

A GARDEN AT THE END OF THE WORLD

By

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OVER BLACK:

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)  
How can all of life begin with just  
a seed? So small. So delicate.  
Nurtured and cared for,  
magnificence grew from it as far as  
the eye could see. How then did it  
forget the garden where it was  
grown?

FADE IN:

POV THROUGH A RIFLE SCOPE:

*Near a COPSE OF DEAD TREES, a lone FIGURE is hunched over the hole he digs. A pile of dirt grows beside him.*

*The Figure wears coveralls and gloves. The shadow of dead trees and the Stetson atop his head hides his face.*

*PANNING RIGHT we find a two-story FARMHOUSE. The first floor windows are BOARDED UP, fortified.*

*WE FOLLOW an intruder creeping cautiously around the side of the farmhouse. This is TERRENCE (30's). PISTOL in hand, he arrives at the front door. Tries the knob. Locked.*

*PANNING even further we find a LODGING HOUSE, boarded up tight. A second armed intruder arrives at the door. He is JOSHUA (20's). After trying the knob, he turns and shakes his head at us.*

*WE RETURN our gaze to the Figure digging the hole. Completely engrossed in his work. No clue he is being watched.*

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

The rifle and scope we've been viewing the world through is lowered, revealing a pair of weary, desperate eyes.

They belong to LIAM (40's). He lies atop a hillside, keeping watch on the farm below. Like his cohorts, he is malnourished and covered in filth.

If we look close enough we will see the BRAND of a COILED RATTLESNAKE atop the right hand of each man.

Liam pulls a small DEVICE from his breast pocket and presses the only button on it. A red light FLUTTERS for a few seconds then stops.

Liam returns the device to his pocket. He sets the scope back to his eye for another look.

EXT. COPSE OF DEAD TREES - DAY

The Figure is still digging, oblivious to the intruders moving in from opposite sides. As they approach, the two men aim their weapons at the figure's back.

TERRENCE  
Hole is deep enough.

But the Figure doesn't skip a beat. Shovels dirt. Tosses it.

Terrence COCKS his weapon for effect.

TERRENCE (CONT'D)  
I said stop digging.

No response. So Terrence SMACKS the Stetson off the Figure's head, revealing a polished white DOME beneath.

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

POV THROUGH THE SCOPE:  
*Whatever this is, it isn't human.*

LIAM  
What the...

INSERT: *Liam's finger finds the trigger, ready to squeeze.*

Before he can, the MUZZLE of another RIFLE presses tight against the back of his head.

Liam's shut eye -- OPENS. He's caught.

EXT. COPSE OF DEAD TREES - DAY

The Figure stops digging. Turns around. And now the two men stare into THE INTIMIDATING FACE OF A HUMANOID COMBAT BOT.

This is KEVIN.

Terrence and Joshua hold their aim on Kevin.

TERRENCE  
Drop the shovel!

But the bot doesn't respond.

VOICE (O.S.)  
He only answers to me.

Liam is pushed out from behind a tree by the muzzle of a PULSE RIFLE -- a weapon unlike any we've seen before.

Behind Liam emerges a mythical looking man.

His name is **FORD** (60's).

Long, straggly hair wisps across his stoic face. His beard is thick. His eyes are intense.

FORD

And you're trespassing on my land.

LIAM

We're looking for a woman and her girl.

Liam slowly turns around. Sizes Ford up.

LIAM (CONT'D)

We tracked them this way. Maybe you've seen them?

Ford looks the men over before he answers.

FORD

They aren't here.

LIAM

You're sure about that?

FORD

I wouldn't say it if I wasn't.

Liam glances over the farm.

LIAM

Quite a place you have. Just the two of you running things?

Ford doesn't answer. Liam regards Kevin.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Doesn't talk much. Is he a service bot?

FORD

Combat.

Liam grins.

LIAM

Well, shit. If he don't talk, it must get awful lonely.

(MORE)

LIAM (CONT'D)  
I can't even imagine how that's  
been. If you'd like some company,  
we wouldn't mind a meal.

FORD  
What I'd like is for you to get off  
my land.

Liam notices Ford's shaky hands wielding the rifle.

LIAM  
We can do that too. Just as soon as  
we have a look inside.

FORD  
I told you. They aren't here.

LIAM  
We aren't leaving until we know for  
sure. Now you can invite us in or  
we can do it another way.

FORD  
You try and enter my home, you  
won't be leaving here at all.

Liam grins.

LIAM  
Is that right?

FORD  
You didn't think my bot was digging  
that hole for nothing, did you?

Liam's grin fades.

SNAP!

TERRENCE  
SPINS his aim on Ford and FIRES. Ford is winged in the  
shoulder.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Rain hell, Kevin!

KEVIN  
SNAPS the shovel up. Strapped beneath the handle is a SAWED-OFF SHOTGUN. Aimed at Terrence. His eyes widen and...

BOOM!

Terrence is BLOWN five feet back. He hits the ground. Dead.

LIAM

GRABS the muzzle of Ford's pulse rifle. A TUG and PULL begins.

JOSHUA

SCREAMS, UNLOADING into the bot. The bullets SMACK its frame. One, a direct hit to the head.

KEVIN

DIVES out of the hole. He ROLLS UP to his feet in two shakes, COCKS the shotgun and REDIRECTS his aim on Joshua.

JOSHUA

Is RUNNING for it. But he doesn't get far.

BOOM!

Joshua tumbles across the ground like a rag doll.

FORD

KICKS Liam back. He comes running as Ford takes aims. FIRES. The pulse rifle emits an ELECTRIC POP each time its lethal energy bursts are discharged.

Several BURSTS pierce Liam's chest. A clean hole BLOWS through his left eye. An exit wound of bone, blood and brain SHOOT OUT through the back of his head.

Liam crumples to the ground.

Ford stares down at the pulse rifle. A small display with a growing POWER BAR atop lets us know the weapon is RECHARGING.

A few seconds and PING. The rifle is CHARGED.

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

Atop the hill, Ford scans the bleak landscape with a pair of BINOCULARS, the pulse rifle slung over his shoulder.

And now we see THE HELL OUR WORLD HAS BECOME:

The farm is set atop a wide expanse of barren, dying land beneath a SCORCHED, MALIGNANT BLACK sky.

Atop the farmhouse is a RADIO TOWER. Next to it a BARN with an empty corral attached. West of the farmhouse, a futuristic WIND TURBINE stands. The large blades slowly turn.

And everywhere else -- Desolation. Nothing is growing. Dead trees poke up from the dry earth as far as the eye can see.

Ford checks a small PROXIMITY SCANNER in his hand.

INSERT OF THE SCANNER DISPLAY: A *GRID* opens revealing *SIX POINTS* of a hexagon, creating a *TRIP LINE* around the farmhouse. This is *Ford's security system*.

THE SCANNER SEARCHES THEN: **NO MOTION DETECTED.**

Satisfied, Ford pockets the device. He touches the wound on his shoulder. He grimaces from the pain.

EXT. COPSE OF DEAD TREES - DAY

Kevin drags Terrence to the hole and rolls the corpse in.

Ford kneels next to Liam. He lifts the dead man's right hand and studies the RATTLESNAKE BRAND atop it.

FORD  
Cover them.

Ford retrieves the discarded RIFLE and PISTOLS then moves off towards the farmhouse.

Kevin lifts Liam and drags him to the hole with the others. When the body drops atop the others, the small device we saw before slips out of Liam's pocket.

The red light BLINKS like a beacon.

Kevin shovels dirt into the hole, covering the device.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

At the front door, Ford opens a small PANEL concealed in the wood of the farmhouse. He TAPS a code on the NUMBER PAD.

Heavy BOLTS UNLOCK within. The door opens.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ford enters the farmhouse. The inside is in complete contrast to the rough and worn exterior:

Modern furnishings fill most of the room. A turntable rests in the corner with a shelf of records nearby. A couch is positioned at the center. A PIANO takes up another side.

Various PHOTOS SET IN FRAMES are positioned across a mantle above a fireplace. In the photos: *A younger Ford and his WIFE in various poses*.

And most importantly two AIR PURIFIERS, each in a corner, HUMMING and CHURNING. We will find these throughout the house.

INT. FARMHOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

A modern bathroom with a shower/tub and a vanity.

Ford pours alcohol from a brown CHEMICAL BOTTLE over his wound. He winces. He takes a swig from the bottle.

Ford tries to SEW up the wound with a needle and thread. His hands shake so bad, he can't do it.

He notices Kevin watching from the doorway.

FORD  
How about a little help?

MOMENTS LATER, Ford sits on the sink sipping from the bottle as Kevin finishes sewing him up. His eyes find the hole in the bot's head.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Your turn.

MOMENTS LATER, Kevin sits on the toilet. Ford inserts a thin pair of tweezers into the bullet hole. His hands shake, making it difficult. He applies a little pressure and POPS the slug out. He drops it in the sink.

EXT. COPSE OF DEAD TREES - DUSK

The sun is going down.

Ford and Kevin stand before the fresh grave of the recently deceased. Ford's head is lowered. A moment of silence and respect, even for men such as these.

FORD  
Rest.

Somewhere out in the distance, dogs HOWL. Ford reacts to it.

FORD (CONT'D)  
We better get inside.

INT. FARMHOUSE - UTILITY ROOM - DUSK

Ford WINDS up a handle connected to a power box. He THROWS the main switch.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DUSK

LIGHTS FLICKER on throughout the house.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A modern kitchen with all the appliances.

Ford sits at a table for two with his plate of food. He drinks from the same chemical bottle. Kevin is seated on the other side.

FORD

We lost a full days work today.  
We'll have to make up for it in the  
morning.

Feeling the bot's stare.

FORD (CONT'D)

Don't look at me like that. I asked  
them to leave. They refused. It's  
better we're alone. We have to keep  
our heads. Stay focused.

Ford continues eating.

FORD (CONT'D)

I said don't look at me that way.

He stops. The two lock into a dead cold stare.

Without warning, both ROCKET to their feet, knocking back  
chairs like old west gunslingers.

Quick as lightning, Kevin draws a pistol from the holster  
attached to his hip, easily beating Ford who draws his shaky  
finger on the bot.

They both hold there. The bot aiming the pistol, Ford aiming  
his finger. Tense.

Then Ford starts laughing. He picks up his chair, takes a  
seat and resumes eating.

FORD (CONT'D)

Go clean those guns.

Kevin TWIRLS the gun forward then backwards, landing it into  
the holster. Ford watches Kevin exit out, a hint of pride in  
his eyes.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Yes, sir. Fastest gun in the north,  
south, east and west.

Ford resumes eating.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

A room stacked with TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT. A gurney is at the back wall. Next to it is a work table organized with TOOLS, CABLES and SPARE PARTS.

In a corner is a SMALL DESK with a HAM RADIO. A VOICE sounds out of it. We'll come to know the voice as BRETT (50's).

BRETT (O.S.)  
I have more confirmed locations  
where extreme environmental danger  
is present. These are 'NO WALK  
THROUGH' zones, folks. Adjust your  
maps accordingly. We'll start from  
the northwest. Zones 7B, 14F...

Kevin sits into a poly-alloy chair.

Ford connects a CHARGE PORT with several coaxials into the back of the bot's head. A HUM and Kevin relaxes. The subtle light in the bot's eyes dim.

Ford touches the side of Kevin's face.

FORD  
You get some rest now.

Ford relaxes into his own chair and listens to Brett.

BRETT (O.S.)  
Stay safe out there, people. We'll  
get through this.

Ford rubs his eyes.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

A black hole sun rises over the farmhouse.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - MORNING

Behind the farmhouse is a large stretch of land populated by rows of INFANT TREES: an optimistic sight if anything were growing. Nothing is.

Each of the trees is marked and labeled. Ford examines one, the leaves wilting and dying. Kevin stands off to the side.

FORD

Collect a sample from each.

Kevin moves to the nearest tree. With a SCALPEL, the bot delicately shaves off an ultra-thin shard of the tree and collects it in a PETRI DISH.

INT. BARN - DAY

The inside of the barn has been converted into an elaborate science lab: TABLES with LAB EQUIPMENT and HARDWARE atop.

BURLAP SACKS are stacked atop each other against one wall.

INT. BARN - WORKSTATION - DAY

At the back of the barn is a WORKSTATION with a LAPTOP computer connected to two LARGE MONITORS.

Ford is seated here, his face pressed to the eye of a MICROSCOPE. Stacks of petri dishes are nearby.

Above the workstation, a large, framed portrait of a beautiful woman is set above the work table. We recognize her from the photos on the mantel. This is MAGGIE.

The size and placement of the portrait make this area feel less like a workstation and more like a holy shrine.

Just a few feet from the workstation is an open DOOR IN THE FLOOR. Bright light beams from the cellar below.

AIR PURIFIERS are HUMMING in this space too.

POV THROUGH THE MICROSCOPE:

*A cellular sample of the tree. The cells are inactive.*

Ford takes out the SLIDE and sets it atop a stack of others. He records video of himself using a LAPTOP:

FORD

The results of synthetics trial 64-271 appear typical. While subjects flourished in the lab, all failed in transition to the hostile conditions outside.

Ford sits back in his chair. Frustrated.

FORD (CONT'D)  
I'm still in need of a viable catalyst to bolster the tree's latent capability to thrive in existing conditions. Multiple combinations of fertilizers, chemicals and other additives have had no effect. Nothing yet.

Ford types into the laptop.

INSERT OF THE LAPTOP DISPLAY: *An application opens with a live feed -- an array of data. Each category is graphed like stock quotes with CURRENT/MINIMUM/MAXIMUM. A larger number on top sums it all up -- AIR QUALITY INDEX: 460.*

Ford frowns. He continues typing.

INSERT OF THE LAPTOP DISPLAY: *A GRAPH appears with various dates and the readings taken on those days, spanning over the course of a year.*

*The graph illustrates the current level of 460 is in the MAROON or 'HAZARDOUS' region, one level below 500 which is RED or 'UNINHABITABLE'.*

Ford articulates the dire situation.

