

EXT. A FIELD - DAY

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TIGHT SHOT of a HOE tilling soil. TIGHT on a HAND picking EARS of CORN. BUSHELs of TOMATOES loaded onto a TRUCK BED.

WIDEN to the whole FIELD.

CHYRON: CONNECTICUT

THE FAINT STIRRINGS of Copland's "Appalachian Spring" rise. MEN and WOMEN -- in modern dress -- young, but not children, weathered under the sun -- dot the field.

A YOUNG MAN wipes his brow and takes a drink of water. A YOUNG WOMAN adjusts the BABY she is breast-feeding in a sling as she harvests.

A GIRL speaks. Matter-of-fact. Conversational.

GIRL (V.O.)

In Aberfan, Wales, the sun rose at 6:02 on the morning of Friday, October 21st, 1966.

EXT. NEW ENGLAND LANDSCAPE - DAY INTO NIGHT

A SERIES of LOW TRACKING SHOTS that guide across the terrain of rural Connecticut. An old-growth OAK AND HICKORY FOREST.

THE CONNECTICUT RIVER flows to the sea. MEADOWS AND GENTLE HILLS. An ANCIENT BURIAL GROUND.

GIRL (V.O.)

The town, on the western slope of the Taff Valley, and just four miles south of Merthyr Tydfil, had had three weeks of steady rain. 6.5 inches. Half of that in the last week. But Friday morning was dry.

THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN. A GAS STATION. A FARM STAND. A BALL FIELD, with kids playing, as the LIGHT BEGINS TO FADE.

GIRL (V.O.)

At Pantglas Junior School on Moy Road, it was the last day before half-term holiday. School would be out by noon.

A YOUNG BOY, only seven, catches our gaze. Looks at us innocently.

GIRL (V.O.)

Above the town, seven spoil tips -
mountains of waste, the refuse of
fifty years of mining coal - loomed
like seven black hills.

Now civilization is thick around us: MIDDLE CLASS SUBURBAN
STREETS. HOUSE AFTER HOUSE. AN OLD NEW ENGLAND CHOP HOUSE.

"Appalachian Spring" MORPHS into Tristania's "THE MODERN END"

A SIGN THAT READS "ENTERING WEST HAM. ESTABLISHED 1684"

GIRL (V.O.)

At 9:15, the hills began to move.
Undermined by rain and the streams
that ran beneath.

ENORMOUS COLONIAL-STYLE HOMES with sweeping lawns, tennis
courts. WEST HAM COUNTRY CLUB with its POLO FIELDS.

GIRL (V.O.)

One hundred and nine children were
buried, where they sat at their
school desks, by 200,000 cubic
yards of waste

THE VILLAGE GREEN. THE WHITE SPIRE OF THE CHURCH.

GIRL (V.O.)

When the roar of the avalanche
subsided, one resident wrote, "you
couldn't hear a bird or child."

A BANK. A ROLLS ROYCE DEALER. A FAUX COLONIAL BUILDING WITH A
SIGN THAT READS "PURITAN CAPITAL: A HEDGE FUND."

GIRL (V.O.)

No act of God was it - no accident.
The town of Aberfan built the
mountains that buried its children.

"The Modern End" CROSS-FADES with the SOUND of "Heads.."

INT. WEST HAM HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAYS - NIGHT

A privileged school: TROPHIES OF THE GOLF TEAM. A POSTER
advertising the ORCHESTRA TRIP TO VIENNA.

THE FOOTBALL TEAM, the CHEERLEADERS, POSE -- ALL SMILES. A
BANNER THAT READS: "HOME OF THE FIGHTING CENTURIONS."

VOICE (O.S.)
Heads... heads... heads... heads...

An AD for the SPRING PLAY: Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead.

INT. AUDITORIUM - STAGE

A barren stage. The line of a horizon painted on a screen and the gentle up-slope of what could be a foreign planet.

An ACTRESS flips a coin in the air and catches it. Shows it to... HARRY. Impossibly handsome, charming and, like the part he's playing tonight, a slight disappointment.

ROSENCRANTZ (HARRY)
Eighty-five in a row - beaten the record.

Guildenstern looks at him, baffled. This is CASSANDRA, tall and willowy, self-possessed beyond her years. She is the very best of her contemporaries and they all know it.

GUILDENSTERN (CASSANDRA)
Is that it then? Is that all?

ROSENCRANTZ (HARRY)
What?

GUILDENSTERN (CASSANDRA)
A new record? Is that as far as you're prepared to go?
(beat)
No questions? Not even a pause?

ROSENCRANTZ (HARRY)
You spun them yourself.

GUILDENSTERN (CASSANDRA)
Not a flicker of doubt?

INT. AUDITORIUM - SEATS - LATER

Parents, family, friends. Hugs. Flowers. MOVE from cluster to cluster. Giddy girls. Effusive parents.

Some of the children -- is it possible -- remind us of the young farmers we saw in their field. But it can't be.

Cassandra receives a bouquet from her parents, AMANDA & JIM PRESSMAN. Good, solid people, mildly neurotic about their children, as parents are these days.

Cassandra has a crowd around her. Always. Boys and girls. Her friends. In the social schematic, the nerdy cool.

DOUG ELLIOT, Cassandra's uncle (Amanda's brother), finds her in the crowd and puts his arms around her. SAM, his son, also in costume, is at his side. Doug whispers in her ear.

CASSANDRA
Thanks, Uncle Doug.
(speaks; signs)
Sam was great, too.

Sam smiles back. Signs a "thank you."

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
Where's Cameron?

SAM
Anywhere but here.

Harry notices the attention Cassandra's getting. It bugs him. Always. But Harry's at the very top of the pecking order. He also has a crowd around him. It's just slightly smaller than Cassandra's. His mother, KAREN, pulls him aside.

KAREN
You okay? You seem --

HARRY
I want to puke all the time.

KAREN
Yes. Well. You get used to it.

HARRY
I thought you said it was gone.

From the stage, TOM, still in costume, watches the family celebrations. No one there to meet him. This is how he is, always slightly apart.

He glances across the stage to BECCA, also alone, a pink and blue streak in her hair, ring in her nose. Small rebellions.

She puts down the camera with which she's been filming the crowd. She pinches her nose. Eww. He nods. Ewww.

INT. SCHOOL - BACKSTAGE

A warren of rooms and sets and stage wings -- in the midst of which, a cast party of sorts is in progress.

FIVE VERY BIG GUYS, all in tights and blousey shirts, are drinking and horsing around. CLARK takes a swig.

CLARK

Looks -- hey, I'm serious -- looks are deceiving. We are here to protect you.

They're all laughing with LUKE, their quarterback, in street clothes. He takes a swig himself.

LUKE

From what? A pass rush by fucking Danish people?

MOOSE

Norwegians. We're Danish. The other team would be Norwegians probably.

A chorus of "That's true." "He's right." "Norwegians." Luke stares for an extra beat.

LUKE

... Good point.

ELSEWHERE -- on RISERS -- ALLIE sits next to her sister, Cassandra. Allie's a little less pretty, less confident...

ALLIE

You were -- I could never do that. I could never... never, never...

CASSANDRA

How many have you had, Al?

ALLIE

I'm serious.

TOM, in costume, walks past a room, door half open. SOUNDS from inside make him stop. Inside... two people hooking up, behind stacked furniture. It looks like Harry, from the costume that hangs off him, his back to Tom. The girl is beautiful. Long hair. Shirt open. Bra exposed.

KELLY pulls back from a kiss. Her eyes catch Tom's. And she hesitates a moment. Meets his gaze. Brazen, not at all shy. As if to say, deal with it. Then Harry slides down her body.

A COMPUTERIZED LIGHT BOARD. GORDIE shows STUMP the details.

GORDIE

Six hundred and fifty discrete lighting set-ups.

The two of them are a pair. They look years younger than the rest; they're not. Other things have developed first.

STUMP

Awesome. They sell this?

GORDIE

I made it. It's mine.

He taps some keys. A SPOTLIGHT captures Cassandra, moving across the stage. Caught in the light, she stops, peers out.

STUMP

Awesome.

Gordie just stares at Cassandra... and nods.

ELSEWHERE -- in one of the wings -- Becca is videoing Sam -- still in costume. She SIGNS and speaks at the same time.

BECCA

Tell us who you played.

Sam signs back. Becca laughs.

BECCA (CONT'D)

Gertrude? Really?

ELSEWHERE -- TOM wanders on stage, to find Allie, who's sitting alone. Plops down next to her. She puts her head on his shoulder. She sort of loves him.

ALLIE

That went well.

TOM

Mmm. Turns out Rosencrantz is going down on Ophelia.

She glances up at him. What an idiot he is, sometimes.

