

# **THE TALL MAN**

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1 - PROLOGUE

Black.

FADE IN:

A block of text appears:

**Every year in the United States, 750,000 minors are declared missing.**

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

**97% are found within an hour of their disappearance.**

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

**One third of one percent are NEVER found.**

FADE OUT TO:

2 - INT. MINE TUNNEL - DAY

A man's hands are lifting one stone after another. The earth looks excavated, as if there had been an extensive search. We pull back:

We are in an enormous tunnel. We can only see the man's silhouette. He is inspecting the rocky walls and damp ground with his flashlight.

Two more men join him from adjacent tunnels.

MAN 1

So?

MAN 2

We need a psychic! ... Or a goddamn magician!

MAN 1

Yeah.

3 - EXT. TUNNEL ENTRANCE - DAY

The three men walk silently through the underground labyrinth. As they approach the entrance, the light of day peeks through. They exit to reveal a frost-covered barren lot around a disaffected mine.

In the center, (THE LIEUTENANT) can be seen wearing a tie and dark suit under a raincoat. To his left, his partner (LIEUTENANT #2). They are both obviously from a

federal agency. To his right a county sheriff, (SHERIFF CHESTNUT).

At the tunnel entrance two county police cars are parked. Their flashing lights on. This is obviously a crime scene. Nearby, are two local POLICE DEPUTIES. At the sight of the men emerging from the tunnel they pretend to be busy.

The two federal agents load into their unmarked car. Sheriff Chestnut looks at the first Deputy (DEPUTY CAMPBELL).

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
Not a single thing.

DEPUTY CAMPBELL  
What do we do?

LIEUTENANT  
(from the driver's seat  
window)  
Police line, 24-hour  
surveillance, no one goes in or  
out.

DEPUTY CAMPBELL  
But there are other entrances!

Sheriff Chestnut, clearly incompetent, motions emphatically with his eyes and head indicating the Feds.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
(Insistently)  
Just make it look good!

4 - INT. INFIRMARY - DAY

We see the profile of a young woman (JULIA DENNING). Her posture portrays intense fatigue. Head bent, shoulders sloping, she is only on her feet thanks to the brick wall she is leaning against. We see she is in an infirmary.

In her thirties, Julia is pretty despite her drawn expression.

A female silhouette (NURSE) speaks to her in a reassuring tone.

NURSE  
Come this way.

Supported by the nurse, Julia can barely walk. She manages to sit down on the edge of a metal examination table.

NURSE (CONT.)  
Will you be alright?

Julia nods.

NURSE (CONT.)  
You're not going to faint, are  
you?

Julia shakes her head.

NURSE (CONT.)  
Good.

The nurse rolls a little first aid trolley over to  
Julia. She touches Julia's chin and tilts her head up.

What we see is shocking:

There is a gaping wound on Julia's right temple. The eye  
itself has also received a violent blow. Julia writhes  
with momentary pain as the disinfectant gauze touches  
her raw flesh.

NURSE (CONT.)  
Shhh... It's okay... Nice and  
easy...

The nurse using surgical tweezers is searching for  
something in the wound - A shard of glass, which she  
drops in a dish.

We remain still for a moment on Julia's face. Tears come  
to her eyes and flow down her cheek to the corner of her  
cracked lips.

The infirmary door opens slowly. In the background we  
see the sights and sounds, comings and goings typical of  
a police station. The lieutenant from the opening scene  
walks in closing the door behind him.

Silence again.

His solid frame stops in front of Julia.

LIEUTENANT  
Are you alright, Mrs. Denning?

Julia looks up, but says nothing. They look intensely at  
one another.

LIEUTENANT (CONT.)  
We haven't found him.

The nurse pauses, aware of the seriousness of the  
moment. The lieutenant turns away, his face both pensive  
and weary.

LIEUTENANT (CONT.)  
Not him, and not the others.

We remain on Julia's silent face.

LONG DISSOLVE

5 - EXT. ROAD - NEAR COLD ROCK - DAY

The sound of distant thunder permeates an overcast sky in a vast landscape dominated by high mountains capped with snow. We are somewhere in the Northwestern United States.

Text appears over the landscape:

36 HOURS EARLIER

We hear the voice of a young woman (THE NARRATOR).

NARRATOR (OFF)  
Our town has been dead for eleven  
years.

6 - EXT. DISUSED COPPER MINE - DAY

We see an immense metal carcass of a disaffected copper mine. All around slag heaps and lifeless bulldozed plateaus, the results of years of mining.

The dirty snow on the ground lies in patchy clumps. The abundant accumulation on the high mountain peaks does not reach down to the valley.

NARRATOR (OFF) (CONT.)  
"It's a hard life," old lady  
Ashcroft used to say. She didn't  
know how right she was...

Under the frost that blankets everything in a sad, monotonous gray we can see a land savaged by the bitter cold.

NARRATOR (OFF) (CONT.)  
It was three years after the last  
factory closed when something  
came to Cold Rock.

The cornfields beyond broken fences have been left fallow. On one of the fence posts, a plastic doll's head is finishing its days in the frigid breeze.

NARRATOR (OFF) (CONT.)  
Something bad that destroyed our  
town even more...

Beside the road, a battered sign indicates the city limits of Cold Rock.

A car races past without slowing. We follow it, revealing the small town.

7 - EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Cold Rock is a small place, run through by an old two-lane highway that continues to the Canadian border.

Abandoned industrial buildings are scattered amongst boarded up shop fronts, weathered facades and run down homes. The remains of better days. Now, it is all but deserted.

8 - EXT. ABANDONED SCHOOL - DAY

The car screeches to a halt in front of a small building, tires still smoking. A middle age woman (TRACY) jumps out urgently running to the passenger side. At the same moment a young teenage girl (JENNY) flings open the passenger door as she assists her older sister (CAROL 17) out of the car.

Carol is screaming, holding her belly.

Tracy and Jenny support Carol as they struggle towards the building, in front of which, a faded sign reads:

George Washington Elementary School

9 - INT. ABANDONED SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Letting the front door slam behind them, the women hurry down a long tiled hallway. On the walls hang some health posters. There is no sign of any normal school activity. Tracy struggles more with each step to keep Carol on her feet. Jenny is physically unable to support her sister for a second longer. She drops back.

TRACY

Help us!

They soon collapse in the middle of the hall. Carol starts having convulsions.

Julia Denning (from scene 4) appears at the end of the hall in a white smock.

TRACY

(CONT.)

Help us, please!

JULIA

(running)

What's wrong?

TRACY

It's my daughter!

Carol is screaming.

Julia leans over her, trying to hold her up.

JULIA  
For how long has she been like  
this?

TRACY  
She just started screaming all of  
a sudden! Out of nowhere!

Julia pulls Carol's oversized cardigan open: we discover her rounded belly. At the sight of it, her mother shudders.

TRACY  
Oh my God, tell me it's not tr...

Carol contorts with another contraction, even more violent than the previous one. Jenny retreats to the wall unmoved.

10 - INT. ABANDONED SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Lying on a stretcher, Carol is pushed swiftly by Julia into a makeshift examination room. At her side, Tracy reassures her as best she can.

11 - INT. MAKESHIFT EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

A FEW SECONDS LATER:  
Carol, gripping the metal bars of the birthing table, tenses, struggling to breathe. Her mother strokes her forehead, trying to calm her.

The birth is well underway. Things do not seem to be going well. An impression that is highlighted by the general appearance of the delivery room: it is clearly a former classroom. In the center lies a bit of medical equipment, the strict minimum.

Julia speaks to Carol in a tone that betrays extreme urgency.

JULIA  
Push, Carol! Push!

Carol can tell something isn't right.

JULIA (CONT.)  
It's a breech, sweetie... It's  
coming out feet first, you have  
to help me!!!

Carol tries to look between her legs.

JULIA (CONT.)  
I'm begging you, Carol! Help me!  
PUSH!

Carol emits a piercing cry.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Push! Good girl! You're doing it,  
Carol!

Carol screams one last time.

Julia holds up the baby, born at last.

We only see its body for a fraction of a second, head down, but one detail does not escape us: it is making no sound.

Moving skillfully, Julia cuts the umbilical cord and carries the newborn to an examination table.

JULIA  
(to Tracy)  
Take her out!

TRACY  
Where?

JULIA  
The next room!

12 - INT. ADJOINING ROOM - DAY

The mother wheels the bed into an adjoining room.  
Another obvious classroom.

Carol, exhausted by her suffering, is in her own world.

13 - INT. MAKESHIFT EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

An extreme close-up of Julia's face as she leans over her work. Completely focused on her task. We hear an intense sound of breathing.

We step back: Julia is administering CPR to the newborn. Mouth-to-mouth alternating with chest compressions.

All we can see of the infant is the surface of its skin, but we realize it is inert.

14 - INT. ADJOINING ROOM - DAY

Carol lifts her head with difficulty.

Her mother leans towards her, reassuringly.



TRACY  
(whispering)  
Everything 'll be okay, honey...

15 - INT. MAKESHIFT EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Return to the CPR.

The tiny body moves artificially under Julia's efforts.

Each movement counts.

She seems to want to influence destiny with her incantations.

JULIA  
Come on... Come on... COME ON!

16 - INT. ADJOINING ROOM - DAY

Carol hesitates between struggling to remain conscious and letting herself go.

She moans. Her mother strokes her hair.

TRACY  
Shh... There you go...

17 - INT. MAKESHIFT EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

The mouth-to-mouth continues.

Julia's movements are precise, more determined than ever: she is not giving up.

The newborn suddenly comes to life!

We hear its painful cough, the sign that air is finally entering its lungs.

A gasp, then another, soon followed by a real breath.

At last the sound of crying.

18 - INT. ABANDONED SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Jenny is seated on an old bench.  
She is drawing on a notepad which has been tied with string around her neck. She is indifferent to the cries of the newborn that echo throughout the building.

19 - INT. MAKESHIFT EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Tracy responds to the sounds of the baby and joins Julia in the examination room.

JULIA  
(with a smile)  
It's a big boy!

Tracy barely glances at the child, clearly preoccupied by something else.

TRACY  
No hospital, Julia.

Julia does not seem to understand.

JULIA  
He needs monitoring, Tracy.

TRACY  
No.

20 - INT. ADJOINING ROOM - DAY

A FEW MOMENTS LATER:

The baby has been entrusted to his mother. Carol, who barely realizes what is happening, strokes his forehead with a movement that is more mechanical than tender.

TRACY (OFF)  
Steven...

21 - INT. ABANDONED SCHOOL OFFICE - DAY

Seated behind her desk, Julia is facing Tracy. The latter is a woman who we see was once attractive however the blows of life have taken its toll. Pensive and resigned, she is avoiding looking at Julia.

TRACY (CONT.)  
That bastard never made a secret  
of the fact he likes my girls...

Julia, listening, expresses no judgment.

TRACY (CONT.)  
He's paraded around in front of  
them like a rooster... Bare-  
chested, cocky, with his stupid  
cowboy hat. Always showing them  
things, teaching them this and  
that... And Carol foolishly  
responding... Even though the  
damn fool is dumb as a stump...

JULIA  
Steven?

TRACY  
(nodding bitterly)  
Yeah... Her reliable step-dad.

She risks a smile, at once sad and ironical.

TRACY (CONT.)  
A good-for-nothing bum that I  
picked up off the street.

JULIA  
Did you realize...?

TRACY  
I had no idea. (convincing  
herself) If I had, I would've  
shot him.

She mimes a revolver with her fingers.

TRACY (CONT.)  
Bang Bang in the cabeza and good-  
bye cowboy... But maybe I did  
know. I could kinda tell... You  
just know shit like that happens  
to people like us...

JULIA  
(gently)  
Don't talk like that.

TRACY (CONT.)  
(thoughtfully)  
It's clear as day that it's gonna  
happen... And then it happens...

JULIA  
It'll be alright...

TRACY  
No it won't... It's nobody else's  
business. No hospital.

JULIA  
They 're discreet.

TRACY  
We won't go Julia. I won't put  
Carol through that torment We  
take care of our own problems as  
a family

We sense Julia is considering the options, disturbed by  
the decision that needs to be made.

22 - INT. ABANDONNED SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

A FEW MOMENTS LATER:

Close-up of Julia's hands holding the blanket-wrapped  
infant out to Tracy. A knowing look between them, like a  
tacit agreement.

JULIA  
I'll come see you every day. If  
there's the slightest problem...

TRACY  
(now calm)  
I'll call you. Don't worry... And  
I'm kicking Steven out. Tonight.

Julia nods.

Tracy and her daughters walk down the school hallway,  
towards the front door. Carol is very weak she looks as  
white as a ghost. Jenny is as silent as ever. Their  
mother holds the child firmly against her shoulder.

NARRATOR (OFF)  
In Cold Rock, sometimes children  
were born when they were not  
wanted. People just managed, and  
they didn't go hollering it from  
the rooftops. It may have been a  
bit sad, but it was just good  
sense. Because a lot worse things  
were happening when it came to  
the children...

Tracy turns back towards Julia, now at the opposite end  
of the long hallway, and points to the newborn in her  
arms.

TRACY  
(reassuringly)  
I'll look after him.

Then she turns towards one of the walls of the lobby.

TRACY (CONT.)  
I swear to you that the Tall Man  
won't get him. Not like the  
others...

On the wall in front of her we discover a bulletin board  
covered with pictures of young children. Dozens of  
photos with the same word in bold type:

MISSING

Young boys and girls, staring straight into the lens of  
a photographer's camera. All with the same innocent  
expression each inscribed with:

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS CHILD?

We advance slowly towards the board.

NARRATOR (OFF)  
Wanted or not, boys and girls,  
some of them just disappeared.  
One day, they couldn't be found.  
Something had come to Cold Rock  
that was taking the children...  
Something so menacing, so  
terrifying, that the people  
finally gave it a name...

23 - OPENING CREDITS

Quick cut of flashes and accelerating images:

Pictures of missing children, excerpts from the local TV  
news with mothers from Cold Rock talking about the  
disappearances.

We see faces of parents ravaged with worry, pleading  
mothers, bits of interviews, snatches of commentary:

"Give us back our children!"

A young mother testifies:

"God has sent the Tall Man to  
Cold Rock to smite us!  
Do you hear me? The Tall Man is  
among us! And no one can stop  
him!"

A question from a journalist:

"Who is the Tall Man?"

Vehement reply:

"Our goddamn punishment!  
Don't you know he's out there?"

A young mother leads the camera through a modest house  
into an empty child's bedroom:

"I just went to answer the  
phone...I left her there for two  
minutes... When I came back she was  
gone..."

Another mother, in tears, implores the anonymous  
kidnapper:

"Please, sir, whoever you are...  
Please don't hurt my Patricia!  
Please!"

A young father addresses him:

"Jordan is so sweet... I beg you,  
sir, be gentle with him..."

An old woman (MRS ASHCROFT) speaks very calmly, standing  
at the edge of a forest:

MRS ASHCROFT  
Sure I've seen him, that Tall  
Man... Twice. He comes to the  
woods. But only as night is  
falling.

She gestures toward the forest, as if she were speaking  
of a mythological animal:

MRS ASHCROFT  
I saw him slipping away...  
Right there... Through the trees.

THE TITLE APPEARS:

THE TALL MAN

The sound overruns the image and makes the transition to  
the following sequence:

24 - EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - EARLY AFTERNOON - DAY

A glimpse of sun peeks through the clouds as we see a  
used Toyota Four Runner travelling down the road.

RADIO VOICE OVER  
Afternoon folks it's another  
almost beautiful day here in the  
North Pine Valley. More rain  
expected so enjoy the glimpse of  
sunshine while ya can. You're  
tuned to 84.70 on your dial... it's  
2:35 and here comes a new...  
(Radio crackles)

25 - INT. JULIA'S CAR - DAY

As she drives, Julia is tuning her car radio.

JOURNALIST (OFF)  
...now it's a total of 14  
children from several small  
towns, in a radius of only 40  
miles, just south of the Canadian  
border. An alarming number even  
on a statewide level. The FBI in  
Pittsville are unable to explain  
it. There has been no contact  
from the perpetrator, no demand  
for ransom, and no trace of any  
children have been found, leaving

the federal investigators to  
believe...

Julia turns the dial as she passes a disused bus  
shelter.

SCHREEEEEEEECH!!!

She instantly slams on the brakes. She has seen someone.

She puts the car into reverse and backs up to the bus  
stop.

A derelict looking woman is sitting there alone,  
crouching forward. The weight of her head in her hands.  
She is covered with a blue plastic tarpaulin.

Julia presses the automatic button to wind down the  
passenger window.

JULIA  
(surprised)  
Mrs. Johnson?... Can I give you a  
ride?

The woman (MRS.JOHNSON) slowly raises her gaze, looking  
intensely at Julia. She's filthy, anemic with a  
disturbed expression on her face. She remains silent.

JULIA  
Are you ok?... You know this bus  
service is discontinued. Can I  
drop you somewhere?

Mrs. Johnson slowly shakes her head nodding "no".

JULIA  
Ok... Umm... I'll be at the clinic  
later if you need anything.

Mrs.Johnson nods mechanically.

Julia winds up the window and pulls away. She glances  
into the rearview mirror observing Mrs.Johnson as the  
car continues down the country road.

26 - INT. ROADSIDE DINER - DAY

The camera travels from booth to booth revealing the  
local clientele. An assortment of characters that have  
had to work hard their whole lives with little to show  
for it.

A man in his fifties (DOUGLAS) is sitting at the  
counter, talking loudly and sipping a beer. He is deep  
in conversation with (TRISH, 55), the owner, and Sheriff  
Chestnut.

DOUGLAS

What else could it be? Of course it's a child molester! The kind of asshole who really hurts the kids, you know?

SHERRIF CHESTNUT

What I'm saying is...

DOUGLAS

What you say is bullshit, Chestnut. It's not the bogeyman or the devil or any of that old wives' tale crap. Tall Man my ass! The guy's got a name, and he'll shit himself like anyone else when we drag him to the chair.

TRISH

I think you're right, Douglas.

DOUGLAS

Course I am... And I'll drink to his slow and painful death when we do.

SHERRIF CHESTNUT

(holding up his glass)

Yeah, I'll drink to that.

DOUGLAS

Cheers.

Their glasses touch.

Douglas's eyes are drawn to the For Runner pulling into the lot outside.

Julia gets out and walks towards the entrance.

She joins Douglas and Sheriff Chestnut at the counter.

JULIA

Hi guys.

(To Trish)

A quick sandwich please Trish.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT

Are you gonna sit down to eat today?

DOUGLAS

(sarcastically)

Some people have to work.



TRISH  
(with a smile)  
Turkey?

JULIA  
As usual.

The (WAITRESS) automatically serves Julia a coffee.

DOUGLAS  
So what's up? How's everybody's  
health in this God forsaken town?

JULIA  
People's health is the same as  
everywhere. It's their spirits  
that are low.

DOUGLAS  
No kidding. It's driving some  
people mad.

JULIA  
(thoughtfully)  
Yeah. I just saw Mrs. Johnson...

DOUGLAS  
She's gone.

TRISH  
She's got nothing to hold on to  
anymore.

Julia nods in agreement.

DOUGLAS (CONT.)  
We've got the highest  
unemployment in the county.  
The place is dying, Julia.

JULIA  
It's on its way.

DOUGLAS  
And that bastard... That Tall  
Man, like they call him... Those  
idiots... He's just finishing us  
off a little faster.

JULIA  
They'll catch him sooner or  
later.

DOUGLAS  
Who? Him? (pointing at Sheriff  
Chestnut) You gotta be kidding!

Julia can't hide a smile as Chestnut sits oblivious to the joke.

Douglas leans towards her, turning serious. He softens his tone to give weight to his words.

DOUGLAS  
The women are saying "He" isn't  
after a thing.

JULIA  
What do you mean?

DOUGLAS  
They say he's doing it just for  
the hell of it. Just to make the  
kids disappear. For fun.

JULIA  
They don't know what they're  
talking about.

DOUGLAS  
(insisting)  
They say that if you lose your  
kid, it's for good.

He snaps his fingers.

DOUGLAS (CONT.)  
Finito. Forever.

JULIA  
They'll find him.

DOUGLAS  
I hope God's listening. And when  
that day comes, believe me, I'll  
have a ringside seat.

He takes a sip of his beer.

JULIA  
And you? How are you holding up?

DOUGLAS  
I'm alright.

He suddenly looks less like a show-off.

DOUGLAS (CONT.)  
Here at the bar...with all the  
other jerks.

A child's soft voice is heard off camera.

OFF CAMERA VOICE  
Daddy?

Their eyes turn towards the little voice.  
A pretty young girl (TIFFANY, 7) is tugging at Douglas's leg.

DOUGLAS  
(returning to his  
boisterous self)  
Yeah Sugar?

TIFFANY  
Can I have another soda?

TRISH  
It's on me Doug.

DOUGLAS  
Thanks Trish.  
(To Tiffany)  
Take a seat Sugar, You'll have it  
in a minute.

Tiffany turns and walks towards a booth.  
The tabletop is strewn with a few plastic toys and well  
loved dolls.  
Julia grabs the soda from the counter and takes it to  
the child who is reading a comic book.

JULIA  
(slipping into the booth)  
Is it good? (Referring to the  
book)

Tiffany nods without looking up.

TIFFANY  
Princess Starr is on her space  
scooter... She doesn't want to be  
captured by the bad guys...

Julia leans over the comic. It's a rather old-fashioned  
cheap sci-fi series.

TIFFANY (CONT.)  
The Trogolls... They sing a  
beautiful song. But if Princess  
Starr goes to see them, she'll  
die. So she ties herself on her  
space scooter...

JULIA  
(nodding)  
To save herself from the  
temptation of the Trogolls.

Tiffany is happy that Julia knows her story.  
They smile sharing a moment.

JULIA (CONT)  
It's based on Ulysses! The song  
of the Sirens, from Homer's  
Odyssey. Do you know it?

Tiffany shakes her head "no".

JULIA (CONT.)  
It's a beautiful story you'd like  
it.

She watches Tiffany as she continues reading engrossed.

27 - EXT. TRACY'S TRAILER - DAY

LATER:  
Close-up of Julia knocking at a door carrying her  
medical kit. The sound betrays the quality of the door:  
a mix of plywood and plastic. Tracy's voice replies.

TRACY (OFF)  
I'm coming!

The door opens to reveal Tracy.

JULIA  
Hello Tracy!

TRACY  
(diverting her gaze)  
Come on in.

28 - INT. TRACY'S TRAILER - DAY

The interior of what turns out to be a trailer is clean  
yet sparsely decorated with used furniture straight out  
of a Goodwill store.

TRACY  
Take a seat.

JULIA  
(looking around the  
trailer)  
Where are they?

Tracy sits down on the sofa.

TRACY  
It's ok I sent them away. They  
are at my sister's in Seattle.

Julia seems surprised and looks disapprovingly at Tracy.

TRACY  
(qualifying)  
She has a big house there and  
they are close to everything they  
need. They're just better off...

JULIA  
Carol was in no state to travel  
Tracy!

TRACY  
Yes, but they got there fine!  
(explaining)  
Julia, I still have to go to work  
I can't be here all day to help  
Carol. You gotta understand.

JULIA  
(backing down)  
I get it.

Julia, contemplating, walks to the window and gazes out.  
Tracy in turn stands as she changes the subject.

TRACY  
I'll fix us some coffee.

From Julia's POV we see the back of a large man (STEVEN,  
40) working outside on a motorbike.

JULIA  
He's still here.

TRACY  
(uncomfortably)  
Gimme some time it's not so  
simple... He's hard to handle.

Julia turns to Tracy. They make eye contact.

TRACY (CONT.)  
Trust me you've got to let me do  
it my way.

JULIA  
What about Jenny?

TRACY  
Over my dead body.

She resumes preparing the coffee.

A moment of silence.

TRACY (CONT.)  
Look... I've raised these girls all  
by myself. I've tried my best.

JULIA

I know.

TRACY (CONT.)

I moved to Cold Rock to start a new life. To get away from the chaos I grew up in.

Tracy holds back tears.

TRACY (CONT.)

And look, here I am. In exactly the same shit my mother dealt with.

JULIA

Times are tough for all of us right now.

TRACY

Just tougher for some...

Julia comforts Tracy by placing a supportive hand on her shoulder.

JULIA

(reassuringly)

Look, I'm here if you need me.

Tracy shakes herself out of it and serves the coffee.

TRACY (CONT.)

I often think about your husband. He wouldn't have left Cold Rock in this mess. The mine wouldn't have closed with Robert around. He knew all them bigwigs up in Pittsville, he'd have gone and gotten 'em and...

JULIA

His power was limited, Tracy.

TRACY

He was from here. He wouldn't have left everyone to rot, may he rest in peace. Look at this state we're in without him.

They sit.

TRACY

We can't even find a kidnapper for God's sake. They're saying these kids are gone for good.

JULIA  
It's just superstition.

TRACY  
(thoughtfully)  
Well the guy is real...  
All the more reason to send the  
baby to Pittsville...

JULIA  
We'll have to register the birth.  
I'll help you with the forms.

TRACY  
Ok.

JULIA  
What did you name him?

TRACY  
(lost in her own  
thoughts)  
What?

JULIA  
The baby?

TRACY  
Nathan, after my granddad. He was  
a decent man.

JULIA  
It's nice.

Julia removes a small notebook from her medical kit.

JULIA  
Where's Jenny?

29 - EXT. TRACY'S TRAILER - DAY

A FEW MINUTES LATER:  
Julia steps out of the back door of the trailer and  
heads down a little path through the trees

30 - EXT. RIVERSIDE - DAY

She makes it a few yards in, pushing through the  
underbrush. We soon hear the sound of a river.

A silhouette is leaning over the edge of a dirty river.

JULIA  
Jenny?

Jenny turns. She is pretty but in a very unusual way. It  
makes it hard to determine her exact age. With unkempt

hair and odd clothes she looks slightly wild, like a small animal.

When she sees Julia, she stretches out a welcoming hand. Julia goes to join her.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Have you been okay?

Jenny nods her head.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Is this your special place?

Same affirmative.

They sit down side by side on some stones.

Julia offers Jenny the notebook. She takes it with a smile. From under her sweater, she replaces the old one with the new. We notice the drawings and bits of sentences as she places the old one in her pocket.

On the blank first page she writes:

Thank you.

Julia smiles at her.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Your mother just told me you're not going to speech therapy anymore?

Jenny looks down without answering.

JULIA (CONT.)  
She also said the psychologist refused to see you because you're not making any effort.

Jenny writes in her little notebook:

He doesn't come here anymore because it's too far.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Jenny, you've got to see him, and make some effort to talk to him!

Jenny writes:

What can I say to him? He's a jerk.



JULIA (CONT.)  
(holding back a smile)  
You could talk to me! Or to your  
mother. But you won't talk to us  
either!

Jenny writes:

Look, I'm talking to you.

Julia strokes her cheek gently.

She gets up.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Alright Mademoiselle, I've got to  
go.

Jenny suddenly starts looking for a page in her old  
notebook. Realizing the urgency of Jenny's act, Julia  
stops.

The page is found: a drawing in gray pencil, at once  
abstract and mysterious. The shape of a man, with the  
proportions of an ogre. Hulking and broad, entirely  
dressed in black.

JULIA (CONT.)  
So you believe it, too?

Jenny writes something below the drawing:

I saw him.

A long silent exchange of glances heavy with  
seriousness.

BANNNNNNNG!!!

31 - EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY

Close up on a makeshift ten-pin bowling game. Beer cans  
substitute the real thing. They scatter with the impact  
of a beaten up baseball.

We pull back to reveal a bunch of kids laughing and  
playing with (BRYAN 18) supervising the fun. These kids  
are all residents of the trailer park.

BRYAN  
(to one of the kids)  
Awesome shot Billy! You're ready  
for next season!

Julia emerges from the trees and greets the gang who  
responds enthusiastically.  
A crane shot reveals the area: an enormous lot filled  
with dozens of trailers and various makeshift shelters.

An abandoned dustbowl on the outskirts of Cold Rock,  
piled with broken down cars, metal drums, and scattered  
auto parts.

As Julia makes her way towards her car she passes Steven  
still fiddling with the motorbike. He wears black  
clothes and cowboy boots. Half-biker/half-cowboy.  
She looks at him coldly trying not to slow down.  
He looks back with a hostile gaze and confronts her.

STEVEN

Who do you think you are?  
Keep out of our business.

JULIA

I know who I am.

STEVEN

What the fuck is that supposed to  
mean?

With wrench in hand he steps too close to her.  
She looks directly into his eyes with disdain.  
He physically towers over her.

STEVEN

Stop brainwashing my wife you  
fuc...

Bryan dives between them confronting Steven with an  
outstretched finger!  
He doesn't speak a word but it is clear from his body  
language that he's serious. Steven backs away.

BRYAN

Come on Julia. Let's go.

Bryan escorts Julia back to the car.

JULIA

Thanks, Bryan.

BRYAN

You're always welcome here.  
(referring to Steven)  
Tracy should just kick him out.  
We've got enough problems around  
here...

JULIA

We sure do.

Bryan looks at the kids still playing.

BRYAN

With the Tall Man and all...

JULIA  
Yeah. Take care of yourself  
Bryan.

BRYAN  
Yes ma'am.

Julia gets in the car and starts the engine.  
The For Runner maneuvers its way out of the trailer  
park.

NARRATOR (OFF)  
It was like an ancient legend...  
Something from a book of fairy  
tales, or an old song...

Julia waves to an elderly woman who is sitting on her  
front porch. They exchange a friendly smile as Julia  
continues on her way.

NARRATOR (OFF)  
Everyone talked about The Tall  
Man all the time, because  
everyone was afraid of it.

At the entrance the For Runner passes a handwritten  
sign:

'WELCOME TO THE BAHAMAS'

NARRATOR (OFF)  
People were always afraid he'd  
strike again; and when he did,  
they thanked their lucky stars he  
took someone else's kid... Maybe  
they felt a little guilty  
thinking that way. But that  
feeling didn't last long.

32 - EXT. ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON

AERIAL VIEW:

Julia's car is driving down the state highway in a late  
afternoon light.

33 - EXT. PATH - JULIA'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

The car turns down a steep path lined with dense  
vegetation that leads to a two-storey Victorian house,  
its windows protected with metal bars.

Julia parks her car in front of the house.

The front door opens.

A Latina woman in her mid thirties (MARIANA) appears on  
the doorstep.

MARIANA  
Done for today?

Julia nods.

When she reaches Mariana, she gives her a kiss on the cheek.

JULIA  
Is everything okay?

They step into the house.

34 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - FRONT HALL - DAY

MARIANA  
Yes. He's been looking forward to  
you getting home.

JULIA  
Really?

The house is charming. The slightly dated exterior hides a spacious and inviting home. The decoration is warm and completely unpretentious.

Julia takes off her coat and hurries upstairs.

JULIA (CONT.)  
I missed him too.

On the wall beside the stairs, we see a gallery of photographs. One showing Julia in a wedding dress in the arms of an older man. He's handsome with salt and pepper hair, square-jawed, endowed with charisma and natural authority. Another shot shows the same man receiving an award from a government official in front of an American flag.

35 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALL - LATE  
AFTERNOON

Stepping quickly, Julia walks down the hall to the last door.

36 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - CHILD'S BEDROOM - LATE  
AFTERNOON

She cracks open the door.

Seated at a little desk, we see the shape of a child (DAVID 5) from behind. He turns at the sound of the squeaking door. When he sees Julia, he gives her an adorable smile and stands up, spreading his arms. Julia kneels down and hugs him.

JULIA  
How are you, sweetheart?

DAVID  
Fine.

JULIA  
Mariana said you missed me?

DAVID  
(nodding)  
Uh-huh.

She hugs him again.

JULIA  
I missed you, too.

DAVID  
(whispering in her ear)  
Mariana taught me a new tune...

JULIA  
Another one?

DAVID  
Yes!

CUT TO:

A FEW MINUTES LATER:  
Julia is sitting on the little bed, watching David lovingly as he clumsily plays his new piece on the upright piano in his room. She applauds at the end.

JULIA  
That was beautiful, darling!

37 - EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Outside, night has fallen.

38 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mariana is humming as she's finishing preparing the dinner.

39 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

David is carefully looking at a book in his bathtub while Julia washes him. He talks about what he's reading.

DAVID  
It's the story of a little boy who built a candy machine. And he ate candy all the time, and it made him really sick. But since he didn't know it was because of

the candy, he kept on eating  
it...

