

Beat. August takes a seat.

The table is covered in a feast of foods. Hands start reaching across the table. The business of a festive dinner begins.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BORDER – AFTERNOON

The SOUND OF WOODEN FLUTES AND HAND MADE INSTRUMENTS CAN BE HEARD IN THE AIR.

Two young girls in mustard yellow cloaks lead two young men in hooded cloaks. The girls walk procession-like with flowers in their hands. The two young men carry a wooden box with rope handles.

The group stops ten feet from the border into the forest. The girls turn ceremonially together and wait for the young men to open the lid of the one-foot by one-foot square box. The girls then toss their flowers in the box and step aside.

The young men raise the hoods of their cloaks over their heads. The lid is closed and the box is picked up by its handles again. The girls stay where they are as the young men carry the box right to the edge of the forest.

There the lid is reopened. The two young men reach down and pull out the contents of the box. The flowers the girls threw in the box, trickle off the blood red surface of the LARGE SLAB OF MEAT.

The two hoods turn and look into the forest. About five feet into the forest is a large flat rock. Its surface is stained dark from dried animal blood.

The young men start swinging the meat to gain momentum. On the third swing, they throw the large slab of meat into the air and over the forbidden boundary. It makes a SOUND as it lands on the rock.

The young men glance at the forest for a moment, and then turn and walk back to the girls. They turn and start walking in a procession back down the hill and towards the MUSIC.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANOPY – AFTERNOON

A canopy of flowers and vines has been made on the grass next to the stream. Candles hung by string are tied throughout.

A quartet of young musicians play on stools. Vivian Percy and the children sing next to them.

Kitty is dressed in a beautiful simple white frock. Christop looks neat and handsome. They stand on either side of August Nicholson who holds a weathered book in his hands. He quietly instructs the couple where to stand and what to do.

Some of the guests are seated in wooden chairs, some are seated in the grass.

Ivy is seated on the grass nearby with an older woman with thick gray hair. We have seen this woman sitting with the elders many times. This is MRS. CLACK.

MRS. CLACK

(whispers)

I had an elder sister.

Ivy turns to Mrs. Clack and smiles.

IVY

(whispers)

Mrs. Clack, you have been keeping secrets.

MRS. CLACK

(whispers)

Kitty reminds me of her so.

IVY
(whispers)

What manner of person was
she?

MRS. CLACK
(smiles)

Saucy. We fought endlessly.

IVY
(smiles)

May I ask her name?

Beat.

MRS. CLACK

Your father created a miracle
here in this place. Sheltered us
from the darkness.

Ivy can hear the change in Mrs. Clack's voice.

IVY

Why did she not come to
Covington Woods?

MRS. CLACK

My sister did not live past her
twenty-third birthday. A group
of men took her life in an alley
by our home.

Mrs. Clack fixes her frock with her puffy hands.

August Nicholson turns to the congregation. He calls out.

AUGUST

Please rise.

Everyone in chairs and on the grass stands for the ceremony.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANOPY - NIGHT

The MUSIC IS LIVELY. The musicians are up on their feet. People are dancing.

Kitty and Christop stand side by side and greet each family of the village. They are presented handmade gifts wrapped in twine. Kitty is glowing as she accepts the wedding gifts.

Ivy steps up and hugs her sister tight. Kitty hugs her back and lets go. Ivy keeps hugging. Kitty realizes Ivy is crying. Ivy kisses Kitty on the cheek and finally lets go. Kitty watch with confusion as her sister moves away.

CHRISTOP

She's not going to squeeze my
shirt like that is she?

Kitty forces a smile and accepts the next gift.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANOPY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Edward and Tabitha Walker greet the elders that swarm around them and congratulate them.

Alice Hunt steps up and kisses Tabitha. She moves to Edward who finishes shaking a man's hand.

ALICE

Many blessings on this most
joyous of days.

Alice puts out her hand.

EDWARD

It was a rare and lovely ceremony, was it not?

ALICE

Glorious. I saw your hand move to your eyes on more than one occasion.

EDWARD

Must have been dust of some matter.

Edward smiles at her. Alice smiles gently back.

She lowers her untouched hand back to her side. They both nod at each other. Alice steps away.

She is flustered. She holds her hands nervously as she walks. Alice turns and glances back over her shoulder.

Edward Walker is greeting Vivian Percy. HE SHAKES HER HAND as she congratulates him.

Alice turns back and keeps walking. She looks around to see if anyone is watching her. Her face is bright red with embarrassment.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANOPY - NIGHT

The swirl of dancing captures more and more people.

Ivy stands to the side. Kitty's hand reaches out from the dancers. Kitty takes hold of her sister and pulls her in. Ivy resists for a moment and then lets herself join the celebration.

CUT TO:

EXT. BORDER – DUSK

Long deep shadows fall in the woods.

The two young men in yellow hooded cloaks walk the final steps to the edge of the forest. They look to the flat stained rock in the woods. THE SLAB OF MEAT HAS BEEN REMOVED. A fresh stain sits where the raw meat used to be.

The young men turn quietly and head back to the little girls. They lower their hoods. They nod their heads to the girls who then smile. The four start walking towards the music in two lines of two.

CUT TO:

EXT. SLOPE TO CANOPY – NIGHT

Lucius Hunt sits along the slope that leads to the wedding canopy. THE MUSIC AND LAUGHTER FLOAT THROUGH THE AIR.

He looks down to the CANDLELIT GLOW of the flowered canopy. Almost everyone is dancing.

SOMETHING MOVES IN THE DARKNESS BEHIND HIM.

Lucius looks back over his shoulder.

THERE IS A RUSTLE IN THE BUSHES ON THE SLOPE ABOVE HIM.

Beat.

LUCIUS
Who's come to visit me?

A LOW GRUNT. WE SUDDENLY HEAR SOUNDS OF SCURRYING.

Lucius rises to his feet immediately.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANOPY – NIGHT

Ivy is in the thicket part of the dancing. Her hair has come loose from its upturned position. She laughs as she turns in circles with her sister and friends.

THE FIRST SCREAM MIXES WITH THE LAUGHTER AND DISAPPEARS.

The dancing goes on.

THE SECOND SCREAM CAN BE HEARD MUCH MORE CLEARLY. Ivy is among the first few who stop dancing.

CUT TO:

EXT. SLOPE TO CANOPY – NIGHT

Lucius leans down and picks up an oil lamp that has been knocked to the ground. It is one of a few that have been strung along a walking path.

Lucius looks to Covington Woods in the distance. THERE IS THE DISTANT SOUND OF BRANCHES SNAPPING.

Lucius turns as the SOUND OF A SCREAM CUTS THROUGH THE MUSICAL DIN FROM BELOW.

He stares down at the warm glow of the canopy. He can see everyone has stopped dancing. There is commotion.

Lucius wheels in the direction of the tower. We see a young man in a yellow cloak standing sentry. We see him standing bored – elbows on the edge of the railing.

Lucius watches him for a moment, then turns back confused.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANOPY – NIGHT

The dance floor is full of confusion.

A few YELLS SPIKE THE AIR.

Ivy is unintentionally bumped a few times as people start panicking. She is separated from her sister.

Ivy puts her arms out. She tries to move out of the knot of people.

PANICKED CONVERSATIONS GET LOUDER ALL AROUND HER.

She is bumped two more times. She struggles to keep moving in the crowd.

A HAND TAKES HOLD OF HERS. She feels Lucius leading her out of the congestion. She holds his hand tight as they move towards the entrance of the canopy.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANOPY ENTRANCE – NIGHT

Lucius and Ivy emerge amongst a group of elders that are gathered around two young boys. The boys are around ten years old. They are terrified. Everyone close at hand listens in hushed silence.