ALLIE

Why is Hamlet always the last to know?

(beat)

I'd get over her, if I were you.

TOM

Can't. Haven't you read the play?

ALLIE

Yes. I even read to the end. Haven't you?

Tom smiles at her -- his sometimes-forgotten best friend.

TOM

I think something may be rotten.

ALLIE

Hence the pungent odor of shit.

(beat)

Duh.

INT. CASSANDRA AND ALLIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Allie stares at a enormous splay of flowers -- bouquets, etc.
All for Cassandra. No one around. Calls out.

ALLIE

Hey. Where is everyone?

AMANDA (O.S.)

Up here in Cassandra's room.

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Story of her life.

ALLIE

You could open a flower shop.

CASSANDRA (O.S.)

I know. Crazy, right? Take some, if
you want, for your room.

ALLIE

No, that's okay.... They're yours.

INT. TOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tom walks in, still half in costume. It's not much of a
house. Shabbily decorated. His "FATHER" sits on the couch,
watching TV. He barely looks up when Tom enters.

TOM'S "FATHER"

Where have you been?

TOM

School. I was in a play.

TOM'S "FATHER"

A play?

TOM

Yeah. You know. On a stage, In an
auditorium. For people to come and
watch.

TOM'S "FATHER"

(ignoring that)

Have you seen the check for this week? It was supposed to be here today.

TOM

Nope.

(heads for the stairs)

Probably some State budget thing. Pay late. Save money.

TOM'S "FATHER"

I'm not the goddamn Red Cross.

TOM

(under his breath)

Fuck you.

EXT. WEST HAM - TOWN GREEN - NEXT MORNING

A spring morning. A no-jacket day, the first of the year, for Harry, who heads across the Green, towards...

INT. VILLAGE OFFICES - WEST HAM - MOMENTS LATER

Harry walks through the down the corridor to outside a corner office. It's his mother's. Even before he gets there, he can HEAR the sounds of argument seeping out from inside.

An ASSISTANT stops him at the door.

ASSISTANT

You can't go in there now, Harry.

Harry nods. Stops outside the door. Though the glass he can see his mother, and Doug Elliot, and Doug and Amanda's brother- and his mother's business partner -- RODGERS ELLIOT. Rodgers is West Ham's wealthiest citizen and its First Selectman.

The three of them -- adults Harry has known since birth -- are having a fight with a FOURTH MAN, whom Harry does not recognize. You'd guess that there's American Indian blood in him, but nothing in his dress betrays that.

Harry is transfixed. There is something disconcerting in the tenor of their disagreement that unsettles him. For all the petty cruelties of his own generation, the meanness of grown-ups, the dangers of adult life, still scare him. And this is no ordinary fight. Harry has never seen his mother like this.

And then the argument is over. And the man whom Harry does not know walks over to the door and opens it and walks right past Harry. And as he does, he looks at Harry -- makes eye contact that penetrates and -- is Harry mistaken about this -- he seems almost to smile in an empathetic way. And though the man whom Harry does not know is gone in an instant -- it is a face he won't ever forget.

His mother is next out the door. She passes Harry - sees him for the first time - as she goes.

KAREN

Harry. What are you doing here? You need something?

Harry's flustered, forgotten even why he came.

HARRY

No, I --

KAREN

-- I have a Town Meeting in twenty minutes. See you at home after?

HARRY

Sure.

(beat)

Is everything okay?

KAREN

Business as usual.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

The meeting Karen was referring to. Parents pack the pews.

At the alter are the SELECTMEN -- inheritors of a centuries old political system of village governance. Karen is there. So, too, LYNETTE COLLIER, mother of Sam (and Cameron, whom we've not yet met). Rodgers Eliot is at the microphone.

RODGERS

I don't know, Phil. We had that factory, American Bicycle. Closed decades ago. Is that the cause? All we know is that there was a smell. It went away. And now it's back. The Committee of Selectmen has asked the Federal Government for help. The EPA and the Department of the Interior will begin testing this week.

HECKLER (O.S.)

You an EPA-lover, all of sudden,
Rodgers?

RODGERS

Point is, there's no reason to
believe that this stink poses any
health hazard. It's just...
nauseating. But if anyone wants to
take this as a cue to get out of
Dodge for a week. Personal choice.
And of course, our senior high
school -- kids over sixteen --

INT. CASSANDRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Cassandra's stuffing a small bag with clothes. But not like
she's happy about it.

RODGERS (V.O.)

-- are going to be the guests of
the National Park Service, who will
bus them to the Great Smokey
Mountains National Park for a few
days of camping in place of our
traditional spring trip. And we
will see them again by time for
church next Sunday -- for those of
you who still go to Church.

Amanda and Jim appear in her doorway.

AMANDA

Cassandra --

CASSANDRA

-- What? You can't keep me from
going!

JIM

It's not optional. You don't just
skip these appointments.

CASSANDRA

Then just reschedule it! It's five
days.

JIM

That's not smart, baby.

CASSANDRA

Please don't do this to me. Please.
All I do is miss things. I just
want to do what Allie gets to do.

AMANDA

Cass -- ?

And she stops packing and sits onto her bed. She tries to
stop the few tears. Amanda sits beside her and holds her.

CASSANDRA

What's the point of not dying if
you wont let me live?

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INT. DOUG & LYNETTE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - WEST HAM - DAY

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Doug plays with eggs on his plate. There are two other plates
of eggs waiting. Lynette eyes the upstairs. Calls:

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*

LYNETTE

*

Cameron! You're going to be late
for the buses. And please make sure
your brother knows.

*

*

*

*

She turns back to Doug. Smiles half-heartedly.

*

LYNETTE (CONT'D)

*

Maybe being away together for a few
days -- apart from us -- will be
good for them.

*

*

*

*

(Doug shrugs)

*

I still have this fantasy that
they'll end up as friends.

*

*

DOUG

*

Like Rodgers and Amanda and me?

*

(beat)

*

I'm glad he's gone for a while. I
know that's a terrible thing for a
father to say. But there it is.

*

*

*

She nods. Takes a breath. Eww.

*

LYNETTE

*

You're not worried about it? The...

*

Fingers under her nose.

*

DOUG

*

Everyone tells us it's harmless.

*

LYNETTE

Maybe. But it smells like
something's dying around here.

At that moment, CAMERON comes into the room. He is
affectless.

CAMERON

Morning.

LYNETTE

Did you tell your brother?

CAMERON

No.

EXT. BEHIND THE CHURCH - TOWN GREEN - AN HOUR LATER

Though you can see the activity of buses and parents and
children in the distance, Luke and Moose and Clark are well
enough hidden to take the last few drags off the joint their
sharing.

MOOSE

Last one for a week. Don't want to
start a forest fire.

LUKE

Let's go.

The pass along the side of the church heading back, when
something catches Luke's eye. It's WRITING - SPRAY PAINTED on
the church.

LUKE (CONT'D)

What's that?

Clark takes a quick glance. Who cares? He keeps going.

CLARK

Graffiti.

LUKE

When was the last time you saw
graffiti in this town?

Clark looks back. He's stoned.

CLARK

'bout three seconds ago.

Moose hasn't moved on. He's transfixed by what he sees.

MOOSE

It's the writing on the wall.

CLARK

No, duh.

MOOSE

That's what it's called. The writing on the wall. From the Bible. The book of Daniel.
(he reads)
Mene Mene Tekel Upharsin.

CLARK

Do you like do anything but play football and read books?

LUKE

It's nonsense.

MOOSE

It's Hebrew. It means, you've been weighed in the balance and found wanting.

CLARK

It means someone was definitely fucking high last night. Let's go. We don't want questions.

And the three of them -- Moose too -- head toward:

EXT. TOWN GREEN - DAY

SIX BUSES lined up.

MOVE SILENTLY among the families -- flashes of them -- like a STROBE of good-byes: Karen and Harry, Doug and Lynette. She gives one final hug to Sam. Doug signs farewell to his son, who signs and smiles back at him. (CAMERON, his older brother looks on, aloof.) Sam signs something to him -- and Cameron gives him the finger back.

A MOM pulls her daughter, EMILY -- 17, but wishing she were 18 -- aside. Opens up her jacket to reveal a flimsy, clinging tease of a dress, testament to the awesome power of being young and fit and beautiful.

EMILY

It's just a dress.

MOTHER

Half a dress. And not for school.

UNSEEN, Cassandra moves around the crowd to the far side of the furthest bus. And SNEAKS ON. She crouches below the windows. Throws her bag under a seat and hides in the back.

When we return, Emily is pulling a sweater over her dress.

EMILY

I hate you sometimes. You have no idea.

MOTHER

Of course I do. I have a mother.

EMILY

I'm going away to college in six months, you know.

