

LEAVE NO TRACE

Written by

Debra Granik
Anne Rosellini

Based on the novel
My Abandonment by Peter Rock

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EXT. SALVAGE LOT - AFTERNOON

WILL, 40s, sorts through piles of industrial hardware and cable. When he finds several pieces of metal grate, he sets them aside. His daughter, TOM, young teens, works with him.

WILL
We only need one more.

She hands him one she's found. They leave a small payment for the man who lives in the lot.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENTRANCE - AFTERNOON

Tom and Will enter a dense park by scrambling up a gully, avoiding the public entrance.

They're in Forest Park, a temperate rain forest abutting the city of Portland, Oregon.

EXT. FOREST PARK - LATE AFTERNOON

Not using an established path, they walk over fallen trees and bushes.

Tom stops. She holds back some brambles. On the ground is a dead animal. She picks up a stick and examines the body.

WILL
How many organs can you identify?

Tom peers through under growth at an animal's body.

TOM
That's his liver. Lungs. Heart.

WILL
Good.

TOM
(pointing with the stick)
I'm not sure what that is.

WILL
Spleen.

TOM
What happened?

WILL
Someone probably hit him with their car. He came too close to town.

They walk away into the woods.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - AFTERNOON

They arrive at a spot where they toss down their packs. They're home. Will lights a lantern which emits a low light.

He pulls back some large branches which they've used to obscure their dwelling, constructed with a tent and tarps. In front of it, they've set up a small cooking area. A camping stove is perched on a flat rock and two tree stump stools are arranged around a small table fashioned from a board.

Will stashes their groceries in a buried food cooling cache.

Tom lights a lamp.

He processes wood - splitting it with his knife.

Tom feathers the tinder sticks.

Will ignites the tinder with the ferro rod, a metal rod he strikes against his knife to create sparks. It's one of their most important possessions because it enables them to start a fire in almost any circumstance.

They sit together and eat.

INT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

Will is reading. Tom arranges her sleeping bag.

WILL
Need a second layer?

TOM
Yeah.

Will spreads an army blanket over her sleeping bag. He turns out the light.

TOM (CONT'D)
See you in the a.m.

They make their clicking sound to say "Good Night" to one another.

After a moment, they hear the sound of snapping branches as some dogs run through the brush and through their camp. One dog stops to sniff around their tent. Will switches on a flashlight and they can see the outline of its snout protruding through the shelter wall. Will reaches for a pan and bangs it with a spoon, which sends the dog away.

TOM (CONT'D)
I named the head dog Layla.

WILL

If she's such a good friend of yours, you could tell her that we're trying to get some sleep around here.

TOM

I don't speak dog.

Will smiles.

WILL

Let's try to get back to sleep.

He settles in attempting to fall asleep again, but is wide awake.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - DAY

Tom walks along a fallen tree to a small garden covered by a transparent plastic tarp. She pulls back the tarp and weeds.

As she works, she gets distracted by pill bugs and centipedes under a log. She uses a magnifier to look closely at the centipede. With the knife on her belt, she cuts deeper into the log and reveals more bugs.

EXT. FOREST PARK - DAY

Tom forages in the forest for edible plants. She uses a small pair of field glasses to identify a bird she hears.

She pokes around a fallen tree and discovers the yellow tip of a chanterelle mushroom hidden underneath.

TOM

Yes!

She investigates further and finds a small patch of the mushrooms and begins snapping them off at the base. In the distance, she can hear her father make a bird sound.

Tom answers him with an owl sound.

She gathers the mushrooms, puts them in the pocket of her hoodie and heads back to camp.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - DAY

She cuts through some low brush to get to Will. He's immersed in building a solar cooker, using the scrap metal they collected as a base.

TOM
Look what I found.

He glances up to look at the mushrooms, but he's absorbed in what he's constructing.

WILL
Excellent. Good haul. Give me a hand here?

She holds pieces of foil while Will tacks them in place over the frame of an umbrella.

She looks at the book he's using to learn about solar cooking.

TOM
Do you think we'll ever be able to cook on this? It seems better for a sunny state.

WILL
There's radiant energy even when you can't see the sun.

TOM
Maybe so, but I couldn't wait 2 weeks for an egg.

He's in thought about improvements.

TOM (CONT'D)
This'll be good in summer.

TOM (CONT'D)
I'm hungry. Can we finish this later?

WILL
Yes.

He smiles at her.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - DAY

Will, in his city clothes, conservative neutral colored garments, combs his beard. He clicks to get her attention.

TOM
Code Brown.

After a moment, Tom comes from behind the privacy tarp, dressed in her clothes for town. She washes her hands. .

WILL
Clean your nails.

He passes her a sharpened stick. She notices a long pine needle in his clothing and picks it off.

He tidies up their dwell space and she coves the lids of cache buckets.

They check each others' clothing and do one last preening.

EXT. FOREST PARK - DAY

Tom and Will walk parallel to each other through the trees. At one point, Will stops, crouches down, and looks back from where they've come to see if their path can be detected.

WILL

We've been this way one time too many. New route needed.

They continue on.

TOM

It's only Tuesday. Why are we going to town today?

WILL

Schedules and routines are fine, but you don't want to be predictable. That's when you get hit, by being overconfident.

(pause)

Anyway, we're low on food -- milk powder, oatmeal. Your appetite is growing.

TOM

I'm growing!

WILL

I know.

She smiles at him.

EXT. FOREST PARK, PUBLIC PATH - DAY

As they approach the boundary of where the park meets paved streets, Tom and Will exit using one of the public paths and stairs, looking like any other folk leaving the park. Tom spots a necklace on the ground. She picks it up, looks at it, and puts it back on the ground.

TOM

If it's still here when we get back, can I take it?

WILL
Yep. That's fair.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENTRANCE - DAY

Will and Tom quickly scramble down a steep gully in Forest Park.

They check each others' appearance, brushing off bits of forest debris, from clothing, hair, and beard.

They walk in the direction of the St. John's Bridge.

EXT. ST. JOHN'S BRIDGE - DAY

They walk across the bridge to get into town.

EXT. ST JOHN'S SQ. - DAY

They deposit two small bags of garbage into the dumpster.

INT. AIR TRAM - DAY

Tom looks at the city; Will looks at the enormous medical complex looming in front of them. There are a few other passengers. TWO MEDICAL WORKERS in white coats are in the mix. As they approach, The VA hospital takes up the whole view.

INT. VA MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

Tom is in the waiting room reading. Her book obscures her face. She glances up at the glass passageways of this labyrinth.

INT. VA MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

Will meets back up with Tom. He stows the meds package that he's been given at the clinic into his back pack.

EXT. ATM - DAY

Will withdraws money from an ATM.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

They shop efficiently for the essentials. Will puts a chocolate bar in the cart, and Tom is surprised.

TOM
Is that a want or a need?

WILL
Both.

She seems pleased.

EXT. ST. JOHN'S BRIDGE - DAY

Tom and Will cross the bridge, carrying a tote with their groceries

EXT. FOREST PARK, MEN'S CAMP - DAY

Tom and Will approach an encampment in a different section of the park, comprised of several tents. One has an American flag hanging off the front and a wheelchair beside it.

One of the men living in the camp, LARRY, a vet who knows Will from the VA, greets them. Larry opens the package of pill bottles, tearing off the warning labels that are affixed to the bottles and the suicide literature that the VA packs in every bundle. Two of the bottles are smaller than the others.

LARRY
They've changed the cocktail again.

Larry checks the label on the small bottles.

LARRY (CONT'D)
Less Roxi's, less bars. Figures, they're cuttin' back on the ones that have any value to us.

He checks the big bottles.

LARRY (CONT'D)
Looks like someone's tryin' to unload the sleep meds -- Seroquel, it really has no value to me. I'd have to find someone who wants to sleep all day and gain 70 pounds.
(rifling through the bag)
Prazosin - when's the last time that stopped a nightmare? They must be gettin' a deal on these.

Will nods. Larry takes all the bottles and pays Will.

WILL
They're harder to get.

LARRY
 First, they give 'em out like
 candy, and now they're yankin' the
 leash back.

Will makes a small parting gesture.

LARRY (CONT'D)
 Whatever they're givin' you, I'll
 take 'em off your hands.

He looks over at Tom.

WILL
 Let's go.

EXT. FOREST PARK - DAY

Tom and Will walk away from the men's camp up a curving path
 into the trees.

TOM
 It's weird, going there.

WILL
 If you're going to say something,
 be specific.

TOM
 It makes me feel sad to be there.

WILL
 That makes sense.

TOM
 Then why do we go?

WILL
 We don't need the meds, but we can
 use the money.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - DAY

Will clears the air shaft for the Dakota pit. He maintains
 the water catchment system.

EXT. FOREST PARK - DAY

Tom ventures into a part of the forest that is far from their
 camp and closer to the public hiking paths. In the trees she
 can see the orange vests of an inmate WORK CREW. AN OFFICER
 walks back and forth supervising. Tom spies from behind the
 trees. She moves closer, staying in the shadows.

The worker closest to sees Tom through the branches and stares. They lock eyes for a minute.

Tom steps back and hurries away.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - DAY

Will's working on a fire, but the dampness makes it hard to start. Tom chops the mushrooms. She's hungry and the fire is taking a long time.

WILL
This is all so wet.

TOM
Can we use the propane?

WILL
Heard your stomach growl.

He nods that propane is the way to go in this instance.

She turns on the propane camp stove and the mushrooms cook quickly. She gives Will one to taste. They enjoy.

Will now hears the sound of the power tools from the work crew in the distance.

TOM
I saw them earlier, it's OK, it's a work crew. They're way down by the pathways.

WILL
Drill.

She pops the last of the mushroom into her mouth. He shuts down the stove, moving quickly fueled by adrenalin.

EXT. FOREST PARK, FERN GROVE - DAY

He hustles Tom along to their emergency hiding area. Will watches her hide in the foliage of a large fern. He checks from all angles to see if she's truly covered, but she's slightly visible.

WILL
The pattern of the face is the first thing someone can recognize -- shape, shine, shadow.

She pulls herself deeper into the fern.

TOM
Dad, I know how to do this.

Her hiding is not precise enough.

WILL
Then do it well.

He covers himself in the foliage in a way that makes him imperceptible.

EXT. FOREST PARK, HIDING SPOT - DAY

Tom relaxes in her hiding spot, which she uses as a look-out. She's reading the section on sea horses in the encyclopedia.

From below, the sound of cracking sticks can be heard, and soon the huffing and puffing of a man. An off-trail RUNNER comes into the clearing. He stops and puts his hands on his knees, spitting on the ground.

As Tom scoots farther back on the hiding spot to be out of his sight, she knocks a book off. The runner doesn't see the book fall, but hears it and turns around, craning his neck to see if he can spot someone. Tom contracts into a small ball.

RUNNER
Hello? Somebody up there?

He steps back a few paces trying to see more, catching a glimpse of her.

RUNNER (CONT'D)
Hello?

Tom holds her breath. She remains utterly still waiting until she can hear him resume his run and leave the area.

She peers over the edge to confirm that he's gone.

EXT. FOREST PARK, HIDING SPOT - DAY

Tom, back on the ground moves quietly in the direction where the runner took off to check that he's no longer in sight. It hits her that an outsider has seen her. She sits for a moment to collect herself.

At the base of the log she's sitting on, she finds an odd looking mushroom, which she picks and heads home.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - DAY

As Tom approaches their camp, she finds Will looking at the Forest Park map.

She sits near him, still shaken from the runner encounter. When he looks up, she hands him the weird mushroom to examine.

Tom looks through the Wild Edible Mushroom Guide and tries to match it to one of the photos.

TOM
Fairy ring mushroom --no
ink cap, hexagonal-pored polypore,
common puffball, Avenging Angel...

