THE FALL

by

Aaron Ridenour
A scratchy song from a cheap TOY MUSIC BOX begins to play multiple times.

TOY MUSIC BOX (V.O.)
Ring around a rosy, a pocket full of posies. Ashes, ashes, we all fall down.

FADE IN:

EXT. CROWE RESIDENCE - NIGHT

A white, two-story house sits on a quiet street, a soft wind moving through the surrounding trees.

SUPER: "OCTOBER 8, 1993."

TOY MUSIC BOX (V.O.)
Ring around a rosy, a pocket full of posies. Ashes, ashes, we all fall...

INT. CROWE RESIDENCE - NIGHT

A dish crashes to the floor.

TOY MUSIC BOX (O.S.)
...down.

SUSAN CROWE stares at the broken dish on the kitchen floor.

She shakes her head as she bends down and picks up the broken pieces. The song continues to play from the cheap toy music box somewhere close by.

SUSAN
Danny, would you please turn that thing off and get upstairs and brush your teeth.

DANIEL CROWE, a 6-year-old boy, sits cross-legged on the living room floor, happily listening to the scratchy song as it emanates from the cheap toy music box.

He turns in response to his mother’s command.

DANIEL
(frustrated)
Can’t I stay up and watch TV with Daddy?
Susan stops collecting the broken dish pieces as she stares curiously at Daniel from the kitchen.

SUSAN
What is he watching?

DANIEL
"X-Folders."

SUSAN
You mean "X-Files?"

DANIEL
Yeah!

SUSAN
Absolutely not! That’s too scary for you. Besides, it’s time for you to go to bed.

DANIEL
It’s not too scary, Mommy! I’ve watched it before!

SUSAN
And you had nightmares for a week. We’re not doing that again.

DANIEL
But I want to watch it!

Susan sighs as she stomps into the living room and glares at her husband.

WALTER CROWE sits lazily in his recliner, his eyes fixed on the television.

SUSAN
Walter!

Walter jolts as he turns to face Susan.

WALTER
Hm?

SUSAN
Please be a father and do something.

Walter glances at Daniel briefly before turning back to the television.
WALTER
Danny, listen to your mother.

Susan, who was returning to the kitchen, jerks around suddenly.

SUSAN
Walter!

Walter turns to give his full attention to Daniel.

WALTER
(frustrated)
Danny, get upstairs and get ready for bed!

Daniel stands up from the living room floor.

DANIEL
(angrily)
I never get to stay up late!

WALTER
I’m not going to ask you again!

Daniel clenches his fists and begins stomping across the living room toward the staircase.

DANIEL
I’m going.

WALTER
3...2...

DANIEL
I’m going!

INT. CROWE RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Several minutes later, Susan walks up the stairs and down the hallway.

She passes her daughter’s bedroom where 16-year-old BRIDGETTE CROWE lays peacefully on her bed studying a textbook. Music plays softly from a nearby radio.

Susan gently knocks on the bedroom door.

SUSAN
Bridgette?

Bridgette looks over her shoulder to speak to her mother.
BRIDGETTE
Yeah?

SUSAN
How long are you planning on staying up, honey?

Bridgette glances through the pages of her textbook as she contemplates her answer.

BRIDGETTE
I need to finish reading this last chapter for history and then I need to study for my biology test. I’ll probably be done in an hour.

SUSAN
Okay. Let me know if you need anything.

BRIDGETTE
Alright, thanks Mom.

Susan continues walking down the hallway.

She hesitates slightly as she approaches Daniel’s room and then moves quietly to position her head close to his door. Daniel’s voice can be heard coming through the door.

DANIEL (O.S.)
I spoke with her during reading time today, but Mrs. Nolan caught me.

Susan listens through the door.

DANIEL (O.S.)
I’m going to try to sit next to her tomorrow, but I don’t know if my teacher will let me. Last week when Mrs. Nolan caught me, I had to...

Susan knocks on the door.

SUSAN
Daniel?

Daniel stops speaking, but does not respond.

Susan opens the door. Daniel sits on his bed next to his bedroom window, the rain gently hitting the glass.

They stare at each other briefly before Daniel responds.
DANIEL
What?

SUSAN
Who were you talking to, sweetie?

DANIEL
No one, Mom.

Susan stares curiously at Daniel for several seconds in silence.

SUSAN
It’s time for bed. Lights out.

DANIEL
Just 10 more minutes?

SUSAN
Five more minutes.

DANIEL
Alright.

Susan begins to close Daniel’s bedroom door.

SUSAN
And I mean five more minutes tonight.

DANIEL
Alright!

Susan turns to walk down the hallway, but stops and looks back over her shoulder at Daniel’s bedroom door.

DANIEL (O.S.)
I wish I never had to go to sleep. Do you ever go to sleep?

Daniel pauses briefly.

DANIEL (O.S.)
My parents hardly ever let me stay up...and my mom doesn’t let me watch scary movies. Do you have parents?

Susan slowly turns and continues walking down the hallway and down the staircase as Daniel continues to speak.

She enters the living room where Walter sits on the edge of his seat as he watches television.
Susan plants herself on the nearby couch.

SUSAN
We need to talk.

Walter’s eyes never leave the television.

WALTER
About?

SUSAN
Danny.

WALTER
Is he asleep?

SUSAN
He’s talking to himself again.

WALTER
Hold on, it’s about to go to a commercial.

Susan sighs and waits impatiently for Walter’s show to go to a commercial break. She quietly runs her hand across her dress draped across her knees, trying to smooth several wrinkles located on the bottom of her dress.

After about 20 seconds, Walter’s show goes to commercial and he turns to face Susan as he mutes the television with his remote.

WALTER
He’s been doing that every night for about a week now, hasn’t he?

SUSAN
Two weeks. I want to call his pediatrician tomorrow and get his opinion.

WALTER
Do you want me to call Steve tomorrow and get his opinion?

SUSAN
Steve?

WALTER
Steve Preston. He works over at Washington State University in the psychology department.
SUSAN
Yeah, if you don’t mind.

WALTER
No, I don’t mind. I’ll call him tomorrow morning on my way to work.

SUSAN
Don’t get in a wreck! I hate it when you talk on the car phone and drive at the same time.

WALTER
I’m not going to get in a wreck, honey.

SUSAN
Just call him from work.

WALTER
I won’t get in a wreck if I call him during the drive!

SUSAN
Please just call him from work.

WALTER
Fine, I’ll call him from work.

SUSAN
Thanks.

Susan stands from the couch.

SUSAN
How long are you planning on staying up?

Walter glances at a clock on a nearby wall before answering.

WALTER
I’ll be up in about 15 minutes after my show is over.

SUSAN
Okay. Goodnight.

Susan walks across the living room toward the staircase.

WALTER
Goodnight, honey.

Walter uses his remote to un-mute the television, a MALE VOICE filling the room.
MALE (O.S.)
I understand that humans are the
top carnivore, but what if
something entered the food chain
above us?

INT. CROWE RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Several hours later the Crowe residence is completely quiet,
except for the quiet ticking of a grandfather clock. All the
lights are off downstairs.

The alarm clock reads "3:07 AM." A sound downstairs startles
Susan out of her sleep.

She sits upright in bed and waits for several seconds,
listening intently for the sound to occur again. Just as she
is about to go back to sleep, she hears another sound.

She quietly shakes Walter.

SUSAN
Walter! Walter!

Several seconds pass before Walter is coherent enough to
respond.

WALTER
What?

SUSAN
Someone’s moving downstairs!

Walter sighs and buries his head once again into his pillow.

WALTER
It’s probably just Bridgette
getting something out of the
fridge.

SUSAN
At 3:00 in the morning?!

Walter moans as he pushes the comforter off his body, grabs
a tattered robe from a nearby chair, and mutters something
to himself as he moves toward the bedroom door.

Walter covers his mouth as he yawns and makes his way down
the dark staircase.

As he turns the corner, he freezes in the living room.

Walter sees the front door gaping wide open.
He quickly looks around as he steps back and returns up the staircase.

Walter re-enters his bedroom and quickly walks to his closet where he retrieves a small handgun and begins loading the firearm. He does not look at Susan as he quietly loads the pistol.

Susan is frozen on the bed.

SUSAN
What is it?!

Walter continues to load the handgun. He does not look at Susan as he responds.

WALTER
Get Danny and Bridgette, lock yourself in the back room, and call 911.

SUSAN
Talk to me Walter, what’s going on?!

Walter retrieves a small flashlight from his closet.

He then crosses the room and looks right at Susan.

WALTER
The front door is sitting wide open.

SUSAN
Oh God!

Walter places a hand on Susan’s arm and looks her straight in the eye.

WALTER
Get the kids...call the police.

Susan grabs the portable phone as Walter enters the hallway and quietly makes his way down the staircase, the flashlight and handgun drawn in front of him.

He peaks around the corner of the living room at the front door still sitting wide open.

Walter moves in the opposite direction through the dark living room and into the nearby family room, checking each corner carefully as he moves through the darkness.
He freezes about halfway through the family room when he hears a faint, scratchy song playing from somewhere else in the house.

    TOY MUSIC BOX (O.S.)
    Ring around a rosy, a pocket full of posies...

Susan rushes into Bridgette’s room and hunches by Bridgette’s bed side, shaking her frantically.

    SUSAN
    Bridgette. Bridgette, honey, I need you to come with me.

Bridgette lays motionless as she responds.

    BRIDGETTE
    What?

Walter enters the dining room from the family room, the gun and flashlight still drawn in front of him.

His hands are shaking slightly. The scratchy song continues to play from somewhere in the house.

    TOY MUSIC BOX (O.S.)
    Ring around a rosy, a pocket full of posies. Ashes...

Susan now shakes Bridgette more furiously than before.

    SUSAN
    I need you to get up right now.

Bridgette sits up in bed as she rubs her eyes.

    BRIDGETTE
    Mom, it’s three in the morning!

Susan briefly covers Bridgette’s mouth.

    BRIDGETTE
    What’s going on?

    SUSAN
    Someone’s in the house. We need to get Daniel.

Susan takes Bridgette by the hand and heads for the bedroom door.

Walter exits the dining room and enters the hallway near the open front door.
He pauses for a brief second before the scratchy song continues to play.

TOY MUSIC BOX (O.S.)
Ring around a rosy, a pocket full of posies. Ashes, ashes, we all fall down.

He steadily makes his way down the hallway toward the garage door as the song continues to play.

TOY MUSIC BOX (O.S.)
Ring around a rosy, a pocket...

Susan and Bridgette enter Daniel’s room.

Susan rushes over to Daniel’s bed.

SUSAN
Daniel.

The bed is empty.

Susan frantically glances around the room.

SUSAN
Daniel? Where’s Daniel?

Walter reaches the garage door.

The scratchy song continues to play as he gradually reaches for the door handle, his hand trembling while still keeping the gun drawn in his other hand.

TOY MUSIC BOX (O.S.)
...ashes, we all fall down.

Walter pulls the garage door open and stares into the darkness of the garage.

He remains motionless for several seconds with his gun pointing into the darkness as the song continues to play, the light from his flashlight circling the garage.

TOY MUSIC BOX (O.S.)
Ring around a rosy, a pocket full of posies...

Susan and Bridgette stand in Daniel’s room as Susan anxiously dials 911. She breathes heavily as she waits for someone to pick-up the phone. 911 DISPATCH responds after a few rings.
911 DISPATCH (O.S.)
911 dispatch. What is your emergency?

SUSAN
Hello! Someone’s in our home and my son is missing!

911 DISPATCH (O.S.)
Ma’am, I need you to calm down and give me your name and address.

SUSAN
My name is Susan Crowe and I live at 1226 Springfield Drive in Granite Falls.

Walter fumbles with one hand for the light switch in the garage while keeping the handgun drawn. He quickly turns the light on and scans the room for any intruder.

He finds the cheap toy music box sitting on the garage floor under his car, continuously playing the scratchy song.

Susan and Bridgette still stand in Daniel’s room. Susan remains on the phone with 911 dispatch.

SUSAN
Please hurry! I don’t know where my son is!

911 DISPATCH (O.S.)
Where are you currently at in the home, Susan?

SUSAN
I’m standing in my son’s bedroom with my daughter, Bridgette!

Walter slowly bends down and turns the toy music box off.

As soon as the scratchy song ceases to play, the lights in the garage turn off and the garage door is slams shut behind Walter as he yells.

WALTER
Hey!

Walter scrambles to the garage door and twists the door handle to discover that he has been locked in the garage.

He bangs on the door several times in frustration before attempting to turn the lights back on. The lights do not come back on.
Walter desperately switches the light switch on and off with no success.

He begins banging on the door and yelling.

    WALTER
    Hey! Hey!

Susan and Bridgette stand in Daniel’s room where Susan continues to speak with 911 dispatch.

    SUSAN
    I’m locking the door right now! Bridgette, get in Danny’s closet and close the door!

    BRIDGETTE
    No! I’m staying right here with you!

    SUSAN
    Get in the closet right now! I don’t have time to argue!

Bridgette moves quickly across Daniel’s room and climbs into the dark closet.

She carefully closes the door behind her and stares into Daniel’s bedroom through the small slits in the closet door.

Susan remains on the phone, listening intently to the 911 dispatcher when she hears something walking down the hallway.

She turns and freezes when she sees a dark shadow parked in front of Daniel’s bedroom door partially blocking the light radiating from the hallway.

Susan drops to the floor, fumbling with the portable phone as she crawls backwards toward the wall near the window.

The 911 dispatcher can still be heard on the phone as Susan stares at the dark figure that remains motionless on the other side of the bedroom door.

    911 DISPATCH (O.S.)
    Susan? Susan, are you there? Susan?

As Susan sits terrified with her back against the wall, her hand runs across some scratches in the wood floor of Daniel’s room.

She looks down to see that the scratches run from the window where she is sitting to the closet.
She is frozen in terror as she barely whispers.

SUSAN
Bridgette.

Bridgette sits puzzled in the dark closet as she stares at her mother’s frozen expression through the slits.

She hears a faint WHINE behind her.

She slowly turns to face the back of the closet. Six eyes can be seen staring at her as they catch the faint light coming through the slits of the closet door.

Bridgette barely has any time to scream as the dark figure lunges at her in the closet.

Susan unleashes a bloodcurdling scream as the closet door shatters into a thousand splinters.

Susan covers her face to protect herself from the air of debris and is struck by a heavy object that lands on the floor beside her.

Susan uncovers her face to find the broken body of Bridgette lying motionless next to her on the floor.

She begins to go into shock as a monstrous dark figure swiftly moves across the room from the closet. The creature overtakes Susan lying on the floor.

Walter hears the commotion upstairs and unloads three rounds of his handgun into the garage door near the door handle.

He shoulders the door, breaking the handle with his force and goes sprinting for the staircase.

As he reaches the staircase, Walter looks up to find Daniel standing at the top of the stairs.

WALTER
Danny? Are you alright?

Six eyes suddenly appear behind Daniel standing at the top of the stairs.

Walter frantically raises his handgun toward the eyes.

WALTER
Danny, get out of the way!

Daniel does not move as his father continues to point the gun in his direction.
Suddenly the creature moves around Daniel and quickly moves toward Walter standing at the bottom of the staircase.

Walter manages to unload a couple rounds into the dark figure before being struck and thrown across the living room, crashing into the nearby china cabinet.

Walter barely has enough time to hit the ground before the dark figure lands on top of him.

A thousand sharp objects pierce his body and the sound of several ribs breaking simultaneously echo through the living room as Walter gasps for air.

As Walter attempts to breathe, he looks over to see Daniel standing in the center of the living room.

Walter uses what is left of his strength to utter one final command.

    WALTER
    Danny...run.

Daniel slowly turns and quietly walks out of the living room and through the broken garage door.

Several seconds pass before Daniel returns carrying the toy music box in his hands. Without looking at the music box, he quietly turns the toy on.

    TOY MUSIC BOX
    Ring around a rosy, a pocket full of posies...

Walter looks up into the six eyes staring down at his broken body.

He gasps for air one last time before the dark figure finishes breaking the majority of the bones in his chest.

Walter’s body lays motionless on the living room floor as the scratchy song finishes playing.

    TOY MUSIC BOX
    ...ashes, ashes, we all fall down.

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPER: "THE FALL."

BLACK SCREEN

The voice of DETECTIVE RYAN CARSON, a 48-year-old police veteran, can be heard.
DETECTIVE CARSON (O.S.)
James? James?

Detective Carson snaps his fingers as though he is attempting to get someone’s attention.

DETECTIVE CARSON (O.S.)
James?

FADE IN:

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Detective Carson snaps his fingers. JAMES SORENSON, an 8-year-old boy, sits motionless near the end of a long table in a dimly lit room.

James clutches a worn book to his chest, his eyes fixed on the table in front of him.

Detective Carson sits in a chair next to the long table.

SUPER: "SEPTEMBER 27, 2011."

James’ eyes do not move from the table.

DETECTIVE CARSON
James, I’m Detective Carson. Would you like me to get you anything? Maybe some food? We have a vending machine down the hall.

James continues to sit motionless, his eyes seemingly never blinking or leaving the dark surface of the table.

DETECTIVE CARSON
When was the last time you ate anything, son?

James does not move or respond.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Can I let you in on a little secret?

Detective Carson leans in a little closer to James and speaks quietly.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Janet downstairs makes the best hot chocolate I’ve ever had. If you want, I’ll head downstairs right now and ask her to make you some.
James continues to sit motionless.

DETECTIVE CARSON
James, I know the last several days have been...hard, but I need to know everything you remember about what happened in the forest.

James does not move.

Detective Carson sits motionless as well, his eyes fixed on James for several seconds before he slides pictures of different individuals across the table toward James.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Where is your sister, Ashley?

James continues to sit motionless.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Where is your sister’s boyfriend, Adam Ducane?

James does not move, his eyes still squarely fixed on the table in front of him.

DETECTIVE CARSON
James, please. I need to know what happened to everyone.

EXT. SORENSON RESIDENCE DRIVEWAY - DAY

A Land Rover sits in front of a large home.