JULIA  
And then what happened?

DAVID  
Uh. He's fat.

Julia keeps waiting. Then:

JULIA  
That's all?

DAVID  
Yes.

JULIA  
It can't be.

DAVID  
It is!

She grabs the book, exaggerating her surprise to amuse  
him.

JULIA  
Who's the fool who wrote that?

DAVID  
(laughing)  
I like music better anyway!

40 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - CHILD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

David is in bed, with Julia sitting next to him. A tape  
player on his bedside table is playing a sonata. Next to  
it are some old tapes of classical music. They exchange  
a few last words before bedtime.

DAVID  
Do you have to go to work  
tomorrow?

JULIA  
I'll try not to finish too late.

DAVID  
I'll play more music for you.

Julia kisses his forehead.

JULIA  
Okay, my little Mozart.

DAVID  
(whispering in her ear)  
Happy music or slow?

JULIA  
Happy music... slowly. So your  
fingers will hit the right keys.

He smiles. She kisses him again.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Goodnight, David.

Julia turns out the bedside light.

DAVID  
Can you leave the music on?

JULIA  
Yes.

Before she leaves the room, she turns around one last time.

JULIA (CONT.)  
(whispering)  
The piece you played tonight  
almost made me cry.  
Sleep well.

She closes the door.

41 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

LATER ON IN THE EVENING:  
Mariana has finished washing the dishes. On the table  
are the remains of supper.

Pensively Julia grabs an apple out of the refrigerator  
and bites into it half-heartedly.

She sits down at the table across from Mariana who is  
already seated. Mariana is rolling what looks like a  
joint.

MARIANA  
Sometimes I think you're gonna  
give all this up.... Go back to  
Boston, to a real hospital, for a  
real salary...

JULIA  
I think about it, for about five  
minutes. Then I think about  
Robert. He wouldn't have wanted  
me to go. We have  
responsibilities here.

MARIANA  
This was his place. Not yours  
Julia.

JULIA  
I know these people well,  
Mariana.

MARIANA  
They couldn't make it without  
you.

JULIA  
They aren't making it.

At a loss for words, Mariana lights the joint and takes  
a deep hit.

JULIA (CONT.)  
I delivered a baby yesterday...

Mariana stops when she notices how serious Julia is.

JULIA (CONT.)  
He was breech. It was really  
touch and go...

MARIANA  
You saved his life?

JULIA  
If you can call it that.

MARIANA  
And?

JULIA  
And the mother, she had no idea  
what was happening. If you could  
have seen her - she's just a  
little girl herself. And the  
baby's father is her stepfather.

MARIANA  
Oh I see.

JULIA  
A psycho jerk they won't even  
throw out - I'd put money on  
it...

Mariana holds the joint out to Julia.

JULIA (CONT.)  
(emerging from her  
thoughts she takes the  
joint)  
Yeah.

She inhales... and immediately starts coughing.



JULIA (CONT.)  
How can you stand this stuff?

Mariana starts laughing.

MARIANA  
But it's so mild!

JULIA  
(still coughing)  
Mild? You've got iron lungs!

MARIANA  
Inhale slowly! Don't go at it  
like you're gasping for air!

They share a friendly smile.

MARIANA (CONT.)  
Don't force it just relax.

After hesitating for a second Julia complies.  
This time she doesn't cough.

But she remains motionless, as if suspended waiting for  
the effect the joint will have.

MARIANA  
So? ... Mild, huh?

Julia slumps onto the table as if the joint had knocked  
her out.

Mariana bursts out laughing.

42 - EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD- NIGHT

LATER:  
Outside, the wind howling. A heavy rain starts falling.

The lights in the house are turned off.

Only one faint glow remains on the upper floor.

43 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - LOUNGE ROOM - NIGHT

Julia, slumped on an antique couch is dozing near an old  
Hi/Fi system.

She rouses herself to change the radio station and finds  
a local news program that is talking about the Cold Rock  
disappearances again.

JULIA  
(to herself)  
Oh no, for Pete's sake, not  
now...

She moves on to a vintage blues station.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Yeah. That's inoffensive.

She goes to stand in front of the tall bookcase that dominates the room. With her head tilting to one side she starts scanning the spines of the books. Moving quickly from one to the next she discovers the one she was looking for: an illustrated book, 'Homer's Odyssey Told to Children.'

JULIA  
(whispering)  
Here it is.

She takes the book from the shelf.

44 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE- BEDROOM - NIGHT

LATER:  
Outside, we hear the rain pouring down.

Julia is in bed. We zoom in towards her face. She is visibly disturbed by a bad dream.

We hear creaking. She opens her eyes, as if she hadn't really been asleep. She sits up. Silence. She lies back down.

Creaking again, louder this time.

45 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Julia walks down the hallway towards the stairs. Suddenly changing her mind she turns around and heads towards David's room.

46 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - CHILD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

She cracks the door open without making a sound: David is sleeping peacefully.

Walking on tiptoes she goes to pull up his covers.

The sound of glass breaking suddenly rings out downstairs!

47 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

From the front hall we see Julia's silhouette at the top of the stairs.

JULIA  
Mariana?

Silence.

Julia comes down the stairs.

A light is on in the kitchen.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Mariana?

She crosses the front hall.

48 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The light is coming from the refrigerator. The door is slightly ajar and continues to open. The rest of the room is perfectly tidy, the dishes drying in the rack.

Julia pushes the door closed.

One last glance around the room. Everything looks normal.

Moving back towards the kitchen entrance she suddenly screams in pain. She has just stepped on something.

She hops to a chair and sits down awkwardly trying to inspect her bloody foot. The existing light is not enough. She opens the refrigerator door again. The beam of light reveals shards of glass stuck in her flesh. She pulls them out one by one.

On the ground lie the remains of a broken carafe.

Suddenly, something draws her attention.

It is in the pantry.

She leans forward.

She is terrified by what she sees.

A BODY IS JAMMED IN A TIGHT SPACE IN THE PANTRY!

Julia takes her time to react.

The body starts twitching as if suddenly waking up.

Petrified, Julia opens the refrigerator wider. The beam of light strikes the body.

It is Mariana!

With her hands tied behind her back and a rag stuffed in her mouth the only sound she can make is a smothered groan.

JULIA  
Mariana!

Julia steps around the broken glass and kneels down in front of the pantry.

Mariana's nose is bleeding. Her bulging eyes express pure terror.

Julia starts panicking.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Oh my God...

Moving clumsily, she removes the gag.

Gasping for breath, poor Mariana continues to moan. Her swollen lips reveal that she has received a violent blow.

Julia tries to pull her from out of the pantry. But she screams with pain at every attempt.

JULIA (CONT.)  
(crying, panicking)  
What can I do?!

Mariana only screams.

Julia doesn't dare touch her.

Then she understands: Mariana is trying to communicate something else. She is jerking her head strangely towards the ceiling, her eyes staring upward.

Julia runs out of the kitchen.

49 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

Running as fast as she can, ignoring the pain in her foot, she passes the front door and climbs the stairs four at a time.

50 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

She picks up speed as she runs down the hall.

51 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

She pushes the door open and turns on the light.

DAVID IS NOT IN HIS BED!

JULIA  
David!

She looks around the room, overcome with fear.

JULIA (CONT.)  
DAVIIIIID!

52 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

From the hallway, we see her running from one room to another. She 's looking everywhere desperately.

Her calls soon turn to screams.

53 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mariana, hands still tied, hears Julia's heavy footsteps and panicked searching. She realizes what has happened and begins to shed tears.

We remain with Mariana for a moment.

We soon hear Julia racing downstairs and back into the kitchen.

Julia lies next to Mariana and tries to untie the knots that are cutting into her wrists.

Mariana is now sobbing, her face to the floor. The scene is very moving. Her hands finally freed. She manages to pull her upper body out from the pantry.

Her expression changes. She has seen something.

Julia notices and turns as well.

SOMEONE IS WATCHING THEM FROM THE FRONT HALL!!!

54 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

A tall and massive silhouette (THE SILHOUETTE) is standing there, motionless in the half-light. Its proportions are those of the Tall Man drawn by Jenny.

It is wearing a raincoat, the hood of which hides its face, making it look even more enigmatic and threatening.

At the hollow of its shoulder is...

SLEEPING DAVID!

As soon as it is seen the Silhouette hurries through the door.

55 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

In one second Julia's tears and panic fall away and she stands up.

56 - EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

The Silhouette runs through the yard towards the path leading to the road.

57 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN / FRONT HALL - NIGHT

Julia turns to the sink, grabs a butcher knife, and runs out after the Silhouette!

58 - EXT. PATH - JULIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT.

As she runs barefoot in the pouring rain, wearing only her nightshirt, Julia never takes her eyes off the Silhouette, who is at least forty yards ahead of her.

Each step through the muddy puddles soaks her even more.

She is as oblivious of her own condition as she is of her surroundings: the brambles, the cold, the nearby forest...

The only thing that matters is the Silhouette ahead of her.

A Silhouette that disappears around every turn, reappears in every straightaway. But the child in its arms is a handicap and the distance between the runners diminishes.

We sense that Julia is beginning to feel something resembling hope.

To her right, the trees are thinner, allowing a view of the road. A black van is parked there. The Silhouette has almost reached it.

Julia tries to run even faster.

Her foot hits a dead branch.

WHAM!

She trips, falling face forward! She just barely misses injuring herself with the knife.

No time to think, she gets up and keeps running.

The Silhouette has dived into the driver's side of the van.

Julia picks up speed.

We hear the engine start.

Julia runs even faster!

59 - EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The van starts moving down the wet road with a squeal of the tires.

Racing towards the car Julia does not give up.

Arms outstretched she manages to grab the handle of the back door. Her upper body is yanked forward by the thrust but she doesn't fall!

Her legs keep pace while her fingers refuse to let go.

In a fraction of a second, she glances at the rear bumper. A wildly daring leap and she manages to balance on it, as if on a running board. Her right hand still clutching the knife, feels for something to grab hold of in the hinge of the rear door. An icy wind makes the maneuver even riskier.

60 - EXT. FOREST ROAD - NIGHT

AERIAL VIEW:

The road runs through a Pine forest that extends as far as the eye can see. In the distance the imposing shadow of the mountains.

In the black of night and under torrential rain the van is driving at top speed with Julia hanging from the back!

61 - EXT. FOREST ROAD - NIGHT

The van is thrown hard when it hits a hole in the road.

Julia loses her balance, her feet slipping off the wet metal of the bumper. Refusing to let go she is dragged along the asphalt holding on to the door handle.

She screams, her feet scraping the road surface.

In desperation she starts banging on the van with the handle of the knife. Blows that make the entire van reverberate.

The vehicle suddenly stops. The tires skid for a few yards. Julia lets go and rolls on to the wet road. She lifts her head ignoring her injuries.

The van is not moving.

For a second she wonders what she should do. And decides quickly: ducking down to stay out of sight she hides under the vehicle. A few seconds of waiting.

The driver's side door finally opens with a creaking metallic sound. The Silhouette appears more massive than ever. It is now carrying a tire iron in its right hand. Terrifying.

Motionless under the vehicle Julia doesn't take her eyes off the Silhouette's feet. They are slowly stepping circling the around the van. Time stands painstakingly still.

Julia waits.

The Silhouette reaches the back of the vehicle.

We hear it examining the door.

Julia continues to wait.

The Silhouette gets into the back.

Julia slips out from underneath and leaps to the passenger side door.

She climbs up, this time onto a real running board, and looks through the window.

The rain blurs her vision.

Suddenly, she can hear the Silhouette getting out of the back.

We see the Silhouette from behind as it continues its inspection, still on the alert:

It checks: No one under the vehicle, no one on the right side.

The Silhouette then runs around to the opposite side: no one.

Climbing onto the rear bumper it looks at the roof: still no one.

A camera movement reveals Julia's position: balancing on the front bumper she is practically one with the hood.

A real cat and mouse game!

Eyes wide-open Julia is vigilant and focused.

Not a sound aside from the heavy rain.

She makes the resolve to leave her position and does so as carefully as possible. She approaches the passenger's side door.

A new attempt: she climbs onto the running board and with the palm of her hand, wipes the rain dripping down the glass.

She puts her nose to the window.

What she sees gives her renewed energy: David is lying on the seat rolled in a blanket.

She glances around.



No one.

Slowly, she pulls the door handle.

We hear a 'click'.

The door opens.

All she needs to do is reach out her arms and she has David.

A PIT BULL JUMPS AT HER BARING ITS TEETH!!!

The animal was hiding under the seat.

Julia loses her balance and falls heavily onto the road.

The dog leaps out of the vehicle and attacks her.

She defends herself as best she can, kicking aggressively.

The ferocious dog goes at her with twice as much rage, lips curled, teeth bared.

A well-placed kick strikes it right in the face.

It whimpers with pain.

Julia gets up.

THE SILHOUETTE APPEARS! WHAAACK!!!

The tire iron comes down right in Julia's face. This time she loses consciousness.

62 - INT. BACK OF THE VAN - NIGHT

A FEW MOMENTS LATER:

The sounds of an engine and creaking metal.

Julia wakes up. Blood is running from above her eye. Her hands have been tied. She tries to get up.

We hear growling.

She freezes. The dog is there with her in the back of the van. It growls on guard ready to leap.

63 - EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The van is racing through the night. The rain has stopped falling.

64 - INT. BACK OF THE VAN - NIGHT

Julia is eagerly studying a bunch of pipes that rattle around as the van drives. But they are too close to the dog for her to reach them.

She turns her head: less than three feet from her, tied up with ropes, is a big metal barrel. Above her a rectangular window looks directly into the cab.

Very slowly and without taking her eyes off the dog, she inches over to the barrel. With each movement the Pit Bull looks like it will lunge for her throat.

Only by literally crawling like a reptile does she manage to reach her goal.

She spies a small hole with jagged edges. She puts her hands up against it and starts making a discreet back-and-forth movement.

The Pit Bull growls but does not move.

Julia moves faster. The dog growls louder.

The ropes finally give. Her hands free Julia now looks around thinking about her next move.

65 - INT. VAN CAB - NIGHT

The Silhouette is behind the steering wheel.

Next to it little David is deeply asleep.

66 - INT. BACK OF THE VAN - NIGHT

Julia spots a rag sticking out of the barrel.

As slowly as ever, inch by inch, she lifts her arm. The Pit Bull looks wary but does not react.

She grasps the rag between her index and middle fingers.

67 - INT. VAN CAB - NIGHT

The Silhouette turns on the car radio. We hear some old country music song.

Little David moves in his sleep. The Silhouette turns off the car radio.

68 - INT. BACK OF THE VAN - NIGHT

Julia rubs the rag over her wounded eye. It seems as if she is trying to clean it but we quickly understand: she is soaking the rag with her own blood. The Pit Bull is watching.

69 - EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The van continues driving down the road.

70 - INT. BACK OF THE VAN - NIGHT

Julia stares at the dog. She throws the rag, drenched in her own blood, right in front of its nose.

The animal surprised, hesitates for a moment. It sniffs the rag cautiously.

Julia waits.

The dog keeps sniffing. Julia stares at it as if her life depended on it.

The dog finally starts licking the rag. Julia's blood is to its taste. It starts to chew enthusiastically.

Julia leaps up!

71 - INT. VAN CAB - NIGHT

The rectangular window behind the Silhouette explodes violently!

The Silhouette has no time to react. Julia's arm is wrapped around its neck while her bloody hand covers its eyes.

72 - EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The van swerves several times.

73 - INT. VAN CAB - NIGHT

Screams ring out in the cab. They are Julia's who is now a ball of rage.

The Silhouette tossed about in every direction, tries in vain to release her grip.

74 - INT. BACK OF THE VAN - NIGHT

The Pit Bull has seized Julia's left leg.

75 - INT. VAN CAB - NIGHT

Julia screams but does not let go of the Silhouette. No one is driving the van it is out of control.

76 - EXT. NIGHT - ROAD

The van skids at top speed.  
The silence of the darkness is pierced by the sound of the screeching tires.

77 - INT. CAB OF THE VAN - NIGHT

The hoarse screams of the Silhouette mix with Julia's.  
The van is going to flip!

Instinctively Julia does what she can to hold and  
protect David. He wakes with a start and sits up.

The van tips.

Julia's eyes fill with terror...

78 - EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

SCREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEECH!!! SMASH!

The left side of the van hits the road in a spray of  
sparks.

