

Claire
written by Brad Ingelsby

CLOSE ON KATE GARRETT

mid-40s, sitting on a tufted chair in the nook of a large master bedroom. It's very late at night. Outside the bay windows, the blue-and-red lights of police cruisers flash on the front yard and the rural road leading to her farmhouse.

A woven throw is draped over her shoulders and the dim light of a glass scone illuminates her face. It's badly bruised and swollen. Her bottom lip is split and crusted with blood. Her eyes are puffy with tears and sore from days of no-sleep.

She stares out the window, in shock, her mind sifting through the rubble of the mess she's made, hunting for clues, wondering if somehow this tragedy could have been prevented.

We hear the BEDROOM DOOR OPEN. The old oak floorboards CREAK as someone moves across the room. A chair is slid close and a MAN sits down beside Kate, just out of view.

MAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

Ms. Garrett? Ms. Garrett?

KATE

...hmmm?

DETECTIVE (O.C.)

I'm Detective McCormick with the West Chester Police Department. Is there anything I can get for you? Maybe a glass of water?

Kate shakes her head 'no'. Her gaze never leaves the road as the Detective speaks.

DETECTIVE (O.C.) (CONT'D)

I know this is a difficult time, but it's very important that I get as much information from you as I can about the shooting... Do you know how your attacker got into the house?

KATE

...I let him in.

DETECTIVE (O.C.)

You let him in?

KATE

Yes. He knocked on the front door and I let him inside.

DETECTIVE (O.C.)
So you're familiar with him then?

KATE
Yes.

DETECTIVE (O.C.)
How?

KATE
Claire... I met him through Claire.

FADE OUT.

EXT. ECHO VALLEY FARM - WEST CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA- JULY DUSK

A stone colonial farmhouse sits on 22 acres of pastoral countryside. The original, late 18th century home has been immaculately restored and a 3,000 square foot addition has been built and sheathed with stones to match the original.

SUPER: **THREE WEEKS EARLIER**

MUSIC UP: Fleetwood Mac's 'Sara' begins and plays over --

VARIOUS ANGLES OF THE SPRAWLING PROPERTY

WE SEE:

A wrought iron signs that reads, *Echo Valley Farm*.

A pond with a floating dock in the center.

A horse paddock and a riding ring.

A DETACHED THREE-CAR GARAGE with an APARTMENT on the second level. Steps on the side of the garage lead up to a wooden deck where paintbrushes and roller trays have been left to dry out and fishing poles lean against the siding.

Through the apartment windows we see the telltale appointments of bachelorhood inside: a shabby brown couch, empty pizza box on the kitchen table, ashtrays perched on anything flat.

Across the yard from the farmhouse is a large, 1920s SEARS & ROEBUCK 'BLOOMFIELD' BARN with a RUN-IN SHED beside it.

The INSIDE OF THE BARN features a TACK ROOM, an OFFICE whose knotty pine walls are covered with riding competition ribbons and plaques, and TWELVE HORSE STALLS.

Only two are occupied at the moment. The heads of two aging mares protrude from the half-doors of their stalls while fans blow to keep them cool.

Finally, we find KATE IN THE FEED ROOM, sweeping the floor, earbuds in her ears. She's wearing her daily work attire: golf shirt, jeans and paddock boots. Without the bruises on her face it's as if we're seeing her for the first time. She's tall, fit and pretty, a few strands of gray gleam through her chestnut hair. She lives alone on the farm she once shared with her husband and two children. The kids are grown now and her husband remarried.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Kate. Kate.

Suddenly, a hand lands on her shoulder.

Kate STARTLES, turns to a brawny contractor, RANDY, 40, standing beside her. She holds her heart, exhales.

RANDY

Sorry. Didn't mean to scare ya'.

KATE

No, I just...hold on, let me shut off my music...

Kate slips the earbuds out of her ears and turns off the iPod. The music STOPS.

KATE (CONT'D)

What's the verdict?

RANDY

Wanna come have a look with me?

Kate leans the broom against the wall.

KATE

Come on, Pheeb.

An old German Shepherd dog, PHOEBE, drowsily lifts its head off the floor and trots out after Kate.

EXT. BARN - DAY

Kate follows Randy up a tall aluminum ladder. They arrive at the roof of the barn where Randy signals a sunken section, the wood shingles damaged from a snow-heavy winter.

RANDY

See there? Got a few more dips on the other side as well.

KATE

How much to replace it?

RANDY

If you wanna stick with the shingles, you're looking at around \$4,000.

KATE

(*shit:* not the answer she wanted)

Do I have any other options?

RANDY

Unfortunately, no. We get another bad winter and your support posts are gonna rot. Then you got a real mess on your hands.

KATE

Okay. I'll have to run it by my ex-husband first.

RANDY

No rush. My guys're busy on another project now anyway.

KATE

Alright. Thanks for coming out, Randy.

RANDY

Sure thing. Have a good weekend, Kate.

Kate climbs back down the ladder, reaches the ground and walks towards the farmhouse with Phoebe in tow.

INT. MUDROOM - DUSK

Kate sits on a bench removing her paddock boots.

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - SHOWER - NIGHT

Kate scrubs the dirt off her hands and scrapes it out from underneath her fingernails.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

With a shower towel wrapped tightly around her body, Kate lays her Church outfit down on the bed. She retrieves a jewelry box from the vanity and searches for a pair of earrings to complement the blouse.

But the pair she had in mind aren't there.

She moves a few pieces around, lifts the top tray. *Nothing*. Returns to the vanity to see if she left them there. But it quickly becomes evident that the earrings are gone.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Kate, dressed in jeans and a suede jacket, sets bowls of food and water down for Phoebe, then snatches her car keys off the message board and exits.

INT. ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE CHURCH - NIGHT

The CHOIR SINGS '*Here I Am Lord*'. Kate's in the communion line, hands clasped before her, singing along just quietly enough so not to stand out. She arrives at the PRIEST. He lifts the communion wafer before her.

PRIEST

The Body of Christ.

KATE

Amen.

Kate receives the communion wafer, blesses herself and walks back to her pew. She kneels, bows her head, and prays.

EXT. ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE CHURCH - NIGHT

Post-mass. The congregation mingles.

Kate exits the Church and keeps her head low, careful to avoid eye contact with the parishioners for fear they might summon her over for a chat. She briskly crosses the lot to her tan 2005 Mercedes-Benz Station Wagon and climbs inside.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Rustic yet sophisticated. Modern flourishes and high-end appliances blend with the original wide-plank floorboards, exposed stone walls and flagstone hearth.

Kate's at the range. A salmon filet and asparagus cook in a skillet while she prepares a dill sauce, consulting a recipe book on the counter for instructions.

She narrows her eyes, attempting to discern the measurements. *Oh forget it.* She reaches for her reading glasses, slides them on. *There, that's better.*

INT./EXT. BARN AND Paddock - NIGHT

Lead rope in hand, Kate escorts one of the mares out of the barn and into the nearby paddock. She carefully slides the halter off the mare's head, then takes a sugar cube from her pocket and places it in the center of her palm. As the horse eats the treat, Kate pets its head.

KATE

Good night, sweetie. It'll be nice
and cool out here for you.

She kisses the horse's nose, then ambles over to the second mare standing nearby. Same routine. Halter off, sugar cube treat, good night kiss.

KATE (CONT'D)

Get some rest, sweetie.

Kate exits the paddock and closes the gate behind her.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DEN - NIGHT

Kate lies on the couch engrossed in a Jodi Picoult paperback. She's wearing an Avalon, NJ sweatshirt. The television's on.

We hear the FRONT DOOR OPEN. Kate lowers her book to see DENNIS HAYES, 50, enter the kitchen, shirtless and barefoot, his frayed cargo shorts speckled with years worth of paint. He works as a house painter and rents the apartment above the garage. His skin is brown and leathery from too much work in the sun and the cartoonish tattoos on his arms hint at a past of hard-living and bad choices.

He sets a can of Busch beer on the counter and begins rummaging the cabinets without so much as a hello. Kate watches him for a few moments, then lays the paperback down on her chest and slips off her glasses.

KATE

If you tell me what you're looking
for, maybe I can tell you where to
find it.

DENNIS

Something to munch on. I'm hosting
poker and I forgot to stop at
Wegmans on my way home.

(re: the tv show)

You watch this shit, too?

KATE

Try the corner cabinet.

(glances back at the tv)

I don't even know what's on. I was
reading my book.

DENNIS

Called *Dating Naked*. Joanne got me
hooked. You go on a blind date with
someone only you're both --

KATE

Naked?

DENNIS

Ding-ding-ding. I was tellin' Jo,
every guy that goes on that show
better be hung like a sperm whale.
Cause if he's not someone's gonna
comment on how his dick aint
measuring up.

KATE

I haven't seen her car in the
driveway lately.

DENNIS

And you won't be seeing it again.

KATE

What happened? I liked her.

DENNIS

Her ex moved back into town.
Whatever flame went out between
them came back on. '*Stronger than
ever*', was how she put it. Guess
that leaves me the odd man out.

Dennis finds a bag of 'Zesty Kale Chips'. Slips one out,
takes a bite, makes a sour face and quickly replaces it.

KATE

Did you just put that back in?

DENNIS

Well, for --

(checks the price tag)

\$6.99, I didn't wanna waste it. I mean there's all of eight chips in the whole bag anyway. What, you afraid of my cooties?

KATE

(shakes her head, then)

There's some leftover salmon in there if you're that hungry.

Dennis locates the Tupperware container with the salmon. Opens the lid. Smells it. Approves.

KATE (CONT'D)

Oh and I finally bought the paint for the room above the garage. So whenever you want to get started.

DENNIS

Alright. I'm finishing up a job on Monday. I'll get into it after that.

Dennis approaches the couch with the spoils of his search: a can of mixed nuts, bag of tortilla chips, and the salmon.

KATE

Keep track of your hours. I'll just take it out of your rent.

DENNIS

Don't expect a discount cause we're friends. And if the work carries into the weekend I want overtime.

KATE

You can put my snacks back now.

Dennis smiles. After living side-by-side for ten years the two share an easy rapport.

KATE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry about Joanne.

DENNIS

Ah that was a dead-end anyway. Her tits were too saggy.

Kate glowers. Dennis grins.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Just being honest. I'm moving on.
Got a date lined up for tomorrow
night. Aerobics instructor from
Kennett Square. Unless you wanna
make an honest man outta me first.

KATE

You don't want to be an honest man.

DENNIS

Not yet at least. Holler over if
we're being too loud.

KATE

Okay.

DENNIS

G'night, honey.

KATE

Good night.

Dennis goes. Kate turns to the television. Two naked daters
race an ATV through a lush jungle. They look miserable. And
sweaty. She slides on her glasses and returns to her book.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kate sits up in bed, her iPad propped on her legs as she
Facetimes with her granddaughter, EMILY, 1. Emily crawls
around on the carpet of a modest San Francisco apartment.

WOMAN'S VOICE (ON IPAD)

Show Grammie how you play with the
birthday present she got for you.

Emily arrives at a Mickey Mouse telephone and begins banging
away on the buttons. The toy makes goofy SOUNDS.

KATE

Wow. What a big girl you are,
Emily. Such a big girl.

The camera swings around to capture RACHEL, 26, Kate's
daughter-in-law, sitting beside Emily.

RACHEL (ON IPAD)

She loves it.

KATE

Oh good. I never know what to get
her when I'm at the store, so --

RACHEL (ON IPAD)

No it's perfect. We practically have to pry it from her hands when we put her down at night... So the judge that Ben's clerking for is going on vacation for two weeks at the end of the month. We were thinking about maybe using that time to come and visit everyone.

KATE

Oh I'd love that. You guys could stay here.

RACHEL (ON IPAD)

That was my plan if you're okay with it.

KATE

Are you kidding? I'm turning that old guest bedroom into a nursery. Dennis is going to paint and I've got a few pieces of old furniture I'm going to fix up.

RACHEL (ON IPAD)

You don't have to do all that.

KATE

I want to. It'll keep me busy. Besides, I want this place to feel like home when you guys are here.

RACHEL (ON IPAD)

Wait. Ben just walked in.

Rachel angles the iPhone to view BEN, 26, Kate's son, as he enters the from the hall in a business suit, returning from a day at his clerkship. He's wiped and in a listless mood.

RACHEL (ON IPAD) (CONT'D)

(to Ben)

We're Facetiming with your mom.

KATE

Hi, honey.

BEN (ON IPAD)

Hello.

Ben gives a perfunctory wave, then moves to the refrigerator. He pours himself a glass of juice and begins sifting through the mail on the counter. The camera remains on Ben as the conversation continues --

RACHEL (ON IPAD)
I mentioned we might try to head
back east at the end of the month.

KATE
I was just telling Rachel that I'm
turning that guest bedroom above
the garage into a nursery --

BEN (ON IPAD)
I don't even know if we're gonna be
able to do it or not. I haven't
even cleared it with Judge Prosser
yet. It was just an idea.

KATE
(deflating a little)
Oh. Okay. Well let me know.

BEN (ON IPAD)
And if we do end up flying in we'll
probably just stay at Dad's.

KATE
(stung)
...Okay.

Ben undoes his tie and disappears into the bedroom.

Rachel angles the camera back on her, feeling guilty.

RACHEL (ON IPAD)
Sorry. He's just been really
stressed out about work.

KATE
It's fine. I understand.

RACHEL (ON IPAD)
I'll talk to him about it.

Kate forces a smile, maintaining a brave face.

Rachel lifts Emily onto her lap.

RACHEL (ON IPAD) (CONT'D)
Blow kisses to Grammie. Say thanks
for the birthday present.

Emily blows kisses: *muh-muh-muh-muh*.

KATE
Bye, sweetheart. I love you.

RACHEL (ON IPAD)
Bye-bye. Love you, too, Grammie.

Kate ends the call, sets her iPad and reading glasses down on the night stand. She leans back against the pillows, thinking about her son's rebuff.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

A wide view of the property. Moonlight shimmers on the pond.

Inside the apartment, we see Dennis and his roughneck friends playing poker, cracking open cans of beer, laughing loud.

The light in Kate's bedroom goes dark.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Kate's asleep. SOUNDS are heard downstairs. Drawers sliding out. The CLINK of utensils.

Kate's eyes open. She listens for a moment, then glances over at Phoebe sleeping soundly in her dog bed on the floor.

Something CLANGS on the kitchen floor. Kate sits up and reaches for her robe.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Kate moves down the hall, warily, as if someone might jump out from one of the bedrooms and accost her.

KATE
Claire?

She tiptoes down the stairs...

KATE (CONT'D)
Claire, honey?

...leans over the railing and peers into the kitchen where Dennis' poker FRIEND, 50, drunkenly scours drawers.

Friend turns back, notices Kate on the stairs.

FRIEND
Shit. I'm sorry. We were just gonna uhh, grill up some hot dogs. Denny said you might have a spatula.

KATE
(exhales her fear, then)
Top drawer. Across from the sink.

It takes Friend a moment to find the right drawer. He finally does and lifts out a spatula.

FRIEND
Bingo.

En route to the front door, he glances back at Kate, liking what he saw and keen for another peek. Kate cinches her robe tight. Friend chuckles, walks out.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Kate returns to her bedroom, pauses, then continues down the hall to the door of another bedroom. Her hand reaches for the handle and she opens the door slowly, as if not wanting to wake up someone sleeping inside.

She peeks into CLAIRE'S ROOM. The bed is empty. She looks around. The band members in the *Radiohead* poster stare at the darkness. The alarm clock glows for no one.

She feels silly for even hoping and closes the door.

(O.S.) **WHOOSH-WHOOSH-WHOOSH --**

INT. YMCA - INDOOR LAP POOL - MORNING

Kate swims, cap and goggles on. She has a swimmer's body -- long and lean with strong shoulders -- and carves through the water with power and grace.

Suddenly, a CHILD'S SCREAM is heard!

Kate stops in her tracks, flips up her goggles and scans the pool deck where --

A LITTLE GIRL has tripped and clutches her knee. It's bleeding.

Kate ducks under the racing line and hurriedly swims for the ladder when --

The GIRL'S MOTHER arrives and lifts the girl into her arms, consoling her as they make their way out of the pool area.

The tension dissolves. Kate's heart slows. She glides over to the ladder and climbs out of the pool.

EXT. MALVERN PINES - MORNING

A private enclave of fifteen estate homes. Landscaping crews buzz around prodigious front yards.

Kate's station wagon pulls into the paved driveway of a Georgian home and parks beside a Jaguar and a Land Rover.

