

TAKE SHELTER

by

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EXT. LAFORCHE HOME - DAY

Sun spikes through the jostling leaves of a maple tree. A strong wind bends them back, showing their light green bellies.

This is a modest house in a row of modest houses. Propane tanks and farmland at their backs show this neighborhood to be more rural than suburb.

CURTIS LAFORCHE(35) stands in his driveway. His eyes, locked on the sky, narrow as he stares at...

A STORM CELL stretching out on the horizon in front of him. It's a bruised sky filled with a vicious mixture of black and gray clouds. They swirl in and out of one another sending wispy tentacles toward the ground.

Curtis stands, awestruck.

The clouds move fast overhead. He looks up as they overtake his position. A light rain begins.

The rain pats the ground. It makes soft indentions on his cotton shirt. He watches it hit the concrete, falling harder now. He notices something strange.

The rain makes dark spots on the sidewalk. He pulls his shirt out and sees dark spots forming there. He holds his palm out flat in front of him. The rain pools.

He rubs the water through his thumb and fingers. It's an amber color, viscous, like fresh motor oil.

Curtis looks to the sky, the rain pelting his face now. Jagged, angry clouds blanketing overhead. The wind bends back the trunk of the maple tree.

Curtis stands alone at the base of the surging STORM CELL.

TITLE: TAKE SHELTER

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Curtis holds his head under the running shower nozzle. Cool, clean water rushes over his face.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

SAMANTHA(29) stands at the stovetop stirring eggs in a pan. She's still dressed in her sleeping attire, an oversized T-shirt and pajama bottoms with cartoon frogs on them.

HANNAH(5) sits at the kitchen table tearing up a piece of toast and feeding it to the dog.

Hannah is a blonde little girl with a large hearing aid wrapped over her right ear. It clips into her hair near the back of her head. The dog's name is Red, a Rhodesian Ridgeback that appreciates the attention.

Curtis enters the kitchen and kisses Hannah on the head. In the same motion, he takes the piece of toast from her hand and sets it on her plate.

CURTIS  
 (takes a seat)  
 No, no, no...Don't feed the dog  
 darlin'.

Hannah immediately picks the piece of toast back up and feeds it to the dog. Samantha brings the pan over and spoons eggs out on everyone's plates.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
 Thanks babe.

SAMANTHA  
 You slept late.

CURTIS  
 Yeah. I need to go. What you got  
 going today?

SAMANTHA  
 I've got to finish up some curtains  
 for Saturday, and Nat and Cam are  
 coming over.

CURTIS  
 (mouth full)  
 With the kids?

SAMANTHA  
 Yeah. Cammie said she just needed  
 to get out of the house.

Samantha takes her seat at the table.

CURTIS  
 Tell Nat to take it easy on her.

Curtis gets up and goes to Hannah.

SAMANTHA  
 Cam can hold her own. We need to  
 send in the deposit for the beach  
 condo.

He kneels beside his daughter's chair and waits for her to make eye contact. She looks over at him. He speaks using sign language. Three broad, slow gestures.

CURTIS  
 (signing)  
 I love you.

Hannah puts her arms around his neck and he squeezes her. He stands and grabs a sack lunch off the counter. On his way out, he kisses Samantha on top of the head.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
 Just write the check, babe. Okay.

SAMANTHA  
 Okay. Bye.

Samantha sips her coffee as Hannah feeds more toast to the dog.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
 (as she signs)  
 No more food. You, eat.

EXT. LAFORCHE HOME - DAY

Curtis shoulds his way out the front screen door. Keys in his mouth and sack lunch in his hand, he makes his way down the porch steps and onto the front walk.

He pops open the chain-link gate and heads for the PICK-UP parked on the street. Clear blue sky overhead.

EXT. SOYBEAN FIELD - DAY

Small soybean plants slouch in the noonday sun. A slight breeze picks up, jostling the leaves, but the sound is drowned out by a loud, mechanical rumbling.

A spiral drill churns up dark soil as it digs deeper into the ground. Curtis, wearing work goggles, grabs hold of the drill's cabling system and yanks down.

CURTIS  
 Yeah, let's keep going with that bit! It'll go another 10 feet!

He yells to DEWART(36), a big guy sitting at the controls of a diesel powered WELL-DRILLING RIG. The truck has a long rusted bed with metal scaffolding raised HIGH on its back.

DEWART  
 We won't get the gravel pack down today!

CURTIS  
 Why not?!

DEWART

Those clouds! We're gonna have to call it!

Curtis looks back to a potential STORM. Gray clouds forming across the horizon.

CURTIS

Happy hour starts at five Dewart!

DEWART

(to himself)

Not if it's rainin'...Ready?

CURTIS

Oh, yeah.

INT. LAFORCHE HOME - DAY

Samantha sits at a table running a long piece of sheer fabric through her sewing machine. She's making curtains.

NAT(37) sips a screwdriver from a clear plastic cup designed not to sweat. She's a woman with rough edges.

CAMMIE(24) cradles a brown-haired BABY on top of her pregnant, eight month belly.

As Nat speaks, she looks out a sliding glass door at her two kids, DJ(7) and SUE(5), playing with Hannah.

NAT

They were just drinkin' and laughin' and oh, my god...it was like I was bein' in a museum and I saw the progress from apes to men. I saw it. I saw the future. Dewart, that was him...that was going to be him in 20 years.

SAMANTHA

Oh my god.

Cammie laughs.

NAT

Let me tell you, you laugh. You laugh. But this little one in your arms is gonna be shufflin' in a bar just like 'em. Yep...  
(glances outside)  
Hannah!

Samantha jumps up from her sewing to see outside. Hannah, with her back to the house, bangs a 2 X 4 with a rusted nail in the end into the ground. Samantha is out the door.

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Samantha walks briskly, talking to the other children.

SAMANTHA  
You guys okay?

SUE  
Yeah.

Samantha takes a wide line around Hannah, who continues banging the two-by-four into the ground. As soon as the child sees her mother, she stops.

Samantha crouches in front of Hannah, gently taking the board away from her. Samantha signs with her hand and speaks at the same time.

SAMANTHA  
No. Don't touch.

Hannah tilts her head, looking off to the side. Samantha touches her chin bringing her eyes back around.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
(signing and speaking)  
You understand?

Hannah nods once, "yes".

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Oksy. Come here.

Samantha stands and takes the board to a trash pile in the back corner of the yard. A STORM SHELTER is buried in the ground just behind the pile. It's a grass covered mound with two rusted metal doors angled toward the sky.

She throws the board onto the heap and wipes her hands on her pants. Staring at the pile, she lets out an irritated sigh.

Thunder rumbles low in the distance. She looks up at the approaching clouds and calls to the children as she walks back inside.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Hey, DJ. Bring the girls inside.

EXT. SOYBEAN FIELD - DAY

THUNDER STRIKE.

The drill bit spins as rain pelts the ground turning the dark soil into black mud.

Curtis holds a rain slicker over his head. He watches as the hole they are drilling fills up with brown water. He lifts his boot, which makes a sucking sound as it dislodges from the mud.

Looking at the horizon, he sees no sign of the storm letting up. He looks to Dewart, who smiles at him from behind the controls of the rig.

DEWART  
What? It's not my fault! I told you!

CURTIS  
Yeah. All right...All right! I'm callin' it! Shut it down!

Dewart gladly eases back on the lever at his knee.

I/E. LAFORCHE HOME - LATE AFTERNOON

Samantha holds the front door open as Nat and Cammie leave with their children packed up and in tow. It's raining pretty hard outside.

SAMANTHA  
Bye guys. Thanks for coming over.

NAT  
I'll call next week about the Lions Club supper.

SAMANTHA  
Okay. Love you.

CAMMIE  
Bye Sam.

SAMANTHA  
Bye Cam.

Running for her car holding a jacket covered car seat.

Samantha closes the door and listens to her quiet house. The rain outside is the only noise. She heads to the kitchen.

IN THE KITCHEN,

Hannah is sitting Indian-style at the glass doors watching the rain. Samantha walks over and kneels down behind her. She wraps her arms around Hannah, who lifts a hand to the glass.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Can you sign s-t-o-r-m?

Samantha puts her hand onto the glass next to Hannah's and signs "s-t-o-r-m". Hannah turns to see her mother's face, and Samantha uses both hands to make the signed symbol. Fingers, spread and bent, moved downward.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Storm.

Hannah looks back out the window. They watch the storm together.

I/E. CURTIS' TRUCK/DEWART'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The blue top of a small cooler is knocked to the floorboard as Dewart fishes the last Busch tallboy out of icy water. He cracks it open and takes an extended sip.

Curtis, sitting behind the wheel of his truck, looks at his drunk friend.

CURTIS

I gotta get home.

DEWART

Nat and me been lookin' into a threesome. We've been chattin' with a girl online from Canton. Yeah. Big 'ol girl.

CURTIS

What's big?

DEWART

She's about two fifty, two seventy five. She can't be no taller than 5 foot.

Dewart starts laughing, which makes Curtis laugh.

CURTIS

Shit man.

The laughing subsides.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

I don't see me and Sam gettin' into somethin' like that.

DEWART

No. I don't guess you would.

Dewart is staring at Curtis.

DEWART (CONT'D)

You got a good life Curtis.



Curtis shrugs.

DEWART (CONT'D)  
I'm serious. I think that's the best compliment you can give a man, take a look at his life and say, that's good. That guy's doin' somethin' right.

CURTIS  
Well. It ain't always so easy.

DEWART  
Hell I know that.

Dewart sees something out his window.

DEWART (CONT'D)  
Ah shit. I gotta go...Manana.

CURTIS  
Good night.

Nat, in a house robe and slippers, weaves her way through the maze of junk on their front lawn.

Dewart passes her without saying a word. Curtis watches as she follows him inside the house, still talking. He shifts into drive and pulls away.

INT. LAFORCHE HOME - NIGHT

The lights are out and the house is quiet. Curtis eases open the front door and steps inside. Standing on the door mat, he slips off his mud-caked boots and gently sets them aside.

AT HANNAH'S BEDROOM DOOR,

Curtis places his palm flat on the door and lets it open. Hannah is curled up with the covers. He watches her sleep.

Samantha, barefoot and wearing a sleep shirt, walks up behind Curtis. He turns his head when she approaches.

CURTIS  
(softly)  
Hey baby.

She wraps her arms around his waist and he lifts his elbow to make room for her. They whisper.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
She do all right today?

SAMANTHA

She was fine. She's still not playin' with the others, though. She can't connect. Honey, you gotta clean up that trash pile in the back. She fished out a board that had nails on it.

CURTIS

I'll get to it this weekend.

It's quiet for a moment.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

I still take off my boots so I won't wake her up.

She smiles up at her husband.

SAMANTHA

I still whisper.

He pulls her tight. They stand together in the doorway. The house is silent.

EXT. LAFORCHE BACKYARD - DAY

Curtis loads pieces from the trash pile into a wheelbarrow. He keeps an eye on Hannah as she jumps on a small, plastic playscape in the middle of the backyard.

The dog, Red, paces by the back door. He's agitated, but his movement is limited by the length of rope tied from his collar to a nearby post. He barks.

THUNDER STRIKES.

Curtis flinches at the loud boom. He looks to the sky and sees dark clouds twisting overhead. Hannah plays, unaffected by the noise.

To get a better view, Curtis moves from beneath a tree in the corner of the yard and surveys the large swath of farmland that runs up to his property.

Chain-link fencing partitions the yard from a deep concrete culvert that leads out to the open field.

A giant STORM CELL gathers force on the horizon there.

Red barks incessantly. He winces and strains against the rope tied to his collar.

Curtis flinches again as A BOLT OF LIGHTNING streaks to the ground in the distance. Sparks shoot into the air leaving a circle of scorched crops. Another CRACK of thunder.

A light rain begins. Red snaps his head around and bucks into the air. He gnashes at the rope.

Curtis collects Hannah off the playscape and turns back to the approaching STORM CELL. He holds up his hand and studies the falling rain. It's the thick, amber colored liquid.

With Hannah in his arms, Curtis watches, awestruck, as wispy tentacles drip to the ground forming a collection of THREE TORNADOS out in the field.

Behind them, Red's teeth fray the rope at his collar. He thrashes his head, the rope SNAPS, and the dog flies toward Curtis and Hannah.

Curtis turns to see Red charging them. He barely has time to set Hannah down before Red catches him by the forearm.

They crash to the ground, tangled together. Rain coming down hard now.

Curtis yells and waves Hannah back. Red, snapping, buries his teeth into the muscles in Curtis' arm. Blood streams from the wound.

Curtis screams in pain.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Curtis bolts up in bed grabbing his forearm. He grinds his teeth and doubles over in pain. It takes a moment for him to find his bearings.

His breathing slows. He gently rubs his hand over the skin on his arm. Sweat has collected around his collar and temples.

From the bed, sheets in a twisted mess, he looks around the room unsure of what just happened to him.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Eggs cool on a plate.

Curtis sits at the kitchen table dressed for work. He stares vacantly at his breakfast.

He looks up at Hannah. She sits on the floor surrounded by toy building blocks and plays with the dog. She rubs under Red's chest and in turn he licks her face. She smiles and gently pushes him away.

Samantha sits with her knees up drinking coffee.

SAMANTHA  
Curtis?

CURTIS  
What?

SAMANTHA  
Did you hear me? You got to be  
home, showered, ready to walk out  
the door by six tonight.

Curtis stands up and goes over to Hannah. He grabs her off  
the floor and she begins to protest with kicks and crying.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
What's wrong?

CURTIS  
Nothing. I just want her to eat her  
breakfast and stop playin' with the  
damn dog.

SAMANTHA  
She's fine down there. She had  
toast already.

Curtis, against flailing, manages to get Hannah in her chair.  
Curtis backs off, frustrated. Hannah climbs down from her  
chair and goes back to the floor and the dog.

CURTIS  
Hannah. Come here. Hannah.

SAMANTHA  
Curtis?

CURTIS  
What?

He stops and checks his watch.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
I'm late.

SAMANTHA  
You didn't eat anything?

Heading out.

CURTIS  
It's okay.

Curtis is gone. Samantha looks at Hannah on the floor with  
the dog.

INT. DELTA AGRI-PRO MAIN OFFICE - DAY

The main headquarters of Delta Agri-Pro is housed in a giant metal building. A row of cheaply built, 70's style offices with drop tile ceilings line the left of a large warehouse that contains all manner of agricultural and construction equipment. Tractors, backhoes, welding rigs, etc.

A GROUP OF MEN, many of which were represented at Gator's bar yesterday, sit in folding chairs or stand in a semi-circle around JIM THOMPSON(53). He speaks, clipboard in hand.

JIM

I didn't say you had control over the weather Russell, what I did say was that the top shelf has to be cleared by the 15th. That's non-negotiable.

Dewart eats from a bag of Sunflower seeds. Curtis stares down at his forearm. He rubs the skin there. Jim runs a finger down his clipboard.

JIM (CONT'D)

Umm, Curtis. Where we at on that east 82nd site?

Curtis snaps his head up, takes a second.

CURTIS

Yesterday slowed us down. We couldn't get the second pilot hole drilled.

Jim drops his head and the clipboard falls to his side. A melodramatic move.

JIM

It rained for two hours yesterday. Two hours and our entire schedule went in the toilet. We lose the permit if you're not out of there by end of day.

CURTIS

Yes sir.

JIM

End of day Curtis.

Curtis nods.

JIM (CONT'D)

All right. Valerie tells me that the father son pancake cook off...

EXT. DELTA AGRI-PRO MAIN OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Curtis and Dewart walk to Curtis' truck.

CURTIS  
Hey, I gotta make a stop before we  
head out there.

DEWART  
Think we got time?

CURTIS  
Yeah. There's time.

INT. HOME DEPOT - DAY

Dewart stands by a flatbed cart with a prefab DOGHOUSE  
sitting on it.

Curtis loads chain-link fencing materials onto the cart.

EXT. SOYBEAN FIELD - DAY

The wheels of the well-drilling rig are half sunk into the  
muddy soil.

Curtis stands over the hole being drilled. The turning metal  
pole suddenly seizes up and stops. Smoke begins to seep up  
from the hole.

CURTIS  
Sonofabitch.

Dewart jumps down from the control panel to take a look.

DEWART  
We stripped that bit.

CURTIS  
Yeah. Well, bring it up. We gotta  
re-set it.

Dewart walks back to his controls. Curtis heads to the cab  
of the drilling rig and checks his watch.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Shit.

Something catches his eye in the distance. Clearing past the  
rig, he walks out into the adjacent field.

He removes his goggles, eyes fixed on the acres of farmland  
that stretch for miles in front of him.

In the sky overhead,

AN ENORMOUS FLOCK OF BIRDS ROLL IN UNISON.

Hundreds of them make up a black swarm that twists and shifts in the air. They dive bomb then ascend in intricate, GEOMETRIC patterns.

Curtis watches, mesmerized.

Dewart strains a wrench against a bolt as the drill screeches in reverse.

DEWART

Curtis!

Curtis acknowledges Dewart but can't take his eyes off the pattern of birds. They shrink and stretch from thick clumps to long cylindrical tubes. A choreography.

Curtis reluctantly heads back to the rig, which is shrieking with the SOUND of metal on metal.

CURTIS

You ever see birds fly like that?!

DEWART

(holding his hand to his  
ear)

What?!

Curtis looks back, giving the birds a final review.

I/E. CURTIS' TRUCK/HOUSE - EVENING

The sun has just set adding a purple hue to the sky. Curtis steers his truck up to the front curb of his house.

THROUGH HIS WINDSHIELD,

He sees Samantha standing by her car, the back door open. She watches him pull up. Hannah is already packed into her car seat.

CURTIS

(to himself)  
Shit.

PARKED,

Curtis climbs out and walks to the driveway.

SAMANTHA

Come on we gotta go.

CURTIS

Ah, Jesus. I could really use a shower.

Samantha isn't having it. She climbs in the passenger seat. Curtis makes his way to her car.

INT. SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Curtis' work boots are encased in dry mud. Chunks have broken off and pepper the thin blue industrial carpet. His mud-stained fingers tap on the top of a desk. Dirt caked under his nails.

TEACHER (O.S.)  
So if you continue with the basic vocabulary, this will allow you to communicate with your children better.

Curtis sits, filthy, at a school desk he doesn't quite fit into. A TEACHER speaks to a ROOM FULL of PARENTS.

TEACHER (CONT'D)  
Between the ages of four and seven the focus is more on the sign and then later we'll begin adding the alphabet as more of a support system. Now in ASL...

Curtis looks over at Samantha, who is sitting in the desk next to him. She won't look at him.

He cranes his neck around to see toward the back of the room. An ASSISTANT TEACHER sits on a large, colorful rug with a GROUP of CHILDREN, all different ages, playing games that teach hand signs. Hannah actively participates in the group.

TEACHER (CONT'D)  
...the male sign is signed at the forehead area. For example, father is signed up here like this...Father, very good.

Curtis turns back in his chair and makes the sign for "dad" along with the other parents.

INT. SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Curtis, Samantha, and Hannah sit on the floor in a circle atop the colored rug.

Samantha turns over large flashcards with illustrated scenes on them. They take turns making the corresponding sign.

Curtis stares at Samantha, but she's still giving him the cold shoulder. Finally, while holding up a card, she looks at him. He signs, "I'm sorry". A fist moving in a circular motion at his chest.



SAMANTHA  
You're not sorry.

CURTIS  
I am sorry.

She looks to Hannah and signs, "swim".

SAMANTHA  
Well, you stink. You smell really bad.

He smiles.

CURTIS  
I think I smell good.

She smiles, begrudgingly, and then signs to Hannah, "Dad" and "stink". Curtis turns to some ladies behind him.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Do I smell good?

Samantha laughs and tries to cover his mouth with her hand.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
See. Maybe I should marry her instead.

They continue to laugh.

SAMANTHA  
Stop.

INT. CURTIS' TRUCK - DAY

Curtis slams the door to his truck, sealing him off from the torrential rainfall outside.

He shakes water off, wipes his face. The windows are smeared by thick, dark rain. It's hard to see out.

He looks over to Hannah sitting in her car seat. It looks odd on the front bench of the truck. He signs to her.

CURTIS  
(signing and speaking)  
You okay?

She nods. He cranks the truck and turns on the wipers. The liquid on the windshield streaks into long smudges. Curtis leans forward to get a better view of the street. He checks his blind spot and pulls away.

MOVING FAST ON A MAIN ROAD,

Stop lights blur into hazy red and green spheres.

Curtis checks the rearview, but the back window is covered by the rain. He tries rolling down his window, but water blows in. He rolls it back up and the smudging gets worse.

The truck shimmies from left to right, pushed by the wind. A THUNDER STRIKE rattles.

Suddenly,

THE SHAPE OF A PERSON STANDING IN THE ROAD.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

SHIT!

Curtis stomps on the brakes and turns the wheel. The truck hydroplanes.

CRASH! Curtis' head busts against the steering column. The front windshield cracks as the truck jerks to a stop.

The HISS of a broken radiator. Curtis winces from the blow to his head. Hannah is crying. He reaches over to her.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

Hannah physically looks all right, but she continues crying. Curtis reaches out and places a hand on her head. He's dazed, mumbling.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

You're okay.

The truck is angled up slightly like the front end has inched up a pole. A cut on his forehead has begun to bleed.

He sees movement. A PERSON passes by the hazy side window.

A SHAPE moves past the driver's window.

The truck shifts as weight is added to the bed. The SOUND of SOMEONE pulling things from the back of the truck. A moment.

WHACK! Curtis flinches as a 2X4 pounds the windshield.

The truck jostles from the weight of someone jumping on the hood.

Bump. Bump.

The roof caves in with two FOOTSTEPS.

Curtis looks around frantically. He reaches over to Hannah and begins to unstrap her from the car seat.

SMASH! A BOARD breaks through the Passenger Window.

A WOMAN, pale and aggressive, stands in the rain storm staring through the broken glass. She reaches for the lock.

Curtis pulls Hannah from the child seat and recoils against his door but is jolted as another board CRASHES through the driver's window.

A HAND yanks Curtis by his collar. He's pulled against the door. A pasty forearm wraps around his neck, choking him. He strains against the arm. Sucks air. Needing to breath.

The Woman at the passenger door grabs for Hannah. Curtis kicks at her.

A MAN's boot KICKS OUT the back window. The Man in the bed of the truck reaches for Curtis' face. He flails and kicks, unable to break free from the forearm at his door.

The Woman gets hold of Hannah. The child is yanked from Curtis' arms. He screams.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Hannah! Hannah!

Hands claw at Curtis' face. Scratching. Blood streaks. The Woman has disappeared into the storm with Hannah.

Curtis screams. Fingers swoop into his open mouth, grabbing hold of his cheek. They pull the cheek back. TEARING.

He yells in pain.

INT. HALLWAY/KITCHEN - DAY

Samantha walks down the hallway holding Hannah's shoes. Hannah trails behind her.

SAMANTHA  
Here honey. Put on your shoes

IN THE KITCHEN,

Samantha walks in. Curtis is standing at the counter in his undershirt and boxers pouring a cup of coffee.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Good, you're up.

Curtis doesn't turn to greet her. He just stirs a spoon in the black coffee.

Samantha walks up to him and puts a hand on his back. She notices that his shirt is soaked with sweat.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Honey, you're soaked.

He turns, taking a sip from the mug. She feels his forehead.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Are you sick?

CURTIS  
I've felt better.

SAMANTHA  
I guess we could stay home if we need to.

CURTIS  
Where you goin'?

SAMANTHA  
It's Saturday, I was going to take Hannah to my booth.

CURTIS  
Oh. Yeah.

Curtis walks to the table and takes a seat.

SAMANTHA  
You look really sick honey.

CURTIS  
I'm all right. It's just a cold or somethin'.

SAMANTHA  
Let me get you some Advil.

She heads for the hallway.

CURTIS  
No. Don't worry about it. Ya'll just go. I'll be fine.

SAMANTHA  
You sure?

CURTIS  
Yeah.  
(holds up the mug)  
Better already.

Samantha walks to her purse on the counter and roots through to find a set of keys.

SAMANTHA

Okay. I got my phone if you need anything. Don't forget Sunday lunch is here tomorrow.

This reminder makes Curtis rub his face with a grunt.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

If you're sick, we should cancel.

CURTIS

I'll be all right.

SAMANTHA

Okay, we'll talk later.

She heads for the door with Hannah.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Come on. Let's go.  
(to Curtis)  
You sure?

CURTIS

Honey, please.

SAMANTHA

Okay.

Samantha scoops up her bag and takes Hannah by the hand. They leave the room.

Curtis notices the dog, Red, sitting on his haunches looking at him. Curtis stares back, sipping his coffee.

EXT. LAFORCHE BACKYARD - DAY

The reverse lights shine as Curtis' pick-up rumbles backward.

Curtis eyes the side mirror as he maneuvers the truck into his backyard. In the mirror, the trash pile comes into view. Just behind it, the STORM SHELTER doors appear.

The truck shutters to a stop. Curtis studies the Shelter in the side mirror for a moment. A grassy bulge with angled metal doors peeking over the trash heap. He climbs out.

A blue tarp is pulled from the bed of the truck, floating down to the yard.

Curtis slips on a pair of work gloves and continues to eye the Storm Shelter. He yanks a bale of chain-link from the bed of the truck and carries it to the back corner of the yard. He steals another glance back toward the Shelter.

Dropping the bale, he sizes up the space. He looks to the sky. It's a beautiful day.

He begins counting off steps from the back fence line.

INT. FLEA MARKET - SERIES OF IMAGES - DAY

-A linen sheet floats down over a folding table.

-The hanging bag is placed on a portable clothes rod.

-Hands place an assortment of home sewn crafts like napkins and embroidered pillows out onto the table.

-A tackle box is opened revealing a tray of small bills and change. A calculator is removed.

Hannah kneels in front of a folding chair behind their BOOTH at an open-air flea market. She uses the seat of the chair as a table for a tiny porcelain tea set.

Samantha stands over her display table smiling and nodding at perusing CUSTOMERS.

EXT. LAFORCHE BACKYARD - SERIES OF IMAGES - DAY

-A mallet drives tall metal stakes into the ground.

-The cord holding together the bale of chain-link is snipped and a boot rolls the fencing out flat.

-Chain-link is attached to the stakes with a number of metal braids.

-The prefab DOGHOUSE is set down in the back corner.

Curtis stands in front of his newly created dog pen. It's waist high and about 7' X 10', tucked in the back left corner of the yard so that half of the pen is made up by the existing fencing.

INT. FLEA MARKET - DAY

Samantha turns to see a large woman holding up an intricately embroidered pillow.

You can tell by the look of her that she's a flea market pro, a BARGAIN HUNTER(54).

BARGAIN HUNTER  
How much you asking for this  
pillow?

SAMANTHA

This pillow's fifteen dollars.

BARGAIN HUNTER

That's more than I want to spend.

SAMANTHA

This is all hand stitched. It takes a really long time. That's why I charge that.

BARGAIN HUNTER

I'll give you seven for it.

Samantha looks at the woman, who is almost daring her.

SAMANTHA

I can't go that low.

BARGAIN HUNTER

Well that's my offer.

The woman sets down the pillow and begins looking over other items on the table. Samantha bites the inside of her cheek. She doesn't like to haggle.

SAMANTHA

How about 10?

The woman doesn't look up.

BARGAIN HUNTER

I'll give you eight, but it's in change.

Samantha forces a smile and motions to Hannah.

SAMANTHA

That's fine.

The woman smiles and removes a Ziplock bag of assorted coins from her purse. Hannah takes the bag.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Lucky for you she likes to count change.

Hannah opens the bag and begins to turn it over.

EXT. LAFORCHE BACKYARD - DAY - LATER

Curtis unlatches a piece of the braided wire holding a separated section of fencing that acts like a gate.

CURTIS

Red! Come on.

He opens it and looks down at Red, who sits at his feet. He speaks gently to the dog.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Get in.

Red walks into the pen.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Good boy.

Curtis closes the gate, kneels and places his hands on the fence. Red approaches so that his nose is touching Curtis' fingers. Curtis scratches him.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry about this buddy. We just gotta work it like this for awhile okay?

Curtis stands, wiping his hands off on his jeans. He sees the Storm Shelter poking up from behind the trash pile. He looks down at Red.

Curtis walks to the Shelter. Clearing past the trash pile, the shelter appears, the mound fully visible.

Curtis stops at the angled doors. He studies them. A rusted padlock is snapped shut across the handles. He reaches out and lifts up the padlock. He yanks on it, then lets it fall.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Coins splash across the kitchen counter. Curtis sets an empty coffee can back on the shelf in front of him and begins sifting through the change.

Odd screws, buttons, then he gets to what he's looking for. A small set of brass keys on a matching ring. He grabs the keys from the pile and exits.

EXT. LAFORCHE BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Curtis walks back out to the storm shelter, keys in hand, long flashlight in his back pocket.

He pulls up the padlock that holds the two rusted doors together. Popping off the rubber cover, he tries a key. The lock pops up. He unhooks it from the doors and lets it fall to the ground.

Curtis strains to pull the first door open. It's heavy and sticks from lack of use. Finally, with a creak, the door swings back.



Curtis holds his head to the side, a musty odor coming from inside. He forces the second door open.

Curtis stands in front of the shelter, a gaping black hole angled up from the earth.

He takes the flashlight from his pocket and turns it on. It illuminates concrete steps leading down.

The dog, nose at the fence, watches from his pen on the other side of the yard.

Curtis enters the shelter.

INT. STORM SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

It's pitch black inside. Curtis makes his way down the steps and holds out the flashlight. An assortment of trash on the ground, empty cans and water bottles, some candy wrappers.

The whole shelter is only about 6' X 8'. His head fits fine, but he still ducks like he might bump it.

He shines the light on the back wall. A rotted, wooden bench is bolted into the concrete there. Curtis walks to it and takes a seat.

He's looking back toward the steps now. A shaft of light cuts a strict beam through the open doors, lighting only the concrete entry.

Curtis takes in the quiet of the concrete box. He leans his head back on the wall and closes his eyes.

He shuts off his flashlight. Left in the dark, he takes a deep breath. Exhales slowly.

INT. DEN - NIGHT

NEWS ANCHOR  
(on television)  
While rescue workers made several  
attempts to reach the family,  
Walter Jacobs wife...

Curtis sits in his Lazyboy bent over a frozen dinner. He watches the local news on TV. Samantha walks in with a glass of milk and some Oreos, a magazine tucked under her arm.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Samantha takes a TIN down from the top of the fridge. It has designs of starfish and other ocean creatures on it.

She sets the tin on the counter next to the tackle box she uses as a cash register and yells to Curtis in the den.

SAMANTHA

But that's what I don't understand.  
If he didn't do anything why did  
you put him out back?

Samantha counts out the money earned at the flea market. She sets a portion aside and closes the tackle box. Curtis says something, but it's inaudible.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

What?

She opens the tin and removes an envelope with the word "BEACH" written on it in black sharpie. Samantha adds the money to the envelope and puts up the jar. She opens the fridge and takes out the milk.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

You hear me? I said if he didn't  
do anything why did you have to put  
him outside?

Curtis' attention is on the TV. Samantha sits on the couch.

CURTIS

I just wanted him to be outside for  
awhile.

SAMANTHA

He's your dog. He's always been an  
inside dog.

CURTIS

He's my dog, and that's why he's  
outside. Right now with Hannah and  
everything I just think it'd be  
better.

SAMANTHA

Hannah loves Red.

CURTIS

Hold on.

Curtis stares at the television program. Samantha's eyes narrow. Frustrated, she flips open her magazine.

NEWS ANCHOR

...the gas cloud spread across  
their six acre property.

(MORE)

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

The only way off their land was across the train tracks which were blocked by wreckage.

WALTER JACOBS

(from a hospital bed)

I tried using some wet rags and towels to breathe through but that just seemed to make it worse.

NEWS ANCHOR

While rescue workers made several attempts to reach the family, Walter Jacobs' wife and brother-in-law died in the home. Jacobs survived despite enduring eleven hours of exposure to the gas cloud before finally being flown out by helicopter.

CURTIS

You hearin' this?

Her nose still in the magazine.

SAMANTHA

It's awful.

CURTIS

Eleven hours. No way out.

Samantha shakes her head. Curtis watches the footage of Walter Jacobs. He watches his red rimmed eyes. The deep lines in his face.

INT. LAFORCHE HOME - DAY

It's daytime, but the house feels dark from the storm blowing outside. The SOUND of rain pelts the windows and roof.

Curtis, dressed for work, walks from his bedroom down the hallway. He passes the den and stops at its entryway.

IN THE DEN,

Hannah sits on the couch with her back to him. She's on her knees looking out one of the front windows.

A dull orange glow halos from the bank of windows. What sunlight there is appears diffused by the dark, thick rain smearing down the outside of the glass.

A THUNDER STRIKE.

Curtis flinches. He shows concern as heavier rain begins battering the house. The wind picks up making wood beams creak on their foundation.

CURTIS

Hannah.

Hannah doesn't move. She continues staring out the window. The SOUND of the storm outside intensifies. Windows begin to rattle in their frames.

Curtis walks over and reaches for Hannah but is startled by the sight of a MAN'S FACE just outside the window. Hannah and the Man have been staring at one another.

The Man, hollow eyed and pale, moves out of the window and out of sight.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

Hey!

Thunder CRACKS overhead. Curtis scoops Hannah into his arms and heads out of the room.

BANG. The front door rattles. Curtis stops and turns back.

BANG. BANG. The SOUND of someone kicking at the front door.

The storm outside has grown to a deafening pitch.

The power goes out.

The entire house vibrates, like a freight train running across the roof. The BANGING at the front door continues, frame giving way, as the STORM reaches its apex.

Curtis, holding Hannah, kneels and braces himself in the entryway to the den. He covers the back of Hannah's head with his hands and squeezes her tight into his shoulder.

Then Silence. A stillness.

The rain stops. No more banging at the front door. The SUN moves brightly through the front windows.

WOOSH.

The furniture in the den lifts off the ground. A couch, Lazyboy, coffee table and lamp. It all hangs in the air, floating for a moment. Quietly.

Curtis watches, eyes wide. A rumbling. Grows. The SUNLIGHT vanishes.

SMASH! The sound of the storm is sucked back into the room as the furniture crashes to the floor, breaking apart on impact.

The windows BLOW OUT.

Curtis squeezes his eyes shut and pivots his body, trying to protect Hannah. Shards of glass splinter across his face.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Curtis gasps for air. It doesn't come.

Gasp. He's sucking for a breath. Hyperventilating.

He rises up in bed, gasping. His face flushed and head soaked in sweat. His eyes dart around the room, frantically searching his surroundings.

One more gasp, and air enters his lungs. He coughs. More air. Long, deep breaths. He's calming down.

His breathing comes under control. His attention turns to something else. Something under the sheets.

Curtis pulls back the bed sheets. The mattress is soaked in YELLOW urine. This scares him.

His hand trembles as he reaches out to touch his wet boxers.

The toilet FLUSHES. Footsteps in heels.

Curtis quickly pulls the covers back up. Samantha enters the bedroom. She pulls her hair into a tight ponytail and picks earrings off a nearby dresser, her back to Curtis.

CURTIS

Babe?

SAMANTHA

Yeah?

CURTIS

You got the number for Dr. Shannan?

She turns.

SAMANTHA

You're still not feeling good?

CURTIS

Yeah, but you got the number?

SAMANTHA

Uh, yeah baby but he'll be closed today.

She approaches the bed and he holds his hand out.

CURTIS  
Right. Yeah. I'll call tomorrow.

SAMANTHA  
Honey if you're not feeling good we  
take you in somewhere.

She walks closer to the bed.

CURTIS  
No. Stop!

She's taken aback.

SAMANTHA  
Okay. Do you want me to cancel  
lunch today...

CURTIS  
Shit...

SAMANTHA  
What is that?

CURTIS  
I'm sorry. I'm sorry. It's just I  
got a sore throat. I'm sorry I'm  
taking it out on you.

SAMANTHA  
I was gonna leave Hannah with you  
so I could go to church, but I'm  
not going to with you like this.

CURTIS  
It's fine. I'll be fine.

SAMANTHA  
No. She needs breakfast.

CURTIS  
(stern)  
I've got it.

SAMANTHA  
I'm sorry that you feel bad but you  
need to drop the attitude.

CURTIS  
Come on. Just go.

SAMANTHA  
What's wrong with you?

CURTIS  
I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Just go.

SAMANTHA

Hannah's in the den. We have  
cereal for her.

Samantha stomps out of the room. Curtis sighs. He halfway  
lifts the sheet then lets it fall again.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Curtis strips the sheets off the bed.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

The laundry room is a stackable set squeezed into a closet  
off the hallway.

Curtis loads the sheets into the washer and presses start.  
Watching the clothes spin, a thought.

INT. DEN - DAY

Curtis pushes Hannah's shoe onto her foot. He stops with the  
shoes to concentrate. He moves his index finger from one  
shoulder to the other and speaks.

CURTIS

We're going out.

Confused, she slices her finger down an open palm.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

(with open palms)

We're going out. Okay? It's okay.

EXT. GRAFTON PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

Curtis leads Hannah up the front walk of the Grafton Public  
Library. It's a one-story brick building with 1960's  
architecture. The parking lot is nearly empty behind them.

INT. GRAFTON PUBLIC LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Curtis holds the glass front door open for Hannah. They stop  
in the entryway and survey the LIBRARY.

There are only a few people, one of which is the LIBRARIAN  
sitting behind a central desk. It is an open room with  
cinder block walls painted in brightly colored shapes.

Curtis finds the children's section to the left and leads Hannah over. She takes a seat at a kid's size table as Curtis grabs a Dinosaur book from a nearby display.

Kneeling in front of her, Curtis shows her the book and motions with open hands to the ground.

CURTIS  
You stay put okay?

Hannah begins looking through the book. Curtis stands, he sees a set of computers under a sign reading, "CATALOGUE".

AT THE COMPUTERS,

Curtis takes a seat in front of one of the two computers set up on a folding table. He eyes the search screen. Title, Author, Subject.

He clicks on "Subject" and types the word "DREAMS". He scrolls through a list of titles and writes down a number.

He looks back for Hannah. She's still flipping through her book. No one else is around.

He begins another search. He types "MENTAL ILLNESS".

AT THE BOOK SHELVES,

Curtis scans the spines looking for his title. He already holds two books against his chest.

He pulls out a thick hard cover book. The title reads, "Understanding Mental Illness."

I/E. CURTIS' TRUCK/GRAFTON STREETS - MOVING - DAY

Hannah is once again strapped into her car seat. She holds a big children's book in her hands.

They pass a Grocery Store. Curtis turns as it goes by.

The truck pulls a U-turn in the street and heads for the store parking lot.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Curtis pushes a cart down the aisle. Hannah rides in the fold down metal seat.

They stop at the bottled water section. Curtis loads several plastic, gallon jugs of water into his cart.

The cart is filled with an assortment of supplies: Batteries, canned food, first aid supplies, matches.



INT. LAFORCHE HOME/DINING ROOM - DAY

Samantha sits in the dining room at a fully dressed table. Steam rises off bowls of mashed potatoes and green beans. Fried chicken piled on a platter.

MELVIN(58) taps his finger on the empty plate in front of him and subtly checks his watch. JANINE(57) smooths out the embroidered table cloth.

KATHRYN(37) and CHARLIE(39) tend to their child, REX(3). Rex repeatedly jams a finger into the potatoes.

SAMANTHA

Let's just start.

MELVIN

Let's all join hands for the blessing.

The SOUND of the front door opening. Samantha gets up and leaves the room.

BY THE FRONT DOOR,

Curtis has Hannah in his arms. He closes the door. Samantha appears behind them. She speaks in a hushed, angry voice.

SAMANTHA

Where the hell have you been?

CURTIS

I know. I'm sorry. I had to run an errand.

SAMANTHA

You're really late.

CURTIS

I know.

SAMANTHA

You didn't even bring your cell phone.

Samantha heads back to the dining room. Curtis sucks his teeth.

INT. LAFORCHE HOME/DINING ROOM - LATER

Potatoes dalloped, chicken passed, the table is active with the family serving and eating. Curtis watches it all, somehow separated from it. He's exhausted.

MELVIN

Missed you at church this mornin'  
Curtis.

SAMANTHA

Dad.

MELVIN

He knows what to do if he wants me  
to stop askin'.

Curtis looks at him.

CURTIS

Was it a good service?

MELVIN

It was. It was good work.

Curtis nods. The family in front of him eats the meal.

CURTIS

I'm thinking about cleaning up that  
storm shelter out back.

They look at him.

INT. LAFORCHE HOME/HALLWAY - EVENING

Light from the open closet door cuts a shape in the  
relatively dark hallway.

Curtis roots through the back of the closet.

INT. STORM SHELTER - SERIES OF IMAGES - NIGHT

-Curtis sweeps the concrete floor of the storm shelter. A  
Coleman camping lantern sits on the wooden bench attached to  
the back wall. It casts an odd light up into the room.

-Curtis places cans of food onto metal shelves.

-Curtis flips through keys on his key ring. He adds the two  
small padlock keys to the ring.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Samantha sits on the bed in her pajamas applying lotion to  
her legs. She wipes the remainder on her knuckles and looks  
at the empty spot on Curtis' side of the bed.

## INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Samantha walks into the kitchen and turns off the overhead light. She pauses, seeing something in the backyard.

She stops at the back door and stares out at the storm shelter. The camp lantern's orange light glows through the open metal doors.

She watches for a moment.

## INT. STORM SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

The shelter has been cleaned up. The metal shelves hold canned food, water jugs and first aid supplies. Blankets and pillows are stacked on the other side of the room.

Curtis sits in the back corner of the shelter on the wooden bench. He flips through one of the books from the library. The cover reads, "DREAM ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION". The book on mental illness sits by his feet.

## INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE/RECEPTION AREA - DAY

The Doctor's Office is a converted one-story residential house. Curtis slouches in a faux leather chair grouped in the small reception area. He has nodded off.

His head snaps up. He sucks air through his nose and sits up in his chair. He sees a WOMAN(25) reading a children's book aloud to her DAUGHTER(3) on a colorful rug in the corner.

A door opens and a NURSE with a clipboard steps out.

NURSE

Curtis?

Curtis stands and follows the nurse out of the room.

## INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE/EXAM ROOM - DAY

Curtis sits, fully clothed, on the edge of a paper covered bench in the exam room. DOCTOR SHANNAN, an older man with a smoker's voice, enters smiling and gives a firm handshake.

DOCTOR SHANNAN

Curtis, how you doin' bud?

CURTIS

Hey Doc.

DOCTOR SHANNAN

How's my girl?

The Doctor turns to a small table in the corner and grabs a wooden tongue depressor and an otoscope from a drawer.

CURTIS  
She's good.

DOCTOR SHANNAN  
That's good to hear. Tilt your head back for me.

The Doctor shines the otoscope into his nostrils.

CURTIS  
I don't have a cold.

The Doctor pauses and turns to check a chart on the table.

DOCTOR SHANNAN  
Oh. Did she get that down wrong?

CURTIS  
No, I just told her that.

DOCTOR SHANNAN  
Oh. So what's the problem?

CURTIS  
I've been havin'...I've been having some trouble sleepin'. I was hopin' you could give me somethin' for it.

Doctor Shannan takes a seat on a rolling stool and processes the request.

DOCTOR SHANNAN  
How long's this been goin' on?

CURTIS  
'Bout four nights now.

DOCTOR SHANNAN  
You're not sleepin' at all?

CURTIS  
Well some, but real restless.

DOCTOR SHANNAN  
Well, I think four nights is a little too soon to tell. My advice would be to not eat or drink anything after 8 o'clock at night. Cut back on any alcoholic drinks, tobacco, caffeine...get some daily exercise.

CURTIS  
Well, I think...

Curtis isn't sure how much he wants to say.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
I think I may need to try some medication.

DOCTOR SHANNAN  
Why do you say that?

CURTIS  
(still reluctant)  
The reason I've been having trouble sleeping is because of some dreams I've been havin'. I didn't think it was anything at first, but then the other day I woke up and the bed was wet.

DOCTOR SHANNAN  
You urinated in your bed?

CURTIS  
Yeah. Couple days before that I had a dream that my dog attacked me and it took all day for the pain in my arm to go away.

Doctor Shannan leans his back against the table and thinks about this.

DOCTOR SHANNAN  
You been to see your mother lately?

He swivels the stool around and writes on a prescription pad.

CURTIS  
It's been about a month.

He tears two sheets off and holds the first out to Curtis.

DOCTOR SHANNAN  
Okay. This is a prescription for a pretty mild sedative. It's non-habit forming, but I'm only giving you enough for a few days anyway. Take it and see if it helps. In the meantime,  
(holds up the other slip)  
This is the number of a good friend of mine in Columbus. He's a psychiatrist. It's a drive, but he's the best I know.

CURTIS

Okay.

DOCTOR SHANNAN

I'll give him a call and let him know you'll be down to see him.

CURTIS

All right.

EXT. PUMP STATION CONSTRUCTION SITE/FARMLAND - DAY

The construction site sits in the middle of open farmland but is considerably more involved than Curtis' last job site. Dump trucks, backhoes and cement mixers roll and beep across muddy ground. A 20 MAN CREW operates throughout.

NEAR THE WELL DRILLING RIG,

Dewart pushes down a lever that activates the hydraulic lift for the drill. Curtis appears behind him.

CURTIS

Hey Dewart!

DEWART

(half turning)

What you say Curtis?

CURTIS

Not much.

Curtis kneels at the ground beside the rig. Sifts dirt through his fingers.

DEWART

They want us to get a pilot hole drilled by lunch. I figure worse comes to worse we can eat on the rig.

CURTIS

Yeah, we'll get it done. Weekend all right?

DEWART

Yeah. Same old shit.

EXT. PUMP STATION CONSTRUCTION SITE/FARMLAND - LATER

It's lunchtime. The men sit around in different groups eating out of bagged lunches.

Curtis eats a sandwich and watches the men. Some bitching. Others laughing.

Wind blows through a wooded area nearby. He watches the leaves move. He looks to the sky. It's a beautiful day. Almost peaceful.

EXT. SHEPHERD INSURANCE OFFICE - DAY

The insurance office sits in a row of small downtown buildings.

INSURANCE AGENT (O.S.)

No. I need the name of the specialist whose diagnosis you'll accept.

INT. SHEPHERD INSURANCE OFFICE - DAY

An INSURANCE AGENT(62) sits behind her desk with the phone to her ear. She's an older woman wearing a pant suit.

Samantha sits by a fake plant and sips a Coke. She watches Hannah play with building blocks from a plastic tub provided by the office.

INSURANCE AGENT

(into the phone)

No. Look it. I've told you this twice. Please. Just get me the name and or the approval code.

(beat)

Okay.

The Agent writes something down.

INSURANCE AGENT (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

All right. And the phone. Well great. Thank you very much.

The Agent hangs up the phone and rips a piece of paper from the pad in front of her. She hands it to Samantha.

INSURANCE AGENT (CONT'D)

This is the name and number of the specialist who the insurance company approves of. Just call and make an appointment. Now if this doctor signs off, you should have the implant procedure fully covered. I'm sorry it took so long.

Samantha looks at the paper, impressed.

SAMANTHA

Can I give you a hug?

## INSURANCE AGENT

It's fine. It's fine. You know your husband's company actually has very good insurance when it kicks in. Not a lot of jobs offer policies half as good. You're very lucky.

## INT. GROCERY STORE PHARMACY - DAY

Curtis stands in line at the pharmacy located in the back corner of the grocery store. He approaches the counter and hands over his prescription to a female PHARMACIST.

She disappears behind a divider as Curtis removes his wallet. He takes out an insurance card and runs his thumb over the bills.

The Pharmacist returns with a stapled white bag. Curtis holds out the insurance card.

## PHARMACIST

That's okay. We have your insurance on file. That'll be \$47.64.

## CURTIS

What's the co-pay?

## PHARMACIST

That is your co-pay.

Curtis studies the small paper sack and removes three, 20 dollar bills from his wallet.

## INT. LAFORCHE HOME - EVENING

Curtis enters the front door, closing it behind him. He turns and is met by Samantha, who wraps her arms around him.

## CURTIS

Hey.

She squeezes him. Then kisses him.

## SAMANTHA

I love you.

## CURTIS

I love you too.

## SAMANTHA

I have good news.



INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Curtis finishes off a dinner of roast and potatoes. Samantha sets the piece of paper the Insurance Agent gave her in front of him and begins clearing the table.

Hannah draws on a piece of construction paper at the other end of the table. Samantha picks up a crayon and shows it to Hannah.

SAMANTHA  
Green? How 'bout a red?

She pretends to use the crayon as lipstick.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
It was like talking to a sane person for once. She made one phone call. That's it. I've been trying that 800 number for weeks.

CURTIS  
It's great. It's great.  
(to Hannah)  
Hey, Hannah.

Hannah doesn't look up. He stands and goes over to her. Touches her shoulder and kneels beside her.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
You excited? Huh? We're gonna get you some help.

Curtis touches his finger to her chest then stops. He can't think of the sign. He turns to Samantha.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
How do you say...sign excited?

SAMANTHA  
Like this.

Samantha shows him the sign. Curtis mimics.

CURTIS  
Excited. Yeah?

Hannah nods. He kisses her on the forehead. He picks up a crayon and holds it up to her lips like lipstick.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Now I got to do you.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Samantha lies under the covers looking at a real estate magazine. Curtis takes off his clothes by the dresser. He subtly removes a prescription bottle from his pants pocket and cups it in his palm.

SAMANTHA

Oh, honey. Look at this one. It's a 2-1 and it sits directly on the beach. Wouldn't that be great? We wouldn't have to worry about Hannah crossing traffic.

Curtis walks over and leans in to see the page. They are rental photos of beach condos.

CURTIS

What's the rent?

SAMANTHA

Eight ninety nine a week.

CURTIS

That sounds real nice.

Samantha keeps flipping through the magazine as Curtis heads to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Curtis turns the water on in the sink and shakes two pills from the orange bottle. He stuffs them in his mouth and chases it with water from the faucet.

Curtis looks at himself in the mirror for a moment before cutting out the light.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

A crack in the ceiling slowly comes into focus.

Curtis sits up in bed, rubbing his eyes. He looks around the room. He hears Samantha in the kitchen.

He takes a deep breath, smelling the breakfast cooking. Curtis smiles.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Curtis sits at the kitchen table as Samantha dishes up some eggs.

SAMANTHA  
You sleep well?

CURTIS  
Yeah. I did.

SAMANTHA  
You look like you're feeling  
better.

Curtis nods and eats his breakfast.

EXT. PUMP STATION CONSTRUCTION SITE/FARMLAND - DAY

Curtis and Dewart attach a drill bit to the rig.

CURTIS  
You want me to come there and do it  
for you? Jesus.

Curtis steadies the large metal piece as Dewart ratchets it  
down.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Hey, how much food do you think  
you'd need to live on for a week?

DEWART  
What do you mean?

CURTIS  
I mean to stay alive. What do you  
think you'd need?

DEWART  
Not a lot.

CURTIS  
You think?

DEWART  
I don't know. You hear about  
people livin' for days all the time  
offa bark and melted snow.

CURTIS  
I've never heard of that.

DEWART  
Shit I don't know. You asked the  
question.

CURTIS  
It's on there. It's on. Come on.

Curtis steps back from the arm of the drill. Dewart taps the wrench on two bolts to make sure they are secure.

A LOUD BOOM RATTLES. THUNDER.

Curtis flinches at the sound.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Dammit.

DEWART  
What?

Curtis turns around and checks the sky. It's clear blue. Not a cloud in sight.

CURTIS  
It sounds like thunder.

DEWART  
What sounds like thunder?

BOOM. ANOTHER THUNDER STRIKE.

Curtis doesn't move. He watches Dewart walk to the controls of the drilling rig.

MORE THUNDER. ROLLING NOW.

Curtis steps back from the rig and checks the horizons. Nothing. It's a beautiful day.

Dewart looks down at him. Curtis' face is pale, scared.

Curtis looks at him. Not sure what to say. Curtis turns and walks to his truck.

DEWART (CONT'D)  
Where you goin'? Curtis. Where you goin'?

BY CURTIS' TRUCK,

Curtis stops and rests his hands on the bed of the truck. Another THUNDER STRIKE makes him flinch.

Curtis VOMITS next to the back tire.

He quickly stands, wiping his mouth. He checks over his shoulders to see if anyone has seen him.

I/E. CURTIS' TRUCK/RURAL HIGHWAY - MOVING - DAY

Curtis studies his face in the rearview mirror as he sails down the rural highway.

He rubs his eyes with the back of his hand and looks in the side mirror. The horizon is still clear.

Curtis begins to hyperventilate. Short breaths accompanied by cold sweat. Sucking air. He can't breathe. He panics.

The truck tires slide on the gravel shoulder as he abruptly slams on the brakes and steers off the highway.

Dust settles outside as Curtis begins to get his breathing under control. He rests his head on the steering wheel and shuts his eyes tight.

Everything quiets down. His breathing. The road. No more thunder.

Curtis looks out his passenger window.

His truck has stopped in front of a Tractor Trailer Depot. A rusted shipping container with giant white letters painted on it reads, "CONTAINERS FOR SALE".

Curtis stares at this. He climbs out of the truck.

EXT. TRAILER DEPOT - CONTINUOUS

Curtis walks around his truck to get a better look at the depot. The dirt lot is piled high with containers.

He studies the "FOR SALE" sign, then a smaller sign next to it that lists available sizes.

Curtis turns back to his truck and rubs his face, still shaking things off. He looks up at the sky. Clear and blue. A thought comes to him. He checks his watch.

I/E. CURTIS' TRUCK/INTERSTATE - DAY

Curtis drives down a divided four-lane interstate.

EXT. PLEASANT GROVE APARTMENTS - DAY

Curtis' truck pulls into the parking lot of the Pleasant Grove Apartments. It's a well manicured, new construction facility. The words "AN ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITY" are written under the apartment name on the sign out front.

INT. ASSISTED LIVING APARTMENT/HALLWAY - DAY

Curtis stands by the door for apartment 212 in an interior carpeted hallway. He knocks.

A passing ATTENDANT guides an elderly WOMAN down the hallway. Curtis nods to them.

The door opens. SARAH(61), a plainly dressed woman much too young to live in a nursing home, looks surprised.

SARAH  
Curtis.

CURTIS  
Hey Mom.

Her eyes light up and she wraps her arms around Curtis.

SARAH  
Come in.

CURTIS  
Sure.

She leads him inside.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The apartment is small, but nicely kept. Not much furniture or personal trappings. Framed family photos mostly.

CURTIS  
I'm going to get some water.

He fills his glass at the sink. Takes a sip.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
You want some?

SARAH  
No.

Curtis enters the living area as Sarah stops in the kitchenette.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Sarah runs her fingers around the bent edges of a small photo of Hannah.

SARAH  
Isn't she lovely.

Curtis drops his head. He looks uncomfortable.

CURTIS  
Mom?

SARAH

Yes.

CURTIS

I need to ask you somethin'.

She looks at him. Totally open.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

Do you remember what year we brought you up here? To the first place.

She has to think about it.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

It was '86.

SARAH

Yes. Because Kyle was going to be a senior.

CURTIS

I was 10.

SARAH

Yes.

Curtis nods.

CURTIS

Can you remember what happened before you got diagnosed?

SARAH

What do you mean?

CURTIS

I mean...I just want to know how it all started. Before you had to leave.

Sarah settles in her chair, understanding the question.

SARAH

Oh, I don't know. I remember it was a real stressful time. Your father was gone a lot, and I couldn't handle things on my own.

CURTIS

Did you ever have any dreams? Like bad dreams.

SARAH

No. Nothing like that. There was always...

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)  
 (searches for the words)  
 There was always a panic that took  
 hold of me. I thought people were  
 watching me or listening to me.  
 I...

Sarah is remembering. Her face draws tight, frustrated.

CURTIS  
 It's all right. It's all right.  
 It's fine.

Sarah looks up and smiles. Her focus shifts back to her son.

SARAH  
 Are you okay?

CURTIS  
 Yeah. Yeah. I'm fine.

Sarah looks back down to Hannah's photo.

EXT. GAS STATION - LATE AFTERNOON

The relatively new gas station sits just off the interstate.  
 Curtis stands at the pump filling up his truck.

He watches the numbers next to the dollar sign roll higher.  
 He looks back at the busy freeway. Cars passing.

The pump stops. The final amount reads, "\$68.79". He hangs  
 the hose back onto the pump and pulls a cell phone from his  
 pocket. He dials and waits.

CURTIS  
 (into the phone)  
 May I have the number for Doctor  
 George Shannan?  
 (waits)  
 Thanks.

Curtis, phone still at his ear, turns and watches the  
 horizon. The sun hangs low in the sky. A reddish haze.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
 (into the phone)  
 Hi, is Doctor Shannan there? May I  
 speak with him? This is Curtis  
 LaForche.  
 (waits)  
 Hey Doc. Yeah, sorry...Sorry to  
 call you at home, I just don't  
 think I can make it to Columbus to  
 see that psychiatrist. Yeah, it's  
 just too far. Is there somewhere  
 local you can send me?



INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Curtis steps quietly into the bedroom. The lights are on, but Samantha has fallen asleep on top of the made bed.

He empties his pockets on the dresser and Samantha wakes up.

SAMANTHA

Hey.

CURTIS

Oh, hey. Sorry I woke you up.

SAMANTHA

It's okay. Where you been?

CURTIS

I went to see mom.

Samantha sits up in the bed.

SAMANTHA

Is she okay?

CURTIS

Mmm hmm. I just wanted to check up on her.

SAMANTHA

You shoulda told me we would have gone with you.

CURTIS

That's okay.

Samantha lays back down, tucking herself under the covers.

SAMANTHA

Come to bed.

CURTIS

I will in a bit.

Curtis finishes emptying his pockets.

INT. HANNAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hannah sleeps soundly in her bed. Curtis stands at the door watching her. He walks over and takes a seat on the edge of the bed. He listens to her breath.

EXT. LAFORCHE BACKYARD - NIGHT

The backyard is almost pitch black. Curtis stands in front of the storm shelter doors holding out the Coleman Lantern.

He surveys the backyard with it. The trash pile has been removed leaving the yard more open.

Curtis begins to count steps out from the left edge of the shelter doors. He counts to himself, three feet per stride.

He begins to outline a rectangle.

INT. DEN - NIGHT

The house is quiet and the den is lit by a single lamp.

Curtis sits alone on the couch, hunched over the coffee table. He writes on a yellow legal pad. It's a list with the heading, "REMODEL". It reads:

- Shipping Container, \$1,800
- PVC, \$475
- Plumbing and waste, \$1,650
- Bobcat, \$1,750
- Jackhammer with pneumatics, \$800
- Sealant, \$150
- Dirt, -\$250

At the bottom of the list, Curtis writes the figure, "\$7,500" and circles it.

He studies the number, then begins drawing a rectangular diagram below it.

INT. FIRST NATIONAL BANK OFFICE - DAY

Curtis blows into a Styrofoam cup and stares through the blinds of an office window. Outside, a flag snaps at the top of a pole next to the FIRST NATIONAL BANK sign.

He looks down at a NEWSPAPER laid out on an end table next to him. He flips it over and studies the ads on the back. A big one in the corner catches his eye.

It reads, "CUYAHOGA GUN AND KNIFE SHOW!" The ad lists items for sell/trade: ...Tactical Gear, Gas Masks, Batons...

Curtis focuses in on the words "Gas Masks" and tears the ad out. JOHN MYERS(34) enters with a set of papers in his hand. Curtis quickly tucks the ad into his back pocket.

Myers takes a seat in one of two chairs in front of his desk and looks over the papers. He takes a pen out of his pocket as Curtis sits down next to him.

MYERS

Well you've kept up with the payments on the house.

CURTIS  
We've been good about that.

Myers nods, but he carries a look of concern. He confides.

MYERS  
I gotta tell you Curtis, banks aren't loaning money the way they used to. We've got you a loan today, but the interest rates are variable and we have to tie it to your house.

CURTIS  
That's fine.

Myers sits back, drawing the pen to his lips and tapping it.

MYERS  
Curtis, I've known you a long time. We financed your house for you, two vehicles. I'm telling you this is a risky loan you're taking.

CURTIS  
I need the money John.

Myers nods, then leans forward and clicks the pen.

MYERS  
Okay.

EXT. FIRST NATIONAL BANK - DAY

Curtis opens the door to his truck which is parked in the bank's lot. He unbuttons his starched white shirt and places it on the truck seat.

He pulls out a dirty blue work shirt and begins buttoning it.

EXT. PUMP STATION CONSTRUCTION SITE/FARMLAND - DAY

Dewart sits at the controls of the drilling rig. He sees Curtis approaching through the construction site. Curtis waves two fingers at him. Dewart shuts down the drill.

CURTIS  
Hey.

DEWART  
Hey.

CURTIS  
Sorry I left you yesterday.

Dewart hops down and the two approach the drill site. Dewart seems sullen.

DEWART  
Jim came by. I covered for you.

CURTIS  
Thanks.

DEWART  
I need your help with the depth charts.

CURTIS  
Sure.

EXT. PUMP STATION CONSTRUCTION SITE/FARMLAND - LATER

Curtis and Dewart sit on the drilling rig eating lunch.

DEWART  
Fuckin' Nat put me in charge of frying oysters for that Lions Club supper.

CURTIS  
You need another burner?

DEWART  
Yeah, if you still got yours I could use it.

CURTIS  
You think you could help me with somethin'?

DEWART  
Whatta you need?

CURTIS  
I'm gonna build out the tornado shelter in my backyard. I could use some help.

DEWART  
The hell you wanna do that for?

CURTIS  
Just needs to be done.

Dewart eyes him, unsure.

DEWART  
What do you need?

CURTIS  
I figure I'll do it on Saturday,  
borrow some equipment from work.

DEWART  
You sure about that?

CURTIS  
I just need a backhoe, a hauler.  
I'll rent the rest.

Dewart stares off into the distance. He notices Curtis looking at him, waiting for an answer.

DEWART  
Yeah. Whatever. I'll help.

CURTIS  
Thanks.

DEWART  
You all right man?

CURTIS  
What do you mean?

DEWART  
I just don't wanna see you fuck up.

CURTIS  
I'm not.

EXT. TRAILER DEPOT - LATE AFTERNOON

Curtis stands and talks with a MAN in the middle of the Tractor Trailer Depot just off the highway. The Man points to a row of shipping containers and uses his hands to mimic how one would be lowered.

They shake hands and Curtis walks away.

EXT. COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER - DAY

The Community Health Center is a one-level, aged brick building.

INT. COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER/LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Curtis sits in the lobby filling out a clipboard full of forms and questionnaires. Light traffic flows in and out.

He flips a page over. The section heading reads, "Family Medical History". Curtis begins to write.

INT. COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER/HALLWAY - LATER

Curtis references a slip of paper as he looks for a room number in a long, linoleum tiled hallway; a book and note pad tucked under his arm.

He finds the correct door ajar and knocks.

KENDRA (O.S.)  
Come in.

INT. KENDRA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

KENDRA(42), a black woman with short hair, sits behind a public issue desk in a public issue office. A poster about flu shots hangs on the wall. There is no personal decor.

KENDRA  
Hi.

CURTIS  
Hello.

She half stands and offers a hand.

KENDRA  
Have a seat. I'm Kendra.

CURTIS  
Curtis.

Curtis shakes and they sit. Kendra opens a manila folder.

KENDRA  
I'm gonna start by askin' you some questions.

CURTIS  
Okay. I already answered all the questions on the forms.

KENDRA  
Yeah, I know. I looked at 'em, but I need to get a profile started on you.

CURTIS  
Right. Well...

Curtis slides the yellow legal pad out of the book he brought. It's the library book on Mental Illness.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Out of the five possible symptoms needed to be diagnosed with schizophrenia:  
(MORE)

CURTIS (CONT'D)

(reads off the pad)

delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech, disorganized behavior, and the negative symptoms, I've had two. Delusions and hallucinations. But they say it has to continue for six months to be diagnosed schizophrenia and mine hasn't been goin' on anywhere near that long. So, I took this quiz in the back of the book and I scored a five out of a possible twenty. Schizophrenia starts at twelve. So, they say it might be a...

(reads off the pad)

brief psychotic disorder. Whatever it is, I need to know what to do or what to get on to get this thing under control.

Kendra stares at him.

KENDRA

Look. I'm a counselor. Certified, but I'm not a psychiatrist. I can't prescribe anything to you. I can talk to you, I can recommend where to send you, but that's it.

Curtis begins to gather his things.

KENDRA (CONT'D)

Now that said, if you want to talk, I'll listen. For a lot of people that's a good start.

Curtis hesitates.

KENDRA (CONT'D)

Now you said here that your mother was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia in her thirties. And you're at 35. You wanna talk about that?

Curtis settles in his seat. Sets his book on the floor.

CURTIS

Yeah, I don't know my mother's symptoms. I was just 10. My brother was 17. And, uh...I don't know. She just left me in the car in the parking lot at the grocery store one day. And she didn't come back. And then they found her a week later eatin' trash out of a dumpster in northern Kentucky.

(MORE)

CURTIS (CONT'D)

My dad had to put her in the state hospital in Columbus. And she's been in assisted living ever since. Yep. My dad raised me. He died last April.

Kendra nods, a pleasant look on her face.

KENDRA

So tell me 'bout these dreams.

Curtis studies her face, bites at the inside of his cheek.

INT. SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM - NIGHT

The class has finished. PARENTS and KIDS trickle out. Samantha stands off to the side speaking with the Teacher.

SAMANTHA

I don't know what our schedule will be, but...

TEACHER

That's all right. But I really do think you should continue with the sign language. And any additional therapies that kids need for the cochlear implant.

SAMANTHA

Absolutely.

TEACHER

Okay. Good night.

SAMANTHA

Good night.

As Samantha talks to the Teacher, Curtis looks over flashcards with Hannah. He signs "SUNSHINE", a circle in the sky with the hand then coming down, fingers spread.

I/E. SAMANTHA'S CAR/INTERSTATE - NIGHT

Curtis drives while Samantha and Hannah sleep in the back.

Surrounding farmland drops quickly into darkness joining a purple sky in the distance. Through the passenger window, a streak of lightning breaks across the horizon. Then another.

Curtis, seeing this, repositions to get a better look through the window. It's horizontal lightning that appears to leap from cloud to cloud. Well defined bolts that strobe the night sky silhouetting towering thunderheads.



Curtis looks back to Samantha and Hannah, still asleep.

He pulls the car over to the shoulder of the interstate and continues watching. He climbs out.

ON THE SHOULDER OF THE INTERSTATE,

Cars rush by as Curtis gently closes the car door. Keeping his eyes on the lightning storm, he walks to the shoulder.

It's a fantastic display of light. Hurried and intense. A BOLT of lightning reaches down to the ground. Sparks pop off the earth in the distance. Another BOLT streaks down, getting closer.

Curtis sees the traffic continuing to pass by at full speed.

CURTIS  
(to himself)  
Is anyone seeing this?

Curtis walks to the back window of the car and sees Samantha sleeping inside. He reaches out to knock but stops himself.

He turns back to the lightning and watches.

INT. DELTA AGRI-PRO MAIN OFFICE - DAY

The giant rolling door curls up in the Delta Agri-Pro warehouse. Sunlight bounces off the finished concrete.

Curtis pulls the chain for the door as Dewart slams the tow latch down on the back of a DUMP TRUCK.

I/E. FLEA MARKET/LAFORCHE HOME - SERIES OF IMAGES - DAY

-The Dump Truck and Tow Trailer sit parked on the street in front of Curtis' house. Dewart stands at the back of the trailer with his hand on the ramp lever as Curtis reverses a BACKHOE onto the street.

-Samantha works her booth at the flea market. Hannah neatly organizes a collection of colored beads on the floor.

-A 20 foot rectangle has been outlined in bright orange paint next to the storm shelter in Curtis' backyard. Other colored markings denote gas and water lines. The bucket on the Backhoe digs into the center of the dotted rectangle.

-Dewart maneuvers the Backhoe's bucket and drops a load of earth into the bed of the Dump Truck. Red, the dog, barks at the loud machinery from his pen.

-Curtis uses a smaller trench digging machine on the backside of the yard, radiating out from the main dig site. He notices a NEIGHBOR watching him from they yard next door.

-Samantha tallies cash from the tackle box she uses as a register. Hannah counts out the change.

-Dewart assembles a series of PVC pipe next to the trenches Curtis dug.

-Curtis, work goggles on, stands in a head deep hole holding a pneumatic jack hammer up to the exposed exterior wall of the storm shelter. He begins hammering.

EXT. LAFORCHE HOME - LATE AFTERNOON

Samantha's car pulls up and parks on the opposite side of the street from their house. She gets out, puzzled by the Backhoe and Trailer parked in front of her house.

Huge light brown tracks of dirt stripe the concrete driveway. Leading Hannah by the hand, Samantha follows the tracks to the backyard.

IN THE BACKYARD,

Samantha stops, mouth agape, stunned by what she sees.

A 20 foot by 8 foot wide hole that is 10 feet deep sits in the middle of her yard. Smaller trenches lead out from it.

Dewart leans against the propane tank in the back corner of the yard. He digs dirt from underneath his fingernails with a pocket knife. Seeing Samantha, he waves a hand.

Curtis' head appears from the hole. He stops when he sees Samantha. They stare at one another. He can see her surprise. He continues up the ladder and walks over to her.

Dewart watches from the back of the yard.

CURTIS

Hey. It's all right. Calm down.

Samantha takes Hannah into the house without saying a word.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

Samantha.

SAMANTHA

Are you out of your mind?

She continues into the house. Curtis turns, frustrated.

Dewart takes this in, then goes back to his nails.

INT. LAFORCHE HOME - NIGHT

Hannah watches television in the den by herself.

IN THE BEDROOM,

Samantha sits on the edge of the bed. Curtis stands a few paces back. His hands dug into the back of his dusty jeans.

SAMANTHA

Not a word. You didn't say one word about this to me. Don't you think you owe me that? Don't you think that you might respect me enough to at least consider what I had to say?

CURTIS

I didn't want you worryin' about it.

SAMANTHA

Well I'm worried Curtis. How are you paying for all that?

CURTIS

I got a home improvement loan from the bank.

Samantha is stunned. She stands and gets in his face.

SAMANTHA

How could you do that without talking to me? You know the expenses we have comin' up. You want to waste money on a stupid tornado shelter?

CURTIS

I'm doin' it...I'm doin' it for us. I know you don't understand.

SAMANTHA

You're right. I don't understand. I don't understand half the stuff you've been doin' lately. I don't understand you puttin' Red out back. I don't understand you stayin' up all night in that stupid tornado shelter. You don't come to bed half the time. You leave and don't tell me where you're goin'. Explain that to me. Please. Tell me something that helps me understand why you're bein' like this.

Curtis can't look at her. He tries to find words but fails.

CURTIS  
There's nothin' to explain.

Samantha stares at his face, searching for an answer. She's on the verge of tears.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
I'm gonna go put Hannah to bed.

Curtis walks out of the room. Samantha can't hold back, tears run down her face.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Curtis stares at himself in the mirror. He opens the bottle of prescription pills and shakes out two. Looks at them. Shakes out another three. He pops the pills in his mouth and drinks from the faucet.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

It's dark and quiet in the house. Samantha sleeps on her side, her back to Curtis.

Her head is jostled. More. The bed begins to vibrate. Her eyes open. She turns over to see Curtis.

He's having a SEIZURE.

Samantha reaches for him. Eyes closed, his body convulses violently. Samantha quickly turns on a bedside lamp.

SAMANTHA  
Curtis!

She touches his arms. A small amount of BLOOD begins to trickle from both sides of his mouth.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Baby. Oh, my God. Baby...Oh, my  
God. Baby.

Samantha jumps off the bed and grabs a cordless phone on the dresser. She dials, watching her husband continue to shake.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
I need an ambulance! My husband's  
having a seizure. 41800 Tindale  
Road. Hurry up. He's bleeding!

Samantha goes over to him. Holding her hands out, cautious to touch him.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
(into the phone)  
Okay. Okay.

Samantha puts the phone receiver down on the nightstand. The Operator's VOICE still coming through. She touches his arm.

Suddenly, the seizures stop. Curtis' body is still. Samantha freezes.

His eyes open and he thrashes up in bed. Samantha jumps, tripping and stumbling backward.

Curtis sucks short breaths into his lungs. His head darts back and forth, eyes wild. He sees Samantha staring up at him from the floor. He begins to calm down.

Curtis touches his mouth. Sees the blood there.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Honey?

Samantha stands up and goes over to him. She sits on the edge of the bed and touches his arm. She's scared.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Honey? Are you okay?

Curtis slowly nods.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
You were having a seizure. I called an ambulance.

Curtis sees the phone on the nightstand and grabs it.

CURTIS  
(into the phone)  
No. It's fine. It's fine. Don't send an ambulance. It's fine.

Curtis clicks off the phone.

SAMANTHA  
What are you doing?

Curtis wraps his arms around her. He holds her tight. The SOUND of ambulance sirens approach from the distance. Samantha speaks, her voice trembling.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Baby what's goin' on?

EXT. LAFORCHE HOME - NIGHT

The ambulance lights splash across the house. Curtis escorts TWO EMTs down the front walk. He favors his left leg, walking with a slight limp.

CURTIS  
I'm sorry you fellows had to come  
all the way out.

EMT  
It's what we do. Now we can still  
take you in if you want a doctor to  
look at those cuts in your mouth.

CURTIS  
Yeah. That's all right.. I'll see  
somebody on Monday.

EMT  
All right.

CURTIS  
Thanks.

Curtis shakes their hands. He turns to walk back in the house and notices NEIGHBORS watching from their porches.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Curtis turns up a bottle of peroxide and swishes it in his mouth. It burns. He spits into the kitchen sink.

Samantha sits at the table watching him. Concerned, scared. She holds a balled up tissue in her hand. Curtis takes a seat across the table. She waits for him to say something.

CURTIS  
I haven't been honest with you.  
I'm sorry.

SAMANTHA  
What's goin' on?

CURTIS  
I've been havin' these dreams. I  
guess they're more like nightmares.  
It's why I've been actin' like  
this.

Samantha listens with a furrowed brow.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
They always start with a kind of  
storm. Like a real powerful storm.  
(MORE)

CURTIS (CONT'D)

And there's always this dark, thick rain. Like fresh motor oil. And then the things, people, it just makes 'em crazy. They attack me. Sometimes they go after Hannah. First one I had Red nearly chewed through my arm.

SAMANTHA

That's why you put him out back?

CURTIS

Yeah.

SAMANTHA

What was the dream? Tonight.

CURTIS

It was Dewart. We were at the job site. The storm started and somethin' happened. His face. His eyes were different. He came after me with a pick ax. And we fought. And he ran it through my leg.

Curtis zones out for a moment. Samantha says nothing.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

It's hard to explain, because it's not just a dream. It's a feeling. I'm afraid something might be comin'. Something that's...not right. I can not describe it. I just need you to believe me.

Samantha's eyes are red. Her nose. She nods slightly and dabs the tissue at the corner of her eye.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

I've been to a counselor. I've seen her a few times.

This makes Samantha look up.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

You know what I come from. And I promised myself...I promised myself I would never leave. And I am doin' everything that I can to make that true.

The room is quiet. Samantha watches her husband.

INT. OTOLARYNGOLOGIST'S CLINIC/CT SCAN ROOM - DAY

Hannah lies flat as the sled moves her through the oval CT scanner. A red, lighted crosshair passes over her face.

INT. OTOLARYNGOLOGIST'S CLINIC/OFFICE - DAY

Samantha has Hannah on her lap. She and Curtis listen intently to an ATTENDANT who sits next to them with a file.

ATTENDANT

Since the doctor's approved her for surgery, We just need to get her scheduled. The next possible opening is...

(reviews a calendar)

The 21st of next month. That's six weeks.

CURTIS

Six weeks?

ATTENDANT

Is that okay?

SAMANTHA

It's wonderful.

EXT. PUMP STATION CONSTRUCTION SITE/FARMLAND - DAY

Curtis stands with Russell over the hood of a pick-up truck. They look over a roll of ground water charts.

Russell talks and points to the map, but Curtis' attention is focused elsewhere. He watches Dewart in the distance.

RUSSELL

...this point just to the west. I don't think we'll have any problem. We should be able to get twenty, maybe thirty in this next week. But we're looking to see how that's gonna shape up, so...

Dewart smiles and makes broad gestures with his arms. He's telling a story to Dave, who laughs hard.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

Curtis?

His attention snaps back.

CURTIS

Yeah.



RUSSELL  
What do you think?

CURTIS  
Yeah. That sounds good. We'll get  
it done.

Russell rolls up the charts. They walk toward the work site,  
toward Dewart.

INT. DELTA AGRI-PRO MAIN OFFICE/JIM'S OFFICE - DAY

Jim fills out paperwork at his desk. There is a KNOCK.

JIM  
Come in.

Curtis walks inside. He stands in front of the desk.

JIM (CONT'D)  
What you need Curtis?

CURTIS  
I need a favor Jim.

JIM  
What's that?

CURTIS  
Can you take Dewart off my crew?  
Just reassign him someplace else.

Jim sets his pen down and leans back.

JIM  
What's the trouble? He not pullin'  
his weight?

CURTIS  
No, nothin' like that. He's a good  
worker. He's a good man. He's my  
friend. I think it'd be easier not  
being in charge of someone I'm so  
close to.

Jim nods.

JIM  
You know, I understand. This is  
part of what it means to manage  
people Curtis. You're gonna have  
to learn that.

CURTIS

Yes sir. I appreciate that but... well it would just be very helpful in this case.

JIM

Okay. Well, I can put him with Russell. Anybody else you prefer?

CURTIS

No. Whoever you think's right.

JIM

Okay.

CURTIS

Thank you.

Curtis turns to leave the office.

JIM

You been missin' a lotta work Curtis.

CURTIS

I know. My daughter's had a lot of doctor's visits. I haven't let anything get behind.

JIM

No. But don't. Okay.

CURTIS

Yessir.

Curtis shows himself out.

EXT. LAFORCHE BACKYARD - EVENING

The sun has just set and a purple hue hangs over everything.

Curtis stands in the very back of the yard and watches a MAN guide a long, flatbed trailer up the driveway. An 18 foot metal SHIPPING CONTAINER rides on the back.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Nat and Samantha sit at the kitchen table going over a list of food in a note pad.

SAMANTHA

I know they just usually do oysters and fries but what if we did something healthier on the side?

NAT  
What like slaw?

Nat gets up to refill her drink. She looks out the back door and surveys the construction zone. A FORKLIFT lowers the Shipping Container into the giant hole in the backyard. Nat shakes her head.

SAMANTHA  
I don't know. Maybe a vegetable or salad.

NAT  
Dewart's been tellin' me how strange Curtis has been actin' lately. I am so sorry.

Nat brings her drink back to the table and sits. Samantha doesn't look up from her pad.

NAT (CONT'D)  
It's not like you don't have enough on your plate with Hannah.

Nat puts her hand on Samantha's. Samantha moves it.

SAMANTHA  
Things are fine. We're fine.

Nat smiles sympathetically.

INT. ARMY NAVY STORE - DAY

Curtis meanders inside. He sees police tactical and survival gear behind the counter. Chief among them is a collection of gas masks hanging on the rear partition.

OWNER  
Can I help you?

CURTIS  
Yeah. Can I look at one of these gas masks?

OWNER  
Sure. Which one you want to look at?

CURTIS  
The newest one.

The OWNER of the store removes a mask and hands it to him. Curtis fiddles with the mask.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

How much?

OWNER

One seventy eight.

Curtis frowns at the price.

CURTIS

Anything cheaper?

OWNER

No. That's the cheapest one I got in the store. They go all the way up to two ninety. I don't know what you want to spend but a gas mask ain't something you want to go cheap on.

CURTIS

You got any kids sizes?

OWNER

No. Kids can't wear those. They got a have a special thing, its like a hood. I don't fool with those.

Curtis nods. The perusing Shopper listens in.

CURTIS

Yeah. Ring me up a couple of 'em.

EXT. ARMY NAVY PARKING LOT - DAY

Curtis stands at the driver's door of his pick-up. The box sits on the seat in front of him. He opens it and removes one of the gas masks.

He stares into its vacant plastic eyes. He drops the mask back into the box and shakes his head. Sighs, frustrated with it all.

He checks over his shoulder, scans the parking lot.

EXT. LAFORCHE BACKYARD - LATER

Curtis stands on top of the shipping container that rests in the hole roughly a foot below the yard. Wearing tinted goggles, he cuts a circular hole in the top of the container with a small blowtorch.

The sparks stop and Curtis raises the goggles to inspect his work. He kicks at the weld with the heel of his boot and the metal falls into the container.

He sets down the torch and removes a roof turbine vent from a cardboard box and holds it up next to the newly cut hole.

KYLE (O.S.)  
What the hell are you doin'?

Curtis smiles to himself. He turns to find KYLE(42) standing at the edge of the hole. His hands are tucked into the back of his jeans and he's sizing up the work.

Curtis steps off the roof of the shipping container onto ground level. He holds out a hand and Kyle shakes it, never taking his eyes off the unfinished shelter.

KYLE (CONT'D)  
What you got goin' on here?

CURTIS  
Just addin' on to the storm shelter.

KYLE  
Why?

CURTIS  
Just 'cause.

Kyle notices the PVC piping running in the trenches.

KYLE  
You runnin' water to it?

CURTIS  
Oh, yeah. From our well. Runnin' sewer out to the city line.

KYLE  
How much you spendin' on this thing?

CURTIS  
It's not bad.

KYLE  
Doesn't look it.

Curtis shrugs. Kyle sees his reluctance.

KYLE (CONT'D)  
You take your eye off the ball one minute in this economy and you're screwed. You got the cash for this?

CURTIS  
Yeah.

KYLE  
Don't put nothin' on credit cards.  
That shit'll eat you up.

CURTIS  
I'm not.

Kyle is staring him down. Curtis just looks at the shelter. There's a long silence shared between them.

KYLE  
Samantha called me.

CURTIS  
I figured.

Curtis climbs back onto the shipping container and continues installing the roof vent.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Called you to come tell me to quit?

KYLE  
She called 'cause she's worried.  
Says you've been stressed out.

Curtis doesn't answer.

KYLE (CONT'D)  
So?

CURTIS  
So what?

KYLE  
You stressed out?

CURTIS  
No. No more than anybody else.

KYLE  
Work all right?

CURTIS  
Uh, huh...Hey, look. You wanna come by and have dinner sometime, Kyle. That's fine. We'll have a beer and talk about the old days, but you got somethin' to say just say it.

KYLE  
You can stop that shit right now. I'll come over there and remind you what it feels like to get your ass whipped.

Curtis keeps his head down, scolded. Kyle relents.

KYLE (CONT'D)  
I'm just coming here to check on  
you.

CURTIS  
Well I appreciate it Kyle.

KYLE  
You been to see Mom?

CURTIS  
Yeah. A few days ago.

KYLE  
She all right.

CURTIS  
You should see her. Take your  
girls.

KYLE  
Yeah. I'll get around to it.

There's an awkward moment as Curtis works with his back to  
Kyle.

KYLE (CONT'D)  
You need a hand?

Curtis turns and looks up at him. Shakes his head.

CURTIS  
No. I've got it.

Kyle nods.

KYLE  
Okay. Call me if you need me okay?

CURTIS  
I will.

Kyle looks at him for a moment. He turns and walks toward  
the driveway.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Hey Kyle?

Kyle turns back. Curtis climbs onto the yard and walks over  
to him.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Actually you could do me a favor.

KYLE  
What's that?

CURTIS  
You still looking for a dog?

KYLE  
Sure.

Kyle looks at him.

EXT. LAFORCHE HOME/DRIVEWAY - DAY

Curtis slaps down the tailgate to Kyle's truck, which is parked in the driveway. Red, tail wagging, hops up into the bed. Curtis closes the tailgate and sets a leash and two bowls into the back of the truck.

Curtis rubs Red behind the ears.

CURTIS  
They got a good spot for you, okay bud.

Kyle stands at the passenger door to the truck.

KYLE  
You sure?

CURTIS  
Yeah.

KYLE  
I know it'll make my girls happy.  
All right.

Kyle walks around the truck to the driver's side.

CURTIS  
Hey Kyle?

KYLE  
Yeah?

Kyle stops. Curtis walks up and hugs him. Kyle slaps him on the back.

CURTIS  
Take care of yourself.

KYLE  
All right. All right. I will little brother. You take care of your family. Handle your business. Okay?

Curtis nods. Kyle smiles, shaking his head.



KYLE (CONT'D)

All right.

Kyle climbs into the truck and cranks it. Curtis steps back as he pulls away. Red looks back from the bed of the truck.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Hannah, fresh from the tub, stands to let Curtis rub her wet head with a towel. He finishes and stands.

CURTIS

All right. Bedtime.

Hannah looks up at him. Curtis signs his hand like a pillow then touches his watch. They move out of the bathroom.

INT. LAFORCHE HOME/BEDROOM - MORNING

Curtis sits on the edge of his bed staring at the window in their room. He's already dressed for work.

He watches as the thick, dark rain hits the window and streaks. He has a curious look on his face.

MOVING, down the hall.

MOVING, past the den.

MOVING, into the kitchen.

Curtis stops at the entry to the kitchen. Samantha, wearing a robe, stands with her back to him. She's cooking something at the stove.

Curtis notices the back door standing open. HARD RAIN slants down outside. He looks down at the tile floor.

WET FOOTPRINTS track inside.

They lead to where Samantha is standing. She turns to him. She's pale with a vacant look on her face. Her hair is soaking wet.

Curtis looks at her, concerned. She stares back, emotionless. She slowly looks down at the counter next to her. A kitchen knife rests there.

Curtis looks at the knife. They look at one another again.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Curtis sits at the breakfast table across from Hannah. He looks over at Samantha. She cooks, her back to him. Hannah climbs out of her chair and goes to look out the back door.

Samantha turns and dishes eggs onto Curtis' plate.

SAMANTHA

You okay?

She touches his hand. Curtis FLINCHES.

Their eyes meet. He wants to take it back, and she can see that. It begins to sink in for her.

Hannah vocalizes something behind them.

Samantha looks at her husband, shakes her head in disbelief. Hannah makes another sound, pounds on the back door.

Samantha turns and sees a MAN standing in their backyard. She flinches.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Who's that?

Curtis stands to see out the back door.

CURTIS

Ah shit.

EXT. LAFORCHE BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Jim, Curtis' boss, stands with his hands on his hips looking down at the planted shipping container. Curtis approaches.

CURTIS

Hey Jim.

JIM

Curtis. Dewart told me you took equipment from work for a project at your house. Said that's why you wanted him off your crew. I came out here to see it myself.

CURTIS

Yeah. It was just a hauler and a backhoe. It was Saturday. I had 'em back in less than 8 hours.

JIM

You know that doesn't matter. I can't even tell you how many rules you broke.

(MORE)

JIM (CONT'D)

What if you had an accident? Huh?  
What if you ran somebody over on  
your way out here? Lawsuit like  
that could bankrupt me.

CURTIS

Well, I'm sorry Jim. I hadn't  
thought of that. Thank God nothin'  
like that happened. You know? I'll  
do whatever I can to make it right.

JIM

You can pick up your last check on  
Friday. You've got two weeks  
benefits.

Curtis nods. Accepts it.

CURTIS

Did you fire Dewart?

JIM

He's on two weeks leave unpaid...  
I'm sorry Curtis. You did this to  
yourself.

Jim turns and walks out of the backyard.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Samantha clears the table. Hannah sits, watching her father  
walk in. Curtis stops just inside the door, closes it.

CURTIS

I've been fired.

Samantha continues clearing the dishes to the sink. She  
doesn't look up.

SAMANTHA

What about the health insurance?

CURTIS

We get two more weeks.

Samantha slams the plates into the sink. They break. She  
holds her head back and stares at the ceiling.

She walks over to Curtis...

CURTIS (CONT'D)

I'm sorry...

...and SLAPS him across the face.

Hannah begins to cry.

Samantha turns and collects Hannah from the table. She grabs her things and walks out of the house.

Curtis stands alone in the kitchen.

INT. AR COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER/HALLWAY - DAY

Curtis walks down the hallway to Kendra's office. The door ajar, he knocks and enters.

INT. KENDRA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Curtis finds ANDY(42), a man in khakis and a button up, sitting behind the desk.

CURTIS  
Oh, 'scuse me.

Andy rises from his chair.

ANDY  
Are you Curtis?

CURTIS  
Yeah.

ANDY  
Come in. Kendra transferred out.  
I'll be meeting with you today.

Curtis looks at the man. He's kind of mincing.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Please, sit down.

Curtis takes a seat.

CURTIS  
What happened to Kendra?

ANDY  
She got into a program at OSU so she'll be transferring near there. I've split her case load with another counselor. It's been kind of crazy around here lately.

CURTIS  
Huh.

ANDY  
So I've looked over your file. It says your mother was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia in her early thirties. Let's start there.

Curtis looks at the man for a moment, then stands and walks out of the room.

EXT. LAFORCHE HOME/DRIVEWAY - DAY

Curtis' truck is parked in the driveway with the hood up and the engine running.

Curtis stands over the vibrating engine, studying it. He looks at the belts. He watches them move.

INT. STORM SHELTER - DAY

Curtis hefts a porcelain toilet down the steps of the shelter. A dull light glows through the new entryway that's been knocked out through the back left wall.

Curtis goes through it.

IN THE SHIPPING CONTAINER SECTION,

Curtis sets the toilet on the floor. He picks up the camping lantern and holds it up to the space.

The lack of light makes it feel more cavernous than it is. Two cots have been brought down as well as an assortment of supplies. Canned food, a small gas burner.

Curtis hangs the lantern onto a hook on the wall and goes about connecting the toilet to a pipe sticking out of the back corner.

INT. LAFORCHE HOME - DAY

Samantha walks inside followed by Hannah and a WOMAN from the flea market.

SAMANTHA

I'm so sorry. I completely forgot.

WOMAN

That's okay. Don't worry about it.

SAMANTHA

Here. I hope you like them.

Samantha hands over the plastic bag.

WOMAN

Thanks. I brought cash.

SAMANTHA

That's terrific. It's fine.

Samantha takes three twenties from her.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Call me if they don't work and I'm  
sorry again.

WOMAN  
Oh, it's okay. Thank you.

Samantha closes the door.

IN THE KITCHEN,

Samantha takes the tin decorated with ocean creatures down from the fridge. She removes the envelope with the word "BEACH" written on it and takes out a stack of bills.

She folds the bills over and stuffs them into her purse before placing the empty envelope back in the tin.

She looks out back and sees Curtis sitting with Hannah.

OUTSIDE,

The shipping container has been covered over with dirt. Two rotating vents spin at either end of the brown mound. Curtis sits on the freshly packed dirt signing with Hannah.

He signs something that makes her laugh. Hannah smacks a muddy clump between her hands. Curtis touches her nose, leaving a dirt smudge. Hannah laughs. She touches his face, smudging it.

IN THE KITCHEN,

Samantha watches through the back door.

INT. HANNAH'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Samantha tucks Hannah into bed. She kisses her on the head and turns out the bedside lamp. Samantha leaves the room.

EXT. LAFORCHE BACKYARD - EVENING

Samantha steps out of the house. She walks over to Curtis, who is standing on a grassy section of the yard over an assortment of auto parts. They don't speak for a moment.

SAMANTHA  
What's that?

CURTIS  
That's the alternator from the  
truck.

(MORE)

CURTIS (CONT'D)

I was just trying to figure out a way to charge enough batteries to run lights down there. Ah, what the hell? Maybe I'll hook it up to your old exercycle.

Samantha almost smiles. Curtis keeps his eyes on the parts.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

You gonna leave me?

Samantha looks at his hands. They hang by his sides.

SAMANTHA

You flinched when I touched your hand this morning.

CURTIS

I'm sorry.

SAMANTHA

I was in one of your dreams?

Curtis nods.

CURTIS

Yeah.

SAMANTHA

Can you deal with that?

He holds open his hand to her. She takes it.

CURTIS

Yeah.

SAMANTHA

Okay. Then I made a decision. We cancel the beach trip. We have enough to cover bills for the next two months with your last check. I'm going to get a job. You're gonna find another job. I'm going to call to see if we can move Hannah's surgery up. We'll need to see what it costs to extend your policy to the end of the year. I want you to see a psychiatrist. Not a counselor from the free clinic. Someone good.

CURTIS

Doctor Shannan gave me the number of somebody. But, uh, I just don't think we can afford it.

SAMANTHA

We'll find the money. Also, the  
Lions Club supper's this weekend.  
I want you to come with me.

CURTIS

I don't want to see any of those  
people.

SAMANTHA

I want you to go. I need to do  
something normal.

CURTIS

All right.

Curtis nods. Samantha let's go of his hand and walks back to  
the house. Curtis goes back to studying the auto parts.

INT. LIONS CLUB LODGE - NIGHT

The inside of the club is a musty banquet hall with wood  
panelled walls and a drop tile ceiling. The place is packed.

Rows of folding tables fill the center of the room. A long  
LINE has formed along the side wall that wraps to a serving  
station at the back. Heated metal bins filled with fried  
oysters and french fries.

Curtis gets in line with his family.

AT THE SERVING TABLE,

Curtis holds two paper plates.

CURTIS

How many pieces does Hannah get?

SAMANTHA

Just one.

Curtis uses tongs to grab pieces of fried oyster. Looking  
up, he can see back through the kitchen to an open door  
outside. Dewart stands there over a butane fired frying pot.  
He wears an apron and stares at Curtis.

Curtis moves down the line.

INT. LIONS CLUB LODGE - LATER

Lewis sits with Cammie and their baby. He laughs and talks  
with another man. From a different table, Russell leans over  
to eye Curtis.



Curtis sits at a table with his family. He loads Hannah's plate up with ketchup.

A tap on his shoulder. Curtis turns to find Dewart standing over him.

DEWART  
What're you doin' here?

CURTIS  
Not here man.

Dewart taps him on the shoulder again.

DEWART  
I said what are you doin' here.

Curtis stands and Dewart takes a step back. The general noise of the place starts to quiet down as people take notice. A few stand.

SAMANTHA  
Curtis.

DEWART  
I told people what you been doin'.

CURTIS  
I know.

DEWART  
You cut me loose. Everything we  
been through.

CURTIS  
I know. I'm sorry.

Dewart shoves him in the chest.

DEWART  
You ain't fucking sorry. You sorry  
you wouldn't cut me loose. We  
fuckin' friends! This how you  
treat friends?

Curtis places a hand on Dewart's chest.

CURTIS  
Come on.

Dewart punches Curtis in the face. It stings.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
God dammit.

Samantha gathers Hannah and moves back. Dewart shoves Curtis across the table. Oysters and bottles go everywhere. The entire room is on its feet watching.

Curtis slips getting up. Dewart walks around the table, heading for him.

SAMANTHA  
STOP IT DEWART!

Curtis stands and kicks Dewart in the knee. It buckles back and he's on the floor. He cries out and grabs the twisted joint. He's done.

Curtis paces over him, covered in ketchup and soda. He shouts down at him.

CURTIS  
I SAID NOT HERE! GOD DAMNIT!

He wipes at his face. Sees all of the people staring at him. Addresses them.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
You think I'm crazy?! Huh! Is that what he told you!

Curtis TURNS OVER A TABLE. He points to the gawking crowd.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Well, listen up! There is a storm comin' like nothing you have ever seen. And not a one of you is prepared for it.  
(pacing)  
You think I'm crazy? I'M TALKIN' TO YOU RUSSELL!  
(pacing)  
LEWIS! You think I'm a thief?

Hannah watches. THE SOUND MUTED. She looks on as Curtis paces, pointing and yelling, red faced at the crowd.

Curtis backs off.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Sleep well in your beds. Cause if this thing comes true, there ain't gonna be any more.

Curtis looks down at Dewart.

He turns to see Hannah. She's tucked under her Mother's leg crying. This hits him hard. He stops. Looking at Samantha, his eyes fill with tears.

Samantha, leading Hannah by the hand, walks to Curtis. He stares at her, on the verge of breaking down.

She takes her hand and gently pulls his head down to her shoulder. Without another look toward the crowd, Samantha leads her family out of the dining hall.

EXT. LAFORCHE HOME - DAY

Hannah stands on a toolbox and rests her elbows on the side of Curtis' truck. The hood is open. She watches her father fiddle with re-installing the alternator. His fingers covered in grease.

Hannah steps down from the toolbox and walks into the front yard. Curtis pauses, hearing a high-pitched, warbling SOUND in the distance. He notices Hannah is gone.

CURTIS

Hannah?

He pulls his head out from the hood and sees Hannah standing on the curb. She looks down the street. He runs down his driveway, wiping his hands on a rag and watching the horizon.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

Hannah!

A FLOCK OF BIRDS, flying in intricate geometric patterns, swarm above the house at the end of the street. They twist and bend into speckled black shapes.

Hannah, watching, walks into the street. Curtis catches her by the hand. He turns away from the birds to see a STORM CELL building on the opposite horizon. He scoops Hannah into his arms, stepping back from it.

The SOUND of the birds grows louder. Curtis pivots to find the mass of birds barreling down the street toward him. He turns away as the wall of birds crash past him. The force so powerful it knocks him backward.

He covers Hannah's head, dodging the onslaught of wind and wings. The Flock passes. Curtis stands, his face cut and scraped. Hannah cries, clinging to his chest.

SMASH!

The windshield of a car parked next to him SHATTERS. Curtis looks at the broken glass. A dead bird, its neck broken, rests crumpled on the hood.

SMACK!

Another bird crashes into the asphalt just in front of him. Then another. Curtis looks up. The Flock of birds are circling overhead and diving down at him.

More birds crashing to the ground. Curtis covers his head. The neighborhood's tornado SIRENS begin to sound.

Curtis rushes Hannah toward his front door as dozens of birds plummet from the sky. The sirens BLARING.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Curtis wakes to Samantha shaking him by the shoulders. She's nearly on top of him in the bed.

SAMANTHA

Curtis! Wake up! Wake up!

TORNADO SIRENS continue to scream throughout the neighborhood.

Curtis looks to the window. Rain and hail are battering the house. He jumps to his feet and grabs Samantha by the arm.

They rush out of the room.

INT. HANNAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Curtis bursts into the room. Hannah is standing at the window looking out. Curtis scoops her up, scaring her. She begins to cry as they run from the room.

EXT. LAFORCHE BACKYARD - NIGHT

Wind blows fiercely as pellets of hail bounce off the ground. Rain cuts at a sharp angle. The Tornado Sirens continue.

Curtis, Hannah in his arms and Samantha close behind, exits the back of the house and heads to the storm shelter. He passes Hannah to Samantha and fumbles with the padlock keys.

At the doors to the shelter, Samantha holds her robe up to shield Hannah from the hail. Curtis gets the lock and opens the door. They go inside.

INT. STORM SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

Curtis slams the doors behind them. It's pitch black until he gets to the switch on the lantern. The room fills with the orange glow as Curtis snaps the padlock through the door handles.

CURTIS  
Come on. It's okay.

Curtis leads them through the entry to the larger section of the shelter. Samantha takes Hannah and sits with her on one of the cots. She's signing to her, trying to calm her down.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
It's okay. All right. Come on. Sit down.

Curtis goes to a trunk in the corner and begins rooting through it. He removes two gas masks and an oxygen mask connected to a small tank.

He goes over and kneels in front of Hannah. He tries slipping the oxygen mask over her face. Samantha grabs his wrist.

SAMANTHA  
No. Don't do that.

CURTIS  
It's okay. It's oxygen. Here. Put this on.

Curtis hands Samantha a gas mask.

SAMANTHA  
Are you kidding?

CURTIS  
Please just do it. Okay?

He looks to Hannah and places an oxygen mask over her face..

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
There we go. All right. Keep it out of your eyes. Okay?

He signs to her.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Hey. I love you. It's okay.

Curtis eases on the knob at the top of the tank.

He climbs onto the cot and puts his arm around them. He slips on his gas mask.

Samantha is hesitant. She looks at her husband in the mask and leans back against the side of the container. Hannah looks up at her. She touches her mother's mask.

Samantha slips on the gas mask.

The camping lantern on the floor casts long shadows up. The faint boom of thunder rolls softly outside.

The family sits huddled together on the cot, wearing their masks.

INT. STORM SHELTER - LATER

A CRACK of thunder rattles the shelter. Curtis snaps awake, still wearing his gas mask.

Samantha has climbed on the other cot and is asleep. Hannah sleeps under Curtis' arm. He gently lays her down on the cot and stands to stretch.

He walks into the original section of the shelter and grabs a small flashlight off the metal shelving. He clicks it on and moves over to the concrete steps.

He takes a seat and listens. He places his hand onto the metal door. A BOOM of thunder.

He can hear the rain and wind blowing outside.

INT. STORM SHELTER - LATER

Samantha rubs Curtis' shoulder, gently waking him.

SAMANTHA

Wake up babe.

Curtis' head moves. He sees that Samantha and Hannah have removed their masks.

CURTIS

Where's your mask?

SAMANTHA

We took them off. It's fine. Take it off.

CURTIS

No.

Curtis hesitates.

SAMANTHA

We're fine. Take it off.

Curtis slips the mask off his face. Worried, he takes a breath.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

You need to open the door now.

Curtis doesn't move. He looks at them.

CURTIS  
(mumbles)  
What if it's...What if it's not  
over?

SAMANTHA  
What?

CURTIS  
What if it's not over?

SAMANTHA  
It's over. Get the keys. Open the  
door.

Curtis slowly gets to his feet. He sees the dark entryway to the original section of the shelter. Taking the lantern, he walks to it.

Samantha and Hannah follow.

Curtis stops just inside. He holds the lantern up, illuminating the padlocked metal doors.

He looks back at his family, then climbs the steps. He places his hand on the door. He flinches.

CURTIS  
It's still storming.

SAMANTHA  
No. It's not.

CURTIS  
I can hear it.

Samantha stares at him. The room is silent.

SAMANTHA  
I don't hear anything.

CURTIS  
Put your hand on the door. You can  
feel it.

He takes Samantha's wrist and guides her to the doors. He watches her face as she places a hand against the metal. She looks at him, her eyes getting red, and shakes her head "no".

Curtis kneels in front of Hannah and mimics the signs from earlier.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
(signing and speaking)  
Thunder? Do you feel it?

He flinches again. Looks to the ceiling

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
(signing and speaking)  
You feel it? You feel it?

Hannah walks to her mother. Samantha holds onto her.

Curtis steps back from them. They watch him, their backs to the doors. He flinches and covers his mouth.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry.

SAMANTHA  
Baby, there's no storm outside.

CURTIS  
I'm sorry.

Samantha walks over to him.

SAMANTHA  
Curtis. I wouldn't lie to you. We  
love you very much. Please open  
the door.

Curtis is on the verge of tears.

He slowly reaches into his jeans pocket. He removes the keys. He holds them out to Samantha.

CURTIS  
I'm sorry. I can't.

Samantha looks at the keys, then at Curtis. Tears shake from his trembling face.

SAMANTHA  
I love you, but if I open the door,  
then nothin's gonna change. You'll  
see that everything's fine, but  
nothing will change. Please. This  
is what it means to stay with us.  
This is something you have to do.

He looks at Hannah, then Samantha. Curtis steadies himself, trying to control his flinching. He wipes his face with the back of his hands and takes a deep breath.

Curtis walks toward the doors. On the steps, he reaches up to the padlock. The keys shake in his fingers. He turns to Samantha.

CURTIS  
Could you move Hannah back?



Samantha picks Hannah up in her arms and Curtis watches them retreat to the rear wall.

He goes back to the lock. He inserts the key. The padlock pops open. Curtis removes it. He looks back at Samantha, then flings open the doors.

SUNLIGHT.

It's blinding. Curtis holds his hand up to cover his eyes. He stares up at a crystal blue sky. Samantha watches as Curtis steps out of the shelter.

EXT. LAFORCHE BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Curtis rises through the storm shelter's entryway. Out of the corner of his eye he catches,

A MAN PASSING BY.

Curtis is startled. He turns to see a CREW of MEN from the power company hoisting a ladder onto the pole at the corner of the house. A power line dangles overhead.

He turns to see NEIGHBORS in their yards clearing debris. Leaves and branches clutter the ground. The aftermath of a storm.

Samantha steps out of the shelter holding Hannah. She surveys the damage.

CURTIS

It's fine.

She walks over to Curtis and hugs him. He kisses Samantha on the head. Curtis looks up at the sky.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST OFFICE - DAY

Curtis sits with Samantha in the plush office of a PSYCHIATRIST(56). Curtis rubs his hand over the soft leather upholstery on the couch.

PSYCHIATRIST

Do you have any vacation time that you could use?

CURTIS

I don't have a job right now.

PSYCHIATRIST

Well, I know that times are hard, but I think it's really important for you to separate yourself from that storm shelter.

(MORE)

PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)

I think you need to break away from it for awhile. We can start you on some medication that I think will help, but that action alone would mean a lot.

SAMANTHA

We usually go on a trip to Myrtle Beach every summer. We were gonns go this month.

PSYCHIATRIST

I think that would be okay if we start the medication now. It would give you all some time to prepare as a family, but I want to be clear, when Curtis gets back he'll need to take more time than that.

SAMANTHA

What does that mean?

PSYCHIATRIST

I mean that he'll need hands on therapy at a real facility.

Curtis looks up for the first time.

CURTIS

You mean I have to leave my family.

PSYCHIATRIST

I think you need to seriously commit to some treatment.

Curtis processes this. Samantha takes his hand.

EXT. BEACH/CONDO - DAY

Curtis scoops handfuls of sand out of a foot deep hole on the beach. He slops the wet mixture into a castle shaped bucket, his back to the shoreline of gentle, breaking waves.

CURTIS

(signing and speaking)

Hey. Good, huh?

Hannah sits on her knees in front of Curtis sprinkling dry sand over castle shaped mounds already formed.

INT. CONDO - DAY

Samantha drops four hotdogs into a boiling pot of water and stirs a bubbling pot of canned chili.

The beach condo is small, but brightly furnished.

EXT. CONDO/BEACH - DAY

The wooden deck hangs off the back of the beach condo. A picnic table is set with plastic place mats and forks. WIND lifts the corner of a stack of napkins. The wind blows harder, fanning the napkins off the table.

ON THE BEACH,

Curtis, still working in the sand, puts a top on the sand castle.

CURTIS

Good. We put a top on it.

Curtis smooths out the sand in the castle shaped bucket and turns it over to top off their sand mound. He hands the bucket over for Hannah to refill.

The SOUND of the waves behind them has STOPPED. They don't notice.

Curtis takes two fingers and digs a small trench around the sand castle.

Curtis looks up ready to sign the letters but sees Hannah staring at the water. She looks at him and signs something with her hands.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

What is it honey?

Curtis misses it. He shakes his head, "no", and Hannah signs again, slowly: "S-T-O-R-M".

CURTIS (CONT'D)

What?

Curtis turns to the shoreline, getting to his feet.

He looks down at Hannah, who watches, mesmerized. Scared, she looks to her father. He grabs her under the arms and rests her on his hip. She buries her head into his chest.

AT THE CONDO,

A gust of wind greets Samantha as she walks out onto the deck holding a plate of hotdogs and a bowl of chili. She stops, seeing the horizon. Her mouth falls open.

She slowly sets the plate and bowl down on the table, her mind racing. She looks down at Curtis in disbelief.

Curtis looks up to the Condo and makes eye contact. He studies her face.

Samantha looks at her husband, trying to process it all. She looks out at the horizon then back down to Curtis. Concern on her face, she nods to him.

Curtis sees her nod.

Samantha's eyes, still locked on Curtis, soften, as if to apologize. After a moment, she mouths to him, "I love you." Curtis nods back to her.

She looks back up to the shoreline.

ON THE BEACH,

Curtis' feet kick up sand as he rushes back toward the condo.

AT THE CONDO,

Samantha hasn't moved from the porch. A light rain begins to fall. Her hands grip the railing. She turns her left palm up. Dark rain collects there.

*ON THE HORIZON IN FRONT OF HER,*

*THE WATER HAS RECEDED INTO THE GULF SOME 100 YARDS. THE DARK SANDY BOTTOM LOOKS ODD STRETCHED OUT SO FAR. A STORM CELL SITS MASSED ON THE HORIZON. CHURNING BLACK CLOUDS FILLED WITH LAYERS OF HORIZONTAL LIGHTNING.*

Behind Samantha, Curtis appears in the open sliding door clutching Hannah. The Storm Cell is reflected in the glass next to him.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

Sam.

Samantha looks down at her palm. She rubs the thick, viscous rain in her fingers. She looks back up at the storm.

On Samantha's face,

SAMANTHA

Okay.

THE END.