The vehicle is carried a good fifty yards and ends its  
run where the road crosses a track that winds through  
nearby fields.

The van, lying on its side, is an inert carcass.

We hear sputtering from the motor and see sparks. Soon a  
thick smoke emerges from under the hood.

The side door of the cab springs opens. Little David is  
pushed out of the vehicle.

He manages to stand up on the crumpled metal. But the  
distance separating him from the ground dissuades him  
from jumping.

He looks inside the cab, seeming to wait for the person  
who helped him get out. He looks completely dazed but  
not injured.

We hear movement inside the cab.

Terrified, David starts to cry.

Someone emerges from the cab... It is the Silhouette!

Its massive body appears to be injured.

It grabs the child and moves to sit down on the side of  
the hood. From there, it lets itself slip down the hood  
to reach the ground.

With the child in its arms, it hurries away from the  
vehicle.

DISSOLVE:

There is now only a thin wafting of black smoke.

A slow camera movement runs along the van.

The rear door suddenly bursts open, kicked violently.

Julia appears!

Behind her, we can make out the lifeless body of the Pit Bull.

Julia emerges from the vehicle her step unsteady.

She hurries to the intersection inspecting the ground, trying to find tracks. She finds none on the path that crosses the field. She goes to the other side of the road beside the forest.

There, near the first row of Pines, she sees footprints in the muddy snow.

CUT TO:

A FEW SECONDS LATER:

Armed with her knife, her shoulders wrapped in a blanket from the van, Julia heads into the forest.

A camera movement reveals a hidden presence on the other side of the road. Someone is watching the scene in silence, sitting on a bicycle.

We track in to reveal the mysterious witness:

It is Jenny!

79 - EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Racing through the forest, Julia is aware of nothing except the footprints in the snow.

CUT TO:

A BIT LATER:

Her steps are slow, her progress less certain, extreme fatigue is making itself felt. Yet she continues...

CUT TO:

LATER STILL:

She is completely devoid of strength. Her legs cannot carry her one step further. She sits down at the base of a Pine tree.

We discover why she has stopped: her feet, in addition to being seriously injured, are completely frozen.

She rubs them for a moment but then breaks down in tears realizing how fruitless her efforts are.

CUT TO:

A FEW MINUTES LATER:

With her knife, she cuts up the blanket: Two large pieces to cover her feet. Tied together with the strips of fabric from her nightshirt.

Slightly reassured she rubs her own shoulders, taps her forearms and begins walking again.

At a trail crossing with almost no snow the tracks vanish.

Julia panics for a moment. She looks in all directions wondering where to go, when...

She notices through some trees, about fifty yards away and up in the valley a distinct outline of a structure.

80 - EXT. CHURCH EXTERIOR - NIGHT

The forest ends suddenly and opens onto a sandy lot.

And there, on a sort of small earthen mound surrounded by loose stones, stands a rundown wooden church.

On the alert once again, Julia turns the rusty handle on the double doors. It's locked.

She walks around the building.

The sacristy door at the back doesn't open either.

The sound of something falling resonates inside the church.

She retraces her steps and studies the front door more closely. We notice a good sized hole near the bottom. She lies down and puts her eyes to it:

The nave and choir are completely deserted. But, from pews to altar, everything is in place for a service.

Through the gap Julia's eyes try to pierce the darkness.

At the other end of the transept the sacristy door suddenly opens. The Silhouette appears. It is carrying a big candlestick and moves with difficulty.

Anxious and suspicious, Julia pulls her face back from the opening but continues to watch.

The Silhouette takes the altar cloth and moves to the middle of the main aisle.

There, it lights the candle in the candlestick and puts it down at its feet.

It freezes.

We hear its husky breathing. It appears as if some secret ceremony is about to commence.

The Silhouette suddenly pulls its raincoat up to its middle along with the layers of clothing underneath. We discover why:

A large shard of metal is lodged deep in its left side.

Julia can't believe her eyes.

The Silhouette grabs the metal firmly and freezing once again, stops breathing.

A brief silence.

Then, with no further hesitation, the Silhouette pulls the piece of metal from its body. A clean, unflinching movement, the result of unshakeable will.

The Silhouette restrains its own screams. The sound of the metal shard falling on the floor reverberates throughout the church.

The Silhouette remains motionless for a beat as it regains its composure. We hear it take deep a deep breath.

Then, by way of a bandage the Silhouette ties the altar cloth around its waist. It pulls its clothes back in place and sits down on a pew.

From Julia's position she can only see half of the Silhouette: Half of an immense hunched back, lit by the flickering, orange glow of the candle.

Unable to resist any longer Julia starts digging at the wooden door with the tip of her knife.

When she looks inside again the Silhouette has disappeared. So Julia starts banging the knife handle against the door. The wood, completely rotten, gives easily. The hole gets bigger.

She looks inside.

THE SILHOUETTE IS RIGHT AT THE DOOR!

Julia jumps back. The Silhouette's arm shoots through the hole, grabs her nightshirt and pulls with all its might.

Julia's body is yanked through the entrance smashing the bottom of the door.

CRAAAAAACK!!!

She is inside the church!

The Silhouette loses its balance knocking over a solid silver censer as it falls.

Julia leaps at it but the Silhouette manages to grab her around the neck.

Livid, Julia sticks her fingers deep in the Silhouette's raw wound. In a fit of rage and pain it throws her aside.

Julia hits the floor hard. The Silhouette stands up, grabs the chain of the censer and prepares to use it as a weapon.

It violently throws the object at Julia. Julia ducks the censer but hits her head hard on the corner of a pew.

SMASH!!!

She almost faints.

The Silhouette leaves her on the floor.

Running up the central aisle it pauses at the front pew. It leans over lifting something up.

David's small form appears clearly exhausted. The Silhouette holds David to its shoulder.

Julia completely drained of her strength looks towards him but cannot make another move.

JULIA  
DAAAVIIIIIIID!!!

The Silhouette stands there a moment contemplating her exhaustion.

We sense something between them. A kind of silent communication.

The Silhouette and David finally exit through the sacristy.

Julia remains there alone in the darkness and silence.

This time they got away.

She closes her eyes and lets herself go.

She remains motionless.

Off camera: - We hear footsteps resonating through the hollow church.

Julia does not wake up.



The footsteps come closer.

A frail silhouette appears beside her.

It's Jenny!

The young girl takes Julia's hands and starts rubbing them to warm them up.

Julia finally wakes. Jenny stops.

They exchange a long gaze.

Julia, still half dazed stares confused.

Jenny suddenly runs off without warning!

Julia finally pulls herself up, wrapping the blanket around her

She is completely alone.

81 - EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

A BIT LATER:

Julia is walking down the road with great difficulty. Fields stretch as far as the eye can see on either side. More than ever her eyes reveal her exhaustion.

Her head sways with each step, a sign of extreme physical effort.

The night is utterly silent.

The sound is muted. All we can hear is Julia's breathing as if we were inside her.

At one point she falls on her knees leaning forward to catch her breath.

She does not realize that she is in the middle of the road.

The sound is still very muted.

Something seems to be bothering her physically. She puts her hand to her left ear: dried blood is blocking it. She tries to clean it out.

The sound changes. She does it again. It's clearer.

She repeats the same on the other ear. The sound is now normal. Clear. - We hear what she hears.

A TERRIFYING NOISE! SCREEEEEECH!

She looks up. Her face is flooded with light. She squints.

An enormous tow truck is coming right at her!

She raises her arms in some kind of hopeless attempt at self-protection.

The tow truck's horn blasts.

Julia does not move.

The vehicle swerves at the last second. Squealing brakes. It skids for several yards coming to stop just inches from Julia.

The driver (JIMMY) jumps out of the cab.

JIMMY  
For Christ's sake! What the  
hell's wrong with you?

He runs over to her.

Julia is oblivious to the danger she was just in.

JIMMY (CONT.)  
Goddammit! I almost ran you over!

When Jimmy realizes he is speaking to a woman, he calms down.

JIMMY (CONT.)  
You okay, ma'am?

Leaning closer, he recognizes her.

JIMMY (CONT.)  
Mrs. Denning!... Shit! I mean....  
You alright?

Jimmy is a rough country guy in his sixties. He helps Julia up.

Still in shock she looks at him but doesn't seem to see him.

JIMMY (CONT.)  
You come with me Mrs. Denning.

Putting his hand on her shoulder, he gently helps her to get into the tow truck.

JIMMY (CONT.)  
Yer colder than my old lady the  
day I buried her...It's winter,  
ma'am, you know that?

82 - INT. TOW TRUCK CAB - NIGHT

A FEW MINUTES LATER:

Huddled in her blanket Julia stares at the road, her face blank.

A plastic Uncle Sam swings from the rearview mirror.

JIMMY

You okay Mrs. Denning?

Julia doesn't answer.

JIMMY (CONT.)

Guess that means yes.

83 - EXT. DINER - NIGHT

The tow truck reaches its destination. We recognize it: Trish's Diner.

Wide-angle shot: we see the silhouettes of Jimmy and Julia going into the establishment.

84 - INT. DINER - NIGHT

The diner has a dozen or so regular customers.

JIMMY

Trish! We got a problem here!

Stunned silence from the assembly.

In the neon light Julia looks even more battered.

Trish comes running over.

TRISH

Oh Julia! My god, what's happened to you?

She takes over from Jimmy and helps Julia sit down at a booth in the back of the restaurant.

TRISH

Come on, you have a seat.  
Everything'll be alright...

Sheriff Chestnut joins them.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT

My God look at you!

Julia lets Trish and Chestnut study her without saying a word.

TRISH (CONT.)

What's going on?

Trish turns around: everyone in the place is staring at Julia.

TRISH (CONT.)  
(to the crowd)  
Hey give it a rest!

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
Yeah! Give us some space!

Everyone pretends to turn back to their business.  
The conversations sluggishly pickup.

Trish strokes Julia's cheek.

TRISH (CONT.)  
You're hurt Sweetie...

The two women look at each other for a moment.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
What happened?

Julia starts crying and with a movement of her hand,  
makes it clear that she's unable to talk.

TRISH (CONT.)  
It's okay, it's okay.

Trish discreetly shoos Chestnut away with her hand. She  
slips in to sit next to Julia and like a good mother  
puts her arms around her. They remain still for a beat  
when Trish realizes that she is freezing and immediately  
jumps back into action.

TRISH  
(to Julia)  
Stay here I'll be right back.

Trish goes back to the counter and disappears into the  
kitchen.

Julia closes her eyes for a moment.

When she opens them a tall thin man is passing her,  
looking at her as if she were some kind of bizarre  
animal.

She cannot bare his gaze. The man continues to the  
counter.

The atmosphere in the diner gets heavier. The volume of  
the conversations has lowered. Trish has still not come  
back out of the kitchen.

Julia rubs her eyes trying to pull herself out of her  
lethargy.

Her eyes are soon drawn to the TV above the counter. Silent images referring to the financial crisis: a middle-class American family being evicted from their home by the police and some marshals.

Julia looks around the diner again:

At the bar the men are drinking. They all look alike, disengaged and lethargic. Battered faces, threadbare coats.

Among them, we recognize Douglas, Tiffany's father.

A young guy missing some teeth is laughing to himself.

About five booths in front of Julia, an old man with glasses and a worn black suit stares at her shamelessly, his eyes blank. More surprising at this hour is the little girl sitting beside him. She feigns interest in her ice cream but also can't keep her eyes off Julia.

Julia soon has the feeling that everyone is looking at her again. Side long glances devoid of kindness.

She turns again towards the television: more news about the economic crisis.

Trish suddenly reappears. She puts a key down on the table in front of Julia.

TRISH

Go and get cleaned up.  
Take the staff exit through the kitchen. I left you a towel and some clean clothes on my bed.  
When you're done perhaps you can tell me what's going on...

JULIA

(quietly)  
Thanks.

Julia takes the key and gets up.

She walks behind the counter and goes into the kitchen as the waitress looks at her out of the corner of her eye.

85 - INT. DINER - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Crossing the kitchen, she notices the very tall and bulky silhouette of the cook. He is smoking a cigarette and does not turn around.

86 - EXT. DINER - BACK LOT - NIGHT

Julia steps out of the kitchen into the back lot surrounded by trashcans and a dumpster.

She crosses the short distance from the rear of the diner to Trish's modest mobile home. She opens the door and steps in.

87 - INT. TRISH'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

A FEW MINUTES LATER:

Julia is drying her face. Her hair has also been cleaned of the blood.

A quick glance in the mirror: as banged up as ever, but a little more presentable.

She walks out of the bathroom...

88 - INT. TRISH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Into a bedroom and starts to get dressed with the clothes that were neatly arranged on the bed.

She pulls on a clean shirt and notices an orange glow in the corner of the room. She finishes her dressing and walks towards the light.

On an ordinary writing desk, arranged as if a strange altar, sits four flickering candles. Above it are dozens of documents pinned to the wall.

She approaches:

The documents are newspaper clippings, originals and photocopies, about the disappearances in Cold Rock. Pictures of the children, faces of their crying mothers, the clippings connected with pins and thread to a map of the region and various hypotheses:

"TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN TO CANADA?"

"MISSING CHILDREN: NEW AMERICAN SLAVERY?"

"MAGIC AND CHILDREN SACRIFICE: AUTOPSY OF A MYTH"

A detail immediately jumps out at Julia. On the desk, in the middle of the rectangle formed by the candles is the picture of a child:

A PICTURE OF DAVID!

She picks it up cautiously.

It is indeed David's face. Smiling, he is posing proudly, leaning against a tree.

Julia looks up. She hears something:

There is the unmistakable sound of people running around outside. She puts the photograph in her pocket and carefully approaches the window to get a better idea of the commotion outside.

Suddenly, a man appears at the bedroom window. He is staring ominously at her!

89 - INT - TRISH'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

She runs out of the bedroom and sees other silhouettes flashing past the windows.

She tries to open the front door. It's locked!

Panic sets in.

She begins to retreat away from the door as...

TRISH AND HER POSSE THREATENINGLY WALK TOWARDS THE HOUSE!

She stops cold.

Some are armed with rifles others with metal rods.

Julia turns and looks at the end of the hall: it's not a wall, but a plate-glass window. She can see in the distance the comforting depth of the surrounding forest.

She thinks fast and starts running. We soon realize that she is picking up speed: she flings herself through the window!

90 - EXT. TRISH'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT

The window explodes into a thousand pieces. Julia pays no attention to her cuts. The only thing she's worried about is the mob behind her. She hears them in pursuit screaming at one another.

"Shiiit! Don't let her get away!"

The remaining customers leave the diner and join the mob.

"Where is she?"

"That way!"

Julia thinks she hears the sound of rifles being armed.

She has the advantage of a small head start. She makes a beeline disappearing into the forest.

91 - EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

When she passes the first trees a bullet whistles by and hits a nearby trunk, just missing her. We hear Trish's voice.

TRISH (OFF)  
Don't kill her!

Julia picks up the pace.

Behind her the shadows spread out, flashlights come on.  
The hunt begins.

CUT TO:

A FEW SECONDS LATER:  
Julia reaches a clearing. The flat ground allows her to  
pick up speed.

CUT TO:

Two of the pursuers seem particularly agitated.

A MAN  
Where is she?

ANOTHER MAN  
Not far, don't worry...

CUT TO:

Julia is thinking about the fact that she is leaving  
tracks and starts avoiding snowy patches. Moving away  
from the path she favors puddles, changes direction  
randomly, rearranging her trail.

CUT TO:

The pursuers call back and forth to each other. Their  
voices cut through the darkness and resonate in the  
forest:

MAN  
Chestnut?

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
Over here!

MAN  
See anything?

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
Not a damn thing!

We even hear a woman's voice.

WOMAN (OFF)  
We need dogs!

CUT TO:

Julia hits a rough patch of the forest. The ground is  
uneven.



Jumping from slope to slope she stumbles over a rock. Trying to catch herself she automatically grabs what she takes to be a branch.

She screams with pain. Off-balance she collapses onto something metallic.

An old barbed-wire fence!

And there she is stuck, her coat caught in the fence. The pain is hard to take.

Behind her the shadows approach.

CUT TO:

MAN

Chestnut?

SHERIFF CHESTNUT

Yeah!

MAN

We're gonna have to cover more ground!

SHERIFF CHESTNUT

There's not enough of us, damn it!