MOTHER

And then you can dress however you want.... Not like that, I hope.

EMILY

(as she walks away)

Yeah, well. I wish it were today.

Tom loads his luggage himself and boards the bus without a goodbye. Luke and Kelly, Stump and Gordie all give their final hugs. Becca boards the bus alone. Jim and Amanda hold Allie tight before letting her go. As she goes:

AMANDA

What is a High School Principal with no students?

(off Jim's look)

On vacation.

JIM

I'll go get Cass. Take her to the appointment. Come with?

The buses roll out. A hundred parents watching -- until the last bus passes out of sight and then for a few moments more, as if frozen in place, and then turning for home.

Jim (and Amanda) pass by Rodgers, who has been watching, aloof.

JIM (CONT'D)

Still think you did the right thing?

RODGERS

Oh, not now, Jim.

EXT. LOCAL ROAD - DAY

The buses sweep out of town, As the last one moves past us, it reveals a sign altered by a single graffiti. It now reads LEAVING WEST SHAM.

EXT. STREETS OF WEST HAM

SERIES OF SHOTS. Peaceful, but a little eerie. EMPTY SCHOOL PARKING LOT. SILENT BALL FIELDS. A BASKETBALL COURT with a lone ball, rolling around in the breeze.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

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TORRENTIAL RAIN pelts the bus as it rolls.

Inside, an anthropology lesson on the social structures of West Ham High School.

In front -- always in the first row -- on the left, MOVE PAST Gordie and Stump, next to each other, lost in their laptops.

Across the aisle, a few rows back, Allie and Tom. He's looking over her math notebook.

ALLIE

You have to integrate by parts.

TOM

No you don't.

ALLIE

I'm telling you --
 (he grabs her notebook)
 -- You can't just copy. Hey!

One row back, Cassandra, a copy of *The Great Gatsby* on her lap, has a GROUP OF FRIENDS around her. The same kids from the night of the play.

CASSANDRA

We should do that -- go to New York for a weekend, after graduation.

GIRL

I'd go see Hamilton again.

BOY

You can definitely get tickets now.

Allie turns, leans over her seat to Cassandra.

ALLIE

Jesus! Will you just answer them!

She shows her phone. Endless texts.

ALLIE (CONT'D)

They're driving me fucking nuts.
And I'm, essentially, lying to them
here.

CASSANDRA

Pretend you have no reception.

ALLIE

You're the smart one. But this
seems pretty stupid.

CASSANDRA

You have no idea what it's like to
be me.

ALLIE

... Yeah. No kidding.

MOVE PAST Becca, sitting alone, staring out the window.

PAST the vast middle -- rows of kids, pretty much all of them
lost to their phones.

ELLE, wanders up the aisle to where Sam and Cameron are
sitting together, neither looking at the other.

ELLE

Hey. Long ride, huh?

CAMERON

Forfuckingevery.

Cameron signs to Sam, who gives him a "fuck you" sign in
response. Cameron grabs Sam's signing hand. TWISTS it until
Sam squeals. Sam, humiliated, squeezes past Elle, who sits
down. Sam signs something to her.

ELLE

I don't know what that means.
(to Cameron as she sits)
I don't know what that means.

Sam heads back to the empty seat next to Becca. She looks at
him, green. He signs.

BECCA

Motion sickness. Yeah.

MOVE toward the back third of the bus. PAST the kids we saw gathered around Harry the night of the play.

PAST Harry and Kelly, asleep with her hand on his crotch.

Finally the far back...

PAST Luke, wrestling with the guys for a FLASK of something. Leaning over seat backs. He grabs it from Moose. Chugs.

Looks over at Helena, his icy, high strung girlfriend. No words necessary. Luke sheepishly hands the flask back.

A BLINDING CRACK OF LIGHTENING and BOOM of THUNDER makes Helena SHUDDER.

INT. BUS - LATER

Outside a BIBLICAL STORM. Inside, all are asleep in the dark.

INT. BUSES - LATER

The Buses LURCH to a STOP. The LIGHTS EXPLODE back on. Kids are startled awake. Groggy. Disoriented.

KELLY

(to Harry; out of it)
D'we stop? What just happened?

HARRY

... Don't know. I'm still asleep.

Cassandra peers out the window into darkness, eyes adjusting to the light in the bus. Sam signs to Becca.

BECCA

What? Fuck. It's too early for a joke.

The BUS DRIVER speaks. We don't see his face.

BUSDRIVER

Change of plans. You're back home.

EXT. TOWN GREEN - NIGHT

A tumult of kids, filing off the buses, milling around in the dark. Luggage being loaded out of the bowels of the bus. Chaos and confusion. No adults. A COUPLE OF STREET LIGHTS are the only illumination.

Allie looks at Tom, a slight hint of concern on her face.

ALLIE
Doesn't look like anyone was
expecting us.

BUS ENGINES ROAR TO LIFE without warning. And the buses roll out of the square as quickly as they pulled in.

Harry... Luke... Helena... even a few of the Centurions look genuinely startled to be stranded, so suddenly. A moment of paralysis and silence. What just happened?

EMILY
My house. It just rings and rings.

Two hundred phones come out. A CHORUS of failures. Helena takes her ringing phone from her ear, looks at Luke.

LUKE
Everyone's sleeping.

Cameron starts to walk away from the edge of the group.

CAMERON
I'm going home.

SAM
You're not gonna wait for me?

Apparently not. As he moves away, others follow -- wheeling bags homeward.

TOM
(whispers to Allie)
Can I shack with you tonight? It's
too far back to my place.

Cassandra drifts away from her friends, over to them.

CASSANDRA
Ready?
(Allie nods, hint of fear)
It'll be fine.

FROM ABOVE - MOMENTS LATER

Groups fan out from the Square. In all directions.

EXT. BECCA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

She's arrived alone. It's small. Poorly kept up. And dark. She opens the front door.

BECCA
Hello?... MOM? It's me. They
brought us back...

UPSTAIRS BEDROOM

She flips the light on. No one there.

BECCA (CONT'D)
Shit. Not again. Fuck, Mom.

INT. HARRY'S HOUSE-- MOMENTS LATER

In the dark stairs. On his cell.

HARRY
My mom must have decided to skip
town.

INT. KELLY'S HOUSE - SIMULTANEOUS

She's in the kitchen. Alone.

KELLY
Their cars are still in the
driveway. It's fucking weird.
(she hesitates)
I'm getting a text.

EXT. CASSANDRA/ALLIE'S HOUSE - PORCH - SIMULTANEOUS

Cassandra, Allie, Tom -- just outside the front door. Tom
reads, texts, reports.

TOM
No one. Nowhere.

MONTAGE

On the STREET, in KITCHENS and LIVING ROOMS, in DRIVEWAYS --
A GAME of TEXT TAG. From Allie to Becca to Sam. From Cameron
to Elle to Helena to Luke to Moose. From Stump to Gordie.

A phone RINGS again.

EXT. CASSANDRA/ALLIE'S HOUSE - PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

Cassandra, alone. On her phone:

CASSANDRA

They must have been evacuated. We were supposed to go meet them, or something -- I don't know -- Look, just have everyone tell everyone to meet back on the Green...

EXT. TOWN GREEN - MINUTES LATER

Returning from every direction, two hundred kids re-converge at the center of town. Snippets of conversation -- anxious, confused, fearful. Moose climbs up onto the FOLLY.

GOOSE

Hey! Who decided we needed a flash mob?

Cassandra answers as she winds her way through the crowd and up onto the Folly.

CASSANDRA

I did.

MOOSE

What the fuck, Cassandra?

CASSANDRA

So we can figure this out, okay? Better than two hundred people sending texts. Making things worse. Has anyone been able to reach anyone?

A CHORUS of NO!!!s.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

No one? Okay... Well, there's definitely a simple explanation.

Someone shouts, "LIKE WHAT?" from the crowd.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

They were evacuated. After we left. The government or something. And there was a miscommunication. And we were brought back here by mistake.

KELLY

(from the crowd)
Someone would still answer a phone.

CASSANDRA

It's three am. Maybe they're all asleep... Maybe -- I don't know -- they're someplace with no reception.

That just came to her. But it makes her feel better.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

That's probably what it is. They're in a shelter or something -- with no reception. And we're fine -- as far as they know. In the morning, someone will answer a phone.

ELLE

Maybe it's not safe to stay here, then? If they all left?

CASSANDRA

I'm sure leaving was just a precaution. A couple of hours isn't going to make a difference. We'll figure it all out in the morning. Right now we should just go home and go to sleep. Anyone who doesn't want to be alone can go with someone. You can come to my house, if you want. Just go to sleep.

HARRY

Is that your advice, Cassandra?

CASSANDRA

Yes, Harry. Go to sleep.

