

THIS COUNTRY

Written by

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FADE IN:

VARIOUS SHOTS of rural Ohio. Farms, rolling hills. *

CHYRON: *In rural America today, studies show that young people feel more marginalized than ever. To explore this problem, Fox sent a documentary crew to spend time with some young people in a typical midwestern town.* *

EXT. FLATCH TOWN STREET - DAY *

SHRUB (20) and KELLY (21) sit on a bench and speak to camera. They both drink big blue Slurpees. *

SHRUB *

So this is where the bus from Dayton stops. *

KELLY *

Once we saw this kid with a ferret on a leash get off. Not kidding. *

SHRUB *

The guy who drives the bus, Mister Fargas, he used to be my soccer coach. Said I wasn't gonna amount to anything. That I was "ill behaved" and I ran weird. *

KELLY *

Then they cancelled soccer at our school and now Fargas's driving a bus so y'know, who's the loser now. *

Kelly stands up, excited. *

KELLY (CONT'D) *

Here it comes! *

They put their Slurpees into the street. The bus rolls OVER the Slurpees, sending blue ice over the front wheels and onto the windshield. *

SHRUB *

Yes! *

The doors open, people get off, unfazed. A beat and then the wipers go slowly once, twice across the windshield. Fargas has been through this before, clearly. *

KELLY *

[bleep]! He's gonna get us! Come on! *

They run away. The bus sits there. From behind, we watch
 Shrub and Kelly sprint down the street. Shrub does run really
 weird. They are overjoyed.

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SHRUB
 Take that, Fargas!

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TITLE CARD: **THIS COUNTRY**

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EXT. KELLY'S HOUSE - DAY

Kelly and Shrub speak TO CAMERA.

KELLY
 Shrub isn't just my cousin, he's my
 best friend.

CHYRON: *Kelly Mallet*

SHRUB
 Tell 'em why.

CHYRON: *Lloyd "Shrub" Mallet*

*

KELLY
 'Cuz he's the only person I can
 share a bucket of Dunkin Munchkins
 with.

SHRUB
 Bingo.

KELLY
 See I love the chocolate and the
 butternut ones and hate the
 cinnamon. But Shrub inhales those.

SHRUB
 And the thing is, it's not cuz I
 love the cinnamon ones so much, I
 just feel sorry for them.

KELLY
 Yeah.

SHRUB
 Cuz they're always left.

A beat. Shrub shrugs.

I like the underdog.

Kelly nods solemnly to camera.

EXT. FLATCH UNITARIAN CHURCH - DAY

FATHER JOE (35) speaks to camera.

FATHER JOE

I've been ministering to Flatch for eight years now. So I've known Kelly and Shrub for quite some time. It's not easy being a young adult these days. Kids need guidance. They call me "Father Joe," and you know--I do feel like their Dad sometimes. Proud...concerned. Anyway, I think they've made real progress.

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INTERCUT:

EXT. FLATCH FIELD - DAY

Shrub and Kelly wrestle awkwardly. They swear at each other and we BLEEP this.

FATHER JOE

They're getting much better with their f-ing and jeff-ing. I think we had one, maybe two c-words last week, but really, great progress.

(listening to a producer
off screen)

Yes. They are still banned from services. Sneaking in and playing "Fat Bottomed Girls" on the bells was not appreciated.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Various shots of the village in full Fall splendor: pumpkin displays, leaf wreaths, scarecrows. A sign reads, "*Scarecrow Festival This Sunday!*"

CHYRON: *The scarecrow festival in Flatch dates back to the 1800s. Studies show that more than ever, young people long for tradition.*

SHRUB (O.C.)

Scarecrow festival is pretty much the biggest day of the year.

Shrub and Kelly walk through town.

KELLY

People make scarecrows and put them up all over town and everyone votes for the best--

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SHRUB

You're looking at the winner. I got a killer design and prime location this year. Right on the green. The guy with that spot last year won. And his was pretty much just some used clothes and twine.

*

KELLY

Winner gets a hot air balloon ride.

*

SHRUB

And you're on the front page of the Flatch Patriot.

KELLY

It's so dumb.

SHRUB

Oh and you throwing a frying pan in the air isn't?

KELLY

A) The skillet toss is a real skill. B) There's a trophy.

SHRUB

Fine, I'll take my Nan on the balloon.

EXT. KELLY'S HOUSE - DAY

Kelly talks TO CAMERA.

KELLY

The skillet toss contest is where you take this five pound pan and throw it as far as you can. I think it's from when pioneer ladies would like throw things at Indians. Or their kids. I don't know, you can look it up. Anyway, my Dad won seven years in a row. Everyone was like, oh man, Marcus Mallet is entering? Forget it. But then he blew his knee out. Really opened up the field. I'm gonna win it back for him.

(MORE)

KELLY (CONT'D)

We're super close my Dad and me.
It's time I brought the gold
skillet back to the Mallet family
where it belongs.

INT. KELLY'S LIVINGROOM - DAY

Shrub is working on his scarecrow. It's clear he has put a lot of work and artistry into his scarecrow. Kelly has two cans of beans that she is using to do arm curls.

KELLY (CONT'D)

The throw is all in the wrist. You gotta build up the tendons and what not.

SHRUB

You're never beating Big Mandy.
(to camera)
She's won the last five years.

KELLY

How 'bout you just concentrate on your hay man, there.

Shrub carefully stuffs hay into an arm.

SHRUB

See most people, they just free-form the whole body. That's just amateur if you ask me. I made sure my scarecrow has the correct ratio of arm length to head span.

He holds up a well-drawn sketch and then some old sneakers.

SHRUB (CONT'D)

Also, real shoes. That's what we call a crowd-pleaser.

KELLY

I don't like crowds. This festival...it's really not safe for me. I got enemies everywhere. Just like my Dad. Trumbull county, the Wyandot area...there's a VFW hall in Canton that has panic buttons under the bar. I walk in...people sound the alarm. Right?

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*

Kelly turns to Shrub. He looks to camera and shrugs.

KELLY (CONT'D)

That's why I got my gang to protect me.

*

EXT. FLATCH STREET - DAY

Kelly walks with a motley group of 11-14 year olds.

SHRUB (O.S.)

Kelly has this group of seventh grade kids she hangs out with. And one freakishly big one from fifth. It's creepy. And honestly a little sad.

INT. KELLY'S LIVINGROOM - DAY

From UPSTAIRS, SUE yells...

SUE (O.S.)

KELLY?!

KELLY

WHAT?!

SUE

KELLY?!

KELLY

WHAT?!

SUE

DID YOU BUY MY BUNION CREAM?

KELLY

THEY WERE OUT!

SHRUB

What does your Mom need foot cream for when she doesn't even get out of bed?

SUE

SHUT UP, SHRUB! AND STOP FOOLING WITH THE CANNED GOODS!

Kelly looks up from the cans of beans she's been curling.

EXT. KELLY'S HOUSE - DAY

Kelly and Shrub talk to CAMERA.

KELLY

So his real name is "Lloyd".

*

SHRUB

After my Dad.

KELLY

But his Dad drank a lot of Busch beer so they started calling his Dad "Busch"--

SHRUB

--And they started calling me "Shrub". For like, a small bush.

KELLY

But then they started calling his Dad "Corny" short for "Unicorn" on account of this weird cyst thing he had on his forehead that stuck out like a horn.

SHRUB

But they still called me "Shrub" cuz there's no name for a little unicorn. Because even normal size unicorns don't exist.

KELLY

Exactly.

(beat)

And that horn was like the least weird thing about his Dad.

SHRUB

Oh that's rich! Everyone knows your Dad's a peeping tom!

KELLY

That has never been proven!

(to camera)

It hasn't.

They are interrupted by BIG MANDY (40) who turns the corner pulling a wagon with her scarecrow in it and yelling at someone behind her.

BIG MANDY

[bleep] you, you [bleeping bleep]!

*

KELLY

Mandy, what's going on?

BIG MANDY
You know that blind guy who lives
up the road?

SHRUB
Blind Bobby?

BIG MANDY
Just walked right into me. Almost
knocked off Colin's "scare fro".

CLOSE ON her scarecrow, who we now see is dressed as Colin
Kaepernick with a football jersey and a black "fro" wig. *

KELLY
So you're doing the scarecrow
contest this year? No skillet toss?

BIG MANDY
Of course I'm doing skillet toss.
I'm in training right now. Colin's
filled with iron bars. Go ahead,
try to pull him.

Kelly reluctantly takes the wagon handle from Mandy and pulls
it. It hardly budes. Kelly looks concerned.

BIG MANDY (CONT'D)
You see that blind [bleep] you tell
him I'm gonna break his legs.

Big Mandy wheels off down the street.

KELLY
(whispering to camera)
Big Mandy's a psychopath.

From way down the street, Big Mandy turns around, yelling:

BIG MANDY
(menacingly)
Who's a psychopath?!

KELLY
Um...Blind Bobby!

BIG MANDY
[bleep] yeah, he is.

She turns and keeps walking.

KELLY
Seriously, such a weirdo.

Unbelievably, Mandy turns around again.

BIG MANDY
Who's a weirdo?!

KELLY
(beat)
Shrub!

BIG MANDY
No kidding!

And she walks off. Kelly mouths to camera, "freak".

EXT. TOWN GREEN - FESTIVAL

The green is festive and alive. People mill around apple bobbing games and carve-your-pumpkin tables. Two PILGRIMS make soup in a cauldron over an open fire. A woman sells hand-made soap surrounded by various scarecrows.

FATHER JOE
(to camera)
The festival is good fun for all
ages--

*

Behind him, Shrub and Kelly make faces.

KELLY
This guy! This guy is a legend!

SHRUB
Legend in the hizz-ous!

FATHER JOE
Okay you two, simmer down--

KELLY
Tell them about when we drank all
those cherry wine coolers!

SHRUB
Yeah, he had to take us to get our
stomachs pumped!

FATHER JOE
Okay that wasn't funny, it was very
scary--

KELLY
He loves golf!

FATHER JOE
I do. I do enjoy golf--

SHRUB

And Chris Pine! He pines for the
Pine!

FATHER JOE

That's not--

KELLY

[bleep] yeah, you do!

FATHER JOE

Okay Kelly, that's a dollar in the
collection plate--

CHERYL (30s) walks by. She has a small camera around her
neck. There's an awkward look between her and Joe. *

CHERYL *

Joe. *

FATHER JOE *

Cheryl. *

SHRUB *

Cheryl! Legend! *

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

CHERYL speaks TO CAMERA. *

CHERYL

Are there are still unresolved
feelings between myself and Joe? *
Yes. But if I hadn't moved to *
Flatch with him I would never have *
become the award-winning editor of *
the Flatch Patriot. So now he has *
God, and apparently Tinder, and I *
have the news. And trust me, the *
scarecrow festival looks fun but it *
is a hot bed of criminal activity
and shenanigans.

Shrub and Kelly amble by behind her. We stay with Shrub and
Kelly. Kelly spots her DAD(40s) pushing a stroller and
talking to a friend (MATT). *

KELLY

(to camera, excitedly)
Hey that's my Dad! DAD!

She rushes to him as he says goodbye to Matt.

MARCUS
I'll see you later, Matt.

*

Matt walks off.

KELLY
How you been, Dad?

MARCUS
Oh you know, busy with the baby.

KELLY
So guess what? I'm doing the
skillet toss! Gonna win it back for
us!

MARCUS
Big Mandy's not competing?

KELLY
No, she is--

*

MARCUS
Ooph. Good luck with that.

He starts to walk away.

KELLY
Hey! Maybe we could hang out one of
these nights--

MARCUS
Yeah not a great time.

KELLY
Sure, yeah--the new baby...

MARCUS
I better get her back. Jessie will
kick my ass--

He wheels away. Kelly watches him go, calling after him.

KELLY
Gonna bring the gold back to the
Mallets!

For a second we can see she is shattered, then she remembers
the camera and brightens up proudly...

KELLY (CONT'D)
That was my Dad!

EXT. VILLAGE GREEN - DAY

The camera follows Shrub and Kelly as they show the crew around the festival.

SHRUB

That's where you get your voting sheet--and that's the plant stall, over there. Don't buy anything from her 'cuz they die in a week.

They pass another stall with a NEW AGE woman selling soap.

KELLY

Alice makes her own soap but doesn't bathe and I call that irony.

They pass LEN (70s and cranky).

SHRUB

Len. Weird, mean man.

He heard Shrub.

*

LEN

Stupid ass kids!

KELLY

See?

JUMP CUT Shrub indicates a scarecrow with rubber glove hands.

SHRUB

This is just the sign of a super lazy scarecrow maker. If you can't be bothered to make real hands then you have no business being here.

*

He shows the camera a limp scarecrow.

SHRUB (CONT'D)

Technically not even a scarecrow 'cuz there's no hay in it. Just a rag on a stick.

JUMP CUT Shrub is now with a very generic scarecrow.

SHRUB (CONT'D)

I mean, I get it but it's not making me feel anything.

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EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Father Joe speaks TO CAMERA.

FATHER JOE

Shrub takes so much care in making his scarecrow and he really is quite talented. He has the soul of an artist. And the body...well...of an artist with a mineral deficiency.

EXT. GREEN - DAY

Kelly runs up to Shrub.

KELLY

It took me forever to register. They made me sign this long thing saying I wouldn't use special chalk on my hands. *

SHRUB

You mean like your Dad did when he was disqualified and then banned?

KELLY

That was never proven!
(to camera)
He blew out his knee.

Shrub looks to camera, subtly shakes his head "no". From a STALL, MICKEY yells to them.

MICKEY

Hey! Hey Shrub! *

They both roll their eyes.

JUMP CUT

Mickey (21) mans a booth to raise money for "Fireworks for the Flatch Fourth!" It is decorated with real fireworks.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

No donation is too big or too small.

SHRUB

Dude, the fourth of July is like eight months away. *

KELLY

Yeah I don't have any cash on me-- *

SHRUB

And I don't like fireworks. *

MICKEY
Everyone likes fireworks, my bro. *

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

Shrub and Kelly talk TO CAMERA.

KELLY
We went to school with Mickey. He
is super annoying--

SHRUB *
He and me were born on the same day *
at the same hospital so ever since *
we were babies he thinks we're best *
friends. Calls me his "bro". *

KELLY *
You gotta feel sorry for him. He *
got dropped on his head when he was *
born 'cuz he came out super wet. *
And like, what is he going to do *
with his life except work at the *
fireworks store out on route 124 *
for the rest of his life?

SHRUB
Sad.

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

Back to Shrub and Kelly at Mickey's stall.

MICKEY *
(to Shrub) *
Wanna come over later and Fortnite? *

SHRUB *
Yeah, no. *

MICKEY *
Okay. Also, if you don't have cash *
you can donate in crypto currency-- *

Shrub and Kelly look to camera--see? What a weirdo...

SHRUB
Yeah Mickey, we will totally pay
you in made-up money.

KELLY
 (mouthing to camera)
 So sad.

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

Mickey talks TO CAMERA from his stall.

MICKEY
 I started trading bit coin a year ago and I've made like a thousand dollars. Minus the money I spent on bunting for my stall. And the fifty I put aside for Shrub's birthday present. It's an iguana. Don't tell my bro.

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 *

EXT. GREEN - DAY

TOWNSPEOPLE circle a refrigerator box painted as a scarecrow. A man's feet stick out below. Everyone is laughing. Shrub clocks this from a few feet away. The box talks like a robot.

BOX VOICE
 Beep. Beep. I have come to steal your crows. Not crows feet! You are safe, June!

JUNE (spry 80) and everyone else laughs.

JUNE
 Oh that's hilarious!

Shrub walks up.

SHRUB
 That's not a scarecrow, it's just a talking box!

BOX VOICE
 Take me to your leader. And the candy apples.

Everyone laughs.

SHRUB
 (exasperated)
 Why does the scarecrow have a robot voice?!

EXT. TOWN DUMP - DAY

Kelly talks TO CAMERA. Behind her, her "gang" moves old crap around.

KELLY

Shrub can get really competitive. Like once we had to do a school walkathon and he was obsessed with raising the most money, so he stole our Nan's ATM card and took out like 200 dollars. Which meant that she couldn't get her teeth done.

(to a kid)

Levi, does that look like a regulation skillet course? Yeah, didn't think so!

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

Kelly walks by NADINE PETERSON(21) manning the historical society table. Next to her is an old wooden latrine with ropes around it.

NADINE

Kelly! Have you considered joining the historical society? For 25 dollars you can preserve Flatch's great past and secure it's future.

KELLY

No, Nadine, I have not considered joining. Because I am not 75.

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

Kelly talks TO CAMERA.

KELLY

Guess how old Nadine is? Seriously. Guess. My age. She married this guy who's Dad owns a car dealership and she has a kid and she acts all fancy and old because she has an above-ground pool. Also, Flatch has like no real history. I mean, she and I have history. I once saw her throw up sour gummy worms on the 8th grade field trip to Indian Village so yeah, can't un-see that.

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EXT. THE LATRINE - DAY

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Nadine talks TO CAMERA

NADINE

Honestly? A lot of my generation
are just wasting their lives.
Colonel Robert Flatch, he was just
25 when he founded this town. Of
course in 1810 most people were
dead by 35. Anyway, many
significant battles have been
fought near here. Not specifically
in our town but Colonel Flatch got
lost one night with five of his
regiment and ended up here. Where
they built this latrine. It's my
job to protect it because
unfortunately at town events people
like to use it as a port-a-potty.

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EXT. GREEN - DAY

Shrub excitedly walks through the crowd.

SHRUB

Okay, almost there!

He stops in front of A BIG TEDDY BEAR in a straw hat. June
stands nearby.

SHRUB (CONT'D)

This is my spot!

JUNE

Oh I'm sorry Shrub but I was given
this area--

Off Shrub, confused...

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

Shrub sits across from Father Joe in the organizing tent.

*

SHRUB

I signed up for that spot with Mrs.
Wicks months ago!

*

FATHER JOE

I'm sorry, Shrub, but that's not
what the map says--

*

He indicates a big map with locations on it. *

SHRUB

And that's not even a scarecrow!
It's a teddy bear in a hat!

ANGLE ON June's teddy bear. A crow sits on it's shoulder.

SHRUB (CONT'D)

Even the crows can see that!

FATHER JOE

(off map)

This shows your location as Wiswall
Farm-- *

SHRUB

There's no way in hell I'm going
there! *

EXT. WISWALL FARM - DAY

Shrub sits on a fence outside of a farm that looks down on
the green. His scarecrow is erected behind him. *

SHRUB

This is bull[bleep].

A PIG comes up and casually sniffs his shoe.

END ACT ONE

EXT. WISWALL FARM - DAY

Shrub talks TO CAMERA while in the background Kelly tosses her sneaker in a field, practicing for skillet toss.

SHRUB

You know how they release the Mcrib
in like February and you get all
excited and then they take it away
like it never happened? That's how
I feel. Betrayed.

From the field, Kelly whoops and raises her arms in triumph after a good throw.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Shrub follows Kelly as she looks for something in the field.

SHRUB

Did you tell people to come vote
for me? *

KELLY

Help me find my sneaker. *

SHRUB

Your sneaker does not weigh as much
as a skillet! There's like no
comparison! *

KELLY

Yes I told people to come here but
look-- *

She points down to the green to a crowd around the robot
scarecrow. *

KELLY (CONT'D)

They love the robot scarecrow-- *

SHRUB

There's no such thing as a robot
scarecrow! There are no crows in
space!!

Kelly pulls out her phone.

KELLY

Check it out. I got a video of him
twerking! It's insane!

*

Shrub takes her phone and watches the video.

SHRUB

Oh yeah, look at that. That's
awesome.

He then HURLS the phone into the field.

KELLY

You [bleep]ing [bleep]!

EXT. FARM - DAY

Kelly talks TO CAMERA.

KELLY

Father Joe has been working with
Shrub on his anger issues. He made
him take this on-line course but
then Shrub sent a bunch of middle
finger emojis to the teacher so
that was that.

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

Shrub walks through the festival carrying his scarecrow. He
passes the robot scarecrow.

ROBOT SCARECROW

(robot voice)
Prepare to lose, alien!

SHRUB

[bleep] you.

EXT. TOWN GREEN - DAY

Shrub gets to the teddy bear and looks around. He sees LEVI.

SHRUB

Levi, you seen June?

LEVI

She had to go home to feed her
feral cat.

Shrub quickly removes the teddy bear from it's spot and puts his scarecrow up.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

Shrub talks TO CAMERA.

SHRUB

Sometimes you have to take what's
rightfully yours. And that might
mean throwing someone under the
bus.

*

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Father Joe talks TO CAMERA

FATHER JOE

No, no. He has never actually done
that. I mean, yes, once he and
Kelly put a penny under the wheels
of the Dayton bus, you know, as
kids do, having some fun, and
unfortunately the penny flew up and
hit Bobby Stearns in the eye.

(beat)

Despite what you may hear, Bobby
was already blind.

*

INT. CHERYL'S NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

Cheryl shuffles through old copies of the Patriot as she
speaks TO CAMERA.

CHERYL

I was the first one on the scene.
So I had the exclusive...

(finding the paper)

Yep. Here it is.

She holds up a POLICE BLOTTER section with the headline,
CENTS AND NON-SENSIBILITY.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

I pride myself on my headlines.

The camera catches a PHOTO of her and Joe on her desk. She
notices this and quickly flips it over, sheepish.

*

*

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

Shrub and the robot box sit across from Father Joe. *

FATHER JOE
Shrub, did you swear at the box?

SHRUB
I absolutely did not.

ROBOT SCARECROW *

(still doing robot box)
Must go. Must get back to planet
winning.

SHRUB
This is not even a scarecrow and
also that voice is annoying.

ROBOT SCARECROW
Ha. Ha.

FATHER JOE
I have to agree, Paul. I would ask
that you use your real voice.

ROBOT SCARECROW
Who is Paul?

June walks up.

JUNE
Father, someone took Teddy crow!

Off Father Joe, eyeing Shrub.

EXT. WISWALL FARM - DAY

Shrub is back at farm with his scarecrow. Behind him, Kelly
is still in the field, looking for her phone as she swears.

CHYRON: *Young people spend over a third of their day on their
phones. For the youth in rural communities, cell phones are a
vital link to the outside world.*

EXT. FIELD - DAY *

Kelly HEARS a faint ringing in the field and follows it. Down
a shoe, she limps as she runs. Success, she finds her phone. *

KELLY
 (answering the phone)
 Hello?
 (then)
 Levi? What?? Now?!

*
 *

EXT. THE FARM - DAY

Kelly rushes past Shrub and hopes on her old BMX bike.

KELLY
 They moved skillet toss time up!

SHRUB
 Why?

KELLY
 They have new entrants! [bleep] me!

Kelly bikes off, her shoe still off one foot.

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

Kelly stands at the sign-up desk, manned by June.

KELLY
 June, who just signed up?

NADINE (O.C.)
 It was I.

*

Kelly turns to see Nadine. She laughs, relieved.

*

KELLY
 Oh my God. I thought it was someone
 who could beat me.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

Shrub talks TO CAMERA.

SHRUB
 Nadine beats Kelly at EVERYTHING.
 Second grade it was Little Miss
 Flatch. In fourth grade she won the
 pie eating contest. AGAINST KELLY!
 In eighth grade Kelly asked Dylan
 Peterson to the school dance and he
 married Nadine. I mean, not in
 eighth grade. Cuz that would be
 massively illegal.

*

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

Back to Nadine and Kelly.

NADINE

If you had a job, maybe winning a
contest wouldn't matter so much.

*
*

KELLY

I have a job. I'm an influencer.

*
*

NADINE

Who exactly are you influencing?

*
*

Kelly points to her rag-tag "gang" one by one.

*

KELLY

Levi, Nathan S, Nathan G...for
starters--

*
*
*

DYLAN PETERSON approaches Nadine and Kelly. He carries a baby
in a baby bjorn and is generally quite handsome and perfect.
It's clear Kelly still likes Dylan.

*
*
*

DYLAN

Somebody's ready for their lunch.

*

NADINE

Dylan, I told you I left you a lean
cuisine on the counter.

*

DYLAN

I meant the baby.
(to Kelly)
Hey Kelly, good luck today!

*
*
*

KELLY

Thanks. Good luck to you too.

Dylan looks puzzled. Kelly is embarrassed.

*

NADINE

(to Dylan)
Here, give me Chantal.

*
*

She takes the baby and goes into the latrine.

KELLY

Is she breast feeding in the
latrine?

DYLAN

Last night she did it while she was
on the stair master.

*

KELLY
Wow.

DYLAN
Yeah.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Shrub stands next to his scarecrow and hands out small plastic bags to a few townspeople.

CHYRON: *with mounting job loss in rural communities, young people are learning to be entrepreneurial.*

SHRUB
Go ahead, pick as many potatoes as you want.

People walk into the farm, showing Shrub their voting forms as they do. He stops an OLDER MAN.

SHRUB (CONT'D)
You filled out your voting form?
"Shrub Mallet first place," right?

The man shows a form to Shrub, and Shrub hands him a bag.

Suddenly TOWNSPEOPLE, including Len, start running back out of the farm, chased by an angry MR WISWALL.

EXT. TOWN GREEN - DAY

Father Joe now sits across from Shrub and Mr. Wiswall (60s).

FATHER JOE
You gave away Mister Wiswall's potatoes?

SHRUB
People just went in and took them.

MR. WISWALL
And he sold my pig for fifty bucks.

SHRUB
Lester gave me the money and then the pig just followed him to his car.

FATHER JOE
I'm gonna need you to apologize to Mister Wiswall.

SHRUB

Here's an idea--how about you apologize to me first?! Cuz you're the one who gave me the wrong, crappy location--

MR. WISWALL

You calling my farm crap?! I run a pristine venture out there and then you and your people come in there and muck it all up. Look at this, Father!

He holds up a sneaker.

MR. WISWALL (CONT'D)

Right in the middle of my field!

SHRUB

Okay well, I have no idea who's that is.

Kelly runs up and grabs the sneaker.

KELLY

Yes!

FATHER JOE

Shrub, apologize. Now.

SHRUB

Sorry, Wiswall.
(to Father Joe)
You [bleeping] happy now?

FATHER JOE

That's it, you're disqualified.

Shrub stands up and claps Wiswall on the back sarcastically.

SHRUB

Well done, Wiswall!
(beat)
And you should thank me for getting rid of that pig! That thing crapped everywhere!

He storms off with his scarecrow.

END ACT TWO

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

Shrub fireman-carries his scarecrow through the festival as Kelly tries to keep up.

SHRUB

I'm fine. Why would I not be fine.
It's just a dumb festival, who
cares?

KELLY

You were totally robbed.

SHRUB

It's just I spent three months
making this...spent all my money
getting orchard grass so my hay
wouldn't get mites...

Mickey runs up behind him. *

MICKEY *

Hey my Bro, let me help you-- *

He grabs the scarecrow and inadvertently pulls off a leg. *
Shrub is horrified. He snatches the leg from Mickey. *

SHRUB *

Are you kidding me?! *

Shrub keeps walking as Mickey calls after-- *

MICKEY *

The Fortnite offer still stands! *

Shrub and Kelly pass Len. *

LEN

Those potatoes had worms!

KELLY

Screw you, they were free!

SHRUB

You know what? This whole town has
it out for me.

KELLY

(to camera)
See? Mallets have enemies
everywhere. *

In the BG, Cheryl speaks into a bull horn.

CHERYL
Five minutes to skillet toss!

KELLY
Well I'm gonna show them.

SHRUB
Put on your other shoe.

KELLY
Copy that.

EXT. GREEN - EARLY EVE

We see Father Joe on long lens looking around. He stops June.

FATHER JOE
June, have you seen Shrub anywhere?

JUNE
I'm afraid I haven't. Is something wrong?

FATHER JOE
There was a real mix up. I found Mrs. Wicks and she told me that she had given Shrub your location. She wrote it on the back of her medication prescription. And then forgot to take her medication.

JUNE
Oh dear.

Cheryl comes up to Joe.

CHERYL
I'd appreciate it if you changed your Tinder profile pic from the one I took of you. That's just cruel.

FATHER JOE
You're on Tinder?

CHERYL
Yes Joe, I am single now, too.

FATHER JOE
(realizing)
Wait.

(MORE)

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

FATHER JOE (CONT'D)

Were you the picture of the cat in
the overalls that swiped right on
me?

*
*
*

CHERYL

(yes)
That's crazy.

*
*
*

EXT. GREEN - EARLY EVE

Big Mandy holds the skillet as Kelly stretches behind her.

CHERYL

Furthest straight toss wins. Any
trash talk during the throw will be
considered an audible and will be
grounds for disqualification.

*

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

Kelly talks TO CAMERA.

KELLY

Sure yeah I'd like my Dad to see me
win. But I know he's with me in
spirit. He's super busy these days.
He has the girlfriend and a new
baby and also I don't think he's
really allowed to be around crowds
since the "upskirt photo" incident.

EXT. GREEN - EARLY EVE

A crowd watches as Mandy lines up, does two full twirls and
LAUNCHES her skillet. The crowd "oohs". It's a very long
toss. June puts a flag in the ground where it landed and
reports to Cheryl, who announces...

CHERYL

Thirty two feet, two inches.

On Kelly as she turns to camera, looking concerned.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

Kelly Mallet next up!

Kelly takes the skillet...approaches the line. She pulls her
arm back, ready to launch the skillet...when out of the
corner of her eye she sees...HER DAD WATCHING.

Her concentration thrown, she doesn't turn her body back around before the skillet is LAUNCHED and it FLIES SIDEWAYS INTO THE CROWD beaming Marcus's friend MATT in the leg, who DROPS. The CROWD reacts and everyone runs over to check on the guy.

KELLY

[bleep].

FATHER JOE

Can we get the EMS?! EMS!

EXT. TOWN - DAY

Shrub talks TO CAMERA.

SHRUB

So the guy Kelly knee capped? Best friends with her Dad. They started a construction company together. Bad optics as they say.

EXT. GREEN - EVENING

As the crowd tends to the guy, Kelly rushes to Father Joe.

KELLY

Is he dead?!

*

In the foreground, Nadine approaches Cheryl.

*

NADINE

Skillet, please.

*

CHERYL

Nadine, this isn't time for--

*

*

But Nadine grabs the skillet and LAUNCHES it. It goes...and goes...well past Mandy's flag.

NADINE

YES!!

But no one is paying attention except Mandy, who acknowledges with a nod and...

MANDY

Respect.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

Kelly and Shrub talk TO CAMERA.

KELLY
Yes okay, Nadine "won".

SHRUB
But no one saw it so whatever.

KELLY
Hardly counts.

EXT. TOWN GREEN - EVENING

*

Father Joe hands out trophies.

FATHER JOE
Skillet toss win goes to Nadine
Peterson--

Nadine goes up to accept the "golden skillet".

NADINE
(to Father Joe)
May I say a few words?

FATHER JOE
No.

ANGLE ON: Kelly watching. She is approached by her Dad.

DAD
Quite a throw.

KELLY
Didn't mean to take out Matt--

*

DAD
Hell, don't apologize. Did me a
favor. Guy tried to feel up Jessie
last week at The Reef after two
beers. If you hadn't pegged him I
woulda.

*

KELLY
Yeah?

*

*

DAD
Enemies everywhere. That's my lot.
(then)
You got a good arm.

*

*

*

*

Kelly beams. *

KELLY
Got it from you, Dad.

DAD
But your aim is for [bleep].

He turns and wheels off with the baby. Kelly is so proud.

KELLY
See ya, Pops!

ANGLE BACK ON Father Joe.

FATHER JOE
Alright and before we get to the
official scarecrow results I would
like to give a special award to
someone whose creativity was head
and shoulders above them all. *
(looking around) *
Has anyone seen Shrub Mallet? *

In the BG we catch Shrub running through, grabbing a half-burning log from under the pilgrim's cauldron. He SETS FIRE to a scarecrow by Mickey's card table. He lights the teddy bear scarecrow on fire as well.

EXT GREEN - EVE - LATER

Scarecrows are ablaze now as Father Joe tries to put them out with the cauldron of "soup". Cheryl takes photos, hip-checking the documentary camera as she does.

FATHER JOE (CONT'D)
Someone call the fire department!

The fire catches onto the bunting of Mickey's fireworks table, and the FIREWORKS GO UP! Bursting into the air. Townspeople all stop to admire them.

PEOPLE
Oooh! Ahhh!

FATHER JOE
People! Focus!

Unseen by everyone but the camera crew, Len slips into the latrine.

INT KELLY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Kelly talks TO CAMERA.

KELLY

So the good news is, people gave a ton of money after that for the fourth of July fireworks. I mean, they were pretty impressive.

Shrub rushes in with a copy of the Flatch Patriot.

SHRUB

Hot off the presses!

He opens it up and shows Kelly...

SHRUB (CONT'D)

Read it and weep!

KELLY

(reading)

"Local man fires up festival".

(then)

Good for you!

SHRUB

I mean, it's not the front page--

KELLY

The police blotter's always page three. You'll get to the front soon.

SHRUB

Yeah.

KELLY

Where's Nadine's win?

SHRUB

Page five. Under "home care aides available."

KELLY

Yes!

They high five. Shrub looks to camera.

SHRUB

Winners.

END OF SHOW