DOUGLAS

(taking charge)

SHUT UP! SHE CAN HEAR US! YOU IDIOTS!

Douglas is a few dozen yards in front of the others. We sense he is at ease in this environment. His 'Hunt Club' vest testifies to his experience.

His instruction brought instant silence. There he is a scout on the lookout.

He steps through the dead vegetation.

Jumping down a slope and then a second he reaches the barbed wire. Sweeping the fence with his flashlight beam it freezes on something that grabs his attention: Julia's coat hanging from the fence is still swinging.

Cracking noises can be heard about twenty yards away.

He turns off his flashlight.

On his tiptoes he takes a step and stops again. Another noise, it's very close.

This time he doesn't move. Even the night animals have gone quiet.

A camera movement runs past a larch stump at the top of a slope. A larch next to which he takes up position.

Just below in a hollow, Julia is utterly still!

Stealthily Douglas takes a few steps forward.

Julia, feeling his presence above her, stops breathing.

Douglas reaches the top of the slope.

He turns on his flashlight and sweeps the ground below.

Nothing.

He leans over.

The beam reveals Julia's feet!

Douglas knows it's over. He jumps down the slope confidently when...

SNAAAP!!!

HIS FOOT LANDS IN A TRAP!

The characteristic snapping of the metal jaws is immediately followed by a horrible howl. He collapses dropping his weapon.

We hear in the distance:

"DOUGLAS!!!"

He responds with an even louder scream.

Julia doesn't immediately understand. She remains in her hiding place for a moment, looking at her adversary's agony without believing it.

We hear the others coming closer, some of them still calling.

"DOUGLAAAS!!!"

He keeps screaming.

Julia finally comes out of her hiding place.

Defenseless, Douglas aims his flashlight at her.

She positions herself next to him and discovers the trap.

Without saying a word she looks Douglas in the eye.

Douglas has stopped screaming. His face is filled with fear.

Julia grabs his weapon and turns it on him.

He whimpers like a child protecting his face with his hands. He is frozen realizing he is now the prey.

She stands there for a few seconds aiming at him at point-blank range.

She lowers the barrel recovering herself. Throwing the gun to the ground she starts running again.

Douglas can't hold back his sigh of relief.

He is joined by the others.

DOUGLAS  
God damn it!

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
Bad luck man!

Trying to put up a good show he refrains from howling.

DOUGLAS  
(clenching his teeth)  
I had her...in my sights...

JIMMY  
Where is the bitch?

DOUGLAS  
Obviously she aint here!

He points at the trap.

DOUGLAS (CONT.)  
Old Ashcroft's doing again!  
Fucking poacher!

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
I told him a hundred times... He  
don't give a shit!

With a quick yank Sheriff Chestnut opens the metal jaws. Douglas lets out a scream of pain.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
We gotta call a doctor!

DOUGLAS  
And the FBI too while yer at it,  
asshole!

He grabs Chestnut by the collar, looking at him with authority.

DOUGLAS  
You go to the mine. I want to  
know what she's up to.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
Okay..

DOUGLAS  
It wasn't supposed to happen like  
this!

Douglas's seriousness intensifies.

DOUGLAS (CONT.)  
Understand?

Intimidated, Sheriff Chestnut doesn't move a muscle.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
Okay, Doug!

DOUGLAS  
Help me get up, goddamn it...

A wide-angle shot shows the figures of Sheriff Chestnut and Jimmy lifting Douglas's massive frame.

The latter holds onto their shoulders and gets moving with a bad limp as best he can.

The Mob, following like sheep, back down the path and towards the Diner.

The camera tracks back to a nearby Pine tree. Julia is hidden behind it. She has heard their whole conversation

92 - EXT. DINER PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A FEW MINUTES LATER:  
From the outside of the diner, POV through the front window, we see Douglas stretched out on one of the benches.

Trish is there over seeing things.

TRISH  
(to the waitress)  
Go get the first aid kit... And  
bring hot water!

All around Douglas the others are busy seeing to the victim's comfort. A cushion is brought over as well as a cold beer.

Douglas gives Sheriff Chestnut a knowing look.

The latter leaves the diner. We follow him across the parking lot to his patrol car.

Sheriff Chestnut races away, tires squealing.

93 - INT. SHERIFF CHESTNUT'S CAR - NIGHT

He scans the road racing by under his headlights. Rain has started falling again. He turns on his wipers.

94 - EXT. MINE BUILDING - NIGHT

A BIT LATER:

The patrol's car is driving down a steep track that winds through the slag heaps. One last bend and the road opens onto the enormous wasteland at the copper mine.

There sits a big industrial building in front of which fires are blazing in old barrels. We hear the crackling of the coals slowly being extinguished by the increasingly heavy rain.

The vehicle drives along side the mine building. It stops in front and parks. Sheriff Chesnut gets out and walks towards the entrance.

The camera tracks towards the rear end of the patrol car. POV from the exterior rear window a silhouette sits bolt up right...

It's Julia!!!

She opens the car door and slips behind a barrel. She surveys the building.

Behind the grimy windows the shadows are busy. One of them, tall and broad could be the Silhouette.

Without her coat Julia is once again exposed to the cold.

She suddenly hears sounds from the building.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT (OFF)  
Okay, okay, you guys stay put!

Sheriff Chestnut finally appears. Emerging from the building he runs over to the patrol car.

Julia wastes no time racing into the building the second the sheriff's car drives away. Pinned to the brick wall she tries to peer through the opaque windows: we see a hallway with a dusty floor.

She heads around the first corner and finds a metal door.

We hear the humming of a generator.

She goes inside.

95 - INT. MINE BUILDING - GENERATOR ROOM - NIGHT

She slips between old electrical panels covered with cobwebs.

The floor is strewn with rolls of cable, broken bulbs, and various dusty technical manuals.

Black smoke snorts out of an ancient gas generator. Jumper cables connect the generator in an improvised attempt to provide power to the dilapidated building.

96 - INT. MINE BUILDING - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

She steps into a corridor. In front of her on a wall covered with moldy wallpaper, sits a factory punch-clock, complete with the timecards. Each one bears the name of a worker.

Cautiously, she continues down the hallway and enters a large room.

97 - INT. MINE BUILDING - 'LIVING ROOM' - NIGHT

We hear the drone of a TV. We pan the room to glimpse an antiquated TV set with rabbit ear antenna. The room is dimly lit by a tattered lamp that flickers with the modulations of the generator surge. A shabby sofa, with only three legs and an ensemble of other furniture create the parody of a living room. People live here!

Through the static picture on the television we glimpse the jovial face of a game show host. We hear a jingle, applause...

A noise suddenly rings out behind Julia. She turns around.

She moves towards the noise and finds herself at the bottom of some stairs.

Looking up the staircase her eyes collide with a silhouette. It flashes past momentarily but there is no doubt, the figure is that of a child.

JULIA  
(whispering)

Hey!

Julia begins to climb the stairs we leave her momentarily as we pan back towards the 'living room.' Through a window we see a massive shadow approaching from the pouring rain.

We hear a terrible screeching sound as the exterior door opens to reveal the raincoat-clad Silhouette. It looks bigger than ever, the face still obscured by the hood.

98 - INT. MINE BUILDING - UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

Julia ascends to the top of the stairs, to the right a hallway.

Taking a few careful steps she passes a half-opened door to an empty room: What was obviously once a mechanical room is now furnished with a little bed, and a few scattered toys; our eyes are drawn to a pair of slippers on the floor.

She moves into another hallway.

99 - INT. MINE BUILDING - GLASS HALLWAY - NIGHT

The hallway is lined with enormous windows. The sound of an approaching storm seems dangerously close without the protection of bricks and mortar.

Once again she is alerted by 'the sound.'

She freezes and turns to see...

DAVID STANDING AT THE END OF THE HALL!!!

Deeply moved Julia can only mouth his name.

David says nothing looking at her with fear.

Time is suspended. A moment of grace before they are reunited.

She approaches him lovingly spreading her arms. But he is staring at something behind her.

His jaw goes slack. His eyes fill with terror.

THE SILHOUETTE IN THE RAINCOAT IS STANDING BEHIND JULIA!!!

With a few heavy steps it races towards her armed with a wooden plank

Julia with no time to react ... WHAAAM!

She receives a heavy blow to the head!

A single definitive blow.

The plank falls to the floor. Julia falls to her knees.

Dazed and trying to focus we see the blurry outline of the Silhouette. It ceremoniously removes the hood:

IT IS A WOMAN!!!

We recognize Mrs. Johnson, the woman we met with Julia at the bus shelter (Scene 25).

Julia collapses. Her chest lands heavily on the plank. With her final strength she looks around for David.

He is stunned on the verge of tears.

The Silhouette approaches him.

Instead of running away he throws himself into her arms.

DAVID

Mommy!

The Silhouette comforts him stroking his hair.

MRS. JOHNSON

Shhh!

DAVID

Mommy...

MRS JOHNSON

It's all over now angel...  
Everything's okay.

Mrs. Johnson's soft voice seems incompatible with her tall statue.

Little David points to Julia on the floor.

DAVID

She's... She scares me...

MRS JOHNSON

Shhhh...It's all over baby, it's  
all over.

Julia blank, dizzy and incoherent... blacks out!

100 - INT. MINE BUILDING - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A FEW MOMENTS LATER:

Through the blurry POV of Julia's vision we are able to find our focus as she regains consciousness. We are in a room that serves as a make shift kitchen.

We pull back to reveal Mrs. Johnson, binding Julia to a chair.

Her arms are solidly roped to the armrests.

She assesses her work and then goes to sit down in the chair opposite Julia across the table.



Without the cover of darkness and the hood her appearance looks ordinary.

A very tall regular woman.

She stares severely at Julia.

MRS. JOHNSON

It took me an hour to calm him down. Just to get him to recognize me. Do you have any idea what that's like?

She stands and bends over Julia threateningly.

MRS. JOHNSON (CONT.)

Do you know how a mother feels when her child does not recognize her? He'd been brainwashed... You told him I was gone!!!

She suddenly loses her temper.

MRS. JOHNSON (CONT.)

What the fuck are you up to.

Mrs Johnson raises her hand

Afraid of being hit Julia flinches.

But it is an opportunity for Mrs. Johnson to release her fury... and her hand lands heavily on the table instead.

A moment of silence.

MRS. JOHNSON (CONT.)

Last night, like almost every night, I went into the woods... To try to find the bastard who took my son... The Tall Man... Old lady Ashcroft said she'd seen him twice at nightfall... So I'd walk...

101 - EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

FLASHBACK:

We see Mrs. Johnson walking through the forest. Her eyes show the immeasurable pain of a mother desperately seeking her child.

MRS. JOHNSON (OFF)

I walked and walked and walked...

Mrs. Johnson's POV: in front of her, a building. We recognize Julia's house.

102 - EXT. AROUND JULIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

MRS. JOHNSON (OFF) (CONT.)  
And then, by chance, I came to  
your house. Chance or intuition,  
call it what you like...

A light comes on in an upstairs window. Through the curtains we see the shadowy silhouette of a child. And then Julia's enters.

MRS. JOHNSON (OFF) (CONT.)  
He was there... I couldn't  
believe it, but he was there...

The two silhouettes move away from the window and disappear from Mrs. Johnson's field of vision.

103 - EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

A FEW MOMENTS LATER:

Mrs. Johnson aimlessly wandering through the forest once again.

Her expression intense: a mix of caution and contemplation. She seems unable to grasp what she saw through Julia's window.

104 - EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

THE FLASHBACK CONTINUES:

Mrs. Johnson in a zombie like state stumbles down the deserted road.

MRS. JOHNSON (OFF) (CONT.)  
It went around and around and  
around in my head... I was trying  
to distinguish my grief with  
reality... Had I dreamt it?

She passes a small vacant construction site. A half finished wall with a stack of remaining bricks is covered by a blue tarpaulin. As if mechanically, she pulls the plastic sheet off the bricks, throws it around her cold body and continues walking.

105 - EXT. BUS SHELTER - DAY

THE FLASHBACK CONTINUES:

Mrs. Johnson wearing the plastic tarpaulin is seated at the disused bus shelter, head in her hands as seen in (Scene 25.)

MRS. JOHNSON (OFF) (CONT.)  
I was on the verge of insanity..  
And then you showed up...

We see a summary of (Scene 25.) This time from Mrs.Johnson's POV:

Julia's car reverses to a stop.

They share an intense gaze.

MRS.JOHNSON (OFF) (CONT.)  
When I looked into your eyes I  
knew... I wasn't mad.

Julia's car disappears down the road.

106 - INT. TRISH'S HOME - BEDROOM - DAY

THE FLASHBACK CONTINUES:

We see Trish's desk: the altar with David's photograph.

MRS.JOHNSON (OFF)  
My mind turned to Trish. She'd  
made an altar for David, like she  
did for all the others... Four  
candles, and prayers for his  
return...

The camera pulls back: through the window we see the silhouette of Mrs.Johnson walking urgently towards the diner.

MRS.JOHNSON (OFF) (CONT.)  
When you talk to Trish, she  
listens...

107 - INT. DINER - DAY

THE FLASHBACK CONTINUES:

Mrs.Johnson and Trish are sitting across from one another in one of the booths. They are deep in conversation.

MRS.JOHNSONN (OFF) (CONT.)  
At first she didn't believe me.  
The people around here all trust  
you, Julia Denning. But I talked  
and talked until she started to  
have doubts. And when her doubts  
were big enough, just big enough,  
I told her I was going to get my  
kid back. She said: ( we see Trish  
mouthing the words) you're gonna  
break into Julia's place? I said:  
(Mrs. Johnson in flashback does  
the same) if David is not there  
you can drive me to the loony bin  
yourself...

Their conversation ceases. We see Trish contemplating the information deep in thought.

MRS JOHNSON (OFF) (CONT.)  
Trish decided to keep the diner  
open all night, patiently  
awaiting my news with some of the  
other regulars...

108 - INT. MINE BUILDING - KITCHEN - NIGHT

END OF FLASHBACK - RETURN TO THE PRESENT:

Close up of Mrs.Johnson taking something from Julia's pocket: the picture of David.

She is dumbfounded staring at the image of her son.

MRS.JOHNSON  
When I saw you at the window with  
David, I thought about calling  
the cops... But I don't trust  
'em. The only thing they've ever  
done for me is kick me out of my  
house...

She takes a few steps circling Julia's chair.

MRS.JOHNSON (CONT.)  
They don't care. Look at where  
they forced me to live with my  
son.

She despondently indicates her home opening her arms as if to say, 'this is it.'

Julia follows her with her eyes... and realizes that the chair is worm-eaten. There is play in the armrests.

MRS.JOHNSON (CONT.)  
You took my David away...

She tries to keep control, but tears well up.

MRS.JOHNSON (CONT.)  
And the other children too...

She suddenly grabs Julia by the collar and draws a knife from her pocket, holding it to Julia's throat.

MRS.JOHNSON (CONT.)  
Where are they? Where are the  
other kids?

Julia says nothing.

Mrs.Johnson pushes the knife harder against her skin.

Julia closes her eyes.

MRS. JOHNSON (CONT.)  
Julia, tell me what you've done  
with the other children, or I  
swear you'll die...

Julia frozen.

JULIA  
I gave them to the Tall Man...

Mrs. Johnson is surprised by the answer.

She snuffles, giving in to the tears.

MRS. JOHNSON  
Who is he?

JULIA  
Don't you know? The whole town is  
talking about him...

MRS. JOHNSON  
Don't fool with me Julia!  
Who is he?

JULIA  
The one everyone's talking  
about...

WHACK!

A monumental blow comes down on Julia making her jump in  
her chair.

MRS. JOHNSON  
The others will be here in a  
minute. Any second Julia Denning.  
You fuck with them too and you'll  
find out...

She lowers her voice to give her words more weight.

MRS. JOHNSON (CONT.)  
what we do around here to people  
who mess with our kids...

JULIA  
I know.

MRS. JOHNSON  
You're a dead woman.

JULIA  
(resigned)  
I know.

WHACK!

A second blow, even harder than the first.

Mrs.Johnson, not getting any answers, is the embodiment of rage.

Thrown off balance, Julia falls taking the chair with her.

It is a heavy fall, she screams with pain.

Silence.

Little David appears at the kitchen door.

Shocked by her own violent action Mrs.Johnson starts to cry.

MRS.JOHNSON  
Come here angel...  
She won't hurt you anymore.