INT. RICHARD'S HOME - FAMILY ROOM - MORNING

HANNAH, 5, sweet, shy, sits on a beanbag watching *Disney Jr.* Pom-poms have been painted on her cheeks. The doorbell RINGS. She races into the hall and opens the door on Kate.

KATE
Good morning, Hannah.

HANNAH
Hi.

KATE
I like your face paint.

HANNAH
It's for cheerleading camp.

KATE
Oh how fun. Is your dad around?

HANNAH
He's in his office.

KATE
Okay. Well have fun at cheerleading camp.

HANNAH
Thank you.

Hannah races back to her spot in front of the television. Kate heads down the hallway.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - MORNING

Kate enters to find her ex-husband, RICHARD, 48, attractive, bookish, salt-and-pepper hair, standing behind his desk searching through a stack of files. He wears a pressed shirt with monogrammed cuffs and a handsome, heavy watch. Richard comes from an old money, Main Line family. Boarding schools and country clubs.

RICHARD

Morning.

KATE

Morning.

RICHARD

Have a seat. I'm just looking for a brief. I got a new assistant and it's not working out. I don't know where the hell anything is.

Kate sits, looks around. Sees a framed cartoon on Richard's desk. A father reading his child a bedtime story. The caption reads, '*C is for Class Action Lawsuit.*' She gazes around the walls now. Photos of Richard, Hannah and his second wife, AUDREY. Others of Ben, Rachel and Emily. Not a single one of Kate. Or Claire.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

There it is.

Richard stuffs the file into his briefcase then sits down in his leather wingback chair.

KATE

Busy?

RICHARD

(sighs tiredly)

Too busy. And we're taking my mother down to Margate for the next two weeks so I'm rushing to wrap everything up. What did Randy have to say about the roof?

KATE

\$4,000 to fix everything.

RICHARD

When are you going to get the hell out of that place, Kate?

KATE

I've been looking around.

Richard glares: *bullshit*. Kate betrays herself with a smile.

KATE (CONT'D)

Where would I go, Richard?

RICHARD
Downsize. An apartment. Preferably
new so I don't have to pay for
something to be repaired every
other week.

With a heavy sigh, Richard opens a drawer and takes out his
checkbook.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
Richard?

RICHARD
I'm back here.

AUDREY, 40, Richard's second wife and co-worker, enters
wearing a grey pencil skirt, blazer and 3-inch heels. Audrey
regards Kate with a smile, polite but not friendly: Kate is
an annoyance that must be tolerated.

AUDREY
Oh. Hi, Kate.

KATE
Hi.

AUDREY
(to Richard)
Did you make Hannah's lunch?

RICHARD
It's in the refrigerator.

AUDREY
Ok. I'm going to drive her over
then. I'll see you at the office.
(turns to Kate)
How's your summer been so far?

KATE
Good. Quiet.

AUDREY
Quiet's not bad, right?

KATE
I'm not complaining.

AUDREY
Well it was nice to see you.

KATE
You, too.

Audrey exits. Richard hands Kate the check. She tucks it into her purse.

A moment passes.

KATE (CONT'D)
Have you seen Claire?

RICHARD
Not since the night I called you.
She scared the hell out of us.
Banging on the doors and windows.

KATE
Was he with her?

RICHARD
Of course he was with her. She
can't go anywhere without that
sonofabitch... I hardly recognized
her. Her hair was a different color
again and some of the things that
were coming out of her mouth...

He shakes his head in disgust.

KATE
You can't listen to her when she's
using. It's not her --

RICHARD
Well it's hard not to listen when
she's screaming in your face.
Hannah was terrified. She asks to
sleep with the light on now.
(a beat)
I don't know what to do anymore.
She infects every part of my life.
Work, with Hannah, Audrey and I are
fighting more than we ever have.
Part of me is desperate to fix her
and part of me wants to let her go
so the rest of my life doesn't fall
apart, too... And I don't think it
helps that you continue to let her
come home.

KATE
She's my daughter, Richard.

RICHARD
But you made promises that you
haven't kept, Kate.
(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)
 We sat down with the counselor --
 the counselor you wanted by the
 way, and --

KATE
 I really don't want to get
 into this right now.

RICHARD
 -- we all discussed how we
 were going to work together
 to get her better --

RICHARD (CONT'D)
 -- and you agreed to not enable her
 anymore.

KATE
 And I tried not to. You know I
 tried, Richard.

RICHARD
 You tried for two weeks --

KATE
 Okay. You know what. I didn't
 come here to get lectured, so
 --

RICHARD
 -- and then she came home
 crying with some bullshit
 story and you fell back into
 the same old routine.

Fed-up, Kate stands abruptly.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
 I'm not saying it's your fault. I'm
 just saying we both know how Claire
 is.

KATE
 Have fun at the beach. Tell
 your mother I said hello.

RICHARD
 She's never going to get
 better unless she knows she
 has to.

Kate's gone. Richard leans back in his chair, frustrated but
 not surprised by Kate's defensiveness.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kate's at the island tossing an arugula salad. A timer BEEPS
 behind her. She spins back to the oven, slides on a mitt and
 removes a large, beautiful roast beef. She sets the pan down
 on the range. We hear the FRONT DOOR OPEN.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
 Helloooo. We made it!

Phoebe BARKS. Kate brightens and moves into the hall where
 her sister, PAM, 44, fattish, gregarious;

beefy brother-in-law, TODD, 44, and niece, LAUREN, 17, have just entered laden with duffle bags and miscellaneous trash from a long car ride. They're genial, blue-collar people from Pittsburgh.

PAM
Hey, Big Sis.

Kate hugs Pam. Long and tight because it's been a while.

KATE
So good to see you.

Excited, Phoebe jumps up and sniffs each of the guests, finding something she likes in Todd's crotch.

TODD
Whoa whoa – hey there.

KATE
Phoebe, sit.
(the dog sits)
Sorry, she's just excited. We don't get many visitors.

TODD
She's probably picking up the combos I spilled all over myself.

Todd's turn now. Big hug.

KATE
Hi, Todd.

TODD
Where's the nearest potty? Gotta drain the lizard.

KATE
(smiles – *classic Todd* – signals a powder room)
Right there.

Todd heads in that direction, unbuttoning his belt before he arrives at the door.

Finally, Kate embraces Lauren.

KATE (CONT'D)
Hi, sweetie.

LAUREN
Hi, Aunt Kate.

Kate steps back and gives Lauren the once-over.

KATE
She looks like Mom.

Ya think? PAM

KATE
Are you kidding? Those green eyes?
Come in, come in.

Pam and Lauren follow Kate and Phoebe into the kitchen.

KATE (CONT'D)
How was the drive?

Long. PAM Long. LAUREN

PAM
(re: the food spread)
Look at all this.

KATE
Well I figured you guys would be
starving.

Pam and Lauren take stools at the island and start to nibble on the hors d'oeuvres Kate's set out.

KATE (CONT'D)
What can I get you to drink?

PAM
A nice big cold glass of water
sounds great right now.

LAUREN
Same.

TODD (O.C.)
Where do you want me to dump our
stuff, Kate?

KATE
Left at the top of the stairs. Take
the two bedrooms on the right.

Kate fills two glasses from the refrigerator dispenser, hands one to Lauren, the other to Pam. From behind the stool, she wraps her arms around her sister.

KATE (CONT'D)
Thanks for stopping.

PAM
Well it's the only way I get to see
you anymore.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Post-dinner. Coffee and cookies.

KATE
So what colleges have you visited
so far?

LAUREN
Just Clarion and Penn State.

And? KATE

LAUREN
I *loved* Penn State.

TODD
She loooovvved Penn State cause
that's where her boyfriend's going.

LAUREN
That's not the *only* reason.

TODD
Well, it's the main reason.

KATE
What's the matter with that?

TODD
The kid's a wiseass.

PAM
He's not a wiseass. Stop it,
Todd.

LAUREN
He is not.

LAUREN
Dad's doctor told him his blood pressure was too high, so Kyle said, 'Why don't we go run together at the school track every night?'

TODD
See. A wiseass.

LAUREN
He was trying to help.

TODD
He was telling me I'm fat.

KATE
Well, you were a wiseass, too.

KATE (CONT'D) TODD
And sneaky, too. Bullshit.

KATE (CONT'D)
(to Lauren)
He used to crawl into the basement window and wait 'til I went to bed so he could creep into your mother's room.

TODD
Well you approved me so I
couldn't'a been that bad.

LAUREN
Approved me? What does that mean?

TODD
If you wanted to date one'a the
Hastings girls you had to get the
approval of Mother Hen over there.

Lauren looks at Kate: *true*?

Kate shrugs, not denying it.

LAUREN
Why not Grandmom?

PAM
Because your grandmom wasn't
around. She was too busy trying to
save your grandfather's business or
pull him outta some bar.

TODD
Or outta some other woman's legs.

Pam playfully throws her napkin at Todd.

TODD (CONT'D)
What? It's the truth.

PAM
I don't care. You don't say it
front of your daughter.

TODD
Fine. I'm gonna go watch the game.

PAM
Good idea.

Todd raises himself out of the chair, trudges off to the den.

KATE
(to Lauren)
Well enjoy the process. I always
regret not going to college.

PAM
Mom begged you to go.

KATE
And I *did* go.

PAM
You went to Allegheny Community
College for one semester.

KATE
Yeah. And I was gonna transfer to
Duquesne to study nursing.

LAUREN
What happened?

KATE
I met Richard. Six months later I
was pregnant, living outside
Philadelphia and planning a
wedding.

LAUREN
How old were you?

KATE
Nineteen... I can remember writing
the names on the wedding
invitations and thinking to myself,
'I've never even met any of these
people before.'

PAM
God, I remember that wedding. What
was the name of that place?

KATE
The Merion Cricket Club.

PAM
(scoffs)
It was like a museum. All those
portraits on the walls.

KATE
(smiles, lost in a memory)
Richard's mother was so ashamed she
wouldn't let us tell anyone we were
pregnant until after the wedding.
And I had terrible morning sickness
when I was carrying Ben.

PAM
And giant tits.

Lauren LAUGHS.

KATE
She's right. See what I'm working
with now? Well they were out to
here back then.

LAUREN
No!

KATE
Easily.

PAM
And her nipples were like pepperoni
slices. And not like the little
pieces you find on pizza --

PAM (CONT'D)	KATE
-- I'm talking like the	Okay. We get the picture.
thick, pepperoni log slices.	Thank you very much.

PAM (CONT'D)
It was freakish.

Lauren's CRACKING UP.

KATE
Anyway, I was in the women's locker
room during the reception. Your
mother was guarding the door and
your grandmother held the veil out
of my face while I threw up.

PAM

And mom just kept saying over and over, 'We can still leave, Katherine. We're from Pittsburgh. We'll never have to see any of these people again.'

More LAUGHS, then:

PAM (CONT'D)

Remember what you said back to her?

KATE

Something nasty, I'm sure. We weren't on good terms then.

PAM

'There's no 'we' anymore, mom. The only 'we' in my life now is me and Richard'... I'll always remember that.

Kate reflects privately for a moment as she sips her coffee, remembering her younger, headstrong days.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - POND - NIGHT

Kate sits on an Adirondack chair by the water's edge smoking a cigarette. A citronella candle glows on the side table.

Pam approaches from the farmhouse, plops down in the chair beside Kate and offers her iPad.

PAM

Pictures from the anniversary party.

KATE

Oh, great.

As Kate swipes through photos from Pam and Todd's 20th anniversary party, Pam reaches for the pack of Parliament Lights at Kate's feet and lights one off the candle.

KATE (CONT'D)

(re: a photo of her brother)

Mark looks like he was in rare form.

PAM
He passed out in our laundry room.
Maureen said he threw up the whole
ride home.

Kate smiles, then pauses at a photo of her MOTHER, 75, eating a slice of cake on a couch, a walker at her side. She stares for a long moment, then:

KATE
Mom looks good.

PAM
Yeah. She had fun.

KATE
How's she walking?

PAM
Good. Better. The rehab's been good
for her.

KATE
I wish I could have made it.

PAM
You could have.

Kate glares: *you know why I wasn't there.*

Pam seems ready to confute the excuse, but decides against it. Kate's absence is a sore point between them.

Kate arrives at a photo of the whole family together, arms around one another, smiling widely. The closeness they share weighs on her. While she ran off to what she considered were the greener pastures of a life with Richard, her siblings stayed behind and leaned on one another, forging a rich history that doesn't include her.

Finally, feeling more melancholy than she anticipated or wanted, she hands the iPad back to Pam.

KATE
Great pictures.

A long moment. The sisters sit quietly, smoking.

PAM
I'm worried about you. Mom's
worried about you.

KATE
Don't start on this thing again.

PAM
Why don't you move back to
Pittsburgh? We're all there and --

KATE
I can't.

PAT
Why can't you?

KATE
Claire needs me here. And I don't
want to let her down again.

Another beat.

PAM
Well, just don't forget to live
your life, too, okay?

KATE
What life?
(Pam glowers)
I'm serious. My ex-husband wishes
I'd sell this place and move far
away. My son barely speaks to me.
My granddaughter's a year old now
and my only interaction with her
happens through a goddamn computer
screen... Claire's all I have left.

PAM
We miss you, that's all. You and
your pepperoni nipples.

Kate smiles, reaches over and squeezes her sister's hand.

KATE
I miss you guys, too.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Kate sits on a stool at the island, reading glasses on, her
iPad open before her as she reviews *Houzz* for nursery room
decor ideas. Lauren's in the den watching television.

PAM (O.C.)
Morning.

Kate looks up to find Pam entering groggily.

KATE
Morning. Sleep okay?

PAM
Slept fine after your tenant was
finished.

KATE
...Dennis?

PAM
You didn't hear him?

Kate shakes her head. Pam moves close and talks quietly so
Lauren won't overhear.

PAM (CONT'D)
He was having sex with a woman. And
she just kept shouting, 'I'm so
wet, ohmygod ohmygod, I'm so wet.'
I felt like screaming out the
window, 'Then dry off already.'

Kate laughs.

KATE
I'll have to talk to him about
that. Want some coffee?

PAM
Yes. Something strong.

Kate moves to the Keurig machine, inserts a K-Cup. From the
window above the sink, she watches Dennis exit the apartment.
He lights a cigarette and begins to load paint supplies into
the bed of his weathered GMC pickup truck.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

CLUNK -- Todd closes the trunk of the Chrysler minivan and
climbs into the driver's seat. Pam rolls down the passenger
window. Kate leans in.

KATE
Tell everyone I was asking for
them. And let Mom know I'm still
going to mass every week.

PAM
Love you, miss you, come home.

TODD
(leans over Pam)
By the way, Kate, I mighta clogged
the toilet upstairs.

Pam rolls her eyes: *can't take him anywhere.*

KATE

I'll take a look at it. Bye guys.

TODD

Thanks for the hospitality.

LAUREN

Bye Aunt Kate.

Kate steps back and watches as the minivan drives away.

INT. BARN - AFTERNOON

Kate mucks a stall with a pitchfork.

(O.C.) A CAR DOOR CLOSES.

Kate moves to the barn entrance to inspect and sees a Volvo sedan parked in the driveway. She leans the pitchfork against the wall and --

WE FOLLOW as she moves across the yard towards the farmhouse. As she passes the Volvo, we glimpse stickers on the bumper, *Coachella, Lollapalooza, Coexist*, et al.

Kate continues into the --

FARMHOUSE

-- through the mudroom and into the kitchen where the refrigerator door is open. Phoebe stands beside it happily gobbling bits of cheese fed to her by someone hidden behind the door. Finally the refrigerator doors closes revealing --

CLAIRE

Kate's heart swells at the sight of her daughter.

Always does.

Claire, 22, looks like a beautiful runaway. Rail-thin with eyes that need sleep. There's a stud in her nose, a tattoo of a keyhole on the back of her neck and another of an angel behind her ear. Her brown hair has streaks of red. Last month they were blue. She wears a gauzy white t-shirt that hangs off her like a wet tissue revealing a dark bra underneath.

She's an opiate addict.

A liar, a thief, and a sneak.

Claire turns back and sees Kate.

CLAIRE
(re: Phoebe)
Are you feeding her? She's ready to
eat my hand.

KATE
She's fine.

Kate nears, hugs Claire, kisses her forehead.

KATE (CONT'D)
I missed you.

CLAIRE
I missed you, too.

Claire breaks the embrace, snatches a Bloomingdale's catalog
off the counter and takes a seat on one of the island stools.

Kate waits for some explanation for her absence, but Claire
casually leafs through the catalog as if her week-long
disappearing act was a fifteen-minute errand run to CVS.

