

BIOHAZARD

THE
BEST
GAMES
EVER

FRESH BLOOD EDITION



WILDER THAN HER

Written By

Jessica Kozak

JessicaAnneKozak@gmail.com

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

TWO YELLOW EYES SHINE from the darkness.

They belong to a small mangy COYOTE. Pupils dilated. Alert. Timid. She licks her lips.

Two more coyotes gnaw on the stomach of a fourth. Their PAWS and JOWLS wet. Matted in DARK RED BLOOD.

The lifeless animal bounces slightly as they tear into it.

The mangy one watches from the sidelines, skinny, starving.

She catches a WHIFF in the air, eyes flash, wild.

Finally, she leaps forward, shoves the other two aside.

Her face digs deep in the carcass, then dips back, eyes satisfied, drunk with life.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

CURIOUS WIDE EYES glisten in the sunlight. They belong to EMILIA (13). There's a hint of something else there. Fear?

She stares timidly at the mangled coyote carcass baking in the sun.

A hoard of PRE-TEEN GIRLS stand around it in a perfect circle. All are dressed in matching CAMP HOMMA T-shirts.

Flies BUZZ.

A red-headed girl steps out of the circle. This is BETH (13), fiery as her hair. She bends down, eyes shining, face close to the dead coyote.

BETH

Cool.

MEGGEN (13), skinny and tightly wound, SQUEALS.

MEGGEN

Beth! Don't touch it. You'll get Rabies.

Emilia watches in awe as Beth pokes it with a stick.

FINN (13) rolls her eyes, over it. She's desperately trying to look older than she is.

FINN
This is boring. And I'm hungry.

BETH
You're always hungry.

FINN
I've started getting periods so I
need more iron.

BETH
Look at all the blood--

Crimson OOZES from the furry body as Beth prods.

EMILIA
Was it murdered?

Emilia's voice CRACKS. She flushes. A few GIGGLES from the girls in the circle. A TALL GIRL points at Emilia, mocking.

TALL GIRL
The new girl's scared.

BETH
Shut the fuck up, Julie.

Julie opens her mouth to respond, but decides against it. She huffs off with the other girls, leaving Emilia, Beth, Meggen, and Finn with the dead animal.

Beth sets down the stick and gathers some rocks.

She sets the biggest one on the ground near the carcass. The second biggest on top of the first. And so on.

EMILIA
What's that?

BETH
It's a Cairn.

Emilia stares, not getting it. Beth smiles.

BETH (CONT'D)
It means 'memorial' in Gaelic. My
mom's Irish.

Finn joins Beth gathering rocks. Then Meggen. They stack one on the other, big to small, impossibly tall.

Emilia watches.

Beth holds a tiny rock toward Emilia. Emilia hesitates, then approaches. She gingerly sets the small pebble on top.

Emilia glances down. She's closer to the carcass than she realized.

She lowers herself, looks into its eyes. It stares back, lifeless. Beth crouches beside her.

BETH (CONT'D)
Probably other coyotes who ate her.

Emilia looks right into Beth's eyes. Beth's eyes TWINKLE.

EMILIA
They kill their own?

BETH
Only when they have to.

CHYRON: 19 YEARS LATER

INT. SCHOOL COUNSELOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Emilia, now 31, leans across her desk. She has the same hair cut, the same curious staring eyes. An older version of the little girl she once was.

EMILIA
Did you hear me?

ALICE (9) sits opposite, swinging her legs, kicking the desk.

THUD THUD.

She stares straight ahead, eyes dull and lifeless.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Alice?

The cramped office is lined with BOOKS and one small WINDOW.

On one wall, a POSTER with the words 'You're PURRRRRFECT' splashed across a cat wearing a sombrero.

On the opposite wall, a clown juggles beneath the saying 'When you feel down, try CLOWNING around.'

THUD THUD.

Emilia ignores the kicking, smiles reassuringly.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
 You don't have to speak. Whatever
 you feel like today is fine.

THUD THUD.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
 Do you want to talk about your
 sister?

THUD THUD.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
 It's okay to feel sad.
 (beat)
 I feel sad sometimes, too.

Alice stops kicking and flicks her gaze to Emilia.

Emilia falters for the tiniest second. Then softens her eyes.

Come on, Alice. Give me something. Come on...

THUD THUD.

Nope.

INT. TEACHERS LOUNGE - DAY

Emilia shovels hummus on pita into her mouth. Across from
 her, SAMUEL (35) sips his coffee.

EMILIA
 Something's off with Alice.

SAMUEL
 She the one who's been bullying her
 classmates?

Emilia nods.

EMILIA
 Her sister died a year ago. Not
 coping well. She's closed off. Dead
 behind the eyes.

SAMUEL
 Rough. You know Brett Holder? He's
 just dealing with divorce. I'm
 hoping he channels his rage into
 math, not torturing animals.

EMILIA

At least he's got rage. Alice has nothing. Just stares.

Emilia replicates it.

SAMUEL

Future serial killer.

Emilia continues shoveling food in her mouth.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

How are *you* doing?

EMILIA

Great.

SAMUEL

Not grief eating, are you?

She stops chewing and looks up at him, hummus on her chin.

EMILIA

No?

SAMUEL

(gently)

Have you talked to anyone about it?

Emilia doesn't answer.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

We're the worst at it, aren't we? Counselors seeking counseling. You need to talk to someone, Em.

EMILIA

Counselors are the worst.

SAMUEL

Don't say it too loud. I don't want to be out of a job.

(then)

What would you tell me?

Emilia sighs.

EMILIA

Talk to friends, other people going through loss. Reach out.

SAMUEL

There she is.

Samuel gets up to leave.

EMILIA

Sam?

He turns. She holds out the remaining hummus. He takes it and throws it in a trash bin as he walks away.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

Thanks.

SAMUEL

Talk to your friends. They're going through it, too.

As soon as he's gone, Emilia retrieves the hummus container out of the bin and dips a large triangle of pita into it.

INT. APARTMENT - HALLWAY - DAY

Bookshelves line the walls, leading up to an old red front door. It opens. Emilia enters.

A dusty CAT instantly appears, working hard to transfer it's grey coat to Emilia's black tights.

Emilia kicks off her ankle boots. We follow her into the

LIVING ROOM

She peels off her bra from under her dress, tosses it on the floor. She collapses onto the couch.

The cat hops onto her lap, testing her thighs with his paw.

EMILIA

How you doing, Freddie boy?

Freddie PURRS as Emilia absently glances around the room.

Her eyes land on a large camping pack, nestled in a corner. Her gaze lingers on the pack, before resting on a framed photo on the wall.

The frame hugs two photos, side by side.

On the right, teenaged Emilia, Meggen, Finn, and Beth stand, arms on shoulders, grinning in their CAMP HOMMA shirts.

On the left, the same configuration, but as grown women in hiking gear.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

Ah!

Freddie's claw pierces her thigh leaving a small tear in her tights. A small drop of blood forms. She stares at it turns into a tiny ball and hardens.

Emilia pulls her phone from her pocket.

ANGLE ON screen as Emilia types a message to 'SAMUEL WORK':

If I took a few days off, could you watch Freddie? Will pay.

Freddie MEWS.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

You want dinner, you rascal?

She heads toward the kitchen, Freddie trailing behind.

DING. Emilia glances at her phone.

ANGLE ON screen. A TEXT: **I love Freddie. No pay accepted.**

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

TECHNO MUSIC bumps. The sweaty, packed dance floor pulses under neon strobe lights.

Finn (now 31) skillfully mixes drinks behind the bar. She slides four green shots to a group of FEMALE FRIENDS.

She shouts over the deafening music.

FINN

Open or closed?

WOMAN

Open!

The WOMAN (20s), rock-a-billy chic, holds out her card, leans over the bar.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

It's my best friend's birthday,
don't let her pay for anything.

She gestures to one of her half-drunk friends.

Finn nods and takes the card. She glances down at the picturesque forest scene under the VISA logo.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
To my best bitches!

They cheer. Finn watches them, distracted.

A hand grips her forearm. She whips around.

FINN
(accusing)
Hey!

A CUTE WOMAN (20s), tattoos and glasses, embarrassed.

CUTE WOMAN
(genuine)
Sorry! I was trying to get your
attention--

FINN
Don't grab me.

CUTE WOMAN
I'm sorry. Not trying to be a
creep.

FINN
Only creeps say that--

She stops short, SOMETHING catches her eye.

A RED PONYTAIL bounces as it weaves through the gyrating
dance floor. IT'S BETH. She gets swallowed by the crowd.

Finn catches her breath. Eyes searching.

Beth reappears, glances back.

But it's not Beth. An unfamiliar face, eyes too round, smile
too narrow, hair a mousier red.

CUTE WOMAN
Can I get a tequila soda?

Finn snaps back to.

CUTE WOMAN (CONT'D)
I promise I won't grab you again.

FINN (PRE-LAP)
Grab me.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Finn fucks the Cute Woman against a dirty sink.

Finn guides the woman's hand to her neck.

CUTE WOMAN

Is that--do you want that?

Finn presses her hand more.

FINN

Harder.

CUTE WOMAN

I don't want to hurt you.

Finn looks her straight in the eye.

FINN

Slap me.

CUTE WOMAN

I don't want to get arrested.

FINN

I want it.

They stare at each other. Finn fucks her harder. She MOANS. She slaps Finn lightly.

FINN (CONT'D)

Harder.

Finn's phone BUZZES. She ignores it.

INT. BALLET STUDIO - NIGHT

TEENAGED BALLERINAS shuffle across the floor in unison. Their necks arch gracefully. Arms float, precise and strong.

The hard toes of their shoes SCRAPE firmly on smooth wood.

MEGGEN (O.S.)

Pas de Bourree. One, two, three,
four. One, two, three, four--

One of the ballerinas slides her foot out. Too far. The toe of her shoe trips another dancer, knocks her to the ground.

BALLERINA 1

Fuck!

MEGGEN

Let's reform our line, back corner.

The ballerinas shuffle back to the starting corner.

Ballerina 1 shoves Ballerina 2 to the ground.

BALLERINA 2

Hey! She pushed me!

On Meggen, distressed.

MEGGEN

She didn't mean to.

BALLERINA 2

Are you stupid? You think it's a
fucking coincidence?

Ballerina 1 bats her doe eyes at Meggen.

BALLERINA 1

We're all on the same team. Right,
Ms. Meggen?

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Meggen sits across from an OLDER WOMAN (60s), her long neck and straight spine exposing her former career.

MEGGEN

I don't want to involve the girls'
parents. It wasn't a big deal.

OLDER WOMAN

She called you 'stupid,' Meggen.

MEGGEN

I'm not sure it was directed at me.

OLDER WOMAN

Even so. The pushing, the name
calling. It's out of line.

Meggen casts her eyes down.

MEGGEN

I'd rather let it go. I don't want
to make a thing out of it.

OLDER WOMAN

If these girls don't learn self-control now, they'll be animals when they're grown.

Meggen looks away.

OLDER WOMAN (CONT'D)

You have to be more assertive. You can't be afraid to discipline them.

