places along the wall. This is their normal. Just the four of them.

As the twangy music crackles through, we now see there are only two windows and a front door in this cabin. A stairway on the left side leads to a small loft space with a single door - *Maria's room*.

ELVIS PRESLEY
*Blue moon, You saw me standing
alone, Without a dream in my heart,
Without a love of my own...*

Hector looks at his daughter as she inspects her new knife, and for a moment - he feels happy... Like everything's okay. Like that overwhelming sense of loneliness fostering inside both of them has temporarily dissipated.

ELVIS PRESLEY (CONT'D)
*Blue moon, You knew just what I was
there for, You heard me saying a
prayer for, Someone I really could
care for...*

Then, suddenly--

Belle starts to **GROWL**.

She's staring at the wall, growling at nothing.

MARIA
What is it, Belle?

The music continues as Maria tries to comfort the dog - but it doesn't work - she keeps growling.

Hector shuts off the stereo.

He looks to Finn on the other wall - unfazed.

HECTOR
(to Maria)
'Think she's in heat.

Maria, not sure he's right, inspects the hide under Belle.

MARIA
There's no blood.

Hector moves toward the dog-

HECTOR
Come on, girl.

He leads Belle to the front door.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
Out for the night.

Hector opens the door and Belle runs outside. That's strange.

As he shuts it, Hector looks to Maria a beat, brushing off the moment, then-

HECTOR (CONT'D)
Sleep?

MARIA
Can I take the music into my room?

HECTOR
No way. You know the rules.
(beat)
We should get some sleep...

INT. CABIN, MARIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maria lies awake in her bed - a futon on a homemade wooden frame. A candle burns on a small bedside table.

Maria's looking at a SKETCHBOOK she keeps. She flips through a few pages. Beautiful drawings.

City landscapes, covered with lush trees and sprouting flowers. Maria couldn't have drawn these.

As she turns the pages, it's clear some sheets have been torn out. But she keeps turning. Maria knows which one she wants to see. The last drawing in the book--

A sketch of a baby girl. Beautiful. Smiling from ear to ear. Below the image is written:

My Maria. Ready to take on this crazy beautiful world.

Maria stares at the portrait drawn by her mother, longingly. The work of a carefree spirit. She runs her hand gently over the paper.

Then Maria turns to the side table and blows the candle out--

BLACK

OVER BLACK WE HEAR THE BUSTLING SOUNDS OF CITY LIFE.

Cars on a highway. The occasional truck. Neighbors yelling to each other. Quite the contrast to Hector and Maria's life in the wild...

SNAP INTO:

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

The camera is low and still. We're looking at the backs of a one year old BABY GIRL and her DOG, sitting on the back patio of a compact yard bordered by a chain-link fence. The overpass hovering over the shoddy neighborhood like a dark cloud.

But the baby and her dog are simply looking ahead - to a large, circular, raised swimming pool. It covers nearly the entire backyard.

As the camera slowly PUSHES IN on the backs of the girl and her dog, upon closer inspection - we see the top of a RED BEACH BALL floating in the water of the pool. Then the red stain against the dark water created by the ball. As it moves faintly, the ripples give the impression of the wings of a bird or an angel.

It seems that's what the girl and dog have their eyes on.

Before we get much closer, suddenly--

WE HEAR A LOUD -- **THUD!**

The baby and her dog both turn toward camera at the noise as we--

SNAP TO:

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

HECTOR WAKES FROM HIS SLEEP, SHAKEN. He's on the living room cot. Was that in his dream or did he actually hear something?

ANOTHER THUD - coming from outside.

Hector looks up the stairs - Maria's door is closed.

He grabs his coat. Throws it on. Moves to a long chest on the wall. Removes the rifle inside.

THUD. THUD. What is that?

Hector walks to the door of the cabin, opens it slowly.

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Hector steps onto the porch, gun-ready. It's windy now. Snow falls. He points the gun in either direction. Nothing in sight.

ANOTHER THUD

Hector whips to the right.

He walks in the direction of the sound, around the cabin, to find the noise is coming from--

A BEAR

A common occurrence out here. It's banging and scratching at the locked door of the shelter.

Hector breathes. Lowers the gun.

False alarm.

EXT. CABIN - TWILIGHT

Maria places a fresh bowl of scraps on the porch for the dogs. Finn eats.

She looks around - Where's Belle?

She calls out for her. Waits.

No Belle.

Maria stands in the cold a beat, her breath misting.

She calls again. Still nothing.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The sun shines low from the east. The redwoods and pines paint a sea of shadows across the ground. Maria walks through the forest with a rucksack on her back. Finn by her side.

MARIA
(calls out)
Belle!

Maria holds her folding knife in her hands. Flipping it open and closed, as she walks.

EXT. GOLD DREDGE - DAY

Maria reaches an abandoned GOLD DREDGE that sits on the remnants of a frozen pond in a clearing. The structure of the old mining machine is the size of a two-story houseboat with a metal arm sticking twenty feet up and out of its side.

Maria and Finn walk across a small moat that leads inside--

INT. GOLD DREDGE - CONTINUOUS

The metal has rusted substantially. Sharp corners and screws stick out everywhere. No doubt a dangerous structure for a ten year old.

MARIA
(looks around)
Belle?

Maria heads past the decaying walls and stray gravel plates to a stairway.

As she walks up the stairs and through a rusty chain-link fence that protects the second floor, we first see what looks like a large, DARK TUNNEL - facing upward. We're staring into it. This is the gravel belt. A hazard in its day - hence the fenced in area. But right now, even with the daylight it's too dark to see much of anything beyond the first five feet inside this long-retired machine.

As Maria moves past it, we see that nestled inside this abandoned Gold Dredge -- is MARIA'S FORT. Her safe space.

Books, dolls and toys Hector's gotten her over the years are scattered about. This is where she's come throughout her unconventional childhood to just be a kid...

But still no Belle in sight.

Finn stands beside Maria as she looks out the frame of a small window on the second floor. The size of a slightly-large mail slot.

MARIA (CONT'D)
(looking out)
Where is she, Finn?

Through the window, Maria focuses on a line of tall pine trees in the distance.

EXT. PERIMETER - DAY

Maria treks deeper into the wilderness, calling out for Belle. Finn by her side. Still nothing.

She reaches the line of trees, the frozen river beyond it. This is the end of the road for Maria. The Coolidge River - the border she's never to cross.

Maria calls again for Belle. As loud as she can this time. Her voice echoes across the ice, to the threatening forest on the other side. Could Belle have crossed the river?

As Maria looks out over the rime with worry, we become aware that something in the background we thought was part of a tree, is in fact something else. **SOMETHING ALIVE**, moving slightly. *Watching her.*

INT. SHELTER - DAY

Using a flashlight to see, Hector arranges frozen meat in an ice box. The shelter door's open, allowing a shaft of sunlight to brighten the rest of the compact space. The whole shelter is only about 7' X 9'. It serves as their storage for everything. The wall on the left is lined with shelves holding army duffle bags and boxes. The wall on the right hangs various animal traps.

Something in the doorway CASTS A SHADOW over Hector's back. He turns to see--

MARIA, at the top of the few steps.

MARIA
(worried)
Belle's missing.

HECTOR
(calm, collected)
Don't worry. She'll come back.

MARIA
She's never gone this long. She
hasn't eaten...

Hector hears the concern in Maria's voice.

HECTOR
She's a smart dog. Probably found a
lynx.

MARIA
I think she went past the
perimeter.

Hector calmly shuts the ice box-

HECTOR
...Even if she did, she'll be fine.

On Maria: He's contradicting himself.

MARIA
What if the bad people took her?
What if she's stuck? Or hurt?

HECTOR
She's not stuck or hurt.

MARIA
Maybe you're wrong.

Hector looks at Maria. An urgency boiling inside her.

HECTOR
The ice is too thin. She wouldn't
cross it. She's gotta be on our
side...

Maria struggles to accept his calming words. Her eyes
pleading with him.

MARIA
It'll be dark soon.

Hector takes in a deep breath. Exhales slowly. Fine-

HECTOR
Let's go find her.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The sliver of sunlight is starting to fade as Hector and Maria walk through the looming trees. The rifle on Hector's back. Finn walks near them.

Maria calls out for Belle. Hector whistles. No luck.

MOMENTS LATER

They continue through the forest. Further now.

Hector spots Finn up ahead, his nose in the snow - eating at something on the ground. Hector can't make out what it is.

HECTOR
(calls out)
Finn. Off!

As Hector and Maria approach the dog, they see he was eating--

THE CORPSE OF A MOOSE

No ordinary dead moose in the snow. This one appears to have been drained of its insides in some way. As if its skin has melted into the ground. And its eyes - gone. Just two sunken holes on its face. Not a trace of blood in the snow.

On Hector: Unclear what animal could have done this, as he grunts at Finn to stay away.

Maria covers her nose to avoid the rotting smell as they pass it.

EXT. BEAR TRAP - MOMENTS LATER

As they reach the spot where Hector parked the snowmobile yesterday--

Finn starts to **GROWL**.

He's looking up the slope, in the direction of the bear trap. His growl fierce and violent.

Hector and Maria look at each other - something's up there.

Hector grabs the rifle off his back. Points it ahead--

HECTOR
(to Maria)
Stay behind me.

Maria does as she's told as they step slowly.

Finn continues to growl more intensely as they inch forward.

Crunch. Crunch.

They reach the top of the slope. The bear trap now in sight, 20 feet away, and--

THERE'S SOMETHING CAUGHT IN IT!

It's jet black. Long. Lying in the snow.

FINN BARKS.

Hector and Maria stop a beat, trying to make out what it is from the short distance - and if it's alive.

Hector inches forward, gun ready. Maria follows.

Finn barks more rapidly now.

As they move closer, we get a better look at the figure--

It looks humanoid in shape. Gaunt and sinewy. Dark black, reptilian skin. And it's totally naked, lying in the snow, unconscious. Its leg seized by the bear trap. A black tar substance bleeding from the wound. No eyes or nose on its head. Just two small ears on either side and a large, closed mouth. Its fingers like slender, sharp talons.

On Hector: In disbelief. What the fuck is that thing?

MARIA
Is that a person?

Hector shakes his head, dumbfounded-

HECTOR
I don't know what it is.

Finn barks louder, more feral. Hector tells him to be quiet.

Maria's eyes scan the creature, regarding it as she would any animal she's unfamiliar with. Taking a mental inventory.

MARIA
It's not breathing.

She's right. Does it even have lungs?

HECTOR
Maybe it's dead.

Maria takes a step forward, approaching with curiosity, but Hector stops her-

HECTOR (CONT'D)
Stay further back.

She does as she's told.

Hector slowly moves toward the unconscious TRESPASSER, armed and ready.

Finn growls again, as if warning him against it.

Finger on the trigger, Hector inches the nose of the rifle toward the otherworldly creature.

Closer. Closer.

Then, ever-so-gently - *HE NUDGES THE SIDE OF ITS BODY.*

Nothing.

Hector exhales. Studies it a beat. He cautiously kneels down to get a closer look.

The texture of its skin looks both delicate and rigid. Covered in tooth-like scales, similar to a shark.

MARIA
What is it?

He doesn't know. His deep breath misting in the air as he looks up. Barely any sunlight left in the cold sky.

HECTOR
(looking back down)
Whatever it is, it looks dead.

Hector thinks-

HECTOR (CONT'D)
Let's leave it in the trap. We'll come back when it's light out again.

A beat.

MARIA
The sun's not on our side... What if it doesn't rise again till after winter?

She's right.

HECTOR
...It'll be fine.

Hector looks back to the Trespasser.

MARIA
What about Belle?

Without taking his eyes off it-

HECTOR
Maybe she's home now.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

The sun's now gone. Only a pale light cast by the moon and snow.

As Hector and Maria reach their home, they find--

The door of the shelter is - *OPEN*.

Fuck. Hector didn't close it properly before they left.

He rushes to it-

INT. SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

Hector points the flashlight to discover - the shelter's been raided by a--

HECTOR
Fucking bear!

Hector looks around at the mess. Papers and bags scattered, shredded.

Even the ice box is torn apart. Their meat is gone...

HECTOR (CONT'D)
Shit.

EXT. SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

Maria stands alone outside the shelter. The wind whips through the trees into darkness. She scans the surrounding. Doesn't see anything. No bear, no Belle, no trespasser.

As she turns back to the shelter she's struck by something on the ground, sticking out of the snow.

A PICTURE

Maria leans down and picks it up. She looks at it. Trying to decipher what she's seeing. We don't yet see the image she's looking at as Hector steps out of the shelter.

HECTOR

Bring Finn inside. I've got to--

Hector notices Maria's focused on something in her hands.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

What is it?

Beat.

MARIA

...I think it's my mother.

Maria shows Hector the photo. And now we see the image. It's a woman with long auburn hair, holding her toddler daughter in her arms. They're standing on the Golden Gate Bridge.

Hector's struck by the photo.

HECTOR

(nods)

Yeah.

His face unreadable.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

With you...

(beat)

Just before I brought you here.

He hands the photo back to her, slightly unsettled by the image but he brushes it off. As Maria takes the photo back, she stares into it. She's clearly never seen it. And it seems she's never seen an image of her mother before now.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Must have been buried in the storage all this time.

Maria smiles as she takes in the sight of her mother.

Hector looks around, an unease comes over him. His paranoia's growing, though he tries his best to hide it.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Get inside, out of the cold. I'll
clean this up.

INT. CABIN, MARIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maria sits on her bed, still dressed in snow gear. She looks at the photo for one more beat, before placing it in her coat pocket, just over her heart.