She stops on the next page and double checks the mushroom against the photo.

TOM (CONT'D)
I think I found it. The Prince!

WILL
Double check that it has no deadly-
poisonous lookalikes.

TOM
I did.

WILL
Check again.

Tom sketches the mushroom in her mushroom and fungi notebook and writes the number 21 on it.

TOM
We're up to 21.

INT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

Tom is awakened by Will, who is having a nightmare. She gently nudges her father.

TOM
Dad. Wake up. You were having a
dream.

WILL
Whoa.

Will takes a deep breath.

TOM
What's your favorite color?

WILL
What's yours?

TOM
Yellow.

WILL

Why?

TOM

The way it makes me feel. It's bright and not still.

WILL

Mine's green.

TOM

That figures. And what was my mother's favorite color?

WILL

Yellow.

TOM

Maybe she taught me that, for it to be my favorite.

WILL

In some way. Let's get some sleep; it's late.

TOM

I wish I could remember her.

WILL

She would've wished that, too. Good night, Yellow.

TOM

Good night, Green.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - DAY

A chess game is in process.

WILL

Always try to control the 4 squares

TOM

Food, clothing, shelter, fuel.

WILL

Yes. In front of your King and Queen.

(he moves her king's pawn
up two squares forward)

A lot of people think it looks dangerous to move the pawn in front of the King, but as long as you Castle, it will be safe for a while.

It's Tom's move. They both hear unfamiliar distant sounds.

Will listens intently, detecting the muffled sounds of a walkie-talkie. Will and Tom look at each other, knowing this is not a drill. The sound gets louder. As Tom starts to sweep the chess pieces back in their box, Will grabs her arm and they run through the trees.

EXT. FOREST PARK, FERN GROVE - DAY

Tom scrambles into hiding. Will, a couple feet away, also disappears.

Then everything grows quiet.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - SAME

A K-9 OFFICER looks through their camp and picks up a piece of clothing to let the dog register the scent.

EXT. FOREST PARK, FERN GROVE - DAY

A POLICE OFFICER scans the area.

Peering out from her hiding spot, Tom can see a boot crushing ferns around her.

The K-9 officer arrives and lets the dog off the leash.

After a moment, the dog discovers Will.

POLICE
Stand up.

Will gets to his feet.

POLICE (CONT'D)
Hands behind your head.

The officer pats him down and removes Will's knife.

POLICE (CONT'D)
Do you have any ID?

WILL
Not on me. My military ID- it's in my pack.

POLICE
Why were you running?

WILL
We didn't know who you were.

POLICE
Are you alone?

Pause. Will has to make a decision. The K-9 officer feeds the dog snacks from a pouch.

WILL
My daughter's with me. Tom, come out.

Tom stands up and the officials turn to see her. She throws her small camping knife to the ground.

POLICE
(to Tom)
Come on over here.

Tom looks to her father. He nods that she should do what's asked.

JEAN, a social worker, is lead in by the RANGER. Will backs away slightly.

POLICE (CONT'D)
Sir, we need you to stay where you are. Please stop moving around. I don't wanna have to cuff you.

Tom grabs her dad's arm.

POLICE (CONT'D)
(trying to use a softer tone with Tom)
Please, step aside.

WILL
(to the cop)
We're not a threat -- you don't have to act this way in front of her.

POLICE
We don't know who you are or what the situation is here.

Jean gently inserts herself between Tom and Will as the police officer leads Will away, with the ranger following. Tom looks past Jean to keep Will in her sight.

TOM
Dad!

Will stops walking and the police have to tug at him. Tom tries to get around Jean to follow her father. Jean gently stops her, but she pushes against her.

TOM (CONT'D)

PLEASE! I want to go where my dad goes.

JEAN

We'll figure this out. We're gonna make sure you're OK.

TOM

We're OK!

JEAN

We're here to help.

TOM

We don't need help.

JEAN

Hey, I'm Jean. What is your name?

TOM

Tom. Why did you chase us?

JEAN

We need to know what's going on here.

TOM

You needed a dog to figure that out?

JEAN

We couldn't have found you otherwise.

They walk off in the direction of the encampment.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - DAY

Tom and Jean approach the camp where Will has been detained. Tom sees the runner waiting with the ranger. The runner glances in her direction, trying to see who she is.

The K-9 officer has entered their living quarters.

WILL

There are some library books to return. Green pack at the back.

Will hears one of the book crates topple over, followed by a dish crashing.

WILL (CONT'D)

We're not hiding anything from you.

Jean leads Tom to sit down on a log. Tom keeps her eyes on her dad as the officer turns him around so Jean can talk privately to her.

JEAN
 You don't have to worry. He'll be all right. We're going to focus on you.

The ranger checks out the camp, snapping photos of the stealth fire pit.

POLICE
 You had no idea they had fire up here?

The ranger shakes his head, intrigued.

JEAN
 You guys are pretty well set up. How long have you been here?

TOM
 A long time.

JEAN
 Can you tell me who you live with?

TOM
 My dad.

JEAN
 It's only the two of you?

TOM
 Yes.

JEAN
 Can you show me where you sleep?

Tom brings her to the entrance of the shelter and shows her.

TOM
 My sleeping bag here. Dad's there.

POLICE
 Sir!

Tom and Jean look up to see that Will has walked up to them. Both cops hold him back.

The officers look at Jean, who nods OK to them. They release Will a little, and he approaches Tom. He leans in and speaks softly.

WILL
 We've got nothing to hide. It's
 very important that we cooperate
 with them.

Tom pushes forward and puts her arms around her father.

WILL (CONT'D)
 We'll be back together soon.

He bends down to be on her eye level.

The cop, carrying Will's pack, and the K-9 unit lead Will
 away. The ranger and runner follow. Will turns back and
 smiles at Tom, who uses her sleeve to wipe her eyes.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - DAY

Jean waits for Tom. She gathers her journal, some books, and
 clothes, stuffing them into her pack.

TOM
 When am I coming back?

JEAN
 I don't think you will be.

TOM
 Will somebody bring my
 encyclopedias?

JEAN
 We'll see if we can have somebody
 come back for those.

Jean realizes what she's just said and how untrue it is.

JEAN (CONT'D)
 Actually, pick two letters, take
 your two favorite letters for now.

Tom emerges from their dwelling with her pack and two volumes
 of the encyclopedia.

JEAN (CONT'D)
 Does your dad ever drink or take
 pills that make him act strange?

Tom nods no.

JEAN (CONT'D)
 Does your dad have any weapons
 here? Anything that could hurt
 someone?

Tom nods no.

JEAN (CONT'D)
 Or places where you've seen him
 hide things?

Tom opens the buried cache bucket which contains papers in a ziplock bag, a collection of utility knives and a small saw. Jean looks in. Tom retrieves the papers and then closes the lid and covers it back up.

Tom arranges branches to camouflage the cache.

Jean lets her finish covering the entrance with branches. They head away from the camp. Tom is nimble in this terrain. Prickers grab at Jean's clothing.

EXT. FOREST PARK, TURNOUT - DAY

They exit Forest Park to where the Social Services van is parked, near a large park diagram. Tom looks around for Will. Jean opens the back door and gestures for Tom to get in. She doesn't.

TOM
 Where's my dad?

JEAN
 He's on his way to our office to answer some questions. And we need to ask you some too. You'll see him soon, but you're going to have to be a little patient. I know this is hard.

Jean gestures again for her to get in. She does. She closes her door and gets into the driver's seat.

INT. SOCIAL SERVICES, MEDICAL OFFICE - DAY

Tom, in a medical gown, is being examined by a female DOCTOR. The doctor takes off a blood pressure cuff and puts the otoscope away. She enters data on Tom as she preforms the child wellness exam. She swipes her tablet.

DOCTOR
 We're getting you into the system here -- Thomasin. Is that your preferred name and how you'd like us to refer to you?

TOM
 I'd like for you to refer to me as Tom.

DOCTOR

I'm required by the state to ask:
"How do you identify? Female? Male?
Or Other?"

TOM

Female.

The doctor scrolls through more of the intake.

She looks in Tom's ears with an otoscope. Checks eyes with a medical eye pen, puts a blood pressure cuff on her arm.

DOCTOR

You are very healthy. Everything
looks good.

TOM

Where are my things?

DOCTOR

We'll give you back your clothes
very soon. We're washing them and
putting them in the bug oven.

TOM

Bug oven?

DOCTOR

That's a way of heating clothes to
kill any body lice that may be in
your clothing.

TOM

I don't have bugs living in my
clothing.

DOCTOR

We do this for everyone who stays
here. It's a precaution.

INT. SOCIAL SERVICES DORM ROOM - DAY

Tom walks into the dorm room. She sees two teenagers, TIFFANY
and VALERIE, sitting at the table making collages from
magazines. She stands, not sure what to do.

VALERIE

Are you just gonna stand there?

TOM

Can I sit down?

VALERIE

Whatever you wanna do.

Tom sits down. She sees a plate of sandwiches on the table.

TOM
Can I have one of those sandwiches?

VALERIE
Knock yourself out, but not the
cheese one, that's mine.

Tom takes a sandwich and eats. The girls keep cutting and
pasting.

TOM
What are you guys doing?

TIFFANY
Making dream boards.

TOM
What's that?

VALERIE
Basically, you cut up magazines and
then you make a board of what you
want to do for the rest of your
life. Things that could make you
feel good about your future.

TIFFANY
Jean asks us to make them.

VALERIE
So, what are you doing here?

TOM
I'm here because I wasn't where I
was supposed to be, I guess. Well,
they don't think I was where I was
supposed to be.

VALERIE
Okay, so, where were you?

TOM
I was with my dad. In Forest Park.

TIFFANY
Forest Park?

TOM
Yeah.

VALERIE
Like, the woods? Are you serious?

TIFFANY
Was your dad taking care of you?

TOM

Yes.

VALERIE

But you were homeless, basically.

TOM

No.

VALERIE

Then why else would you be living
in the woods?

TOM

Well, that was our home.

TIFFANY

If you had a home they wouldn't
have brought you here.

TOM

Well, they just don't understand
that was our home.

TIFFANY

And where is your dad now?

TOM

He's somewhere in this building, I
think, but he's gonna come and get
me in a couple hours, I think.

VALERIE

Your dad's gonna come back and get
you?

TOM

Yeah. Why wouldn't he? That's what
Jean said. They're just sorting it
out.

VALERIE

You know, just so you know, most of
the kids that come in here, their
dads don't come back for them.
Tiffany, do you know anyone who's
dad came back for them?

Valerie turns to Tiffany.

TIFFANY

I don't know anyone whose dad came
back.

VALERIE

Yeah, me neither.

TOM
I know my dad's coming back.

VALERIE
Don't hold your breath.

They resume cutting images and tearing from magazines.

INT. SOCIAL SERVICES, JEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Tom, in fresh clothes, works quickly filling out bubbles on an exam form. She finishes.

TOM
I'm finished.

JEAN
Already?

TOM
Yes.

Jean leafs through the pages of the test booklet, nodding. Surprised.

TOM (CONT'D)
It's like homework only easier.

JEAN
Who gave you homework?

TOM
My dad.

JEAN
Who taught you to read? We have no record of you going to school.

TOM
My dad teaches me. You said I passed your test, so we should be able to go back home.

JEAN
Yes, you're actually quite a bit ahead of where you need to be, but school is about social skills too, not only intellectual ones.

TOM
Is my dad taking tests like this?

JEAN
Yes, they're asking him a lot of questions.

Jean reels it back, sensing Tom's concern.

JEAN (CONT'D)

I want you to understand what's happening, Tom.

TOM

OK.

JEAN

An off-trail runner reported seeing a person in Forest Park, in a part of the park where no one goes, who he thought was a minor -- hiding there, or maybe in need of help. We had to check out the report to make sure you were not in danger.

TOM

But you can see now that I'm all right, and that I was with my father.

Jean nods yes.

JEAN

Do you feel safe living with your dad?

TOM

Yes.

JEAN

I know that the two of you share a tent. Has this ever made you uncomfortable?

TOM

No. The tent's warmer with two people.

JEAN

Has anyone ever touched your body without your permission?

TOM

No. My dad would not let anything bad happen to me.

Jean processes this, searching for her next question.

TOM (CONT'D)

We didn't need to be rescued.

JEAN

That's what we're trying to understand.

TOM

What is it you want to understand?
That we could live differently from
how you're used to it being and
still be fine?

Tom stares at Jean.

INT. SOCIAL SERVICES, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Will is seated in front of a computer. JAMES, the other social worker on the case arranges a key board in front of Will.

James reads from the test instruction booklet.

JAMES

Respond "true" or "false" to each statement. There are 435 items. If you can't answer, wait til the next question. Complete as many as you can. (beat) Are we good?

He brings the computer keyboard closer to Will.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I'm gonna leave you to it.

James pushes the start key and leaves.

TEST GIVER'S VOICE

Welcome. The test will begin in 3 seconds:

TEST GIVER'S VOICE

I wake up rested and peaceful most mornings

WILL

True.

TEST GIVER'S VOICE

I enjoy reading articles on crime

WILL

False.

TEST GIVER'S VOICE

My daily life is full of activities that keep me interested

WILL

True.

TEST GIVER'S VOICE

My sleep is fitful and troubled.

Beep. Will exceeds the limit and the computer presses on.

INT. SOCIAL SERVICES, JEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Jean pulls out some flash cards.

JEAN
For each picture I want you to make
up a story.

Tom nods. Jean lays out four cards with symbolic drawings
onto the table.

JEAN (CONT'D)
Pick one.

Tom selects a card and studies it.

TOM
How do you read my answers? You
think they're going to mean a
certain thing?

JEAN
They might be able tell us a little
more about you.

TOM
You could just ask.

JEAN
Yes. But you may not be able to say
it.

TOM
So you go at it in a crooked way.
Somehow I'll say what I can't say?

Tom writes in the test booklet.

TOM (CONT'D)
Can I see my dad, now? Just for
five minutes? I know it'll make
him feel better.

JEAN
You've been very patient. We're
almost there.

Jean glances at her check list.

JEAN (CONT'D)
Would you say you've had a happy
childhood?

TOM

Yes.

JEAN

Does your father get angry if you don't agree with him?

TOM

No.

JEAN

What does happen when you do something that your dad does not agree with?

TOM

We discuss it.

JEAN

I wish I could have followed you around for a day, just to see how you guys operated.

TOM

You wouldn't have been able to. I'd lose you in five minutes. The park has 5,100 acres.

JEAN

It sounds to me like you really loved it there. But Tom, you understand that you can't live in the park anymore?

Tom looks down, averting Jean's gaze.

JEAN (CONT'D)

It's not a crime to be unhoused -- many people are. But it is illegal to live in the park.

Tom swallows hard, staring at the poster on the wall behind Jean. She doesn't notice Jean's concern.

INT. SOCIAL SERVICES, DORMITORY

Tiffany and Tom are looking at Tiffany's phone. Tiffany is explaining what Instagram is and swiping through photos she's been sent. She comes to an image of a banana slug that a friend posted from her visit to the park that day.

TIFFANY

What's that?

TOM

Banana slug. You can eat them. You have to cook it to get the slime off. It tastes like a mushroom.

Tiffany looks down at the few images Tom cut from the magazines.

TIFFANY

What are you gonna put on your board? Anything besides trees?

TOM

I'm still looking.

Valerie comes back into the room and sits down at the table. Tiffany moves back to her seat. Tom starts to work on her dream board. Valerie is upset.

TIFFANY

How'd it go?

VALERIE

So, they couldn't find a placement for me in that district, so I won't be able to go to the school I wanted to.

TIFFANY

What'd Jean say?

VALERIE

She was like, "I'm really sorry, I tried really hard and blah blah blah..."

Valerie looks down. Tiffany gives her a sympathetic look.

VALERIE (CONT'D)

She says I'm too high risk to place and nobody wants a kid that's my age.

Tiffany tries to divert Valerie's attention. She passes Valerie an image that she thinks she'll like for her board.

Valerie looks at the dream boards and experiences a wave of frustration and disgust. She sweeps the boards and magazines off the table.

VALERIE (CONT'D)

This is bullshit.

Tiffany and Tom watch as Valerie crosses the room and grabs a stuffed teddy bear. She sits back down at the table and pulls a needle out of the bear. She starts poking her finger with the needle.

TOM

So, what are you gonna do?

VALERIE

I don't know what I'm gonna do,
okay? If I knew what I was gonna do
this wouldn't be such a big deal.

Tiffany shoots Tom a look. Valerie anticipates Tom's question and stops her from asking more.

VALERIE (CONT'D)

No one is coming to get me.

Tiffany is concerned that Valerie is hurting herself.

TIFFANY

Did you sterilize that?

VALERIE

Of course I sterilized it. No one's
used it since the last time I used
it.

TIFFANY

Did you clean your finger?

VALERIE

Yes.

TOM

My dad says it's important that if
you get a cut you need to clean it
out to prevent an infection from
spreading.

VALERIE

Your dad knows everything.

INT. SOCIAL SERVICES, JEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Jean and James are meeting with Will for his exit evaluation.

JEAN

In finding a placement for you and
Tom, we've considered what kind of
support will be helpful to you two.

James stares at Will's VA file, overwhelmed.

JAMES

We want to help you meet the legal
and social expectations of being a
family. We don't want you in the
"system" How can we help you stay
out?

WILL

We'd like to go back to how we were living, which is a way of life that was working for us.

Beat.

WILL (CONT'D)

She has the rest of her life to conform.

JAMES

Will, as much as we might want to let you go back to living as you were, we have no say over the rules and regs in the park.

JEAN

We're just not sure it's the best thing for her.

Tense silence.

WILL

I don't want to let the little light go out in her.

Jean and James exchange a look, jot a note.

WILL (CONT'D)

We bother no one.

JAMES

Not surprisingly, you scored high on the social introversion scale, but that does not make you a dangerous person.

Will takes a deep breath.

INT. SOCIAL SERVICES, FOYER - DAY

Tom waits in the foyer. Jean approaches with her belongings and puts them down.

JEAN

All your things.

Tom looks into her backpack and sees that her knife is still in her pack.

TOM

Thank you for not taking my knife.

But her journal is not where she usually keeps it.

TOM (CONT'D)
Did you read my journal?

Jean looks uncomfortable.

TOM (CONT'D)
Have you been looking through it?

JEAN
Yes, I did. I'm sorry. With underage people there's a conflict between your privacy and what we need to know about you -- to ensure your well being.

Tom withdraws, upset. Jean changes the subject.

JEAN (CONT'D)
I liked your notes about mushrooms.

TOM
That doesn't make it okay.

JEAN
You're right. I should have asked you, and we could have looked at it together.

Jean moves on, tries to re-engage Tom.

JEAN (CONT'D)
Tom, we want to try something we haven't done before. Usually, we'd put you up in a motel until we found some housing, but we found something that will be better.

TOM
How can you say what's good for us?

JEAN
We don't have a lot of options, and this seemed like the best one. We found a place outside the city where you and your dad can stay until we can get you into permanent housing. I'll be checking in with you regularly to see how you guys are doing.

She cuts to the chase.

JEAN (CONT'D)
What do you think about going to a regular school?

TOM
My dad can teach me.

JEAN
But you can have friends your own
age. Wouldn't you like that?

TOM
Sometimes I think I would, and
other times I don't think so.

JEAN
Do you have any questions you'd
like to ask me?

TOM
What's going to happen to Tiffany
and Valerie.

JEAN
We're in the process of finding
them foster placements.

INT. SOCIAL SERVICES, FOYER - DAY

Will is brought in, beard groomed, wearing stiff new jeans
and a bright colored new coat. Tom stands up when she sees
him. They hug tightly.

EXT. SOCIAL SERVICES - DAY

Will and Tom come out the front doors of the facility.

INT. CAR - DAY

Tom and Will are in the back seat as they drive through town.

INT. CAR, SOUTH OF CITY - DAY

They drive through the Christmas tree farms south of
Portland. Will looks out the window. Tom opens her pack and
gives Will his scarf.

Jean puts on the radio. After some irritating ads and a
traffic report, she glances back to check on Will and Tom.

JEAN
Would you like it off?

WILL
Yes.

INT. CAR, HORSE FARM - DAY

The car turns onto a private road where they see rows of Christmas trees and a house on a hill.

EXT. MR. WALTERS' HOUSE - DAY

The car pulls up and parks in a driveway where the owner, MR. WALTERS, 50's, greets them, and they get out of the car.

EXT. HORSE FARM, COTTAGE - DAY

Tom, Will, Jean and Mr. Walter's enter the cottage.

INT. COTTAGE - DAY

Tom and Will look through their new home, escorted by Mr. Walters and Jean.

JEAN
We hope this will work for you.

WILL
Thank you.

JEAN
Mr. Walters is a generous man.

Will nods.

MR. WALTERS
I'm excited we can do this. I read about you in the newspaper when they found you in the park.

Jean opens the cupboards and refrigerator to show that some basic supplies have been purchased.

JEAN
A few groceries to get you started.
Do you like it?

TOM
It's nice.

They stand at the doorway to Tom's new room. Neatly stacked on the bed are brand new brightly colored school clothes and supplies.

JEAN
We thought you could use some new clothes for school.

The tour done, they file out the front door.

EXT. HORSE FARM, COTTAGE - DAY

The group stands in front of the house saying their good byes. Mr. Walters takes a few photos on his phone.

MR. WALTERS
 Tomorrow'll be a full day. I'll
 leave you two to get settled in.

Mr. Walters walks back to his house. Jean gets into her car. Taking stock of their new circumstances, Will is distracted by the satellite dish off to the side of the cottage.

INT. COTTAGE, KITCHEN - DAY

TOM
 It feels good to be by ourselves
 again.

Will opens a window and exhales out. Tom sits at the table.

WILL
 I wish they could've just dropped
 us on the road and let us be.

She brings him back to the here and now.

TOM
 They made me take a lot of tests.
 What about you?

WILL
 Yes, they asked me a lot of
 questions.

TOM
 Like what?

WILL
 About us. 435 questions.
 (pause)
 It was hard not knowing how you
 were. Did they treat you all right?

She nods.

WILL (CONT'D)
 Let's try to put it behind us.

Tom looks around the new surroundings. Will joins her at the table.

TOM
 Everything's different now.

WILL

What's different is that we're in a kind of house that most people are comfortable with us living in.

He catches her eyes.

WILL (CONT'D)

But we can still think our own thoughts.

He smiles at her. Will lifts the foil off a casserole that was left for them, and then covers it back up.

TOM

I'll try it.

INT. COTTAGE, WILL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Will puts the TV into the closet.

INT. COTTAGE, WILL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tom leans against the door of her dad's room. She taps a little rhythm on the door jam to see if he's awake.

WILL

You can come in.

Tom enters the room and sits on the edge of the bed.

TOM

I can't sleep.

WILL

Not since we left the park.

TOM

The sound of the wind in the trees used to help me fall asleep.

Tom puts her face against the window, looking out.

WILL

There's been something on my mind.

TOM

What is it?

WILL

They said a person saw you, and that's how they found our camp - is this true?

TOM
I saw a man, but I didn't think he
saw me.

WILL
Why didn't you say something?