SUPER: "4 DAYS AGO."

James sits quietly in the backseat of the Land Rover, lazily staring through one of the side windows as 27-year-old ADAM DUCANE opens the driver-side door and slides into the seat.

Adam checks around to see if he retrieved everything he needed for the trip. Adam then turns to face James.

ADAM
Jimmy, you have everything you need?

James turns away from the window to face Adam.

JAMES
Yeah.
Adam nods briefly in approval and turns to look out the driver-side window, his fingers anxiously tapping on the steering wheel. Several seconds pass in silence.

ADAM
What’s taking your sister so long?

JAMES
She’s always late.

Adam laughs to himself briefly as he turns to face James.

ADAM
I guess I better get used to that.
What is that you’re holding?

James glances down at the worn, black book sitting in his lap.

JAMES
My sketchbook.

ADAM
You like to draw?

JAMES
Yeah.

ADAM
What kinds of things do you like to draw?

JAMES
I like drawing cars and things like that. I also like drawing pictures of my friends.

ADAM
May I see?

James hands the worn, black sketchbook to Adam.

Adam spends a few seconds glancing through James’ drawings before speaking.

ADAM
Wow, Jimmy, you’re really good. How old are you?

JAMES
8...but I’ll be 9 next month.
ADAM
9...that’s a huge milestone. You’re a lot better than I am at drawing and I’m 27.

JAMES
You’re old.

Adam continues to look through James’ sketches.

ADAM
Thanks. What kind of car is that?

James leans his head between the two front seats to get a better look at the drawings.

JAMES
It’s a futuristic car. I drew it during math class last year.

ADAM
Math class was always kind of boring.

JAMES
I hate math. Mrs. Anderson always smells like moth balls and old medicine!

ADAM
(confused)
What does old medicine smell like?

JAMES
You don’t want to know.

Adam continues to look through the sketches.

ADAM
And who’s this?

JAMES
My mom and dad...at the cabin by the lake.

ADAM
And this?

JAMES
That’s my friend Rory.
ADAM
He’s a friend at school?

JAMES
No. I usually hang out with him after school.

ADAM
Does he actually look like that? I mean with the teeth and...

ASHLEY SORENSON, James’ 25-year-old sister, opens the passenger-side door and slides into the front seat of the truck.

She is breathing heavily as she clicks her seat belt into place.

ADAM
There you are!

ASHLEY
I know, I know. I just didn’t want to forget anything.

ADAM
You always forget something.

ASHLEY
I know! I hate it when I miss something important.

ADAM
Jimmy, is your seat belt on?

JAMES
Yes.

ADAM
Alright, let’s get going. I can only imagine what type of mood Sam will be in when we show up late.

Adam turns the key and throws the truck into gear.

EXT. PARKING LOT NEAR THE FOREST - DAY

SAMANTHA TAYLOR and DANE EASTMAN sit quietly in the cab of their truck. Samantha’s fingers tap obnoxiously on the steering wheel.

Dane is slouching in his seat, his head gently resting against the back of his seat.
SAMANTHA
What time is it?

Dane keeps his head motionless on the back of his seat as he raises his arm to his head to glance at his watch.

DANE
7:59.

SAMANTHA
They’re going to be late.

Dane continues to rest his head on the back of his seat with his eyes closed.

DANE
Getting a little anxious?

SAMANTHA
Not as much as I am exhausted.

DANE
Late night?

SAMANTHA
Working on a project that’s due early Monday morning.

Samantha glances into the nearby forest.

SAMANTHA
Although, my team didn’t seem to find it important to get the project done last night.

DANE
Or they were just tired of getting bossed around.

SAMANTHA
I’m not bossy! I just like to be in charge.

DANE
That makes a lot of sense.

Several seconds pass in silence.

SAMANTHA
What’s the time?
DANE
8:01.

SAMANTHA
They’re late.

Dane laughs to himself briefly.

DANE
I knew they would be.

SAMANTHA
Then why’d we get here so early?

DANE
It’s fun watching you get anxious.

SAMANTHA
Jerk.

Dane laughs silently as Samantha stews in her seat. They both sit quietly for several seconds before Dane lets out a huge yawn. Samantha glances over at him, still disgusted by the situation.

SAMANTHA
Why the heck are you yawning?

DANE
I’m not much of a morning person--plus I got dragged along to some stupid horror movie late last night with some friends from work.

SAMANTHA
How was it?

Dane leans up and rubs his eyes as he speaks.

DANE
Same old story. Teenage girl gets a creepy phone call--for some reason these people never have caller ID--she runs upstairs instead of running to the neighbors...somebody dies while taking a shower...the boyfriend gets killed...the killer turns out to be somebody from the girl’s past...the whole thing was pretty predictable.

Samantha shakes her head.
SAMANTHA
I probably wouldn’t like it. I hate horror movies.

DANE
I don’t think you’d like it either. Just once I’d like to see a horror movie that’s...you know...unpredictable.

Samantha glances in the rear view mirror and notices Adam’s truck approaching through the parking lot.

SAMANTHA
Here they come.

Samantha and Dane exit their vehicle and begin to approach Adam, Ashley, and James as they pull their backpacks and equipment from the back of the truck.

SAMANTHA
You guys are late!

DANE
Here we go again.

Adam continues to retrieve equipment from the back of the truck.

ADAM
(puzzled)
What time is it?

Dane briefly glances at his watch as he helps Adam retrieve equipment from the back of the truck.

DANE
8:07...and 39 seconds.

Samantha stares coldly at Dane as she awaits Adam’s response.

ADAM
We were meeting at 8:00, right?

SAMANTHA
Yes.

ADAM
So...what’s the issue?
Samantha shakes her head as she turns to head back to her vehicle to retrieve her backpack and equipment.

As she begins to retrieve her equipment, a third car arrives.

CHRIS MILLER and TRAY MAXWELL exit the vehicle.

CHRIS
Hey.

Adam and Dane acknowledge Chris and Tray as they check their equipment.

ADAM AND DANE
Hey.

ASHLEY
Hey, Chris.

CHRIS
Hey, guys, this is my friend Tray. He’s the one who told me about the place that we’ll be hiking to.

Adam shakes Tray’s hand as he speaks.

ADAM
It’s nice to finally meet you. Chris can’t stop talking about you. He thinks you’re the perfect roommate.

TRAY
Good to know.

Dane shakes Tray’s hand.

DANE
I’ve heard it’s really easy to get lost on the different trails going into the park from this direction, is that true?

TRAY
If you’re not careful and unfamiliar with the territory, then yeah you could get lost pretty easily.
DANE
Have you ever been up this trail before?

TRAY
Yes.

ASHLEY
How many times?

Tray shrugs.

TRAY
A few times over the last several years.

Tray notices that Ashley is staring at him with a concerned expression on her face. He laughs to himself briefly.

TRAY
Don’t worry. There are several places on the different trails where there’s almost universal cell phone reception. We’ll be fine.

Chris rummages through a backpack on the ground.

CHRIS
Tray, have you seen my camera lens?

TRAY
Which one?

CHRIS
The 300mm 2.8.

Tray stares at Chris with a puzzled look on his face as Chris changes his explanation.

CHRIS
The big one that’s about this long.

TRAY
Check the back seat of the car. I think it’s sitting in there.

Ashley is also rummaging through her backpack nearby.

ASHLEY
Crap!
DANE
What?

ASHLEY
I forgot my toothbrush!

Adam, already wearing his backpack, is helping James secure his backpack nearby. He shakes his head slightly.

ADAM
We’re not going back for it.

ASHLEY
What am I supposed to do? We’re going to be up there for two days.

DANE
Use your finger.

ASHLEY
No, that’s gross.

ADAM
It’s called camping.

ASHLEY
I don’t know how I let you talk me into this.

Dane moves close to Adam.

DANE
(whispering)
She’s never been camping before, has she?

ADAM
No.

Ashley continues to search frantically through her backpack as Samantha, Chris, and Tray approach the group with their equipment, ready to begin the hike.

Adam rocks on his heels for a few seconds before he speaks.

ADAM
Just don’t brush then. No one will care.

DANE AND JAMES
I care!

Ashley finally closes her backpack in frustration and approaches the waiting group.
As she approaches, BLAKE TANNER, a 61-year-old park ranger, exits the trail onto the parking lot.

He freezes for a brief second, a quizzical look stretched across his face. A wry smile then pulls at the corner of his mouth after analyzing the group as he quietly walks toward them.

His hand extends toward Tray.

BLAKE
How are you doing, Tray?

TRAY
It’s good to see you, Blake.

Blake then turns and addresses the rest of the group.

BLAKE
Tray here knows the forest on this side of the park better than anyone else. You’ll be in good hands.

ADAM
How has the weather been up here?

BLAKE
It was a bit cloudy earlier this week, but it’s been sunny the last couple days.

ASHLEY
Ever had anyone get lost or stranded on this side of the park?

Adam lets out a small sigh.

ADAM
Ash...

ASHLEY
What? I’m just asking.

Blake chuckles.

BLAKE
As long as you’ve got Tray with you, you’ll be just fine. Also, there’s a ranger station just down the road here about a half mile if you need anything.
ASHLEY
Thanks.

CHRIS
Would you mind taking a picture of the group before we take off?

Blake hesitates for a brief second before he answers.

BLAKE
Certainly.

Samantha, Tray, Dane, Chris, Adam, Ashley, and James group together as Blake curiously examines the camera.

BLAKE
This is a little more high tech than my camera. Do I just press this button right here?

CHRIS
The other button...the one right next to it. There you go. The auto focus should be turned on, so you don’t need to worry about it.

BLAKE
Alright, everyone smile.

Chris retrieves his camera from Blake after the picture is taken.

CHRIS
Thanks.

BLAKE
Don’t mention it.

Blake turns toward Tray.

BLAKE
It was good to see you again, Tray.

TRAY
You, too, Blake.

Blake motions toward the rest of the group as he climbs into his truck.

BLAKE
Take care of them while you’re out there.
TRAY
I will.

Blake smiles as he turns the key, backs his truck from the parking space, and quickly drives away from the parking lot.

The group watches as his truck rounds the corner and disappears through the trees.

SAMANTHA
Are we just going to camp here in the parking lot or are we actually going to the campsite?

ADAM
Why? Are we supposed to be there by 8:24?

DANE
Good one.

Samantha turns away from the group and begins to walk toward the trail. Chris and Tray follow behind, Chris checking his camera as he walks.

Dane walks past Adam to follow Samantha.

DANE
I guess she wasn’t amused.

Ashley walks swiftly toward the departing group. James follows closely behind her as Adam briefly looks around the parking lot to see if they forgot anything and then turns toward the trail.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Detective Carson sits quietly with James in the observation room. There is a quiet knock on the door as 32-year-old DETECTIVE NICK JONES quietly pokes his head into the room and makes eye contact with Detective Carson.

Detective Carson begins to stand from his chair.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Would you excuse me for a second, James?

Detective Carson quietly joins Detective Jones in the observation room and stands beside him, both their eyes fixed on James, still sitting motionless in his chair, through the observation window.
DETECTIVE CARSON
Has anyone reached the boy’s parents?

DETECTIVE JONES
Tom just spoke with them on the phone. They’re on their way.

DETECTIVE CARSON
What about each of the other families?

DETECTIVE JONES
Tom is currently calling the other parents as we speak. Forensics is still at the park attempting to find any other evidence, but they haven’t found anything else besides the shoe. Still no bodies. They’ve swept a half mile radius outside the initial campsite and still no new information.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Those kids are still out in those woods somewhere. Tell the team to increase the radius to two miles and sweep the area again.

Detective Jones turns to leave.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Also, contact Roland over in county and do whatever you can to get a chopper up there as well. What about that child psychologist they were going to send down. Dr. Mangum?

DETECTIVE JONES
Dr. Mangum is currently out of town, so they’re sending down Dr. Grey. She’ll be here within the hour.

DETECTIVE CARSON
I’m going to wait with the kid until she arrives.

DETECTIVE JONES
I’m meeting with the park ranger who filed the missing persons report in a few minutes.
DETECTIVE CARSON
Please let me know if you discover anything interesting.

DETECTIVE JONES
You got it.

Detective Jones quickly exits the room as Detective Carson slowly steps back into the waiting room where James sits motionless and closes the door.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Tray, Dane, Samantha, Chris, Ashley, James, and Adam exit the forest into a small clearing that is partially shaded by the surrounding trees.

Dane retrieves his water bottle from his backpack before dropping to the ground. He then drinks from the water bottle before speaking.

DANE
That’s a good workout getting up here.

Tray looks around the clearing.

TRAY
Five miles.

SAMANTHA
How long did that take us?

Dane wipes sweat from the face of his watch before he is able to see the time.

DANE
A little over five hours. It probably wouldn’t have taken as long if Chris hadn’t stopped every 10 seconds to take a picture of a leaf.

Chris gives Dane a sharp look as he carefully drops his backpack to the ground.

CHRIS
You’ll thank me later.

DANE
You’re right, because I frequently need pictures of 50 different
DANE leaves at my staff meeting on a weekly basis.

Adam, who was at the rear of the line, drops his backpack next to Dane as he drinks from a water bottle.

ADAM I know I do.

Color rushes to Chris’ face.

CHRIS I wasn’t stopping every 10 seconds. And besides, it was Jimmy who kept stopping to take breaks.

Ashley, who was ignoring the bantering altogether, gives Chris a cold look.

ASHLEY That’s great, blame my younger brother. Blame an 8-year-old.

Chris’ eyes quickly drop to the ground.

CHRIS (embarrassed) I didn’t mean to...it’s just that he was the one taking breaks and...

With a smile on his face, Dane places a hand softly on Chris’ shoulder.

DANE (whispering) Maybe just stick to taking pictures.

Dane briefly gives Chris a pat on the stomach before he turns to walk over toward Samantha, who is now setting up one of the tents nearby.

CHRIS Thanks. Thanks for the support.

Samantha, who has not been paying attention at all to the conversation, now sits up from assembling one of the tents and brushes her hair out of her face.

SAMANTHA Chris, would you and Tray set-up the other tent?
CHRIS
Not now, I won’t.

DANE
Oh, c’mon dude, we were just joking.

CHRIS
I’ll be back later.

Chris begins to retrieve additional camera equipment from his backpack as Samantha stops working on constructing her own tent.

SAMANTHA
Chris, c’mon...grow-up, get over it, and help us out!

Chris does not turn his head to look at anyone as he walks into the forest; pieces of various camera equipment in his hands.

CHRIS
Why don’t you tell them to grow-up?

Adam continues to drink from his water bottle as Chris walks into the forest. He turns to look at Dane.

ADAM
I’m an adult.

DANE
Stuck with a 12-year-old boy’s body.

ADAM
Shut-up. At least I don’t look like Tom Arnold...on a bad day.

DANE
No, you actually look like Meryl Streep...when she was 10.

Ashley desperately searches through her backpack as Adam and Dane continue to converse. She shakes her head.

ASHLEY
(frustrated)
Did anyone happen to bring an extra toothbrush?

Tray walks over to where Samantha continues to construct her own tent and drops his backpack from his shoulders.
TRAY
What do you want me to do?

Samantha looks around the clearing.

SAMANTHA
(confused)
Did Chris actually leave?

TRAY
Yeah, he’s gone.

Samantha lets out a brief sigh as she shakes her head.

She then looks at James sitting about 15 feet away from her. James has already retrieved his sketchbook from his backpack and is quietly drawing.

SAMANTHA
Jimmy.

James looks up from his sketchbook.

SAMANTHA
Would you please help Tray set-up the other tent?

JAMES
Okay.

As James places his sketchbook back into his backpack, Samantha looks at Ashley who is carefully shuffling through her backpack; still looking for the presence of a possible toothbrush.

SAMANTHA
Ash, would you please help me with this tent? Dane and Adam, you guys get the fire going?

Adam and Dane, who have continued to banter concerning each others’ physical appearance, now begin walking passed Samantha laughing at each other as they walk into the forest.

ADAM
Fire by 2:28!

SAMANTHA
What was that?!
ADAM
Nothing.

DANE
Reprimanded by 2:30!

SAMANTHA
I heard that!

ADAM
The woman has bionic hearing.

Dane, laughing to himself, begins to speak in his best Obi-Wan Kenobi voice.

DANE
She’s more machine now than man.

ADAM
Twisted and evil.

SAMANTHA
Just get the fire going.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Blake sits quietly in a waiting room for several seconds before Detective Jones enters the room.

DETECTIVE JONES
Mr. Tanner?

BLAKE
Yes.

Detective Jones closes the door behind him before he crosses the room and sits in a chair across the table from Blake.

Detective Jones retrieves a notepad and pen from his jacket pocket as he looks at Blake.

DETECTIVE JONES
I’m Detective Nick Jones. Is it alright if I call you Blake?

BLAKE
Of course...and anything I can do to help with your investigation, please let me know.

DETECTIVE JONES
Thank you.
Detective Jones carefully inspects some previous notes from his notepad.

DETECTIVE JONES
Now, I understand you were present at the parking lot on the morning when the group left, is that correct?

BLAKE
Yes. I had just finished my rounds on my designated trails when I returned to the parking lot.

Detective Jones writes notes in his notepad as they converse.

DETECTIVE JONES
And that was at what time?

Blake stares at the table for a brief second.

BLAKE
Oh, it must have been around...8:30 that morning.

DETECTIVE JONES
How many were in the group?

BLAKE
Six.

DETECTIVE JONES
And did they say where they were going?

BLAKE
No. We only spoke briefly before they left. Nice group of kids, though.

DETECTIVE JONES
Did you notice anything unusual about the group?

Several seconds pass as Blake ponders the question.

BLAKE
No, not that I can recall.

DETECTIVE JONES
And, if I'm understanding correctly, you filed the report on Monday morning around 11:00 AM?
BLAKE
Yes.

DETECTIVE JONES
Why did you wait until Monday morning to call the police?

BLAKE
I was off Sunday, so when I returned Monday morning it was unusual that their cars were still there. Most visitors that hike that side of the park are usually gone by Monday...because of work or what not. That’s when I called it in.