David steps timidly into the room. Unable to comprehend the events of this night.. he stops

MRS.JOHNSON (CONT.)  
Look at her. Look at her face.  
Don't be afraid anymore...

MRS.JOHNSON (CONT.)  
Look at my son Julia... And tell  
him the truth!

Julia resists, as if she did not want to confront the boy's gaze.

MRS.JOHNSON (CONT.)  
He has to hear it from you.

JULIA SUDDENLY LEAPS UP!

The wood of the chair had shattered when it fell. Her arms are still attached to the armrests but she can move them!

With incredible speed she swings an arm. The broken bars under the armrest jam into Mrs.Johnson's shoulder.

Mrs.Johnson screams and falls backwards...

CRUNCHHH!!!

Smashing her head on the corner of the table.

She's out cold.

Terrified, David runs.

109 - INT. MINE BUILDING - STAIRS - NIGHT

He bounds up the stairs, two at a time.

110 - INT. MINE BUILDING - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Julia frees herself from the armrests.

111 - INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

David sprints down the hallway. He stops next to a big cupboard. Thinking quickly he opens one of the sliding doors and jumps inside.

112 - INT. MINE BUILDING - CUPBOARD - NIGHT

Securing the door behind him he peeks through a tiny opening. He stands frozen. Alone in the darkness.

He hears Julia calling from downstairs.

JULIA (OFF)

David?

113 - INT. MINE BUILDING - 'LIVING ROOM' - NIGHT

Julia walks through the 'living room' listening.

JULIA

David!

114 - INT. MINE BUILDING - CUPBOARD - NIGHT

Now crouched at the back of the cupboard, David doesn't dare move.

115 - INT. MINE BUILDING - 'LIVING ROOM' - NIGHT

Julia is standing at the bottom of the stairs.

She expectantly gazes up.

JULIA

(impatiently)

David?

No answer.

Determined she starts to climb.

116 - INT. MINE BUILDING - CUPBOARD - NIGHT

Showing courage beyond his years, David steadily begins to open the door of the cupboard. He peeks out trying to see down the hall.

117 - INT. MINE BUILDING - STAIRS - NIGHT

Julia is craning to hear the slightest whisper of David.

JULIA  
It's me, David! It's Julia!

118 - INT. MINE BUILDING - CUPBOARD - NIGHT

David sensing she is close pulls the cupboard door shut. In complete darkness he sits terrified. Senses on alert. He hears her approaching footsteps... she is now very close. Too close... He covers his eyes unable to bear the suspense. He is completely frozen.

CRREEAKKKKK!!

In one split second the door is pulled open.

The light of the hallway exposes little David's face. His expression changes from terror to relief in an instant...

He smiles.

It is Jenny standing at the cupboard entrance!

119 - INT. MINE BUILDING - UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

Off camera we hear a smothered little yelp.

Julia reacts.

She passes the makeshift child's bedroom and stealthily enters.

120 - INT. MINE BUILDING - CUPBOARD - DAY

Jenny is holding David very firmly, pressing a hand to his mouth...

JENNY  
Shhhhh...

121 - INT. MINE BUILDING - UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

She guides him gently out of the cupboard into the hallway.

Looking at him with reassuring eyes.

She gives him a comforting nod. Everything about her indicates that she is there to help him.

He is calmer.

She puts her hand on his shoulder inviting him to walk in front of her.



They take a few cautious steps when...

JULIA SUDDENLY EMERGES FROM THE CHILD'S BEDROOM, FACE TO FACE WITH DAVID!

The little boy screams and hides himself against Jenny.

Jenny remains still. It is not the reaction he expected.

He looks at her pleading.

Jenny stares at Julia, a hint of a smile on her lips. Julia responds with a similar expression.

David wants to escape.

Jenny grips his sweater.

David determined continues to struggle.

Jenny doing her best to subdue David offers him to Julia.

The latter holds the child to her, gripping his wrists.

The boy continues to fight but he is physically unable to free himself.

Julia and Jenny walk quickly to the top of the stairs.

122 - INT. MINE BUILDING - STAIRS/'LIVING ROOM' - NIGHT

Just as they are about to descend the stairs the 'living room' door bursts open. Without hesitating they immediately turn and run in the opposite direction.

The Mob from the diner appears. Enraged and armed to the teeth!

We recognize Sheriff Chestnut and Jimmy amongst others.

123 - INT. MINE BUILDING - UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

Jenny and Julia race down the hall. Julia, carrying David, is slower as she tries to secure his mouth with her hand.

Jenny implores her to hurry. She knows the exit.

124 - INT. MINE BUILDING - 'LIVING ROOM'/STAIRS - NIGHT

Everyone is gathered. We hear Sheriff Chestnut haphazardly co-ordinate the search.

The troops spread out. Two men scurry upstairs.

125 - INT. MINE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Jenny and Julia race down a spiral staircase leading into an enormous warehouse.

It is a storage area full of containers. The sound of pouring rain reverberates on the sheet-metal roof making an incredible racket. It punctuates the urgency of the moment. It is as if they are in a war zone racing across a battlefield. They are relieved to finally arrive at the exit. Jenny grabs the handle of a huge metal sliding door and pulls with all her might. To the sound of screeching metal the door opens.

126 - EXT. MINE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

We see the exterior warehouse parking lot is now full with the vehicles from the crowd. Jenny has everything planned. She takes a flick knife from her pocket and systematically slashes one tire and then another and then another.

She spares only one vehicle and urges Julia to jump in to the drivers seat. Jenny has selected the car with the keys in the ignition.

Without hesitation Julia hands David to Jenny.  
They load into.  
With tires squealing. They are away.

127 - INT. STOLEN CAR - NIGHT

Julia eyes are fixed on the road in front of her.

Beside her Jenny is busy keeping David calm.

JULIA  
Why did you do that Jenny?

The only response Jenny makes is to shrug her shoulders.

Julia, demanding to know, raises her voice.

JULIA (CONT.)  
HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW???

128 - EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The car races at top speed down the wet road.

129 - EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD/PORCH - NIGHT

A FEW MINUTES LATER:

The car pulls to a stop in front of the house.

Jenny and Julia hurry to the porch. Julia is holding David.

The front door opens.

Mariana appears, bandaged and bruised from the assault. She is surprised at first to see Jenny but quickly turns her attention to David relieved to see him.

MARIANA  
(to Julia)  
You did it!

Julia hands her the child who is crying but no longer struggling.

JULIA  
Calm him down please!

MARIANA  
My god you did it!

Julia looks urgently at Mariana.

JULIA  
We have no time, do you understand?

Mariana nods.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Calm him down!

Mariana goes inside with David.

Julia turns to Jenny, who is standing to the side.

She hugs her.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Go home Jenny!

But Jenny shakes her head.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Go home and don't say anything to anyone!

Instead of complying, Jenny writes something in her notebook:

Take me to HIM...

JULIA (CONT.)  
(with gravity)  
You don't know what you're talking about!

But she insists, underlining her words three times.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Don't ask me that Jenny! You couldn't bear it!

She insists again.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Believe me, you couldn't!

Jenny writes something else:

I'll go to the police.

JULIA (CONT.)  
(suddenly in a dark,  
threatening tone)  
By God, Jenny, if you do that...

130 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

From one of the front windows we see the figures of Julia and Jenny as they continue their 'conversation' under the porch.

We pull back: Mariana enters the frame. Behind her back, she is hiding a syringe full of a clear liquid.

She heads towards a corner of the room where David is sitting on a sofa.

Tears are still running down his cheeks but we can tell he is overcome with fatigue.

Mariana kneels down in front of him.

MARIANA  
(speaking calmly)  
Do you remember the little  
sonata? The one we learned  
yesterday...

David doesn't respond.

MARIANA (CONT.)  
Do you remember David?

He nods without smiling.

Mariana begins to hum. It is melodic and comforting, like a lullaby.

David is silent at first but then joins in.

The singing stops when David lets out a little yelp.

MARIANA (CONT.)  
It's all over David.

We see Mariana withdraw the syringe from the side of David's thigh. The liquid has been injected. David is subdued.

Julia bursts through the front door, anxious and distressed.

JULIA  
Jenny knows everything.  
Absolutely everything. She's been  
watching me for weeks!

MARIANA  
(worried in turn)  
Everything?

JULIA  
What she hasn't seen, she's  
figured out.

MARIANA  
Are you sure?

JULIA  
She's mute she's not stupid!

MARIANA  
God!

JULIA  
She wants to see HIM.

MARIANA  
She doesn't know what she's  
saying!

JULIA  
She insists!

MARIANA  
(icy)  
She insists on dying?

JULIA  
She's threatening to go to the  
police!

MARIANA  
She's crazy!

Julia kneels down at David's feet. He is sleepy,  
completely surrendered to his fate.

JULIA  
You're going to come with me  
David.

She leans toward him.  
She picks up David's slack body and holds him up to her  
shoulder.

She walks past the front door and down a narrow hallway.

131 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - BASEMENT DOOR - NIGHT

With her one free hand Julia turns the key in an old wooden door. The door opens to reveal a staircase that leads into blackness. Without a second to waste Julia begins to descend the staircase pulling the door closed behind her.

The camera pulls away as we are left in the stillness of the empty hallway.

132 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

A clock reads 5:23.

FADE IN FADE OUT:

The clock now reads 6:00.

The six chimes ring out.

Mariana appears and sits down on the bench by the door. She seems to be waiting for something, in the calm and silence of the house.

She hears creaking. The basement door re-opens.

Julia appears without David.

Mariana gets up and goes over to her.

MARIANA  
Is it done?

JULIA  
It's done.

MARIANA  
Did he cry?

JULIA  
No.

MARIANA  
Will the others come?

JULIA  
Dozens of them.

MARIANA  
So it's really over?

JULIA  
It's over.

Mariana looks down. She has no more questions.

They embrace holding one another for a long time.

JULIA  
(in Mariana's ear)  
Go.

MARIANA  
No.

JULIA  
Please...

MARIANA  
No.

Without a word Mariana loosens her embrace and walks to the bottom of the stairs.

She climbs them slowly, turning one last time towards Julia. She's crying. Behind her is a happy portrait of Julia and her husband in an undetermined African location.

MARIANA  
Without Robert and you I'd be nothing.

They look at one another with love and affection. They are forever connected.

Mariana disappears at the top of the stairs.

Julia moves to the window in an effort to distract herself from the pain.

Jenny is there, waiting on the porch. She has not moved since we saw her previously.

133 - EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

The front door opens. Julia appears.

She looks intensely at Jenny.

The latter is hanging on her every word.

JULIA  
I told him your name. Where you live. Perhaps he will come.

Jenny wants to know more.

JULIA (CONT.)  
That's all!

JULIA (CONT.)  
(without ambiguity).  
And if you tell anyone, Jenny...  
He'll come for sure...

For the first time we are shocked to hear an icy tone in her voice.

JULIA (CONT.)  
...but he'll do things to you  
that you can't even imagine.

Jenny is frightened.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Now Go!

Jenny looks at Julia for the first time without knowing who she is. She turns and runs away.

Julia stands completely motionless at the front porch. She seems somehow comforted by the sound and smell of the rain. She stares into the endless darkness.

Finally there is peace.

It doesn't last long.

The sound of approaching vehicles destroy her ambience.

Julia turns and goes into the house. Calmly she bolts the multiple locks on the front door.

134 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - STAIRS - NIGHT

Julia lethargically climbs the stairs to the upper floor.

We hear, off-screen, the screeching brakes the squealing tires the slamming doors and a cacophony of voices.

They have arrived.

The front door shakes with the banging of the crowd.

135 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - LOUNGE ROOM - NIGHT

Julia collapses on the old sofa. She closes her eyes and relaxes her head on the backrest.

In the distance the sound of police cars accompany the building hysteria outside her front door.

We leave Julia and track around the room.

On a bookshelf are books and pictures that we see for the first time:



Julia, at twenty: at a clinic in Africa she is surrounded by children who are smiling despite their obvious poverty.

Julia, at twenty-five: a nurse in a public hospital she is posing with the local bigwigs at a charity event. Robert, the Mayor of Cold Rock is also there. Around them, children from a cancer ward, smiling despite their pale skin and bald heads...

Julia, at twenty-eight: she is again with Robert building a brick house, obviously part of a humanitarian project, somewhere in South America.

The camera continues its circular movement.

The light slowly changes during the shot.

136 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - LOUNGE ROOM - DAWN

Dawn is breaking. Several hours have gone by. The camera finishes its 360 degrees movement and is once again on Julia.

She is now sitting on a chair, half-asleep.

There is complete silence in the room.

A whistling sound is suddenly heard.

CRAAAACK!!!

The window explodes into a thousand pieces!

A stone hits Julia over the eye, violently dragging her from her torpor.

She tilts backward, falling from the chair where she was dozing.

Her hands are in handcuffs.

We hear the clamor of the crowd outside.

ANONYMOUS VOICE 1 (OFF)  
Bitch! We're gonna kill you!

ANONYMOUS VOICE 2 (OFF)  
We're gonna do to you what you  
did to our kids!

Deputy Campbell appears and leans towards Julia, helping her up.

DEPUTY CAMPBELL  
Are you alright?

JULIA  
I think so...

Sheriff Chestnut bursts into the room.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
For God's sake, Campbell, I told  
you to keep her away from the  
window!

DEPUTY CAMPBELL  
Sorry Sheriff...

The FBI lieutenant (Scene 2) enters in turn.

LIEUTENANT  
What are you fucking doing!  
They're gonna lynch her Godammit!

Sheriff Chestnut helps Campbell pull Julia up.

LIEUTENANT  
Everything's set. The  
reinforcements are here we can  
go!

137 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAWN

Surrounded by four men Julia is led to the door.

Her eyebrow is spurting blood.

They move quickly the atmosphere is one of urgency.

We stay close on Julia's face as the police shout  
orders.

LIEUTENANT (OFF)  
Don't look up just keep moving  
straight ahead until you get to  
the car!

LIEUTENANT #2 (OFF)  
Don't say anything, don't shout,  
don't slow down and stare  
straight ahead, is that clear?

Julia nods, looking a bit lost.

The procession passes Mariana's room:

Julia and her posse slow down as she looks up to see two  
FBI agents release Mariana's lifeless body from a self  
made noose. Julia has no time to grieve, escorted at top  
speed towards the stairs.

138 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - STAIRS / FRONT HALL - DAWN

Outside, the impatient crowd grows increasingly fervent and violent. We hear windows breaking. The atmosphere is explosive.

The procession comes down the stairs four at a time.

Reaching the front hall, the policemen lean over Julia forming a human shield.

From the wall of bodies around her she glimpses the front door and, just beyond, the light of day.

The crowd sounds bigger and angrier than ever.

139 - EXT. JULIA'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAWN

We never leave Julia's face.

She is hunched forward as the bodies of the policemen form a protective vault above her.

All around, we sense unimaginable chaos.

Insults fly, mixed with crying, shouting, spitting.

We hear the whistling of projectiles, shouts from the police, replies from the raging crowd.

Julia is shaken, and almost stumbles several times.

The passage only lasts a few seconds, but it seems interminable.

She finally makes it to the safety of the car.

The door closes.

The car races away sirens a blazing as random stones hit the vehicle.

She turns to look back at the raging mob. Their faces imbued with rage, hungry for vengeance. Amongst them, we recognize, Douglas, Steven and others..  
Julia's face remains blank.

140 - INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

The door to the basement opens.

We see, backlit, the figures of the lieutenant and Sheriff Chestnut standing at the top of the stairs.

The lieutenant finds the light switch.

They go down the stairs.

Outside, despite the return of a certain calm, we continue to hear the noise of the crowd.

The basement is a small room covered with mildew.

In the middle of the room stands a large wooden workbench.

One detail does not escape the attention of the police: old, long-bladed knives lie among the other tools.

Behind the rotting planks erected to form a wall, we make out some stone foundations dripping with dampness.

The room is empty except for a very large, old-fashioned wardrobe.

The lieutenant opens the door.

The wardrobe has no back: it leads directly into the galleries of the mine.

LIEUTENANT

Did you know the house was built over the galleries?

SHERIFF CHESTNUT

There are holes everywhere here... More than 40 square miles in all. Can you imagine the mess?

141 - INT. MINE TUNNEL - DAY

The two men go through the wardrobe and find themselves in a tunnel.

LIEUTENANT

That's bad for us sheriff...