In half the town, that's exactly what happens:

KIDS CRAWLING INTO BED, in empty houses. LIGHTS flicker off.

SOME KIDS double up, bunking with each other.

But in the other half:

SERIES OF SHOTS.

Emily rifles through a freezer for ice cream.

A GUY sits on the TOILET, SMOKING WEED.

A GIRL on the BED, stripped down to her undies, puts her hands down her pants and starts to RUB. Her PHONE RINGS.

GIRL ON THE BED
Shit! What? I'm busy.

Moose rummages through the fridge. Grabs a handful of GRAPES, stuffs them in his mouth. Ditto a CHICKEN DRUMSTICK. In the back, hidden, he discovers TWO SIX-PACKS OF BEER. Huh? Why not? And he pulls them out...

INTERCUT

The Centurion Guard -- ON THEIR PHONES --

LUKE
Where are we going?

MOOSE
Wherever's open, man. Spread the word.

CLARK
Fucking awesome. Just not my house.

LUKE
Nah. I'm going to sleep. Helena's coming over. She's kind of weirded out.

CLARK
Everyone's weirded out. That's why I'm planning to get a good buzz on.

MOOSE
Eat, drink and be merry, Luke-y.
For tomorrow we die.

EXT. CASSANDRA/ALLIE'S HOUSE - PORCH - NIGHT

Cassandra looks out over the railing. Into the darkness. There are kids, in the distance, coming down the center of the street. On a mission. Provisions in hand.

CASSANDRA
(calls out to them)
What are you -- ?

WALKING KID
-- Party on the Green!

CASSANDRA
Now?

SECOND WALKING KID
Won't wait till tomorrow, Pressman.

WALKING GIRL

It's BYPB!

WALKING KID

Bring your parent's booze.

THE TOWN GREEN. From ABOVE.

It's filling with kids. A HUNDRED of them or more.

FOLLOW Clark. He's headed, beer in hand, across the Green with Jason stumbling, two steps behind.

CLARK

I gotta go take a pee. *

JASON

No place is open, man. Do it right here.

CLARK

In public? Like a dog?

JASON

No one's gonna remember in the morning.

The arrive at the FRONT DOORS of the CHURCH. Clark pulls. They OPEN. Jason turns to the Green.

JASON (CONT'D)

The FUCKING church is OPEN!!

INT. PRESYTERIAN CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

CROWDS literally STREAM through the doors.

Luke stands in the doorway, trying to STEM THE TIDE.

LUKE

Not here. Come on! It's a goddamn church. Just turn around --

He turns to Helena, SHRUGS. What do you want from me? He looks over to Clark.

LUKE (CONT'D)

I still say this whole thing is creepy.

CLARK

It's fucking creepy. Drink up.

And he hands him a beer.

EXT. BEHIND THE CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

Moose and Clark are finishing up a pee, into a bush, side-by-side.

CLARK
Once it was so cold, mine froze on
the way down.

MOOSE
I wish I had been there.

They zip up and head back in. Moose stops at the side of the church.

MOOSE (CONT'D)
The writing's gone.

CLARK
What?

MOOSE
The writing on the wall. It's gone.

CLARK
Of course it is. They cleaned it
up. This is West Ham. Nothing ugly
remains for more than a minute.

Moose nods. Makes sense.

ONE HOUR LATER

Like a scene out of Bruegel. A hundred devils in paradise.
Kids crawling over the pews. BEER PONG in the aisles.

FOLLOW Kelly, up an aisle to the STEPS of the ALTAR. Her POV.

Harry and some CUTE GIRL play a drinking game against another
couple. ARMS tied together, they CHUG a SIX-PACK of BEER.

HARRY
Shit! No, you gotta --

He pulls the sixpack back in his direction.

CUTE GIRL
-- Hey! What are you -- ?

The beer SLOSHES over both of them. On their shirts.
UPROARIOUS LAUGHTER.

HARRY

Here, let me. I'm sorry. My fault.

He wipes the beer off her breast.

Now Kelly's in his face.

KELLY

Are you fucking kidding me?

CUTE GIRL

Are you fucking kidding her?

FIND Becca. She's filming all of this on her phone. PANS the room. To Sam... who's been watching her. He SIGNS.

Reluctantly, she takes a hand from the phone.

BECCA

I can't sign and shoot.

SAM

Why don't you ever join in?

She TURNS AWAY. Keeps shooting.

THROUGH HER LENS. Tom. Leans against one of the LECTERNS. Allie walks into frame.

She kneels in front of Tom.

TOM

What?

ALLIE

I have a confession to make.

TOM

This is not a Catholic church.

ALLIE

Shit. You're right.

A beat. She KISSES him. He doesn't react. She waits for some sign that it's okay. Maybe even reciprocated.

ALLIE (CONT'D)

... Say something.

TOM

You shouldn't do that when you're drunk.

ALLIE

... Fuck.

He starts to walk away. She tries to stop him.

ALLIE (CONT'D)

Wait... I take it back... Tom?

FIND Elle and Cameron. He's backed her into a corner.

ELLE

Don't. Just. Don't --

CAMERON

Why are you spoiling all the fun?

He persists. Grabs her by the arms.

ELLE

You're hurting me.

She squirms out of his rough grasp.

ELLE (CONT'D)

Seriously?

And she walks away from him.

FIND Cassandra. She's just walked in. Surveys the carnage. Spots a STASH of BEER to her right and GRABS a bottle.

There's Allie. Up against the wall, drinking away her sorrows. Their eyes meet.

CASSANDRA

Fun night?

ON EMILY. Sitting in a pew, drinking. Luke's sitting next to her.

EMILY

Where's your girlfriend?

LUKE

She doesn't believe in this stuff.

Emily nods. Looks around.

EMILY

It's always less fun than you think it's going to be, isn't it?

KELLY (O.S.)

Let go of me!

ON Kelly. On the STEPS OF THE CHURCH. She WRENCHES herself from Harry's grip.

HARRY
What's your problem?

KELLY
Apart from the fact that you were drying her tits?

HARRY
By accident.

KELLY
Jesus. Go fuck yourself.

HARRY
Hey, it's not like we own each other!

KELLY
OWN each other?

HARRY
What? You know what I mean.

KELLY
No. I don't. I swear.

INT. STUMP'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

On his cell. Illuminated by the light of the screen. He calls GORDIE. In his BED. INTERCUT:

GORDIE
What time is it? Shit.

STUMP
The web is gone. It's disappeared.

GORDIE
What?
(checks his phone)
It's just you -- I'm getting texts.

STUMP
No, I know. But I'm telling you, there's no web. And try your folk's cable. Nothing. It's fucked up. We can talk to each other. But it's like there's nothing beyond this place.

GORDIE
That's impossible.

He checks his phone. No web. He grabs his computer. Panic rising. Typing furiously now...

GORDIE (CONT'D)
It's impossible.

EXT. STREET - NEW HAM

Cassandra heads to the Town Green to survey the damage. She passes Cameron, who hobbles out of the driveway of his house, toward the street, the worse for wear.

CAMERON
Morning.

She gives him the slightest nod of the head, moves on.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
I don't bite, you know.

But Cassandra is pretty clear that he does.

EXT. CHURCH STEPS - NEW HAM - MORNING

A perfect, sunny day. Cassandra peers into the square -- empty. She watches a DOG amble across -- the same dog Rodgers saw from his window.

She turns back to face a small huddle of her peers: Harry, Tom, Allie, Kelly, Luke. Feeling gross.

CASSANDRA
I'll take a car, go to Greenwich.
Get help.

HARRY
Why you?

She looks at him. Dipshit.

CASSANDRA
I don't care. Someone has to find
out where everyone went. We can't
all go.

HARRY
I'll do it.

CASSANDRA

You're sober?

HARRY

Fuck you, Cassandra. Luke, you wanna see if we can get some of The Guard to come with? I can take six.

LUKE

You're gonna get four in the back seat of that car?

HARRY

I've gotten four before. Remember? Huh. Remember?

LUKE

(laughs)

Yeah. Those weren't linemen with us.

KELLY

Guys? What the fuck?

Sam wanders over. Signs.

ALLIE

Notice what?

SAM

(signs; speaks)

The smell. It's gone.

EXT. STREETS OF NEW HAM - DAY

Harry's behind the wheel of his car -- a BMW convertible. Luke next to him, Clark and Moose in the back. They're cruising down empty streets.

MOOSE

"As a rule, the more bizarre a thing is, the less mysterious it proves to be."

(off their looks)

Arthur Conan Doyle.

HARRY

Who the fuck are you?

MOOSE

I like Sherlock Holmes. Point is: there's an explanation for everything.

CLARK

What does that have to do with your
Arthur Conan Boyle dude?