DETECTIVE JONES
How long have you been working for the park, Blake?

BLAKE
Oh, I’d say it’s been...about...20 years.

DETECTIVE JONES
That’s a long time to working for the park service.

BLAKE
(jokingly)
What can I say? I’m connected to the forest.

DETECTIVE JONES
Well, thank you for your time, Blake.

BLAKE
Anytime. Please let me know if there’s anything else I can do to help.

Detective Jones returns his notepad and pen to his jacket pocket.

DETECTIVE JONES
I’m sure we’ll be in touch.

As Blake stands from the table, a small grimace crosses his face as he slightly grabs his thigh.
DETECTIVE JONES
Everything alright?

Blake begins to make his way to the door.

BLAKE
Yeah, it’s just like you said.

Blake turns to face Detective Jones as he reaches the exit. A small smile stretches across Blake’s face.

BLAKE
20 years is a long time to be working for the park service.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Adam, Ashley, James, Dane, Chris, Samantha, and Tray sit lazily around a campfire laughing with each other.

Dane is in the middle sharing a story with the rest of the group as the scene opens.

DANE
...so I’ve got this wet toilet paper mixed with fake blood covering my entire face and I’m chasing Adam clear across campus from the testing center and he’s running as fast as he possibly can trying to get out of there...I mean he’s already dropped his backpack so it wouldn’t slow him down and he’s just running for dear life...

Everyone laughs around the circle, including Adam whose face is noticeably bright red in the light of the fire.

ADAM
I can’t believe you did that. I’d just finished the worst biology test of my life.

SAMANTHA
So what happened?

DANE
So he’s running as fast as he can across campus and finally he sees some campus police dude just strolling through one of the buildings close to one of the
DANE
entrances...so Adam runs up to the
door and starts banging on the door
as if his life depended on it...

ADAM
It did at the time!

DANE
So I duck through some of the
nearby bushes and start
high-tailing it back to the
apartment before the cop notices
I’m there and...what did you say to
him, anyway?

Adam stares at the blazing fire in front of him for a brief
second.

ADAM
I can’t remember exactly...but I do
remember he wanted to take me down
to the police station and have me
take a drug test.

DANE
So I run clear back to the
apartment...Chris is sitting in the
front room playing X-Box as I come
bursting through the front
door...he turns and takes one look
at me and lets out the loudest
12-year-old girl scream I’ve ever
heard in my life...

Everyone laughs except for Chris as his face turns a deep
shade of red.

CHRIS
Oh, I didn’t scream like a girl
when you came through the door.

DANE
...and I’m like, "Chris, it’s me,
Dane." I swear I had to say it like
time five times before you calmed down
enough to understand what I was
saying.

CHRIS
Whatever.
DANE
Anyway, so I go and hop in Adam’s closet and I wait there for him to come home. I swear it was a good 30 minutes before you got home.

ADAM
After the cop decided that I wasn’t worth taking down to the station, I had to go back and get my backpack. So I’m scared to death as I’m walking across campus...looking over my shoulder every 10 seconds...so I finally get home and I’m exhausted, so I go to put my jacket in my closet...

DANE
Your face was priceless.

ADAM
...and here comes Dane barreling out of the closet on top of me...so I start throwing punches as fast as I can, because I think I’m about to die!

DANE
I was trying to get off of you as fast as I could, but you got me a couple times across the chin.

ADAM
You scared the crap out of me that night! And what was it you were yelling when you were chasing me across campus?

Dane laughs for a brief second before he speaks in the deepest voice he can.

DANE
I’m gonna gut you!

Everyone around the fire starts laughing again.

ADAM
You just kept saying that over and over again.

DANE
You know, I think that’s the fastest I’ve ever seen you run.
ADAM
Tell them the one about when Chris was coming back from Christmas vacation and you were supposed to meet him at the airport.

CHRIS
Please don’t.

SAMANTHA
No, tell them the one when those two guys came into our camp outside of Graves Creek and we were all... 

Ashley quickly cuts off Samantha.

ASHLEY
Is this a story Jimmy should be hearing?

Dane chuckles to himself briefly.

DANE
Is this a story Ash should be hearing?

ASHLEY
Watch it!

Adam casually looks over at Tray who quietly sips from a cup.

ADAM
Tray, you have any good prank stories?

Tray carefully analyzes the inside of his empty cup.

TRAY
No, not really.

JAMES
Any scary stories?

ASHLEY
James!

A small smile stretches across Tray’s face as he looks at James.

TRAY
Just one.
INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Detective Carson speaks on his cell phone outside the observation room where James continues to sit motionless. Detective Carson is visibly frustrated by the conversation.

    DETECTIVE CARSON
    I don’t care what he says! I need a helicopter up there today!

Detective Carson stares at James as an ambiguous voice can be heard through the phone.

    DETECTIVE CARSON
    I don’t care if he has the day off! Just get me that chopper!

Detective Carson pulls his phone away from his ear and glances at the phone. He then returns the phone to his ear.

    DETECTIVE CARSON
    I have another call coming in. I’ll call you back in 15 minutes and at that point you better tell me that a helicopter is on the way!

Detective Carson quickly pulls the phone away from his ear, switches the call, and returns his cell phone back to his ear.

    DETECTIVE CARSON
    This is Carson.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Detective Carson enters the dimly lit office of the records department. TOM LEWIS, an older, overweight gentleman, carefully reviews records on his computer, a distinct crease running across his forehead.

    DETECTIVE CARSON
    What’ve you got?

Tom leans back away from his computer, his chair creaking as he turns to face Detective Carson.

    TOM
    It doesn’t make any sense.

    DETECTIVE CARSON
    (confused)
    What doesn’t?
A group of six adults goes missing in a national park? Not likely. I mean one or two people getting lost up there is pretty common, but the odds of a group that size getting lost and we aren’t able to find any of them? Something’s not right.

Detective Carson leans against a nearby filing cabinet.

DETECTIVE CARSON
I’m listening.

Tom groans as he stand up from his chair and walks over to a nearby refrigerator, retrieving a can of pop.

Tom returns from the refrigerator and sits down in the creaky chair.

TOM (CONT’D)
I found several cases that occurred over the last 20 years that reported large groups going missing around the same park. Look at this one.

Detective Carson leans in to scrutinize a record displayed on Tom’s computer.

DETECTIVE CARSON
(reading)
Five hikers went missing near Leavenworth...no bodies were found...police called off the search after 14 days.

TOM
And this one.

Tom taps a button on the computer. A new document is displayed on the screen.

DETECTIVE CARSON
(reading)
Martin family of six lost near Wenatchee National Forest. Police
were unable to locate the family after a 10 day search.

Tom pushes away from his desk; his chair creaking loudly as he begins to stand and walk toward a nearby table.

The list goes on and on...one sizable group disappearing once a year...so I got curious and began charting the dates and locations of each case.

Tom clears a spot on the table and begins to unroll a large piece of paper as Detective Carson walks over and stands on the other side.

What did you find?

Tom finishes unrolling the large piece of paper, which is a demographic map of Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest in Washington. He has drawn several red markers indicating where the individuals went missing and the date the events occurred; all during the same two months of the year.

The markers form a circle spanning nearly 60 miles of forest bordering multiple towns in central Washington.

A distinct pattern to the disappearances...combined with the fact that they always occur during September and October...

Why didn’t we notice this pattern before?

Tom scrutinizes the map briefly.

Well look at the different locations of the disappearances: different police jurisdictions.

Both Tom and Detective Carson stare at the map in silence.

It looks like the disappearances didn’t occur more than twice in any one police jurisdiction during that
TOM
20 years. Why would we suspect anything?

Detective Carson stares at the map in silence for several seconds.

TOM
I don’t know what happened to those kids, detective, but I’m willing to bet that they didn’t go missing because they didn’t have a compass.

One of the red markers has "CAMPSITE" written beside it.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

The camp is quiet as a small fire continues to smolder in the middle of the small group of tents. Ashley, James, and Samantha share one tent while Chris and Tray share another. Adam and Dane share another tent closest to the forest.

The surrounding forest remains quiet as Dane sleepily stumbles out of his tent and into the nearby woods.

He walks about 20 yards and stops to relieve himself.

As he is relieving himself, he hears something moving in the forest nearby. He shrugs off the noise as he quietly finishes relieving himself and turns to head back to camp.

After a few steps, he hears an unusual sound in the forest nearby, similar to a WHINE.

He stops and squints his eyes, desperately trying to see into the darkened forest before him. Dane hears the unusual sound again as he is about to head back to camp.

DANE
Hello?

The unusual sound occurs again, but this time much closer than before.

DANE
Look, Adam, you’re not going to scare me out here, dude.

The unusual sound occurs again, even closer than before.
DANE
I’m going back to bed, dude. You can spend your night running around in the forest if you want.

The unusual sound occurs again, but is now within 10 feet from Dane. Dane strains his eyes desperately trying to see into the darkness, but with no success.

Dane sprints back toward the small campfire.

As he takes off running, he only makes it about 15 feet before he runs into a tree stump mounted in the ground.

Dane stumbles into the hard dirt and clutches his ankles where he primarily collided with the tree stump and struck something sharp. He can feel warm blood barely trickling from the minor lacerations across his ankles.

DANE
Son of a...

Before Dane is able to finish his sentence, the tree stump, barely silhouetted in the soft light of the moon, rises into the midnight air right in front of Dane.

Dane stares at the monstrous shape in front of him for a half second before he lets out an audible scream. His scream only lasts for a fraction of a second as the dark figure moves in on top of him.

Adam is awakened abruptly by Dane’s brief scream and groggily sits up in his tent, looking at Dane’s sleeping bag as his eyes adjust to the darkness.

He fumbles for a nearby flashlight and runs the light across Dane’s empty sleeping bag.

Adam then pokes his head through the small door of the tent and runs the beam from the flashlight around the entire camp.

ADAM
(whispering)
Dane?

Adam hears nothing as he waits for Dane’s reply.

ADAM
Dane!

Adam continues to hear nothing from the surrounding forest as he waits for Dane’s reply.
He then goes back into his tent and retrieves a 10-inch hunting knife from his backpack.

He then quickly walks over to the nearby tent where Chris and Tray are sleeping.

ADAM
Chris. Tray.

Neither Chris nor Tray move.

ADAM
Chris! Tray!

Adam nudges both of them.

Both begin to stir as Tray peaks out of his sleeping bag.

TRAY
(confused)
Yeah?

ADAM
I can’t find Dane.

Chris now sits up in his sleeping bag, rubbing his eyes.

CHRIS
What’s going on?

ADAM
I can’t find Dane.

Tray pulls his legs from his sleeping bag and places his shoes on his feet.

TRAY
What do you mean you can’t find Dane?

ADAM
I thought I heard a...scream not too long ago coming from the woods. When I got up, Dane was gone.

TRAY
He’s probably just going to the bathroom.

ADAM
He’s been gone for a while.
CHRIS
What do you want us to do?

Adam sits in the darkened door of the tent with an annoyed expression on his face. After a few seconds, he shines the flashlight directly into Chris’ face.

CHRIS
Oh, c’mon...what are you doing?

Adam continues to shine the light in Chris’ face.

ADAM
Put your shoes on. We’re going to look for him.

Adam, Chris, and Tray stumble through the forest, their flashlights circling in every direction.

ADAM
Dane!

CHRIS
This isn’t funny, dude!

Adam stops walking as he glances around the forest, his flashlight looking in different directions.

ADAM
I thought I heard the scream come from this direction.

TRAY
Where would he go?

ADAM
I don’t know. I don’t think he would have gone too far from camp...but if he was injured, why would he move further away from camp?

TRAY
Or why is he still not screaming?

Adam, Tray, and Chris sit in silence for a brief second, their eyes resting on the ground in front of them as they think to themselves.

CHRIS
Look guys...have either of you considered the fact that Dane might be just playing some practical joke on us?
ADAM
This feels different.

CHRIS
How is this any different from any other prank he’s ever played on any of us?

Adam acts as though he is about to speak, but then shakes his head and continues to shine his flashlight around the forest. Neither of them speak for several seconds.

Tray glances at his watch.

TRAY
Well, I don’t know how much we can do really at 2:23 in the morning.

ADAM
We should probably head back to camp. If Dane still isn’t back in four hours when the sun comes up, we’ll head out again and look for him.

TRAY
Alright.

Chris begins speaking as they all turn to head back to the campsite.

CHRIS
I’m telling you guys, he’s just playing a practical joke on us.

ADAM
This isn’t like Dane.

CHRIS
What do you mean this isn’t like Dane? This is just like something he would do! He’s probably just sitting off in the forest right now laughing his head off as we walk circles around the camp!

ADAM
Give it a rest, Chris.

CHRIS
I’m not going to give it a rest! You woke us up at 2:00 in the freaking morning, so that we could...
As Chris is talking, Adam stumbles into the hard grass of the forest.

He remains motionless as he sits on one knee in the grass, his flashlight fixated on one spot in the grass.

TRAY
Hey, you alright?

Adam does not answer as he remains motionless, staring at one spot in the grass.

Tray and Chris move to Adam’s side as Tray asks again.

TRAY
Hey, are you alright?

Chris and Tray look at the spot illuminated by Adam’s flashlight. About three feet in front of them, the grass has been smashed into the soft dirt and is covered in blood.

One of Dane’s shoes lays on the outskirt of the crimson colored pool.

Adam’s flashlight follows a small stream of blood that leads from the spot to a nearby tree about five feet behind Adam, Tray, and Chris.

All three shine their flashlights into the tall tree above them, but see no signs of Dane.

ADAM
Let’s get back to camp and get out of here.

Adam, Tray, and Chris take off running back to camp, Tray carrying Dane’s shoe in one hand.

EXT. CAMPSITE – DAY

Detective Jones wanders through the same area where we last saw Adam, Tray, and Chris standing, only several days later. Several police officers examine the area.

He slowly walks toward a section of grass that has been smashed into the ground, his gaze carefully analyzing the surrounding area.

POLICE OFFICER #1, kneeling carefully near the questionable area, collects several samples.
DETECTIVE JONES
This is where you found the shoe?

Police Officer #1 carefully finishes placing the last sample in his case and removes the latex gloves from his hands as he stands.

POLICE OFFICER #1
The shoe was actually found near the campfire, but you can see where there was a struggle here in the grass. The one set of footprints was the only set we found.

DETECTIVE JONES
How long until the lab finishes their toxicology report?

POLICE OFFICER #1
Probably another hour or so.

Police Officer #1 does not look at Detective Jones as he walks him around the area.

POLICE OFFICER #1
The body was apparently dragged over to this area and then hoisted up the tree for some reason.

Detective Jones stares up at the tree silently for several seconds.

DETECTIVE JONES
The shoe was obviously for a male, so how big do you think this guy was?

POLICE OFFICER #1
Until we know for sure which male it belonged to, I’d guess anywhere from 180 to 200 pounds.

DETECTIVE JONES
Who could have pulled him up this tree? It would be hard enough to climb this tree on your own, let alone carrying an extra 200 pounds.

Suddenly, the radio attached to Detective Jones' belt screeches as the crackly voice of POLICE OFFICER #2 can be heard.
POLICE OFFICER #2
Nick? Nick you there?

Detective Jones retrieves the small radio from his belt and speaks into the radio as he continues to stare up into the tree.

DETECTIVE JONES
I’m here.

POLICE OFFICER #2
You’ll want to take a look at this.

DETECTIVE JONES
Where are you?

POLICE OFFICER #2
About a mile east of the camp.

DETECTIVE JONES
I’ll be right there.

Detective Jones returns the small radio to his belt and continues to stare up into the tree for a few seconds before leaving the campsite.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Adam, Tray, and Chris return to camp.

Adam immediately opens the small door of the tent where Samantha, Ashley, and James are sleeping. He nudges all of them as he speaks.

ADAM
All of you get up.

Samantha and Ashley begin to stir.

Adam continues to nudge all of them until Samantha sits up in her sleeping bag, a frustrated look on her face.

SAMANTHA
coldly
What could you POSSIBLY want in the middle of the night!?

ADAM
Something’s happened to Dane.

Ashley now sits up in her sleeping bag.
ASHLEY  
(concerned)  
Is he alright?

ADAM  
We don’t know.

Samantha now starts to climb out of her sleeping bag and place her shoes on her feet.

SAMANTHA  
What do you mean you don’t know!?

ADAM  
We can’t find him.

Ashley is now putting her shoes on as well.

ASHLEY  
What about Chris and Tray?

ADAM  
They’re both out here already...but you all need to get up, so we can figure out what to do.

Both Adam and Samantha exit the tent as Ashley gently shakes James out of his deep sleep.

ASHLEY  
James, you need to wake up.

Adam, Tray, and Chris all stand around the barely visible campfire, Samantha rubbing her eyes as she attempts to wake-up.

She then notices the shoe in Dane’s hand.

SAMANTHA  
Is that...Dane’s shoe?

ADAM  
Yes.

SAMANTHA  
Where did you find it?

Tray points outside the camp.

TRAY  
About...15 yards outside of camp.
SAMANTHA
What is that all over his shoe?

No one says anything as Samantha takes the blood covered shoe from Tray and examines it for a brief second.

Samantha’s eyes widen as she quickly drops the shoe into the soft dirt in front of her.

She then looks around the group as Ashley and James join next to the small campfire.

ASHLEY
What are we going to do?

ADAM
We need to go.

ASHLEY
And leave Dane wandering around in the woods?

TRAY
We don’t even know if he’s still alive.

ASHLEY
What do you mean?

A speechless Samantha quietly points down at the blood covered shoe at her feet.

Ashley stares at the shoe for a brief second before her eyes widen.

ASHLEY
Is that...

CHRIS
...blood.

The group remains motionless for several seconds before Adam begins to speak.

ADAM
We’re leaving.

Samantha shakes her head in disapproval as she raises her hand to prevent Adam from leaving the group.

SAMANTHA
Hold on, this is just another one of Dane’s practical jokes. He’s
SAMANTHA
just hiding out there right now
laughing at us.