TOM
I was afraid to. I didn't want to
leave our camp - it was such a good
one.

WILL
We stayed there too long.

She hears a heavy sigh from Will.

TOM
Do you think you'll be OK here?

WILL
We're gonna make the best of it.

INT. COTTAGE, KITCHEN - DAY

When Tom comes into the kitchen, she finds Will peering out
the window through the curtain.

TOM
Morning.
(pause)
What are you looking at?

WILL
I'm just looking. Good morning.

They eat cereal and orange juice. Tom eats hungrily. Will
looks anxious.

TOM
What's the matter?

WILL
"To keep bright the Devil's
doorknobs and scour his tubs.
Better not to keep a house."

Tom sighs.

TOM
Thoreau slept inside.

There's a knock at the door. Will gets up to open the door.

MR. WALTERS
 Good morning. Don't mean to
 interrupt your breakfast.

Will nods hello.

MR. WALTERS (CONT'D)
 I know that you have particular
 ways.

Will shifts his weight, trying to hide his exasperation with
 Mr. Walters.

MR. WALTERS (CONT'D)
 And I don't want to disrupt.

WILL
 What do you have planned for us
 today?

MR. WALTERS
 I was hoping you could help with
 the tree work. Take the tractor and
 get stumps out of the south field.

WILL
 I'd rather not operate heavy
 machinery. Is there any work with
 the horses that I could do? Down in
 the stables?

MR. WALTERS
 Yes, but I'd rather you not work
 down there yet. Working with horses
 requires training. And that can
 happen, but for now, I need help
 elsewhere.

Will nods, complying.

MR. WALTERS (CONT'D)
 Do you not know how? Or is it
 something else?

There's silence for a moment.

MR. WALTERS (CONT'D)
 Listen, the work that really needs
 doing is clearing that field.
 That's how I make my money.

WILL
 Okay. Tractors, trucks, armored
 vehicles -- whatever. I can operate
 them all.

EXT. HORSE FARM - DAY

Will is given his tools in the garage.

Will is working a long row of evergreens. He uses a tool to shape and cut the trees evenly.

The land adjacent to Walters' has recently been logged. In the distance, Will can hear saws. He can hear the sound of a helicopter overhead and looks up. (helicopter is sfx only)

INT./EXT. HORSE ARENA - DAY

KRYSS, a horse trainer does liberty training with her horse.

The horse runs the length of the arena and stops on a dime before the arena gate.

Tom watches, peering over the arena wall.

INT. COTTAGE, WILL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tom walks in to check on Will, who she can hear is having a nightmare. He has sat up on the edge of the bed, his head in his hands as he tries to re-stabilize. Tom sits down beside him.

She provides a gentle distraction.

TOM
If you could be any animal, what
would you be?

WILL
An owl.

TOM
Let's look at the stars like we
used to do.

EXT. COTTAGE, PORCH - NIGHT

Tom and Will lie in blankets under the night's sky, jammed with stars. The leaves rustle. Will exhales.

INT. MR. WALTERS' HOUSE, LAUNDRY RM - DAY

Tom stands next to the washing machine dropping clothes in.

MR. WALTERS

Different than doing laundry at your special place in the stream, I bet. Do you know how to use the machine?

TOM

We went to the laundromat sometimes, like when it was raining.

Tom cuts off tags from the new bright clothes with her pocket knife and adds them to the load. One pair of jeans has fancy, glittery pockets, which she takes a moment to examine. The way Mr. Walters is observing her makes Tom think she's supposed to narrate what she's doing.

TOM (CONT'D)

These are school clothes. I'm just getting ready.

MR. WALTERS

You'll finally get to spend some time with kids your own age. That'll change you.

Tom pours some detergent into the machine. Mr. Walters hands her a small bag.

MR. WALTERS (CONT'D)

I gathered from the newspaper that you used to have a garden.

Tom looks inside the bag to find several packets of seeds.

TOM

Thank you.

Tom, interested in the article, wants to know more.

TOM (CONT'D)

Why did they want to write about us?

MR. WALTERS

A lot of people like to imagine themselves living like you guys were, but not many actually do it.

He fans through a pile of magazines and papers to find the article and passes it to her. She looks it over and passes the article back to him.

MR. WALTERS (CONT'D)

No, keep it. Your dad may want to read it.

TOM
I don't think so.

Mr. Walters shrugs.

EXT. HORSE FARM, COTTAGE - DAY

Mr. Walters stands nearby as Tom plants the seeds. She sets the worms carefully aside and breaks up the clods with a trowel.

Overhead, she hears a helicopter.

TOM
Lots of helicopters around here.

MR. WALTERS
Forestry mapping. Deciding where to cut next.

Tom gets back to work putting the seeds in the soil.

MR. WALTERS (CONT'D)
This life here must seem pretty easy. Hope it's not too boring for you.

TOM
It's a person's own fault if they get bored.

She works in a very focused way, finishing the row.

TOM (CONT'D)
Okay. These turnips are all planted.

MR. WALTERS
I'm interested in how you were living before. Your father doesn't seem to want to talk about it.

TOM
What would you like to know?

MR. WALTERS
I guess I'm just curious how you managed to make do with so little. What would you have done if they hadn't found you? Were you going to just keep living there?

TOM
Yes. I think so. I have a question for you.

MR. WALTERS

Shoot.

TOM

How come you're all alone?

MR. WALTERS

I like the solitude, I guess.

TOM

You and my dad aren't so different then.

MR. WALTERS

That could be.

TOM

Except no one bothers you about it.

MR. WALTERS

That's true.

EXT. HORSE FARM, SIDE ROAD - DAY

Tom walks along the edge of the farm following the fence that stretches along the property. She finds a rabbit randomly scampering in the middle of the gravel road. She picks it up

EXT. ISAIAH'S HOUSE - DAY

She walks into the adjoining yard.

She hears a boy's voice calling out, "Chainsaw."

ISAIAH, late teens, walks from a small half-built shed-like structure in his yard and sees that Tom has the rabbit.

ISAIAH

Thanks.

TOM

You're welcome.

Isaiah has a tool in his hand that Tom doesn't recognize.

ISAIAH

When she sees these clippers, she takes off.

He sits down on the platform, positions the rabbit like a baby in his arms and attempts to clips its nails. The rabbit squirms and wriggles.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)
Can you give me a hand -- hold her feet? Like this.

He shows her. Tom helps restrain the rabbit.

TOM
Why do you cut its nails?

ISAIAH
So they look nice. The judges look at the nails.

TOM
What judges?

ISAIAH
For the FFA show.

Tom can not figure out what he's talking about. He can tell.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)
Future Farmers of America. It's a club for people who are interested in raising animals. It's like 4-H.

They continue clipping.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)
Some kids make fun of FFA, but it's one of the best parts of school for me.

TOM
So you're gonna be a farmer in the future?

ISAIAH
I don't know yet.

He's curious about her.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)
You go to school around here?

TOM
I will soon.

She wonders about the half-built structure they're sitting in.

TOM (CONT'D)
What are you building?

He puts down the rabbit on its mat and starts swiping through images until he finds the one he's looking for and shows her.

ISAIAH

I'd like to do something like that.

He puts down the phone and physically sketches out his idea.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

Sleeping loft for me. Place for her. Kitchen here. Even in a small space like this, you can have everything you need. You don't gotta be rich to have a tiny house.

TOM

Where're you gonna put it?

ISAIAH

Maybe Colorado.

INT. ISAIAH'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Isaiah makes chocolate milk for them. Tom holds the rabbit. She looks at the fridge door which has a collection of photos of rabbits and kids with their chickens and goats. She steals a look at Isaiah stirring. He offers her a glass of the frothy milk and points to one of the photos.

ISAIAH

This is Chainsaw's mother.

INT. ISAIAH'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

They stand at the counter drinking the milk with the rabbit between them.

ISAIAH

If you like rabbits, you should come to one of our meetings sometime, if you want.

He muses.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

Good rabbits, good kids.

She notices that it's gotten late.

TOM

I gotta go. My dad's not going to know where I am.

He hands her his phone. She doesn't take it.

TOM (CONT'D)

He doesn't have one.

ISAIAH

The meetings are Wednesdays right
down this road, left on Rte 119.
The first place on the left.

EXT. HORSE FARM, COTTAGE - DUSK

Tom walks briskly away, cutting across the property to get to
the cottage, talking softly to herself.

TOM

Wednesdays, Rte 119, Wednesdays...

Tom can see Will inside the cottage looking out. She takes a
deep breath.

INT. COTTAGE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

There's an awkward silence.

WILL

Where've you been?

TOM

I met a kid who lives down the
road, and we were talking about
rabbits.

WILL

Why didn't you tell me where you
were?

TOM

There was no time to tell you. It
was just happening.

Will walks to the window and looks out into the darkness.

TOM (CONT'D)

I'm sorry for making you worry
about me.

He looks off.

TOM (CONT'D)

If we had a phone, I could've
called you.

WILL

We've always been able to
communicate without all that.

Tom lets out a sigh and tries to be comforting.

TOM

I think we have to be able to adapt.

She can see Will's reflection in the window.

WILL

There's no place on this farm where we can't be seen except for in this house.

Will takes a seat at the table. Tom opens the fridge.

TOM

It's impossible for them to be watching us all the time.

Checking to see if he's listening to her, she looks over at him. He touches his beard and nods. Her own anxiety slips in.

TOM (CONT'D)

What if the kids at school think I'm strange?

Beat. Will wonders what's on her mind.

TOM (CONT'D)

Because of the way we were living?

WILL

How important are their judgements?

EXT. HORSE FARM, COTTAGE - DAY

Jean unloads the van, putting a few boxes and two bicycles near the door of the cottage. She's showing Tom the bikes when Will walks up.

WILL

What's all this about?

JEAN

These are things that got donated to our agency.

WILL

We don't need more things.

JEAN

Maybe you'll find something you can really use. What about the bikes?

Jean looks at Tom.

JEAN (CONT'D)
Do you know how to ride?

Tom shakes her head no.

JEAN (CONT'D)
I'm sure your father can teach you.

Will nods, picks up one of the boxes, and walks it into the house.

JEAN (CONT'D)
How are you feeling about this place?

TOM
Good.

JEAN
I'm happy to see that you're adjusting. Tom, take a look --

Jean opens the flap of one of the boxes. Inside the books are packed tight.

JEAN (CONT'D)
Encyclopedias. Every single letter.

TOM
World Book. Mine were Brittanica.
Thank you.

Will hefts another box.

WILL
Thank you for bringing these -
we'll sort through them.

JEAN
Ok, great.

She hands Will a paper-clipped packet of papers.

JEAN (CONT'D)
This is the paperwork to enroll Tom
in school. Here's the statute so
you can read it and understand it.

Will takes a deep breath, managing the overload of rules and requirements.

JEAN (CONT'D)
Next visit, we can tackle the DMV.

Will has tensed up.

WILL

So soon?

JEAN

That's one of the easier ones.

Will forces a smile.

JEAN (CONT'D)

I'll see you guys in a couple of weeks.

Jean turns toward her car. Tom and Will watch her go.

EXT. 4-H CLUB MEETING - DAY

Tom is frozen for a moment, shy about walking into a group of kids she's never met. She takes a deep breath and heads over to the gathering.

Isaiah signals that Tom can stand next to him in the circle. The teens of the 4-H club stand attentively with their rabbits positioned in front of them.

COACH

Please, lift your rabbits.

He leads the group in a health check on the rabbits. Ears, fur, feet are checked. Tom watches Isaiah and the other kids. He passes the rabbit to her, and leans in to show her what to do.

Tom follows along. Her fingers burrow into the soft fur. Standing there, she looks like a new member of their group.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Tom and Will, both in church clothes, sit in a pew. The MINISTER begins his sermon in a soothing tone.