MOOSE

Doyle... And you are hopeless --

HARRY

-- **Ohh Shit!**

Now WE SEE WHAT HE SEES.

The road they are on -- the regular road, past stores and a gas station at the edge of town and the sign that reads "Leaving West SHam" -- just ends.

It ends. Suddenly. And in front of them, FIELDS and beyond that, TREES.

Harry SLOWS THE CAR as the road dies into a dirt path than meanders into the field and them disappears.

LUKE

What the fuck is going on?

CLARK

Oh Shit!!

What the fuck is going on? It's... IMPOSSIBLE.

Harry SLAMS THE CAR INTO REVERSE. SKIDS INTO A TURN and HEADS BACK IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.

WE ARE OUTSIDE THE CAR

Watching them careen through town. As fast as he can, Harry TURNS and TURNS again. His WHEELS SCREECHING as he heads... where?

Past stores... houses... through the Town Square without stopping... toward the other side of town... where the houses become scarcer...

The ROAD CURVES and when it straightens again... Harry can see that he is heading directly at...

NOTHING.

A ROAD that dies into TREES and, beyond that, GENTLE NEW ENGLAND HILLS.

He SLAMS ON HIS BRAKES just before the road ends.

Panic. Panic. Panic in every face.

They are -- in their words -- SO FUCKED.

EXT. A FIELD - NEW HAM - LATER THAT DAY

*

A COIN is FLIPPED into the air and caught. Again. Again.

This is Cassandra, sitting on a rock at the edge of a field. She turns to the SOUND OF QUARRELING next to her.

It's the whole group: Tom, Allie, Harry, Kelly, Sam, Cameron, Becca, Gordie, Luke and perhaps a few others.

GORDIE

There are only so many options.

ALLIE

We're dreaming. That's the best option.

HARRY

The same dream? Yeah, I don't think so.

KELLY

Maybe just one dream. Maybe it's my dream and you're all in it.

LUKE

That sounds like something you would say.

KELLY

Shut the fuck up, Luke.

HARRY

Or. Or. It's like some weird, elaborate fucking game. Someone built a replica of our town in the middle of nowhere and if we just walk... that way... this way... any way... eventually we'll get back to the real world.

(utter silence)

I'm not saying it makes sense.

Some of the others are in tears by now.

CASSANDRA

There was a smell. And it went away and then it came back. And someone came for us.

HARRY

You're gonna work this out -- like some kind of math problem?

CASSANDRA

(maybe, asshole)

The world doesn't just turn upside down. There has to be a reason.

LUKE

I'm gonna grab Moose and hike out of here. Take a group with us.

(they look at him)

Through the woods. Like a search party. And if someone's out there, we gotta find out. Get help.

Harry turns away.

HARRY

Well, good for you. I'm leaving. I'm hungry.

ALLIE

You're leaving?

HARRY

I have a house and it has a refrigerator with food inside and I'm going to go eat it.... Luke?

Luke hesitates.

CASSANDRA

You can't just leave -- AS IF THIS IS JUST SOME TUESDAY.

Harry turns on that.

HARRY

What are we supposed to do instead?

All eyes on Cassandra.

CASSANDRA

I don't know.... How am I supposed to know? We have to figure out what's happening to us!

Harry just looks at her. Damned if he'll take orders.

HARRY

You're not Head Prefect anymore.

CASSANDRA

You really need to get over that.
 (beat)
 What do you want? You wanna be in
 charge, Harry?

He doesn't know what he wants. He wants this not to be
 happening.

HARRY

My head hurts from last night. I'm
 hungry. I wanna go eat.
 (beat)
 You coming with, Kel?

KELLY

... No.

HARRY

Jesus Christ. Just get in the car --

TOM

-- Leave her alone --

HARRY

-- Fuck off, Tom.

Harry hesitates. Waits for Kelly to fall in line. But he made
 his bed, last night.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Fine. Who gives a shit?

Cameron takes out his phone.

CASSANDRA

What are you doing?

CAMERON

I'm sending a text --

CASSANDRA

-- Cameron, don't --

CAMERON

-- Let everyone know how fucked we
 are.

CASSANDRA

Oh, no. That's just gonna to make
 things worse.

He looks at her. Smiles. Precisely. And hits send.

A WILDFIRE

TEXTS move with the speed of type from PERSON to PERSON to PERSON. GIRLS in CLIQUES. GUYS SHOOTING HOOPS. SMALL MOBS of kids hanging in the Square. A COUPLE in MID-FOREPLAY in a backyard POOL.

Now PANIC begins to take over.

PACKS of New Hamelinites roam the streets.

Kids grab cars -- cram in together -- and speed to the end of town, to see for themselves.

GIRLS huddle on beds, together. One of them cries.

Freak outs at the edge of town, as one-by-one, kids meet the woods where escape used to be.

TWO CARS CRASH into each at an intersection. No one paying attention to the rules.

GORDIE and STUMP. In front of computer. Checking files. Typing in addresses. What the fuck?

ALLIE sits on a bench, watching kids pass by. She makes a call. Voicemail. "You've reached Amanda..." She hangs up. Next, her father. Voicemail: "You've reached Jim..."

EXT. NEW GROWTH FOREST - NEW HAM - DAY

A TROOP of about fifteen of our group -- men and women -- carrying backpacks, move easily through the trees.

Led by MOOSE, who surveys as he goes and reads what looks like a ROAD MAP and a compass. He seems completely comfortable in the woods.

MOOSE

Five days worth of food. That should be enough to get us past Greenwich, Stamford... all the way to New Haven.

Emily, right behind Moose, with Luke, struggles to keep up.

EMILY

So we're headed in the right direction?

LUKE

We are so good. Moose here is an Eagle Scout. Don't be nervous.

EMILY

I'm not nervous. I trust you. I just -- I'm not the obvious choice for a rescue mission.

LUKE

Yeah, well. Fuck that. People say, this is who she is -- this is who he is. It's bullshit.

EMILY

Exactly.
(struggling to keep pace)
... Sort of.

LUKE

(beat)
I like that dress you had on, last night.

MOOSE

(calls out behind him)
Hey, Luke-y.

LUKE

Yeah?

MOOSE

What do you think of me being an Eagle Scout now, asshole?

LUKE

Pussy shit is pussy shit. But I'm coming around to it.

INT. CASSANDRA/ALLIE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Cassandra RIFLES through the SMALL BAG she brought. And then she looks through it AGAIN.

We don't know what she's looking for -- but she's like a man in a desert digging in a mirage for water.

With increasing intensity, she looks: through her MEDICINE CABINET, her DRAWERS, her PARENT'S MEDICINE CABINET, her PARENT'S DRAWERS.

Reaches her hand in. Pulls out. A DILDO. Gross. She's on the verge of panic.

ALARMS begin to SOUNDS ALL OVER TOWN.

INT. SUPERMARKET - NEW HAM - AN HOUR LATER

ON Allie. She stares at the MAD SCRAMBLE in front of her.

There must be THIRTY KIDS GRABBING whatever they want. Which, by the way, is way more than they need.

Tom appears beside her, watching the scene. She notices him.

ALLIE

I called you before. You didn't answer.

TOM

Oh, yeah?

ALLIE

Are you not talking to me?

TOM

I'm talking to you now.

Tears well up her in eyes.

ALLIE

That's not what I...

(beat)

I would take a friend at this point

--

TOM

-- We should get some food. Before it's all gone.

He heads into the breach. That didn't go well. She follows.

AN AISLE

A COUPLE OF GUYS push SHOPPING CARTS with enough meat in them to feed a football team.

Allie grabs an APPLE. Looks over at the SCENE playing out ten feet away from her. She can't hear what's said over the WAIL of the alarm, but the plot of the scene is clear.

Elle has grabbed every BAG of CARROT STICKS in the place. Filled her cart. A HEAVY-SET GIRL protests. Elle takes a single bag, throws it into the girl's cart and rolls away.

Allie follows Elle. Stops her cart next to her. STUDIES a can of BEANS. Elle looks over. Why is she standing so close?

ELLE

(getting on her nerves)
Do you mind? You're kind of in my
 fucking space

ALLIE

... You ever see the movie The
 Poseidon Adventure?

ELLE

What?

ALLIE

I watched it as kid -- about a
 cruise ship that capsizes. And the
 Captain, in this big upside-down
 ballroom, tells all the passengers
 to stay where they are -- that
 they're gonna be rescued. Only six
 of them -- the movie stars -- they
 decide to disobey orders and climb -
 - up -- to the bottom of the ship.
 And some of them live. And no one
 else does. And ever since I watched
 it, I always wondered, which one
 would I be? Would I stay put? Or
 would I climb up? Who I am in this
 story? Am I the one who turns out
 to be weaker than expected? Who
 turns out to be at her best only
 when the going is good? Am I the
 one who has to die so that the
 others can live? I know I'm not
 the heroine, cause that's my
 sister? So who?