CHRIS
That’s what I said about 20 minutes
ago, but...

ADAM
If he is, I’ll kill him later...but
I’m leaving. If you want to wait
here to see if he comes strolling
out of the woods, you’re more than
welcome to.

SAMANTHA
You’re overreacting.

ADAM
And you’re under reacting!

As Samantha and Adam begin to argue, Ashley returns to her
tent and begins placing her belongings outside the tent.

ADAM
What are you doing, Ash?!

ASHLEY
Gathering up my stuff.

ADAM
Leave your stuff!

ASHLEY
I’m not leaving it in the middle of
the woods!

They hear an unusual sound as something moves through the
forest nearby.

All of the group members turn and shine all flashlights in
the area where the sound originated.

All they can see is a dense forest with some occasional dead
trees here and there.

ADAM
Dane!?

CHRIS
If this is a joke, stop foolin’
around, dude!
They hear the unusual sound again, but this time on the opposite side of camp.

They all turn to shine their flashlights in the new area where the sound originated.

All they can see is dense forest with occasional dead trees scattered throughout the woods.

Adam carefully retrieves his hunting knife from his side and holds the blade close to him.

ADAM
What other weapons do we have?

SAMANTHA
I’m telling you, it’s just Dane out there screwing with us!

TRAY
I have a pocket knife, but it wouldn’t be much in a fight.

Ashley pulls James close to her side as she looks around the camp for anything that could possibly be modified into a weapon.

ASHLEY
There’s a small hatchet next to the stack of firewood over there.

ADAM
Chris, you have anything?

CHRIS
Just a basic pocket knife.

Samantha sighs and returns to her tent. After a few seconds, she steps out of her tent carrying a Glock 23, loading the pistol as she returns to the group.

She continues to load bullets into the magazine as the rest of the group stares at her. Everyone is speechless as she finishes loading the pistol and slides the magazine back.

Samantha then looks up at the rest of the group and is shocked to find everyone staring at her with gaping mouths.

SAMANTHA
What?

Adam shakes his head in disbelief.
They hear the unusual sound again coming from a different side of camp. The entire group turns to face the direction from which the sound emanated.

TRAY
How many rounds do you have for that thing?

SAMANTHA
14. I have another magazine of 13 in my pocket.

TRAY
Let’s hope we don’t need all of them.

The unusual sound continues to emanate from the forest around the small camp.

SAMANTHA
Dane this is your last chance!

They hear the unusual sound again. Without warning, Samantha fires a shot into the forest toward the sound.

ADAM
What the hell was that!?

SAMANTHA
Just giving them a warning.

CHRIS
You could have at least warned us before you shot a gun two feet away from us!

As the entire group continues to stare into the forest, Ashley grabs the back of Adam’s arm.

ASHLEY
I just want to leave.

ADAM
We can’t go anywhere now, Ash.

ASHLEY
What do you mean? You wanted to leave a few minutes ago!

TRAY
He’s right. We can’t leave now. Whoever they are, they have the entire camp surrounded.
ASHLEY
So what are we going to do!?

Adam begins scanning the camp for any ideas.

CHRIS
Well, they obviously don’t have firearms, so that’s a plus.

SAMANTHA
What makes you say that?

CHRIS
If they wanted us dead, wouldn’t they have opened fire on us already? I mean, we’re the ones standing next to a campfire.

Adam turns quickly immediately after Chris mentions the word "campfire" and marches to the medium-sized pile of wood sitting a few feet from the smoldering fire.

Adam speaks as he begins to gather several branches and broken pieces of wood.

ADAM
Ash...Jimmy...give me a hand with this!

Ashley and James rush to Adam’s side.

ASHLEY
What do you want us to do!?

Adam continues to gather firewood.

ADAM
How long do we have before sunrise?

Tray glances down at his watch for a brief second.

TRAY
I’d say about three hours.

ADAM
We just have to last until sunrise; then we stand more of a chance when we hike back during the day.

CHRIS
What’s your plan?
The unusual sound continues to originate from somewhere in the nearby forest as Adam begins making small piles of firewood in a 20 foot radius around the campfire.

ADAM
I’m not a survivalist, but we need to light this place up if we’re going to make it until sunrise. If it’s a bunch of guys out there...and if they really don’t have any firearms...then they’ll have to come in close to get any of us.

TRAY
And the fires...

ADAM
...will help us see them coming.

Adam moves methodically around the camp, building small campfires about three feet from each other.

ADAM
If it’s some kind of animal, then the fire should hopefully keep it away from us...hopefully.

Samantha continues to circle with her pistol, the unusual sound moving quickly around the forest and seemingly moving closer than before.

SAMANTHA
Whatever you’re going to do, make it fast!

Adam, Ashley, and James finish constructing small campfires around the camp.

Adam looks around the camp in desperation, analyzing each small campfire before looking at Ashley.

ADAM
Ash, grab the lighter fluid from the front of my tent!

Ashley quickly runs to Adam’s tent and retrieves the small can of lighter fluid.

Adam then grabs the can from her and quickly sprays lighter fluid on each small campfire.
He then retrieves his lighter from his pocket and carefully lights each campfire, the small flames gently rising into the air.

As each fire continues to grow larger with each passing minute, the unusual sound and movement of the forest progressively become more faint.

Adam looks around the group, still breathing heavily.

   ADAM
   You think that worked!?

   TRAY
   I guess we have about three hours to find out.

The unusual sound continues to fade into the forest.

INT. POLICE STATION – DAY

Detective Carson enters the forensics lab.

Detective Jones stands with his arms folded across his chest as he speaks with JESSICA WHITE, the forensic scientist. Detective Carson quickly crosses the room toward them.

   DETECTIVE CARSON
   Please tell me you have something.

Jessica turns toward her examination table, gently handling a broken camera as she speaks.

   JESSICA
   The camera was pretty much trashed when we found it. Let’s face it, it’s been sitting up there in the mud and rain for the last...

   DETECTIVE CARSON
   (cutting her off)
   Do we have anything?

Jessica sighs as she drops the camera on the examination table and turns toward her computer.

   JESSICA
   I managed to pull one fingerprint and match it with the one we pulled from Chris Miller’s apartment, which confirms that the camera belonged to him.
Jessica continues to work at her computer.

JESSICA
We also got lucky. I was able to extract a few pictures from the SD card.

DETECTIVE CARSON
And?

Jessica cycles through several scenic pictures.

JESSICA
Most of them were scenic pictures--this guy obviously loved his trees--but this one might be helpful.

Suddenly the group picture that was taken at the parking lot before the hike began appears on the screen.

Detective Carson and Detective Jones stare at the picture for several seconds in silence.

DETECTIVE JONES
Hold on a second!

Detective Jones quickly retrieves his notepad from his jacket pocket. He flips through several pages of notes furiously.

DETECTIVE JONES
Six.

Detective Jones looks at Detective Carson, who has a perplexed look on his face.

DETECTIVE JONES
The park ranger I interviewed earlier today...the one who saw the group right before they left the parking lot...

DETECTIVE CARSON
Blake...Tanner?

DETECTIVE JONES
Yes. He said that there were six people in the group altogether.

Detective Carson thinks to himself for a moment.
DETECTIVE CARSON
Which families also filed a missing person’s report earlier this week?

DETECTIVE JONES
Eastman...Taylor...Sorenson...Miller...Ducane...

Detective Carson shakes his head in agreement.

DETECTIVE CARSON
(interrupting)
And that covers the six we knew about, but who’s this kid on the end?

Detective Carson reaches over Jessica’s shoulder and points directly at Tray standing in the picture.

DETECTIVE JONES
We don’t know. No other families have reported a missing person in this area...at least not that I know of.

Detective Carson leans away from the computer and looks directly at Detective Jones.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Get Tanner back in here...and run this guy’s photograph through the database to see if there are any matches.

Detective Carson turns again toward Jessica.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Were there any other pictures worth viewing?

JESSICA
Not really.

DETECTIVE CARSON
What about the toxicology report from the shoe?

Jessica begins to type at her computer.

JESSICA
DNA analysis confirms that the blood belonged to Dane Eastman...but this is something you may find interesting.
A technical report suddenly appears on the computer screen.

   JESSICA
   I also found traces of saliva on the shoe.

   DETECTIVE JONES
   Saliva?

Detective Carson looks at Detective Jones.

   DETECTIVE CARSON
   Animal attack.

   JESSICA
   The analysis results signify a genetic code similar to that of a gray wolf. However, the carnassial markings on the shoe are certainly not concordant with that species.

   DETECTIVE JONES
   But there’s quite a few...

   JESSICA
   (interrupting)
   ...but there were also DNA sequences that resemble a black widow spider.

Both Detective Carson and Detective Jones look confused.

   DETECTIVE JONES
   (sarcastically)
   Okay, so we just have to find a spider riding a wolf. Anything else we should know? Do they sing?

Jessica lets out a brief sigh.

   JESSICA
   Actually there is. The saliva contained some type of venom, so I ran a toxicity analysis.

   DETECTIVE CARSON
   What did you find?

Jessica stands from her chair and retrieves a report from a nearby table.
JESSICA
It’s an atypical neurotoxin. I can’t tell you which specific toxin, because, quite frankly, I don’t know.

Jessica flips through several pages of the report.

JESSICA
The analysis report was unable to classify this particular agent, but did acknowledge traces of ethanol, nitric oxide, and tetrodotoxin.

Detective Carson paces back and forth in silence as he thinks to himself.

DETECTIVE CARSON
What effect would this neurotoxin have on humans?

JESSICA
Without a more reliable toxicity analysis, the effects are unknown.

Jessica flips through more pages of the report as she continues to speak.

JESSICA
I CAN say that, because of the number of toxins involved in this one agent, exposure would definitely include widespread central nervous system damage; possibly even epilepsy and dementia.

Jessica closes the report and places it back on the table.

JESSICA
It would probably also depend on where the person is bitten.

Jessica pauses for a brief second.

JESSICA
It would also depend on the other chemicals present within the body when the subject is envenomated. Dane had traces of lysergic acid diethylamide coursing through his blood.
DETECTIVE JONES

LSD?

JESSICA
Correct. That’s why I’m saying that the effects of the different chemicals combined is currently unknown.

Detective Carson turns toward Detective Jones.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Get Blake back in here now.

Detective Carson turns toward Jessica.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Thanks for your help, Jessica. Let us know if you find anything else.

JESSICA
Of course.

Both Detective Carson and Detective Jones walk toward the exit.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Find Blake. I want to know if he knows the seventh member of the group. And run the photo through our database to see if there’s a match.

DETECTIVE JONES
What are you going to do?

DETECTIVE CARSON
I need to visit the records department.

Both Detective Carson and Detective Jones exit the forensics lab.

EXT. CAMPSITE - MORNING

Adam adjusts his backpack to fit squarely on his shoulders.

He quietly pulls the hunting knife from the sheath attached to his belt and carefully inspects the blade before quickly returning the blade.
Small strings of smoke rise into the air from the small
fires carefully positioned around the camp as Adam analyzes
the surrounding forest.

He then gently lifts the tent door and peers inside at
Ashley and James who are quickly packing their belongings.

ADAM
You need to pack light.

ASHLEY
I’m not leaving my stuff just
sitting out here in the woods!

ADAM
That’s fine...but leave your
sleeping bag...and pillow.

ASHLEY
What about the blankets?

Adam thinks briefly to himself.

ADAM
If you can stuff them in your
backpack, bring them.

Ashley continues to quickly pack her belongings for a few
seconds in silence.

ADAM
Do you have your cell phone?

ASHLEY
It should just be here in the front
pocket...

Ashley opens the front pocket of her backpack. A confused
look spreads across her face as she searches around the
tent.

ASHLEY
Where’s my cell phone? Jimmy, have
you seen my cell phone?

JAMES
No.

ADAM
I can’t find mine either.
ASHLEY
What happened to them?

ADAM
I don’t know. I haven’t seen mine since I tried using it last night. Just hurry and finish packing, so we can get off this mountain.

ASHLEY
Jimmy, don’t forget your sketchbook.

Adam steps away from the tent, peering around the dimly lit camp before he looks toward one of the other tents.

ADAM
Chris!?

Chris emerges from the nearby tent, placing his backpack on his shoulders as he moves toward Adam.

CHRIS
I’m ready to go.

ADAM
Do you have your cell phone?

CHRIS
I couldn’t find it.

Chris motions toward the forest.

CHRIS
I think I may have accidentally dropped it in the woods last night when we were looking for Dane.

ADAM
I doubt it.

CHRIS
What do you mean?

Samantha moves toward Adam and Chris.

SAMANTHA
Hey guys, have you seen my cell phone?

ADAM
Everyone’s cell phones are missing.
Tray emerges from the nearby tent and moves toward Adam and Chris as Samantha continues to speak.

SAMANTHA
What? How are they all missing? We were sitting in camp all night and no one tried to come into camp!

ADAM
Tray?

TRAY
I didn’t bring mine with me.

CHRIS
How did they sneak into camp and get our cell phones?

Ashley emerges from her tent and approaches the group.

ADAM
I don’t know.

ASHLEY
What are we going to do?

ADAM
We just need to get to the cars as soon as we can. How fast can we get down?

TRAY
Most of the trip back is downhill. I’d say we can make it back around noon.

SAMANTHA
Are we ready?

ADAM
Just about.

Adam turns toward the nearby tent.

ADAM
James?

A couple seconds pass before Adam speaks again, this time louder.

ADAM
James!?
JAMES
I’m ready.

ASHLEY
Shouldn’t we look for Dane one more time in the daylight before we go?

SAMANTHA
I’d prefer we just start making our way down right now. If Dane is still alive, he’s no where near this area.

CHRIS
Don’t we need to make a decision as a group?

ADAM
Do any of you really want to stay here?

Several seconds pass as the group stands in silence.

ADAM
Let’s get back to the parking lot as fast as possible, and then we’ll get help. Tray, you lead the way.

Adam, Tray, Samantha, Ashley, James, and Chris begin to walk away from the camp.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Detective Carson enters the records department.

Tom turns his chair to face Detective Carson as he approaches.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Do you still have those different cases pulled up on your computer?

TOM
Yeah.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Check each one to see if forensics detected any traces of toxins during the investigation.

Tom turns back to his computer and types quickly. Several seconds pass as he carefully analyzes different documents.
TOM
There.

Tom points to a specific spot on the computer document.

TOM  
(reading)
Unknown neurotoxin. Detected traces of ethanol, nitric oxide, and tetrodotoxin. Traces of lysergic acid diethylamide were also present.

DETECTIVE CARSON
And the other cases?

Tom types in silence for a few seconds.

TOM  
(reading)
Unknown neurotoxin. LSD.

Tom continues to pull up different forensic reports.

TOM  
(reading)
Ethanol...tetrodotoxin...the same chemicals were found at each site.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Thanks, Tom. That’s all I needed to know.

Detective Carson turns to exit the room as Tom continues to look at various documents on the computer.

TOM
Detective...

Detective Carson stops before he reaches the door.

TOM  
...this is something you may find interesting.

Detective Carson paces back across the room.

TOM  
(reading)
Walter, Susan, and Bridgette Crowe all go missing from their home in the early morning of October 9th, 1993. The neighbors reportedly
TOM heard screaming and gunshots shortly after 3:00 AM and called the police, but officers had already been dispatched. They found traces of an unknown neurotoxin present at the scene.

DETECTIVE CARSON Did the call come from someone in the home?

TOM (reading)
Uh...Susan Crowe reportedly called 911 at precisely 3:15 AM, stating that someone was in their home and her son was missing.

DETECTIVE CARSON What happened to the boy?

TOM (reading)
Daniel Crowe was found sitting on the front steps when the police arrived around 3:30 AM. No visible injuries, but officers reported that he was displaying severe catatonic behaviors.

DETECTIVE CARSON How old was the boy at the time?

TOM (reading)
Six. Why?

DETECTIVE CARSON I’ve got an 8-year-old kid upstairs displaying the same behavior.

Detective Carson and Tom stare at each other in silence briefly.

DETECTIVE CARSON Do you happen to have the case file?

TOM Give me one second.
Tom stands up from his chair and searches through multiple filing cabinets. After several minutes, Tom turns and hands a file to Detective Carson.

TOM
It’s all there.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Thanks. Just out of curiosity, do they happen to have a photo of the family?

Tom searches through different documents on his computer.

TOM
Here it is.

Detective Carson glances over Tom’s shoulder at the computer screen. His eyes narrow as he analyzes the face of Daniel Crowe.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Where is Daniel now?

Tom quickly types on his computer. Several seconds pass before he answers.

TOM
(reading)
Last known residence was with a foster parent; a Mrs. Deborah Clark. 3531 South Whitmore Ave. in Monroe, Washington.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Phone number?

TOM
(reading)
360-384-0919.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Thanks, Tom.

Detective Carson pulls out his cell phone as he begins to walk toward the exit.

TOM
Where are you going?

DETECTIVE CARSON
Monroe.
EXT. FOREST - DAY

Tray, Samantha, Chris, Ashley, James, and Adam hike through the forest. Beads of sweat run down each of their faces. Samantha wipes the sweat away with her forearm as Chris pulls at the front of his soaked shirt.

Adam glances down at his watch and gently brushes some dust away from the clock face, which reads "10:45."

ADAM
Tray, are you sure we’re going the right way?

Tray does not turn to face the group as he continues walking.

TRAY
One year when I came up here, there was a ranger station along this trail somewhere.

The group walks along the trail.

SAMANTHA
Why are we headed to the ranger station?

TRAY
There’s usually a radio we could use. Maybe even get Search and Rescue up here sooner to start looking for Dane.

ASHLEY
Shouldn’t we just get off this mountain as fast as possible?

ADAM
If there isn’t a radio, how much time will this add to the time it takes to get back to the parking lot?

TRAY
1-2 hours. 2 1/2 at the most.

CHRIS
As long as we get back before dark.

Tray stops walking along the trail, stopping the entire group in their tracks. He turns to face the rest of the group.
TRAY
We’ll be back before dark. Trust me.

EXT. DETECTIVE CARSON’S CAR – DAY
Detective Carson is driving when his cell phone rings. He quickly puts the phone to his ear.

DETECTIVE CARSON
This is Carson.

DETECTIVE JONES (V.O.)
Blake isn’t here.

DETECTIVE CARSON
What?

EXT. FOREST – DAY
Detective Jones stands on one of the trails leading through the forest. POLICE OFFICER #3 stands next to him as several police officers continue walking through the thick woods.

INTERCUT – TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

DETECTIVE JONES
He said he wasn’t feeling well, so they let him go home early today.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Did you already check his home?

DETECTIVE JONES
I sent a black-and-white over there as soon as I found out. They called about five minutes ago and said the place was empty.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Tell them to stay there until he comes home...or until they hear from you.

DETECTIVE JONES
Understood.

Detective Jones closes his phone and turns to Police Officer #3.
DETECTIVE JONES
Sorry...so which direction did they go after they left the campsite?

POLICE OFFICER #3
They headed back the same direction they came, but it looks like they diverged onto a different trail about an hour into the hike.

DETECTIVE JONES
(confused)
Which direction did they go?

POLICE OFFICER #3
(pointing)
Uh...north...northwest. The trail goes everywhere at that point.

DETECTIVE JONES
Why would they go deeper into the forest?

EXT. FOREST - DAY
Tray, Samantha, Chris, Ashley, James, and Adam continue walking along the trail, the sun hanging directly above them.

ADAM
Tray, it’s been an hour since we started looking for this ranger station.

Tray slowly stops walking as he speaks, almost to himself.

TRAY
We should have been there by now.

The entire group comes to a stop on the trail. Adam looks around the forest, listening intently for any unusual sounds.

ADAM
We need to get back before dark.

JAMES
I’m hungry.

Ashley places her hand on James’ shoulder as she speaks.
ASHLEY
I know, Jimmy.

Ashley quietly bends down as she gently removes her backpack from her shoulders and unzips her backpack. She begins to rustle through her belongings.

ASHLEY
Let me see if I have any more granola bars.

As Ashley rummages through her backpack desperately searching for food, Chris carefully lets his backpack drop from his shoulders to the ground.

Chris then slumps to the ground next to his fallen backpack and rests his back against a tree.

Adam turns away from examining the nearby forest to face Chris.

ADAM
What are you doing, Chris?

Chris rolls his eyes as he snaps at Adam.

CHRIS
We’ve been hiking for three hours straight! I’m going to sit down for five minutes!

ADAM
We don’t have time to take a break!

Ashley, who is now sitting on the ground next to James as he frantically bites into a crushed granola bar, looks up at Adam.

ASHLEY
Adam, Jimmy needs to sit down for a second, too.

Adam lets out a soft sigh and glances around the surrounding forest for several seconds before he speaks.

ADAM
Two minutes...that’s it!

Adam turns to walk toward Tray.

ADAM
We need to get back to the parking lot.
CHRIS
Oh sure, you’ll listen to her, but you won’t listen to...

Adam quickly turns to face Chris, his jawbone clearly tense in the shade of the forest.

ADAM
Save it, Chris!

Chris shakes his head and mumbles "you save it" to himself.

ADAM
Tray, what’s the fastest way out of here?

Tray sips from a water bottle as he glances around the forest.

TRAY
We’ll take this lower path back along the ridge and hopefully cross with the path we came in on.

ADAM
Hopefully?

Tray speaks sharply, the sarcasm inherent in his voice.

TRAY
Do you want to lead the group?

ADAM
I’m just concerned about getting all of us out of here alive.

TRAY
So am I.

ADAM
Then do whatever it takes to get us back before dark.

Adam casually turns back to face the rest of the group.

ADAM
Are you all ready to go? We need to get moving.

Adam quietly walks over to where Ashley and James sit. He gently reaches down and grabs James’ backpack.
ADAM
Jimmy, I’ll carry your backpack for you.

TRAY
Here Chris, I’ll carry your backpack for a while.

Chris lets out a sigh of relief as he stands up from the ground and hands his backpack to Tray.

CHRIS
Thanks.

Chris, Samantha, Ashley, and James follow Tray along a different trail as Adam readjusts his two backpacks on his shoulders. He glances up at the noon sun as it gently shines through the thick branches of the tall trees. Adam begins to walk along the trail following the tired group.

EXT. CLARK RESIDENCE - DAY

DEBORAH CLARK, a 65-year-old woman, opens her front door where Detective Carson is waiting.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Mrs. Clark?

DEBORAH
Yes.

DETECTIVE CARSON
My name is Detective Carson. We spoke on the phone about an hour ago.

INT. CLARK RESIDENCE - DAY

Detective Carson sits patiently on the couch, casually looking around the living room, when Deborah enters the room carefully balancing a tray with two cups of coffee.

DETECTIVE CARSON
When was the last time you saw Daniel?

DEBORAH
Oh, we always called him Danny. He always preferred Danny. Would you like sugar in your coffee?
DETECTIVE CARSON

Yes, please.

Deborah places a couple sugar cubes into the coffee before handing the cup to Detective Carson.

DETECTIVE CARSON

Thank you.

DEBORAH

But I actually haven’t seen Danny in about 10 years...not since he graduated from high school.

DETECTIVE CARSON

Has he contacted you at all in the last 10 years?

Deborah thinks to herself for a brief second.

DEBORAH

We spoke on the phone off and on for the first year or so, but then Danny moved and I couldn’t reach him.

DETECTIVE CARSON

Did Danny ever talk about the night his parents and sister disappeared?

DEBORAH

He never mentioned anything about that night, but then again he didn’t really talk a lot.

DETECTIVE CARSON

Did you ever notice anything...unusual about his behavior?

DEBORAH

There was one thing that I was always concerned about. On several different occasions, I would find him talking to himself.

DETECTIVE CARSON

Talking to himself?

DEBORAH

It wasn’t a consistent problem, but every once in a while I would hear him talking to himself in his bedroom late at night.
DETECTIVE CARSON
Did Danny have a history of mental illness?

DEBORAH
Aside from the...what’s it called...PST?

DETECTIVE CARSON
PTSD.

DEBORAH
That’s the one. Aside from that, the social service worker didn’t say anything.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Do you happen to have a picture of Danny before he left following his high school graduation?

DEBORAH
You know, I think I have one in the closet. Just give me a second.

Deborah stands and crosses the room to a nearby closet.

She carefully removes a shoebox from the top shelf.

Deborah returns to her chair. She begins to thumb through several pictures.

DEBORAH
I’m sorry. I really should get these into a photo album one of these days.

Several seconds pass in silence as she continues to look through her pictures.

DEBORAH
Ah, there it is.

Deborah hands a photograph to Detective Carson.

DEBORAH
That was taken the day of Danny’s graduation.

Detective Carson inspects the photograph carefully. He then quickly stands as he tosses the picture on the coffee table.
DETECTIVE CARSON
Thank you for your time, Mrs. Clark, but I really need to get going.

Detective Carson begins to walk toward the front door.

DEBORAH
(confused)
Wait, are you at least going to tell me what this is about?

Detective Carson stops as he opens the front door.

DETECTIVE CARSON
I just want to find Danny. If I hear anything, I promise I’ll give you a call. Thanks for the coffee.

DEBORAH
Anytime.

Deborah closes the door behind Detective Carson as he quickly makes his way to his car. Detective Carson dials into his phone as he walks. He places the phone to his ear.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Tom, this is Carson. I need you to do me a favor.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Tray, Chris, Samantha, Ashley, James, and Adam walk along the shaded trail, each carrying their own backpack again.

Adam glances down at his dust-covered watch, which now reads "3:00 PM."

He glances back up at Tray who is looking around at the surrounding forest as he walks.

ADAM
How much longer until we reach the parking lot?

TRAY
About a half hour.

SAMANTHA
Wait!

Samantha quickly stops on the shaded trail. Everyone else ceases to walk as they turn to face her.
SAMANTHA

Listen!

The entire group stands motionless on the trail; desperately listening for whatever Samantha heard.

ADAM

What is it, Sam?

SAMANTHA

Just shut up for a second and listen!

The entire group continues to stand motionless on the trail for several seconds. Tray slowly turns to continue walking along the trail when the faint and broken sound of a cell phone can be heard.

As the faint ring of the cell phone sounds again, Samantha slowly turns and looks directly at Chris’ backpack.

Chris’ eyes widen as Samantha quickly lunges for his backpack, jerking Chris in multiple directions as she fumbles for the zipper.

CHRIS

Hey!

SAMANTHA

Stop moving for one second!

Samantha successfully grabs hold of the zipper and desperately rips open Chris’ backpack.

She finds a collection of broken cell phones; smashed to the point of rendering them unusable.

She quickly grabs the phone that continues to emanate the broken ring.

The smashed phone has malfunctioned and is projecting one last ring tone program before dying completely.

The entire group stares at the dead cell phone for several seconds before their eyes slowly shift to look directly at Chris.

Chris stands motionless on the shaded trail, his eyes wide with terror.

SAMANTHA

What are our cell phones doing in your backpack, Chris?
ADAM
And why are they broken?

Chris’ eyes dart from one member of the group to the other as he attempts to collect his thoughts.

CHRIS
I...I...I don’t know.

Suddenly, Ashley bursts past Samantha and begins punching Chris in the arm and face. Chris attempts to cover his face with both hands, but Ashley successfully lands a couple punches across his cheek.

ASHLEY
We trusted you! Dane was your friend!

Chris continues to protect his face as Adam quickly rushes into the situation, grabbing Ashley around the waist and hoisting her off the ground as he pulls her away from Chris.

Chris’ eyes dart from one group member to the other, his face red with anger.

CHRIS
I didn’t kill anyone! And if you think I did, then you all can go to hell!

Chris ceases speaking and freezes in his place as he hears the CLICK of a pistol behind him.

He slowly turns to face Samantha, who has retrieved her firearm from her side and is pointing the pistol directly at his head. Chris’ eyes widen with fear.

SAMANTHA
You first.

Adam, who was still wrestling to control Ashley, now turns and notices the situation for the first time.

ADAM
Sam, stop fooling around!

Samantha stands motionless, the gun still pointed directly at Chris.

SAMANTHA
Do I look like I’m fooling around?!

Tray moves slowly toward Samantha.
ADAM
(calmly)
Samantha, look at me.

Samantha does not respond.

ADAM
Look at me!

Samantha’s head jerks in Adam’s direction.

ADAM
(clearly and slowly)
Please put the gun down.

Samantha shakes her head in disbelief and looks back at Chris who is still standing in shock.

SAMANTHA
Not a chance.

CHRIS
I swear I didn’t take everyone’s phone!

Chris turns to Adam for support as Tray continues to slowly inch his way toward Samantha.

CHRIS
Please, Adam, you have to believe me! Why would I smash everyone’s phone?

Everyone stands motionless on the shaded path as Adam carefully looks at Chris.

Ashley stands breathless with James clutching her waist as Tray stands only a foot away from Samantha.

The quiet sounds of the forest are broken by Adam’s controlled voice.

ADAM
Who else used your backpack recently?

Chris’ gaze drops to the ground as he begins to back track through recent events.

Tray continues to stand motionless only a foot away from Samantha.
CHRIS
I checked my backpack this morning right before we started hiking back.

ADAM
And who has touched your backpack since then?

Chris’ eyes widen as his gaze darts to Tray standing next to Samantha.

Tray quickly disarms Samantha of the firearm and shoves her back toward Adam who was advancing toward Tray.

Chris stands motionless as Tray steps as far away as he can from the group, standing near the edge of the trail and pointing the pistol toward the different group members; his hands slightly trembling as he attempts to keep the gun steady.

ADAM
Tray?

TRAY
You can’t stop it. No one has ever been able to stop it!

SAMANTHA
Who is trying to kill us!?

TRAY
You will all be dead by tomorrow morning!

ASHLEY
What!?

ADAM
Tray, please put the gun down.

Tray quickly points the gun at Adam.

Everyone stands motionless.

TRAY
Trust me...this will be better for all of you.

SAMANTHA
What are you talking about!?

Tray’s entire demeanor changes from a once scared and trembling individual to calm and relaxed.
A small smile pulls at his face and a brief chuckle escapes his lips.

TRAY
Ring around a rosy...

Tray begins to point the gun at each individual group member.

TRAY
...a pocket full of posies...

Chris, Samantha, Ashley, James, and Adam all stand motionless as Tray continues to routinely point the firearm.

TRAY
Ashes, ashes, we all fall...

Tray’s methodical pointing of the pistol ends targeted at a tree. He fires one bullet at a nearby tree as he finishes chanting the lyrics.

TRAY
...down.

Chris, Samantha, Ashley, James, and Adam continue to stand motionless.

Tray stares speechless at the tree he shot for several seconds, a small smile still stretched across his face.

He then begins to recite the lyrics again and point the pistol at each group member in the same routine manner that he did before.

TRAY
Ring around a rosy, a pocket full of posies...

Tray continues to point the firearm at each group member.

TRAY
Ashes, ashes, we all fall...

Tray points the gun at Adam.

Suddenly, Chris rushes toward Tray from the opposite side.

Tray quickly turns the gun toward Chris, but is only able to fire one shot before Chris tackles him and they both tumble off the trail and down the steep side of the mountain.

Adam quickly jumps onto the steep slope, desperately sliding behind them.
Tray and Chris, intertwined in their struggle as they both attempt to punch the other, continue their uncontrollable descent down the mountain and off a small cliff; ricocheting off a couple trees as they plummet to the shaded ground below.

Adam digs his heels into the soft dirt in front of him, attempting to stop his own descent.

He comes to a stop near the edge of the cliff, laying his head back into the soft dirt as he catches his breath. After a couple seconds, Adam carefully leans up and peers over the ledge into the shaded forest below.

ADAM

Chris!

Adam listens intensely for some response from the dark forest, but hears nothing.

ADAM

Chris!

Adam peers around and begins to make the slow, steady trek back up the steep slope.

About halfway up the slope, he finds the Glock 23 lying in the soft dirt.

Adam quickly grabs the pistol and stuffs the firearm in the back of his pants.

Several minutes pass before Adam is able to reach the top of the slope again. He glances around at the remaining group members as he attempts to catch his breath.

Ashley sobs as she cradles James close to her chest.

SAMANTHA

What happened?

Adam retrieves the pistol from his back and hands the firearm to Samantha as he catches his breath before speaking.

ADAM

They rolled off the cliff and I can’t see anything moving in the forest. Chris didn’t respond when I called out to him.

Adam glances down the shaded trail.
ADAM
We’ll have to follow this trail
down and then backtrack to see if
we can find them.

Adam begins to pick himself up from the ground and grab his
backpack.

SAMANTHA
Shouldn’t we just keep moving
toward the cars and send help back
for him?

ASHLEY
And leave Chris lying down there?

ADAM
Chris just risked his life to save
us. I’m not going to just leave him
down there dying in the forest...if
he is still alive.

Adam glances down at his dirt-covered watch and recognizes
that the small hands have stopped moving. He then turns
toward Samantha.

ADAM
How much time do we have before
sunset, Sam?

Samantha quickly glances down at her watch, glances toward
the sky, and back to her watch before answering.

SAMANTHA
It’s almost 4:00 right now. I’d say
we have about three hours.

ADAM
That doesn’t give us much time. We
have to get down this cliff and get
Chris...and hopefully have enough
time to get back to the parking lot
before dark.

ASHLEY
You think whoever is chasing us
will only attack us at night?

Adam helps Ashley and James stand up.

He gently swings their backpacks over his shoulder.
Adam glances around at the sullen faces of Samantha, Ashley, and James as a few seconds pass in silence.

Adam
C’mon. We need to get moving.

Adam begins to make his way down the trail as Ashley and James follow close behind him.

Samantha glances around the quiet forest as she begins to walk behind the group, using the bottom of her shirt to wipe dirt from her firearm.

EXT. FOREST – DAY

Detective Jones quickly crosses the parking lot near the forest to his car, his phone pressed against his ear.

Detective Jones
Hold on. You issued an APB for who?

Detective Carson (V.O.)
Daniel Crowe.

Detective Jones
Who?

EXT. DETECTIVE CARSON’S CAR – DAY

Detective Carson drives with his cellular pressed against his cheek.

INTERCUT – TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

Detective Carson
And Blake Tanner.

Detective Jones
I understand that one, but who’s Daniel Crowe?

Detective Carson
He’s the seventh group member. I’ve asked Tom to contact every law enforcement agency west of the park.
DETECTIVE CARSON within 100 miles to ensure they received the profile information.

DETECTIVE JONES Ask him to send the information to every hospital within that area as well. Just in case.

DETECTIVE CARSON Good idea. How far away are you from the station?

DETECTIVE JONES About 30 minutes.

DETECTIVE CARSON I’ll meet you there.

Detective Carson closes his phone.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Chris regains consciousness in the forest. His hand slowly moves toward his head.

His eyes slowly open, the forest around him gradually coming into focus as he blinks several times.

Chris quickly sits up, but immediately falls back into the dirt and thick grass around him.

He clenches his teeth together for several seconds before he slowly leans up again, his eyes darting to his legs.

Blood stains tattoo his jeans around his right thigh where the bullet hit him. He remains motionless for several seconds as he stares at the open wound.

His eyes widen as his gaze shifts to his left leg, which is twisted in an awkward position.

Chris talks to himself as he reaches for his dirt stained backpack lying about three feet away from him.

CHRIS Stupid. stupid. stupid.

Chris pulls a t-shirt from his backpack, retrieves his pocketknife from his pocket, and begins to cut the t-shirt into strips.
He retrieves another t-shirt from his backpack, places the shirt securely over the bullet wound, and uses the cloth strips to bind the dressing to his leg. Chris winces as he cinches the cloth strips tight around his thigh.

CHRIS
Ow!

Chris carefully watches the dressing as he rummages inside his backpack and quickly retrieves a bottle of ibuprofen.

He immediately unscrews the lid, shakes four tablets into his palm, and shoves them into his mouth. Chris coughs violently as he chokes down the medication.