Edward Walker is seated in a chair. The boys stand before him at eye level.

BOY

They are in the village.

EDWARD

It cannot be.

BOY

It saw us. It ran off into the darkness.

WALKER
You are certain?

The boys nod. They are both crying. Beat.

Ivy moves next to her father. Edward takes her hand. Edward looks at the boys.

WALKER
You two boys stay close to Ivy here. She'll tell you some funny stories and have you laughing soon.

Ivy gathers the boys close as Edward stands. He turns to the worried crowd around him.

WALKER
We will go together. All of us.

CUT TO:

EXT. WALKING PATH - NIGHT

A SNAKE OF HANDHELD LIGHTS MOVE SLOWLY towards the village.

The members of the village move in a group led by the elders. Lucius walks towards the front holding one of the lanterns.

Kitty and Christop move in the middle and walk in tense silence.

The procession moves towards the DIM LIGHTS OF THE CABINS.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD – NIGHT

The elders have already moved into the courtyard. They walk in stunned silence.

Lucius and the young men are the next to follow.

When Kitty arrives her hands move to her mouth. Christop stops in front of her.

THE COURTYARD BEFORE THEM IS LITTERED WITH DEAD ANIMALS. CHICKENS, AND SQUIRRELS AND RACOONS. THEY HAVE ALL BEEN SLAUGHTERED AND SKINNED. THERE ARE A HANDFUL OF SKINNED ANIMALS DANGLING FROM ROPES TIED TO THE POSTS OF THE HOUSES.

The villagers move like ghosts through their courtyard. Edward Walker moves amongst them. He walks up to one of the hung animals and with shaking hands, slowly unties the knot and lowers the animal to the ground.

A young man walks up to Edward Walker, hesitates and then taps him on the shoulder. GERALD speaks in a whisper when Edward turns.

GERALD

They would like you at the shed
sir.

Everyone is moving towards doorways. Christop is trying to pull a stunned Kitty through the chaos.

Elders usher people towards the nearest porch.

Lucius picks up two children in his arms and moves them to a doorway.

Ivy follows a group of people into a cabin.

Kitty stands in HER BEAUTIFUL WHITE WEDDING FROCK. Christop tugs at her arm. She finally is pulled across the littered courtyard and disappears into the darkness of a cabin.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHED – NIGHT

Alice Hunt stands alone by the open entrance to the shed.

Edward Walker approaches her. She steps away so he may look inside. Edward steps into the doorway of the shed. He stares quietly into the shadows of the food shed. Empty cages hang open throughout the structure.

Alice speaks softly from outside.

ALICE

All the livestock has been taken, and skinned. The fur and feathers are missing.

(beat)

There are marks on the door, where it was opened.

Edward's eyes move to the doorjamb. He sees the fresh torn wood at eye level.

ALICE

The marks are high. Coyotes cannot reach that height.

Beat. Edward stares into the darkness of the shed.

WALKER

(soft)

Are you scared Alice?

ALICE

(whispered)

I am sir.

WALKER

(soft)

So am I.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANOPY – NIGHT

There is no one in the wedding canopy. THE CANDLES HAVE ALL BUT FLICKERED OUT.

A handful of chairs lay on their sides.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWER – NIGHT

Two young men stand in the tower. One man eats leftover cake from a wooden plate. He cuts a piece off and hands it to his partner.

They eat wedding cake as they stare into the darkened woods.

CUT TO:

INT. IVY'S BEDROOM – NIGHT

Ivy lies in bed. She is awake. THE MOONLIGHT STREAMS IN THROUGH THE HALF CLOSED WOODEN SHUTTERS.

THERE IS THE SMALLEST OF NOISES OUTSIDE.

Ivy gets out of bed. She moves to the window slowly.

Her outstretched fingers reach the shutter first. She pushes the shutter open.

She stares out into the darkness.

CUT TO:

EXT. WALKER PORCH – NIGHT

Ivy walks out with a shawl over her night dress. She moves to Lucius who sits on the stairs of the porch.



He turns as she sits down next to him. Beat.

IVY

The elders are going to have an inquiry tomorrow. Each member of the village is to be questioned in the meeting hall.

LUCIUS

To see how the border was breached?

IVY

Yes.

Lucius nods silently. Beat.



LUCIUS

It is cold outside. You ought to go in.

IVY

Why are you on this porch?

LUCIUS

It is not safe.


IVY

There are other porches.

Beat. There is an awkward moment. Ivy searches for something to say.

IVY

Do you find me too much of a tomboy?



Lucius shakes his head lightly, "No."

IVY

I do long to do boy things.

(whispers)

Like that game the boys play at
the stump. They put their backs
to the woods and see how long
they can wait before getting
scared. It's so exciting.

(softer)

I understand you hold the
record. It will never be broken
they say.

LUCIUS

It's just children's games.

IVY

How is it you are brave when
all the rest of us shake in our
boots?

LUCIUS

I do not worry about what will
happen. Only what needs to be
done.

Beat.

LUCIUS

How did you know I was here.

IVY

I saw you out the window.

(beat)

No, I won't tell you your color.
Stop asking.

Beat. The wind blows stronger. They see leaves move all around them.

IVY

When we are married, will you
dance with me?

Lucius looks at her.

IVY

I find dancing very agreeable.

Beat.

IVY

Why can you not say what is in
your head?

LUCIUS

Why can you not stop saying
what is in yours?

Ivy is surprised by the strength in Lucius' voice.

LUCIUS

Why must you lead, when I
want to lead? If I want to
dance, I will ask you to dance.
If I want to speak, I will open
my mouth and speak. Everyone
is forever plaguing me to speak
further. Why? What good is it
to tell you, you are in my every
thought from the time I wake?
What good can come from my
saying I sometimes cannot
think clearly or do my work
properly? What gain can rise
from my telling you the only
time I feel fear as others do is
when I think of you in harm?

LUCIUS

That is why I am on this porch
Ivy Walker. I fear for your
safety before all others.

(beat)

And yes I will dance with you
on our wedding night.

Ivy sits in the moonlight. Tears stream down her cheeks. A hand reaches out
and wipes a tear. This causes more tears to fall.

Lucius Hunt leans forward and kisses Ivy Walker on the porch of her
father's home.

CUT TO:

INT. WALKER BEDROOM – MORNING

Ivy and Kitty sit on their old bed together. Ivy squeezes her sister's hand.

IVY

Kitty, I wanted to speak with
you first. I would not want you
to feel pain in any fashion. You
are my cherished one. If you
were to feel badly about
Lucius, I would not have it.
One love to sacrifice another
love is not right.

The two sisters sit quietly. Kitty moves the stray hairs from Ivy's face.

KITTY

(soft)

Do not fret, younger sister.

Ivy closes her eyes.

KITTY

There is nothing you can do
that would sacrifice my love for
you. You are my cherished one
as well.

(Kisses Ivy on the head)
God bless you and your life
together.

The two sisters sit holding hands in the room they used to share.

CUT TO:

INT. MEETING HALL – MORNING

A woman in her twenties stands before a committee of five elders.

WOMAN

...I had been to the storage
shed twice to fetch food prior to
the wedding ceremony.

ALICE

And the livestock was
untouched at that time?

WOMAN

Yes Mrs. Hunt. All was as it
should be.

Beat. Alice nods.

WOMAN

Could this be a new creature?

ALICE

What do you mean?

WOMAN

If there are Those We Don't
Speak Of in the woods, could
there not be yet another
creature, similar, but different
to our own creatures.