SHERIFF CHESTNUT

The whole region is sitting on the same Swiss cheese...

The lieutenant takes a few steps into the tunnel. The ground soon becomes damp.

Further along we can make out reflections in large puddles, leaving us to imagine that some of the tunnels are flooded.

LIEUTENANT

(thinking out aloud)

If the children are down here, it'll take a hundred men and twenty years to find them... If they are here... But she could also just use it as a passageway into the forest.

Then he turns back to Sheriff Chestnut.

LIEUTENANT (CONT.)  
Take me to the mine. I want to do things right. Starting with the main entrance. Let's get out of here.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
Okay.

LIEUTENANT  
Call the land registry. Get me some maps.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
If there are maps...

The two men go back out into the basement.

142 - EXT. TUNNEL ENTRANCE - DAY

LATER:

We see (Scene 3) again from a different angle:

A disaffected mine. Cars keeping watch in front of the entrance to the main tunnel. Flashing lights on, the police are waiting.

Two feds, including the lieutenant, accompanied by sheriff Chestnut, emerge from the tunnel. Empty-handed, they duck into an unmarked car.

The past has caught up with the present.

143 - INT. INFIRMARY - DAY

A shard of glass is dropped into a dish.

In the police-station infirmary, a nurse is treating Julia's wounds. (Scene 4 again).

The lieutenant enters the room and goes to stand in front of Julia.

LIEUTENANT  
Are you alright Mrs. Denning?

Julia looks up but does not respond.

LIEUTENANT (CONT.)  
We haven't found him.

The nurse pauses, aware of the seriousness of the moment.

LIEUTENANT (CONT.)  
Not him, and not the others.

Julia remains silent. The lieutenant looks at her with great severity.

LIEUTENANT (CONT.)  
Don't tell me that's what I will  
have to tell the parents.

144 - EXT. MINE BUILDING - DAY

Mrs Johnson is lying on a stretcher, her shoulder heavily bandaged. She is sobbing, murmuring to anyone within earshot:

MRS. JOHNSON  
David... David...

The stretcher disappears into an ambulance.

LIEUTENANT (OFF)  
I'm given to understand your  
husband was a respected man  
around here, Mrs. Denning?

145 - INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Silhouettes in black suits are posted in front of a two-way mirror. On the other side, in a cinder-block room, Julia - looking more absent than ever - is seated across from the lieutenant.

JULIA  
Immensely sir.

LIEUTENANT  
There was a big age difference  
between you, isn't that so?

JULIA  
25 years.

LIEUTENANT  
Mrs. Denning... This Mariana  
Adelmo who worked for you...

JULIA  
Yes?

LIEUTENANT  
It would appear that she was  
unknown to the immigration  
authorities. Her only form of  
identity was a Cuban passport.

JULIA  
What's known as an undocumented  
immigrant sir.

LIEUTENANT  
Exactly. So you were aware of the situation?

JULIA  
My husband brought her from Cuba in 1983.

LIEUTENANT  
Brought her?

JULIA  
With the help of forged documents. You have no idea how unhappy she was there. Oppressed, disadvantaged, abused. My husband was like that. Impulsive and determined when he could not tolerate something unjust...

LIEUTENANT  
He was Mayor of Cold Rock from 1992 until...

JULIA  
Until the end. His end. And consequently that of this town.

LIEUTENANT  
By which you mean...

JULIA  
He kept this community going sir. He helped them find possibilities. Cold Rock had dignity then, can you believe that?

A moment of silence.

JULIA (CONT.)  
But when he died from cancer everything collapsed. The mine, the morale... The will... And that's when the children started to suffer.

LIEUTENANT  
The children?

JULIA  
So, in memory of him, I decided to do something.

The lieutenant compels himself to listen calmly, from fear that her confession will end.

LIEUTENANT  
By... kidnapping... the children?

JULIA  
Yes.

LIEUTENANT  
Explain that for me will you Mrs.  
Denning.

Julia frowns. As if she did not understand the meaning  
of the question.

LIEUTENANT  
You... kept them in a room? One  
after the other?

JULIA  
A real children's room sir. With  
books, toys, music - full of  
beautiful things.

A weighty silence. Julia seems far away.

LIEUTENANT  
And then?

JULIA  
And then nothing. I couldn't keep  
them all, could I?

LIEUTENANT  
No, I guess not. But... You  
apparently told David's mother  
that you delivered the children  
to someone you called... The Tall  
Man?

JULIA  
The whole of Cold Rock chose that  
name, sir.

LIEUTENANT  
Who is this Tall Man?

Julia closes up all of a sudden. The lieutenant realizes  
that she will not answer.

LIEUTENANT (CONT.)  
Does he exist?

Julia gives him an absolutely inscrutable look. She  
begins to cry.

The lieutenant leans toward her, giving more weight to  
his questions.



LIEUTENANT (CONT.)  
Mrs. Denning... Is there a man,  
whatever his name, to whom you  
delivered the children?

Julia's crying intensifies. She looks down.

JULIA  
No.

LIEUTENANT  
You acted alone?

JULIA  
Yes.

LIEUTENANT  
Mariana looked after each of the  
children while you were away?

JULIA  
Yes.

LIEUTENANT  
You never had children yourself,  
is that so?

She shakes her head.

JULIA  
My husband... could not have  
children...

LIEUTENANT  
I see.

The lieutenant glances discreetly toward the two-way  
mirror.

Then he takes the leap, almost as if bluffing.

LIEUTENANT (CONT.)  
Mrs. Denning... Did you kidnap  
the children of Pittsville  
County?

JULIA  
Yes.

LIEUTENANT  
Did you...

He pauses, perhaps surprised by Julia's simple candor.

LIEUTENANT (CONT.)  
Did you make those children  
disappear?

JULIA

Yes.

LIEUTENANT

How?

Julia cries harder than ever.

JULIA

I couldn't keep them...

LIEUTENANT

Let's put it another way, Mrs.  
Denning... Are those children dead?

JULIA

Yes.

Behind the two-way mirror the officials are dumbstruck.

LIEUTENANT

Mrs. Denning...

The tension in the interrogation room is palpable.

LIEUTENANT (CONT.)

Did you murder those children?

JULIA

Yes.

A policeman enters the room. He gives the lieutenant a list of names and turns to go. The small tape recorder recording the conversation keeps rolling.

LIEUTENANT

Julia Denning... Did you kidnap  
and murder...

He looks at the list.

LIEUTENANT (CONT.)

Matthew Fillingham?

JULIA

Yes.

LIEUTENANT

Did you kidnap and murder Jeffrey  
Broome?

JULIA

Yes.

LIEUTENANT

Did you kidnap and murder Susan  
Fredericks?

JULIA  
Oh yes, little Suzy, yes.

The names go by one after the other.

Julia's answer is always the same.

FADE IN FADE OUT.

146 - INT. MINE TUNNELS UNDER JULIA'S HOUSE- DAY

We can still hear the Lieutenant's questions and Julia's similar answers.

Various shots:

Stakes have been planted all around the tunnels near Julia's basement, all connected together by police tape, indicating passages.

A small bulldozer is digging up the earth.

We see police officers, forensics scientists, people in orange vests with an agency acronym coming and going from the basement, carrying equipment. Everyone is searching for clues.

A finely choreographed procession of experts.

147 - INT. PRISON - CORRIDOR - DAY

The once imposing silhouette of Mrs. Johnson is now reduced to what appears to be a much smaller, more fragile figure. She has cleaned up, wearing regular clothes. She looks almost normal but is obviously emotionally damaged, a victim of the events of the past few days.

She is being led by a prison guard and Officer Campbell through the corridors of a prison.

Sounds of keys, locks, openings and closings of each heavy metal door.

148 - INT. PRISON - INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

The procession finally reaches a small room furnished with a table and a few chairs.

The lieutenant is waiting there, and stands up to shake a nervous Mrs. Johnson's hand. Her shoulder is wrapped in a sling.

LIEUTENANT  
How are you managing Mrs. Johnson?

MRS. JOHNSON  
(quietly)  
Holding on.

He invites her to take a seat without displaying any excessive sentimentality. We sense he is ready for action, deep in his investigation.

LIEUTENANT

We have to avoid any confrontation Mrs. Johnson. We need for you to appeal to her as a mother. Do you understand?

MRS. JOHNSON

I understand.

LIEUTENANT

If a single question or remark shuts her down, we will have nothing. If you are not up to it you need to let me know now.

MRS. JOHNSON

(convincing herself)

No, I am ready

LIEUTENANT

Try not to focus on anything too specific. Speak to her, listen to her and see if you can get her to open up. If we get anything, it'll be because she doesn't realize it. Understand?

She nods yes.

LIEUTENANT (CONT.)

We'll be able to hear everything.  
We are here if you need us.

They stand up and head towards a narrow door that leads to the visiting room.

Before he opens it, the lieutenant gives Mrs. Johnson one last, knowing look. We can feel the tension.

LIEUTENANT (CONT.)

Whatever she says, Mrs. Johnson, just stay calm.

MRS. JOHNSON

Okay... (pause)  
Do you really think she's a child killer?

A moment of silence.

LIEUTENANT

I... I believe it, Ma'am. Julia Denning is a very perplexing

woman. I mean... Maybe you'll help  
us find out.

He opens the door and Mrs.Johnson exits.

149 - INT. PRISON - VISITING ROOM - DAY

Mrs.Johnson walks into the visiting room alone.

Julia is already seated behind the protective glass,  
watched by two guards standing but a few steps behind  
her. She does not look directly at her.

Mrs Johnson takes her seat.

Silence.

Finally, they each pick up their respective telephones.

Julia avoids Mrs.Johnson's direct gaze and breaks the  
silence with a question.

JULIA  
Is your shoulder alright?

MRS.JOHNSON  
It's okay.

JULIA  
I'm sorry about that.

Silence.

JULIA (CONT.)  
I agreed to see you... but I don't  
think it'll help... I guess you  
want answers.

MRS.JOHNSON  
(emphatically)  
Yes.

JULIA  
There will be no consolation in  
what I can tell you...

MRS.JOHNSON  
I can handle it.

JULIA  
I doubt it.

MRS.JOHNSON  
It can't be worse than this.

Silence.

JULIA  
I know you hate me.

MRS. JOHNSON  
No, I... I'm too confused for  
that... I can't live Julia... I  
keep turning things around in my  
mind.

Julia looks down but doesn't reply.

MRS. JOHNSON (CONT.)  
And I miss him, you know?

Tears well up but she suppresses the urge to cry.

MRS. JOHNSON (CONT.)  
It's unbearable, the missing  
him... Thinking about him all the  
time... Not knowing where he  
is...

JULIA  
(compassionately)  
I understand.

MRS. JOHNSON  
For a mother, that's the worst  
thing of all...

JULIA  
I know...

MRS. JOHNSON  
I don't think you do know, Julia.

JULIA  
(calmly)  
No, I do know. My words will  
never comfort you but... I was a  
mother to each and every one of  
them. They had everything they  
could possibly need. Everything.

Mrs. Johnson is barely able to maintain her composure.

MRS. JOHNSON  
What are you saying?

She is physically wounded by Julia's statement.  
However, she finds the courage to continue.

MRS. JOHNSON (CONT.)  
Julia, I know I live in a squat,  
I have no job and life isn't  
easy. But I would still die for  
him ya know?

JULIA  
(interrupting)  
I know that... please, I... No, I  
know. It's the same everywhere...

Mrs.Johnson is perplexed.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Defeat...pain.I have seen it  
everywhere. It's a cycle.

MRS.JOHNSON  
(confused and angered)  
A cycle?

JULIA  
It will never make sense for you  
Mrs.Johnson...

She leans closer to the glass as if to reveal a secret.

JULIA (CONT.)  
Your only resolve is to hate me.

MRS.JOHNSON  
It won't bring back my son.

JULIA  
You shouldn't have come here.

Mrs.Johnson terrified that Julia is shutting down tries  
another approach.

MRS JOHNSON  
What cycle?

Julia reconnects with her thoughts and continues

JULIA  
The system is broken. It doesn't  
work. There is nowhere to turn.  
No support. I've seen it all over  
the world.... It's easier to give  
up.

We track into towards Julia's face. Closer and closer  
and closer. The camera and Julia are now intimate.

JULIA (CONT.)  
I'm no better than you, Mrs.  
Johnson... I have just seen more.  
It's not a matter of being a good  
person or a bad person it is  
about how you cope. Life is  
hard... we need to all face the  
day to day difficulties as best  
we can; but it is how we deal

with our own limitations. We  
can't surrender right?  
I will not let the world tell me  
it is hopeless...  
It is in the eyes of every child  
that we find potential and hope.  
We must embrace these qualities  
or we will continue to make the  
same mistakes. Children will  
continue to grow up as lost and  
broken as their parents. Breaking  
this cycle now is more urgent  
than ever. It must be our prio...

She stops, looking at Mrs.Johnson directly in the eyes.

We cut to Mrs.Johnson:

She's devastated. She's overwhelmed with grief. Her face  
is swollen with tears.

JULIA (CONT.)  
(sadly with remorse)  
See? I just keep torturing you...

The silence is so intense we could hear a pin drop.

Mrs.Johnson begins to stand using the back of her chair  
for support. She could not do it alone.

She turns to face Julia for the last time gathering her  
remaining strength.

.

MRS.JOHNSON  
Can you answer just two simple  
questions?

Julia agrees with a nod.

MRS.JOHNSON (CONT.)  
The parents of Cold Rock need to  
know.

Mrs.Johnson weighs each word.

MRS.JOHNSON (CONT.)  
I know what you told the police.  
But I want you to tell it to me.

The atmosphere is heavy.

Even the two guards are hanging on the words that are  
about to be spoken.

MRS.JOHNSON (CONT.)  
Are the children dead?



The answer does not come immediately. But after a few seconds...

Julia finally nods.

A clear, affirmative sign that cannot be interpreted any other way.

MRS. JOHNSON  
(breathless)  
Where are the bodies?

JULIA  
(like a sad confession)  
In the tunnels... In the  
forest... Everywhere.

Mrs. Johnson merely nods.

MRS. JOHNSON  
Now we can mourn.

She turns and leaves the visiting room. There is nothing anymore to say.

150 - INT. PRISON - INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Mrs. Johnson enters the interview room. She looks at the lieutenant who is stunned and then...

She collapses.

151 - INT. PRISON - CELL BLOCK - DAY

A SHORT TIME LATER:

Julia is being led back through the cellblock.

There is an atmosphere of intense hatred reining throughout the prison. Arms and hands outstretched try to grab her. Her fellow inmates would tear her to shreds if given half an opportunity.

In the rising cackles we hear the threats of the other prisoners:

"You bitch, baby killer!"

Julia does not react.

"You know what we do to people  
like you in here?"

She finally reaches her own cell.

"I'll kill you in the name of my  
own kids! You're so dead!"

She hears the door close and lock directly behind her.

She stands there, motionless, resigned to her fate.

As she turns back towards her cell door we see one of the guards standing there on the other side of the bars. He is a black man in his forties.

GUARD  
I heard what you said.

He stares at her severely.

GUARD (CONT.)  
(calmly)  
Who do you think you are?  
God?

Julia remains frozen.

GUARD (CONT.)  
God is love and is loved.

She cannot hide the fact that the words hurt.

The guard jerks his head to the side, indicating the cries of the prisoners.

GUARD (CONT.)  
I can't hear the love.  
(without irony)  
Welcome back to the real world.

He turns away, leaving Julia alone.

152 - EXT. COLD ROCK - NIGHT

A wide-angle shot of Main Street completely deserted.

153 - EXT. TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

In the moonless darkness it appears more desolate and hostile than previously seen.

154 - INT. TRACY'S TRAILER - JENNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jenny's room is the size of a cupboard. Only a small single bed can fit. On the 'thin as paper' walls are a scattering of her own drawings, lit by a torn old children's night lamp.

We see Jenny, hands over her ears, curled up on her bed.

Off camera we hear two people arguing violently.  
From Jenny's tiny window we see two figures outside.

155 - EXT. TRACY'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Steven and Tracy are in the throws of a terrible fight. Steven, who has obviously been drinking, is holding Tracy by the shoulders too tightly.

STEVEN

I don't care what your fucking  
sisters says, you are staying  
with me!

TRACY

(imploring)  
Steven, you are going to wake up  
Jenny please stop!

He continues to hold her tightly

TRACY (CONT:)

You are drunk can't we talk about  
this tomorrow?