KATE
So where were you?

CLAIRE
A bunch of Ryan's friends rented a
house down in Ocean City.

KATE
You didn't get my messages?

CLAIRE
My phone died.

KATE
No one had an extra charger?

CLAIRE
No, like, it *died* died. Ryan threw
it in the ocean.

KATE
Why would he do that?

CLAIRE
Because he's an asshole. And
because I ran over his phone with
my car.

KATE
Claire.

CLAIRE

That's what happens when you text
ugly skanks right in front of your
girlfriend.

(Kate glares)

Seriously the girl looks like a
rat. Like --

(makes an ugly rat face)

And everyone calls her The Blowjob
Queen.

KATE

Don't talk that way, please.

CLAIRE

Well it's true.

KATE

I don't care if it's true. I don't
want to hear about it... Are you
hungry?

CLAIRE

No.

KATE

How about I make you a grilled ham
and cheese?

CLAIRE

I'm not hungry.

KATE

You need to eat something. It'll
take two minutes.

Kate begins to set out the ingredients when Claire flips the
catalog shut, pushes her stool back and heads down the hall.

KATE (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

Claire tilts her head down against her clasped hands -- *nap* --
then moves up the stairs.

Kate watches her go, feeling unfulfilled.

EXT. FARM - Paddock - Dusk

Kate stands outside the fence watching Claire ride one of the
mares around the ring, leaping over jump gates. She's an
experienced rider, confident and fearless.

Dennis' pickup truck cruises into the drive and slows to a stop outside the garage. Dennis steps out and joins Kate by the fence. They watch Claire dash around the ring.

DENNIS
(calls out to Claire)
Where the hell have you been?!

Claire flashes a thief's grin and gallops by --

CLAIRE
None of your goddamn business!

DENNIS
(smirks: *same old Claire*)
Well alright then.
(to Kate)
How's she doing?

KATE
(shrugs)
She's home... How'd your date go
with the aerobics instructor?

DENNIS
Went alright. Nice enough lady.

KATE
Sounded better than alright.
(off Dennis' look)
Do me a favor and close the windows
next time you decide to have a
sleepover. You kept my sister was
up half the night.

DENNIS
(fights off a smile, then)
What'd she hear exactly?

KATE
Nothing good.

DENNIS
Nothing good *for her* maybe.

Kate watches as Dennis heads toward his condo, swaggering a bit more than usual. She can't help but smile.

She turns her attention back to the ring now and watches as Claire dismounts and kisses the mare on its nose and pets its withers adoringly, thanking her for the ride.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DEN - NIGHT

Kate sits on the couch, Claire's head resting in her lap as the two watch an episode of *Orange Is The New Black*. Kate gently strokes her daughter's hair.

CLAIRE

What was the name of my imaginary friend?

KATE

Oh God... Dandy? Dandelion?

CLAIRE

No.

KATE

Danda...lane?

CLAIRE

Dandalus!

KATE

That's it. Princess Dandalus.

CLAIRE

I could not remember that the other night. For, like, two hours I was like, Danda-leer, Danda-cane...

A beat.

Claire giggles.

KATE

What?

CLAIRE

I'd make you put out an extra dinner setting.

KATE

Not just a setting. I'd have to fill her plate.

CLAIRE

'Princess Dandalus would like some mashed potatoes, please. Can you pass the ketchup to Princess Dandaulus?'

They laugh.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Dad used to get so mad at me for that. 'Goddamn it Claire, stop playing games. Goddamn it Claire, knock that crap off. There's no one there.'... I remember one time Mrs. Brennan asked me my name and I said, 'Well, my dad calls Goddamn it Claire.' Oh my God, he got so mad. He was, like, so embarrassed by that he wouldn't even look at me.

Kate dismisses the anecdote with a thin smile, but it's a painful memory. Richard wasn't an easy father.

The portable phone RINGS on the end table. Claire sits up, checks the caller ID, then snatches the phone off the stand and disappears into the hall.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Hey.

Kate turns the volume low on the television and listens in on the conversation --

CLAIRE (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Was he pissed-off?... He said what?...

(laughs)

Cause I did... Yeah I'm serious... Like five-hundred dollars worth of his shit. I took it right out of his backpack... Cause screw him. He wants to treat me like shit, then I'm gonna treat him like shit. You don't sit in front of your girlfriend who you say you love texting whores. Like, fuck that... Well come pick me up... Alright, I'm gonna get dressed... Bye.

Kate quickly turns the volume back up as Claire returns.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Alyssa's on her way over to pick me up.

KATE

Where are you going?

CLAIRE

Just to a friend's house in West Chester.

Claire nears, bends down and kisses her mother.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Love you.

KATE

Love you, too. Be careful.

CLAIRE

Don't worry, I've got Princess
Dandalus to protect me.

Claire puts her arm around her invisible friend. Kate feigns a smile and watches as Claire bounds up the stairs.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kate lies in bed, unable to fall asleep. It's often the case on nights when she knows Claire is out using.

She rolls over and looks at the clock radio: **2:32 AM**. Checks her cell phone for missed calls, as if somehow she might not have heard the phone ringing right beside her.

A DOOR CREAKS OPEN in the hallway.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY/CLAIRE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kate exits her bedroom and peers down the hall. Claire's door is open a crack. Kate moves that way and peeks in.

Claire sits on the edge of the bed, high on opiates, floating in some other orbit as she 'nods off'. This 'zombie state' frightens Kate the most, because she doesn't recognize a trace of her daughter in that girl on the bed.

KATE

Claire?

Claire doesn't move, doesn't hear.

Kate enters the room. Finally, Claire turns and looks up at her mother as if peering at a stranger through a thick fog.

KATE (CONT'D)

Lie down, sweetie.

CLAIRE

...what...?

KATE

It's late, Claire. Lie down.

Kate guides Claire down onto her pillow. Slips off her shoes, tugs off her jeans, then lifts the comforter over her and slides her hair out of her face.

A moment later Claire's asleep.

Kate regards the stranger a long moment, wondering if her daughter will ever reemerge.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - FOLLOWING DAY

Kate stands in the doorway, hands in jeans pockets, as she appraises a strip of pink paint Dennis has just rolled onto the wall.

DENNIS

It's pink.

KATE

What do you mean 'it's pink'? I know it's pink.

DENNIS

But it's *pink* pink. I mean it kinda screams atcha, yunno.

KATE

You think it's too bright?

Dennis shrugs.

Kate considers it another moment.

KATE (CONT'D)

Can we go a shade lighter?

Dennis dips his roller in another tray and makes a second strip on the wall. This one lighter. Kate reviews it.

KATE (CONT'D)

I think I like that better.

DENNIS

You can thank me in my tip.

Kate smiles, then heads down the hall.

WE FOLLOW as she moves down the stairs, out the front door --

EXT. FARMHOUSE

-- and across the yard towards the barn. She glances over at the pond. Phoebe naps on the grass. Claire's in the water, string bikini and wayfarers on as she lazes on an inner tube.

KATE
How's the water?

But Claire's got her headphones on and doesn't hear.

Kate continues toward the barn. Separates the two large sliding doors and enters --

BARN

-- She grabs her iPod off the desk, pushes in the earbuds and turns on some music as she refills the horses water bowls.

While Kate works, our attention is focused OUTSIDE THE OPEN BARN DOORS as --

A cobalt blue DODGE CHARGER races into the driveway and screeches to a halt. The passenger door flies open and RYAN, 25, Claire's boyfriend, a good-looking, but lank and hapless addict, jumps out. Baggy jeans sag halfway down his ass and bunch up at the top of his high top sneakers. His baseball cap is perched on the top of his head so lightly that the slightest breeze would blow it right off. Their relationship is toxic and unstable. *Can't-be-without-you-love* one minute and *I-fucking-hate-your-fucking-guts* the next.

Ryan stalks to the edge of the pond.

RYAN
Claire! CLAIRE!

No answer. Ryan lifts a rock and tosses it into the pond, attempting to capture her attention. Phoebe springs to her feet and begins BARKING at him.

CLAIRE (O.C.)
What the hell are you doing here?

RYAN
You know what I'm doing here. Where are the pills?

CLAIRE (O.C.)
I don't know what you're talking about.

RYAN

Oh don't be a fucking bitch,
Claire. I know you took them -- you
were the only one who coulda taken
them -- now where the fuck are
they!?

Oblivious to the activity by the pond, Kate begins to fill
the horses' grain bowls from a bucket of feed.

CLAIRE (O.C.)

Fine. They're in my backpack on the
dock. If you want them, come and
get them.

RYAN

I'm not coming in there.

CLAIRE (O.C.)

Because you can't swim! Oh my God,
you're so pathetic!

CLAIRE (O.C.) (CONT'D)

-- 25 years old and you can't
even swim!

RYAN

You're such a fucking bitch,
you know that, Claire? I
swear to God I'm so fucking
done with your shit.

Ryan FIRES another rock into the pond.

CLAIRE (O.C.) (CONT'D)

OWWW! You fucking asshole! That hit
me!

Phoebe BARKS LOUDER, baring her teeth, ready to attack! Ryan
awkwardly threatens to kick and punch the dog which only
serves to make Phoebe even more aggressive.

CLAIRE (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Hey! Don't touch her!

RYAN

Then tell her to back up! Tell her
to fucking back away!

RYAN (CONT'D)

Back up you stupid fucking
dog!

CLAIRE (O.C.)

Stop it! Ryan stop! MOM! MOM!
MOM!

Finally, out of the corner of her eye, Kate glimpses the
confrontation between Ryan and Phoebe. She drops the grain
bowl. The contents spill onto the floor and --

WE FOLLOW KATE AS SHE RACES OUT OF THE BARN, tearing the ear buds out of her ears as advances on the pond.

KATE
Phoebe down! PHOEBE GET DOWN!

Kate arrives in the nick of time. Grabs Phoebe's collar and YANKS her away from Ryan.

Kate and Ryan regard each other a moment. He despises her. She despises him times ten.

KATE (CONT'D)
(breathless)
...What are you doing here?

RYAN
(re: Claire)
Ask her why I'm here.

CLAIRE
Call the cops, mom! He kicked Phoebe and threw a rock at me.

RYAN
I didn't kick the dog!

RYAN (CONT'D)	CLAIRE
She was coming at me! I was defending myself.	Yes you did yes you did yes you did --

CLAIRE
Animal cruelty! Call the cops, Mom.

KATE
I think you should go, Ryan.

RYAN
(mockingly)
Oh is that what you think?

CLAIRE
Call the cops, Mom!

KATE
Just leave. Please.

Ryan looks at Kate, then at Claire who raises her middle finger. He shakes his head disgustedly: she's impossible.

RYAN
She hates you. You know that?

RYAN (CONT'D) CLAIRE

She uses you for your money Are you even listening, mom!?

and when she needs a place to
crash or when she doesn't get
her way --

RYAN (CONT'D)
But when you're not around all she
does is shit on you and say what a
terrible mother you were.

Kate is deeply affected, but refuses let him see it.

KATE
Please go.

CLAIRE
Call. The. Cops!

Ryan stalks back to the Charger, climbs in and slams the passenger door shut.

It's only now that we notice the man in the driver's seat of the Dodge Charger --

JACKIE, 30, a tall, stout local drug dealer. A brief exchange takes place between Jackie and Ryan inside the car. Then Jackie, looking annoyed at Ryan's amateurism, exits. He looks at Kate, then speaks matter-of-factly, like a repairman laying out the work he's about to perform to a customer.

JACKIE
Sorry to show up at your house like
this. But your daughter stole
something that doesn't belong to
her. So I'm just gonna take back
what's mine and then I'll leave you
alone. Alright?

Before Kate can respond, Jackie moves towards the pond. He undresses down to his boxer shorts revealing a muscular frame plagued with tattoos. Dives into the water and swims out to the dock. Climbs up and unzips Claire's backpack.

He removes a large ZIPLOC FREEZER BAG FILLED WITH PILLS, seals the bag tight and begins to swim back. Along the way he pauses at Claire's inner tube.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
(quietly, so Kate won't
hear)
Steal from me again, you spoiled
little cunt, and I'll cut your
fucking face open. Understand?

Claire's flippant demeanor melts away. She looks frightened.

Jackie swims off, steps out of the water and walks back to the Charger. Pops open the trunk and removes a beach towel. He's drying himself off when --

DENNIS steps out of the house. Looks at Jackie, then Kate.

DENNIS

Everything alright out here, Kate?

Kate nods flimsily.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

I don't need to get my shotgun and chase these fellas back home?

Jackie smirks to himself as if to say: *I'd tear you limb from limb, old man.* But he's a businessman. A smart one. He knows when to cause a stir and when to let one die.

JACKIE

No need. We were just about to leave.

DENNIS

Good idea.

Jackie climbs into the car. Starts the engine and lets it GROWL a moment before hastily reversing out of the drive.

The tension gradually dissolves as the sound of the engine fades down the rural road.

Rattled, Kate looks at Dennis, then turns to Claire in the pond. Hoping for some apology for the violation.

But Claire gives nothing. She simply raises her headphones and hides her eyes behind her sunglasses.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Kate listlessly unloads the dishwasher, still troubled by the incident earlier.

HEADLIGHTS glide across the windows over the sink.

She watches as a MERCURY SEDAN parks in the driveway. The passenger door opens, illuminating the cabin momentarily. Inside, Ryan hugs the FEMALE DRIVER, 35, says goodbye, then climbs out. The sedan goes, but Ryan remains.

Claire bounds down the stairs and walks into the kitchen with a camping backpack in hand. Kate turns to her.

KATE

What's Ryan doing here?

CLAIRE

We talked about what happened. He apologized and he wanted me to apologize to you, too.

Claire opens the refrigerator and begins stuffing snacks and drinks into her backpack.

KATE

I don't care if he apologized. I don't want him here any more.

CLAIRE

(snippy)

That's why we're leaving.

Kate glances back outside. Ryan carries a KAYAK out of the garage and begins fastening it to the roof of Claire's Volvo.

KATE

...Leaving for where?

CLAIRE

We're gonna camp out for a few nights.

KATE

You mean you're going to get high for a few nights.

CLAIRE

(mockingly)

Yeah, mom, *we're going to get high for a few days.*

(shakes her head, then,
under her breath)

Jesus Christ...fucking annoying...

Kate's too tired, too pissed-off, to protest tonight. She dries her hands with a wash cloth, grabs her paperback novel off the counter and lies down on the couch in the den.

Backpack loaded, Claire reaches for her purse on the counter. Opens the wallet and looks inside. No cash, of course.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

(annoyed to have to ask)

Do you have any cash?

KATE

No.

CLAIRE

Come on, I just need like sixty bucks.

KATE

I don't have any money, Claire. I don't know what you want me to tell you.

Claire looks around and spots Kate's purse hanging on the pantry door handle. She grabs it. Kate hears the KEYS JINGLE inside and turns.

KATE (CONT'D)

Claire, give me my purse.

CLAIRE

I'm just going to see if you have any cash.

Kate springs up off the couch and marches into the kitchen. She reaches for her purse. Claire pulls it away, retreating.

KATE

Claire.

Claire turns and RUNS for the powder room. Kate CHASES. Not fast enough as --

BOOM! Claire SLAMS THE DOOR SHUT right in her face. Kate tries the handle. *Locked.* Her anger builds.

KATE (CONT'D)

Claire, give me my purse.

CLAIRE (O.C.)

I'm just going to see if you have cash. You told me you didn't so I wanna see if you're a liar or not.

KATE

Claire, open the door.

CLAIRE (O.C.)

Whoa. Look at that.

Three \$20 dollar bills peek out from under the door.

CLAIRE (O.C.) (CONT'D)

You are a liar.

KATE
Open the door, Claire.

Kate SHAKES the handle violently as if it'll do any good.

CLAIRE (O.C.)
Let's see what else is in here.
Mmmm, Nordstrom credit card, Macys
card, a few tampons --

KATE
Goddamnit, Claire!

CLAIRE (O.C.)
Oh my God. You sounded just like
Dad. I literally just had, like, a
flashback of dad --

CLAIRE (O.C.)	KATE
-- screaming in my face.	Do you want me to call the cops?

KATE
I know you stole my jewelry. Do you
want me to tell them you were
pawning my things for drugs? That
you drained my savings account?

CLAIRE (O.C.)
You're not gonna call the cops --

CLAIRE (O.C.)	KATE
-- because I'll just leave and never talk to you again and then who will you have left?	I will if you don't open this door and give my purse back.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Huh? You don't have any friends.
Dad hates you. Ben hates you.
Everyone hates you except for me.

