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# FROM

"Long Day's Journey Into Night"

Episode 101

Written by

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**EXT. TOWN STREET - EARLY EVENING**

A small, quiet town in middle America. At first glance, it doesn't seem much different from any other small town you might encounter on a trip across the heartland.

The QUIANT, PASTORAL HOMES lining the quaint pastoral street are all identical, though each is a different color. All the colors are pale and faded.

A number of cars are parked along the side of the street, yet all the driveways are empty.

There's no one outside.

ANGLE ON : A WINDOW SHUTTER BEING CLOSED FROM THE INSIDE, BEHIND THE GLASS.

All along the street, the shutters have been closed from the inside. On all the windows, in all the houses.

On closer inspection, ALL THE CARS HAVE FLAT TIRES.

**EXT. TOWN POOL - EARLY EVENING**

An old, wrecked PICK-UP TRUCK on its side in a large, empty, resort-style pool; the type you'd find at a mid-range hotel almost anywhere in the country.

Thing is - there's no hotel. The pool seems randomly placed amongst the homes on a residential street.

The tires on the truck are blown out.

Up above, the streetlights come on; the soft electric hum audible in the early evening quiet.

**EXT. CATTLE PEN, EDGE OF TOWN - EARLY EVENING**

The makeshift fence around the pen is made out of sturdy tree branches. Crude, but serviceable. The cattle move about the pen, restless.

**EXT. EDGE OF THE FOREST - EARLY EVENING**

The road out of town leads into a dense forest; TALL TREES like ancient watchmen overlooking the town.

ANGLE ON : THE TREE LEAVES RUSTLING IN THE EVENING WIND

**EXT. TOWN - EARLY EVENING**

SHERIFF BOYD STEVENS (52), grizzled, tough as nails, walks down one of the quiet, empty streets, his eyes scanning the homes around him.

His uniform is well-kept, though a bit frayed and worn. It also looks more like a state trooper's uniform than that of a small town sheriff.

The wind begins to howl. Boyd stops, refusing the urge to quicken his pace. He takes a deep breath, checks the sun hanging low in the sky. He continues down the street.

**EXT. FRANK AND LAUREN'S BACKYARD - EARLY EVENING**

MEAGAN PRATT (6), adorable, swings on a creaky, homemade backyard swing. LAUREN PRATT (late 20s) comes into the yard.

LAUREN  
Time to come in, sweetie.

MEAGAN  
Just five more minutes. Please?

LAUREN  
(kneels down in front  
of her)  
It's gonna be dark soon. You don't  
wanna be out here when it gets dark,  
do you?  
(Meagan emphatically  
shakes her head)  
Alright, well, come on in then.

Lauren takes her by the hand and leads her to the house.

**EXT. TOWN - EARLY EVENING**

Boyd continues down the quiet street, passing the TOWN DINER. It's your basic small town diner, yet curiously, like the pool, it's on a residential street among the houses.

The OWNER waves to Boyd as he pulls the shutters closed behind the plate glass doors. Boyd nods and continues on.

**INT. TOWN CLINIC, ANH DUNG'S ROOM - EARLY EVENING**

ANGLE ON : A CHESS BOARD. A MAN'S HAND MOVES A PAWN ONE SPOT FORWARD.

ANH DUNG (O.S.)  
(in Vietnamese)  
*Ha! Bay gio anh dang gap rac roi.*

DEPUTY KENNY NGUYEN (25, Vietnamese) plays chess with his father, ANH DUNG NGUYEN (early 60s), a once proud, strong man suffering from dementia. Kenny's uniform is different than Boyd's, more like a crossing guard's uniform. It's also newer, less worn.

Anh Dung takes his ROOK and moves it like a BISHOP diagonally across the board.

ANH DUNG (CONT'D)  
(broken English)  
That checkmate.

Kenny smiles a bittersweet smile, playing along with the blatantly incorrect move.

KENNY  
Yup, you got me. Still the best  
there is.

The door opens and KRISTI MILLER (30), the resident medic, enters the room accompanied by a Nurse.

KRISTI  
(smiles)  
Okay, Mr. Nguyen, time to go down to  
the basement.

ANH DUNG  
No. We play.

KENNY  
It's okay dad, we'll just --

Anh Dung SLAMS HIS FIST down on the board, sending pieces flying.

ANH DUNG  
*Dang choi!!!*

KENNY  
*Bo! The la du roi.*

Anh Dung hears the tone in Kenny's voice, sees the pieces all over the floor. He suddenly looks very feeble and confused.

ANH DUNG  
I - sorry --

Kristi crouches down beside him.

KRISTI  
It's okay.  
(motions to the Nurse)  
Gina's gonna take you down to the  
basement and you can come back up in  
the morning when it's light out again.  
Just like we talked about, remember?

Kenny begins to translate -

KENNY

*Ban co the quay lai khi -*

Anh Dung waves Kenny off, embarrassed.

KRISTI

I'll come down and see if we can  
make it a little more - what's the  
word -

Kenny is about to help.

KRISTI (CONT'D)

No, I remember, hold on - *thoai mai*.

Anh Dung smiles, puts his hand on Kristi's cheek. Appreciative  
of the effort.

ANH DUNG

You are good girl.

GINA (40s), the Nurse, takes Anh Dung's arm and begins helping  
him from his chair.

GINA

You know, I'm not too shabby at chess.  
We can play a whole tournament if  
you like.

Kenny watches his dad shuffle out, lead by the arm like a  
helpless child.

**INT. TOWN CLINIC, FOYER - EARLY EVENING**

Kristi walks Kenny to the front door, giving us a better  
look at the inside of the clinic. There's not much in the  
way of medical equipment. It's more a "make do with what  
you've got" small town clinic.

KENNY

You have a really good way with him.  
Thank you.

KRISTI

We all look after each other,  
remember?

(smiles)

You should tell your mom she's more  
than welcome to stay with him at  
night if she wants.

KENNY

Yeah, she's still not really -  
handling it very well.

(MORE)

KENNY (CONT'D)  
 She just keeps saying he'll get  
 better. Denial is a big part of our  
 family tree.

There's a sweet, awkward chemistry here. They both linger  
 at the door, in the place where a goodnight kiss should be.

KENNY (CONT'D)  
 Guess I'll see you tomorrow.

KRISTI  
 (smiles)  
 See you tomorrow, deputy. Get home  
 quick, okay?

KENNY  
 Yes, ma'am.

Kenny leaves. Kristi closes the door behind him, taking a  
 moment to check the ORNATE TALISMAN that's nailed to the  
 door, making sure it's secure - a rote gesture, something as  
 second nature as making sure the door is locked.

**EXT. TOWN - EARLY EVENING**

Boyd stands at the end of the street, staring out at a RUNDOWN  
 THREE STORY ESTATE on a hill just beyond the edge of town.  
 This is THE COLONY HOUSE. Boyd takes a set of binoculars  
 from his belt for a closer look.

POV OF THE BINOCULARS as we scan the Colony House. A handful  
 of BOHEMIAN TYPES retreat inside, closing the doors behind  
 them. All the windows are shuttered. The house is secure.  
The binoculars linger on one particular window a moment longer  
 than the rest.

Satisfied, Boyd lowers the binoculars. He looks tired. A  
 little beaten.

**EXT. SHERIFF'S STATION - EARLY EVENING**

Deputy Kenny waits outside the station - also situated between  
 two residential homes - nervously checking the sun's location  
 in the sky. He sees Boyd approaching, breathes a sigh of  
 relief.

BOYD  
 We all clear?

KENNY  
 Looks like.

BOYD

Alright, go on inside. I'll see you  
in the morning.

KENNY

Cutting it kinda close, aren't you  
Sheriff?

BOYD

Looks like.

Kenny watches Boyd continue down the street, then turns and  
heads inside the station.

**INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - CONTINUOUS**

Kenny enters, closing the door behind him. Just like Kristi,  
he checks the ORNATE TALISMAN that's nailed to the door to  
make sure it's secure.

He settles in, takes off his coat, and opens a side door  
into a room that's been CONVERTED INTO AN APARTMENT. Kenny's  
mother, THAO NGUYEN (50s), is at the stove cooking dinner.  
They live at the Sheriff's station.

**EXT. TOWN BAR - SUNSET**

A squat wooden structure near the edge of town, away from  
the houses. Four walls and a roof. No windows. It's just  
a big wooden shack.

The sky is getting darker. The sun has almost set.

**INT. TOWN BAR - SUNSET**

The inside is a ramshackle affair. A long plank serves as a  
makeshift bar top. Tree stumps serve as stools. A patchwork  
tangle of tubes and bottles to distill whatever home-brewed  
poison the bar serves.

BARTENDER (O.S.)

Frank! Get the fuck up.

FRANK PRATT (early 40s) is passed out on the floor. The  
BARTENDER (late 30s), also drunk, is getting ready to lock  
the doors.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Come on Frank, gotta get home. It's  
getting dark out. Frank!

(sighs)

Fuck it. Lauren's gonna kill you.

He slides a crowbar into the handles of the HEAVY WOODEN  
DOORS, locking both he and Frank inside the bar.