MINISTER

We're all born with a void. That's why we're here -- to be with each other and God. Otherwise, it is too lonely.

Curious, Tom steals looks at a few people in her pew. Mr. Walters is in front of them.

MINISTER (CONT'D)

Let me ask you this. What would you do if you had a hundred sheep and one of them wandered off?

(MORE)

MINISTER (CONT'D)

Wouldn't you leave the ninety-nine on the hillside and go look for the one that had wandered away? I'm sure that finding him would make you happier than having the ninety-nine that never wandered off. That's how it is with the almighty, your Father in heaven. He doesn't want any of his sheep to stray from the flock. Matthew 18: 12-14,

A collection plate is passed down their row.

While the plate makes it down the pew, DEVOTIONAL DANCERS with silk flags perform to a song.

Will hands Tom two singles to donate.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

After the service is over, Will follows the custom of greeting and shaking hands with church members. Tom does the same. Mr. Walters greets them warmly, looking very pleased to have Tom and Will present.

As they near the exit, Tom takes brochures and literature from the membership table.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Tom and Will ride their bikes home from church. The wind therapy is invigorating. Will lets out a yelp as he flies past Tom.

INT. COTTAGE, KITCHEN - DAY

Will is making sandwiches at the counter while Tom looks through the brochures she collected from the church. She opens one and reads it to her father.

TOM

"There are many ways to be involved -music, devotional dance, carpentry, camp, prayer group, rock 'n roll, social media.

She looks at the next brochure.

TOM (CONT'D)

"Considering membership? Have you read the Doctrinal Statement and Core Values documents, and are you willing to live by these principles?"

She steals a look at Will, curious how he responds to these questions.

TOM (CONT'D)
 "Have you read the Bylaws and are you submissive to the word of the almighty as addressed in the Bylaws?"

He turns to face her.

WILL
 Some people get comfort from church and some people don't.

He brings the sandwiches to the table and sits down.

TOM
 So that's why we went?

WILL
 Walters asked us to go. Appearances, unfortunately, count. If we dress up and show up there on Sunday, people believe certain things about us.

TOM
 Like what?

WILL
 That we're more like them and that they understand us. And then they don't ask too many questions.

TOM
 Why'd you shake hands with people?

WILL
 It's the custom.

TOM
 But maybe you could make a friend with someone there?

WILL
 Could be, but Church is not the first place to find a friend.

TOM
 I feel like I could make a real friend at 4-H.

She studies him. Will bites into his sandwich.

TOM (CONT'D)
 Are you growing your beard?

He touches his beard and nods. Tom peels an orange. Will stirs his tea, and the clinking sound from his spoon is the only sound in the room.

Will peels another orange in such a way that the skin comes off in one long coil. She makes a different shape out of his orange peel.

EXT. HORSE FARM, COTTAGE - DAY

Will and Jean are in the doorway of the cottage. Will passes a cell phone back to Jean.

JEAN
OK, we can wait on that.

Tom approaches.

JEAN (CONT'D)
Here's the date for the appointment
with housing.

Jean passes Will another packet of papers, he glances at them. Jean diverts her attention to Tom, and Will retreats into the cottage.

Jean is happy to see Tom.

JEAN (CONT'D)
Hey there! I've heard you've been
busy.

Tom nods. Jean smiles.

TOM
Why's my dad upset?

JEAN
He's struggling with some of the
things he agreed to.

Jean sighs.

JEAN (CONT'D)
But he needs to follow through for
this to work and for you guys to
stay independent.

Wishing Jean could back off a little, Tom bites her tongue. She sees her father walk away from the cottage.

INT. BARN - DAY

Will walks past a row of horses enclosed in stalls, stroking their foreheads through the bars.

A HORSE OWNER enters the barn. Will, knowing that he's not supposed to be there, hides himself in the next stall, waiting to slip out.

Through the bars he sees the owner trying to get a bit into the horse's mouth and thread the reins through the loop of the bridle. The horse is bridle shy, doesn't want to go on the bit, and swings his head away.

The rider tethers the horse and steps out to get more gear. Will is face to face with the horse whose mouth metal and head gear clank against the bars. Will strokes his forehead quickly and slips out.

INT. COTTAGE, WILL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Will sits on his bed looking out the window.

INT. COTTAGE, BATHROOM - MORNING

Will grooms his beard.

INT. COTTAGE, TOM'S ROOM - MORNING

Will wakes Tom up. When she comes to, he puts her back pack on the bed.

WILL
Pack up some of your things.

Tom is confused about what's going on.

He walks out. She opens her dresser drawers, trying to decide what to take. Will walks back into her room and hands her a head lamp. She throws it into the pack.

WILL (CONT'D)
Don't take anything you don't need.

When Will walks out, Tom looks through the colorful donated clothes and selects a shirt and hat. She tosses in a few of the school supplies and buries them in the bottom of her pack.

INT. COTTAGE, KITCHEN - MORNING

At the front door, Will puts on his old coat, leaving the bright new coat he was given at social services on the hook. He hands Tom her old coat. She puts her boots on, leaving the sneakers. Will switches the lights on.

EXT. HORSE FARM, COTTAGE - MORNING

Leaving the cottage, they pass the bicycles leaning up against the side of the house. She reaches for her bike.

WILL

No. We leave those here. They're not ours.

They hurry along the road off Mr. Walter's property.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENTRANCE - DAY

Tom and Will slip into the park from the road.

EXT. FOREST PARK, ENCAMPMENT - DAY

They arrive at what remains of their old camp. Their site has been ransacked. Will looks at the desolation marked off with yellow "No Trespassing" tape.

Tom touches one of the encyclopedias strewn about, wet and bloated. The catchment is partially down and spilled over. The cache buckets are open and empty. The garden is wilted and uprooted.

EXT. FOREST PARK - DAY

A distance from their old site, Will reaches up into a hollow and takes out knives in a ziplock. He extends the small scissors that fold out of the pocket knife.

WILL

We need to cut your hair short.

TOM

Why?

WILL

So you'll look different.

TOM

Can we wait til we get some real scissors?

WILL

Check, but keep wearing your hat.

TOM

When are we going back?

WILL

We're not.

TOM
I liked it there. Did you really
give it a try?

WILL
I did.

TOM
Did you?

WILL
Our choices about how we want to
live were being taken away one by
one.

He takes a moment.

WILL (CONT'D)
They would have separated us
eventually, if we didn't follow
their rules.

Hearing her dad say this makes her feel sad. She drops the
conversation.

Will takes out some sandwiches from his backpack and they
eat. He's got the map of Forest Park laid out in front of
them.

TOM
Won't he notice that we're gone?

WILL
With luck, not til tomorrow.

TOM
Where're we going?

Tom studies the map with him.

TOM (CONT'D)
If we find a good place really deep
in, do you think they'll find us
again?

He's really not sure what to do. He picks up his pack,
heaves it onto his back, and they walk on.

EXT. FOREST PARK, MEN'S CAMP - DAY

Will and Tom approach the men's camp, which is deserted too.
They walk a little further and see Larry.

LARRY
You can't stay here with her. Now,
no one can.
(MORE)

LARRY (CONT'D)
 It's been hot since they picked you up. Services lit a fire under the rangers asses. And they've finally caught up with me.

Larry looks at the dozer.

WILL
 What about on the other side of the ravine?

Larry shakes his head, no good.

LARRY
 They're patrolling everywhere. There's no place they don't look for you.

The bull dozer sound escalates with the crushing of Larry's belongings. Will and Tom look at what Larry is watching: the dozer shoves his structure down.

LARRY (CONT'D)
 (shouting over the dozer)
 That's all I've got.

Tom looks at the shelter collapsing then back at Larry's face.

LARRY (CONT'D)
 I've gotta find a forest where they can't find me.

EXT. PORTLAND STREET - DAY

Tom and Will walk in an industrial zone, under a bridge with the freeway towering above them.

EXT. TRAIN YARD - DAY

Looking through a chain link fence at the train yard, Tom glances at a "No Trespassing" sign, anxious that they're going where they shouldn't.

TOM
 What're we doing here?

WILL
 Looking for a train that can take us out of town.

TOM
 Have you ever done this before?

Tom reluctantly follows him.

On the tracks are more signs: Do Not Enter, Authorized personnel only, Danger. She notices how nervous Will appears, as he constantly looks around.

INT. TRAIN CAR - DAY

They move back in the car and sit crouched with their packs against the back wall. They hear the trains around them moving on different tracks. Tom's hand grazes over some glass shards on the floor. She winces and wraps her finger in her sweatshirt. Will sees what's happened.

WILL
Let me see it.

He looks at her hand, roots through his bag, and pulls out a band-aid.

He wraps it around her finger.

The sound of wheels squeaking on the neighboring track is piercing. Their car hasn't moved yet.

TOM
Why're we doing this?

Will avoids her. The yard is quiet for a moment. Exhausted, they wait. A freight goes by on the upper track. A cop siren and bull horn break the silence. It's an announcement directed at unauthorized people spotted on the tracks.

TOM (CONT'D)
Please, Dad, let's go. We shouldn't be here.

WILL
You're right.

EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

Tom stands in an outdoor waiting area at the entrance of the bus station.

Will comes over to Tom and gives her a ticket, and reminds her of the drill.

WILL
Get in line when they call the bus.

Will looks around.

TOM
When you look around like that, you look nervous.

He acknowledges this and heads back toward the waiting area.

Tom gets a book out of her pack. She moves back into the covered portico that stretches along the front of the station. She sits on a bench next to a WOMAN PASSENGER, old enough to be her mother, who's reading from a tablet while waiting.

EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

From across the street, Valerie, the girl from social services spots Tom and heads over. They're both surprised.

VALERIE
You guys aren't on that ranch
anymore?

Tom is caught out. Valerie senses she's nervous.

VALERIE (CONT'D)
I swear I'm not gonna tell anyone.

Valerie looks around for Will.

VALERIE (CONT'D)
Are you still with your dad?

TOM
Yeah.

Announcements about bus departures drown out Valerie's next question. Tom steps back, needing to go. Will has joined the line of passengers boarding the bus and steals a look back to check on Tom.

She heads over to the bus queue.

INT. BUS - DAY

Tom walks up the aisle staying close behind the woman from the station and sits next to her on the bus. Will sits in the back.

A TEEN GIRL, 14, with a roller bag heads down the aisle and takes a seat a couple of rows in front of Tom.

Tom glances at the man across the aisle whose phone is making noise.

A plain clothes DETECTIVE, 30s, approaches the girl. Tom leans a little closer to the woman. The detective moves in on the teen traveler.

DETECTIVE
Hey, how's it going?

He pulls a badge hanging around his neck from under his shirt. The girl looks nervous.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
You traveling alone?

Tom doesn't dare look up and turns a little more toward the woman next to her.

TEEN GIRL TRAVELER
Yes. I'm 18.

DETECTIVE
Do you have some ID?

TEEN GIRL TRAVELER
Not on me.

DETECTIVE
Is there someone who can verify
your age?

The girl looks around quickly trying to think of some way out.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
You gotta come with me so we can
look into your situation.

The detective leads her away. Tom steals a look.

Tom's attention turns back to the man swiping through numerous photos. He takes selfies. Will notices all the photo action.

INT. BUS - DAY

When the woman is asleep, Tom gets up and heads back to where Will is sitting.

Tom sits down next to her father.

WILL
What're you doing?

TOM
I missed you. No one's looking at
us right now.

Will is anxious, but tries to rein it in.

INT. BUS - DAY

Tom has fallen asleep on his shoulder. He puts his arm around her.

INT./EXT. BUS - DUSK

The bus pulls into a stop, and there's an announcement on the bus PA system: "Be back on the bus in 10 minutes."

