

THE ONE PERCENT

Pilot

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BLACK

The ominous sounds of thunder rolling in the distance.

FADE IN:

EXT. A PEPPER FARM - KERALA INDIA - DAY

A vast field of pepper crops.

A TITLE

"KERALA, INDIA: August 9, 2001"

A number of humble workers prune and tend to the plants.

Two young girls laugh, playing hide-and-seek among the crops.

Finally, we come to Amaranth Kurup, 50's. He sits at a small table, scribbling on a clipboard and sipping at a cup of tea.

Suddenly, a forceful wind blows the pages of his clipboard violently. He struggles to hold the pages down.

Amaranth rises from the table and examines the skies suspiciously. He looks to the fields. *[All the following is in Hindi with subtitles.]*

AMARANTH
(Calling out.)
Nita! Ramya!

Another thunderclap. Closer. Louder.

AMARANTH (CONT'D)
Nita!

One of the young girls appears before her father.

AMARANTH (CONT'D)
Take your sister inside the house.

NITA
She's hiding. I don't know where she went.

Amaranth looks to the fields.

AMARANTH
Get inside. Now.

Nita dutifully obeys.

Amaranth walks toward the fields. Fierce wind. The sky quickly growing black.

AMARANTH (CONT'D)

Ramya!

And with that, a violent streak of lightning, followed by an earth-shaking clap of thunder. The sound of the first heavy drops of rain slap against the leaves and the ground.

Amaranth looks down at his clipboard, an expression of absolute shock on his face.

CLOSE ON THE CLIPBOARD

What appears to be a drop of blood against the white page. Then another.

The sky opens and rain, red as blood, pours from the heavens.

The workers run for cover, screaming.

WORKER

It is the end of days! God save us!
End of days!

Amaranth drops his clipboard and runs into the fields.

AMARANTH

Ramya!!! Ramya!!!

He tears through the leaves frantically, the crimson rain pelting him.

Faintly the sound of crying. He rips away at the bushes and finally finds his daughter crouched on the ground, trembling.

AMARANTH (CONT'D)

Rami?

The terrified little girl looks up at her father, her hair and her innocent face drenched in the "blood".

He scoops her up and dashes for the house, leaves snapping against his legs.

They finally reach the house, he practically throws her into the front door. Just as he is about to pull the door shut, the sudden and eerie sound of silence. As suddenly as it started, the rain has stopped.

Slowly, he comes out of the door, surveying his land, everything covered in crimson liquid. Dead silence.

Amaranth wipes his face and examines the red liquid on his hands. He looks up, staring into the sky...

NEIL YOUNG (A simple tune from a bad radio).

The Indian sky dissolves into night. Thousands of stars begin to appear. We hear the sound of night crickets.

We pan down to...

EXT. A FARM - NIGHT

...The light of a full moon impossibly illuminating an endless field of crops.

A TITLE

"CHAGRIN FALLS, OHIO: TONIGHT"

In silhouette, we pan across the crops, vast and serene, until we come to an old oak tree. Under the tree, the shadow of a man. Suddenly, a flick and the glow of a lighter.

As we come closer, we see ALFRED MURPHY, 40's dragging on a cigarette, staring up into the sky. He is dressed in his pajama bottoms and a t-shirt. He takes another drag, a serene expression on his face. He looks over the fields for a moment, taking it all in. Another long drag. For a moment, he stares at the lighter in his hand.

CLOSE ON

An antique Zippo lighter. Barely visible, are inscribed the initials, "M.M.M". He rubs his thumb across the engraving, as if he were searching for some answer in the old metal.

He looks into the night sky. Another drag. We can hear the paper of the cigarette burning, his breath... his exhale.

CLOSE ON HIS EYES

He is somewhere else, somewhere he longs to be...

Eventually, he snaps himself out of it and stubs the butt out against the old tree. He carefully places the cigarette butt into a plastic bag and pockets it. He reaches down and places the lighter into a rusty metal box.

In the box, a soft pack of cigarettes, an old leather journal, a bottle of hand sanitizer and an aspirator of Binaca. (Breath freshener.) He spritzes the breath freshener into his mouth, replaces it, then picks up the sanitizer and rubs it vigorously through his hands.

Finally, he replaces the sanitizer, closes the box, and places it into a man-made hole next to the tree, covering it with some twigs and leaves that were in a pile nearby.

Taking one last look at the heavens, he reaches down and picks up an old tape deck. He hits a button and the music stops. The sounds of the night remain, slightly amplified.

INT. A KITCHEN

ALFRED opens a cupboard, and lifts some of the rubbish. He places the bag with his cigarette at the very bottom, replacing the rubbish on top of it. He walks through the moonlit house and climbs the stairs.

INT. A HALLWAY- CONTINUOUS

Alfred goes to a door which is slightly ajar. He gently pushes it open.

INT. A BEDROOM

Alfred looks over to see a young girl (his teenage daughter) asleep on the bed, laptop still opened, a cell phone still clutched in her hand.

He walks over, delicately closes the laptop and puts it with her cell phone on the end table. He looks down at his daughter, staring at her serene expression for a moment, and then exits as quietly as he entered.

INT. THE MASTER BEDROOM

As Alfred enters his bedroom. We see his wife asleep on the bed. Her reading glasses still on her face. There are textbooks and papers strewn around her. He cleans up the papers, takes her glasses off and adjusts the covers on her. He lays down in the bed.

CLOSE ON ALFRED

He stares at the ceiling. After a few moments, he finally closes his eyes.

BLACK

EXT. A MUNICIPAL BUILDING - DAY

The side of the building, pristine and white. Suddenly, a tomato explodes against the white of the building like a gunshot. Then another. Eventually the side of the building resembles a Pollock canvas. Beautiful and chaotic. The sound of a mob and turmoil...

We hear a voice through a megaphone.

VOICE (O.C.)

They're killing us! They're turning our soil to dust! Ashes to ashes, dust to dust! And they expect us to lay down! To take their filthy blood money and walk away from our land! Well, you know what I say? *I say they have no idea who they're fucking with!*

The camera pans down across a roaring mob.

EXT. BUSINESS DISTRICT - CONTINUOUS

Hundreds of farmers gathered in front of an FDA building, protesting the recent voting down of a GMO labeling bill.

Tractors and Caterpillars block the main thoroughfare.

One of the farmers, Nathaniel Cobb (69), a man who looks as if he was made of the very earth he tends, stands on a vegetable crate shouting into a megaphone...

NATHANIEL

Well, maybe we'll give 'em what they want! Maybe we'll stop working the land every day and come right down here. Camp out on their doorstep, until they realize that they're wrong about us! That we'll never walk away! That we refuse to poison our neighbors! We refuse to poison our children!

More roars from the crowd. Behind Nathaniel, we see his daughter Laura (39), tough and beautiful, his son-in law Alfred, who we saw earlier and his grandson James (19), a younger version of Nathaniel himself.

The first line of farmers stand three feet away from the policeman who carry batons and shields.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

Mr. Marlowe released a statement yesterday saying that GMO labels run counter to science and to the public interest in healthy food! Now either he's got a hell of a sense of humor, or he's just another whore, bought and sold by the corporations! How can a label that says, "This is artificial" run against the public interest in healthy food?

Roars of approval.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)
The only thing that GMO labels run
against, is their multi-million
dollar profits!

Louder approval.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)
(Shouting like a madman.)
Until they cut down the last tree,
poison the last river and net the
last fish, they're not gonna
realize that they can't eat money!

Laura turns to James and Alfred and smiles. Alfred smiles back, but we can see the worry in his eyes. He senses that this protest is a powder keg about to explode.

James moves away, working his way through the crowd with a bag full of rotten tomatoes that he hands out to each farmer as if they were grenades.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)
Maybe we oughta show the bureaucrats
in there what a GMO vegetable looks
like! Maybe that'll help 'em decide
why food labeling is not only
necessary, but an absolute right for
consumers!

With that, the farmers begin to hurl more rotten, transgenic vegetables and fruits against the white building. It's a beautiful way to protest, like an ancient Spanish celebration.

The first line of protestors inches closer to the policemen.

The police begin to shout warnings at the farmers. The farmers shout back, until...

One farmer spits into an officer's face. The officer instinctively whacks the farmer on the head with his baton.

And just like that, the fuse is lit.

The whole mass of protestors blitz the police line, the farmers fight as if they had nothing to lose.

The police try to control them, but it's impossible. They are forced to fight back. They use their shields and batons. Blood begins to flow.

Nathaniel jumps off his crate and joins the chaos. James begins to follow, but Alfred grabs his son's arm. Nathaniel sees this and casts a fiery glance at Alfred.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

He's a man now. Let him go.