Even with the crowbar in place, the Bartender still checks the TALISMAN to make sure it's secure.

**INT. FRANK AND LAUREN'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING**

Lauren stands at the front door, peering out as the last gasp of sunlight fades. There's a bitterness in her eyes.

MEAGAN (O.S.)  
Is daddy coming home?

Lauren turns. Meagan is ready for bed, holding a ragged teddy bear in her arms.

LAUREN  
(lying)  
Any second now.

MEAGAN  
He's supposed to be home before it gets dark. He promised.

LAUREN  
Well, sometimes your dad, he just gets a little forgetful, that's all. You go start saying your prayers. I'll be there in a minute.

MEAGAN  
Ok.

Meagan makes her way towards the back of the house.

LAUREN  
(under her breath)  
Goddammit, Frank.

Lauren checks the TALISMAN on the door.

**EXT. TOWN - NIGHT**

Night has fallen. The town is silent.

ANGLE ON : THE WOODS. THE DEEP, DARK, FOREBODING WOODS.

**EXT. CATTLE PEN - NIGHT**

The cattle grow increasingly restless. We hear rustling footsteps. MULTIPLE FIGURES pass by the pen OS.

**EXT. BOYD'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Boyd is at his front door. Something rustles in the dark nearby. Boyd turns, a steely look in his eyes. Silence. He steps into the house and shuts the door.



**INT. MEAGAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Meagan kneels at her bed, saying her prayers.

MEAGAN

Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray  
the lord my soul to keep.

**INT. FRANK AND LAUREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Lauren is checking to make sure all the doors are locked,  
all the windows shuttered.

MEAGAN (O.S.)

If I die before I wake --

**INT. MEAGAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Back to Meagan saying her prayers -

MEAGAN

I pray the Lord my soul to --

A LOUD BANG from elsewhere in the house. A heavy hand against  
a door. Meagan looks up.

**INT. FRANK AND LAUREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Lauren stares at the front door, still, unnerved, yet not  
surprised. Though it chills her to the bone, it almost seems  
as though she was expecting it.

BANG! Again the heavy hand falls against the door. Lauren  
trembles, but stands her ground. The talisman is secure.

**INT. MEAGAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Meagan gets up, heads to the bedroom door when -

TAP TAP TAP

She stops. Looks at the shuttered bedroom window. Something  
with a long fingernail just tapped on the other side.

TAP TAP TAP

Fear wells up inside Meagan as -- SOOTHING WHISPERS fill the  
air, or are they in her head? Meagan's fear begins to subside  
as she stares at the shutters, entranced.

MEAGAN

(answering the whispers)  
But I'm not supposed to.

The whispers continue. Meagan moves to the window.

MEAGAN (CONT'D)

Do you promise?

Reassured by the whispers, Meagan undoes the latch on the shutters and - pauses a moment, uncertain. But the whispers continue.

MEAGAN (CONT'D)

Okay.

She opens the shutters to reveal -

A KIND LOOKING OLD WOMAN, staring in the window. Her clothes and hair are matted, filthy, covered in dirt. Her lips are smiling, but her eyes seem vacant.

WHISPER (O.S.)

Let me in.

The Old Woman's lips don't move. Meagan stares at her, entranced by the DISEMBODIED WHISPER, her hand slowly reaching for the window latch when -

LAUREN (O.S.)

Meagan --

Lauren stands in the doorway, speaking very slowly, trying to control the panic in her voice at the sight of Meagan's hand on the window latch.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Sweetie, you know the rules. You know what they'll do.

Lauren starts moving very slowly towards her daughter, the smile on the Old Woman's face growing warmer, kinder, the vacant eyes focused on Meagan.

WHISPER (O.S.)

Let me in.

LAUREN

Baby, please, just --

Meagan's hand starts to turn the latch.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Meagan, no!

But it's too late! The latch springs open! We barely catch a glimpse of the Kind Old Woman's face as it MORPHS into something HORRIFYING AND DEMONIC! It lunges at the window, crashing through the glass as we --

CUT TO BLACK.

We hear the terrified cries of Mother and Daughter.

**TITLE CARD:                                 FROM**

**CREDITS**

**EXT. MOTEL 6, PARKING LOT - MORNING**

JIM MATTHEWS (mid-30s) is carrying suitcases to the family mini-van in the parking lot. He seems conflicted, maybe even a little bitter.

**SUPER:   Denver, Colorado**

JIM  
(calling up to the  
room)  
Kids, let's go, I wanna be on the  
road in ten minutes.

**INT. MOTEL ROOM - MORNING**

ANGLE ON : 2 FINGER PUPPETS. THE KIND YOU'D FIND IN THE 99 CENTS BIN AT A ROADSIDE REST STOP. BIG EYES, GANGLY ARMS, MUPPET-LOOKING THINGS.

The puppets are on the fingers of a teenage girl as she acts out a scenario, providing the voices for "Norman" and "Harold" as Norman the finger puppet lay at death's door. The girl really sells the drama. We remain tight on the puppets.

HAROLD  
You saved us, Norman. The Evil Beast  
is vanquished. Everyone is safe  
because of you.

NORMAN  
I'm - glad.

HAROLD  
You're going to be okay. Just hold  
on a little longer. The secret  
fairies are on their way back from  
the Lake of Tears. They're going to  
make you better again.

NORMAN  
(coughs)  
The monster's claws went too deep.  
Tell my friends that I will miss  
them. Tell my parents that I said --  
goodbye.

The finger propping up Norman relaxes, evoking his "death."

HAROLD

Norman? Norman, no, please! You're my best friend, Norman, please don't leave.

(weeps)

Please.

Harold drapes his finger puppet body over Norman's, the Girl's finger twitching back and forth, evoking Harold's "sobs."

A wider angle reveals JULIE MATTHEWS (16), the girl voicing the puppets. Like most kids her age she's incredibly temperamental, caught in a whirlwind of hormonal changes and self doubt, which she takes out on her younger brother, ETHAN MATTHEWS (9), a gentle spirit, far more sensitive than other boys his age. He watches the scene play out, holding his breath, waiting for the magical happy ending.

Julie sighs, tosses the puppets on the bed.

JULIE

Well, we should get going.

ETHAN

What? No, but the fairies are coming from the lake of tears, right? They're gonna make him better.

JULIE

(shakes her head)

Sorry buddy, Norman's dead. And once you're dead you're gone. Fairies can't do a fuckin' thing to help you.

She pats the puppets gently, taking a great deal of sadistic sisterly pleasure in Ethan's genuine panic.

JULIE (CONT'D)

(gets up to leave)

Okay.

ETHAN

Bring him back, you have to bring him back!

**EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - MORNING**

Jim finishes packing up the car as TABITHA MATTHEWS (mid-30s) walks over from the lobby. She's got a conflicted look similar to Jim's. It becomes pretty clear pretty quick that these two are having problems in their marriage.

JIM

All set?

TABITHA

Yup.

JIM

What did they say about the room?

TABITHA

(sighs)

There's no manager on Sundays, so they said to call the corporate office.

Jim sighs, frustrated.

JIM

This is bullshit.

He starts walking towards the lobby.

TABITHA

Where are you going?

JIM

To talk to the clerk.

TABITHA

(annoyed)

What is it you think he's going to tell you he didn't tell me?

(catches herself,  
changes her tone)

Look, can we just -- get on the road? The sooner we get there the better. Right?

Jim realizes he's overreacting, reigns it in.

JIM

Yeah, sorry, I just -- sorry.

ETHAN (O.S.)

You have to change it!

Jim and Tabitha turn to see a teary-eyed Ethan trailing behind an innocent looking Julie.

JULIE

I can't change the ending because the story's over. I'm sorry. Norman's dead.

(mock sympathy)

Sometimes life is hard.

Julie gets in the car.

TABITHA

(to Ethan)

What happened?

Ethan holds up Norman the finger puppet.

ETHAN

(teary-eyed)

Julie killed Norman. He died at the end of the story.

JIM

(confused)

What?

(annoyed)

Julie, get out of the car.

TABITHA

(thinking on her feet)

Well, just - tell another story.

One that brings Norman back to life.

Ethan brightens for a moment. Julie rolls down the window --

JULIE

It won't matter. He'll still be dead. My story came first.

(off Tabitha's "not helping" look)

What? You said you wanted us to bond, right? He's too sensitive.

Julie rolls up the window and puts her headphones on.

Tabitha looks at Jim, he's at a total loss. Tabitha crouches down in front of Ethan.

TABITHA

Okay, how did Norman die?

ETHAN

The monsters killed him.

TABITHA

Oh. Well that's good news then.

ETHAN

Why?

TABITHA

Because there's no such thing as monsters. And if there's no such thing as monsters then that means Norman's still alive, doesn't it?

Ethan processes this information, his young brow furrowed.

ETHAN

Really?

TABITHA

Really.

His face lights up with a smile.

**INT. MINI-VAN - MORNING**

Ethan climbs into the mini-van with his spirits renewed.

ETHAN

(to Julie)

Guess what? Norman's still alive.

JULIE

(shrugs)

If you say so.

**EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - MORNING**

Tabitha stands back up, straightens herself out.

TABITHA

Okay, we should definitely get back  
on the road before they --

(sees Jim looking at  
her, smiling)

What?

JIM

Nice work, Chief.

TABITHA

(smiles)

Why thank you, Captain.

It's a nice moment. Beneath all their problems, there's still a lot of love there. They get into the car and off the car doors closing we -

CUT TO:

**INT. STONE LODGE/CHURCH - MORNING**

FATHER KELLY (60s), stout, strong, and compassionate, kneels in prayer.

We're inside an old stone lodge that looks like it was built stone by stone, a long, long time ago. The inside is primitive, drafty, and has been converted to serve as a church.

Makeshift pews that have been assembled from found wood. A pulpit at the front built from the same. Behind the pulpit is a large cross, fashioned from sturdy branches.

Father Kelly finishes his prayer with the sign of the cross and gets to his feet. He walks to the heavy wooden doors at the front, pushing them open, revealing -

The houses of the town across the street. Like the diner and the pool, the lodge/church is on a residential street.

**EXT. STONE LODGE/CHURCH - CONTINUOUS**

Father Kelly steps out into the morning sun and looks down the street with a heavy heart, at the small crowd of townspeople gathering around the Pratt house.

**INT. MEAGAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING**

ANGLE ON : THE TALISMAN ON THE FLOOR.

Sheriff Boyd picks it up. Turns it over in his hand. It's the talisman we last saw nailed to the front door. Boyd grits his teeth as the rage boiling up inside flashes across his face. He puts the talisman in his pocket.

The room is in ruins. There is blood everywhere. Deputy Kenny crouches in the midst of the carnage, staring at the scene in a grief-stricken daze.

KENNY

(numb)

I kept telling her. It wasn't safe for kids upstairs at night. She said they were being careful, that Meagan knew the rules.

(gets emotional)

Jesus Christ.

Kenny covers his mouth with his hand, tears well in his eyes. Boyd grabs him roughly by the collar.

BOYD

Hey, knock it off. Now is not the time. You understand me?

KENNY

(choking it back)

Yes sir.

BOYD

Those people out there need you to be strong. I need you to be strong.



Kenny nods, gathering himself. Boyd lets him go. His eyes take in the room, the rage boiling dangerously close to the surface.

BOYD (CONT'D)  
Where's Frank?

**INT. FRANK AND LAUREN'S BEDROOM - MORNING**

Frank sits on the bed, his head in his hands. Boyd comes in, followed by Kenny. Frank looks up, starts to explain --

FRANK  
I was - it got late. I fell asleep -

WHAM! Boyd cracks Frank across the face with his pistol. Frank tumbles to the floor. Boyd hits him again.

BOYD  
Motherfucker. What did I tell you, huh? What did I tell you?

FRANK  
Please, it wasn't my fault.

Boyd grabs Frank by the hair AND DRAGS HIM FROM THE ROOM.

**INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Boyd drags Frank towards Meagan's bedroom.

FRANK  
No, please! I don't, no, I don't wanna go in there!

**INT. MEAGAN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Boyd drags Frank into the room where the mangled corpses still lay. Frank manages to scramble to his feet, tries to get away.

Boyd gets him against the wall and WHAP! WHAP! WHAP! Hits him in the face with three quick, harsh jabs and shoves him down on his knees, puts his face right up against the mangled corpse of his wife. Half of her face is missing.

BOYD  
A man protects his family, Frank. Look at what you did.

FRANK  
No, please --

BOYD  
 OPEN YOUR EYES AND LOOK AT WHAT YOU  
 FUCKIN' DID! LOOK AT THEM!

Frank just keeps shaking his head. His eyes closed. Boyd shoves him to the ground, disgusted.

BOYD (CONT'D)  
 I oughta break your legs and leave  
 you in the street tonight.  
 (to Kenny)  
 Lock him up. I'll figure out what  
 to do with him later.

Kenny nods, does his best to gather the sobbing, babbling mess that used to be Frank from the floor.

Alone in the room, Boyd takes in the grisly scene with a heavy heart.

FATHER KELLY (O.S.)  
 Sheriff?

Boyd turns to see Father Kelly standing in the doorway.

FATHER KELLY (CONT'D)  
 If I may?

BOYD  
 They're all yours, father.

Boyd walks out of the room.

**EXT. HOUSE - MORNING**

Boyd is addressing the gathering crowd of townspeople.

BOYD  
 You all know how this works. If you  
 have children then the only safe place  
 for them at night is the basement.  
 You have got to keep them away from  
 the windows and doors. These things  
 are smart. You can't make exceptions.  
 It may not be a perfect system but it  
 works. We've been doing alright here.  
 Let's everybody get to work, keep it  
 together, there'll be a service for  
 Lauren and Meagan later in the  
 afternoon.

**EXT. COLORADO HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON**

The Matthews family mini-van coasts down the two lane highway.

**INT. MINI-VAN - AFTERNOON**

Ethan and Julie each wear headphones, watching a movie on the built in DVD player. Jim stares at the road, Tabitha stares out the passenger window. You get the feeling they've been driving in silence for a while. Tabitha picks up her phone. Sighs.

JIM  
Whatsamatter?

TABITHA  
I'm not getting any service.

JIM  
We're kinda in the middle of nowhere.

TABITHA  
It's supposed to be a NATIONWIDE  
network.

She puts her phone away, frustrated.

JIM  
Hey, you remember the first time we  
made this drive?

A smile creeps into the corners of Tabitha's mouth.

JIM (CONT'D)  
As I recall, I was driving my '83  
Volvo, which had metal on metal posing  
as brakes and a passenger side door  
that wouldn't open.

TABITHA  
That car was a deathtrap.

JIM  
That car was a champ.

TABITHA  
God, I was terrified my parents were  
gonna hate you.

JIM  
They didn't though.

TABITHA  
No, they didn't.

Tabitha's smile becomes bittersweet.

TABITHA (CONT'D)

You know sometimes - I remember what we were like when we weren't like this. What we were like before.

JIM

Hey. We're gonna be okay. We got the counseling, we got the - we can do this. We just - we have to do better. I have to do better. But we're gonna be okay.

She wants to believe that.

She squeezes his hand and turns back to the passenger window. Jim watches her a moment, turns back to the road and --

JIM (CONT'D)

(startled)

Shit.

He hits the brakes. The car comes to an abrupt stop.

TABITHA

Jesus --

JULIE

(re: the abrupt stop)

What the hell, dad?

Tabitha and Jim stare out the windshield in mild disbelief, not exactly sure what to do next.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Wow.

Jim gets out of the car.

**EXT. HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON**

A wide view reveals a MASSIVE TREE has fallen across the highway, completely blocking their passage.

Jim is scratching his head, staring at the tree at a complete loss. Tabitha gets out of the car and joins him.

TABITHA

Why is there a tree in the middle of the road?

JIM

Musta got knocked down by a storm or something.

(whistles)

That is a very big tree.

TABITHA

So what do we do?

JIM

Well, there was an exit a couple miles back. We'll just have to get off the highway and circle around.

Ethan has joined them, lending his "expertise" to the mix.

ETHAN

Maybe we can push it with the van.

JIM

(smiles)

I don't think so, pal. Come on, let's --

Suddenly a LARGE BACK CROW swoops down, just missing Jim's head!

JIM (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ!

It comes to a perch on the tree. It looks at them and emits a SHRILL CAW. Jim looks at the brazen crow.

JIM (CONT'D)

Well you're a bold little shit.

TABITHA

(re: his language)

Jim!

JIM

(exasperated)

Did you see what just --

A SECOND CROW lands on the tree. It also looks in their direction and begins to caw.

JIM (CONT'D)

And now he's got a friend.

TABITHA

Okay, let's --

Suddenly DOZENS OF CROWS burst from the trees on both sides of the highway, swooping down to perch on the fallen tree and join the shrieking chorus. The scene quickly becomes surreal as they just keep coming with greater and greater frequency, getting louder and louder.

ETHAN  
 (wide-eyed)  
 What are they doing?

TABITHA  
 Can we just go please?

JIM  
 Yeah, let's uh, yeah.

Jim looks back as they head to the minivan. The murder of crows continues to grow. Staring after the family. Cawing. And cawing. And cawing. The shrieking chorus building to a crescendo as we --

CUT TO:

**EXT. STREET, EDGE OF TOWN, COLONY HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Sheriff Boyd stands in the quiet afternoon breeze, looking up the hill at The Colony House, the rundown three-story estate at the edge of town. We see people doing various activities on the grounds surrounding the house - gardening, reading, meditating, etc. Boyd looks at the house, conflicted.

**EXT. COLONY HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

DONNA (53), stout, earthy, no nonsense, is on her hands and knees in the garden, digging in the soil with rudimentary, homemade tools. She's completely at peace - until she looks up and sees Boyd approaching.

Donna stands, her demeanor going ice cold. Boyd walks towards her, stops about ten feet away. There's no love lost here.

BOYD  
 (nods)  
 Donna.

DONNA  
 We got an arrangement, Sheriff. You don't come here.

