

MINARI

Written by

Lee Isaac Chung

****All dialogue in [brackets] indicates Korean language.**

"MINARI" by Lee Isaac Chung

FADE IN:

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY (TRAVELING)(YEAR 1983 - SPRING)

An Arkansas dirt road.

In the car is the Yi family, Korean American. DAVID (age 7-8) is in the back. He watches his mother, MONICA (age 35) at the wheel; she follows a 1980s U-HAUL up ahead.

MONICA

[Where is daddy taking us?]

David looks to his older sister, ANNE (age 10-11), for an answer, but she's busy reading a book.

EXT. THE FARM - MEADOW - DAY

The U-Haul and the station wagon turn into a vast meadow. On the land is a SINGLE-WIDE TRAILER HOME. The vehicles park.

From the U-Haul emerges the dad, JACOB YI (age 37-40).

MONICA

[What is this place?]

JACOB

[What is this? This is home.]

David runs to the house and looks underneath. There, he sees:

DAVID

Wheels? Wheels? Whoa.

Mobile homes don't come with stairs. There's a three foot climb to the front door. Jacob reaches up to open the door.

MONICA

[Really, what is this?]

Jacob laughs as he hoists Anne and David to climb:

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

It's decked out in early-80's brown and yellow.

DAVID
WHOA. WHOA.

MONICA (O.S.)
[You said you'd find a house in a
big town.]

David and Anne explore the empty house.

EXT. THE FARM - MEADOW - DAY (LATER)

Cicadas sing. David walks, staring in wonder at the meadow.
Jacob and Anne follow. Monica lags behind, avoiding thorns.

MONICA
[And how far is the hatchery?]

JACOB
[The hatchery...? That way.]

MONICA
[I asked how far. Is there even a
grocery store here?]

JACOB
[Come here. Take a look at this.]
(taking dirt in his hand)
[Look. Look at the color. This is
why I picked this place.]

MONICA
[Because of the dirt color?]

JACOB
[This is the best dirt in America.
We made a deal, remember?]
(to David, in a Korean
accent)
Daddy's gonna make a big garden.

MONICA
(Korean accent)
"Garden??" Garden is small.

JACOB
Oh no, Garden of Eden. It was big
like this...

Anne puts straw in David's hair, and then he chases Anne to
do the same.

ANNE
David! No running!

MONICA
David! [Don't run!]

David slows and feels his heart while walking quickly.

JACOB
[We wanted a new start, right?
...Taste the air here.]

He inhales. Monica inhales. Then, Anne screams, running away from David who is bent down.

MONICA
[What is it?]

Jacob is concerned also, is David ill?

David rises and holds up a GRASS SNAKE like a trophy.

DAVID
[Snake.]

MONICA
[DAVID YOU PUT THAT D-]

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Jacob offers a hand to help Monica inside. She won't take it.

MONICA
[This is not what we agreed.]

JACOB
[Don't be like that; come look.]

Monica ignores Jacob's hand and begins her three foot ascent. She gets stuck on her stomach with her legs dangling.

JACOB (CONT'D)
[Lift that leg... Now the other
leg... Good job!]

Monica fixes her clothes and glares at Jacob.

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Monica looks around. David follows and watches her.

MONICA
[Every place we move is worse and
worse.]

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Monica listens through a stethoscope and measures David's blood pressure.

Anne unpacks a CARDBOARD BOX and from the top, an old PICTURE OF MONICA AND HER MOTHER (SOONJA) taken in Seoul.

ANNE

[Where should grandma's picture go?]

MONICA

[We're not staying. Leave it in there.]

Monica sees Jacob unpacking BOOKS.

Anne watches Monica jot the blood pressure reading in a little notebook.

ANNE

Is the murmur getting louder?

MONICA

[Mmm. We will need to keep checking. ...We need to find a home near a hospital too.]

This is directed at Jacob, but he doesn't seem to have heard.

JACOB

[Because it's the first night here. Let's all sleep together on the floor. Wouldn't that be fun?]

Monica shakes her head in disbelief.

ANNE

[No, daddy you snore!]

DAVID

[I wanna listen too.]

David takes the stethoscope and listens to his heart: an unnatural WOOSH WOOSH WOOSH

MONICA

[We'll have to keep praying.]

WOOSH WOOSH WOOSH. David sees the photo of Monica and Soonja.

EXT. HATCHERY - DAY

A team of OZARK WORKERS yell in country twang and guide a POULTRY TRUCK into a CHICKEN HATCHERY loading dock.

David and Anne walk alongside the parents.

INT. HATCHERY SEXING ROOM - DAY

BABY CHICKENS in stacked bins huddle for warmth. David stares at them.

MR. H
Hello everybody!

David looks to see HAYASHI (60s, Japanese), introducing Monica and Jacob to seven ASIAN WORKERS. It looks like the presentation of a newly married couple.

MR. H (CONT'D)
I introduce to you Mr. Jacob and Mrs. Monica Yi.

Monica and Jacob bow politely. The workers clap.

MR. H (CONT'D)
Mr. Yi is an expert chicken sexer. He comes from Seattle and California. And let's welcome him to Arkansas!

No one claps. MR. H leads Jacob and Monica to their stations. MRS. OH (age 40-50), gives a little bow.

MRS. OH
[Hello.]

MONICA
[Oh hello, there are Koreans here!]

MRS. OH
[Yes, a few of us.]

MONICA
[I heard it's was only Vietnamese.]

MRS. OH
[Oh no. There are a few Koreans. Fayetteville is bigger, but we all live in Rogers for the schools. Is that where you moved...?]

MONICA

[Uh, no, we're in a town called
"Holt."]

MRS. OH

[...I never heard of it.]

MONICA

[It's an hour away, in the
countryside.]

MRS. OH

[Why would a Korean move there?]

Monica doesn't know. Meanwhile:

THE HATCHERY BREAK ROOM - DAY

Anne pulls out two big ENCYCLOPEDIA BOOKS.

ANNE

I'll read "V." You start with "L."

David reads. He's bored.

HATCHERY SEXING ROOM - DAY

Jacob works quickly, separating male and female chicks.

He looks like a poker dealer dealing fuzzy yellow cards.

Monica is slower, just learning. Mrs. Oh watches them both.

MRS. OH

[I've never seen anyone as fast as
Mr. Yi. Surely he made more money
in California.]

MONICA

[Yes, but I wasn't fast enough to
work there, so...]

MRS. OH

[When did you begin working?]

MONICA

[Six months ago.]

MRS. OH

[In any case, fast enough for here;
you're in just the right place!]

Monica doesn't seem to like that, but she nods respectfully.

David arrives next to Monica. Monica smiles at David.

MONICA

[Go to your sister.]
 (to another worker)
 I'm sorry, we have no babysitter.

DAVID

Mom, what can I do?

Monica flashes Jacob a look -- this is clearly his fault.

JACOB

Daddy can take a break. Come.

EXT. HATCHERY - DAY

Jacob smokes. He watches as David jogs and stops himself, his hand on his heart.

JACOB

[David, it must be frustrating that
 you do not get to run.]

A FLY BUZZES near David. He looks up and sees a big TOWER covered in flies, emitting SMOKE and sounds of SLOSHING.

DAVID

[What's that?]

JACOB

[That? Don't worry about that.]

David now sees a scattering of other dead chicks. Flies hover. David looks to Jacob - *what is this?*

JACOB (CONT'D)

[Male chicks are put in there.
 They're discarded.]

DAVID

[What is 'discarded?']

JACOB

[That word is difficult right?
 Mm... Their meat is bad, they don't
 lay eggs. Males have no use.]

David stares at the tower.

JACOB (CONT'D)
 [So you and me should try to be
 useful, right?]

Just then, a dead chick lands on the ground, having fallen
 from the tower. The incinerating tower seems to grow louder.

JACOB (CONT'D)
 [...Come, don't go near.]
 (when David is near)
 Son. What do you think of the farm?

DAVID
 It's good.

JACOB
 Better than California. [Right?]
 (upon David's hesitation)
 ...No? California is better?

DAVID
 I don't know.

JACOB
 [When daddy was your age,
 grandfather had a big farm also.
 But I didn't know it was good.]

DAVID
 [Why didn't you know?]

JACOB
 [I just didn't. After the war, we
 lost it all; that's when I realized
 how good it was.] But, now it's
 o.k. The farm daddy bought is much
 bigger than the one harabeoji lost.
 ...It's a lot of land right?

DAVID
 [It's tons.]

JACOB
 [Tons and tons right!]
 (upon David's nod)
 ...And how small was our land in
 California?

DAVID
 We had nothing.

Jacob laughs.

JACOB
 Now we have lots; isn't that good?
 (David nods)
 Good. Good. You tell mommy you like
 it o.k?. ...Let's go inside.

David follows Jacob inside. They keep their eyes on the tower.

INT. HATCHERY SEXING ROOM - DAY

David is on Jacob's lap, and Anne stands next to them. Jacob teaches them the art of chicken sexing:

JACOB
 [First, empty its poop, or it can
 poop here, on your finger.]

Jacob squeezes the bird like a mustard bottle, and its poop squirts into the COFFEE CAN. David and Anne laugh.

JACOB (CONT'D)
 [Then look...]
 (peering at its orifice)
 [It's male.]

ANNE
 [How do you know?]

JACOB
 [I just know by the look. ...Now
 where's a female...]

MONICA
 [You should finish working.]

JACOB
 [This is my last bin- a person so
 slow shouldn't criticize me.]
 (holding up a chick)
 [Now look. This one, female.]

DAVID
 [It's the same.]

JACOB
 [They all look the same. But daddy
 can sense something is different.
 It's intuition. I'm not using
 this:]
 (he points to his head)
 [We don't use our minds here. Only
 intuition.]

David watches the other workers sorting.

JACOB (CONT'D)
 [You train for months to learn
 this. Do you know that word,
 "intuition?"]

They shake their heads "no."

JACOB (CONT'D)
 Good. Fine. When you grow up, use
 your minds instead.
 (points to his head)
 [This is a job for stupid people.]

David looks grave, as though he'll remember these words
 forever. Jacob smiles and rubs his stubbly chin on the boy.
 David giggles.

DAVID
 Appa stop it!

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

After work. It's WINDY. The sky is GREEN. The kids are in the
 back. David holds the LUNCH PAIL on his lap. Monica drives.

JACOB
 [The sky is green. It's strange...]

MONICA
 [There are four big towns, she
 said. The Koreans live in Rogers.
 If we move there, one of the Korean
 grandmothers can watch the kids.]
 (Jacob doesn't answer)
 [There's a shopping mall there, a
 decent school ...and people.]

JACOB
 [But we made a deal. We come here
 so you can work, and I can build a
 garden.]

MONICA
 [You can get five acres in Rogers.]

JACOB
 [Five acres is good for a hobby.
 Fifty acres... you see that was my
 dream.]

MONICA
[That place is your dream?]

JACOB
[We don't even need a babysitter.
No one is around to bother them.]

MONICA
[And what about-- What if something
happens to him...?]

Jacob understands: he looks back at David.

ANNE
David, let me see them again.

David opens the lunch pail. Inside are TWO BABY CHICKS, saved from destruction.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

Green skies mean tornados. The wind is furious. Jacob runs around, securing loose objects under the trailer.

INT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

Monica removes PLATES and CUPS from the cabinets, where there's a leak. The METAL ROOF shakes over her.

On the television is a "TORNADO WARNING" broadcast. Anne and David care for the baby chicks, feeding them.

DAVID
Hey let's give them Mountain Dew!

ANNE
No! Only water. O.k. David?

Jacob jumps up into the house, wet with rain.

JACOB
O.k.! [The car is ready. When it comes, we hurry and go.]

MONICA
[Go? Why?]

JACOB
[In a tornado, this kind of house can fly away.]

Monica and the kids look at each other.

MONICA
[Stop looking. Go to the car.]

JACOB
[First we wait here and watch where
it goes.]

MONICA
[Watch what!]

JACOB
[They report where the tornado is
going on TV. Look.]

The TV has a "Tornado Warning" broadcast, and then: "BREAKING NEWS" takes over the screen. Just then the POWER GOES OFF, and the TV dies. DARKNESS. The house CREAKS.

ANNE
[Mommy...]

The LIGHTS FLICKER BACK ON. Anne and David hug Monica, scared. The TV broadcast returns.

JACOB
[See look. It's now a "tornado
watch," no longer a "warning." We
worried for no reason!]

Monica throws the WET RAG she had been using for cleaning.

JACOB (CONT'D)
[Are you crazy right now?]

As Anne and David HURRY to their room to hide.

MONICA
[Who's calling who crazy?!]

ANNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The SOUND OF PARENTS' MUFFLED FIGHTING. Meanwhile, David and Anne fold PAPER AIRPLANES.

Anne opens the door to throw her airplanes to the parents in:

THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

JACOB
[Who is this all for? You! The
kids!]

MONICA
[Speak truthfully.]

JACOB
[I worked ten years! Staring at chicken butts all day, coming home to a tiny apartment without a penny.]

MONICA
[And where did the money go? To the kids? Because your *dream is for the kids?*]

David throws his plane.

JACOB
[Don't start.]

MONICA
[How much money went to the kids?]

JACOB
[I had duties as the eldest son, I had to take care of family, and now it's over. Everyone at home is well now.]

MONICA
[Who's home, my mother's home? Our home? Who's home are you talking about?]

SLAM! Jacob hits the table with his palm.

JACOB
[I said stop!]

Anne pulls David back into:

ANNE'S ROOM - NIGHT

They shut the door. (Muffled sound of fighting continues).
Anne hands David a paper airplane.

ANNE
Write it big.

"Don't fight!" David writes on the airplane.

Anne scrawls "don't fight" on hers.

They open the door and throw planes again, into:

THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A paper airplane flies past them:

JACOB

[Look at me. Have I ever done anything for myself? I'm trying to create a better life for us!]

MONICA

[Then why did you bring us to a flying home?]

JACOB

[This is why I can't talk to you.]

A paper airplane almost hits Jacob. Jacob looks down the hall. The kids hide from view.

JACOB (CONT'D)

(to Monica)

[We wanted a new start.
...This is it.]

David listens from the hallway:

MONICA

[Honey, if this is it, maybe there's no chance for us.]

A GROANING WIND. Lights FLICKER. The window makes wumping suction sounds. The rain stops. Dust falls. What was that?

On the TV: BREAKING NEWS.

MONICA (CONT'D)

[Anne! David! Go to the car.]

INT. STATION WAGON - NIGHT

Jacob gets inside to drive. He reaches and pushes open the passenger side door for Monica to get in.

Monica ignores this and climbs into the backseat with the kids to avoid sitting next to him. Jacob has to reach far to shut the door.

Jacob turns on the radio and searches for a news station.

ANNE

[Mom. Why will the house fly away?]

MONICA
[It isn't attached to the land.]

ANNE
[But why?]

MONICA
[Didn't you see? The house is on wheels.]

ANNE
[But mom. The car is on wheels!]

JACOB
[Anne. If the tornado comes, we'll drive to a safe place. Sit still.]

MONICA
[How about we pray Anne? Can you pray for us?]

AM RADIO (V.O.)
Okay folks. ...Got a tornado touch down in Evansville. Folks in Evansville, a tornado touch down...

Jacob scrambles to look at an Arkansas map. Monica leans forward to look.

MONICA
[Where's our town on here?]

JACOB
[We aren't on any map, hang on.]

MONICA
[Of course we aren't on any map.]

WOOSHING WIND! DRUMMING RAIN!

ANNE
God please save our family. God please save our family...

David's eyes open to see Monica wiping away her tears.

But he can't stay awake. The heater is too warm. The wind rocks the car in a splendid way. David sleeps as the metal womb holds the family from the CHAOS and CLAMOR until:

INT. DAVID'S ROOM - MORNING

It's SILENT and still, sunlight streams through dust. David wakes on his bed. *Is this heaven?*

No. He's wet the bed.

LATER

David busily hides away his wet underwear. Then he shouts:

DAVID
Sis! Sis! Sis!

ANNE (O.S.)
What is it?!

DAVID
Was the tornado a dream?

ANNE (O.S.)
No!

LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - MORNING

Anne and David emerge. The floor is littered with PAPER AIRPLANES from the night before.

Anne gets CEREAL from the counter.

David pours two cups of MOUNTAIN DEW, smiling.

DAVID
(to himself)
My favorite... my favorite...

On TV, a 1980s style news interview of a STORM SURVIVOR HUSBAND AND WIFE:

OZARK MAN
(on television)
It was real dark. That's when I heard it come rippin' through. Real big.

Monica emerges.

MONICA
[Already awake?]

The kids stare at Monica. She seems at peace. How odd. Jacob follows, in search of coffee. Both behave as though nothing happened the previous night.

DAVID

[Mom, Anne said we have to move now. Do we really have to move?]

MONICA

[David, when you have a family, will you choose a house like this?]

DAVID

[When I get married, I'm gonna live here 'til I die.]

Monica finds this funny.

ANNE

[But Mom, when are we moving?]

MONICA

[Mm... Daddy and I talked a long time last night. We made a deal. We will stay. And Grandma will come and live with us.]

ANNE

[Mommy's mom?]

MONICA

[Yes, and that means she'll finally meet David... Isn't that good?]

David doesn't say anything. He looks to Jacob. Jacob seems pleased and puts on his HAT.

JACOB

[I'll check the land.]

Monica looks around.

MONICA

[We'll have to get this place ready.]

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Preparations are underway:

-Anne removes the PICTURE of Monica and Soonja.

-A decorative, wooden Korean MASK is smiling on the wall. Monica wipes it clean.

-On a bookcase, Anne sets the picture next to WOODEN FIGURINES of a Korean husband and wife in traditional HANBOK.

-Monica wipes a mirror clean.

-In a BOX, Anne finds a WEDDING PICTURE OF JACOB AND MONICA.

ANNE

[Why don't you ever hang this up?]

MONICA

[This?]

Monica takes the picture and looks. It is such a good picture that you'd be tempted to pray to it. Monica and Jacob look like royalty, elegant, seated side-by-side, ageless.

ANNE

[In other houses they put up wedding pictures...]

MONICA

[Is that so? Maybe later...]

The picture returns to the box.

EXT. THE FARM - MEADOW - DAY

DOWSING DAN (age 50) holds a DOWSING STICK with his eyes blindfolded and demonstrates for Jacob and David.

As soon as Dan walks over a cup of water, his dowsing stick quivers downward like it's possessed. David is amazed.

DOWSING DAN

That's two-fifty for one good clean water well, three hunerd for two.

JACOB

Three "hundred?"

Dowsing Dan hands Jacob a pamphlet on THE MYSTERY OF DOWSING.

DOWSING DAN

Yessir. See, that's how we start a farm in this country. I dowsed all the good wells up this road.

JACOB

No, we don't need that.

DOWSING DAN

...I tell you what. Fella here before you tried to save money too. You heard what he did. Heh.

Jacob holds the pamphlet out to Dowsing Dan to take back.

EXT. THE FARM - WELL SPOT - DAY

Jacob carries a shovel. He walks with David.

JACOB

[Stupid Americans, believing that
nonsense. Koreans use our minds.]

(he stops walking)

[Now. Look at the land. When it
rains, where will the water go?]

David doesn't know.

JACOB (CONT'D)

High place or low place?

DAVID

Low place.

JACOB

[Where is a] low place [here]?

DAVID

[...There?]

David points to a small dip in the valley.

JACOB

[Yes. Where else?]

DAVID

[There?]

Another small dip, with vegetation.

JACOB

[Which place has water?]

DAVID

[There?]

(The one with vegetation.)

JACOB

[Why?]

DAVID

[Trees like water.]

Jacob picks up David and kisses him with pride.

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Monica is strong and able. She pushes David's bed to the side of the room to make room for her mother's bed.

Later, Monica lines a DRESSER drawer with calendar paper.

EXT. THE FARM - WELL SPOT - DAY

A FRESH DIRT PILE. Jacob has dug down to waist level.

JACOB

(while digging)

[Digging a well is just like life. You pick one spot and dig. Don't dig here and there. Stick to one spot. Then one day, you reach water. Understand?]

EXT. MOBILE HOME - NEAR BARN - DAY

Monica sets TRASH on fire in a FIRE BARREL. Anne brings more trash to the barrel.

MONICA

[We need to get you both new shoes. There's a clothing store in that little town.]

Anne looks at her WORN SHOES.

MONICA (CONT'D)

[We'll look our best for grandma.]

Monica puts more trash into the growing fire.

ANNE

[Mom, from now on, do we have to burn all our trash?]

MONICA

[Yes. Isn't the city better? Careful of the smoke.]

BANG! A glass bottle explodes. The two duck for cover.

EXT. THE FARM - WELL SPOT - DAY

Water pools at Jacob's feet inside the hole. He flicks the groundwater on David. Jacob even tastes it.

JACOB

[Did we use a stupid stick? How did we find this?]

DAVID

[We used our minds!]

Jacob laughs and pats a muddy handprint on David.

EXT. TOWN STREETS - DAY

Holt is a tiny, one main street town.

There's are a few small shops and a bank.

INT. CRESCENT'S DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

It's a tiny, rural clothing store. Anne tries on new SHOES. Monica watches. The kind SALES LADY (70s) assists Anne.

SALES LADY

Looky there! How pretty you are!

DAVID

(to Monica)

[I wanna go to daddy.]

MONICA

[Tell him we're almost done.]

INT. HOLT BANK - DAY

David enters. It's a small town bank.

A loan officer, RANDY BOOMER (50s) is seated with Jacob.

Jacob reads the terms of a BANK LOAN, and RANDY smiles.

RANDY

You're a common sense man, Mr. Yi, taking land folks are too scared to buy. I respect a thinking man.

JACOB

Thank you.

RANDY

Now, lemme tell you, with farming these days you have to go big or go home-that's just how it is.

(MORE)

RANDY (CONT'D)

It's a good time for it, Reagan's out to make farmers happy. And I'll be right here to help you.

Jacob signs.

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Monica chops at something in the kitchen with a BIG BUTCHER KNIFE on a cutting board. What is it?

It's a thick ROPE. She looks at the chopped end.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

PAUL (age 60) drives up with his beat up PICKUP, hauling a JOHN DEERE TRACTOR. Jacob watches, frowning.

David, in his NEW COWBOY BOOTS approaches them.

PAUL

Hey there. My name's Paul.

LATER

Jacob inspects the tractor. Paul stands nearby. He has a gentle demeanor, a ratty Jesus t-shirt, coke bottle glasses.

PAUL (CONT'D)

If something's wrong, you can call the owner. I'm just the one haulin' it.

David watches Jacob pull out a thick BILLFOLD full of money. He hands around two thousand to Paul.

David watches Paul count it, a bit too slowly. Jacob puts his hand on David's head.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Now Mr. Yi, if you need, I drive these things all day, drive 'em in my sleep. This a cattle farm?

JACOB

Fruit and vegetables.

PAUL

God bless you. I work crop farms all over. Don't be scared of these tattoos, I'm a good worker.

JACOB

Thank you. But these are Korean vegetables. Korean fruits.

PAUL

Korean? Korean? Heh heh. You better take a look at this...

David watches Paul uncover a 1950s Korean 10 WON BILL from his HARLEY DAVIDSON BILLFOLD.

JACOB

This is old money! Korean War money.

PAUL

Yessir I was there. A hard time. I'm sure you know.
(to David)
Here, you wanna take it?

JACOB

Oh, he doesn't need.

PAUL

I got more at home. You want it?

David pulls out a FAT, TEXAS BILLFOLD and tucks the bill inside. Paul and Jacob both find this funny.

PAUL (CONT'D)

(to Jacob)
Soon as I saw you, I knew, *we're gonna be friends*. Can I pray?

JACOB

Sorry?

PAUL

(eyes closed)
Yes. Yes God. Thank you. Thank you for the Yi family. Mm. Ha ha! Thank you for this divine appointment.
(prays in tongues)
Amen. Yes. Big things, you got big things for this family.

Jacob gives David a look, *strange huh?*

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Monica pushes the rope through a hole in a FLAT PIECE OF WOOD. David returns.

DAVID
[Mom, did you look outside?]

Monica looks out the window:

Monica sees Paul giving Jacob a big bear hug. Jacob is not a willing hugger. She then sees the tractor.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Jacob puts some change away in the closet.

MONICA
[How much was it?]

Jacob changes into farming clothes.

JACOB
[It's an investment. We borrow, we pay back after harvest. In America, that's how farming is done. ...Why are you smiling?]

MONICA
[So now it's a farm, not a garden.]

JACOB
[Farm, garden, it's all the same. Think of it as money. In three years, we won't step foot in another hatchery.]

MONICA
[Just leave enough for David, that's all I ask.]

JACOB
[Of course. You seem happy. Because mother is coming?]

MONICA
[Why?]

JACOB
[When you're happy, you look quite pretty.]

MONICA
[Yes, don't I?]

In this levity, Jacob kisses her. But somehow this creates an awkward moment.

Jacob walks out.

LIVING ROOM - DAY

On the carpet, Anne and David look at a CHILDREN'S MAGAZINE: A perfect Minnesota granny holds a TRAY OF COOKIES under the heading of "Grandmothers."

Anne smiles at David. A TRACTOR ENGINE ROARS outside. David and Anne react to the sound.

EXT. THE FARM - LATE DAY

Jacob is proud, driving his tractor on his land.

Twenty meters behind the tractor, David, Anne, and Monica walk, following the tractor's path. In Monica's hands: rope and a swing wooden seat.

Jacob moves the throttle from "tortoise" to "rabbit," and the tractor zips ahead.

LATER

At a tree at the edge of the field, Monica tosses a ROCK with a line attached to it, getting it over a tree branch. She lowers the rock by letting up rope.

The kids watch: Monica tugs on the ROPE, and a hitch knot tightens on the branch.

MONICA

[Who wants to try first?]

It's a WOODEN TREE SWING, the object she was making. David smiles, looking up at the branch.

SOON AFTER: David and Anne swing on it together, laughing. Monica pushes them.

She looks in the distance:

LATER

Jacob plows fresh rows of dirt on the tractor.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DUSK

Jacob washes dirt off himself from under an outdoor hose.

The night bugs HUM. A faint sound of a Korean HYMN.

ANNE

[Dad, isn't it better to grow
American foods?]

JACOB

[Thirty thousand Koreans are moving
to America every year. Do they miss
Korean food?]

ANNE

[Yes.]

JACOB

[So how do you think a Korean farm
will do?]

Anne smiles.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

A CASSETTE PLAYER plays a Korean church service, a HYMN.

Monica cleans David's ears with a KOREAN EARWAX SPOON.

MONICA

[It's because you're shy?
(David doesn't answer)
...Why don't you like grandma?
(David doesn't answer)
[It's not earwax, it's dirt.]

She puts little a little dirt crumb on a tissue. David looks
at it.

MONICA (CONT'D)

[Grandfather died during war.
That's why mommy has no brothers or
sisters. You know?]

DAVID

[Yes.]

MONICA

[That means grandma has no one but
us. But you say you don't like her.
Why not? ...Hmm? Don't touch that;
answer me.]

DAVID

[You always fight about grandma.]

MONICA

[Mommy fights about grandma, so you don't like her?]

He nods, and she's amused by the reasoning.

MONICA (CONT'D)

[Hey. Mommy fought because grandma had health problems, and mommy couldn't be with her. And mommy worries about leaving you alone. So if grandma is here watching you, will mommy fight?]

David picks at Monica's THUMBNAIL, shit-stained yellow.

MONICA (CONT'D)

[It won't come off. This is from mommy's work.
...Now let's clip your nails. Look how long they are!]

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Anne and David are dressed up. They smile for Monica and her CARTRIDGE CAMERA.

MONICA

[My kids are so good looking!]

RIBS and vegetables are ready to cook on the kitchen counter.

MONICA (CONT'D)

[One more. Oh! They're here!]

David hears FOOTSTEPS ON THE WOODEN STAIRS.

Jacob carries SUITCASES in. Grandma SOONJA (60) enters.

JACOB

[Grandma is here!]

David quickly hides behind Monica and peeks out.

ANNE

[Hello grandmother!]

SOONJA

[Hello! Is this Anne? Such a lady!]

Anne notices that SOONJA'S SOCK HAS A HOLE. Her lipstick is a little messy.

MONICA
 (to David)
 [David. Greet grandmother.]

David slips underneath Monica's skirt to hide. He sees Soonja faintly through the fabric:

SOONJA
 (laughing)
 [He's hiding in mommy's skirt!]

JACOB
 [Come out. How embarrassing David!]

Monica's voice shakes.

MONICA
 [Mom, so you're finally here...]

SOONJA
 [You wanted to see me that badly?
 Fine. Now I'm getting tears too.]

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

In the hallway, David spies through the doorway into:

DAVID'S ROOM - DAY

Soonja unloads one of her suitcases. Monica watches.

RED PEPPER FLAKES

MONICA
 [Ahh this... You know, we can't get
 the right kind here; we even drove
 8 hours to Dallas, and it was all
 wrong.]

DRIED ANCHOVIES

MONICA (CONT'D)
 [You brought this too!]

SOONJA
 [Crying again? Crying over
 anchovies?]

MONICA
 [You see the kind of life we're
 living. I'm sorry mom.]

SOONJA

[Why? A house on wheels! So fun!
...And take this, don't say
anything, just take it.]

Soonja gives Monica a KOREAN ENVELOPE forcefully. Monica immediately pushes it away, and they push it back and forth:

MONICA

[No mom.]

SOONJA

[Just take it.]

MONICA

[No, no, keep it, hide it. I'm
working now, mom. I should be the
one giving you money.]

Soonja finally shoves it into Monica's hand.

MONICA (CONT'D)

[But where is this from?]

SOONJA

[It's nothing. I sold the store.]

MONICA

[What about when you return?]

SOONJA

[You left Korea at a good time.]

MONICA

[...then I'll keep it safe for you
and use it carefully for the kids.]

Soonja notices David peeking in the doorway.

SOONJA

[Will this one ever greet grandma?]

MONICA

[David, come here.]

David creeps in. He crouches behind Monica.

SOONJA

[So this is the one who looks like
me.]

David whispers in Monica's ear.

MONICA
 [What? Say it loud.]
 (another whisper)
 [She doesn't look like a grandma?]

SOONJA
 [Good boy. Because you say that,
 you get something.]

She finds a pack of KOREAN PLAYING CARDS.

MONICA
 [You're giving Hwatu to a seven
 year old child?]

SOONJA
 [If he learns now, he'll beat all
 the other bastards!]

Monica and David just stare at her.

SOONJA (CONT'D)
 [Fine. I'll give you something
 else. You want to eat this?]

MONICA
 [Ooh tasty, a chestnut. Go on! He's
 never had one.]

SOONJA
 [But... After the plane ride, it's
 a little too hard. Hang on.]

Soonja CHEWS UP THE CHESTNUT. After she does this:

SOONJA (CONT'D)
 [Eat it.]

MONICA
 [Mom, you don't have to do it that
 way.]

David just runs out of the room, grabbing the HWATU CARDS.

SOONJA
 [Because it's too hard.]

HALLWAY - DAY

David hides and listens. He can hear:

SOONJA (O.S.)

[He doesn't mind sharing a room
with grandma? I heard how American
kids are.]

MONICA (O.S.)

[He's not like that. He's Korean.]

David looks at a HWATU CARD. On it, a painted silhouette of a
distant hill. The illustrated HORIZON matches and fades to:

EXT. THE FARM'S HORIZON - DAY

A series of shots:

-Paul and Jacob walk toward the plowed field, carrying
shovels.

-Three rows have plastic covers over the raised beds. About
two thirds of the fourth row is completed with plastic cover.
Paul and Jacob finish this task by shoveling dirt onto sides
of the plastic to tuck it in.

-Jacob and Paul work two separate rows, punching holes and
planting cucumber sprouts. Jacob puts a foot and a half
between plantings. Paul puts three feet.

PAUL

You could think about doing
something out here. An exorcism.
Know what that is?

JACOB

Yes. No need.

PAUL

After what happened here. It's no
good, something like that.

(to the land)

Out! In the name of Jesus, out!

Jacob finds this a little funny.

JACOB

Ok! Now things will grow!

PAUL

Hey you keep spacing them holes too
close. Oughtta be like this.

JACOB

No...

PAUL
You'll get all leaves no cucumbers.
Unless you grow it up?

JACOB
(indicating width)
No, here to here.
(upon Paul's doubt)
You know I went to an agriculture
university in California.

PAUL
Oh ho. So you got a degree in
cucumbers!

JACOB
I only studied two years.

PAUL
Ohhh that's how smart you were!

JACOB
No, no. I didn't finish. I ran out
of money.

PAUL
Heh heh, good. I can tell you it's
a bad school, they're tellin' you
cucumbers grow like that. Shoot
man.
We'll grow 'em the Arkansas way.
You'll be happy too.

Jacob offers Paul a cigarette. Paul almost falls over.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Get that away! In the name of
Jesus!

JACOB
You're a crazy man.

That's music to Paul's ears.

Finally: Paul and Jacob turn the knobs on irrigation
connectors, and there's a sound of buzzing/wheezing water.

PAUL
Good. Keep that soil wet.

EXT. THE WELL SPOT - DAY

The well hums where it was dug.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

A CUP of THICK, DARK, HERBAL MEDICINE. Monica mixes it and gives it to David. He struggles to drink it.

DAVID
[I hate it!]

MONICA
[Drink. Grandma brought it all the way from Korea.]

David drinks and then stops.

MONICA (CONT'D)
[Drink it all. It's expensive medicine.]

David manages to finish it.

DAVID
[Grandma.]

SOONJA
[What is it?]

DAVID
[Don't ever bring anything like this ever again.]

MONICA
[Stop David. You have to drink one every day.]

Monica finds David's shock funny. She's in good spirits.

INT. DAVID'S ROOM - NIGHT

Soonja removes a small folded packet from a hidden packet in her clothes from the airplane.

From them, she removes: MINARI SEEDS. She looks at them, a small handful of seeds.

INT. ANNE'S ROOM - NIGHT

ANNE
Stop! Stop it! Go to your room!

David, pushes aside Anne's toys to sleep on her floor. Anne fights him.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Go away!

Soonja and Monica arrive.

MONICA

[David, go to your room.]

DAVID

There's a Korea smell!

Jacob arrives.

ANNE

You've never even been to Korea!

DAVID

Grandma smells like Korea.

Jacob sees Monica's displeasure.

JACOB

You talk about a Grandma smell? [Go get the stick.]

David stops and looks wilted.

JACOB (CONT'D)

[No? Then act properly in front of grandma. ...Go on, sleep.]

David carries his pillow out. Monica seems to appreciate Jacob's intervention.

INT. DAVID'S ROOM - NIGHT

David lies awake plugging his nose. He looks at Soonja who is snoring. The SNORING gets louder.

David sighs and moves his fingers from his nose to his ears.

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Anne stirs ATOMIC ORANGE CANNED PASTA in a pot.

David wraps a piece of WHITE CHEESE around a BANANA. He eats.

SOONJA

[Looks tasty! Can grandma try?]

Nope - David turns his back on her. Anne pours herself MOUNTAIN DEW.

DAVID
I want some.

ANNE
No, your drink is there:

The STEAMING CUP OF HERBAL MEDICINE waits for him. Poor David. Soonja points to the Mountain Dew.

SOONJA
[What is that?]

ANNE
[It's water from the mountains. Dad said it's good for your health.]

SOONJA
[Ohhh great! Give me...]

Soonja takes Anne's cup. Anne sighs, annoyed.

DAVID
[Grandma. You can't cook?]

SOONJA
[No...]

DAVID
[Can you make cookies?]

SOONJA
[No why? Can you?]

David stares at his grandma enjoying the fresh Mountain Dew.

DAVID
[Is there anything you can do?]

LIVING ROOM - LATER - DAY

A red and black WISTERIA CARD from the HWATU deck. SLAP! A matching WISTERIA CARD lands on it. In Korean:

SOONJA
[EAT IT!]

Anne plays her card gently. ...David plays his card gently.

WHAMMO! Soonja again. Another pair.

SOONJA (CONT'D)
[It's a bbuk all you bastards!]

Anne plays a card. David then plays and gets a match.

SOONJA (CONT'D)
[Bullshit, you think you're
winning, look at this!]

Soonja SLAMS! Anne and David exchange a glance, *what is this?*

SOONJA (CONT'D)
[Fast, fast. Keep the game moving.]

INT. HATCHERY - DAY

Jacob sorts the chickens at his usual fast speed.

Monica sorts slowly, carefully. She second guesses herself and rechecks the last chicken she sorted.

Monica gets up to put the bin away.

The other workers work, their masks are bright in the lamps, chicken dust drifting around them.

MONICA
(to Mrs. Oh)
[Why didn't anyone start a Korean
church around here?]

MRS. OH
[With fifteen Koreans?]

MONICA
[It could be good. All the Korean
kids can play together.]

MRS. OH
[The Koreans around here, we left
the cities on purpose. ...To escape
Korean church.]

She's half joking, and Monica plays along, politely smiling.

Jacob watches Monica, her smile fading.

EXT. THE MEADOW - DAY

David and Anne walk together. Soonja is ahead. Countless grasshoppers catapult away. Anne whispers to David.

ANNE
Did you know she can't read?

DAVID
She isn't like a grandma.

SOONJA
(heavy Korean accent)
Oh! You like grandma!

The kids laugh about this as they approach:

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

ANNE
[We should go back.] David.

DAVID
Grandma's going.

ANNE
David you have to be careful.

EXT. THE MINARI CREEK - DAY

Soonja is on the creek bed. Anne and David watch from the top of the embankment.

SOONJA
[So wonderful.]

ANNE
(to Soonja)
[Grandma, we can't be here because of snakes.]

SOONJA
[Minari would grow very well here.]
(they don't answer)
[You American bumpkins don't even know what minari is. Grandma brought minari seeds from Korea, and we can plant it there and there.]

ANNE
[David shouldn't come here.]

SOONJA
[The water is nice and cold.]

David climbs down towards Soonja.

A water moccasin disappears in the grass.

ANNE

[David!]

David feels the water and sees the streaming weeds.

He smiles at Anne. Anne frowns at him.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

The station wagon pulls into the farm.

The car headlights turn off, just as Monica sees a big delivery of LUMBER.

MONICA

[Is this for the storm shelter?]

JACOB

[First we need a barn.]

A tense silence. Jacob gets out.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

As Monica changes, Anne presents a PIECE OF PAPER.

ANNE

[There were so many bad things, I wrote them down.]

(reading)

*Grandma taught David how to curse.
Grandma watched TV for three hours.
Grandma ate all our candy...*

MONICA

[Mom's tired; tell me some good things that happened today.]

ANNE

[Grandma pinched us with her toes.]

MONICA

[Anne...]

ANNE

[Oh. And David's acting worse too.]

DAVID (O.S.)

(hiding somewhere)

That's a lie!

ANNE
See! You're spying!

Monica heads toward the kitchen.

MONICA
[Both of you, no fighting. Mommy
will make dinner, go and wait.]

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

KOREAN VHS tapes are in a box covered with postage stamps.

On television, a KOREAN MAN and WOMAN sing Lana et Rospo's
1971 hit Korean song about lost love, "I love you darling."

The family eats Korean food at the coffee table.

SOONJA
[We should grow minari in the creek
area. It's just right for it.]

JACOB
[I'll think about it.]

SOONJA
[Think about what? I'll do it all.]

MONICA
[Mom, eat more of this.]

SOONJA
[That mountain water is tasty.]

David runs and grabs the MOUNTAIN DEW BOTTLE.

MONICA
[No...leave it there, drink your
water.]

The Korean man on television sings the first verse, *truly I
love you. Darling, after you left...*

SOONJA
(watching television)
[Hey, this is your favorite song.]

MONICA
[This song?]

Jacob eats silently, perhaps it's true.

SOONJA

[Anytime anyone asked you two to sing, you would sing this looking at each other all lovey-dovey. It'd make our skin crawl.]

MONICA

[Is that so?]

SOONJA

[They come to America and forget everything...]

The woman singer on television sings her verse--*how many tears I wept, you don't realize...*

David watches the MAN AND WOMAN DUO gaze at each other lovingly. He then looks at his parents as they watch.

EXT. THE TOWN - NIGHT

Over images of Holt, Arkansas, not listed on any map, the KOREAN SONG continues.

We see a water tower, fifteen stories high.

The square is empty, a gazebo is covered with mulberries.

Worn out tractors and mowers wait for service, steps away from the library.

There are nearby pastures, warm lights from windows of houses. Cows rest in the fields.

The love song from a distant land fades, taken over by tree crickets in the Arkansas night.

MONICA (V.O.)

[David, it's time to pray..]

INT. DAVID'S ROOM - NIGHT

David is under the covers. Monica's words continue:

MONICA

[Some kids prayed to see heaven in their dreams, and at night, God let them see it.

...One of the kids had a bad heart, and when he woke up, he was healed. What if you pray to see heaven while you sleep?]

DAVID
[You pray it. You go see heaven.]

MONICA
[It's only for kids.
(she touches his heart)
How about it? Do you want to try?]

David looks afraid.

SOONJA
[Wah... you say all kinds of messed
up things to that kid.]

Monica laughs, having forgotten Soonja is nearby in her bed.

MONICA
(to David)
[You don't have to pray it. But if
you ever do, tell me what you see.
I'm so curious.]

David doesn't respond. Monica wraps up the stethoscope and closes the notebook with blood pressure readings.

MONICA (CONT'D)
[O.k.] Good night. [Sleep well.]

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

There is a small box of BABY CHICKENS on the kitchen table. Monica practices chicken sexing.

Jacob draws plans for a barn. The television is on, playing a 1983 KBS program on family reunifications.

JACOB
(to Monica)
[Practicing like that is no help.
Those are too old.]

Jacob watches Monica practice.

JACOB (CONT'D)
[...You're fast enough for
Arkansas.]

MONICA
[If you're not going to help me,
don't talk me.]

Jacob gets up and sits next to Monica. She continues practicing while ignoring him.

JACOB
 [It must be lonely here without any
 friends.]

She doesn't answer. She slows down.

JACOB (CONT'D)
 [Even if mom is here, it's not the
 same as having friends.]

MONICA
 [Why are you saying this?]

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Jacob puts on a necktie.

INT. DAVID'S ROOM - MORNING

Monica, also dressed well, changes David's bed with Soonja.
 David and Anne are there also.

MONICA
 [Next time don't hide it from me
 David.]

SOONJA
 [Something must be broken down
 there. What's it called in
 English?]

ANNE
 "Penis."

DAVID
 [I dream that I'm peeing in the
 bathroom, but I wake up and I'm in
 the bed.]

MONICA
 [From now on, before you pee, you
 think,
 (pinching her cheeks)
 'Is this a dream? Is this a dream?'
 [O.k.?.]

David nods.

SOONJA
 Pennis. Pennis. [Is your pennis
 broken?]

DAVID
It's not "pennis." It's called a
"ding dong."

David makes a face at her and walks out.

INT. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH - DAY

The CONGREGATION is around thirty people, humble farmers dressed in their Sunday best. The Yi family is among them.

It's offering time, and the PIANIST plays.

CONGREGATION
*'Perfect submission, perfect
delight/ Visions of rapture now
burst on my sight/ Angels
descending, bring from above/
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.*

A scrappy looking kid, JOHNNIE (7) stares at David. A bunch of KIDS sit next to Randy Boomer, the bank loan officer.

Jacob almost passes the offering plate, but Monica tithes a hundred dollars. Jacob's look says, "that much?" Monica ignores him.

Soonja notices the \$100 bill in the offering plate.

LATER

BROTHER ROY (40s) is at the pulpit.

BROTHER ROY
If this is yer first time with us,
could you please stand? Oh don't be
ashamed, y'all stand up.

The Yi family stands up. Jacob and Monica bow politely.

BROTHER ROY (CONT'D)
What a beautiful family. We're so
glad you're here!

The congregation gawks at them, wide-eyed and curious. Some of them smile kindly, others are amused.

INT. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH/FELLOWSHIP HALL - DAY

The parishioners talk to each other over refreshments.

Jacob is off to the side on his own. Isolated.

David pours himself sweet tea. Johnnie shows up again.

JOHNNIE
What's your name?

DAVID
David.

JOHNNIE
Hey David, why's your face so flat?

DAVID
...It isn't.

Now over to Monica, who makes an effort to meet BONNIE (50s) and DEBBIE (40s):

MONICA
Hello, I'm Monica. Nice to meet you.

DEBBIE
Well hi there! You are too cute.

BONNIE
How long y'all been in town, where you been hidin'?

MONICA
I'm sorry, my English is not so good.

DEBBIE
Well that's o.k.! We can teach you English.

BONNIE
She'd be in a world of hurt learnin' English from us.

DEBBIE
We'll teach her all our good words!

BONNIE
We only got four good words Debbie.

They laugh, but Monica doesn't get the humor.

MONICA
Yes. Thank you.

A BIG MAN walks by.

SOONJA

[There's another one! So fat! So fat! Quickly look!]

MONICA

[Mom, stop that.]

JUNE (12) and MINDY (12) follow Anne down the snack table. June points at different things. June and Mindy giggle with every Korean word:

JUNE

Hey, what's that one called?

ANNE

[Cookie.]

JUNE

What about that one?

ANNE

[Grapes.]

JUNE

That one?

ANNE

[Bread.]

JUNE

That one.

ANNE

It's just called a "pretzel."

June and Mindy giggle.

JUNE

That is sooo neat!

Back to Monica and Soonja. Bonnie and Debbie gossip in low voices and Monica looks lost, all alone. She sees other church members happily talking.

David tugs on Monica's dress.

DAVID

[Can I sleep at his house?]

MONICA

[You have to sleep at home, with grandmother.]

DAVID
[I don't like grandma!]

MONICA
[Don't say that.]

JOHNNIE
No? Why can't you?
(to Soonja)
Why?

SOONJA
(about David)
Ding dong broken. Ding dong broken.

Johnnie laughs. Soonja is amused and makes David's earlier face back to him. David just blinks.

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY (TRAVELING)

The family returns from church.

JACOB
[With English, you have to use it
to learn.]

MONICA
[In any case, it's better we just
work on Sundays.]

JACOB
[If you don't want to go back, why
did you tithe so much?]

David steals a look at Soonja's hands. Soonja notices. She reveals that she's holding the \$100 bill. David thinks this is bad.

ANNE
What's up there?

On the road, they see Paul dragging his wooden cross.

Jacob slows down next to him.

JACOB
Paul! What are you doing?

Paul is happy. David looks: the cross is on a wheel.

PAUL
 It's Sunday.
 (meaning his cross)
 This here's my church.

Paul knows it's a little funny.

JACOB
 O.k. Do you need a ride?

PAUL
 I'll finish this. See you Monday.

Jacob continues on. Paul waves to the kids.

Jacob turns to Monica, as though to say, "funny huh?." Monica doesn't respond.

JACOB
 [Why? You like Jesus too.]

EXT. THE MOBILE HOME - NEAR BARN - DAY

A FIRE burns in the trash barrel.

Anne tends it. The SMOKE envelops her momentarily.

EXT. THE TRAILER - DAY

The PILE OF LUMBER is there, and Jacob holds PLANS for the barn.

PAUL
 We're gonna build a barn. Alright!

JACOB
 Have you built anything?

PAUL
 Have I built anything? Of course I -
 ...What is this?

JACOB
 These are plans.

PAUL
 We don't need plans.

JACOB
 Paul- we need plans.

PAUL
 Stop. Wait.
 (listening)
 Whippoorwill.

JACOB
 What?

Paul whistles like the bird that's singing in the background.

Jacob stares at him. Paul takes Jacob's plans; whether he's been joking or not, it's never clear.

PAUL
 We build this now or later?

JACOB
 Later.

CROP FIELDS - LATER:

The crops have grown considerably.

They hoe weeds between rows.

Then, Paul checks on irrigation lines.

PAUL
 Jacob. This one too. No water. Bone dry.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

David enters. He sees: Soonja is seated on the floor, watching an over-the-top, ringside PRO WRESTLING INTERVIEW on the TELEVISION. She's wearing POLK A DOT boxers.

SOONJA
 [Ayoo, look at those muscles.]

David stands over her. She looks up at him.

DAVID
 [You are not like a grandma!]

SOONJA
 [Oh? What is a grandma like?]

DAVID
 [They make cookies! They say nice things! They don't wear men's underwear!]

SOONJA
[Is that so?]

Her toes reach out to pinch him, and he dodges them.

SOONJA (CONT'D)
[Let's drink that mountain water.]

He shakes his head "no."

SOONJA (CONT'D)
[Then call Anne, let's play Hwatu.]
(a secret)
[...You and me, we help each other
win; we take all her money.]

DAVID
(pointing at her)
That's bad.

David YELPS. He looks down to find that Soonja has PINCHED HIM WITH HER TOES.

DAVID (CONT'D)
[Don't do that!]

He pushes her away.

SOONJA
[David. Why don't you like me?
Hmm?] So pretty boy.

DAVID
(angry)
I am not pretty.

SOONJA
No no. Pretty, so pretty!

DAVID
(he loses it)
I AM NOT PRETTY, I AM GOOD
LOOKING!!!!

He storms away.

EXT. THE FARM - DAY

The WELL PUMP has been removed. Paul clears away pipes, and Jacob rigs together a THIRTY FOOT AUGER.

PAUL
You make that? Pretty good!

JACOB

It's easy.

Jacob plunges it inside the well casing. He hits dirt and then gives the top handle a hard twist.

PAUL

Might be a rock layer. If it's a water table well, you won't find nothing much deeper.

Jacob strains at the task. He stops to catch his breath.

PAUL (CONT'D)

How you figure it's ground water?

Jacob points to his head to say *I used this*. Jacob goes back at it; it's difficult work.

INT. THE HATCHERY - DAY

Monica works in the hatchery, along with other workers.

Jacob's station is empty.

Monica's hands remain slow. She doubts her work.

EXT. THE FARM - DAY

Jacob removes the auger. There's white clay, but no water.

PAUL

You could try calling one of these guys.

Paul imitates dowsing, and Jacob isn't impressed.

PAUL (CONT'D)

So what you thinkin?

JACOB

When will it rain?

Paul blinks at him. He looks like a wonderful owl in his THICK GLASSES.

PAUL

...you asking me?

INT. DAVID'S ROOM - DAY

A CUP OF HERBAL MEDICINE steams on the nightstand. David thinks. He throws Soonja's pillow off Soonja's bed.

SOONJA (O.S.)
[Anne, did you hide the mountain water?]

ANNE (O.S.)
[We ran out!]

Something wicked seems to trigger in David's brain.

BATHROOM - DAY

We see the TOILET. David peers at it.

He empties his CUP OF HERBAL MEDICINE into the sink.

David gets in position with the cup to pee in it.

DAVID
(pinching his cheeks)
Is this a dream? Is this a dream?

LIVING ROOM - LATER

Soonja watches on television: A wrestler gets clobbered with a folding chair.

SOONJA
[Oh my, oh my, oh my!]

David approaches grandmother with THE CUP. He looks like Prometheus presenting fire to humanity

SOONJA (CONT'D)
(watching television)
[Oh he's killing him!]

DAVID
[Grandma, you want mountain water?]

Grandmother takes the cup, and she puts it aside.

SOONJA
(watching television)
[So well behaved. Sit and watch with me. ...Oh he hit him again!]

David holds his breath and tiptoes away.

BACK DOOR

David tiptoes down the hall.

David quietly puts on his worn boots. He waits:

SOONJA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
YAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!!!!

David bolts out the door!

EXT. FARM - DAY

His arms pumping, and his feet skeetering like he's about to sing.

Then he slows. He holds his heart, and his pulse THRUMS in his ears. WOOSH WOOSH WOOSH.

He looks back, smiling. The palpitations continue: WOOSH WOOSH. David catches his breath.

INT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

David is on his knees with his hands raised in the air. Soonja is there. Anne listens out of view in the hallway. Jacob and Monica seem to be a united front.

David tries to keep his arms raised, but it's difficult.

JACOB
(checking the time)
[O.k. David. Now turn to grandmother. Apologize.]

DAVID
[I'm sorry.]

David gives a half-hearted bow.

JACOB
[Do it properly.]

DAVID
[She's not like a real grandma.]

SOONJA
[It's o.k. From now on, don't do such things. And I'll try to be a real grandma. Ok?]

JACOB
 [David, because you won't bow
 properly, go get the stick.]

David looks to Anne. "Uh oh."

SOONJA
 [No... Why would you hit that boy?]

JACOB
 (to David)
 [Go get the stick.]

David stands, gets a CHAIR and climbs up to get the STICK
 that's hanging on the wall.

SOONJA
 [Doing this to a pretty kid... He's
 just a kid. So what? I drank pee.]
 Who cares? It's funny!

David slips and falls with the stick. It BREAKS!

SOONJA (CONT'D)
 [Oh oh oh.]

David is fine. He is, perhaps, even a little *intrigued*.

JACOB
 [Bring it to me.]

David approaches with the broken stick. David seems to think
 what's done is done.

JACOB (CONT'D)
 [Go get a new stick.]

Oh.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

In the moonlight, David walks. Coyotes laugh in the distance.

David picks up a STICK identical to the original.

David feels the weight, and in defeat, he begins his return.

But then... Here's ANOTHER STICK.

He compares the two. This one is a little thinner... He drops
 the first stick.

INT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

Soonja, Jacob, and Monica wait for David.

Anne, hiding in the hallway, spies on Soonja:

JACOB

[Mother, we need to make sure he learns.]

MONICA

[It's true mom, you've suffered too much in a place like this.]

SOONJA

[Shame and suffering! The way you both talk. This place is pure heaven to me. I'll do better next time.]

MONICA

[Mom, you've come all this way to a hillbilly place, you don't have to say that.]

JACOB

[See, only you call it 'hillbilly.']

MONICA

[We live in a hillbilly place, and now David acts like a hillbilly boy.]

JACOB

[Spoken like a true Seoul girl. Always looking down on country people.]

SOONJA

[Fighting over this??]

Just then the door opens. David enters, hiding something behind his back.

JACOB

[Let's see.]

David reveals A THIN REED. It bends under its own weight.

Soonja claps for joy, jumps up and hugs him.

SOONJA

[Good job! Good job!]

Anne joins in the dance and twirls the straw.

David sees that Monica and Jacob are amused by this spectacle, and so, David is quite happy, and for once, David, Anne, and Soonja are all as one.

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jacob can't seem to remove his shirt.

JACOB
[Honey? Do this for me.]

Monica tries to help him, but he's unable.

MONICA
[Why are you acting like that?]

JACOB
[I worked so hard out there, I
can't raise my arms any higher.]

Monica finally removes it and walks away.

JACOB (CONT'D)
[Hey... ...I need to wash my hair.]

LATER

Jacob is seated in the tub. Monica shampoos his hair.

JACOB (CONT'D)
[Working outside sure makes life
good.
...Ouch! You dig your nails when
you don't like what I say!]

This makes Monica laugh.

MONICA
[We're losing so much money.
...I'm serious.]

JACOB
[It will be fine.]

She turns on the hand shower to rinse his hair. Jacob stops her, taking her hand.

JACOB (CONT'D)
[I will fix everything. Understand?
All of this, this backwards place,
is something I'm doing for us.
(MORE)]

JACOB (CONT'D)
 If this farm fails, take the kids
 and leave me for good. I deserve
 it.]

These words strike at Monica. She hides it.

MONICA
 [Lean your head forward.]

She rinses his hair. Water streams from his eyes and nose.

Monica stands to get a towel. His hair drips.

MONICA (CONT'D)
 [I've been wanting you to teach me
 something.]

JACOB
 [What is it?]

INT. MOBILE HOME/CAR PORT - NIGHT

An overhead lamp is on, moths all around. The coyotes and
 bugs are loud around them. Jacob and Monica take a seat in
 front of the table. BABY CHICKS are in a CRATE.

Monica practices, handing each to Jacob to double check:

MONICA
 [Male?]

JACOB
 (with a nod)
 Mm.

MONICA
 (to the next)
 [Female?]

JACOB
 Mm.

MONICA
 [Male?]

JACOB
 Mm.

MONICA
 [This one...]

She looks twice at the chick.

JACOB
[That is why you are slow.]

MONICA
[But- look.]

JACOB
[What is your first idea?]

MONICA
[Male.]

JACOB
(without looking)
[Then it's male.]

MONICA
[It's not up to me.]

JACOB
[Not an ounce of doubt. Doubt means
you're thinking.]

MONICA
(meaning her chick)
[But really. Just look at it.]

JACOB
[It doesn't matter. You said it's
male. So believe it. When you work,
you need absolute, complete faith
in yourself. "There's no one who
does this better than me..."]

MONICA
[That's not my personality.]

JACOB
[Then you'll never be fast.
I'm saying don't use this.]
(meaning the mind)
If you want to train your
intuition, you can't have doubt.]

MONICA
[Tell me if I'm right or wrong.]

Jacob looks at the chick. He withholds it playfully, until:

JACOB
[You're right. Male.]

This makes Monica think.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

As Monica enters. Jacob heads somewhere on the land.

JACOB
[Go in first.]

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

Near the mobile home, at the WATER MAIN, new flexible pipes have been unraveled. Jacob, in the shadows, reaches his hand into the WATER MAIN BOX.

Jacob TURNS something. SHWEEEEEE water begins to flow through the pipe, and the shadow of the pipe grows TAUT with water.

SCENE OF JACOB AND PAUL DECIDING WHAT TO HARVEST/MONICA WORKING AT HATCHERY/MONICA CARRYING LUNCH PAIL ALONE INSIDE

EXT. HATCHERY - MORNING

Monica walks to work alone.

EXT. MINARI FIELD - MORNING

Soonja tends minari sprouts.

INT. THE BARN - MORNING (WEEKS LATER)

It's recently built. Paul and Jacob work to sort a variety of EMPTY CRATES.

PAUL
But these fit the garlic.

JACOB
Cabbages here, garlic there. When you put inside-

PAUL
It's all side by side.

JACOB
You sure?

PAUL
Well shoot. Space em for airflow. Ohhh don't be smiling at me.

Jacob is in very good spirits, he knows he's on top of it.

MONICA (O.S.)
[Jacob, phone!]

JACOB
[Who?]

MONICA (O.S.)
[From Dallas.]

Jacob runs out to the house.

Paul now takes the EMPTY CRATES:

EXT. THE FARM - CONTINUOUS

To the TRACTOR. As he loads, we see:

ROWS OF CABBAGES. ROWS OF PEPPERS. Insects BUZZ.

An IRRIGATION DRIP NOZZLE trickles water. (IRRIGATION PIPES -
SOUND OF WATER)

Soon after, Jacob comes back to Paul. He looks upset.

PAUL
What happened?

JACOB
Take it back.

INT. THE BARN - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

Jacob and Paul move crates back in place. Jacob works with some obvious anger.

PAUL
Where they getting their produce?

JACOB
California.

PAUL
They just change it like that on you? ...we got some time Jacob to find someone else. It ain't rottin' on the vines.

JACOB
Korean people, living in big cities. You can't trust them.

PAUL
Forget Dallas then. Must be other
ones? OKC? Memphis?

Jacob throws his gloves to the side.

JACOB
I have to go to work.

EXT. HATCHERY - DAY

The TOWER OF DEATH grinds at full power.

The smoke is black. The flesh flies hover for food.

INT. HATCHERY - DAY

Monica is very fast at working. Mrs. Oh notices.

Mrs. Oh turns to see that Jacob is not as fast; his work
seems clumsy. He seems more tired than before.

MRS. OH
(seeing Monica get up)
[Already finished?]

Monica seems to take pride as she gets a new carton.

EXT. THE FARM - DAY

The irrigation pipe from before slows to a drip... drip...

The pipe system makes no sound.

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

Anne tries the tap water. NOTHING.

INT. MOBILE HOME - LIVING ROOM

Anne walks into the living room. David and Soonja watch
wrestling.

ANNE
David, go change! It's time to go!

David is wearing oversized polka dot boxers.

DAVID

Where?

ANNE

Church picnic. Mr. Randy will be here.

DAVID

There's no water.

ANNE

Doesn't matter go change.
[Grandma can you help him change?]

SOONJA

[Who cares what a little boy wears?]

DAVID'S BEDROOM - DAY

David removes the DRESSER DRAWER slowly. It's too far...

It FALLS! Match this to:

INT. HATCHERY - DAY

A crate of chickens FALLS to the floor.

Jacob has dropped it. Monica hurries to help him pick it up.

MONICA

(to Jacob)

[Your arms are that sore again?]

MRS. OH

Put the box there; if any are injured, we have to throw them away.

Jacob notices that Mr. H eyes him from the back. Monica notices this too.

INT. DAVID'S ROOM - DAY

David rises, straining. He lifts the drawer back in place.

Then he looks down: BLOOD pools around his foot.

He looks scared.

DAVID
[SIS! GRANDMA!]

David clutches his BLOODY FOOT. Anne arrives but is shocked and doesn't move.

Soonja runs in and gets to work. She stops the blood with some socks.

SOONJA
(to Anne)
[Anne! Get your mind in order! Go get a towel quickly]

Anne hurries away.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

In the sunlight, Soonja has on her READING GLASSES and dresses the wound with COTTON BALLS and GAUZE.

Anne watches out the window.

ANNE
[The church bus is here!]

SOONJA
[Go on. Leave David behind.]

ANNE
[I'll stay.]

SOONJA
[You think I haven't taken care of injured people? Go.]

Anne doesn't know what to do. As she leaves:

ANNE
Mom will be so mad.

David lies on his back and covers his face.

SOONJA
[There it's done.]

David looks at the wound. It's taped up.

SOONJA (CONT'D)
[But why did you put the drawer back? How did you pick it up, such a heavy drawer?]

He just looks at the bandage.

SOONJA (CONT'D)
[Stand up. Try walking.]

David stands up slowly.

Then, taking a reassuring glance from Soonja, he tries a step. He's able to walk.

SOONJA (CONT'D)
Strong boy! Strong, strong boy.

He's never heard this.

SOONJA (CONT'D)
[You've never heard that. But you are. You know? You are stronger than anyone thinks.]

He draws close to her.

DAVID
[Grandma?]

SOONJA
[What is it?]

DAVID
[What does pee taste like?]

SOONJA
[You rascal!]

EXT. THE FARM - DAY

DAVID
[Grandma, if you walk like this you can go fast!]

Soonja laughs and tries it. She's winded by it.

SOONJA
[Because you can't run, you walk like this? Do you want to try running? Down to the tree there? Us. Together.]

David looks to the distance. The wind causes the TALL GRASSES to sway. David wants to run so badly.

Then he holds his heart.

DAVID

[I can't.]

SOONJA

[...It's fine. Let's keep going.]

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

Soonja and David walk into the woods. They get to a path to the creek.

EXT. THE MINARI CREEK - DAY

David plays on the rocks over the water.

Soonja weeds the sprightly minari sprouts in the stream.

SOONJA

[The minari is growing well!...You grew up in America so you never ate minari. But it's the best food. It grows like weeds, so anyone can have it. Rich person. Poor person. Anyone can pick it and be healthy. You put it in kimchi, put in soup. When you are sick it is medicine. Minari is truly] wonderful, wonderful.

DAVID

(singing)

Minari, minari, minari...

SOONJA

[What is that? Minari song?]

David does a little dance as he sings:

DAVID

(singing)

[Minari, minari, wonderful minari.]

SOONJA

[Ah ha ha! Good! Sing again!]

David holds his heart, feeling something there.

SOONJA (CONT'D)

[Why? You O.k.?)

David nods. He notices the light on the water. A GUST OF WIND blows across.

SOONJA (CONT'D)
 [It's a cold wind. Minari says]
 "thank you very much!"

DAVID
 (singing)
*Minari, minari, thank you thank you
 minari!*

SOONJA
 [Yeah! Yeah!]

DAVID
 [Grandma! Look there!]

On a FALLEN LOG over the water, a WATER MOCCASIN SNAKE sunbathes, having had its fill of summer cicadas.

David throws a rock and misses.

SOONJA
 [David.]

He finds another rock and takes aim:

SOONJA (CONT'D)
 [David! Stop it. Leave it.
 Otherwise it will crawl away and
 hide.]

The snake remains still.

SOONJA (CONT'D)
 [...with some things, it's better
 to see them than have them hide.]

David drops the rock.

INT. MOBILE HOME - LATE DAY

A loud angry BANG from outside. Jacob walks in. He had made the noise.

He discovers Soonja is there.

He goes to the sink. By habit, he tries the tap. The water doesn't turn on. He sees the buckets of water.

SOONJA
 [You're working hard.]

Monica enters.

JACOB
[I'll check the pipes.]

Jacob walks out.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - LATE DAY

Jacob walks to the hose area while David plays with dirt and a TOY CAR nearby. Jacob changes from his SANDALS to BOOTS.

DAVID
[Dad, I made a road.]

Jacob doesn't notice David. David watches Jacob head toward the fields.

INT. MOBILE HOME - KITCHEN - LATE DAY

Around the kitchen floor, next to a COLANDER of MINARI, there are small plastic buckets and containers filled with water.

SOONJA
[All day, we gathered it from the minari garden.]

MONICA
[It's because of the water bill this happened. He thinks I don't know. He used our water for the crops.]

SOONJA
[How will it be fixed?]

MONICA
[The bank, borrow more, I'm sure. Mom... I can take full care of us.]

SOONJA
[Don't work too hard.]

MONICA
[But mom, how did you bring so much water?]

EXT. MOBILE HOME - LATE DAY

In fact, David is spying in through the window, but Monica and Soonja don't know it.

INT. MOBILE HOME - KITCHEN - LATE DAY

SOONJA

[That David. He's stronger than you think. He helped carry all this.]

MONICA

[He's not supposed to do things like that.]

SOONJA

[Even your idiot cousin Doo-won, that big bodied guy, at that age, he was much weaker.]

MONICA

[Mom, you really don't know.]

SOONJA

[How can it be that bad? That's how kids are, they get hurt and bounce back stronger.]

MONICA

[Even the doctors say he needs an operation any moment. Understand?]

SOONJA

[...what would I know next to a doctor?]

MONICA

[I'm sorry that you're alone watching him more and more. But really, I only ask you to watch him carefully. Please.]

SOONJA

[O.k. O.k. I'll do better.]

David steps down from the bucket.

EXT. THE FARM - NIGHT

Jacob then tidies a row of crops, using a spotlight to illuminate the harvest.

He searches for signs of life. He finds an EGGPLANT. It's overripe. On the other side of it, it's CRAWLING WITH BUGS.

He tosses it down.

EXT. THE MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

We see the home, approaching to and fro, as though we move in a strange serpentine way. The crickets and frogs cease.

A STRANGE SOUND emerges, low and awful.

DAVID'S ROOM - NIGHT

A THUNDERSTORM brews outside. Lightning illuminates the clothing dresser momentarily.

David is in bed, rubbing the spot over his heart.

SOONJA

[What are you doing?]

David hurriedly turns and pretends to sleep.

SOONJA (CONT'D)

[Why aren't you sleeping? Hmm?
What's the matter?]

DAVID

[Mom said if I pray I can see
heaven in my sleep.]

SOONJA

[...Ah, those kids who saw heaven?
(upon no answer)
...Are you scared?
(he remains silent)
...If you're scared, don't pray.
It's nonsense, you don't have to go
see heaven.]

DAVID

[But I prayed it! Grandma I prayed
it, and now I don't wanna go!]

SOONJA

[It's o.k. It's o.k. then pray,] *Oh
my God! Oh my God, [heaven] no
thank you!*

DAVID

[But Grandma... then I would go to
hell!]

SOONJA

[Hey hey hey, why are you already
talking like that?]

DAVID
[...I don't wanna die.]

SOONJA
[Ayoo. ...Come over here if you're
scared.]

David climbs into Soonja's bed.

SOONJA (CONT'D)
[Grandma won't let you die.]

DAVID
[Grandma...]

Soonja wipes his tears and covers him.

SOONJA
[Shh. Shh. Shh. Who dares to scare
my grandson this way? Don't be
scared. Don't you know how strong
you are? Here... Sing it again.]
(singing)
*[Minari, Minari, Minari! Minari
Minari Minari!]*

DAVID
[Minari. Minari. Minari.]

Wind rocks the little trailer home.

SOONJA
[Minari, Minari, Minari!]

This comes to a sudden HUSH:

INT. DAVID'S ROOM - MORNING

From the window: SUNLIGHT.

In the bedroom, David flings the blanket off. He thinks he's
wet the bed, and he hurries to clean it up.

But his pants... They're not wet.

Then he looks at Soonja. He feels around Soonja. It's her.
She's wet the bed.

LATER

David leads Anne into the room. They creep up to Soonja who
continues to snore.

David points out what had happened.

DAVID
[Grandmother...]

ANNE
[Grandmother...]

Soonja wakes, a heavy drowsiness on her.

She trembles, her face is not right.

DAVID
[Grandmother why did you wet the
bed?]

Soonja reaches out toward David strangely. David avoids her.

SOONJA
[Leave me alone. Go!]

She seems transformed. It scares the kids.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

David is now alarmed.

DAVID
Why is she like that?

Anne looks at the clock.

ANNE
We'll call mom from church. Get
dressed. The bus will be here.

DAVID
O.k.

ANNE
Wait.

INT. DAVID'S ROOM - DAY

Anne and David creep in together. David goes to the dresser.

ANNE
(quietly)
Stay back, I'll do it.

Anne opens the DRAWER and gets David's clothes. David sees hwatu cards nearby. Anne closes the drawer, and they leave.

Soonja opens her eyes and looks at the DRESSER. She seems to feel menaced by something she sees there.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Anne hurriedly washes her face in a BUCKET and then runs out.

INT. SANCTUARY - DAY

The church ORGAN plays as Brother Roy concludes his sermon.

BROTHER ROY

When Jesus comes again, and we're
all gathered up, what a glorious
day that will be!

ANNE

(whispering to David)
I'm going to call mom.

Anne leaves.

BROTHER ROY

Sit still kids.

David looks at something in his hand.

BROTHER ROY (CONT'D)

But what'll you say when he asks,
why is Rick from work, Sue from the
bank, why is Earl from the grocery
store not with us? Why didn't you
share the good news of salvation to
these precious people? Boy I
wouldn't wanna have that
conversation. Would you?

David looks at the HWATU card in his hand.

EXT./INT. CHURCH BUS - DAY (TRAVELING)

Randy drives the church bus while kids play and yell. Anne and David sit next to each other.

ANNE

Mom and dad took grandma to the
hospital.

OLDER KID

There's that cross guy!

All the kids move to the side of the bus to look.

The bus approaches Paul and his big cross on the road.

They pass by slowly. The older kid flips off Paul from the back window. Johnnie laughs looking at David. David smiles.

JOHNNIE

Think he saw?

OLDER KID

I heard he got a dirt floor and shits in a bucket. He don't got no water where he lives.

The kids laugh.

OLDER KID (CONT'D)

(to the red head kid)

Why you laughing? You ain't got no walls in yours.

The kids laugh, and the moment plays again in David's mind like a regret:

-The bus passes Paul, and Paul looks up right at him. David's smile fades.

INT. MOBILE HOME/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Anne is on the phone while David hovers nearby.

ANNE

(on the phone)

[Yes... There's still no water. We can go get more from the minari garden. ...O.k. I will. O.k.]

DAVID

Lemme talk to her. Tell her we're hungry.

ANNE

(on the phone)

Bye.

She hangs up.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Mom said we can stay with friends.

DAVID

Really? ...How's grandma?

ANNE
She wouldn't say.

EXT. TOWN STREETS - DAY

A PICK UP TRUCK turns the corner and honks. An OLD COUPLE sits on a porch staring:

The paved road passes underneath a front bicycle tire.

Johnnie rides his bicycle down the street, grinning at the townspeople. David watches in the distance.

Johnnie gets to the end of the street and then flips David off. He slaps at his butt and taunts David.

Then Johnnie comes back.

JOHNNIE
Now it's your turn.

DAVID
O.k.

David rides down the street.

JOHNNIE
Fast as you can!

David smiles and rides. He stops. He waves at Johnnie.

JOHNNIE (CONT'D)
(in the distance)
No, flip me off! Flip me off!

David tries to raise his middle fingers; he contorts his face to do so- he's never done it before.

JOHNNIE (CONT'D)
Yeah cock suckuuuh!

That's Johnnie.

INT. MOTHER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnnie digs in a dresser and pulls out a can of SKOAL.

JOHNNIE
My mom's friend keeps this here. He don' mind.

Johnnie puts a little dip in his mouth.

JOHNNIE (CONT'D)
Wanna try some?

DAVID
Does it hurt?

JOHNNIE
It hurts if you eat it. So don't
eat it stupid.
(showing his lip)
Put it like this.

David does this. Johnnie puts on a big COWBOY HAT.

JOHNNIE (CONT'D)
I'm a cowboy!

LATER

They play HWATU with tobacco in their lips, taking turns
spitting into an empty COKE CAN. They have coins and dollars
beside them. Johnnie plays a match.

DAVID
You won't get points that way. Get
the junk card, you'll get a point.
No that one! Use your mind!

JOHNNIE
This one?

DAVID
Now it's my turn.
(slams a card)
[IT'S A MATCH YOU BASTARDS!]

JOHNNIE
This a good game!

INT. JOHNNIE'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

David brushes his teeth by moving his head and keeping his
arm in place.

Johnnie does exactly the same. They start laughing together.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

FLOWERS in the hospital room. Soonja sleeps in the hospital
bed, monitored by machinery.

Monica is there with her.

INT. JOHNNIE'S HOME - MORNING

Johnnie climbs onto BILLY'S (late 20s) lap, and Billy tickles him and gives him a kiss on the head. Johnnie laughs. David watches them.

David gets caught staring and returns to eating breakfast.

BILLY

How's your daddy like that new farm?

DAVID

Good.

BILLY

He growin' things good? Doin' things right?

DAVID

Yes.

BILLY

Gooood. I knew the fella who was there before. You know about him?

DAVID

Yes.

BILLY

So you know what he did?

Billy points his finger to his head in mock suicide.

JOHNNIE

Who?

BILLY

Bucky Reed. Went flat broke. I guess that's what a man does. ...You sure your daddy likes that farm? There ain't no ghosts walkin' round?

David just sits there and seems scared.

BILLY (CONT'D)

I used to have a farm. Shoot. Even bigger than that up in Berryville.

Billy finishes and gets up. He pats Johnnie's head.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Tell yer mom I was here all night.
 (to David)
 You help your dad on that farm
 alright? Don't be lazy.

DAVID

Yes sir.

EXT./INT. JOHNNIE'S HOME/STATION WAGON - DAY

Johnnie watches David from the window as David climbs into the station wagon. Jacob and Anne are already inside the car.

David sits next to Anne. Jacob looks tired.

JACOB

[Did you have fun?]

DAVID

Yes.

Anne hugs her pillow and looks tired. David yawns big. Jacob begins to drive. David watches Johnnie's house as they depart.

DAVID (CONT'D)

(to Anne)

What was your friend's house like?

ANNE

Good. Kinda weird.

DAVID

Yeah.

David watches Johnnie's house as they depart.

INT. DAVID'S ROOM - DAY

From the doorway, Anne sees a lump of Soonja's form. Soonja stares with an empty expression at the DRESSER.

ANNE

[Grandma?]

No answer. Anne looks at the dresser where Soonja stares.

ANNE (CONT'D)

[What are you looking at?]

SOONJA
 (weak voice)
 [Leave it there. Or it will hide.]

Anne looks again at the empty dresser. Monica arrives.

ANNE
 [Why is grandma like that?]

MONICA
 [It's called a "stroke." She needs
 a lot of rest.]

ANNE
 [How did it happen?]

MONICA
 [It's mommy's fault. I was selfish
 and brought her here.]

ANNE
 [Mom. Grandma will be o.k.]

MONICA
 [You've grown up so much. Already
 seem like an adult. Mom is sorry to
 make you do so much. I left you
 both alone. It won't happen again.]

EXT. THE FARM - SUNSET

Jacob stares out at the sunset, smoking a cigarette.

JACOB
 Please. Please.

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - DAY

The sink. The faucet.

Just then a WHEEZE. A gurgle.

DIRTY BROWN WATER. The TOILET TANK SOUNDS like it's
 refilling.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

David and Anne brush their teeth. David brushes in his funny
 manner, shaking his head instead of moving his arm.

ANNE

Mom wants to go back to California
because of grandma.

David stops brushing his teeth.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I heard them talking. They might
get a divorce...

DAVID

When?

ANNE

They said they're gonna check your
heart and then decide. ...One of us
should stay with dad, one of us
should go with mom, don't you
think?

David starts to brush his teeth slowly, the correct way,
moving his arm instead of his head.

INT. DAVID'S ROOM - NIGHT

David climbs in bed, watching Soonja snoring.

He studies her face.

DAVID

[Grandma, it's your fault.
Everything is your fault. You came
to America for nothing.]

The snoring stops. David hurriedly turns to sleep.

Soonja's eyes open. She remains there, awake.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

A SNAKE SLITHERS down the narrow corridor.

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

A family dinner with Paul. He's the first guest they've had
in the home. Paul is handed some Korean food.

PAUL

Thank you so much.

Soonja, with her strange new expression, teeters and tries to get water.

MONICA
[David help grandma.]

David watches but doesn't help. Soonja spills the water.

MONICA (CONT'D)
[David! I said help!]

Monica cleans it and pours the water.

MONICA (CONT'D)
[Mom, you already have water.]

SOONJA
(meaning David)
[Him.]

Monica puts the cup in front of David. David hesitates, then drinks. Monica moves the kimchi.

PAUL
Oh no, don't put that kimchi so far
away.
(face turns red)
...Sweating on my head.

He dabs his head with a napkin. The kids seem amused. Monica smiles politely.

Monica hands out some Korean pancakes. Paul watches the way Monica serves Jacob the food.

He then sneaks a glance at Soonja who feeds herself.

LATER: as the table is cleared:

PAUL (CONT'D)
Mashitgye mogosubnida.

MONICA
[Yes, thank you.] You are our first
guest here.

PAUL
I am honored. Thank you. Wish I had
something to offer in return.
(looking for something)
David. Won't you come up here?

Paul's hands are tattooed. The tattoos are self made, done badly. He shows the tattoos on his neck too.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Look at them. Look at them. Who's the fool? I put junk in my veins, junk in my skin. Made these marks in prison- a sewing needle and ink from a ball point pen. That's how foolish I was. Now I carry that big ol' cross. You see it?

DAVID

Yes.

PAUL

I know what people think. You wanna put marks like these on those hands of yours?

DAVID

No.

PAUL

Good. Remember these hands David. You're good kids. You remember. You and Anne both. Stay close to your Abba Father. Be glad and generous with what you have.

David just stares at the tattoos. Paul tussles David's hair.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Oh how I like this one! ...now where'd I put that box of oil?

INT. DAVID'S ROOM - DAY

David and Anne watch from the hallway:

Paul walks around the room dabbing oil from a wooden box on the bedposts, the doorways, praying in tongues.

MONICA

She sees something on this dresser.

PAUL

This one?

He sees Soonja staring at it.

PAUL (CONT'D)

(fiercely to the dresser)
...Out. Out. You dirty thing. Go.
In the name of Jesus I cast you out... (back to praying in tongues)

Then Paul prays over Soonja momentarily. Monica prays next to him. Jacob slips outside the room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jacob is alone. The others walk out.

PAUL
It feels lighter! Do you feel it?

MONICA
Yes. Thank you. Thank you. Please.
Wait right here. I have something.

Monica smiles and walks to the kitchen to pack leftovers.

Paul pats Jacob on the shoulder and offers:

PAUL
(between them)
Do you want me to pray for you
and...
(indicating Monica)
If you want.

JACOB
Why?

Paul knows Jacob doesn't like this suggestion, but his concern is apparent.

Jacob glances at Monica, who hasn't heard Paul's offer.

JACOB (CONT'D)
No need.

PAUL
I didn't mean to...

JACOB
Come early tomorrow. Lots of work.

PAUL
...You're my dear friend Jacob,
thank you for having me for this
meal.

Jacob nods, uneasy, not reciprocating.

MONICA
Paul, please take this.

PAUL
 What's this?
 (seeing the leftovers)
 Oh ho thank you! You read my mind!

LATER

As Monica closes the door.

JACOB
 [You used to say he has mental
 problems, now you ask him to do
 something like this?]

MONICA
 [When did I say that? He came
 because he wanted to help us. I'm
 very thankful.]

JACOB
 [What did you tell him about us?]

MONICA
 [Why would I tell him anything?]

Monica walks away.

INT. THE BARN - DAY

It's packed with PRODUCE. Paul picks out the best of each.

PAUL
 This one's good. And this. They
 won't say no when they see these.

They put together the BOX of SAMPLES including BROCHURES of
 "BIG COUNTRY FARMS."

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Monica prepares and packs away food in the refrigerator.
 Soonja tries to help by wiping down the counters.

MONICA
 [Mom, look, the food is all here.
 You don't even have to heat this
 one, o.k.?)

Soonja accidentally causes a KITCHEN POT to drop.

Monica picks it up.

MONICA (CONT'D)

[Don't try to help so much. Just rest, watch tv. ...we'll be back late.]

SOONJA

[I'll be o.k.]

MONICA

[Mom. I'm grateful for this.]

Monica holds the envelope of money from Korea.

INT. STATION WAGON - MONTAGE (TRAVELING)

- The kids are asleep in the backseat.
- Monica and Jacob pass the time in silence in the front.
- They pass lakes and forests.
- The kids eat snacks that Monica hands back.
- They drive on the interstate.

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY (TRAVELING)

-OKLAHOMA CITY SKYLINE

ANNE

Wake up David. Look!

MONICA

[We lived in a city even bigger. Do you remember?]

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE ROOF - DAY (OKLAHOMA CITY)

Monica, David, and Anne are heading to the stairwell. Monica notices that Jacob follows with his big BOX OF PRODUCE.

MONICA

[You're bringing that inside?]

JACOB

[It's too hot up here.]

MONICA

[Look at all the dirt on it.]

JACOB

[Then go in first. I'll wait for a spot to open in the basement.]

MONICA

[We're here for David.]

JACOB

[Go on in first. I'll be right there.]

Monica goes.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Anne watches:

A LAB TECH gives David a SONOGRAM.

Jacob enters now WITH THE FRUIT BOX; he wasn't able to find a spot. Monica seems annoyed with him.

Jacob gives David a small, encouraging smile.

The sonogram shows a colorful image of spraying blood between the ventricle wall.

Jacob studies the screen, he watches the image of blood.

ANNE

Is it bad?

LAB TECH

Doctor will have to tell you.
(to David)
She a good big sister?

DAVID

Yes.

LAB TECH

He a good little brother?

ANNE

Yes.

LAB TECH

Heheh. ...Alright buddy, you can sit up, get dressed, wait in the waiting room. How's that sound?

ANNE

Good. Thank you.

He chuckles.

LAB TECH
A good big sister.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

On the path between the trees toward the barn, Soonja walks with her cane.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Jacob picks at the chicken shit stain on his thumbnail. David and Anne are far away looking at a medical poster. Monica is next to Jacob, watching the kids.

JACOB
[Life was so difficult in Korea. When we married, remember what we said? That we'd go to America and save each other. Remember?]

MONICA
[I remember.]

JACOB
[What could we have known? Instead we came and fought so much that he was born this way.]

David and Anne play a made up game together.

MONICA
[...Honey. Can't you come with us? We can't do this without you.]

JACOB
[I'm not the one who wants to leave.]

MONICA
[If I stay, we'll go under. Only in California can we make enough to pay all the debts.]

JACOB
[We'd be chicken sexing til we die.]

MONICA
[Think about it for the kids.]

JACOB

[The kids need to see their father succeed at something for once.]

The box of produce is next to Jacob's feet.

MONICA

[At what cost? ...Isn't it better we stay together?]

JACOB

[Do what you want without me. Even if I fail, I have to finish what I started.]

Monica sees that Jacob won't budge on this.

DOCTOR

Mr. and Mrs. Yi? Come on in--

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

The DOCTOR is with the family. He shows them a model heart.

DOCTOR

This is where the blood flows out like a door - open close, open close. See how close the hole is? That's why the California doctor said to wait on surgery til he's older. But--you ready?--it looks like the hole is getting smaller.

The doctor waits for a good response.

MONICA

What?

DOCTOR

It's still there, but comparing the measurements, it's a significant improvement. It means we can rule out surgery, and we can see if the hole is closing up on its own.

They stare at him.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

This is very good news.

MONICA

But the sound has gotten louder...

DOCTOR

Yes. Sometimes, as the hole gets smaller, the sound gets louder. Loud is good. ...Are we happy?

MONICA

Yes. Thank you.

JACOB

Thank you very much.

DOCTOR

Must be the Ozark water.

Jacob laughs. Monica is clearly surprised. Anne hugs David.

ANNE

Good job David.

David smiles, as though he did something.

EXT. BARN - DAY

Soonja cleans up rotting PRODUCE that's been discarded from the harvest.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Jacob moves the box of produce. He lets ICE WATER drain from ice bags.

MONICA

[Your father needs to make a stop. Then we'll eat. Are you hungry?]

ANNE

[I want naeng myun!]

MONICA

[Naeng myun? We'll see which place has the best naeng myun. Get in.]

The kids get in.

JACOB

[It's been a while since we've heard good news.]

MONICA

[It's a miracle...]

JACOB
[I told you it would be fine...]

Monica thinks on these words.

INT. KOREAN GROCER - AFTERNOON

Anne and David look at PIGS FEET for sale.

ANNE
Look!

David can see toward the back room:

Jacob talks with the OWNER (40s). They are laughing together.
Their conversation is inaudible.

The owner looks at the produce box, smells the produce.

INT. KOREAN GROCER - BACK ROOM

The owner flips through the BROCHURE OF THE FARM. There's a
picture of DAVID AND ANNE ON THE TRACTOR.

OWNER
[Shrewd business idea, many Koreans
are moving to this area...]

Monica watches.

JACOB
[Yes, and most of your produce
comes from California, so it
arrives badly, with no taste. We're
five hours away.]

OWNER
[Very good.]

JACOB
[What day is good? My wife she
works, so I can come any time.]

EXT. KOREAN GROCER BACK ALLEYWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

The family bows to the owner to say goodbye, and they walk
toward the station wagon.

JACOB
(to Monica)
[Did you see?
(MORE)]

JACOB (CONT'D)

They have so many Korean foods now.
This is perfect timing. The owner
said that. Soon he will build a
bigger store.]

Monica seems guarded. Jacob notices this.

JACOB (CONT'D)

[Mom is in shock and can't say
anything.]

The kids stare up at her.

MONICA

[Anne. Take the keys. Go take your
brother to the car and get in.]

Anne stops. She knows what this means.

MONICA (CONT'D)

[Go on.]

The kids go to the car with the keys.

JACOB

[What is this?]

MONICA

[You act like nothing happened...
Just now at the hospital, when you
had to choose between the farm and
the family, you chose the farm.]

JACOB

[It doesn't matter, everything
worked out.]

MONICA

[So if our circumstances are good,
we're able to live together, but
when they aren't, we fall apart?]

JACOB

[What kind of talk is that? From
now on we make good money, we can
live in peace.]

MONICA

[So we can't save each other, but
money can?]

(upon no response)

[The truth is, I grew used to the
idea of a divorce... David is
better, and that's just as well.

(MORE)

MONICA (CONT'D)

...One day this kind of thing will happen again, and you'll fail completely, and it's inevitable what will happen to us.]

JACOB

[Then that's it. Even after all this, you don't believe in me. I feel the same way.]

After a heavy silence:

She appears to hold some hope that there are words that can undo everything that has been said. For a moment, Jacob searches for them.

In the distance, the back door of the grocery opens.

OWNER (O.S.)

You're still here!

Jacob turns and bows politely.

JACOB

[We're on our way. We'll see you soon.]

Jacob turns around. Monica has already walked halfway to the car.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - SUNSET

Soonja tends to a fire in the fire barrel.

She tries to put a bag of trash into the fire but misses.

She tries to push it in, but it falls out. A small fire starts on the grass.

INT. STATION WAGON - NIGHT (TRAVELING)

Jacob, Monica, David, and Anne ride in silence.

Jacob and Monica stare ahead.

David then leans forward.

DAVID

(quietly)
[...Mom.]

MONICA
[What is it?]

DAVID
[I prayed to see heaven.]

MONICA
[You did?]

DAVID
[I saw it.]

MONICA
(not listening)
[Good. Thank you for telling me.
Sit back in your seat, David.]

EXT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

The FIRE RAGES from the FIRE BARREL. Debris burns next to it. Areas of grass burn around, and Soonja fights against them.

Floating embers drift in the air toward the barn.

Soonja's face is blackened, and her eyes are wide.

A floating flame of debris lands on a spot of grass.

Soonja fights a small grass fire that burns further away.

STRAW BALES near the back of the barn begin to ignite.

The flames grow and catch the wood on fire.

The station wagon pulls in.

Jacob gets out.

JACOB
[Don't come out!]

He runs to see where the fire has spread. He's alarmed.

He sees that the back of the barn has caught fire.

He attempts to fight it, a useless effort.

Monica gets out of the car. She sees:

Soonja, FACE BLACKENED, walks out of the smoke of the grass fire, as though returning from a holy mountain.

Monica hurries to help Soonja be near the car.

Jacob runs around to the front entrance of the barn. He enters. Monica sees this.

MONICA
[Jacob!]

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Inside Jacob sees the flames growing at the rear of the barn.

He pulls a canvas tarp covering the boxes and begins to beat at the fire. (The fire is growing, but it seems like a manageable size.)

Monica enters.

MONICA
[Jacob!]

Jacob turns back to her. Monica sees desperation in his eyes.

Monica joins in the effort to fight the fire.

EXT. BARN - NIGHT

Standing a five feet away from the car, Soonja watches the barn, flames growing.

She looks over at the car, children inside.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Smoke fills the air. The back wall on fire is larger, and crates of produce are burning.

JACOB
[Go! Don't be here! Stay with the
kids!]

It appears Jacob never plans to leave. He will fight to the end.

MONICA
[Jacob!]

Just then, a PILLAR OF SMOKE (with flames/flaming timber) engulfs the space between them, and Monica reaches out to Jacob as she disappears into the cloud of smoke.

Then Monica is no longer visible.

A sense of panic enters Jacob's eyes. He drops everything and searches for her.

JACOB
[Monica! Monica!]

He finally sees her, crawling on the ground.

Finding her, he reaches out, they clasp hands and escape.

OUTSIDE

Monica and Jacob run out, supporting each other.

Soonja, seeing this, seems to turn to the road.

Anne opens the door and shouts to her parents:

ANNE
[Mom! Dad!]

David remains in the car and sees:

Monica and Jacob are on the ground, catching their breaths.

David looks the other way to see:

The flames have begun to take the rafters of the barn.
Inside, the crates seem to be ablaze.

David turns again to his parents:

Monica and Jacob are collapsed together.

They cling to each other in tears, in a show of weakness and need for each other that he's never seen.

The light from the fire glows on them like embers.

The barn blazes, Jacob doesn't even notice.

David looks to his side. The space next to him is empty.

In the distance, Anne walks toward the road with urgency.

ANNE (CONT'D)
[Grandma!]

David hurries out.

EXT. THE DIRT ROAD - DUSK

Anne and David walk side by side.

 ANNE DAVID
Grandma! Grandma!

In the distance, Soonja walks down the dirt road.

Light from a coming FIRE TRUCK illuminates her silhouette.

On her face is a look of something between self-banishment, shame, and guilt. She carries herself down the road toward the unknown.

The fire truck passes, dangerously close to her.

 DAVID (CONT'D)
 [GRANDMA!]

The dust climbs from the passing fire truck, and David and Anne cannot see Soonja.

 DAVID (CONT'D)
 [GRANDMA!]

This is when David breaks out into a FULL RUN.

It's the first he's run, and he runs with all his strength to where she was.

She comes back into view as the air clears. David stops when he reaches her finally, catching his breath.

 DAVID (CONT'D)
 [Grandma. Grandma...]

Soonja stops.

Anne now catches up to them.

 ANNE
 [Grandma. This is not the way.]

David watches.

 ANNE (CONT'D)
 [Grandma, our house is that way.]

 DAVID
 [Grandma.]

Soonja tries to continue on her way.

David becomes distraught, trying to stop her; this is the most desperate we have seen him.

DAVID (CONT'D)
 [Grandma! Grandma! Don't go! Come home with us! Grandma! Come home with us!]

Soonja finally stops.

The kids take her by the hand, and they walk home together.

David helps her remain steady, walks with her with care.

EXT. THE BARN - BEFORE DAWN

The barn is burned.

On the ground: some scattered, charred crops in boxes.

INT. MOBILE HOME - BEFORE DAWN

Framed pictures of the family on display in succession:

- The picture of young Monica and Soonja
- A family picture from a past vacation
- The children and Jacob on a tractor

INT. MOBILE HOME - BEFORE DAWN

David, Anne, Monica, and Jacob are asleep on the floor, collapsed from the fatigue of the night before.

Traces of soot remain stained on Jacob's hands and nails. Soot fingerprints mark Monica's white nightgown.

Above them, Soonja is awake, in a chair, watching them sleep.

EXT. FARM - DAY

A DIVINER walks the land with a DOWSING STICK in search of water. Jacob, Monica, and Paul follow behind. Jacob carries a STONE.

There are rows of plants that have reached the end of season, along with rotting crops that were discarded during harvest.

The dowsing stick quivers down. Paul and the dowser step back for Jacob, giving him space to put down the stone.

PAUL

O.k. mark it. That's where it is!

Jacob doesn't move.

MONICA

(to Jacob)

[Go on.]

Upon her words, Jacob marks the ground with the STONE.

It stands like a PILLAR, a monument.

EXT. TREE SWING - LATE DAY

Soonja watches David and Anne play at the tree swing.

Monica and Jacob walk together toward the tree.

Monica asks what they've been doing. She tells them it's time to go home, time for dinner.

JACOB

[Go on first, I'll meet you.]

DAVID

[Daddy, where are you going?]

JACOB

[You want to come? Let's go.]

EXT. THE WOODS - LATE DAY

Beyond the opening of the trees, we reach a steep descent.

Jacob slides down first.

JACOB (CONT'D)

[Hand me that.]

David gives him the bucket. Then, Jacob helps David down.

Jacob sees that ABUNDANT MINARI grows in STREAMING WATER.

LATER

Jacob clips and gathers minari into the bucket.

David gathers shoots also.

We see closely, STALKS OF MINARI.

JACOB (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
[It grows even when we don't do
anything... Grandmother picked a
good spot.]

David stores these words away, as something he might understand with time.

LATER

From afar, we see Jacob and David finish their gathering. They clean dirt off their pants, their movements are almost identical.

They carry the bucket of minari up the steep path to return home, leaving behind the minari and the flowing water.

FADE OUT: