

## WILDLAND

FADE IN:

SUPER – OVER BLACK

“Fleeing military conscription and religious persecution German immigrants came to the New World and were, in 1723, the first Europeans allowed to buy land. Despite Indian raids, one immigrant, Thomas Wieland, a missionary, built his family seat, Mettingen, in the wildlands of upstate New York. “

EXT. – A FOREST HAGG – AUTUMN, 1756 – DAY

Sound of twigs snapping and flashes of red moving through the tree trunks. A WHITE MAN in the tattered uniform of the British 45<sup>th</sup> emerges and looks to the sun to get his bearings. A rope hooked to a ring on his belt and trailing into the woods, falls slack.

He jerks on the rope and a NATIVE WOMAN, her hands secured to the rope and a filthy rag binding her mouth, emerges from the wood and falls to her knees.

The Man unclips a gourd from his belt and raises it to his lips. Muffled cries from the Native Woman. He glances back at her, drinks, then secures the gourd and walks on. The Native Woman staggers to her feet.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. – A FOREST HAGG – EARLY SUMMER, 1773 – DAY

SUPER: “Seventeen years later and no less wild.”

The trees green up. There is now a primitive road along the same treeline. In EXTREME LONG SHOT, two gentlewomen with baskets. One’s caution over the ruts and furrows and the other’s buoyant step tell us that one is older or at least more reserved. This is CLARA WIELAND, approaching thirty and LOUISA CONWAY, about seventeen.

They walk a few paces. Clara suddenly stops and turns to look at the woods. Louisa continues walking in her energetic manner, unaware Clara has stopped.

LOUISA

. . . after all not every bridegroom gets a ready-made family with an orphan and an unwed sister which is why we *both* should visit the fortune teller . . . because, well, have you any prospects?