BOYD  
 I came to see my son.  
 (hates having to add  
 this)  
 Please.

She stares at him with cold eyes. Weighing her options. Then -

DONNA  
 Come on in then.

He follows her towards the house.

**INT. COLONY HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Donna leads Boyd inside, revealing an interior that is equal parts ARTISTS' RETREAT and HOTHOUSE OPIUM DEN. The rundown rooms are spacious, thanks to the vaulted ceilings. A SCULPTOR sits in the corner, trying his best to work with shoddy materials. A YOUNG COUPLE fuck on the couch. Various granola types come and go, either ignoring or not noticing Boyd's presence.

Donna yells at the young couple on the couch.

DONNA  
Hey! What did I tell you two? Keep  
it in the bedroom. This isn't a  
goddamn cathouse.

The Couple retreats from the room, mumbling their apologies, as Donna whispers to a MAN standing at the bottom of the stairs. He's dressed like a stoner but posted like a sentry. The Man nods, Donna turns back to Boyd.

DONNA (CONT'D)  
Follow me.

**INT. ELLIS' STUDIO - MORNING**

We hear the SCRATCHING SOUNDS of charcoal on canvas.

FATIMA HASSAN (19, Iranian), earthy, intelligent, a stunning natural beauty, stands before the third story window in the high-ceilinged, rundown room, nude except for a thin veil that hangs loose off her shoulders, bathed in the light of the morning sun.

The scratching of the charcoal stops. Fatima turns.

FATIMA  
Why did you stop?

ELLIS STEVENS (21), a handsome philosopher with the shredded body of an underwear model is across the room, working at a beautiful and haunting charcoal sketch of Fatima. He's staring at her now in open adoration,

ELLIS  
You're like a poem, you know that?  
You make everything around you  
beautiful. Even this place.

The words are like a warm embrace. Her eyes move to the doorway behind Ellis and her face lights up.

FATIMA

Sheriff Stevens! It's so nice to see you.

Ellis turns to see Boyd standing in the doorway, blushing at Fatima's nudity.

BOYD

(averting his eyes)  
Hello, Fatima.

Fatima sees the red in his cheeks, finds his discomfort endearing. She smiles a smile that could start a war.

FATIMA

Sorry, I guess I should --  
(kisses Ellis on the cheek)  
Be good.  
(as she glides from the room)  
It was nice seeing you, Sheriff.  
You should come by more often!

Boyd smiles. Shakes his head. As distasteful as he finds the rest of Colony House, he has a fatherly affection for Fatima.

BOYD

She doesn't change, does she?

ELLIS

What are you doing here?

The smile fades from Boyd's face. There's a bond here that's been broken beyond repair.

BOYD

We lost a couple people last night.

ELLIS

Did "we?" And how exactly did "we" lose them?

BOYD

Lauren Pratt and her little girl Meagan. Lauren was the lady used to --

ELLIS

(cutting him off)  
I know who Lauren is.

BOYD

Might be nice if you came to the service. Paid your respects.



Ellis takes the news hard but he refuses to show it. He simply nods his head, an acknowledgment that he'll be at the service.

BOYD (CONT'D)

You alright? Taking care of yourself?

ELLIS

Look, I'm a little busy, so if that's all?

BOYD

Yeah, that's all. I'll show myself out.

Ellis watches him leave, his eyes betraying the emotion he refuses to show.

**INT. HALLWAY, COLONY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

Boyd steps out into the hallway. Fatima sits on the steps wearing a robe. She looks up with hopeful eyes.

BOYD

He's all yours sweetie. Take care of him, okay?

She grabs his hand. Goes up on her toes and kisses his cheek. Her heart breaks as she watches Boyd walk down the stairs, looking older than his years.

**INT. CAR - LATE AFTERNOON**

Jim is driving through the winding backroads. No sign of civilization anywhere. Both he and Tabitha are getting frustrated.

TABITHA

Maybe we missed the sign.

JIM

We didn't miss the sign.

ETHAN

Dad! Dad! Howcome those crows were doing that?

JIM

(focused on the road)  
I don't know buddy, sometimes birds do funny things.

TABITHA

Are you sure we're even driving in  
the right direction?

(off his look)

Sorry, it's just - we're supposed to  
be parallel to the highway. I can't  
even see it anymore.

Jim starts pressing buttons on the console. Sighs in  
frustration.

JIM

The GPS is frozen.

TABITHA

Well maybe if we reboot it --

JIM

This is ridiculous. At some point  
it's gotta -- what the hell is this?

Jim stares out the windshield in confusion - the backwoods  
have begun to clear as they arrive at the entrance to what  
looks like a small town.

**INT. STONE LODGE/CHURCH - LATE AFTERNOON**

Kenny makes his way down the row of makeshift pews towards a  
small room in the back.

**INT. CHURCH, BACKROOM - LATE AFTERNOON**

Father Kelly sits at a table deep in thought; a sheet of  
blank notebook paper laid out before him, beside a stack of  
paper filled with writing. An old fashioned quill in his  
hand and a pot of ink on the table. His lips are moving,  
trying to remember something, a phrasing - his eyes open.  
He's got it. He begins to write.

A knock at the open doorway. Deputy Kenny comes in.

KENNY

Father Kelly? Sheriff told me to  
let you know they're ready.

FATHER KELLY

Thank you, Kenny.

KENNY

(re: the parchment)  
How's it coming?

FATHER KELLY

(smiles)  
Line by line and page by page.

KENNY

It's pretty crazy you can remember the whole thing like that. I mean word for word? That's impressive.

Father Kelly smiles and finishes the passage he was writing. Puts down the quill. Kenny is lingering.

KENNY (CONT'D)

Can I ask you something, Father?

FATHER KELLY

Of course.

KENNY

You think we're being punished? I mean, you think that's why we're here?

Father Kelly sits on the edge of the table, contemplates the question.

FATHER KELLY

I did at first. When I first came here I thought things - felt things - that would have been unimaginable to me before.

KENNY

What changed?

FATHER KELLY

(smiles)  
I found my faith.

KENNY

You - weren't a priest before?

FATHER KELLY

Oh no, I was. I said the words and I read the scriptures. I had a lovely congregation and took great joy in bringing the Lord into their hearts and lives. I thought I knew what faith really was. But here - to know that God has a plan, no matter how impossible it may be to understand, to find peace in that truth even on a day like today - now I understand what faith truly means. And for that, Kenny, strange as it may seem, I'm grateful.

(MORE)

FATHER KELLY (CONT'D)

(smiles)

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding."

KENNY

Which part is that?

Father Kelly holds up the piece of parchment he'd just been writing on.

FATHER KELLY

Proverbs, chapter three, verse five.

Hot off the presses.

(puts a reassuring hand on Kenny's shoulder)

Let's not keep everybody waiting huh?

Kenny nods.

**EXT. TOWN - LATE AFTERNOON**

Jim drives the car into the town. There's no one around. The family stares out the windows at the faded, identical, different colored houses.

**INT. CAR - LATE AFTERNOON**

Jim pulls to a stop in front of the town diner, mystified by its placement on the residential street.

JULIE

What the fuck?

TABITHA

Julie!

JULIE

What? There's -

She looks back out at the diner, trailing off. Tabitha can't exactly argue with the sentiment. It's a little weird.

ETHAN

Where is everybody?

JIM

I'll be right back.

TABITHA

Wait, hold on, Jim -

But he's already out of the car.

**INT. DINER - AFTERNOON**

The diner is empty. The bells over the door ring as Jim enters.

JIM

Hello?

He moves through the diner. Everything seems normal, except for the fact that it shouldn't be empty. If it were closed for the season then everything would be boxed up, put away, the doors would be locked. It looks like people cooked and ate here this morning.

JIM (CONT'D)

Hello? Anybody here?

Jim goes behind the counter into the kitchen. There is a HEAVY WOODEN DOOR towards the back of the kitchen. It's open. Jim peers inside and sees --

A storage room converted into AN APARTMENT, much like Kenny's apartment at the sheriff's station.

POV SHOT: SOMEONE IS WATCHING JIM AS HE LOOKS INTO THE BACK ROOM.

Jim turns away from the backroom apartment and -- catches a glimpse of a FIGURE, a woman. She runs when he sees her.

JIM (CONT'D)

Hey, wait --

Jim hustles into the dining room just in time to see SARA MYERS (23), a fragile girl with wild eyes in a tattered dress, scampering out the back of the diner.

Jim stands there, bewildered.

**INT. MINI-VAN - LATE AFTERNOON**

Tabitha watches as Jim comes out of the diner.

**EXT. STREET - LATE AFTERNOON**

Jim stands in front of the diner, looks around, there's something unsettling about the empty streets in the daytime. He notices something else - THE FLAT TIRES ON ALL THE CARS.

**INT. MINI-VAN - CONTINUOUS**

Jim gets in, starts the ignition.

TABITHA

You find out where the highway is?

JIM

Not exactly.

ETHAN

(staring out the window)

Howcome all the tires are flat?

TABITHA

(she hadn't noticed)

What?

Tabitha looks around at the cars as Jim pulls out.

**EXT. CEMETERY - DAY**

Father Kelly leads a funeral service for Lauren and Meagan. It looks like most of the town has turned out to pay their respects.

Boyd stands with Kenny off to the side, his eyes scanning the crowd. Ellis didn't come.

FATHER KELLY

We commit to the earth Lauren and Meagan Pratt. May the life they know beyond this world be kinder, and may the mysteries of their time here be solved. None of us knows what plan the Lord has for us when we come into this life, but the peace we shall know at His side beyond this life is certain. And in that peace we --

Father Kelly stops when he sees the Mini-Van driving down the street. Words fail him and his face fills with sadness. Others have spotted the car as well.

BOYD

(under his breath)

Shit.

KENNY

(leaning over)

They got kids in the car.

BOYD

Yeah, I see 'em.

**INT. MINI-VAN - DAY**

Jim pulls the minivan up to the curb outside the cemetery. A number of the townspeople are staring openly at them from up the hill.

TABITHA

I guess we found everybody.

JULIE

Why are they staring at us?

JIM

(quietly, to Tabitha)

Lock the doors.

Tabitha looks at him, confused. He gets out of the car before she can ask why.

**EXT. CEMETERY - DAY**

Boyd and Kenny watch as Jim gets out of the car.

The crowd of townspeople looks uneasy, whispering amongst each other. Boyd clears his throat, gives Father Kelly a "get on with it" look.

FATHER KELLY

In that peace we can be sure that  
Lauren and Meagan now reside. Ashes  
to ashes, dust to dust.

Boyd steps in before Father Kelly can even complete the sign of the cross.

BOYD

Alright folks, you can hang around,  
say your prayers if you like. Let  
me and Kenny handle the rest. You  
all remember what it was like for  
you, so just leave these people be.

**EXT. CEMETERY - DAY**

Jim walks up the hill, approaching some of the townspeople as they depart the service.

JIM

Excuse me, I was trying to --

(no response)

I'm sorry, can you tell me how to --

The townspeople avert their eyes as Jim approaches them, continuing on their way. Thao, Kenny's mother, leads her husband, Anh Dung (the one with dementia) down the hill.

Anh Dung stops and looks straight at Jim.

ANH DUNG  
(ominous tone)  
*Day la mot noi xau xa.*

JIM  
I'm sorry, I don't -

Thao pulls Anh Dung along, leaving Jim unsettled by the ominous tone.

BOYD (O.S.)  
Can I help you?

Jim turns to see Boyd and Kenny approaching.

JIM  
Sorry, didn't meant to interrupt  
your service.

BOYD  
Not a problem. We were just wrappin'  
up.

JIM  
Detour took us off the highway a few  
miles back. Haven't seen a sign in  
a while, I was hoping maybe you could  
point us back in the right direction.

BOYD  
(looks at the car)  
Got your family with you.

JIM  
Uhhh, yeah.

**INT. MINI-VAN - DAY**

Tabitha watches the interaction between Jim and Boyd. Ethan is unnerved by the way people are looking at them as they pass the car. Julie sees him fidgeting nervously.

JULIE  
(to Ethan, quietly)  
Hey, you know, there's a name for  
what those crows did before. When  
they all got into a group like that?  
It's called a "murder".

ETHAN  
What? No it's not.



JULIE

It is. It's called a murder of crows. Because when they gather like that? They're looking for a victim. And if you see them doing it then you're the one they murder.

ETHAN

(less confident)  
Shut up. You're making that up.

JULIE

I'm not. Once they see you, they won't stop hunting you.

ETHAN

Stop it.

JULIE

Then one night you'll be sleeping, and they'll come into your room and get under your sheets and they'll peck at your face and your eyes and your ears -

ETHAN

(starts to cry)  
No, stop it, stop it! Mom, tell her to stop it!

TABITHA

Goddammit Julie, knock it off!

The harsh tone in Tabitha's voice shocks both Julie and Ethan into silence. She doesn't yell very often.

JULIE

(quietly, to Ethan)  
You're such a baby.

Julie's trying to play it off, but even she's getting nervous now.

**EXT. CEMETERY - DAY**

Back with Jim and Boyd --

JIM

I'd really appreciate if you could just point us back towards the highway.

BOYD

Just keep heading east down the main road there. Should start seeing signs about a mile or so out of town.

JIM

(extends his hand)

Great. 'Ppreciate it. Apologies again.

BOYD

Not a problem.

Boyd watches Jim head back down the hill towards the car.

KENNY

You want me to make up a couple spots at the station?

BOYD

Might as well. Gonna be a long night.

They watch the minivan pull back onto the road.

**INT. COLONY HOUSE - DAY**

Ellis stands at the window shirtless, smoking a joint and watching the minivan drive down the road. Fatima comes up behind him, rubs her hands lovingly on his chest.

ELLIS

Some new folks in town. Looks like a family.

FATIMA

They still driving around?

ELLIS

Yeah.

FATIMA

God. That's the worst part.

ELLIS

You sure about that?

FATIMA

It's the part where you still expect to find the road that takes you home. That's the part that's cruel.

She kisses his shoulder, leans her head against his back. He covers her hand with his own as it rests on his chest.

ELLIS

I love you.

FATIMA

I know.

**INT. BOYD'S OFFICE, SHERIFF'S STATION - DAY**

Boyd sits turning the lamp on his desk on and off, on and off. A knock at the door. He looks up to see Father Kelly standing in the doorway.

FATHER KELLY

Thought I'd see how you were holding up.

Boyd stares at the lamp.

BOYD

Where do you think it comes from? The electricity. The water. You think it's magic?

Father Kelly takes the seat across the desk.

FATHER KELLY

I've always found electricity to be one of the more common forms of magic we take for granted in the world.

BOYD

(grim smile)

At least you didn't say it was God lending us a helping hand.

FATHER KELLY

I also didn't say it wasn't.

Boyd shakes his head. Goes to the map. As he speaks, he points ot the different spots marked on the map.

BOYD

That car had Washington plates on it. Which means they probably came off a highway somewhere in the pacific northwest. When Kenny and his dad got here, they detoured off a road in San Antonio. Kristi, hell, Kristi was in Michigan. Nathan and Sara were on the eastern tip of Long Island. I can point to every single entry point for every single person in this town. You know what I can't show you? I can't show you -

(MORE)

BOYD (CONT'D)  
(spreads his arms)  
- this. Anywhere.

FATHER KELLY  
What's your point, Boyd?

BOYD  
I heard about your talk with Kenny.  
Said you told him this place taught  
you what faith "really" means.

FATHER KELLY  
That's right.

BOYD  
So you tell me something. And I  
don't want any of the bullshit you  
talked about at the cemetery. You  
tell me what it is about this place,  
about the things we've seen that  
could make you possibly think there's  
still someone up there looking out  
for us.

FATHER KELLY  
You really want the answer?  
(off Boyd's look)  
Because of you.

Boyd bursts out laughing; he laughs so hard it brings tears  
to his eyes.

FATHER KELLY (CONT'D)  
I realize how that may sound -

BOYD  
You really don't.

FATHER KELLY  
Before you came here I buried more  
people in a week than you've seen  
die in the last two years. And there  
were no ceremonies then, no tears,  
because people had given up on  
everything but trying to survive the  
next night. You came here and you  
created order from chaos. You found  
the talismans in the forest. You  
made it possible for people to protect  
themselves, to live again, not just  
survive. I believe that you're the  
one who will find a way out. Who  
will get these people home.

(MORE)

FATHER KELLY (CONT'D)

That's why God brought you here.  
That's what gives me faith.

Boyd stares at the lamp, shakes his head.

BOYD

A giant tree in the middle of the road brought me here, same as you. And if God had something to do with that? He's a bigger sonofabitch than I thought.

(looks at the map)

I've seen things in that forest you wouldn't believe. God didn't bring me here. Because I don't think it's a place God remembers. I think it's a nightmare that got stuck in the world. And now that poor bastard in the minivan just drove his family straight into it.

They sit in silence, the words hanging in the air.

**INT. CAR - DAY**

Jim and Tabitha are peering out the windshield as they drive along the backroad outside of town.

TABITHA

How far did he say the highway was?

JIM

Said we shoulda seen signs about a mile out of town.

TABITHA

I didn't -- this is way more than a mile. Maybe we should --

Tabitha is cut off by the sight of something that leaves both she and Jim bewildered. They are once again approaching the entrance to the town.

JIM

What the hell is this?

TABITHA

You didn't -- did you turn somewhere?

JIM

No, I just --

Looks back over his shoulder, looking for a turn he knows he didn't take.

JIM (CONT'D)

This can't be the same place.

As Jim drives down the main road, they see some of the townspeople still lingering, watching the car's progress.

JULIE

Okay, this is getting really creepy.

Jim stops the car.

TABITHA

(to Jim)

Just ask someone else.

Jim is getting frustrated. He rolls down the window.

JIM

(to one of the townspeople)

'Scuse me, I'm trying to get back on the highway, could you --

The Townsperson turns away from him and walks away.

JIM (CONT'D)

Are you kidding me???