Chris glances around the nearby forest.

CHRIS
Real smart, Chris. Rush a guy who’s pointing a gun at you. Yeah, real smart. Ow!

He attempts to stand on his bandaged leg, but immediately falls to the ground, his teeth clenching tightly together.

Chris remains motionless for several seconds before army crawling to the base of the cliff.

He carefully analyzes the massive rock wall stretching into the sky above him.

CHRIS
Adam!

He pauses for a second, desperately listening for a response.

CHRIS
Sam!

Chris’ shoulders drop. He quickly glances around the nearby woods, whispering to himself.

CHRIS
Where did you go, Tray?

Chris retrieves his small pocketknife again from his pocket and analyzes the short blade.

CHRIS
(shaking his head)
Great.
He carefully crawls and positions his back against the hard, rock wall. Chris glances toward the top of the cliff one last time.

CHRIS
Adam! Ashley!

Several seconds pass in silence before Chris rests his head against the rock wall.

He carefully removes the lid of the medication bottle, shaking two ibuprofen tablets into his palm. Chris chokes down the medication, a brief cough escaping his lips before he closes his eyes.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Adam, Ashley, James, and Samantha push their way through the dense forest.

ADAM
Chris!?

SAMANTHA
Chris!?

ASHLEY
Chris!?

Adam glances into the surrounding forest as they listen for a response.

ADAM
Keep your eyes peeled for Tray.

SAMANTHA
If he’s smart, he’ll stay away from us.

ASHLEY
Chris!?

ADAM
Chris!?

All of them stop walking as they wait for Chris to respond. Adam glances toward the cliff high above them.

ADAM
We should have reached the spot where they fell by now.
ASHLEY
Then where are they?

All of them glance into the surrounding forest.

SAMANTHA
We’re running out of daylight, Adam.

ADAM
I’m aware of that, Sam. Just give me a minute to think.

SAMANTHA
Look, we may have already passed the spot where they landed.

Samantha briefly analyzes the nearby forest.

SAMANTHA
If he survived the fall, maybe Chris thought he’d just meet us at the parking lot.

ASHLEY
That would be the logical place to head.

ADAM
And where is Tray?

SAMANTHA
Who knows. At least we know Chris might be alive and mobile.

ASHLEY
We just need to watch for Tray.

Adam glances up into the sky.

ADAM
How much time do we have before sunset?

Samantha looks at her watch.

SAMANTHA
A little over an hour.

ADAM
We need to find some kind of shelter for the night. The sun is about to set and I don’t think we
ADAM
should keep wandering through the woods.

SAMANTHA
Shouldn’t we just keep moving? I mean, if someone’s following us, shouldn’t we stay ahead of them?

ADAM
We’ll be more vulnerable in the woods. They could attack us from multiple angles and we don’t have enough people to cover all sides.

ASHLEY
What about Chris?

ADAM
Chris is smart. If he’s alive, let’s hope he can take care of himself tonight.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT
Detective Carson glances through the file on Daniel Crowe as he walks.

Detective Jones approaches Detective Carson.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Where are the boy’s parents?

DETECTIVE JONES
They’re meeting with the child psychologist right now. They’ve been in there for almost two hours.

Detective Carson closes the file as he continues walking.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Has James said anything?

DETECTIVE JONES
Not a word. He’s still sitting in the observation room.

Detective Carson’s cell phone rings. He quickly retrieves his phone from his jacket pocket.
DETECTIVE CARSON
What’ve you got for me, Tom?

Detective Carson stops walking as he carefully listens for several seconds. He then turns and walks back the way he came.

Detective Carson motions for Detective Jones to follow him.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Send two police officers over there and tell them to plant themselves right outside that room. They don’t move until we get there. We’re on our way.

Detective Carson returns his phone to his pocket.

DETECTIVE CARSON
(smiling)
We got him.

DETECTIVE JONES
Daniel Crowe or Blake Tanner?

DETECTIVE CARSON
Daniel.

DETECTIVE JONES
(smiling)
Lucky number seven. So where are we going?

DETECTIVE CARSON
United General Hospital.

EXT. CAVE - DAY

Adam, Ashley, James, and Samantha enter the mouth of a small cave as a light rain begins to fall through the nearby trees. Adam slips the heavy backpack from his shoulders.

ADAM
We’ll have to stay here for the night and keep going tomorrow morning.

Adam retrieves his water bottle from his backpack. He takes a drink as he glances around the cave.
ADAM
This appears to be the only entrance to the cave; meaning it will be easier for us to protect ourselves.

Ashley and James sit against the rock wall huddled close together.

ASHLEY
And Jimmy is tired. He needs to rest.

Samantha stands briefly in silence.

SAMANTHA
I understand the need to protect ourselves, but if there’s more than one of them then we’ll be trapped in here.

Adam nods his head in agreement as he drinks from his water bottle.

ADAM
We need to take that chance.

Samantha then glances around the cave, squinting to see the back of the dark cavern.

SAMANTHA
We should at least move to the back of the cave away from the entrance...just in case there’s a chance we can avoid a confrontation altogether.

ADAM
You’re right.

Adam turns and begins to gather Ashley and James’ belongings.

ADAM
Ash, Jimmy...let’s move to the back of the cave.

Adam begins to make his way to the back of the cavern.

ADAM
It looks like there’s a better spot in the back where the two of you could lay down.
After setting the stuff down, Adam then returns to the mouth of the cave and retrieves his backpack.

He then hands his backpack to Ashley, who has already begun constructing a small bed for James.

ADAM
Here, there should be a couple army blankets in that one.

JAMES
I’m cold.

Adam pauses for a brief second before he removes his jacket and hands the jacket to James.

ADAM
Here, buddy. This won’t do much, but it’ll help a little bit.

JAMES
Thanks, Adam.

ASHLEY
Should we try to get a fire going?

ADAM
No. It’ll give away our position. In fact, we need to limit using our flashlights.

Samantha drops her backpack near the back of the cavern.

SAMANTHA
Someone needs to stay awake just to keep an eye out.

ADAM
I’ll take the first watch.

Adam stands motionless for a few seconds near the mouth of the cave.

ADAM
Ash, do you happen to have any more granola bars?
EXT. CAVE - NIGHT

A few hours have passed since Adam, Ashley, James, and Samantha first entered the cavern. Rain pours outside the mouth of the cave.

Adam sits with his back against the wall of the cave; one arm gently secured around Ashley who also sits with her back against the wall and his other arm quietly resting near James’ head as he sleeps in a fetal position.

Samantha sleeps peacefully on the other side of James. Adam’s head bobs infrequently as he desperately attempts to keep his eyes open.

Adam quietly glances down at Ashley, small tears streaming down her face.

ADAM
Hey. You alright?

Ashley shakes her head as she sobs quietly.

ADAM
What’s wrong?

Ashley carefully wipes away the tears from her cheeks.

ASHLEY
I don’t want to die, Adam. I don’t want Jimmy to die. He’s only 8!

Adam gently kisses Ashley on the forehead.

ADAM
Jimmy’s not going to die. You’re not going to die. I promise you that I’m going to do everything I can to get both of you off this mountain.

ASHLEY
I’m so tired, but I can’t sleep.

ADAM
Close your eyes. I’ll stay awake and keep watch. You need to sleep, though. We won’t be able to stay here for long.

ASHLEY
What’s Jimmy doing?
Adam glances to his other side to make sure that James is still asleep.

    ADAM
    He’s asleep.

    ASHLEY
    Is he comfortable?

A small smile stretches across Adam’s face as he kisses Ashley again on the forehead.

    ADAM
    He’ll be fine. Get some sleep.

Ashley gently buries her head into Adam’s chest as Adam gently rests his head against the hard rock wall of the cavern, his eyes gazing at the mouth of the cave as the rain continues to pour.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Chris lays slumped against the rock wall, drenched by the pouring rain. He desperately attempts to cover his camera as he uses the flash from the broken camera to see the surrounding forest.

    CHRIS
    Why don’t we go camping next weekend. You know, so I can kidnap one of your friends, try to frame you, and then shoot you in the leg. How does that sound?

Chris places the camera in his lap as he retrieves the ibuprofen bottle from his pocket.

    CHRIS
    Oh, that sounds like fun, Tray. Really? You bet.

He unscrews the lid, dumps a few ibuprofen tablets into his palm, and shoves them into his mouth. Chris coughs several times as he choke down the medication.

    CHRIS
    In fact, after you shoot me, can we tumble down a "much-steeper-than-it-looks" hill and off a cliff? Of course we can!

Chris places the ibuprofen bottle back in his pocket as he retrieves his camera from his lap.
And then after I regain consciousness with the worst headache of my life, can I lay against the "holy freakin’ cold" rock wall with a broken leg, a bullet in my thigh, and most likely a couple bruised ribs?

Chris uses the camera flash to light the surrounding woods.

"Yes, please do."

Chris briefly pauses as he desperately peers into the nearby forest, the flash from his camera going off periodically.

"Tray, I have something I need to say to you. What is it, Chris? Go screw yourself."

The rain continues to pour.

"This is the LAST time I’m going camping for a while."

Chris suddenly hears movement in the forest. He stops talking as he attempts to listen over the pouring rain.

"Hello?"

Something rustles in the nearby woods, followed by an unusual WHINE. He flashes his camera in all directions.

"(scared) Who’s out there?"

The unusual WHINE seems to be coming from all directions as something moves in the forest. Chris continues to flash his camera in all directions, but is unable to see anything.

He retrieves his small pocketknife from his jeans and opens the blade.

"(panicked) Tray, I swear if you come near me, I’m going to ram this knife straight into your throat, so"
CHRIS
you’ll never be able to chant that stupid nursery rhyme ever again!

Suddenly the forest is quiet again, aside from the pouring rain.

CHRIS
(confused)
Tray!?

The forest remains silent for several seconds. Chris begins to flash his camera again into the nearby woods. He is unable to see anything move as he flashes his camera in different directions.

Chris’ shoulders drop as he lays the camera in his lap, closing his eyes as he listens to the pouring rain. Suddenly, he hears the WHINE again in the forest to his left.

As he turns and flashes the camera, a monstrous figure can be seen briefly as it is in the process of attacking Chris. Chris does not even have enough time to scream.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Detective Carson and Detective Jones walk down a bright hallway at United General Hospital. DOCTOR #1 walks close beside them as they maneuver through the different hallways.

DETECTIVE CARSON
What time did you say he came in?

DOCTOR #1
The ambulance was called shortly after 1:00 PM yesterday by a family who found him laying next to the road near Concrete Muni. He was pretty banged up when they brought him in...broken arm...two cracked ribs...multiple bruises...

DETECTIVE JONES
Has he said anything?

DOCTOR #1
Nothing. He didn’t have any identification with him and he’s refused to answer any of our questions. That’s why we had him listed as "John Doe."
DETECTIVE CARSON
Did you find anything unusual during the medical examination?

DOCTOR #1
It’s funny that you should mention that. We did find high concentrations of an unknown neurotoxin in his blood as well as LSD. However, we’re stumped as to how the toxin hasn’t killed him at this point...based purely on the levels of ethanol and tetrodotoxin coursing through him. He should be dead by now.

Detective Carson, Detective Jones, and Doctor #1 turn onto another hallway and come to a hospital room where two police officers stand outside the door.

Detective Carson turns to Detective Jones.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Let me talk to him alone.

DETECTIVE JONES
(confused)
You sure?

DETECTIVE CARSON
Yeah.

DETECTIVE JONES
You’re the boss.

Detective Carson enters the hospital room.

Tray lays quietly in his hospital bed, his left arm in a sling as he stares out the nearby window into the darkness. Multiple bruises cover his face.

Detective Carson quietly retrieves a chair from the corner and pulls the chair close to the foot of the bed.

Detective Carson then places pictures of Ashley, James, Adam, Chris, Samantha, and Dane on the bed.

DETECTIVE CARSON
So where are they?

Several seconds pass in silence as Tray continues to peer out the window.
DETECTIVE CARSON
Don’t recognize them?

Detective Carson places additional photographs onto the bed.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Maybe you’ll recognize the Martin family...or Larry and Paula Faraday...or any of these other innocent people you led into the woods.

Tray slowly turns his head from the window, his eyes resting on the multiple photographs spread across the bed.

DETECTIVE CARSON
You should recognize them, shouldn’t you? I mean you were there when they disappeared.

Several seconds pass in silence.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Oh wait, I apologize. I didn’t lay these out correctly.

Detective Carson arranges the different photographs into a circle following the order they disappeared; matching the mapped diagram he had received from Tom earlier.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Is this jogging your memory yet?

Tray does not respond as he stares at the photographs.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Oh sorry, I almost forgot.

Detective Carson places photographs of Walter, Susan, and Bridgette Crowe on the bed.

Tray glares at Detective Carson.

DETECTIVE CARSON
I certainly hope they look familiar.

Tray quickly moves to the foot of the bed and swings a punch with his good arm at Detective Carson.

Detective Carson blocks the punch and counter attacks with an elbow to Tray’s nose. He shoves Tray back into the bed, Tray’s back hitting the bed with a THUD.
Detective Jones quickly enters the room.

DETECTIVE JONES
Everything alright?

Detective Carson glares at Tray as he responds.

DETECTIVE CARSON
We’re good. Just give us a few more minutes.

Detective Jones exits the room, a small grin stretched across his face as he closes the door behind him.

A small trail of blood trickles from Tray’s nose.

Detective Carson retrieves a box of tissues from the nearby table and tosses the box at Tray’s chest.

DETECTIVE CARSON
It’s been a long week, Danny, and I’m in no mood to continue wasting my time with you...so where are they?

Tray presses a tissue to his nose.

TRAY
I didn’t kill anybody.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Are they still alive?

TRAY
(smiling)
No one EVER survives.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Who else are you working with?

TRAY
If I tell you anything, he’ll kill me.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Who? Blake Tanner?

A small chuckle escapes Tray’s lips.

TRAY
You don’t get it, do you. I never had a choice. It was always them or me.
DETECTIVE CARSON
(confused)
Please explain.

TRAY
Once he gets you, you never have a choice. He keeps you alive as long as you continue to help him.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Help him?

TRAY
Collect.

DETECTIVE CARSON
(confused)
Collect for what?

A small smile pulls at the corner of Tray’s mouth.

TRAY
Winter is coming, isn’t it?

DETECTIVE CARSON
When you say “he,” are you referring to some kind of animal?

TRAY
I don’t know WHAT he is. I just know that I’ve spent the last 20 years scared of him.

Several seconds pass in silence as Detective Carson thinks to himself.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Where can I find him?

Tray points to the center of the circle that Detective Carson made using the pictures.

TRAY
(smiling)
Don’t worry. You wander into those woods after dark by yourself and, trust me...he’ll find you.
EXT. CAVE – DAY

Ashley awakens in the darkened cave.

Soft morning light emanates from the entrance where Adam sits close to James constructing some type of spear using one of the hunting knives he was carrying.

Samantha stands near the entrance of the cavern, anxiously gazing into the nearby forest.

Adam speaks softly to James.

ASHLEY
What are you doing?

ADAM
I was just showing Jimmy how to make a spear.

Ashley rises to her feet as she rubs her shoulder. She slowly shuffles toward the rest of the group.

ASHLEY
How long was I out?

Samantha responds as she continues to peer into the woods.

SAMANTHA
It’s almost 9:00.

Samantha turns to face the rest of the group.

SAMANTHA
We need to get moving if we’re going to find the parking lot.

Ashley watches James as he carefully secures a hunting knife to the end of a long stick. Adam continues to instruct James for a brief second before Ashley speaks.

ASHLEY
Jimmy, please be careful with that. I don’t want you to cut yourself.

ADAM
He’ll be fine.

James finishes fastening the hunting knife to the long stick and hands the finished product to Adam.

Adam carefully inspects the completed spear and nods in satisfaction as he turns and attempts to hand the completed spear to Ashley.
ADAM
Here, this one is for you.

Ashley raises her hands in defense as though someone is attempting to hand her a dangerous animal.

ASHLEY
I’m not carrying a spear!

ADAM
Ash, please. If we run into...Tray, I want you to be prepared.

Ashley looks directly at Adam, a disgusted look stretched across her face.

ASHLEY
Do you really think I’m capable of stabbing another person?

ADAM
If it comes to that, I sincerely hope so.

ASHLEY
Well I can’t.

Adam lets out an audible sigh as he rubs his forehead. Samantha turns to Ashley.

SAMANTHA
Even if it means saving Jimmy?

Ashley glares at Samantha for several seconds.

ASHLEY
I’m not carrying a spear.

ADAM
Here...

Adam digs into his pocket and retrieves two small pocketknives.

ADAM
...at least carry a couple of the small pocketknives: one for each pocket.

Ashley stares at the pocketknives in Adam’s hand for a brief second, picking at her lip as she considers her decision.
ADAM
Please, Ash. Just do it for me.

ASHLEY
Fine.

Ashley quickly grabs the two pocketknives in frustration and stuffs one into each of her pockets as a small smile pulls at the corner of Adam’s mouth.

ADAM
Thank you.

SAMANTHA
I think the rain is about to let up. We need to get moving.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT
Detective Carson stands from his chair and begins to gather the photographs from Tray’s bed.

DETECTIVE CARSON
A police escorted ambulance will transport you back south tomorrow morning.

Detective Carson motions toward the door.

DETECTIVE CARSON
There are two police officers waiting outside your room...plus one more in the lobby...that will be monitoring you throughout the night. I would recommend not trying anything.

Detective Carson begins to walk toward the door. He stops after a few steps and turns to face Tray.

DETECTIVE CARSON
You were wrong about one thing, Tray. Someone DID survive.

TRAY
(panicked)
What?

DETECTIVE CARSON
James Sorenson is on his way home with his parents as we speak.
TRAY
(panicked)
No. That wasn’t the agreement!

Tray quickly glances at the window into the darkness before he turns back to Detective Carson, terror spread across his face.

TRAY
You have to get me out of here!

DETECTIVE CARSON
You’re not going anywhere until tomorrow morning, Danny.