(beat)

Anyway, I'm telling you -- the one
 you are right now: you don't want
 to be that one.

INT. PHARMACY - NEW HAM - DAY

Gordie's clearly walked in on Cassandra, HAMMER in hand --
 STRIKING, uselessly at the PLEXIGLASS that guards the good
 stuff -- all the drugs.

GORDIE

What are you doing?

CASSANDRA

This thing is fucking
indestructible!

GORDIE

Are you -- do you have like a drug problem or something?

CASSANDRA

Depends on how you mean that.
(he stares at her)
What? I'll explain it to you later.
Just help me -- WHAT?

He looks scared.

GORDIE

Your lips?

CASSANDRA

My lips?

GORDIE

They're turning blue. You look blue.

She touches her lips. Her breaths become short and erratic.

CASSANDRA

I'm sweating.
(beat)
Take me home. I have to go home.

GORDIE

What's going on?

CASSANDRA

Just take me home, Gordie!

INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NEW HAM - DAY

On Gordie. WATCHING. Cassandra unbuttons her shirt. Under her bra, between her breasts, there is a long, jagged scar on her chest.

CASSANDRA

It's a congenital heart defect.
I've had... a lot of surgeries.

*

GORDIE

Uh-huh.

CASSANDRA

I ditched a check-up for this trip.
And now I can't find my pills. I don't know where I put them.... I'm gonna fucking die.

GORDIE

No -- that's -- don't say that.
We'll break into the pharmacy. If
we have to blow it up.

CASSANDRA

... Okay.... Thank you.

Silence for a moment. Then... panic again. Gordie sees it.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

What -- what if things don't go
back to the way they were?

GORDIE

Of course they're gonna go back --

CASSANDRA

(in his face)
-- Don't give me a fucking speech.
Gordie. You have no idea.
(beat)
And I have a pacemaker.

GORDIE

Oh... Oh.

He gets it. The terrible weight of that.

GORDIE (CONT'D)

If it turns out we're stuck here --
whatever the fuck that means -- if
we can't go home -- if this is
home... I'll learn how to take care
of you. We still have books. I can
study. There's still a hospital.
(beat)
You have to stay alive or we're all
fucked.

He reaches out and PLACES A FINGER on her SCAR. He can't take
his eyes off it -- or her breasts.

GORDIE (CONT'D)

S'okay. Everything happens for a
reason.

EXT. STREETS OF NEW HAM - DAY

*

Tom STARING at a FIRE in the distance. Kelly just joined him,
but she's upset, agitated, a little out of breath.

TOM
 Weirdly beautiful, isn't it?
 Apparently, Glasberg tried to
 barbecue in his bedroom and set his
 house on fire.

(beat)
 I would have voted him most likely
 to do that.

She LAUGHS.

TOM (CONT'D)
 You headed to Harry's?

None of his business.

KELLY
No.... I don't know where I'm
 going. There's no where to go.

TOM
 We could break into a restaurant
 and steal some food and hang out.

She shakes her head.

TOM (CONT'D)
 -- What? I just want to help.

KELLY
 I know what you want.

She starts to walk away. He follows.

TOM
 Yeah? So what? That's what I want.
 Since the day I moved here.

KELLY
 Why? What's so special about me?

That's an honest question. She really doesn't know. What Tom
 sees. What will turn out to be true about her.

TOM
 How long do you have?

KELLY
 Shit, Tom. This is not a very good
 time. Maybe you didn't notice, but
 the whole fucking world just turned
 upside down.

We can SEE the FIRE BURNING behind them.

TOM

I noticed. Believe me. Today feels like the first day in my whole life that it's the right time.

KELLY

I don't --

TOM

-- We're all orphans today.

She looks at him. She realizes: that is the truth.

TOM (CONT'D)

Now what does he have that I don't have?

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The advance party has found a clearing and stopped to eat.

CORY

Pass the crackers. The whole box.

Luke tosses a box of crackers. Emily FLIRTS.

EMILY

Nice toss.

GWEN

Who's got the peanut butter?

They turns packages over.

MOOSE

I don't see it --

EMILY

-- Maybe it's still in the pack.

LUKE

I'll get it --

EMILY

-- I'll get it.

She walks over to a pile of packs. Pushes one away with her foot. And she SHRIEKS!

EMILY (CONT'D)

Ohmygod! Oh, shit! A snake. It just slithered -- it was like --

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)
(she shows how long)
-- fuck!

She starts to LAUGH.

EMILY (CONT'D)
You didn't mention anything about
snakes.

MOOSE
Outdoors. Animals. Sort of a
package.

EMILY
I almost had a heart attack.
(as she walks back)
Next time, remind me --

And she CRIES OUT. GRABS HER LEG.

EMILY (CONT'D)
It bit me! Oh, shit, I got bit!

A PANIC of RESPONSE. A RUSH to her. Moose takes charge. *

MOOSE
Check the area. Make sure there are
no more snakes. CHECK THE AREA!

LUKE
There's nothing. I don't see
anything.

MOOSE
Lie her down. Okay, get back. Just
step back!

Luke is at her side. Scared for her. Responsible.

EMILY
Oh shit, it kills. It's killing me.
Fu-u-u-ck.

MOOSE
Just try to calm down. We want to
slow your heart rate down. Deep
breathes. That's it. Squeeze my
hand.
(to the others)
Put packs behind her head and her
back. We want her heart above it.

They do just that. Moose takes a look at her ankle.

MOOSE (CONT'D)

Oh, yeah, that's a good bite.
(to the others)
Get me -- I need rope or something
to tie around her leg above the
ankle.

She grimaces in pain. Squeezes Luke's hand tight.

EMILY

Is it supposed to hurt this much?

Luke touches her face, gently.

LUKE

If you're lucky.
(Emily smiles)
You gonna be able to walk?

EMILY

Oh, yeah. Just give me a few.
(beat; strange feeling)
My mouth is tingling.

INT. CASSANDRA/ALLIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Cassandra is on the couch. On the phone. It rings and rings
and rings and rings.

CASSANDRA

Please pick up. Mom? Please? I'm
sorry. I know I'm not supposed to
be here. If you pick up, I'll
explain. So you won't be afraid....
I'm alive. Allie is alive. We want
to be with you... at home...
(rings, rings, rings)
... If there is a home.
(rings, rings, rings)
I need you. Please.

It rings and rings and rings. She finally hangs up.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Okay. Okay. Okay.

She falls back onto the couch, as Allie walks in. Allie -- a
bag of GROCERIES in hand, as if she were A HOUSEWIFE, as if
this were an ORDINARY DAY -- casts a look at her sister,
lying on the couch.

ALLIE

You know how you always said that everyone we go to high school with is an asshole? Well --
(looks at Cassandra)
What are you doing?

CASSANDRA

I'm not feeling well.

ALLIE

Nobody is feeling well.

CASSANDRA

I'm serious. I can't find my medicine --

ALLIE

Your medicine's in my bag. I thought you put it there on purpose.

CASSANDRA

What?

ALLIE

It's upstairs. I'll get it for you.
(beat)
But then you have to get up off the couch and get out there. You have to do something. Because there are hundreds of scared shitless idiots running around -

CASSANDRA

-- No one wants to hear anything from me.

(beat)

I wasn't even supposed to be here.

ALLIE

Fuck that, Cassandra. You're here.

CASSANDRA

I'm scared.

ALLIE

Me too.

CASSANDRA

And I have to take care of myself.

ALLIE

You can't do that.

CASSANDRA

Why not?

ALLIE

Because you're my sister. And I need to you take care of me.

As Cassandra turns away from Allie. Quiet:

CASSANDRA

You're the strong one.

Allie is reeling.

ALLIE

I lived in your fucking shadow for sixteen years. Now you're gonna disappear?

CASSANDRA

Go away, Allie. Just go away.

EXT./INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - VARIOUS ROOMS -NEW HAM

Harry SITS in the KITCHEN, BREATHING into A PAPER BAG.

He's at a MEDICINE CHEST. Grabs a BOTTLE OF PILLS. Shakes a few of them out. Downs them with water from the tap. As he puts the pill bottle back, he finds something on the shelf. CONDOMS. And that only adds to his anxiety.

INT. CHURCH - NEW HAM - DAY

Helena sits in a pew. She looks around her. She's not the only one. SMILES at a GIRL in the same row, halfway down.

She PRAYS. Closes her eyes. Clasps her hands together and lifts them to her face. As her sleeve falls, we can see the marks -- the CUTTING MARKS -- on her arm.

EMILY (V.O.)