Pissed, Jim grabs the door handle and starts getting out. Tabitha grabs his arm - she's getting really freaked out.

TABITHA

Jim, let's just go, okay? We probably missed the turn.

Jim bites down on his frustration, throws the car into reverse and jerks the minivan through a three point turn.

**INT. NATHAN AND SARA'S HOUSE - DAY**

NATHAN MYERS (27), stands at the window, watching Jim drive back out the way they came. He's got a tea tray in his hands. He turns away from the window.

**INT. SARA'S BEDROOM - DAY**

Nathan's little sister, Sara Myers, the fragile girl with wild eyes that was watching Jim in the diner, sits on the bed, her knees pulled up to her chest, staring blankly at the wall. Nathan enters with the tea.

NATHAN

I got a look at the new people in town. Husband, wife, some kids.

(MORE)

NATHAN (CONT'D)

They look kind of on the young side. Maybe, maybe once they get situated we could head over there. See if they need any help getting adjusted.

(no response)

Just think about it. Be good to get out a bit. Make some friends. I think it could help. Having friends.

Tears well in Sara's eyes. She starts to tremble as the tears roll down her cheeks.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Hey, it's okay. We don't -- I didn't mean to upset you.

SARA

(trembling)

I knew. I knew they were coming. I saw them in my dream. It's about to get so much worse. Terrible things are going to happen.

NATHAN

To who?

She looks up at him with tears in her eyes.

SARA

All of us.

**INT. MINIVAN - DAY**

Jim is driving, focused, channeling his frustration into finding the turnoff. Tabitha's nervous - something doesn't feel right. Even Ethan and Julie are peering out their windows, looking for a turn, a sign, anything.

TABITHA

Maybe it's more of a - what's the word - like a switchback. You know what I'm talking about? You merge getting on but then to get back you'd almost have to do a U-turn to get on the original road.

JIM

I would have noticed if we merged with another road.

TABITHA

Well, you obviously didn't Jim, because we're driving in circles. Just drive slow --

JIM  
I am driving slow.

He's actually getting angry and speeding up. Both their nerves are wearing thin. Ethan senses the tension.

ETHAN  
(trying to be bright)  
We'll find it dad!

Tabitha's had enough.

TABITHA  
Jim slow down! You're gonna pass it again!

JIM  
Pass what?! What are we gonna pass, Tabitha? The switchback? Where is it? Show it to me.

TABITHA  
Don't do that.

JIM  
There's nothing here! I'm going twenty miles an hour, alright? Stop telling me to --  
(looks out the windshield)  
Goddammit!!!

He slams his hand on the steering wheel, losing his shit. They have once again entered the town.

Jim hits the brakes, bringing the car to a stop. He sits in the drivers seat, drained. Tabitha looks around them, something is very wrong. Not just the fact that they're back in the town but --

TABITHA  
This is impossible.

JIM  
Look, I can't drive any slower, alright?

TABITHA  
No, that's not - we didn't go in a circle that time. We drove out this way. You turned around and drove out. So how did we get back to --

Jim looks around. She's right. Frustration turns to bewilderment - and the slightest hint of fear.



There are Townspeople watching from their windows.

JIM  
No, this - no.

Jim throws the car into gear and PEELS OUT in a 180, pushing the mini-van's engine, more reckless than before. He speeds back out in the direction they came, just like before.

**EXT. SHERIFF'S STATION - DAY**

Boyd and Kenny watch Jim speed back out of town.

KENNY  
You think they're ready?

JIM  
Go ahead and get the strip.

Kenny disappears into the station. Boyd sighs a deep sigh as the mini-van disappears back into the forest.

**INT. MINI-VAN - DAY**

Jim is speeding down the backroad, both his and Tabitha's nerves are frayed. Ethan and Julie are sitting stock still in the backseat, scared and confused.

TABITHA  
Jim. Jim, how is that possible?

JIM  
I don't know.

TABITHA  
You can't - the same road can't go in a circle one time and then go in a - we're on the same road.

Ethan starts crying. Tabitha turns around -

TABITHA (CONT'D)  
No, no, baby, it's okay. Don't cry.  
It's gonna be fine, okay, we're just gonna --

For a SPLIT SECOND, through the windshield, we see ANOTHER CAR come around the bend towards them and -

CRASH!!!!!!

The whole world spins and slams upside down in a crushing, devastating crash. The mini-van goes crashing off the side of the road and down the hill!

Toppling end over end until it comes crashing to a halt at the bottom, ON ITS SIDE, WEDGED AGAINST A TREE.

And then - it's over. The wheel's spin on the wreckage of the mini-van at the bottom of the hill.

**UP ON THE ROAD**, the Second Car, a BMW SEDAN, is wrapped around a tree, steam rising from the radiator. The windshield is shattered. Someone went through it. The driver, Gil, a young male in his early 20s, has had his throat pierced by a low, sturdy tree branch. He is pinned to the seat and quietly choking to death on his own blood.

**INT. MINI-VAN - DAY**

The mini-van is on its side with the driver's side down. Jim comes to, looking up at Tabitha, suspended above him, unconscious in the passenger seat, her head is bleeding, her body limp against the seatbelt. A wave of panic hits.

JIM

No. Nononono --

Jim grabs Tabitha's limp hand and holds it as he tries to turn and get a visual on the kids, but his range of motion is limited, the steering wheel pressed against his side.

JIM (CONT'D)

(panicked)

Everybody okay? Kids? Kids, you okay back there?

He can see Julie over his right shoulder. Her eyes wide in shock, her seatbelt holding her suspended in the seat.

JIM (CONT'D)

Julie? Julie, look at me. Sweetie, please, I need you to look at me.

She turns to look at him.

JIM (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

JULIE

I - I think so.

JIM

Ethan? Ethan buddy, can you hear me? Ethan?

ETHAN

(weak)

I'm stuck.

Jim breathes a sigh of relief. Looks back at Tabitha. She still hasn't moved. He rubs her hand in his, shakes her gently.

JIM  
 Tabitha? Baby, wake up.  
 (no response)  
 Tabitha!

JULIE  
 (panicking)  
 What's wrong with mom? Is she okay?

JIM  
 (reigns it in)  
 She's fine. Don't worry, we're -  
 we're all fine. I'm gonna get us out  
 of here, okay? Everybody just - just  
 hold on. We're gonna be okay.

Jim scans the car, his mind racing.

**EXT. SECOND CAR CRASH SITE - SAME TIME**

The REAR driver's side door of the BMW creaks open. TOBEY MCCRAY (19) stumbles out of the backseat. He's barefoot, wearing board shorts and a tank-top. Ordinarily he'd be handsome, an all-American, boy-next-door type. The gash on his forehead and the blood streaming down his face sort of temper the aesthetic.

He's in shock, trying to collect his thoughts. He takes in the carnage. Stumbles. Vomits.

**EXT. STREET, TOWN - EARLY EVENING**

ANGLE ON : A MAKESHIFT SPIKE STRIP BEING ROLLED ACROSS THE ROAD.

Kenny and Boyd roll out the strip near the entrance to town, making sure it stretches across the entire road.

BOYD  
 (re: the spike strip)  
 Make sure you pull it taut. Guy  
 seemed unhinged enough as it is.  
 Last thing I need is him barreling  
 through town once he finds out.

KENNY  
 How many times you figure we've done  
 this?

BOYD  
 Too many.

TOBEY (O.S.)  
Hey! Hey, we need help!

                  BOYD  
What the --

Boyd and Kenny turn to see Tobey stumbling up the road.

                  KENNY  
I don't remember seeing him in the  
van.

                  BOYD  
He wasn't.

Tobey reaches them in shock, out of breath.

                  TOBEY  
There was an accident. It's really  
bad. Please.

                  BOYD  
How many people in your car?

                  TOBEY  
Four. Four of us.

                  BOYD  
Everyone alive?

                  TOBEY  
I - uh, I -

                  BOYD  
How far up the road?

                  TOBEY  
Maybe a mile, I don't know.

                  KENNY  
We got less than two hours of daylight  
left.

                  BOYD  
We better make this quick then. Get  
him to the clinic. Find Father Kelly,  
grab whatever supplies you can and  
meet me out there.

                  KENNY  
(deeply troubled)  
Sheriff, you ever seen two cars show  
up at the same time before?

Judging by the grave look on Boyd's face, he hasn't.

BOYD  
You should go.

Kenny nods and starts moving off with Tobey. Boyd looks up at the sky. The first hints of fading daylight are just beginning to appear.

**INT. CLINIC SUPPLY CLOSET - EARLY EVENING**

Kristi and Kenny are loading up on supplies.

KRISTI  
How many people are hurt?

KENNY  
He just said grab as much as I can.

KRISTI  
We don't exactly have a lot to spare.

KENNY  
Kristi, there's kids out there.

Kristi looks at him. Nods her understanding.

KRISTI  
How are we supposed to get all this stuff out there?

KENNY  
Whoah, whoah, what do you mean we?  
It's gonna be dark soon.

KRISTI  
And that's exactly why you need me there. It's not a request. Don't make me waste time arguing with you.