Kate's silent because Claire's right.

For a long moment she feels sorry for herself.

Then she's struck with an idea. She stalks back into the
kitchen. Opens a drawer and finds an EMERGENCY KEY under a
stack of menus. Crosses back to the bathroom, slips the key
into the handle quietly, TURNS IT, and CLICK --

She OPENS THE DOOR. Claire STARTLES. Kate LUNGES for the
purse. Claire tries to YANK it away. An awkward struggle
ensues, the space not much larger than a telephone booth --

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Get off! Get off, you stupid bitch--
you fucking liar --

But Kate's angry and hurt and Claire's words just intensify that terrible pain and she TUGS HARDER and HARDER until --

SNAP! The strap BREAKS and --

Kate FALLS BACK, BANGING HER HEAD on the wall before falling into the tiny space between the toilet and the wall.

Claire looks down at her mother, then turns the purse upside down and SHAKES THE CONTENTS OUT over her head in defiance.

Ryan, who has entered the home to investigate the screaming, ducks his head in.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Come on, let's go.

Claire tucks the cash into her pocket and leaves.

Ryan looks down at Kate and chuckles pathetically.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
I said let's go!

Ryan turns and follows Claire out of the house.

Kate doesn't move for a long while. She sits there catching her breath. Too numb to cry anymore.

Finally, she pulls herself out of the tight space and begins picking up everything her daughter spilled.

INT. YMCA - LAP POOL - MORNING

WE'RE UNDERWATER, watching as Kate swims freestyle through the lap lane. Her hand touches the wall, she FLIP-TURNS and --

INT. YMCA - HALLWAY - MORNING

Kate moves down the hall, duffel bag hanging off her shoulder as she bites into an apple. To her left are the RACQUET BALL COURTS. She can hear the VOICES OF THE MEN playing inside.

A MAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
Whoa! Helluva shot there, Andy!

That voice...stops her in her tracks. It couldn't be...?

She backtracks, scans the courts and there he is --

ERIC, 45.

Impossibly he's even more handsome now than when she last saw him seven years ago. He smiles as he chats with his opponent and sweeps his wavy brown hair out of his face and twists the racquet in his hand as he readies for the next point.

Her heart beats so fast she can't breathe

She watches him spring around the court, as fit and agile as a man half his age -- smashing the ball against the wall with increasing ferocity -- dripping sweat -- pushing his opponent to the limit -- tightening the noose until --

Eric wins the point and the match. His opponent falls to the ground, spent. Eric picks him up, puts his arm around him.

She remembers that about him now: *the way he could make you feel good about losing to him.*

The men pack their belongings and move towards the exit.

Kate snaps from her daze, turns and walks swiftly down the hall. Soon, as if feeling his footsteps behind her, she jogs, and then RUNS out of the building.

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON - YMCA PARKING LOT - LATER

Kate watches the building's entrance for any sign of Eric. He emerges finally, showered, chatting on a cell phone. He climbs into a BMW sedan and drives towards the lot exit.

Kate starts the car, reverses out of her spot and speeds out of the aisle and --

H-O-N-K!

Kate STARTLES, realizing she pulled out in front of a sedan. She ducks her head in case Eric was alerted to the noise.

The sedan WHIZZES BY, the driver flashing Kate the bird as he passes.

Kate lifts her head in time to see Eric's BMW turn right out of the lot. She hits the gas, hurries to catch up and --

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREETS - MORNING

Kate's station wagon trails the BMW through quiet, tree-lined residential streets, careful to maintain a safe distance.

The BMW swings into the driveway of a ranch-style house. Eric steps out and enters the home.

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON

Kate parks at the end of the block and watches Eric move through the home before finally vanishing into a bedroom.

She doesn't leave...but isn't sure why she's staying. She seems to be thinking, remembering, torn between trepidation and excitement.

Her cell phone VIBRATES in the console, snapping her from her daydreaming. **'Mom Calling...'** She weighs answering it for a moment, then presses **'Ignore'**.

She looks up now to find Eric exiting the home dressed in a business suit. He ducks into the BMW and drives off down the opposite end of the street.

This time Kate doesn't follow.

Instead, she opens her car door and --

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET/ERIC'S HOUSE

-- steps out. Looks around. Quiet. No one around. She walks down the sidewalk to ERIC'S HOUSE and peers into the windows. Moving boxes on the floor, furniture still waiting to be arranged, newspapers in a pile on the kitchen table.

On the front step, she opens the mailbox. Letters inside. Mostly bills. She stares at the addressee:

Mr. Eric Kessler
51 Willistown Road
West Chester, PA 19803

Off Kate, staring down at the name.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - POND - LATE AFTERNOON

Kate sits on the Adirondack chair smoking a cigarette, still unsettled and pondering her discovery earlier. Phoebe prowls the edge of the pond, sniffing at tufts of weeds.

Dennis' pickup truck enters the driveway and crawls to a stop. He HONKS the horn. Kate turns back. Dennis rolls down his window and holds out a gorgeous, 18-inch brown trout.

DENNIS
Hungry? Pulled her outta the
Brandywine an hour ago.

EXT. DENNIS' APARTMENT ABOVE THE GARAGE - DECK - DUSK

Kate and Dennis sit at a plastic table eating the trout and vegetables out of a foil wrap he's cooked on the grille. The table is adorned with red-white-and-blue napkins, utensils, and paper cups for the July 4th holiday. Cheap shit, but he's clearly made an effort. Joe Cocker's '*Darling Be Home Soon*' plays on old radio perched on the deck railing.

Dennis watches Kate eat anxiously.

DENNIS
Well...?

KATE
Mmmm. It's amazing. So good. What's
in it?

DENNIS
Just about everything. My
grandfather taught me that recipe.
Throw a bunch of shit in, seal it
tight, and hope it tastes good.

He refills his Solo cup with Pepsi, then Kate's.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
(raises his cup)
Happy 4th.

KATE
Happy 4th.

They TAP cups.

Dennis reaches over to a chair where he's hidden something under the cushion. He slips out a card and offers it to Kate.

KATE (CONT'D)
What's this?

DENNIS
Open it up and find out.

She looks at him disapprovingly, then opens the envelope and slides out a card. It's a HAPPY BIRTHDAY Hallmark card, but in between the words 'Happy' and 'Birthday' he's penciled in '*6th Sober*'.

KATE
Happy 6th Sober Birthday.

DENNIS
Hallmark doesn't make cards for the
occasion yet, so I improvised.

Kate smiles, turns the cover. A \$25 Gift Card to *Carrabba's Italian Grill* falls out.

KATE
Dennis, you didn't have to get me
anything.

DENNIS
I thought maybe you'd take your mom
next time she was in town... I'd go
with ya, but I wouldn't want you
thinking it was some kinda date.

KATE
(smiles)
We tried that already, didn't we?

DENNIS
Yes we did.

A beat. Both thinking back to that time they tried for
something more. Dennis looks over at Kate, then:

DENNIS (CONT'D)
...Why didn't that go anywhere? The
way the two of us get along...?

KATE
Some people are better as friends,
I guess.

DENNIS
I was gonna say saggy tits, but...

She laughs. He smiles. Humor has always been his way of
deflecting his true feelings.

Dennis stands --

DENNIS (CONT'D)
One more thing.

He disappears into the apartment and returns a moment later
carrying a cupcake with a candle in the center. He lights the
candle and sets it down before her.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
Go ahead and make a wish.

Kate hesitates. There are so many things about her life she wants to change that it's hard to settle on just one.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
You're not gonna make me sing happy
birthday are ya?

Finally, she blows out the candle.

KATE
Here. Take half of this. I'm not
gonna eat this whole thing myself.

She slices the cupcake, gives him half. They eat in silence for a few moments. Something's on Dennis' mind. He looks over at Kate a few times, searching for the right moment to divulge. Finally --

DENNIS
Listen, I wanted to give you a fair
warning about something. I'm uhh,
I'm gonna be moving out at the end
of the month.

KATE
(incredulous)
...moving out? To where?

DENNIS
Florida. Clearwater. My son's
girlfriend called me last week. He
went off his meds again. Had some
blow-out with his supervisor.
Slashed his tires. Now he's living
with his asshole cousin. It's a
whole fuckin' mess, and...
(shakes his head: *I won't
bore you with it*)
So I'm gonna head down there, see
if I can cool him off.

KATE
Well I'll just hold the apartment
like I did the last time.

DENNIS
Nah, I don't want you doing that.

KATE

Why not? I don't want to go through the process of finding a new tenant anyway. Not these days. You can't know who anyone is anymore.

DENNIS

I gotta stay this time. Straighten him out and make sure it sticks. It's my own fault. If I would've done right by him the first time around maybe there wouldn't have a mess to clean up, so...

Kate feels a pang of loneliness. Dennis notices.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

You gonna miss me?

KATE

Of course I'm going to miss you.

DENNIS

Well don't get all gloomy on me. That wasn't the point of all this.

KATE

I'm just feeling sorry for myself. It's fine. I'll get over it.

She doesn't appear to be getting over it at all.

DENNIS

You're gonna miss my long showers, aren't you? I see you peeking in on me, checking out my ass and junk.

Kate laughs, momentarily breaking the melancholy.

But it soon seeps back in.

Dennis looks out over the property reflectively.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

I'm gonna miss the hell outta this place. Gave me something to look forward to every day. My heart beats a little easier out here.

They sit in silence for a few moments, listening to the music, each considering life without the other.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

A wide view of the farmhouse.

It's raining.

Dennis can be seen inside the apartment taking down items from his kitchen cabinets and loading them into moving boxes.

The light in the farmhouse garage is on.

INT. FARMHOUSE - GARAGE - NIGHT

Wearing a tattered button-down flannel and a pair of torn jeans, Kate uses sand paper to smooth the corners of an old dresser she's refurbishing for the nursery.

Through the square garage windows, we see Claire's Volvo race into the driveway and jerk to a stop.

Kate doesn't notice it.

Claire exits the car and SPRINTS into the house.

CLAIRE (O.C.)
Mom!? MOM!?

Kate looks up, listens.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Mom!?

KATE
(frightened by the panic
in Claire's voice)
Claire...?

Kate drops the sand paper, rushes inside --

INT. FARMHOUSE MUDROOM

-- moves through the mudroom, pushes open the half-door --

CLAIRE (O.C.)
Mom!?

-- follows her daughter's voice across the dining room and into the --

KITCHEN

where Claire is standing. Her clothes are sopping wet and she's shivering. She turns to Kate, shocked and ashen-faced, like she's seen a ghost.

KATE

Honey, what's going on?

Claire just stares at Kate, unable to form words.

Kate moves to a linen closet and removes two towels. She approaches Claire and slides a chair out from the kitchen table. Claire sits, head down, breathing heavily.

Kate drapes the towels over Claire's shoulders and rubs her hands up and down her arms, trying to warm her up.

KATE (CONT'D)

What's the matter, sweetheart? Talk to me.

But Claire's in a daze. Kate can feel her arms trembling violently under the towel. Her gaze travels down to the bottom of Claire's shirt. It's covered in blood.

KATE (CONT'D)

...Whose blood is that?

(no response)

Claire?

CLAIRE

(almost inaudibly)

...Ryan's.

KATE

Ryan's? Did you say Ryan's?

(Claire nods)

...How did it get there?

CLAIRE

We...we got into an argument. He was mad that I stole his drugs and he hit me... so I pushed him... and he, he fell and... hit his head on a rock and it just...

(starts CRYING)

It just opened up, like...

KATE

What opened up, Claire? What opened up?

CLAIRE
...his head... it just... there was
blood everywhere...

Kate hesitates to ask the next question. Finally --

KATE
...is he alive?

CLAIRE
I don't know. He wasn't talking --
he wouldn't answer me -- I don't
know --

KATE
Did you call the police?
(no response)
Claire?

CLAIRE
(shakes her head 'no')
I didn't have a phone and I didn't
know where to find one out there so
I just came here...
(overwhelmed)
Ohmygod, what did I do, mom? What
did I do?

Kate pulls Claire close and holds her as she SOBS.

Dread rises within Kate as she processes the situation and
all its myriad outcomes. All of them terrible.

Finally, Claire breaks the embrace.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Can we just call the police and
tell them it was all an accident?

Kate considers it for a moment, knowing things aren't nearly
that simple.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Mom? Can't we call the police --

KATE
Let me go and see if he's okay
first.

CLAIRE
He's not okay! I just told you he
wasn't okay --

KATE

I know. But let me go see for myself, Claire. Please... Where is Ryan now?

CLAIRE

...Marsh Creek Lake.

KATE

Where on Marsh Creek? It's a big place, Claire. I need to know exactly where he is.

CLAIRE

(thinks, then)

...do you know where we used to rent those boats with Pop-Pop?

KATE

Yes.

CLAIRE

Across from there...in the woods... that's where we put up our tent.

KATE

Okay.

CLAIRE

...What's gonna happen to me if he's not okay?

KATE

Look at me.

Claire meets her mother's stare. Her eyes are heartbreaking. Vulnerable and terrified.

Kate wipes away her tears.

CLAIRE

I'm scared, mom.

KATE

I know you are, but I'll never let anything happen to you. Ever... Now I want you to go upstairs and put on some dry clothes and get into bed. And don't leave your room until I come back. Do you understand?

Claire stares at Kate for a moment, then nods.

INT. CLAIRE'S BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Kate stands in the doorway watching Claire change out of her wet clothes into her pajamas. When she's finished --

KATE
Give me your clothes.

CLAIRE
Huh?

KATE
Your wet clothes. Give them to me.

CLAIRE
...what for?

KATE
(hesitates, then)
I'm going to wash them for you.

Claire hands over the sopping, bloody clothes, then climbs into bed and pulls the covers up to her neck. She turns to Kate who holds her stare a long moment. Something seems to pass between the two, some unspoken arrangement. Finally --

KATE (CONT'D)
I'll be home soon. I love you.

CLAIRE
I love you, too.

Kate closes the door.

INT. KITCHEN/LAUNDRY ROOM - NIGHT

Quickly now, Kate stuffs Claire's wet clothes into a trash bag, ties it tight and drops it off in the laundry room.

She moves back into the hall, snatches her keys off the message board, slides on her raincoat and --

EXT. FARMHOUSE/INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON - NIGHT

-- RACES THROUGH THE RAIN to the station wagon. She climbs inside and looks up at the apartment through the windshield.

Dennis is still packing kitchen items into boxes.

She waits for him to disappear into his bedroom, then starts the car and hastily reverses out of the drive.

EXT. BACK ROAD - NIGHT

The station wagon barrels down a secluded, forested road.

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON, MOVING - NIGHT

It's raining heavily now and the wipers FLOP back and forth loudly. Kate can hardly see out the windshield as she attempts to scan the passing woods.

Finally, a sign gleams up ahead. She slows to read it, the words blurry through the cascading rain:

MARSH CREEK STATE PARK ENTRANCE 1 MILE.

She steers the car onto the shoulder and kills the engine.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

Kate steps out of the car, pops open the trunk. She removes a FLASHLIGHT and sets out into the woods.

EXT. FOREST SURROUNDING THE LAKE - NIGHT

Kate SPRINTS through the trees, breathing heavily, struggling to keep the sagging hood of her raincoat out of her eyes.

EXT. MARSH CREEK LAKE - NIGHT

Kate emerges from the forest onto a small beach where the rental paddle boats and kayaks sit asleep for the night.

This is the place Claire mentioned...

She looks around. The massive lake is vacant. Not a person in sight. She aims the flashlight at the towering evergreens on the opposite side of the lake, searching for the tent amidst the trees. But it's too dark, too dense.

She takes a moment to catch her breath, then jogs around the lake's edge.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Kate scales a steep, rocky slope. SLIPS on the mud, reaches out for the jagged corner of a rock, but can't hang on --

She SLIDES DOWN THE SLOPE, STRIKING her knee on a boulder before finally TUMBLING to a stop.

She GRIMACES, looks at her hand. It's CUT, BLEEDING. She clambers to her feet, looks up the steep, daunting incline and begins her ascent again.

FOREST - MINUTES LATER

Exhausted, Kate arrives at the crest. Prime vantage up here, the lake seventy feet below. She runs her flashlight across the ridge and sees --

A SOLITARY ORANGE TENT in the distance.

INT. ORANGE CAMPING TENT - NIGHT

Rain assaults the polyester fabric and the gusting wind threatens to rip the stakes from the ground.