INT. TRUCK STOP, MARKET PLACE - NIGHT

In the snack lounge, Tom waits for Will near a blinking vending machine.

Anxious that they'll miss the bus, she looks out the glass door.

She speaks through the bathroom door to Will.

TOM
Dad, the bus is gonna leave.

She sees the bus pull away.

Will comes out of the bathroom.

WILL
We're not getting back on.

He tries to drop it, but can't.

WILL (CONT'D)
Was the woman on the bus asking you anything?

TOM
Nothing. She barely noticed me. She was doing things with her phone.

WILL
And the girl at the station - she mighta seen what bus we were on.

Tom looks down, nods no, avoiding him.

TOM
This isn't the way we used to be.

Will swallows hard.

WILL
We can't take any chances.

EXT. TRUCK STOP, PARKING AREA - NIGHT

Tom hangs back on the curb of the lot. From where she stands amid the din of CB radio, police scanner static, and engine noise, she can see a SECURITY GUARD doing his rounds, listening into an earbud. Will approaches an 18 wheeler where the DRIVER is standing outside of his cab.

WILL
Any chance you could give us a lift
-- me and my daughter?

The driver glances over at Tom, noting her age.

DRIVER 1
(O.S.)
I don't get involved with this
stuff.

Will quickly moves away.

EXT. TRUCK STOP, PARKING AREA - NIGHT

Will approaches another truck where the DRIVER is climbing back into his cab.

WILL
Hi there.

TRUCK DRIVER 2
What can I do for you?

WILL
We broke down. Any chance you
could take us up the road a bit?

The driver quickly takes stock of Will. He leans in, coming closer to Tom to address her directly.

TRUCK DRIVER 2
Everything OK here?

Tom nods.

TRUCK DRIVER 2 (CONT'D)
Let me talk to the kid a minute.

Will takes a step back.

The driver leans so that their backs are to Will and hushes his voice.

TRUCK DRIVER 2 (CONT'D)
If you're in trouble here, now
would be a really good time to tell
me.

She spells it out in the most sincere way she can.

TOM
My dad and I just really need a
ride.

The driver takes a hard look at Tom, who shows no signs of
distress.

TRUCK DRIVER 2
I just wanna know that I'm doin'
the right thing. Hop in.

WILL
Thanks, man.

INT. TRUCK, PARKED - NIGHT

The truck is neatly organized. The driver's sleeping area is
comfortable and decorated with a nature scene painted on
velvet. On the driver's bed is a little dog.

TRUCK DRIVER 2
The kid can ride back there. Willie
Nelson's really friendly - ain't
you, Willie?

Tom crawls to the sleeping cabin. Will settles in shotgun.

The driver puts on some music. Tom pets the dog who's rested
its head on her. The truck pulls out.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

The truck has left the highway and is climbing up a two lane
road in the mountains. The driver listens to the news on the
radio.

Tom has fallen asleep. Will looks out the window.

They pass a clear cut area and imposing power line towers.
The driver sees the siren lights of the sheriff in the rear
view mirror.

DRIVER
Not sure why that sheriff was out
here. Marijuana's legal up here
now. So it's not that. But then
you got all the people that got
hooked on pain medication. That's
devastated their lives, families
too. Ruined their marriage. I'm
aware of a few people that have
faced this.

The driver stares ahead, and Will steadies his gaze on the trees.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

The first sign of open Wilderness is visible from the window.

TRUCK DRIVER 2
We just crossed into Washington.

Will registers this.

TRUCK DRIVER 2 (CONT'D)
Where'd you say you were headed?

WILL
Not too far from here.

After a few more curves ahead, Will sees an old logging road.

WILL (CONT'D)
We're up near that next bend.
Anywhere you're able to pull over.

He's concerned.

DRIVER
You sure? Here?

Will nods. The driver looks for a spot to pull the truck over.

Will turns around to talk to Tom.

WILL
Sweetie, we're here. We've gotta get out.

DRIVER
Take care.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY

They get out of the truck.

WILL
Thanks, much.

The driver toots the horn and pulls away.

Tom and Will put their packs on.

TOM
It feels a lot colder.

WILL
It's the altitude.

Will tries to orient himself with the map. Tom adds a layer of clothes. Will does the same.

EXT. FOREST, LOGGING PATH - DAY

Will leads the way along the path. Tom is lagging behind, tired. He checks on her.

WILL
It's important to keep up the pace,
or we'll get even colder.

TOM
I'm trying! My feet are stinging.

He roots through his pack and gets out dry socks.

WILL
My feet are stinging, too.

They sit down on a log to change socks. He guides Tom's feet under his shirt to warm them up.

They put on the dry socks. Will wraps plastic bags around her feet. She struggles to get her boots back on.

She takes off wet gloves or he gives her his.

WILL (CONT'D)
Wet wool still keeps you warm.

They look around trying to get their bearings as to what direction to choose, but it all looks the same.

TOM
Do you see any power lines?
They'd lead us somewhere. Wouldn't
they be connected to houses?

WILL
They could, or they might just go
up and over the mountain.

Tom looks around for any other signs of where to go.

TOM
What do you think we should do?

WILL
Keep moving.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

They resume walking.

He gestures for her to put her hands in her arm pits.

WILL
It can happen quickly. That's why
we've got to keep moving.

He puts out his hand to tug her along.

He hands the last of what's in their thermos to her. She takes a few sips and passes the bottle back to him.

WILL (CONT'D)
You need it. It's important to
drink. Finish the rest.

She takes a few more sips.

They walk on.

She looks to him for help.

TOM
What are we looking for? Have you
ever been here?

WILL
Not to this exact place.

The fact that he had no specific location hits her hard.

TOM
There's no cabin?

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Will sets down his pack. Adrenaline is coursing through. He looks behind them and into the void ahead, trying to decide how to gamble.

TOM
I can't feel my feet.

He follows his gut about which choice gives them a better chance of surviving.

WILL
Collect branches.

Tom, so cold that she can only move slowly, collects branches and boughs. Will drags over a large fallen branch.

Will props one end of the branch against a stump, creating a spine for a structure, and then starts leaning branches and sticks against the spine.

WILL (CONT'D)
Keep adding to this.

He drags another bough from a fallen tree, breaking off pieces with his foot and using his small shovel like an axe. He shows Tom how to layer the boughs over the sticks to create the debris shelter. He cuts sword fern branches with his knife and gives them to Tom to layer on.

WILL (CONT'D)
Line the bottom. We can't let the moisture reach us.

She's adding pine needles. He tosses her some cedar. She doesn't take it.

WILL (CONT'D)
Use cedar for that.

TOM
What does it matter?

WILL
It matters. Cedar keeps back the moisture.

She stops moving and sits down. He gets the mylar emergency blanket out of his pack and then lifts her off the wet ground and helps her sit on his pack. He covers her in the mylar. He sings very quietly to her, trying to keep her calm.

WILL (CONT'D)
Are you still shivering?

She nods.

He brings over moss and drips water into her mouth and his. It's hard to extract the water and his hand shakes.

Will adds his coat around Tom and holds her.

He ranges out for more wood to keep building out the shelter.

Finally, it's layered enough to insulate them, and he helps her get into the shelter.

EXT. SURVIVAL SHELTER - NIGHT

They can hear the storm blowing the branches. Tom breaks the silence.

TOM

Are we going to freeze in our
sleep?

WILL

No, you'll wake up if you get too
cold. We'll get through this.

EXT. FOREST, SURVIVAL SHELTER - MORNING

The shelter is illuminated by the light of morning. It is utterly still in the forest. Will makes a clicking noise to greet her. She clicks back, which makes him smile.

They crawl out of the shelter.

EXT. FOREST, SURVIVAL SHELTER - DAY

Nearby, Will gets more moist moss and they each get a few drops. They set off from the debris shelter, trudging stiffly. He carries her pack.

EXT. FOREST, CABIN - DAY

Tom is the first to spot a structure up ahead. A hundred feet closer, and they can see that it's a small rustic cabin. Will mutters words of thanks to himself.

Will pries the latch off the door frame carefully using a rusted metal bar on the porch shelf.

INT. CABIN - DAY

The cabin is bare bones. Wood walls, simple furniture, wood stove. Tom sees some children's books and games on a shelf near a small couch.

Tom investigates a photo on the fridge of the family who owns the cabin.

He turns on the faucets. No water comes out.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Will looks at the power source for the cabin. Solar batteries, long drained, encrusted with nature debris.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Will lights a fire in the stove with his ferro stick. When it catches, he wraps a wool blanket around Tom.

She moves closer to the fire to warm her feet. They watch the flames.

WILL
Any better?

TOM
Tingling, throbbing.

Will nods.

WILL
That's what happens when they warm back up.

TOM
What about you?

WILL
Mostly OK.

INT. CABIN - DAY

He takes out the three cans of soup in the kitchen cabinet and heats one up.

Tom can see that he's limping a little.

They sit at the table eating the soup.

While Will looks at a map, Tom puts her hand over the flame until it's too hot to keep there. Will gets up to check the map that's on the wall.

WILL
(tracing the route with his finger)
Cut across this ridge here, and if not, hitch from the road.

TOM
I wish we could just stay here for a while.

Will nods, appreciating the remote, cosy tranquility.

WILL
We need provisions.

TOM
Maybe we can build ourselves a place like this.

WILL
Need to own a little land.

TOM
What about a small house that's in
a tree? We wouldn't need land for
that. We'd just need one tree.

Will is amused by her kid logic. He keeps the optimistic planning going.

WILL
We'll find a good new spot.

Will double checks the cabinets to see if they've missed any food supply. He reaches to the back of a cabinet turning up only condiments.

TOM
Do you miss the things we had back
at the farm?

WILL
Those were never really our things.

INT. CABIN - AFTERNOON/EARLY EVE

Will looks over and sees that Tom has fallen asleep. He finally looks relieved. He sits on the chair across from her. Even though he knows she can't hear him, he whispers to her.

WILL
Get some rest, Yellow.

INT. CABIN - MORNING

The two remaining cans of soup are on the counter.

WILL
Which one do you want first?

TOM
Minestrone.

They make a shopping list together.

WILL
What am I missing?

He passes the list to her, and she writes down a few items.

TOM
Beans. Noodles.

She draws a big mushroom on the list. He smiles.

Tom brings over a wool sweater for Will to layer under his coat. He bundles up to leave. She hands him some socks.

Tom gives him a hug.

TOM (CONT'D)
Dad, you're sure I shouldn't come with you?

He puts the socks in his pocket.

WILL
No, it's important for you to let your feet recover.

TOM
What about yours?

WILL
They're fine.

TOM
But you're still limping.

WILL
Bad blister can do that.

She looks at him, wondering if he's leveling with her.

Will hands Tom a debit card.

WILL (CONT'D)
Do you remember the code?

TOM
Yes.

From the window, Tom can see Will walk away from the cabin.

INT. CABIN - DUSK

Tom spends a lonely night in the cabin. She opens the last can of soup, and cooks half of it. The wind rattles the cabin. She looks out the window.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Tom lights a candle, and settles in to wait for her dad.

She looks at the map on the wall of the cabin, seeing in detail the ridges and passes. She sits back in the chair. Waiting.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Tom cooks the second half of the can of soup. She cleans her blistered toes, wrapping them in gauze. She puts on two pairs of socks and her boots.

She leaves the cabin with a colorful patterned table cloth.

EXT. FOREST, CABIN - DAY

Tom surveys the land around the cabin, trying to see which direction Will might be coming from. She decides on a tree that stands alone from the others and wraps the table cloth around it to make a noticeable marker.

Branches creak, the wind stirs, no sign of Will.

She heads back to the cabin.

INT. CABIN - DAY

With no soup left, Tom stands on the counter and looks into the very back of the highest cabinet shelves to see if they might have missed something. She finds nothing edible.