MEGGEN

Huh?

OLDER WOMAN

Can you discipline them?

Meggen nods, unsure. The Older Woman stares at her.

OLDER WOMAN (CONT'D)

Are you okay, Meggen?

Meggen's phone BUZZES.

Meggen shakes her head. Her face reddens.

MEGGEN

Yeah, I-I'm sorry. I'm about to start my period, I think. It's- I'm fine. Thanks. Thank you.

She forces a smile, gathers her things, and rushes out.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Meggen pulls out her phone as she walks to her car.

ANGLE ON screen. TEXT from EMILIA:

Hey stranger! Four Leaf Clover tomorrow night, 8 PM? I need 743 red wines. Miss you.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Finn peels off her work clothes.

She slips her undies off, smells them, tosses them into a pile of clothes on the floor.

She pulls on sweat pants. Not even a thought of a shower.

She looks at the name and number inked on her palm, partially smeared: GRETA. She SPITS on her hand and rubs it away.

She slips into bed, glances at her phone as she sets it on the bedside table.

ANGLE ON screen. A TEXT ALERT from 'EMILIA'.

Without reading it, she blackens the screen and clicks off the bedside lamp.

INT. FOUR LEAF CLOVER PUB - NIGHT

Emilia sips a Negroni in a corner booth.

She scans the room. A COUPLE makes out at the bar. TWO MEN play darts. A RED-HEADED WOMAN chats excitedly to a MAN.

Emilia's gaze lingers on the red-head who gingerly touches her collar bone as she laughs.

MEGGEN (O.S.)
Is this seat taken?

Meggen hovers over the booth. Emilia grins.

EMILIA
I'm saving it for a huge bitch.

Meggen slips in.

MEGGEN
Are you calling me a dog?

They hug.

EMILIA
Is that patchouli?

MEGGEN
It's a new thing. Do you hate it?

EMILIA
It reminds me of Whole Foods. I love Whole Foods.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Look at you. You look great.

MEGGEN
I have two new wrinkles I'm ignoring. What are you drinking?

EMILIA
Negroni.

MEGGEN
Beth's favorite.

Emilia nods.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)
Where's Finn?

EMILIA
She didn't text me back. I'm not
sure she's coming.

MEGGEN
She'll come.

Emilia sips her drink.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)
It's been so long. I miss you!

EMILIA
The past couple months have been so
busy...

MEGGEN
I've been dying to see you guys.

Meggen falters.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)
Not *dying*. I--I didn't mean--

Emilia shakes her head.

EMILIA
I'm sorry I've been reclusive.

MEGGEN
Well, we're together now.

Emilia sips her drink, passes it to Meggen.

EMILIA
So, how are you?

MEGGEN
Chris and I are back together.

EMILIA
I love Chris.

MEGGEN

He's been a big help. It's been nice to talk to him.

EMILIA

You know you can talk to me.

Meggen looks away.

MEGGEN

Oh yeah, of course. It's just, Chris is separate, in a way. He's, like, neutral. Detached.

EMILIA

I get that.

MEGGEN

I'm going to get a drink. Want one?

Emilia looks her glass. Half empty. She nods.

Meggen stands just as Finn rushes up and throws her arms around her.

FINN

God, dude, you're skinny as fuck!

MEGGEN

Finn! Yeah right, I'm a cow.

Finn holds out one of Meggen's skinny arms.

FINN

Can I borrow this? I'm out of floss.

Emilia gets up and wraps her arms around both of them.

FINN (CONT'D)

She's a bag of bones, right?

Emilia laughs. Meggen slips out of the hug.

MEGGEN

I'm getting drinks.

FINN

Whiskey, por favor.

Meggen goes for drinks as Emilia and Finn slide in the booth.

EMILIA

You came! How are you?

FINN
Peachy. Work is work. Boring. You look tired.

EMILIA
I am. Thanks for noticing?

FINN
It's attractive. Makes you mysterious.

EMILIA
Is that a thing?

FINN
When someone looks tired, I wonder what kept them up.

Emilia smiles at her friend.

EMILIA
I wasn't sure you were coming. You didn't text back.

FINN
I didn't?

EMILIA
No.

FINN
Huh.

Emilia waits for more.

FINN (CONT'D)
Did Meggen go to Timbuktu for those fucking drinks?

INT. FOUR LEAF CLOVER PUB - LATER

Finn stands beside the booth as she regales her story.

FINN
I literally didn't know if it was cum or pee dripping down my leg.

Emilia and Meggen are in stitches.

FINN (CONT'D)
So two things to be grateful for: darkness and paper towels.

MEGGEN

Finn, that's so gross.

FINN

Welcome to dating in the modern age.

EMILIA

Remember that guy Beth was dating a couple years ago? Who had like no cum? She swore he was faking every time because nothing ever came out.

They laugh. It fades to awkward silence.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

I miss her.

Emilia is lost in her thoughts.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

I still don't understand how--

MEGGEN

Emilia.

Finn looks at Emilia's pleading eyes.

FINN

There was no way to know how shallow it was.

Emilia wants to say more. Meggen remains silent.

EMILIA

I think we should go to Mohawk Island.

Finn shakes her head.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

Why not?

FINN

It's too soon.

EMILIA

It's been almost 2 months since she...is gone. Don't you think Beth would want that? We've gone every year since we've been adults.

MEGGEN

I know, but work--

EMILIA
We've made it work every year.

FINN
It's too soon.

EMILIA
I need this. I'm not okay. Are you?
We've hardly talked since the
funeral. I can't lose you, too.

Meggen and Finn exchange a look. Finn is out of reasons.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
I want to build cairns in the
forest for her. To honor her.

MEGGEN
She made one for every dead animal
we ever came across.

Emilia nods.

FINN
It's going to be weird without her.

EMILIA
Everything will be. It'll always be
weird from now on.

Meggen gulps her drink.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
But we're still alive. What's the
point if we're not living?

Finn ponders that.

FINN
I hate it already.

That's a yes. Emilia throws her arms around them.

FINN (CONT'D)
We need shots.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

'MOHAWK ISLAND CAMPSITE' is splashed in bold lettering across a brown bus. It pulls into a deserted parking lot.

The forest grows thick around the black asphalt.

INT. BUS - DAY

Emilia, the sole passenger, scans the empty lot. The DRIVER eyes her.

DRIVER
Are you sure you want to be dropped
here alone?

EMILIA
My friends are meeting me.

DRIVER
That's what they all say.

Emilia ignores him. She loops her giant pack onto one shoulder and hops out.

EXT. MOHAWK ISLAND - CAMPSITE - DAY

POP. A TENT snaps into shape.

A hammer POUNDS a thick metal pin into dirt, securing a loop.

Emilia steps back to admire her work.

She checks her watch. 3:20.

SNAP. Emilia breaks branches and twigs, arranging them carefully in a pile.

She settles onto a tarp spread in front of an empty firepit and pops open a hard cider.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DUSK

The lone tent sits in the clearing.

Emilia warily eyes the sun as it sinks into the horizon.

The forest wraps around her for miles.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Cicadas HUM in rhythm, cutting into the dense summer night.

The forest looms, menacing in the ink black night.

Emilia paces.

She feels the trees watching her, unwavering. Her skin prickles.

She throws some sticks into the center of the fire pit. Squirts in lighter fluid. Strikes a match.

Shadows flicker as flames lick wood.

Emilia ventures to the edge of the clearing, where a footpath carves into the forest.

She stares into pitch black.

Darkness stares back.

SILENCE.

She turns back to the campsite but--

--SOMETHING catches her eye. Some movement.

She peers into the dark forest. A shiver runs down her spine.

EXT. CAMPSITE - A MOMENT LATER

A flashlight CLICKS on, partially illuminating the woods.

EMILIA'S POV as she scans the forest, following the narrow beam of light. Tall skinny trees fill the horizon, pale white bark mixed with pitch black.

A twig SNAPS behind her. She whips around. Shines the light.

The fire POPS.

Suddenly from behind her, far away VOICES carry.

Emilia perks up.

EMILIA
(calling out)
Finn? Megs?

No response. She calls out again, louder.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Meggen? Finn?

MEGGEN
(from a distance)
Hey!

Emilia lets out a breath.

EMILIA
(calling out)
Hey!

FINN
(a bit closer)
We here bitch! We got steaks!

Finn and Meggen emerge, backpacks and gear in tow. Emilia does a quick scan.

EMILIA
Did you bring chairs?

A pause.

FINN
Fuck.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON steaks SIZZLING on a flat top grill laid over the fire. BLOOD bubbles out, HISSING as it evaporates on the scorching surface.

Emilia, Finn, and Meggen perch on the tarp around the fire.

Emilia flips the steaks. Meggen scoops cole slaw onto paper plates. Finn sips a beer.

MEGGEN
The mayo is low fat so eat as much
as you want.

EMILIA
Great. I'm starving.

Finn and Meggen exchange a glance.

FINN
Sorry we're so late. I was waiting
on my clothes in the dryer. It was
a whole thing. Fucking top loaders,
man. Take forever.

EMILIA
You could've done the load earlier.

Emilia pokes the steaks. SIZZLE.

MEGGEN
We're so sorry, Em. We feel bad.

FINN

We would've texted but we know
there's no signal here.

Finn nudges Emilia with her foot. She grins widely. Emilia
cracks a smile.

MEGGEN

Trust me, I wanted to be here
before dark. It took us so long to
find the site. I hate the woods at
night.

FINN

We're literally in the woods, at
night, right now.

MEGGEN

It's technically a clearing.

EMILIA

I got spooked. A place feels
different when you're in it alone.

FINN

You could've just waited and come
with us.

EMILIA

I wanted to get here early and set
up. Like Beth used to do.

Meggen and Finn exchange a look.

MEGGEN

I'm sorry, Em.

FINN

You did a great job. The site looks
pretty fucking symmetrical.

EMILIA

Yeah?

(then)

God, I'm being a baby. I know you
guys had work. Seriously, it's no
big deal. We're all here now.

She pulls the steaks off the grill one by one as Meggen and
Finn hold out their plates.

They eat in silence for a moment.

FINN
They're a little undercooked.

EMILIA
What?

FINN
No, it's just a little raw still.

EMILIA
I can put it back on.

FINN
I'll just eat around the middle.

Finn picks at the edges. Emilia watches for a moment.

EMILIA
(to Meggen)
Is yours okay?

MEGGEN
Huh?

EMILIA
Is your steak okay?

MEGGEN
Oh, yeah, it's fine.

FINN
I thought you liked it well done?

Meggen is cornered.

MEGGEN
I don't know. It's good any way. I
like all temperatures.

Emilia reaches for Finn's plate. Finn pulls it back.

EMILIA
It's so easy to just throw it on
for a few more minutes.

They stare at each other. Then Finn relaxes.

FINN
Lighten up, Em. You're not a chef.
It's fine.

Emilia forces a smile. They eat for a moment.

EMILIA
Chefs prefer medium rare.

Finn opens her mouth to respond, but Meggen jumps in.

MEGGEN
Should we open a bottle of wine?
I brought a Merlot. It's jammy and
dark. Has crusties at the bottom.
Sediment. That's what it's called.

She pulls a bottle of wine from a bag and begins to uncork.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)
I brought some cards, too. What
game should we play?

EMILIA
Spades?

FINN
That's a four person game.

They think for a moment.

EMILIA
Hearts?

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Four person game.

FINN
Fucking four person game.

MEGGEN
Go Fish?

FINN
Boring. God, this sucks.

Emilia turns to her. Almost keeps her mouth shut but--

EMILIA
Maybe we should talk about it.
We haven't really. I think we
should talk about Beth--

Finn scoffs at the mention of her name.

FINN
Maybe we don't want to talk about
it. She used to cook, she brought
the chairs, and we could play all
the fucking card games we wanted
because she was the fucking fourth.

EMILIA

I feel the same! I want to know how you guys are feeling--

Finn stands up.

FINN

Jesus Christ, Em. It's a fucking buzz kill, dude.

Emilia hides her hurt. Presses on.

EMILIA

I know how hard this is.

FINN

No, you don't. You guys weren't as close to her as I was.

A beat.

FINN (CONT'D)

Look, I'm sorry. I didn't really sleep last night. I'm tired. I'm going to bed.

She turns and disappears into her tent.

EMILIA

What does she mean she was the closest to Beth?

MEGGEN

She didn't mean it like that.

EMILIA

I was really close to Beth. We lived together.

MEGGEN

When you were in college.

EMILIA

We went skiing in Colorado that time. For A LONG weekend. Just us.

MEGGEN

It's not a competition.

EMILIA

If it was, Finn wouldn't be winning.

MEGGEN

Who would?

A beat.

EMILIA

You're right. It's not a
competition.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

The tents sit in a triangle in the dark. Fire long gone out.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Emilia's face as she sleeps.

The night is dead quiet.

ROCKIN' ROBIN rings out suddenly, breaking the silence.

"Tweet-tweedilly-tweet. Tweedilly-tweedilly tweet."

Emilia's eyes flutter open.

She's disoriented. Is this a dream?

No. She's awake. And hears music.

*"He rocks in the treetops all day long, Hoppin' and a-boppin'
and singin' his song..."*

Emilia sits up. The music comes from somewhere outside.

She unzips her tent, slides out.

EXT. CAMPSITE - CONTINUOUS

Emilia peers around.

*"Every little swallow, every chick-a-dee. Every little bird
in the tall oak tree..."*

EMILIA

Guys?

The music STOPS. She freezes, listens.

Silence.

Emilia creeps over to Meggen's tent.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
(whispers)
Megs?

No response.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
(louder)
Meggen.

MEGGEN (O.S.)
Hmmm.

EMILIA
It's Emilia.

MEGGEN (O.S.)
I know who you are.

Emilia unzips Meggen's tent and peers inside. Meggen is curled up in her sleeping bag, eyes closed.

EMILIA
Did you hear that?

MEGGEN
The only thing I hear is you.

EMILIA
I heard music.

Meggen finally sits up, groggy.

MEGGEN
I don't hear anything.

EMILIA
Not anymore. It stopped.

MEGGEN
Were you dreaming?

EMILIA
No.

But Emilia falters. *Was she?*

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Will you check it out with me?

Meggen reluctantly pulls herself from her warm sleeping bag.

EXT. FINN'S TENT - MOMENTS LATER

Emilia and Meggen huddle just outside Finn's tent. Their faces close to the nylon.

EMILIA
Finn?

FINN (O.S.)
What?

EMILIA
Oh good, you're awake.

FINN (O.S.)
You just woke me up.

EMILIA
Did you hear music?

FINN (O.S.)
I haven't heard a peep since I took that Ambien.

MEGGEN
(concerned)
You take Ambien?

FINN
Can we discuss my pharmaceutical needs when the sun is up?

Emilia presses.

EMILIA
Are you sure you didn't hear anything? Or accidentally play--

FINN (O.S.)
Good night, Emilia.

Meggen tugs Emilia back.

MEGGEN
Let her sleep. She didn't hear it.

Emilia is unconvinced.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)
Are you okay? Do you want to sleep in my tent?

EMILIA
I am a grown woman.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Emilia settles into her sleeping bag. Closes her eyes.

A twig SNAPS nearby. Her eyes shoot open.

INT. TENT - MORNING

Emilia and Meggen sleep side by side in Meggen's tent.

EXT. WOODED AREA - MORNING

Emilia pees near a tree.

She glances around. The trees stare back. She suddenly feels exposed, watched.

She finishes, pulls her sweat pants up and heads back.

EXT. CAMPSITE - MORNING

Hot water STEAMS over coffee grinds in a ceramic pour-over resting on a large mug. 'FINN' is painted on the mug in loopy blue letters, a heart dotting the 'i'.

Meggen's electric toothbrush WHIRS as she spits into a bush.

Emilia re-joins Finn who tends to the coffee.

FINN

Want one?

EMILIA

I thought I was in charge of that now. I brought a coffee press.

FINN

Pour-over is so much richer.

Meggen calls from the bush.

MEGGEN

Did anyone bring floss?

FINN

Dude, give your gums a break for a couple days.

EMILIA

It took up a lot of room in my bag.

FINN

What did?

EMILIA

The press. It's bulky. And heavy.

Finn hands Emilia the first cup.

FINN

Try it. You'll never go back to
press, trust me.

Emilia takes it. Forces a smile.

Meggen joins them by the firepit.

Steam HISSES from the kettle over the fire. Finn re-sets the
pour-over on a fresh mug.

MEGGEN

Flossing daily adds seven years to
your life.

FINN

Who wants seven more years of life?

MEGGEN

I'd take 70 extra if I could.

FINN

There's something sexy about death.
The mystery. The unknown.

EMILIA

It's just science. Energy leaves
our body, and is transferred to
soil which feeds something else.
We're food for worms.

FINN

Way to take the fun out of it.
Okay, what should we do today? I
don't want to sit around the fire
in a therapy session.

Emilia sips her coffee.

EMILIA

I thought we could build a cairn?
Maybe on the way to the falls?

FINN

Yes! Skinny dipping!

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Finn and Meggen stomp through the woods in hiking attire. Emilia trails behind.

MEGGEN

--I'm that person. I hang out at parent pick up just to talk to the moms and dads. I'm starved for adult conversation.

FINN

Ugh, I'm sick of talking to people. And my customers grab me.

MEGGEN

They can do that?

Finn shrugs.

FINN

People always want to touch the bartender. It's a familiarity thing. Sometimes it works.

MEGGEN

What do you mean 'works?'

FINN

I fuck them.

MEGGEN

You reward their bad behavior.

FINN

Only the hot ones. I fucked this babe a few days ago. Great tits.

MEGGEN

How can you call yourself a feminist?

Finn puts her arm around Meggen, teasing.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)

It's not going to work on me.

They come to a split in the path. Emilia catches up.

EMILIA

I think it's left.

FINN

The falls are to the right.

EMILIA

Are you sure? I remember that tree.

She gestures to a tree on the left side of the path.

FINN

All the trees look the same.

EMILIA

That one has a thicker trunk.

They look to Meggen.

MEGGEN

I feel like we've hiked both in the past?

EMILIA

Only one leads to the falls.

Finn leads Meggen to the right.

FINN

(to Emilia)

Come on, Em.

Emilia watches them walk away, arm in arm.

EMILIA

I thought the whole point of this trip is to be together.

FINN

Then hurry up!

Emilia takes off after them.

EXT. FOREST PATH - DAY

They approach a CLIFF'S EDGE.

Finn runs ahead and peers down. A ravine cuts through the rocks below.

No waterfall.

FINN

Fuck.

MEGGEN

We could turn back, make a right at the fork.

Finn puts her hand on her hips.

FINN
(to Emilia)
Just say it.

EMILIA
What?

FINN
You were right.

EMILIA
I don't care about that--

FINN
I fucked up. Just say it.

Emilia looks to Meggen who casts her eyes down.

EMILIA
You're tired. And a little grumpy.

FINN
I'm not grumpy. I just want you to
say it. Why can't you say it?

Emilia looks away.

EMILIA
You fucked up.

MEGGEN
Emilia--

EMILIA
She asked me to.

FINN
No, it's good. I can handle it.
Thank you.

EMILIA
I don't want you to handle it--I
genuinely don't care.

MEGGEN
We've seen the waterfall before, it
really doesn't matter.

FINN
Whatever.

Finn's voice rises.

MEGGEN

Really, Finn, we don't care.

Finn turns, her eyes suddenly watery.

FINN

It was my fault. Everything is my
fucking fault.

She bends down, hiding her face.

Emilia and Meggen crouch beside her.

EMILIA

(gently)
Hey, Finn--

FINN

Beth. It was my fault.

She looks up, her face red and watery.

Emilia lowers her voice, soothing. Her work tone.

EMILIA

It was an accident.

FINN

No. I wanted to jump. She wouldn't
have jumped if I wasn't there.

MEGGEN

It's no one's fault.

EMILIA

You can't think like that. It was a
horrible fucking accident and it
could've happened a million times
in a million different ways.

FINN

But it was that time. It happened
with me. I should've known it was
too shallow.

Finn hides her face. Emilia is about to say something, but
stops herself.

Meggen stands up, walks to the cliffs edge, and SCREAMS.

Emilia and Finn startle.

EMILIA

What the fuck?

Meggen leans toward the cliff again.

MEGGEN
(screaming)
Fuck!

It sounds ridiculous. Emilia starts to laugh. So does Finn.

EMILIA
I've never heard you say fuck.

FINN
I think she said it once, quoting a
movie.

MEGGEN
Hey.
(beat)
Cunt.

EMILIA
Damn dude. Own it.

Finn and Emilia join Meggen at the edge. They lean over.

FINN
Fucking cunt!

EMILIA
Fucking cunt!

They stare into the ravine below.

Emilia turns and spots ROCKS to their left.

She gathers them. Meggen joins in. Then Finn.

They silently build, until a structure blossoms before them.

Emilia takes a small SERRATED knife from her pack.

She pokes her hand. A SHINING RED DROP forms instantly.

She passes Finn the knife. Finn smiles, cuts her hand in an
easy slice.

Meggen's turn.

MEGGEN
Can someone do it for me?

Emilia takes the knife, splits a tiny incision in Meggen's
open palm, as Meggen looks away.

One by one they rub their bloody hands together, the cairn resting in the center.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Emilia, Finn, and Meggen make their way back to camp.

RUSTLING ahead. They stop, listen.

It's FOOT STEPS. Getting closer.

From around a bend, a MAN (30s) appears. Tall, plaid, granola with an edge. He's fully NAKED.

MAN

I thought I was alone out here.

FINN

Clearly.

EMILIA

So did we.

MAN

Not many people come out in summer.
Don't like the heat.

FINN

Pussies.

He laughs. Meggen stares openly at his naked body.

MEGGEN

W-we come here every summer.

EMILIA

It's a tradition.

MAN

What's the tradition?

FINN

Annual friends' trip.

EMILIA

(blurts)

It used to be four, now it's three.
Our other friend is dead.

They stand there awkwardly for a moment.

MAN

I should put pants on.

EXT. CAMP SITE - DAY

Emilia, Meggen, Finn, and the Man sit around their camp site, drinking beer. He's clothed now.

Meggen is sidled close to the him, while Finn lounges back, hardly paying attention. Emilia fiddles with her drink.

EMILIA

We used to come with our friend
Beth. Now it's just us.

MAN

Sorry to here that. I guess we're
all going to die soon, aren't we?

EMILIA

What?

MAN

In the grand scheme of things. It's
like that--

He snaps his fingers.

MAN (CONT'D)

--and it's over.

Meggen leans in.

MEGGEN

I wish we had more time. It's not
fair.

FINN

That's why it's exciting. Anything
that drags on too long--fucking
kill me. I like fast and fun.

MAN

Well, I'm headed to the falls.

FINN

Go right at the bend, not left.
There's a hot springs below.

He nods. He eyes Finn.

MAN

You didn't seem wet before.

FINN

We didn't go today.

MAN
Want to go now?

Emilia steps in.

EMILIA
This is a gals' trip.

FINN
We might go tomorrow. Same time.
(beat)
If we're still alive.

The Man grins.

MAN
Here's hoping. Thanks for the beer.

He stands, nods goodbye, and continues onto the footpath.

As soon as he's out of earshot--

EMILIA
Well, he was an insane creep.

MEGGEN
I didn't mind his philosophy.

FINN
Or his dick.

Finns smiles at Meggen, who turns red.

MEGGEN
I hardly saw it.

FINN
Too bad. It was nice.

EMILIA
We're not meeting him tomorrow.

FINN
Are you kidding? Yes we are.

EMILIA
We don't know him. And we came out
here to reconnect--

FINN
We are reconnecting.

EMILIA
You know what I mean.

FINN
Yo, cock block, chill out.

Emilia, stung.

EMILIA
I'm not a cock block.

FINN
I was teasing.

Finn playfully squeezes Emilia's hand.

Emilia glances down. Blood smears her hand where Finn squeezed. Her cut re-opened.

FINN (PRELAP) (CONT'D)
I have to take a shit.

EXT. CAMP SITE - DAY

Meggen, cross-legged on the tarp, looks up from her magazine.

MEGGEN
Thanks for telling us.

Emilia lays on her back, reading.

Finn picks her nails with a Swiss Army knife.

FINN
I've been constipated. I thought
you'd be happy for me.

EMILIA
How many days?

FINN
Three?

EMILIA
Jesus. Where does it even go?

Finn shrugs. She grabs a roll of toilet paper and heads for the woods.

MEGGEN
(calling out)
Go far! When you think you've gone
far enough, go farther.

FINN
(calling back)
I was going to go near your tent.

MEGGEN
Funny.

Meggen settles back into her magazine.

With Finn out of sight, Emilia leans in.

EMILIA
Hey. What's going on with Finn?

MEGGEN
Reverse IBS?

EMILIA
Not that. She's acting weird. She's kind of being--well, a bitch.

MEGGEN
Is she? I haven't noticed.

EMILIA
You haven't noticed? Everything I say, she nit picks me. I open my mouth and she's all over me.

MEGGEN
Are you just being sensitive?

EMILIA
I don't think so. Literally anything I say, she argues the opposite. You can't tell?

MEGGEN
No. You're tired, Em. And you were freaking yourself out last night.

Emilia considers this.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)
You know how Finn is. She likes to push the edge. Maybe try going with the flow with her?

Before Emilia can respond, Finn returns.

FINN
Nothing.

She sighs and plops down on the tarp.

Emilia sets her book down, determined.

EMILIA

What do you want to do the rest of the afternoon?

FINN

Let's go hunting.

MEGGEN

For berries?

FINN

No. Hunting hunting.

Emilia is confused but determined to bond with Finn.

EMILIA

Like actual hunting?

FINN

That's the word.

EMILIA

Why would we go hunting?

FINN

Could be fun?

MEGGEN

I'd rather get my dead animals at the grocery store.

FINN

I'm serious.

EMILIA

Okay. Let's go hunting. I'll whittle us a spear.

Finn hops up, bee lines for her tent.

MEGGEN

You know how to whittle?

Finn pops out of her tent with a small RIFLE.

EMILIA

What the fuck, Finn?

Meggen eyes it nervously.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

Did you bring a *gun* here?

MEGGEN
Is that loaded?

Finn holds it up.

FINN
Of course it's loaded. What's the
point otherwise. The safety's on.
It's fine.

EMILIA
(to Meggen)
It's fake.

Finn holds it out to Emilia.

FINN
It's real.

Emilia reaches out, brushes it with her finger tips.

It's metal. Cold.

She looks at Finn, surprised.

Emilia gingerly wraps her fingers around it, the weight of it
heavy in her hand.

EMILIA
Finn. Why do you have a gun?

Finn smiles.

FINN
So we can go hunting.

MEGGEN
No way. I've seen enough blood
today. I'm not touching that thing.

FINN
Emilia?

EMILIA
I can't kill a living thing.

FINN
You had no problem eating that cow
last night. It's more honest to
kill if you're going to eat meat.

Emilia hesitates.

EMILIA
What are we going to hunt?

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

BROWN RABBIT ears snap to attention. Black nose twitches. Once. Twice. Then it's off, jetting into the woods.

Finn and Emilia trek through the woods, twigs SNAPPING and CRUNCHING under their feet.

EMILIA
How do you know how to shoot that?

FINN
I used to go to the gun range.

EMILIA
You did?

FINN
With Beth.

They walk in silence for a moment.

EMILIA
You two shot guns together?

FINN
Yeah.

EMILIA
I didn't know that.

Finn shrugs.

FINN
You don't know everything.

EMILIA
What do you mean?

FINN
Beth had secrets.

EMILIA
What secrets?

Finn turns to Emilia, rifle in hand.

FINN
If I told you, I'd have to kill you.

They stare at each other for a beat.

FINN (CONT'D)

Do you have the water? I'm parched.

Emilia pulls out the water bottle and hands it over.

EXT. CAMP SITE - DAY

Meggen soaps a ceramic mug in a squat portable dish basin.

'EMILIA' is written in bold letters on the face of the mug. The 'i's are dotted with stars.

EXT. CAMP SITE - DAY

Meggen carries clean dishes over to a large plastic bin, filled with ceramic plates, cups, and cook ware.

Something catches her eye in the pile.

She digs out a second ceramic mug with 'BETH' written in bold blue. Little hearts drawn inside the curves of the 'B.'

A HAIRLINE CRACK runs down the mug, cutting the name in half.

Meggen runs her finger down the crack.

An indiscernible FIGURE moves behind her in the woods. She doesn't notice.

Meggen sets the 'Beth' mug beside the other three. Four matching, each with one of their names on it.

The Figure grows larger behind her as it gets closer--

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Finn rests her pack on a large rock.

Emilia glances around. The sunlight struggles in the dense woods around them. The air hangs, stuffy and still.

Finn pulls the rifle from her bag, clicks the safety OFF.

EMILIA

Finn, I don't know--

FINN
(sharp whisper)
Shhhh. You're going to scare
everything for miles.

Emilia moves close to Finn. She lowers her voice.

EMILIA
Sorry.

They sit beside each other in silence. Finn's eyes sweep the forest, looking for movement. She grips the rifle.

Emilia scoots closer. Their faces are inches apart as they scan the woods.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Hey, are we good?

FINN
Why wouldn't we be?

EMILIA
I don't know. You're acting weird.

FINN
You always do this. You can't deal
with your own shit so you make it
seem like everyone else is the
problem.

EMILIA
I don't do that.

FINN
You're doing it right now.

Emilia pauses. Looks away.

EMILIA
I see her sometimes.

The silence of the woods hangs in the air. Emilia can hear her own breath.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Beth. I have dreams about her.
Sometimes I see her. In crowds, on
the street.

Finn doesn't move.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
 That probably sounds crazy.
 (beat)
 Do you ever see her?

Finn doesn't respond. Then--

FINN
 That does sound crazy.

EMILIA
 I know. Samuel says it's common. I
 know that, too. When loved ones
 die, people project. Every stranger
 becomes the person you lost.
 (beat)
 Every red head becomes Beth.

Finn looks right at Emilia. Finn's gaze is cold, distant.

Emilia is taken aback. Finn leans in close.

FINN
 Don't make a sound.

She moves Emilia aside with her arm. Carefully, soundlessly
 lifts the rifle.

Emilia follows her eyes.

In the distance, a BROWN RABBIT hops to the right, nibbles on
 the grass.

Finn's finger hovers over the trigger.

EXT. CAMP SITE - DAY

Meggen stares at the four mugs in front of her.

A shadow falls over her back. CRUNCH.

She turns at the sound, wields a mug, smashes it into--

--the Man from earlier!

MAN
 Jesus!

Meggen holds out the mug, ready to strike again. Then she
 recognizes him.

MEGGEN
 Oh god, sorry! I--

MAN
You've got good reflexes.

MEGGEN
I'm a dancer. Well, teacher. Dance
teacher.

Meggen stands awkwardly.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)
So, what's--uh what do you want?

MAN
Maybe an Advil.

MEGGEN
I have tablets. Or liqui-gels if
you have trouble swallowing.
Sometimes I have trouble
swallowing.

He smiles. She turns red.

MAN
I was joking. Because of the head
hitting thing. Anyway, just saying
hi. Your camp is on the way back.

He points to his left.

MAN (CONT'D)
I'm set up down that path a ways.
Wanted to thank y'all for the
waterfall tip.

MEGGEN
You're welcome.

MAN
Where are your friends?

MEGGEN
They're hunting. With a gun.

MAN
A gun, huh?

They stare at each other.

MAN (CONT'D)
Well, I hope to see you guys
tomorrow. I'm Zeke by the way.

He holds out his hand. Meggen reaches hers to meet his.

MEGGEN

Meggen.

His hand lingers in hers. Then he nods and turns.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)

You should come by later.

He glances back.

ZEKE

Maybe I will. Sorry about your mug.

He heads into the forest.

Meggen examines the mug in her hand. It's Emilia's. A large crack cuts through the letters, splitting her name in half.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Emilia eyes the rabbit, concern growing.

Finn's finger presses into the trigger.

Emilia SHOVES the rifle to the side just before Finn fires.

FINN

Fuck!

EMILIA

I'm sorry.

FINN

What is wrong with you?

Finn sets the rifle on the rock, annoyed.

FINN (CONT'D)

Get your shit together. Death is part of life. Deal with it.

Finn pulls the water bottle of her pack, gulps.

EMILIA

Are you mad at me?

FINN

Now I am. You're afraid of everything. You can't deal with Beth. And you know what, you're fucking boring, dude.

Emilia watches as Finn slips the water back into her bag.

Emilia snatches the rifle. Turns toward the rabbit.

BANG. A deafening ring.

Finn turns, surprised.

The tiny brown body lays lifeless in the distance.

Finn turns to Emilia, shocked. Emilia stares as the rabbit turns wet with blood.

EXT. CAMP SITE - NIGHT

A long needle-like metal SKEWER catches light from the fire.

Emilia carefully organizes items for S'MORES: Hershey's chocolate bars, giant marshmallows, Honey Maids, skewers.

Beside her, Meggen and Finn drink from plastic cups. A half empty bottle of VODKA rests on the tarp.

Across from them, Zeke lounges, mid-story.

ZEKE

--so I released the little guy back
in the wild.

FINN

I hate killing bugs.

Emilia rolls her eyes.

EMILIA

It was a spider.

ZEKE

All creatures have value--

EMILIA

The s'mores are ready.

Meggen lifts the vodka bottle to pour more in Zeke's cup. No one acknowledges Emilia.

Emilia grabs one of the skewers and points it toward the three of them.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

S'mores. Hello.

FINN

Take it easy, Zorro.

ZEKE

I don't eat refined sugar.

Emilia jams a marshmallow onto a skewer as she stares at him.

ZEKE (CONT'D)

Marshmallows are pure sugar. Rot
the teeth.

Emilia twists the spike deeper into the soft white.

The fire POPS and dwindles. Emilia pokes at it.

She pushes pieces around, trying to get it going again. She
adds a large branch but it doesn't catch.

MEGGEN

The fire was Beth's job.

Zeke gets up and tosses some kindling into the fire.

Emilia's skin crawls with every move he makes.

He lays a few larger branches on top of the kindling which
quickly catch flames.

EMILIA

Lucky.

Zeke settles back onto his tarp.

ZEKE

What happened to your friend?

Emilia looks away. Meggen takes a large sip of her drink.

Finn stares down at her hands.

The fire grows as the larger branches catch the flame.

Finally--

FINN

She broke her neck. Two months ago.
She dove into a creek. It wasn't
deep enough.

Finn looks at Emilia who's staring right at her.

The silence lingers.

Zeke pulls a UKULELE from his pack.

ZEKE
 Sometimes when I can't deal with
 something, I sing.

Emilia jams a second marshmallow onto her skewer.

The fire BLAZES.

Zeke STRUMS a few chords.

ZEKE (CONT'D)
 (singing)
*She's a house on fire,
 she's got all those charms.*

Emilia shoves her marshmallow stack into the fire.

ZEKE (CONT'D)
 (singing)
*I'm a house on fire too,
 But I got four alarms.*

Emilia's marshmallows catch fire. She pulls them from the flames and watches with pleasure as they turn black and hard.

ZEKE (CONT'D)
 (singing)
*I'm wilder than her,
 And it drives her out of her mind.*

Emilia rips the burned skin from the marshmallows.

ZEKE (CONT'D)
 (singing)
*I guess she thought that she was
 just one of a kind.*

Zeke wraps up his last chord. Meggen and Finn clap.

Emilia bites hard into the sticky remains. She MOANS.

They all stare at her.

EMILIA
 (mouth full)
 What? I love refined sugar.

Zeke stands up.

ZEKE
 It's getting late. When the sun
 sleeps, so shall I.

MEGGEN

Are you okay getting back to your
camp in the dark?

ZEKE

I am. Goodnight, ladies.

He disappears into the darkness.

Finn gets up and snags a skewer. She pops on a marshmallow.

EMILIA

You're not tired?

FINN

The ukulele was a bit much.

Emilia perks up at the olive branch.

MEGGEN

I liked it.

Meggen joins them on Emilia's tarp. Finn absently twirls her skewer.

FINN

What should we do now?

EMILIA

We could tell campfire stories?

MEGGEN

The only scary stories I know
involve student debt.

FINN

I have something better.

Finn drops the skewer and pulls a little PLASTIC BAG out of her pocket. She holds it out. A few small white PILLS inside.

EMILIA

What is it?

FINN

Molly.

MEGGEN

I'm not getting my fingerprints on
that bag. We'll get arrested.

FINN

By who? We're in the middle of
nowhere.

EMILIA
C'mon, Megs, it's hardly even a
drug. Psychiatrists used to give it
to patients as a joy drug.

FINN
We could use some joy.

EMILIA
I want this. Tonight. Just us.

Meggen grabs the bag from Finn's hand and examines the pills.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Plus we need this to cleanse that
song from our brains.

FINN
Your fingerprints are on it now.

MEGGEN
You guys are ridiculous.

Finn laughs and drinks vodka out of the bottle. Emilia
reaches for it, smiling. Takes a big swig.

Emilia stands up, holds the bottle of vodka up like a toast.

EMILIA
I am out here with my two best
friends. And I've only done Molly
once when it was called Ecstasy and
that was in college.

Finn CHEERS. Emilia smiles.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
I want to do it tonight with you.

She points at Finn.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
And you.

She points at Meggen.

MEGGEN
We've been drinking--

EMILIA
Barely. Plus that's when everyone
does drugs. Now hand me the fucking
pills. Please.

FINN
Yes, Emilia!

Emilia flourishes in Finn's approval, drunk on vodka and validation.

Meggen hands her the bag. Emilia pops one of the pills into her mouth.

She takes a second one out and walks over to Finn who parts her lips. Emilia presses it on her tongue.

She approaches Meggen.

EMILIA
C'mon, Megs. We're safe out here.
Nature is why drugs were invented.

MEGGEN
That makes no sense.

Emilia twirls a pill toward Meggen's mouth, like a mom airplane-ing a child.

Meggen snatches it, gently bites it in half. Emilia pops the other half in her mouth.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)
How much time do we have til it
hits?

EXT. CAMP SITE - NIGHT

Emilia lies on her back. Finn hovers over her. Meggen sits cross-legged, rubbing her own legs.

FINN
Ready?

Emilia nods. Finn pours water from a bottle on her stomach.

EMILIA
God, that's good. We're all water.
That's what humans are.

She sits up. Meggen continues rubbing.

MEGGEN
Is skin water?

Emilia nods.

FINN
I miss Beth's skin.

Finn rolls onto her back beside Emilia.

EMILIA
Beth's skin was like flowers.

FINN
Silk flowers.

MEGGEN
Are flowers water?

EMILIA
Everything is water.

Meggen stops rubbing her legs.

MEGGEN
Guys. I think I'm blind.

EMILIA
Can you see?

MEGGEN
No.

Finn looks at Meggen.

FINN
Your eyes are closed.

Emilia and Finn giggle.

MEGGEN
Oh, thank God.

Emilia stops laughing. Suddenly serious.

EMILIA
We need a plan to come down.

FINN
No plans. We need music.

Finn goes to her tent. Emilia turns to Meggen.

EMILIA
I have to tell you something.

MEGGEN
Okay.

EMILIA
I killed a rabbit.

MEGGEN
Oh no.

EMILIA
I'm a killer.

She leans in close, grips Meggen's hands. Meggen listens intently.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
I'm pretty sure Finn is a killer,
too. Are you?

MEGGEN
I swatted a mosquito. I'm a killer,
too. A murderer. Are we going to
get in trouble for being murderers?

EMILIA
Probably.

She puts her lips right next to Meggen's ear.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
What if Finn killed Beth?

MEGGEN
Why do you think that?

EMILIA
She said it was her fault.

Meggen thinks about that. Then shakes her head.

MEGGEN
No. It was an accident.

Emilia pulls away, convinced.

EMILIA
Yeah. Accidents happen all the
time. We accidentally forgot the
chairs.

They giggle.

Finn returns with her phone. Music starts up. *Rockin' Robin*.

Emilia dances.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
I was just listening to this. Where
did I hear this?

She pulls Finn and Meggen to their feet. They half dance/half hug. Fully rolling on the Molly.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Hey. I want to see the hiker.

MEGGEN
He's so hot.

FINN
You loooove him.

MEGGEN
Why wouldn't everyone love everyone
all the time?

EMILIA
I want him here.

FINN
But you hate him.

EMILIA
I love everyone. I want to
apologize. Where is he?

No one knows.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
I'll find him. I can apologize and
Meggen can have the rest.

Emilia sprints toward the woods.

FINN
She's fast.

MEGGEN
Don't go out there, Em! She's gone.
(then)
Finn, what if I go blind again?

FINN
I'll help you open your eyes.

INT. WOODS - NIGHT

Emilia runs barefoot through the woods. She reaches her arms high, brushing leaves with her fingertips as she goes.

She stops, looks around. It's dark. She can no longer see the camp site.

She looks up. STARS peek through the twisted tree branches. They PULSE in the sky. She smiles.

Then everything goes BLACK.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Emilia's face. She's sitting up, her hair tangled.

Sweaty. Naked.

She glances down. Zeke is beneath her, naked. She's straddling him. She grinds down harder. *Fuck, it feels good.*

He reaches up, pushes her hair back. She closes her eyes, grinds harder.

She opens her eyes, looks down, but it's--

FINN UNDER HER NOW. Grinning. Holding on hard to Emilia's hips. Emilia continues rocking back and forth.

Finn snakes her hands up Emilia's body to her neck. Her slender fingers wrap around the delicate skin.

Squeezing.

Emilia fucks her harder. Gasps for breath. Harder. Harder. Finn squeezes. Emilia grinds.

Emilia looks down again.

A giant BLOODY RABBIT HEAD stares back at her.

She SCREAMS.

Her eyes snap open. Disoriented. *Where is she?*

She recognizes her own tent. Tangled in her own sleeping bag. Alone. Dressed.

It was a dream.

She kicks off her sleeping bag and--

FREEZES. To her right, the SILHOUETTE of a PERSON through the thin mesh of her tent.

The figure doesn't move. It's close. Maybe a foot or two away

Emilia sits up slowly, her eyes trained on the figure. It stands still, unmoving.

Emilia reaches her arm out slowly toward her bag. She fumbles with the zipper. She moves her eyes to her pack and pulls out a knife.

When she turns back, the shape is gone.

She looks around. Nothing.

EXT. CAMP SITE - NIGHT

Darkness.

Emilia creeps toward Finn's tent.

She stops when she spies the flap to Finn's tent open.

EMILIA

Finn?

No response.

She reaches the tent, slowly pulls the unzipped flap back.

EMPTY.

Emilia hurries to Meggen's tent.

It's unzipped. She peers in.

EMPTY.

The hairs on her neck stand up.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

Finn! Meggen!

FINN (O.S.)

You're awake.

Emilia whips around to find Finn and Meggen behind her.

MEGGEN

You're okay!

EMILIA

Where were you?

FINN

Megs had to pee. I went with her.

EMILIA

No, before that. What happened? I don't remember.

MEGGEN

We were dancing and you ran off. We looked for you and found you sleeping in the woods.

FINN

We brought you back to your tent.

MEGGEN

It's scary at night.

Emilia looks at them.

EMILIA

I don't remember that.

FINN

That Molly kicked your ass.

MEGGEN

Are you okay? I'm getting you some water. I was so worried.

Meggen goes for the water bottle.

Finn's gaze lands on Emilia's neck.

FINN

What's this?

Finn reaches for Emilia's neck. Emilia jerks back. Finn eyes her, suspicious.

FINN (CONT'D)

Why is your neck red?

Emilia brings her hand to her neck, confused. She struggles to remember. Then--

EMILIA

Were you choking me?

FINN

Uh, no.

EMILIA

I thought-- I don't know.

She shakes her head. Finn narrow her eyes.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

I-- must've gotten a mosquito bite.

FINN

Hmm.

EMILIA

Hey, were you playing music? When we were rolling?

FINN

Probably.

EMILIA

Rockin' Robin?

FINN

I don't remember.

EMILIA

It's the same song I heard the first night. Is it on your phone?

FINN

A lot of songs are on my phone.

EMILIA

Can I check?

FINN

The phone's dead.

EMILIA

What?

FINN

It died.

They stare at each other. Meggen returns with the water.

MEGGEN

You guys, the sun's almost up. I need to sleep. I think I might still be polluted from the drugs.

FINN

We're probably still high.

MEGGEN

What if I get drug tested?

EMILIA

Does your job drug test?

MEGGEN
They might start.

FINN
Alright. Sleep tight, little birds.

Finn blows a kiss and heads for her tent.

Emilia strokes her neck as she watches Finn walk away.

EXT. THE FALLS - DAY

A waterfall ROARS.

Emilia, Meggen, and Finn stand on a rock overlooking a shiny HOT SPRINGS a bit down from the falls.

Finn undresses. Emilia stares as Finn slips off her bra.

A small TATTOO grace's Finn's left rib cage. A CURSIVE 'B.'

Finn locks eyes with Emilia, who quickly looks away.

FINN
You checking me out?

EMILIA
No.

Finn turns her body squarely toward Emilia.

FINN
You can look. I don't mind.

EMILIA
Finn, what are you doing?

FINN
Giving you a better angle.

EMILIA
I didn't know you got a tattoo.

FINN
Now you do.

Meggen is down to her sports bra and underwear.

Finn readies herself on the rock. She hesitates. Stares at the water shining below.

MEGGEN
Maybe we should wade in.

FINN

No. We've done this a thousand times. We know it's deep here.

She looks at the rippling water below.

Then jumps, head first. Emilia holds her breath.

Finn emerges moments later.

MEGGEN

Why does she do this to me?

FINN

It's glorious. Get in here! Emilia, take your clothes off.

Emilia starts to strip.

Meggen finds a path down to the water. She sticks a toe in. Cautiously submerges.

Emilia in bra and underwear, peers down over the rock.

FINN (CONT'D)

Take those off.

EMILIA

What?

FINN

Are you afraid to be naked?

EMILIA

You've seen me naked before.

Finn throws her arms in the air.

FINN

Then take them off. We're in nature!

Emilia looks around. No one in sight.

Emilia slips off her bra and underwear. She hesitates.

EMILIA

(re: the water)

Is it warm?

ZEKE (O.S.)

It was yesterday.

She whips around to see Zeke standing behind her. Emilia turns and jumps in quickly.

She emerges from the water, gasping. Struggling.

FINN

Dude, you're fine. Just calm down.

Emilia spits water and glares at Finn. She swims toward Finn and Meggen, who covers her chest even though it's hidden in a sports bra.

Emilia whispers loudly, voice muffled by the nearby falls.

EMILIA

I almost drowned!

FINN

No, you didn't.

EMILIA

Yes I did!

FINN

You panicked. You're okay.

EMILIA

Why didn't you tell me he was there?

FINN

We saw him when you did.

EMILIA

You were looking right at me. You saw him and let me humiliate myself.

FINN

No, I didn't. And why is that humiliating?

EMILIA

You're lying.

FINN

Quit attacking me. I didn't see him. Jesus, Em.

Zeke peeks over the edge.

ZEKE

(calling down)

Can I join you?

FINN
(calls back)
Only if you take your clothes off!

He moves away from the edge and starts undressing.

EMILIA
Megs? Did you see him?

MEGGEN
I was facing the other way. Maybe
Finn was, too?

EMILIA
She was looking right at me!

FINN
You're being a baby.

MEGGEN
Alright, guys, chill out. It was
nobody's fault. It was an accident.

FINN
Who cares anyway? We saw his full
dick yesterday. He didn't care.
You're being a prude.

Emilia splashes Finn in the face.

FINN (CONT'D)
What the fuck! Who splashes?

MEGGEN
Guys. I don't want to take sides.
You both need to calm down.

Finn gestures to the rock.

FINN
Look! His dick is out again. No one
cares, Emilia.

Zeke is down to nude. Meggen stares. He jumps in.

MEGGEN
Guys, let it go. He'll hear us.

They all look to him, making his way towards them. His arm
muscles flexing as he swims.

EMILIA
Fine.

EXT. HOT SPRINGS - DAY

They lounge in the shallow end. Finn close to Zeke. Meggen stares, trying to flirt and cover herself at the same time.

Emilia couldn't be more over it.

ZEKE

It's usually an outfit or cool designs. Painted directly on the skin.

FINN

I saw a bunch of women at a protest once in Union Square with body paint.

ZEKE

I do a lot of protests.

MEGGEN

What if you sweat?

ZEKE

It's waterproof. We have paints that can last days.

Emilia picks at her nails. She doesn't look at him.

EMILIA

Do you ever paint men?

ZEKE

Not really.

EMILIA

So you just enjoy exploiting women's bodies?

ZEKE

It's not exploitation. I embrace all body forms. Men, women, whoever. It's natural. Society taught us to be uptight.

Emilia looks to Meggen, but Meggen is enthralled.

FINN

Uptight people are the worst.

Finn looks right at Emilia, then emerges out of the water.

Zeke stares. Emilia watches him watch Finn.

EMILIA
Is Zeke your real name?

ZEKE
(keeping his eyes on Finn)
Last time I checked.

EMILIA
It sounds fake.

ZEKE
Why would I give you a fake name?

EMILIA
Because it sounds cool. Or because
it's a nickname. Or so we can't
find your mug shot online.

ZEKE
Not much signal out here so I guess
my mug shot's safe for now.

He winks at her. Emilia gives him nothing.

Finn steps out onto the rock, naked. She rifles in her bag.

She pulls a GRANOLA BAR out of her bag. Suns herself while
she eats.

ZEKE (CONT'D)
(to Finn)
Do you have another bar?

FINN
Sure do.

Zeke makes his way to the rock.

EMILIA
(to Meggen)
Do you want to leave? I hate this
guy.

MEGGEN
I'm having fun.

EMILIA
Are you serious? He's an ordinary
shitty misogynist hiding behind
some hippie granola bullshit.

MEGGEN
I thought you liked hippie granola.

EMILIA

I thought you wanted it to be just us on this trip.

MEGGEN

I do. But, he's nice--

EMILIA

I don't like him sexualizing Finn.

MEGGEN

He's naked, too. That feels equal.

EMILIA

I feel like we're watching their weird foreplay.

Megan looks longingly.

MEGGEN

Everyone loves Finn.

She turns to Emilia.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)

You don't think she'd actually hook up with him, do you? I mean, she knows I like him.

EMILIA

Don't be naive.

That stings.

MEGGEN

I'm not naive.

Finn interrupts from the rock.

FINN

We're going for a hike. I'll see you guys back at camp in a bit!

MEGGEN

Hey, wait-- we'll join!

FINN

Enjoy the water!

They take off before Meggen can make it out.

Meggen and Emilia watch as they disappear in the woods.

EXT. CAMP SITE - DAY

Emilia and Meggen approach their camp.

MEGGEN
She's not here.

EMILIA
It hasn't been that long.
(then)
I can check on her.

MEGGEN
Where?

EMILIA
Zeke said his camp site is that way. It can't be far.

MEGGEN
But they're hiking.

EMILIA
I doubt that.

Meggen looks hurt.

MEGGEN
I don't want to see them having sex.

EMILIA
I'll go.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Emilia approaches Zeke's campsite. She creeps closer.

She sees movement ahead. Gets a bit closer.

Through the trees, Zeke becomes clear. He's bent over a tarp. Emilia creeps closer.

Zeke's hand are covered in BRIGHT RED LIQUID.

Finn lies on the tarp on her stomach, covered in BLOOD.

Emilia freezes. Breath quickens.

Then it comes into focus. Not Blood. It's PAINT.

Zeke paints Finn's body. A bright cardinal spreading its wings on her back.

Emilia watches, mesmerized by the bizarre tableau.

EXT. CAMP SITE - DAY

Meggen hangs her wet clothes to dry. Emilia approaches.

MEGGEN
Did you find them? Is Finn okay?

EMILIA
(lying)
I didn't see them.

Meggen brightens.

MEGGEN
They probably took the trail head
east of the mountain. I knew Finn
wouldn't sleep with him.

EMILIA
Yeah. Sure. Look, I don't want to
talk about Finn. I'm sick of
talking about Finn.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP SITE - DAY

Meggen and Emilia SNAP firewood branches.

Emilia looks up to see Finn entering the clearing, hair WET.
All signs of the paint gone.

MEGGEN
Why are you wet?

FINN
I went swimming again.

EMILIA
Why?

Finn shrugs.

FINN
Hot from the hike.

Emilia watches her lie so easily.

Finn plops down on the tarp, pulls ONIONS from lunch off the
grill and drops them right in her mouth.

EMILIA
You could use a plate.

FINN
I don't want a plate.

She scrapes more onions off the flat top.

Emilia's skin crawls.

EMILIA
What's wrong with you?

FINN
Excuse me?

EMILIA
Why are you the way you are?

Finn turns to her. Emilia pauses, takes a breath.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Why don't you tell us what really
happened with Beth?

Finn looks at her.

FINN
What? Where did that come from?

MEGGEN
Emilia. Don't.

EMILIA
We came out here to honor Beth but
we've hardly built any cairns and
have barely spoken about her.

FINN
You're acting crazy.

EMILIA
No. *You're* acting crazy.

MEGGEN
Guys--

EMILIA
Why were *you* at the cottage? Beth
went there to work. She never said
anything about you going. But you
were there. I want to know why?

Finn doesn't respond. She looks uneasy.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

You were the one who called the cops. What really happened? You've never really explained it.

FINN

You don't know anything, Em.

EMILIA

Then tell us. Why were you there?

Finn shakes her head. She takes a deep breath.

FINN

I loved Beth.

EMILIA

So did we.

FINN

No.

(then softly)

I was in love with her.

EMILIA

What do you mean *in love* with her?

FINN

We were together. Sort of. We were-- trying it out.

EMILIA

That doesn't make sense. I can't--I don't understand.

Emilia shakes her head.

FINN

We didn't want to say anything yet. We didn't know what it was. I wanted to tell you, but Beth was afraid you'd be weirded out--

EMILIA

So you were lying to us.

FINN

Only for a couple months.

EMILIA

A couple months! Jesus Christ, Finn. That's a fucking lifetime.

FINN

Then the accident happened. And
there was never a time to tell you.

EMILIA

So you and Beth had this special
thing that we weren't a part of?
You were lying. So the last few
months of Beth's life were a lie?

Emilia turns to Meggen for support.

Meggen casts her eyes down. Emilia suddenly realizes.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

You knew.

It's not a question.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

Finn told you but not me.

MEGGEN

No.

Meggen looks away. Emilia waits for more.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)

Beth told me.

Emilia doesn't understand.

EMILIA

Why didn't she tell me?

No one responds. Finally-

FINN

You know how you are sometimes. We
were afraid you'd feel...left out.

Angry tears fill Emilia's eyes. She glares at Finn.

EMILIA

Fuck you.

Finn puts her arms in the air.

FINN

Great. Yeah. Fuck me. Fine.

EMILIA

Fuck this whole trip! You're a liar and you'd rather hang out with some asshole than your friends--

FINN

Zeke has been the only redeeming part of this trip.

MEGGEN

Hey.

FINN

Sorry, Megs. But I'm done.

Emilia and Meggen stare at her.

FINN (CONT'D)

After this trip, I don't want to be friends anymore. This isn't working. It's over.

Meggen shakes her head.

MEGGEN

You don't mean that.

FINN

I do. I don't want this without Beth. This group doesn't work without her. It's over.

Finn storms off into the woods. They watch her go. After a beat, Emilia turns and heads in the other direction.

Meggen watches Emilia go.

She breaks a few more branches, hard. The cut on her hand opens up, blood trickling down.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Emilia crunches through the woods. She takes off in a sprint. Branches whip her skin as she passes. She pushes them aside, not slowing down.

She reaches a clearing and stops, breathing hard.

She lets out a SCREAM.

It pierces the air but nothing around her changes.

Trees sway in a slight breeze. The sun beats down. Birds CHIRP.

She glances around.

She eyes a stream filled with large stones and pebbles to her left.

EXT. CLIFF'S EDGE - DAY

Finn hikes up to the high edge that overlooks the ravine.

She glances down.

The cairn they built the day before stares back at her.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Emilia has three rocks already piled on one another, steadily building.

She pulls a fourth from the stream and carries it toward her cairn, carefully placing it on top.

EXT. CLIFF'S EDGE - DAY

Finn crouches beside the rock structure. She stares at it.

She reaches out, runs her finger carefully over the rocks.

Then, SMASHES IT. Rocks FLY.

She pounds her hands until there's nothing left standing.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Emilia places the last rock on top.

She turns and walks away without looking back.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DUSK

The sun sinks into the horizon, rays of light slicing through the trees.

Emilia approaches the campsite.

Finn is sprawled on a tarp, peeling a SHINY RED APPLE.

Emilia watches as the peel breaks and drops to the ground.

Finn hooks the knife into the flesh and a new spiral GROWS from the fruit as she twists it.

EMILIA
Where's Meggen?

Finn shrugs, not looking up.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
It's getting dark.

FINN
That happens at night.

EMILIA
It's not safe for Meggen out there.

FINN
She's a grown woman.

EMILIA
So was Beth.

The peel snakes out, growing longer.

Finn doesn't respond. Emilia walks away.

EXT. WOODS - DUSK

Emilia walks quickly through the thick woods. The sun sinks further. The sky darkens by the second around her.

EMILIA
Meggen!

Nothing.

Emilia's panic grows. She continues deeper into the woods.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Megs!

Her voice travels, swallowed by the forest.

She trudges forward.

A SCREAM pierces the air. Emilia stops, listens.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Meggen!

A second SCREAM. She takes off in a sprint toward it.

EXT. WOODS - DUSK

In the distance, a small clearing with a BRIGHT RED TENT comes into view.

Emilia reaches the clearing. A small fire struggles to stay alive. On it, a piece of MEAT burns, closer to charcoal now.

EMILIA
Meggen!

MEGGEN (O.S.)
Emilia! Oh my god!

Meggen emerges from the forest. Tears streak her face.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)
Oh my god. Oh my god.

EMILIA
Are you okay?

Meggen doubles over. She throws up. Emilia bends beside her.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Meggen. What's happening?

Meggen points behind her, into the woods. Emilia gazes out. She struggles to see what Meggen is pointing at.

A glint of BLUE catches her eye. She shakily stands and approaches the forest line.

Zeke sits against a rock, his back to her.

She's almost to him, now.

Emilia reaches the rock, steps in front of him. Her hands shake.

He's slumped over. Blood dampens his hair and onto his shirt.

HE'S DEAD.

EXT. WOODS - DUSK

Meggen and Emilia RACE through the forest. Hearts pounding.

The sky is almost black. The sun completely hidden now.

EXT. CAMP SITE - NIGHT

Finn swigs from a half empty bottle of wine.

The THUMPING of shoes on hard dirt catches her attention.

Emilia and Meggen emerge from the tress. Their faces pale, frantic.

MEGGEN

Zeke is dead.

Finn stares at her, confused.

FINN

What the fuck?

EMILIA

Zeke is fucking dead. Holy shit.
He's dead.

Meggen shakes her head, in shock. Tries to catch her breath.

FINN

What-- I don't understand. Why were
you with Zeke?

MEGGEN

Does it matter? I'm telling you
he's *fucking dead*.

FINN

(defensive)
I'm just trying to get some
context.

Meggen looks to Emilia. Emilia's voice shakes.

EMILIA

I found Meggen. She went looking
for Zeke. She went to his campsite
and found him...his head is bashed
in. H-He's dead.

Finn shakes her head, tries to understand.

FINN

Why were you looking for Zeke?

MEGGEN

I wanted to flirt. I don't know.
It's so stupid now--Oh my god--

She starts to realize what's happening. Panic rising.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)

We need to get out of here. We need to leave.

She starts frantically gathering her things in her bag.

EMILIA

It's okay, Megs--

MEGGEN

How is it okay?!

FINN

Hold on. Are you sure? How--what did you see? Was he--

MEGGEN

He was sitting against a rock, covered in blood! It was everywhere.

Emilia suddenly turns to Meggen.

EMILIA

Was he shot?

FINN

What?

Emilia backs away from Finn.

EMILIA

Megs, was he shot?

MEGGEN

I don't know. I couldn't tell. His head was covered in blood.

FINN

(to Emilia)

You saw him, too.

EMILIA

It was dark. I hardly looked. It could've been a gunshot.

Finn backs away.

FINN

What are you saying?

EMILIA

You brought a gun out here. You've been acting like a lunatic. You left with him, Finn.

Finn stares at her.

FINN

Are you insane? Are you saying I fucking killed a man?

Emilia turns to Meggen. Meggen shakes her head.

MEGGEN

What are you saying, Em? That's crazy--

EMILIA

I know it sounds crazy. But I don't trust her. She lied about where she was with Zeke. I saw them together earlier, they weren't hiking. He was painting her.

FINN

What? No.

EMILIA

I saw you.

MEGGEN

Finn?

FINN

Okay, yes, he was painting me.

MEGGEN

You lied? Why would you lie?

She turns to Meggen, pleading.

FINN

I didn't want to tell you. I knew you liked him. I didn't want to hurt you--

EMILIA

And she lied about Beth. She brought a weapon here! And she's been messing with me, standing outside my tent at night. And she said the phone was dead--

FINN

The phone is fucking dead, Em! Why would I lie about that? I'll show you.

Finn runs for her tent.

EMILIA

Megs, you know Finn's been acting strange. Since Beth. She's keeping secrets. She's...different.

MEGGEN

Yeah, but--

Finn returns, pale.

FINN

The phone is gone.

EMILIA

That's convenient.

FINN

Someone must have taken it.

MEGGEN

Someone? There's no one else here!

Finn stares Emilia in the face.

FINN

You're lying.

EMILIA

What?

FINN

Did *you* kill him?

Emilia, incredulous.

EMILIA

Are you fucking kidding me, Finn? Why would I kill him?

FINN

Why would I? You shot the rabbit. You've been wandering in the woods at night, hearing things, seeing things that aren't there.

Emilia shakes her head.

MEGGEN

You guys--what's going on. Why does it have to be one of us that did it!

FINN

Megs, you know I'm right.

EMILIA

Meggen. You know me. This is insane.

Meggen looks back and forth between them. Caught in the middle of hell.

She slips her Swiss Army knife from her pack. Holds it out.

MEGGEN

Both of you, back the fuck up.

They look surprised.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)

I'm fucking serious. Back up.

They do. Meggen thinks.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)

Here's what we're going to do. We're going to get the fuck out of here. Tonight. Through the woods. I don't care if it's dark. We can't stay out here. We're going to walk to the car and call the police.

They all stare at each other for a beat. No one moves.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)

Okay?

They nod.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)

Finn, get the car keys.

Finn looks down.

FINN

Fuck.

MEGGEN

What?

FINN
Zeke...my pack. It's at his camp site. The car keys are in it.

EMILIA
Jesus Christ, Finn.

FINN
I'm sorry!

EMILIA
I'm not going there with her.

Meggen looks distraught. She grips the knife.

MEGGEN
We don't have a choice. We'll walk there. Get the keys. Then get the fuck out of here.

FINN
We should take the gun.

EMILIA
No fucking way I'm letting her carry that gun.

Meggen shakes her head.

MEGGEN
I'll carry the gun.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Meggen walks behind Finn and Emilia, gun in hand. Many feet separate Emilia and Finn. They carry flashlights.

The woods around them are dark, lit only by moonlight.

FINN
This is fucking ridiculous.

MEGGEN
I didn't say you could talk.

Finn stops.

FINN
Is this a fucking hold up now?
(re: the gun)
Do you even know how to use that?

Meggen suddenly looks unsure.

MEGGEN

Tell me.

FINN

It's hard to explain. Let me show you.

EMILIA

Don't give her the gun.

MEGGEN

(to Finn)

Try to explain.

Finn sighs.

FINN

You see the safety? On the side.

Finn shines her flashlight at the rifle. Meggen swings the gun around, attempting to locate the safety.

FINN (CONT'D)

Fuck, dude, don't point it at us!

MEGGEN

Sorry.

FINN

Do you see the safety?

She looks for it. It's hard to see in the dark.

MEGGEN

I'm not sure--

Meggen looks incredibly uncomfortable handling the gun.

FINN

I can't believe this is happening.

EMILIA

Just tell her how to click the safety off.

FINN

Why am I telling the *woman pointing a gun at us* how to use it?

MEGGEN

I'm not pointing it at you. And I'm the only one here who definitely isn't a murderer.

Finn and Emilia share a look.

FINN
How do we know that?

MEGGEN
Know what?

FINN
That you're not the murderer?

MEGGEN
Why would I kill him?

EMILIA
Why would I?

FINN
Why would any of us?

MEGGEN
I'm the one who found him!

FINN
That's fucking suspicious enough.

MEGGEN
What?

FINN
You happened to wander off to Zeke's without telling anyone *and* you were the one who found him.

MEGGEN
That's different.

FINN
How the fuck is that different?

Emilia looks at Meggen, suddenly suspicious.

EMILIA
You did look jealous when he went off with Finn.

MEGGEN
I wasn't! I thought they were hiking.

FINN
Please. You knew we weren't hiking.

Meggen glares at Finn.

MEGGEN

So you fucked him. Of course you did. You fuck everything that moves, Finn.

FINN

Not that it's anyone's business but I didn't fuck him. And why is this about my sex life?

EMILIA

You've always used sex as a way to deal with things. It's textbook self-destructive, Finn.

FINN

Says the control freak.

EMILIA

I'm not a control freak!

FINN

You control everything. If one tiny thing changes, you come unhinged.

Emilia looks to Meggen for back up.

MEGGEN

You are a bit controlling.

EMILIA

At least I can make a decision. I'm not a doormat for everyone.

MEGGEN

Are you calling me the doormat?

EMILIA

You can't make a decision to save your life. You never take a side. You're a people pleaser.

MEGGEN

You only want me to make a decision if it's on *your* side.

She turns to Finn.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)

And you have no problem making any decisions because you get everything you want. The rest of us are left in you shadow.

EMILIA

That's true.

FINN

So I'm supposed to apologize for getting what I want?

Finn throws her arms up.

FINN (CONT'D)

You've been smothering us the whole weekend, Megs. Honestly, our whole fucking lives. You probably killed Zeke to get rid of him so you could have us to yourselves.

MEGGEN

Smothering you? All I've wanted is to hang out with you two!

FINN

And Em, you've been controlling us this whole time. Your little fucking puppets!

EMILIA

I try controlling you, but it's impossible because do whatever you want without thinking about anyone.
(gestures to Meggen)
And ole Switzerland over here can't decide if she wants to have a good time or not!

MEGGEN

Everyone shut up! I'm making a decision now. We're getting the keys. That's it. End of story.

Finn takes a step toward Meggen.

FINN

Would you really shoot me, Megs?

Another step. She inches closer. Meggen raises the gun. Emilia stiffens.

FINN (CONT'D)

Would you?

Meggen stares at her.

Then, Finn CLICKS OFF HER FLASHLIGHT and DARTS into the forest.

EMILIA

Fuck!

MEGGEN

Finn!

Emilia and Meggen lose her instantly.

They WHIP their flashlights around frantically. Nothing.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)

I don't like this.

EMILIA

Megs, we need to get out of here.

MEGGEN

We need the keys.

EMILIA

Give me the gun.

Meggen looks unsure.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

I know how to use it. I've got more practice than you. We'll get to Zeke's site, get the keys, then leave. I promise.

Emilia holds her hands out.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

Megs, look at me. Finn is out there. We don't know what she's capable of.

Meggen looks her right in the eyes. Emilia pleads.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

I don't want this any more than you. But we have to get out of here alive. Do you trust me?

Meggen eyes her. She slowly hands over the gun, a clear weight lifted.

MEGGEN

I trust you.

Emilia takes the rifle and they creep side by side towards Zeke's camp site.

A SNAP behind them.

Emilia whips around, gun pointed.

They shine their flashlights.

A RED HAIREd WOMAN darts behind a tree.

Emilia blinks.

EMILIA
Did you see that?

MEGGEN
No. Was it Finn?

EMILIA
No...someone else.

MEGGEN
There's no one there. I don't see anything.

They swipe their beams left to right.

TWO YELLOW LIGHTS shine back.

It's a red haired FOX, staring back at them.

It darts into the forest.

Emilia shakes her head.

EMILIA
I thought I saw--

They stare into the twisted branches. The forest seems alive.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
We should keep moving.

EXT. ZEKE'S CAMP SITE - NIGHT

They approach the site cautiously.

EMILIA
We need to find Finn's pack.

MEGGEN
Are we going to leave her out here?

EMILIA
I don't know.

MEGGEN

I don't know what to do.

EMILIA

Let's just find the keys. We can
decide then.

They shine their flashlights ahead of them.

The beam of light slowly sweeps the camp site. The dead fire.
The red tent. A tarp, crimson with dry cracked, paint.

The beam finally rests on FINN'S PACK, against a tree.

They creep towards it. Every dry leaf they step on giving
them pause.

When they reach the pack, Meggen bends down, rifles through.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

Hurry up.

MEGGEN

I can't find them.

EMILIA

They must be in there.

MEGGEN

Shine your light on it.

Meggen sets down her flashlight to use both hands. Emilia
shines her light on the pack as Meggen searches.

She finally dumps the contents on the ground, sifts through.

Then, Emilia's FLASHLIGHT DROPS.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)

Emilia, I can't see.

Meggen picks up her light and shines it back.

Finn stands behind Emilia, a KNIFE to her neck. Emilia holds
the gun, but it hangs loose in her hands.

FINN

Drop the gun, Em.

Emilia reluctantly lets it fall.

The KEYS dangle in one of Finn's hands.

FINN (CONT'D)

Meggen, I have the keys. We can go.

Meggen looks at Emilia.

EMILIA

Don't listen--

Finn presses on the knife, harder, but not breaking skin yet.

Her hands shake as she holds the blade to Emilia's neck.

Meggen stands just a few yards away, flashlight aimed at the horrific scene in front of her.

She locks eyes with Emilia, searching for anything.

In a moment, Meggen clicks her flashlight off. It goes DARK.

A few seconds pass, but it could be hours.

The flashlight clicks back on.

A GLINT. Meggen aims the rifle perfectly at Finn, who holds steady on the blade.

Emilia tries to catch Meggen's eye. The barrel of the rifle stares them down.

FINN

Meggen--

Meggen's hands tremble. She moves her finger to the trigger.

Emilia finally catches Meggen's eyes. Emilia gives a tiny nod, barely discernible.

BAM.

Finn writhes on the ground, bleeding oozing from her middle.

Emilia watches, inches away. Her eyes wild. The mangy coyote.

Finn desperately reaches for the knife, just out of her grip.

Emilia watches from the sidelines. Then climbs on top of Finn. Finn reaches her hands towards Emilia's neck.

Emilia pushes them away and wraps her own around Finn's neck.

EMILIA

I'm sorry.

Emilia presses hard.

The life drains from Finn until it's all gone.

Emilia stares down at her hands, covered in blood.

Meggen races over and pulls Emilia off Finn's body. They sit in shock in the dirt.

Meggen turns to Emilia, in control for the first time ever.

MEGGEN

Look at me. You had no choice. It's okay. It's okay.

She pulls Emilia close and they hug. The forest HUMS.

Meggen helps Emilia to her feet and they walk away.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MORNING

Meggen and Emilia sit in Finn's car.

Red and blue lights FLASH in the distance, reflecting off their faces.

They exchange a look.

PRELAP: THUMP. THUMP.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Alice bangs her legs into Emilia's desk. Emilia watches her.

Emilia's hair is different. Darker. Shorter.

EMILIA

You have to talk at some point.

THUMP. THUMP.

Emilia leans over her desk.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

I know what you're feeling, Alice.

THUMP. THUMP.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

I know how it feels to lose someone like you lost your sister.

Her voice gets lower. Softer.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
I know what it's like to be so
angry you want to hurt something.

Alice stops swinging her legs. She looks at Emilia.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
To replace pain with emptiness.

Alice's lips curl into a small grin. Emilia winks at her.

ALICE
Sometimes I think about hurting
people.

EMILIA
That's okay. Let's talk about it.

INT. TEACHERS LOUNGE - DAY

Emilia enters, NOTEBOOK in hand. Samuel sits at the table,
studying hand-written notes.

EMILIA
You never let me pay you for
watching Freddie.

SAMUEL
Your money's no good here.

EMILIA
Want to come over for dinner?

SAMUEL
I didn't know you cook?

EMILIA
I don't.

She exits with her coffee. He watches her go, delighted.

INT. BALLET STUDIO - DAY

Meggen CLAPS in rhythm as BALLERINAS shuffle, their pale
pinks TUTUS bouncing.

Two ballerinas stand in the corner, giggling while waiting
their turn. One of them the troublemaker from before.

MEGGEN
Quiet, girls.

The ballerina makes a face. Meggen continues counting.

CLOSE ON the two ballerinas whispering.

BALLERINA

She's too much of a pussy to say anything--

Her arm is YANKED back. She turns surprised.

Meggen stand beside her, fingers gripping her skinny limb.

MEGGEN

When I tell you to be quiet, shut your mouth.

The ballerina stares at her, in shock. Meggen drops her arm.

MEGGEN (CONT'D)

Form your line. Let's go.

Meggen walks back to the center of the room.

INE. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Emilia and Samuel lie next to each other in bed.

Emilia glances at her phone.

EMILIA

You should probably go.

SAMUEL

What about dinner?

EMILIA

I told you I didn't cook.

She gets up and pulls clothes on. Samuel reluctantly follows.

SAMUEL

Is it going to be weird at work?

EMILIA

Not unless you want it to be.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Emilia watches Samuel walk down the driveway. She shuts the door, flops onto the couch. Freddie jumps into her lap.

EMILIA
Hey, Freddie.

Emilia settles into the sofa.

The front door opens and Meggen enters.

MEGGEN
Is it okay if I'm a ballet teacher
who hates ballerinas?

EMILIA
Yes. Hungry?

MEGGEN
Starved.

Meggen tosses her keys on the side table.

EMILIA
I paid the cable bill today. I'll
Venmo you for half.

Meggen nods. She flops down beside Emilia on the couch.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Chris stopped by. He dropped off
the rest of your stuff.

MEGGEN
Did he say anything?

EMILIA
No. Just mentioned something about
how he's learning to eat pussy to
win you back.

Meggen makes a face.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
So what do you want to eat?

MEGGEN
Whatever you want.
(beat)
Thanks for this.

EMILIA
You can stay forever.

Meggen looks serious.

MEGGEN
Do you think...

EMILIA

What?

MEGGEN

Do you think about why Finn--? I still don't get it--

EMILIA

We'll never fully know. Sometimes people snap.

EXT. WOODS - DAY - FLASHBACK

Zeke tosses a piece of CHICKEN onto the grill. Pokes it.

EMILIA (V.O.)

Some people can't cope with death.

Zeke hears a SCREAM. He turns.

EXT. CLEARING - DAY - FLASHBACK

CLOSE ON Zeke, as he enters a clearing. He smiles.

EMILIA (V.O.)

Finn lost someone she loved. A partner. She felt responsible.

Zeke's smile fades.

A ROCK SMASHES over his head. He drops.

EMILIA (V.O.)

She took it out on someone else. She couldn't control herself.

The rock SLAMS into his skull again. Blood oozes out.

REVEAL EMILIA STANDING OVER ZEKE.

A bloody rock dangles from her hand.

EMILIA (V.O.)

We're all just animals.

She drops the rock, lifts his legs, drags his body into the woods. She rests it against the rock.

EMILIA

Wild animals.

Emilia frantically scrubs her bloody hands in the stream. She pats them dry, composes herself, and walks off.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Meggen stares off.

EMILIA
Finn snapped.

Meggen nods, none the wiser.

MEGGEN
I guess.

EMILIA
It's just us now. For life.

MEGGEN
Which could be super short.

Emilia grins.

EMILIA
Life is short. It's this--

She SNAPS her fingers.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
--and it's over.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END