James yanks his arm away from his father and follows Nathaniel into battle. Alfred can only watch helplessly.

Laura rushes to help two women who are about to be trampled.

A young policeman is trying to grab Nathaniel. Nathaniel is about to clock him when he recognizes the young officer.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

Tommy? Tommy McCartin...?

Tommy looks at Nathaniel, a moment of hesitation, then he smashes Nathaniel in the head with his baton.

In a screaming rage, James tries to get at Tommy but is restrained by two other officers. He head butts one of them and narrowly escapes.

A group of policeman near the building fire tear gas cannisters into the crowd.

Alfred finds Laura and pulls her away from the madness.

James spots Tommy again, his eyes narrow. He starts to charge when...

A cannister explodes just feet away. The smoke rushes at James like a tidal wave. He tries to take a deep breath, but too late, the smoke envelops him.

Alfred spots his son.

ALFRED

(To Laura.)

Stay here!

He rushes over to James, who is coughing violently, saliva pouring from his mouth.

Alfred drags James to the sidewalk near Laura. They both attend him, Laura takes off her shirt and feverishly wipes her son's eyes, while Alfred holds him.

JAMES

(Trying to pull away.)

Get off of me! Let me go back!

Motherfuckers!

Alfred is paralyzed by the sight of his blinded and enraged son.

LAURA
 (To Alfred.)
 Don't just stand there! Go get some
 water!
 (Alfred stands there.)
 Go!!!

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Alfred hustles around the corner, onto a less crowded street.
 He darts into a convenience store.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Alfred rushes to a fridge to grab a bottle of water, but an
 older African American man, LEONARD WALLACE, 52, is blocking
 his way...

ALFRED
 Excuse me.

LEONARD
 Hold your horses, man. I'm getting--

Alfred shoves Leonard aside with force. The two men lock
 eyes, in close.

ALFRED
 Sorry...

Alfred grabs a big bottle of water. He runs to the counter
 where a young female employee stands, texting on her cell.
 She tosses the water into a plastic bag.

He fumbles through his pockets. No cash.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
 Shit!

He whips out his wallet and holds out his credit card.

YOUNG GIRL
 Fifteen dollar minimum.

ALFRED
 Lady, give me a break. My kid is--

YOUNG GIRL
 Fifteen dollar minimum.

He spots some groceries and lottery tickets on the counter.

ALFRED
I'll take these.

YOUNG GIRL
Those aren't--

ALFRED
(Fire in his eyes.)
Charge it. Now.

The young woman, now a bit frightened, swipes his card. Alfred sweeps the items into the bag and snatches his card back from the woman.

Leonard sees Alfred taking the groceries.

LEONARD
Hey! Those are my-- Hey!!!

But Alfred is already out the door.

EXT. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Alfred is running as fast as he can.

EXT. BUSINESS DISTRICT - MOMENTS LATER

The chaos still raging, Alfred gets back to Laura and James. James is coughing and clawing at his eyes.

LAURA
You're just making it worse!

JAMES
I can't see!

Alfred dumps the contents of the bag onto the street and snaps the bottle of water open. Laura still in her bra, pours the water onto her shirt and wipes James' face. She notices the groceries on the ground.

LAURA
You bought toilet paper?

ALFRED
Long story.

Nathaniel emerges from the smoke and chaos, blood pouring from the gash in his head. Laura sees him.

LAURA
Dad...!

NATHANIEL
I'm fine.

LAURA
You're bleeding!

NATHANIEL
(Unfazed.)
How's the boy?

LAURA
He'll be okay.

Nathaniel turns and looks at the pandemonium behind him. A deranged smile washes over his bloody face.

NATHANIEL
Beautiful, isn't it?

Alfred stares at his father-in-law, unsure of what world he is in right now...

FADE TO BLACK.

CREDITS: The camera travels low over a field of beautiful vegetables. They seem to have lifted from a fashion magazine. They look tasty, bursting with color, unreal. But suddenly, the vegetables begin to explode. In slow motion. We see their flesh burst against the lens. We continue traveling along the mess of erupting vegetables until we arrive at a tree. We tilt up and discover it is a tree of money.

EXT. THE COBB FARM - EVENING

The silence of the country almost rings in our ears after the madness we just witnessed.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Laura, now in comfortable clothes, attends to her father's injury with peroxide and bandages.

James sits at the table, eyes still swollen.

Alfred stands at the counter cracking some ice into a washcloth.

JAMES
We oughta bomb the place.

LAURA
James...

NATHANIEL

He's right.

LAURA

Don't encourage him.

Abigail (16) the daughter we saw sleeping earlier, enters.

ABIGAIL

Hey, what are we doing for dinner?

She notices them all staring at her.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Umm, what's going on? Why is he crying?

JAMES

I'm not crying, idiot.

LAURA

Where the hell were you? I didn't even know you were home.

ABIGAIL

I was in my room. There was a Project Runway marathon.

ALFRED

Come here.

She walks to her father, confused.

ABIGAIL

What?

Alfred takes her into his arms, hugging her tightly.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Okay, did someone die? Who died?

ALFRED

Nobody died.

LAURA

The protest got out of control.

ABIGAIL

Oh, my god. Are you guys okay?

NATHANIEL

Well, it took her a while, but she eventually got there.

LAURA

Everybody's fine.

ABIGAIL

Okay. Good.

(A pause.)

Maybe we should just order pizza or something.

LAURA

Just go back to your room.

ABIGAIL

Fine...

Abigail storms off.

ALFRED

(Calling after her.)

Hey. I'll make you something to eat.

NATHANIEL

Yeah, I wouldn't worry about a paternity test with that one, Murphy. She's definitely your daughter.

Alfred hands the ice to James, taking the insult quietly.

INT. BATHROOM- FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Alfred stands in his pajamas, brushing his teeth with organic toothpaste. The foam coming out of his mouth is green.

ALFRED

(Mouth full of toothpaste)

I'm saying maybe we should stop antagonizing the FDA and the multi-nationals. Those people are dangerous...

INT. ALFRED'S BEDROOM - FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Laura is in her underwear putting on her nightgown. Her attractive body somewhat undercut by the hair of her armpits.

LAURA

So is my father.

Alfred enters from the bathroom.

ALFRED

We're going to lose the farm.

LAURA

There isn't much left to lose.

They both climb into the bed.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I mean, the money is the least of our problems. Hail. Climate change. Bad seeds. If we didn't have shitty luck, we wouldn't have any luck at all.

ALFRED

What about talking to your father?

LAURA

About what?

ALFRED

You know what.

LAURA

Remind me.

ALFRED

Laura...

LAURA

About what? Just-- *God*. Just spit it out.

ALFRED

Green Life.

LAURA

No.

ALFRED

Just listen--

LAURA

No. Don't start with that again.

ALFRED

Studies say that it's the only pesticide that--

LAURA

Since when do you read studies?

ALFRED

Most organic--

LAURA

Thirty years ago, studies said DBCP was harmless.

ALFRED

That was--

LAURA

That was right up until Wyeth was diagnosed with leukemia.

ALFRED

What happened to Wyeth had nothing to do with-- That was different and you know it.

LAURA

Was it? How? How was it different?

Alfred has no answer for that.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Yeah. That's what I thought.

ALFRED

Organic farms all over the country are using Green Life. Farms that are turning actual profits. *We're not.* And we won't. Not like this. I tried to explain that to your father. Before he went out for the third loan. Now we're facing a debt that--

LAURA

It doesn't matter. Can you understand that? *It doesn't matter.* We're not "organic". Fuck the label. We don't use chemical pesticides, harmless or not. It goes against everything we-- Do you want to go out there and explain to my father how those chemicals had nothing to do with the death of his son?

(Beat.)

Do you?

After a pause...

ALFRED

I'm just saying we would have more to sell if--

LAURA

Stop! Just stop talking. Please.

He does. Silence. She turns off the light. After a moment she rips the covers off of them. She reaches under her nightgown and unceremoniously removes her panties from under her gown.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Take off your pants.

Alfred reluctantly takes his pajama bottoms off. She straddles him. They begin to have sex. Silently. Mechanically.

EXT. FARM - BEFORE DAWN

Three men in suits wander around the entrance of the farm with flashlights. One points toward the house and says something to the other two. They carry surveying equipment.

INT. ALFRED'S BEDROOM - FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON and alarm clock. It ticks from 4:29 to 4:30. A loud beeping.

Alfred slaps the clock off. He gains his bearings, turning to see that Laura is already gone. He turns on the light and sits up on the side of the bed rubbing his face.