The candle light flickers off the wooden walls as Maria looks to her rucksack in the corner of the room. Then to her bedroom window. The wind and snow outside.

A beat, as she contemplates the creature in the trap. Her curiosity consuming her.

CUT TO:

EXT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Rucksack on her back, Maria climbs out the small window of her second-story room. She maneuvers along the side of the cabin with calculation. She's done this many times.

As she starts to climb down, using the military netting as steps - her foot SLIPS on a pocket of snow. She almost falls 20 feet to the ground, but quickly catches her foot on a SHARD OF WOOD, protruding from the house. The shard bends slightly as she steadies herself.

SECONDS LATER

Maria's boots hit the ground quietly.

They delicately pierce the snow as she sneaks past the shelter. The light from Hector's flashlight beaming inside.

Off Maria, heading back out into the dark forest. No dog with her. She's all alone now.

EXT. BEAR TRAP - NIGHT

Maria reaches the bottom of the slope. The moonlight's bright in this part of the woods. In this moment, it seems to cast a majestic glow over the white frost, almost dreamlike.

Maria treks up. The snow crunching under her boots. A nervousness growing inside her as she comes in eye-shot of the trap.

Then she sees it--

THE TRESPASSER

The dark figure - it's still there. Its leg still caught in the trap. Only now - *it's awake*. Sitting upright.

Maria stops cold.

MARIA

Hello?

The Trespasser's head whips in her direction, though it doesn't make a sound. The moonlight reflecting off it's slick black skin.

Maria approaches cautiously.

MARIA (CONT'D)

(stepping closer)

Can you understand me?

It utters foreign CLICKING SOUNDS. Raspy. Chirping. As if it's trying to place Maria.

As she inches closer, she can see it's hurt, vulnerable. The black tar substance from its leg has pooled in the snow.

She stops five feet away. Any closer and she could put herself in danger.

But we don't get the sense she's very afraid. If anything, there's a pull there. Maria is drawn to this thing.

A beat, as she studies the beast. It's larger than she realized. Tall. Slender. As if a human shadow had come to life. And having no clear eyes make it hard to read.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Are you hungry?

The Trespasser just stares in her direction.

Maria takes off her rucksack. Opens it and removes--

A GRANOLA BAR

The Trespasser unreadable as she unwraps the treat.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Do you eat this?

Maria holds the bar up. The Trespasser listens to the wrapper crackling in her hand as makes more clicking noises. She can't tell what it's thinking and it frightens her.

Then, **THE TRESPASSER EXTENDS A HAND**. The moonlight glistening on its talons. *They're sharp as knives*. Maria looks at them with fear at first, but the gesture doesn't seem threatening.

She slowly reaches the food in her hand out toward the creature-

MARIA (CONT'D)

Here you go...

It's a tense moment. The CLICKING louder. She's putting herself at risk. Is it going to hurt her?

Then, as THEIR HANDS REACH ONE ANOTHER--

It just takes the food delicately...

Their fingers never touch. Maria breathes with relief. Recoils. She watches as the Trespasser opens its terrifyingly big mouth - revealing SLIMY TENTACLES instead of teeth.

The tentacles extend and consume the bar before swallowing the treat hole. Maria watches with fascination. This is one of the only other beings Maria's met in her young life. She can't help but feel some sort of connection.

More ethereal sounds emanate from the strange being. Unclear what it's conveying. Gratitude? A request?

Maria looks at the Trespasser's wound.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Are you hurt?

It doesn't understand her. But we see Maria feels empathy for this scary-looking beast. Almost a trust between them.

And we worry she's going to set it free, as we--

CUT TO:

EXT. SHELTER - NIGHT

A TOMAHAWK AXE SLICES THROUGH A LOG.

Hector chops wood in the moonlight, when he hears--

MARIA (O.S.)

It's awake!

Hector looks to see Maria, dressed in snow gear, having just come from the woods. She's nearly out of breath.

HECTOR
What?

MARIA
Dad. It's awake! The creature.
(excited)
And it's nice. It doesn't mean us
harm. But it's hurt.

Hector grows angry-

HECTOR
You went back there?

Maria catches her breath-

MARIA
Yeah.

HECTOR
You disobeyed me.

MARIA
You're not listen--

Hector has had enough-

HECTOR
--Don't you ever do that again.
Understand?

Maria doesn't say anything. A silent anger building inside her.

He points the axe in his hand to the cabin-

HECTOR (CONT'D)
Go inside. And stay there.

MARIA
Dad- It's--

HECTOR
--NOW!

A long beat. Maria boils. Without a word, she turns and heads to the cabin.

Hector collects himself a moment. Looks out at the dark, lurking forest...

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Maria storms into the dimly-lit cabin and slams the door. She paces in frustration, feeling foiled.

Maria throws some logs in the fireplace. She grabs a small container of gasoline and pours it on them. She pulls a small lighter out of her jacket pocket. It takes a few flicks to work. Nearing the end of its fuel. But as she holds the flame to the log - the fire erupts.

She stares into the flames - a burning inside her. Then she looks to the wall.

Maria grabs the BOOMBOX off the shelf. No more waiting for dad to say it's okay. She presses 'Play' on the cassette and turns the music - ON.

'He's Got the Whole World in His Hands' by Laurie London - PLAYS.

Maria turns the volume nob and cranks the old-timey music up LOUDER.

LAURIE LONDON

*He's got the whole world in his hands,
He's got the whole wide world in his hands,
He's got the whole world in his hands,
He's got the whole world in his hands...*

Finn watches Maria, confused. She breathes deeply as the music plays. Things are changing...

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The woods are dark as Hector treks through the snow, flashlight in hand. Rifle on his back. He points the flashlight at each tree as he peers into the darkness ahead. As if every branch were a threat.

EXT. BEAR TRAP - MOMENTS LATER

Just a shred of moonlight on the area. The majestic glow from earlier is gone.

Hector reaches the trap, catches sight of--

THE TRESPASSER - indeed awake. Its leg still clutched in the rusty metal.

Hector stands 10 feet away. Pointing his rifle at the unknown being. Its head facing toward him.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

Hector stares at the creature in shock.

The Trespasser senses Hector's aggression. It clicks louder and louder before opening its mouth and **BARING ITS TENTACLES!**

Hector reacts with horror-

HECTOR
What the fuck are you?

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

We're back with Maria. Still listening to the stereo. The fire burning.

A beat. Then Maria looks at the buttons on the boombox, thinks-

Curious, she PRESSES THE 'RADIO' BUTTON and the airwaves pick up static.

She listens to the unnerving sound a few moments as her eyes zone in on another of the machine's buttons -- SEEK.

Maria presses the 'SEEK' button and the digital numbers scramble in front of her - searching for a channel. Then they stop when--

A MAN'S VOICE comes through - talking. What has she found?

MAN'S VOICE (ON RADIO)
...Our messages received for all those out there in the bush. This last one's from Meredith, in Tulsa Oklahoma... To one of our favorite families... Jim and Nancy and their two girls on the Coolidge River...

Maria clocks this mention of the river as she listens-

MAN'S VOICE (ON RADIO) (CONT'D)
Meredith wants to wish her sister all the best with her pregnancy. Lucky number three. She can't wait to meet him when she visits...

Maria doesn't know what to make of this.

MAN'S VOICE (ON RADIO) (CONT'D)
 ...Well I know I speak for all of
 us at the station when I say we
 wish you the best too, Nancy and
 family... Hope you're staying warm.
 (then)
 That's the last for tonight, y'all.
 Til next Wednesday... Everybody
 sleep tight out there...

Maria stares at the stereo in silence, staggered. Trying to
 comprehend what she's just heard.

INT. CABIN - LATER

Hector comes through the front door. It's still dark outside.
 A fire embers in an otherwise vacant space.

He takes the rifle off his back and puts it down. The dim
 light from the fire allows us to see splatters of a black
 substance on his clothes. He sets a LARGE FOLDING KNIFE down
 that's caked in the same black as he starts to remove his
 snow gear.

MARIA (O.S.)
 Was it awake?

Hector looks up to see--

Maria, at the top of the stairs, standing outside her room.
 Hector thinks of how to respond, before-

HECTOR
 No... it's dead.

MARIA
 (confused)
 What happened?

HECTOR
 It was dead when I got there.

A beat as she tries to understand this-

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 (re knife)
 'Had to cut its leg out of the trap
 to move it.

Hector takes off his boots-

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 I need some sleep before I can go
 trap again. That bear took all our
 meat.

On Maria, knowing he's not telling her something. But before
 she can ask another question, he says--

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 We both need some sleep...

Maria stares into her father. She's looking at him through a
 different prism now, and he feels it.

BLACK

Silence in the darkness.

After a few long beats, we hear a woman whisper--

WOMAN (O.S.)
 (softly)
 Maria.

INT. CABIN, MARIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maria slowly opens her eyes. The candle beside her bed is
 still burning.

She half-focuses, to see--

HER MOTHER CLAIRE

Sitting on the edge of her bed, dressed in snow gear. Basking
 in the flickering candlelight. Looking just as beautiful as
 she did in the picture. How can this be?

Claire smiles warmly at Maria-

CLAIRE
 (softly, tears of joy)
 Time to wake up, okay?

Is this real? Maria's eyes water-

MARIA
 (disbelief)
 Mommy?

Claire nods - yes, silly girl. It's a moment Maria's yearned
 for her entire life. Without a word, she throws her arms
 around her mother. Holding onto her tight.

CLAIRE
 My beautiful girl. Look at you.
 You're so big. You're so grown up.
 (sincere)
 I've been looking everywhere for
 you.

Maria looks up at Claire-

MARIA
 You have?

Claire combs her fingers through Maria's hair-

CLAIRE
 Of course I have.
 (deep remorse)
 I'm so sorry it took me so long to
 find you.

Maria presses her face into her mother's chest. Hoping she'll never have to let go.

Then Claire's expression turns to one of urgency...

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
 ...He'll be up soon.
 (beat)
 We've gotta get you out of here.

MARIA
 What? Where are we going?

Beat.

CLAIRE
 Over the river.

At that last word - something feels off...

Maria pulls her face away from Claire's chest, and as she does - we see it's no longer her mother in front of her--

IT'S THE TRESPASSER HOLDING MARIA!

As Maria GASPS with fright, we--

SNAP TO:

INT. CABIN, MARIA'S ROOM - TWILIGHT

MARIA WAKES WITH A START. *It was all a dream...*

Blue light bleeds through the window. How long has she been asleep? She looks around to see--

Finn, lying by the door - WHINING.

MARIA

Finn?

Finn moves to her and hops on the bed, nuzzling into Maria. Her mind stirs as she tries to comprehend her nightmare. Her mother's words. The image of the Trespasser.

After a beat, Maria looks to the door, calculating her next move.

INT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Maria stands at the top of the stairs, looks around-

Twilight casts a blue haze through the windows. But no sign of Hector.

She looks to the clock and then to Finn-

MARIA

(looks like)

No more sun...

MOMENTS LATER

Maria, dressed for the cold, opens the RIFLE CHEST.

The rifle still there. She thinks, before grabbing the gun.

EXT. CLEARING - TWILIGHT

SCOPE POV: A GROUP OF DALL SHEEP MOVE SLOWLY, only the tops of their curved horns visible through blades of tall grass shooting out of the snow. The cross-hairs of the rifle search for a good shot with no luck.

REVERSE TO REVEAL: Hector, in snow gear and animal skins, laying prone on the ground. A CROSSBOW to his shoulder.

Hector takes his eye off the scope. He's waiting for the sheep to get in a better position. They're too far - nearly 70 yards away.

Hector looks up at the sky. A deep shade of blue. This is the most light he'll get for the next three months.

He takes a few deep breaths, visible in the cold. Then looks back through the scope.

SCOPE POV: The cross-hairs move around the tall grass before landing on the Dall Sheep again. They've barely moved. Still hiding behind the grass.

Hector focuses on ONE in particular, steadily moving into an exposed position.

HECTOR
(to himself)
Thata boy...

Hector takes an ARROW, slides it down the rail of the crossbow. Ready. Looks back through the scope-

SCOPE POV: Hector narrows his aim. He's about to take the shot on the lone Sheep, when suddenly--

SOMETHING BEHIND THE ANIMAL ENTERS THE SCOPE'S VISION...

A *BLACK OBJECT*, unclear its exact shape. It came from above but just as quickly fell out of view. And whatever it was - *made no sound...*

Hector removes his eye from the scope - looks for any sign of what he saw...

Nothing.

Hector thinks. He's unsure just how far behind the animals the object was... Was it even real? Is he seeing things?

Then suddenly, the group of Dall Sheep start to - *RUN*. As if *running from something...*

HECTOR (CONT'D)
(to himself)
What the--

As the animals run deeper into the distance in panic - Hector watches, weary. What the hell is going on?

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - TWILIGHT

An aerial view of the wilderness. The dark rifts between the trees and mountains now feel ominous and threatening.

The sky has turned a duskier shade of blue - telling us... It'll be dark again soon.

EXT. BEAR TRAP - CONTINUOUS

WE FOLLOW MARIA, rifle on her back as she treks through the woods. Finn close by.

Maria flips her knife open and close as she moves through the trees. The sound of the knife with the crunch of her boots creating an unsettling rhythm.

She treks up the familiar slope. But when she's in eye-shot of the bear trap, she sees it's empty. No Trespasser. Nothing there.

The fresh snow covers any remnants from the scene the night before.

On Maria, staring at the empty trap as Finn sniffs around the area. If it weren't for the bits of dried black blood on its steel spikes, she'd wonder if the creature ever existed.