Kenny wants to argue, knows she's right.

KENNY  
About a month ago we gathered up all the spare tires from everyone's cars just in case. We got a couple vehicles at the far end of town for emergencies.

KRISTI  
Good. Let's go.

She grabs one of the supply bags and heads for the door.

**EXT. SECOND CAR CRASH SITE - EARLY EVENING**

A bruised and battered girl in a bikini top and shorts, JADE HERRERA (18) - another passenger from the BMW - is sitting by the car in a daze staring with vacant eyes at -

THE BODY of another girl lying face down in the grass. She's Jade's age, also in beachwear that looks out of place on her mangled, lifeless body. This is the passenger who went through the windshield.

Sheriff Boyd comes running up the road, out of breath. He stops when he sees just how bad it is.

Boyd rushes up to Jade. Kneels down in front of her, giving her a cursory exam.

BOYD

Are you okay? Does anything hurt?

Jade looks up at him, as if she just noticed he was there. She's clearly in shock.

JADE

I'm fine.

Her gaze drifts back to the body.

BOYD

Is there anyone else in the car?

She doesn't answer. Boyd glances in the BMW, it's empty. He takes off his jacket, puts it around Jade's shoulders.

BOYD (CONT'D)

Okay, I'm gonna go and check on the other car. There's help on the way. You just - you stay here. I'll be right back.

JADE

(far away)

Okay.

Boyd waits a beat, not sure he should leave her, but he's got no choice.

**EXT. CEMETERY - EARLY EVENING**

ANGLE ON : LAUREN AND MEAGAN'S RUDIMENTARY HEADSTONE.

Ellis stands at the fresh grave, paying his respects. He lays two flowers on the grave, saying a silent goodbye.

**EXT. STREET, EDGE OF TOWN - EARLY EVENING**

Ellis is walking back towards the Colony House at the far edge of town when a pick up truck pulls up beside him. Father Kelly is driving. Kenny and Kristi are in the car.

FATHER KELLY

Ellis -- there was an accident outside town. We could use some help.

ELLIS

What?

FATHER KELLY

The mini-van with the family. It collided with another car. Your dad's already out there.

ELLIS

(disbelief)

What do you mean it collided with another car?

KENNY

Will you just get in?! We don't have a lot of time.

Ellis hesitates. He's not a part of this anymore.

ELLIS

I, um --

FATHER KELLY

Ellis. It'll be dark soon. He's your father.

The words hit home.

**EXT. ACCIDENT SCENE, MINIVAN - EARLY EVENING**

Jim is still stuck, trying and failing to find leverage to move.

JIM

You guys keep talking to me, okay? Let's tell a story.

JULIE

Dad --

JIM

(to Ethan)

What do you say, little man? You wanna tell a story? How about the crows? That was pretty cool right?

JULIE  
Dad, I think he's bleeding.

JIM  
Where? Where is it coming from?

JULIE  
(panicking)  
I don't know, I can't see.

Jim is powerless to help. He starts thrashing in the seat but it's no good, he's stuck.

JIM  
I need to hear from everybody, Ethan.  
(no response)  
Ethan!  
(hears a noise outside  
the van)  
Hello? Somebody out there?

BOYD (O.S.)  
Everybody okay in there?

A momentary relief washes over Jim. Help has arrived.

JIM  
I don't know, I can't -- the steering  
wheel's got me pinned, I can't move.

We hear the sounds of Boyd climbing up onto the car. His face appears in the passenger side window above Tabitha. He puts two fingers on Tabitha's neck, feeling for a pulse.

JIM (CONT'D)  
Please, help our kids. I think my  
son -- he's bleeding. Please.

BOYD  
I need you to stay calm, okay? What's  
your name?

JIM  
Jim. My name's Jim.

BOYD  
Okay Jim, my name's Boyd. We got  
some more folks on the way to help,  
everything's gonna be fine.  
(off Jim's look)  
Why don't you go ahead and introduce  
me to the kids.

JIM  
Julie. Julie and Ethan.



BOYD  
 (turns to Julie)  
 Julie, how are you holding up?

JULIE  
 I'm okay. I think I'm okay.

BOYD  
 You think if I open up your door and  
 lift you out that'd be alright?

Julie nods, she's still in shock.

BOYD (CONT'D)  
 Okay. Let's give that a try then.

KENNY (O.S.)  
 Sheriff?

BOYD  
 (calls up the hill)  
 We're down here.

**EXT. SECOND CAR CRASH SITE - EARLY EVENING**

Kristi is crouched down beside Jade, applying a bandage to a cut on her head. She hands Jade a bottle of water.

KRISTI  
 (to Jade)  
 I want you to drink this, okay?  
 Small sips.  
 (stands, to Father  
 Kelly)  
 She's in shock. Keep her warm and  
 don't let her fall asleep.

Kristi grabs the supply bag and heads over the edge of the hill. A wide angle reveals Ellis tending to Julie by the side of the mini-van, while Kenny helps Boyd lower himself inside.

Kristi freezes at the site of the carnage. This is far more than she's ever had to deal with.

KRISTI (CONT'D)  
 Oh my god.

**INT. MINI-VAN - EARLY EVENING**

Boyd is lowering himself inside toward a non-responsive Ethan.

BOYD

(to Ethan)

How you doing in there, Ethan? Can you hear me, buddy?

As he gets closer he sees the damage that's been done - part of the mangled frame of the car has punctured Ethan's leg, attaching him to the car. His skin has gone very pale. He's lost a lot of blood.

JIM

(from the front seat)

How is he? Boyd, how's he doing?

Boyd strips off his belt and cinches it around Ethan's thigh, slowing the flow of blood.

BOYD

He's good. Fine. I'm just - I'm gonna peek up front now and take a look at how you're doing.

JIM

What? No. Get my boy out first.

BOYD

Jim --

JIM

What's wrong with him? He's okay, right?

BOYD

Jim, I need you to calm down. I know that's not easy right now, but we gotta take things slow so that we don't make them worse, alright? We need to get you and your wife out of the front seat so that we can have a little more room to maneuver back here. Okay?

JIM

Okay.

**EXT. MINIVAN - EARLY EVENING**

Boyd comes out of the car. Meets Ellis and Kenny on the ground.

KENNY

How they look?

BOYD

Kid looks bad. We gotta get the mom  
and dad out first.

KENNY

Is the mom -- ?

BOYD

She's alive, but she took a pretty  
nasty shot to the head. Go see if  
that other car has a crowbar or  
something. We're gonna need leverage  
to get the dad out.

Kenny looks nervously at the sky. The first shades of  
nightfall are beginning to show.

BOYD (CONT'D)

(to Kenny)

Hey! Look at me. I need you to  
focus right now.

KENNY

Yes sir.

Kenny heads off. Boyd looks at Ellis.

BOYD

(to Ellis)

Thank you. For coming.

Ellis nods. Walks away. It's gonna take more than a crisis  
to repair whatever happened between these two.

**INT. CLINIC - EARLY EVENING**

Tobey, from the accident, is lying in bed, groggy.

SARA (O.S.)

How are you feeling?

Tobey turns. Sara Myers, the fragile girl with the wild  
eyes is standing in the corner of the room. A little freaked  
out, Tobey tries to sit up, but he's woozy.

TOBEY

Where's the doctor?

She walks to the bed.

SARA

She had to go. But it's okay. You're  
safe now. Everything's going to be  
alright.

**EXT. CRASH SITE - EARLY EVENING**

Tabitha is laid out, still unconscious, by the side of the mini-van. Jim and Julie are kneeling beside her.

In the BG we see Boyd, Kenny and Ellis helping Kristi out of the mini-van.

BOYD  
How's the kid?

KRISTI  
He's a mess. Getting him out of there is gonna take at least an hour.

BOYD  
We got about ten minutes before the sun sets.

KRISTI  
We can't just pull him out. I have no idea what type of internal damage there is. He could bleed out before we get to the top of the hill.

KENNY  
We don't have a choice. We can't just leave them here.

Boyd's mind races for a solution. Then -

BOYD  
Can you fix him in the van?

KRISTI  
What?

BOYD  
Can you stitch the kid up inside the van?

KRISTI  
What does that matter, we'd still be --

Boyd's hand goes into his pocket. He pulls out the TALISMAN HE PICKED UP OFF THE FLOOR OF MEAGAN'S BEDROOM.

KRISTI (CONT'D)  
Will that even work?

BOYD  
I don't know.

KENNY  
No. No, that's nuts, no way --

KRISTI

Kenny --

KENNY

You're not staying out here, you -  
shit.

Kenny catches sight of Jim making a beeline for the mini-  
van. Boyd intercepts him.

BOYD

Woah, woah, hold on a second -

JIM

Get out of my way. I'm getting my  
son out of there.

BOYD

I can't let you do that, Jim.

JIM

Oh, so now you wanna help? Now you  
wanna talk to me? I don't know what  
the fuck is going on here, but I'm  
getting my son!

He tries to shove past - Boyd grabs him, the two struggle.

BOYD

You can't do that.

JIM

Why not?!?!?

BOYD

Because you could kill him! Alright?  
You move him now and he could die.

All the fight goes out of Jim. He can't take anymore.

BOYD (CONT'D)

Look, we are gonna do everything we  
can. But right now, I need you to  
take your daughter and your wife and  
go back to town.

JIM

No. No, we stay here.

BOYD

Jim -

JIM

My family stays here!

JULIE

Dad! Mom's waking up.

Jim turns to see a very disoriented Tabitha beginning to stir on the ground. Boyd grabs his arm.

BOYD

Jim, I need you to listen to me. Very carefully. It is not safe in these woods after dark. And we have about eight more minutes before the sun goes down. Now if you want to stay that's fine. But you get your wife and daughter in that truck with Father Kelly and you send them back to town. Please. I don't want to bury another kid.

Jim stares at him. His mind spinning. He may not understand exactly what Boyd is saying - but he believes him.

**EXT. PICK-UP TRUCK - EARLY EVENING**

Jim is trying to make Tabitha comfortable in the back of the pick-up. Tabitha is disoriented, SEVERELY CONCUSSED.

TABITHA

No, I'm staying! I'm not leaving him. I wanna stay here.

JIM

Tabby, we need to get Julie back to town. I promise, we'll be right behind you.

TABITHA

(terrified)

Why can't they get him out of the car?

JIM

He just - he's stuck. The doctor's gotta make sure it's safe to move him. She's gonna patch him up in the car and then we're gonna come meet you and Julie in town.

TABITHA

Jim, I don't trust these people. There's something - it's not right here.

JIM

I know. But I need you to trust me. Please.

Tabitha's eyes well with tears.

TABITHA

Jim -

JIM

I love you. We'll be there as soon  
as we can.

Tabitha nods, her head too scrambled to argue. Jim turns to Julie, about to say something when Julie throws her arms around his neck, overcome with emotion.

JULIE

When he wakes up, please tell him  
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to scare  
him. I didn't mean it.

JIM

I know, baby. It's okay.

Meanwhile, Ellis is scavenging the trunk of the BMW, grabbing whatever supplies he can. He shuts the trunk and finds Boyd standing there.

ELLIS

You realize this is suicide.

Boyd doesn't have a response for that. He takes a chain from around his neck. At the end of the chain is A KEY.

BOYD

You remember what this is for?  
(he does)  
I need you to hold onto it til  
morning. Everything goes okay I'll  
come get it back from you.

Ellis takes the key. There's so much left unsaid. Too much.

BOYD (CONT'D)

I love you, son.

He wants to say it back. He just can't. He extends his hand.

ELLIS

Good luck.

Boyd shakes his hand. Ellis heads for the truck without another word.

Ellis hops into the bed of the truck where Father Kelly sits beside Tabitha. Kenny and Kristi stand by the driver's side door.

KRISTI

(to Kenny)

I'll be fine. Get those people back to town.

Kristi puts her hand on his cheek, kisses him lightly on the lips - the kiss they didn't have in the opening.

KRISTI (CONT'D)

I'll be fine.

Ellis bangs on the side of the truck.

ELLIS

Hey lovejoy, let's go! We're running out of daylight!

Kenny looks up at the sky, looks at Kristi.

KRISTI

Go.

**INT. CLINIC - EARLY EVENING**

Sara is approaching Tobey's bed.

TOBEY

Where are we? We got detoured off the road. I kept telling Gil he was driving too fast. The people in the other car. Are they okay?

SARA

(sadly)

I don't think so.

Tobey takes it hard.

TOBEY

Jesus Christ. I never - I shouldn't have gone with him. I never should have fucking --

SARA

Shhh, it's okay.

(she strokes his hair)

It's okay.

She leans in. Kisses him softly on the lips. It's a strange, oddly erotic moment. She draws back, her lips inches from his.

SARA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. This isn't your fault.



TOBEY

What do you --

With surprising quickness, Sara thrusts a LONG SCREWDRIVER up under Tobey's chin, driving it all the way up. His body jerks and spasms, his bulging eyes filled with confusion.

**EXT. ACCIDENT SCENE, MINIVAN - EARLY EVENING**

Boyd stands by the wreck, his eyes scanning the forest as the sky grows darker. Jim climbs up on top of the minivan and lowers himself in the passenger side door.

**INT. MINIVAN - EARLY EVENING**

Jim lowers himself into the minivan where Kristi waits beside Ethan. It's a tight fit.

KRISTI

Okay, here's what we're gonna do. I'm gonna need you to hold him steady while I pull his leg free. If he wakes up and starts moving around it could do more damage than there already is. You think you can do that?

JIM

Yeah.

Jim looks down at Ethan, his heart in his throat.

KRISTI

Jim.  
(he looks up)  
I need to know you're with me here.

JIM

I'm good.

KRISTI

(calls off)  
Boyd? You better come in, we're getting ready to start.

**EXT. ACCIDENT SCENE, MINIVAN - EARLY EVENING**

Boyd looks at the talisman in his hand, takes a final look at the surrounding woods.

BOYD

I'm comin'.

He turns towards the minivan.

**EXT. BACKROAD - EVENING**

The Pick-up drives down the backroad.

**INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - EVENING**

Kenny is driving. Jade and Julie are in the cab beside him. Father Kelly and Ellis are in the bed of the truck with Tabitha.

Ellis is staring at the darkening sky. Yells in through the window.

ELLIS  
(to Kenny)  
Drive faster!

KENNY  
I'm going as fast as I can, we're  
almost --

**EXT. ROAD - EVENING**

ANGLE ON : THE TIRES OF THE PICK-UP AS THEY SPEED OVER THE SPIKE STRIP BOYD AND KENNY LEFT IN THE STREET!

The tires on the pick-up blow! Sending the truck into a skid!

**INT. MINIVAN - NIGHT**

Boyd is trying to anchor the talisman in the windshield, mirroring the placement we've seen on the front doors of the houses.

BOYD  
(under his breath)  
Please work.

He hangs the talisman from the rearview mirror, trying as best he can to secure it.

JIM  
What are you doing?

BOYD  
Securing our perimeter.

JIM  
What?

KRISTI  
Jim! I need you to focus.

Jim turns back to Ethan with his full attention.

**INT. PICK-UP - EVENING**

The truck has come to a stop. Everyone sits in shocked silence.

KENNY

Shit! Shit, shit, shit.

ELLIS

(to Kenny)

You left the fucking spike strip down?!

Kenny looks through the windshield, frantically trying to gauge the nearest refuge.

KENNY

Avery's farmhouse is the closest place.

ELLIS

No, the farm's close, but the house is way too far back from the property line. Our best bet is up the hill. Colony House.

Kenny DOES NOT like this idea.

FATHER KELLY

He's right.

KENNY

That's if they open the door.

ELLIS

They'll open it.

Kenny sighs. They're out of both options and time.

KENNY

(to Julie and Jade)

Listen to me. It is extremely important that we get inside before the sun goes down. Okay? So that means you move as fast as you can. You run where we tell you and you keep your eyes straight ahead no matter what? Okay?

JULIE

What happens when the sun goes down?

**INT. MINIVAN - EVENING**

Boyd has gathered items from the family's suitcases and is using them to cover the windows, keeping his eyes on the surrounding trees as the last rays of sunlight begin to disappear from the sky.

Meanwhile, Kristi has finished her preparations and takes hold of Ethan's leg.

KRISTI

Okay, I'm ready. We're gonna do this nice and slow. You got him?

JIM

Yeah.

Kristi takes a deep breath, steels herself as Boyd peers out through the window covering.

BOYD

Jim, there are things you need to understand about what happens next.

KRISTI

Not now.

BOYD

We don't exactly have a lot of time.

KRISTI

I need everybody focused. You can -

Kristi is cut off as ETHAN GOES INTO A SEIZURE!!! His body begins spasming, his eyes roll to the back of his head. Kristi instinctively grabs his leg, trying to keep it stable.

KRISTI (CONT'D)

No, no, no, no - Jim, hold him down!

JIM

What's happening?

KRISTI

I don't know! You have to hold him down!!!

Jim looks down at Ethan's spasming, writhing form, his mind spinning, his breath choked in his throat, frozen with fear as -

**EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT**

Kenny is ushering Jade and Julie from the truck as night falls.

KENNY

Go! Go! Go! Do not stop! Do not  
look back!

Meanwhile, Father Kelly and Ellis are helping Tabitha down from the bed of the truck. Ellis scans the area feverishly as they stumble from the truck.

**INT. MINI-VAN - NIGHT**

The severity of Ethan's seizure is escalating. Jim has his hands on him now, but he's holding back, not putting his full weight into it as Ethan continues to thrash and spasm.

KRISTI

Goddammit Jim, hold him down!

JIM

I don't want to hurt him.

KRISTI

If he tears an artery he's gonna die! Do you understand me? Your son is going to die.

That snaps Jim out of his fear. He presses down on Ethan with all of his strength.

KRISTI (CONT'D)

Boyd, we need you back here!

Meanwhile, Boyd peers through the coverings on the windshield and his face goes white with fear - there are figures approaching slowly from the dark.

BOYD

They're coming.

**END OF PILOT**