Steven becomes enraged by her attempts to pacify him and shakes her more violently.

STEVEN

(Yelling at the top of  
his lungs.)  
NO WE CAN'T FUCKING TALK ABOUT  
THIS TOMORROW... WE WILL RESOLVE  
THIS NOW!

156 - INT. TRACY'S TRAILER - JENNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jenny shaken by the intensity of his tone looks out her bedroom window. At the very moment Steven shakes Tracy too hard. She trips on some forgotten bicycle and falls backwards hard to the ground.

Without hesitating, Jenny jumps off the bed and crosses the short distance from the living room and out the front door.

157 - EXT. TRACY'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Steven is crouching beside Tracy to see if she is ok, when Jenny with one leap, jumps on Steven's back trying to pound him with her small fists. All the anger and fear she has repressed over years is being released with each ineffectual punch.

STEVEN

(staggering off balance)  
GET OFF ME YOU LITTLE RODENT!

He spins around too fast. Little Jenny is thrown off his back and lands THUMP against an old car.

Tracy doesn't miss a beat jumps up, dives on Steven like a lioness protecting her pride.

TRACY  
Don't touch her! Don't you EVER  
touch he...

Steven completely confused grabs Tracy by the nape of her thin sweater, raises his right hand and slams his fist into her face...

She is struck by the giant skull ring on his middle finger and her cheek begins to bleed.

Silence.

All three of them remain still realizing that this round is over.

Steven drops to his knees.

STEVEN  
(sobbing like an infant)  
Oh baby... I am so sorry baby.

He strokes her hair.

STEVEN (CONT)  
I love you so much baby, why do  
you make me angry sugar, you know  
I love you...

Tracy is dazed and defeated. She looks over towards Jenny, who is now standing leaning against the old car. A little ruffled but OK.

Tracy's eyes are welling with tears of fatigue and desperation. It is clear she doesn't know how to get Steven out of their lives... She has let Jenny down again.

Steven continues to tend to Tracy like a lost puppy.

We track with Jenny as she walks to the trailer steps, picks up a plastic flashlight and storms off towards the trees and away from the chaos.

158 - EXT. RIVERSIDE - NIGHT

LATER:

Off camera we hear select sounds of the night. A few nocturnal animals, the soft flow of the river and one other scratching noise. We pan to reveal Jenny, lit by her flashlight, completely absorbed in her notebook feverishly drawing.

She is knocked out of her fantasy world by an unusual cracking noise... she feels a strange presence.

She stands up, listening. What she hears is indeed footsteps.

159 - EXT. BEHIND TRACY'S TRAILER - NIGHT

We see Jenny reappear through the trees as she heads back towards the trailer.

She stops as we see her POV, Tracy and Steven standing in the kitchen. Steven is tending to Tracy as if she was a Princess. Touching her tenderly, obviously asking for forgiveness. Tracy is awkward but resigned and she can't help to respond to his embrace, needing the reassurance of being held in someone's arms.

Jenny turns away.

We pull in: she's heard something.

160 - EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Cautiously walking towards the direction of the sound she finds herself in a thicket of tall grass. She makes her way through and stops revealing miles of cornfields vanishing in the blackness.

There is a slight breeze and we notice that the animals are now silent.

She turns on her flashlight, aiming towards the field.

The corn is swaying gently in the breeze. There is nothing there.

She waves her flashlight to the right.

Nothing but the winding path that leads to the river.

She spins her light to the left.

A MASSIVE SILHOUETTE POUNCES ON HER AND GRABS HER!!!

She screams.

The flashlight falls to the grass.

161 - EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Wide-angle shot. A singular vision:

The Silhouette, absolutely identical to the one of the Tall Man drawn by Jenny in her notebook, is carrying her over its shoulder and running into the forest without stopping.

Jenny, petrified, does not struggle.

162 - EXT. PATH BESIDE THE ROAD - NIGHT

The silhouette finally reaches a path that joins up with a road.

We see a black car parked.

The Silhouette yanks open a back door: Jenny is dumped into the vehicle.

The Silhouette closes the door, walks around the car, and gets in behind the wheel.

163 - INT. SILHOUETTE'S CAR - NIGHT

Jenny, sitting in the back, doesn't dare move.

From her POV we see the back of THE TALL MAN sitting in the drivers seat.

Entirely dressed in black, wearing gloves and a hat, he inspires only mystery and fear.

A long silence.

THE TALL MAN  
You wanted to talk to the cops?

Jenny, frightened, shakes her head.

THE TALL MAN (CONT.)  
That's good, Jenny.

Silence again.

THE TALL MAN (CONT.)  
I usually go through the tunnels to Julia's house. You're making me take a very big risk.

Jenny nods, more out of fear than anything else.

THE TALL MAN (CONT.)  
You wanted to see me. Here I am.

Jenny is dumbfounded.

THE TALL MAN (CONT.)  
You think you know, but you don't know anything. You don't know what it means to come with me.

Jenny doesn't know how to react.

THE TALL MAN (CONT.)  
It means dying. You're going to die, Jenny Weaver. You have no other choice.

This time, Jenny's expression is pure fear.

The Tall Man starts the engine.

THE TALL MAN (CONT.)  
Stand up.

Jenny obeys.

He turns towards her.

In the darkness of the car, it is difficult to make out his face.

With one firm tug, he lifts up the seat on which Jenny was sitting, revealing a secret compartment the size of a human body.

THE TALL MAN (CONT.)  
Lie down and don't move.

Jenny hesitates.

THE TALL MAN (CONT.)  
Do it or I'll make you do it.

The tone is dark, chilling.

Jenny has no choice but to obey once more.

The man closes the seat.

164 - EXT. PATH BESIDE THE ROAD - NIGHT

The car pulls onto the road, accelerates and disappears around the first bend.

An aerial shot follows the vehicle as it drives away from Cold Rock at top speed.

165 - INT. UNKNOWN ROOM - DAY

A filthy bathroom.

We pull back: peeling wallpaper covered with damp stains.

We pull back further: Jenny appears in the frame. She is brushing her hair in front of a mirror.

Wide shot: she is in a bathroom that is as tiny as it is squalid.

A tired candle burns dimly on the shelf over the sink.

She brushes her hair ceremoniously takes a final glance at her own image and then exits the bathroom.

We are in a grimy, low rent motel room.

The windows are bricked up.

Jenny inspects a new shirt laid out on the bed. She puts it on buttoning it carefully. She straightens her skirt and bends over to wipe the already shiny surface of her new shoes.

Then she sits and waits. She is motionless on the edge of the bed.

The almost sacred silence is pierced with a knock on the door.

She answers with a murmur.

The door opens. It is the Tall Man. Behind him lies another room obscured by darkness.

THE TALL MAN  
It's time.

She gets up and walks through the second room, its windows also boarded up.

On the other side lies a door leading to the hallway.

The Tall Man gestures for her to go out.

She takes a deep breath and without further hesitation, steps out of the room.

166 - INT. UNKNOWN HALLWAY - DAY

The hallway is as gloomy as the other rooms. Standing in the shadows is a figure waiting. Jenny advances timidly.

They meet in the middle. It is a (LADY). Well dressed and manicured in her early sixties.

LADY  
I'm probably not what you were  
dreaming of. But you are not a  
baby yourself dear!

Jenny nods.

LADY (CONT.)  
Can you wait here for a moment?

The Lady joins the Tall Man at the entrance to the room.

LADY  
Yes, I think it'll be all right.



THE TALL MAN  
It has to be.

The Tall Man takes a bunch of documents from his pocket and holds them out to the Lady. We recognize the shape and color of a passport.

THE TALL MAN (CONT.)  
As far as we're concerned, Jenny Weaver is dead. Please meet Vera Parker Leigh. Watch over her carefully. Our Field Officer was unable to give her the proper transition, do you understand?

LADY  
Yes, of course I do.

THE TALL MAN  
Be extremely careful the first few weeks. Her behavior could still be detected and us along with her.

LADY  
Yes.

THE TALL MAN  
Any mistake on your part and everything collapses.

LADY  
I completely understand.

The Lady discreetly slips an envelope into the Tall Man's pocket. The latter looks in disapprovingly and immediately hands it back.

THE TALL MAN  
No, ma'am.

LADY  
Please, I insist!

He grabs her wrist.

She pulls back slightly surprised.

He leans towards her. His size makes him all the more intimidating.

THE TALL MAN  
(in her ear, whispering  
emphatically)  
Take this away from me.  
Mrs Parker Leigh, the Officer who saved this girl will never again see the light of day. This

exchange would have been  
impossible without her. Do you  
understand?

LADY

Yes, I...

THE TALL MAN

Your money is an insult to her  
sacrifice.

Contrite the woman takes her envelope back.

LADY

Will Jenny be the last one to be  
taken care of?

THE TALL MAN

The last one from that division.  
Mrs. Parker Leigh.

A beat.

LADY

So there are more of you?

THE TALL MAN

Not enough to change the world.

The Tall Man disappears as he closes the door behind  
him.

167 - INT. UNKNOWN BRIGHT HALLWAY - DAY

A FEW MOMENTS LATER:

A much brighter hallway.

The Lady is leading Jenny, holding her by the hand.

Jenny is a bit lost following along like a small child.

At the end of the hall, there is a blinding white light.  
Jenny squints. With each step, the brightness  
intensifies, almost forcing her to close her eyes.

She tries to make out her surroundings, catching a few  
details in the brief seconds when she can open her eyes:  
a bit of wall, a pattern on the floor...

The white light is now very close.

She steps into the light. The image goes white.

168 - EXT. TRACY'S TRAILER - DAY

A close-up of Tracy's face.

She has aged dramatically in just a few months. Drawn and tired. She is hanging out some clothes on an exterior clothesline. She stops and turns at the sound of a car pulling up.

Wide-angle shot:

She steps expectantly forward to greet Sheriff Chestnut who is getting out of his patrol car.

He shakes his head walking towards her.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
Not yet Tracy

TRACY  
No news? Nothin' at all?

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
Nothing.

TRACY  
(with resignation)  
Okay.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
Sorry Tracy...

TRACY  
I guess you guys are doin what ya  
can.

Uncomfortable pause.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
The Prosecution asked for the  
death penalty this afternoon.

TRACY  
Uh-huh.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
I don't they'll grant it.  
They don't wanna fry that Bitch  
just in case she decides to tell  
em' where them kids lie...

TRACY  
You're right.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
But I get the impression she's  
never gonna talk.

TRACY  
Well, we know she's not the one  
who took my Jenny.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
Your Jenny ran away, Tracy. Crazy  
teenage stuff and you know it.  
We'll find her.

TRACY  
Crazy teenage stuff or the Tall  
Man.

SHERIFF CHESTNUT  
Stop talking nonsense Tracy. That  
business is over and done with.  
Trust me on that. Give me a  
little time and I'll bring your  
Jenny back.

TRACY  
When I look at yer face Sheriff,  
trust is all I can feel!

She gives him a smile. He does not grasp the irony.

She turns back towards her chores passing Carol on the  
steps of the trailer holding Nathan, now 6 months.  
Steven is standing at the door.

Off camera: Sheriff Chestnut's patrol car is heard  
pulling away.

Tracy continues hanging out the washing as we close in  
on her blank face.

NARRATOR (OFF)  
My first mother was a good woman.  
Hard working, generous,  
affectionate. We talked, we  
shared, we laughed. But then it  
stopped. She couldn't talk to us  
anymore. About men. About her  
dreams. About the pain.  
My first mother loved me, and I  
loved my first mother.

169 - INT. PRISON - JULIA'S CELL - DAY

Cut to a close up of a drip, drip, drip out of the  
faucet of a gray industrial sink. Camera pans to a close  
up of Julia's face.

NARRATOR (OFF)  
My second mother only mothered me  
for a short time. I often think  
about her... she was very special.

We slowly pull back to reveal Julia's cold cell.

She is lying on her bed.

From her POV we see the other prisoners parading past.

A bell sounds indicating exercise time: they are walking to the yard.

Only Julia remains in her cell.

Isolated from the others, she watches them pass.

NARRATOR (OFF) (CONT.)  
I saw her fight, struggle, I saw  
her do some terrible things...

The other detainees give Julia nasty looks. Threatening her with taunts and physical gestures: miming the slice of a throat, the pulling of a trigger. One of them actually spits at her through the bars.

NARRATOR (OFF) (CONT.)  
But she always believed in me...  
she gave me a glimpse of a bigger  
world...

Julia turns away and looks towards something nondescript. She gazes into space, lost in her inner world.

NARRATOR (OFF) (CONT.)  
My second mother loved me and I  
loved my second mother.

170 - INT. LADY'S NYC APARTMENT - VARIOUS ROOMS - DAY

We are in a vast luxury apartment. Exquisitely designed and decorated as if in a spread of Architectural Digest. We pan through the entry hall, living room, dinning room following the sound a violin concerto.

NARRATOR (OFF) (CONT.)  
My third mother is teaching me  
about the bigger world...

We track into a girl's bedroom as tastefully designed as the rest of the apartment.

A bay window looks directly out over Central Park.

We see the back of young girl leaning over a mahogany desk studiously writing.

NARRATOR (OFF) (CONT.)  
She says: " 'knowledge' is the  
key to open all my doors." So, I  
work hard. And I watch. And I  
listen...

We circle around the young girl. We recognize Jenny, even though her appearance has changed completely.

Her hair is curly, fashionably styled. Her clothes are well cut, elegant and urban in no way different from other wealthy, young New Yorkers.

LADY (OFF)  
Vera, you're going to be late!

Jenny turns around. We see her speak for the very first time.

JENNY  
I'll be right there!

Her voice is indeed that of the narrator. She finishes up what she was writing in a beautiful leather-bound notebook.

Her desk is neatly organized with schoolbooks and stationary etc.. We notice an assortment of pencil drawings far more accomplished than we have previously seen. One of them is of Julia. Technically proficient, life like, unmistakable.

She closes her notebook.

NARRATOR/JENNY (OFF)  
My third mother loves me and I  
love my third mother.

171 - INT. LADY'S NYC APARTMENT - ENTRY HALL -  
AFTERNOON- DAY

The Entry Hall is as vast as the other rooms. The Lady completes the top button of Jenny's coat.

LADY  
Are you ready, darling?

JENNY  
Yes I am.

She runs her hand over Jenny's golden hair and hands her an artist's portfolio.

LADY  
What will you paint tonight dear?

JENNY  
A vase of flowers I think.

LADY  
You mean a still life.

JENNY  
Yes, still life.

They exchange a friendly smile but there is a slight reservation that exists between them.

LADY  
Be back at 6:00.

172 - EXT. CROWDED NEW YORK STREET - AFTERNOON - DAY

Jenny is heading down a bustling New York City street, noisy and hectic. Her eyes are fixed to the pavement. From time to time she is bumped by a passerby oblivious to her presence.

NARRATOR/JENNY (OFF)  
My world has changed. I should be  
happy but... "It is a beautiful  
world," my new mother says..

173 - EXT. NEW YORK RESIDENTIAL STREET - AFTERNOON -  
DAY

Walking past the entrance of an elementary school she is surrounded by dozens of small schoolchildren

NARRATOR/JENNY (OFF) (CONT.)  
She tells me I'll get used it  
with time. (pause) I'm not so  
sure.

Jenny's eyes are drawn towards one boy in particular. He is looking for his mother in the crowd of parents. He turns to face Jenny as if by some intuitive force.

We recognize young David. Despite his new haircut and his cute clothes he looks a little taller, his face a little thinner.

NARRATOR/JENNY (OFF)  
I'm different than the others.  
They've forgotten. I cant.

David looks directly at Jenny but he doesn't recognize her.

A young middle class woman steps out of a VW Bug.

David spots her and runs directly to her. He throws his arms around her waist and cries out "Mommy!"

She hugs him back.

NARRATOR/JENNY (OFF) (CONT.)  
I wanted this life.

David and his new mother walk to the VW Bug. The child climbs into the back.

NARRATOR/JENNY (OFF) (CONT.)  
And I remind myself of this  
everyday.

The VW BUG drives off. Jenny remains motionless watching it as it disappears around a corner.

Jenny turns towards the camera looking directly at it.  
At 'us.'

JENNY (CONT.)  
It is better.  
(pause)  
Right?

Her stare, impenetrable, joyless, lasts for a few seconds.

JENNY (CONT.)  
Right?

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.