Finn keeps sniffing, then runs off into the woods.

Maria watches him, registering that he's tracking a scent, and follows...

MOMENTS LATER

Maria finds Finn at the bottom of a nearby slope, digging at the snow.

MARIA
(to Finn)
What is it?

Maria gets closer to Finn as his paws claw at the white powder and dirt, until suddenly - she sees something in the snow.

She leans down and helps Finn dig with her hands.

Then it becomes clear what he's found...

The black reptilian skin of the Trespasser protrudes from the dirt. Maria brushes some snow away. It appears to be part of the creature's ARM. She moves her hands ten inches above and digs more. Sure enough, there... buried shallowly in the ground is the dead Trespasser's HEAD.

Maria keeps digging, and uncovers more of its face, until she stops at the sight of something. Her eyes freeze on the image.

REVERSE TO REVEAL: The Trespasser's throat has been completely *slit open*. Its head barely connected to the rest of its body.

As Maria wrestles with the realization that her father brutally murdered the thing that seemed so kind to her for some unknown reason...

FINN GROWLS in the background.

It takes a few beats for the dog's sound to pull Maria from her thoughts.

But when she turns to Finn, she sees - he's not growling at the corpse of the Trespasser... He's looking at something else - *something in the woods*.

MARIA (CONT'D)
(confused)
Finn?

But Finn doesn't acknowledge Maria. He keeps his eyes trained on the forest. Growling at something she cannot see...

On Maria, a nervousness creeping in as she looks into the woods. It's nearly dark. She can't tell what's upset him.

After a few beats, Finn suddenly TAKES OFF in the direction he was looking.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Finn! No! Stay!

But it's too late. The dog runs into the darkness, out of sight... just as the last bit of light in the sky disappears.

MOMENTS LATER

MARIA
(calls out)
Finn?

Maria walks through the dark woods, looking for Finn, rifle on her back.

Then, as she walks--

A NOISE is heard through the trees - what might have been *the faint whimper of a dog*.

Maria freezes as she turns and listens for another sound.

But there's nothing but darkness beyond the trees... Until--

ANOTHER NOISE

The sound of branches cracking, from the opposite direction.

Maria whips around, but doesn't see anything there.

Spooked, she takes the rifle off her back. Keeps it aimed down but puts her finger over the trigger, alert.

Up ahead she sees - the GOLD DREDGE. Her safe space. She starts walking toward it. Then--

ANOTHER CRACKING SOUND makes her JUMP.

It came from behind her. Something is most definitely lurking in the forest.

She picks up her pace, keeps her hands on the rifle.

When suddenly--

PLOP!!!

FINN'S BODY FALLS ON THE GROUND, directly in front of her. As if it was launched by something. Only it looks as the moose did early. Drained and floppy. Sunken holes where his eyes used to be.

Maria SCREAMS.

Her best friend in this world is dead. But before she can register what's happened, she spins back away from the bloody mess to see--

A TRESPASSER

Standing 20 feet away from her. Clearly not the same one from the trap, but similar in size. It's dark, lanky body just stands there, silhouetted by the moon. It makes those familiar clicking sounds as it opens its mouth - its four tentacles slivering in the air. Maria trembles as she stares at the creature - no longer looking friendly...

She lifts her rifle, breathing nervously. Her hands shaking as she points the gun at the beast.

But it doesn't seem fazed.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

As it takes a step toward her, Maria takes a step back. But the Trespasser keeps moving slowly forward.

She has no choice. Maria FIRES THE RIFLE--

SNAP!

She hits it right in the stomach!

The Trespasser clearly felt the shot as it staggers briefly, but it doesn't take it down. What the fuck?

After a moment, it starts walking toward her again...

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

Maria freezes with fear. What the hell does she do? She starts to tremble before snapping herself out of it. She backs away slowly until she hits a tree.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

Then, as it takes one more step toward her - she realizes in its movements that it's trying to place her. Her being against the tree has disoriented it somehow. As Maria registers that these creatures may be blind...

She drops the rifle on the ground, quickly turns and - *RUNS.*

Straight toward the Dredge...

But as she reaches the small bridge leading into the structure, she freezes when she spots--

ANOTHER TRESPASSER

On the other side of the bridge.

Is it the same one? Can they move that fast?

She glances behind her but doesn't see anything. She looks back to the one across the bridge.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

Its head moves around, trying to locate the sound she just made.

Maria stays quiet as she pulls the HUNTING KNIFE out of her pocket, keeping her eyes on the Trespasser. But as she flips the knife open - the metal makes a FLICKING SOUND.

The Trespasser whips its head in her direction. Found her.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

She glances back toward the forest, only this time she sees--

There's not one but **TWO TRESPASSERS** behind her! Fuck. They're ten feet away. She stands frozen, now surrounded by **THREE OF THE CREATURES**.

Fear rushes through Maria's body as she registers just how fucked she is, before she does the only thing she can and-

RUNS DOWN THE BRIDGE, INTO--

INT. GOLD DREDGE - CONTINUOUS

It's dark inside the Dredge. Maria's eyes dart around the dusky room. Where can she hide?

She quickly ducks down into the first place she sees - the lower compartment at the center of the first floor. A crawl space of sorts where the gravel plates descend into the pond below.

She holds her breath in terror as she hears--

THE TRESPASSERS ENTER THE DREDGE

Maria is shielded by a rusty metal beam. She tries to stay still, but she can't see anything. She slowly lifts her knife up to try and see in its reflection.

NOW WE'RE ON THE HUNTING KNIFE...

Seeing only what Maria can see. Nothing... She turns the knife slightly. Still nothing... Another turn, and--

SHE SPOTS TWO TRESPASSERS IN THE REFLECTION! They're moving on all fours around the space, looking for her.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK

Maria's hand quivers as she instinctively lowers the knife, out of view.

After a few beats she begins to lift the knife again, terrified. But she stops herself as she notices--

ONE OF THE TRESPASSERS AHEAD OF HER, moving under the stairs. It doesn't seem to register Maria beneath the beam. She's hiding well in the shadowy crevice.

Maria stays frozen in fear as she watches the Trespasser move around the dirty space - *hunting her*.

As it moves along, she exhales quietly. Maybe she can get by unnoticed down here, wait for them to leave...

But as she stays quiet and still she suddenly hears--

CLICK. CLICK. CLICK.

That same clicking sound. Only *closer*. These ones seem to be coming from beneath her. What the fuck?

Maria's head slowly turns downward to see...

SOMETHING AT THE BOTTOM OF THE GRAVEL PLATES - **MOVING.**

Holy fucking shit. Then we see those sharp claws inching toward her as something crawls up the plates.

A 4TH TRESPASSER IS COMING UP FROM BELOW THE DREDGE!

Before it can get close enough to touch her, Maria--

SPRINGS UP, SPRINTS PAST THE TRESPASSERS AND UP THE STAIRS.

Her boot catches one of the steps and she TRIPS - DROPPING HER KNIFE below. Fuck. It's too far out of reach.

She looks back as the four Trespassers HIT THE STAIRS, coming after her.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

She picks herself up and leaps through the chain-link fenced door.

Then, just as the Trespasser in front reaches the fence, Maria SHUTS THE DOOR in its face, locking herself inside her fort.

The four shadowy creatures stand on the opposite side of the fence, scraping at it, registering its texture and durability with their fingers and tentacles.

Maria backs into the small space, her eyes darting around, looking for anything she can use to protect herself. Her old dolls and books scattered along the wall.

One of the Trespassers HOPS ONTO THE FENCE like a big, terrifying monkey. It starts clawing at the holes with its talons. Trying to get in. The others follow suit on the door.

Maria SCREAMS IN TERROR. Trembling with fear. What can she do? She looks behind her to the small, dark tunnel, angled upward. Can she fit through there? Is there a shoot big enough once she gets to the end? It's too hard to tell.

Then one of the Trespassers starts to bend the wire of the fence.

On Maria: Panicked. Knowing - eventually they will make it in here...

Then she thinks - her lighter!

Maria reaches into her jacket pocket and pulls out the LIGHTER she used to ignite the fire in the cabin earlier.

She moves to the wall and grabs one of her DOLLS. Holds the lighter to its head and LIGHTS ITS HAIR ON FIRE, creating a torch of sorts.

Maria holds the doll torch up toward the fence, close to the Trespasser clutched to the metal. It flinches back from the heat and drops off the fence, showing Maria these creatures don't seem to like fire...

But as she's registering this, we notice that behind her--

THE ARM OF **A 5TH TRESPASSER** IS COMING THROUGH THE SMALL WINDOW!

The opening is too small for its body, but its lanky arm reaches, closer and closer toward Maria...

But she's still focused on the fence, holding the torch to it, as - the Trespasser from below LEAPS BACK UP and onto the metal.

She jerks backward, startled by the aggressive movement. Unaware she's now closer to the 5th Trespasser's reaching arm behind her.

Then its sharp finger - GRAZES HER HAIR --

Maria turns and JUMPS at the sight of the one in the window - dropping the flaming torch to the floor.

She grabs a book and starts swatting at its arm. She SCREAMS with a mix of rage and fear as she SWINGS and SMACKS it, again and again, until the Trespasser recoils from the slot and falls out of sight.

She turns back to face the other Trespassers on the fence. They've managed to break a small hole in the chains of the door. Soon enough, they'll get through.

Then she notices--

THE FALLEN TORCH HAS LIT HER TOYS AND BOOKS ON FIRE! And the flames are getting bigger.

Maria starts to sob, helpless. She's trapped. Death just a door away...

She's got no choice. She has to go through the narrow gravel belt.

Maria moves and crawls head first through the claustrophobic tunnel. The flames in the room behind her lighting the otherwise dark passage.

As she crawls further, her breath mists in front of her. She looks back, hears the FENCE BREAKING. She starts to panic for a moment, breathing faster. But she pushes forward. The tunnel getting narrower as she goes deeper.

Smoke starts to fill the space. Maria COUGHS, trying hard to breathe. She's got to keep moving.

She pushes forward, reaches the small chute at the end of the belt. Barely big enough to fit through. She looks through it and takes in a deep inhale of the clean air outside.

She stares down and sees the long drop below... As Maria contemplates if she'll make it, she hears--

THE FENCE DOOR BREAK FURTHER, then--

ONE OF THE TRESPASSERS ENTERS THE TUNNEL!

Its figure obstructing the light from the flames. It starts to *crawl toward her*. Fuck. There's no more time to waste.

Maria squeezes her body through the chute and--

DROPS THROUGH--

EXT. GOLD DREDGE - CONTINUOUS

Maria hits the frozen pond, 15 feet below - HARD.

She's lying on her stomach. A little disoriented, but intact. After a few beats, she remembers - she has to run...

But as she picks herself up and starts to move, Maria comes face to face with--

THE TRESPASSER FROM THE WINDOW!

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

Before she can even think-

The Trespasser GRABS ONTO HER HAIR and LIFTS her up, holding her just above the ground. Then it opens its mouth and those disgusting, slimy, SLUG-LIKE TENTACLES EXTEND. Pulsating in the air.

Maria tries to scream but all that comes out is a hollow gasp... Because the moment the Trespasser grabbed onto her - something strange happened... Maria lost her ability to *breathe*.

Even though the creature is only clutching her by the strands of her hair, Maria begins to suffocate from its very touch.

She can't catch a breath. She's choking, gasping for air, hovering just above the ground. The Trespasser simply feeling the life drain from her body as its tentacles spasm in what looks like pleasure.

Maria swats her hands toward the creature with the last bit of energy she has left, but it's no use.

She's going to die...

When suddenly--

THWIK!

A 19 INCH PREMIUM BOLT ARROW STRIKES THE TRESPASSER STRAIGHT THROUGH THE SHOULDER!!!

The Trespasser SHRIEKS OUT IN PAIN, releasing Maria from its grip and dropping her to the ground.

And at the same time, the four other Trespassers in and around the dredge - SHRIEK OUT as well - as if they all felt the shot trespasser's pain.

Maria chokes, fighting to regain her breath, crouched down on the ice, as the Trespasser retreats and runs into the dark forest. The arrow sticking out of its shoulder.

The other Trespassers emerge and disperse into the wilderness as well.

Maria looks around in shock and horror until her eyes land on the source of the arrow...

HECTOR

Crossbow in hand, stunned by what he's just witnessed.

He runs to Maria, drops the crossbow on the ground and wraps his arms around her.

HECTOR

You're okay. You're okay.

But she's not okay. Maria's in shock. Her body trembling. Her breathing erratic.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

It's okay. Breathe. Just breathe.

She's staring at nothing as a tear streams down her face, before freezing on her cheek. She can hardly make out a word, until-

MARIA

They're gonna kill us...

On Hector, as he watches fear consume his young daughter. We can tell he's thinking the same thing, but he knows he has to hide it now.

HECTOR

No they're not.

Maria nods in panic. Yes they are...

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Look at me. Listen to me...

Maria meets Hector's gaze. Any shred of fearlessness from when we first met her is now gone.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

How do we survive? Remember?

She doesn't respond, shaking her head.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Come on. I know you do- Say it.

(come on)

How do we survive?

Beat.

MARIA

...Hold it in.

Something Maria clearly doesn't look like she can do in this moment.

HECTOR

(nods)

That's right. We hold it in.
Don't acknowledge it. Or what?

MARIA

...You'll give it power.

Hector nods, that's right.

HECTOR

(beat)

You keep that fear locked deep
inside and it can't harm you. Okay?

Maria remains hollow. She's barely listening to him. Then she remembers-

MARIA

...They killed Finn.

