

DOG YEAR

By
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EXT. SARAH'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

A layer of grease and grime covers this part of Milwaukee, courtesy of the passing railroad.

A run-down, but not unlivable apartment building sits next to the tracks.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - DAY

SARAH BJORN, 31, squints out the window. She's sassy and would be nice looking if she weren't so thin. Her long, dark hair, stringy with grease, hangs in a ponytail. Dark bruises cover the upper inside of both of her arms.

The living room surrounding Sarah exudes masculinity. Animal heads, mounted fish, and gun racks are scattered across the walls.

SARAH

(yells)

Where did you have them last?

CARL (O.S.)

If I knew that, we wouldn't have to look, would we?

SARAH

(yelling)

Why did I even bother hanging up the key thing if you never use it?

Sarah flings the cushions off the couch, rifles through stacks of papers and drops them to the floor. She turns over an end table.

Her search becomes more and more frantic.

A lamp falls to the floor and breaks.

Papers scatter in her wake.

She knocks a fish from the wall and pulls the curtains from the window.

Her husband, CARL, 37, enters the room, eyes wide.

CARL

Sarah.

Her assault persists.

CARL
Sarah. Sarah. Sarah.

She drags her arm across the fireplace mantle, knocking candles and pictures to the floor.

Carl grabs her arm.

CARL
Sarah! I found them.

SARAH
Found what?

CARL
My keys.

Tears form but do not fall. She reaches for the bruise on her arm, grabs the purple flesh and twists. Her face contorts in pain, then becomes barren. She collapses into a chair.

SARAH
Where were they?

CARL
Hanging on the key thing. Holy shit,
Sarah. What's going on?

SARAH
I couldn't find them.

He pulls on a coat.

CARL
Clean up the place.

Sarah jumps as he SLAMS the door behind him.

She slouches deeper into the chair and glances around the room.

She leaps to her feet, snatches a vase, hesitates, and flings it against the wall.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sarah's skinny hands shake as they peel an orange. She squeezes the orange and watches the juice drip into a glass.

A Twizzler dangles from the corner of her lips. She scrutinizes Carl's hairy back as he bends low over a bowl of Fruit Loops.

SLURP, SLURP, SLURP.

He is breathing her air.

Her eyes move from Carl to the orange, then back at Carl.
Her breathing quickens, she doubles over and gasps.

Carl stands over her.

CARL
Another panic attack?

He shakes his head...

CARL
Damn, Sarah.

...and throws his bowl into the sink.

EXT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Sarah sets a cheap bottle of wine on the counter. She waits in line, flipping through a magazine, trying to look casual.

The CLERK, 19, full of healthy disrespect, chews gum and looks past Sarah. Sarah gives a tight smile.

SARAH
I worked in a grocery store when I was young. Actually, it was sort of a convenience shop.

He ignores her.

SARAH
In this small town.

Sarah clears her throat.

The clerk bags her groceries and starts with the next CUSTOMER.

EXT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Carl's younger sister, BECKY, 27, a silly girl with intelligent eyes and a huge smile, knocks on the door.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sarah opens the door: Becky's smile disappears.

Sarah holds the bottle of wine, now with a gaudy ribbon around its neck, out to Becky.

BECKY
Oh, hi. Carl here?

SARAH
Congratulations on the law school
thing.

BECKY
Thanks.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sarah sets the bottle of wine on a table.

Carl enters the room. Becky runs to her brother and jumps
in his arms.

He blows a wet, obnoxious kiss on her cheek.

CARL
Baby sister, you get prettier every
time I see you.

Becky juts out her bottom lip.

BECKY
Why don't you come see me more?

CARL
Don't give me that line.

Becky drops her feet back to the floor.

BECKY
Have I told you lately that I love
you?

CARL
Jesus, country song lyrics? Have
you been drinking?

BECKY
Where are all of your pictures and
stuff?

Carl shrugs and looks at Sarah.

BECKY
Can she function in the real world
for five minutes?

CARL
Easy, Becky.

Carl puts on his coat.

SARAH
You're leaving?

CARL
I'm taking Becky to dinner. Unless
you want me to stay?

SARAH
No.

CARL
If you think you'll be okay...

Becky CLAPS and grabs his hand. Carl waves to Sarah as he and Becky hurry away.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - LATER

Sarah stands in the kitchen, drinking from the bottle of wine. The ribbon dangles from one of her fingers.

EXT. SARAH'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Sarah's hair is shorter and greasier. She's thinner and more fragile.

She bounces on her toes in front of a pay phone near the entrance of her building.

Fifty cents drops into the phone as Sarah pulls a faded address book from her back pocket. The once square corners are round from age.

She opens to CAROL ANDERSON.

SARAH
Hey Carol. Yeah, it's been a
while...How are you?...Still living
in that two-bedroom place?...

Sarah scratches at a wad of old gum stuck to the side of the phone.

SARAH
Really?...He moved in...That's great.

Her throat closes in on her. She pinches a bruise on the inside of her bicep and tries to breathe. Her upper arms are swollen and red from shoulder to elbow. New welts cover old welts, exacerbated by her daily torture.

SARAH

I'm glad things are going so well...No, really...I don't...Things are great...Just keep in touch.

She hangs up the phone and uses a black marker to cross out CAROL ANDERSON; she slides fifty cents into the phone and dials another number.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Sarah sits cross-legged on the floor of the living room.

There are five cardboard boxes next to Sarah marked MINE.

Carl looms over her.

CARL

So that's it?

SARAH

Yeah.

CARL

Just like that.

Sarah shrugs and drops a sweater into a box.

SARAH

Becky used to like me.

CARL

She doesn't think before--

SARAH

She told me once, after breaking up with this guy she was dating, that she heard that noise or sound or something.

CARL

What sound?

SARAH

That sound you hear when you've fallen out of love.

Carl shuffles his feet. He clears his throat and tries to avoid adoring her.

CARL

You heard that sound with me?

SARAH

No.

CARL

You still love me?

SARAH

No.

She glances, meeting his gaze, and then looks back at the floor.

He nods.

He kicks in the side of a box allowing its contents to spill.

He strides into the bedroom and closes the door behind him.

Sarah tosses clothing and kitchen utensils into one of the MINE boxes.

She removes her wedding ring, drops it, and lets it roll across the floor.

She picks up one of the shotguns leaning against the wall and jams it into a MINE box. Only about a third of the gun fits into the box; the other two-thirds stick out over the top.

She shoves the box out of the apartment door and leaves.

EXT. FARM, MINNESOTA - DAY

A farmhouse, immaculately maintained, but there are no flowers or shrubs in sight, no porch swing or flower pots.

Three barns pepper the yard around the house. Two are well kept and usable.

The third barn stands a good distance from the house with its roof almost completely caved in. It is no longer of any use.

PETER BJORN, 36 going on 56, skin already leather from a life of labor, wears rubber, manure-covered waders, and strides into one of the healthy barns.

INT. BARN - DAY

He forks hay into a horse's stall.

Katie, a black dog, sits just out of the way.

Peter closes the stall door and moves to the next.

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

Peter, ax in hand, chases a chicken around its coop.

He catches the chicken and makes his way to a tree stump.

The sound of SNARLING dogs invades the chicken coop.

Peter runs into a shed and exits carrying a rifle in one hand and the chicken in the other. He drops the chicken back into its pen and races toward the meadow. Katie clings to his heels.

They both follow the SNARLING.

Peter skids to a stop. The sheep stand frozen with fear.

Several wild dogs corner one of the sheep, segregating it from the rest. They RIP and TEAR the flesh of the sheep's legs. Katie runs into the pack, GROWLING and BARKING.

Peter FIRES at the dogs. The dogs turn and run away.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Peter holds the phone to his ear. The house is lit only by the gray light traveling in from outdoors. Raindrops roll down the windows of the house.

PETER

I know, Shirley...No, it's still standing. I'll get around to knocking it down...No, I haven't seen her in a long time--I'll talk to you later.

He hangs up the phone and glances around his darkened home. Despite its furnishings, it is empty.

His eyes search out the window and rest on the dilapidated barn in the distance.

EXT. MILWAUKEE STREET - DAY

Dark clouds fill the sky. Sarah stands beside her rusty, brown Plymouth holding the foreign pieces of a car jack in her hand.

A drop of rain splatters on her arm. She looks into the sky as the rain drenches her skin. Her head bows and shoulders hunch in a servile position against the rain's cold drops.

She kneels next to the flat tire on her car, still trying to construct the parts of the jack. A car passes and splashes her already clinging clothing closer to her flesh.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Peter digs around a large stump. Rain drips down his forehead and nose. Mud soaks every inch of his skin.

Each time he pulls a shovel full of mud out of the hole, the rain washes twice as much back.

He throws the shovel onto the ground and SCREAMS over the THUNDER.

EXT. MILWAUKEE STREET - NIGHT

Sarah sits in the rain on the ground next to her car. The flat tire remains on the vehicle. She taps the shaft of the car jack on the ground.

INT. SARAH'S CAR - NIGHT

Sarah's hands rest on the steering wheel of her car. She looks at the car jack on the seat next to her. She rests her head on the steering wheel of the car.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Peter dozes at the wheel of a tractor. The headlights of the tractor cut through the darkness surrounding Peter. Dried, cracked mud covers his body.

He shakes himself awake.

PETER

Shit.

Peter turns off the ignition and leans forward against the steering wheel.

INT. PETER'S TRUCK - MOVING - DAY

Peter pats Katie as she pants in the passenger's seat. Drool drips from her tongue onto the fabric.

A sign at the side of the road reads, WELCOME TO WORTH, HOME OF THE CARDINALS, POPULATION 1,312.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Peter hops out of his pick-up and steps onto the old wooden boardwalk of the main street.

The sign above a market shop reads, WORTH MORE. The jewelry store sign next to the market shop reads, YOUR WEIGHT IN GOLD.

Peter tapes a FARM HELP WANTED sign on the window of the market shop and nods to an unseen patron inside.

INT. MARKET SHOP - DAY

HENRY, 36, unshaven and disheveled, a shy man with unintentional charm, watches Peter through the window and hands the CLERK, 17, a credit card. The clerk swipes the card through a credit card scanner.

Henry's khakis and white dress shirt have several days worth of wrinkles, but he's still more dressed up than anyone in town.

CLERK

New in town?

Henry nods.

The clerk shakes his head.

The credit card scanner reads DECLINED. The clerk shakes his head and gives the card back to Henry.

Henry hands the clerk a second card. DECLINED.

A third card. ACCEPTED.

Henry tucks his cards into his wallet and steps from the store.

EXT. MARKET SHOP - SAME

Henry glances at Peter's sign. He removes a pen from his pocket and jots the number on his palm.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Henry's car, dust rising around it, slows near the farmhouse.

He steps from the vehicle and approaches the barn.

Henry stops to gaze out at the vast farmland and lush green meadow around him. Only one other house several miles away is visible.

He enters the barn.

INT. BARN - DAY

As Henry approaches Peter, Katie gives a low GROWL. Peter wipes his brow and leans against the pitchfork.

PETER

Quiet, Katie.
(to Henry)
You here for the job?

HENRY

Yes.

PETER

Don't look like a farm hand.

HENRY

What does a farm hand look like?

PETER

Not like you.

HENRY

Yes, well, bills to pay. Where should I start?

PETER

You comfortable with the wages I mentioned?

Henry nods.

PETER

Ever shovel shit?

HENRY

No.

Peter chuckles.

PETER

Can't call yourself a farmer until you shovel shit.

Peter nods to the last stall.

PETER

Start down there. If you last the day, there's a room at the back of the house you can use. If it's empty tomorrow, I'll assume life on the farm wasn't for you.

Peter returns to his work as Henry picks up a pitchfork leaning against the wall and shovels the stall.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Peter stands outside the barn and loads a rifle. Katie remains at his side, leaning lightly against his leg. Henry exits the barn and watches Peter load the gun.

The gun jams. Peter re-loads.

HENRY

What's going on?

PETER

Wild dogs got into the sheep again. Scalped another ewe. She's still alive. Katie chased 'em away.

Peter bends, balancing on the rifle, and affectionately strokes Katie's back.

PETER

(to Katie)

Good girl. You're a good girl.

Peter glances up and stands.