She opens the lower cabinets. On her hands and knees she almost crawls inside. From the way back, she pulls out a box of pancake mix. There's only a little mix in the box, and she taps out every drop and adds water. When she pours it into the skillet, it makes one large pancake.

She eats the pancake slowly.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Tom stuffs her clothes into her pack.

She walks over to a pile of Will's belongings, things he'd removed from his pack when he set off across the ridge.

She is hesitant to touch an envelope that is filled with documents, but peers in, decides it is important.

From the things he left behind, she takes the pouch of documents, his notebook, a well worn map of Forest Park.

When she looks again inside the pouch, she finds a snap shot of Will, her mother, and herself as a baby. There's another photo of a soldier in a hospital, one of a soldier in dress uniform. She finds a newspaper article, some papers from the VA, and the coin. She finds a couple of her drawings, along with poems and passages that he's torn out from books and folded into his sketch book. She opens a folded page taken from the Iliad.

TOM

(reading the page)

Achilles went on grieving for his friend, whom he could not banish from his mind. Sleep refused to visit him. He tossed to one side and the other, thinking always of his loss...As memories crowded in on him, the warm tears poured down his cheeks.

She finds a little plastic capsule with some small teeth inside. A folded paper has been inserted with the teeth.

TOM (CONT'D)

(reading the note)

Tom's baby teeth.

She unfolds the article with the headline: A UNIT STALKED BY SUICIDES, TRYING TO SAVE ITSELF.

She looks at one of the VA questionnaires, reading what boxes will had checked.

TOM (CONT'D)

(reading to herself)

Do you have difficulty in enjoying things? Have you felt distant or cut off from people? Are you unable to have sad or loving feelings?

EXT. FOREST, CABIN - NIGHT

On the front railing of the porch, she drips wax and lines up candles. She yells as loudly as she can.

TOM

DAD!

She waits. She hears the wind in the trees and the spitting of the candle flames.

She goes back inside and stands at the window, looking out.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Tom tidies up the cabin, leaving it in good shape. She bundles back up, putting on layers.

EXT. FOREST, ACCIDENT SITE - DAY

Tom walks deep into the woods, looking for tracks. Periodically, she stops to listen for sounds.

In the distance, she hears an engine sound and quickens her pace in that direction. As she nears the edge of a ravine, a spot of color catches her eye. She sees her father at the bottom. She scrambles down the ravine to where he lies.

TOM

Dad?

No answer. She swallows hard.

TOM (CONT'D)

Dad?

She runs over to him and shakes him gently. He's slightly responsive, not fully conscious, but still breathing. She runs her fingers across his forehead, which is scraped and smeared with dried blood.

TOM (CONT'D)

Oh, Dad.

She puts her hands on his face, trying to warm him.

She hears the engines again, but they stop before she can figure out what direction they're coming from.

TOM (CONT'D)

Someone's in these woods. I heard engines before.

Tom opens her pack and layers the remaining garments over her father. She grabs moss and puts water to his lips. She opens her father's pack and sees that he had gotten their provisions.

She holds him tight.

TOM (CONT'D)

I'm getting us some help.

She walks away, backing up, afraid to turn her back on him.

Tom turns to concentrate on where she should be heading, but she finally breaks down. She leans against a tree wiping stinging tears from her chapped cheeks.

She doesn't know which way to walk. She turns 360, waiting for the sound again.

The engines resume; she moves as fast as she can. She can hear human voices, music, and the engines.

EXT. FOREST, ATV SITE - DAY

As she gets closer to the sound, she sees that it's coming from two TEENAGERS, who are horsing around on ATVs. At first, no one notices her.

Tom runs into their path to get their attention. One of the drivers, COLIN, 18, notices her. He's surprised to see someone just appear, stops immediately, and cuts his engine.

TOM
I need some help.

COLIN
What's wrong?

TOM
My dad's hurt. I need help carrying him.

Colin nods for her to get on the ATV.

TOM (CONT'D)
I came from that direction.

Tom points the way.

COLIN
You gotta hold on.

She puts her arms around him. They drive into the woods and Colin's friend follows.

EXT. FOREST, ACCIDENT SITE - DAY

It's not clear if Will is still alive. The two teens are suddenly scared.

Tom approaches Will, whispering softly.

TOM
Dad, we're going.

Will nods slightly.

The two boys help Tom roll the stump off of Will and load him onto the ATV. They tie Will to Colin so he won't fall off.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Tom holds Will in place on the ATV. Colin drives carefully.

EXT. DALE'S HOUSE - DAY

The teens pull into a gravel driveway which leads up to a cabin. The lights are on inside.

COLIN
This is the only place anywhere
near here.

Tom knocks. The door is answered by DALE, a middle-age woman in Carharts.

TOM
I need some help.

Dale looks over to Colin, who she recognizes as a local kid.

DALE
They friends of yours?

Colin shrugs and shakes his head. Dale gestures for them to bring Will in.

INT/EXT. DALE'S HOUSE - DAY

Will is laid onto a couch. Colin and his friend back their way to the door.

DALE
Tell me what happened.

TOM
His leg's hurt. He was lost for
two days. He fell somehow.

DALE
He's gotta get to a hospital.

Dale picks up her phone, poised to dial.

TOM
Can anyone from here help?

DALE
They'll treat him even if you don't
have money.

TOM
He doesn't like people to ask lots
of questions.

DALE
He's in bad shape. What kind of
trouble are you in?

TOM
 We're not in trouble. Can we just
 take care of it ourselves?

Dale steps out onto her porch, dials, and talks to someone.
 Tom can't hear what's she's saying.

INT. DALE'S HOUSE - DAY

BLANE, 40's, a former army medic, lets himself into Dale's.
 He gestures for Dale to take Tom out of the room, so he can
 get to work.

When Blane touches Will's head to clean the gash and examine
 it, the touch jolts Will into awareness. He catches Blane's
 eyes, but quickly turns away.

BLANE
 Let me help you, brother.

Will nods slightly. Blane begins to triage Will's condition.

-- Checks for traumatic head injury; he uses a light to look
 into Will's eyes, watching their dilation.

-- checks capillary response in fingers for dehydration.

BLANE (CONT'D)
 Squeeze my hand.

Will can't squeeze much. Blane puts his hand down.

BLANE (CONT'D)
 Easy. I bet your head's throbbing -
 - isn't it? Easy. Let me at it.
 I'm going to have to pull this boot
 off. It's going to hurt. One,
 two, three.

Blane removes the boot, and Will moans in pain.

BLANE (CONT'D)
 Yea you did a number. Now you're
 with me. Pain lets you know you
 ain't dead yet.

Will finally faces Blane and looks at him.

BLANE (CONT'D)
 Remember being in the woods?

Blane snaps to keep Will from losing consciousness.

BLANE (CONT'D)

Stay with me. Do you know where you are?

WILL

On a couch.

Blane smiles because sarcasm is a good sign that the injured will rally.

BLANE

Yea, you are on the couch. The good news is brother I didn't see any fluid coming out your nose or your ears. But this is going to take some time.

Blane presses gently on Will's leg till he gets a response. Will winces. It's his ankle. Blane uses a SAM splint from his combat first aid kit to immobilize the injured area.

EXT. DALE'S HOUSE, PORCH - DAY

Tom peers through the window trying to check on her father, while Blane treats him. Dale consoles Tom, but also wants information.

DALE

Blaine was a medic in the army. So he's in good hands. Was your dad in the service?

Tom nods yes.

DALE (CONT'D)

What happened out there?

TOM

We got lost.

Dale needs specifics.

DALE

Where were you guys headed?

TOM

I don't think we knew where we were going.

DALE

Where is your home?

TOM

With my dad.

Dale wants to follow up with more questions, but she's interrupted by Blane who comes into the kitchen to update them.

BLANE

He's splinted and taped up. It's gonna knit back, but it'll take time. There's some soft tissue damage. He might've lost some function in his toes, but everything's clean.

Tom steals a look at Dale to see how she's taking it all in.

BLANE (CONT'D)

He's drowsy from what I gave him. But try to get some food in him, when you can.

Blane looks to Tom, and then hands Dale some pills.

BLANE (CONT'D)

For pain.

Dale gives him a hug. He smiles at Tom.

BLANE (CONT'D)

I'll come back and check on him.

TOM

Thank you.

Blane leaves.

INT. DALE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dale is wrestling with a rolling cot. Tom helps her pull it into the main room.

DALE

I trust you, but there's other people here that might not. If your Dad's in some kinda trouble, I need you to tell me 'cuz folks here are not lookin' to get mixed up in somethin'.

Dale looks Tom in the eye. Tom shakes her head no.

INT. DALE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dale and Tom cover Will. Tom squeezes Will's hand.

They unfold the cot so it's next to the sofa where Will lies. They make the bed.

Tom gets into her cot. Will shifts position and becomes aware of her next to him. He speaks softly; the words are stuck in his throat.

WILL
I'm so sorry.

She can hear that he's choked up. He tries to say more. She spares them the agony of vocalizing his regret.

TOM
I know you are.

They lie silently, neither knowing what to say.

EXT. DALE'S PROPERTY - MORNING

She looks around the property to get a sense of where they've landed. She sees several RVs set up in a long-term way -- little yards, clothes line, chimes. One RV has colored crates stacked off to the side.

EXT. REMOTE RV - DAY

As Dale and Tom approach the remote RV, Dale double checks that Tom prefers the remote RV over the others.

DALE
I've got the other RVs up the hill,
one has a little yard --

TOM
No, this is good. My dad will like
this one.

DALE
He's gonna need a while to recover.

TOM
We won't be in your way here.

Dale looks Tom in the eye, trying to figure out who these two travelers are. Tom returns her gaze calmly and honestly. Behind them, a small Bobcat dozer, driven by ANDY, Dale's partner, bobs down the hill transporting a mattress.

INT. REMOTE RV - DAY

There are two small rooms -- a general living space and a small bedroom in the back. They set Will up in the back, propping up his leg on a pillow. Will steals a look at Dale.

DALE
 (to Tom)
 You know where to find me.

WILL
 We won't be here long. Thank you.

DALE
 It's not a problem.

Dale smiles at them as she leaves.

Tom sits on the edge of Will's bed. From the RV's window, she observes a bird working on its nest.

EXT. SUSAN'S DWELLING - DAY

Tom ventures over to the stacked colored crates. She watches SUSAN, the woman she had noticed before, and Susan engages her.

SUSAN
 Have you ever seen inside a bee
 hive?

Tom shakes her head NO.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 Would you like me to show you?

Tom nods yes.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 Okay wait right there. Let me get
 something for you.

Susan helps Tom put a bee mask on.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 When I open this the bees are going
 to come up. But they're not coming
 out to hurt you.

Tom is riveted.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 When a bee stings it dies. So they
 don't want to sting you. They want
 to come up and land on you and just
 get to know you.

The bees land gently on Susan's bare skin.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

It's kind of nice to have the trust of a whole box of creatures that have the power to come out and kill you if they wanted to.

Tom looks deeper into the hive.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

So it means a lot to me that I have their trust. I worked hard to get it.

Susan places some bees on Tom's gloved hand. Tom smiles.

INT. REMOTE RV, WILL'S ROOM - DAY

Tom checks on Will who's looking out the window. She enters his room with two cups of tea and the jar of honey. She hands a cup to Will.

TOM

Dad, there's some interesting things in this place.

She's got his attention.

TOM (CONT'D)

There's a beekeeper who lives here.

She catches his eye. She lifts the jar of honey.

TOM (CONT'D)

This is from the bees, from right here. When you can walk, I wanna show you.

Will manages to lift his leg a little. After a second, he puts it down.