She starts to sob. Hector pulls Maria into his chest as he looks out at the dark sky, guilt and remorse in his eyes. Maria almost died... Hector's greatest fear come to life.

She catches her breath.

MARIA (CONT'D)

They're everywhere.

(beat)

But I don't think they can see.

On Hector, she's right.

MARIA (CONT'D)

That clicking... it's--

HECTOR

Echolocation.

MARIA

Like bats.

HECTOR

(nods)

That's how they see what's in front
of them.

MARIA

Can they still track us?

Hector thinks-

HECTOR

I don't know.

(beat)

I counted five. Maybe that's all
there is.

MARIA

I shot one and it didn't do
anything.

Hector's look tells us he's not surprised by this-

HECTOR
...Bullets don't work.
(beat)
Blades do.

WE STAY ON HECTOR as he thinks a beat, before reaching a decision-

HECTOR (CONT'D)
We've gotta get to the cabin.

CUT TO:

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

THE DOOR TO THE DARK CABIN BURSTS OPEN.

Hector comes in on high alert, wielding a flashlight and the crossbow. Maria behind him. Hector keeps the crossbow at the ready as he scans the area with the flashlight.

A fearful Maria positions herself beside the doorway.

HECTOR
Stay right there.

He looks around the room. Under the futon and behind the small corner near the kitchen. But there's nothing.

Hector moves up the stairs, glancing at Maria by the door. A check in. His flashlight an intruding spotlight on her face.

He reaches her closed bedroom door at the top of the stairs and stops a beat. Then--

HE KICKS OPEN THE DOOR

He looks around the dark space. The flashlight scans the bedroom but finds no sign of anything.

He breathes. They're safe... For now.

Hector comes down the stairs and hands Maria the crossbow. An arrow loaded in the chamber, ready.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
I want you to stay right here,
okay? I'm gonna lock this door and
you keep the crossbow aimed at it.

Maria doesn't like the idea of being left alone-

MARIA

Wait, what? Where are you going?

Hector moves to the shelf along the wall. Pulls out a battery powered LED LIGHT and sets it on the rifle chest.

HECTOR

I have to get something in the shelter.

MARIA

I'll go with you.

Hector turns on the light and it illuminates the inside of the cabin with a FADED BLUE GLOW.

HECTOR

(no)

It's safer for you in here. I checked the place. We're clear. I'll only be a moment.

Maria hesitates, before taking the crossbow.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

I'll knock three times when I'm back and you can unlock the door. Got it?

A beat, as Maria gives her father a reluctant nod.

INT. SHELTER - MOMENTS LATER

The door unlocks and pushes open. Hector enters the shelter, flashlight in hand. He shuts the door behind him and descends the few steps. He wastes no time as he moves to a spot on the corner of the floor, behind the shelves.

Hector removes a wooden board in the floor and reveals a secret compartment -- an old UHF HAM RADIO inside.

Hector removes the small radio. It's covered in dust. There's a microphone attached by a cable.

As Hector brushes the dust off, he takes a beat to think before turning the device - ON.

The LED light on the digital screen emits an orange glow. Hector turns the dial to CHANNEL 28. He lifts the microphone. Presses the push-to-talk button and says-

HECTOR
(into radio mic)
Radio Check. Radio Check.

On Hector, as he waits a beat for a response. Does this thing still work? Then an automated voice crackles through--

AUTOMATED VOICE
Thank you for using the Arctic
Automated Radio Check located in
Arctic Village, Alaska.

Hector breathes. The radio works. He turns the dial on the radio to - CHANNEL 16.

Then he flips the RED 'DISTRESS' BUTTON on the radio - UP.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

ON MARIA, sitting in the chair by the fireplace. The crossbow in her lap as she stares at the door. The room lit only by the faded blue LED light on the rifle chest.

Maria looks down at the arrow in the chamber of the bow. The same type that saved her from the Trespasser only an hour ago. Maria runs her finger over its sharp tip. Wondering what exactly those creatures want and why they're here, as--

BAM!!!

A LOUD THUD HITS THE FRONT DOOR FROM OUTSIDE

Maria JUMPS out of the chair, alert. What the hell was that?

MARIA
(to door)
Dad?

But nothing. Silence.

She lifts the crossbow, aiming it at the door. Her breath quickening.

She takes a few steps closer to the door, her eyes staring daggers at the lock, waiting for the slightest movement or sound of anything.

She takes a few deep breaths to calm herself-

In... and out... In... and out...

MARIA (CONT'D)
 (slightly louder)
 Dad?

No response.

INT. SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

Hector's on Channel 16, still trying to make contact.

HECTOR
 (into radio mic)
 ...Those are our coordinates.
 Again, we're under attack. Do you
 copy?

Nothing but static. Hector jiggles the frequency dial.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 (into radio mic)
 Mayday. Mayday.
 (beat)
 Please send help.
 (louder)
 Is anyone there?

Silence.

Hector SLAMS THE MIC TO THE GROUND as he yells-

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 FUCK!!!

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

We're back with Maria, still staring at the door. Taking deep breaths to keep herself calm.

In... and out... In... and out...

Then we start to make out something moving behind her as--

A DARK SHADOW EMERGES FROM THE FIREPLACE!

In... and out... In... and out...

Maria's eyes stay on the door as the ARM OF A TRESPASSER creeps out of the chimney. Stealthy and quiet. The cold blue light radiating its coarse black skin.

But as the Trespasser's arm hits the logs - it makes a NOISE.

Maria turns at the sound and immediately FIRES THE ARROW at the fireplace--

SHOOTING STRAIGHT THROUGH THE CREATURE'S ARM!

The Trespasser falls to the floor of the fireplace as it SHRIEKS OUT in pain. But Maria doesn't have another arrow.

The creature starts to move around the ground erratically, disoriented.

Maria panics. Looking around the room for a weapon.

KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK!

Hector BANGS on the door from outside.

HECTOR (O.S.)
(yelling)
Maria! You okay?

But the Trespasser's blocking the front door. Maria doesn't respond, not wanting to draw attention to herself as the preoccupied creature writhes in pain, jerking its body around.

HECTOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)
MARIA!

The Trespasser makes terrifying sounds as it tries to pull the arrow out of its arm.

Maria looks around, panicked. Then she spots--

THE TOMAHAWK AXE. Right by the wood. Just a foot away from the creature.

BAM! BAM!

HECTOR'S NOW KICKING THE DOOR. Trying to break it open.

Maria's got no choice. She runs to the axe just as the Trespasser yanks the arrow out of its arm.

As the beast turns toward Maria and BARES ITS TENTACLES--

Maria SWINGS and--

FSHT -- SLICE!!!!

SHE CHOPS ITS HEAD STRAIGHT OFF WITH THE AXE!

BLACK BLOOD SPLATTERS ACROSS the door as the Trespasser falls to the ground. Then--

BAM!!!

HECTOR BREAKS THE DOOR OPEN

He sees the creature dead on the ground, Maria standing over it with the axe. Adrenaline coursing through her veins.

MARIA

It came through the fucking chimney!

On Hector - Holy shit.

He runs to her, takes the axe from the clutch of her trembling hand.

HECTOR

Okay. Okay.
(thinks)
It's not safe here. We've gotta get to the vantage point.

Maria takes a beat to register what he's saying.

MARIA

(shakes her head)
I'm not going out there!

HECTOR

It's not safe here.

MARIA

It's not safe anywhere!

Hector kneels down, puts his hands on her shoulders.

HECTOR

Listen. I know what you've been through. I'm so sorry. But right now I need you to be brave. We can't stay here.

(then)

We need to get to the vantage point.

A beat as Maria calms slightly.

MARIA

Why?

HECTOR
 To be able to see...
 (reassuring)
 They won't be able to get to us up
 there.

But there's something in Hector's expression. Something that makes both Maria and the viewer suspect he has other motives...

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

ON MARIA AND HECTOR'S BOOTS, squashing the snow in the moonlight as they rush through the forest on high alert.

THE WIND HOWLS through the dark woods as Hector's flashlight leads the way.

Maria keeps her eyes trained on the ground, terrified at what she might see out there if she looks up.

MARIA
 You said we don't go up there in a
 storm.

HECTOR
 We'll be fine. Its just heavy wind.

Then his words are clipped as--

A BELLOWS-LIKE SCREECHING HOWL RIPS THROUGH THE TREES

The Trespassers...

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 (trying to ignore it)
 Almost there.

Maria looks out, alert-

MARIA
 What are they?

HECTOR
 (unsure)
 I don't know.

Hector's eyes scan the darkness around them. Each shadow a danger. His paranoia consuming him. The wind grows more stringent as they push forward-

Maria cautiously gazes up at her father. His face distressed.

MARIA
What happened to the one in the
trap?

Hector keeps his eyes straight ahead. The look on his face coming to terms with the fact that he can't lie to her anymore...

HECTOR
I killed it.

A long beat, as Maria registers what she already knew to be true...

EXT. REDWOOD TREE - MOMENTS LATER

HECTOR
(see...)
We made it.

Hector and Maria approach the bottom of a thick redwood tree, surrounded by thinner trees. Two-by-fours are nailed to its trunk for steps. The end of a rope dangles from above. The wind's still strong.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
Keep your body close to the tree
and the rope between your arms.

But Maria's not listening as she meets her father's gaze. There's a strange look in her eyes, as though she's come to a new realization...

MARIA
This is all your fault.

HECTOR
What?

A beat.

MARIA
The creature was nice. It didn't
mean us harm. And you killed it.

HECTOR
It did mean harm.

MARIA
It was hurt. It wasn't a threat.

HECTOR
 Look at what they've done.
 (enough)
 Come on. Let's go.

MARIA
 What if they're up there?

A beat.

HECTOR
 (then)
 I'll go first...

Hector steps onto the tree. Starts climbing. Keeping the rope between his arms in case he needs to grab it.

Maria looks around, before following right behind him. And as she starts to climb, we're wondering if in the background we can make out the figure of a Trespasser, *lurking in the darkness*.

As they climb 40 feet up the tree, Maria can't help but push him further.

MARIA
 ...They all felt it when you shot
 that one.

On Hector, he noticed that too.

HECTOR
 Stay quiet.

As Hector reaches the top of the steps we see the bottom of a TREE STAND above them. The base a large piece of plywood. Long slabs of wood securing it between the redwood and two other trees - creating an elaborate hunting platform. From this angle we can make out a BLACK METAL BOX nailed to the bottom of the base.

MARIA
 (putting it together)
 You killed the one in the trap. Now
 the pack wants revenge.

At that, Hector looks down at her-

HECTOR
 (enough)
 Maria. They killed Finn. They tried
 to kill both of us. And yeah - I
 killed the one in the trap.

As Hector's boot reaches the top step, the two-by-four BREAKS from the tree, sending Hector SLIDING DOWN - his foot and the step breaking the steps beneath it as they collide.

Maria dodges a collision by instinctively grabbing a hold of the rope and pushing off the tree. Hector grabs onto the rope as well. They've clearly trained for this occurrence. But now their highest steps are - gone.

Hector catches his breath, holding the rope-

HECTOR (CONT'D)
You secure?

Maria looks down at the 40 foot drop below. The wind heavy.

MARIA
Yeah.

Hector looks up at the platform, only 10 feet up. The rope secured to it.

HECTOR
We climb the rest of the way.

He lifts his arm and clutches the rope, using his legs to move like a navy seal... Maria follows. But as she does, she notices a point where the outer strands of the rope are starting to break.

She keeps moving past it as Hector steps onto the platform.

He grabs Maria's arm and helps lift her onto the--

EXT. TREE STAND - CONTINUOUS

We see now that the hunting platform is carefully designed and perfectly camouflaged to the trees. But as Hector looks out over the sprawling landscape, he sees something unsettling in the distance--

Over the mountains and tops of trees is... A brewing storm.

HECTOR
(re storm)
Fuck.

As he turns back to Maria, she's staring daggers at him.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
What?

She shakes her head-

MARIA
You're a liar.

A beat.

HECTOR
Fine. I'm a liar.
(then)
But I'm not gonna lie to you
anymore.

MARIA
Why would I believe you?

He looks at his daughter, hating to admit to her-

HECTOR
Because I'm your father and I love
you.

The look on Maria's face tells us that isn't enough this time. But Hector's starting to break and she can see it.

MARIA
It's not safe up here.

HECTOR
I know.

MARIA
Then why are we here?!

Maria doesn't know what to think as Hector moves to the edge of the platform. He reaches down and unhooks the black box secured below it. He lifts the box and pulls a small key out of his pocket.

MARIA (CONT'D)
(re box)
What is that?

HECTOR
I can't protect you. We need help.

Maria watches as Hector opens the box. He pulls a small, black, IRIDIUM SATELLITE PHONE out of the box and PRESSES THE 'ON' BUTTON. Maria stares at the object. Everything about it is utterly alien. Hector doesn't wait for her to ask-

HECTOR (CONT'D)
It's a satellite phone.

As he waits for the phone to start up-

MARIA
What's a satellite phone?

On Hector, shame in his eyes.

HECTOR
It's a communication device-
something I've kept in case of
emergencies. In case you were in
danger. We can call and get help...

MARIA
I thought you said there was no one
to help us out there.

Hector reacts. Part of him knew this day would come. His
every choice landing right here. Right now. But all he can do
is move forward.

HECTOR
From my perspective. That was the
truth.

MARIA
But it's not the truth now?

HECTOR
No.

Maria takes a few instinctive steps back away from him. When
her jacket hits the tree - she stops.

MARIA
(but)
'When I broke my arm open... You
didn't call for help then.

Beat.

HECTOR
(because)
...I knew you would be okay.

The storm is getting closer. The wind starts to pick up. A
light blizzard of little white flakes flies around them.

MARIA
You haven't been protecting me.
You've been protecting yourself.

Hector moves to Maria, the satellite phone in his hand. He
looks into her eyes.

HECTOR
 (sincere)
 All I've ever wanted was to keep
 you safe. I swear.

Maria looks into her father's eyes. Eyes she can't trust at this point.

Hector looks down and sees the Satellite Phone has come to life. The GREEN LIGHT from its screen GLOWS.

The wind howls. Maria's hair blows violently, but she stands frozen. One question on her mind...

MARIA
 What's really beyond the river?

A beat as Hector looks at her. But before he can respond--

A LANDING BUSH PLANE FLIES DIRECTLY OVERHEAD!

Eerily close to them. Low, skimming the tree line.

Startled, Maria spins to look at it, JERKS BACK and loses her balance, making her--

FALL OVER THE EDGE!

Hector tries to catch her, DROPPING THE SAT PHONE off the platform in the process. But he doesn't get to her in time.

HECTOR
 Maria!!!

He looks over the edge. The unrelenting wind and snow making it hard to see that Maria--

CAUGHT THE ROPE AS SHE FELL. She holds on tight as she dangles - 20 feet down.

MARIA
 (yelling through the storm)
 Dad!!!

A rush of relief races through Hector.

HECTOR
 It's okay. Stay calm. Can you climb
 back up?

Maria composes herself. Breathes...

MARIA

I think so.

She starts to climb. The rope flailing in the wind.

Hector looks up to see what he feared -- the storm has officially reached them as...

A CLOUD OF FOG CONSUMES THE AREA

Maria panics as she realizes she's in a--

WHITE OUT

She whimpers in panic as she takes another deep breath. She can only see about 5 feet of rope ahead of her now. She keeps climbing. But stops when she sees--

5 feet up, the spot in the rope where the strands are breaking has whittled down to nearly nothing. No way it will hold her for much longer. Might even break with one more pull...

MARIA (CONT'D)

(yelling)

It's breaking!

On Hector, unsure what to do. He can hear her but he can't see her.

HECTOR

(thinks)

Can you grab past the break?

On Maria, she's not so sure.

She reaches overhead and gives herself one pull upward, but a large strand breaks off. Shit.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

You okay?

Here goes, she's got no choice.

MARIA

...Yeah.

She pulls herself up the rope as quickly as she can, but as she almost passes the breaking point--

THE ROPE SNAPS!

Sending Maria crashing down through the white fog.

WE FOLLOW HER AS SHE FALLS. The flailing rope partially wrapped around her as she cascades through sharp branches, nearly hitting them at every second. Her hands reaching to nowhere, trying to grab onto anything... Until suddenly - Maria is falling head first and there's no stopping her as--

SHE HITS A LARGE BRANCH! --

BLACK

EXT. REDWOOD TREE - SECONDS LATER

CLOSE ON MARIA, opening her eyes in a cloud of white. She's disoriented. She hit the branch hard.

WE HEAR HECTOR SHOUTING HER NAME FROM ABOVE.

Then she registers--

SHE'S UPSIDE DOWN. Dangling. She looks to her ankle to find -- it's caught in the rope above her. Tangled. The rope holding her must have caught onto a branch in the fall. No telling how sturdy.

She looks around, but the white out is still too thick to see anything. The snow-covered forest floor only 5 feet below. She needs to unhook herself.

HECTOR
(faintly)
Maria! Are you okay!

But Maria doesn't respond. Her eyes dart around. She knows if she speaks it could alert the trespassers where she is and she has no weapon to protect herself.

She tries to reach her arm toward her ankle. But it's too high and she's too weak.

She swings her body slightly and tries a little harder this time, and--

SNAP!

Maria's back FALLS TO THE GROUND!

SHE HITS THE THICK POWDER OF SNOW - HARD.

Her body still submerged in it. Nothing around her but white wind and fog. She rolls to her side and starts to push herself up with her hands. Then she registers--

HER ANKLE. It's hurt. She grabs it and winces at the pain.

She hears HECTOR SHOUTING HER NAME AGAIN through the storm, but remains quiet. She cautiously looks around, assessing her next move, when she sees--

A BLACK FIGURE MOVING THROUGH THE SNOW

20 feet away - the hunched-over back of a Trespasser on all fours.

Maria freezes. Ducks back down into the 2 feet of snow. Praying it can't find her with the storm. She watches the creature intensely as it moves.

Then as its head POPS UP from the snow, looking around -- we notice that this Trespasser is one we haven't seen before... He's substantially larger than the others, his spine like a row of protruding spikes in the snow. From this point forward, we will refer to him as - PAPA T.

Maria stays completely quiet, watching Papa T in terror as he circles the area surrounding her.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK

She has to move... but where?

She keeps herself submerged in the top layer of snow as she crawls away from the lurking beast.

As she moves further away, he falls out of sight due to the white out.

Maria reaches a tree and lifts herself up, leaning against it, her clothes camouflaging into it.

WE'RE ON MARIA, as her eyes dart around. Her breath quick. The wind raging directly on her face. Where is Papa T?

Then -- *CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK*

Out of the corner of her eye, Maria spots--

THE DARK FIGURE MOVING 10 feet away from the tree. And this close, she can now see the texture of his face. A mix of a disfigured human and a T Rex. No eyes or nose but its mouth more in the shape of snout than the others. Maria trembles with fear as he moves *closer*.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

She instinctively moves halfway around the tree, away from the beast.

Then she discovers that there's a hollowed-out opening on the tree's side. Maria backs into it. Shaking with fear. PAPA T now out of sight.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

But then Papa T moves right in front of her and lifts onto his hind legs, cowering higher than we've seen a Trespasser before. Standing only a few feet away from Maria...

His mouth opens wide as his TENTACLES SLIVER INTO THE AIR. They extend about a foot long in the wind, feeling for her.

Maria holds her breath, shaking. Her body pressed against the inside of the tree. If she moved an inch - she might be dead. It's maddeningly tense as Maria shuts her eyes tightly. The biggest risk of her short life.

But when she opens them again, he has retracted his tentacles.

After a few long fucking seconds -- the Papa Trespasser moves on...

Maria catches her breath. Turns her head and watches as the beast disappears into the heavy snow and wind flying around her. She's still alive... But what now?

She looks around. Can still barely see anything ahead of her. When suddenly -- through the fog, in the distance -

Maria spots -- THE BEAM OF A FLASHLIGHT.

On Maria - Who is that?

She pushes away from the tree, her swollen ankle causing her to limp through the snow to the next tree as quickly as she can. She pauses against this one, facing downwind. Looking around but no trespasser in sight.

She looks back to the flashlight beam. But it's gone. Where'd it go? Maria waits a beat. And then--

THE LIGHT APPEARS AGAIN... Though it's moved a bit.

She pushes off from this tree and limps to the next. Watching the snow, alert and weary. The storm continues to rage. But she's getting closer to the light. A few more trees and she'll be able to see who or what it is...

But as she gets closer - suddenly -- the flashlight is gone.

Maria stands in the storm, spins around... Did she change directions? Where did it go?

She moves to the closest tree, stands beside it and thinks. She can barely see where she is. After a beat, she decides to keep moving. But as she spins around, she runs right into--

A MAN!

About 40 years old. Dressed in thick snow gear. A federal officer vest exposed under his top coat. He's wearing a beanie cap and snow shoes on his feet. This is OFFICER HIPPS.

OFFICER HIPPS
Hey. Steady. It's okay.

Maria jumps back, startled by the man.

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)
I'm Officer Hipps. You alright?

She stares at him in shock and awe. This is the first person outside of Hector Maria's ever seen out here. The storm continues to rage.

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)
It's okay. I'm gonna help you...
(then)
You alone?

Maria doesn't respond. She looks around, still on alert for the trespassers.

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)
You speak English?
(then)
How'd you get all the way out here?

She remains quiet. Doesn't trust him. Doesn't know what to think.

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)
(almost to himself)
How old are you?

Maria turns to move away from him, tries to RUN but only makes it 10 feet on her sprained ankle. The officer moves and grabs her by the shoulder--

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)
Hey!
(turns her toward him)
It's not safe out there. Why are you running?

Maria looks into the officer's eyes as he waits for a response.

MARIA

...There are creatures out here.
Hunting us!

The officer looks at her confused-

OFFICER HIPPS

Us? Who are you here with?

He looks around for a sign of anyone.

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)

Are there others hiding out here
with you?

She doesn't respond. Just looks around, paranoid by the noise he's making. The officer tries another approach - speaks softer - as soft as he can to still be heard over the wind...

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)

You don't have to be scared of me.
I'm here to help you, okay? I've
got a plane not that far away.
Gonna need you to follow me.
(off her suspicious look)
Get you safe...

That word means something to Maria. After a beat, she nods...

MARIA

My dad.

The officer looks around-

OFFICER HIPPS

Your dad's out here?
(getting it)
That's the man who radioed.

She doesn't know what he's talking about.

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)

Where is he?

Maria looks around, unsure.

MARIA

I don't know. He was at the tree...
I think he's stuck.

OFFICER HIPPS
Which tree?

The storm is still raging. Hard to see where anything is.
As Maria looks around with worry-

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)
What's your name, darlin'?

Maria looks at the officer.

MARIA
Maria.

OFFICER HIPPS
Where's your mother, Maria?

A beat.

MARIA
...She's dead.

The officer struggles to understand what exactly is going on out here.

OFFICER HIPPS
Listen to me, I need to get you
some place safe...
(re ankle)
You're hurt.

Maria shakes her head-

MARIA
I'm going to find my dad. I can't
leave him.

Officer Hipps grabs her wrist, preventing her from leaving.

OFFICER HIPPS
(slightly raising voice)
Your dad wouldn't want you out here
alone. He called because he needed
to protect you. That's what I'm
here to do...

Maria doesn't look so sure. She looks around, anticipating a Trespasser is going to attack them at any moment.

MARIA
Stay quiet. They'll find us.

Officer Hipps leans down to her level-

OFFICER HIPPS

I'm not gonna let anyone hurt you.

He pulls out his wallet. Shows Maria a PICTURE of his daughters...

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)

(see)

I have daughters too...

Maria looks at the picture. The image of a happy family. Her face unreadable.

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)

You gotta trust me.

(then)

Your dad probably saw my plane.

Might be on the way there right now...

(beat)

Let's go find him, okay?

Maria finds comfort in his words. Thinks - maybe he's right.

After a beat, she nods...

EXT. CLEARING - MOMENTS LATER

FROM BEHIND, WE FOLLOW OFFICER HIPPS AND MARIA through the forest. The storm is weakening. Hipps helps Maria walk with her bad ankle. As they pass a line of trees, they reach a clearing.

There, in the center of the clearing is a modest BUSH PLANE. Its sides - blue and white striped. Big rubber wheels and a single propeller on its nose. One large wing hovers over the roof. A row of lights beam along it.

Maria looks at the foreign object with amazement. Officer Hipps pulls her to keep walking.

INT. PLANE - MOMENTS LATER

Maria gets into the plane, followed by Officer Hipps. She looks around, taking in all of the plane's details and gadgets. There are two seats in the front. Pilot and Co-Pilot. One more in the back. Behind the back seat is a cooler and various supplies.

Officer Hipps closes the door of the plane, muting the wind.

OFFICER HIPPS
(motions to back seat)
Have a seat. I'll strap you in.

Maria sits in the back seat.

MARIA
You said we were going to find my
father. He's not safe out there.

Hipps takes the buckles on either side of Maria and straps her in.

OFFICER HIPPS
He'll be okay. The storm's dying
down. I gotta get you safe first
then I'll come back and find him.

He takes another thick strap and buckles it around her lap.

MARIA
You're not listening. There are
creatures out there. Animals.
Trying to kills us!

Officer Hipps moves to the cooler in the back, looks at its contents, before retrieving an ORANGE GATORADE from inside.

OFFICER HIPPS
Here...

Opens the bottle. Holds it out to Maria.

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)
Drink this. You must be thirsty.

Maria looks at the bottle of orange liquid in front of her.

MARIA
What is it?

Hipps looks at her, perplexed-

OFFICER HIPPS
It's Gatorade... You've never had
it?

Maria shakes her head.

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)
Just sugar and water. It's good for
you.

She takes the bottle in her hands but doesn't drink it.

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)
Gonna blast the heat for you. It's
freezing out there.

Officer Hipps moves to sit in the pilot seat. Tweaks a few controls. Turns the heat on full blast. Maria's startled by the hot air coming through the vents.

OFFICER HIPPS (CONT'D)
You never told me where you're
from.

MARIA
Here.

OFFICER HIPPS
But where's home?

MARIA
Here...

At that, Hipps looks back at Maria. But as he's doing so he catches sight of something out the window.

OFFICER HIPPS
What the --

THROUGH THE WINDOW: We see something coming toward the plane, in the distance. A dark figure in a sea of white. Is it a Trespasser?

On Maria, fear creeping in as she sees that the officer is looking at something.

MARIA
(panicked)
What is it? Is it one of them?

THROUGH THE WINDOW: As the figure gets closer, it reveals itself to be...

HECTOR. Running toward them.

OFFICER HIPPS
It's a man...

As Officer Hipps thinks of what to do, Maria yells--

MARIA
Is it my dad?

EXT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS

ON HECTOR, running through the snow toward the plane, satellite phone in his hand. The white out has dissipated. Only light wind and snow persists.