As he looks down to put his slippers on, he sees the plastic bag from the convenience store. He picks it up and looks inside. Toilet paper, lottery tickets, mouthwash, ginger candies. The madness of the day before coming back to him as if he had a hangover.

Suddenly: two loud gunshots.

Alfred tosses the bag to the floor and runs out of the room.

EXT. THE FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The three men in suits running toward their car. Behind them, Nathaniel wielding a shotgun. He aims at the intruders, then fires a shot over their heads.

NATHANIEL

*You'll have to kill me! You
understand me? You'll have to look
me in the eye and kill me!*

Nathaniel cocks the shotgun again.

The car tires spit up gravel as they peel away.

ALFRED (O.C.)

Nathaniel!

Nathaniel wheels and points the shotgun right at Alfred. He holds it there a long second, then finally lowers it. He turns to watch the car speeding away.

INT. KITCHEN - FARMHOUSE - LATER

Still dark outside. Nathaniel, Alfred and Laura, are at the table having breakfast.

An odd scene. They all eat heaping portions of eggs, bread and sausage. Nobody speaks. Laura pours coffee, dark as mud, into their mugs. Only the sounds of slurping, chewing and silverware clicking against the plates.

Finally, the bizarre image of Nathaniel casually eating eggs with a shotgun draped across his lap.

EXT. THE COBB FARM - DAWN

A group of Mexicans has already began their work on the trees and the plantations. There isn't much produce to save, so they have to examine every plant carefully.

There is a long table set outside the house. On it, a row of crates.

Nathaniel and Alberto (45), a Mexican farm hand that has worked for the Cobbs for years, stand efficiently pruning the stems and leaves of freshly picked peaches. They throw the good fruit into one group of crates, and the bad fruit into another group. There are more rotten crates than good.

Alfred walks back and forth, lifting the good crates and loading them, one by one, onto the back of an old pickup.

Alberto and Nathaniel speak to one another in Spanish.

NATHANIEL

No sé cuánto tiempo. Unos meses.
Pero el dinero va a ser muy poco.

ALBERTO

¿Qué significa poco?

NATHANIEL

Poco. Muy poco.

Alberto sees the sadness in Nathaniel and understands.

ALBERTO

Estamos jodidos, eh?

NATHANIEL

Sí. Jodidos. Pero hemos superado
situaciones peores.

Alberto thinks.

ALBERTO
¿Unos meses?

Nathaniel realizes he cannot continue with the lie.

NATHANIEL
Trabajadores buenos como tú y tu
hijo siempre son bienvenidos en las
granjas. No les tendría rencor si
desean irse a--

ALBERTO
Aquí estamos bien.

Alberto squeezes Nathaniel's arm encouragingly. Nathaniel
nods, thankful. Alfred watches them.

Juan (25, Alberto's son) appears, already dirty, carrying a
bag filled with gloomy looking peaches.

JUAN
Esto está para la mierda.

He shows Nathaniel the sack of sickly peaches.

NATHANIEL
We'll save whatever we can.

JUAN
(to Alberto)
¿Le dijiste de los medicamentos?

Alberto shakes his head "no".

JUAN (CONT'D)
(to Nathaniel)
We are almost out of Brovana. For
his breathing. We're going to need
some, soon.

NATHANIEL
(worried)
I'll see what I can do. Get my
grandson to help you pick the rest.

Juan nods. He doesn't like that idea much but heads off none
the less.

Laura entering with a large jug of dark liquid stops Juan as
he passes. She grabs his hand and examines it. He looks away.

CLOSE ON JUAN'S HAND

A nasty cut, which seems to be infected between his thumb and
forefinger.

JUAN

It's fine.

LAURA

It's not fine. Come up to the house later and we'll get some garlic and aloe on it.

JUAN

It's nothing. I just need to--

LAURA

You just need to come up to the house when you're finished. You know better than to argue with me, Juan.

JUAN

Yes ma'am.

She brushes the hair from his face and lets him go. She lifts the jug and puts it on the table in front of Nathaniel.

LAURA

We'll try this for a while.

NATHANIEL

What is it?

LAURA

A new fertilizer blend.

NATHANIEL

(firmly.)

What is it?

LAURA

Nothing. Manure. Slurry. Worm castings...

NATHANIEL

And...?

LAURA

And I added a new humic acid compound.

NATHANIEL

Laura--

LAURA

I added a new humic acid compound. It'll help growth with lower nutrient densities. It's natural.

A beat. Nathaniel eyes his daughter.

LAURA (CONT'D)
 (Re: the bad fruit.)
 Look at those crates, dad.
 (He does.)
 It's natural. I mixed it myself.

A pause.

NATHANIEL
 Okay. Leave it here.

LAURA
 Thank you.

She starts to walk away. Alfred is on his way back.

NATHANIEL
 Six hundred thousand.

She turns back.

LAURA
 What are you talking about?

NATHANIEL
 That's how much we owe the bank.

Laura and Alfred stare at him in shock.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)
 What?

LAURA
 What do you mean *what*? You told us
 it was half that much.

NATHANIEL
 Yeah. I lied.

ALFRED
 You *lied*?

NATHANIEL
 Sometimes the only thing you can
 throw at bad luck is money.

ALFRED
 We can't possibly--

NATHANIEL
 Hail the size of golf balls? The
 cutworm infestation? And now this
 fungus spreading on the trees. It
 was bad luck. After ten good years
 we've had to deal with three bad
 ones. I did what I had to do.

(MORE)

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

What're they gonna do? Chase us out? Buy up our land? They don't know who they're dealing with. Nobody out here is gonna sell.

ALFRED

Martinson is selling.

Nathaniel seethes.

NATHANIEL

Alberto, nos dejas un momento.

Alberto nods and quietly walks away.

ALFRED

Most of the families around here--

NATHANIEL

My family isn't *most families*.

Alfred sees the steel in Nathaniel's eyes.

ALFRED

Then let me charge a little more. We can get at least twice--

NATHANIEL

Forget it. We're not big organics. We are not opportunists. I'm not gonna charge people not to poison themselves. You got that? *Ever*.

Alfred knows this is futile. He looks at Laura for a moment and then grabs the last crate of good fruit and walks away. Laura and Nathaniel stand quietly for a moment.

LAURA

So what's the plan?

NATHANIEL

What plan?

LAURA

What do you mean *what plan*? The plan to save the farm.

Nathaniel begins to walk toward a tree.

NATHANIEL

There is no plan. We do what we've always done. What I taught you since you were a little girl. We wait for the ecosystem to balance itself out again. It'll happen. Always does.

LAURA

(Trying to find hope.)
 Maybe I could plant a grid of
 sunflowers and corn, attract some
 of the right kind of insects.

NATHANIEL

That's your plan? Sunflowers and
 corn? (He smiles.) You just might
 be crazier than me.

Nathaniel scratches at the branches of the tree.

LAURA

Fungus?

NATHANIEL

Don't you worry, Mother Nature'll
 watch our back.

LAURA

Really? Cause it feels like she's
 just laughing behind it.

Laura turns and walks back to the house. Nathaniel stands
 there, staring up at a branch of the old tree. The sun
 starting to rise behind him.

INT./EXT. - TRUCK - MORNING

Alfred drives the pickup on a road through the farm country.
 Greens and yellows paint the scenery. Morning has broken.

He listens to Neil Young blasting on his radio. He sings
 loudly, imitating Young's high-pitched tone.

ALFRED

(Singing.)
*Everybody seems to wonder what it's
 like down here... I gotta get away
 from this day-to-day running
 around... Everybody knows this is
 nowhere... Na, na, na. Na, na, na.*

The trucks engine slips between gears, the relentless
 revving, ruining his tune.

He turns the music up even louder to drown out the sound.

The pickup barreling down the empty road.

EXT. A DRIVEWAY - LATER

The truck comes to a stop outside a grocery store.

Alfred steps out, walks around back and grabs a crate of peaches from the back of the pickup.

INT. GROCERY STORE - CONTINUOUS

The bells on the door ring as Alfred enters with the crate. He walks it toward the back of the store.

Joe (65) the owner, comes around the counter.

JOE
Alfred...

ALFRED
Hey, Joe.

JOE
Listen...

ALFRED
(Singing a la Hendrix.)
*Where you going with that gun in
your hand?*

JOE
Alfred, hang on.

ALFRED
(Stops crate in hand.)
What's up?

JOE
We don't need 'em. The peaches. We
already got some in this morning.

Alfred spots a crate of robust looking peaches already on display. He puts down his crate.

ALFRED
Those things?

JOE
Al, listen to me. I can't sell 'em.
Look at those and look at yours.

Alfred picks up one of the large peaches. He tests the density and sniffs the skin.

ALFRED
It doesn't have a scent. How does a
peach not have a scent? These
things are made--

JOE

Save the song and dance, will ya?
 People take one look at your fruit,
 they walk right by. By end of day
 tomorrow I'm throwin 'em in the
 mulch. People buy these. And they
 cost me half as much. Look, we know
 each other a long time. Let's just
 be honest here, okay?

ALFRED

We're working hard, Joe. We're in
 the middle of a bad patch right now
 and we-- We're working hard.

JOE

(Guilty.)

Hey, look. You come on down with
 some of that nice lettuce you got,
 I'm gonna put it right there on the
 shelf. Up front, okay? Now let's--

Alfred tosses the peach at Joe.

ALFRED

Taste that. (A beat.) Go ahead.

Joe reluctantly does.

JOE

So...?

Alfred tosses him one of his own peaches.

ALFRED

Now try that one.

JOE

Al--

ALFRED

(Firmly.)

Try it.

Joe bites into the peach. The juice drips from his mouth.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Which ones you wanna bring home and
 feed to your grandkids?

Joe ponders this. There's no denying it. A pause.

JOE

(Defeated.)

Put 'em over there.

A slight smile. Alfred puts the crate in place. He starts out.

ALFRED
Thanks, Joe.

JOE
(Calling to him.)
I'll put a sign on 'em, says "Local
organic". Charge twice as much as
the other ones. People love that
shit!

The bells on the door ring and Alfred is gone.

INT. FARMHOUSE - ALFRED'S BATHROOM - DAY

Juan sits on the toilet lid as Laura rubs a mixture from a cup onto his injured hand.

LAURA
Better?

JUAN
Better.

She washes her hands in the sink.

LAURA
Don't take it off til the morning.
It needs time to work itself in
there.

JUAN
Thank you.

Laura goes to the door.

LAURA
You're welcome.
(She locks the door.)
Now, take off your pants.

EXT. A COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY

Alfred stands by the truck, a crate by his feet. A man, Gary (40's) hands him some cash.

ALFRED
'Preciate it, Gary.

GARY
See you Thursday.

Alfred hops in the truck. He tries to start it, but only the sound of the ignition grinding. He tries again. No luck. On the third try it finally starts up.

GARY (CONT'D)

You better get that looked at.

ALFRED

It's fine. It's just the starter.

GARY

Is that right? Do you know anything at all about engines?

ALFRED

I know enough. One time I had this--
 (He stops. Smiles.)
 Nothing. I know nothing about engines. See you Thursday.

He starts to pull out.

GARY

You hope!

Alfred drives off. Gary picks up the crate and walks it into his house.

EXT. A ROAD - LATER

Alfred's pickup stalled on the side of the road. Smoke billowing from the hood.

INT. THE TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Neil Young blasting. Smoke filling the pickup. Alfred sits there totally still, staring ahead.

Suddenly, he flies into a rage, screaming and slamming his fists against the steering wheel and the dash. A complete meltdown.

After a moment he looks out his window and sees a farmer on a tractor, staring at him.

ALFRED

How ya doin'?

EXT. ROAD - LATER

The farmer slams down the hood and wipes his hands.

FARMER

That should get ya home at least.
But you better get yourself a new
truck, and bury this piece of shit.

ALFRED

This piece of shit is all we got.

FARMER

Know the feeling. Good luck, buddy.

ALFRED

Hey, let me give you something...

FARMER

(Understanding.)
I'll take a few of those peaches.

ALFRED

(Reaching into his pocket)
You sure I can't give you--

FARMER

What else you got to give?

ALFRED

(A beat.)
Nothing.

FARMER

I'll take some peaches.

Alfred hands the farmer a few peaches. The farmer drives off.

EXT. THE COBB FARM - AFTERNOON

Mid-afternoon, the time when farmers take a few hours off.

The crack of a bat. We see Nathaniel hitting a bucket of
baseballs to a less than graceful James.

NATHANIEL

Keep your head down!

He hits another ball to James, who backs off of it in fear.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

Down, dammit!

Another grounder. James turns his head away.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

Alright, get over here! Come on,
drop the glove and come 'ere.

James does.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)
What the hell's a matter with you?

JAMES
You're hittin' em too hard.

NATHANIEL
I'm not hitting-- What're you
afraid of? A little ball?

JAMES
No.

NATHANIEL
Sure you are. Look at you. Stand there.

Nathaniel walks a distance away with the bucket.

JAMES
What're you doing?

NATHANIEL
You just stand there.

Nathaniel hurls a ball at James hitting him in the chest.

JAMES
Fuck! Ow!

NATHANIEL
Does that hurt?

JAMES
Yeah!

NATHANIEL
No, it doesn't.

He fires another ball, pelting James in the side as he turns.

JAMES
Quit it!

Another one hits James in the arm as he tries to block it.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Stop!!!

Nathaniel charges over to a crying James, backing him up
against a tree with ferocious determination.

NATHANIEL
You listen to me. *Nothing hurts til it
hurts.* You understand that?
(MORE)

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

You're my grandson, so I'm gonna tell you this. You weren't born with a lot of brains. That's just the way it is. So for the rest of your life, people are gonna throw a world of shit at you. Try to take you down. The only thing you can do is be tougher than them. Stare 'em in the eye and take it. Show 'em if they want to get at you, they're gonna have to get in close. And believe me boy, they do not want to get close to you. I don't care what college they graduated from. That's all you got, Jimmy. And don't you ever forget it. Now, get the fuck out of here.

James sulks toward the house.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

James!

James turns.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

I love you, son.

INT./EXT. THE TRUCK - LATE AFTERNOON

The pickup truck, once again on it's way.

After a moment, it screeches to a stop.

Alfred sits for a moment, staring straight ahead. Finally, he puts the truck into reverse.

The truck backs up for a bit, then turns onto a barely visible dirt road with a sign that reads: "Woodson Lake 3 miles."

EXT. A DOCK - MOMENTS LATER

There are boats of different size and value tied to the dock. Some luxurious houses scattered around the large lake.

A young man sits on the edge of the dock, fishing.

ALFRED

Catch anything?

The young man turns with excitement.

RICKY

Alfred!!!

This is Ricky Swanson (26, with Down Syndrome). He drops his pole into the lake and runs toward Alfred, who puts down a crate of fruit just in time to absorb Ricky's huge embrace.

ALFRED

(Laughing.)

Okay. Okay. Hey, your pole!

He breaks away from Ricky and grabs the pole before it sinks.

RICKY

I thought this was harvest week. I thought you couldn't come!

ALFRED

(Wiping off the pole.)

What'dja think? I was gonna let you catch all the fish?

RICKY

I didn't catch any at all.

ALFRED

Not yet.

RICKY

I never catch any.

ALFRED

Never say never, Ricky. Come on, siddown.

They both sit on the edge of the dock. Alfred positions the pole correctly in Ricky's hands. Ricky concentrates earnestly.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

There you go.

Alfred reaches back and grabs a peach, biting into it.

RICKY

How's the harvest going? If you need me to help, I can come help you guys. I'm super strong.

(Flexing his bicep.)

Feel my muscle.

ALFRED

(Touching the arm.)

You been working out?

RICKY

(Embarrassed.)

No! I'm just a naturally strong person.

ALFRED
 (Adjusting the pole.)
 Hold it upright. Like that.

Ricky holds the pole just as he was instructed. A silent moment. Alfred holds the peach to Ricky's mouth. Ricky takes a bite without letting go of the pole.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
 (Confessing.)
 The harvest isn't goin' so good,
 buddy. Been a rough year. A few
 rough years. I'm beginning to think
 I don't have any luck.
 (Feeding him some peach.)
 We got ourselves in this hole, see?
 And we'll never get out of it.

RICKY
 Never say never.

ALFRED
 (A smile.)
 Yeah...

Another moment of silence.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
 (From a distance.)
 Ricky...?

Ricky immediately jumps up.

RICKY
 That's my mom.

ALFRED
 Bring her those peaches.

RICKY
 Okay.

Ricky grabs the crate of peaches and clumsily carries them with his pole. He turns back.

RICKY (CONT'D)
 Hey, Alfred...

ALFRED
 What's up, pal?

RICKY
 You got more luck than I do.

Ricky heads off. Alfred sits, pondering the truth of that last remark.

EXT. THE LAKE - LATER

Alfred sits in a rowboat in the middle of the lake, fishing. The water, like glass, reflecting the beautiful trees that surround the lake.

ALFRED
(Singing quietly.)
*Everybody seems to wonder what it's
like down here... I gotta get away
from this day-to-day...*

We begin to hear an overlapping voice, echoing distantly.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE
*...And now, tonight's drawing of
the Ohio Lottery pick six... Our
first number is... Eight.*

An insert of a lottery ball rolling down it's tube. #8.

And with that, water ripples as Alfred gets a bite.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Our second number... Twelve.

Another bite, bigger. Alfred sits up.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE (CONT'D)
The next number... Twenty-two.

The pole bends. Alfred begins to work the line.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Twenty-nine...

And the battle begins, Alfred surprised by the force.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Thirty-seven...

And Alfred has it hooked. He starts reeling for dear life...

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE (CONT'D)
And... forty-two...

Alfred reels an enormous fish up and into the boat. The fish flails wildly, flopping against the deck of the boat. Alfred places a foot firmly on the fish to subdue it...

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE (CONT'D)
*Making tonight's winning lottery
numbers, 8, 12, 22, 29, 37 and 42.
Congratulations and thank you for
playing the Ohio Lottery.*

The fish takes it's last breath, finally still. Alfred sits back and catches his breath, staring at the fish and the lake around him. He can't believe his luck. Little does he know...

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - EVENING

CLOSE ON the whole roasted fish, sitting on the center of the table. It has been carved up and we can see the flesh and bones within.

At the table, Nathaniel, James, Laura, Abigail and Alfred. They are typically silent. After a few moments.

LAURA

This is good. Where did you say you got the fish?

ALFRED

Huh? Oh. That market over by Route 12.

LAURA

Pretty fresh, isn't it dad?

JAMES

It's pretty good.

NATHANIEL

It's fine.

More silence. Always silence.

EXT. THE FARM - NIGHT

Alfred walks over to the old tree. He bends down to retrieve his rusty box, only to see that it has already been uncovered and opened on the ground below him. He looks through it and notices the lighter is missing. A moment of panic before...

THE SOUND OF A LIGHTER

The glow of the lighter reveals Nathaniel, standing in the darkness lighting a cigarette.

NATHANIEL

(Inhaling.)

These things'll kill ya'.

ALFRED

Give me the lighter.

Nathaniel looks closely at it.

NATHANIEL

"M.M.M."

ALFRED

Give it to me.

NATHANIEL

Your father?

A pause.

ALFRED

No.

NATHANIEL

Grandfather?

Alfred shakes his head, no.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

(An odd smile.)

We all have our secrets.

ALFRED

Nathaniel...

He flips Alfred the lighter and grabs a bottle at his feet. He takes a swig then holds out the bottle to Alfred.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

I'm okay.

NATHANIEL

Are you? Take a swig. Don't let an old man drink alone.

A moment of hesitation. Alfred takes the bottle and drinks from it. He hands it back to Nathaniel.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

So this is what you do, Murphy. You come out here at night, when everyone's asleep. Stare at the sky. Count the stars. Wonder how you got here. Wonder if you'll ever leave. I see that look in your eye. Always somewhere else. Same look my mother had. (A swig.) You can't make somebody a farmer. The way I figure it, ya are or ya ain't. And you ain't. But, you stuck around longer than I thought you would. I guess I gotta give you credit for that.

He offers Alfred the bottle. Alfred hesitates.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

Take it.

Alfred does. Nathaniel begins to walk away. After a few steps, he turns back.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

You see that branch right there?
When I was a boy, we tied a rope to
it. Made a swing out of an old
tractor tire. My mother'd push me
on it for hours. I'd just swing
there all day. Didn't have a care
in the world.

Nathaniel stares at the old branch, lost in a thought. Finally, he stumbles away. Alfred leans against the tree, looks up to the stars and takes another swig.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - LATER

The familiar routine of Alfred hiding his plastic bag with the cigarette butt at the bottom of the garbage.

INT. LIVING ROOM - FARMHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Alfred comes in to the dark living room to discover Abigail on the couch watching TV.

ALFRED

It's three in the morning.

ABIGAIL

Yeah, I couldn't sleep.

Alfred sits next to Abigail. She turns to look at him.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

What are you still doing up?

ALFRED

(After a beat.)

I don't know.

A moment of silence.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

What're you watching?

ABIGAIL

Project Runway...

ALFRED

Project Runway. What is it about
this show?

ABIGAIL
What do you mean?

ALFRED
I mean why are you obsessed with
it?

ABIGAIL
They're in New York City.

ALFRED
And...?

ABIGAIL
And I'm here.

Alfred glances at his daughter. Silence. She yawns.

ALFRED
Go to bed, Abby. It's late. You
have school in the morning.

She gets up and slowly walks toward her room. Alfred searches for the remote control and changes channels. Something catches his attention...

On the television, a newscast. A young lady is being interviewed.

Alfred looks closer at the television. And then it hits him. The young lady is the one from the grocery store during the protest.

Alfred sits on the edge of the couch closest to the tv.

A title on the screen reads, "Winning Ohio lottery ticket sold right here in Columbus."

He picks up the remote and turns the volume on so low that we can't even hear it. He puts his ear to the tv speaker. He hears something that we don't and steps back from the television.

Not a chance.

He takes a second to gain his bearings, then goes to the master bedroom murmuring the winning numbers.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Laura asleep under her black and white marble notebooks.

Alfred slowly walks to his end table and opens the drawer. Inside it, we see some of the things he got at the store.

He reaches underneath, takes out the lottery ticket and walks out of the room.

INT. BATHROOM - FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Alfred comes in and closes the door. He stares at the ticket, murmuring the numbers, frightened by what he oddly knows in his heart.

He checks them against the ticket, his head going back and forth. Over and over.

The hand holding the ticket begins to tremble. Not knowing what else to do, he lowers his pants and sits on the toilet.

INT. ALFRED'S BEDROOM - FARMHOUSE - BEFORE DAWN

CLOSE ON the alarm clock. It ticks from 4:29 to 4:30. The familiar loud beeping.

Alfred slaps the clock off. He sits up on the side of the bed rubbing his face.

He reaches down to his dirty clothes, which lie in a pile beside the bed. He picks up the shirt and smells it. Good enough. He buttons the shirt and pulls on his pants. When he's done with the socks and shoes, he pauses. He opens the his end table drawer and pulls out the ticket. He stares at it for a moment then shoves it into his sock.

EXT. THE FARM - DAWN

The sun has barely risen but the farm is buzzing with activity. Juan, James and the other workers oiling up the equipment, crates being piled, organized chaos. No chatter, just work.

Alfred joins in, loading the truck as usual.

Laura checking crates and jotting notes.

Nathaniel with a concerned expression, examining the produce.

After a bit of this an unfamiliar sound.

Nathaniel looks up into the distance.

A small car is approaching them, kicking up the dry dirt behind it.

NATHANIEL
What the hell...?

Laura and Alfred look up as well.

The car comes to a stop. A small, bookish man emerges, holding a manila envelope.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)
 (Approaching him.)
 Mick...?

MICK
 (Barely any eye contact.)
 'Morning Nate.

NATHANIEL
 What's going on?

MICK
 Julie gave me this last night, told me to bring it to you first thing in the morning. I guess this is first thing in the morning.

Nathaniel takes the envelope.

MICK (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry, Nate.

NATHANIEL
 What's inside it?

MICK
 I honestly don't know. But good news can usually wait til after breakfast.

NATHANIEL
 Yeah...

Mick walks back to his car and drives away. Nathaniel opens the envelope and examines the contents.

LAURA
 What is it?

NATHANIEL
 A notice of a trustee's sale.

JAMES
 What does that mean?

NATHANIEL
 Means they're putting the farm up for auction.

LAURA
 What can we do?

NATHANIEL
 I'll figure something out.
 (To everyone.)
 Let's get back to work.

Everyone is still. Alfred stands, looking down at his feet.

LAURA
 God damn it!

NATHANIEL
 Laura...

LAURA
 Damn it!

Nathaniel grabs Laura and comforts her.

Everything in Alfred's body wants to reach into that sock and produce the ticket. Well... not everything, because when he finally reaches down, all he comes up with is a crate of fruit, which he loads onto the back of the truck.

I/E. TRUCK - DAY

The pickup sputters down the highway. The crates fruits and vegetables bouncing on the flatbed.

Alfred drives, a stoic expression on his face. The absence of Neil Young is louder than the music could ever be.

The skyline of the city emerging in front of us. Tall buildings jutting out of the vast green fields.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

The peaceful silence of the farmlands is abruptly replaced by the cacophonous city noise.

Alfred's truck is sorely out of place in the city traffic.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - MOMENTS LATER

Alfred, dressed in his worn and grimy work clothes, walks along searching for an address. He refers to a piece of paper and checks the building numbers.

Three gorgeous women who look like they jumped out of Abigail's television show, pass him by.

He continues to walk a moment, then stops and turns to see them from behind. Unbelievable...

A couple, exiting a department store with arms full of bags practically run him over.

EXT. LOTTERY BUILDING - DAY

Alfred stares at the immense edifice. He is still for a moment as he checks the address against the paper in his hand. A deep breath, and he strides toward the building.

INT. LOBBY - LOTTERY BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Alfred approaches a security guard behind the grand marble desk. An awkward moment...

ALFRED
Hi.

GUARD
Hello.

ALFRED
My name is Alfred Murphy.

GUARD
Okay.

More silence.

GUARD (CONT'D)
Do you have an appointment?

ALFRED
No.

GUARD
Do you know who you're here to see?

ALFRED
No.

GUARD
Why are we talking?

ALFRED
I have the-- I think I have the
winning lottery ticket.

Alfred looks around for a moment, then reaches down into his sock and produces the ticket, holding it out to the guard.

GUARD
(Pointing to a bench.)
Wait over there.

Alfred goes to the bench and sits, tucking the ticket back into his sock. He watches people in suits coming and going. The sounds of heels against marble.

INT. HALLWAY - LOTTERY BUILDING - LATER

A beautiful Assistant leads him down the corridor. They arrive at a door. She opens it for him.

ASSISTANT
Right in there.

Alfred hesitates.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
It's okay.

He tentatively steps through the doorway, entering a small, claustrophobic office. Startled by the door slamming shut behind him.

INT. OFFICE - LOTTERY BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Alfred is received by four lottery executives. They look serious, almost menacing.

EXECUTIVE 1
Mr. Murphy?

ALFRED
Yes.

EXECUTIVE 1
Can I see your driver's license?

ALFRED
What?

EXECUTIVE 1
Your license.

ALFRED
Sure.

Alfred takes his license from his wallet. The executive looks it over and hands it back to Alfred. He nods to the other executives.

EXECUTIVE 2
Show us the ticket.

Alfred, once again, takes the ticket from his sock and hands it to the executive.

The executive grabs the ticket with two fingers and examines it carefully. He looks Alfred over, but says nothing. He mutters to the other executives.

Alfred shifts uncomfortably. Waiting for a response.

The executives stand simultaneously and begin to exit the room. Alfred is alarmed.

ALFRED

The ticket...

EXECUTIVE 3

Have a seat.

They exit with his ticket.

Alfred sits. He looks down, suddenly ashamed of his filthy clothes. He smells his shirt.

What seems like an endless wait. Alfred gets up and goes to the window, staring at the city below. He leans against the window frame, inadvertently hitting a button on the wall. The automatic shades begin to close on their own. Alfred backs away, frightened.

Suddenly, the door opens and Executive 2 enters.

ALFRED

I didn't mean to-- I hit the--

EXECUTIVE 2

Come with me.

He walks Alfred out of the room, down the hallway and into...

INT. LARGE OFFICE - LOTTERY BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Alfred follows the executive into the large office.

An explosive pop...

A startled Alfred looks up to see the other executives standing with an opened champagne bottle and glasses.

EXECUTIVE 1

(Holding out a glass.)

Congratulations!

Alfred takes the glass, somewhat startled. An executive seats him at a table in front of a document and hands him a pen.

ALFRED

What's this?

EXECUTIVE 2

It's a standard claim form, so we can get started processing your winnings. We'll give you a copy. We'll also give you a list of information we're gonna need from you. We'll have you back in a few days to dot the "i's", cross the "t's" and make a formal announcement. You can have your attorney get in touch with us.

Alfred stares at the document, pen in one hand, champagne in the other.

ALFRED

How long will it be before I have access to 627,000 dollars?

The executives look at each other, amused.

EXECUTIVE 2

That's a pretty exact number...

Alfred is silent.

EXECUTIVE 1

These are the first steps of a process that takes some time, but believe me, in a few weeks we're going to transfer a lot more than \$600,000 to your account.

EXECUTIVE 3

Welcome to the 1%, Mr. Murphy...

EXT. THE FARM - LATE AFTERNOON

This time of day is always busy. Racing against the setting sun. Alberto, Juan and several other farmhands tend to the work at hand. Picking, sorting, pruning and crating with expertise and purpose.

INT. THE FARM - BARN - CONTINUOUS

The late afternoon sun shining through the slats of the barn. In a back corner there are tables lining the walls. On them, dozens of sample grafts in individual "incubators".

Laura examines them, one by one, jotting notes on a pad. As she moves down the line we see plant after plant wilting and brown. She takes her notes and moves on to the next one.

As she gets further down the line, she lifts her head up to spot one particular plant. She leans in and takes a closer look. This one plant, out of all of them, stands out. Though the plant is not thriving, there is one brilliant green leaf at it's center. An anxious smile cracks her stoic expression.

She rushes over to a pile of boxes and tears the lid off of one of them. Inside, we see dozens of Black and white marble notebooks. She rifles through them, looking for one in particular. Not there. She tears open another box. More notebooks. She finally spots the one she is looking for and hustles it back to the plant on the table.

She turns the pages furiously.

James enters the barn.

JAMES

Hey, mom, the guy is here with the cake.

LAURA

(Almost to herself.)
Get out...

James walks toward her.

JAMES

The guy is here. He says he needs a signature.

LAURA

So, sign it. You're capable of signing your name, right?

JAMES

I just didn't know if--

She wheels on him, fire in her eyes.

LAURA

GET THE FUCK OUT!!!

James walks away dejectedly.

Laura looks at the page in the notebook, then at the plant. She stares at it as if it were a mirage.

INT. VISITING ROOM - PRISON - LATE AFTERNOON

Alfred waits in a booth.

A door is opened by a guard and Raymond Murphy (47), Alfred's brother, comes out and walks toward the booth. He sits in front of Alfred with a smile on his face.

ALFRED

Hi, Ray.

RAYMOND

I thought you weren't coming this week.

Silence. Alfred presents a package of new towels.

ALFRED

I brought you these.

Raymond smiles.

RAYMOND

Thanks, Alfie. I appreciate that. But I'm not allowed to take those.

Alfred nods, he knew that.

ALFRED

So... How's everything?

RAYMOND

Oh. Great. Really. Lot of fun.

ALFRED

Right.

RAYMOND

How're you doing little brother?

ALFRED

Me? Good. Great. Good. Fine. What?

RAYMOND

What's on your mind?

ALFRED

Hm? What do you mean?

RAYMOND

Who you talkin' to Alfie?

ALFRED

I don't--

RAYMOND

You just dropped in for a surprise visit? You never drop in for a surprise visit. Matter of fact, you never do anything surprising. What're you doing here?

Silence.

ALFRED
I ran into some money.

RAYMOND
What do you mean? With the farm?

ALFRED
No. I-- (A beat.) I bought a
lottery ticket.

RAYMOND
You're full of shit. What are you,
a millionaire now?

A pause.

ALFRED
Fifty grand.

RAYMOND
You're a lucky son of a bitch. You
know that? Always have been.

ALFRED
I guess.

RAYMOND
What are you going to do with it?

ALFRED
I'm not sure...

Raymond stares at an absent Alfred.

RAYMOND
How's everything with Laura?

ALFRED
What?

RAYMOND
Your wife. How is she?

ALFRED
She's good. She's great.

RAYMOND
Good or great?

ALFRED
Great.

RAYMOND
Bet she is. So, what does she want
to do with the money?

Alfred remains quiet. Raymond understands.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
(Smiling.)
You didn't tell her.

ALFRED
No.

RAYMOND
Good. Keep it that way. Those
hillbillies you call a family will
probably want to use it to hire a
masseuse for their watermelons.

A bell rings. Time is up.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
(Starts to leave.)
Thanks for bringing those towels,
Alfie. That was thoughtful.

Raymond walks off.

INT. FINNERTY'S BAR - AFTERNOON

The local bar and grill. Various locals sitting at small tables, playing pool or watching tv at the bar. They are mostly farmers and blue collar workers having an end of day drink or two.

Nathaniel sits at the bar with a can of beer and a shot of whiskey. He occasionally looks up at the ESPN on the tv.

After a moment Jules (30's) walks up behind him. Her business attire in stark contrast to the t-shirts and work jeans of the other patrons.

JULES
(Looking at the tv.)
If the Sox are gonna make a serious
run at it, Lackey is gonna have to
start earning that salary of his.

NATHANIEL
10 and 13 with an ERA of about...

JULES
3.57

NATHANIEL
And what are they paying him this
year?

JULES
15.2 Million.

NATHANIEL
Jesus Christ...

JULES
29 starts. That comes out to
\$524,000 every time he takes the
mound. Averaging 75 pitches per
start, he's getting paid about
7,000 dollars every time he throws
the ball.