August Nicholson and the rest of the elders stare quietly at the woman. Beat.

ALICE

I suppose it is possible.
(beat)
Thank you Beatrice.

BEATRICE nods and starts out.

BEATRICE

I beg your pardon...

The elders look up to find Beatrice still in the meeting hall.

BEATRICE

Is it true, about Lucius and Ivy?

Alice is taken a little off guard.

BEATRICE


There are whispers all over the
village.

She glances to Edward and Tabitha who smile back. Alice turns to the
woman.

ALICE

We were informed early this
morning of their intentions.

BEATRICE



It is amazing to witness which
two people love chooses to
unite. It follows no rules.

ALICE
(soft)

No it doesn't.

Alice gently looks down.

BEATRICE
God bless them both.

ALICE
Thank you dear.
(smiling)
Please ask the next person to
enter.

CUT TO:



EXT. MEETING HALL - MORNING

A line of villagers wait patiently outside the doors of the meeting hall cabin.

Beatrice walks out and lets the next person in.

CUT TO:

INT. HUNT CABIN - MORNING

Lucius Hunt opens the front door to his cabin.

LUCIUS
What's happened?

Noah Percy stands in the doorway sobbing. Beat.



Noah walks in. Lucius closes the door.

LUCIUS
Is this about Ivy and myself?

Noah doesn't answer. Beat.

Lucius heads back to his desk. Lucius folds the piece of paper he was writing and places it in the drawer.

LUCIUS
I know you are very fond of
her.

Noah shakes his head. He moves to Lucius.

LUCIUS
I know she is fond of you.
(turns)
There are different types of
love Noah-

Lucius barely sees THE SHARP BLADE.

NOAH AND LUCIUS STAND EYE TO EYE. BEAT. NOAH PULLS OUT
THE BLADE FROM LUCIUS' STOMACH.

WE WATCH LUCIUS FOLD TO THE FLOOR OF HIS CABIN.

NOAH, STILL CRYING, CHANGES THE GRIP ON HIS KNIFE AND
BENDS DOWN OVER LUCIUS.

CUT TO:

INT. PERCY BEDROOM - MORNING

Vivian Percy is helping Robert with his vest. She gently straightens out his collar. They've done this routine many times.

THERE IS A NOISE FROM THE CABIN'S ENTRANCE.

VIVIAN

Noah, you'll be late for the meeting hall. Would you like your father to walk you there?

Robert Percy places his eyeglasses on.

VIVIAN

Noah?

CUT TO:

INT. PERCY CABIN – MORNING

WE ARE MOVING THROUGH THE PERCY CABIN. THE MAIN SITTING ROOM IS EMPTY. WE SEE THE FRONT DOOR IS OPEN. WE MOVE TOWARDS IT.

THERE IS A NOISE, A CREAKING THAT GROWS IN STRENGTH. WE MOVE TO THE FRONT DOOR AND THEN THROUGH IT.

WE ARE ON THE PORCH. THE CREAKING SOUND IS VERY LOUD. WE TURN AND SEE NOAH SEATED IN A ROCKING CHAIR. HE ROCKS BACK AND FORTH CREAKING ON THE NOISY WOOD OF THE PORCH.

HE TURNS AND LOOKS OVER WHEN HE FEELS HIS PARENTS PRESENCE.

VIVIAN AND ROBERT PERCY STAND FROZEN LIKE A BAD PAINTING.

NOAH POINTS AT HIS WET SHIRT.

NOAH

(whispers)

The bad color.

CUT TO:



INT. MEETING HALL – MORNING

The elders look away from the man who stands before them. They turn to the SOUNDS OF COMMOTION COMING FROM OUTSIDE THE MEETING HALL CABIN.

The door opens, a short flustered man enters. THE NOISE AND GROWING COMMOTION SPILLS INTO THE MEETING HALL.

A couple of the elders stand.

FLUSTERED MAN

I beg your pardon-

EDWARD

What is it?

Beat.



FLUSTERED MAN

There has been an accident.

CUT TO:

EXT. WALKING PATH – MORNING


Ivy and Kitty step off their porch together. They make their way down the walking path. There is a GROWING SOUND OF VOICES ahead of them.

Two people come rushing past.

KITTY

Helen what is it?

One of the girls stops and comes back. She speaks in a frantic whisper.



GIRL

Noah Percy was found with
quarts of blood upon his clothes
and hands... The blood was not
his own and he will not speak
as to whose it is.

KITTY

Dear God in heaven.

HELEN runs off.

Ivy's face changes. Beat.

Ivy lets go of her sister's hand. She starts moving away.

KITTY

Ivy, where are you going?

Ivy does not respond. Her walk becomes quicker and quicker. Kitty stares
after her as her sister breaks into a run.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - MORNING

WE HEAR IVY COUNTING UNDER HER BREATH AS SHE RUNS.

IVY

Eighteen-nineteen-twenty-

On the twentieth step she reaches the end of the path and makes the turn
around a cabin into the courtyard.

THERE IS COMMOTION ALL AROUND HER. SHE HEARS
KNOCKS AND DOORS OPENING AND CLOSING. ELDERS YELL
OUT.

AUGUST

(o.s.)

Are there any injured in here?

ALICE

(o.s.)

Has anyone been hurt in this
home?

Ivy runs past all the voices. She runs past all the frantic people and movement.

THE SOUNDS OF COMMOTION ARE BEHIND HER.

She crosses the entire courtyard, brushing people as she runs.

She reaches the quiet part of the village; the part not searched yet.

Her feet hit the walking path stones similar to the ones near her house.

She drops her walking stick and keeps going.

She reaches a turn in the path and goes in the wrong direction before realizing and changing directions. She starts running again. Her hair comes flying out from its bindings.

IVY

(exhales)

-Twenty-two- twenty-three.

She comes to a quick stop and puts her hands out. She feels the wood of the front door of the Hunt cabin.

She pushes it open.

CUT TO:

INT. HUNT CABIN - MORNING

She steps into the silent cabin.

IVY

Lucius?

Ivy uses her hands to find the first piece of furniture. It's a chair. She walks around it.

IVY

Lucius Hunt you answer me
this moment!

Ivy moves slowly across the room, heading towards Lucius' loft.

Her foot HITS SOMETHING. SHE STOPS.

She is now standing in the middle of the cabin. Ivy bends down and gropes with her hand. Her hand comes back dripping.

Ivy kneels to the ground and searches with her hands for Lucius' head. She finds his shoulders and pulls with all her strength to get him onto her lap.

THERE ARE VOICES AND NOISE OUTSIDE. FOOTSTEPS ARE HEARD.

A young man steps into the doorway. He is instantly stopped by what he sees. He quickly runs away.

WE HEAR MANY FOOTSTEPS NOW.

Edward Walker is the first one in the doorway. He begins shaking his head violently. Tears instantly fall over his anguished face.

WE HEAR MORE FOOTSTEPS APPROACH.

The area behind Walker gets filled with villagers.

Edward Walker gathers himself for a moment. He speaks to those closest behind him.

WALKER

Do not let Alice Walker come
here.

A handful of those in shock behind him, leave.

Ivy Walker sits on the floor of the cabin with a bloodied lump of clothes and flesh in her arms. She looks in the direction of her father's voice.

IVY

(desperate)

I cannot see his color.

CUT TO:

EXT. SICK CABIN - DAY

The entire congregation of the village waits outside the sick cabin. Everyone is silent. All watch the windows of the narrow cabin.

A FLAG OF WHITE FLIES at half mast next to the cabin.

Ivy walker listens TO THE SNAP OF THE WHITE FLAG.

A door to the cabin opens. Mrs. Clack walks out and approaches the group. She glances at Ivy and then looks to the group.

MRS. CLACK

It is best to be direct at moments such as these. He has suffered a great deal. He is very weak. He may pass at any time.

Some women in the group begin to cry. Parents hold their children a little tighter.

MRS. CLACK

Please give him all your prayers and good thoughts. He will hear them.

Ivy concentrates on the SOUND OF THE FLAG. She listens to the RHYTHMIC SNAPS. Then slowly, her face begins to tremble. She finally begins to cry.

CUT TO:

INT. THE QUIET ROOM - DAY

The heavy wooden door to the quiet room is being unlocked. Robert Percy turns from the door. His face is an ashen. He steps aside.

Ivy moves to the door. She opens it.

Next to the sacks of potatoes, in the corner of shades, Noah Percy sits in the only chair in the room. He sits eerily straight up. When he sees who it is, he smiles. **THE CHAIR CREAKS AS HE STANDS.**

Ivy walks straight to **THE SOUND**. She reaches for his face. Finds it... and **CRACKS HIS FACE WITH A VIOLENT SLAP**. Noah covers his face with his hands. She slaps him again and again. Her hand hitting his ears, his hands. She stands there hitting him. He stands there taking it.

Robert Percy takes hold of her and gently pulls her off him. After a moment, she stops raising her hand. She lets herself be quietly taken from the room.

The door is closed again. Locked again.

FROM INSIDE THERE IS A SUDDEN BURST OF SCREAMS. IT DIES DOWN TO A WHIMPER.

CUT TO:

INT. SICK CABIN - DAY

One of the oldest of the elders, **VICTOR**, stands near the door to the sick cabin with Tabitha and Edward Walker.

In the background we can see Alice Hunt sitting next to the only occupied cot. There are low sounds coming from the lump that is Lucius.

The three elders in the doorway, speak in whispers.

TABITHA

(whispers)

I am very worried for Alice.
She will not speak.

EDWARD

(whispers)

Her son is to die. There is
nothing to say.

Beat. Edward turns to Victor.

EDWARD

(whisper)

There is nothing to say. Victor
am I correct in that statement?

Victor shakes his head.

VICTOR

(whisper)

There were six wounds
inflicted. Five of the wounds
are not life threatening. The
sixth was made to the chest.
When I listen to his breastplate,
I cannot hear airflow as I
should. The sound is deadened.
He is having greater and greater
difficulty breathing.

EDWARD

(whisper)

What can be done to mend
him?

VICTOR

(whisper)

We can only pray.

Beat.

EDWARD

(whisper)

If there were no limitations,
what could be done?

Tabitha's eyes move to her husband's. Victor looks directly at Edward who stares back quietly. Beat.

VICTOR

(whisper)

What are you asking me?

EDWARD

(whisper)

Is there anything at all that can
be done to mend the boy?

Beat. Edward's eyes are tearing up.

EDWARD

(whisper)

Please Victor, would you be so
kind as to answer my
question...

Tabitha and Victor stare in stunned silence. Beat.

VICTOR

There is one other option.

CUT TO:

EXT. WALKER PORCH - DAY

Ivy Walker sits still on a rocker on the porch of her cabin. She does not look over as her father comes onto the porch and stands by her. Beat.

IVY
Has he passed?

WALKER
No.

(beat)
You know the moment I heard
my child's vision had finally
failed her, and that she would
forever be blind, I was sitting in
that very chair.

(beat)
I was so ashamed.

IVY
(soft)
Why?

WALKER
(soft)
For not protecting you.
(beat)
Could we take a walk Ivy?

CUT TO:

EXT. WALKING PATH - DAY

Edward and his daughter move along a walking path. Edward leads her off the path onto the grass. They continue walking.

WALKER
What do you know about your
grandfather?

IVY
He was the wealthiest man in
the towns.

WALKER

That he was. He had a gift for that. If he was given one dollar, in less than a fortnight he would have turned it into five. You do not know of money. It is not a part of our life here. Money can be a wicked thing. It can turn men's hearts black... Good men's hearts. My father could not see this. For all his gifts, he was a poor judge of a man's character. Your grandfather was a good man Ivy. He had a laugh that could be heard three houses away. He used to hold my hand as I hold yours.

(beat)

He taught me strength and showed me love and told me to lead when others would only follow.

(beat)

Your grandfather James Walker, died in his sleep. A man put a gun to his head and shot him while he dreamed. I tell you this, so you will understand some of the reasons for my actions and the actions of others.

(beat)

You are a strong one Ivy. You lead when others would follow. You see light when there is only darkness. I trust you among all others.

They stop walking.

IVY

Thank you father.

WALKER

Ivy do you know where you
are?

IVY

At the old shed that is not to be
used.

They stand next to a worn shed hidden in tall grass.

Edward opens the lock on the small shed.

WALKER

Ivy...

IVY

Yes father.

WALKER

Do your very best not to
scream.

IVY

What?

CUT TO:

INT. SHED - DAY

WE ARE IN THE DARKNESS OF A SHED. LIGHT POURS IN AS
EDWARD OPENS THE DOOR. He steps in.

He puts out his hand and helps Ivy inside.

IVY

There is an odd smell.

WALKER

It is ahead of you.

IVY

What is it?

WALKER

I cannot explain in words.

(beat)

It is just a few steps.

Beat. Ivy steps forward. Her hands go out – searching. Her fingers reach into the shadows of the shed.

She touches something. Her hand glides over the GLISTENING FUR. Her fingers graze the TEETH. IT MOVES.

Ivy pulls back and stifles a scream with her own hands.

Edward catches her.

IVY

-Those We Don't Speak Of.

Edward holds her gently.


WALKER

Do not be frightened. It is only
farce.

WE SEE IN THE DARKNESS NOW. HANGING FROM WOODEN
RAFTERS ARE NINE OR TEN SUITS OF FUR AND CLAWS. EACH
ONE HAS A HUMP – EACH HAS DARK AND LIFELESS EYES.

THE COSTUMES CREAK AS THEY SWING SLIGHTLY ON THEIR
HOOKS.

CUT TO:



EXT. BEHIND OLD SHED – DAY

Ivy is seated in the grass with her back to the shed. Edward stands near her.

WALKER

There did exist rumors of
creatures in these woods. It is
in one of the history books I
used to teach in the towns.

Ivy nods as if she understands.

IVY

The ceremony of meat.

WALKER

We remove it ourselves. An
elder is always assigned.

IVY

The drills? They are farce too?

WALKER

We did not want anyone to go
to the towns Ivy.


IVY

What about the animals? The
skinned ones? Are the elders
responsible for that too?


WALKER

It was not us. We do not know
what did that.

Beat.



Ivy's face begins to tremble. Edward kneels down.



Edward Walker reaches out and takes Ivy's hand in his. He places a TINY FOLDED PAPER in her hand and closes her fingers over it.

WALKER

(whispers)

On this paper has been written
a tool of medicine. It is
common in the towns.


Ivy looks up. Edward holds his hands tight over his daughter's closed fingers.

WALKER

(whispers)

Lucius Hunt will pass if he
does not receive this soon. He
may pass regardless.

(beat)




You are to go with two others
and follow the path near the
stream. A half day's journey
will bring you to a hidden road.
There, the two others will wait
as you continue. You alone will
follow the hidden road to the
end of Covington Woods.

(beat)

You are to tell no one in the
towns where we are and return
with haste.

(beat)

You gave your heart to this
boy. His mother is in need. Are
you ready to take this burden,
which, by right, is yours and
yours alone?