Tray shakes his head in disbelief.

TRAY
No, you don’t understand! I can’t stay here tonight!

DETECTIVE CARSON
Why not?

TRAY
He’ll kill me!

DETECTIVE CARSON
You’ve got two police officers standing right outside your door. I think you’ll be fine for one night.

Detective Carson moves toward the door.

Tray panics and falls from his bed in an attempt to reach the door.

TRAY
No! Please, don’t leave me here!

Detective Carson opens the door without looking back at Tray and moves past Detective Jones. They both walk down the hallway as Tray continues to scream.

TRAY
Don’t leave me here!

Both detectives continue to walk down the hallway as two doctors run past them into Tray’s room.
EXT. FOREST - DAY

Adam, Ashley, James, and Samantha walk through the forest, exhaustion stretched across their faces.

SAMANTHA
Adam, we’ve been walking all day. We should have been there already.

Adam turns in frustration toward Samantha.

ADAM (sarcastically)
Thank you, Sam, for that AMAZING observation.

SAMANTHA (agitated)
Look, I haven’t said anything this whole time, because YOU said you could get us back to the parking lot.

Adam shakes his head as he turns and continues walking through the forest.

ADAM
First off, I didn’t say I could get us back to the parking lot. I just said that I could point us in the right direction.

Samantha throws her hands into the air.

SAMANTHA (sarcastically)
Oh, well great. I’m SO glad that you’re clarifying that now.

Adam, Ashley, James, and Samantha enter a clearing next to a steep cliff.

Adam stops walking as he carefully analyzes the clearing. Ashley, James, and Samantha also carefully look around the clearing.

SAMANTHA (confused)
What are we doing here, Adam?

Several seconds pass in silence.
ADAM
How much time do we have before sunset?

Samantha glances down at her watch.

SAMANTHA
About three hours, why?

Adam turns to face the rest of the group.

ADAM
We can spend the next three hours continuing to look for the parking lot or we can stay here and set a trap for this thing that’s going to start hunting us in a matter of hours.

ASHLEY
I just want to get Jimmy out of this forest.

ADAM
I know, Ash, I know. I want all of us to make it off this mountain alive, too, but if we spend the next three hours looking for the parking lot and we can’t find it, then we won’t have much of a chance when that thing comes looking for us.

SAMANTHA
What do you mean "thing?"

ADAM (hesitating)
We’re being hunted by some kind of...animal.

SAMANTHA
Okay, so if we can’t find the parking lot in two hours, then we’ll spend the remaining daylight finding a suitable hiding spot. It couldn’t find us last night.

ADAM
We were lucky last night.
ASHLEY
What do you mean?

Adam stares at Samantha, Ashley, and James in silence.

FLASHBACK - EXT. CAVE - NIGHT

Ashley, James, and Samantha lay on the hard ground near the back of the cave.

Adam sits with his back against the wall, his head bobbing as he attempts to stay awake.

Adam glances to the side for a brief second as he quietly adjusts the blanket draped across Ashley. When he glances back toward the mouth of the cave, a dark figure stands silhouetted by the light.

Adam freezes as he stares at the creature.

The creature does not move for several seconds, but then takes a couple steps into the cave.

Adam quietly grips the hilt of his hunting knife and clenches the handle in his fist as perspiration begins to trickle down his forehead.

The creature slowly crouches, remaining still for several seconds. The dark figure emanates a quiet WHINE, which reverberates off the walls of the cave.

Adam, who had quietly slipped under his own blanket, now lays with his eyes peeking from underneath the blanket. The hunting knife lays close to his face.

The creature stares into the darkness of the cave for several seconds before it emits another quiet WHINE, which reverberates off the walls of the cave again.

Adam does not move as his eyes dart from Ashley, James, and Samantha.

After several seconds sitting in silence, the creature stands and returns to the mouth of the cave.

The creature scurries quickly into the pouring rain and disappears into the nearby forest.

Adam continues to lay under his blanket, his hand visibly shaking as he puts down his hunting knife.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY
Adam, Ashley, James, and Samantha stand in the clearing near the cliff. Ashley, James, and Samantha stand in silence for several seconds.

SAMANTHA
And you were planning on sharing this information with us when?

ADAM
It wasn’t important until now.

SAMANTHA
What do you mean it wasn’t important until now?

ADAM
Sam, look at Ash.

Ash looks visibly terrified.

ADAM
Now you tell me why I didn’t say anything.

ASHLEY
Why didn’t you wake any of us?

ADAM
(hesitating)
I froze. If that thing would have attacked, I wouldn’t have been able to help anyone.

ASHLEY
So why didn’t this thing attack us then?

ADAM
I don’t think it could see us.

SAMANTHA
This thing is obviously nocturnal and it can’t see in the dark?

ADAM
I don’t think it sees the same way we do.

Adam, Ashley, James, and Samantha stand in silence for several seconds as they process this information.
SAMANTHA
Sound?

ASHLEY
What?

SAMANTHA
Was it using the sound to find us?

ADAM
But we weren’t making any noise. All of you were asleep and I was motionless.

SAMANTHA
Not "hearing" the sound, but using the vibration of the sound to see.

The entire group stands in silence as they reflect on Samantha’s comments.

ASHLEY
That would make sense.

SAMANTHA
It rains up here quite frequently and that would definitely give this thing the advantage when hunting at night.

ADAM
I think it’s also using the trees to move through the forest. When we were looking for Dane two nights ago, there was a blood trail leading to a nearby tree close to where we found his shoe.

SAMANTHA
So what are you proposing we do?

ADAM
I’m tired of running. I’m tired of waiting for this thing to finish us off.

Adam glances around the clearing.

ADAM
There are few trees in this area. If we can force it into the clearing, we may be able to force it off the cliff.
Adam walks to the edge of the cliff and peers into the sharp rocks below.

**ADAM**

There’s a 300 foot drop off this ledge and there’s no way that thing can survive the drop.

Ashley, James, and Samantha contemplate their options for several seconds.

**SAMANTHA**

I don’t know, Adam. I mean do you really think the four of us can take this thing head on?

**ADAM**

We have a few knives and we still have your firearm.

**SAMANTHA**

I know that, but still, it doesn’t seem...

**ADAM**

(interrupting)
Sam, please, for once in your life trust that someone else has a better plan than you do.

Samantha stares at Adam for a brief second.

**ADAM**

Please, Sam.

**SAMANTHA**

What do you need us to do?

MONTAGE - ADAM, ASHLEY, SAMANTHA, AND JAMES CONSTRUCT A TRAP

--Ashley and James retrieve several branches, twigs, and dry kindling from the forest.

--Adam uses a small hatchet to dig a small trench around a section of the clearing.

--Samantha constructs some kind of man-shaped figure using some of Adam’s clothes. She then removes the broken cell phone from her pocket and carefully inspects the cracked screen.

--Adam pulls two containers of lighter fluid from his backpack. He opens the containers and pours the liquid into the newly dug trench.
--Samantha retrieves two small kerosene tanks from her backpack. She opens the tanks and begins to pour kerosene into the trench.

--Ashley and James drop several wood chips into the trench on top of the flammable fluids.

END MONTAGE

Adam glances at the sky as the sun is beginning to set over the forest.

ADAM
Are we almost done?

SAMANTHA
I think we got it.

Adam turns to Ashley.

ADAM
You have both sets of car keys, right?

ASHLEY
Yes.

ADAM
Remember, don’t...

ASHLEY
...move until you signal.

ADAM
(smiling)
Right.

Adam and Ashley stare at each other in silence for several seconds.

ADAM
You know I love you, right?

ASHLEY
Yeah.

Adam kisses Ashley on the forehead.

ADAM
Keep James close to you, but run as fast as you can.
ASHLEY
We will.

Adam turns to Samantha.

ADAM
Alright, Sam. Let’s suit up.

EXT. FOREST – NIGHT

The clearing next to the cliff is quiet, except for the soft sound of crickets in the nearby forest.

Ashley lays under a blanket covered with branches and twigs close to the cliff. James lays under the blanket close beside her as they both peer into the clearing lit by the moonlight.

Close to the cliff stands a motionless man-shaped figure.

Ashley peers along the tree line close to the clearing. The forest remains quiet as she pulls James close to her.

Somewhere else in the clearing, Samantha watches the nearby tree line, carefully watching for any form of movement.

Adam also lays motionless somewhere in the clearing as he prepares for the attack.

Suddenly the broken cell phone emanates a ring tone, which is attached to the man-shaped figure standing in the clearing.

As the phone rings, Adam’s eyes carefully analyze the nearby tree line. The phone rings for several seconds and then ceases, but nothing moves in the forest.

Samantha lets out a quiet sigh as she waits in silence.

Suddenly, she hears soft movement in the clearing behind her.

Adam’s gaze turns in Samantha’s direction as a dark figure quietly emerges from the nearby forest and crouches in the tall grass.

Adam’s hand quietly tightens around the spear laying by his side.

The dark figure almost disappears in the tall grass as it slowly moves into the clearing closer to the man-shaped figure.
Adam’s eyes widen as he realizes the creature is moving directly in Samantha’s direction.

Samantha does not move as she can hear the soft shuffle of the creature moving through the tall grass behind her. She attempts to control her breathing as the creature moves closer to her.

Samantha peers to the side to find the creature crouched right next to her in the tall grass.

Samantha covers her mouth as the creature lays still in the grass next to her for several seconds before it continues moving through the clearing.

Adam slowly retrieves a lighter from his pocket as the creature moves within 10 feet of the man made figure.

Suddenly, the creature attacks the man-shaped figure; crushing the diversion into the ground.

Adam quickly turns and lights the trail behind him of tinder, wood chips, bark, and dry kindling, which had been doused with lighter fluid, kerosene, and propane earlier that follows the previously dug trench.

The fire quickly spreads across the clearing, sealing the creature in a wall of flames against the cliff.

Adam quickly jumps from his hiding spot along the ground. He is wearing his hooded sweatshirt covered and tied in branches, twigs, and dirt as he clenches a spear in his hands.

Samantha also quickly emerges from her hiding spot in the clearing, also wearing a hooded sweatshirt and covered in branches, twigs, and dirt. Both Adam and Samantha are trapped by the wall of flames against the cliff with the creature.

ADAM

Now, Ash!

Ashley and James, who were hiding under a camouflaged blanket outside of the wall of flames, now leap from their hiding spot.

Ashley hesitates for a brief second before she grabs James’ hand and runs as fast as she can into the nearby forest.

The creature quickly tears the man-shaped figure in half and turns to face Adam and Samantha.
Samantha begins to unload her pistol in the direction of the creature.

One bullet connects with the creature’s shoulder as it quickly moves in Adam’s direction.

Adam quickly lunges forward and drives the spear into the creature’s thigh.

The creature emanates a high pitched WHINE as the spear sinks deep into its thigh.

Adam retrieves another hunting knife from his belt and swings the sharp blade toward the creature’s neck.

The creature quickly turns as the blade drives deep into its back.

Adam feels several sharp objects pierce his hand as the blade buries into the creature’s skin.

Adam winces in pain as the creature quickly backhands him in the chest, tossing him back several feet in the clearing; more sharp objects tearing at Adam’s makeshift camouflage.

Adam hits the ground with a THUD as Samantha fires shots at the injured creature.

The creature turns its entire attention toward Samantha as the wall of flames continues to grow. The creature lunges at Samantha.

Samantha quickly dives to the side to avoid the attack.

She flips over to shoot the creature again, but the chamber is empty when she pulls the trigger.

Samantha quickly reaches into her pocket to retrieve the other magazine.

The creature suddenly jumps onto Samantha as she slaps the magazine into the pistol. Multiple sharp objects pierce Samantha’s skin as the massive figure lands on her, the CRACKING of several bones echoing through the clearing in the process.

Samantha does not hesitate as she unloads the clip into the creature crouched directly above her. Multiple bullets pierce the creature’s chest.

The creature leaps away from Samantha toward the cliff. Adam charges from the opposite direction with another spear in hand.
Adam yells as he drives the spear deep into the creature’s neck and pushes the creature toward the cliff.

The creature desperately grabs the shaft of the spear as it attempts to pull the spear out of its neck. The creature plants its foot against the edge of the cliff, successfully stopping its movement.

Adam ditches the spear and shoves his shoulder into the creature’s chest; several sharp objects piercing his shoulder and neck as he makes contact with the creature.

The creature tumbles over the edge of the cliff, a loud WHINE escaping its lips as it falls 300 feet into the rocks below.

Adam stares into the darkness below, unable to see the creature’s body laying on the rocks below.

Adam clutches his neck as he drags himself over to Samantha.

Samantha lays on her back in the clearing as the wall of flames continues to burn around them. Samantha’s breathing is very shallow as Adam looks up and down her body. Blood stains her entire chest area where the sharp objects pierced her skin.

Samantha’s entire body suddenly convulses wildly as Adam stares in shock. Her entire body arches and eventually goes limp.

Adam sits quietly in the grass staring at Samantha’s lifeless body for several seconds, blood staining his clothes in multiple areas where his skin was pierced by the sharp objects protruding from the creature’s skin.

He vomits into the grass as his vision begins to blur.

Adam hunches over in the clearing as his muscles begin to contract rapidly. He grabs his abdomen as he experiences intense and painful muscle cramps.

Suddenly, his entire body straightens as intense pain continues to course through his body. After several seconds, Adam’s body goes limp.

His breathing becomes more and more shallow as he lays motionless in the smoke covered clearing.

Rain begins to fall on Adam’s lifeless face.
EXT. PARKING LOT NEAR THE FOREST - NIGHT

A police helicopter starts its engine as it sits in the middle of a parking lot near the forest.

Detective Carson and Detective Jones crouch in the middle of 10 police officers about 50 feet away, the map Detective Carson received from Tom earlier spread on the ground in front of him. Several flashlights shine over his shoulder onto the map.

DETECTIVE CARSON
We will land about 10 miles east of the campsite.

Detective Carson points to the middle of the circle indicating where every disappearance has occurred over the last several years.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Once we land, we’ll have two hours to complete a thorough sweep of the area. The helicopter will return to the extraction point at exactly 4:00 AM.

Detective Carson pauses for a brief second.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Now, just so we’re all clear on this, once we land we all stay together.

POLICE OFFICER #4
Wouldn’t we be able to cover more...

DETECTIVE CARSON
(interrupting)
We ALL stay together. Is that understood?

POLICE OFFICER #4
Yes sir.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Alright, let’s move.

Detective Carson stands as he folds the map and shoves it into his pocket. The 10 police officers gather their equipment and make their way toward the helicopter.

Detective Jones adjusts his bulletproof vest as he walks toward the helicopter.
Detective Carson suddenly places his hand on his shoulder to stop him. Detective Jones turns to face Detective Carson.

**DETECTIVE CARSON**
You’re not going.

**DETECTIVE JONES**
(angrily)
What!?

**DETECTIVE CARSON**
I want you to go back to the police station and wait... just in case there’s any word on Blake Tanner.

**DETECTIVE JONES**
(angrily)
You seriously expect me to sit this one out!?

**DETECTIVE CARSON**
Yes.

Detective Jones shakes his head in disbelief as he turns to look at the waiting helicopter.

**DETECTIVE CARSON**
Look, Nick, you’re a damn good detective. I need someone I can count on back at the station if new information comes in.

Detective Jones shakes his head as he begins to remove his bulletproof vest.

**DETECTIVE JONES**
(pointing at Detective Carson)
You owe me one.

Detective Jones walks past Detective Carson toward his car. He stops and turns back to face Detective Carson.

**DETECTIVE JONES**
Just be careful out there.

Detective Jones continues toward his car. Detective Carson makes his way to the helicopter.

Detective Carson quickly climbs into the helicopter with 10 police officers and slams the door shut.

The helicopter lifts from the parking lot and begins to move over the forest.
EXT. PARKING LOT NEAR THE TRAIL - DAY

Ashley and James walk through the forest, fatigue apparent on their faces.

Ashley stops to catch her breath for a brief second and listen for any movement in the nearby forest. The sun begins to peak over the mountain as she continues through the forest.

Ashley suddenly stops walking as she notices the sun reflecting off of something through the trees down the mountain.

Ashley’s eyes widen with excitement.

The sun is reflecting off of one of the car windshields sitting in the parking lot.

ASHLEY
Jimmy, we’re almost there!

Ashley grabs James’ arm as she sprints down the hill through the woods.

Ashley and James emerge from the forest onto the gravel parking lot where the cars wait.

Ashley tugs on James’ arm as she sprints for her car.

ASHLEY
Hurry, Jimmy, get in!

James opens the passenger-side door as Ashley slides into the driver-side seat.

Ashley fumbles with the keys for a brief second as she slides the key into the ignition. She attempts to turn the car on several times, but the car does not start.

ASHLEY
C’mon, c’mon. C’mon start!

Ashley continues to attempt to start the car, but the car is unresponsive.

JAMES
Why won’t it start?

ASHLEY
(angrily)
I don’t know, Jimmy!
Ashley stops trying to get the car started. She glances over at James, who is now staring at the floor.

ASHLEY
Sorry, I didn’t mean to yell at you. I’ve just never had a problem with this car before.

Ashley sits silently for a brief second as she stares at the steering wheel.

ASHLEY
Jimmy, stay in the car for a second. I need to check the engine.

Ashley quickly glances around into the nearby forest as she moves from the driver-side door and lifts the hood of the Land Rover.

Ashley finds several wires in the engine have been cut. She checks the tires to find that every tire has been slashed. Ashley glances over at Samantha’s and Chris’ cars to find that all tires have been slashed.

Tears begin to trail down Ashley’s face.

ASHLEY
(whispering to herself)
Damn you, Tray.

Ashley wipes the tears away from her cheeks as she quickly moves to James’ door, which she opens.

JAMES
What’s wrong, Ash?

Ashley grabs James’ arm and pulls him from the car.

ASHLEY
C’mon, Jimmy. We have to run a little further...just down the road to find help.

James attempts to fall in step with Ashley as he’s dragged through the gravel parking lot.