Officer Hipps emerges from the plane, leaving the door open. Maria still strapped inside.

But before Hector reaches them, Hipps pulls his gun out and trains it on him-

OFFICER HIPPS
Stop right there. Put your hands
up.

Hector stops and does as he's told.

HECTOR
(catching his breath)
I'm unarmed. That's my daughter in
your plane.

Hipps keeps his gun trained on Hector.

OFFICER HIPPS
Where are your papers?

On Hector: What?

HECTOR
I'm a fucking American Citizen!

OFFICER HIPPS
I'm the federal officer assigned to
the refuge. This land is not
permitted to anyone, sir.

HECTOR
I know.
(re phone in his hand)
I was trying to call you for help.

OFFICER HIPPS
(beat)
What's your name?

HECTOR
Hector Ramos.

Hipps looks as though he recognizes that name but can't place from where.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 I'm a Marine - Ex-marine.
 (but)
 Listen to me - there's some kind of
 predator out here. A group of them.
 We gotta get out of here, fast.

Officer Hipps looks at Hector, suspicious. Not buying it.

OFFICER HIPPS
 What platoon?

HECTOR
 What?

OFFICER HIPPS
 You were a Marine - Me too... What
 platoon?

HECTOR
 ...Force Recon.

A beat, as something dawns on Hipps...

OFFICER HIPPS
 I know who you are.

HECTOR
 What?

Then, Officer Hipps glances back toward the plane, realizing something...

INT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS

ON MARIA, still strapped into the back seat - listening.

OFFICER HIPPS (O.S.)
 'That girl's the one you kidnapped,
 isn't she?

Those words hit Maria. She reacts with confusion. Stunned by what he just said.

EXT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS

BACK ON HECTOR, shaking his head at the officer, helpless-

HECTOR
 I've served this country, sir.
 That's my daughter... All I want is
 for you to protect her.
 (MORE)

HECTOR (CONT'D)
I called you because we need to get
out of here. It's not safe.

A beat, as Hipps thinks.

OFFICER HIPPS
Sir, you're under arrest for
murder. Gonna need you to hold your
hands out together for me.

We see the pain in Hector's eyes as he hears that word. Then
he deflects - looks around for the trespassers.

HECTOR
We don't have time for this!

Hipps removes handcuffs from his vest.

OFFICER HIPPS
Put your hands together so I can
cuff you.

Hector thinks a beat, before doing as the officer says...

HECTOR
I'm not a danger. The danger is out
there.

Hipps steps to Hector. Takes the satellite phone from
Hector's hand and clips it to his coat. Then cuffs Hector's
hands together.

OFFICER HIPPS
All the same, you're under arrest.

Hector looks the officer in the eyes.

HECTOR
Okay. Fine. Arrest me. But can we
go now?

Hipps looks at Hector a beat, struggling to understand him-

OFFICER HIPPS
Yeah... Let's go.

Hipps leads Hector to the plane.

INT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS

As Hector steps inside the plane, he looks to Maria.

HECTOR
You okay, kiddo?

But she doesn't look at him, keeps her eyes averted.

Officer Hipps shuts the door and motions for Hector to sit in the co-pilot seat. He does. As Hipps straps him in, Hector keeps his eyes on Maria, knowing what she's heard...

HECTOR (CONT'D)
You hurt?

But she doesn't budge.

Officer Hipps takes his seat. Starts tweaking the controls, preparing the plane for take off.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
(to Maria)
There's things I haven't told you.
I know. I'm going to tell you
everything.

Hipps starts the engine. The propeller comes to life.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
Maria. Please look at me.

Maria keeps her eyes averted, trained out the windshield.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
(pleading)
Look at me.

But she's not listening anymore as suddenly - she sees something outside--

TWO FIGURES MOVING THROUGH THE SNOW ON ALL FOURS. Coming toward the plane...

MARIA
Dad --

Hector turns to look at what she sees.

THROUGH THE WINDOW: Hector spots the Trespassers. Two of them. One larger than the other. They're picking up speed, following the sound of the plane.

On Hector, seeing PAPA T for the first time...

HECTOR

Fuck.
 (to Hipps)
 There they are.

Hipps looks out the window. What the fuck is that?

HECTOR (CONT'D)

You need to go. Take off.

Hipps stares at the creatures in shock. He can barely think.

OFFICER HIPPS

What the--

HECTOR

Now!

Hipps snaps to - puts the plane in motion. The wheels start to turn and glide along the snow.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Come on... Come on...

The plane is picking up speed but so are the Trespassers.

Maria watches as the smaller Trespasser LEAPS INTO THE AIR and--

MARIA

Dad!

BANG!

It lands on the nose of the plane. Clutching the windshield.

OFFICER HIPPS

(in shock)
 What the fuck is that thing?

HECTOR

I don't know.
 (just)
 Lift!

As Hipps pulls the lever toward him--

BAM!!!

PAPA T IS AT HIS WINDOW!

Then the terrifying creature -- BREAKS THE GLASS!

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

Papa T reaches his arm through the opening and--

SLICES INTO THE BACK OF HIPPS'S NECK WITH ITS TALON

Hipps begins to SCREAM OUT IN PAIN but he's lost his breath. He starts to suffocate by the Trespasser's touch --

Just as the plane begins to rise into the sky...

Hector instinctively reaches his cuffed hands out and takes a hold of the stick. Pulling it back to keep the plane ascending.

As the plane lifts, Papa T recoils and drops off the side of the plane, back down into the snow.

Hipps chokes and gasps for air as blood spills from the back of his neck. The other Trespasser still holding on tightly to the nose of the plane.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Officer. Stay with me!

On Maria, noticing -- a small slimy rod still sticks out of Hipps's neck. Papa T left it. What is that?

OFFICER HIPPS

(can barely speak)

I. Can't. Breathe.

The plane SHAKES VIOLENTLY as it climbs. Hector struggling to keep a hold of the stick.

HECTOR

Yes, you can. Just hold on a few more minutes. Need you to fly this thing.

Maria starts to panic in the backseat. She's trying to reach behind her to unbuckle the strap but it's too far. Hector glances back to her-

HECTOR (CONT'D)

(to Maria)

No. Keep yourself strapped in!

MARIA

I can help.

HECTOR

(no)

Safer for you there.

Hector levels out the plane but it's low in the sky. Just above the tree tops as it flies above the forest. Officer Hipps is starting to fade in and out of lucidity.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 (to Hipps)
 Hey! Come on, goddammit!! Help me!

Maria watches as her father starts to panic. Truly panic. A sight she may have never seen before now.

Officer Hipps's head falls forward, unconscious.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 Officer!

THEN A WHEEL CATCHES THE TOP OF A TREE AND THE PLANE SUDDENLY PITCHES FORWARD!

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 (to himself)
 Fuck.

Hector pulls on the stick, but it forces the plane to stall.

THUMP THUMP THUMP --

Tree tops hitting the wheels!

MARIA
 DAD!!!

HECTOR
 Hold on.
 (thinks)
 Try to relax yourself!

The Trespasser on the nose of the plane struggles to hold on as the plane tilts forward and begins to plummet toward the ground. The wings skimming the trees as it descends back into the dark forest.

CRACK!

The right wing snaps on a large branch, causing the Trespasser to lose its grip and fall directly into the SPINNING PROPELLER--

SPLAT!!!

BLACK BLOOD SPLATTERS ACROSS THE WINDSHIELD AS THE CREATURE IS RIPPED TO SHREDS!

Maria SCREAMS as the plane nose-dives and--

HITS THE GROUND - burying into a snow bank - A PLUME OF WHITE POWDER LIFTS INTO THE AIR, and--

BLACK

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

THE SOUND OF SURROUNDING CITY LIFE, as -

We're back in the image from Hector's earlier dream...

FROM BEHIND - ONE YEAR OLD MARIA AND HER DOG, sitting on the back patio - looking ahead at the raised swimming pool. The red beach ball floating at its center...

But this time, as WE SLOWLY PUSH IN, and Baby Maria and the dog turn toward camera - indicating someone's just arrived...

WE CAN NOW MAKE OUT SOMETHING ELSE FLOATING IN THE POOL --

THE ARM OF A LITTLE GIRL...

And just as we're putting the pieces of this tragic scene together, we--

SNAP TO:

INT. PLANE - TWILIGHT

CLOSE ON HECTOR'S FACE, fallen forward. The familiar hazy blue light on his skin tells us it's twilight again.

HECTOR SLOWLY OPENS HIS EYES.

REVERSE TO REVEAL: The first image he sees as his eyes adjust-- THE PICTURE MARIA FOUND IN THE SNOW EARLIER -- of her mother Claire, holding her toddler daughter in her arms, standing on the Golden Gate Bridge.

As WE STAY ON THE IMAGE a few beats, we now wonder... Is this toddler Maria, or - the girl who drowned in the pool?

Then WE PULL BACK to see the picture is resting on the dash of the plane. It must have flown out of Maria's jacket pocket in the crash.

Hector stares at the image, unreadable, until he moves his eyes, taking in his surroundings...

Ahead of him, through the broken and bloodied windshield is -- THEIR CABIN. They crashed 40 feet away from it. He looks to his left to find -- THE DEAD OFFICER. His head tilted downward. The rod still sticking out of his neck. His body covered in blood. Hector now registers exactly where he is...

He immediately looks back to - MARIA, still strapped into her seat, but she's lying unconscious. Her eyes closed.

HECTOR
(hard to speak)
Maria.

No response. He can't tell if she's breathing.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
(louder)
MARIA!

Still nothing. Hector tries to move but he can't. The chain of his handcuffs pinned under the dash by a shard of metal. He needs the key. They must be on the officer. But he can't get to him.

Hector tries to PULL THE CUFFS FREE with all his strength -- but it's no use.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
FUCK!

He looks back down at the photo in front of him. And it's as if he's suddenly in his own personal prison... Hector breaks down and SOBS. Helpless. Surrounded by his failures. It's a side of him we have not seen before.

THEN WE'RE ON MARIA, as--

SHE WAKES UP...

Her eyes adjust, registering that she's alive, remembering everything that had happened. Then she takes in a crying Hector in the front seat. The picture in front of his face...

She watches a beat, before--

MARIA
We're alive.

Hector turns at the sound of his daughter's voice - a rush of relief shoots through his body like an electric current. He nods, tears in his eyes.

HECTOR

You're okay. Thank God, you're okay.

But Maria's expression isn't one of joy. She looks around the plane. The tail has ripped off, creating a small opening in the back, angled upward. The plane's body is somewhat crushed, leaning mostly to one side. If Maria weren't strapped in, she'd fall forward onto the window to her left.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Are you hurt? Can you move?

Maria tries to unhook herself but she's too tightly pinned to the chair and the buckle is too far behind her.

MARIA

I don't think so.

Hector assesses her position.

HECTOR

Reach your right arm down below your seat. There's a latch there. The strap's wrapped around it.

Maria does as he says.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Feel that?

She does. He's right. But her fingers can barely reach.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Can you pull it free?

Maria tries. Hard. But she can't quite do it.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

It's okay. Breathe. Take a second and try again.

A beat, before Maria tries again -- SHE REACHES with all her strength -- and grasps the strap with the tips of her fingers. She yanks at it and it loosens the strap but doesn't quite free it.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Good. Good! One more and you're free.

Maria breathes. Here goes... She REACHES and gets it again, YANKS and -- THE STRAP UNHOOKS! Her body falls forward, getting caught by the loosened belt.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 Okay, now unhook the belt on your
 left side.

She turns her body and reaches to where Officer Hipps secured the three straps and unhooks them, one by one. Maria holds onto the straps as she lowers herself down.

But then Hector notices something by her feet--

A BOX WITH YELLOW STICKS INSIDE.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 (urgently)
 Wait! Don't move.

Maria freezes, looks to Hector.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 That's dynamite by your feet. For
 tree felling. Don't step on it.

Maria nods, okay. Lowers herself beside the box. Her ankle is still sore. She winces as it bends on the ground. Breathes...

And now she takes in the sight of - THE DEAD OFFICER. A man who was kind to her, who tried to help her.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 (off her look)
 It's okay. Don't look at him.
 (but)
 ...I need you to reach into his
 pockets for me.

Maria doesn't want to do that.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 'Need his keys.

Maria reluctantly moves closer to the officer. Reaches her hand into one of his pockets. Nothing... She moves to another pocket on the vest over his chest.

THE JINGLE OF METAL tells us there's keys in this one.

MARIA
 Got it.

HECTOR
 (a sigh of relief)
 Good...

But as she pulls the keys out of Hipps's pocket--

THE OFFICER'S BODY MOVES!!!

Startled, Maria drops the keys on the ground by the officer's feet as she JUMPS BACKWARD. Is he alive? It doesn't look like it.

Hector and Maria watch Hipps intensely as--

HIS BODY JERKS AGAIN!

His head flying back this time, his chest lifting. And then he starts to CONVULSE.

Maria panics--

MARIA
What's happening!

HECTOR
I don't know. Stay back.

Maria moves further back as Hector uses his foot to try and reach the keys on the ground. He's just an inch away.

Then--

SOMETHING PROTRUDES FROM THE OFFICER'S CHEST.

His flesh expanding like a balloon - as if something inside him was trying to get out. Until finally --

IT BURSTS OPEN!

On Hector - Holy. Fucking. Shit.

He extends his foot as hard as he can and REACHES THE KEYS. Kicks them toward his hands, just as--

THE SLIMY HEAD OF A TRESPASSER BEGINS TO EMERGE FROM THE OFFICER'S CHEST!!!