Father and daughter are crying. They are leaning towards each other now. Their foreheads almost touching.

IVY
(whispers)

I do.

CUT TO:

INT. WALKER CABIN – DAY

Edward Walker sits at the small table next to the stove. He waits outside the open door to Ivy's bedroom.

Through the doorway we see her packing a cloth bag. Her yellow cloak lies on the bed.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD – DAY

Ivy moves through the courtyard. Her walking stick moves steadily back and forth. Her cloth bag is stuffed and hangs against her back.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESTING ROCK – DAY

Ivy sits in her yellow cloak. Her hood is up over her head. She sits on the enormous rock embedded in the base of the hill.

Her hand moves under her hood. She looks like she's wiping tears, but we cannot see her face.

Ivy just sits there... gathering strength.

THERE IS A NOISE. She looks up. Two cloaked figures emerge from the path. They stand in silence across from her.

CUT TO:



INT. SICK CABIN - DAY

Alice sits in a chair to the side of Lucius' bed. Lucius lies under the sheets asleep. His hair is damp. His face is white. His breathing is shallow and labored.

THE SOUND OF THE DOOR TO THE CABIN OPENING AND CLOSING CAN BE HEARD.

Edward walks into the cabin. He moves towards Alice and Lucius. They are the only three in the cabin. Beat.

EDWARD

(soft)

Alice, I have sent for help.

Alice looks up. Beat.



EDWARD

(soft)

I have sent Ivy to the towns.

Now Alice stands.

ALICE

(soft)

-You cannot

Alice starts crying. Edward wants to touch her. He leans towards her.


EDWARD

(soft)

It is all that I can give you.

(trembling)

...It is all that I can give you.



Alice looks at the man standing so close to her. She looks in his childlike eyes.

ALICE
(soft)

I accept.

They stand together, almost touching. They both are trembling. Beat.

Edward gently nods and steps away. Alice slowly takes a seat next to her son. She holds her son's hand tight.

CUT TO:

EXT. BORDER NEAR CREEK – DAY

Three cloaked figures move towards the line of trees at the start of the woods. The two large figures flank the smaller one. They all carry cloth bags on their back.

There is a creek to their right. It travels from the woods into their valley.

The three stop at the border.

We see their faces under their hoods. Ivy Walker is in the center. To her one side, is Christop Crane. To her other side is Finton Coin.

Ivy's fingers run over the yellow slash of paint on the tree bark. She listens and hears the **SNAPPING OF THE YELLOW FLAG ABOVE HER.**
YELLOW FLAGS SNAP IN THE DISTANCE ON THE EITHER SIDE OF HER.

Finton glances to the soil and sees the claw marks in the dirt just in front of them. He looks over to Christop who has seen them too. Finton looks like he may faint on the spot.

Ivy is the first to move. She holds out her stick and takes a step. Her foot presses into the dirt amongst the large clawed footprints. The others follow.

Ivy steps into the woods. She makes it to her sixth step before Finton's trembling hand touches her shoulder. She turns to him.

FINTON

Christop.

Ivy turns and faces back the way she came. Christop stands on the other side of the border. He has not stepped into the woods with them.

IVY

Christop make haste.

Christop stands crying at the forbidden line.

CHRISTOP

(crying)

I beg your pardon.

IVY

You needn't be scared. You were told.

CHRISTOP

(crying)

I will be unable to join you.

IVY

They had costumes Christop.

FINTON

Please Christop, do not leave us.

IVY

There is nothing to fear.

CHRISTOP

-Then why do you wear the cloak of the safe color?

Finton looks at Ivy wearing her yellow cloak. Her hood is up. He realizes the truth in what Christop is saying.

IVY

We will light torches. It will be safe.

Ivy stares in the direction of Christop's voice. Her eyes are steeled.

IVY

Do not worry what will happen.
Only what needs to be done.

Christop wavers for a second. Beat. He is still crying as he backs away.

CHRISTOP

(crying)

It is forbidden.

Finton watches as Christop backs away. He turns and moves down the slope out of sight. Beat.

IVY

Come if you are coming.

Finton turns and finds Ivy walking into the woods. Her walking stick taps trees as she moves.

Finton stands where he is. He lets her get ten feet away before running and catching up to her.

CUT TO:

EXT. TREE TOPS - DAY

We look down from the branches of the trees. Below us is a bed of leaves and dirt. The leaves come to life and begin swirling in agitation. The wind moves through the trees like a presence.

Down below, two specters in yellow move through the woods. Their hoods pulled tight over their scared faces.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK OF SICK CABIN – DAY

The elders have gathered behind the sick cabin.

They wait and watch as August Nicholson comes around the corner. He hurries over.

AUGUST

(whispers)

I had a difficult time getting away.

(beat)

What is it?

Everyone turns to Edward. He gathers himself before he speaks.

EDWARD

(whispers)

I have sent Ivy to the towns to retrieve medical supplies.

The elders are stunned. Mr. and Mrs. Percy stand like ghosts.

MRS. CLACK

What have you done?

EDWARD

Lucius has a chance-

MRS. CLACK

We have agreed, never to go back – never.

EDWARD

What was the purpose of our leaving? Let us not forget, it was out of hope of something good and right.

MR. PERCY

You should not have made decisions without us. You have gone too far.

EDWARD

I am guilty Robert. I made a decision of the heart. I cannot look into Alice's eyes and see the same look I see in August's. It is too painful.

August stares at Edward.

EDWARD

I cannot bare it.

MRS. CLACK

You have jeopardized everything we have made.

EDWARD

Yes I have. I hope I am always able to risk everything for the right and just cause. If we did not make this decision – we could never again call ourselves innocent. And that in the end is what we have protected here – innocence.

(beat)

That, I am not ready to give up.

Beat.

AUGUST

There is still hope.

Edward looks to August and smiles.

EDWARD

Yes there is my dear friend.

MRS. CLACK

How could you have sent her?
She is blind.

Edward stares at Mrs. Clack.

EDWARD

I sent her because I trust her.
And it is in her blindness that
our town's hope lives.

Beat. They all stand in silence.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS – AFTERNOON

Two torches have been lit and fit atop two thick branches stuck into the ground.

We hear the SIZZLE OF TINY RAIN DROPS AS THEY HIT THE FOREST FLOOR. Ivy and Finton tie a heavy cloth tarp by its corners to nearby trees. They are racing the growing drizzle around them.

CUT TO:

EXT. TENT – LATE AFTERNOON

Finton and Ivy are seated with knees to their chests under the cloth tarp.

THE OVERWHELMING SOUND OF A DOWN POUR ECHOES THROUGHOUT THE FOREST.

Finton stares through the gray wall of pounding rain all around him.
Everything is a blur.

In the haziness of the world of trees around him, THERE IS A THING OF DARKNESS. Finton leans forward a bit as he stares more intently.

Rain continues to cloud and obscure his view. THE THING OF DARKNESS FAR AWAY SEEMS TO FLICKER AND MOVE.

Finton's mouth opens a bit as he stares. THE THING OF DARKNESS SEEMS TO GET SMALLER AND THEN GETS WASHED AWAY BY THE RAIN.

Finton waits and watches. There is nothing to be seen but the constant downfall of rain. Beat. Finton turns to Ivy. She remains huddled and quiet. Finton turns back to the rain and looks around nervously.

CUT TO:

EXT. TENT SITE - DUSK

The rain has stopped.

Finton stands with his bag over his shoulder. He peels away layers of soggy cloth from the torches.

FINTON

They are useless.

Finton turns and walks slowly over to Ivy who stands by the tent. Beat.