Please... please. Help me...

*

EXT. WOODS - TWILIGHT

A deathly watch. Luke HOVERS over her. She's DROWNING. She tries to grab onto him -- onto his shirt.

EMILY

... I'm having trouble.

She TEARS at her own clothes.

EMILY (CONT'D)

-- I can't --

He tries to stop her -- calm her down. To hold her arms down.

LUKE

No, just -- stop -- you have to try
-- It doesn't help -- EMILY --

EMILY

-- I need -- my mom -- I need --

He looks up -- utterly lost -- at a few of the women -- Gwen and others -- who circle Emily.

Gwen KNEELS beside her. Grabs her hand -- even as Emily squirms. SHH! SHH!

Luke can't take it any more -- her pleading eyes. He gets up and walks a few feet away. She CRIES MEEKLY after him.

Moose is by his side, immediately.

LUKE

We're in Connecticut! There are no
fucking cobras here!

MOOSE

It's not venom. She's allergic.
(beat)

If this were yesterday -- if we
were home -- but we're three hours
from anywhere... I have no idea
what to do.

LUKE

What the fuck does that mean?

MOOSE

Her body is shutting down. She's
suffocating.

LUKE

But I made her do this.

MOOSE

You should tell everyone. So
they're prepared.

LUKE

What are -- you're giving up?

MOOSE

Luke, we are so fucking in over our heads --

GWEN

I don't think she's breathing. Oh my God!

Moose doesn't move. But Luke rushes over. Now everything's whirlwind.

LUKE

Give her mouth-to-mouth.

GWEN

What? I don't know --

LUKE

-- JUST DO IT!

And she does. They surround her like a surgical team.

CORY

Tilt her head back --

GWEN

-- What --

CORY

-- You have to tilt her head back --

GREG

-- And close her nose --

LUKE

-- Put your fingers over her nose --

GWEN

(sobbing as she does it)

-- I'm doing the best I can!

RACHEL

Does she have a pulse?

They check her wrist.

OLIVER

I don't know. I don't think so. I don't know.

CORY

That's not where you do it. SHIT.

She tries to put her fingers on her neck.

CORY (CONT'D)
I can't. You're moving her too
much!

Luke puts his head to her chest.

LUKE
Shit.
(beat)
Okay.

And he starts to pound on her chest.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Emily.

GWEN
You can't --

LUKE
-- What --?

GWEN
-- You can't do that while I'm
doing this! It doesn't work.

LUKE
THEN STOP!

GWEN
YOU TOLD ME TO DO IT!

LUKE
NOW I'M TELLING YOU NOT TO!!

He pushes on her chest again and again.

GWEN
Oh. My. God.

She looks up at Moose, who just stands and watches.

GWEN (CONT'D)
Moose?

MOOSE
We need to decide if we're going to
bury her here or take her home.
(beat)
Everything else is out of our
hands.

Luke doesn't stop. On every compression.

LUKE

No. No. No.

EXT. THE STREETS OF NEW HAM - NIGHT

*

The RESIDENTS of New Ham do the only things there are to do:
They WANDER IN PACKS.

They come out of stores LADEN WITH FOOD.

They DRINK on the corner. They SHOOT HOOPS under the lights.
They CRUISE in CARS, going nowhere.

INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - OFFICE - NEW HAM - NIGHT

Kelly holds a condom in her hand. Watches as Harry turns the dial on a hidden safe.

KELLY

I don't understand.

HARRY

It was my mother's. I found it.

KELLY

Okay.... I need to go --

HARRY

-- She was fucking someone. And my dad hasn't even been dead a year.

KELLY

Harry. I'm sorry. But what does that matter now?

(no answer; opens the safe)

Don't go poking around in there. How is finding out some shit about our parents gonna make things any better?

HARRY

The truth makes things better.

KELLY

No. Un-uh. I don't think so.

(beat)

So your mother is capable of terrible things. Maybe everyone is. So what? And they're not even here to defend themselves.

*

*

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HARRY

You're responsible for what you
leave behind.

KELLY

We're what they left behind. Let's
leave it at that.

(no response; she's
afraid)

Harry, please! It's like our
childhood is pretty much over.
Can't you just let our memories of
it alone?

He ignores her -- still rummaging.

KELLY (CONT'D)

... What are you looking for
anyway?

He takes out - GOLD. A bar of gold. And another. And another.

HARRY

This.

KELLY

Gold?

HARRY

My father left it for me. It was an
insurance policy, he said. In case
things go to shit. I was afraid she
had taken it.

KELLY

Your mother?... I don't --

(beat)

Who cares about gold, Harry?

HARRY

You can't trust anybody. All you
can do is have an advantage. And
this is mine. The only one I have.

(beat)

You and me.

KELLY

You and me? I don't think so.

HARRY

Kelly --

KELLY

-- We don't OWN each other,
remember?

HARRY

I was drunk.

KELLY

No drunker than usual. Why should I
trust you today, when things are
shit, if I couldn't trust you
yesterday?

HARRY

(too forced)

... Because I love you.

(she turns away)

Because we're the same. And you
have to stick with your own. In
times like these.

And that, of course, is a terrible truth. He holds up the
bars of gold.

KELLY

It's just a chunk of metal, Harry.
I really don't think that's going
to matter now.

INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NEW HAM - NIGHT

Cassandra's slipping her bra off from under her tee shirt.
Gordie appears at the door. Sees the bra in her hand.

GORDIE

Oh. I --

(she puts the bra down)

I moved my work into the guest
room, if that's okay.

(shows a book he's
holding)

I've been doing some reading. On
pulmonary atresia. I'm going to
become an expert.

CASSANDRA

I bet you are... Thank you.

Something occurs to her.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

No one else can know about this.
That I'm... vulnerable. That could
be...

GORDIE

Right. Right. You and me.

He turns to go. Stops. Turns back.

GORDIE (CONT'D)

We used to talk all the time. When
we were like seven, remember?

CASSANDRA

We were best friends. Yeah.

He smiles. And turns and goes.

EXT. VILLAGE OFFICES - NEW HAM - NIGHT

Sam GIRDS himself. Turns to Becca. Talks and signs.

SAM

I'm doing this why?

He gives him a look that says DO IT. He CHARGES the OLD
WOODEN DOOR, shoulder first. He YELPS in pain on contact. But
the door SPLINTERS. He KICKS IT OPEN.

INNER OFFICE

Becca RIFLES through files.

BECCA

What's the point of freaking out?
Or partying all night? Or ripping
the place apart. That's all
useless.

(stops; turns to him)

I want to know why we're here. Why?
And why it's exactly like home --
and the lights still go on and our
cellphones work?

SAM

What if there is no why? What if it
just is?

BECCA

I don't accept that. We've been
kidnapped. Or rescued. Or
something.

(MORE)

BECCA (CONT'D)

(beat)

There was a smell. It went away.
And then it came back. The order
came for us to leave. Buses arrived
to pick us up. To take us from
point A to point B. There is a
story here!

She tears into the files. Looking more rapidly, more
desperately. No hands free to sign.

BECCA (CONT'D)

People don't just disappear.

SAM

I can't hear you.

She turns back to him. Signs and talks.

BECCA

People don't just disappear.

SAM

Apparently they do.

(beat)

You go missing. You go deaf. For no
reason. You're looking for answers.
There are none. Doesn't this prove
that?

BECCA

No.

She slumps to the ground. He goes down with her.

BECCA (CONT'D)

No.

She takes out her phone. Start flipping through the pictures
she's taken.

She flips past pictures of the day they were taken -- the
buses, the kids climbing in, the chaos on the bus... there's
one shot where the BUS DRIVER'S FACE is visible. And we know,
immediately, who it is: *

It is the man whom Harry saw at his mother's office -- the
face that Harry won't ever forget. And though not today, one
day soon, Harry will see Becca's photo. And they will begin
to put together this puzzle -- who is this man? Why were they
taken? *

BECCA (CONT'D)

I have to find out why.

And she put her phone down next to her. The image of the driver remains. He stares at us, as if to say, figure me out. *

The SOUNDS of TRAMPLING THROUGH THE WILDERNESS RISE and take us into: *

EXT. WOODS OUTSIDE NEW HAM - NIGHT

The search party is on the move. A bunch of the guys are CARRYING EMILY on their shoulders. Luke is one of them. Moose is right behind him.

MOOSE
Need me to spell you?

LUKE
I'm okay.

Moose keeps walking behind him. Catches up. *

MOOSE
Hey, Luke -- I keep thinking about that writing on the wall. Before we left. That it meant something. *

LUKE
You mean, like a message -- a sign from God. On a church wall? *

MOOSE
I don't know. Yeah. Maybe. *

LUKE
Yeah. 'Cause that's exactly how God would do it. He's a tagger. *

Moose laughs. Luke's right. It's stupid. He checks his phone. *

MOOSE
I just got a bar of reception. We must be getting close. *

LUKE
Text Helena. Tell her to spread the word. Everyone should meet in the church. Don't say why. We don't need more panic.

INT. CHURCH - NEW HAM - NIGHT

The entire population of New Ham is gathered. Restless. Uncertain. Waiting.

Helena, Harry, Kelly, Cassandra, Tom, Allie, Gordie, Becca, Sam... they're all there.

HARRY
(to Helena)
Anything?

HELENA
He's not answering. Neither is Luke.

HARRY
They must be headed back here. That's why he wanted us together.

KELLY
That's so fast. Twelve hours. Maybe they found something.

HELENA
Or maybe they found nothing. Why wouldn't he say, if it was good news?

ELLE
... Shit!

The crowd becomes even more restless. Now Cassandra speaks:

CASSANDRA
Listen!... Hey, listen up! While we're all here. Together. There are some things we ought to figure out. Before we completely rip this place apart and maybe start hurting each other.

RUMBLINGS from the crowd. Hard to read. Not so with Allie. For her, it is as if the cavalry has arrived.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
I don't know what the fuck is going on. And maybe Luke will come back with good news --

ELLE
-- Not maybe! Of course he will.

HARRY

We don't we just wait and see,
Cassandra?

CASSANDRA

Because right now we are behaving
like a group and not like a mob.
And I'd rather prepare for the
worst before the worst happens.

KELLY

What does that mean -- prepare?

CASSANDRA

I don't know. Specifically. But I
think first it means we agree not
to just TAKE things when we want.
Until all the food is gone and we
starve.

*

ALLIE

I'd agree to that.

Cassandra looks over at Allie and nods. Her wingman. Allie's
assent triggers a CHORUS of "Me too"s from around the church.

HARRY

This is bullshit.

Everything stops dead. They turn to him.

TOM

Jesus. What is your problem?

HARRY

What are we agreeing to, Cassandra?
Which one of us gets to decide who
gets what? You? Your friends?

BECCA

It's called democracy.

HARRY

I'm not a fucking idiot.

CASSANDRA

How do you want to decide things?
Every person for himself? Then
we're back to where we started!
Maybe you want to flip a coin to
see who decides?

She takes out a coin. He can't think as fast as she does.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
 You don't like democracy? How about
 random fucking chance? Call it,
 Harry. Call it -- !

HARRY
 (knows she's mocking him)
 -- I'm not gonna --

CASSANDRA
 -- Okay. I'll call it for you. You
 get heads.
 (flips the coin)
 It's tails. Still think it's
 unfair? Best two out of three?
 (flips again)
 Tails.

She does it again. Less triumphant and taunting now:

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
 ... Tails.
 (again)
 ... Tails.

She looks at Harry. Creeping panic from both of them.

HARRY
 ,... Do it again.

CASSANDRA
 Tails.
 (again)
 Tails.
 (again)
 Tails.

HARRY
 Fuck.

She does it again. Closes her eyes. Prays. Peeks.

CASSANDRA
 ... Heads.
 (beat)
 We decide our own future.

Silence. Cassandra has to play her hand now.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
 Look at what used to be our
 supermarket. Or at the fire someone
 set over on Kirkwood. There is no
 civilization here.
 (MORE)

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Not until we make one.

(beat)

... So what do we do? First thing,
I think we have no choice but to
share. Food. Resources.

HARRY

Houses?

CASSANDRA

Maybe.

HARRY

Fuck you.

ALLIE

Really? How much electricity do we
have? Until it's used up and
everything goes dark? 225 people in
175 houses makes no sense.

VOICE FROM THE FLOOR

We keep what's ours!

CASSANDRA

What is yours? You have money? Who
are you gonna pay? The things you
need to live -- food, clothes --
the stuff in stores -- no one owns
them.

TOM

Are we gonna fight each other for
food? That's fucking crazy.

HARRY

That's cause you have nothing.
And some of us have things that
others want, right, Tom? Like
houses, maybe. Or girlfriends.

Tom looks at Kelly. Then back to Harry.

TOM

I have no house. The place I lived
was outside of town. It doesn't
exist. You want me to live on the
street?

HARRY

You can live wherever you want.
Just not with me.

Allie turns to Tom.

ALLIE

You can live with me, Tom.... Come
live with me.

He looks at her -- his friend -- true friend -- and nods.

Harry's had enough. As he walks away, to Cassandra:

HARRY

I don't have to listen to you. Not
anymore.

As he walks out, Cassandra responds:

CASSANDRA

Jesus, Harry. This is not about you
and me --

A GUN SHOT EXPLODES in the AIR. Silence.

Cameron is in the back -- pointed toward the ceiling. Now he
moves up the center aisle, toward Cassandra.

CAMERON

Fuck this.
(beat)
Harry's right. No one elected you
king. Cousin.

CASSANDRA

I don't want to be king.

He moves toward her. Up the aisle. Now he points the gun
directly at her.

CAMERON

Good.

She flinches, just a little bit.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Are you afraid of me?

CASSANDRA

No.

CAMERON

Liar. You've always been. It's the
one thing I have over you.

Tom, Sam move to shield her. And then Allie. Cassandra moves
between them and Cameron's gun, which he cocks. He keeps
moving toward her.

CASSANDRA

I've thought a lot about dying.
I've almost gotten used to that.
But I don't like being afraid.
(beat)
You want chaos?? FUCKING SHOOT ME!

CAMERON

I don't need to. I just need you to
know that I can.

Just a few feet from her now. He puts his gun down.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

This meeting is over. We'll come
back when Luke gets here. Anyone
who's tired of listening to her,
follow me.

Cameron turns and heads to the door. Harry does the same.

HARRY

And me.
(looking back)
Kelly?

She hesitates. Glances at Tom. More hesitation, And then she
goes. A fair number of people follow. Not half, but many.

As they stream to the door. People stop. SHOUTS, GASPS can be
heard from the crowd.

The mob parts. And through the path they've created comes the
search party, carrying Emily.

Now the church is SILENT as they bring her up to the raised
pulpit and lay her down.

Luke turns to them all.

LUKE

She died from a snake bite. Her
body shut down. We tried to save
her. We just couldn't...

People begin to crowd toward her body to take a look.

MOOSE

We're gonna bury her tomorrow
morning. Before it starts to smell.
I need a bunch of guys. Clark?

CLARK

Yeah. No problem.

Now they wander up to take a closer look at the body. In waves. For some, it's the first dead body they've seen.

Perfect silence. Out of respect.

Some look and run. Some linger. Some sob as they lean close to take a last glance at her face. One or two reach out and touch her -- her clothes, her hand.

Allie... Tom... Becca... Elle... Gordie... Stump... They each take their turn.

What does a dead body feel like? It feels like this.

LUKE

There is nothing out there.

At this, the whole place freezes. This is the lede.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Just deep woods that go on forever.
We're all alone.

(looks to Cassandra)

This is not our home.

ONE KID has made his way to BELL TOWER and has begun to RING THE BELL.

DONG. DONG. DONG. DONG.

Sam sign something to Emily as he leans over her. A goodbye.

As he walks away, Cameron, who's been watching from a distance, grabs his arm and pulls him close. Signs with his other hand.

CAMERON

Don't come home tonight.

SAM

It's my house, too.

CAMERON

Ever since you were born, I never
had a single day that was just
mine... Until now.

(beat)

Give me your key.

Sam flinches from Cameron's tightening grip. Reaches into his pocket and turns over his key.

DONG. DONG. DONG. DONG.

Now Helena goes to the body. She takes a tissue from her pocket, wipes some dirt off of Emily's cheek. She crosses herself. Whispers to herself.

HELENA

Yea, though I walk through the
valley of the shadow` of death, I
will fear no evil, for thou art
with me; thy rod and thy staff they
comfort me.... my cup runneth
over...

DONG. DONG. DONG. DONG. DONG.

Allie turns to Tom, who's right there.

ALLIE

We're not in fucking Kansas
anymore, are we?

*
*

Tom squeezes her hand, just for a second. But it's something.

Cassandra and Harry on opposite sides of the church -- across the sea of people slowly absorbing what has now become a funeral -- take careful stock of each other.

No more maybes. This is the new world.

DONG. DONG. DONG. DONG.

*

The crowd begins to stream out of the church and into:

*

EXT. NEW HAM - NIGHT

*

Over the TOLLING OF THE BELLS, the citizens of New Ham -- still children -- fan out across the Green to their homes.

*
*

Their new home.

*

DONG. DONG. DONG. DONG. DONG. DONG. DONG.

*

FADE TO BLACK

*