NATHANIEL
Earn his salary. What the hell is
this country coming to?

JULES
You should have been a pitcher.

NATHANIEL
I was a pitcher.

JULES
You should have been a better
pitcher.

NATHANIEL
Yeah.

JULES
(To the bartender.)
I'll take whatever he's having.

BARTENDER
Beer and a shot?

JULES
Why not.

NATHANIEL
Thanks for coming, Jules.

JULES
Sure.

NATHANIEL
How's your old man?

JULES
Hanging in there. He has some
trouble getting around, and pretty
much no short term memory left. But
you know him.

NATHANIEL

Tough old bird. You tell him I said hello.

JULES

I will.

The bartender puts down the drinks.

NATHANIEL

(Holding up his shot.)
To what's next.

JULES

To what's next.

They down their shots. Silence.

JULES (CONT'D)

Listen, I'm gonna have to get home to the kids, so...

NATHANIEL

I need another loan.

JULES

Mr. Cobb...

NATHANIEL

Nathaniel.

JULES

It's not gonna happen.

NATHANIEL

Jules--

JULES

It's not gonna happen. There's no chance.

NATHANIEL

You gotta-- I'm asking you to help me out, here.

JULES

Help you out? Do you even-- I've gotten you two deferrals, a debt writedown and a rescheduling already. I tried to process the IA, but you're not eligible no matter how we position it.

NATHANIEL

I'm gonna lose the farm, Jules.

JULES

Sell.

NATHANIEL

Don't start with--

JULES

Sell the farm.

NATHANIEL

Do you know who you're talking to?

JULES

I'm talking to my father's oldest friend. I'm talking to my godfather for Christ's sake.

NATHANIEL

That's right. And I'm asking you--

JULES

Listen to me carefully. You're 65 days in default. They're about to start repossession proceedings, *and there's not a damn thing I can do about it.* Too many powerful people are interested in that property. Make them a deal. Because if you don't-- And you gotta-- If you don't, you will walk away with nothing. After 47 years, your family will walk away with nothing.

She rises from the stool, and throws a twenty on the bar. Without looking at her, Nathaniel grabs the twenty and holds it out to her.

NATHANIEL

Keep your money.

She takes the bill out of his hand and puts it on the bar.

JULES

Stop being so damned proud.

She walks away. Nathaniel sits silently.

INT./EXT. STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

The truck, making its way down the avenue, stops at a light.

Alfred spots a car dealership and, when the light turns green, makes a left and pulls into it.

EXT. CAR DEALERSHIP - THE LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Alfred stands admiring a brand new truck.

VOICE (O.C.)

She's a beauty, isn't she?

Alfred turns to see Paul Stevenson (48), confident and genial in a cheap but stylish suit.

PAUL

Paul Stevenson.

ALFRED

Alfred Murphy.

They shake.

PAUL

Can I call you Al?

ALFRED

No.

PAUL

Okay.

(After a beat.)

How 'bout Murph?

Alfred smiles.

ALFRED

Sure.

PAUL

You got good taste, Murph. You know what you're looking at?

ALFRED

I guess not.

PAUL

That's the new Avalanche. Standard V8. 45.5 cubic feet of cargo volume. Max towing 8,100 lbs. 9.3 out of 10 rating from KBB.

ALFRED

How's the radio?

PAUL

The radio?

ALFRED

Is it good?

PAUL
You're tugging my nutsack, right?

ALFRED
No.

Paul eyes Alfred up and down. He opens the door to the truck.

PAUL
Get in.

Alfred hesitates, but can't help himself. He gets into the truck. Paul goes around and gets in the other side.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Paul leans over and starts the truck.

PAUL
What kind of music you like, Murph?

ALFRED
Neil Young.

PAUL
The Old Shakey. I knew I liked you.

Paul turns on the sound system and hits a button. The music blasts through the truck. Glorious.

PAUL (CONT'D)
(Over the music.)
Bose eight-speaker Centerpoint Surround
Sound System, SiriusXM NavTraffic
standard with three trial months.

They listen for a moment, then Paul turns off the stereo.

PAUL (CONT'D)
So, yeah. The radio's good.

EXT. CAR DEALERSHIP - THE LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Paul walks Alfred to his truck.

PAUL
MSRP is \$35,980. But I can work
with you.
(Re: Paul's truck.)
Hell, you trade this thing in, I'll
give you-- No, I won't give you
anything for this.

ALFRED
 (After a beat.)
 Can I ask you something?

PAUL
 Shoot.

ALFRED
 Why are you talking to me?

PAUL
 Beg your pardon?

ALFRED
 I mean look at me.

He points to a well-dressed couple perusing the lot.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
 Shouldn't you be talking to them?

PAUL
 What do you do for a living, Murph?

ALFRED
 Farmer.

PAUL
 Got a lot of time to waste, do you?

ALFRED
 No.

PAUL
 Those people? They got a lot of
 time to waste.

Alfred hops in his truck. He points over to the well-dressed couple who are now talking to another salesman.

ALFRED
 (Through the window.)
 You should've talked to them.

He drives off. Paul watches him go.

EXT. THE FARM - EARLY EVENING

Nathaniel, by now a bit drunk, walks toward the house. After a moment he stops in his tracks, staring at the quiet, darkened home. He takes a deep breath and turns to walk away.

Abigail, in a dress, rushes out of the house to greet him.

ABIGAIL

Grandpa?

Nathaniel turns to see her.

NATHANIEL

You look nice.

ABIGAIL

(Surprised.)

Really? I designed it myself.

NATHANIEL

Well, it's real nice. You got talent, kid.

ABIGAIL

Where were you going?

NATHANIEL

I was just-- Nowhere.

ABIGAIL

(Taking his arm.)

Come inside. I want to show you something.

They walk toward the house.

NATHANIEL

Abby, I'm sorry. I'm tired, honey. I just want to be by myself. I could use a quiet night tonight.

They reach the front door.

ABIGAIL

You probably should have told mom that.

NATHANIEL

Why?

She opens the door and suddenly all the lights come on. A loud cheer. Dozens of people yell, "Surprise!"

A band plays, "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow".

Laura stands in the center of all the guests arms wide open.

LAURA

Happy Birthday, Pop...

NATHANIEL

What the hell...?

LAURA
You only turn 70 once, right?

NATHANIEL
Abigail?

LAURA
Yeah, grandpa?

NATHANIEL
Get me a scotch.

People begin to swarm Nathaniel, congratulating him.

EXT. THE FARM - LATER

Alfred's truck slowly rolls into the driveway.

INT. THE TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Alfred turns off the engine and sits in the truck. He looks through the windshield at the activity within the house.

After a moment, he opens the glove compartment and takes out a piece of paper. It is a copy of the state claim form for the lottery.

He stares at it, unable to take his eyes off the number. \$180,000,000. Impossible.

He looks back at the house, motionless.

Finally, he folds the paper and tucks it into his pocket.

He gets out of the truck and heads for the house.

INT. THE HOUSE - LATER

A small trio plays music. Some people dance. Everybody drinks.

Nathaniel is in the middle of a group of men, telling a joke. Alberto sits in a chair eating from a paper plate and listening as well. Nathaniel appears to be in great spirits, with lightness and energy that we have not seen from him.

NATHANIEL
...The rich guy says to the Mexican worker, "Did you find the painting supplies in the garage?" The worker says, "Sí, señor". He says, "And you painted the porch like I asked?" The worker says, "Sí, señor, I painted it.

(MORE)

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

But let me tell you, that is no a porch, it's a Ferrari."

The men burst out laughing. Alberto wheezes with laughter.

Laura and Alfred dance in the center of the room.

LAURA

Do you have a present for him?

ALFRED

I think so.

LAURA

You think? It better not be another hat. It's his 70th birthday, I hope you got him something he'll like.

ALFRED

I'm pretty sure he's gonna like it.

They dance for another moment. Then Alfred calls out.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Juan?

Juan walks from his father's side toward Alfred.

JUAN

Yes, Mr. Murphy?

ALFRED

Come here. Dance with my wife for a minute. I need to do something.

He places Juan in his wife's grasp and walks away. Juan and Laura dance uncomfortably.

EXT. BEHIND THE FARMHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

James sits alone on the edge of the porch in the back of the house. He gulps from a tall can of beer, eating from a bag of potato chips. Several empty cans nearby.

We see an open crate at his feet. Inside the crate, a small field mouse. He takes a chip, breaks off a piece and feeds it to the mouse.

After a moment, Abigail comes out the back door.

ABIGAIL

What are you doing?

JAMES

Nothing.

ABIGAIL

Come inside. Grandpa's asking for you.

JAMES

In a minute.

Abigail steps closer.

ABIGAIL

What's in the box?

She peers down to see the mouse.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Oh, my god. That's disgusting.

JAMES

Leave me alone.

ABIGAIL

Come inside, weirdo.

She walks back into the house.

James sits, smiling at the little mouse.

JAMES

(To the mouse.)

Did you hear that? We're disgusting.

He guzzles the rest of his beer and tosses the can.

After a moment, he reaches down and picks up a large rock from the ground. He holds it up in the air, then suddenly slams it down, crushing the mouse.

He lifts the rock, fascinated by the final convulsions of the tiny rodent.

He empties the remaining chips from the bag into his mouth, clutching the bag and staring at the mouse.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Nathaniel stands in the center of the room, glass in hand, addressing the guests.

NATHANIEL

70 is just another number. And there are no special numbers. We make ourselves believe that there are, mostly so we find an excuse to get together and drink.

A cheer from the guests.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

So I guess I'm glad to be 70 if that's what it takes to have you all here with me. My friends. My family...

Folks raise their glass in approval.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

Laura, my beautiful daughter. I look over there and I have to look twice. Cause at first, all I can see is your mother. And then I realize it's you. Only stronger and smarter than she was. And believe me, that is saying something. I'm so proud of you. (Choked up.) And your brother would have felt the same. You're the backbone of this farm.

People clap.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

James, my boy. My right hand. You're the hope that keeps me going.

James holds up his beer in recognition. In his other hand he holds the potato chip bag, his dead friend inside.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

Abigail, you are the princess, for better or worse. You are the joy around here. The light. I know sometimes your mother and I can be hard on you. But, that's because we love you.

Abigail, standing next to Juan and Alberto, blushes.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

Alberto. Juan. Su lealtad me enorgullece. Gracias. And to everyone else...

Laura glances at an overlooked Alfred. He smiles awkwardly.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

To everyone here. My friends. I just want you to know that Sunny Laura Ranch is as alive as ever.

(MORE)

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

I don't care if a thousand floods
turn this land into a swamp, we're
not going anywhere.

Cheers.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

We're the good guys. All of us.
We're the ones who dare to stand up
for what we believe. Who dare to
stand up to the millionaires who
think they can buy up our history.
Our heritage. They have the money
and the corrupt politicians behind
them. They think they have us
outgunned. Well I say, let 'em
believe that. Cause here's what
they don't understand. We have
Mother Nature on our side. She's
with us...

More cheers.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

And she is one vengeful bitch!

Louder cheers.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

To Sunny Laura ranch. Forever!

EVERYBODY

Forever!

NATHANIEL

Now let's get those musicians
started up! And somebody get 'em
some food, cause god knows that's
all we can afford to pay them!

The band strikes up. The party rages on.

EXT. PORCH - FARMHOUSE - LATER

The final guests stumbling away, drunk.

Laura and Abigail clean the table and sweep up.

Nathaniel sits in a rocking chair, drinking from a bottle of
whiskey. After a moment Alfred walks up.

ALFRED

May I?

Nathaniel stares at Alfred for a few seconds. Then he holds out the bottle of whiskey.

Alfred sits and takes a swig, trying to hide that it is scorching his throat. They sit in silence. Alfred reaches into his pocket and takes out the folded piece of paper.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

I need to talk to you about something.

NATHANIEL

What?

ALFRED

The farm. The debt.

NATHANIEL

I don't wanna talk about it.

ALFRED

We have to-- Look, something happened. Something completely unbelievable and--

NATHANIEL

I said I don't want to talk about it. It's my birthday, Murphy. Try not to ruin my birthday.

He casts a loathing glance at Alfred.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

God knows you've already ruined the last 15 years of my life.

Alfred is stunned and hurt. Nathaniel takes the bottle back and takes a long drink, coughing.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

I gotta tell you-- We're men, right? I'm gonna be honest. I never understood what Laura saw in you. You're lazy. You're talentless. And worst of all, you're boring. Just your presence exudes this bitter weakness that stains everyone around you. You're useless, Murphy. You have no use. You're this sad, little rain storm that turns the ground you walk on into mud.

ALFRED

You should stop talking now.

NATHANIEL

You should be glad that your
parents died in that accident
before they got to see how you and
your convict brother turned out.

Alfred does everything he can not to punch Nathaniel.

ALFRED

Nathaniel, I'm serious...

NATHANIEL

No you're not. You're a lot of
things, but serious isn't one of
them. But you wanna know what
really kills me? The thing that
keeps me up at night? It's that one
day, when I'm gone, you're gonna
inherit this farm. My farm. My
father's farm. And when I'm awake,
in bed, staring at the ceiling, I
sometimes convince myself that it
might be better to just lose the
farm to those motherfuckers, rather
than see it in your hands. And I
hate myself for that.

(A beat.)

I hate you for that.

Alfred squeezes the letter in his hands.

Nathaniel takes another swig and stares Alfred in the eye.

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

You still wanna have that little
chat?

Without saying a word, Alfred stands up and walks away.

INT. ALFRED'S BEDROOM - FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Alfred lies in bed staring at the crumpled letter.

He hears Laura approaching and tosses it into his night
stand.

Laura enters. She looks exhausted. Alfred feels the impulse
to get up and hug her, but he doesn't move.

LAURA

(Unenthusiastically.)
That was fun, huh?

She begins to take her clothes off.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Daddy fell asleep on the porch. I
left him there.

ALFRED
We need to talk.

Laura nods, a sad expression on her face.

LAURA
(Sitting on the bed.)
Yes. We do.

Alfred turns to her, confused.

LAURA (CONT'D)
This isn't working.

ALFRED
What?

LAURA
This.

ALFRED
You talking about the farm? Because
that's what I wanted to--

LAURA
Not the farm. This. Us. We've been
trapped in this horrible routine
for years. And it feels like it's
never going to end.
(A beat.)
And you and Daddy... It's gotta
stop. Sometimes I feel like maybe
that's the reason the farm has been
a disaster for the last few years.
The energy is just-- It's
unbearable.
(A beat.)
We need a change.

Alfred tries to find his bearings, his whole world morphing
in one day.

ALFRED
Okay, you have to listen to me. I
know it's been hard lately, but
things are gonna get--

LAURA
Let me finish.
(Stops and looks at him.)
Do you love me?

ALFRED
 (With certainty.)
 Yes. I do.

LAURA
 You're sure about that?

ALFRED
 I'm sure. Why would you--
 (A frightening revelation.)
 Do you love me?

A moment.

LAURA
 I don't know.

ALFRED
 You don't know?

LAURA
 I used to love you. I know that.
 But things are different.

ALFRED
 I'm not different. I'm the same as
 I've always been.

LAURA
 No, you're not. Not really. But, I
 guess I'm not either. Thing is,
 whoever we are. Whatever this is
 that we've become.
 (A beat.)
 I don't think marriage is the best
 arrangement for us anymore.

Alfred sits, devastated.

LAURA (CONT'D)
 Maybe we shouldn't talk about this
 tonight.

She lays down in the bed and pulls the covers over herself.

LAURA (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry, Alfred. I really am.

She kisses him on the forehead and turns out the light.
 Alfred sits for a moment, then lies down, staring up.

CLOSE ON ALFRED

A single tear runs down his face.

EXT. FARM - DAWN

The sun rising over the horizon.
 The fields still empty... waiting.

INT. ALFRED'S BEDROOM - FARMHOUSE - DAWN

The sun pierces the shades as it does every morning, lighting Alfred's face.

Suddenly: the sound of screaming.

Alfred jolts up.

LAURA (O.C.)
Stop it! James, stop!!!

Alfred rushes to the window. Nothing.

He darts out of the room.

EXT. PORCH - FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Alfred flies out the door to see Alberto sitting on the porch wheezing. Juan trying to help.

ALFRED
 What's going on?

Juan just looks at Alfred, expressionless.

LAURA (O.C.)
James, stop!

EXT. FARM - CONTINUOUS

Alfred runs across the farm, toward the old tree when he sees Abigail kneeling on the ground crying. He looks over to see...

CLOSE ON

Nathaniel hanging from an old rope tied around the branch.

James is pulling at Nathaniel's legs, fiercely.

JAMES
 It's okay. He's okay.

He continues to pull at Nathaniel. We can almost hear the bones cracking.

Alfred runs over, tackling James to the ground. James fights for a bit, then begins to sob in his fathers arms.

Alfred clutches his son close.

Laura is suddenly eerily quiet and expressionless... staring.

Alfred follows her gaze over to Nathaniel, swinging lifelessly against the brilliant flame-colored sunrise.

Swinging...

FADE TO BLACK

*