The entry flaps are parted as Kate ducks in and looks around. Sleeping bags, blankets, pillows, soda cans along with some drug paraphernalia -- a glass pipe and strips of foil with brown streaks where Claire and Ryan smoked their opiates.

But no Ryan.

EXT. FOREST

Kate exits the tent, aims her flashlight down the slope. It's covered with large, craggy boulders. She scans the terrain until a PAIR OF SNEAKERS GLEAM DOWN NEAR THE BASE, just feet from the water's edge.

She raises the flashlight up a PAIR OF JEANS...

...a HOODED SWEATSHIRT...

...and finally THE BACK OF RYAN'S HEAD, face-down in the mud.

She moves cautiously down the slope, using the boulders for support, and arrives at RYAN'S BODY. She bends down beside him, grabs a fistful of his sweatshirt and rolls him over.

His eyes are open. There's a DEEP AND GHASTLY WOUND on his forehead. He must have struck a boulder as he tumbled down.

Kate recoils at the sight of it, then slowly gains the nerve to check for a pulse that isn't there.

For a few moments she doesn't move.

Can't.

She just sits there beside his dead body as the rain pelts her raincoat --

poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc
poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc poc

She's thinking about her daughter.

About all that can happen.

Finally, she seems to arrive at some decision and --

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Kate DRAGS Ryan's limp body away from the lake and hides it in a patch of thick underbrush.

EXT. FOREST AROUND THE LAKE - NIGHT

Kate RACES through the woods, retracing her steps to the car.

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON - NIGHT

CLUNK! Kate pops open the trunk, rummages through assorted junk until she finds a plastic container filled with colored BUNGEE CORDS. She pops the lid. Six inside. *It'll do.*

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Kate scours the terrain, searching for small boulders. Finds one she likes, bends down and nudges it out of the ground.

FOREST - LATER

Kate kneels beside Ryan's body. There are two small boulders lying on top of his chest and she begins to fasten them down with the bungee cords when --

SSKKR! SSKKR! SSKKR!

Kate STARTLES, DROPS to her belly. FIREWORKS explode in the sky overhead. Her eyes dart around for the source of the noise. She crawls to the edge of the underbrush and sees --

A PACK OF DRUNKEN TEENAGERS across the lake lighting off roman candles.

SSKKR! SSKKR! SSKKR!

Each explosion LIGHTS UP THE LAKE AND FOREST, momentarily exposing her and Ryan. She buries her head in the brush, praying she won't be seen.

TEENAGE VOICES (O.C.)
 Fuck yeah! Light it up! Woo-hoo!
 Look at that shit, motherfuckers!

A few teens jokingly sing, *'The Star-Spangled Banner'*.

Kate glances back at Ryan. His dead eyes staring right at her. They seem soft and innocent. They seem like they are asking for help.

She feels a pang of guilt for wanting him to disappear.

Kate turns back to the Teenagers as the last of the roman candles is lit. A big ROUND OF APPLAUSE as they leave the beach and their voices fade into the woods.

Kate's head drops, her body slackens.

EXT. FOREST/LAKE'S EDGE - MINUTES LATER

Using all her waning strength, Kate lifts Ryan's body into the kayak, then notices a DAB OF BLOOD on one of the bungee cords holding the rocks to his chest. She looks down at the cut on her hand. *Must have come from that...*

She tries to rub the blood out, but it's futile. She thinks about removing the cord, but it would undo the whole apparatus. And she's too far along now to pull it apart.

Forget it... She pushes the kayak into the lake, then climbs in and begins to paddle. It's grueling work transporting all that dead weight, but she presses on, stroke after stroke, moving farther and farther away from shore.

MIDDLE OF THE LAKE - MINUTES LATER

Kate arrives at a deep section of the lake, then pauses and looks around. There's no one in sight. She sets the oar down and turns back to Ryan's body. Positions herself beside it and ROLLS IT OFF THE KAYAK into the water --

BLOOP.

It disappears under the surface.

She waits for a hand to pop up, some ripple from underneath.

...

But nothing happens. It was easier than she thought.

She lifts the oar and begins paddling back to shore.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

All of Claire's camping equipment is stuffed into the kayak as Kate drags it slowly through the forest.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

Kate opens the trunk and hastily shoves in the camping equipment and slams the lid shut.

She struggles, but manages to lift the kayak onto the hood of the wagon. She begins tying it down with string.

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON, MOVING - NIGHT

Driving home. The rain just a drizzle. The wipers quiet.

Kate's soaking wet and shivering. She reaches into the backseat and yanks a towel out of her duffel bag and uses it to dry her hair and face and neck.

She turns the heat on to full blast and the radio to some pop station to distract her from the dark thoughts spin-cycling in her mind.

INT. DENNIS' APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dennis kneels inside his closet, sifting through years of accumulated junk. A trash can sits nearby and he dumps in the crap he no longer wants or needs.

Amidst a pile, he finds an CVS PHOTO SHOP ENVELOPE OF PHOTOGRAPHS. Lifts the flap and leafs through photos of a mens fishing weekend from many years ago. At the end of the stack are the photos taken simply to finish off the roll. Shots of the farm, the horses, the pond, and then --

ONE OF KATE standing by the paddock fence. It's a candid shot. Kate's looking away from the camera, coyly attempting to shield her face like a teenage girl deflecting the advances of an enamored lover.

She looks young and vulnerable. Unmasked for once.

He stares at the photo a long moment, then sets it aside and tosses the rest into the trash.

HEADLIGHTS flash on across the walls.

Dennis stands, moves to the window and sees Kate's wagon roll into the driveway. She rushes out of the car into the home. A light goes on inside the laundry room.

Dennis glances back at the clock on the night stand: **2:13 AM.**

INT. FARMHOUSE - LAUNDRY ROOM - NIGHT

Kate spreads a towel out on the floor and begins taking off her wet clothes until she's naked.

She stuffs the dirty clothes and socks and sneakers into a trash bag and sets it beside the trash bag of Claire's clothes she left here earlier.

INT. DENNIS' APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dennis watches curiously as Kate, now dressed, carries the two trash bags out of the house and stuffs them into the trunk of the station wagon.

She cuts the string holding the kayak to the roof rack, and drags the kayak across the yard before disappearing inside the barn.

For a moment he considers going out to ask what the hell's going on. But the urge dissolves and he returns to the closet and the task at hand.

INT. BARN - WASH STALL - NIGHT

SSSSSK! THE HOSE EXPLODES, shooting water onto the kayak as Kate attempts to blast away every trace of what's she done.

INT. FARMHOUSE GARAGE - NIGHT

Kate hangs the kayak on the rack. It's still wet and a few drops of water fall onto the floor. She reaches for a rag and wipes them up. *Just in case.*

INT. CLAIRE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kate peeks in.

Claire's awake, in the same position we last saw her in. It's as if she stayed frozen for the hours Kate was gone.

Kate steps inside, sits down on the bed beside her and rubs her face gently. Claire looks up at her.

CLAIRE
What happened?

KATE
I took care of it all for you.

Claire sits up.

CLAIRE
...what does that mean you took
care of it?

KATE
Ryan's not out there anymore. No
one's going to find him and no
one's going to know what happened.

The finality of Kate's words affects Claire deeply. She starts to breathe heavily, overcome with panic and guilt.

Kate sees her beginning to fall apart and holds her shoulders.

KATE (CONT'D)
Listen to me, Claire.
(strong, confident,
showing a fierce resolve)
You have to be strong now. Can you
be strong with me?

CLAIRE
...I don't know.

KATE
Yes you can. I did this for you.

CLAIRE
Don't say that! Stop saying that! I
never told you to do anything -- I
told you to call the police and say
it was an accident!

KATE
What if the police didn't believe
you? What if they don't care if it
was an accident or not?

CLAIRE
...I didn't ask you to do anything.

KATE
You didn't have to. I'm your
mother... Now can you be strong
with me?

Claire takes a moment, then finally nods.

KATE (CONT'D)
Good girl. Now I need you to tell
me a few things. Did anyone see you
and Ryan out by the lake?

CLAIRE
No.

KATE
Think, Claire.

CLAIRE
I am thinking! Jesus Christ --

KATE
It's important.

CLAIRE
(thinks, then)
...a few teenagers. They saw us
swimming and asked Ryan if he had
any cigarettes.

KATE
Is that all?
(Claire nods)
And who knew you were going
camping?

CLAIRE
No one.

KATE
Are you sure?

CLAIRE
Yes I'm sure. We didn't tell anyone
we were going. We just left.

Kate reflects for a moment, formulating a plan.

KATE
You never went camping. Okay? You
came back here and you got into an
argument. I saw it all. You were
saying nasty things to one another
and Ryan stormed off.
(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)

This happens all the time. The two of you will get into a fight and Ryan'll run off. For days, sometimes weeks at a time. You won't know where he is or what he's doing and then he'll just come back.

CLAIRE

Okay.

KATE

That's our story. You two got into a fight. Ryan left and you don't know where he is.

CLAIRE

Okay.

KATE

Claire, you have to promise me that you'll never talk about what happened to anyone. Can you promise me that?

Claire nods through her fear.

Kate smiles.

CLAIRE

...Why are you smiling?

KATE

Because I love you more than anything in the world. Because I can't stand to see you sad like this.

Kate glances at the clock on the night stand: **3:32 AM.**

KATE (CONT'D)

Get some rest.

Kate stands moves to the door.

CLAIRE

Wait...

(Kate turns back)

Will you stay in here with me?

Kate nods, exits the room and returns a moment later with a blanket. She shuts off the light, sits on the chaise and spreads the blanket out over her body.

Comforted, Claire climbs under the covers and shuts her eyes.

Kate settles. *She'll stay up all night, she thinks. Just in case Claire wakes up and is frightened and needs her.*

This isn't a tragedy.

This is an opportunity to prove her love to her daughter.

Off Kate, fighting to keep her eyes open...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY/CLAIRE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Bright sunlight floods the hall as Phoebe trots across the hardwood floor. Claire's bedroom door is open. She nudges her way in and sits beside the chaise. Kate's asleep. She succumbed to exhaustion at some point during the night.

Phoebe's panting stirs Kate. She opens her eyes. Looks at the clock: **9:32 AM**. Then over at Claire's bed. *Empty*.

She stands, lifts the blanket off and moves into the --

HALLWAY

KATE

Claire?

(calls down the stairwell)

Claire?

No answer. She peers out a window in the hall. Claire's Volvo isn't in the driveway.

DENNIS (O.C.)

She took off early this morning.

Kate follows the voice into the --

NURSERY

The walls are covered in light pink. Dennis is working on a mural of an oak tree which spans the entire back wall.

CLAIRE

She left?

DENNIS

Around 7 I saw her take off.

Kate's stomach drops.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
You were up late last night.

KATE
...huh?

DENNIS
Midnight kayaking?

KATE
(plays it off coolly)
Oh, no, just... another Claire
emergency. You don't wanna know.

Kate turns and goes.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM

Kate enters, closes the door behind her, locks it. Lifts the
portable phone, DIALS --

RECORDED MESSAGE (V.O.)
The number you have dialed is no
longer in service. Please check --

KATE
Goddamnit, Claire.

EXT. WAWA CONVENIENCE STORE/INT. MERCEDES WAGON - MORNING

Kate drives around to the side and parks near the dumpsters.
Two CONSTRUCTION WORKERS stand beside them, smoking, shooting
the bull. She glances around and notices SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS
perched on the corners of the building.

Unsettled, she reverses out of the space and zips away.

EXT. TOWNSHIP PARK - LATE MORNING

Vacant baseball and soccer fields.

Kate's station wagon swings into the gravel lot. She exits
the car quickly, almost afraid to look for cameras, and hurls
the trash bags into the dumpster.

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON, MOVING/EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Kate speeds up the farmhouse driveway, hoping to see Claire's
Volvo parked there.

No such luck.

She shuts off the engine and sits in her car, helpless.

The secret is out of her hands now and there's not a thing she can do but wait.

THESE SHOTS QUICKLY NOW

As Kate drifts through THE NEXT FEW DAYS on the verge of a total collapse. The bravado she possessed has disappeared without a trace. She's edgy, frightened, and exhausted.

-- She lies on the DEN couch, clutching her cell phone to her chest as she watches the LOCAL NEWS for any reports of a body being found.

-- Kate drives through DOWNTOWN WEST CHESTER, past Claire's late-night haunts. Coeds hang outside bars, smoking and flirting. She scans their faces. No Claire.

-- The CLOCK RADIO in the master bedroom reads: **4:23 AM**. Kate lies in bed, filled with dread as she stares up at the ceiling fan turning indifferently.

-- IN THE BARN, Kate replaces the straw bedding inside the stalls. She looks withdrawn, somewhere else.

Across the yard, Dennis loads supplies into his pickup. He watches Kate move lethargically, worried about her.

-- Kate's in the SHOWER, shampooing her hair. She pauses, listens, and hears the PHONE RINGING in the bedroom. She quickly grabs her towel, hardly wraps it around her body as she races dripping wet into the bedroom and answers --

KATE

Hello?

WOMAN

Kate Garrett?

KATE

...yes?

WOMAN

My name's Stephanie and I'm calling from AT&T U-verse. I wanted to talk to you about some exciting new cable tv offers we have.

Deflated, Kate hangs up, walks numbly back into the shower and washes the rest of the shampoo from her hair.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - DEN - SOME NIGHTS LATER

Kate lies on the couch again watching the Local News. She can barely keep her eyes open.

Dennis enters from the hall carrying his paint supplies. She doesn't even turn to acknowledge him.

DENNIS
Few more days should do it.

KATE
Oh. Good.

DENNIS
...Everything alright?

KATE
Mmm hmm.

DENNIS
Why don't we go out and grab a sandwich? My treat.

KATE
I'm not very hungry.

Kate's cell phone RINGS on the coffee table. She nearly jumps out of the blanket to answer it --

KATE (CONT'D)
Hello?... Claire?... Claire, where are you?... Stay right there.

Kate hangs up, runs into the kitchen.

Dennis watches as she grabs her car keys and races out the front door.

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON, MOVING - NIGHT

Kate's driving fast and frantic through a grimy section of West Chester. She darts through a red light. Up ahead, she spots Claire standing on a street corner, arms wrapped around herself as if she's just been pulled from a frozen lake.

Kate pulls to the curb, hops out --

EXT. STREET

-- and runs to Claire. She looks awful, so fragile. Been on a four-day drug bender. Kate hugs her.

CLAIRE
...I need help, mom.

KATE
Okay. Just get in the car.

Kate assists Claire into the passenger seat, closes her door and moves to the driver's side.

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON, MOVING - NIGHT

Kate drives, feeling equal parts scared and relieved.

She glances over at Claire. She seems lost, defeated.

Kate reaches out and holds her daughter's hand.

I'm here...

INT. DRUG REHABILITATION FACILITY - LOBBY - NIGHT

Kate sits in the waiting room, hands hugging a Styrofoam cup of coffee.

The lobby doors open. Richard rushes in, sees Kate.

RICHARD
Where is she?

KATE
They're getting her checked in.

Richard sees how shaken Kate looks.

RICHARD
Are you alright?

Kate nods, tries to hold it together, but can't.

She begins to CRY.

Richard pulls her close, holds her.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
It's okay. This is a good thing.
This is how we start to get our
daughter back.

Off Richard consoling Kate...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - SOME NIGHTS LATER

Kate's at the sink, washing dishes by hand while she talks to her sister Pam on the portable phone --

KATE

-- I haven't spoken to her yet. The facility doesn't allow contact with family during the first week... We'll see. I'm hopeful this time it will stick, but I've said that before and it hasn't worked out, so... Just say your prayers. We need 'em... How was the rest of your trip?... Oh good... good... What about Mom?... I know. I owe her a call. I'll call her as soon as I hang up with you...

As Kate places a dish on the drying rack, she NOTICES THE CUT ON HER HAND from when she fell in the woods. Still hasn't quite healed. A tremor of fear courses through her.

KATE (CONT'D)

What's that?... Okay... Okay, I will... Love you, too.

Kate hangs up and dries her hands, still staring at the cut.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DUSK

Kate exits the farmhouse with a towel in hand. She glances at the barn where repairs to the roof have begun. A truck filled with WORKERS rolls by, leaving for the day. Kate WAVES.

She crosses to the POND and takes off her jeans and golf shirt revealing a bathing suit underneath.

She steps into the water. It rises above her knees, then her shoulders and soon she's floating on her back.

It feels good, warm. She looks up at the sky. Pastel pink and blue. She floats for a while, enjoying the silence, then dives under the water to get her hair and face wet.

She surfaces now and treads water, staring out across the vast property to the ancient Maple trees rising on the edge like fortress walls.

There's not a sound in the air other than her arms swishing the water.

In the distance, the horses move across the paddock like figures on a muted television.

She almost smiles.

It's as if she so successfully removed herself from the world that it forgot about her altogether.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. YMCA - HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Kate exits the women's locker room carrying her duffel bag, hair still wet from a swim. She continues down the hall towards the exit when --

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

Kate?

Kate turns back to find a woman, EILEEN, 45, standing behind her. Kate doesn't recognize her.

KATE

Yes...?

EILEEN

Eileen Webster. I used to bring my kids to your summer riding camps.

(still no hint of
recognition from Kate)

Connor and Riley...?

KATE

Oh. Right. How are you?

EILEEN

Good, good. Are you still running the camps out there on the farm?

Down the hall, ERIC and a FRIEND exit a racquet ball court following a match. Kate freezes at the sight of him.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

Kate...?

KATE

Huh? I'm sorry...?

EILEEN
Are you still doing the summer
riding camps?

KATE
No. No, I stopped quite a few years
ago now. Sold most of my horses.

KATE (CONT'D) EILEEN
I'm sorry I have to be Oh that's a shame.
somewhere --

EILEEN
The kids just absolutely loved
spending time there. You must miss
it, huh?

Eric turns, sees Kate.

The two lock eyes for a moment.

KATE
Yes. I do. I'm sorry I have to go.

Kate turns and stalks toward the exit and --

EXT. YMCA - PARKING LOT - MORNING

-- RUNS ACROSS THE LOT to her station wagon. Climbs in, keys in the ignition -- **VRMM!** She glances outside and sees Eric hustling towards her. She quickly reverses out of her space.

Eric arrives, TAPS on the window --

ERIC
Kate, wait. Kate, come on.

She HITS THE GAS and SPEEDS out of the lot.

INT. FARMHOUSE - HALLWAY/KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Kate enters, turns the dead bolt behind her, then walks into the kitchen. Shaken by the encounter, she opens a cabinet and removes a box of Parliament cigarettes. Lights one. Takes a long drag, exhales.

Outside the window she sees ERIC'S BMW roll into the driveway. She watches him exit the car and make his way to the front door. He RINGS the doorbell.

Kate doesn't move.

ERIC (O.C.)
Kate, let me in. Come on, I see
your car out here.

One final long drag and she stubs the cigarette out in the sink. She reluctantly moves back down the hall and looks at Eric through the narrow windows on the side of the door.

KATE
...What do you want?

ERIC
(from outside)
I moved back to be near my parents,
Kate. I bought a house. We're going
to have to see each other
eventually. Open the door.

A long beat.

Finally, she unlocks the door, but doesn't open it for him. Instead, she turns and walks back into the kitchen.

After a moment, Eric opens the door, steps inside and makes his way into the kitchen.

She stands as far away from him as possible. The distance between them feels like miles.

ERIC (CONT'D)
I didn't want it to happen that
way. I've been meaning to stop by.

KATE
How long have you been back?

ERIC
Almost a month.

KATE
Why?

ERIC
Things hadn't been good between
Kirsten and I for a while. We
agreed to stick it out until our
youngest left for college. Once
that happened we made it official.
I wanted to come by sooner, but...
I didn't know how you'd react. Or
if you'd want to see me at all.

He looks at Kate, waiting for some reaction, some response.

She gives him nothing.

The silence is huge. Finally --

ERIC (CONT'D)
How are you?

KATE
Fine.

ERIC
And Richard?

KATE
Remarried. He lives in Malvern. He
has a daughter.

A beat.

ERIC
I'm sorry, Kate... I've thought
about what I'd say in this moment a
million times and that's the only
thing I've ever come up with.

KATE
For which part? Leaving or
forgetting I ever existed?

ERIC
I never forgot you existed. You
can't really believe that.

KATE
What else was I going to believe?
You wouldn't answer my calls, you
refused to see me --

ERIC
You drove to Connecticut. You broke
into my house in the middle of the
night while my kids were asleep --

KATE
You gave me no choice. How else was
I going to see you?

ERIC
I'm just saying. It made things
impossible. She forbid from me
having any contact with you --

KATE

And when did that start to matter?
Huh? Everyone knew about the
affair. Kirsten found hotel
receipts in your pocket. Allie
Hanlon saw us together that weekend
down in Florida. Everyone knew. And
we were happy they knew. Because we
could finally embrace it and start
our life together.

ERIC

(a guilty beat, then)
I didn't know how to leave. I
wanted to, but I didn't know how.

KATE

I didn't have any problem leaving.

ERIC

I wasn't as strong as you.

KATE

Oh don't fucking lie to me --

ERIC

I loved you and I loved my family.

KATE

And you chose your family.

ERIC

And you hate me for that?

KATE

I don't hate you. I hate myself.

ERIC

You could have gone back. Richard
would have taken you back --

KATE

There was no going back! Don't you
understand that!? There was only a
life with you. It was you or it was
nothing. And so it was nothing.

Another beat.

ERIC

It ruined me, too.

KATE

It didn't ruin you. Her parents bought you a big house up in Connecticut and you started all over and you just... you took out an eraser and you just wiped that little dark spot out of your life.

ERIC

You don't know what it was like to live in that house with her.

KATE

Oh fuck you. You know that? Fuck you fuck you fuck you fuck you.

ERIC

They were awful years. I was still in love with you.

KATE

You want to know about awful years?

KATE (CONT'D)

God, there are so many moments to choose from.

ERIC

Don't do this, Kate. This isn't a fucking misery contest --

KATE (CONT'D)

Like when the cops pulled me over while I was driving Claire to school. Shitfaced at 7 o'clock in the morning.

ERIC

Stop it, Kate.

KATE

Or the time at Richard's company picnic where I disappeared for hours. They finally found me in my car. I'd passed out and pissed myself.

KATE

No no no --

ERIC

Kate.

KATE (CONT'D)

-- I got it now. It just came to me. The most awful thing was when Richard took the kids away.

(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)

And everyone agreed that I was a terrible mother and I was selfish and 'unfit' to raise them properly and all of that shit they said that was probably all true. Even after that, when I lost my kids and my husband and my whole fucking life, I kept drinking. Because none of it mattered. I just wanted you... My own children hate me because I chose you. And I don't blame them. I hate myself more than they ever could. I can't even look at myself in the mirror without feeling physically ill.

A very long beat.

KATE (CONT'D)

Just leave.

He doesn't move. Instead, he moves towards her. Opens his arms as if to embrace her.

ERIC

I'm sorry.

KATE

Don't touch me.

He wraps his arms around her.

She WRITHES, tries to push him off.

KATE (CONT'D)

Don't you dare fucking touch me --
I fucking hate you -- !

But Eric just holds her tighter, pinning both her arms against her sides.

He kisses her neck, her forehead, then her lips.

She turns her head away.

But he persists.

Soon, she succumbs and kisses him back.

Still so weak in her need for him.

He reaches down into her jeans, into her panties and begins to finger her.

She MOANS. Breathes heavier. Kisses him harder.

She reaches down into his shorts and gets him hard.

It doesn't take long. She YANKS his shorts down.

He follows her lead. Lifts her up and sets her down on the kitchen table.

She lifts her t-shirt off, unsnaps her bra while he tugs off her jeans and panties.

He puts himself between her legs.

She GASPS when he enters her. Digs her fingernails into his back and pulls them down leaving white contrails in his skin.

They ROCK, the legs of the kitchen table RATTLING on the floor as they fuck.

Finally he MOANS, ready to come.

She pulls him closer. Wants it inside her.

His body SHUDDERS and he comes.

For a few moments after they just hold one another, bodies aquiver.

All we hear is the sound of their breathing.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kate and Eric lie naked under the covers. Her head lies on his chest as he fiddles with a silver horse figurine on the night stand.

ERIC
Why horses?

KATE
You know I've always loved horses.

ERIC
But you grew up in Pittsburgh. In a row house in Lawrenceville. It wasn't exactly *Little House on the Prairie*.

KATE

(smiles, then)

When my father was drinking or in one of his moods, my mother would tell all of us kids to pack up a few days worth of clothes. And we'd drive out to my Aunt Kaye's house in Plum. Her yard backed up to a farm. In the summer the horses would sleep outside. Brown Hanoverians. Beautiful horses. And I'd sneak out at night and go watch them. It was my secret place. No one saw me leave. No one knew I was there. It was the one thing in my life that was mine alone.

A beat.

KATE (CONT'D)

How old are your sons now?

ERIC

Kevin's 18. Michael's...

(thinks for a moment)

26. And Charlie will be 24 next week actually... Jesus, we're getting old.

KATE

You won't miss them?

ERIC

I don't see them much anymore. Michael's married and lives in Boston. Charlie's in graduate school out in California. They're much closer to their mother... Do your kids really hate you?

KATE

...Claire's in rehab right now. The third time in two years.

ERIC

And you blame yourself?

KATE

Of course I blame myself.

He slides down next to her, their faces just inches apart.

ERIC

We make our own lives. That's why I moved back. I'm tired of not being happy.

He caresses her face gently.

She stares into his eyes for a moment.

KATE

Were there others? Besides me?

ERIC

Never.

He sees the doubt in her eyes.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Never.

She kisses his hand, over and over.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I have a conference in Phoenix this weekend. Can I see you after?

She smiles, nods.

He slips out of bed and gets dressed. He leans down and kisses her forehead, then goes.

Alone, she stares at the sheets still crinkled around the shape of his body. She runs her hand over the still-warm area he occupied, smiling like a teenage girl remembering the boy who just slipped out her window.

EXT. APARTMENT ABOVE THE GARAGE - DECK - NIGHT

Dennis smokes a cigarette as he reorganizes his tackle box. He hears a DOOR SHUT and looks up to find Eric exiting the farmhouse. He watches, confused and disgusted, as Eric climbs into his BMW and drives away.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Kate sits on a stool, her iPad propped up on the counter as she Facetimes with Rachel. Emily can be seen in the background, playing with toys.

RACHEL (ON IPAD)

So we get in on at 5:45 PM on the 25th. And we stay until the 2nd.

KATE

Ben didn't put up too much of a fight about having to stay with his mother?

RACHEL (ON IPAD)

I didn't let him. I just told him, 'If we're going home, this is what's going to happen.'

Kate smiles, grateful.

The house PHONE RINGS. Kate glances over at the caller ID: **ANGELA SCHAFFER**. The name registers and makes Kate uneasy.

RACHEL (ON IPAD) (CONT'D)

You can answer that if you need to.

KATE

No. No, it's fine...

Emily FALLS, begins to CRY. Rachel moves to console her.

RACHEL (ON IPAD)

Oh, sweetheart. Did you hurt yourself?

KATE

I'll let you go.

RACHEL (ON IPAD)

Ok. We'll talk about everything later this week.

KATE

Love you, Emily. See you soon. Bye.

Kate ends the Facetime call, then stands and moves to the answering machine. Presses the blinking red dot.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

Hi, Ms. Garret. It's uhh, it's Angela Schaffer, Ryan's sister. I'm just -- I'm hoping you could give me a call back. I haven't seen Ryan in a few days and I'm getting a little worried. Anyway, my number is 215-244-7688.

Kate reaches for a Post-It pad, scribbles down the number.

INT. FRAZIER DINER - AFTERNOON

Kate sits nervously at a booth sipping coffee. She's been here awhile, rehearsing her version of Ryan's disappearance in her mind over and over.

Outside, a Mercury Sable glides into a space. We recognize it as the car that dropped Ryan off at the farmhouse on the night of the accident.

Kate watches as Ryan's sister, ANGELA, 35, steps out in her dental hygienist uniform. Two YOUNG BOYS, 7 and 5, pop out of the backseat and immediately begin fighting over a toy race car. Angela tugs them apart, admonishes the older of the two before herding them both towards the entrance. The vestibule is filled with arcade and toy capsules machines. Angela rummages through her purse and hands the boys a handful of quarters. They race off to the arcade games.

Angela approaches the booth, sits down across from Kate.

ANGELA

Hi. Sorry I'm so late.

KATE

No, it's fine. I just got here myself.

ANGELA

The babysitter cancelled on me last minute. Summers are hard. Trying to keep them busy. It's like another full-time job.

(sighs tiredly, then)

Anyway, thanks for meeting me.

KATE

Of course. How old are your boys?

ANGELA

Aidan's 6. And Andrew's 4.

KATE

A's.

ANGELA

I'm sorry?

KATE

Angela, Aidan, Andrew. All A's.

ANGELA

I know. Everyone says, 'You guys are the A family.

(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)

What's your husband's name?
Anthony? Alex?' Then I'm like, 'My
husband's not around and --

KATE

Oh, I didn't mean to --

ANGELA

No no, it's fine. It's not your
fault. It's just kinda funny. Like
if I'd'a known I'd have to tell
that whole stupid saga over and
over again I would've named one of
them something else, yunno?

Kate smiles, nods.

Waitress arrives.

WAITRESS

Getcha started with anything?

ANGELA

Just a coffee, please.

Waitress goes.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

So did you have a chance to talk to
Claire?

KATE

(all lies)

I did. I called down to the rehab
facility after we spoke. They
normally don't want patients
talking to family for at least a
week after they're admitted, but I
explained the situation and they
agreed to let Claire talk. I didn't
want to alarm her --

ANGELA

Of course --

KATE

Because, you know how it is, it's
so hard to get them to agree to go
in the first place and I don't want
her to be upset --

KATE (CONT'D)

and have it effect her
progress --

ANGELA

Sure, no --

KATE (CONT'D)

So I just said that you were looking for Ryan, and I asked if she knew where he might have gone and, and she said that she hasn't heard from him since he left our house that night.

ANGELA

(deflates a bit, then)

And she didn't have any idea where he might have gone, or -- ?

KATE

No. I'm sorry.

Waitress returns with Angela's coffee. As she stirs in cream and sugar, Kate looks at the embroidery on her uniform:

LITTLE SMILES DENTISTRY, ANGELA.

ANGELA

Do you remember where they went the night I dropped him off?

KATE

Which night was what?

ANGELA

Saturday. The 3rd.

KATE

(thinks, then)

They didn't go anywhere. At least Claire didn't. They got into an argument at the house, which, as you know, wasn't unusual for the two of them.

Angela rolls her eyes: *tell me about it.*

ANGELA

So they didn't go camping then?

Kate's stomach drops: *how much does she know?*

KATE

...Camping?

ANGELA

Ryan mentioned that they might go camping somewhere. He didn't say where, but...

KATE

No. No, they didn't go camping.
Ryan called a friend after they got
into an argument and someone came
to pick him up.

ANGELA

Do you remember which friend?

Kate hesitates.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Sorry, I don't mean to interrogate
you, I'm just... trying to retrace
his steps.

KATE

I don't remember. I was with
Claire. She was pretty shaken up.

Angela's disappointed, was hoping for a stronger lead.

ANGELA

He's always good about getting back
to me. I know he lost his cell
phone, but... He's real close to
the boys, so he'll usually stop
over the house at least once a week
for dinner, or show up at Aidan's
baseball game.

KATE

Did you let the police know?

ANGELA

I tried.

KATE

What did they say?

ANGELA

(scoffs)

Nothing. The detective told me to
wait a few days and if he still
hasn't turned up, then he would
take a Missing Persons Report. He
wasn't helpful. In fact he seemed
annoyed I even called him.

Kate's strangely comforted by that news.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I get it, yunno. I'm not stupid. They've got hundreds of missing kids out there and who are they gonna spend their time looking for-- some innocent young girl who gets kidnapped while walking home from school, or some drug addict whose been nothing but a pain in the ass his whole life? I don't blame them for that, it's just... he's my brother. If I don't look for him, who will?

Angela's SONS race up to the booth.

OLDER SON

Mom, we need more quarters.

ANGELA

I don't have any more quarters --

YOUNGER SON

But Mom, pleeeeeease, we almost made it to the second level and --

ANGELA

No no no no. I'm not playing this game with you two right now.

KATE

Here. I might have some.

Kate rummages through her purse and hands the boys a handful of quarters. They're about to run off when Angela grabs them both by their arms.

ANGELA

What do we say to Ms. Garrett?

BOYS (TOGETHER)

Thank you.

Angela shakes her head.

ANGELA

Manners.

Kate watches the boys run excitedly back to the arcade and begin banging away on the machines.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

It's this weird cycle, yunno.

KATE
(turns back to Angela)
I'm sorry...?

ANGELA
(continuing)
I can't stand him most of the time.
In fact I hate him for making my
life harder than it already is.
Then whenever something like this
happens, I get this...terrible
guilt in my stomach... Did I try
hard enough to save him? Did I love
him as much as I could have?...
Have you ever gotten that feeling?

KATE
(thinks for a long beat)
Yes... I'm sure he'll turn up.

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON - DINER PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

Kate climbs in and watches as Angela ferries her two sons
into the rundown sedan.

Angela turns in her direction, waves goodbye.

Kate smiles, waves back. Her CELL PHONE VIBRATES in the
console. She picks it up. It's a TEXT MESSAGE FROM ERIC. A
photo of a resort swimming pool, red rock mountains in the
background, with a message underneath:

wish u were next to me and i could reach out and touch you

For a moment, she considers replying, then decides against
it. She starts the car and drives out of the lot.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kate's cutting vegetables as she prepares a salad.

Dennis comes down the stairs carrying his supplies after a
day's worth of painting the nursery. He's in a sour mood.

KATE
How's it coming along?

DENNIS
Just finished it up.

KATE

Oh. Wonderful. Did you write down
your hours?

He doesn't answer. Kate turns back to him, sees that
something is off, but isn't sure what to make of it.

KATE (CONT'D)

Do you want to stay for dinner? I'm
making roast chicken and a salad.

DENNIS

Saw you had a guest over the other
night.

KATE

(beat)

I didn't know you were watching me.

DENNIS

Are you seeing him again?

KATE

I don't think that's any of your
business --

DENNIS

Or you just wanted to get laid?

Kate stares at him a moment, indignant.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Cause if you just wanted to get
laid, call me the next time. God
knows I've waited for that call
since I first set eyes on you.

KATE

Thank you for the offer, but I'm
not interested.

DENNIS

And why is that? Why aren't you
interested?

KATE

Do we really have to go over all
this again? I can't make myself
feel for you the way you feel for
me --

DENNIS

Oh I'm not talking about me. I'm talking about someone who will treat you the way you deserve to be treated. Why does that scare the shit out of you?

Kate doesn't have the answer.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Are you that stupid, Kate? Huh? He's gonna use you in a thousand different ways. Just like he did before. Only this time I'm not gonna be around to pick your ass up when he's through with you.

KATE

You can leave now.

Dennis angrily SLAMS his invoice down on the island.

DENNIS

There! That's what you owe me.

KATE

Thank you. Now get out.

DENNIS

These are Saturday hours here. So they're double. And I want my check by tomorrow morning.

KATE

Fine.

She tucks the invoice away, turns back to the vegetables.

Dennis stomps down the hall to the front door, but he's still so fucking angry and disappointed and jealous that he SLAMS THE DOOR CLOSED and whips back to her --

DENNIS

You're lucky I'm taking off, cause if I wasn't I'd stand outside your door and wait for that sonofabitch to come around again. And I'd beat his ass down before I let him inside. And if you were smart, you'd do the same goddamn thing.

Now he SLAMS THE DOOR SHUT and goes. For a long moment after, she doesn't move. She just stares down at the knife hovering over the vegetables on the cutting board.

INT. BARN - FEED ROOM - FOLLOWING AFTERNOON

Kate's sweeping the aisle when she glances out the barn doors and sees a familiar cobalt blue DODGE CHARGER sitting in the driveway. Before she has a moment process it --

MAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

There you are.

Startled, Kate spins to find --

JACKIE standing in the doorway of the feed room, shoulder leaning against the door frame.

KATE

...Can I help you?

Jackie doesn't answer. He just leers at her for an uncomfortably long moment.

KATE (CONT'D)

Claire's not home if you're --

JACKIE

I'm not here to see Claire.

He steps into the room and gazes at the picture frames on the knotty pine walls. Photographs of KATE'S SUMMER RIDING CAMPS on the farm over the years. In each photo, Kate stands among a group of 30 or so young kids, smiling wide, in her glory.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

You teach kids how to ride?

KATE

Not anymore.

JACKIE

But you used to?

KATE

A long time ago.

JACKIE

So if I had a friend who wanted to learn, you could show them?

KATE

I don't give lessons anymore.

JACKIE

But for a friend? That's what I'm asking.

Kate's silent, unnerved, unsure where all this is going.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

My niece loves horses. I got her that movie *Black Stallion* for her birthday. She watches it every morning when wakes up.

KATE

I'm sorry, is there something I can help you with?

JACKIE

(turns to Kate)

Your daughter came to my condo last week. She was upset. Wanted to forget about the world for a while so I helped her get there. And she started telling me a story. This crazy story about how she got into an argument with Ryan and pushed him down a hill out there at Marsh Creek Park.

Kate's heart drops. She wants to turn into liquid and sink through the floorboards and disappear.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

And how you wanted to protect her so you dumped his body in the lake.

A very long beat. Kate stares at Jackie, betraying nothing.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Has that ever happened before?

KATE

...Has what ever happened before?

JACKIE

Claire making up stories like that?

Kate doesn't respond.

Jackie walks towards her, slow, threatening. He stops a foot in front of her.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

I'm only asking because Ryan's sister stopped by yesterday.

(MORE)

JACKIE (CONT'D)

She wanted to know if I'd heard from Ryan 'cause he's been gone for a while and she's worried that something bad might've happened to him. So suddenly I'm thinking about that story Claire told me. And I'm asking you if she makes up stories like that. Cause if you tell me she does, then I'll consider it just that. A crazy story. But if you tell me she doesn't make up stories like that, then I feel an obligation to go to the police and tell them what I heard.

Jackie waits for an answer.

Kate's too stunned and unnerved to speak.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Okay, well I'll let them know.

Jackie turns, moves towards the open barn doors when --

KATE

Wait.

(Jackie pauses, turns
back)

What did you tell her?

JACKIE

I didn't tell her anything. Yet.

KATE

...What do you want?

JACKIE

\$20,000 dollars. Cash. By Friday.

KATE

I don't have that kind of money --

JACKIE

Don't fucking lie to me.

KATE

I'm not lying to you. I get a check from my ex-husband every month which barely covers my expenses. What little savings I had my daughter wiped out a long time ago. I don't have \$20,000 dollars.

JACKIE
That's why I gave you til Friday to
find it.

Jackie turns and exits.

Kate stands there, frozen, watching as his car drives off,
fighting the urge to collapse.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kate's on her iPad. She logs into her Wells Fargo account.
Scans the Checking Account Balance: **\$16,898.**

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT

Kate opens the lid of the jewelry box, searches through the
pieces that Claire hasn't already stolen. It's scant.

KATE
Jesus Christ, Claire...

INT. PAWN SHOP - WEST CHESTER - NIGHT

Kate watches as the SHOP OWNER appraises the bracelets and
necklaces she's brought in for appraisal. He sets aside the
ones he's interested in from the ones he's not.

OWNER
I'll give you \$2,000.

KATE
For all of them?

Owner nods. Kate expected more. Finally --

KATE (CONT'D)
Okay.

Owner moves over to the register, removes the cash and hands
it to Kate.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

A flustered Kate paces as she talks on the portable phone to
Richard. She's smoking a cigarette --

KATE
-- they found some damage to the
interior walls...
(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)
Because I didn't know it then,
Richard. Randy just discovered it
when he was fixing the roof... I
don't know what you want me to tell
you... Another \$3,000...
(BEEP -- an incoming call)
Hold on a second...

Kate glances the caller ID: **ANGELA SHAFFER**. Ignores it.

KATE (CONT'D)
Will you just please wire it over?
Don't make me beg, Richard. It's
bad enough that I have to come to
you for everything anyway. Just...
Thank you...

She hangs up.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - FOLLOWING AFTERNOON

Kate drops a basket of laundry at the bottom of the stairs,
then moves to the island. Swipes her iPad and checks her
Account Balance to see if Richard has wired the money yet.
But the balance is the same as yesterday: **\$16,898**. *Shit...*

She grabs the portable phone, ready to call Richard when --

CAR DOORS SHUT outside. She glances out the window and sees
the Dodge Charger in the driveway. Jackie steps out along
with a YOUNG GIRL, 5. They walk up towards the barn.

INT. BARN - MORNING

Jackie and the Young Girl look at the horses in their stalls.

Kate races up from the farmhouse and steps inside.

KATE
What are you doing here?

JACKIE
I brought my niece over to see the
horses. This is Riley.

KATE
(manages a smile)
Hi, Riley.
(to Jackie, quietly)
You said I had until tomorrow.

JACKIE

You do. In the meantime, you're gonna give her a riding lesson.

EXT. RIDING RING - AFTERNOON

Kate holds the reins as she leads one of the mares around the ring. Riley's in the saddle. Jackie stands outside the fence, smoking a cigarette, texting customers on his cell phone.

KATE

Okay, now let's try to put your hands on your hips.

Riley does just that.

KATE (CONT'D)

Good girl. Now reach down with your left hand and touch your left foot.

(she does)

Now the right one.

(she does)

Good girl.

RILEY

What's the horse's name?

KATE

This is Party Dress. She's my oldest horse. My daughter used to ride her when she was your age.

RILEY

Is she a magic horse?

KATE

I think she might be.

Riley smiles.

VOICES are heard. Kate turns to the detached garage where Dennis and a FRIEND are loading pieces of furniture into a POD MOVING CONTAINER he's had delivered.

She wants him to look at her, to intuit how desperate and trapped she is and come to her rescue.

But he doesn't so much as glance in her direction.

INT. BARN - TACK ROOM - NIGHT

Kate hangs up the saddle and reins and watches out the window as Jackie's car leaves the driveway.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kate hustles in and goes right up to the iPad still perched on the island. Logs into her Wells Fargo Account. The Checking Account Balance hasn't changed: **\$16,898.**

INT. RICHARD'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

An elegant dinner party. Richard, Audrey and THREE WELL-DRESSED COUPLES chat and laugh. Old friends sharing good conversation and better wine.

The doorbell RINGS. Audrey glances at Richard: *Are we expecting someone?* Richard shrugs. Audrey stands, moves to the front door and opens it revealing a frazzled Kate.

AUDREY

Oh. Hello.

KATE

Is Richard here?

AUDREY

We're just in the middle of a --

KATE

I need to speak to him.

AUDREY

(annoyed by the
interruption)

Let me get him. Wait here, please.

Kate waits in the hall as Audrey walks back over to the dining room table, bends down and whispers to Richard.

The table conversation quiets. The guests all turn and stare at Kate. They know her, of course, and they've seen her unhinged like this before. They regard her with pity, as if she were an injured mouse.

Kate doesn't turn away from their stares. She stares back at them, unblinking, like she wants to set them all on fire.

Richard stands and approaches.

RICHARD

What's the matter? Did something happen with Claire --

KATE

You didn't transfer the money.

RICHARD

For the roof? I was going to do it in the morning. What's the rush?

KATE

It's supposed to rain the next few days and I'm scared the feed and straw might get wet and moldy and... Do you remember when Tucker got pneumonia and died?

RICHARD

Tucker?

KATE

Claire's first horse. I couldn't get out of bed for weeks. I just, I really need to get the roof fixed.

Richard turns back, sees the guests still staring. He feels for Kate, doesn't want her to be humiliated.

RICHARD

Okay. I understand. Let's go back to my office. I'll make the transfer right now.

Richard ferries Kate down the hall.

The guests slowly shift back into their seats. Audrey forces a smile.

AUDREY

I think she's just feeling a little overwhelmed.

INT. FARMHOUSE - HALLWAY - MORNING

Kate comes down the stairs, dressed for a day out. She grabs her keys off the message board and exits the home.

WE STAY for a moment as the PHONE RINGS and finally goes to the answering machine --

KATE'S VOICE ON MACHINE (V.O.)
You've read the Garrett's, please
leave a message.

ANGELA (V.O.)
(on the answering machine)
Hi, Ms. Garrett, it's Angela
Schaeffer calling again. Listen
I've left a few messages now and
haven't heard back from you.

Through the window Kate's station wagon drives off.

EXT. WELLS FARGO - WIDE - MORNING

From outside, we see Kate sitting alone in the BANK MANAGER'S OFFICE. Manager enters, sits down across from her. They share a quick chat before he hands her an envelope of cash. She tucks the money into her purse.

ANGELA (V.O.)
I wanted to talk to you again, just
about a few questions I had and...
I still haven't heard from Ryan
and, well, just please call me back
when you have time. It's important
that I talk to you.

Kate exits the bank and moves to her car in the parking lot.

INT. MERCEDES STATION WAGON, MOVING - AFTERNOON

Kate rolls into the driveway and finds ANGELA'S MERCURY SABLE parked there. Angela stands at the front door, peering into the windows. She turns back at the arrival of Kate's wagon.

KATE
Shit...

Kate looks over at her purse. It's unzipped, the cash envelope exposed. She quickly closes it. Reaches into the backseat and lifts a bag of groceries.

EXT. FARMHOUSE DRIVEWAY

Kate steps out of the station wagon. Angela stares at her, bitter, ready for a fight.

KATE
Hi.

ANGELA

Did you get my messages?

KATE

(moves to the front door)

Yes. Yes I did and I'm sorry I didn't get back to you sooner. I had some family in town.

ANGELA

Do you have a minute to talk?

KATE

(glances at her watch)

I'm supposed to meet a friend for lunch --

ANGELA

It will only take a minute.

KATE

Right. Okay.

Kate opens the front door. Angela follows her in.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN

Kate sets the groceries down on the island and hangs her purse inside the pantry, out of view. She begins unpacking the groceries, keen to avoid eye contact with Angela.

KATE

What did you want to talk about?

ANGELA

Something you said at the diner. You said Claire was home all night.

KATE

Which night are we talking about?

ANGELA

The 3rd.

KATE

The 3rd? Let me think... Yes. Yes, she was here with me all night.

ANGELA

(accusatory)

All night?

KATE

That's right. I don't understand where this is going.

ANGELA

I talked to one of Ryan's friends. He said Ryan and Claire stopped by his house that night to buy drugs. They told him they were going camping and he saw Claire's car and it was packed with all kinds of camping stuff.

Kate freezes, panicking inside. She starts putting the groceries away so Angela won't see her falling apart.

KATE

And which night was this again...?

ANGELA

(annoyed)

The 3rd.

KATE

I don't know -- maybe I got my dates mixed up. I thought we were talking about the second --

ANGELA

No, you knew which night we were talking about, Ms. Garrett, because you said the night I dropped Ryan off at your house. You said they didn't go camping.

KATE

They didn't go camping --

ANGELA

But Ryan's friend saw Claire's car packed up to go camping. There was even a kayak on the roof!

KATE

That doesn't mean they went.

ANGELA

Why would they pack up if they weren't going?

KATE

I don't know what you want me say.

ANGELA

(frustrated)

I'm just, I'm trying to figure out where he went so I can maybe figure out where he is and I feel like you're not helping me.

KATE

I think you need to talk to the police.

ANGELA

The police don't give a shit about my brother! They won't even take down a report yet!

KATE

I'm sorry. I don't think I can help you anymore.

A long beat as Angela watches Kate put the groceries away.

ANGELA

Why do I feel like you're not telling me something?

KATE

Because I don't know anything. You want me to tell you things I don't know... I'm sorry, I have to get ready for my lunch.

Kate moves down the hall, opens the front door, and waits.

Angela remains in the kitchen. Quietly devastated, realizing now that something terrible has happened to her brother. Finally, she moves down the hall and pauses beside Kate.

ANGELA

What aren't you telling me, Ms. Garrett?... What did you do?

Kate's silent, cold.

Finally, Angela numbly walks out of the home.

Kate closes the door behind her, turns the dead bolt.

Angela looks back in through the door windows.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I'm going tell the police that you lied to me.

Kate walks down the hall, moves just out of view and puts her back against the wall.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
I'm going to tell them that you're
a liar who knows more than you're
telling me.

Silence, then -- Angela POUNDS ON THE DOOR out of frustration and guilt and helplessness.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
What aren't you telling me!?

Kate STARTLES.

Finally the pounding stops.

Kate waits for the sound of Angela's car to start, then exhales. In the silence that follows, the full weight of her deceit and shame comes crashing down upon her.

She sinks down to the floor and SOBS into her hands.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Dark. Vacant. The doorbell RINGS.

A moment later, the light goes on in the upstairs hall.

Kate appears at the top of the stairwell in her nightgown. She walks halfway down the stairs until, through the narrow door windows, ERIC comes into view, standing outside.

He looks up at her, expectantly.

But that's as far as she goes.

A long moment.

Kate seems to be making a decision. Finally, she slowly turns away from him and walks back up the stairs and shuts off the hallway light.

Eric remains at the door for a moment, staring up at the dark stairwell, processing her rebuke.

Finally, he retreats to his car and leaves.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KITCHEN - THE FOLLOWING NIGHT

Jackie sits in a chair at the kitchen table. Phoebe stares at him from behind the half-door of the mudroom.

Kate comes down the stairs, hands him the envelope of cash, then sits across from him. Jackie opens it, looks inside to make sure it's all there, then tucks it away.

JACKIE

It's a good start.

KATE

What does that mean? A good start?

JACKIE

It means it's hard to keep a secret like this one. And every so often I'm gonna need to be compensated for doing my part.

KATE

But I don't have any more money to give you. I told you, I get a check from my husband every month that barely covers my expenses --

JACKIE

We'll figure out a number that works for everyone. It'll be like a little monthly paycheck for me.

A long beat.

Kate sits in silence realizing he won't ever leave her alone.

KATE

I can't live this way.

JACKIE

(chuckles darkly)

You don't have a fuckin' choice.

KATE

(completely breaking down)

No. No, I won't pay you any more money. You can go to the police and you can tell them what you think happened because I'm not going to pay you money I don't have and I'm not gonna to live like this --

As QUICK AS LIGHTNING, JACKIE LEAPS OUT OF HIS SEAT and GRABS KATE BY HER HAIR.

He YANKS HER out of her chair and THROWS HER UP AGAINST THE WALL! He PUNCHES HER IN THE RIBS! Over and over as hard as he fucking can.

Kate SCREAMS OUT IN TERRIBLE AGONY, trying to cover herself.

Finally, he PUNCHES her in the stomach, knocking the wind out of her. She CRUMPLES to the floor, loudly GASPING FOR AIR.

She looks up at him. He looks monstrous, unstable, capable of anything.

JACKIE
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE FUCKING
WITH HERE, YOU DUMB BITCH? HUH!?
STUPID FUCKING CUNT!

Behind the half-door, Phoebe BARKS WILDLY, rattling the gate.

Kate tries to crawl away, but Jackie grabs her sneakers and pulls her back underneath him and presses his shoe down on her face, pinning it to the tile. As Kate looks up him, she feels the cold steel of a PISTOL against her forehead.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
You're gonna pay to keep me quiet.
Do you fucking understand that?

Kate nods, trembling.

Phoebe BARKS LOUDER!

Agitated, Jackie turns back to the dog. He grabs the remote control on the counter and turns the small kitchen television on. Blasts the volume.

Kate realizes where he's going and what he's going to do.

KATE
No! NO!

Jackie leans over the half-door and --

BLAM!

The BARKING STOPS abruptly. A dull thud is heard.

KATE (CONT'D)
NOOO! NOOO!

Jackie tucks the pistol away and calmly leaves the home.

Kate tries to stand, but her ribs are too sore. She crawls to the mudroom and lifts herself up on the half-door and looks down at Phoebe's body. Heartbroken, shattered. Her arms give out and she sinks back down to the floor, sobbing.

MUDROOM - LATER

Kate, eyes bloodshot from crying, lies on the floor beside Phoebe. The dog is wrapped up in a blanket, eyes closed.

Kate pets her fur as she searches her mind for an escape route out of this situation.

Finally, she stops petting, as if she's arrived at some idea.

INT. GARAGE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Kate rolls Phoebe's body in a tarp.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Walking gingerly, clutching her bruised ribs, Kate drags the tarp across the field.

EDGE OF THE PROPERTY - LATER

Kate digs a hole deep enough to hold Phoebe's body. When she's satisfied with the depth, she pushes the tarp in.

EXT. BARN/Paddock - NIGHT

Kate escorts one of the mares into the paddock. The other mare stands nearby.

She gives each horse a sugar cube treat, then kisses them good night, and walks out of the gate.

INT. BARN - FEED ROOM - NIGHT

Kate lifts two cans of gasoline and lugs them out.

INT. BARN

Kate SPLATTERS gasoline onto the floor, the walls, inside the stalls -- everywhere.

When all the gasoline has been emptied, she takes one final look around. At the ribbons on the walls...the photos from the riding camps...the pictures of Ben and Claire...

Finally, she walks to the edge of the barn, and takes a pack of matches out of her pocket. She strikes one and drops it onto the floor --

W-H-O-O-M-P!

The gasoline IGNITES. The barn LIGHTS UP. Wood CRACKLES.

Kate retreats out the barn doors and into the yard where she watches as the fire HOWLS and greedily consumes the old wood.

She waits for it to reach the peak of its fury and, when not a single plank can be spared, she turns and walks across the long field towards the detached garage.

She climbs up the side stairs to Dennis' apartment and knocks on his door.

A light goes on inside the bedroom.

FADE OUT.

INT. SAINT MAXIMILIAN KOLBE CHURCH - SOME NIGHTS LATER

Evening mass.

Kate stands in the back of the church, lost in her thoughts.

The CHOIR begins singing the communion hymn.

Kate snaps from her reverie and watches the congregation funnel into the aisle and approach the altar to receive communion. She doesn't join them. Instead, she dips a finger in the holy water font, blesses herself, then leaves.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM

Kate stands before the mirror wearing a nightgown, staring intensely at her own reflection.

Suddenly, she SLAMS her head into the glass! The impact is far worse than she imagined it would be. She grimaces, grits her teeth, then stares at herself again.

BOOM! She slams her head into the glass again.

BOOM. BOOM. BOOM. Over and over and over.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

The Dodge Charger glides into the drive way and parks. Jackie steps out and looks around. The apartment above the garage is dark, Dennis' truck missing.

He crosses to the front door and KNOCKS. No answer. He RINGS the doorbell a few times. Still nothing. Finally --

KATE (O.C.)

It's open.

Jackie turns the knob and steps inside. The house is completely dark.

JACKIE

...where are you?

KATE (O.C.)

Over here.

He follows Kate's voice and notices a dim light on in the stairwell. He steps onto the landing and looks up.

Kate stands halfway down the stairwell. Her face is terribly bruised and swollen. Hard to look at.

JACKIE

(aghast)

...What the hell happened to you?

Kate doesn't respond. She just stands there expectantly.

An uneasy feeling comes over Jackie. He feels as if he's being watched suddenly. He looks around and sees a form in the darkness of the hallway.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

What the fuck...?

B-L-A-M!

A SHOTGUN BLAST SHATTERS THE SILENCE.

JACKIE'S CHEST IS RIPPED OPEN!

The force of the slug LIFTS HIM OFF HIS FEET and THROWS HIM against the wall. He's dead before he reaches the ground.

Kate stares down at the body.

We hear FOOTSTEPS MOVING DOWN THE HALL and then --

DENNIS APPEARS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRWELL, his Mossberg hunting shotgun in hand. He looks down at Jackie a moment, then checks for a pulse. *Nothing*.

He turns to Kate now and moves up the stairs and bends down before her, looking at her face. He knew what she was doing, but nothing prepared him for how far she took it, how terribly damaged she looks.

DENNIS
...Jesus, Kate.

She's crying. Her eyes haven't left Jackie's body.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
The hard part's over now. Okay?

She nods, steels her nerves and walks past Dennis down to Jackie's body. She kneels before him and lifts his hands and rubs them in her hair...

...on her face...

...on her arms and hands and legs...

...rubs him all over her.

When she's finished staging the scene, she moves down the hall into the kitchen and lifts the portable phone. She seems to lose her nerve for a moment and turns to Dennis.

He nods. *Go on...*

She dials 911.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

ON KATE, sitting in the back of an ambulance. A PARAMEDIC shines a blue penlight in her eyes.

As the Paramedic takes Kate's blood pressure, she watches Dennis talk to TWO DETECTIVES, selling the story they've constructed together.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - LATER

TIGHT ON KATE, sitting on a chair by the large bay windows, staring out the bay windows. The is the same image that started the film.

The BEDROOM DOOR OPENS and DETECTIVE MCCORMICK, 40s, enters and slides a chair close. Flips open a notepad.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK
Ms. Garrett? Ms. Garrett?

KATE
...hmmm?

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK
I'm Detective McCormick with the
West Chester Police Department. Is
there anything I can get for you?
Maybe a glass of water?

KATE
I'm fine.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK
I know this is a difficult time,
but it's very important that I get
as much information from you as I
can about the shooting... Do you
know how your attacker got into the
house?

KATE
...I let him in.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK
You let him in?

KATE
Yes. He knocked on the front door
and I let him inside.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK
So you're familiar with him then?

KATE
Yes.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK
How?

KATE
Claire... I met him through Claire.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK
Claire's your daughter?

KATE
Yes. He came here for the first
time a few weeks ago. He threatened
me, saying that my daughter and her
boyfriend, Ryan, had stolen drugs
from him.

(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)

I didn't know what he was talking about. He told me that if I didn't pay him \$20,000 dollars he would hurt her.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK

And you believed he would?

KATE

Yes. Especially after Ryan's sister called me saying she couldn't find him, that she was scared something terrible had happened to him.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK

When was this?

KATE

Right after he threatened me. A few days before the 4th, I think.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK

And where's Ryan now?

KATE

I don't know. His sister still hasn't found him as far as I know.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK

You think Jackie might have hurt him?

KATE

...I think it's possible.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK

So you paid him the \$20,000 dollars he asked for?

KATE

Yes. But it wasn't enough. Once he got that money -- once he saw I was capable of paying -- he wanted more. And he kept coming here and threatening me and demanding more money.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK

And you're convinced he's the one who burned down your barn and killed your dog?

KATE

Yes.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK
But you didn't mention that to the
officers who questioned you that
night.

KATE
Because I was scared of what he
might do to me. What he might do to
my daughter.

She turns and faces him finally, giving him a full view of
her bruised face, as if to say: *Look what he's capable of.*

Detective McCormick stares for a moment, then has to turn
away. He flips his notepad shut.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK
Okay. That's enough for now. You
sure I can't get you some water?

KATE
I'm fine.

DETECTIVE MCCORMICK
Just sit tight for a few minutes.

Detective goes.

Kate sits in the silence, hoping he didn't see through her.

EXT. RUN-IN SHED - DUSK - A FEW DAYS LATER

Kate replaces the hay in the feeder. She looks back at the
detached garage, making sure Dennis' truck is still there.

INT. DENNIS' APARTMENT - DUSK

The apartment is empty. All the furniture gone.

Dennis stuffs a few t-shirts and a few pairs of shorts into a
duffel bag. Just enough to get him to Florida.

He separates the blinds and sees Kate reading a book down by
the pond.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

The clock radio reads: **4:15 AM**. Kate lies in bed watching a
sitcom rerun, unable to fall asleep. Finally, tired of the
noise, she shuts off the television.

INT. DENNIS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dennis sits on the floor, smoking a cigarette, duffle bag at his side as he waits for his chance to slip away.

He stands and looks out the window for what feels like the 100th time.

This time, though, Kate's bedroom is dark.

EXT. DENNIS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dennis exits, quietly locks the door, then puts the key under the welcome mat and moves down the stairs to his truck.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK/EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Dennis starts the truck, drives halfway down the driveway before he sees Kate standing in his headlights. He brakes.

Kate crosses to the truck. Dennis rolls down the window down.

KATE

Were you going to leave without saying goodbye?

DENNIS

That was the plan.

She hands him a small lunch cooler bag.

KATE

I packed you some snacks in case you get hungry.

He nods a 'thank you' and sets the bag on the passenger seat.

A long beat.

Neither knows how to say goodbye.

KATE (CONT'D)

Call me when you get there, okay?

He shakes his head 'no'.

KATE (CONT'D)

Will you check in on me from time-to-time?

He shakes his head again 'no' again.

DENNIS

Look at me.

She raises her eyes. They're filled with tears.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

It's the only way this thing goes away.

She nods, seems to understand the need for the two of them to distance themselves from each other. Forever.

He can't stand to see her sad, so --

DENNIS (CONT'D)

(re: the cooler bag)

What's in the bag? Don't tell me it's your chicken salad. I never told you this, but I hate your chicken salad. It's terrible. I think it's the dijon shit you put in there.

She laughs through her tears.

But the tears quickly return.

He pulls her close and buries his face in her chestnut-and-grey hair and breathes her in one last time.

Because he loves her.

He's always loved her.

She hugs him back. So tight. Not wanting to let him go.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Take care of yourself now.

When her head's down and she's not looking, he lets his foot off the gas and the truck drifts away from Kate.

It happens so fast that by the time she raises her head he's already too far away for her to protest.

He doesn't look back because it would be too hard.

She watches as his truck rolls down the rural road and his taillights vanish behind a scrim of trees.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON - SOME DAYS LATER

Empty, then -- a DOOR OPENS. WE HEAR KATE'S VOICE --

KATE (O.C.)
-- I'm fine, mom. Really. Still a
little swollen, but that's all...

Kate enters with bags of groceries hanging off both arms, her cell phone pinched between her shoulder and ear as she talks to her mother. Her face has almost completely healed.

KATE (CONT'D)
I do. I have an appointment with my
doctor next week, just for her to
look me over again...

She sets the bags down on the island. Grabs her morning coffee mug, sticks it in the microwave. 20 seconds. Start. The microwave WHIRS.

Kate turns back to the counter and begins unpacking the bags. It's primarily items for her granddaughter; jars of baby food, formula, rice cereal, milk, a bathtub toy, et al.

KATE (CONT'D)
...Claire's doing really well. I
visited her at the facility again
yesterday. She looks good. She's
gained something like eleven pounds
since she's been there and there's
color in her face again and... I
brought a whole box of old pictures
with me, just memories from when
the kids were little out here on
the farm. The two of us sat there
going through them all, just
laughing and crying, and...

She takes out a bouquet of tulips. Trims the stems and places them in a vase and fills it with water. The microwave DINGS.

KATE (CONT'D)
...I did. I gave her a big hug for
everyone and told her how much we
all love her and want her home when
she's ready. Just keep saying your
prayers. We need all of 'em...

Kate opens the microwave, grabs her coffee mug and crosses into the --

LAUNDRY ROOM

-- and opens the dryer. She removes four pink baby towels and folds them neatly.

KATE
...Well I was thinking I'll come up
to visit over Labor Day...

She exits now with the towels and coffee mug in hand --

HALLWAY/STAIRWELL

Moves up the stairs --

KATE
...Pam mentioned doing a barbecue
and having everyone over to the
house one night...

Down the upstairs hallway --

KATE (CONT'D)
...Yeah she visited with Todd and
Lauren a few weeks ago... Good. It
was good. Todd broke my toilet, but
other than that...

Turns into the --

NURSERY

We see the finished room now. The dresser she refurbished has been painted white and there's a changing table on top. The walls are light pink and Dennis' mural is finished. It's beautiful. A large oak tree whose limbs stretch across the walls. A colorful array of animals hang from its branches.

KATE
...And how's the walking?...
Yeah?... The rehab's been helping,
you think?

Kate sets the towels down on the dresser, then reviews the the organizer, making sure everything's in its place when --

BLOOP! She accidentally KNOCKS THE COFFEE MUG OVER. The contents spill onto the pink towels.

Shit...

KATE (CONT'D)

Let me call you back later, mom...
No, everything's fine, it's just
that Ben and Rachel are flying in
with the baby in a few hours and I
still have to get a few things
ready here... I love you, too...

Kate hangs up, balls up the four towels and carries them out
of the room --

HALLWAY

Down the stairs and into the --

LAUNDRY ROOM

She opens the washing machine, drops the towels in along with
a detergent pod, then presses 'Start.' The MACHINE RUMBLES to
life. Kate glances down her watch, thinks --

KATE

What else what else what else...?

A thought strikes her. She moves into the hall, opens the
front door and --

EXT. FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

-- walks across the yard. She glances over at the new barn
that's started to go up. It's not nearly the size of the last
one, but it'll do just fine.

She arrives at the RUN-IN SHED where the two mares are
standing: it's their temporary home while the barn is being
rebuilt. She grabs the lead rope on one mare and secures it
to a post. Lifts a curry comb from the bench and begins to
work it up and down the horse's neck.

KATE

(to the horses)

It's going to be a busy couple days
around here. Lots of new faces.
Lots of excitement... Ben's coming
home. You two remember Ben, don't
you? The three of you used to be
best friends.

She continues combing until --

A POLICE SIREN is heard.

Distant at first, but quickly getting closer, louder.

Kate freezes.

Her blood runs cold.

She's too frightened to turn around and see if it's her
they're coming for.

The sound of the siren gradually fades.

But long after it disappears, Kate still can't move.

CUT TO BLACK.