FINTON

Ivy.

IVY

You may go.

FINTON

Darkness will be here soon.

IVY

It is always here for me.

FINTON

It is not too late to return.

(beat)

There must be another way to help Lucius.

Beat. Ivy continues to stand with her back to Finton.

FINTON

Do not pretend you do not feel it. There is something in these woods. It turns my stomach to rot. The elders themselves admit there were stories of creatures in these woods long before they arrived.

Ivy does not turn to face him. Beat.

FINTON

(emotional)

You will be safe. They will not harm you because you cannot see. They will take pity on you as they took pity on Noah when he ventured into the woods.

(beat)

They will kill me Ivy. I cannot stay.

We see Ivy's face. She is frightened.

IVY

It is my burden, Finton. You may go.

When she hears THE SOUND OF FINTON'S FOOTSTEPS RUNNING AWAY, all she can do is close her eyes.

CUT TO:



EXT. TENT - NIGHT


The forest has turned to shadows and black. There is a small figure huddled under the cloth tarp. She is huddled under her yellow cloak. Her hood is pulled low over her face. She lets only her tired eyes peek through.

THE SOUND OF THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS OF CICADAS FILL THE AIR WITH THEIR HIGH PITCHED VIBRATO. THE SOUND SEEMS TO GET LOUDER AND LOUDER. UNNATURALLY LOUD.

Ivy has to cover her ears. Her head bows and we lose sight of her eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - MORNING



A slender hand is held out in the air. It slowly pivots till A PATCH OF SUN WASHES OVER ITS PALM. Ivy uses the heat from the sun to guide her direction.

Ivy's silhouette moves against the harsh slant of the morning sun.


Her cane moves back and forth in front of her.

Tap. She adjusts and moves around a tree. Her feet are stepping in mud. She keeps moving.

Tap. She adjusts and continues forward. Her left foot lands in deeper mud. She pulls it out and keeps going.

Tap. She changes position and takes a step. THERE IS NO GROUND WHERE SHE STEPS. HER HANDS GO OUT AS SHE FALLS. SHE GRABS THE EARTH AS IT SLAMS INTO HER ARMS.

SHE IS HANGING ON AN EDGE. SHE TRIES TO PULL HERSELF UP. THE GROUND IS ALL MUD - SHE BEGINS TO SLIDE. SHE FLAILS AS SHE DISAPPEARS INTO THE HOLE IN THE FOREST.



WE WATCH FROM ABOVE as she comes to a stop ten feet down the hole's wall.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOLE - MORNING

Ivy is in a hole about fifteen feet deep. At the bottom there are the SOUNDS OF WATER RUNNING OVER ROCKS.

Her walking stick has wedged into the roots of some trees that are sticking out in this hole in the ground.

Some loose rocks and dirt come free as Ivy finds her footing in the mud wall.

The debris falls to the rock floor.

Ivy catches her breath before pulling herself up.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS NEAR HOLE - MORNING

We see her stick climb over the edge of the hole. Her hand is the next in view as it takes hold of some roots to drag herself out.

She finds the base of a tree and moves to standing.

Her fingers travel over an unusual CROOKED BRANCH of the tree. She ducks under it and steps away from the hole.

She takes a couple heavy breaths... and begins to laugh. It is a tired laugh as she whips her hands at her sides to get the thick mud off her fingers.

She puts her hand to her cloak. It comes away full of mud... She slowly stops smiling. Her other hand goes to the surface of her cloak. It comes away with slick mud.

WE SEE IVY NOW, FULL FIGURE. HER CLOAK AND HOOD IS COATED IN MUD. HARDLY ANY OF THE SAFE COLOR YELLOW CAN BE SEEN.

Ivy starts wiping the mud from her cloak. Her movements are even at first and then become more desperate as her hands just slide over the slick mud.

We watch her in SILHOUETTE frantically trying to wipe off the mud.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The mud caked figure of Ivy moves through the forest. Her walking cane swings back and forth.

Tap. Crack.

Ivy stops walking. She runs her hand over the cane and finds it fractured three-quarters of the way down.

Her fingers tremble over the crack. She takes hold of each end and checks its strength. THE CANE SNAPS. THE SOUND ECHOES THROUGH THE AIR.

A moment later, WE HEAR ANOTHER SNAP SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY.

Ivy turns. Beat. She remains still under her hood. We watch as she slowly lowers to the ground. Her hand reaches out to the ground. Her fingers search the leaves. After a moment, her hand finds a rock.

She hesitates, and then throws the rock as far as she can. It lands with a CRUNCH IN A BED OF LEAVES.

Ivy stays crouched and listens. THE WIND RUSTLES. Beat.

AND THEN WE HEAR IT - THE IDENTICAL SOUND OF A ROCK LANDING IN A BED OF LEAVES SOMEWHERE BEHIND HER.

Ivy rises in terror. Her hood slips off her head as she starts to move. Her hands go out in front of her as she begins to run.

Branches slap at her arms and face. Her hand slams into a tree, she SCREAMS IN PAIN. She tries not to stop, she moves around it and keeps running.

Another tree catches her shoulder. She spins and almost falls to the ground. She clutches her shoulder as she gathers her balance. She keeps running.

She holds her hand up as she runs through a collection of small branches. They shatter against her forearm. She does not stop.

Ivy's hands start waving in front of her like her walking stick. She is running as fast as she can.

SHE PASSES INCHES FROM A LARGE TREE THAT WOULD HAVE CRUSHED HER. She keeps running.

The branches stop striking her arms. She is racing through a slight clearing. She is out of breath. She slows and stumbles to an exhausted stop.

She breathes slowly and looks around, listening in all directions. WE PULL BACK AND SEE SHE IS STANDING ALONG A HILLSIDE COVERED IN RED FLOWERS. THE BAD COLOR BLANKETS THE GROUND ALL AROUND HER.

Beat. AS HER BREATHING BECOMES SOFTER AND MORE NORMAL ANOTHER SOUND CAN BE HEARD.

IT IS ALSO BREATHING, BUT IT IS MORE ANIMAL IN NATURE – STRONG SNORTING SOUNDS – HORSE LIKE.

Ivy turns slowly in a circle till she finds the direction of the SLOW ANIMAL SNORTING.

Beat. STANDING FORTY FEET AWAY FROM HER IS THE LARGE DARK UPRIGHT FIGURE OF A HUMPED CREATURE. IT STANDS WITH ITS BACK TO IVY.

THIS CREATURE IS LARGER AND HAIRIER THAN THE COSTUMES THE ELDERS HAD.

THE CREATURE ROCKS A BIT SIDE TO SIDE LIKE ITS AGITATED.

Ivy moves ultra-slow. She begins backing up. She makes it a few feet before bumping up against the thick trunk of a tree.

THE CREATURE REMAINS WHERE IT IS, WITH ITS BACK TO US, ROCKING BACK AND FORTH.

Ivy edges around the trunk of the tree. She moves around it till she is hidden. WE LOSE SIGHT OF THE CREATURE FORTY FEET AWAY.

Ivy has her back to the bark. Her chest rises and falls with her panicked breaths. She listens. WE CANNOT HEAR THE ANIMAL BREATHING.

Beat. Ivy leans back around the tree slowly. WE SEE FORTY FEET AWAY, THE CREATURE IS NO LONGER THERE.

WE SUDDENLY HEAR A VERY LOUD ANIMAL SNORT.

Ivy jerks back.

Ivy's face tilts down. WE SEE AT THE BASE OF THE TREE, AN ENORMOUS MOUND OF FUR. THE MOUND SHAKES AS IT BREATHES OUT LOUDLY. THE CREATURE LIES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TREE.