Hector reaches his hands down, gets the key ring in his finger tips. Come on... Come on...

Maria watches in terror as the slick and icky creature slides out of the officer's body like the grossest alien birth you can possibly imagine. And it's coming out at almost adult size...

Hector fiddles with the keys, gets a hold of the smallest one. He looks up in horror as--

The NEWLY-BORN TRESPASSER starts to JERK AROUND the compact space as it frees itself from the officer's body. Unaware of where it is and covered in slime. Then the creature lets out -
- A FERAL SHRIEKING SOUND.

Hector gets the key into the lock. Turns it. One wrist free. No time for the other as he reaches to his right ankle and retrieves his HUNTING KNIFE. He flicks it open and just as the Trespasser's tentacles begin FLAPPING and GRASPING at the air --

HECTOR STABS IT IN THE HEAD!

Black blood spurts from the gash. Hector wastes no time.

STABS IT AGAIN. AND AGAIN. AND AGAIN.

All over its disgusting body. It's a bloody fucking mess in this claustrophobic little space.

Hector SCREAMS WITH RAGE as he stabs the Trespasser over and over, until finally - it goes completely still. DEAD.

Hector's out of breath. He looks at the dead creature by his side. Then to the Officer's body, or what's left of it. What the hell just happened? He can't take one more thing thrown his way... But then he turns to see--

Maria is gone...

EXT. PLANE - MOMENTS LATER

Hector emerges from the plane. The knife in his hand.

As he steadies himself, he spins around - but sees no one.

HECTOR

Maria?

He looks in all directions around their property. But she's nowhere to be found. Then his gaze lands on - the cabin...

WE FOLLOW HECTOR, as he walks through the snow, toward the cabin. He's battered and bruised from the crash.

As he reaches the broken front door, and steps inside--

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Hector's stopped by the sight of--

MARIA - rifle in hand - aimed directly at him...

MARIA
Don't come any closer.

He stops moving.

HECTOR
What are you doing?

MARIA
Is what that man said true?

A beat.

HECTOR
I can explain. I've wanted to explain.

MARIA
You're a liar.

HECTOR
...I'm your father.

MARIA
(shakes her head)
No you're not. You kidnapped me.

HECTOR
Maria. I'm going to tell you everything, but we don't have time--

MARIA
-- Tell me now.
(beat)
You're a bad man. You took me from my mother. That's why you kept the picture of us hidden.

HECTOR
No.

MARIA
Stop lying!

HECTOR
That's not you in the picture.

Maria doesn't understand

HECTOR (CONT'D)
That's not you.
(a long beat)
It's your sister. Luz...

On Maria: Confused-

MARIA

(so)

You took her too?

Hector shakes his head, not wanting to keep going but knowing he has no other choice.

HECTOR

No. She died.

(explains)

It was my fault. I was high...

A pause. He struggles to finish...

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Luz fell in the pool. She wanted her ball and she fell in I guess... Don't know cause I nodded out. And when I woke up --

A pause...

HECTOR (CONT'D)

She was gone.

Maria keeps the gun trained on her father as tears well in his eyes-

HECTOR (CONT'D)

My life was a mess - since forever. A mess... Until we got here.

Maria looks unmoved.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

I joined the Marines to run away I guess, but it didn't work. Things kept eating at me. I couldn't breathe. So I used things to numb everything. For a while...

(beat)

That's when I met your mom. She was like me. Running...

On Maria: Listening. Unsure what to think.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Things just spiraled. We lost control. I got kicked out of Recon.

(MORE)

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Your mother had to try to find work
and I was supposed to be watching
you both. Had one thing to do. One
thing...

On Maria, hearing these words - seeing the deep remorse in
her father's eyes... She slowly lowers the gun.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

And then Luz was gone and they were
gonna take you away. From me and
your mother. And I couldn't lose
you too. So I took off. And we got
here. I got clean. First time I
felt like I could breathe. Like
this was where I was supposed to
be. We were supposed to be.

Hector takes a step toward Maria.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

I stayed cause I wanted to keep you
from all the bad stuff. Wanted to
keep you safe... I killed that
creature in the trap for the same
reason.

Tears fall down Maria's cheeks.

MARIA

...Now they're gonna kill us.

Hector shakes his head-

HECTOR

I won't let them.

MARIA

I don't believe you.

HECTOR

(nods, shame in his eyes)
Why should you?

(beat)

I've kept everything from you- even
the chance of a normal life-
because of my own problems.

(beat)

It wasn't fair.

MARIA

It's too late now. To make it
right. They'll be here soon.
They'll kill us.

Tears flood her eyes, panicked at the thought. Hector rushes to her.

HECTOR
I won't let them. I swear.

Maria has no choice but to give in as Hector pulls her into his arms. She cries into his chest.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry I lied to you.
(beat)
No more lies, okay? We're gonna get out of this. I'll find a way.

Hector thinks as he strokes her hair.

MARIA
They're going to find us. How are they tracking us?

HECTOR
(thinks)
...I don't know.

A beat, until something dawns on Hector...

HECTOR (CONT'D)
...They're not.

Maria looks up at her father, as if to say - what?

HECTOR (CONT'D)
They're not tracking us... They're tracking them. Each other.
(off her look)
After I killed the one in the trap, I saw something fall from the sky when I was hunting. Something landed. It was them. Then they found you near the trap. That's where they went.
(and)
Then, after you killed the one in the chimney we left the cabin - they were probably here shortly after.

On Maria, as she looks out the partially open door - to the plane...

MARIA
If you're right, then...

Hector cuts her off.

HECTOR
I have an idea.

EXT. CABIN - TWILIGHT

ON THE DEAD BODY OF THE NEWBORN TRESPASSER, BEING DRAGGED ACROSS THE SNOW. Stab wounds from Hector's knife all over its body.

As WE PULL OUT we see that Hector's pulling the creature by its shoulders. He stops as he reaches the porch to the cabin.

HECTOR
Help me pull it inside.

Maria stops keeping watch to do as he asked.

As she leans down to help, she hesitates to touch the creature.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
It's okay. It's dead.

Maria looks to her father. Gives a reluctant nod, before grabbing onto the Trespasser's legs.

As they both LIFT its body through the front door, we--

CUT TO:

INT. CABIN, MARIA'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

ON HECTOR'S KNIFE, AS IT PIERCES THE TRESPASSER'S TORSO - and cuts downward, making a vertical incision.

Then, Hector's hands PULL THE SKIN APART, exposing a bloody pulp of dark flesh and gore.

HECTOR (O.S.)
In the war, terrorists would pack bodies with explosives. A way to get the most casualties from US soldiers.

ON HECTOR'S HANDS, LIFTING A YELLOW STICK OF DYNAMITE out the box from the plane, and into the Trespasser's open flesh.

The creature's body now lies on Maria's bed, as Hector carefully places another stick of dynamite into its open wound.

MARIA
Will it work?

Hector nods-

HECTOR
I hope so...
(beat)
If we get them close enough.

Maria looks at her father - almost appreciating his uncertainty.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
You ready?

She nods.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
(okay)
...Go.

INT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

MARIA PLACES A CAN OF BEANS ON THE FLOOR - next to five other cans in a row. A noise-maker, should anyone enter... The door ajar just a crack.

Maria grabs the BOOMBOX and places it at the bottom of the stairs to her room.

ON THE BOOMBOX - as she turns the volume knob all the way up and presses PLAY...

'Top of the World' by The Carpenters - PLAYS LOUDLY.

As the twangy music comes through the speakers, Maria looks back to the front door a beat - this better work. She then hurries upstairs, still a slight limp with her ankle.

THE CARPENTERS (CONT'D)
Such a feeling's coming over me.
There is wonder in most everything
I see...

INT. CABIN, MARIA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Maria walks through the room and heads to the open window where Hector stands.

THE CARPENTERS

(from stairs)

*Everything I want the world to be,
is now coming true, especially for
me...*

Hector's secured a 20 foot detonation wick cord to the Trespasser's torso. Hector holds the end of the cord. Ready.

He nods to Maria-

HECTOR

I'll be right behind you.

Maria nods, fear in her eyes. Then she climbs out the window.

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

WE'RE WIDE ON THE FRONT OF THE PROPERTY. The deep blue of twilight casting an eery glow over everything. Not a creature in sight as we hear the muffled music play from inside the cabin.

THE CARPENTERS

*I'm on the top of the world,
lookin' down on creation and the
only explanation I can find...*

EXT. CABIN, ROOF - CONTINUOUS

Maria climbs down the side of the cabin, using the netting as steps.

THE CARPENTERS

(faintly)

*...Is the love that I've found ever
since you've been around, you'll
have put me at the top of the
world...*

Maria hits the ground and delicately moves through the snow, as fast as she can. Her eyes darting around, scanning the area, making sure nothing's lurking in the woods, watching her...

She moves slyly through the snow until she makes it to the--

INT. SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

Maria slips inside and closes the door so it's only open an inch. Her eyes scan the area through the crack. Looking for any sign of the trespassers...

THE CARPENTERS

(faintly)

*Somethin' in the wind has learned
my name. And it's tellin' me that
things are not the same...*

Then she spots them -- TRESPASSERS -- the three remaining smaller ones. In the woods. Heading toward the cabin. But where's Papa T?

Maria looks back to the cabin - Her father inside.

Here goes...

INT. CABIN, MARIA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ON HECTOR, watching the door to Maria's room, listening intently-

THE CARPENTERS

*I'm on the top of the world,
lookin' down on creation and the
only explanation I can find...*

Suddenly -- WE HEAR THE CANS CLANK as they fall to the ground downstairs.

It's go time.

Hector quickly lights the wick... It takes for a beat, but then the flame goes out. Fuck!

INT. SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

Maria watches through the crack as the third Trespasser enters the cabin door.

She looks around the property, scanning the forest. Knowing their biggest threat is still out there somewhere, when--

THE CARPENTERS

*...The love that I've found ever
since you've been around, you'll
have put me at the top of the
world...*

THERE HE IS... PAPA T -- Moving along the side of the house.

On Maria - her eyes filled with worry. He's not following the others inside. Will he find Hector escaping?

Her mind stirs as she remains helpless behind the door.

INT. CABIN, MARIA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Hector lights the wick again. This time... It takes!

He looks to the door as he hears--

THE TRESPASSERS MOVING AROUND DOWNSTAIRS.

As the flame slowly moves through the wick, Hector quickly climbs out the window. And just before he closes it behind him--

WE HEAR THE BOOMBOX CRASH AGAINST THE WALL --

And the music goes... *OFF*.

EXT. CABIN, ROOF - CONTINUOUS

Hector maneuvers along the side of the cabin as fast as possible.

He starts to climb down, just as Maria did. But much like she did a few nights before, Hector's foot SLIPS on a pocket of snow.

His other foot catches his fall, landing on a crevice, but as Hector throws his hand up to hold onto the side of the cabin, he presses it right onto the--

SHARD OF WOOD!!!

The one Maria stood on.

THE SHARP STICK PIERCES STRAIGHT INTO HECTOR'S PALM, ERUPTING THROUGH THE OTHER SIDE!

Hector tries to stifle the searing pain, but fuck that hurts!

He's got no time. He has to rip his hand off the wood.

He breathes. One... Two...

HECTOR PULLS HIS HAND FREE and--

FALLS TO THE GROUND!

As he hits the snow he looks at his hand, gushing blood. He picks himself up and runs to the shelter.

He's moving so fast, knowing that the dynamite is going to blow any second and he--

TRIPS AND FALLS. Shit!

He's still too close to the cabin to be safe...

As he picks himself up again, facing the cabin, as if right on cue --

BOOM!!!

THE BOMB GOES OFF!

As the structure of the cabin bursts apart -- A LARGE PIECE OF WOOD FLIES RIGHT AT HECTOR -- HITTING HIM IN THE STOMACH!

INT. SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

WE HEAR THE HOWLING SHRIEK OF PAPA T OUTSIDE, as--

Maria's beside the closed door, her back against the wall. Her face filled with dread, unsure if Hector's dead or alive, when--

BAM!!!

Something hits the door. Maria stares at the door with dread. Is it Hector or Papa T?

She slowly reaches toward the knob and OPENS THE DOOR just a crack, to find--

HECTOR

He's in bad shape. Out of breath, on the ground.

MARIA
(thank god)
Dad.

She pulls him inside and quickly closes the door.

MARIA (CONT'D)
You're hurt.

HECTOR
 (catching his breath)
 I'll be okay.
 (re shriek)
 I take it we didn't get them all.

He grabs a cloth from the shelf and wraps it around his hand to stop the bleeding.

MARIA
 (nods)
 The three...
 (but)
 The big one... He's still out there.

Hector COUGHS. Holds his stomach, trying to mask the amount of pain he's truly in. But Maria notices. Hector tries to distract her from it by drawing her attention to the TOMAHAWK hanging on the wall.

HECTOR
 We have the axe.
 (beat)
 Not sure I can swing it hard enough at the moment, though.

MARIA
 I can do it.

HECTOR
 No. Too dangerous.

Maria thinks-

MARIA
 We can weaken it.

HECTOR
 How?

Maria looks around, until her eyes land on --
 The FIFTY-POUND STEEL BEAR TRAP along the wall.

MARIA
 ...Trap it.

On Hector - as he looks at the trap, then his daughter... She's right. This is their best shot.

ANOTHER SHRIEK FROM PAPA T RINGS OUT FROM OUTSIDE --

HECTOR
He's looking for us.

MARIA
Doesn't sound that close though.

Hector nods - let's get to work.