JAMES
I’m so tired, Ash.
ASHLEY
I know, Jimmy, I know. Just a little further and I promise we’ll find help.

Ashley and James walk down the road away from the parking lot.

INT. RANGER STATION - DAY

Ashley and James turn a corner as they come into view of a ranger station. Ashley quickly grabs James’ arm and goes running for the station.

She bangs on the front door desperately.

ASHLEY
Hello!? Hello, please help us!

Ashley continues to pound on the door and attempts to turn the door handle to get into the ranger station.

ASHLEY
Please, we need help! Please! Is there anyone in there!?

Suddenly, Blake’s voice can be heard from somewhere within the station.

BLAKE (O.S.)
Hello?

Blake opens the front door. He stares at Ashley and James for a brief second before a smile stretches across his face.

BLAKE
Hello! How was the hike?

ASHLEY
They need help!

Ashley walks past Blake, pulling James into the ranger station in the process.

BLAKE
Who needs help?

ASHLEY
We need to call the police.

Ashley quickly looks around the room.
ASHLEY
Is there a phone in here?

BLAKE
(motioning behind him)
I just have a radio in the back room. Give me a second and I’ll grab it.

Blake turns to exit the room as James tugs at Ashley’s arm, attempting to pull her toward the exit.

JAMES
Please can we just leave?

Ashley kneels down beside James.

ASHLEY
What’s wrong, Jimmy?

Ashley suddenly feels an arm tighten around her neck as she is pulled from the floor.

Ashley quickly plants her feet on the ground and shoves her attacker into the desk behind them.

The attacker briefly loosens his grip around her neck. Ashley quickly retrieves one of the pocket knives from her pocket. She quickly flips the blade open and jabs the knife deep into her attacker’s leg.

The attacker shoves her toward the floor as he grabs the area where the knife cut him.

Ashley turns around to find Blake clutching his left thigh as he winces in pain. She quickly pulls herself from the ground.

ASHLEY
Run, James!

As Ashley attempts to run, she feels the hard hand of Blake grab her shoulder.

ASHLEY
Run!

Ashley is thrown into the nearby wall. Picture frames shatter against the floor as Ashley bounces off the wall onto the floor with a THUD, the pocket knife falling from her hand. She lays motionless on the floor of the ranger station.
Blake turns to look at James, who has already exited the ranger station and is running across the parking lot into the nearby forest.

Blake winces in pain as he peers down at his injured leg.

He quietly removes his jacket and bandages his leg. Blake turns his attention to Ashley laying motionless on the floor.

Blake crouches down over her body.

BLAKE
(shaking his head)
I’m sorry, child. I’m so sorry that it has to be this way.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Tray lays in his hospital bed, curled in a fetal position as he gazes through the window into the darkness. Tears stream down his face. The lights are off in his room.

TRAY
(singing)
Ring around the rosy...

The clock on the wall reads "2:59 AM."

TRAY
(singing)
...a pocket full of posies...

The second hand on the clock is about to strike "3:00 AM."

TRAY
(singing)
...ashes, ashes, we all fall...

The clock strikes "3:00 AM."

TRAY
(singing)
...down.

Several seconds pass in silence as Tray stares into the darkness.

TRAY
(singing)
Ring around the rosy, a pocket full of posies...
Tray turns his back to the window, terror stretched across his face.

TRAY
(singing)
...ashes, ashes. we all fall...

Tray hesitates for a brief second as he closes his eyes.

TRAY
(singing)
...down.

Suddenly, a dark figure crashes through the hospital room window.

Tray lays motionless in his bed, his back still turned toward the monstrous figure.

The two police officers who were stationed outside Tray’s room quickly rush in.

Their eyes rest on the dark figure silhouetted by the light outside the building. They hesitate for a brief second before they both open fire on the creature.

The dark figure quickly moves around the room as it attempts to dodge the gunfire.

A stray bullet strikes a piece of hospital equipment, which starts a fire. The fire alarm sounds as the sprinklers ignite in the room.

The creature suddenly rushes the two police officers.

The dark figure deflects one police officer’s gun as the police officer fires and is tossed through the door into the hallway, where several medical personnel rush through the halls desperately attempting to evacuate other patients from the building. The deflected shot strikes Tray in the chest.

The other police officer is slammed against the wall as multiple sharp objects pierce his body.

He is suspended in the air for a brief second before the monstrous figure drops his broken body to the floor.

The dark figure turns and stands at the foot of the bed where Tray lays bleeding from the bullet wound in his chest.

Tray breathes heavily as he turns to look at the creature, blood streaming between his fingers onto the bed.
TRAY
(smiling)
I knew you would come.

Tray attempts to sit upright in his bed, but falls back into the bed; his hand clutching his chest.

TRAY
Please. Please don’t leave me here alone. Who’s going to help you? Who’s going to bring them to you?

Tray stares at the creature for several seconds as though he is listening to a response.

TRAY
You were my friend. My only friend. I would’ve done anything for you.

Tray slowly lays his head back against the wall as his eyes roll toward the ceiling.

TRAY
Please don’t let me die alone.

The monstrous figure slowly turns and grabs the fallen police officer’s body from the ground. It then moves toward the window. Tray’s eyes begin to gloss over.

TRAY
Please...don’t...leave...

The creature exits the window carrying the police officer’s body; only visible for a brief second as it passes through the light emanating from the hospital.

TRAY
...me.

The fire sprinklers continue to rain on Tray’s lifeless body.

EXT. CAVERN - NIGHT

Ashley awakens in a dark cavern, duct tape strapped across her mouth. She is unable to see anything as she glances into the surrounding darkness. She attempts to move her arms, but her arms and legs have been bound.

Ashley spends several seconds attempting to reach her tied hand into her pocket. She finally manages to retrieve the second small pocket knife from her pocket.
Ashley attempts to see through the darkness as she quietly opens the blade and begins to saw through the duct tape binding her wrists.

After several seconds of cutting, Ashley frees her hands. She quickly cuts the duct tape binding her ankles.

Ashley continues to stare into the darkness as she frees her ankles and carefully removes the duct tape covering her mouth.

She sits quietly in the dark cavern, hearing nothing as she waits for several seconds.

Ashley begins to move quietly along the rock wall of the cavern.

She moves along the cavern wall for several steps when her foot suddenly bumps something on the ground.

Ashley crouches and quietly reaches into the surrounding darkness. She hesitates slightly as she carefully examines the object with her hands.

Ashley touches the cold, lifeless features of a human body.

She quickly stands as she cups her hand over her mouth. Tears stream down Ashley’s face as she attempts to regain her composure.

She carefully steps over the dead body as she continues to walk along the cavern wall. Ashley seems to walk quietly along the rock wall for an hour before she feels some kind of small tunnel about waist high exiting the cavern.

Ashley carefully climbs into the small tunnel and crawls into the darkness. She crawls for about 20 feet until she turns a corner and notices a faint light emanating from the end of the tunnel about 100 feet in front of her.

Ashley begins to crawl faster up the tunnel. She makes it about 20 more feet when she hears quiet movement in the tunnel ahead of her.

She glances toward the end of the tunnel as something is pushed into the tunnel. In the soft glow of the night sky, Ashley also sees a dark figure pushing the object into the tunnel.

Ashley’s eyes widen as she quietly moves back down the tunnel. As she quickly moves backward, she can hear the creature coming closer to her in the tunnel as it pushes the object down the shaft toward her.
As Ashley rounds the corner in the tunnel, she feels a small alcove carved in the tunnel wall. She quickly climbs into the alcove, a small rock breaking from the tunnel wall as she positions herself.

The small rock falls into the tunnel leading to the cavern.

The creature stops pushing the object down the shaft for a brief second as it listens for any further movement.

Ashley cups her hand over her mouth in an effort to control her breathing.

After a few seconds, the creature continues pushing the object down the shaft.

Ashley holds her breath as the object and creature move past her nestled in the alcove. Through the darkness, she is barely able to recognize that the object the creature is pushing is a human body; the reflective surface of the police officer’s badge giving off a soft glow in the darkness.

Ashley turns away from the tunnel as the creature pushes the body forward. After several seconds, she hears the body hit the cavern floor with a THUD. She hears the creature enter the cavern as well.

She waits a couple minutes as the creature moves the police officer’s body around the cavern. Ashley climbs from the alcove and quietly makes her way up the shaft. Ashley carefully rounds the corner in the tunnel, the soft light of the night sky gleaming ahead of her.

Ashley quietly ascends up the shaft, the quiet movements of the creature in the cavern behind her. She is about 30 feet away from the end of the tunnel when Ashley reaches ahead of her and grabs a stone protruding from the cave wall. As she pulls herself up the shaft, the rock suddenly pulls loose from the rock wall and rolls down the shaft. Ashley slips slightly, her feet grinding on the tunnel floor as she attempts to catch herself.

She hears the creature suddenly emanate a brief WHINE as it ceases moving in the cavern below. Ashley remains motionless in the shaft as she listens intently for any movement from the creature. Ashley is about to resume climbing when she suddenly hears the creature quickly moving through the tunnel behind her.

She quickly ascends the remaining 30 feet of the tunnel. Rocks slide behind her as she scrambles up the shaft as fast as she can.
Ashley can hear the creature moving quickly up the shaft behind her as she grasps the end of the tunnel. She quickly pulls herself into the night sky.

She rolls down a small hill before jumping to her feet and sprinting into the nearby forest. She hears the creature release a loud WHINE as it exits the tunnel about 50 feet behind her.

Ashley panics as she hears the creature quickly moving through the forest behind her.

ASHLEY
HELP!

The creature is gaining on her as she attempts to sprint through the dark forest.

ASHLEY
HELP!

Ashley suddenly hits a hill and begins to descend at an uncontrollable rate. She quickly loses her footing and begins to roll down the hill, the creature still closing in behind her.

Ashley connects with a massive rock laying at the bottom of the hill, knocking the wind out of her. She coughs as she glances up the hill to see the creature quickly moving toward her. The creature is barely visible in the soft moonlight, but is only 30 feet away from her.

Ashley freezes as the creature quickly closes the gap between them.

20 feet.

10 feet.

Ashley closes her eyes.

Suddenly, the loud sound of gunfire causes Ashley to cover her ears and bury her head against the cold rock. She can hear several people shouting as they continue to fire.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Keep firing! Don’t stop until that thing drops!

The sea of gunfire seems to last for several minutes. Finally, the forest is quiet again, except for the distant echo of the gunfire.
Ashley carefully lifts her head to look at the still outline of the creature laying only five feet in front of her. The creature’s chest continues to move as its breaths become more and more shallow.

Ashley lays still as Detective Carson steps between her and the creature, his gun still pointed at the dark figure laying in the grass.

Detective Carson stands motionless for a brief second before firing one last bullet into the creature’s head.

He quietly turns and helps Ashley to her feet.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Ashley?

Ashley manages a nod.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Where are the others?

Ashley shakes her head as she suddenly collapses to the ground. Three police officers quickly grab her and begin to carry her through the forest.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Let’s get her back to the helicopter.

POLICE OFFICER #4
(motioning toward the creature)
Sir, what do we do about...that thing?

DETECTIVE CARSON
Leave it. It’s not going anywhere.

Detective Carson and the other police officers disappear into the darkness of the forest as they carry Ashley to the helicopter.

They enter a clearing as the helicopter begins its descent above them.

Suddenly, Detective Carson’s radio bursts to life. He quickly retrieves the radio from his belt.

DETECTIVE CARSON
This is Carson.
Detective Carson attempts to listen to the voice on the other end, but is unable to make it out over the sound of the descending helicopter.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Say again!?

Detective Carson is only able to hear the word "Jones" over the sound of the helicopter.

DETECTIVE CARSON
Nick, I can hardly hear you! We have Ashley Sorenson! We’ll be at the police station in 30 minutes!

Detective Carson returns the radio to his belt as he quickly climbs into the helicopter and slams the door.

The helicopter quickly climbs as it moves over the forest.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Detective Jones stares at the police station radio in frustration.

Tom sits quietly across the table from Detective Jones.

TOM
What did he say?

DETECTIVE JONES
They have Ashley Sorenson. They’ll be here in about 30 minutes.

Detective Jones sits back in his chair, a loud creak echoing through the room, as he rubs his forehead.

DETECTIVE JONES
What did they say at the hospital?

TOM
They checked the surveillance tapes. They said you’ll want to take a look at them when you get there.

Detective Jones stops rubbing his forehead as he looks directly at Tom.

DETECTIVE JONES
Anything interesting?

Tom hesitates briefly, his eyes resting on the table.
TOM
(confused)
They mentioned something about an...animal exiting the building?

Tom looks across the table at Detective Jones.

TOM
Does that mean anything to you?

Detective Jones stands from his chair and retrieves his jacket from a nearby coat rack.

DETECTIVE JONES
I’m going to head to the hospital myself and get that mess sorted out. Ryan isn’t going to be happy when he hears that Daniel was killed by one of two dead police officers.

TOM
What would you like me to tell Ryan when he arrives?

DETECTIVE JONES
Just bring him up to speed and tell him to call me on my cell phone when he has a chance.

Detective Jones walks toward the exit as he throws his jacket over his shoulders.

TOM
Oh, I almost forgot.

Detective Jones stops walking and turns to face Tom as Tom retrieves a black, worn sketchbook from within a stack of papers he was carrying.

DETECTIVE JONES
What is that?

TOM
James’ sketchbook. I guess he left it in the observation room after meeting with the psychologist. I bumped into her as she was leaving and she requested that I turn it into Ryan when I see him...but I might as well give it you while you’re here.
DETECTIVE JONES
Just set in on my desk on your way out. I’ll make sure we get it back to James when we have a chance.

Detective Jones buttons his jacket as he thinks to himself.

DETECTIVE JONES
Speaking of which, I’ll call the Sorensons on my way to the hospital and let them know they found Ashley.

TOM
Sounds good. Make sure you take an umbrella with you. It looked as though it was going to rain.

Detective Jones nods and exits the room.

Tom stands from his chair and collects the paperwork he was carrying. He pauses briefly as he stares at the worn, black sketchbook sitting on the desk.

He quietly sets the papers down and retrieves the sketchbook from the desk. Tom casually thumbs through pages of different sketches.

A small smile stretches across Tom’s face as he inspects the different drawings of people and cars. He pauses as he turns to a specific page in the sketchbook. Tom’s eyes narrow as he analyzes the drawing carefully.

The sketch is of a little boy, presumably James, standing next to a creature-like figure.

JAMES (V.O.)
That’s my friend Rory.

ADAM (V.O.)
He’s a friend at school?

JAMES (V.O.)
No. I usually hang out with him after school.

INT. SORENSON RESIDENCE - NIGHT

GEORGE SORENSON stands in the dark kitchen, a cordless phone pressed tightly to his cheek as rain pounds against the kitchen window. His wife, KIMBERLY SORENSON, stands in the kitchen doorway, listening intently as she pulls the lapels of her robe together.
GEORGE
Thank you so much Detective Jones for letting us know. I’ll be there as soon as I can.

George hangs up the phone as he turns to look at Kimberly. They briefly stare at each other in silence.

KIMBERLY
Ashley?

A small smile pulls at the corner of George’s mouth as his eyes begin to water.

GEORGE
They found her. She’s alive.

Kimberly quickly paces across the kitchen and embraces George, tears streaming down her face.

KIMBERLY
Thank God she’s alright.

George pulls away to look directly at Kimberly, his hand gently caressing her cheek.

GEORGE
Tell Jimmy they found Ash. I’m going to throw some clothes on and head down there.

Kimberly nods as she turns to exit the kitchen, wiping away tears as she walks.

She quickly walks down the hallway to James’ room and gently opens the door. A quizzical look crosses her face.

James stands in the middle of his room as he stares at the rain pouring down outside his window.

Kimberly moves to stand directly behind him.

KIMBERLY
What’s wrong, Jimmy?

JAMES
He is coming.

KIMBERLY
Who is coming, Jimmy?
JAMES
He likes the rain.

KIMBERLY
Who likes the rain?

James quietly turns to face Kimberly.

JAMES
It makes it easier to hunt.

Kimberly startles as a loud CRASH occurs downstairs.

EXT. SORENSON RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Rain pours on the Sorenson residence as George suddenly screams from somewhere in the home. Kimberly also screams after several seconds. The dark house sits quietly as the front door slowly opens.

James exits the house and casually walks to the end of the driveway, his eyes following the ground in front of him.

He stops as he reaches the street. James stands motionless staring at the road, his hair and pajamas drenched by the rain. A pair of headlights suddenly illuminate James. James slowly turns to look directly at the headlights.

An old, gray pick-up truck sits quietly along the road. James stares at the truck briefly before approaching the vehicle. He opens the passenger-side door and climbs into the cab.

James sits motionless as he peers through the windshield. Blake sits behind the steering wheel, a small smile pulling at the corner of his mouth. Blake quietly turns the truck on and shifts into gear.

Several seconds pass in silence as Blake drives down the road.

BLAKE
You’re going to like where we’re going, James.

BLAKE
(shaking his head)
It’s a shame Danny won’t be able to join us, though. I guess he just couldn’t cut it.

Blake drives in silence as James stares through the windshield.
BLAKE
Do you like music?

James does not respond.

BLAKE
Let’s listen to some music.

Blake turns the radio on. He switches the channel multiple times before stopping on a station playing a childish version of RING AROUND A ROSY. Blake listens to the song as he drives. James stares through the windshield, both sitting in silence as they listen to the song.

MONTAGE - ASHLEY LEAVES THE FOREST

--Detective Carson wraps a thick blanket around Ashley riding in the helicopter. He pulls her close as she shakes uncontrollably.

--Detective Carson peers out the window of the helicopter into the forest below.

--A sliver of moonlight penetrates the rocky ceiling of the creature’s cavern.

--Adam’s motionless body, the body Ashley touched earlier in the darkness, is seen briefly as the moonlight passes over his face and disappears.

END MONTAGE

Blake drives as he listens to the radio, a small smile pulling at the corner of his mouth.

BLAKE
I like this song.

Blake drives down the rain-covered road as the song continues to play.

THE END