Ivy is slowly going into shock. She's barely able to push herself away from the tree bark. She begins moving away from the tree ever so slowly.

Ivy begins the longest walk of her life. Her striking face remains quiet with exhaustion and fear as she keeps moving. The tree in the background behind her gets smaller and smaller.

She gets a hundred feet away before we HEAR THE ANIMAL GROWL LOW AND MENACING. Ivy stops. She has to turn and face the sound.

THE CREATURE IS NOW STANDING NEXT TO THE TREE. WE BARELY SEE ITS DULL LIFELESS EYES UNDER ITS FUR.

There the two face each other across a hundred feet of woods. There is a terrible stillness; the kind of stillness people often feel before something awful is about to happen.

Suddenly the creature starts moving in long and fast strides towards Ivy.

Ivy reacts too slow to the ON COMING SOUND. She turns and begins running...

THE ANGRY ANIMAL SOUNDS GAIN ON HER... SHE SCREAMS...

THE FIRST BLOW IS FAST AND SUDDEN. ALL WE SEE IS FUR AND CLAWS. IVY IS KNOCKED TO THE GROUND VIOLENTLY.

THE CREATURE CONTINES PAST HER MOVING INTO THE WOODS. WE SEE IT START TO TURN BACK ABOUT FIFTY FEET AWAY - LIKE A BULL IN A BULL FIGHT.

Ivy get ups. She has a set of fresh cuts along the side of her neck.

Ivy turns and runs into the thickest part of the forest.

CUT TO:

EXT. DENSE WOODS - DAY


Her hands go out again as branches and trees close in around her. She fights her way through.

HER OWN BREATHING, AND THE BREAKING OF BRANCHES AND THE CRUSH OF LEAVES FILL HER EARS AS SHE RUNS.

A tangle of branches from a clump of trees slows her. She slaps and strikes at the branches. They snap and break off.

She runs until she can run no more. She slows out of pure exhaustion. She comes to a stop. Her hands hold onto a thick branch in front of her as she rests.

THERE ARE NOISES BEHIND HER.



She is too tired to move. Her hands tremble on the branch.

THE NOISES GET LOUDER.


Her fingers slide over the CROOKED BRANCH. Her fingers stop with recognition. They go back over the crooked bend in the branch.

WE HEAR LOUD MOVEMENT - GALLOPING IN THE DRY LEAVES. BRANCHES SNAP QUICKLY BEHIND HER.

Ivy steps around the branch. Beat. Ivy closes her eyes...

THE CREATURE STRIDES TOWARDS HER...

Ivy raises her arms at her sides. Her body makes the form of the crucifix. She stands steady as **THE SOUNDS OF THE CREATURE RUSH TOWARDS HER...**



She holds.

SHE HEARS THE SOUNDS OF THE BRANCHES BREAKING RIGHT BEHIND HER.


She holds.

THE CREATURE IS SUDDENLY UPON HER...

At the last possible second, she moves. It is fast and unexpected. **HER FEET SLIDE ON THE MUDDY EDGE AS SHE DIVES QUICKLY TO THE SIDE...**

THE CREATURE'S CLAWS JUST GRAZE HER MUDDIED ROBE AS IT DROPS INTO THE HOLE IN THE WOODS.

CUT TO:



INT. QUIET ROOM - DAY

The door to quiet room is unlocked. Robert and Vivian Percy open the door. They hold food in a wooden plate in their hands.

VIVIAN PERCY

Noah?

They step into the musty room. Their eyes go to the center of the room's floor. A handful of floorboards have been pulled up.

In the hole beneath the floor boards **THERE ARE CHICKEN FEATHERS AND BITS OF ANIMAL FUR. A PATCH WHERE TWO FUR PIECES HAVE BEEN KNITTED TOGETHER LIES ON THE WOODEN FLOOR BY THE OVERTURNED FLOOR BOARDS.**

Vivian Percy drops the plate of food.

In the back of the quiet room, the potato sacks have been pushed aside. Where they sat against the wall is an opening three feet in width and height. **HARSH SUNLIGHT POURS IN THROUGH THE OPENING.**

CUT TO:

EXT. HOLE IN WOODS - DAY

The creature lies utterly still.

WE SEE THE CREATURE'S FUR IS RAGGED AND MADE UP OF DOZEN AND DOZENS OF ANIMAL FURS PATCHED TOGETHER.

THE CHICKEN FEATHERS THAT HAVE FILLED ITS HUMP HAVE SPILLED OUT OVER THE VIOLENTLY SHAPED ROCKS THAT THE CREATURE IS LAYING ON.

ITS HEAD LAYS HALF ON AND HALF OFF.

Noah Percy is bloodied and crying. A surge of pain makes his face a tight knot of strain. He gasps as his boyish eyes dart around in panic. He wants to scream. He can't.

A wave of pain crushes his face again and then slowly relaxes. He makes small whimpering sound. Tears fall down his cheeks. He does not make another sound. His eyes stare forever frozen in a moment of a young boy's shock.

WE SEE THE SILHOUETTED FIGURE OF IVY STANDING ON THE EDGE OF HOLE LOOKING DOWN. SHE IS LIKE A GOTHIC HOODED FIGURE against the bright sky.

CUT TO:

EXT. EDGE OF HOLE - DAY

Ivy listens for noises below. None comes. She backs away from the edge. She turns and shakily moves through the tangle of branches.

Her hands find the crooked branch. She feels its strength and then takes hold of it. She pulls and tugs at it until she feels it crack. She pulls down with all her weight and the thick branch snaps off.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Ivy's new walking stick moves back and forth in front of her. TAP. It hits a tree, she moves around it.

The wind starts to blow hard. Leaves start to swirl around her.

THEN SHE HEARS THE FIRST WAIL FROM THE WOODS.

Her stick stops moving.

THE WAIL IS LIKE A SCREAM AND IT IS NOT HUMAN. THE FIRST WAIL IS JOINED BY ANOTHER AND THEN ANOTHER.

THE SCREAMS AND WAILES COME FROM ALL DIRECTIONS. THE SOUND IS OVERWHELMING.

Ivy drops her stick and covers her ears.

WE SEE WHAT SHE CANNOT... THE TREES IN THESE WOODS HAVE HOLES THROUGH THE CENTERS OF THEM. WE WATCH AS WIND TRAVELS THROUGH THESE HOLES AND CAUSES A SOUND... A SCREAM.

IVY

(yelling)

It is for love that I am here!
I beg you, to let me pass!

Beat. THE SCREAMS CONTINUE FROM THE WOODS AS THE LEAVES KEEP SWIRLING.

Ivy's hands lower from her ears.

WE HEAR NON-HUMAN SCREAMS FROM FAR OFF IN THE WOODS.

Ivy reaches down and finds the branch she was using as a walking stick. She rises to her feet defiantly.

IVY

(crying)

It is for love-

THE SCREAMS AND WAILS SEEM TO MOVE AND SWARM AROUND HER.

She takes her first step. She is trembling but finds the strength to take a second. Her stick starts moving back and forth as her steps turn into a walk and her walk turns into a run.

CUT TO:

INT. SICK CABIN - AFTERNOON

Lucius Hunt struggles hard to breathe. Alice Walker keeps a steady watch over her son.

Edward Walker steps next to her chair. He watches Lucius fighting to live.

EDWARD

(soft)

His will to live is very strong.

Alice turns in Edward's direction.

ALICE

(soft)

Love of your daughter makes
him strong.

Edward nods. He moves towards the entrance to the sick cabin. His wife Tabitha waits for him there. He opens the door and he and Tabitha exit together.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD – AFTERNOON

Ivy's stick moves back and forth through high weeds. She holds her palm out and continues to check the location of the sun.

Suddenly, the weeds are gone. The stick moves back and forth unimpeded.
THERE IS A CRUNCH UNDER HER FEET.

Ivy stops. She taps her stick to the ground and HEARS THE SMALL TICKS OF STONES.

Ivy instantly becomes agitated and excited. She starts moving forward, her STEPS CRUNCHING UNDERNEATH HER. She moves until she feels her stick hitting weeds again.

She now knows the width of the GRAVEL ROAD she is on.

She turns around and counts her steps back to the center. She holds her hand up and searches for a patch of sun. She finds it. She turns and faces her body east.

Ivy is breathing heavy from excitement. She starts forward. With each step there is a CRUNCH. THE CRUNCHES START TO GET CLOSER TOGETHER AS IVY STARTS PICKING UP HER PACE.

Ivy removes the cloth bag from her shoulder. She lets it drop to the gravel and dirt as she walks.

She starts walking faster.

Ivy starts tugging at her mud caked cloak. She juggles her walking stick as she pulls the dirty cloth over her head. She slips her arms out of the tangled cloth and drops the crumpled cloak to the gravel and dirt floor.

Ivy starts running.

CUT TO:

INT. WALKER CABIN – AFTERNOON

Edward Walker and Tabitha are standing in their cabin. They are holding hands. The cabin is silent. There is no one else there.

Edward gently lets go of his wife's hand and moves to the corner of the cabin. Tabitha's eyes follow her husband. She turns and walks to the front door and closes it.

We watch her put the wooden plank in place to lock it.

CUT TO:

EXT. WALL OF VINES – AFTERNOON

Ivy runs on the hidden dirt and gravel road. Her stick waves low and in front of her.

THERE IS A SUDDEN THUD AS THE STICK HITS A PACK OF FOLIAGE.

Ivy comes to a quick stop with her hands out. Both hands get swallowed into greenery.

Ivy feels around with her hands. There is A WALL OF VINES AND WEEDS IN FRONT OF HER.

Ivy moves to her side and finds the wall of foliage continues into the woods.

Ivy stops and puts down her walking stick. She reaches up and searches for something to hold. She wedges her foot into a clump of knotted weeds and pulls herself up onto the wall of green.

CUT TO:

INT. WALKER CABIN – AFTERNOON

Edward Walker turns the key of the BLACK BOX. He lifts the lid into its standing position.

Tabitha stands at his side.

Edward reaches into the darkness of the box. There is some folding clothing. His hands push aside the first layers and take hold of a heavy cloth. He pulls it out. We see its blue unfold as he raises it. Dust dances off of it and swirls in the air.

Tabitha takes a slow breath. Edward Walker stares at it with his sad childlike eyes.

WE LEAVE EDWARD AND TABITHA WALKER IN THEIR CABIN STARING AT THE PAIR OF FADED BLUE JEANS EDWARD HOLDS IN HIS HANDS.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY – AFTERNOON

WE ARE LOOKING THROUGH A TRUCK'S WINDSHIELD. WE SEE A DASHBOARD WITH A STYROFOAM CUP. WE SEE A HAND HOLDING A STEERINGWHEEL.

WE ARE MOVING ALONG A HIGHWAY lined on one side by forest. A ten-foot mesh fence covered over with vines and weeds borders the forest.

In the distance there is a SPOT OF WHITE climbing down the weed-covered fence.

WE ARE MOVING FAST. THE SPOT GETS LARGER.

THE WHITE SPOT turns into a figure dressed in white, which lands in the weeds at the side of the highway.

WE ARE MOVING ALONG SIDE IT.

THE FIGURE IN WHITE IS A GIRL. SHE STEPS OUT IN FRONT OF THE TRUCK.

THE DELIVERY TRUCK SWERVES TO AVOID HER; IT SWERVES INTO THE ONCOMING LANE AND LOSES CONTROL.

THE TRUCK ARCS IN THE ROAD; THE SCREAM OF BRAKES SHATTERS THE AIR.

The truck comes to a stop in the middle of the highway.

We hear a SNAP as the truck door opens.

THE TRUCK DRIVER gets out.

He looks frustrated and walks to the girl who stands in the middle of the highway.

TRUCK DRIVER

I didn't see you-

The striking looking girl stands with her hands at her ears.

TRUCK DRIVER

Are you hurt?

The girl slowly lowers her hands. She stares in his direction.

GIRL

What was that noise?

TRUCK DRIVER

What are you doing out here?

Beat.

GIRL

Are you from the towns?

The young truck driver looks at the white girl's old-fashioned clothing for the first time.

TRUCK DRIVER

Where did you come from?

Beat.

GIRL

The woods. You ought not tell anyone.

TRUCK DRIVER

You need help or something?

GIRL

A doctor of medicine. I need to find these things. We must hurry.

The girl holds out her hand. There is a dirty paper folded in it. The driver steps forward and takes the paper. He unfolds it. Beat.

TRUCK DRIVER

I have two or three syringes in my first aid kit. You can have them if you want.

GIRL

You have the things written on
the paper?

TRUCK DRIVER

I think so.

(beat)

Is someone sick?

The girl suddenly has tears in her eyes. Beat. She nods, "yes."

CUT TO:

EXT. GAS STATION - LATE AFTERNOON

The same large delivery truck sits at a small country gas station by the side
of the highway.

The truck driver finishes filling the tank and walks to the tiny wood shingled
building that serves as the gas station.

There is a bench outside the door to the shingled building. AN OLD
WOMAN AND AN OLD MAN are seated there. They are weathered and
fairly unpleasant to look at. They are wearing multiple coats each. Their
bodies have kind of melted into the bench from years of sitting there.

The truck driver steps up.

OLD WOMAN

Twenty-five dollars please.

TRUCK DRIVER

Twenty-five?

OLD WOMAN

Pennsylvania Gas Tax.

TRUCK DRIVER

Oh.

He pulls the cash out of his wallet and hands it over.

TRUCK DRIVER

Pardon me, but what is that
over there?

The truck driver points across the highway to the ten-foot fence covered in
ivy and weeds that lines the road.

OLD WOMAN

Private property.

TRUCK DRIVER

Who lives there?

OLD WOMAN

No one. It's for animals.
Seventy-two thousand acres of
woods. No one's loud to step
foot in there. They got it fixed
so planes ain't even allowed
over it.

TRUCK DRIVER

But who lives there now?

OLD WOMAN

No one. Ain't you listening?
(beat)

Walker family owns it. But
they ain't none of them left.
The youngest son, a history
professor disappeared some
twenty-five years ago. They got
some estate watching over it
now.

Beat. The young truck driver stands thinking.

OLD MAN
Why are you all curious?

The three of them stare at each other. The truck driver looks like he's going to say something. An eternal beat.

TRUCK DRIVER
Just curious.

The young truck driver nods and heads back to his delivery truck.

The old man turns to his wife.

OLD MAN
Pennsylvania Gas Tax? – Good
one Paula.

The old woman laughs a phlegmy, hard laugh that shakes the bench.

The truck driver gets into the cab of his truck. He sees through his window the old couple laughing on the bench. He shakes his head.

TRUCK DRIVER
Crazy-fucking-white people.

HE TURNS THE IGNITION ON and pulls away from the country gas station.

WE SEE his truck on the highway as it rides along the ten-foot fence that marks the preserve. The weed-covered wall goes on for as long as the eye can see. It stretches out till it disappears into the horizon, like some painting in a children's book.

FADE TO BLACK: