



Bloodlist 14

THE HARVEST

Written by

Caroline Glenn

Ccglenn29@gmail.com

EXT. LAKE - DAWN

An idyllic but secluded stretch of water tucked into a peninsula of lush greenery. What might have been New England. Once.

Come closer and we see two naked bodies bobbing in the water, holding each other close. IVY (mid-20s) is locked with HARRY (40) in a passionate embrace, lost in each other.

A BELL strikes four times.

They break apart, chests heaving.

HARRY
People'll be out soon.

Ivy nods, wrapping her arms around him.

IVY
If it's me, then this is the last
time -

HARRY
It's not gonna be you. I won't let
that happen.

Ivy cups his cheek. He sounds almost naive.

IVY
That's out of your control.

HARRY
You're going to be okay.

IVY
It's okay, Harry. I'm not afraid.

And it's true. She doesn't seem afraid at all. She's at peace with whatever's to come.

He pulls her in for a long kiss as the sun rises.

INT. WOMEN'S QUARTERS - DAY

Ivy buttons up a modest blue dress. Her bedroom isn't much - two twin beds (one neat, one a mess) and a bureau, all handmade.

She inspects herself in a dusty mirror, tying her wet hair up to look presentable.

A cough comes from the next room. Ivy winces, then follows the sound into the -

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Where LARK (mid-20s) lies drunk in the bathtub, cradling a bottle of moonshine like a baby. Ivy is less than sympathetic.

IVY

Lark?

Lark blinks up at her.

LARK

Why are you wet?

IVY

Get up. You need to get ready.

Lark scoffs, shifting to face away from her.

LARK

I'm not going.

IVY

Of course you are. It's August 1st, everyone has to.

Lark takes a long pull of moonshine.

LARK

If it's me, they know where to find me.

IVY

You're not my responsibility.

LARK

I didn't ask to be.

She's not moving. Ivy sighs, grabbing a cup of water and POURING IT on Lark's head. Lark jumps up.

LARK (CONT'D)

What the fuck?!

Before Lark can protest, Ivy is yanking her out of the bathtub and to her feet.

With their arms outstretched, we notice both have BRANDED ROMAN NUMERALS on their inner arms. Lark eight, Ivy seven.

Lark looks like shit - dark circles under her eyes, red and puffy - not just from the alcohol, it looks like she's been crying. Ivy softens.

IVY
It's alright to be frightened -

LARK
Frightened? No.
(then)
I *hope* it's me.

Ivy bristles at Lark's disregard.

IVY
Show some respect. If not to me,
then to the girl who gets chosen.

That silences Lark.

IVY (CONT'D)
Come on, we're going to be late.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

Ivy and Lark join the LARGE CROWD of townspeople (all dressed in their best clothes) heading towards the center. The attitude is pleasant, cheerful. Around them, townspeople greet each other with "*Happy Choosing Day.*"

There's a feeling about this place that's distinctly off - the vibe is vintage Americana, and yet there's no electricity and the architecture is extremely old fashioned - simple wood and brick structures.

Ivy is welcomed with big smiles and "Hellos!" as she passes, while no one can even look Lark in the eye. Until -

MALCOLM (late 20s, sweet) bounds up to Lark with a big smile.

MALCOLM
Happy Choosing!

LARK
Is it?

MALCOLM
You look beautiful today.

Lark stares at him with bloodshot eyes. He decides not to push it.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Hi Ivy.

IVY

Malcolm. Excuse me. I need to help with the wreaths.

She hurries ahead, Lark watching her go.

LARK

So damn pious.

EXT. CENTER GREEN - DAY

The townspeople gather on the center green (a total of about 700 people.)

The young women of the group (ages 17 - 27), all dressed in blue, dutifully separate themselves, forming a group in the field's center.

Ivy walks to each of them with a basket full of COLORED WREATHS. One by one, they remove a wreath and place them in their hair.

IVY

Happy Choosing.

ABIGAIL (18, rebellious) and DREMA (17, naive) join the line.

ABIGAIL

Stand right here.

Drema looks around excitedly.

DREMA

Everyone looks so beautiful. I can't believe it's finally my turn.

ABIGAIL

There's over a hundred of us, you don't know it'll be you.

DREMA

Do you like my dress?

She twirls a little. Abigail politely nods.

DREMA (CONT'D)

My grandmother wore it for her first choosing day, and then gave it to my mom, who gave it to me.

ABIGAIL
 (distant)
 It's pretty.

Ivy reaches them.

IVY
 Good morning ladies. Abigail, do
 you have a sweater to wear? Your
 sleeves are a bit short.

Abigail smiles tightly.

ABIGAIL
 I guess I grew since last year.
 Sorry to offend.

IVY
 It's not me you're offending.

Abigail takes a wreath with an eye roll. Drema follows.

DREMA
 Thank you so much, Ivy.

IVY
 Happy Choosing.

When every young woman wears the headdress, and Ivy joins the
 line, THE PRIESTESS (50s) walks to the center of the field,
 addressing the crowd of villagers behind them.

PRIESTESS
 Good morning, Little Haven.

VILLAGERS
 Good morning.

PRIESTESS
 I wish this August 1st has found us
 in better times. The spring was not
 kind to us, which is why this
 Choosing Day is more vital than
 ever for fall harvest.

A chorus of agreements from the crowd.

PRIESTESS (CONT'D)
 Two hundred years ago, those who
 lived before us dishonored our
 earth until there was nothing left.
 Until the gods brought destruction
 so that new generations could
 rebuild.

(MORE)

PRIESTESS (CONT'D)

Now, we make amends for their disgrace. To honor the gods because they failed to.

(to the young women)

Each and every one of you are blessed for our salvation. We offer our daughters and sisters in the spring of youth so that our earth may prosper. We hold you all in eternal gratitude. It is time we crown the Lady of the Fall.

(then)

Mr. Mayor?

The crowd parts as Harry leaves his spot next to his WIFE AND CHILD and walks to meet the priestess.

HARRY

Good morning all. Happy Choosing.

The Priestess holds up A BOX bearing old runes.

Abigail squeezes Drema's hand tight. Ivy waits expectantly. Lark is completely zoned out.

Harry sticks his hand inside, finally selecting a slip of paper with a name.

It's IVY.

Without hesitating, he puts the paper back in before anyone can see and clears his throat, eyes falling on -

HARRY (CONT'D)

Drema Langdon.

Drema gasps excitedly. Abigail tries to hide her dismay.

DREMA

Oh my - oh my goodness!

PRIESTESS

Step forward, dear.

Drema moves towards her, but Abigail will not let go of her hand.

DREMA

Abigail.

ABIGAIL

It's your first year, we can tell them it was a mistake. Tell them to do it again -

DREMA

Abigail.

She yanks her hand away with an embarrassed smile, walking to meet the priestess.

She holds Drema's hand high up over her head.

PRIESTESS

Hail our Lady of Fall!

The village drops to its knees, heads bowed in respect. Drema smiles wide.

PRIESTESS (CONT'D)

May the harvest prosper.

After a moment, Harry clears his throat.

HARRY

We will celebrate Drema at tonight's festival at sundown.

The townspeople cheer as they join around Drema, picking her up and raising her high over their heads, chanting.

VILLAGERS

May the harvest prosper.

Nearly swept up by the commotion, Abigail watches from the sidelines, crestfallen.

EXT. CENTER GREEN - LATER

Excitement over, the villagers walk off to start the day's work. The young women who weren't chosen wait patiently in line as Harry thanks each of them.

Lark steps forward when it's her turn.

PRIESTESS

Arm please.

Lark shows her arm, and the priestess brands AN ADDITIONAL ROMAN SYMBOL on the inside. *Nine.*

HARRY

(pleasant)

You've almost made your ten.

Lark says nothing.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Thank you for your service.

He shakes her hand, and they move on next to Ivy, who already has her arm ready.

It isn't obvious enough for anyone who isn't looking to notice, but she perks up when Harry stands near.

IVY

Mr. Mayor.

But Harry pretends like he hardly knows her, barely making eye contact. Ivy tries not to look disappointed.

The priestess brands her arm, but she doesn't notice the pain.

Harry shakes her hand.

HARRY

Thank you for your service.

Ivy nods and walks away. It's only when she's a distance away that she opens her fist and finds a slip of paper - *WOODS AT FESTIVAL TONIGHT*. She smiles.

INT. CLINIC - DAY

JAMES (6) cries over his bruised wrist. His mother, REBECCA (30s) pats his knee.

REBECCA

Shh, shh, James, you have to sit still.

CAL (30, intelligent and meticulous) gently takes the boy's hand to examine it.

CAL

This will only take a second.

Cal feels the bone, James yelps when he touches the bruise.

CAL (CONT'D)

You're very brave, you know. I hurt my arm when I was your age and I wouldn't even leave the house.

That settles James, just a little. He sits up a little straighter, wiping his eyes.

CAL (CONT'D)

It's not broken, just badly sprained. With a bandage and some rest, it'll be good as new. Can I ask how you hurt it?

JAMES

My sister and I were racing in the woods and I fell.

REBECCA

I told him not to go out there alone -

JAMES

But it's so boring watching you do the wash!

Cal begins to bandage his wrist, offering Rebecca a sympathetic smile.

CAL

We were absolute menaces as kids. My mom used to make up stories about evil things in the forest to scare us away.

He finishes tying the bandage.

CAL (CONT'D)

All done.

JAMES

Done?

CAL

Be good and listen to your mom, she knows what she's talking about. Come back in two weeks and we'll see how it's healing.

REBECCA

Thank you, Doctor.

INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION - DAY

Ivy sits down behind the front desk as RICHARD (50s, head physician) pokes his head out of his office.

RICHARD

Have you made your ten yet?

IVY
Two more years.

Richard groans.

RICHARD
Every time I get so worried he'll
call your name. I couldn't imagine
losing the best damn secretary I've
ever had.

IVY
Dr. Curan!

Richard laughs as Cal emerges from the exam room.

RICHARD
Everything alright with the boy?

CAL
Minor sprain.

RICHARD
Kids are getting so sensitive. My
mother wouldn't have dreamed of
taking me to the clinic, just iced
it and put me back to work the next
day.

The door opens and Malcolm enters.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Can I help you?

MALCOLM
I need to see a doctor. It's
urgent.

IVY
You need an appointment, Malcolm -

MALCOLM
Please.

Richard, Cal, and Ivy look at each other. Richard puts his
hands up.

RICHARD
I don't have time -

CAL
I can take you in the exam room.
Come on.

INT. CLINIC - EXAM ROOM - DAY

Cal shuts the door behind him as Malcolm sits on the exam table.

CAL
What seems to be the problem?

Malcolm rolls up his sleeve revealing a HIDEOUS DISCOLORED RASH. Almost a purple-y color. Cal is momentarily speechless.

MALCOLM
I tried to treat it myself, but
it's only gotten worse.

CAL
When did it start?

MALCOLM
Just last week.

Cal nods.

CAL
Excuse me one second.

INT. CLINIC - DAY

Cal runs down the hall, passing Ivy.

IVY
Is everything alright-

Cal shuts the door behind him.

INT. CLINIC - RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Richard looks up from his work.

CAL
He has the rash.

RICHARD
Are you sure?

CAL
Sir, it's the third one this month
and the worst by far. I don't know
how to treat it.

RICHARD
Give him the standard skin
treatment.

CAL
I'm not sure it'll make a
difference -

RICHARD
Could be an allergen, could be
anything. No need to get
hysterical.

CAL
If it's contagious, we should warn
people -

RICHARD
I'll let the council know. But in
the meantime Cal, keep it between
us. I don't want to frighten
anyone.

CAL
Sir -

RICHARD
That's all.

Cal reluctantly nods. Conversation over.

INT. CLINIC - EXAM ROOM - DAY

Cal returns to Malcolm.

CAL
I want you to apply this balm three
times a day.

MALCOLM
But it's just what I've been using
already.

Cal hesitates, then sighs, echoing Richard -

CAL
It's probably an allergen or
something in the air. See me next
week if it gets worse.

EXT. DREMA'S HOUSE - DAY

Abigail knocks on Drema's door and waits. A second later, DREMA'S MOM (40s) answers.

DREMA'S MOM

Abigail.

ABIGAIL

Is Drema there? I didn't see her after the ceremony.

DREMA'S MOM

We're very busy right now, she's being fitted for her dress -

ABIGAIL

Of course, but could I just -

DREMA'S MOM

I'm sure you'll see her tonight at the festival.

ABIGAIL

Will you tell her I -

DREMA'S MOM

May the harvest prosper.

She shuts the door before Abigail can reply.

ABIGAIL

(soft)

May the harvest prosper.

EXT. LAUNDRY - DAY

Lark and OTHER WOMEN hang laundry by the lakeshore.

Abigail joins a GROUP OF TEENAGE GIRLS working a distance behind her. MARY (18) greets her.

MARY

There she is. Late as always.

ABIGAIL

They wouldn't let me see her. They wouldn't let me in. She must be so afraid -

MARY

Afraid? She's being worshipped. It's a dream come true.

ABIGAIL

They wouldn't even let me say
goodbye.

(then)

She's just a kid. It's *bullshit*.

The other girls are shocked she's being so defiant.

MARY

Lady of Fall is an honor -

ABIGAIL

None of this is fair. And we're
just supposed to accept it because
it's tradition?

MARY

Abigail, keep your voice *down* -

Abigail's gaze falls on Lark. She sets her basket down.

ABIGAIL

I'll be right back.

MARY

What are you doing?

Her eyes follow Abigail's to Lark.

MARY (CONT'D)

Abigail, don't do anything rash.
She's crazy.

ABIGAIL

Relax, I'm just going to talk to
her.

MARY

Abigail -

But Abigail's already headed to Lark.

She stops a short distance behind her and clears her throat.
Lark pauses and turns.

LARK

Your friends are incredibly loud.

Abigail swallows, more than a little intimidated.

ABIGAIL

I - um, sorry. Ma'am.

LARK
 (offended)
Ma'am?

ABIGAIL
 I - I know you sell - *things* to
 people. I have money, I can barter -

LARK
 Not to children.

ABIGAIL
 I'm eighteen.

LARK
 Do you still live with your
 parents?

Abigail is silent.

LARK (CONT'D)
 I don't need more people
 complaining I gave their precious
 daughter moonshine on top of all
 the other shit I get. I'm sure
 they'll let you and your friends
 sneak wine at the festival to
 celebrate.

She returns to her work, but Abigail doesn't move.

ABIGAIL
 I don't want to celebrate.
 (softer)
 I just want to get through the next
 24 hours as painlessly as possible.
Please.

Lark meets Abigail's vulnerable gaze and softens.

LARK
 It doesn't make it go away, it just
 makes you forget. Until it doesn't,
 and then you drink more.

ABIGAIL
 It isn't fair.

She looks away, blinking back tears.

A beat, then Lark softens, removing a FLASK from her things.
 She discreetly hands it to Abigail.

LARK
Don't tell anyone.

ABIGAIL
Thank you.

Lark shrugs.

LARK
I'm sorry for your loss.

INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Harry gets ready for the festival. His wife, NORA (mid-30s, loyal) puts her hands on his shoulders, both watching him tie a tie in the mirror for a beat.

Nora laughs.

NORA
Okay, I can't take it anymore. Let me.

Harry turns to her with a smirk as she undoes his damage and properly ties it herself.

NORA (CONT'D)
Imagine if I weren't here.

HARRY
I could never.

ELSIE (10, big imagination) lingers in the doorway.

ELSIE
Can I *please* go?

HARRY
Give it a few years.

Elsie groans.

ELSIE
But I want to see Drema in her costume!

NORA
If you're up early tomorrow, you can see her procession through town.

That sways her a little.

ELSIE
What about her family?

Nora and Harry pause. Look at each other.

HARRY
What's that, sweetheart?

ELSIE
I'm sure they're proud of her, but
they aren't ever gonna see her
after...

Nora kneels down to Elsie's level, ruffles her hair.

NORA
She's not their little girl
anymore, Elsie. She's our savior.

ELSIE
Would you be sad if it was me? What
if you're mayor when it's my turn
and you call my name?

Harry's breath catches in his throat.

HARRY
That will never happen.

ELSIE
But you said -

He pulls her into a tight hug.

HARRY
I promise. You're family, and
family always looks out for family
no matter what.

A knock at the door.

INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Nora answers to find Abigail at the other end.

NORA
Abigail, how are you?

ABIGAIL
Fine thanks, Mrs. Brown.

If Nora was paying the slightest bit of attention, she'd see
that Abigail is not fine at all.

Nora lets her inside, shutting the door behind them.

NORA
Thank you for staying in to watch
Elsie tonight.

ABIGAIL
No problem, I didn't feel much like
going anyway.

NORA
Harry, we're going to be late!

Harry enters with Elsie.

HARRY
We'll be back by midnight. Thanks,
Abigail.

ABIGAIL
Have fun.

They leave, Abigail turns to Elsie.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
What do you want to do first?

It's only then we notice the FLASK peaking out of Abigail's bag.

EXT. FESTIVAL - NIGHT

The center green is decorated with paper lanterns and candles. The villagers dress in colorful clothes and head wreaths, dancing joyously to a BAND on a makeshift stage. Ivy sings folk music accompanied by wood instruments.

In the center of the dance floor, Drema is dressed in a pale blue flowing dress, the belle of the ball.

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

A distance away from the revelers, Lark sits with her feet in the water, drinking from a dark bottle. Malcolm approaches.

MALCOLM
No dancing?

Lark gives him a look. He sits down beside her.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)
Can I have a sip?

Before Lark can reply, he drinks - and SPITS it out.

LARK
...It's a little stronger than
wine.

MALCOLM
You can't keep living like this.

LARK
As long as I'm here, I will.

She takes the bottle back from him and drinks.

MALCOLM
What if we left?

LARK
You're funny.

MALCOLM
I'm serious. Packed up our stuff
and went.

LARK
Where would we go?

MALCOLM
Somewhere else.

Lark shakes her head.

LARK
There *is* nowhere else.
(then)
When my mom was fall queen, I stole
a horse and ran. I didn't even know
where I was going, I must have
ridden for days. But there was just
nothing. A wasteland. For miles.
This is all there is.
(then)
As much as it terrifies me, it
scares me even more wondering what
would happen if we just - stopped.

They stare out onto the lake. Malcolm puts his hand on hers.

MALCOLM
Then we stay here. Together.

Lark knows where this is going, starts to pull away -

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Marry me, Lark.

LARK

Malcolm, no, we talked about this -

MALCOLM

You don't need to love me, I'm not expecting you to. But I won't let you be alone for the rest of your life.

LARK

Your mother will be thrilled. All the girls you could marry, you choose the town freak.

MALCOLM

You deserve someone to take care of you.

LARK

And you deserve someone who can give you a family. You understand that, don't you? We could never have kids. Because if one of them was a girl...

A beat.

MALCOLM

The way people have treated you - I understand that you've convinced yourself you're alone. But you're not, Lark. For better or worse, you've got me.

He stands up, offering a hand. Lark looks at it.

LARK

What?

MALCOLM

Come on. We're dancing.

LARK

Absolutely not.

He yanks her up.

LARK (CONT'D)

Malc, Malc I'm serious -

EXT. FESTIVAL - NIGHT

Malcolm drags Lark onto the dance floor, ignoring the suspicious side eyes the villagers give her.

LARK

I'm a terrible dancer -

He twirls her and she struggles to hide her smile.

In the crowd, Cal watches them dance with narrowed eyes.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Ivy creeps through the forest, the trees monstrous and thick around her, branches softly groaning in the wind.

In the distance, a figure stands alone in a clearing.

IVY

Harry?

He turns - cautious at first, then brightens when he recognizes Ivy. She rushes towards him, meeting in a tight embrace.

HARRY

I told you it wouldn't be you.

He kisses her passionately.

IVY

When I was in line, waiting for you to say the name, I kept thinking what if it was the last time I saw you? I don't want to hide anymore, Harry.

Harry takes a cautious step back.

IVY (CONT'D)

It's been two years sneaking around. You said it would only be temporary.

HARRY

I'm the mayor, Ivy, I set an example -

IVY

And I'm a model citizen! It's not like you're abandoning your wife and child for someone like Lark.

(MORE)

IVY (CONT'D)

You fell out of love, that's not a crime.

Harry takes her face in his hands.

HARRY

You have been patient. So patient. I can't tell you how much it means to me. But now isn't the right time. I'm just asking you to wait a little longer.

IVY

How much longer?

Instead of replying, Harry kisses her.

INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - ELSIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Abigail tucks Elsie into bed. In the far distance, they can hear the low hum of the festival.

ELSIE

Come on, Abigail.

ABIGAIL

You always beg for a scary story, then I tell you one, and then your parents ask me why you couldn't sleep for a week.

ELSIE

I won't, I promise.

Abigail blows out the lamp.

ELSIE (CONT'D)

I'm ten, I'm not afraid, I can handle it. Please?

Abigail sighs, perches on the edge of the bed, considering. Then -

ABIGAIL

A long time ago, there lived a girl in a town at the edge of a great big forest. It was a nice town, filled with nice people, and she was happy. Or she should have been. She was surrounded by everyone she had ever known, but she was so lonely.

(MORE)

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

She'd walk through the fields all day, looking for something. She didn't know what it was, just that it was missing and she couldn't find it.

INT. WOODS - SAME TIME

Ivy and Harry still together.

ABIGAIL (V.O.)

Most nights, the girl would wander into the forest. It was dark and eerie, but she was so desperate to find this thing that she wasn't afraid.

Ivy pulls away from Harry's kiss.

IVY

Harry, I'm serious.

HARRY

I know, I just...can we just have this moment? Right now?

Ivy looks deep into his eyes, trying to decide if she can believe him. Then, she relents, and they crash into each other.

ABIGAIL (V.O.)

Her mother warned her to stay away, that darkness hid there, between the spaces where the branches cast shadows. But she didn't listen.

INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - ELSIE'S ROOM - SAME TIME

ABIGAIL

One night on her forest walk, she came upon an old woman. Or at least - she thought she was old. But the closer the girl got, the younger the woman became. Until standing in front of her was the most beautiful woman she had ever seen dancing naked in the moonlight. When the girl tried to hide, the woman just smiled. Held out a hand, inviting her to join in.

ELSIE
 (nervous)
 Abigail -

ABIGAIL
 And so they danced. And danced. And the girl loved it, at first. But then she realized she couldn't stop. Until her feet were out of control beneath her and she was screaming and black smoke rose from the ground and suddenly that small town at the edge of the fire was in flames. And only then, did the girl's legs collapsed beneath her. When she opened her eyes, a man in black stood before her, smiling. "I heard you were looking for me."

ELSIE
 (terrified)
 STOP!
 (quieter)
 I think I'm ready to go to bed.

INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Abigail sits down, removing the flask from her bag. She CHUGS.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Ivy and Harry lying on his jacket. Harry kisses her hand.

HARRY
 I love you. You know that, don't you?

Ivy nuzzles into him, trying to enjoy the moment before it's over.

INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - ELSIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Elsie tosses and turns in bed, still frightened. She takes a deep breath and stands up.

ELSIE
 Abigail?

No response.

INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Elsie runs to find Abigail.

ELSIE
Abigail, I can't -

She stops when she sees Abigail UNCONSCIOUS on the floor,
empty flask beside her.

She drops to her knees, shaking her.

ELSIE (CONT'D)
Abigail? Abigail, wake up!

But Abigail isn't moving. Is she dead?

Elsie is paralyzed, unsure of what to do.

ELSIE (CONT'D)
I'll be right back, I'll get help!

Still in her pajamas, she rushes out.

EXT. FESTIVAL - NIGHT

Lark and Cal are still dancing when Lark is interrupted by a
brusque tap on the shoulder.

She spins around to find a solemn Cal.

CAL
I need to speak with you.

LARK
(cautious)
Why?

CAL
I'll explain in private.

MALCOLM
Cal, we're at a dance -

CAL
It's urgent.

Lark reluctantly follows Cal to the perimeter of the dance
where they have some privacy.

LARK
What?

CAL

It's an open secret in this town
you've been making and distributing
illegal substances -

Lark scoffs.

LARK

You're seriously going to do this
now -

CAL

- And for reasons I can't
comprehend, you've managed to avoid
disciplinary action. But you've
crossed a line.

LARK

I make salves and medicines to
treat people because whatever
you're doing at the clinic isn't
working -

CAL

- And now you're endangering
people. There's a reason we don't
just experiment with -

LARK

Endangering people? What are you
talking about?

Cal nods at Malcolm, coming towards them.

CAL

Why don't you ask your friend about
his rash?

Before Lark can reply, the music stops and the priestess
appears onstage.

PRIESTESS

Attention, all. I'd like to make a
toast.

She raises a goblet. Ceremonial cups are distributed amongst
the crowd. Malcolm pulls Lark away from Cal as they listen.

PRIESTESS (CONT'D)

Let us join together to give
thanks. Thanks to our brothers and
sisters for preserving our little
haven. Thanks to this earth we hold
so sacred.

(MORE)

PRIESTESS (CONT'D)

And thanks most of all to our dear
Drema, our savior, our Lady of
Fall.

She extends a hand and helps Drema onto the stage.

PRIESTESS (CONT'D)

To Drema!

CROWD

To Drema!

They drink till their cups are empty, then SMASH them on the ground.

The priestess nods at the violin player, who starts a slow tune. Then the drummer and the others join in.

On cue, the townspeople put on INTRICATE MASKS, and begin to dance. It isn't relaxed anymore, it's rushed, frenzied, AN EXORCISM.

Soon everyone is wearing a mask except for Drema, who looks a little nervous. The priestess puts a comforting hand on Drema's shoulder, angling her to face away from the crowd.

PRIESTESS

Let them carry you.

With a deep breath, Drema crosses her arms across her chest and falls backward into the audience. The music swells as the masked people carry her high over their heads.

Like she's flying.

EXT. FESTIVAL - SAME TIME

Elsie arrives at the outskirts of the festival.

ELSIE

Mom?? Dad??

She stops for a moment to take in the scene - the masked people chanting as Drema floats above them. It's terrifying.

Elsie elbows her way through the crowd, desperate to find anyone familiar. A figure removes her mask, and suddenly Marie is staring down at her.

MARIE

Elsie?

ELSIE
Have you seen my parents?

MARIE
I thought I saw your dad head off
in that direction -

She points towards the woods.

MARIE (CONT'D)
But let me -

Elsie RUNS.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Elsie runs through the forest, shadows seeming to gain on her, the lights of the festival growing farther and farther away.

ELSIE
Dad? Dad? D-

She stops. Covers her mouth. A distance away, she sees Ivy and Harry, now semi-dressed, lazily kissing.

Elsie is speechless. Horrified. Devastated.

A TWIG snaps.

Ivy and Harry pull away from each other, spinning around to see the intruder -

But Elsie is already gone.

EXT. FESTIVAL - NIGHT

Elsie returns to the festival to find Mary and Nora looking anxiously for her.

MARY
I tried to stop her, but she just
took off -

NORA
Elsie!

Elsie makes a beeline for her mother, throwing herself into her arms.

NORA (CONT'D)
Where did you go? What's going on?

ELSIE

I saw -

She stops herself.

Behind them, the drumming is getting faster and faster.

ELSIE (CONT'D)

Something's wrong with Abigail.

EXT. DANCE CIRCLE - NIGHT

Drema floats over the crowd.

CROWD

(chanting)

May the harvest prosper.

At the edge of the crowd, Malcolm removes his mask. His face is flushed. Lark removes hers.

LARK

Are you okay?

Malcolm nods, forces a smile.

MALCOLM

Just a little hot. I'm fine.

He puts his mask back on, but Lark looks unconvinced.

The sea of people bends towards them, and Malcolm raises his arms over his head to catch Drema.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

(joining in)

May the harvest prosper.

He is holding her full weight now, but even with the mask hiding his face, Lark knows something is off.

Then she sees it. His hands. They look - PURPLE.

Suddenly, Malcolm's eyes roll into the back of his head and he COLLAPSES ON THE GROUND, SEIZING.

Without his support, Drema nearly falls to the floor, the nearby villagers narrowly catching her before she hits the ground.

LARK

MALCOLM? MALCOLM!

Malcolm exhales a SHARP COUGH, SPLATTERING Drema's dress with BLOOD.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The music abruptly stops and SCREAMS cut through the forest from the direction of the festival.

Harry and Ivy pull apart.

IVY
What was that?

Harry hastily straightens his collar.

HARRY
Wait a beat, then follow me. Make
sure no one sees.

He takes off.

EXT. FESTIVAL - NIGHT

Harry rushes on scene to find the dance in CHAOS.

He pushes his way through the crowd that has formed around Malcolm, who is locked inside himself as he contorts VIOLENTLY. His eyes are wide, panicked. From the sidelines, Drema watches in terror.

Cal tries to move him to his side, but it's helpless. Lark kneels beside him.

LARK
Malcolm, Malcolm, please -

CAL
Give him room.

Malcolm STOPS moving.

The crowd waits.

Then, slowly, two trickles of blood flow from each of Malcolm's eyes. He stills. Instantly DEAD.

Cal looks to Harry with a soft shake of his head. Lark covers her mouth.

For a moment, Harry lets the devastation in. Then, his mask is on.

HARRY

Get Richard. Have him taken to the morgue. Everyone, make space.

The crowd obediently parts, except for Lark. She starts towards Malcolm, but TWO MEN grab her and hold her back.

LARK

Malc? Please, no, wait, stop -

But they aren't listening.

HARRY

The festival is over. Everyone to bed. Now.

Out of the corner of Lark's eye, she sees Ivy emerging from the woods where Harry came from.

INT. WOMEN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Ivy enters to find Lark leaning against the window. She doesn't acknowledge her.

IVY

Lark, I can't tell you how sorry I am -

LARK

How long?

IVY

Excuse me?

Lark turns to face her, eyes red. She's been crying.

LARK

How long have you been seeing Mayor Brown behind his wife's back?

Ivy's jaw drops. She fumbles for the right thing to say.

IVY

I - I have no idea what you're talking about.

LARK

You always acted so above it all, I should have known.

IVY

(flustered)
Harry and I are not -

She stops when she realizes her mistake. Lark scoffs.

LARK
He has a family.

IVY
It isn't illegal to realize you
want different things for your life-

LARK
It is when you're still married.

IVY
He's going to leave.

LARK
Did he say when?

Ivy is silent.

Lark shakes her head.

LARK (CONT'D)
Be careful, is all I'm saying.
Because when word gets out, it's
not gonna be his fault.

IVY
Lark, you cannot -

LARK
I'm not the one you should worry
about.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAWN

CLOSE ON: BARE FEET.

WIDEN: Drema walks, still in the silk dress from the night before. The blood has been scrubbed out to the best of ability, but the dark stains remain.

The priestess leads her, a distance in front, and TWO GUARDS flank behind her, creating a weird sort of procession.

VILLAGERS emerge from their homes cheering, banging POTS AND PANS, ringing bells, as she passes.

She smiles big, waves, but when her hands fall to her sides, they are SHAKING.

EXT. LABYRINTH - DAWN

The priestess stops at the mouth of WEATHERED STONE RUINS.

PRIESTESS
Gods bless you, child.

She makes space for Drema to enter -

BUT DREMA DOESN'T MOVE.

DREMA
That man's face last night...he was
so afraid.

She steps backward, bumping into the guards behind her. They don't budge.

DREMA (CONT'D)
I don't...I *can't*.

The priestess stares at her coldly, then softens. Puts a hand to her cheek.

PRIESTESS
You don't have a choice, dear.

Drema's lip quivers.

DREMA
Please, please don't make me - I
don't want to die.

PRIESTESS
This is so much bigger than you.

Drema tries to turn around, but the guards block her.

PRIESTESS (CONT'D)
Wouldn't you rather go with
dignity?

Drema whimpers, she's terrified. A beat as she weighs her options before accepting she has none.

She straightens her shoulders.

PRIESTESS (CONT'D)
Good girl.

The priestess kisses her cheek.

PRIESTESS (CONT'D)
May the gods bless your sacrifice.

Drema swallows hard.

DREMA
(hollow)
May the harvest prosper.

She takes tentative step after step into the labyrinth, clasping the stone sides to steady herself. The guards follow her in.

CLOSE ON her hand lingering on the wall, before it slips away.

She INHALES.

INT. MORGUE - DAY

Richard pulls off a sheet to reveal Malcolm's body lying on a table. Harry, Cal, and WILLIAM (50s, Harry's right hand) look with dread and curiosity.

But he looks fine. Dead, but not unusual. Harry is unmoved.

HARRY
What am I looking at?

RICHARD
Cal?

Cal moves to Malcolm's side. Together, he and Richard flip the body onto its back.

Then Harry's eyes WIDEN.

It's REVOLTING - the rash that had started on his arm snakes up his body, now covering his ENTIRE BACK - A HORRIFYING PURPLE WEB.

A seasoned doctor, even Cal cannot hide his grief. Harry just looks ill.

WILLIAM
Gods have mercy.

HARRY
And you don't know what caused this?

RICHARD
Not yet, sir.

HARRY
Is it...

RICHARD
Contagious? No.

Cal looks at his boss with surprise.

CAL
We can't say anything for certain.

A knock at the door -

GUARD (O.S.)
Her Holiness, sir.

HARRY
Send her in.

The priestess enters. Unlike all of the men, she doesn't bat an eye at the body.

She shakes her head knowingly.

PRIESTESS
It's a message. They're trying to warn us of something.
(to Harry)
Mr. Mayor, a moment?

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The priestess leads Harry into a private alcove.

PRIESTESS
The ceremony did not go as planned.

HARRY
What do you mean? Did she -

PRIESTESS
Yes, of course. But she was inconsolable. Hysterical from the night before. You must be careful handling them.

INT. MORGUE - DAY

Harry returns to Cal and Richard.

HARRY
Tell no one of this.

Cal looks concerned.

RICHARD
You have our discretion.

CAL
But - Forgive me, but they deserve
to know if -

HARRY
It won't do any good, just sow
panic. And we can't have that now.
I'll handle it. Understood?

Richard stares daggers at Cal.

CAL
Yes sir.

A shuffling and a yelp outside, then the GUARD pokes his head
in.

GUARD
We caught her sneaking in outside.

With a shove, a struggling Lark appears in the doorway.

HARRY
I can't deal with this now.

He storms out.

RICHARD
How much did you hear?

LARK
Nothing, I mean, I just - I just
wanted to see him.

RICHARD
How much did you hear?

LARK
I don't know what I heard, please -

Richard sighs.

RICHARD
Jail her.

LARK
What?

RICHARD
We can't risk this getting out
until we've figured out a solution.

The guard starts to pull her away as Lark helplessly fights him.

LARK

Are you serious? That's ridiculous,
I'm not -

RICHARD

Without a mother, I suppose no one
ever taught you to learn your
place.

For half a second, she locks pleading eyes with Cal, but he silently watches her go.

INT. ABIGAIL'S ROOM - DAY

A beam of sunlight hits Abigail in the face and she slowly rouses from sleep. She's visibly hungover.

She groans, flipping over to go back to sleep when -

The sun.

The sun's out.

ABIGAIL

Drema.

She LEAPS out of bed.

INT. ABIGAIL'S HOUSE - DAY

Abigail clumsily RUNS through her home, still in the haze of sleep, *screaming* -

ABIGAIL

DREMA!

EXT. ABIGAIL'S HOUSE - DAY

Abigail runs out onto the street. The morning is in full swing - with dawn, the ceremony has come and gone.

ABIGAIL

DREMA! DREMA!

She starts to RUN down the street.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

DREM -

She's so hungover that she VOMITS in the bushes, collapsing.

IVY
Abigail!

Ivy rushes across the street to help her. Abigail is sobbing in a pool of her own vomit.

ABIGAIL
I missed her. I lost her.

IVY
Abigail, let me help -

ABIGAIL
(distressed)
I missed her, I lost her.

Ivy helps her out of the bushes, keeping an arm around her shoulder for support. Abigail is sheet white - either from the dehydration or the loss of her best friend.

IVY
Your parents were worried so the clinic sent me to check on you.

But Abigail isn't listening.

ABIGAIL
(faint, to herself)
I lost her.

INT. ABIGAIL'S ROOM - DAY

Ivy settles Abigail back in bed. Abigail looks numb. Ivy hands her a cup of water.

IVY
Drink.

Abigail accepts the cup but is in a daze.

ABIGAIL
I never said goodbye. She must have been so scared.

Ivy brings the cup to Abigail's lips.

IVY
You need water. The whole thing.

Defeated, Abigail chugs it.

A beat.

IVY (CONT'D)

Your friend was very brave. The gods are grateful for her sacrifice. We wouldn't survive without her.

ABIGAIL

Please. Stop.

IVY

It was an honor, she wouldn't want you to grieve -

ABIGAIL

You have *no idea* what she would want.

Ivy is struck silent for a beat, then -

IVY

My mother was chosen for Lady of the Fall when I was a little girl. She was the only family I had. I was despondent.

That piques Abigail's interest.

IVY (CONT'D)

I was all alone - stuck together with the other girl who had lost her mother and we...didn't get along well. Still don't.

(then)

But I realized something. I hadn't lost a mother, not really. This town, this community is my family. She lives on through them. I have never known more kindness than Little Haven's. We understand the sacrifice is so that we may prosper. We carry it with us.

Abigail regards her warily. She's unconvinced.

ABIGAIL

But *why*?

Ivy is momentarily speechless.

IVY

I - it's just the way things are. Always have been.

ABIGAIL

But they don't have to stay that way -

IVY

I would caution you to be careful. I know you're grieving so I won't repeat this conversation, but other people won't be so sympathetic.

Abigail scoffs.

ABIGAIL

As if you're perfect.

Ivy freezes.

IVY

What do you mean?

ABIGAIL

Your friend's the one who gave me the moonshine.

Abigail doesn't notice Ivy's soft sigh of relief.

IVY

She's not my friend. Keep away from her. I'll let you rest.

She gets up to go.

ABIGAIL

You must be exhausted.

Ivy stops, hand on the doorknob.

IVY

Pardon?

ABIGAIL

Trying so hard. All the time.

Ivy says nothing, just goes.

INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - DAY

Harry sits in his living room with the priestess, amid a private counsel.

HARRY

I've heard the gossip. They think what happened at the festival was an omen.

PRIESTESS

The girl was frightened after last night. They all are. You have to be resolute. They don't want the truth, they want to see strength. You can't ask questions with no answers.

Harry nods, straightening.

HARRY

Is there any reason the gods would reject her sacrifice? We barely had enough food to survive last winter. And if -

The priestess's eyes flick to something behind Harry.

PRIESTESS

Appears we have a visitor.

Harry turns to see Elsie sitting tentatively on the stairs.

HARRY

Everything alright, sweetheart?

Elsie swallows and comes over to them, awkward in the presence of the priestess.

ELSIE

Can I, um, talk to you about something that happened last night?

HARRY

Can it wait? Now's not the best time.

ELSIE

No, Dad, I think I saw -

PRIESTESS

This is not the time, dear. Your father is under a great deal of pressure.

ELSIE

But -

The priestess puts her hands on Elsie's shoulders, forcing her to look her in the eye.

PRIESTESS

Do you understand how dangerous things are? We are on the precipice of chaos, and your father must be the one to lead us out -

HARRY

Back off. You're scaring her.

The priestess lets go, leaving Elsie shaken.

PRIESTESS

She should be scared. We should all be scared.

INT. JAIL - DAY

The guard deposits Lark in a small cell.

LARK

You can't keep me in here -

The guard ignores her, locking her inside.

LARK (CONT'D)

Hey! Hey! I'm talking to you!

He walks off, ignoring her.

GUARD

Freak bitch.

EXT. CENTER GREEN - DAY

The bell tolls, signaling a town meeting.

Ivy follows a crowd of townspeople onto the center green, an eerie repetition of the day before. Except today, there are no smiles. Townspeople are still reeling from Malcolm's death.

In the distance, Ivy sees Abigail, still unwell but standing in between her PARENTS.

Ivy turns her attention to the front of the crowd to watch Harry holding Elsie and Nora close before heading to the stage.

Nora catches her staring and she quickly looks away, failing to notice -

ELSIE STARING AT HER.

Off to the side of the green, Cal stands at Richard's side.

RICHARD
Your conduct with Mayor Brown today
was unacceptable, Cal.

CAL
I'm sorry Sir, I was just concerned
because we don't know -

RICHARD
Exactly. We don't know. So there's
no reason to stir up trouble.

CAL
So we're just meant to wait until
it happens again? It's *spreading* -

Harry puts a hand up, the crowd quiets.

HARRY
I wish I could have called this
meeting under better circumstances.
But unfortunately today we mourn
the loss of Malcolm Reed. He was a
good man and an invaluable part of
our community. Later this week, we
will hold a proper funeral -

TOWNSPERSON (O.S.)
Was he sick?

TOWNSPERSON 2 (O.S.)
I saw him! He was purple!

HARRY
I assure you that while his death
was sudden and tragic, it is no
cause for concern.

TOWNSPERSON 3 (O.S.)
But it was on Choosing Day! What
does it mean for the harvest?

Murmurs throughout the crowd. For the first time, Harry looks the tiniest bit nervous. Ivy watches him, concerned.

HARRY

The gods have always taken good care of us, a single man's sickness means nothing. We are safe and protected in our -

A bell tolls.

Again. And again. And again. And again.

The crowd goes silent.

RICHARD

It couldn't be.

Nearby Ivy, Mary's eyes WIDEN.

MARY

Five times? But that's -

IVY

A stranger.

In horror, Harry looks to the priestess, who doesn't even have a chance to speak before -

A MAN rides down the main street on horseback. Blood pours out of his gut. The entire town watches him in bewilderment.

MAN

HELP! HELP, PLEASE, I NEED -

He falls unconscious, tumbling off the horse.

OFF IVY'S LOOK OF SHOCK -

INT. TOWN HALL - DAY

Harry, William, and JOHN (50s, council member) mid-argument.

WILLIAM

He's not our responsibility. We can't take him in, not now.

JOHN

Have some compassion, the man has a bullet in his gut.

WILLIAM

We don't bring the outside in. That's how we protect ourselves.

JOHN

We don't even know where he came
from

WILLIAM

People are already nervous -

HARRY

Enough.

(then)

If we can't help someone in need,
we don't deserve any of our good
fortune. We'll treat his wounds and
release him back to - wherever he
came from.

WILLIAM

What if he tells his friends? And
more come?

HARRY

We've survived for two hundred
years, I don't intend to stop now.

INT. CLINIC - DAY

The man lies unconscious on an operation table. Robert cleans
his hands. Cal enters with Ivy at his heels.

IVY

Is there anything you need, sir?

ROBERT

Stay outside Ivy, I don't want you
anywhere near this.

IVY

Yes sir.

She disappears.

Cal moves to prep his own hands, but Robert stops him -

ROBERT

I'll be doing this alone.

CAL

I'm sorry?

ROBERT

Instructions from the council -
highest levels of discretion. I'll
need you to go too, Cal.

Cal is stunned.

CAL
 Sir, with respect, I've apprenticed
 for you for twelve years, I think
 I've proven myself trustworthy.

Robert says nothing, continues prepping.

CAL (CONT'D)
 If this is about my earlier
 hesitation about the seizure, I was
 only concerned -

ROBERT
 And I understand your concern. In
 fact, why don't you stand guard
 over the body in the morgue? Just
 to make sure no one else tries to
 sneak in for a look.

CAL
 I'm not a guard -

ROBERT
 You're right. Guards can follow
 simple instruction.

Cal holds his tongue, then exhales, defeated.

CAL
 ...Yes sir.

He wordlessly leaves.

INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - DAY

Elsie stands at the screen door, silently watching her mother
 sew on the front porch. She hesitates, then -

EXT. HARRY'S HOUSE - DAY

Elsie joins her mother.

NORA
 You hungry darling? There's some
 fruit in the -

ELSIE
I saw something in the woods last
 night.

INT. MORGUE - DAY

Cal sits across from Malcolm's body, stewing in resentment.

He stands, pulls the sheet off, looking intently at where the rash started on Malcolm's hand.

An idea comes to him, he hurries out.

EXT. JAIL - DAY

Cal pauses for a second - is he really going to do this?

He glances back in the direction of the clinic - fuck it. He is. He heads inside.

INT. JAIL - DAY

The guard stands when Cal enters.

CAL

I've come to fetch her, Dr. Curan's orders.

GUARD

I was told -

CAL

You were told to keep her here until the matter was settled. It's settled.

The guard looks hesitant, but Cal's authority makes him back down.

INT/EXT. LARK'S CELL - DAY

Cal enters to find Lark leaning against the wall. She sees him and stands.

LARK

I heard five bells, does that mean -

Cal ignores her, unlocking the cell and holding it open. Lark is frozen in shock.

CAL

Come on, then.

LARK

Is this a joke? Are you going to
slam it in my face right when I
come out?

CAL

I will if you don't hurry up.

Lark doesn't trust him, but anything's better than her cell.
She follows him out.

INT. CLINIC - DAY

Richard finishes stitching the man's wound. The man lies
still, skin pale. It's unclear if he'll make it.

INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION - DAY

Ivy sits dutifully, patiently in front.

Harry bursts in, and she stands, startled.

IVY

Mayor Brown!

HARRY

Where's Richard?

IVY

In surgery, is everything alri-

Harry rushes past her.

INT. CLINIC - EXAM ROOM - DAY

Finished, Richard removes his bloody apron and washes his
hands as Harry enters.

RICHARD

Did the best I could, but he lost a
lot of blood. I don't know if he'll-

HARRY

You need to come to my house right
now. There's something wrong with
my daughter.

INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION - DAY

Ivy is still standing, waiting anxiously as they emerge. She tries to meet Harry's eyes, but he won't look at her.

RICHARD

We'll be back. Keep watch, but do not go inside.

IVY

Yes sir. What's the matt-

They leave her alone.

INT. MORGUE - DAY

Cal wordlessly leads Lark to the entrance of the room where Malcolm's body is kept. He ushers for her to enter.

Lark takes a hesitant step towards the covered body, then turns back to Cal.

LARK

I don't understand.

Cal shrugs. He doesn't really either.

CAL

You wanted to see him.

Lark eyes him, trying to figure out what his agenda is. But he's inscrutable.

She walks to Malcolm's body and gently pulls the sheet off to reveal his face.

She puts her hand over her mouth, eyes welling up with tears.

Lark gently takes his face in her hands, running her thumb across his cheek. She can't hold it in any longer.

She breaks down in heaving sobs, legs wavering under her.

LARK

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

Cal watches from the doorway, moved despite himself.

Lark wipes her eyes, trying to get herself under control.

LARK (CONT'D)

Do you...do you know what happened to him?

CAL

No.

Lark nods, not looking up from Malcolm's face. Trying to solidify every detail into memory.

LARK

He asked me to marry him last night.

She laughs a little.

LARK (CONT'D)

For the third time. He didn't love me like that, but he always tried to look out for me. For some godforsaken reason.

Cal doesn't know how to reply.

LARK (CONT'D)

He was good. He was so good.
(then)
It should have been me.

CAL

(soft)
I'm sorry.

LARK

Why did you take me here?

To spite my boss. But that isn't even the truth anymore. So he answers honestly -

CAL

I don't know.

LARK

They'll tuck this away to make us forget so everything returns to being happy and pleasant and perfect. I know you don't like me, but I am asking you to please find what did this. So it doesn't happen to anyone else.

Cal swallows hard.

Suddenly, he starts towards her, reaching for the sheet covering Cal's chest.

CAL

Can I show you something?

INT. CLINIC - NIGHT

Ivy sits quietly at her desk. In the other room, she can hear rustling and soft moaning.

She turns, cranes her neck to try to see the man inside, but does not go in. Richard told her not to.

MAN (O.S.)
Hello? Is anybody there?

Ivy freezes, unsure of what to do.

MAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Water. I need water.

He sounds hoarse and pained. Ivy glances at the front door, willing Richard to return and relieve her of this decision, but it remains closed.

MAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Please.

Ivy hesitates, then stands, walking into the -

INT. CLINIC - EXAM ROOM - NIGHT

The man lies on the operation table, wound stitched but covered in sweat.

MAN
Oh, thank god.

Ivy knows better than to speak to him. She fetches a jug and pours it into a cup for him.

MAN (CONT'D)
I didn't think this place existed, not really. I had only ever heard stories. But I got shot and I was on my own and I just rode until -

Ivy extends to cup to him, keeping her distance.

MAN (CONT'D)
Can you help me?

Ivy hesitates, but obliges, lifting it to his lips to let him drink.

It's then that the man notices the roman numerals on her extended arm.

MAN (CONT'D)

So it is real.

Ivy notices him staring at her arm and snatches it away, covering it with her sleeve.

MAN (CONT'D)

She told me you do it every year,
but it was unfathomable. I never
believed...

Ivy sets the water down, hastily making her way out -

MAN (CONT'D)

It's not like that everywhere. You
know that, don't you? Outside, no
one would ever think to - you'd be
safe.

That gets her.

IVY

I *am* safe. Here. It's the outside
that's dangerous.

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

Cal peels off the sheet to reveal Malcolm's naked body. Lark winces.

LARK

I don't want to see -

CAL

Help me roll him over.

Confused, Lark helps Cal roll Malcolm onto his back.

Lark GASPS when she sees the purple that crawls from his arm to his entire back. Cal watches her take it in horrified, before she manages to collect herself.

CAL (CONT'D)

He came to me yesterday morning
with a patch on his arm. It spread
so fast.

LARK

That's why you confronted me at the
dance. You thought I did this.

CAL

I thought it was possible.

LARK

Nothing I make could ever be - I
wouldn't even know how to...it's
inhuman.

CAL

It's my fault. I dismissed him. He
needed help and I sent him off.

LARK

He's not the only one, is he?

A beat. Cal debates whether he can trust her.

CAL

No. Though he is the first to -
pass.

LARK

And they're just going to cover it
up? You have to do something. You
have to -

CAL

They jailed you for being in the
nearby vicinity. I can't do
anything rash.

LARK

Then why are you showing me?

CAL

Honestly, I don't know.

A beat.

LARK

I won't let anyone else die like
Malcolm did. And I don't think you
will either.

Cal says nothing.

LARK (CONT'D)

We both know medicine. Between the
two of us, we can figure it out.

(then)

Together.

They eye each other, an uneasy alliance forming.

CAL

And if it's beyond our
comprehension?

LARK

Then maybe this town is overdue for
what's coming to it.

INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - SAME TIME

Harry and Richard burst in -

HARRY

What's wrong? Elsie, are you
alright? I brought the doctor -

- to find Nora, the priestess, and Elsie, looking perfectly
fine. Harry takes a step back, confused.

HARRY (CONT'D)

...What's going on?

Elsie hesitates.

The priestess nods toward her.

PRIESTESS

Tell him what you told me.

Elsie swallows hard, then -

ELSIE

After I found Abigail on the floor
last night, I ran to look for you
in the woods. And I - I saw...

Harry realizes what's happening. He starts to open his mouth -

ELSIE (CONT'D)

I saw Ivy, dancing naked. Chanting
things in tongues, things I
couldn't understand. Black smoke
rising from the ground, curling at
her feet.

PRIESTESS

Witchcraft.

Harry is speechless.

NORA

I called her Holiness as soon as
Elsie told me. What if it's her,
Harry? She puts on a good mask, but
what if our troubles are because -

HARRY

Elsie, I don't know what you think you saw, but that's impossible. Ivy wasn't doing witchcraft in the woods last night.

NORA

How would you know?

Harry goes silent. He's her alibi. Elsie watches him closely.

HARRY

I...witches don't exist. Witches are what we use to frighten disobedient children. Perhaps Elsie accidentally took a sip of the punch -

PRIESTESS

Just as our gods exist, so do theirs. The dark ones. It accounts for everything - the poor season, the stranger.

RICHARD

The illness that took hold of Malcolm Reed.

Harry gets down to Elsie's level.

HARRY

This is a tall accusation to make, Elsie. Are you positive you saw what you think you saw?

Elsie looks him dead in the eye as she nods, echoing his earlier words.

ELSIE

Family protects each other no matter what.

Harry is running out of excuses. He stands, looks to the priestess.

HARRY

I believe my daughter, but we'll need more than the word of a little girl.

The priestess nods, turning to Elsie.

PRIESTESS

Is there anyone who can verify your accusation?

INT. CLINIC - NIGHT

Ivy is still in the clinic with the man, right where they left off.

MAN

The outside is dangerous? Have you ever left this place?

IVY

This is my home -

Ivy's in such a rush to get out, she drops the jug of water and it shatters on the floor.

She frantically tries to clean as quickly as she can. The man keeps talking.

MAN

You're brainwashed, do you get that? They've messed with your mind. You have no idea what it's like - what life *could* be like -

IVY

Stop.

She dries the ground with a towel, trying to ignore him.

MAN

I know you're afraid, but I promise you - you don't have to stay here. You can make that choice for yourself.

She stands to leave, but he catches her hand, forcing her to look at him.

IVY

Let me g-

MAN

I've found you now. When I'm healed, I'll come back - I have friends. Friends who can help set you all free.

Ivy pales in terror.

IVY

No. No, you can't bring anyone else. You can't ever come back.

MAN

They can't hide here forever. Eventually, they have to let the world in -

Thinking fast, Ivy grabs a pillow and SHOVES IT OVER THE MAN'S FACE. She holds it there as she struggles, eyes widening in horror as she watches him wriggle. But he's weak, and he can't put up much of a fight.

She holds it there until his body slackens. And then another beat to be safe, before she finally removes it.

Ivy stares into his empty eyes, wiping away the tears gathering in her own. She did her duty.

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

Cal escorts Lark back to her cell, closing the door when Lark steps inside.

CAL

Richard will let you out officially tomorrow. I'll vouch for you.

Lark nods. Cal nods.

Neither knows what to say.

Cal turns to go, then -

LARK

Thank you.

EXT. JAIL - NIGHT

Cal steps out onto the street. He glances left and right, making sure the road is empty before he pulls up his left pant leg.

On the inside of his ankle is the beginnings of a PURPLE RASH.

EXT. ABIGAIL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ABIGAIL'S MOTHER (30s) answers the door to find the priestess on the other side.

ABIGAIL'S MOTHER
Your Holiness! I wasn't -

PRIESTESS
I need to speak with your daughter.

INT. ABIGAIL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The priestess waits. Abigail enters behind her mother warily.

PRIESTESS
Sit, child.

Abigail reluctantly perches on a chair, bracing herself for whatever the hell this is.

ABIGAIL
Is this about Drema?

PRIESTESS
Did you watch Elsie Brown last night during the festival?

ABIGAIL
I - what? I mean, yeah I did.

PRIESTESS
Elsie claims that she saw Ivy Harris in the woods performing dark magick. She ran home to find you recovering from unconsciousness and told you before going to the festival. Can you confirm that accusation?

Abigail opens her mouth automatically in a scoff, almost like it's a joke - but then reconsiders.

Bitter, hurt, reeling, hungry to watch the world burn.

A split-second decision that will alter the course of lives forever.

ABIGAIL
Yes.

INT. CLINIC - OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

Ivy Robert and Harry burst in to find the man dead on the table. Ivy stands behind them.

IVY

IVY (CONT'D)

It must have been infected - he
stopped breathing - I'm so sorry.

She locks eyes with Harry, who just shakes his head.

IVY (CONT'D)

At least it wasn't one of our own.

INT. ABIGAIL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The priestess nods, satisfied.

PRIESTESS

I should have known. Our gods are
fair and just. They would never
torment us without reason.

INT. CLINIC - NIGHT

Harry watches the frenzied look on Ivy's face with a dread
that Ivy doesn't yet understand.

PRIESTESS (V.O.)

We are in the presence of a witch.

OFF IVY -

EXT. FIELDS - NIGHT

The moon is high as the guards who led Drema into the
labyrinth make their way through dark rows of seeded crops.
This year's fall harvest.

The guards separate; each begins to gently, carefully pour
out the contents of two vases over the fresh dirt.

CLOSE ON one plant as a guard finishes pouring and moves on
to the next. CLOSER STILL, and we see that mixed in with the
mud and water and the soil is a faint trickle of BLOOD.

END OF EPISODE