EXT. SHELTER - MOMENTS LATER

Hector and Maria DRAG the heavy trap across the snow. The axe on top. Both of them are struggling. Her with her ankle and him with his injuries.

Both scanning their surroundings. But no sign of Papa T.

While they're pulling toward a spot with deep snow, about 30 feet away--

The axe falls off the trap.

HECTOR
(to Maria)
Don't stop. Leave it. We need to set first.

They make it to the spot. Hector quickly tries to pry open the trap. But he's too weak. Maria looks at him with worry, before she jumps in to help.

Together they pry the trap wide and lock it in place. Then Maria buries it in the snow.

Hector COUGHS violently. As he pulls his hand away from his mouth he notices -- *blood came out...*

But Maria's distracted by - something in the distance...

MARIA
Dad --

Hector looks to what she sees--

PAPA T MOVING THROUGH THE SNOW ON ALL FOURS!

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK

HECTOR
(hurry)
Grab the axe. Stay by the trees.

Maria starts to move quickly along the trees, heading toward the axe, but as she's doing so - she looks down to see--

A TRAIL OF BLOOD IN THE SNOW

Left behind by Hector. He's bleeding a lot worse than she realized.

ON HECTOR

Fear in his eyes as he watches Papa T get closer.

Hector positions himself directly in line with the hidden trap, just 10 feet away.

ON MARIA

Stopped in her tracks as Papa T moves right near her. She stands against a tree, holding her breath. Trying to stay completely still, unsure if the beast can sense her.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK

As his head moves around, facing the other way, Maria tries to take a step toward the axe but *CRACKS A TWIG* in the process, creating a noise.

PAPA T WHIPS HIS HEAD IN HER DIRECTION!

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

He's trying to place her.

Hector thinks fast - has to distract the creature from Maria and shouts--

HECTOR (CONT'D)

HEY!

Papa T turns to Hector - *BARES HIS TENTACLES* - and--

CHARGES TOWARD HIM LIKE AN UN-CAGED ANIMAL!

HECTOR (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Come on... Come on...

Papa T is coming right down the line. Hector takes a another step backward, fear rushing through his veins.

Just as the large Trespasser is about to reach Hector--

SNAP!!!

HIS LEG IS SEIZED BY THE TRAP!

Papa T SHRIEKS OUT IN PAIN. But the trap doesn't take him all the way down. Though slow and weak, Papa T is still able to move toward Hector.

Hector tries to move back but he's too weak as Papa T closes in on him.

Maria watches in horror as Papa T--

GRABS HECTOR BY THE THROAT AND LIFTS HIM INTO THE AIR!

She quickly runs and -- GRABS THE AXE.

HECTOR SWINGS HIS ARMS AROUND AS HE CHOKES AND GASPS FOR AIR, SUFFOCATING BY THE TRESPASSER'S TOUCH. His veins bulging out of his skin. His eyeballs beginning to bleed. No use fighting anymore. He can't escape this beast any longer...

Hector looks into the Trespasser's open mouth. Its slimy, slug-like tentacles slivering in the air. Nothing but darkness behind them. Hector's holding on as long as he can until he slowly loses consciousness, just as--

SHWKKTT!

MARIA SLICES INTO THE TRESPASSER'S BACK!!!

Papa T drops Hector to the ground as Maria PULLS THE AXE OUT, LIFTS IT UP and -- CHOPS INTO HIM AGAIN!

The creature falls to his knees and she pulls it out again.

As Maria LIFTS THE AXE as high as she can one more time, Papa T spins around and slices her side with his talon, just as she--

BRINGS THE AXE DOWN DIRECTLY ON HIS HEAD!

SHWKKTT!!!

Papa T falls to the ground... DEAD.

Maria catches her breath as she looks to her father, lying in the snow, unconscious.

MARIA

Dad!

She leans down, shakes him, using all her strength to will him awake. But it's no use...

He's gone.

Maria SOBS. Her father is dead. She's all alone now.

Then, as she catches her breath - she sees something... sticking out of the back of Hector's neck... that same rod she saw on Hipps. Maria begins to back away from Hector's body.

She looks down at the gash on her side, bleeding... Then back to Hector. Is something going to come out of him? She looks around. What does she do?

Then she sees something out of the corner of her eye--

Back by the shelter, in the snow, is--

A GLOWING GREEN LIGHT.

What the hell is that?

Maria picks herself up, limps toward the light. Her hand over her wound.

She's right by the shelter as she reaches down into the snow and picks up--

THE IRIDIUM SATELLITE PHONE

It must have shot out of the plane and landed here in the crash.

Maria looks down at the foreign object with confusion.

Then she looks back to Hector. Watching intently for any sign of movement.

Back down to the phone. She presses some buttons. Maria doesn't get how to use it. She feels helpless. Pushes more frantically.

But nothing happens.

Back to Hector. Still nothing.

She flips the phone over to see--

A SMALL PIECE OF PAPER TAPED TO THE BACK

A few emergency names and numbers on it.

She focuses her eyes. Zeroes in on one of the names--

CLAIRE

Maria thinks. Unsure what calling the number next to her mother's name would even do. But decides to do it anyway.

SHE DIALS. One by one. Until the last number.

A beat, before Maria pushes it. Puts the receiver up to her ear and listens...

She keeps her eyes on Hector as the phone--

RINGS. And RINGS again...

Then, someone picks up-

CLAIRE'S VOICE
(disbelief)
Hector? Oh my god, Hector - is that
you?!

Maria says nothing. She freezes. Tries to comprehend-

CLAIRE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Hector. Please answer me. Where are
you? Please.

But as Maria stands frozen, in shock, her eyes to the ground -

In the background--

WE SEE HECTOR'S BODY START TO JERK AND MOVE!

Distracted, Maria manages to muster the word--

MARIA
(into phone)
Mom?

It's a beat as strong as anything. Maria doesn't know what to think. She was told her mother died. Could this be real?

CLAIRE'S VOICE
...Oh my god. Maria, is that you?

Maria stays frozen. The significance of this moment can only be gleaned by her eyes and the tears that fill them.

But we're also distracted by what is happening behind her as--
**THE SILHOUETTE OF A NEW TRESPASSER EMERGES FROM HECTOR'S BODY
AND TAKES SHAPE!!!**

CLAIRE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Maria? It's mommy...
(beat)
Where are you, baby?

But before Maria can utter another word, she turns and sees--

THE NEWLY-BORN TRESPASSER COMING RIGHT TOWARD HER!

Holy. Fuck.

In an instant, Maria DROPS THE PHONE and RUNS past the shelter, toward the cabin, but her bad ankle gives and she--

FALLS TO THE GROUND! Fuck!

She's got to pick herself up. And as she does, she spins around to see the Trespasser pass the shelter, coming right at her, only to be--

TOPPLED BY A GIANT GRIZZLY BEAR!!!

Holy shit! Maria trembles, lifting herself up cautiously - as the GRIZZLY SWINGS IT'S PAWS at the dark figure and lets out a massive ROAR.

Instinct pushes Maria to takes off at full sprint as the two creatures brawl and she runs straight for--

THE SNOWMOBILE

At the side of the cabin.

She gets on. Pulls the choke once. Fuck that hurt her wound! But there's no time.

SHE PULLS AGAIN. She can feel her skin tearing.

She looks over to see, as--

THE TRESPASSER SLAUGHTERS THE BEAR WITH ITS CLAWS!

As the Grizzly falls limp to the ground--

MARIA PULLS ONE MORE TIME making the snowmobile roar to life and -

SHE ZOOMS OFF--

EXT. NARROW TRAIL - TWILIGHT

Maria speeds down the snow covered trail, through the tall trees.

She looks back - no Trespasser. But when she looks down, she sees blood rupturing from her side. She feels the gash with her hands and they become slick with blood.

She looks ahead and nearly hits a tree! Shit!

She swerves, steadies the snowmobile and keeps it moving as fast as she can.

EXT. PERIMETER - MOMENTS LATER

Maria reaches the pine trees lining the frozen river and pulls to a stop. A dead end. She looks around, fearful-

Maria hops off the snowmobile and moves toward the edge of the river. She looks across the rime - the place she was told never to cross. Her Rubicon. The threatening forest on the other side. The ice an abyss from here... A hundred feet of frost and snow, no telling how sturdy. But it's her only exit. The only end to all of this...

She looks back again to see--

THE DARK FIGURE IN THE DISTANCE

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

Maria's eyes widen. It's moving through the white. Heading for her. *Closing in on her.*

She's got nowhere to go but the ice...

Maria starts hobbling as fast as she can--

ONTO THE ICE

She's in so much pain, but she pushes through.

Blood from her side dripping on the white frost along the way.

The ice begins to crack under her feet. It could give at any moment with the wrong step.

She looks back--

THE TRESPASSER GAINING ON HER!

She pushes further, but she knows she can't outrun it. She can't make it. Not even sure she wants to at this point...

As the Trespasser reaches the river, Maria looks down at the growing fissures and breaks in the ice. Her blood a thick trail behind her.

THEN THE TRESPASSER STEPS ONTO THE ICE

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

Starts moving across it. It's coming toward her.

Maria whimpers in panic as it closes in on her.

Then, suddenly, in this moment - Maria makes a snap decision.

She stops moving.

Turns to face the beast approaching her.

And as it comes -- Closer. Closer. -- about to reach her--

Maria CLOSES HER EYES and--

JUMPS IN THE AIR!

And as her feet hit the surface again, the ice gives and--

MARIA PLUNGES THROUGH THE SURFACE!

Like falling through a trap door, and--

THE TRESPASSER FALLS WITH HER!

As they go straight into the swirling black hole, we stay on it a beat. The blood from her wound painting the water a tint of red. The ripples from their fall give that familiar impression of wings of a bird or an angel.

And we're--

INT. UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

The shock of the freezing water ripples through Maria's entire body as if she's been lit on fire. It paralyzes her momentarily.

She opens her eyes and can make out the Trespasser's figure close by. It's struggling in this foreign climate.

Bubbles of air escape Maria's mouth and race along the ceiling of ice until they find the exit. The hole Maria hatched with the fall.

Maria holds onto the ceiling, keeping just enough distance, as she watches the Trespasser spasm and wrestle with the water before falling deeper below.

She's got another 10 seconds to live... Now's her chance.

She struggles to focus...

Finds her mark... The opening in the ice.

She can't hesitate. Now's her shot.

Her survival depends on it...

EXT. PERIMETER - CONTINUOUS

WE'RE ON THE FROZEN RIVER. Vast. Cold. Silence.

Then, after a beat--

Maria thrashes out of the hole, grabbing, pulling herself up -
ALL THE MIGHT IN THE WORLD INSIDE THIS GIRL.

Gasping, spitting, choking. Gulping air as she rolls her body
onto the ice. She's clearly been taught how to do this.

Maria crawls. Her fingers leading the way, grasping at the
frost, feeling almost disconnected from her body.

Blood on the ice from the gash on her side. Her feet slowly
declining to a mere drag.

MARIA CRAWLS TOWARD CAMERA

It's excruciating. Everything is buzzing. Her skin freezing.

But she makes her way to the other side of the river, rolls
to safety... and--

COLLAPSES IN THE SNOW

CLOSE ON MARIA'S FACE. She's's out of breath. She can barely
move. She's made it this far but she'll soon freeze to death
or bleed to death...

A beat, as Maria closes her eyes, surrendering. The last bit
of life draining from her face.

Then--

WE HEAR SOMETHING APPROACHING. A soft CRUNCHING in the snow.

Maria remains unfazed. Doesn't hear anything. Is she already
dead?

When--

A DOG'S TONGUE LICKS MARIA'S CHEEKS!

What the hell? Maria's eyes flutter as she recognizes this
feeling. She finally opens them to find--

IT'S BELLE!

Belle BARKS and continues to lick Maria's face.

She's overcome with emotion. If she had any tears left in her she would crumble to pieces right now.

Belle pulls on her coat, willing Maria to move. And it's just the motivation she needs. She's not giving up. She's a survivor.

Maria plants her hands on the ground - hands she can barely feel at this point, but--

SHE LIFTS HERSELF UP!

And hugs Belle - pulls her in - buries her face in Belle's fur - and is overcome with emotion...

A long beat, as Maria breathes deeply before steadying herself. She pulls slightly away to get a good look at Belle. She can't believe it.

Then, as she wipes her frozen tears away, Maria fixes her gaze on something in the woods, ahead of her--

A CABIN

Through the forest, in the distance. Smoke rising from the chimney... Warm, inviting...

Can this be real?

WE FOLLOW MARIA, a layer of ice over her body. Her hair freezing wet. Belle by her side. As she struggles through the forest, hobbling to the cabin - her last hope on this planet.

EXT. CABIN, PORCH - DAY

MARIA'S HAND KNOCKS ON THE CABIN DOOR

After a beat--

THE DOOR OPENS TO FIND--

A PREGNANT WOMAN. Her TWO DAUGHTERS behind her.

They all stare at the ten year old girl and her dog in front of them - drenched, freezing, bleeding.

PREGNANT WOMAN
(worried)
Oh my God. What happened to you,
Hun?

Maria struggles to find the words, her face shivering as she says-

MARIA
...I fell through the ice.

The astonished woman looks past Maria - no sign of anyone else. Just the vast, frozen river.

PREGNANT WOMAN
(in shock)
How'd you get out?

Maria thinks, remembering for just a moment - *everything*.

A long beat, before she finally responds--

MARIA
...My father taught me.

And with that we--

BLACKOUT

**'Theme from a Summer Place' by Percy Faith - PLAYS as the
CREDITS ROLL.**

THE END