FORD (CONT'D)  
The earth is suffocating. Without viable plant life, there is no hope of reversing the trend. Time is running out.

Ford shuts off the RECORD function on the laptop. His eyes find the portrait of his wife.

FORD (CONT'D)  
We'll just have to try again,  
Maggie.

Desperation grips Ford's face.

He types into the laptop and presses the SPACE BAR.

ON SCREEN: *A video recorded previously using the laptop begins to play. A woman sits in the same seat where Ford now sits. She adjusts the laptop display and we see it's MAGGIE. She continues to hum as she types.*

*MALE VOICE*  
(*off screen*)  
*Are you coming in?*

*MAGGIE*  
*Almost finished.*

*MALE VOICE*  
(*off screen*)  
*The others are getting restless in there.*

A *CLEAN CUT FORD* approaches from behind. He puts his arms around his wife. She smiles.

*MAGGIE*  
*So let them be restless.*

*CLEAN CUT FORD*  
*Your food is going to get cold.*

*MAGGIE*  
*I'll still have my husband to keep me warm.*

*They kiss.*

Watching the scene, Ford smiles. Happier times.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DUSK

The sun is going down. Ford approaches Kevin who stands amidst the dead trees with a shovel in hand. Unmoving.

Ford is perplexed.

*FORD*  
What are you doing? I asked you to clear these out.

Kevin doesn't budge. Ford approaches, concerned.

*FORD (CONT'D)*  
Kevin? Kevin!

No response. Ford's face crumples.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin lies on the gurney. The bot's face plate is open.

Ford inserts a fiber optic CABLE into the back of Kevin's head. The bot's eyes illuminate with a soft glow.

Ford types into a DIAGNOSTICS DEVICE.

INSERT OF THE SCREEN: DATA scrolls down the screen. When it stops: **DIAGNOSTICS REPORT -- CEREBRAL INFLUX FAILURE.**

Ford's face caves.

MOMENTS LATER, Ford lowers a pair of thin TOOLS into the bot's head. His shaky hands make it difficult.

He stops to catch his breath. He wipes the sweat from his brow. He lowers his hands back in, trying his best to keep them steady. He struggles. But it's impossible.

FORD  
Shit! SHIT!!!

He drops the tools and stares with contempt at his gnarled hands. His face crinkles with emotion.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Damn it, Kevin. Why couldn't you be more careful?

He composes himself then unplugs the diagnostics device from the bot. He closes the faceplate.

FORD (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry. It's my fault. I'm just not like I used to be.

He sits down in a chair. Devastated. And he remains here, holding vigil over his friend.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - MORNING

As Ford slowly awakens, he gains his bearings. He's sitting in the same chair and he's been here all night.

He rises and looks down at Kevin. Reluctantly, he pulls a white sheet to cover the bot.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DAY

Dirty and sweaty, Ford struggles to dig out the dead trees himself. But his shaky hands make it incredibly difficult. Yet he fights on. Determined more than ever.

## INT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DUSK

As the sun begins to set behind dark clouds, Ford sits utterly exhausted on the stoop, staring over the dead trees. He has made little progress.

## INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ford is drinking heavily. He's hardly touched his meal. He stares at the empty chair across the table.

He pours himself another drink from his chemical bottle. He tries to lift the glass. But his hand is so SHAKY he spills it. Booze flows across the table.

And that does it. Ford GRABS the glass and angrily THROWS it as hard as he can, SMASHING it against the wall. He WIPES his arm across the table, sending the dinner plate to the floor.

Seething, Ford grabs the chemical bottle and stumbles out of the room.

## INT. FARMHOUSE - GRAVE - NIGHT

Ford sits next to a grave marked by a CROSS. The name across it reads: MAGGIE.

A million thoughts are going through his mind. No telling how long he's been out here. Deep within his eyes, the isolation and loneliness have truly taken their toll.

FORD  
What now, Maggie? What now?

Ford takes a drink from his bottle.

## INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ford is passed out on the couch. The chemical bottle lies on the floor, on its side. Empty.

An eerie RED LIGHT is flashing in the corner of the room. A SOFT ALARM is sounding. But still Ford sleeps.

Until frantic KNOCKING comes at the front door...

BAM! BAM! BAM!!!

...and Ford JOLTS awake, falling off the couch. He stares around the room in a daze. His eyes find the flashing red light.

FORD

Oh, no.

He snatches the PROXIMITY SCANNER from his belt.

INSERT OF THE DISPLAY: **PROXIMITY ALERT! ZONE B.**

And someone is BANGING on the front door of the farmhouse. And with it comes YELLING.

Ford gathers quickly to his feet. Fear in his eyes.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Are you in there? We saw your light. Please.

Ford curses himself under his breath.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ford enters his bedroom with the PULSE RIFLE in hand. He has left the light on in here. He reaches for the light switch but debates.

Whoever is below continues KNOCKING and YELLING.

Ford turns the light off and moves swiftly to the open window. Taking a cautious position, he carefully moves back the drapes to get a better look outside.

Two figures stand on the stoop, a WOMAN (30's) and a YOUNG GIRL (12). The woman protectively steps in front of her daughter as she squints up at the window.

WOMAN

I can see you up there.

Ford moves back quick. Panicked. He curses under his breath.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Please. We need help.

FORD

Back away from the door!

Ford peeks again. More careful this time. He scans the surrounding darkness for others.

WOMAN

We're unarmed.

The woman lifts her arms to show her hands empty.

FORD  
I said back away!

The woman and child do as they're told.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Who else is with you?

WOMAN  
Just the child and I. Please. We  
have nowhere else to go.

The woman begins COUGHING.

FORD  
That's not my concern.

WOMAN  
My girl. She hasn't eaten in days.  
I'm not well. We need help.

Hearing this causes Ford more distress.

FORD  
There's nothing for you here!

WOMAN  
Please. I beg you...

FORD  
Leave!

They just stare.

FORD (CONT'D)  
I SAID GO!!!

Rejected, the woman quickly ushers her child off the stoop  
and they retreat back into the darkness.

Once they're gone, Ford slides down against the wall.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Quiet. In the distance, a small CAMPFIRE.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Seeing the campfire infuriates Ford. He debates what to do.  
Too much risk to go outside now and he knows it.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Daylight spans over the farmhouse.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford is sleeping where we last left him. The pulse rifle slips from his fingers and lands on the floor with a THUD.

Ford's eyes FLUTTER open.

He gathers the rifle and quickly scans back out the window. A dark trail of SMOKE funnels up into the sky from where the campfire used to burn.

Ford lifts the scope to his eye.

FORD'S POV:

*Two figures lie unmoving near the smoldering campfire.*

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Ford slowly approaches the smoldering campfire.

The woman lies on the ground. She's not moving. Her daughter sits beside her. Both are extremely dirty, their clothing ragged and worn. The girl's hair is a crusted tumbleweed.

Ford eyes his surroundings, the pulse rifle ready.

FORD  
Who else is out here?

The girl JUMPS, startled by Ford's presence. She takes a protective position over her mother's body.

FORD (CONT'D)  
What's wrong with her?

The girl doesn't even look up.

Ford pulls out a small GEIGER COUNTER. The moment he tries to move in, the girl places herself between him and the body.

FORD (CONT'D)  
If I can help her, I will. But I'm not going to go the rounds with you.

The girl softens. Ford leans down. He waves the Geiger counter over the woman as he gauges the readings. Hardly any movement on the needle.

Satisfied, Ford checks the woman. Her face is BRUISED. Lifting her arm, he checks for a pulse. He can't help but notice the fresh ROPE BURNS on both her wrists.

When he doesn't find one, he rises to his feet. He makes brief eye contact with the girl.

FORD (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry.

The girl doesn't like the sound of that. She crawls protectively over her mother. Holds her in her arms.

The sight is too much for Ford to bear. He walks away, leaving the girl to grieve.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Ford sits next to Kevin, the bot still lying dormant on the gurney. The sheet is pulled back, exposing Kevin's face.

FORD  
She's not my responsibility. I have my own problems to worry about. More so now with you out of commission. Maybe she'll wander some place else.

He lifts the bottle to drink and finds it empty.

INT. BARN - LAB TABLES - DAY

Ford works at a table where the tubes and burners are organized differently. This is Ford's STILL.

He fills a chemical bottle with a fresh batch then shuts off the nozzle and takes a test drink. Satisfied, he fills it to capacity then caps the bottle.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DUSK

Ford carries the bottle and a load of vegetables back to the farmhouse. As he walks, he scans out where the campfire was.

THE GIRL HASN'T MOVED.

She notices Ford. He quickly looks the other way. She watches him enter the farmhouse.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - DUSK

Ford is cutting up fresh vegetables but his thoughts get the better of him.

FORD

Damn it!

He drops the knife and leans over the counter for support. He mulls it over and over.

Then he looks up. A decision has been made. He grabs a dish towel and wipes his hands clean.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DUSK

The girl lies next to her dead mother. With her back to us, she hasn't noticed the man standing behind her -- Ford.

He's torn. This won't be easy. He slowly lifts a pistol.

HE AIMS IT AT THE BACK OF THE GIRL'S HEAD.

INSERT: *He places his quivering finger on the trigger.*

His face is straining, his entire body trembling as he urges himself on. But will he do it? Can he do it?

NO.

Ford lowers the weapon and catches the breath he was holding. He shoves the gun into his pants.

FORD

She needs to be properly buried.  
It's too late to do it tonight.  
We'll have to move her inside.

He waits for a response. Doesn't get one.

FORD (CONT'D)

You hear what I'm telling you? You  
can't stay out here. It isn't safe.

Ford gives up and moves in. He reaches to lift the woman. The girl meets him with a BITE to his forearm.

FORD (CONT'D)

Damn it!!!

Now he's PISSED. But the girl looks angrier.

FORD (CONT'D)  
You've had it now.

Ford RUSHES the girl.

He GRABS her up into his arms. The moment he touches her, she SCREAMS bloody murder, kicking, scratching and thrashing about, trying to get in another bite.

Ford takes hold of her hair, keeping her teeth from sinking into his flesh. He carries her back to the farmhouse.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - DUSK

Ford fights the girl into a modestly furnished bedroom. He opens the closet and shoves her in.

He SLAMS the door shut. He PULLS the bureau in front of it. The girl immediately kicks and punches against the door.

Ford backs away to catch his breath. He watches as the door RUMBLES and the girl's SCREAMS continue.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CLOSET - DUSK

Ford flips on the light and enters a closet. He reaches up high, digging around.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DUSK

Ford walks out of the farmhouse with a bed sheet. The sound of the girl screaming ECHOES from back inside.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DUSK

Ford spreads the bedsheet out. He drags the woman's body onto it then begins to wrap it.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - DUSK

Ford carefully lowers the woman's body onto the bed. He turns on a table lamp.

He returns to the closet. Listens. He PULLS the bureau away from the door. Then he slowly opens it, prepared for more struggle.

Instead, the girl is scrunched into the furthest corner, her back to Ford. Breathing heavy. Exhausted from fighting.

Ford leaves the closet door open and exits the room.

INT. FARMHOUSE - HALLWAY - DUSK

Ford closes the bedroom door. He locks it. Steps back.

INT. FARMHOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Water runs over the bite on Ford's arm. He winces.

He pours from the chemical bottle to clean the bite. He takes a drink. He's still shaking from the encounter.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - NIGHT

The door opens. The girl hides behind her mother's body.

Ford enters with a plate of food and a glass of water. He sets them both on the bureau then disappears into the closet.

The girl eyes the food ravenously, but she doesn't move a muscle. When Ford returns, he carries a blanket and pillow.

As Ford approaches the bed, the girl presses herself to the wall, ready for more trouble. But Ford merely sets the pillow and blanket down and exits. He closes the door and locks it.

The girl stares at the bureau. The plate of food and glass of water just waiting. Her wide eyes tell all -- she's starving.

She crawls off the bed and cautiously approaches the bureau, keeping an eye on the door. She snatches the glass and downs the water in long gulps.

She grabs the plate of food and rushes with it to the corner of the room. She begins to eat voraciously.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Ford sits with Kevin. Drinking. Thinking.

BRETT'S VOICE plays out over the ham radio:

BRETT (O.S.)  
...another attack by highway men  
yesterday. As I've mentioned  
before, these people are as well  
organized as they are dangerous.  
They can be identified by the brand  
of a snake on the right hand.

Ford perks up hearing this.

BRETT (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
I can't reiterate enough the importance of community and solidarity in these times. There's no reason for you to be alone out there. If you have any information, contact us on the affiliated frequencies.

Ford stares at the ham radio. Thinks about what was said.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ford lies in bed on his side, staring at the open window. The drapes flutter with the wind.

Too many thoughts to process. Sleep won't come easy.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAWN

Morning light creeps through the grey clouds above.

Somewhere out there is the sound of DIGGING.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - DAY

The door opens. Ford enters. The girl is on the bed, crouched behind her mother. No telling if she slept or not. The smell in here causes Ford's face to cringe.

Ford retrieves the empty dishes. He looks up at the girl. She hasn't let him out of her sight.

FORD  
We have to bury your mother. We can't leave her in here.

The girl doesn't respond. Ford crosses back to the door and exits.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Ford places the dishes in the sink. He flips the water on. He feels the temperature with his hand. An idea comes.

He searches through the cupboards until he finds what he is looking for - a mixing BOWL.

## INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - DAY

Ford reenters the room with a BOWL of water, some WASHCLOTHS and a BRUSH. The girl remains on the bed with her mother.

Ford crosses to the bed. He sets what he carries on the side table. The girl eases back against the wall as he takes a seat next to the body.

Ford dips a washcloth into the bowl of water. He wrings it out then uses it to gently clean the woman's left hand.

Feeling the girl's eyes on him, he offers it to her. The girl ignores the gesture, so he leaves it for her. He dampens another cloth and continues.

As the girl observes, the tension begins to ease. She slowly reaches for the washcloth, her eyes never leaving Ford. He gives her no notice.

With the washcloth in hand, the girl watches Ford. She lifts her mother's other hand and copies what he does.

Ford sets the bowl between them. He wrings out his cloth then dampens it. The girl does the same.

Ford begins to clean the grime from the woman's face. The girl adjusts her position and begins to help. As the girl continues, Ford sets the washcloth in the water and lifts the brush. He uses it to comb the woman's hair.

The girl stops to watch. Enthralled.

Noticing a HALF-HEART NECKLACE around the woman's neck, Ford sets down the brush so he can unclasp it.

He offers the necklace to the girl. She stares at it but doesn't take it.

Ford sets it on the bed then rises. He leaves the room. Once he's gone, the girl retrieves the necklace.

## INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CLOSET - DAY

Ford rummages through a box of clothing: Dresses, skirts, women's shoes.

## INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - DAY

The girl is now combing her mother's hair as Ford reenters. He displays a BEAUTIFUL DRESS for her to see.

FORD  
She'll look pretty in this.

The girl ignores him.

FORD (CONT'D)  
We have to say goodbye now.

But she doesn't budge.

FORD (CONT'D)  
We can't leave her in here.

The girl stops brushing. Lowers her head.

FORD (CONT'D)  
She would have wanted you to be  
brave.

The girl looks up at her mother. Then to Ford.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - GRAVE - DAY

Ford carries the woman, now adorned in the dress, to a HOLE dug a few feet away from Maggie's grave. He gently sets the body down. He retrieves a WHITE SHEET rolled up in his back pocket.

He lays the white sheet down then lifts the woman and places her atop. He wraps the sheet around her.

Once it's wrapped tight, he lifts the body and sets it into the hole. He claims the shovel out of the mound of dirt.

Ford begins to cover the body. The girl watches with dread. Before Ford can throw another load, she scurries into the hole and now hugs her mother.

Ford lowers the shovel.

FORD  
We have to bury her. And I can't  
with you in there.

The girl doesn't move. Ford grimaces. The sight is unbearable for him.

FORD (CONT'D)  
It's okay. She's not in that body  
anymore.

This doesn't help. Ford struggles.

FORD (CONT'D)  
She's in heaven now. You know where  
heaven is?

The girl looks up at the sky.

FORD (CONT'D)  
That's right. She's up there now so  
she can always watch over you.

The girl's gaze returns to the body.

FORD (CONT'D)  
One more hug goodbye then you come  
out of there.

The girl hugs her mother tight then crawls out of the hole.  
She perches off to the side, watching as Ford buries her.

INT. FARMHOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Ford turns on the faucet. He washes his face and hands. The girl watches from the safety of the doorway.

Ford finishes. He leaves the water running and wipes his hands and face with a washcloth.

FORD  
Your turn.

The girl doesn't budge.

FORD (CONT'D)  
You can't bury your mom looking  
like that.

Ford exits out. The girl steers clear of him as he does.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Well, go on.

The girl slowly crosses to the faucet. She looks to Ford then carefully places a hand beneath the running water. Then both, feeling its coolness.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Use the towel when you're finished.

Ford walks away.

The girl moves her hands through the water. Curious, she turns the knob, shutting the flow off and on.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Ford stands before a mirror. He uses a pomade to dampen his dry, ragged hair -- enough for him to comb it presentable.

He notices the girl watching him from the doorway. Despite her attempts, the dirt on her face is smudged even worse.

Ford sighs.

EXT. COPSE OF TREES - DAY

Ford and the girl stand before the grave. A somber moment.

FORD

Maybe you'd like to say something?

The girl looks at him with sad eyes but doesn't make a sound. So Ford bows his head. Again, he struggles. This is not a man who prays a whole lot.

FORD (CONT'D)

Lord. Please, take this woman into your care. She was a mother to this one here. She was loved. She will be missed.

The girl tenses. Ford feels it and hesitates.

FORD (CONT'D)

And if you don't mind, maybe you could have my Maggie watch over her. Show her the ropes. Let her know she's okay. Let her know she's still loved.

Ford's face tenses.

FORD (CONT'D)

And always will be.

After a moment of silence,

FORD (CONT'D)

Rest.

The two stare straight ahead. Lost in the moment. It's difficult to know who was affected more by the service.

Ford looks down at the girl, half-expecting her to be crying. She isn't.

FORD (CONT'D)  
We should eat.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Ford and the girl sit at the table together, eating.

While Ford uses a fork and knife, the girl eats with her hands. She drinks greedily from the glass of water, leaving dirty smudges behind. And Ford can't help but notice.

He refills her glass. The girl drinks. Her eyes look everywhere, taking in her new surroundings.

Ford notices the ugly ROPE BURNS on the girl's wrists, similar to those on her mother.

FORD  
What's your name?

She ignores him. Continues eating.

FORD (CONT'D)  
I'm just trying to help you. It only makes it harder if you won't talk.

No answer. Ford gives up.

EXT. MAGGIE'S GRAVE - DAY

The girl lies next to her mother's grave. She traces the dirt with a finger. She stares up at the cross erected over Maggie's grave.

INT. BARN - WORKSTATION - DAY

Ford plops down into his chair. Frustrated and exhausted. He opens the laptop and types into it. He presses the SPACE BAR.

ON SCREEN: *Another VIDEO of Maggie working in the barn begins to play.*

MAGGIE  
Today was a breakthrough. The computer models I've run are finally yielding positive results.

Maggie's excitement restores hope in Ford.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DAY

Reenergized by Maggie's words, Ford struggles to dig out the dead trees, gathering them into a WHEELBARROW.

MAGGIE (V.O.)  
These trees would reach maximum efficiency in six months.

EXT. BARN - DAY

Ford dumps the loaded wheelbarrow next to a COMPOST PILE. This is where Ford is creating his fertilizer.

MAGGIE (V.O.)  
The result being literal biofilters capable of restoring balance to our earth.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DUSK

Ford stops to gaze over his work. He's about an eighth of the way finished. So much more to go.

MAGGIE (V.O.)  
We can save this world. I know it.

Ford notices the girl watching him from the stoop.

FORD  
You get back inside. We'll be having dinner soon.

The girl does as she's told.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ford prepares dinner.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The girl moves through the living room, curious about everything here: the turntable. The TV. The piano.

She stops in front of the mantle and stares at the framed photographs of Ford and his wife.

Ford enters the living room. The girl quickly steps back.

FORD  
Time to eat.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ford watches the way the girl eats with her dirty hands.

FORD  
Only animals eat with their hands.

These words do little to affect her behavior.

FORD (CONT'D)  
You going to tell me your name? Or  
maybe you want me to guess?

The girl doesn't answer.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Lavonda? What about Cherokee? I  
know.

The girl looks up at him.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Lupe.

The girl returns to eating.

FORD (CONT'D)  
If you aren't going to tell me then  
I'll just have to call you Lupe.  
Lupe isn't so bad. Has a nice ring  
to it.

The girl stops eating. She stares sadly at her plate.

Realizing his attempt at humor has bombed, Ford's face grows serious. He stands and takes his dishes to the sink. With his back to the girl, he takes a heavy drink.

FORD (CONT'D)  
I should have let you and your  
mother in. I didn't because I  
wasn't sure who you were or if  
there were others.

The girl looks up at him. Ford struggles to say it.

FORD (CONT'D)  
I was afraid. I didn't know she was  
sick. I'm sorry.

He starts to wash his dishes in the sink. The girl debates and then,

GIRL  
Did she really go to heaven?

Ford is surprised she spoke but he keeps his back to her.

FORD  
Depends. Was she a good mother?

GIRL  
Yes.

FORD  
Then I suppose she did.

GIRL  
Was Maggie your wife?

This hits Ford like a ton of bricks.

FORD  
Yes.

GIRL  
What happened to her?

Ford's answer is another drink from his bottle.

GIRL (CONT'D)  
It's not Lupe.

FORD  
I didn't think it was.

The girl hesitates as if she were about to divulge a huge secret.

GIRL  
It's Violet.

Ford turns.

FORD  
You can call me Ford.

They stare at one another for a beat.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Before you and your mom arrived,  
some men came looking for you.

Violet is frightened hearing this. Ford sees it.

FORD (CONT'D)  
It's okay. You don't have to worry  
about them anymore.

VIOLET  
They're dead?

FORD  
Yes.

Violet's face turns to shock and awe.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Do you have any other family?

Violet's eyes lower.

VIOLET  
Not anymore.

This is difficult for Violet so Ford treads carefully.

FORD  
Were there others you were  
traveling with?

Violet nods.

FORD (CONT'D)  
And where are they?

Violet shrugs. She's in a daze.

FORD (CONT'D)  
If your people are still out there,  
we'll have to find them. Get you  
back to where you belong.

Violet isn't too thrilled hearing this.

Ford turns and resumes washing his dishes.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Ford reluctantly pulls the MICROPHONE to him. This isn't  
going to be easy. He hesitates then presses the CALL BUTTON.

FORD  
One, one, six, Whiskey, November.  
This is eight, four, eight,  
Charlie, Tango.

STATIC. He tries again.

FORD (CONT'D)  
One, one, six, Whiskey, November.  
This is eight, four, eight,  
Charlie, Tango.

Finally,

BRETT (O.S.)  
This is one, one, six, Whiskey,  
November. I don't recognize your  
call sign. Who is this?

Ford hesitates.

FORD  
It's me, Brett. It's Ford.

A long pause on the other end.

BRETT (O.S.)  
What is it you want?

FORD  
I need information and was hoping  
you might be able to help.

Brett's end remains silent.

FORD (CONT'D)  
I know I'm probably the last person  
you want to hear from. But I  
wouldn't have called if it wasn't  
important.

Ford waits for an answer. It doesn't come.

FORD (CONT'D)  
You still there, Brett?

BRETT (O.S.)  
Last time we spoke, you had a gun  
pointed at my face, Ford. What  
makes you think I'd listen to  
anything you have to say?

FORD  
I have a young girl here with me on  
the farm. The information I need is  
for her and her alone. I just ask  
that you hear me out.

Another pause.

BRETT (O.S.)  
You've got one minute of my time.  
Start talking.

FORD  
A few days ago a woman and the girl  
came knocking on my door. The  
mother was sick and died, leaving  
her child to my care. Three men  
bearing snake brands were looking  
for them. Maybe you might have  
heard something about it. I'd like  
to get this girl back to her people  
if they're still out there.

BRETT (O.S.)  
Snake brands I have heard about.  
They're a bad group of highway men.  
They don't leave survivors. I'll  
look into it. For the girl's sake.

FORD  
I realize the odds are probably  
slim which is why I need to ask.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Hearing Ford's voice, Violet approaches the closed door and  
presses her ear against it to listen.

FORD (O.S.)  
Maybe there is someone with you  
there who might take this girl if  
no one else can be found.

Violet frowns.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Ford waits for a response,

BRETT (O.S.)  
Still trying to grow those trees,  
aren't you?

FORD  
I made a promise, Brett.

BRETT (O.S.)  
I'm sorry for Maggie's loss, Ford.  
I truly am. But she never would  
have wanted it this way.  
(MORE)

BRETT (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
No matter how much she cared about  
those trees, people were more  
important.

Ford feels the blow.

A longer pause. Then...

BRETT (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Keep your radio set on this  
frequency. I'll make contact when I  
have something.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The door to Kevin's room opens and Ford exits out. Hearing  
Violet moving quick up the stairs, causes him to halt.

Upstairs, the spare bedroom door CLOSES shut.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DAY

Ford is back at it, digging out the dead trees but making  
slow progress. The grueling work is beginning to take its  
toll on him. He stops to rest on his shovel.

VIOLET (O.S.)  
Can mama really see me from up  
there? With all those clouds in the  
way?

Ford turns. Notices Violet on the stoop, staring up at the  
sky.

FORD  
Angels have their ways.

Ford resumes his work.

VIOLET  
She said the sky was blue once.  
Said one day those clouds will just  
float away.

FORD  
Well... She was wrong. I wouldn't  
be out here doing this if I knew  
different.

Violet moves closer as Ford continues to work.

VIOLET  
I can help.

FORD  
I'm doing just fine on my own.

Ford pulls up the tree he was working on and sets it into the wheelbarrow. He pauses to wipe his brow. Notices Violet, still standing there. Watching.

FORD (CONT'D)  
You really want to help?

Violet nods, beaming.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Then you go back inside and let me know if someone calls for me on that radio in there.

Violet frowns.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Well, go on.

Violet turns and trudges to the door.

Ford lifts the wheelbarrow up by the handles and pushes it towards the compost pile. He gives Violet one last look,

FORD (CONT'D)  
And don't touch the radio. Or anything else in that room.

Violet enters through the back door and she's gone.

EXT. BARN - DAY

Ford empties the wheelbarrow into the compost pile. Out of view of Violet, he takes a moment to rub the pain in his left hand.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Violet is sitting on the couch. Bored.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Violet exits out the front door, kicking rocks as she goes. She notices the barn.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DAY

Ford returns with the wheelbarrow. He lifts his shovel and returns to work.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Violet watches Ford from the side of the farmhouse. As soon as he's not looking, she runs towards the barn.

INT. BARN - DAY

Violet walks through the barn. Entranced. There is too much to see and explore in here. She notices the light SHINING UP from the open door in the floor leading to the cellar beneath the barn.

INT. BARN - WORKSTATION - DAY

Violet approaches the workstation. Her eyes find the large portrait of Maggie.

But then she sees the laptop on the desk. The SCREENSAVER is mesmerizing. She moves closer.

She reaches out and touches the keys. She inadvertently presses the SPACE BAR.

Maggie's voice begins to PLAY.

STARTLED, Violet STEPS BACK QUICK. She TRIPS on the laptop's power cable.

YANKING THE COMPUTER OFF THE DESK AND SENDING IT DOWN THE CELLAR STAIRS WITH A LOUD CRASH!

Horrified, Violet RUNS.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DAY

Ford is loading up another tree into the wheelbarrow when he notices Violet running from the barn.

FORD  
Hey! HEY!

But she disappears around the farmhouse. Ford looks back to the barn with trepidation.

INT. BARN - WORKSTATION - DAY

Ford lifts the power cable no longer attached to his laptop. The computer is no longer on the desk.

Ford searches for it but then he sees the trapdoor. His face falls. He approaches and looks down into the light below.

Ford disappears down the stairs.

Within moments he returns back up with the busted laptop in his hands. He sets it down on the table. He plugs in the power cable and tries to turn the computer on.

It's completely dead. Ford stares at it in disbelief.

FORD

What did you do?

He suddenly pounds the table. Now he's furious.

EXT. BARN - DAY

Ford comes out of the barn like a bat out of hell.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Ford searches around for the girl.

FORD

Where are you?

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ford enters.

FORD

Violet!

He hears SHUFFLING upstairs. He starts for the stairs.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - DAY

Ford opens the door and enters. The room is empty. He checks the closet. Also empty.

Just as he starts to exit he freezes.

He returns to the bed and kneels down to look beneath. Violet is scrunched into the furthest corner. Cowering with fear.

VIOLET  
Don't hurt me!

FORD  
Come out of there!

Violet shakes her head.

VIOLET  
Mama! Mama!

Ford reaches in further and GRABS Violet's foot. She begins KICKING and SCREAMING.

FORD  
Get out of there!

Ford DRAGS her out and pins her to the floor.

FORD (CONT'D)  
I told you to stay inside!

And Violet goes ballistic, THRASHING about as hard as she can. She is so frightened, she urinates herself.

VIOLET  
MAMA!!!

Seeing the urine stream onto the floor, Ford lets her go. Violet RUNS from the room.

SHOCKED - Ford remains where he is.

Downstairs, the front door opens then SLAMS shut. Ford lies on the floor. Exhausted. At a complete loss.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Seated at the table, Ford drinks from his bottle.

INT. BARN - WORK STATION - DAY

Ford inspects the laptop.

Something begins to BEEP. Ford retrieves his PROXIMITY SCANNER and checks it.

INSERT OF THE DISPLAY: **PROXIMITY ALERT! ZONE F.**

Ford's face caves.

FORD  
Goddamn it.

Ford returns to the workstation and sits down. His eyes find Maggie's, staring down at him. The weight of guilt is heavy.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Goddamn it!

He stands.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Ford exits the farmhouse with a backpack and his pulse rifle.

EXT. BARREN LANDSCAPE - DAY

Ford walks along the dead land. He stops to look around for the way he should go. He checks his Proximity Scanner and sighs.

He takes a RESPIRATOR MASK from his bag and straps it to his face. He looks in the direction he needs to go. Then reluctantly trudges on.

EXT. DRY LAKE - DAY

Ford follows Violet's footprints across a dry lake bed.

EXT. TREES - DAY

Ford walks through a forest of dead trees. Something SNAPS. He looks up, raising his rifle to shoot.

Violet has climbed up into one of the trees. She's scratched up good and her face is red. She's gasping for breath.

Ford straps the gun across his chest.

FORD  
What the hell are you doing out  
here? Come down!

He opens his backpack and retrieves another RESPIRATOR.

FORD (CONT'D)  
I said come down from there!

But Violet doesn't budge. She's trying to tell him something but can't get it out. Then her frightened eyes look past him.

Ford hears it before he sees it. A LOW GROWL.

Two MUTATED DOGS circle Ford from both sides. Angry. Vicious. Sharp teeth dripping saliva. Hounds of hell.

Ford starts to retrieve the gun but any moves he makes causes their GROWLS to heighten. So he freezes.

And with a dog on each side of him, he is in serious trouble and he knows it. So does Violet.

She and Ford lock into a stare. Violet breaks a small limb from the tree. Ford realizes what she's about to do.

FORD (CONT'D)

Don't...

Violet THROWS the limb as a diversion. She JUMPS from the tree and RUNS. The dogs GIVE CHASE.

FORD (CONT'D)

NO!

Violet doesn't get far. The dogs POUNCE. Dropping Violet.

The larger goes for the throat. But not before Violet can JAM her wrist into it's mouth. She SCREAMS.

RIFLE IN HAND, HERE COMES FORD!

He SLIDES across the dirt, landing on one knee. He raises the rifle to his eye. Aims. Fires.

BLAM! He's a crack shot.

The larger dog DROPS OFF Violet with a YELP.

The remaining dog RUSHES Ford. He drops the rifle as the dog LEAPS. He PULLS his BOWIE KNIFE just as the dog CRASHES into him, SLAMMING him to the ground. The two lie there in a bloody heap. Still for a second.

Then Ford rolls the dog off: The twelve-inch blade BURIED in the animal's chest. Ford YANKS out the blade and SHOVES the dog off.

He rises to his feet and crosses quick to Violet. She lies on her back, holding her bloody wrist. Her eyes wide. Face pale. Gasp for breath. She's in shock.

FORD (CONT'D)

Damn it! You shouldn't have done  
that! You shouldn't have!

Her breathing shallow, Violet passes out. Deep concern replaces the anger on Ford's face. He straps the second respirator over her face. He RIPS part of his shirt and uses it to wrap around her wrist.

EXT. DRY LAKE - DAY

Ford carries Violet back the way he came.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Ford returns with Violet to the farmhouse.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - DAY

Ford sets Violet down on the bed. He pulls off his mask. Then hers. She's still out cold. He checks her pulse to be sure. Finding one, he sighs relief.

INT. FARMHOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Ford opens the cabinet and locates the first aid kit.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - DAY

Ford cleans Violet's wound then wraps her arm in a bandage.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DUSK

Ford sits on the stoop, staring over the remaining dead trees. The garden is almost clear but a burden of thoughts weigh heavily on him.

He takes a drink from his bottle.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ford cooks a stew.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ford enters the bedroom carrying a tray with a bowl of stew and a glass of water. Violet is still asleep.

Ford sets the tray on the side table and takes a seat on the bed. He reaches out to touch her hair but thinks better of it. He rises and exits out, closing the door behind him.

INT. FARMHOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ford locks the door.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ford eats and drinks alone.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Ford sits at the desk, staring at the ham radio. Hoping for a response. But none comes.

Ford looks to Kevin.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Ford has fallen asleep at the desk. Hearing MOVEMENT he stirs awake. Another NOISE and he grabs his rifle.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ford cautiously exits out of Kevin's room, the rifle aimed. Another CREAK and Ford SPINS. Only to find Violet on the staircase. Startled to see Ford, she turns and runs back up.

FORD

Wait!

But she's gone.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - DAY

Ford enters the bedroom. It appears empty but he knows where Violet is. He approaches the bed and crouches down to look under.

Beneath the bed, Violet is curled up into a ball. Seeing Ford, she begins to rock back and forth. Frightened.

VIOLET

Mama. Mama. Mama.

So Ford stands up and retreats to the back wall where he slides down into a sitting position. At a loss.

After some reflection, his eyes find Violet beneath the bed. He stares at her with contempt.

FORD  
I'm not going to hurt you.

He gets up and exits the room. As soon as he's gone, Violet stops rocking.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DAY

Ford is back to work digging out trees when Violet approaches. Ford feels her presence but ignores her, turning his back to solidify it.

Violet works up her courage.

VIOLET  
I'm sorry.

Ford keeps working.

VIOLET (CONT'D)  
I said I'm sorry.

Ford doesn't break a beat. So Violet starts back inside. Ford stops what he's doing.

FORD  
You had no business being in that barn. I asked you to stay inside and you didn't.

VIOLET  
I didn't mean any harm.

Ford turns and stares at Violet.

FORD  
There were things on that computer...

Ford fights to control his temper.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Things that meant a great deal to me. Things I can't replace. You understand?

Violet bows her head in shame.

FORD (CONT'D)  
And then you run off. Where did you  
think you were going?

Violet shrugs. Ford shakes his head.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Jumping down from that tree like  
you did. Just stupid. That was a  
terrible choice you made. To put  
yourself in harms way. You could  
have been killed.

Ford softens.

FORD (CONT'D)  
You saved my life.

Violet finally looks up. It takes every bit of him to  
dispense with his pride and say it,

FORD (CONT'D)  
Thank you.

A slight smile forms on Violet's lips.

FORD (CONT'D)  
But don't you ever do anything like  
that again. You understand?

The smile disappears and Violet nods.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Now how about you tell me how you  
got the bedroom door unlocked.

Violet reluctantly shows him a HAIR PIN. Ford moves closer to  
get a better look.

FORD (CONT'D)  
How many locks have you picked?

Violet shrugs.

FORD (CONT'D)  
A lot or a little?

She hesitates.

VIOLET  
A lot.

Ford debates. Violet waits, expecting another angry tirade.

FORD

Show me.

INT. FARMHOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Violet demonstrates with her hair pin. She expertly opens the door.

FORD

Ever pick one you couldn't open?

Violet shakes her head. Ford studies her.

FORD (CONT'D)

Do you still want to help?

Violet slowly nods. Unsure of his meaning.

INT. KEVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Ford pulls the sheet off of Kevin. Seeing the bot causes Violet to take a few steps back.

FORD

It's okay. He's not going to hurt you.

VIOLET

Is he dead?

FORD

People die. He just needs to be repaired. But I can't do it. Not with these hands.

Ford lifts his shaky hands.

FORD (CONT'D)

But if you can pick a lock like you say, then maybe you can.

Ford opens Kevin's faceplate. This scares Violet. Ford watches her.

FORD (CONT'D)

Don't be frightened. I promise he won't harm you.

Violet takes a step closer. She looks into the opening in Kevin's face. She's not sure what to make of it.

FORD (CONT'D)  
You won't make him any worse off.  
Believe me.

VIOLET  
I don't know how.

FORD  
I can tell you how.

But Violet looks doubtful.

VIOLET  
I can't.

FORD  
You broke my laptop and that  
requires some penance on your part.

Ford can see she has no idea what this means.

FORD (CONT'D)  
That means you need to do something  
to make up for your wrong doing. If  
you help me with Kevin here, then  
you and I will be square.

Violet considers then nods.

IN A SERIES OF SHOTS: *Ford assists Violet as she works over Kevin. With two TOOLS in her hands, he guides her through the intricate repair. She becomes more confident as they proceed.*

With Ford's help, Violet installs an ultra-thin card into Kevin.

VIOLET  
Mama said there were nice dogs  
once.

FORD  
She's right about that.

VIOLET  
What happened to them?

FORD  
Some died. The rest went wild.  
Those dogs that attacked you were  
reacting the only way they knew  
how.

VIOLET  
Could they ever be nice again?

Violet connects fiber optic wiring.

FORD

All you can do with a wild dog is  
put him down.

VIOLET

How come?

FORD

He might be nice for awhile. But  
the time will come when he'll turn  
on you. The world is a more  
desperate place now. And they don't  
know better like we do. When  
something bad happens, we can  
choose to let it affect us, control  
us. Then we'll be just as wild as  
those dogs. Or we can choose to  
take a higher road. Be honest and  
true to ourselves and those around  
us. Live the way we know is right.

This affects Violet deeply.

VIOLET

What if I don't know?

FORD

When the time comes. You'll know.

With the card in place, Ford hands her a LASER TOOL.

FORD (CONT'D)

Last one. Solder it like I showed  
you.

Violet takes the tool and begins to solder.

MOMENTS LATER: Ford types into the DIAGNOSTICS DEVICE.

INSERT OF THE SCREEN: **KVN-500 - INITIATING REBOOT SEQUENCE.**

Ford holds his breath.

Waiting. Waiting.

INSERT OF THE SCREEN: **REBOOT SEQUENCE INITIATED.**

Kevin's eyes emit a soft glow.

Ford looks to Violet. Surprised it worked.

FORD (CONT'D)  
You did it.

Violet breaks into a smile. Then Kevin moves causing her to jump back. Ford throws up a hand to stop her.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Don't be alarmed. Sit up, Kevin.

Kevin sits up. But Violet gets nervous.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Say hello to Violet.

Kevin lifts his hand and waves.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Violet is our friend. She is to be protected. Not harmed. Nod for confirmation.

Kevin nods.

FORD (CONT'D)  
See that? Means he can never hurt you.

VIOLET  
Can he talk?

FORD  
No. But he listens real good. Get into your chair, Kevin.

Kevin gets off the gurney and does as told. Violet is amazed watching this strange being move. Ford stares at Violet. Dirty face and hands. Hair a rat's nest. Clothes tattered.

Ford attaches the CHARGE PORT to the back of Kevin's head then he steps back with Violet.

FORD (CONT'D)  
I think this calls for a celebration. What do you say?

Violet nods in agreement. But staring over the girl, Ford's eyes grow sad.

FORD (CONT'D)  
When was the last time you bathed?

Violet shrugs.

INT. FARMHOUSE - BATHROOM - SHOWER - DAY

A hand turns a knob.

WATER spills out of the shower head. Ford feels it with his hand, adjusting for the right temperature.

Violet watches from the doorway. Scared. But it's hard to tell who is more uncomfortable, Ford or the girl.

FORD

You ever had a shower before?

Violet shakes her head.

FORD (CONT'D)

There's nothing to it. You just take off your clothes and get in.

Ford lifts a worn bottle.

FORD (CONT'D)

Wash your hair with this.

Ford points to a towel.

FORD (CONT'D)

You can dry off with when you finish. That knob turns the water on or off.

Ford steps out to allow her room. But Violet doesn't move. And Ford can feel her distrust.

FORD (CONT'D)

I'll shut the door behind you.

Violet reluctantly enters the bathroom. Ford closes the door. Violet stares at it. Untrusting. She slowly undresses.

INT. FARMHOUSE - BATHROOM - SHOWER - DAY

Violet enters the shower. She looks up at the water spilling from the nozzle. She steps into it.

She stares down at her hands as dirt and grime begin spilling off of her. Something begins to emerge -- Pale white skin.

Violet lowers her head and allows the water to spray through her hair. Difficult to ignore this exhilarating feeling.

And Violet is enjoying it.

INT. FARMHOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Ford stands at the door to the only room we have not yet been in. Staring at the door, he's hesitant.

Using a pair of keys, he unlocks the door. He presses it open. With trepidation, he enters.

INT. FARMHOUSE - CHILD'S BEDROOM - DAY

A bedroom decorated for a girl. Besides the dust, everything in here looks brand new: A crib, a bed, toys for all different ages, a book shelf filled with reads for children.

Ford stares over these items. And judging from his look, it's been years since he's been in here.

INT. FARMHOUSE - BATHROOM - SHOWER - DAY

Violet scrubs her hair when the bathroom door OPENS.

FORD (O.S.)  
You okay in there?

Violet freezes.

VIOLET  
Uh-huh.

FORD  
Take your time. I'm just leaving  
something for you.

Some movement then the door CLOSES.

INT. FARMHOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Violet pulls back the curtain. Sitting on the toilet is a folded DRESS, a pair of SHOES, SOCKS and a BRUSH.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ford is making dinner. But tonight he's preparing something extra special. And then Violet enters the room. Ford feels her presence and turns to look:

AND THERE SHE STANDS, WEARING THE DRESS.

This is not the same girl we've seen before. In fact, previously it would have been difficult to define her as such. Now is a much different story.

Her hair is naturally curly. Her skin pale white. Her eyes shine like diamonds. Young. Innocent. Beautiful.

Ford is stunned. Mouth agape. He wasn't quite expecting this.

Seeing Ford's expression, causes Violet some doubt. She looks down at herself then back up at Ford. A lack of confidence of her face.

VIOLET

I look funny.

FORD

You look like a young lady.

Violet beams.

MOMENTS LATER, AT THE TABLE: Ford sets a plate before Violet.

FORD (CONT'D)

Ever had spaghetti?

Violet shakes her head.

Ford uses a pair of TONGS to dish out the NOODLES. Then he pours on the red SAUCE. Steam rises up into the air.

He does the same for his plate.

FORD (CONT'D)

I've been saving that last box for a special occasion. This might as well be it. I'd hate not to use it. And I love spaghetti.

He sits down at the table.

FORD (CONT'D)

Bon appetite.

Ford begins to eat. He savors the first bites.

Violet stares at her plate. There is no way for her to use her hands in this scenario. She watches Ford eat, how he uses his fork and knife.

She slowly lifts her fork and spoon. She watches how Ford twirls the spaghetti up. She tries to duplicate but fails.

She tries again with no luck. And then Ford notices.

Without too much show, he demonstrates using his fork and spoon to create the perfect bite then places it in his mouth.

While Ford chews, Violet tries again.

This next attempt is rough around the edges. But she manages to twirl it up enough to eat. Ford acknowledges by taking another bite, his eyes never leaving Violet.

And now it's a volley back and forth as one takes a bite then waits for the other to follow. As Violet begins to keep a steady rhythm with Ford, she breaks into a smile.

FORD (CONT'D)

Think you're pretty smart, don't you?

Violet nods. Gives Ford a smile. He takes a drink from his bottle. Watching him, she downs her glass of water then presses it forward for him to fill.

FORD (CONT'D)

I don't think so.

VIOLET

What is it?

FORD

Medicine.

VIOLET

Are you sick?

Ford intentionally doesn't answer., continuing his meal in silence.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin sits on the couch. Violet is looking at the various records in Ford's collection as he exits the kitchen with bottle in hand.

FORD

Ever heard a record before?

Violet shakes her head. Ford crosses to her. He searches through the records then chooses one. He takes out the vinyl and sets it on the turntable. He places the needle atop.

A SONG begins to play. Ford smiles. He looks to Violet who is mesmerized as it spins. Ford moves to the mantle. He stares over the photographs as he drinks.

FORD (CONT'D)  
This was Maggie's favorite.

Violet turns to him.

VIOLET  
What happened to her?

Ford contemplates the question.

FORD  
The world wasn't always like this.  
Sometimes people do things without  
understanding the consequences of  
their actions.

Ford pauses to reflect on this.

FORD (CONT'D)  
This farm became a safe haven for  
Maggie and I. There were others we  
invited in. We thought they would  
understand what we were trying to  
do with the trees. But they didn't.

Ford struggles to continue.

FORD (CONT'D)  
And maybe I was too hard. One night  
a fight broke out. One of the men  
pulled a gun. A shot was fired.  
Meant for me.

Waves of emotion blow through Ford.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Maggie got in the way and...

Ford takes a long drink to curb his emotions. He's drunk.

FORD (CONT'D)  
It's late. You better get to bed.

Violet starts for the stairs then stops. Turns.

VIOLET  
Good night.

With his back to her, Ford doesn't answer. Lost in the  
memory.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Violet lies in bed. But she cannot sleep. The music continues to play downstairs.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Drunk, Ford thumbs through a photo album. PICTURES of he and Maggie together. His eyes are a mess of sadness.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The needle is at the end of the record but it continues to spin, hissing static. Violet creeps back down the stairs and approaches the sofa.

She stares down at the crumpled man passed out on the floor. Ford's bottle is discarded nearby. She lifts it to smell the contents. The stench burns her nose.

She picks up the photo album, upturned on the floor. A sole photo takes up the last page.

*INSERT: A middle-aged Maggie, smiling big, holding her PREGNANT belly.*

Looking on Ford, her heart BREAKS seeing him this way.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Another bleak dawn arrives.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

CLOSE ON Ford sleeping. His eyes open and he sits up. He immediately GRABS his pounding head.

Then he realizes: Violet's blanket is draped over him and her pillow has been placed under his head.

Lying on the couch is little Violet. She looks like she tried her best to stay awake all night to watch over Ford.

Ford is moved. Humbled by this gesture of kindness.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford carries the sleeping child and lies her on the bed.

Noticing the poor state of the wrap on Violet's arm, Ford rises and disappears out the door. He returns with the first aid kit and a bottle of his brew.

Ford removes the wrap and inspects the wound. He uncorks the bottle and pours the contents over the young girl's arm.

Feeling the sting Violet JERKS awake, yanking her arm to her chest. Ford puts up a hand.

FORD

It's okay. Just replacing the bandage. Nothing more.

Violet holds there. Unsure.

FORD (CONT'D)

It's going to get infected if I don't put a bandage on that.

Violet looks down at the wound then she gives up her arm. Ford takes a large ace bandage from the first aid kid and applies it over the wound, careful not to overstep his bounds.

FORD (CONT'D)

Now I think it would be wise if you got some rest.

Violet nods as Ford pulls the blanket over her.

VIOLET

Are you going to die?

FORD

Now why would you say that?

VIOLET

You said you were sick.

Ford is taken aback.

FORD

Not any time soon.

Ford lingers, his eyes fixed on the ROPE BURNS on her wrists. He must ask.

FORD (CONT'D)

Who did this to you?

Violet looks away.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Those men?

Violet's face darkens at the thought. She doesn't answer.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Look me in the eye, Violet.

Reluctantly, she does.

FORD (CONT'D)  
No one is ever going to harm you  
again. I promise.

Violet just stares.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Get some sleep.

Violet nods and rolls away from him.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DAY

Ford and Kevin work together, digging up the last of the trees. Violet wanders out of the house to watch.

VIOLET  
Are you going to plant more trees?

FORD  
Yes.

VIOLET  
But won't they die?

FORD  
That doesn't mean we shouldn't keep  
trying.

Ford eyes her.

FORD (CONT'D)  
And what I'm planting aren't just  
trees.

VIOLET  
What are they?

FORD  
Like your mama said, the sky was  
blue once. But it won't go back the  
way it was without trees.

(MORE)

FORD (CONT'D)

They have to grow first and what little sunlight we have makes that impossible unless we make the trees special.

VIOLET

How do you do that?

Ford is becoming more and more infused by Violet's growing fascination and interest.

FORD

How about I show you?

INT. BARN - DAY

At the back, Ford opens a refrigerator and carefully removes a tray of SIX CARTRIDGES full of viscous liquid.

He carries the tray to a table where a large machine with a PRINTER HEAD awaits. This is a BIOPRINTER.

Ford loads the tray of cartridges into the bioprinter. He then closes the chamber and programs it. The machine suddenly springs to life.

The Printer Head moves up and down/right and left. It works quickly and efficiently. And it's creating something.

Violet moves closer.

Within moments we see the amazing result: A SEED. Synthetic biology at its finest.

Once the acorn is complete, it is lifted by a small ROBOTIC ARM and set in an EGG TRAY.

Ford looks to Violet. Smiles.

FORD

Now we have our special seed.

VIOLET

What do you do with it?

INT. BARN - WORK STATION - DAY

Ford and Violet enter the door in the floor.

INT. GREENHOUSE - DAY

Violet follows Ford down the stairs.

Halfway down she freezes. In complete awe of...

THE MASSIVE GREENHOUSE

Numerous GROW LIGHTS attached to grids hang above. The greenhouse is split into two sections. Each section has a different light level:

- *SAPLINGS in VARIOUS STAGES of growth. This is the larger section of the greenhouse. The majority of grow lights are being utilized here.*

- *A small GARDEN growing herbs, plants and vegetables. This is Ford's source of food.*

Ford and Violet walk along the saplings.

FORD

Once we have the seed, we plant  
them down here where they can grow  
just enough to be planted outside.

IN A SERIES OF SHOTS:

*Ford, Violet and Kevin transfer the infant trees from the greenhouse to the garden.*

*IN THE GARDEN, Ford teaches Violet how to properly plant the trees: Using shovels they dig holes, place the tree inside then cover it with soil.*

SERIES OF SHOTS ENDS.

INT. GREENHOUSE - DAY

At the side of the greenhouse is a SQUARE DOOR in the wall. Ford opens it. He FLIPS on a light. It's a crawlspace.

INT. CRAWLSPACE - DAY

There are several BURLAP SACKS inside but the crawlspace continues beyond.

INT. GREENHOUSE - DAY

Violet stares into the crawlspace.

VIOLET  
Where does it go?

FORD  
Back inside the house.

Ford pulls a sack out.

BACK NEAR THE TREES, Ford demonstrates how to plant the genetically engineered acorn in potted soil. As they plant, Ford adds fertilizer from one of the BURLAP SACKS.

FORD (CONT'D)  
This is the most important part.

VIOLET  
What is it?

FORD  
Super food for the trees so they can grow outside. But so far it hasn't worked.

VIOLET  
Why?

FORD  
That's the million dollar question. And I need to find the answer. When the trees begin to blossom, I'll know I found it.

Ford reflects on this.

FORD (CONT'D)  
And once that happens, I won't have to do any of this. I'll just be collecting seeds from the trees that grow and planting them wherever I can. I keep planting and eventually that sky is going to turn blue again.

Ford smiles.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ford clears the dirty dishes from the table.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin sits on the couch. Violet cautiously approaches.

VIOLET  
Can you wave?

Kevin doesn't respond. Ford appears in the doorway.

VIOLET (CONT'D)  
You can do it if you try.

Still, Kevin doesn't move.

FORD (O.S.)  
He only responds to me, I'm afraid.

Violet spins around to find Ford standing in the doorway, observing. She backs away from Kevin.

FORD (CONT'D)  
How about a game?

VIOLET  
A game?

FORD  
Ever play hide and seek?

Violet gives Ford a look of contempt.

VIOLET  
Of course, silly.

FORD  
He can play if you're up for it.  
But I have to warn you. He's real  
good.

Violet's eyes turn serious.

VIOLET  
So am I.

Ford chuckles.

FORD  
Sounds like a challenge. Hide and seek, Kevin. Violet and I are your opponents. The sofa is base. Count to twenty and begin.

Kevin begins to BEEP.

FORD (CONT'D)  
That means we better hide.

Violet RUNS for the stairs and up she goes. Ford follows.

## IN A SERIES OF SHOTS:

Violet, Ford and Kevin play HIDE AND SEEK. In the Child's Bedroom, Violet hides beneath the bed. Ford behind the door. Kevin enters. Goes to the closet.

Ford signals for Violet to run. She crawls out from beneath the bed and dashes for the door. Kevin sees her and chases.

Violet lets out a shriek. Ford closes the door before Kevin can reach her, allowing her to escape.

In a second round, Violet hides behind the shower curtain. Ford in the Master Bedroom. Kevin enters the bathroom and starts for the curtain. Before he can, Ford enters the hallway.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Hey, metal head.

Kevin turns. Ford RUNS. The bot chases allowing Violet to come out of hiding.

Violet sneaks out into the hallway. Kevin enters the Child's Bedroom, searching for Ford. But the bot is looking in the wrong place because Ford is in the spare bedroom. And Violet spots him.

Seeing Violet, Ford motions downstairs. Violet nods.

FORD (CONT'D)  
(inaudible/mouthing)  
One... Two... Three!

Ford and Violet MAKE A BREAK for the stairs. Hearing them, Kevin SPINS. Sees them. Gives chase.

Ford and Violet reach the bottom of the stairs but Kevin JUMPS over the railing and lands in front of them.

Violet SLIDES between the bot's legs and tags the sofa like a professional baseball player.

Ford CHEERS. Violet raises her hands in victory.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Now that's the way it's done!

Violet is beaming.

VIOLET  
Again! Again!

Ford is winded.

FORD

I need a breather. And I need to finish those dishes in there. Why don't the two of you play a few rounds together?

Violet shakes her head.

FORD (CONT'D)

I told you. You don't have to be afraid of him. He won't harm you.

But Violet isn't so sure.

FORD (CONT'D)

What if I gave you voice command over him. That means you can tell him to stop any time you want.

Violet considers it. Then she nods.

FORD (CONT'D)

Stand down for instruction, Kevin.

Kevin relaxes, leans forward. The bot's eyes dim.

FORD (CONT'D)

System administration. Voice command. Add user.

Ford turns to Violet.

FORD (CONT'D)

Tell him your name.

VIOLET

Violet.

FORD

Lock user. End of instruction.

Kevin's eyes light back up. The bot stands straight.

FORD (CONT'D)

Now tell him to wave.

VIOLET

Wave, Kevin.

Kevin waves at Violet. She giggles. Now Ford is the one who is beaming.

FORD

I think he likes you. Tell him what it is you want to play.

VIOLET

How about hide and seek?

FORD

Don't ask. Tell him.

VIOLET

Let's play hide and seek, Kevin.

FORD

That's better. Now where is base?

VIOLET

Base is the sofa, Kevin.

Violet is enjoying every second of this.

FORD

Violet is your opponent now, Kevin.  
So count to twenty and begin.

Kevin begins to beep and Violet tears off for the stairs. As soon as she is gone, Ford lowers his voice to the bot.

FORD (CONT'D)

Whatever you do, don't touch her.  
Let her win.

He pauses.

FORD (CONT'D)

She's a smart kid. So be creative about it.

He pats Kevin's shoulder.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

As Ford does the dishes, we hear Violet squealing with delight as she and Kevin play their game.

Ford lets go a smile.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford is sleeping when Violet's voice stirs him awake.

He sits up to wipe his tired eyes. Then listens.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford pauses in the doorway.

Violet is attending to Kevin who is seated on the bed.

VIOLET

You hold still now. It's not going  
to hurt none. I have to put it on  
or it will get infected.

Violet takes a large ace bandage from the first aid kit and applies it over the bullet hole in Kevin's head.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

See? Isn't that better? Look. I  
have one too.

Violet shows Kevin her bandage. Then she cautiously reaches to take the bot by the hand. But due to Ford's previous command, Kevin pulls it away.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

It's okay. You don't have to be  
scared. No one is going to hurt  
you.

Ford is moved by the tender moment. Feeling his presence, Violet spins around. Sees Ford.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

He had a hurt on his head.

FORD

He did. Thank you for doing that.

Half-expecting Ford to be mad, Violet is relieved.

FORD (CONT'D)

Are you hungry?

Violet nods.

FORD (CONT'D)

Why don't you run along to the  
kitchen. Kevin and I will be down  
shortly.

Violet does as she's told. Then Ford approaches Kevin. Staring at the bandage on the bot's head, he grins at the absurdity.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Don't look at me, pal. You wanted  
her to stay.

He takes a seat next to the bot as his face grows serious.

FORD (CONT'D)  
I think she's growing fond of you.  
If she wants to hold your hand, you  
go ahead and let her.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DAY

Ford, Violet and Kevin work together in the tree garden.

On one of the trees, Violet notices a spider spinning a web.

VIOLET  
Come here, Kevin. Come and look.

But Kevin keeps working alongside Ford. Violet frowns.

VIOLET (CONT'D)  
Kevin.

FORD  
He's working now. He can look  
later.

VIOLET  
I thought he does whatever I tell  
him?

Ford stops shoveling.

FORD  
Usually he will. But right now he  
needs to work. Your command can  
never override mine.

VIOLET  
How come?

FORD  
He can only answer to one boss. And  
that boss is me.

Ford returns to his work. But he can see this has taken the  
wind from Violet's sails.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Tell you what. How about we go  
halves with Kevin?  
(MORE)

FORD (CONT'D)  
I'll take him during the day. And  
you can have him after dinner. What  
do you say?

Violet nods her agreement with a smile.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

As Ford cleans his rifle, the sound of Violet playing with Kevin can be heard throughout the house.

Violet's laughter causes Ford to stop what he's doing and listen.

And then a lone voice calls out from the ham radio,

BRETT (O.S.)  
Eight, four, eight, Charlie, Tango.  
This is One, one, six, Whiskey,  
November.

Ford rises.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Ford sits before the radio. The door to the room is closed.

BRETT (O.S.)  
Unfortunately no one knows anything  
about this woman or her child. More  
than likely the others they were  
with are dead.

FORD  
I figured as much but just wanted  
to be sure.

BRETT (O.S.)  
I've spoken to the others about  
this girl. We can take her but we  
need to discuss how to get her  
here.

Ford nods. He's clearly torn.

FORD  
I don't mind bringing her.

A pause.

BRETT (O.S.)  
I feel I need to be clear, Ford.  
The offer is for the girl only.

FORD  
I understand. And I thank you.

His face quivers.

FORD (CONT'D)  
I know I've used up all my favors,  
Brett. But I need to ask one more.  
I need to know this girl is going  
to be okay.

BRETT (O.S.)  
There are some good people here,  
Ford. And we'll do our best. That's  
the best I can do.

Ford nods.

BRETT (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Now let me give you the coordinates  
of where we can meet. Do you have  
something to write this down?

Ford searches the desk for pencil and paper.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The door to Kevin's room opens and Ford exits out.

Violet and Kevin sit together on the sofa, looking over a book. It's obvious Violet can't read but she's making up a story from the picture she sees.

VIOLET  
And then they walked down the road  
together. The best of friends that  
ever could be. Look, they're so  
happy.

Noticing Ford, Violet turns back a few pages and lifts the book for him to see.

VIOLET (CONT'D)  
It's Kevin and me.

The illustration in the book is of: DOROTHY OILING THE TIN MAN.

FORD

I see.

Ford stares at her with sadness as she continues with her story, turning the page.

FORD (CONT'D)

Violet, there's something we need to talk about.

Violet lowers the book. Ford mulls over how to tell her as he enters the room.

FORD (CONT'D)

There's a community of people about a weeks journey from here. Men, women, even children. Some your age. One of the men there is a friend of mine. Brett. He agreed to let you come live with them.

Violet's happy demeanor goes south.

VIOLET

But I want to stay here.

FORD

That's just not a good idea.

VIOLET

I could help you. With the trees.

FORD

I have Kevin and he's all the help I need.

Violet feels the sting.

FORD (CONT'D)

These are good people, Violet. You'll like it there.

VIOLET CONT'D)

You and Kevin could come too.

Ford shakes his head.

FORD

The offer is only for you.

VIOLET

You can ask.

FORD

No.

VIOLET

Why not?

FORD

I can't.

VIOLET

Why not?

FORD

BECAUSE I CAN'T!

Ford catches himself. His face strains with regret.

FORD (CONT'D)

The man who shot Maggie, I killed him. Then I ran Brett off along with the others. Look, it doesn't matter. My place is here. With the trees. Not with them.

Violet shakes her head.

VIOLET

I don't want to go.

FORD

There's nothing for you here. Can't you understand that?

VIOLET

I won't go!

FORD

Well, it's not your choice!!!

Violet stares at Ford in stunned silence.

FORD (CONT'D)

You have to trust me. And you don't.

Violet stares at Ford with pained eyes.

VIOLET

You don't trust me.

Ford feels this but is undeterred.

FORD

We leave tomorrow.

Violet is on the verge of tears.

VIOLET  
You promised I'd be safe. You're  
just a big liar.

Violet RUSHES past him and up the stairs. Ford starts to go after her but stops himself.

Up above, the spare bedroom door SLAMS SHUT.

Ford feels Kevin's gaze.

FORD  
She doesn't belong here. We have  
our work to do.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Morning arrives on the farm.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford is sleeping when the soft alarm SOUNDS and the red light starts FLASHING. He sits up quick. He reaches for the side table and retrieves the PROXIMITY SCANNER.

INSERT OF THE DISPLAY: **PROXIMITY ALERT! ZONE D.**

Ford tenses. His mind reeling with the implications.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford opens the door and peers in on Violet. She's still sleeping. Curled up. Ford leaves her be and closes the door.

INT. FARMHOUSE - HALLWAY - MORNING

Ford locks the spare bedroom door.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - MORNING

Ford enters. Kevin is seated in the chair.

FORD  
We've got visitors.

## INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford keeps watch out his bedroom window, his pulse rifle in hand. Kevin is on the other side, aiming out the window. Ford places the familiar stetson on Kevin's head.

And then in the distance. MOVEMENT. Ford aims the pulse rifle and takes a peek through the scope.

POV THROUGH THE SCOPE: *a MAN on a HORSE is approaching.*

## EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

The horse and rider arrive at the farmhouse. The MAN'S (40's) clothing is tattered and torn. He looks like he's been through hell. The horse is loaded with SADDLEBAGS. Coiled ROPE is attached to a worn saddle.

He stares around suspiciously. Everything is peaceful and quiet. Almost too quiet. He looks up to the windows.

MAN

Hello?

## INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford and Kevin stay out of sight. Ford leans to take a peek.

## EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

The Man slides off the horse and approaches the front door. He tries it. Locked. So he KNOCKS.

MAN

Hello?

## INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford continues to watch from the bedroom window.

MAN

Anyone in there?

FORD

Move away from the window.

The Man whips around and steps back. Surprised. He looks up to Ford. His eyes skittish, he lifts his arms in surrender.

MAN  
Hello, friend. I don't want any trouble.

Ford scans the area. Untrusting.

FORD  
Then I suggest you get back on that horse and go back the way you came.

The Man stares up at Ford with pleading eyes.

MAN  
I'm searching for my wife and daughter.

Ford's face falls.

MAN (CONT'D)  
We were separated several days ago.  
I saw your farm and was hoping  
maybe they might have passed this way.

Ford stares at him intensely.

FORD  
Show me the other side of your hands.

MAN  
Sorry?

FORD  
Your hands! Turn them!

The Man reluctantly turns his hands so the backs are visible. He lifts them.

Ford peers through the scope of the rifle.

POV THROUGH THE SCOPE:  
*Both hands are clean. Neither has the familiar snake brand.*

Ford lowers the rifle. Still, he's nervous.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Keep watch on him, Kevin. You spot any others, you open fire. Violet is in the spare bedroom. Protecting her is your first priority.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

The front door opens and Ford cautiously exits out, holding his aim on this Man.

Ford scans around for trouble.

FORD  
Who else is with you?

MAN  
It's just me. And my horse.

FORD  
If you're lying, I won't hesitate to put you down.

The Man nods up at Kevin in the window.

MAN  
I see your man up there. Like I said, I'm not here for trouble. Just trying to find my wife and daughter.

Ford studies the Man.

FORD  
How would I know they belonged to you?

MAN  
Lacey. My wife. She had the other half of this.

The Man pulls out a necklace hanging around his neck, the missing side of the HALF-HEART.

MAN (CONT'D)  
She wasn't well. And my girl. She's only twelve.

Ford stares at the necklace then his eyes return to the Man. The tension between them is beginning to thaw.

Ford lowers the rifle.

FORD  
There's something you need to see.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - GRAVE - MORNING

The Man stands before the grave of his wife. His face tightens. Ford remains behind him, giving him space.

MAN  
What happened?

Ford struggles.

FORD  
She was sick when they arrived. She didn't last the night.

The Man nods. Ford battles with himself. A twinge of guilt over what really happened.

MAN  
And my girl?

FORD  
Inside. Asleep.

The Man gasps. Relieved. He turns to Ford.

MAN  
I don't know how I can ever repay you.

FORD  
There's no need for it.

The Man nods. He offers his hand.

MAN  
My name is Roman.

Ford stares at it then takes it. They shake.

FORD  
Ford.

ROMAN  
My wife and I, we didn't always see eye to eye. Wish I could have spoken to her one last time.

Roman follows Ford's eyes to Maggie's grave.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
Looks like you lost someone yourself. Your wife?

Ford nods.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
How long ago?

FORD  
Twelve years.

ROMAN  
Any offspring?

Ford hesitates. Pained by the mention.

FORD  
No. We wanted to but...

ROMAN  
So it's just the two of you? You  
and your friend up in that window?

Roman nods up to Kevin, still holding his position at the window. Ford doesn't answer. Grows cautious.

But Roman is staring over the farm. Impressed.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
How did the two of you manage all  
this?

FORD  
There were others who helped.

His gaze lands on the turbine.

ROMAN  
Electricity?

Ford slowly nods.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
Do you mind?

Ford extends his hand.

Roman starts walking. Ford follows.

EXT. BACK OF FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Roman stops, to get a better look at the turbine.

ROMAN  
She's a beauty.

Then Roman notices the tree garden. He almost falls over.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
You're growing trees?

FORD  
Trying.

Roman approaches. Sees they've already begun to wilt.

ROMAN  
Not gonna do you much good without  
the sun. But for somebody who built  
his own turbine, you already knew  
that.

Roman's keen eyes take in his surroundings. His gaze lands on  
the barn.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
I'm thinking you grow the trees  
inside the barn there. Greenhouse  
more than likely. Do whatever it is  
you do then plant them out here.

Roman turns to the wheelbarrow. He touches the remains of a  
dead tree lying inside.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
Haven't had much luck though.

FORD  
You're an observant man.

ROMAN  
And you're a persistent one. You  
some kind of biologist?

FORD  
My wife was. This was her work.

ROMAN  
She sure left you one hell of a  
honey-do list. You really think it  
can be done?

FORD  
She believed so.

Roman considers then looks back up at the clouded sky.

ROMAN  
Well, I wouldn't fret too much  
about it. That bitch of a sky is  
bound to clear up at some point.

FORD  
Not on its own it won't.

ROMAN  
She believe that too?

Ford shakes his head.

FORD  
Hard data backs that up.

ROMAN  
Hard data suggested no one would  
survive. But here we are. You and  
me. Survival of the fittest. We  
play our cards right, we can get  
through this here too.

Roman and Ford exchange a look.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
It won't be easy.

He nods into the distance.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
Out there, the only way to survive  
has been to travel in groups. And  
even that doesn't always work out  
so well.

FORD  
How were you separated?

ROMAN  
Violet didn't tell you?

FORD  
I didn't want to press her.

ROMAN  
It's not one of my finer moments.

Roman pauses, embarrassed.

FORD  
Three men came looking for them.

ROMAN  
What happened to them?

FORD  
Buried out front.

Roman considers this.

ROMAN  
Thank you.

Ford nods.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
I've taken up too much of your  
time. I should probably collect my  
girl. We have a long day ahead of  
us.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Ford and Roman return to the front of the house.

FORD  
Where are you headed?

ROMAN  
Probably south. I've heard  
rumblings there are settlements.

Ford nods.

FORD  
I'll go fetch her. If you don't  
mind waiting out here.

ROMAN  
I don't mind at all.

Ford crosses back to the front door. Just as he reaches it, the door opens. And there stands Violet. She looks alarmed.

VIOLET  
I heard voices.

FORD  
It's okay.

Ford is torn.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Appears I won't be taking you after  
all.

Violet smiles.

VIOLET  
I can stay?

FORD  
Something better.

Ford moves out of the way. Father and daughter see one another. Roman is taken by the sight.

ROMAN  
My God. Look at you.

But Violet's smile fades.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
I missed you, girl. I was worried sick. Afraid I might never see you again.

Roman opens his arms. But Violet doesn't budge.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
Don't you have a hug for your old man?

Urine streams down around Violet's left foot. Ford sees it. Roman doesn't.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
You just going to stand there and ignore your daddy?

VIOLET  
Hello, daddy.

ROMAN  
What's the matter? You look like you've seen a ghost.

VIOLET  
I thought you was dead.

ROMAN  
Why would you think that?

Violet looks to Ford. Roman frowns.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
You told her I was dead?

A chill runs through Ford.

FORD  
I told her the men who were chasing her were dead.

Ford stares at the rope burns on Violet's wrists.

Ford's eyes are lit with fire.

FORD (CONT'D)  
She assumed I meant you.

Ford raises his rifle on Roman.

ROMAN  
What is it you think you're doing,  
Ford?

FORD  
It's not what I'm doing but what  
you're about to.

ROMAN  
Which is?

FORD  
Get on that horse. Turn around. And  
ride back to that rock you crawled  
out from under. And stay there.

Roman smirks.

ROMAN  
And if I don't. What then? You  
going to shoot me dead? In front of  
my little girl? Bullshit.

FORD  
If I don't, that bot up in the  
window will for damn sure.

Roman eyes Kevin, still holding position. But Roman hardly  
seems phased.

ROMAN  
My father used to say, 'never  
ignore another man's courtesy'.  
Worst offense in his opinion. He  
was right about that.

Roman shakes his head.

FORD  
See, I could have reigned down on  
you like a wraith from the  
underworld. Instead, I came  
friendly. And even after seeing  
what all you have on this farm.  
Enough to tempt any man to take it  
for himself. But I just want my  
daughter, Ford.

Roman puts on a RING with the familiar brand we've seen previously.

ROMAN  
Those men you buried had a tracer.  
That's how we found you.

Roman looks Ford dead in the eye.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
You're surrounded from all sides.

Alarmed, Ford searches the landscape.

WE SEE Roman's men from various positions behind trees, their weapons aimed: PETE, B-MACK, LINCOLN and STEVEN.

ROMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
All I have to do is give word and  
they're gonna storm in here and  
unleash hell.

AT THE BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE we see the various positions of the others: EL RAY, DANE, KILLIAN, MARCO and POLISH. All positioned and ready for bear.

ROMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
They will burn your barn. The  
turbine. The farmhouse. The trees.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

From Kevin's POV, the bot holds aim on Roman.

ROMAN  
Even your bot up there.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

BACK ON Roman.

ROMAN  
And we'll leave you to watch it  
all.

Ford is sunk and he knows it.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
I won't pretend to understand what  
it is you think you're doing with  
them trees. A waste of time if you  
ask me.

(MORE)

ROMAN (CONT'D)

But a man out here alone, with only a bot for company. Maybe there's more to it. I can respect that, if you can respect she's my daughter, Ford. Violet belongs to me, just like this farm belongs to you. So before this gets out of hand, you're going to give her over. Do that and I give you my word, you won't be harmed.

FORD

I've been told you don't leave survivors.

ROMAN

I won't deny it. But you took in my girl. And that I can't ignore. So you do right by me and we'll leave you in peace.

Ford debates what to do. But what can he do?

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Your wife wanted you to grow them trees. You really gonna give up all that over a girl who don't belong to you?

Defeated, Ford lowers the rifle.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

That's good. Now toss it in front of you.

Ford does as he's told. Roman nods to Kevin.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

The bot as well.

Ford reluctantly gives the command.

FORD

Stand down, Kevin. Drop the rifle.

Kevin obeys the command. As soon as the bot does, we see the men behind Roman make their presence known.

Roman retrieves the rope from his horse.

ROMAN

A man struggles to be a good husband, a good father. He struggles to keep his family safe.  
(MORE)

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
Sometimes his acts of love and  
compassion are misconstrued and  
distorted as selfish and ugly  
deeds.

As Roman readies the rope,

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
You bring her to me and this will  
all be over.

But Ford doesn't budge.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
I won't ask again.

Ford offers his hand to Violet. But she won't take it, won't  
even look at him.

So Ford kneels down next to her.

FORD  
I need you to be strong, Violet.

Violet and Ford exchange a look.

ROMAN  
Go on now.

Ford lifts Violet into his arms and stands. He turns to face  
Roman. He gazes over the armed men.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
Bring her to me.

Instead, Ford takes a step back.

FORD  
I'll see this farm burn before you  
ever touch a hair on her head.

Roman frowns.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Now, Kevin!

FORD  
ESCAPES with Violet through the open front door. The door  
SLAMS shut, just as...

ROMAN  
MAKES for the side of the house, just as...

KEVIN

Lifts the rifle and begins to FIRE after him.

Return fire immediately PELTS around the window and the bot takes cover.

EXT. SIDE OF THE FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Roman takes cover. He checks the minor graze on his arm. He looks to the trees and waves.

REVEREND, an ugly man with religious tattoos covering his body, RUSHES out of the trees to join him.

Reverend TOSSES Roman a pistol then takes the CROWBAR in his other hand and uses it to begin prying off the boards covering the kitchen window.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Ford taps in the code to secure the door. His mind is racing.

FORD  
Upstairs with Kevin! Go!

Violet dashes for the stairs.

Ford crosses quickly to Kevin's room.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Kevin TRADES FIRE with the men outside.

EXT. SIDE OF THE FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Reverend YANKS off the last board covering the kitchen window.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - MORNING

Ford shoves a pistol into his pants. Then he begins loading a rifle. When -- SMASH -- goes the kitchen window.

FORD  
Help me, Maggie.

Ford slings the rifle over his shoulder and returns to the door.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Ford eases out with the pistol in hand as Reverend comes dashing from the kitchen.

Ford FIRES, catching the man several times in the chest. Down he goes with a tumble.

ROMAN appears around the wall, FIRING as Ford RUSHES UP the stairs.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

TWO MEN carrying ROPE and GRAPPLING HOOKS come racing from the cover of dead trees.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Kevin spots them and FIRES off a few rounds, taking one of the men down. But return FIRE is heavy, KNOCKING OFF the stetson.

Kevin takes cover as Ford enters the room, his eyes searching for...

FORD  
Violet!

But she doesn't respond.

CRASH! Another window breaks.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

A grappling hook locks tight against the window frame.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Kevin FIRES on PETE climbing up the rope but again takes cover when more bullets stream around the window frame.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford RUSHES in just as Pete climbs through the window.

Ford FIRES as Pete lunges. The shot catches him in the neck. He grabs at it,

Ford FIRES again. The second shot hits Pete in the chest. He falls over onto the bed. Dead.

Ford searches the room.

FORD  
Violet?

He kneels to peek beneath the bed. She's not there. His face dissolves to panic.

INT. FARMHOUSE - CHILD'S BEDROOM - MORNING

A grappling hook SMASHES through the window.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

Hearing glass break in the room across the hall, Ford SPINS AROUND. And there stands Violet, staring back at him from the child's bedroom. Terrified.

But before Ford can cross to her, Roman APPEARS IN THE SPARE BEDROOM DOORWAY, PISTOL AIMED!

Ford SLAMS THE DOOR CLOSED and takes a side as bullets PLUME through the wood, mere inches from his head.

INT. FARMHOUSE - CHILD'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Violet SLIDES beneath the bed just as El Ray climbs through the window.

INT. FARMHOUSE - HALLWAY - MORNING

Roman spots El Ray coming in through the child's bedroom window. El Ray pulls two revolvers from their respective holsters.

Roman motions for him to stay quiet then points to the spare bedroom door. El Ray nods.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Out of ammo, Kevin drops the rifle and crosses to the closet.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CLOSET - MORNING

Kevin yanks back some clothes. On the wall hangs a DOUBLE BARRELED SHOTGUN and a vest full of shells. Kevin takes both.

INT. FARMHOUSE - CHILD'S BEDROOM - MORNING

VIOLET'S POV FROM UNDER THE BED: El Ray's feet as he exits out.

Violet holds her position. Her gaze holds firm on the BASEBALL BAT leaning against the closet door across the room.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford peeks through a bullet hole in the door. Seeing El Ray coming, he backs away from the door, holding his aim firm.

INT. FARMHOUSE - HALLWAY - MORNING

El Ray takes a position across from Roman at the Spare Bedroom door.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford peeks out the window. Quiet. Empty.

He returns his fearful gaze to the door. He can feel the men on the other side, ready to storm in.

FORD  
The hallway, Kevin!

B-Mack DIVES through the window. Landing on Ford's back, he JAMS a knife into his shoulder blade.

Ford YELPS in pain. Drops the pistol.

INT. FARMHOUSE - HALLWAY - MORNING

El Ray and Roman turn around just in time as Kevin exits the master bedroom with the shotgun aimed. FIRES.

El Ray takes a DIRECT HIT to the chest. He tumbles to the floor dead. Roman DIVES into the Child's Bedroom.

A shotgun BLAST splatters the door frame just, missing him.

INT. FARMHOUSE - CHILD'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Roman SLAMS the door shut then quickly scatters to the window. He signals for more men outside.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Marco and Killian answer Roman's call.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

Hanging onto his back like a wildcat, B-Mack PULLS the knife free and is about to stab again but Ford SMASHES him hard into the wall.

Not enough so Ford SLAMS him again. B-Mack drops the knife but he still hangs on, taking Ford into a choke hold.

INT. FARMHOUSE - CHILD'S BEDROOM - MORNING

As Roman aims at the closed door, a thought occurs to him. He kneels to look beneath the bed. But Violet is not there.

Searching over the room, he notices the closet. But WE NOTICE the baseball bat is no longer leaning against it.

Roman moves carefully to the closet but his eyes are fastened on the bedroom door.

INT. FARMHOUSE - CHILD'S BEDROOM - CLOSET - MORNING

Hiding inside, Violet cringes as a dark shadow eclipses any light, bleeding into the dark closet.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford and B-Mack STRUGGLE through the room. Ford reaches the door. Opens it.

FORD

Kev...

But B-Mack DRAGS him back in and THROWS Ford down on the bed and CHOKES the life from him.

## INT. FARMHOUSE - CHILD'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Just as Roman reaches to open the closet, the bedroom door SWINGS open with Kevin on the other side. Shotgun in hand.

This happens the exact moment Marco climbs in through the window. The bot FIRES and Marco is BLOWN out the window from whence he came.

Roman UNLOADS into Kevin, sending the bot back into the hallway.

## INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

A few of Roman's bullets RICOCHET into the room, one HITS B-Mack in the back. He lets go of Ford and reaches for it.

That's enough for Ford to PUSH OFF from the bed. B-Mack tries to regain his hold as they STUMBLE to the window.

## INT. FARMHOUSE - HALLWAY - MORNING

Out of bullets, Roman RUSHES Kevin before the bot can fire off the shotgun. They COLLIDE hard against the hallway wall.

Both gripping the shotgun, Kevin SHOVES Roman to the floor.

Just as the bot aims the shotgun on him, Killian enters the hallway guns BLAZING.

Roman SCATTERS towards the stairs, GRABBING El Ray's revolvers as he goes.

Kevin takes a few hits then FIRES on Killian, KNOCKING this large man back. Kevin FIRES again, blasting Killian through the wooden banister and DROPPING him into the living room below.

Kevin advances after Roman.

## INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

At the window, B-Mack regains his STRANGLE HOLD on Ford.

Ford reaches out for Kevin, as the bot passes by the doorway without seeing him.

Ford reaches behind him. Finds the grappling hook. Then the rope. He pulls up the slack. Makes a loop.

B-Mack increases his CHOKE hold. Ford's face is red. His eyes bugging out. He's done for unless...

Ford YANKS the loop over B-Mack's head. PULLS it tight. B-Mack releases the choke hold. Tries to get the rope off.

Before he can, Ford DUMPS him out the window.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

B-Mack DROPS, falling until the rope goes TAUT. SNAP! Breaks his neck. His feet just inches from the ground.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Trading FIRE with Kevin, Roman retreats into the kitchen. Kevin follows.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Roman crawls feet first out of the same window he entered through just as Kevin enters the kitchen.

The bot FIRES the shotgun as Roman disappears outside of it.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford falls to his knees. Gasping for breath. When he looks up, Dane is coming through the window across the hall.

Ford eyes his own pistol. Too far away. And with the rifle still strapped across his back, he's done for.

INT. FARMHOUSE - CHILD'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Dane aims his pistol and offers a crooked smile. But before he can pull the trigger -- CRACK!

The baseball bat SMASHES him over the head from above.

Dane falls to his knees. Another swing of the bat but Dane catches it then YANKS it from Violet's hands.

He pulls her off the bureau she stands atop. She struggles in his arms...

DANE

I got her!

...POP!

A fresh HOLE now marks the spot in Dane's head. Across the hall, Ford aims the rifle.

Dane lets go of Violet and slumps to the side.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

Bloody and winded, Ford rises.

EXT. SIDE OF THE FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Kevin exits out of the farmhouse and rounds the side, searching for Roman. The bot only makes it a few feet when his left leg is lassoed and he is YANKED into the air, upside down.

The other end of the rope is attached to the horse. Polish urges it forward.

Spinning, Kevin tries to FIRE the shotgun but Steven SMACKS the bot with the crowbar. Lincoln latches onto Kevin and YANKS the shotgun from his hands.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

Ford watches helplessly out the window as the men continue their attack on Kevin, WHOOPING IT UP as they beat the bot like a pinata.

Ford looks to the barn. The cogs are turning.

He looks down at Violet.

FORD

We can get out of here. But you have to trust me. Can you do that?

Violet nods.

EXT. SIDE OF THE FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Roman EMERGES from the shadows, a creature of darkness.

The right side of his face is a bloody mess, having been grazed by that last shotgun blast. Fire and brimstone burn from his eyes.

He stares at Kevin, dangling helplessly. He reaches out to Lincoln who hands him a pistol. Roman aims the gun at Kevin's face. Point blank range.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Ford helps Violet as she slides down the rope to him. A lone GUNSHOT sounds out. Ford cringes.

FORD  
I'm sorry, Kevin.

EXT. SIDE OF THE FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Roman stares down at Kevin. Lifeless. Another hole in his head. His eyes dimmed to nothing.

Lincoln notices Ford and Violet making their escape.

LINCOLN  
He's on the move.

All turn to see Ford and Violet as they reach the barn.

Roman and his men start after them.

INT. BARN - MORNING

Ford SLAMS the doors shut. He quickly locates a chain and quickly wraps it around the door handles. He attaches a padlock to secure it.

He turns to Violet.

FORD  
The greenhouse.

EXT. BARN - MORNING

Roman and his men arrive at the barn doors. But they are cautious as they approach.

Roman nods to Polish who tries the doors.

POLISH  
Locked from the inside.

ROMAN  
(to Lincoln)  
Watch the backside.

Lincoln starts off.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
Open it.

Steven starts in with the crowbar.

INT. GREENHOUSE - MORNING

Ford opens the SQUARE DOOR in the wall where the fertilizer is kept. He begins dragging the sacks out.

FORD  
Do you remember where it goes?

VIOLET  
Back inside the house?

FORD  
You keep crawling until you reach a door. Behind the door is a shelter. You wait there...

Ford falters.

FORD (CONT'D)  
...wait there until I come get you.

VIOLET  
What about you?

FORD  
I have to stay here.

Ford pulls the last sack out.

VIOLET  
I'm scared.

Ford kneels to her.

FORD  
I need you to trust me. Remember?

Violet hesitates then nods.

FORD (CONT'D)  
Now I promised I'd keep you safe.  
And I mean to do just that.

Violet nods again. Ford FLIPS a switch. A strand of Christmas lights flicker on, leading the way.

Ford lifts Violet up into the crawlspace. Inside, she looks back at Ford one more time.

FORD (CONT'D)  
We don't have much time. Go on now.

Violet starts crawling. Ford closes the door behind her.

He kneels down and opens the bag of fertilizer. He digs his hand inside and sifts the flakes through his fingers.

EXT. BARN - MORNING

Steven is working the door the best he can.

ROMAN  
I want that door open.

Polish returns with another crowbar and they both go to work on it.

INT. BARN - MORNING

As the men outside try to pry open the doors, Ford pours himself a drink from his still. He takes a long pull.

INT. BARN - WORKSTATION - MORNING

Ford approaches the workstation. His eyes reluctantly find the portrait of Maggie. She stares down on him.

FORD  
I have to, Maggie.

EXT. BARN - MORNING

Steven pulls the door open as Polish jams the lock.

It BUSTS open.

They drop their crowbars and pull their weapons. Polish KICKS the door open. They stare cautiously into the darkness.

Roman nods. Polish and Steven enter the barn. Roman signals for Lincoln to stay put.

INT. BARN - MORNING

Polish and Steven enter the barn with stealth, each taking a side, using hand signals as they go.

INT. CRAWLSPACE - MORNING

Violet crawls through the dimly lit tunnel.

EXT. BARN - MORNING

Roman holds his aim. Impatiently waiting. He diverts his attention to the farmhouse.

INT. BARN - MORNING

Polish and Steven continue their search.

INT. CRAWLSPACE - MORNING

Violet reaches the end of the tunnel and a small door.

INT. SHELTER - MORNING

A square shelter with a shelf of canned goods, a ladder leading up and a cot in the corner.

On the far wall, the other side of the small door.

IT OPENS.

INT. BARN - MORNING

GUNFIRE erupts in the barn.

STEVEN

Is hit. He SCREAMS, dropping to the ground.

POLISH

Crouches low position and begins FIRING back.

EXT. BARN - MORNING

Roman waits and listens until the gunfire subsides. He signals Lincoln to hold his position.

Then he enters the barn.

INT. BARN - MORNING

Roman quickly takes cover. Alert for any movement.

ROMAN  
Polish. Steven.

STEVEN

Lies on the floor. His leg is bleeding. He aims his gun.

STEVEN  
I'm hit.

POLISH

Doesn't answer. Doesn't move. Waiting like a spider for his chance to pounce.

ROMAN

Moves further into the barn.

ROMAN  
You there, Ford? It's over. You just hand over my girl. No one else needs get hurt.

Roman waits for an answer. There isn't one.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
You hearing me?

Roman freezes, hearing movement.

Then he spots Polish. He signals him to the sound he heard. Polish nods.

The two men begin moving in tandem.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
You hurt?

STEVEN

Holds his aim, fearful of the darkness around him.

ROMAN

Reaches the workstation. He stares over Ford's work. He notices the metal door sealing the cellar shut.

POLISH

Locates the source of the sound they've been hearing. The nozzle of the still has been left open. Alcohol pours freely onto the floor.

Polish places his hand beneath the nozzle. He smells the liquid. He realizes it's ALCOHOL. The booze is running in a steady stream towards the BAGS OF FERTILIZER stacked against the far wall.

The bags of fertilizer are DRENCHED IN ALCOHOL.

POLISH

Fuck.

FORD

Steps out of the shadows with his rifle. He AIMS for the still. FIRES off a shot.

THE STILL EXPLODES!

POLISH

Is BLOWN to the ground. He ROLLS on the floor, SCREAMING, a HUMAN BLANKET OF FIRE.

ROMAN

Sees the flames lighting up the stream of alcohol like a fuse, heading for the bags of fertilizer. Then he spots...

ROMAN

FORD!!!

...RUNNING for the barn doors.

EXT. BARN - MORNING

Ford BURSTS through the barn doors and keeps RUNNING. Lincoln sees him and gives chase.

He pulls to a stop in front of the barn to take careful aim on Ford with his revolver. His finger sets on the trigger. Just as he begins to squeeze, he lets go his best shit-eating grin.

LINCOLN

Tag. You're it.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!

The barn EXPLODES in a BALL OF FLAMES. Splinters of wood and fire OBLITERATE Lincoln.

Ford is THROWN to the ground by the force of the explosion. Debris begins to rain down around him.

Ford slowly pulls himself up. A DARK CLOUD of smoke billows up from where the barn used to be. All he can do is watch.

All of his work. Gone.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Ford picks up his pulse rifle, still discarded where he dropped it earlier.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Ford rolls back the rug. Beneath is a trap door. He pulls it open. Down below, Violet CRINGES in a corner.

INT. SHELTER - MORNING

Violet stares back up at Ford.

FORD  
Everything is going to be okay now.

VIOLET  
What about daddy?

FORD  
It's over.

Violet swallows hard, realizing what he means.

EXT. SIDE OF THE FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Ford approaches Kevin, lying lifeless on the ground. He kneels down next to his friend.

Violet appears beside him.

VIOLET  
Can we fix him?

Ford bites his lip.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Ford sadly walks towards the barn or what is left of it which isn't much. Violet trails behind him.

The entire area is now consumed with GREY SMOKE from the burning fertilizer. Sacks of it are still smoldering.

In the rubble he locates what is left of the Bioprinter. Which isn't much. Ford's face registers the loss.

Ford approaches where the cellar door used to be. It was blown off by the blast. Now there is a large gaping hole and grey smoke is billowing out of it.

Ford signals to Violet.

FORD  
You wait up here.

INT. GREENHOUSE - MORNING

Ford makes his way down the stairs. The east wall is slightly on fire but the rest of the greenhouse is intact.

Ford crosses to a small closet and opens it. He retrieves a blanket.

Ford uses the blanket to put out the flames on the east wall.

The sacks of fertilizer are also burning. This is the source of the grey smoke that consumes the greenhouse.

Ford kneels next to the burning fertilizer. He looks to the trees where the smoke hovers.

Ford walks along the row of infant trees, inspecting them with growing curiosity.

ROMAN (O.S.)  
I figured you were up to something  
running to the barn.

Ford's BLOOD RUNS COLD!

He turns to face Roman who steps out of hiding, gun in his hand. His face bloody, he looks like the devil himself.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
But I never in a million years  
would have guessed you to do  
something as rash as that.

Roman stops in front of Ford. Face to face.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
You're playing my kind of game. How  
about we ante up?

Roman lifts the gun and FIRES twice into Ford.

Ford shudders, grabbing his gut. Thick blood begins oozing from his wounds. He drops to his knees, struggling to stay up.

Roman walks past Ford and looks over the trees.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
I'm going to burn all your trees.  
Tell me something. Was she worth  
it?

FORD  
They mean nothing otherwise.

ROMAN  
They never meant anything anyway.  
Just something for an old fool like  
you to occupy his time.

FORD  
You don't deserve her.

ROMAN  
But you do?

Ford doesn't answer. Roman is boiling as he moves back around to face him.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
I'M HER FATHER! NOT YOU! ME!

Ford slowly shakes his head. His face has turned pale.

FORD  
No. You're nothing but a wild dog  
that needs to be put down.

Roman smiles.

ROMAN  
You've been cooped up here too  
long, Ford. Wild dog is all that is  
left out there now.

Roman steps closer. His eyes narrow.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
Survival of the fittest.

Roman raises the gun on Ford to end him.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
And that ain't you.

His finger sets tight on the trigger. A GUNSHOT SOUNDS OUT.

Roman SWATS at his cheek as if he were stung by a bee. Blood immediately seeps between his fingers.

He stumbles, turning around. Fully surprised by what he finds:

VIOLET.

WITH TEARS STREAMING, SHE HOLDS THE GUN ON HER FATHER.

Roman removes his hand. Blood flows from the large bullet hole in his cheek.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
Fuck you doing?

Violet is too frightened to answer. Roman reaches to her. Blood spills out of his mouth.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
Give me the gun.

Violet doesn't. Roman takes a step.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
Said... GIVE ME...

Roman LUNGES. Violet FIRES.

The shot nails Roman square in the head. He falls to his knees. Then topples over dead.

Violet drops the gun then RUSHES to Ford, embracing him.

FORD  
It's okay now. It's over. It's over.

But Ford is too weak. He slides out of the girl's arms and falls to the floor. Violet weeps over him.

VIOLET  
Please, don't go. I don't want to be alone.

FORD  
The radio. You call Brett on it.  
He'll come.

Violet shakes her head.

VIOLET  
I'm scared.

FORD  
Call Brett. You're strong.

Ford takes her hand. He squeezes.

FORD (CONT'D)  
You were worth it, Violet.

Ford smiles.

VIOLET  
What about the trees?

But Ford doesn't answer.

VIOLET (CONT'D)  
Mr. Ford? Mr. Ford?

Our hero has died. Violet drapes her body over Ford and continues to grieve.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)  
How can the seed of life start so small? Be so delicate?

ANGLE ON Roman, lying in a pool of blood. His furious expression remains on his face.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)  
How can it grow an earth just to forget what it once was?

ANGLE ON the grey smoke billowing from the fertilizer, continuing over the infant trees.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)  
And if it does forget, can it ever again remember?

Violet reaches with her hand and closes Ford's eyes.

FADE TO BLACK:

BRETT (O.S.)  
Eight, four, eight, Charlie, Tango.  
This is One, one, six, Whiskey,  
November.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Violet approaches the ham radio.

BRETT (O.S.)  
Eight, four, eight, Charlie, Tango.  
This is One, one, six, Whiskey,  
November. Come back, Ford.

Violet sits before the radio. She wants to answer but she's afraid. She reaches for the microphone, takes it in hand.

But then her eyes find the table of spare robot parts, the tools, the gurney, Kevin's charging chair.

FADE TO BLACK:

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)  
How can the seed of life start so  
small? How can it be so delicate?

INT. FARMHOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Violet awakens, lying in Ford's bed. She rises.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - MORNING

With a basket in hand, Violet walks past the tree garden. All of the trees here have been dead a long time.

Violet stops at the opening to the greenhouse. Two doors, taken from the farmhouse, have been attached to close it off from predators.

Violet opens the doors then heads down the stairs.

INT. GREENHOUSE - MORNING

Violet picks vegetables off the vines and places them in the basket. As she does this, she notices something.

The infant trees are bursting out of their pots - GROWING. She touches the limb of a tree. A SMALL FLOWER IS BLOSSOMING.

Violet is amazed. She knows what this means.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KEVIN'S ROOM - MORNING

Violet enters the room. She smiles.

VIOLET  
Wake up, sleepyhead.

A REVERSAL reveals Kevin sitting in his charging chair. A second, band-aid has been attached to the bot's head.

VIOLET (CONT'D)  
We have work to do.

Kevin rises.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DAY

Kevin and Violet toil, digging out the dead trees.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

A garden cannot be grown on  
neglect.

EXT. GREENHOUSE - DAY

Kevin lifts an infant tree and carries it to the stairs.

EXT. BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE - TREE GARDEN - DAY

Violet carefully plants a tree as Kevin brings another.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

A fruitful garden requires a  
nurturing, loving hand.

Several MEN slowly descend on the pair. Feeling their presence, Violet drops what she's doing and stands. Frightened.

REVERSAL of the weary men, holding weapons. Stunned at the sight of the trees. The LEADER presses through them, signaling the men to lower their guns.

LEADER

I'm Brett. You must be Violet.

Violet stares over the men. Then nods, breaking into a smile.

We PULL BACK from the scene, MAKING OUR WAY to the graves: MOVING across Violet's mother's, Maggie's and now Ford's.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

The seed of life is within us all,  
if we will but try to remember.

Each grave has a SMALL TREE planted next to it.

FADE OUT:

THE END.