PETER

Fuckin' dogs. Ever shot a rifle? Good experience. You look like you could use the experience.

HENRY

Don't you have a vet you can call to do that?

Peter smirks.

PETER

Doc charges seventy-five dollars just to make the trip. Probably charge me another forty to stick a needle in her ass. Bullet costs twelve cents. We do what we have to do. Grab a shovel. You can dig, right?

HENRY

I can dig.

PETER

Not much different from shoveling
shit, but digging's good experience.

Peter and Henry tread to the rear of the barn.

The ewe rests on her side. Each breath is labored. Her
wool is sliced back just behind her eyes, exposing the raw,
soft, pink flesh below.

HENRY

God damn.

PETER

They really did a job on her.

Peter raises the gun and fires. The ewe's body quivers
quietly and then is still.

The area of wool around the wound turns a dark crimson; the
circle of red ripples outward.

PETER

Won't be able to use the wool now,
either.

Henry's face turns white as he drops to one knee. Peter
glances over at him.

PETER

You need a minute?

Peter points to an open area behind the barn.

PETER

You can dig there. At least three
feet deep, otherwise them dogs will
be back to dig her up again.

Henry stumbles to the spot and leans against the shaking
shovel.

INT. SARAH'S CAR - NIGHT

Sarah curls up in the back seat and watches the lights of
the passing cars reflect on the ceiling of her car.

Several days worth of garbage fill the floor of the back
seat. Candy wrappers and soda cans dominate the area in the
back window.

She closes her eyes.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Sarah flips the pages of her address book. Most of the names in the book have a black line drawn through them.

The book slides from her fingertips and drops to the floor.

She walks from the phone booth to her car.

INT. SARAH'S CAR - DAY

Sarah enters her car and stares at a building across the street.

The sign above the building has a faded SALVATION ARMY symbol. Two HOMELESS MEN crouch outside the door of the shelter.

INT. SARAH'S CAR - NIGHT

Sarah has not moved. Her eyes remain on the shelter. The two men outside the door stand and enter the building.

Sarah glances at the mess in the back seat of her car, then back to the shelter.

A tear streams down her cheek. She tortures a tender piece of flesh, starts the car, and puts it in drive.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Henry glances around the minimal bedroom. He removes his muddy shirt and shoes, and he collapses onto the bed. His breathing deepens.

He sleeps.

INT. HENRY'S CAR - DAY (DREAM)

Henry whistles quietly behind the wheel of his Toyota.

CARRIE, 30, reclines in the seat next to him. Her wild red hair forms a halo around her face.

Henry tilts the rear-view mirror and admires his sleeping wife.

He touches her shoulder.

HENRY

Carrie.

She does not move. Carrie's features distort in front of him. Her nose bleeds, and her face changes shape.

CARRIE
Stop.

HENRY
Stop what?

CARRIE
Watching.

HENRY
Where's Jake?

CARRIE
Asleep in the back.

Blood drips from her mouth.

Henry looks in the back at JAKE, 2, an adorable toddler, tucked in his car seat. Jake's features begin to distort.

HENRY
No. It's okay, buddy.

Jake's nose bleeds. He cries.

END DREAM

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Henry sleeps beneath his sweat-drenched sheets. He opens his eyes, turns on his side, and stares out the bedroom window.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Peter fills a barrel with water. Katie runs, tail wagging, to Henry as he strides across the yard.

PETER
Katie and I had a bet. Guess she won. You might become a farmer after all.

Henry helps Peter move the barrel. Peter starts filling a second.

PETER
Head across the field there. Grab a sickle. There's a patch of thistle that has to come out. I'll bring some chemical to kill it, but we need to knock it down first. Katie will show you where it is.

HENRY

Probably a lot like digging and shoveling.

PETER

Worse.

(to Katie)

Go girl.

Katie BARKS and starts across the field.

Henry enters a tool shed, then exits carrying a sickle. He swings the sickle leisurely in front of him as he walks across the meadow.

Katie lunges in front of him GROWLING and BARKING.

HENRY

What the fuck is with you?

Henry continues to walk.

Katie nips at his heels. He draws his boot up to kick her face.

Peter springs at him from behind, dropping the bucket he carries.

He snatches the sickle from Henry and searches the long grass in front of him. He stops and strikes at the ground several times.

Peter bends and picks up a now headless rattlesnake from the marshy grass.

PETER

Well, damn. Looks like you owe Katie a steak dinner. This one would've killed ya.

Peter bends to the dog, who licks his hand.

PETER

Good girl.

He strides to Henry, stopping inches from his face.

PETER

Don't ever fuckin' kick my dog.

Both men glare at each other.

HENRY

Won't happen again.

Peter picks up the pail and storms across the field.

PETER

Stay here, Katie.

Henry picks up the sickle and follows behind Peter.

Katie sits.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sarah's car idles near the entrance.

INT. GAS STATION GARAGE - DAY

Sarah barterers with a MECHANIC, 56, chewed toothpick in his mouth, chewed pen behind his ear.

MECHANIC

I can't do it for less than twenty-five.

SARAH

I already put twenty in gas in and I only have twenty left.

MECHANIC

Should've put fifteen in I guess.

SARAH

No shit.

He shakes his head.

SARAH

You can keep the flat.

MECHANIC

I don't want the flat.

SARAH

What about the jack? You can keep the jack.

The mechanic holds out his hand, palm up.

Sarah opens her wallet, removes the remaining cash and hands it to the mechanic.

He pulls a five dollar bill from his pocket and drops it in her hand.

INT. GAS STATION BATHROOM - DAY

A MINE box with some clothing in it sits on the floor next to the toilet.

Sarah uses the liquid soap dispenser mounted on the bathroom wall and washes her face and hands. She dries her face with paper towels and then puts toothpaste on her toothbrush.

She glances in the mirror at her reflection and then turns her back to the mirror as she brushes her teeth.

She turns back to the sink and spits.

Sarah bends and digs through the box. She removes her tee shirt and pulls a clean one over her head.

She takes a final look in the mirror. She stretches the sleeves of the tee shirt, unsuccessfully attempting to cover her bruises. The bruises have made it past her elbow and are now creeping down toward her wrists.

SARAH

(to herself)

Here we go.

Tears form in her eyes. She grabs the thin fleshy skin above her wrist and twists it between her fingers.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

Henry and Peter work side by side. Henry swings the sickle, knocking weeds as he walks. Peter removes the lid from his pail and starts spraying the chopped plants.

PETER

So what'd you do before becoming a hired hand?

HENRY

Little bit of everything, I guess.

PETER

Uh huh. You look tired.

HENRY

I didn't sleep well.

PETER

Not that kind of tired. Looks like your soul is tired. Maybe been re-incarnated so many times it's running out of life.

Henry raises his eyebrows and glances sideways at Peter.

PETER

Yeah, I know some big words. Re-incarnated, mortality, necessity, asshole.

HENRY

I was just surprised you believe in reincarnation.

Peter bends to pull an uncut thistle.

PETER

Didn't say I believed in it...You got family?

HENRY

Did once.

PETER

Divorce?

HENRY

No.

Peter stops and stares at Henry's back.

PETER

Look, at the rate I'm losing this place--

He shakes his head.

PETER

You won't find peace here. Too many bills; too much death around. You will find quiet, though.

HENRY

Quiet is enough...What about you? Family?

PETER

Got a sister somewhere.

HENRY

Somewhere?

PETER

You steel yourself out here. Careful
not to love much of anything.
Sometimes it bleeds over to family.
Guess she went to find some.

The men straighten and survey the weeds, now blue from the
poison in which they swim.

EXT. MEADOW - NIGHT

Henry and Peter approach the farmhouse from across the meadow.
Both men are covered in dirt.

Henry drags the sickle behind him.

Katie waits where she was told to stay, the grass around her
flattened from her devotion.

PETER

Let's go, girl.

She bounces behind him, running back and forth between the
two men.

HENRY

She was there all day?

PETER

I told her to stay.

HENRY

Loyal dog.

PETER

Yeah, had her more than ten years,
but don't let yourself love her.
You can't love anything on a farm.

Peter bends and brushes his cheek across her soft fur.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Henry steps from the shower, wraps a towel around his waist
and drops onto the bed in front of him. He reaches over and
shuts off the lamp.

A GUNSHOT. Henry turns on the lamp. He shakes his head and
rubs his eyes.

A second GUNSHOT.

Henry springs from bed and dresses.

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

Peter re-loads the gun. Henry hurries to his side.

HENRY

Pete. What the hell?

Peter's face is ashen. He stands stiff, stoic, emotions in check, his voice gruff.

PETER

Damn wild dogs again. Katie tried to scare them off. I killed a few but they got a piece of her. Going to have to put her down.

Henry looks at Peter, disbelief in his eyes. He grabs Peter's gun arm.

HENRY

Wait...Pete....let's call the vet.

PETER

Doc's forty minutes away. She won't last that long. She shouldn't be left to suffer the last minutes of her life.

Peter turns and walks toward the barn.

HENRY

This is insane. I'm sure the vet can help her.

PETER

This isn't a fucking petting zoo.

Henry rushes up and grabs the rifle out of Peter's hands.

Peter shoves Henry.

HENRY

I could use the experience.

Henry, rifle in hand, walks past Peter. Peter's shoulders slump.

Henry marches into the barn. Peter stands perfectly still, head hanging, fists clenched.

BANG.

Peter turns and walks away.

EXT. SARAH'S CAR - DAY

Sarah's Plymouth cruises the Southern Wisconsin countryside.

The car follows the edge of the Mississippi river and crosses the river into Minnesota.

INT. SARAH'S CAR - DAY

A Twizzler dangles from the corner of Sarah's mouth as she glances in the rear-view mirror. She removes the licorice from her mouth, holding it between two fingers like a cigarette as her eyes blink several exhausted times.

She turns up the radio and rolls down the window.

A deer leaps in front of the car.

SARAH

Move! Move! Move! Move!

Her foot slams the brake as she jerks the car to the right. The fear-frozen deer bounces off the front fender of the car.

The car slides to a stop at the side of the road.

SARAH

Damn it!

Sarah steps from the car and surveys the damage. The deer whimpers and attempts to stand, but both of its back legs are broken.

Sarah rests her hands on her hips and studies the fallen creature.

The deer's foggy eyes blink back at her.

Determined, Sarah walks to her car and removes the shotgun in the MINE box from the trunk. She bounces on her toes, hurries back to the deer, checks the chamber of the gun, aims, and fires.

The deer's eyes fall closed.

Sarah flings the rifle back in the trunk as a highway patrol car arrives.

SARAH

Fabulous.

The County Deputy, ELLIOT, 32, snug-fitting, high-water pant legs, ugly brown uniform, and crew cut, approaches Sarah with his gun drawn.

ELLIOT

Hands on the car!

SARAH

For God's sake, Elliot, it's me.

ELLIOT

Sarah?

Elliot returns the gun to his holster.

ELLIOT

What the hell are you doing back here?

SARAH

I hit a deer.

ELLIOT

You're carrying weapons in your car now?

SARAH

It's not mine.

Elliot raises his eyebrows and starts to search the interior of the vehicle.

ELLIOT

Why don't we take a look in the trunk.

He rests his hand on the butt of his gun.

SARAH

You've finally found an occupation where they pay you to be a tight ass?

ELLIOT

As I recall, you were encouraged to leave this area.

SARAH

The judge said it was recommended, not required.

ELLIOT
Semantics. Open the trunk.

She jerks the keys from her pocket and storms to the back of the car. Elliot's eyes drift over her body as he follows closely behind.

Sarah lifts the trunk.

Elliot's eyes widen.

Sarah's broken boxes with rumpled clothing and silver chips fill the trunk.

She SLAMS the trunk and sits on the back of the car, arms crossed in front of her. Elliot rests on the trunk next to her.

A moment passes. He starts to speak, then stops himself.

Sarah looks away.

He kicks the gravel.

ELLIOT
Help me get your mess off the road.

They move to the front of the car and both grab a front leg of the dead deer.

ELLIOT
You headed to the farm?

SARAH
Yeah.

ELLIOT
Peter will be glad to see you.

They GRUNT under the weight of the deer.

SARAH
No, he won't.

ELLIOT
He's got a new hand. Quiet one.
Rumor is he used to be married. Had
a son, I think.

SARAH
There's no therapy like farm therapy.

The dead deer rolls into the grassy ditch.

Sarah wipes her hands in the dewey grass and then on her thighs. The blood of the deer leaves delicate pink streaks on her jeans.

Elliot kicks leftover pieces of the deer's flesh off of the road. He turns his ankle to wipe the side of his shoe in the grass.

Elliot shoves his hands deep in his pockets and shifts back and forth on his feet. He clears his throat.

ELLIOT

You staying this time, Sarah? We could get a cup of coffee. Maybe catch up a little.

Sarah looks at the bloody mess smeared across the pavement.

SARAH

Doesn't matter how many times it rains. It always surprises me how long the stain stays.

She walks to her car, gets in, and drives away.

Elliot climbs into his squad car.

EXT. COUNTY HIGHWAY - DAY

Her car passes the sign that reads,

WELCOME TO WORTH, HOME OF THE CARDINALS, POPULATION 1,312.

Someone has spray painted the word LESS after WORTH on the sign.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Henry and Peter repair a fence. Both men stop working and look up at the sound of an approaching car.

Sarah's car rolls to a stop. She exits her car and walks to the mailbox, removing and flipping through the letters.

She returns to her car, removes a box from the back seat, and enters the house without looking at either of the men.

Henry glances sideways at Peter.

Peter hammers a nail into the fence post.

PETER

My sister, Sarah.

HENRY

Is she staying here?

Peter shrugs.

PETER

She could, I guess. She owns half
the place.

Peter drops his hammer and wanders away.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Peter and Henry sit in tense silence. Sarah sets soup and biscuits on the table in front of them, then takes a seat at the table.

Peter bends low over his bowl and shovels in the food.

SLURP, SLURP, SLURP.

Sarah sits upright and crumbles a biscuit, watching the white crumbs scatter across the cherry table.

SARAH

Where's Katie?

PETER

Dead.

Sarah nods, pinching her tender flesh.

SARAH

How long?

PETER

Not long.

SARAH

Where'd you bury her?

PETER

Same as always.

Sarah's cheeks turn a shade darker than the table as she wrenches her colored flesh.

Henry grimaces.

Peter glances up. His jaw flexes. He grips the spoon in his clenched fist.

PETER

Then you should have been here to
bury her.

SARAH

It's fine.

Peter drops his spoon into his soup and bumps the table away
as he gets up.

She looks squarely at Henry for the first time. He squirms
in his chair.

SARAH

Why are you here?

Henry stands and offers his hand.

HENRY

Henry Kline. Nice to meet you.

Sarah stares at Henry but does not shake his hand.

SARAH

Don't stay long, Henry.

She stands, reaching for Henry's bowl.

SARAH

Are you finished?

Her hip brushes Henry as she removes his bowl.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Sarah walks behind the barn to the area where the sheep was
buried. She squats near the dirt and rests her chin on her
folded arms.

Henry approaches, dragging a bale of hay.

HENRY

That's not--

Her look stops him short. He drops the bale and blows on
his palms. Sarah glances at Henry's blistered and cracked
hands.

SARAH

Soft hands?

HENRY

Just trying to make a living.

SARAH

On a farm? Are you an idiot? You don't just pick up and start work on a farm. It's not a living.

HENRY

Like you said, I'll try not to stay long.

Henry picks up the hay and moves back toward the barn.

Sarah's eyes linger on his back. He pauses and turns around.

She looks away.

INT. BARN - DAY

Sarah shovels oats into a bucket and feeds them to a horse standing in one of the stalls.

SARAH

Hey, boy.

She picks up a brush and slowly strokes the horse's mane. Peter enters unnoticed.

SARAH

(to the horse)

I knew your mother. She was a beauty. Not gorgeous like you, of course.

PETER

The work not as bad as you remember?

SARAH

It was never the work that bothered me.

She drops the brush to the ground and walks out.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Henry, Sarah, and Peter sit in silence eating lunch. Sarah leaves the table.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Henry and Peter take a break on the front porch of the house. Both men sip water.

HENRY

Your sister is interesting.

PETER

Cold as a Bemidji winter.

Henry laughs.

HENRY

Has she always been like that?

PETER

Not always.

Peter throws his water onto the ground.

PETER

Leaves will be changing in a month or two. Stay a few months and you'll know winter.

HENRY

Are you going to tell her that you're losing the place?

PETER

Back to work.

Henry rises and rubs his hands.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Sarah jumps from her car. Her boots echo against the boardwalk.

She stops in front of the market shop to pet Dawg, a scraggly looking mutt sitting near the door.

INT. MARKET SHOP - SAME

Sarah enters the WORTH MORE shop, causing a bell over the door to RING her arrival.

SHIRLEY, 72, stands behind a monstrous cash register.

Shirley's back is so hunched from age that she sees more of the floor than the people around her.

SHIRLEY

No shoplifting girly.

Shirley has not raised her head.

SARAH

Same old Shirley.

SHIRLEY

Same old thief. You'll need to empty
your pockets before you leave.

Sarah jumps up, half leaning over the counter, and kisses
the top of Shirley's gray head.

Sarah's shoulders drop. She drinks in the smell and levity
of the old woman.

SARAH

I missed you most.

Sarah hops down and shops her way down a cramped aisle.

Elliot steps into the store.

ELLIOT

Shirley, you have to stop calling
the station.

SHIRLEY

Then take care of the problem.

ELLIOT

There is no problem.

SHIRLEY

That ugly mutt is scaring away
customers.

ELLIOT

You think that dog is the reason
people are afraid to come in here?

SHIRLEY

Watch yourself. I'll tell your mother
about your smart mouth.

ELLIOT

There are real criminals out there.
I can't keep coming here to have
conversations about a dog. You're
going to get me fired.

JOHN, 75, leans heavily on a cane, inches his way from the
back of the store.

JOHN

You back, Elliot?

ELLIOT

She's calling again, John.

JOHN

Well, get the dog off the porch.

Sarah bursts into laughter at the back of the store.

John shuffles next to Shirley. Shirley removes a folding chair from behind the counter and opens it.

John sits.

SHIRLEY

It's not a dog. It's *your* dog.

Sarah heads toward the door.

SHIRLEY

Pay for the gum.

Sarah SLAPS two dollars onto the counter. Shirley has her change ready.

SARAH

Still sharp.

SHIRLEY

Still sneaky.

Henry enters.

SHIRLEY

Nice to see you again, young man.

Henry glances up.

HENRY

We've never...I've never been here.

SHIRLEY

Sure you have. A few years ago.
Pretty redhead with you.

JOHN

Ohhh...even I remember that redhead.

Sarah pulls herself on to the counter and sits sideways next to the cash register.

Henry's confusion escalates. His voice breaks and rises.

HENRY

You're thinking of someone else.

SARAH
She's an elephant.

HENRY
What?

JOHN
Never forgets.

SHIRLEY
You looked happier then.

Henry wanders, bewildered, out the door.

JOHN
Stop scaring away the customers.

SHIRLEY
It's not me. It's the ugly mutt
outside.

Elliot rolls his eyes.

ELLIOT
Stop calling the station.

SHIRLEY
Get out of my store and shoo your
mutt off the boardwalk when you go.

She shuffles from behind the counter and reaches for a broom
hanging beside the front door of the store.

SHIRLEY
Who names a dog "Dog" anyway?

ELLIOT
It's Dawg. D-A-W-G.

SHIRLEY
Oh. That's way different.

Sarah hops down from the counter.

Elliot nods his head at Sarah and reaches for her arm as she
passes. She pulls her arm from his touch, looks away and
exits the store.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SAME

Henry stands frozen, drawing raspy breaths, eyes full of
recognition.

HENRY

We only stopped here for a minute on our way to Vegas.

SARAH

Want a drink? How long were you married?

HENRY

I don't like to talk about it. Where's the bar?

SARAH

Around the corner.

He pushes his hands deep in his pockets.

Sarah touches him. He moves away from her.

SARAH

Sorry. This way.

She nods her head toward the bar.

EXT. MARKET SHOP - SAME

Shirley steps out of the store and gives Dawg a WHACK with her broom. He scampers into the street.

INT. BAR - DAY

Sarah and Henry sit at a pub table. There are several empty glasses in front of them.

HENRY

How long were you married?

Sarah shells peanuts, already a little drunk.

SARAH

Two hundred and thirteen days.

HENRY

That long?

Sarah bursts into laughter.

SARAH

It's amazing. We only knew each other for three weeks before we married. If I had only waited one more week.

HENRY

You've got a great laugh.

He looks down at the table.

SARAH

I was sick of him by week four. I am usually sick of them by week one. He really was a nice guy. Probably why I married him. I don't think I've ever really been in love.

(beat)

Anyway, I think the hairy back pushed me over the edge.

Henry laughs weakly.

SARAH

You've got a pathetic laugh.

She takes a long drink of beer and nods her head toward a dart board.

SARAH

Darts?

HENRY

Sure.

They stand and move toward a dart board.

SARAH

How long have you been living on the farm?

HENRY

A while, not long.

SARAH

Long enough to know Peter?

HENRY

Long enough to respect him.

She throws a dart.

SARAH

The problems you don't see your parents solve, you have to fix on your own.

HENRY

What's Pete's problem?

SARAH
I'm Pete's problem.

HENRY
What's your problem?

Sarah shrugs.

SARAH
You tell me?

HENRY
A know it all?

SARAH
Ouch.

HENRY
And me?

SARAH
Guilt?

HENRY
Like I said. Know it all.

Henry crosses his arms.

She glances at him from the corner of her eye and throws another dart.

SARAH
Pete and I didn't have anyone. Mom died before...Every time I see him, it's like starting from scratch. Tearing off the band-aid again and again.

A third dart. Bull's-eye. She wrings the flesh underneath her shirt.

Henry clears the dart board. He steps back behind the line.

He throws a dart.

HENRY
I'm wondering if I would trade.

He gulps a beer.

SARAH
Trade?

HENRY

Never knowing love or having it taken
away.

THWACK. Second dart.

THWACK. Third dart. Bull's-eye.

Sarah twists the flesh of her arms. Once, twice, three times.

HENRY

There was this girl I knew in college.
She used to wear a thick rubber band
around her wrist.

Sarah shakes her head.

SARAH

A bracelet?

HENRY

No. Just a plain old rubber band.

SARAH

Why?

HENRY

She used it to snap her wrist whenever
she had a negative thought about
herself.

Henry pushes up Sarah's sleeves and looks at her bruises.
She pushes his hand away.

SARAH

Did it work?

HENRY

She committed suicide sophomore year.

Sarah crosses her arms in front of her. Her jaw tightens.

SARAH

What was your son's name?

Henry's mouth drops. He steps toward her in confused anger.
His mouth moves to speak, but nothing comes out. He steps
closer.

Sarah shrugs.

SARAH

It's a small town, people talk.
Even the things you think you've
hidden.

He does not step away. His breath moves the hair that has
fallen across her face.

HENRY

I don't like to talk about it.

SARAH

Not even his name?

HENRY

No.

He brings his fingertips to her mouth, then stops himself.

He clears his throat and takes a step backward.

HENRY

Thanks for the beer.

He looks into her eyes, then down to her mouth and takes a
second step back.

Henry turns and leaves. She flings the darts at the board.

SARAH

(To herself)
Welcome home.

Sarah reaches for and downs Henry's abandoned beer.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Peter walks slowly through the barn.

A rifle rests on his shoulder.

GROWLING and the TEARING of flesh echoes through the barn.

Peter slinks toward the rear of the building. The door of
the barn is awkwardly ajar. Peter approaches three wild
dogs RIPPING into a sheep's carcass. The rest of the sheep
huddle into a corner.

PETER

Son of a bitch.

He aims. A soft BANG. The gun misfires.

The dogs turn on him, teeth snarling.

One of the demons jumps at his throat.

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

Henry steps up the stairs of the porch. BARKING and SNARLING echo through the darkness. His hand pauses on the screen door.

He hears Peter's SCREAMS and bolts to the barn.

INT. BARN - SAME

Henry rushes to Pete. He picks up a board and beats chaotically at the dogs.

Two of the mongrels turn to Henry and attack his legs. He POUNDS them until they flee. Henry drops the board and kicks the third dog senseless. It limps from the barn.

Peter MOANS. His face is unrecognizable. Blood covers his now naked body. The dogs have left him with nothing.

Henry drops to Peter's side.

HENRY

Hold on.

Henry props the board against the open door and runs to the house.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Sarah and the bartender, JIMMY, 52, jolly and tough, are the only two remaining in the bar.

Jimmy speaks into the phone.

JIMMY

Hey, Elliot...Sarah needs a ride.
Pete's not answering, so I
thought...Great.

He hangs up the phone.

JIMMY

Elliot's coming to give you a ride
home.

Sarah sits at the bar with several more glasses in front of her.

SARAH
I don't need a ride.

JIMMY
Unless you plan on sleeping on the
bar, yes, you do.

Sarah waves her hand in the air dismissing him.

SARAH
Have you heard this one?

JIMMY
Lay it on me.

SARAH
What is big and blue and eats rocks?

JIMMY
I don't know.

SARAH
A big blue rock eater. What's big
and green and eats rocks?

JIMMY
I don't know.

SARAH
A big green rock eater. What's big
and red and eats rocks?

JIMMY
A big red rock eater?

A dramatic pause.

SARAH
Oh, Jimmy. There is no such thing
as a big red rock eater.

Sarah laughs hysterically. Jimmy shakes his head. Elliot
enters the bar in street clothes.

JIMMY
There he is. Just in time. Little
comedian needs a ride home.

SARAH
No I don't.

Sarah stands, falls down, and gets right back up.

Jimmy removes a bag of trash from behind the bar and carries it out the back door.

Sarah sits on a barstool.

Sarah looks at Elliot. He meets her gaze.

She pats the seat next to her.

SARAH

Sit with me.

Elliot sits. Sarah lays her head on the bar and drifts off.

He watches her for a moment and brushes the hair from her eyes. He runs his hand along her chin and cheek.

Sarah stirs. Elliot pulls his hand away.

Sarah wants to talk, but can't quite keep her eyes open.

SARAH

How's your mom?

Elliot smiles.

ELLIOT

I'd forgotten how chatty you are when you're drunk. She's fine.

SARAH

I always liked your mom.

ELLIOT

That's nice.

SARAH

She told me once, "You don't have to love them, Sarah. You just have to live with them."

Elliot's smile fades.

ELLIOT

Really.

SARAH

I mean your father was a good guy, right?

ELLIOT

Yeah.

SARAH
Strange thing to say.

ELLIOT
Yeah.

SARAH
Yeah.

Sarah falls asleep.

Jimmy re-enters from the back of the bar.

The phone rings behind the counter.

JIMMY
(Into the phone)
Jimmy's...Yeah, she's here.

Jimmy looks at Sarah.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Henry paces in front of a waiting room door.

Sarah races to his side.

SARAH
What's happening?

HENRY
It was the dogs.

SARAH
What did the doctor say?

HENRY
I couldn't see her face.

Sarah reaches for his elbow, but stops before touching him.
Henry shakes beneath his coat. His teeth chatter.

SARAH
You couldn't see the doctor's face?

HENRY
Carrie's. Pete's. His face. Pete's
face. I couldn't see it. It was
covered. Or maybe gone.

He drops to his knees. Sarah, face ashen, sits on the waiting
room couch.

INT. HOSPITAL - SEVERAL HOURS LATER

Sarah dreams fitfully. She has not moved from the couch. Henry sits next to her watching her sleep. Her body leans next to him until her head rests on his shoulder. He turns and rests his mouth lightly on her head.

Sarah stirs and opens her eyes.

Henry stares down at his feet.

EXT. BARN - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The dilapidated barn is perfectly restored.

INT. BARN - DAY (FLASHBACK)

SARAH, 11, same beautiful hair, same disarming smile. PETER, 16, wise and distant, stands with both hands on his hips. Sarah paces in the top part of the hay loft.

SARAH

Come on. Jump with me.

PETER

You are going to break something.
An arm, a leg, your head.

Sarah puts her hands under her armpits and does a slow and elaborate chicken dance.

SARAH

Cheep. Cheep. Cheep.

PETER

A chicken? Really? You think that's going to get me up there? Nice...This will not be a good experience, Sarah.

Sarah spreads her arms wide as if diving into a pool, holds the pose and then jumps.

PETER

Holy shit.

She lands in a pile of hay. CRACK. Her ankle makes a ninety degree angle at the bottom of her leg. She pinches the inside of her arm. Her face shows no emotion.

SARAH

Get Dad.

Peter runs from the barn.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Henry lifts his head. His eyes pass over her face as she flinches and reaches for her ankle.

He folds his shaking hands in his lap.

SARAH

Why don't you go back to the farm.
I'll stay.

HENRY

Elliot's at the farm, taking care of
things. What were you thinking about?

Sarah nods her head, then shakes it.

SARAH

I can't remember.

DOCTOR ANDERSON, 40, geekishly attractive, enters.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Sarah?

Sarah looks up.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

You can see him, but it is not a
pleasant sight. He has multiple
face lacerations and he'll need some
time with a plastic surgeon.

Sarah follows behind the doctor.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah approaches Peter's bed. His face is almost completely covered in bandages. His left cheek is exposed. Several ugly stitches stick out.

Sarah sits, arms crossed, beside the bed. Her gaze moves out the window into the night.

Peter sleeps.

SARAH

You always do this...this shit.

She stands and paces, pinching the inside of her arm, once, twice, three times. It's not working. Her voice cracks.

Her breathing quickens.

SARAH

I don't want to start again. I don't
want to know you. I'm over this
part of my life. I don't need you.

She plops back into the chair, drops her head to her knees,
and massages her temples.

SARAH

Shit.

Her breathing slows.

PETER

I'm sorry.

Sarah jumps.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Sarah stands in her bedroom, her MINE box and gun hunker in
the corner.

A row of framed pictures rest on a shelf. Sarah's fingertips
brush across each picture. Her hands tremble. She pauses
and smiles as her gaze reaches a picture of her mother. She
continues down the line of pictures. In the last picture an
older man meets her gaze. Her father.

She steps back toward the first picture, picks up the frame
and drops it to the ground. It shatters.

She plucks a second picture off of the shelf and drops it.

She raises the third picture above her head and SHATTERS it
against the wall. A fourth picture, fifth, sixth.

The final picture of her father remains on the shelf. She
walks to the MINE box and removes the gun. She points the
shotgun at her father.

A standoff.

She closes her left eye, aims, and CLICK. No shells.

She grabs the gun by the barrel and swings it like a bat at
her father's picture. The picture splinters and falls to
the ground.

She hurls the gun out the window.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Henry pushes a wheelbarrow toward the house.

The gun and shards of glass fall to the ground in front of him.

He looks up and meets Sarah's wild eyes. Henry bends to pick up the mess.

SARAH

Leave it.

She steps away from the window.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Sarah stands in a trance next to an open empty mailbox.

A mail truck pulls up next to Sarah. She nods to the MAILMAN, 60, gentle smile, and accepts the letters he holds out the window of his truck.

Sarah walks to the front porch and sits on a step. She looks into the distance, still submerged in a trance, and holds the mail in one hand and unknowingly pinches her tender flesh with the other.

Henry strolls to the porch and sits next to Sarah.

HENRY

How is he?

SARAH

Dead.

Alarm takes over Henry's features. Sarah does not move.

HENRY

Peter's dead?

SARAH

Peter? No. He's alive.

HENRY

Who's dead?

SARAH

My father.

Henry nods. Sarah shakes her head and ends her trance.

HENRY

How are you?

SARAH

I know you want to go. To leave
this place. I can see it in your
eyes.

She touches his hand.

HENRY

I can wait. How are you?

SARAH

You're still trembling.

HENRY

Yeah, it goes away.

SARAH

It's happened before?

HENRY

Once.

SARAH

What makes it go away?

She traces the inside of his palm with her fingers.

HENRY

Distraction, I guess.

SARAH

When I was eleven I broke my ankle.
Pete couldn't believe I didn't cry
that day. I haven't really cried
since my mother died.

Henry nods.

HENRY

You cry another way.

His fingers brush new welts and puffy red flesh on the inside
of her arm.

SARAH

Help me find something?

HENRY

Sure.

She takes his hand and enters the house.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Sarah opens the closet door. Boxes fill the closet, floor to ceiling.

SARAH

Pete's filing system. We need to find medical records, health insurance stuff.

HENRY

Devoted sister.

SARAH

Not really. That's the way it works out here. You get sucked back into the life whether you like it or not. Don't stay. It will happen to you, too.

HENRY

Okay.

She pulls a box from the top.

Henry grabs a second box. The two drop down on the floor and shuffle through papers.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Stacks of papers surround Sarah and Henry. One box remains in the closet. Sarah opens the last box.

SARAH

Oh, here we go.

She sorts through paper in a manila file.

Henry shuffles through the box.

He pulls out a stack of photos from the box.

HENRY

Who's this cutie?

He shows Sarah a picture of a baby sleeping face down on a blanket.

SARAH

Peter.

Henry pulls out a second baby picture.

HENRY

Then this beauty must be you?

Sarah slides next to Henry.

The two sit shoulder to shoulder.

The picture shakes in his hand.

SARAH

My mom.

HENRY

You miss her.

Henry's eyes remain on the picture. Sarah watches him.

SARAH

I don't remember much about her, but
I think that times like these are
probably when I'd need a mom the
most.

Henry takes her hand.

HENRY

I'm sorry she's not here for you.

She kisses his trembling fingertips.

SARAH

I hate it here.

Henry takes her face in his hands. His shaking becomes worse.
She kisses him on the mouth. Her eyes fill, her voice shakes.

SARAH

But I don't know where to go.

She leans away from him and reaches for her upper arm. She
rubs her tender flesh as if she can wash away the darkness
that stains her body. Tears stream down her face. She drops
herself into Henry's arms, desperately kissing him.

Henry shakes his head; she holds his face, kissing him again
and again. He relents. He kisses her wrists and moves up
her arms to her elbows. He pulls her shirt over her head.
Bruises mar her shoulders and the upper part of her chest,
reaching her breasts.

Sarah crosses her arms over her body. Henry's hands encircle her wrists. He pulls her to him.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Henry and Sarah lay entwined. He kisses her temples and eyelids, then rests his head on the pillow and drifts to sleep.

INT. CARRIE'S BEDROOM - DAY (HENRY'S DREAM)

Carrie's face shines. She sits on the bed, holds her feet and giggles.

Henry chases Carrie around the bedroom. He leaps over the bed toward her. She shrieks and runs into the corner.

As she doubles over with laughter, Henry scoops her up and drops her onto the bed. He kisses her temples and eyelids.

Her laughter stops. She grins.

They melt together onto the bed.

Henry watches her sleep.

END DREAM

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Henry spoons next to Sarah. Smiling, he opens his eyes. He gazes at Sarah, blinks, and his smile fades.

As he watches Sarah sleep, she drifts awake.

SARAH

Don't watch me. You make me self-conscious.

He squeezes his eyes shut. Sarah rolls to her back, her eyes fixed on the ceiling. She twirls the sheets with her fingers.

SARAH

Dad used to lose his keys. All of the time. We used to have to look for hours. We would find them behind the seat of the tractor or in a bucket in the barn. I used to think he did it on purpose to keep us busy. After Mom died, he didn't know what to do with us.

HENRY

It must have been hard for him.

Her fists clench.

SARAH

Hard for him? He never touched us.
Ever.

She reaches for her bruised flesh.

SARAH

Do you have any idea how hard it is
not to hug or touch your own child?

Her anger increases. As she looks at Henry, his eyes remain closed.

SARAH

I mean never. He was the same with
Peter. Never a hug or a pat or a
kiss...My best memory of Dad, to
this day, is when I broke my ankle.

Her eyes well. She twists her skin. She grabs the area
above her breasts and squeezes. She closes her fist over
different areas over her body.

SARAH

He had to carry me all the way to
the car.

Tears run down her face.

SARAH

He stopped looking at me when I was
fourteen, stopped talking to me when
I was sixteen. I stopped existing
here when I was eighteen. He died
before I could make him see me.

Her knuckles whiten; she turns her wrist again and again
injuring as much of her body as possible.

SARAH

I think he wished he would have died
with her, like you do.

Henry opens his eyes. She releases her skin, closes her
eyes, and turns her body away from him.

As Henry stares at her back, tears roll down his cheeks.

EXT. BARN - DAY

Henry hunches next to a tractor and searches through an old tool box. He removes a wrench, slams the cover, and kicks the side of the box.

Sarah approaches, holding a cup of coffee.

SARAH
What did it do to you?

HENRY
Look, Sarah.

She nods.

SARAH
It's no big deal. It's nothing.

HENRY
I'm not sure-- I'm not sure I'm supposed to be here. I didn't plan on staying this long.

SARAH
Stop. Really. Forget it.

HENRY
A one night stand...It's not something I do.

SARAH
Is that what it was?

Sarah holds out the coffee. Henry accepts.

He glances to the ground. His shoulders drop.

Sarah looks toward the field next to the house, reaches for the inside of her arm, and turns to leave.

Henry softens.

HENRY
I might stay for a while. I don't know.

Sarah turns back to him.

SARAH
Jesus, Henry. Is making decisions another one of your many problems? I bet it drove your wife to drink.

Henry closes the gap between them.

HENRY

Think before you speak.

SARAH

Thanks for the roll in the hay. I'm glad I could provide some distraction.

HENRY

Damn it, Sarah.

SARAH

Has the shaking stopped?

HENRY

Give yourself a couple of weeks and you'll find something wrong with me. Isn't that how it works with you?

SARAH

Go to hell.

As Sarah hurries away, Henry turns and kicks the toolbox.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Peter rests in bed. He's conscious. His face remains covered in bandages except for his eyes and cheek.

Sarah eases into the room.

Peter peers at her through the bandages.

PETER

How is Henry? I'd like to thank him. Give him a raise.

SARAH

Fine.

Peter nods.

SARAH

What's next?

PETER

We need to get the shed cleaned, get some wood chopped and start thinking about harvest help-

SARAH
(interrupting)
What's next with you?

PETER
What do you mean?

SARAH
I'll go talk to the doctor.

She rolls her eyes and leaves.

Peter sits in silence and stares at the gray brick wall in front of him. His hand trembles.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Elliot drives the tractor while Henry stacks bales of hay that move up a conveyor belt.

Sweat drips from Henry's face. Elliot sips water as he drives.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Elliot and Henry sit on the open tailgate of a pick-up truck eating lunch. The tractor waits in the distance.

Several bales of hay sit on the truck behind the men.

ELLIOT
You're a hard worker.

HENRY
Does that surprise you?

Elliot shrugs and looks at his feet.

ELLIOT
Pisses me off a little.

A moment.

HENRY
Nice of you to help out so much.

ELLIOT
I don't do it to be nice.

HENRY
Why do you do it?

ELLIOT
Hard worker, but not too bright.

Elliot hops from the tailgate and drinks from a water bottle.

HENRY
Are you talking about me or you?

Elliot smirks. Henry steps from the tailgate and the two men stand inches apart.

ELLIOT
Finished?

Henry nods.

ELLIOT
Maybe tomorrow I'll show you how to drive the John Deere.

HENRY
But?

ELLIOT
But, I doubt it.

Elliot strides toward the tractor.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Sarah and Doctor Anderson stand near the doorway. They speak in hushed tones. Peter has not moved.

DOCTOR
Rehabilitation....several months....a cane...probably for the rest of his life.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Sarah and Doctor Anderson approach Peter's bed.

DOCTOR
Hello, Peter. How are we feeling?

PETER
Why do doctors always say we?

DOCTOR
How about the legs? Any pain?

PETER
Fine. When do I go back to the farm?

DOCTOR

Peter, there is extensive damage to your legs, arms and face. This type of thing could take months, even years to recover from.

PETER

I can recover at the farm. When do I check out?

DOCTOR

I can't let you go until you can walk on your own. We had to remove some of the muscle from your buttock to repair your leg.

Peter nods toward Sarah.

PETER

I thought she was the pain in my ass.

DOCTOR

Funny.

PETER

Not really.

DOCTOR

Your right leg was impressively damaged.

PETER

Why do doctors always say impressively?

DOCTOR

You can start physical therapy tomorrow. As soon as you can use a walker, I'll let you go.

Reality sets in.

PETER

A walker.

DOCTOR

It helps if a family member participates in the sessions. Is there someone available?

PETER

No.

SARAH
It's fine. I'll be there.

PETER
No.

Sarah turns to the doctor with her back to Peter.

SARAH
When does he start?

DOCTOR
His first session is tomorrow at 8
A.M.

SARAH
I'll be here.

Sarah picks up her purse and leaves the room.

DOCTOR
Interesting girl. You are going to
need her.

PETER
Cold as an Ely winter, I'm told.

DOCTOR
You should meet my wife.

PETER
Funny.

DOCTOR
Not really.

The doctor pats Peter's shoulder and leaves the room.

Peter stares forward, draws a breath, then swings his legs
over the side of the bed.

He grimaces.

PETER
Shit.

His body doubles over and he tumbles off of the edge of the
bed.

Peter lifts the gown exposing his damaged legs. They are
covered in gauze. The gauze dips unnaturally in random areas
where the dogs ripped his flesh.

PETER

Damn it.

He unwinds an area of the bandage on his arm. As it loosens, the stitches and horror are exposed. His chin trembles.

Peter COUGHS, attempting to clear his throat.

JUDY, 42, overweight physical therapist, passes in the hallway.

JUDY

Dear God.

She rushes in to the room and hits the assistance button.

Peter's doctor runs in.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Help him stand.

They help Peter to his feet and settle him back into bed.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Seen enough?

Peter GROANS.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Can I get you anything?

Peter shakes his head.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Why don't we give Peter some space.

Doctor Anderson and Judy leave the room.

Peter stares ahead.

EXT. BARN - DAY

Henry stands with a pitchfork, staring at the spot he found Peter.

Elliot enters.

Henry hands him the pitchfork. They walk to the rear of the barn. It is completely clean. The broken door has been repaired and painted.

HENRY

You're in love with her?

ELLIOT
Does it matter?

HENRY
No.

Sarah enters.

SARAH
Does what matter?

He shrugs.

SARAH
Elliot, go home.

ELLIOT
Maybe we could step outside for a
minute.

SARAH
No.

Elliot throws down the pitchfork and trudges out.

HENRY
Why are you so shitty to Elliot?

SARAH
What?

HENRY
You seem like someone who likes to
hurt the ones she loves most.

SARAH
What?

HENRY
Why are you so shitty to Elliot? Do
you have feelings for him?

SARAH
No. I don't think so.

HENRY
No?

SARAH
No.

HENRY
You don't think so.

SARAH
No. Stop asking.

HENRY
Then give a straight answer.

She tilts her head, deciding, then shrugs.

SARAH
Elliot was the "just in case."

Henry shakes his head.

SARAH
Just in case. Just in case I ended
up alone. There was always Elliot.

HENRY
That's fucking nice.

SARAH
You wanted a straight answer. His
grandparents left him money. He's
loyal. There are worse things. Why
does it bother you so much?

HENRY
Hard worker, but not too bright.

Henry steps closer to her.

HENRY
You need to cut him loose. I can't
stand the way he looks at you.

He walks away.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Peter lies flat on a white padded table. Judy leans over
Peter helping him stretch his legs.

Sarah stands, arms crossed, in the doorway.

Judy notices Sarah and gestures for her to join them.

SARAH
Looks painful.

JUDY
It shouldn't be. Hold his hand.

Sarah stands beside the table; her body is stiff.

A phone RINGS in an office adjacent to the physical therapy room.

JUDY

Take his hand. I need to answer that.

Judy enters the office. Peter's breathing is rapid.

JUDY (O.S.)

(muffled)

Physical therapy...Oh, yes...I could try to fit it in today. Hold on...

Judy closes the office door.

Sarah stares at Peter's hand. She inches toward the table. Sarah rests her hand next to Peter's, but they do not touch.

He lifts his hand and offers it to her.

Their fingertips touch. Peter clutches her hand.

The office door opens. Judy enters.

JUDY

Sorry about that. Now where were we? We are just going to stretch the legs now. Peter, try to relax.

Judy pats Peter's leg.

JUDY

Peter, are you with me? Peter? Peter?

PETER

Yeah.

JUDY

Are you ready?

PETER

No.

Judy stretches Peter's leg. Sarah's knuckles are white against the black stitches on Peter's hand.

EXT. FARM - DAY

The leaves have changed color. The once green lush farmland glows with hues of orange and red. Fall has arrived.

Sarah's hair is cropped short. It is clean and well kept. She looks healthier, heavier, happier.

Sarah and Henry stand side by side staring at the dilapidated barn.

HENRY

Are you sure you want to do this?

SARAH

It has no use.

She shrugs.

SARAH

Can you think of a reason not too?

HENRY

Sentimental value?

He walks to the far side of the barn.

HENRY

We could hook chains up to one wall and just give it a pull.

SARAH

I think the beam in the center is going to be the problem.

HENRY

Let's give it a shot. What's the worst that could happen?

SARAH

It could fall on our heads.

He smiles.

INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - DAY

Sarah sits behind the wheel of the truck.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Henry hooks a chain from the back of his truck to the door frame of the dilapidated barn.

INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - DAY

Sarah hits the gas.

EXT. FARM - DAY

The barn doesn't budge.

Sarah steps from the truck.

SARAH
That didn't work.

HENRY
Really?

SARAH
Hook the chain to the center beam.

Henry re-adjusts the chain and steps clear of the barn.

Sarah hops back into the truck.

INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - DAY

Sarah steps on the gas. The barn groans, but does not fall.

EXT. PICK-UP TRUCK - DAY

Sarah steps out of the truck.

HENRY
Strike two. Let me try pushing it
with the truck.

Henry jumps into the front seat, drives to the barn and touches the bumper of the truck to a corner.

INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - DAY

He steps on the gas and increases the pressure.

EXT. PICK-UP TRUCK - DAY

The barn's timber cries out, but remains standing.

SARAH
Strike three.

Sarah approaches the side of the barn and strikes it with her fists.

SARAH
Why won't you fall.

She steps back.

HENRY

Feel better?

The barn groans again, then collapses. Sarah does a victory dance in the settling dust.

HENRY

Do something else.

SARAH

I didn't know I could do that.

Henry smiles.

EXT. FARM - LATER

Sarah and Henry load pieces of the barn's remnants into the back of the truck.

SARAH

That was long overdue.

HENRY

Doesn't seem like Pete to keep something on the farm that was so run-down.

SARAH

And you know him so well?

HENRY

Don't--

Sarah nods and leans against the fender of the truck. Henry leans next to her.

INT. FARM - DAY

Sarah enters the farmhouse carrying the mail. Henry sits at the table eating lunch.

She sorts the stack of letters. One large letter in particular stands out.

Sarah opens and reads the letter. Words like FORECLOSURE jump off of the page.

Sarah picks up the phone and dials a phone number from the top of the letter.

SARAH

(Into the phone)

Hi. This is Sarah Bjorn. I received a letter from your bank regarding the foreclosure of our farm? There must be a mistake...How was it taken care of?...Land sold to whom?

Sarah jaw drops.

SARAH

(Into the phone)

Thank you for your time.

She hangs up.

SARAH

(To Henry)

Did you know about this?

She waves the letter at Henry. He glances at the letter.

HENRY

I knew it was bad.

She throws the letter onto the table.

SARAH

God damn him.

She storms out the door.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Elliot fills a barrel with water. Sarah approaches holding the FORECLOSURE LETTER.

SARAH

This is why you're here, isn't it?

She shakes the letter at him. Elliot does not look up.

ELLIOT

Part of it.

SARAH

Get off of my farm.

ELLIOT

Your farm?

SARAH

I'm buying it back. Get off.

ELLIOT
You can't afford it.

SARAH
Stay away from me. You'll get your
money.

ELLIOT
I don't want the money.

She turns away from him and runs to her car.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Peter tries to roll over in bed. He barely moves. The back
of his robe drops open, exposing his ass.

Sarah invades the room. Peter holds his hand over his bottom.

SARAH
God damn you.

PETER
Hello.

SARAH
You can not sell my half of the farm.

PETER
Stop.

SARAH
It's against the law. You did not
get my signature.

Sarah's words start to slur.

PETER
Sarah, you look sick. Maybe you
should sit.

SARAH
I look sick. I look...

She collapses on to the floor.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Sarah lies sleeping in a hospital bed. An I.V. drips fluid
into her arm. Peter sits in a wheelchair next to the bed.
His hand rests next to hers, as close as physically possible
without actually touching.

She slowly opens her eyes. She sits slightly and looks around the room. Her clothes are folded neatly next to the bed. She looks down at her hospital gown.

SARAH

I'm spending entirely too much time
in this place. What's happening?

Doctor Anderson enters the room.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

You're spending too much time here,
young lady.

SARAH

What's happening?

DOCTOR ANDERSON

(to Peter)
Please excuse us.

SARAH

It's fine.

The doctor pulls a chair close to the bed.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Sarah, you're pregnant.

Sarah shakes her head. Peter's arm drops.

SARAH

Really?

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Really. Really. Congratulations?

Sarah shrugs and shakes her head.

SARAH

I don't know.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Here are some brochures on childbirth,
prenatal care and other things. I
wasn't sure-- I wanted you to know
your options. There are some on
adoption and other options.

He stands and pats her leg.

SARAH

When can I go?

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Take it easy tonight and I'll let
you go tomorrow.

The doctor leaves.

PETER

Sarah, I didn't sell your half.

SARAH

What do you call it then, Peter?

PETER

I sold mine.

Peter wheels himself from the room.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Henry sleeps.

INT. HENRY'S CAR - DAY (DREAM)

Henry whistles quietly behind the wheel of his Toyota.

Carrie reclines in the seat next to him. Her wild red hair
forms a halo around her face.

Henry tilts the rear-view mirror and admires his sleeping
wife.

He touches her shoulder.

HENRY

Carrie.

She does not move. Carrie's features distort in front of
him. Her nose bleeds. Her face changes shape.

CARRIE

Stop.

HENRY

Stop what?

CARRIE

Watching her.

HENRY

What?

CARRIE

Stop watching her.

HENRY

Where's Jake?

CARRIE

Asleep in the back.

Blood drips from her nose and mouth. Her features-unrecognizable.

Henry looks in the back seat at Jake. Jake's features begin to distort.

HENRY

No. It's okay, buddy.

Jake's nose bleeds. He cries.

Henry takes Carrie's hand in his and kisses her fingertips.

END DREAM

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Peter wheels himself into the room and struggles into the empty bed next to Sarah. Sarah stares at the ceiling above her, waiting for Peter to catch his breath.

SARAH

Do you remember that time the sheep got into the garden?

PETER

Dad was furious.

SARAH

I left the barn door open.

PETER

Really?

SARAH

On purpose.

PETER

What was the name of the dog we had before Katie?

SARAH

Missy.

PETER

Missy, right. Do you remember when Missy ate his lunch?

SARAH

Yeah.

PETER

I left his lunch box open...and fed his sandwich to Missy.

Sarah sits up on her elbows.

SARAH

No way.

PETER

Missy knew it was his, too. I had to beg her.

Peter pats his knee and whistles.

PETER

Eat the sandwich. Come on girl, eat the sandwich. Here you go. Eat the sandwich. Just eat it. Go ahead. Eat the sandwich.

She flops down on the bed in giggles.

SARAH

I remember one time, it was about midnight. Dad heard me sneaking in, so I hid on the porch. The farm gets so dark at night.

She chuckles.

SARAH

He came out on the porch in his tightie whities, only they were more gray than white and they were practically see through.

Peter snorts.

PETER

You are going to make me blow a stitch.

SARAH

He's got a gun over his shoulder and I'm sitting in the corner of the porch, holding my hands over my mouth. Trying not to laugh...Drunk off my ass.

PETER

You are crazy.

Her laughter turns into tears.

SARAH

You can't say anything. To Henry.

PETER

It'll come out. People talk.

Sarah shakes beneath the sheet.

SARAH

I'm scared. I mean really scared.
I can't have a baby.

She sobs. Peter waits quietly. His hand reaches toward her, touching only darkness. She uses the sheet to wipe her eyes.

PETER

SHHH...You'll work it out.

SARAH

I have no home. No money.

PETER

I'll get the farm back. We'll work
it out.

The sheet twists in Sarah's hand as she squeezes her tender skin. She stops crying.

SARAH

Right. It will be fine.

A long moment.

PETER

I shot dad in the ass once.

SARAH

What?

PETER

I thought he was a burglar. I was
eight. With my BB gun.

Sarah sniffs.

PETER

Help me to the bathroom? I hate calling the nurse. It's not a good experience.

Sarah swings her legs over the bed, removes the tape holding the needle of her IV in place, and pulls out the needle.

Peter grimaces.

Sarah shrugs.

She puts Peter's arm over her shoulder and helps him to stand. They struggle forward. Both are panting as they enter the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Sarah looks away as she lifts his gown and helps him to sit.

PETER

I'm good. Thanks.

Sarah closes the door.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah leans back against the bathroom door and slides to the floor.

She presses her hands forcefully against her mouth. Her shoulders quake. Her breathing increases in and out, in and out. She lowers her head. Her breathing slows.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Elliot works beneath a tractor. Grease covers his clothing and hair.

Henry sits in the tractor's seat.

Sarah sits on the steps of the porch. Her chin rests in the palm of her hand. She watches the two men. First Henry, then Elliot, then back to Henry.

ELLIOT

Try it again.

Henry turns the key. Nothing.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Sarah walks slowly along the boardwalk. She stops to pet Dawg, then enters the convenience store.

INT. MARKET SHOP - DAY

The bell RINGS above the door. Sarah picks up a shopping basket.

SHIRLEY

Don't pet that dog. It just encourages him.

SARAH

Love you too, Shirley.

She hops onto the counter and kisses her forehead.

Shirley looks up. For the first time her soft, brown eyes smile at Sarah.

SHIRLEY

You've got quite a glow about you.

Sarah fiddles with the candy bars at the counter.

SARAH

Do you miss her?

SHIRLEY

Your mother?

SARAH

I know you were friends.

SHIRLEY

You're exactly like her.

SARAH

No.

SHIRLEY

She loved your father. Her cancer turned him to stone. Turned Peter to stone, too. What about you?

SARAH

Peter's not so bad. I'm as hard as a rock.

Sarah puts a candy bar and a twenty dollar bill on the counter.

SHIRLEY

Don't be. You have more to worry
about than yourself, now.

Shirley puts an apple on the counter next to the candy bar.

SARAH

You're scary.

SHIRLEY

Farm life looks good on you.

Shirley grins.

SHIRLEY

Chase that dog off of the porch on
your way out.

SARAH

Do your own dirty work, woman.

The bell above the door RINGS as she exits.

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

The lights of a pick-up shine on the tractor. Both Henry
and Elliot work beneath it.

Elliot strikes a wrench against the side of the tractor,
then throws it into the darkness.

Both men stare into the night for a long moment.

HENRY

We may need that later.

Elliot holds out his hand. Henry hands him a flashlight.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Peter sits on the edge of the physical therapy table. Several
more bandages have been removed. He's healing fast. Sarah
is heavier. He lights up when Sarah enters.

SARAH

How's the session going.

PETER

Good experience, feeling pain. Help
me use the walker?

Sarah nods and pulls a metal walker toward him.

SARAH

Are you ready to try this?

PETER

Like to be able to use the bathroom
alone someday.

SARAH

No one should know their brother
that well.

Peter smiles. He struggles to pull himself upright, balancing
against the walker. His mouth strains; his lips tighten.

Peter moves forward, his breathing becomes erratic.

As he takes another step, frustration takes over. Peter
falls forward and SMACKS his mouth against the top of the
walker.

Blood drips from his top lip. He shoves the walker away and
lies flat on the floor.

Sarah kneels next to him.

SARAH

What can I do?

PETER

Nothing.

Peter spits a mouthful of blood on the floor.

SARAH

The farm's in bad shape, Peter.
It's not going to make money this
year. We can't seem to make things
work.

PETER

It's fine. Get Judy.

Sarah leaves him lying on the floor.

He wipes his forearm across his mouth and examines the trail
of blood left behind on his sleeve.

He drops his arm to the floor.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Henry and Sarah walk through a field of dry and withered
soybeans. There are holes through the leaves of the plants.

Some of the plants crawl with the insects that created the holes.

SARAH

Look at these. We're going to have to treat this entire field. What has Peter been doing for the last few years?

Henry throws the shovel he is carrying to the ground.

HENRY

He worked his ass off, Sarah.

SARAH

Who are you to defend anyone?

Sarah stomps down the center of the field. She slows, grabs her stomach and bends to stop the nausea.

HENRY

What did the doctor say this time?

SARAH

He said I'm fine.

HENRY

You don't look fine.

She bends again.

SARAH

I don't think we should talk about this.

HENRY

Talk about what? Say it. Say it out loud.

SARAH

What's your next stop on memory lane?

HENRY

What about you? Why don't you take the chip off of your shoulder and really talk.

SARAH

Get over her.

HENRY

I can't.

SARAH

It was an accident, Henry. You can't bring them back.

HENRY

Shut up.

SARAH

I need you to stay.

HENRY

You always have Elliot. Just in case.

Her jaw tightens. Tears well in her eyes.

SARAH

I want you to stay. I need you to stay. Please. Don't leave.

HENRY

His name was Jake. My son. Carrie liked the way it sounded.

Sarah walks to him and touches his arm. He tenses.

HENRY

And I worry that when I kiss you, I will taste her. Or worse, I won't taste her.

His fists tighten.

HENRY

I couldn't live with that.

Henry walks away. He runs to the road and crosses to his pick-up.

HENRY

Shit.

He turns and watches as Sarah cries.

He gets in the truck and pulls away.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Sarah lies on a table in a small hospital room. Doctor Anderson wheels in ultrasound equipment.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

We should get a pretty good look
this way. May be able to identify
the sex, if you want to know.

SARAH

I don't.

Sarah lifts her shirt exposing her belly. Her stomach is
beginning to bulge. The doctor squeezes a gel on her stomach
and spreads it with the wand of the ultrasound equipment.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Have you made any decisions?

Sarah shakes her head.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

Do you have any questions?

Sarah shakes her head. The whirring HUM of the ultrasound
breaks the silence. The small rapid THUMP THUMP of the baby's
beating heart fills the room.

EXT. SHIRLEY'S HOME - DAY

An amazing old Victorian home. Flowers bloom everywhere.
It is the Garden of Eden on a porch.

Sarah stands on the porch and RINGS the bell.

John opens the door.

JOHN

Well, hi there.

SARAH

Hey, John. She around?

John turns back into the house.

INT. SHIRLEY'S HOME - DAY

John offers an elbow to Sarah.

JOHN

She's in the shitter. Come on in.
Could be twenty minutes. Could be
an hour. One never knows.

They walk arm and arm.

JOHN

Let's go to the back yard. It's nice back there.

John takes his hat off the hat peg. They walk out the back door of the home.

EXT. SHIRLEY'S HOME - DAY

John and Sarah rock in a small bench swing. John leans back with the sun on his face. Sarah sits forward with her legs crossed at the ankles.

JOHN

I love the sun.

SARAH

Not worried about losing your girlish skin.

JOHN

I don't worry about much of anything anymore.

SARAH

Sounds like a good way to live.

JOHN

You youngsters have no idea how to live. You think if your heart isn't racing, or your palms aren't sweaty you're not living or loving...

SARAH

That's not right?

He jerks his head up.

JOHN

No. Shirley and I have been married more than fifty years. Wanting to tell them that joke you heard on the radio today, that's love.

Sarah nods.

JOHN

Or when I'm so sick I can't take off my shoes and she walks in the room and without even asking she bends to take them off.

John leans back in the sun.

JOHN
Your brother, he'd take off your shoes.

SARAH
Shirley's lucky to have you.

JOHN
I'm the lucky one.

She kisses his forehead.

SARAH
I was going to ask Shirley, but...can I borrow some money?

John arches his back to retrieve his wallet.

JOHN
How much?

SARAH
Enough to buy back the farm.

John's hand stops in mid-air.

JOHN
You care about the farm now?

Sarah touches her belly.

SARAH
No. It's for Pete.

John shrugs.

JOHN
Why not. You can't take it with you.

Sarah throws her arms around John.

JOHN
Easy. I don't want Shirley to see. She's the jealous type.

Sarah smiles.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Peter sips soup from a straw and reads from a magazine. The bandages are removed from his head. Stitches cover the greater portion of face.

Sarah enters the room.

Peter smiles.

PETER

Did you know they sell a magazine
just about sheep?

She twirls a finger in the air.

SARAH

Yee haw.

PETER

It's called Sheep! Magazine.

SARAH

Wow.

PETER

I never knew. The magazine girl
says it's very popular. Seems strange
since there are only a handful of
sheep farmers in the area.

Sarah sits on the edge of his bed, looks over his shoulder
at the magazine and smirks.

Peter reads from an article aloud.

PETER

The herding industry has changed
more in the last decade...

Sarah watches Peter's face as he reads.

SARAH

Peter.

He does not look up from the magazine.

PETER

Hmmm?

She puts her hand over the magazine.

SARAH

I need to tell you something.

PETER

Okay.

SARAH

I borrowed money from Shirley for the farm.

Peter nods.

SARAH

I can't have that hanging over me with Elliot. And...I don't have much time to decide.

She touches her swelling stomach.

PETER

What?

She shrugs.

SARAH

The time went by so fast. I thought, you know. I don't know.

PETER

Have you discussed it with Henry?

SARAH

It's not his decision.

Peter touches her hand. She springs from the bed.

Sarah looks at her watch, shrugs and forces a smile.

SARAH

Therapy.

A NURSE enters with a wheelchair. Peter swings his legs over the edge of the bed as Sarah bends and puts on his slippers.

EXT. MARKET SHOP - DAY

Dirty and exhausted, Henry sits at a table in the corner of the shop. His head rests on his palm and falls forward. He shakes himself awake and GULPS coffee.

Shirley is at her post behind the register. Her eyes remain on the floor.

SHIRLEY

No sleeping here. This isn't the Best Western.

HENRY

The coffee is free at the Best Western.

SHIRLEY

So go get a room. You're scaring away customers.

HENRY

What customers?

Sarah enters.

Sarah hops on the counter and kisses Shirley's head.

Shirley gives Sarah a smile.

Sarah holds her.

SHIRLEY

You pay Elliot?

Sarah nods.

John, whistling, shuffles in from the back of the store. Shirley's smile grows.

John, out of breath, makes it to the counter. Shirley pushes Henry off the chair and slides it next to John.

John sits. Shirley bends to him, and they kiss.

Sarah smiles.

SARAH

Get a room. Did you get my juice?

SHIRLEY

Organic juice. Organic juice is what you order when you've made a big decision.

She nods toward Sarah's growing belly.

SHIRLEY

You think it's going to make a difference?

Shirley puts the juice on the counter and winks.

SARAH

Thanks, Shirley.

Sarah pays for the juice.

HENRY

Sarah?

Sarah hurries out the door. Henry leaps from his chair to follow.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SAME

Henry grabs Sarah's arm. She jerks her arm away.

SARAH

Don't touch me like that.

HENRY

Talk to me.

SARAH

It's none of your business.

HENRY

Damn it, Sarah. It is my business.

Sarah walks toward her car.

SARAH

Go to hell, Henry. You are such a hypocrite. You only see what you want to see.

She SLAMS her car door.

SARAH

You're not supposed to be here? Anywhere but here. Well, too bad. You are. And wishing you were dead is not going to bring them back.

Henry leans in through the window.

HENRY

I don't--

Sarah forces him out.

SARAH

How many times do you need to hear the word 'no' to make you feel better. What can I say to make you leave guilt free? Free of Peter. Free of me. You can go, Henry.

HENRY

Stop.

She pulls away. Henry wanders to the middle of the road and watches her drive away.

Shirley shuffles onto the boardwalk carrying her broom. She chases Dawg from his slumber with a THUMP of her broom to his rump. He scampers from the boardwalk into the street.

SHIRLEY

She's not as tough as she thinks she is.

HENRY

I know.

SHIRLEY

What do you know?

HENRY

I like to watch her sleep. That's always how I knew.

Shirley sweeps.

HENRY

I've been having these dreams. My wife said something to me in the car after the accident just before she died. I've never been able to remember what it was.

Henry steps back on the boardwalk and sits on a bench to watch Shirley.

HENRY

I would give anything to know what she said to me, to talk to her, to tell her I'm sorry--

Shirley stops.

SHIRLEY

Sorry for what?

HENRY

For being distracted. For not seeing the brake lights.

Shirley nods.

HENRY

I was clutching their hands when the paramedics arrived. They got cold so fast.

Shirley sits next to him and takes his hand. Henry nods toward the settling dust in the road.

HENRY

I don't deserve her or a second chance.

Shirley pats his hand.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM BATHROOM - DAY

One of Peter's legs is unbandaged from the knee down. This portion of his body is mostly intact.

Sarah holds a razor blade in one hand and shaving cream in the other.

SARAH

They are going to take skin from where and put it where?

PETER

You don't want to know. Just shave.

SARAH

Are you sure you want me to do this?

PETER

You get all the good stuff.

SARAH

Remember when I broke into the Johnson garage?

PETER

Yeah.

SARAH

Why didn't you tell on me?

PETER

I'm glad you're back.

A tear streams down his face and runs down one of his long jagged cuts.

He loses it. Sarah stops shaving.

SARAH
You're healing fast.
(assumes a manly voice)
Good experience being eaten by dogs...

Peter laughs.

SARAH
Not too soon?

Sarah gently kisses his cheek.

He shakes his head, smiling.

His chin trembles. He struggles, and then regains his composure.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Sarah folds laundry in her bathrobe. Her robe falls open, exposing her now large belly. She rests her hands on her stomach and caresses the growing baby inside.

Sarah pauses and pulls up the sleeves of her robe. She studies the fading, almost invisible bruises on her arms.

She smiles.

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

Elliot's patrol car pulls up to the farmhouse. The sirens of the car BLARE and the lights flash.

Elliot falls out of the front seat of the car.

ELLIOT
(slurred)
Sarah...Sarah...Sarah.

Sarah steps onto the porch.

SARAH
Elliot, get the hell out of here.

He stumbles closer in a drunken stupor.

ELLIOT
You kissed me in the eighth grade.

SARAH
What?

ELLIOT

It was on the cheek and it was a Halloween party, so I had a mask on and I think you thought I was Mike Martin, but you kissed me.

SARAH

Elliot, go home.

He points at her and trips. A cloud of dust rises around him. He waves his hand and coughs.

He stands and brushes his pants.

ELLIOT

I'm saying my father knew. He knew my mother didn't love him.

He sits down on the step in front of her.

ELLIOT

I think relationships like that happen more than we know. It worked for them for forty years, so it must have been okay. Right?

SARAH

No, Elliot-

He puts his head in his hands. Henry wanders from the house onto the porch.

ELLIOT

-I love you, Sarah. I never wanted the farm. I only wanted you. I've always loved you.

Elliot points to Henry.

ELLIOT

And if he's not going to do anything about it, I will.

Elliot moves toward her.

SARAH

I've never loved you.

He stops.

Sarah looks at Henry, then back to Elliot.

SARAH

I've never loved you, Elliot. Do you understand? I never have. I never will. Now, go home.

He stares at them and stumbles toward his car.

He drives away. Henry walks back into the house.

Sarah remains on the porch looking into the emptiness.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Sarah has moved a kitchen chair onto the porch. Her head bobs as she dozes. The chair is not designed for napping.

Henry steps out with a cup of coffee in hand. He watches her sleep.

Sarah gives up.

SARAH

You make me self-conscious.

HENRY

I wasn't watching.

SARAH

It's kind of creepy, ya know.

HENRY

I know. My wife used to hate it.

Henry walks to the edge of the porch.

SARAH

Elliot's agreed to sell it back. Now I owe Shirley instead of Elliot.

HENRY

You're okay with that?

SARAH

I have to be. I couldn't owe Elliot, you know? I was awful to Elliot.

Sarah fidgets in her chair.

HENRY

You were honest.

Sarah shrugs.

HENRY

When are you going to be honest with me?

She picks up the chair and takes it into the house.

EXT. FARM - DAY

The trees are bare. Winter is near.

Sarah stands on the porch. She pulls a sweater around her middle. She closes her eyes.

Henry approaches the porch. He stands on the ground below Sarah. Romeo and Juliet.

HENRY

When are you going to talk to me?

Sarah opens her eyes and looks away from him.

SARAH

About what?

HENRY

When are you going to say the words?

SARAH

What do you mean?

HENRY

You're showing. You've been showing for weeks. I'm not an idiot. I've done the math. Tell me. Say the words, Sarah.

An excruciating pause.

SARAH

Too far to end it.

HENRY

Did you want to end it?

SARAH

No.

HENRY

When were you going to talk to me about it?

SARAH

I wasn't.

HENRY

It's my baby, too. You didn't think
I had a right to know?

SARAH

I think you have the right to go to
hell.

Henry's fists clench at his sides.

HENRY

Stop doing that shit.

SARAH

What?

HENRY

I won't take that kind of shit
forever.

SARAH

Is that a threat? Say it. You say
the words. Say, I want to leave.
Say, I can't stand the sight of you.
I've heard it before.

Sarah's voice cracks. She reaches for her arm, but stops
herself.

SARAH

Say, I can't stand touching you.

HENRY

I can't say it.

SARAH

Why?

HENRY

Because I--

Sarah's gaze shifts to the fields. Henry drops to the stairs
of the porch.

HENRY

Because I--

He shakes his head. Sarah sits next to him. She dries her
tears. She takes his hand and turns it over in hers. She
traces the calluses that have developed.

SARAH

Farm hands.

The two sit side by side.

INT. MARKET SHOP - DAY

Henry and Sarah shop at Shirley's market.

Shirley points to a burned-out light bulb.

Henry gets a ladder and changes the bulb.

Shirley kisses and then pinches Henry's cheek.

Sarah's belly is in full-bloom, she rolls her eyes as she watches them.

INT. PHYSICAL THERAPY ROOM - DAY

Peter struggles next to Judy with a walker. He takes several steps and smiles.

Judy helps him to his wheelchair.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Sarah walks through a plowed field, ready for winter. Her belly protrudes out from beneath her maternity blouse and ill-fitting coat.

A pick-up truck drives along the dusty road beside the field and pulls over.

HENRY

Are you going to walk these fields
when it snows?

Sarah smiles.

SARAH

What is your obsession with the snow?

HENRY

I want to find out about your winter.

SARAH

My winter?

She touches her belly. Henry steps closer.

HENRY

Is it okay if I...

He gestures toward her swelling stomach.

SARAH

You and everyone in the tri-state area. Go ahead.

He lightly touches her stomach. She puts her hand on top of his.

HENRY

Sarah, I was wondering. Would you like to go on a date?

She blushes; it's everything she wants.

SARAH

I don't think with Peter and the farm--I'm not sure.

HENRY

It's fine. Maybe after the baby.

SARAH

Yeah.

Henry nods.

Henry reaches for her hand. She pulls away.

HENRY

You're a hard person to touch.

SARAH

Don't say that. Anything but that.

He reaches for her hand. She lets him hold it.

HENRY

Peter doing okay?

SARAH

He has physical therapy today. Want to come?

He nods.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Henry watches Sarah and Peter through the window of the door.

Sarah and Peter throw their heads back in laughter. Peter touches Sarah's stomach. Sarah holds the sides of his healing face.

Peter stops and pats her belly. He bends and talks to the baby. They both giggle.

PETER

Since you have been back things have been different. Probably the best experience of my life.

SARAH

Really?

PETER

Really.

She smiles.

Sarah sees Henry and gestures him into the room.

INT. PETER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Peter, Henry, and Sarah eat chicken from a large cardboard bucket.

PETER

Slow down there, blimpy.

Sarah raises her eyebrows.

SARAH

Excuse me? I know you're not talking to me.

Peter smiles.

PETER

Never call a pregnant woman fat.

Henry hides his smile behind his chicken leg.

PETER

And never ask a woman if she's pregnant unless you know for sure that she is pregnant. Only have to experience that once.

SARAH

My big brother, ladies and gentlemen. Tip your waitresses.

PETER

How long you staying, Henry?

Henry glances at Sarah.

Sarah sets down her food.

SARAH

You better get some rest.

Sarah goes to Peter's side. She rests her lips on his forehead for a long moment.

Peter's body pulls away from her.

SARAH

You'll get used to it.

Peter smiles.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Sarah closes her eyes as she walks through the harvested soybean field. All that remains are dried leaves and black clumps of dirt.

She takes a deep breath.

Her face contorts. She bends and clutches her stomach.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Sarah sleeps. Dr. Anderson stands near her bedside.

Henry holds Sarah's hand as tears fall down his cheeks.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Peter sits in a wheelchair outside Sarah's room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Sarah wakes up and reaches for her still bulging belly. She smiles and squeezes Henry's hand.

SARAH

How long have I been sleeping?

HENRY

A few hours.

SARAH

The baby?

Sarah sits up.

SARAH

Where's Pete? Why are you crying?

Doctor Anderson clears his throat.

DOCTOR ANDERSON
Sarah, you've had what's called a
Placental Abruption. It means that
the placenta has separated from the
womb.

SARAH
Sounds bad.

DOCTOR ANDERSON
The baby didn't survive.

He touches her shoulder. Sarah reaches for her belly.

DOCTOR ANDERSON
We had to stabilize you before we
induce labor.

SARAH
Labor?

DOCTOR ANDERSON
You will need to deliver the baby,
but he will not be alive. Do you
understand?

Sarah nods and looks at the wall in front of her.

SARAH
He.

Doctor Anderson glances at Henry and leaves the room.

She reaches for her inner arm. Henry covers her arms with
his hands. Her eyes spill over as he gathers her in his
arms. Grief consumes her. She clutches Henry with her
remaining strength and sobs.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Peter cries for his sister.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Sarah pushes Henry away and twists her flesh.

HENRY
Sarah, stop.

Henry reaches for her hands. She frees herself from him and
wrings her flesh, again and again.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

Several nurses and a doctor move around Sarah.

She sits with her feet in stir-ups and her body at delivery angle.

DOCTOR

One more big push, Sarah.

Sarah leans forward, pushes, and blows the breath from her lungs.

DOCTOR

That's it. That's it. Here he is.
Good job. Relax.

Sarah leans back against the delivery table. The doctor looks over the sheet at Sarah and replaces an area of the sheet that has fallen from her knees.

Her eyes focus on the ceiling.

Where there should be the sound of a baby crying, there is silence.

Where there should be joy, there is sorrow.

The doctor pats her knee and hands the unseen child to the nurse next to him.

The nurse wraps the child in a baby blanket, cleans his face, and places him in a hospital bassinet.

Sarah's eyes rest on the bassinet.

The doctor removes the bloody sheets from underneath Sarah and lifts her feet from the stir-ups.

A nurse replaces Sarah's wet hospital gown and lowers the hospital bed.

The nurse pushes the bassinet next to Sarah's bed. The doctor speaks, but Sarah no longer hears him.

The nurses and doctor leave the room.

Sarah pulls the bassinet next to the bed. She loosens the sheet wrapped around the baby and takes his tiny hand.

Uncontrollable shaking moves through her. Her teeth chatter. She tries to twist the skin of her arm, but the shaking prevents her from damaging herself.

She relents and allows the shaking to take over. The sounds of her sobs fill the room.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Henry leans against the wall.

A nurse passes him and enters the operating room.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah stares at the ceiling above her. Her crying has stopped. The coldness within her has returned.

The nurse enters and speaks to Sarah. Her words are not heard.

Sarah nods.

The nurse covers Sarah with a blanket and removes the bassinet from Sarah's bedside.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

The nurse exits the operating room, pushing the bassinet.

She stops next to Henry.

The nurse nods and steps away from the baby.

Henry approaches the tiny body.

HENRY

Hey, buddy.

He takes the baby's hand and caresses it.

HENRY

You remind me of...

He covers his eyes with his hand and wipes away the tears.

HENRY

Hey, buddy.

Henry kisses the infant's fingers.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

Henry enters, but does not approach Sarah. Pain consumes them both.

He takes one step toward her. She does not look at him.

He waits, then turns and walks away.

INT. SARAH'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Peter wheels himself into Sarah's room. She stares at the ceiling above her.

PETER

A long time ago, I asked Dad if he loved mom.

Sarah cries.

PETER

Dad said it didn't matter, that love didn't matter, but it does. And when you yell at me, I hate it--

SARAH

Don't--

PETER

No, listen. I hate it, but part of me...your voice sounds so much like Mom's.

Sarah's turns to him.

SARAH

You remember her?

PETER

Some things. Bits and pieces.

Sarah nods.

PETER

So much of you...it's just like her. Your hands. Your hair. The way you laugh, how you think you never cry, but do all the time, the way you smile, the way you touch people.

SARAH

I don't touch people.

PETER

Not physically.

A tear falls down Peter's cheek. Sarah reaches for him.

Peter takes her hand.

PETER

Do you know why I never tore down
that old barn?

Sarah shakes her head.

PETER

It was full of you. Memories of
you. I loved that.

Her body shakes with grief.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Henry sleeps.

INT. HENRY'S CAR - DAY (DREAM)

Henry whistles quietly behind the wheel of his Toyota.

Carrie reclines in the seat next to him. Her wild red hair
forms a halo around her face.

Henry tilts the rear-view mirror and admires his sleeping
wife.

He touches her shoulder.

HENRY

Carrie.

She does not move. Her once distorted features are perfectly
restored.

Henry clutches her hand.

CARRIE

I'm not scared.

HENRY

What?

CARRIE

It's okay to let go. I'm not scared.

HENRY

I sorry.

CARRIE

Don't be.

HENRY

Where's Jake?

CARRIE
Asleep in the back.

Henry looks in the back seat at JAKE, 2, adorable toddler.
Jake's features are also restored.

HENRY
I love you, buddy.

CARRIE
We're okay. Let go.

Henry takes Carrie's hand in his and kisses her fingertips,
then lets go.

END DREAM

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Henry opens his eyes.

INT. MARKET SHOP - DAY

Henry and Shirley sit at one of the small tables drinking
coffee.

Shirley's hunched body leans close to the table. She pats
his hand.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Sarah dresses and puts her hospital slippers and a baby
blanket into a plastic bag.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Sarah sits with her knees pulled to her chest and looks out
the window. Light snowflakes drift to the ground.

Henry enters the house with a shopping bag.

HENRY
Sarah?

She rocks in her chair, but does not acknowledge him.

HENRY
I brought some lunch. You need to
eat. The doctor said Peter could
come home in a couple weeks.

He rests his hand on her shoulder.

SARAH

This isn't your home.

Sarah snaps, blasting Henry with her rage.

SARAH

Don't touch me. I don't want you to ever touch me. Do you hear me?

He takes a step back.

SARAH

Why do you waste your time on this dump?

He reaches for her.

She stands, pressing her hands against her flat stomach. Her sweatshirt is wet below her breasts with the milk that her body produces.

HENRY

Hold on.

SARAH

Are you that pathetic? It makes me sick to look at you. Get out of my house you son-of-a-bitch.

HENRY

Hold on. This is crazy.

SARAH

There's no baby. Go. Get away from me.

Sarah throws a book at him. She pulls down pictures, knocks over a table, and destroys the room.

She turns and stumbles over a table.

She clutches her stomach as she tumbles toward the floor.

Henry catches her. She struggles away from him.

SARAH

I have nothing left.

HENRY

You have me. I'm sorry. I should have stayed with you. Losing another son...I'm sorry.

She twists the flesh on her arm.

SARAH
Get out.

HENRY
No.

SARAH
Get out.

HENRY
No.

SARAH
Get out. Get out. Get out.

Henry backs away from her.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Sarah wanders the farm. She wears only a tee shirt and jeans in the bitter cold.

Sarah steps into a small cemetery. Her arms are marred with grief. There are two old headstones standing side by side, and one new headstone for the baby.

In a corner of the cemetery a spot is marked with a small wooden cross.

Henry clears his throat and approaches Sarah.

As Sarah walks toward the small wooden cross, confusion takes over her features.

HENRY
It's Katie.

SARAH
Pete buried her here?

HENRY
He loved her.

He pokes his foot into the dirt. Sarah's coldness remains.

SARAH
Why did you come out here?

HENRY
Shirley called. She wants to see you.

Sarah nods and turns her back to Henry.

He steps from the cemetery and pauses.

HENRY

I'll leave tonight.

Sarah fights the tears, chin trembling. She composes herself and turns to him.

SARAH

Good-bye.

He turns and leaves.

INT. MARKET SHOP - DAY

Sarah wiggles onto the counter and sits sideways.

Shirley holds Sarah's head in her hands and rests her cheek on the top of her head.

Tears stream down Sarah's face.

Shirley encircles Sarah with her weathered arms and gently pats Sarah's back.

SHIRLEY

Can I show you something?

Sarah nods.

Shirley reaches under the counter and removes an old framed picture. The picture is a young, smiling Sarah standing at Shirley's post behind the register.

SHIRLEY

Do you remember it?

Sarah nods.

SHIRLEY

I took it the day before John caught you stealing.

Sarah grimaces.

SARAH

Sorry about that.

Shirley shrugs.

SHIRLEY

I always knew you were stealing.

SARAH

Why didn't you turn me in?

SHIRLEY

I liked seeing you everyday.

Tears drop onto Shirley's cheeks.

SHIRLEY

I'm so sorry, baby.

A sob escapes from Sarah.

SHIRLEY

Don't do it again.

SARAH

Do what?

SHIRLEY

Let your pain push him away. It's what your father did. It's what will happen to you.

Sarah weeps. Her shoulders shake as she covers her face with her hands.

SHIRLEY

Henry found love a second time. He found you. He loves you, Sarah. Don't let it go.

SARAH

I don't know how to stop.

SHIRLEY

Promise me. Just take one step. That's all. Love will do the rest.

Sarah embraces her.

SHIRLEY

Promise me.

Sarah nods.

Shirley pats her back.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Henry closes his suitcase and walks to the bedroom door.

He shuts off the bedroom light.

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

She sits on the edge of her bed and rocks back and forth.

The pictures that she threw against the wall sit in a box in the corner.

Sarah approaches the box and shakes the glass from a picture of her mother. She places the picture, without its frame, gently on a shelf above her.

She removes a picture of Peter from the box and places it on the shelf.

She removes the picture of her father. Sarah holds the photograph close to her eyes and studies the man staring back at her.

She places the picture on the shelf.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Henry stands outside Sarah's bedroom door.

He holds his suitcase in one hand and rests his other hand against Sarah's door.

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sarah notices the shadow under the door.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Henry walks down the hallway.

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The shadow disappears.

SARAH

Henry.

A moment.

The shadow returns to the bottom of the door.

SARAH

Come in.

The door opens.

Sarah clears her throat.

SARAH

I thought...

A moment passes.

SARAH

I thought...

HENRY

You thought?

SARAH

I thought--

Henry's eyebrows come together. Tears form in his eyes.

Sarah takes a step toward him.

SARAH

Please stay.

Henry steps toward her.

He stops and turns away.

Henry pauses, turns, and rushes to her arms. He kisses away her remaining pain, the anger, the grief, the guilt.

SARAH

Please stay.

He looks into her eyes and nods.

Sarah kisses him. Touching his face, his hair, his arms.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Spring is in the air. The leaves are green, flowers bloom.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Sarah sits on the steps pulling the petals off a daisy.

She watches Peter driving a tractor in the distance. He waves. Sarah waves back.

Henry approaches.

HENRY

He loves me. He loves me not.

SARAH

Funny.

HENRY

Not really.

Henry leans into Sarah. As he kisses her, she lets the flower and its petals float from her hand.

The bruises on her arms have disappeared. Henry smiles into her eyes.

HENRY

The south field looks good. Bugs are gone.

Sarah nods.

HENRY

Maybe we can make some money this year...or next year...

SARAH

...or the year after that.

He reaches for Sarah's hand.

She does not pull away.

FADE OUT