TOM (CONT'D)

It'll take a little while, Dad.

Will sighs. His mind races ahead.

WILL

What have you told these folks about us?

TOM

Not a lot. They haven't asked me much.

WILL

What have they asked you?

TOM
Dale asked me if we're in trouble.
I said no. We're not, right?

Will uses his arms to try again to lift his leg.

WILL
Do you think they called anyone?

TOM
Called who?

WILL
People who will try to move us
somewhere.

TOM
I don't think they'd do that here.

WILL
What makes you say that?

TOM
It's a feeling I get.

Sitting on the edge of her father's bed, she lifts the honey jar off the window sill and adds a spoonful to her tea. She dips the spoon again and turns to Will.

TOM (CONT'D)
Want to try it?

WILL
Yes.

She drizzles a long strand of honey into his cup.

EXT. DALE'S CABIN - DAY

Tom heads over toward Dale's. Blane is in the yard with his dog, Hector. They greet Tom warmly.

BLANE
How's he doing?

TOM
He's trying to get up on the
crutches.

BLANE
Takes time.

Tom seizes the opportunity to talk about her dad to someone who she senses won't use it against them.

TOM
He wants to leave.

Blane nods, understanding. He runs his hand over Hector's head and brings him closer.

BLANE
This is Hector. He's helped me a lot.

Tom reaches out to the dog, who lets her pet him.

BLANE (CONT'D)
You wanna take him for a couple of days?

Blane puts his arms out and Hector balances on his hind legs so Blane can hug him. He lets Hector jump back to all fours.

BLANE (CONT'D)
I think your dad might like having him around. Let him sleep in your dad's room.

Tom looks at him curiously.

BLANE (CONT'D)
Hector can nudge him so he can come out of the dream. He does that for me.

Hector buries his snout in Blane's hand.

INT. REMOTE RV - DAY

Tom brings the dog inside the RV. She lets Hector pad his way into Will's room.

Hector has rested his snout on Will's bed, looking at Will with raised eyebrows. Will puts his hand out, and Hector licks it.

Tom steals a glance at her dad relating to the dog.

She puts food in Hector's bowl and heads out.

EXT. DALE'S CABIN - DAY

Tom and Dale are at the trunk of Dale's car unloading groceries. Tom carries one of the bags to the porch. Tom has something she wants to say to Dale. Finally, she just blurts it out as she pulls some folded cash from her pocket.

TOM
 This is what I've got left. We
 want to stay.

She shows Dale the money in her hand. Dale pushes the money
 back to Tom.

DALE
 You're welcome to stay down there
 til your dad gets better. If you
 guys were to be here for a long
 time, it costs something to stay on
 -- for propane, water, things like
 that.

TOM
 So is this enough?

DALE
 I don't need to take your money
 right now.

TOM
 We want to stay a long time.

Tom tries again. Dale takes a symbolic few bills.

DALE
 I can take this as a deposit.
 (assuring her)
 I'm not gonna rent the place out
 from under you. Take a deep
 breath. You can stay.

TOM
 I like living here.

Tom leans into the trunk to get another grocery bag. Dale is
 stuffing some of the cans she bought into a canvas bag. When
 the bag is full, she ties it shut and rolls it into a forest
 patterned tarp.

TOM (CONT'D)
 What's that for?

DALE
 I leave this out for someone who
 lives up in the peninsula. I
 haven't seen him in years, but I
 know he gets the food. When I come
 back to check, the bag's always
 empty. I know he appreciates it.

EXT. DALE'S PROPERTY - DAY

Tom watches as Dale stands on a stump and wedges the bag into the branches of the tree.

DALE

It's been the same spot for years.

She pats the tree.

INT. REMOTE RV - DAY

Tom takes mushrooms out of a grocery bag and then out of their shrink wrapped plastic container. While they cook, she looks in on her father, who's got their map laid out on his bed.

TOM

Are you hungry?

WILL

Yes.

Will comes out of his room on the crutches. Tom is surprised to see him up.

TOM

You're up!

WILL

Been practicing.

He swings his leg around to sit at the table.

Tom serves them each a plate of mushrooms. Will digs in, and smiles at her, relishing the mushrooms. Tom is preoccupied.

TOM

I want to tell you something.

WILL

Please do.

TOM

I paid for this place, so we can stay here.

WILL

That was the right thing to do -- pay them something for letting us be here.

TOM

I rented this place. So we can live here.

Will nods and keeps eating.

INT. REMOTE RV, WILL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Hector is lying next to Will on the bed. Will pets his head.

EXT. REMOTE RV - DAY

Tom and Will are walking near their RV. Will tries a few steps off his crutches, gingerly putting weight on his leg, trying to walk normally. Tom hears music from a small party in Dale's yard.

Blane sees them from a distance and waves.

Tom notices several neighbors carrying chairs over towards Dale's.

TOM
C'mon?

WILL
Gonna walk around. Strengthen the leg.

TOM
Dad, please. They're good people.

She stares at him, imploring. Will feels a tug and he obliges.

EXT. DALE'S CABIN - DAY

The gathering is in process. Several people are playing music. Dale is grilling.

Will manages to get his thanks out to Blane.

WILL
You look out for her. Thank you.

Blane puts his hand on Will's shoulder, acknowledging Will's gratitude.

Will observes -- he can see that Tom is comfortable, and that Dale is warm towards her. He stands a little apart to avoid the chance encounter. Tom steals a look to check on him.

One of the neighbors, MICHAEL HURLEY, is singing with his guitar.

MICHAEL HURLEY
*Kiss me once, Oh kiss me twice.
Give me a taste of paradise.*
(MORE)

MICHAEL HURLEY (CONT'D)

I don't want the blues always on my shoulders. Get me a cold beer as I get older.

The sun going down and the sky is different colors. Baby runs through all the different hues. I feel alright, but these times are bad. Mama come here and help me with these blues. Oh my stars, how you
...

Will quietly slips away from the gathering.

EXT. SUSAN'S DWELLING - DAY

Will moves quickly, despite the weakened leg. He doesn't know that Tom has followed him.

TOM

Dad, wait up.

He stops and waits for her.

TOM (CONT'D)

Can I show you something?

Tom beckons Will over to her hive.

TOM (CONT'D)

Have you ever seen inside of a hive?

Tom approaches the hive with the smoker.

He shakes his head no. The music from the gathering has changed, and a different song wafts over the yard. Tom helps him into a bee mask. Will comes closer.

TOM (CONT'D)

It's cool huh? You put your hand over it. You can feel the warmth of the hive.

Tom positions his hand over the hive.

TOM (CONT'D)

Close your eyes. Open.
Come closer. Feel the warmth. A person can withstand five hundred stings.

He looks up at her.

Close your eyes.

Will does.

Tom takes off her mask and gloves and lets the bees collect on her arm.

TOM (CONT'D)
Open. See, you don't need to be scared.

She shows her dad the bees on her skin up close. Will takes in how comfortable she is. The bees sit gently on Tom's hand. She is very alive, feeling everything.

She locks eyes with Will.

EXT. DALE'S HOUSE - DAY

Tom has returned to the gathering. They've built a fire. Someone in the group is singing.

EXT. REMOTE RV - NIGHT

Will is on the front stairs of the RV listening to the distant music from the gathering, but he reacts to all sounds nearby. He gets up to check around the RV, then sits back down. Hector moves closer to Will and puts his head on Will's knee.

Tom approaches the RV humming a line from the song at the shindig. She joins her dad. Tom puts her arms around him. Together, they are 50% agony; 50% hope.

TOM
I know that you have some things in your mind that I can't understand.

The Pacific Tree frogs start up their chorus and they listen together.

INT. REMOTE RV - MORNING

When Tom looks in Will's room, she stops in her tracks. His few items of clothing are on the bed, along with the map, and some food.

TOM
What're you doing? Your leg isn't even healed all the way.

He finishes rolling a blanket.

TOM (CONT'D)
It won't heal right. I don't want
to leave.

Will looks down, searching for words to explain.

TOM (CONT'D)
Last time you almost died-

He raises his eyes to look at her.

TOM (CONT'D)
And you would have if I hadn't
found you.

He looks down, thinking.

WILL
It won't happen to us again.

She wants him to understand; she tries again.

TOM
The people here aren't very
different from us. Don't you see
that?

WILL
Yes. They've been very good to us,
but we need to go back to our own
way of life.

TOM
Why can't you stay?

Will shuts his eyes, wishing he had words for it. He packs
food. Tom is frustrated. She watches him pack the few last
things.

TOM (CONT'D)
The same thing that's wrong with
you is not wrong with me.

She's scared that she just said that.

She hears the door of the RV click. She won't turn around to
look.

EXT. REMOTE RV - DAY

Will paces around the back of RV, Hector trails him. He can't
leave. Tom exits the RV and watches Will from behind a tree.

INT. REMOTE RV - DAY

Tom stuffs clothes and journal into her pack. From the RV, she can see that Will is on the wooded path looking out for her, looking back, waiting for her.

EXT. WOODS NEAR DALE'S - DAY

Tom can see Will in the distance. He can't move as quickly as he once did. Tom soon overtakes him.

TOM
Are you just going to leave?

WILL
No, I want you to come with me.
Your home is with me. And mine is
with you.

Her tears well up.

WILL (CONT'D)
At least that's the way it's always
been.

She squeezes his hand.

EXT. WOODS NEAR DALE'S - DAY

They've been hiking for a while on an evergreen lined logging path. Will stops to rest.

They sit in silence. He looks up at a big tree above them, lost in thought.

WILL
We'll find a good spot.

Will passes Tom some of the bread he packed. He's brought her jar of honey, with the label that she's decorated. She takes the jar, but doesn't open it. Will reaches for the jar and drizzles some honey on the bread.

She looks out into the expanse of woods. She knows why her dad loves being in the forest.

A gust of wind rustles the branches. A wild hare forages, unafraid. The trees sway. He stands up ready to continue the search for their new place.

EXT. WOODS NEAR DALE'S - LATER

Will stops to look at the map and get his bearings.

WILL

We can keep bees at our next place.

WILL (CONT'D)

We can find a good spot like we had in Forest Park. Don't you want that?

TOM

We're not going to find that again.

He starts to walk. Fighting heavy resistance, Tom follows her father. She lags behind him. He looks back at her. Tom is distant and upset. He slows down until she catches up. The leaves rustle loudly. She looks at him.

TOM (CONT'D)

Dad -

In the silence it becomes clear what she's about to say.

WILL

Can you find your way back?

TOM

Yes.

Will's eyes well up.

WILL

Tell that we'll be in touch.

TOM

Will you check on me?

WILL

Yes.

TOM

I know you would stay if you could.

Will nods. Tom buries her tears in his shoulder and hugs him.

TOM (CONT'D)

I love you, Green.

WILL

I love you, Yellow.

He hugs her tightly.

TOM

You know where to find me.

Will finds it hard to let go.

Tom takes the ferro rod from around her neck and places it around his. They stand in arm's reach, neither able to make the first move. Will nods that it's OK. Tom begins walking backwards, watching her dad. She holds the seahorse amulet until her dad becomes small in the distance. When she can no longer see him, she turns forward and heads back in the direction of Dale's.

EXT. WOODS NEAR DALE'S - DAY

Halfway back to Dale's, Hector meets her on the path.

TOM
He had to go.

Hector looks in the direction of Will. Tom faces forward.

EXT. WOOD NEAR DALE'S, DAYS LATER

A beautiful spider web holds tenaciously to an old tree. Tom follows the web with her eyes.

EXT. DALE'S PROPERTY - DAY

Tom stands at the tree where Dale had hung the bag for the man who comes down from the mountain. Tom hangs the bag in the right place. She listens keenly for a moment, picks up the empty bag, and makes her way back to where she lives.

END.