

HOMEGROWN

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. APPALACHIAN WILDERNESS - ESTABLISHING - DAWN

Trees blanket the rolling mountains. A lone CABIN dots the autumn landscape.

INT. CABIN - SAME

CHARLIE NASY (42) and his son WILL (15) sleep in parallel twin beds in the bare bones, one-room cabin.

As the sun peeks in a window, they simultaneously awaken.

Without a word, they roll onto the floor and do push ups in perfect unison. Flawless form, machine-like. Their muscular physiques ripple through their threadbare attire.

BIRDS, CRICKETS, and a ROOSTER provide the only noise.

No electricity. The only decor is hundreds of BOOKS, lining the walls from floor to ceiling on homemade shelves.

EXT. CABIN - SAME

Wilderness. Total isolation.

A large SHED, an outhouse, a WATER TANK, and a CROP FIELD flank the cabin. SOLAR PANELS cover the shed and outhouse - not the cabin. In the rear, an apple orchard meets the woods.

A DIESEL PICKUP TRUCK is parked in the long, unpaved driveway that snakes away to an indiscernible starting point.

INT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie and Will do pull ups from a rafter, again in unison -- finish a set -- hang in a resting position, but not for long:

CHARLIE
Fifteen more.

They snap back into the exercise, eyes straight ahead.

EXT. POND - DAWN

Charlie and Will fish side by side in silence.

Charlie feels a bite. Inexpressive, he reels it in. The newly-caught fish joins others in the bucket.

Will's line grows taut. His face lights up momentarily, then he adeptly reels in his catch.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Charlie methodically *chops* wood. Will guts the fish on a homemade table nearby.

EXT. APPLE ORCHARD - DAY

A WOODPECKER *hammers* high in a tree. Charlie and Will pick apples below. Will admires the magnificent bird - only for a moment - then back to work.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

A homemade punching bag - a potato sack filled with dirt - hangs behind the cabin. Will watches as Charlie strikes it with rapid, forceful punch combinations.

Charlie steps back. Will approaches the bag -- mimics Charlie's exact pattern of punches -- looks to Charlie for approval or encouragement: no reaction.

Charlie replaces Will in front of the bag -- kicks the bag with amazing force.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Will loads the firewood onto the truck bed, already near-full with apples, corn, mushrooms, berries, and squash.

Charlie fills a gas can with BIODIESEL fuel from an oil drum near the shed -- pours it in the gas tank.

WILL

Father..? May I come to town with you?

CHARLIE

Not this time, William. See to your studies then prepare dinner.

Will eyes his feet.

WILL

Okay, Father.

Charlie continues to pack the truck.

EXT. TOWN MARKET - LATER THAT DAY

TEN VENDORS line a quaint town square. CUSTOMERS peruse the offerings -- tinker away on their SMARTPHONES.

Charlie - looking completely out of his element in contemporary society - keeps to himself, reading a book behind his display of produce, fish, and firewood.

The other Vendors chat amongst themselves.

A customer, THERESA (40s), scans Charlie's produce -- bags a selection.

THERESA
My husband and me, we just love
your produce. It's perfection.
What's your secret?

CHARLIE
No secret.

THERESA
(re: the fish)
What kind?

CHARLIE
Trout.

THERESA
Catch 'em yourself?

CHARLIE
This morning.

THERESA
Delightful. I'll take two.

Charlie packages the fish.

CHARLIE
Fifteen.

She hands him the cash.

THERESA
Is it possible to buy direct from
the farm? Or do you have a website?
You could really make a killing if
word gets out.

CHARLIE

(terse)

We cultivate a limited amount of native crops. Not looking to expand. But I'll be here each week.

Theresa is surprised by his curtness -- departs.

A flirty woman, BEVERLY (38), approaches.

BEVERLY

How's business?

CHARLIE

Okay.

BEVERLY

Did Ann contact you about her roof?

(off Charlie's nod)

Hope you don't mind me passing your name. It'd be selfish to keep you all for myself.

Charlie tilts his head slightly in consent.

BEVERLY

Come by later. My sink's leaking and there're some dead lights. I don't have any new bulbs. Mind picking some up?

CHARLIE

Sure.

BEVERLY

Sure as in you mind or sure as in you don't mind?

(off Charlie's blank look)

Oh come on - *lighten* up.

CHARLIE

I'll bring the bulbs.

BEVERLY

Anyway... I'll see you soon then.

Beverly prances away.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Will sits on a branch high up in a tree, reading Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. His perch overlooks the entire property. *How the hell did he get all the way up there?*

A SQUIRREL leaps from limb to limb. Will observes it until it jumps from sight.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Charlie pushes a cart to the register: LIGHT BULBS, DRAIN-O, an opaque JUG OF LIQUID, THREE LARGE BEAKERS, and WIRING.

The OLD CLERK (65) eyeballs Charlie.

OLD CLERK

Say there, son. You wouldn't happen to be that outta-towner does odd jobs, wouldya?

CHARLIE

No.

Charlie starts to unload his cart.

OLD CLERK

Heard 'bout you.

CHARLIE

You have me confused with somebody.

OLD CLERK

Someone's been snatching up business from the local contractor. May not be aware he's stepping on toes, if you catch my drift.

(surveys Charlie's items)

You building explosives, son?

Charlie shifts but maintains his composure.

CHARLIE

This amount should take care of a handful of gophers, right?

OLD CLERK

(suspicious)

That's about right, boss.

Charlie hands the Clerk some cash.

OLD CLERK

You happen to see that outta town handyman, tell him his services aren't 'preciated round here.

Charlie stares down the Clerk, icy -- receives his change.

OLD CLERK
You have a good one now.

INT. CABIN - EVENING

Will finishes cutting vegetables -- wipes the knife on his pant leg -- stares out the window, restless.

INT. BEVERLY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Charlie works on the sink. Beverly enters in a low-cut dress -
- leans in, dangling her cleavage. He doesn't even glance.

BEVERLY
Can I offer you something to eat?

CHARLIE
No.

Charlie finishes -- stands -- turns on the faucet. They look at the pipes: no more leak. Beverly beams.

BEVERLY
Sure you can't stay for supper?

CHARLIE
I'm sure.

BEVERLY
At least let me get you a drink. I
have milk, lemonade, tea...
(with a seductive glance)
Maybe a glass of wine.

CHARLIE
I have dinner waiting.

BEVERLY
Oh... Your wife's cooking?

No reply. Beverly hands Charlie some cash. He exits.

INT. CABIN - EVENING

Will cooks a fish over the open-flame stove. Smoke billows out the window.

INT. CABIN - LATER - DUSK

Charlie and Will dine in silence. Will inhales as if to speak but suppresses the urge.

They finish eating. Will clears the dishes. Charlie exits. Will hears the *truck engine* start -- exits...

EXT. CABIN - DUSK - MOMENTS LATER

Will enters the truck. No talk. Charlie drives away.

EXT. DEEP WOODS - HOUSE - NIGHT

Secluded. Satellite dishes line the roof. A TV flickers from within. The curtains rustle as someone peaks out.

Charlie and Will walk from the parked truck to the door.

INT. DEEP WOODS HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Smoky. Cluttered. A shady hillbilly, JIM (50s), ushers them in. Charlie stares Jim down, all business. Will stands back, detached; they've done this before.

Jim rubs his fingers together expectantly: '*the money?*'

CHARLIE

The results?

JIM

You don't trust me by now?

(smiles)

Right.

Jim fishes two documents off a messy desk.

JIM

Squeaky clean as always.

Charlie inspects the documents: two sets of STD results. Charlie nods -- hands Jim a small roll of cash.

Jim thumbs the cash -- grins -- leads them back into the...

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jim keys into a bedroom. Charlie enters -- pulls the door closed behind him. Jim leads Will to another...

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

A REDNECK PROSTITUTE (35) sits on the bed -- clicks off her TV -- mechanically starts to undress. Jim leaves them alone.

Will stares at her blank-faced -- starts to disrobe. Routine.

INT. CABIN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Moonlight illuminates the cabin. Charlie and Will sit next to each other cross-legged -- eyes closed in deep meditation.

Their *breathing* is deep, focused, rhythmic; their faces completely calm. *Crickets* and the occasional *frog* are the only thing we can hear over their breathing.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CROP ROWS - DAY

Charlie and Will work their field. Will notices a POLICE CAR winding up the driveway.

WILL

Father.

(points to the cop car)

Should I get the rifles?

CHARLIE

Remain calm, William.

WILL

How could they know?

CHARLIE

We don't know what they know. Keep your eyes on me. If I clench my fists, we attack. Understood?

WILL

Yes, Father.

CHARLIE

We are prepared for this.

Will nods. Charlie walks to the driveway. Will follows.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

The police car parks and TWO OFFICERS, LOU (25) and GEORGE (50s), exit. Charlie nears.

OFFICER LOU
Had a helluva time finding you.

CHARLIE
May I help you?

The Officers scan the property.

OFFICER GEORGE
Just the two of you here?
(off Charlie's nod)
We just have a few questions, sir.
Mind coming with us?

CHARLIE
I'd prefer to answer here. We're in
the middle of some work.

OFFICER GEORGE
We better head down to the station -
to follow protocol and whatnot.

WILL'S POV: Will watches Charlie's hands, awaiting the
signal. Charlie slightly curls his fingers... no fist.

OFFICER LOU
Know why you were so hard to track
down, *sir*?

No reply. George eyes his overeager young partner.

OFFICER LOU
Damn hard to find a man who doesn't
take part in the census - and
doesn't pay taxes on the odd jobs
he steals from hard working, law-
abiding citizens.

OFFICER GEORGE
Enough, Lou.
(to Charlie)
Why don't you just come along now?

CHARLIE
The crops don't work themselves.
I'm sure you can appreciate that.

OFFICER GEORGE
I can.

George and Lou look around. Charlie's eyes instinctively dart
to the SHED. The thick PADLOCK dangles... UNLOCKED. Charlie
scowls accusingly at Will. Will meets his gaze, anxious.

CHARLIE

You said you have some questions.

The Officers turn their attention back to Charlie.

OFFICER GEORGE

Yessir.

Lou can't keep his eyes from the shed -- starts toward it.

OFFICER LOU

(re: the oil drums)

What's in there?

CHARLIE

Vegetable oil. For the truck. We create our own biodiesel.

OFFICER LOU

You mind giving us a little tour - show us how it works?

CHARLIE

Another time.

OFFICER LOU

(re: the shed)

What's in *there*?

Will gulps, nervous -- shifts. Charlie grits his teeth -- wiggles his fingers. Lou edges closer to the shed.

CHARLIE

Unless you have a warrant, you must leave now. Nothing personal. We have work to do. We understand our rights and appreciate our privacy.

Officer Lou scoffs -- continues toward the shed. Charlie takes a step toward Lou.

OFFICER GEORGE

Please relax, sir.

OFFICER LOU

Get down on your knees.

CHARLIE

Am I under arrest?

OFFICER LOU

You bet your ass you are.

OFFICER GEORGE

Lou. Easy.

CHARLIE

On what charge?

Will's eyes widen. Sweat beads on his brow.

OFFICER LOU

Practicing construction without a license for starters.

Charlie relaxes his hands. Lou approaches Will.

OFFICER LOU

Where's your mom, partner?

Will stares Lou straight in the eyes.

WILL

Dead.

OFFICER LOU

You guys have a smooth operation. All alone up here. What exactly does your dad do up here, buddy?

WILL

We respectfully live off the land. A simple life. My father is a veteran. A hero.

CHARLIE

Enough, William.

Lou moves toward the shed. *Too close.* Charlie sidesteps -- stands in his way. Lou, threatened, instinctively reaches for his gun -- grabs Charlie's collar with his other hand.

Charlie allows Lou to initiate contact. Lou attempts to force Charlie to the ground. Charlie doesn't budge.

LOU

I said get your ass on the ground!

With lightning quick speed -- Charlie punches Lou in the jaw.
Lou drops hard, immediately knocked out.

Will assumes a fighting stance, ready to lunge at George.

CHARLIE

William - relax.

Lou lies unconscious. A drop of blood trickles from his mouth.

George is frozen: 30 years of nonviolent crimes in Podunk hasn't prepared him for this. He kneels next to Lou. Will sprints to the shed -- fastens the padlock.

Charlie voluntarily raises his hands above his head.

CHARLIE

I was provoked, Officer. I was cooperative and he grabbed me.

George stands -- fumbles -- draws his gun.

OFFICER GEORGE

Just come along. You don't want any more trouble.

Charlie walks toward the police car.

OFFICER GEORGE

I have to cuff you.

Charlie allows George to handcuff him.

Lou's eyes flutter. He comes to, dazed, unable to move his jaw.

OFFICER GEORGE

Just stay still, Lou.
(to Will)
Get in the car, son.

WILL

I'm not going anywhere.

OFFICER GEORGE

How old are you?

CHARLIE

(off Will's hesitation)
He's fifteen.

OFFICER GEORGE

Can't leave you out here alone.

WILL

This is my home. I'll take care of myself until my father returns.

CHARLIE

It will be fine, William. Come.

INT. COURTHOUSE MEETING ROOM - DAY

Charlie, in a prison jumpsuit, sits with Will. The CASE FILE rests on the table.

CHARLIE

Go to the property. Make sure everything is secure.

Will chews his thumbnail, staring a hole in the table.

CHARLIE

Look at me... There are so few strong men left in this world.

WILL

I know, Father.

CHARLIE

You must be one of them right now. The prosecutor is recommending 3 years in prison.

Will's eyes show fear.

CHARLIE

Based on previous cases and with no prior offenses, I'll work it down to 16 months. Out in a year with good behavior. Worth it to stop them from snooping around, ruining everything we've worked for.

WILL

Why don't you at least meet with an attorney, Father? It couldn't hurt.

CHARLIE

I've read enough to represent myself better than the vast majority of attorneys. You could even do better than most.

Will nods, confident in Charlie. Charlie leans in, serious:

CHARLIE

It is of utmost importance we do not draw attention to ourselves. Conceal your intellect and physical abilities. Avoid photographs. Anonymity is one of our most powerful assets.

EXT. CAHILL HOME - DAY

Quaint, one-story home. Will, carrying a small duffle, walks with his new foster mother, MRS. CAHILL (60).

MR. CAHILL (63) rocks slowly in a rocking chair on the porch.

MRS. CAHILL

This is my husband, John.

No response. Mr. Cahill continues to gaze into the street. Mrs. Cahill leads Will in. Will glances back at Mr. Cahill.

INT. CAHILL HOME - DAY - CONTINUOUS

A den/dining/kitchen combo. Will marvels at the interior. Modest decor - but a posh lounge compared to the cabin.

MRS. CAHILL

Not exactly *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*, but it treats us well.

Will studies each painting and photo -- stares at a photo of the Cahills - much younger - with a uniformed SOLDIER.

MRS. CAHILL

(re: the soldier)

Our son...

Her eyes turn sad for a moment. A medieval-style CRUCIFIX hangs on the wall. Will eyes it with disdain for a long beat - then follows Mrs. Cahill into the...

INT. GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Decades of accumulated stuff. She points to an old BICYCLE:

MRS. CAHILL

You're welcome to use it. I took it for a tune up. We're about five blocks from the school. Or I can drive you - if you prefer.

WILL

I'll walk.

MRS. CAHILL

Up to you. I'd like to see the bike get some use.

INT. WILL'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mrs. Cahill shows Will his room. Basic. But he's blown away.

MRS. CAHILL
Towels are in the restroom closet.
I'll leave you to get settled.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

INMATES stand in racially segregated clumps.

Charlie stands alone. A massive, tattoo-covered skinhead, JACOB (35), approaches.

JACOB
Whaddya say there?

Jacob towers above Charlie. Charlie assesses Jacob, calm.

JACOB
Talking to you, boy.

Charlie eyes Jacob, unblinking, unintimidated. More SKINHEADS trickle up. The BLACK PRISONERS observe from across the yard.

JACOB
You have two options: Keep giving me the mime act and make this stretch a living hell.... Or make some friends today. Join up with my crew. Help us run this place.

CHARLIE
I prefer to serve my time alone.

JACOB
Did it sound like you had a choice?

Charlie attempts to step away, but he's surrounded.

JACOB
Enough talk. Let's welcome him.

A Skinhead, BJ (30), *rushes* at Charlie -- *swings*. Charlie *ducks* -- lands an *uppercut*. BJ falls, knocked out cold.

The next CRONY steps up. Charlie *sweeps his leg* -- lands a *punch* to the face before he hits the ground.

A SKINHEAD PUNK pulls a SHANK from his waistband. Jacob notices -- shakes his head -- wants to see what Charlie can do in a fair scrap. Punk tucks the shank away.

A third SKINHEAD *punches* from the side. Charlie *dodges* it -- *grabs* the wrist -- *punches* the elbow hard, *breaking* the arm.

PRISON GUARD

(O.S.)

Hey! Break it up.

A GUARD rushes over. The Skinheads back off. Charlie maintains his fighting stance, on high alert.

BJ starts convulsing on the ground. The Guard rolls his eyes.

PRISON GUARD

Somebody go get BJ his meds...

One of the Skinheads sprints away.

PRISON GUARD

(re: the fight)

Your handy work, Jacob?

JACOB

No way, boss. Not me. New guy here is a real firecracker. Better keep a close eye on him.

PRISON GUARD

Right.

JACOB

I'm a product of my environment. Just seem to end up in compromising situations sometimes.

The Skinhead runs back with a pill and water cup -- feeds BJ the medicine. His breathing slowly returns to normal.

PRISON GUARD

Alright. Everybody cool off.

The crowd disperses. The Skinheads stare Charlie down.

JACOB

We'll see you later then. Pleasure to make your acquaintance.

INTERCUT - INT. PRISON CELL / INT. WILL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Charlie and Will each sit cross-legged, meditating.

ON CHARLIE: *Clanking* of cell doors; *footsteps* of guards; and prisoner *chatter* echo, but Charlie's focus is unbreakable.

ON WILL: An occasional *passing car* and the faint *whirring* of electronics disrupt the silence, but he's completely at ease.

EXT. CAHILL HOME - ESTABLISHING - PRE-DAWN

The neighborhood sleeps. The sun barely hints at rising.

INT. WILL'S ROOM - SAME

The clock reads 5:41. Will instinctively wakes -- rolls onto the floor -- starts doing push-ups.

INT. PRISON HALLS - SAME

Dark. Eerily quiet.

INT. PRISON CELL - SAME

Charlie - seemingly the only person awake in the entire prison - does push-ups.

INTERCUT WILL AND CHARLIE: They go through their workout routine - as if in unison - but in their new environments.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - COUNSELOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Will - in his threadbare outdoor attire - sits opposite a hefty COUNSELOR. She looks puzzled.

COUNSELOR

Now - have you ever been in school?

(Will shakes his head)

Because your placement tests were actually darn good. I'd recommend a full track of advanced courses.

Will grimaces: *he revealed too much intellect on the tests.*

WILL

I'll pursue the average curriculum.

COUNSELOR

You'll be bored. Some of the AP instructors are doing very exciting-

WILL

No.

COUNSELOR

At very least, try AP U.S. History -
I think you'll connect with Mr.
Ganthon. And let me know ASAP if
you want to switch into the other
advanced courses.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER THAT DAY

Congestion between classes. STUDENTS covertly check their
SMARTPHONES at their lockers, presumably banned from use
inside the school.

Will walks with a stack of books -- passes a group of POPULAR
GIRLS. They take a break from texting to gawk.

GIRL 1

Where'd they find that creature?

GIRL 2

My mom said his dad's a total
psycho. Raised him in the woods.

GIRL 1

Twisted. Where's he staying?

GIRL 2

Foster care... with the Cahills.

GIRL 3

It's like, the kid has been through
enough, then you stick him with a
batty old couple.

Will overhears their jeers but walks straight ahead.

GIRL 3

Tragic.

GIRL 1

Please, Em. You'd probably blow him.

GIRL 3

(playing along)
He *is* kind of cute...

The Girls giggle.

Down the hall, a group of BOYS stare at Will. The apparent
leader is ADAM (17): handsome, athletic, cruel.

ADAM

Freak show. Look at those clothes.

BOY 2

Imagine growing up in the woods,
man. I bet his dad was bangin' him.

BOY 3

His dad got 14 months, bro. He's
stuck here with us.

BOY 2

Home-schooled his whole life.

BOY 3

Home-everythinged...

BOY 2

Home-schooled is just a fancy way
of saying molested. Sick shit, man.

Adam - much taller than Will - intentionally *bumps* into Will,
knocking his books to the floor. The Boys snicker.

Will immediately shoves Adam forcefully against the lockers.

Adam's face drops, startled by Will's strength. The other
Boys - equally shocked - step in between them.

Will assumes his fighting stance, identical to Charlie in the
prison yard. OFF WILL'S CLENCHED FISTS, we...

FLASHBACK - EXT. CABIN - DAY

Will, sweaty from training, stands in his fighting stance at
the makeshift punching bag. Charlie watches.

CHARLIE

Right.

Forceful *right hook* to the bag.

CHARLIE

Left.

Will *punches* with his left, equally powerful.

CHARLIE

Attack.

Will pivots to Charlie, who assumes an identical stance. Will
lunges at Charlie, unleashes a flurry of full-force *punches*
and *kicks*. This is no simple sparring session.

Charlie only defends. One *kick* solidly connects with his
side. Charlie nods, impressed but betraying no approval.

CHARLIE
Stop... Defend.

Charlie attacks at full speed, *punches* and *kicks* flying. Will skillfully defends, but Charlie's strength takes a toll on his forearms and shins.

Will deflects a *jab* at his stomach, but Charlie lands a forceful *punch* to Will's cheek. Will is momentarily fazed but defends the next barrage.

CHARLIE
Stop.

Will steps back, catching his breath, his cheek already bruised and swelling.

CHARLIE
We are strong, William.

Will's eyes are locked on Charlie's, fully focused.

CHARLIE
We possess the physical ability to overpower... to injure... to *kill*.

Will nods, intense.

CHARLIE
Using this ability at the wrong time is wasteful - jeopardizing everything we work for. We must carefully choose when to use these skills... Understood?

WILL
Yes, Father.

END OF FLASHBACK.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - RESUMING

Will stands in his fighting stance, glaring at Adam. Adam and his friends remain frozen.

Will recalls Charlie's advice -- exhales -- relaxes his posture -- collects his books.

The bell *rings*. The Boys walk away. Adam feigns confidence, joking with his pals, but glances back at Will, uneasy.

RENEE (16), an indie girl-next-door type, rushes from her locker to catch Will.

RENEE

Don't worry about them. They're
assholes.

(off Will's silence)

I'm Renee.

Will shuns her -- quickly walks away. She watches him go,
then turns and heads to class.

INT. WARDEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Tidy. Plaques adorn the walls. WARDEN AYERS (50s) sips coffee
at his massive desk. Charlie sits opposite him, stolid.

WARDEN AYERS

I've seen thousands of inmates come
through these doors.

Charlie stares him dead in the eyes.

WARDEN AYERS

I pride myself on running a tight
ship. When a new inmate immediately
gets to fighting, I smell a trouble
maker.

(sips his coffee)

You a trouble maker, Nasy?

Charlie's constant eye contact unsettles the Warden. He
fidgets with his already-straight tie.

CHARLIE

No.

WARDEN AYERS

Trouble makers get time tacked on.
That what you want?

Charlie shakes his head.

WARDEN AYERS

Keep your head down. Serve your
time. We'll overlook today's
indiscretion, but only once.

(off Charlie's nod)

I'd like nothing more than to not
see your face again til your
release. I want you to be a ghost.

CHARLIE

Likewise.

EXT. CABIN - LATE AFTERNOON

Will jogs up the long driveway, drenched in sweat -- surveys the property: no sign of intrusion.

INT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Will selects a thick tome from a bookshelf -- opens it -- removes several rolls of CASH from a secret cut-out section -- replaces the homemade safe on the shelf.

EXT. CROP ROWS - SUNSET

Will moves through the crops, pruning and picking.

INT. CAHILL HOME - NIGHT

Will enters, out of breath. Mrs. Cahill stands to greet him as Mr. Cahill watches the nightly news.

MRS. CAHILL

In the future, please let me know
if you have plans after school. So
we can have supper together. We can
get you a cell phone, so-

WILL

No, thank you. I'll be exercising
after school most days. Like today.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

Will and Mrs. Cahill finish their meals in awkward silence. Mrs. Cahill searches for words.

WILL

Could you drive me to visit my
father on Saturday? Visiting hours
begin at 9:00.

MRS. CAHILL

Sure. It's about a 3 hour drive.

WILL

So we should leave by 5:30.

MRS. CAHILL

You mean in the morning, right?

Will nods. Mrs. Cahill is surprised by Will's nonchalance.

MRS. CAHILL

The gardeners are coming to finish
the shrubs. Maybe we could leave a
bit later...

They make eye contact. Will's gaze is intimidating. Mrs.
Cahill crosses to the refrigerator, unnerved.

MRS. CAHILL

Blueberry or cherry pie? Wasn't
sure which you preferred, so I
baked one of each.

(off Will's shrug)

Who can choose, right?

Will scrapes his fork against his empty plate.

WILL

I've never tried either.

Mrs. Cahill's face drops. She quickly recovers with a smile.

MRS. CAHILL

Try a piece of each and decide.

Will looks at her with a naive innocence, but his
vulnerability is short-lived. He turns unpleasant, defensive.

WILL

I don't want any. Excuse me.

MRS. CAHILL

Okay, honey. I just-

Will exits. She joins Mr. Cahill on the couch -- rests her
head on his shoulder, unaffected by his trance-like state.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

MR. GANTHON (40s) displays a slideshow on a large FLATSCREEN
TV. Renee sits a few rows behind Will, paying more attention
to him than the lecture.

GANTHON

Columbus discovered the Americas
because he dared to explore. Took a
leap into the unknown and found
scores of new land and resources.

Will shakes his head in disgust, looks down at his TEXTBOOK.
OFF HIS TEXTBOOK, we...

FLASHBACK - INT. CABIN - DAY

Will sits opposite Charlie at the table, reading the final paragraphs of Sartre's *Nausea*. Will closes the book.

WILL

I'm sure I would experience similar frustration out there: the lack of intelligence, consciousness, purpose.

CHARLIE

These simple-minded people are brainwashed in schools, factories for teaching lies so a select few can control the masses. The outside world is bleak... If we are separated, you must never trust anyone.

Will nods with conviction.

END OF FLASHBACK.

INT. CLASSROOM - RESUMING

Will - lost in his memory - stares at Ganthon.

GANTHON

It could be argued he was seeking a shortcut to India, but the bottom line was that he had the courage to get in a boat and explore.

The bell *rings* and most of the students dash out. Will lingers, sorting his books. Renee confidently approaches.

RENEE

How'd you like the lecture?

(no response)

Ganthon is so smart. Most teachers would lose my interest in the first ten minutes, but he's just so articulate and keeps it interesting, you know?

(Will scoffs, judging)

You disagree? How could you? He just gets it.

Will boils over.

WILL

That man knows *nothing*. They spit
lies to impressionable students...

RENEE

Low blow.

Will looks puzzled at her slang usage. She smiles.

RENEE

Just wanted to get you talking. I
think I have your number, Will
Nasy... See you tomorrow.

She walks away before he can react.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Crowded. The Boys stand by their lockers. Will passes.

ADAM

What's up, pussy?

Will shoots Adam a glare. The Boys look away, pretending to
look at something else. Will rummages in his locker.

BOY 2

What're you doing, faggot?

Will looks. Again, they avert their eyes -- *whistle*.
Irritated, Will turns back to his locker -- grabs a book.

BOY 3

Fuck you, freak!

Will hurries away, past a group of three TEACHERS, including
Ganthon and Theresa (Charlie's customer from the market).
They can't resist staring. We stay with the teachers:

TEACHER 1

Of all schools, they send *that* here.

THERESA

Can't wait til his dad gets out and
they both just get out of town.

TEACHER 1

How's he doing in his classes?

GANTHON

I don't think anyone's heard him
speak yet. His first essay was odd.

THERESA
He's literate?

GANTHON
Absolutely. The essay lacked
ambition and was formulaic. But...
with allegedly no previous
schooling, he cited several authors
that aren't introduced until upper-
level college courses.

The other Teachers raise their eyebrows.

GANTHON
I don't know what they were doing
up there in the woods, but the kid
has been educated.

EXT. CAHILL HOME - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

The neighborhood is silent.

Will plants shrubs in the yard. He digs quickly, efficiently -
- then carefully fills in the dirt -- moves on to the next.

INT. CAHILL HOME - PRE-DAWN - THE NEXT MORNING

Will *knocks* on the Cahills' bedroom door. *Stirring* from
within. A groggy Mrs. Cahill opens the door in a robe.

MRS. CAHILL
Everything okay?

WILL
Yes. I'm ready to leave for the
prison.

MRS. CAHILL
Honey. The gardeners. I told you.

WILL
The shrubs have been planted.

Mrs. Cahill purses her lips, still half asleep, confused.

INT. MRS. CAHILL'S CAR - MOVING - MORNING

Mrs. Cahill drives. Will gazes out the window.

MRS. CAHILL
Is he expecting you?

WILL

Yes.

MRS. CAHILL

You sure miss him a lot, don't you?

WILL

I'm fine.

MRS. CAHILL

I know you're going through a lot.
Maybe you're not comfortable yet,
but I'm always here to talk. Okay?

She looks at Will. He continues to look out the window, but his intense gaze slightly softens.

INT. PRISON VISITATION ROOM - DAY

Large, open room. PRISONERS mingle with VISITORS at tables.

Will waits eagerly. Charlie approaches in an inmate jumpsuit.

WILL

Hello, Father.

Charlie scans around: the coast is clear, but he still speaks in a near-whisper.

CHARLIE

How's the property?

Will's emotion is stifled by Charlie's stoicism.

WILL

The shed is secure. The cabin is
untouched.

CHARLIE

You must be discrete with your
letters. I don't know who reads
them before they reach me.

(off Will's nod)

Is anyone suspicious of you?

WILL

I rarely speak. I do just enough to
pass the assignments in school. I'm
invisible.

CHARLIE

Stay strong. Be patient. This is
only a temporary setback.

Charlie motions to a Guard, who approaches and leads him away. Will watches him go, longing for more interaction.

INT. PRISON WAITING ROOM - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Mrs. Cahill looks up from her book, surprised to see Will.

MRS. CAHILL
Was he not available yet?

WILL
He was. We spoke. We may go now.

MRS. CAHILL
That's it? After the long drive?

Will nods. Mrs. Cahill stands, facing Will, yearning to hug him. Will turns abruptly -- exits. She follows.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The trees are barren. Hints of winter.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYM - DAY

16 STUDENTS - including Will, Adam, Adam's friends, and the Popular Girls - do *jumping jacks*. Most sport gym clothes, but Will wears his usual outdoor attire.

An apathetic PE COACH (30) observes, paying extra attention to the Girls' bouncing physiques.

Coach blows his *whistle*, and the students stop exercising.

PE COACH
Alright, everybody's favorite time
of year... Fitness tests.

LATER

The Students stand in queues behind PULL UP STATIONS. The first group grasps the pull up bars.

PE COACH
Partners, be sure to count
accurately... Good luck breaking
your own record, Adam.

Adam is in the first group. Coach *whistles*, and the pull ups begin. Most struggle, achieving only a few reps. Coach records their results on his iPad.

Adam cranks out fast reps, only going halfway down. The class counts his reps aloud, cheering him on. The Girls swoon.

CLASS

19-20-21-22... 23... 24.

Adam strains for a 25th, red-faced, but fails -- drops from the bar, breathing heavily. The Boys high five him. Coach smiles, impressed.

LATER

Will at the pull up bar. Adam watches, arms crossed and smug. Coach *whistles*.

Will does one rep then lowers to a resting position. Adam sneers, thinking Will is struggling... Then Will churns out another *full* pull up - from resting position all the way up. And another. And another.

MOMENTS LATER

The class looks on, surprised. Will's 'partner,' a NERDY GIRL, counts aloud. Adam snarls. Coach's mouth hangs agape.

NERDY GIRL

17... 18... 19...

Will continues, showing no sign of fatigue.

NERDY GIRL

20... 21... 22... 23...

After the 23rd rep, Will drops from the bar, barely breathing above normal. Nerdy Girl offers him a high five: denied. Will nonchalantly walks away.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Will stands alone. Adam and the other Boys change clothes.

Will removes his shirt, exposing his ripped physique. The other Boys pretend not to stare, but the kid is shredded.

ADAM (O.S.)

He's actually heard of a shower
after all? Fucking freak...

Will turns. The others gasp as they notice his back: *scarred* and *bruised* from years of intense training and rugged living.

Will turns on a sink: OFF THE WATER STREAMING, we...

FLASHBACK - EXT. CABIN - DAY

Water flows from the RAINWATER TANK. Will rinses dirty clothes, then hangs them on a clothes line.

Charlie creeps up -- cups his hands and emits a noise, similar to a *bird call*... An alert.

Will's ears perk up. He drops everything -- *sprints* past the shed -- runs into the woods. He runs powerfully. Damn fast.

Charlie watches from his hiding place.

EXT. WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

Will ascends a tree, climbing with force and speed, arrives quickly at the top. From a high branch -- where we saw him reading before -- he has a clear view of the property.

Will hears the *bird call alert* again -- sees Charlie below. Charlie quickly climbs up -- joins Will at the top.

They look out over the property and the breathtaking mountains beyond.

WILL
All seems secure.

CHARLIE
The shed?

WILL
Locked.

CHARLIE
You didn't check behind you before climbing. Someone could've followed. You'd be stuck -- finished.

Will closes his eyes -- nods, disappointed in himself.

CHARLIE
We waste our physical superiority if fail to use our intellectual superiority...

WILL
I'm sorry, Father.

Fire flashes in Charlie's eyes, vicious. The most animated we've seen him:

CHARLIE
Never apologize! Apologizing is
weakness! Belittling yourself...
Learn - then never repeat a
mistake.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Ganthon lectures, mid-slideshow. The images are glamorized colonial portrayals of interaction with Native Americans. Will eyes his desk, frustrated.

GANTHON
Some tribes had positive relations
with settlers and coexisted in
peace. Others refused to cooperate,
so relations became violent.

Will glares at Ganthon with disdain. OFF HIS LOOK, we...

FLASHBACK - INT. CABIN - DAY

Will holds Friedrich Albert Lange's *Geschichte des Materialismus* (the German language edition). Charlie stands looking down at him.

WILL
I sympathize with his plight, but I
cannot directly relate. I'd like to
encounter the outside world.

CHARLIE
You have the opportunity to live
and think freely without being
corrupted by this rotting *society*.
A superior existence. I would give
anything for that opportunity. You
alone are pure, William.

WILL
You're right. Of course. However my
knowledge is purely theoretical...
I'd like to observe, just a bit, to
confirm my beliefs.

CHARLIE

Your senses cannot be trusted out there. It's all mind tricks and manipulation.

Will nods, unconvinced, looks away.

END OF FLASHBACK.

INT. CLASSROOM - RESUMING

Will stares a hole through Ganthon - lost in his memory - anger on his face.

Ganthon has noticed and stopped lecturing. The whole class looks at Will and his frightening expression.

GANTHON

Will..? Are you okay? Will?

Will looks up -- nods -- looks down at his desk. Ganthon, still uneasy, realizes he's short on time:

GANTHON

Quick. I want to plant a seed about the Presidential Scholars Program.

Mostly groans and yawns. Renee perks up.

GANTHON

Scholars receive an all-expense paid trip to Washington DC and meet the President of our great United States. Looks amazing on a college application. Great opportunity but extremely competitive. Only the top students in the country. Let me know if you want more info.

The bell *rings*, and the students explode toward the door.

GANTHON

Have a safe weekend. Good luck to our football players tonight.

The students flee. Renee follows closely behind Will.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Will trudges through the crowd. Renee catches up.

RENEE

A few friends and I are going to a movie tonight. Wanna come?

(Will eyes the floor)

It'll be fun. What else would you do - go to the big game?

WILL

What do you think?

RENEE

I think people like us wouldn't be caught dead there. Bunch of dumb assholes running around with a ball, trying to cream the crap out of each other.

WILL

What do you mean 'people like us'?

RENEE

Outsiders. Losers. Different kids.

WILL

We are nothing alike.

RENEE

I moved here last year. I know what it's like to be new. To hear people talking about you in the hall. You don't have to face it alone.

For a moment, Will's shield drops. Renee notices the glimmer.

WILL

You know nothing about me.

Renee pulls out her smartphone.

RENEE

What's your number? I'll text you about the movie.

(off Will's blank stare)

No number - got it. How about I swing by your place on the way. If you want to come, be outside at 7. If not, no big deal.

Will watches her walk away.

EXT. CABIN - DUSK - LATER THAT DAY

The sun begins to creep below the mountains. Will unlocks the cabin -- enters.

EXT. CAHILL HOME - DUSK

Renee parks in front. A hippie girl, POLLY (16), and a stoner, POPS (16), ride along.

Renee scans the porch: no Will. Disappointed, she drives away.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - LATER

Renee, Polly, and Pops watch the film. Renee regards the empty seat next to her -- turns pensive.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

Will *strikes* the homemade punching bag with a newfound vigor. He *strikes* and *strikes* until the bag *rips*, spilling dirt. Oblivious, he continues to *strike*.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Will shuts his locker. Renee is waiting.

RENEE

You should apply for the
Presidential Scholarship.

(blank stare)

The school only nominates one
student. I'm applying.

WILL

So why would you want me to apply?

RENEE

Healthy competition. I like a
challenge. It would make us both
work harder. Get to know each
other. I can go on...

WILL

I'm not a strong enough student.

RENEE

(scoffs)

You're not fooling anyone.

Will is taken aback. Renee doesn't belabor the point:

RENEE

You missed a good movie last weekend. We're going again Saturday. I'll swing by at 7.

She doesn't wait for a reply.

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

Charlie does push ups, eyes straight ahead, unblinking.

INT. PRISON VISITATION ROOM - DAY

Charlie sits opposite Will.

CHARLIE

Does anyone question you?

WILL

Not really.

CHARLIE

Elaborate.

WILL

Most people leave me alone, but there's a girl.

CHARLIE

Trouble. I told you to remain completely inconspicuous.

WILL

I have. She's harmless. But she's persistent.

Charlie's exhales hard, losing interest.

WILL

She wants me to apply to a scholar program for the top students in the country. To meet the President in Washington. It's comical. Who would want to compete to meet that conniving puppet?

Charlie's eyes dart back to Will.

CHARLIE

You would meet the President?

Will nods. Charlie processes the information... then:

CHARLIE

Perfect. This is your opportunity.
This is your destiny.

Will's eyes search Charlie, perplexed.

CHARLIE

It's time to achieve, William.
Integrate yourself. Do what you
must. The President will meet you.
The world will know our strength.

They lock eyes. Will wavers, then nods. Charlie leans in -- starts whispering plans to Will.

EXT. CAHILL HOME - DUSK

Will sits on the porch. Renee pulls up. Will freezes, hoping he hasn't been spotted. Her voice pierces the night:

RENEE

Come on, Will. We're running late.

Will nervously plods toward the car.

INT. RENEE'S CAR - MOVING - MOMENTS LATER

Renee drives. Polly texts in the front seat. Will and Pops ride in back. Pops nods '*what's up*' to Will.

Bob Dylan's *Tangled Up in Blue* thunders from the speakers, forcing the conversation to consist of near-yelling.

Will studies Pops. Renee smiles back at Will.

RENEE

Glad you came.

Will gives a slight nod. Polly turns the volume down.

POLLY

Dylan sold out, man. If he hadn't
gone electric, folk scene would
still be huge. He ruined folk
music. Period.

RENEE

He evolved as a musician. His
electric stuff just shows
versatility. Interests can change.

POLLY

Sold out.

RENEE

If he hadn't come along, the folk scene never would have gotten as big as it was...

Polly turns to address Pops, whose full attention is occupied by watching his own hand dip and rise in the wind.

POLLY

What do you think, Pops..? Pops!

Pops, oblivious to the conversation, offers a cheesy grin. Will studies their interaction.

POLLY

Thoughts about Dylan going electric?

POPS

Dig it.

POLLY

Profound insight as always.

Pops returns to watching his hand surf the wind.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

The foursome watches a movie and shares popcorn. Polly cuddles with Pops.

Will's face contorts in new ways, engaged in the film. Renee observes Will -- smiles.

INT. RENEE'S CAR - MOVING - LATER THAT NIGHT

The foursome rides home.

RENEE

What'd you guys think?

POLLY

Effects were too much. Plot was way outlandish. I need a little realism.

RENEE

Pops? How'd you like it?

POPS

Dope.

RENEE
Will... your thoughts?

WILL
The story seemed unrealistic-

POLLY
Thank you. Finally a fellow realist.

WILL
The characters lacked conviction and made illogical decisions. But the experience was intriguing.

Renee smiles in the rearview.

EXT. POLLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Renee pulls into Polly's driveway. Polly and Pops exit.

POLLY
Good night, you guys.

Renee calls out of her open window:

RENEE
Good night, my love. G'night, Pops.

Pops throws up a peace sign over.

INT. RENEE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Will remains in the back. Renee eyes him in the rearview.

RENEE
My name is Renee. I'll be your chauffeur this evening. Where to?

Will swallows, the humor lost on him.

RENEE
Get up front, Will.

WILL
Oh - okay.

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

Charlie scribbles on a note pad. His hand moves with rapid precision, as if he can't write fast enough.

INT. RENEE'S CAR - MOVING - SAME

Renee stops in front of the Cahill home.

RENEE
Thanks for coming tonight.

WILL
(hesitates; then:)
I enjoyed it.

Renee leans over and kisses Will on the cheek. Will's body locks up; his face reddens. Renee leans back, smiles.

RENEE
Have a good night.

Will exits -- then turns back, earnest.

WILL
I've decided to participate in the
Presidential Scholar Program.

RENEE
You mean 'apply?'
(off his confident stare)
Alright - I like the swagger. Let's
meet early Monday to start prep.

Will nods. Renee smiles -- drives away.

EXT. CAHILL HOME - PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Cahill puffs a cigar. Will walks past. No pleasantries.

INT. PRISON KITCHEN - NIGHT

BJ, still with a black eye from Charlie, washes dishes.
Charlie mops. They are alone.

BJ
You got a lady on the outside?
(no response)
Listen, man. We're gonna spend a
lotta time together in this fuckin'
sweatbox. Goes much faster if we
talk.

CHARLIE
What would you like to discuss?

BJ
Shit - I dunno. Anything.

Charlie's eyes penetrate BJ, sizing him up.

CHARLIE
I'm interested in your group. Are you actually a White Supremacist, or do you just claim allegiance in here for protection?

BJ
Wasn't affiliated on the outside, but I got to listenin' to the teachings. I like what I hear.

CHARLIE
And what are the teachings?

BJ
We're the superior race, man. We just want to wipe out the inferiors, you know?

CHARLIE
What makes you superior?

BJ
This beautiful ivory skin.

CHARLIE
That's all it takes?

BJ
Them minorities aren't fully evolved.

CHARLIE
You're aware that whites aren't a majority in the world. Even in this country, Caucasians will soon be outnumbered.

BJ
Which is why we gotta attack now.

Charlie sneers -- continues mopping.

BJ
Where'd you learn that fancy fightin' shit?

CHARLIE
 Learned basics in the Army.
 Developed the rest myself.

BJ
 You mind showing me a few moves?

CHARLIE
 I do mind.

BJ chuckles: *fair enough*. They work in silence for a moment.

BJ
 What do you believe in then? Easy
 to cast judgment - not say anything
 - not stand for anything.

Charlie pauses, provoked -- stares a hole through BJ, then:

CHARLIE
 I believe in many things, but my
 prime ethic - which permeates every
 decision I make - is to leave
 things better than I find them.

BJ
 You think my face is better off
 with this black eye?

CHARLIE
 The struggle to survive precedes
 the desire to improve.

BJ
 How do you reckon we improve things?

CHARLIE
 Sometimes it's simple - like
 picking up a piece of trash.

BJ
 So you wanna be a garbageman?

CHARLIE
 On a larger scale, to leave the
 earth better than we found it...
 will require drastic actions. The
 world is on a dangerous trajectory.
 (off BJ's nod)
 Humans are consciously destroying
 the earth, while the population is
 swelling. And this nation is
 crumbling.

BJ

I'm with you. We have similar beliefs, man. Keep the foreigners out. Wipe out the excess - the minorities. Stop them inferiors from overbreeding.

CHARLIE

Do you have children?

BJ

Yep - four little white angels.

CHARLIE

You're the problem. And your bigoted, nonsensical, obsolete ideology disgusts me.

BJ processes the insult for a moment, then laughs, uncomfortable. Charlie just stares at him.

BJ

You're fucking crazy, man.

CHARLIE

Sometimes I think I'm the only sane person on the planet.

Charlie gets back to mopping.

A moment of silence, then BJ coughs... then all of a sudden starts convulsing, having a seizure.

BJ

Nasy... Shit...

BJ's breathing deepens. He falls to the floor, gasping:

BJ

My pills... in the infirmary... please...

CHARLIE

Quite superior.

Charlie calmly walks away.

INT. PRISON HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie strolls past a door marked 'INFIRMARY' but doesn't break stride. Not even a glance.

INT. PRISON KITCHEN - SAME

BJ writhes until he finally lays motionless, dead.

INT. CHARLIE'S CELL - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie nonchalantly peruses the collection of books on his window sill -- selects on a tattered Kierkegaard novel.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

-LIBRARY. Renee and Will study together. Renee points to Will's notes -- makes a suggestion. Will shakes his head -- explains his better way. Renee nods, conceding.

-COUNSELOR'S OFFICE. Will sits with the Counselor.

WILL

I'd like to switch into the
advanced classes... All of them.

COUNSELOR

The semester's nearly over.

WILL

I'll make up the work. No problem.

COUNSELOR

O-kay. Would you want to take some
of the old Advanced Placement
tests... To gauge-

WILL

Absolutely. As many as possible.

-MATH EXAM. The rest of the class hammers away on their scientific calculators. Will quickly computes in his head.

The Teacher strolls past, intrigued -- looks down at his answer sheet. Her face drops, impressed.

-WILL'S ROOM. Will scribbles on his homework.

-TRACK. William outsprints the entire gym class, including Adam, with ease. Coach's eyes nearly pop out of his head.

-HALLWAY. Will passes Teacher 1, Theresa and Ganthon.

TEACHER 1

He scored 5's on every sample AP
exam he took - including Latin,
Physics, and *Chinese*.

THERESA

Did he have access to the tests
beforehand? Did he cheat?

TEACHER 1

No way. I proctored the exams
myself.

GANTHON

Ms. Dalton says his work in chem
lab is the most advanced she's seen
in her 40 year career...

END OF MONTAGE.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Will walks home from school -- passes the local...

EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY - CONTINUOUS

STUDENTS trudge home from school, glued to their smartphones.

Will stares straight ahead, unblinking, in his own world. As
he crosses the school driveway... Beeeep.

Will springs out of the way of the car. His leap and reaction
speed seem superhuman. He surveys the area, wide-eyed, then
slowly relaxes -- continues walking.

RENEE (O.S.)

Sorry to startle you. Just saying hi.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL Renee is driving the car, picking up her
brother BEN (13; pre-pubescent, overconfident) from school.

BEN

That was some ninja robot shit.

Will becomes self-conscious.

RENEE

This is my pesky little brother Ben.

Ben pretends to scratch his cheek with his middle finger,
flipping Will the bird. Will is oblivious.

RENEE

Come over for dinner.

(off Will's hesitation)

You like beef stroganoff? Mom's
specialty.

WILL
Never tried it.

RENEE
I'll scoop you at 6.

Will tries to force a smile, but manages to look uncomfortable. Renee drives away.

INT. CAHILL HOME - DAY

Mr. Cahill watches TV as Mrs. Cahill works on a crossword. Will approaches. Mrs. Cahill looks up -- smiles.

WILL
I won't be eating dinner here.

MRS. CAHILL
Okay. Where will you be eating, if you don't mind me asking?

WILL
A friend's house.

MRS. CAHILL
What's his name? Maybe we know the family.

WILL
Renee. I don't know her last name.

MRS. CAHILL
Oh, a girl friend - not necessarily a *girlfriend* girlfriend, but a friend that's a girl. Delightful.

Will blushes. Mrs. Cahill recovers.

MRS. CAHILL
Renee... Doesn't ring a bell. We aren't the socialites we once were.
(Will lingers)
Is there something else?

WILL
I was wondering... Would it be okay if I borrowed some clothes from the closet in my... the room I'm staying in?

Mrs. Cahill pauses, nostalgic for a moment, then grins.

MRS. CAHILL
Of course. It's your room. You're
welcome to wear anything you find.

WILL
Thank you.

Will retreats. Mrs. Cahill calls after him:

MRS. CAHILL
But I doubt those clothes are still
in style...

Too late: Will's already out of earshot.

EXT. RENEE'S HOUSE - EVENING

Renee approaches her house, casually dressed. Will follows,
sporting a plaid flannel shirt and acid washed jeans.

The front door opens and a small DOG, "Otis," sprints to
Renee. She greets it warmly. Renee's dad, AMOS (39), barefoot
in gym clothes, leans out the door.

AMOS
Make sure Otis drops one.

RENEE
This is my friend Will.

Otis sniffs Will thoroughly. He stands straight, stiff.

AMOS
Hey there.
(re: Will's attire)
You two going to a grunge
concert... or a costume party?

Will looks down at his outfit, instantly embarrassed.

AMOS
You can help with the dog, Will.
He's small but don't underestimate
his ability to defecate.

RENEE
We get it. Thanks, Dad.

Amos disappears into the house. Renee scratches Otis' belly.

RENEE
Do you have a dog?

Will is slow to respond:

WILL
We had a hunting dog for a while.

RENEE
And...

WILL
It's a long story.

RENEE
We have time. Otis likes to inspect the area before deciding where to *drop one*, as my dad so eloquently put it.

As if on cue, Otis starts sniffing around the yard.

WILL
I was much smaller... I had been hunting with my father before but only to help scout. One day he went to town, and I wanted to try the rifle by myself.

RENEE
Oh god. You didn't. You shot the dog?

Otis crosses into the neighbor's yard. They follow.

RENEE
Okay. Sorry. I won't interrupt. But if you shot the dog, you're no longer welcome for dinner. Just kidding. But seriously - you didn't shoot the dog, did you?

WILL
We went into the woods. Walked a while - didn't find any animals, so I sat down by the creek.

Renee hangs on every word, enthralled.

WILL
I dozed off... woke to barking. There was a black bear with her cub about 20 meters from me.

Renee is speechless for the first time in her life.

WILL

The dog tried to protect me and got slashed. I fired one shot - missed. Father had returned from town, heard the shot, came running, and shot the bear. The dog was injured so Father shot it.

Her jaw drops at his deadpan delivery.

RENEE

You're joking, right?

WILL

The dog wouldn't be able hunt anymore, so it wasn't of use. No reason to keep it around.

Renee looks away, perplexed.

RENEE

What was its name?

WILL

No name. It knew hunting commands. No need to address it otherwise.

They turn back toward the house in silence.

EXT. NASY PROPERTY - CROP ROWS - SAME

The crops begin to show signs of neglect. Weeds creep between the formerly pristine crop rows.

BIRDS snack on the crops.

INT. RENEE'S HOUSE - SAME

Renee and Will enter the tidy home. Ben and Amos lounge on the couch, watching sports.

Renee's mom, DIANA (38), hums as she prepares dinner.

BEN

This is the drifter Renee picked up on the sidewalk earlier.

Amos laughs. Diana chimes in from the kitchen:

DIANA (O.S.)
I can't hear exactly what you're saying, Benjamin, but I assume it's inappropriate. Knock it off.

BEN
Are you two sexually active?

Renee reddens. Will raises his eyebrows. Amos laughs again.

BEN
Didn't think so.

RENEE
Shouldn't you be staring at your armpits in the mirror, hoping to miraculously sprout hair?

BEN
Whoa whoa. Some of us take longer to mature than others. Don't rush perfection, lady. It'll happen.

AMOS
That's right, bud. Can't rush it.

Ben shoots Renee a smug glance. Diana bounds from the kitchen, greets Will with a handshake.

DIANA
So nice to meet you. Please excuse them... I visited a psychic in college. She said I'd have three *kids*: two boys and a girl.
(motioning to Amos)
How right she was... Dinner is served.

Ben leaps the couch -- runs to the dining area. Amos follows Diana into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Amos sneaks a few green beans from the serving dish.

DIANA
I saw that, mister.

AMOS
Looks so delicious - couldn't wait.

DIANA
Yeah yeah.

Will watches the exchange. Renee smiles -- tugs at Will's hand. He follows her to the table.

INT. PRISON DINING HALL - SAME

INMATES eat mystery slop.

Jacob addresses the Skinheads, elbows on the table:

JACOB

I know BJ got seizures, and I don't care if Nasy had nothing to do with it. They had kitchen duty together - That's suspicious enough. We don't deal with him, we lose face.

Murmurs and nods. Jacob's disciples listen intently.

JACOB

Straight up: This fucker is serious. Got some Bruce Lee shit going on. Can't just walk up and shank him. We wait... Let him get comfortable, then we hit.

Charlie eats alone. GOBI (50s; beady-eyed), joins.

GOBI

Name's Tom Gobieski. Call me Gobi.

Gobi talks fast -- avoids eye contact.

GOBI

I don't get mixed up with the gangs. I'm more of a thinker... Seems we got things in common. Saw that book collection of yours - Nice spread.

Charlie eats, ignoring Gobi. Gobi brags:

GOBI

I was a professor on the outside. Had my way with a few too many co-eds. A few got mouthy - disappeared.

Charlie glares at Gobi, disgusted.

GOBI

You need anything, or wanna talk philosophy or play chess, come find me... I'm on library duty.

Charlie stands -- walks away.

INT. RENEE'S HOUSE - DINING AREA - SAME

Dinner is underway: beef stroganoff, salad, bread.

WILL
Everything is delicious.

DIANA
Thank you, Will.

RENEE
His first time eating beef
stroganoff.

BEN
You've never stroged it off?
Weirdo.

Renee silences Ben with a *kick* under the table.

WILL
(without thinking)
I've never eaten beef actually.

DIANA
Oh no. Do you have dietary
restrictions? I should've asked.

AMOS
You Muslim?

RENEE
Muslims eat beef, Dad.

WILL
I usually cook fish, deer, fowl, or
hog. Depends on the season.

DIANA
(impressed)
You cook? Wow. Any particular
reason you choose those meats?

All eyes on Will. He proceeds slowly, self-conscious.

WILL
Well, my father and I - we catch
our own fish. Hunt our own meat.

Ben looks at Will with a newfound respect.

BEN
Can you take me? I will totally
snipe some deers.

DIANA
Deer.

BEN
No no. Deers. I would take down
five or six big ass-

DIANA
Language.

BEN
Five or six big-boned deers.

DIANA
Deer, hon. Plural of deer is deer.

BEN
Whatever. Will you take me hunting?

CLOSE ON WILL'S intense gaze as we...

FLASHBACK - EXT. WOODS - EVENING

Will and Charlie creep with RIFLES, wearing camouflage.

CHARLIE
3 o'clock. 60 meters.

Will rapidly pivots -- eyes his scope -- *fires* at a tree in
the distance with a target painted on it. Bark flies.

The rifle kicks a bit, but he seems in control. Definitely
not his first time. He cocks the rifle. Charlie checks the
shot with binoculars.

CHARLIE
Too high.

BINOCULAR POV: Nearly a bull's eye - millimeters too high.

CHARLIE
Shooter at 12 o'clock. 25 meters.

Will drops to a knee behind a fallen log -- steadies -- *fires*
at the target painted on the 12:00 tree. Slightly high.

CHARLIE

Too high. Again. When you're too weak or hesitant, the gun kicks, the bullet enters too high, and the target suffers. Steady, strong hand. We must respect our targets. Directly through the heart. No suffering. Clean kill.

WILL

It's just paint on trees.

Charlie glares at Will, provoked. A long beat.

CHARLIE

Get in the truck.

EXT. MAIN STREET - EVENING - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie's truck cruises along.

INT. CHARLIE'S TRUCK - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Will stares out the window. They still sport hunting camo. They cruise past a FATHER and SON playing catch.

WILL

What are they doing?

CHARLIE

A pointless activity to fill time.

WILL

They just heave it back and forth repeatedly?

CHARLIE

Correct.

Will takes a long look at the catch game -- squints -- perhaps recalling a distant memory from his subconscious...

CHARLIE

Their lives are meaningless.

The comment snaps Will from his reminiscence. He chuckles, amused by the 'pointless' game. His laugh is unnatural - obviously not a common behavior.

WILL

Such an unproductive use of time.

They pass a HOMELESS MAN panhandling on a street corner.

WILL

And him?

CHARLIE

These people are everywhere: drug-addicted, mentally ill, cast away by society, begging for scraps.

A SERIES OF SHOTS:

-DUSK. Charlie drives down the interstate. Will rides in front. The only vehicle on the road.

-MIDNIGHT. Charlie continues to drive. Will sleeps.

-DAWN. Charlie pulls off the highway -- parks deep in the WOODS. Will wakes as he feels the car stop.

CHARLIE

Come. We have a small hike.

EXT. OIL FIELD OUTSKIRTS - MORNING

Charlie and Will walk silently, rifles on their shoulders -- arrive at a steep drop-off.

CHARLIE

Here.

They stop. Several UPRIGHT OIL RIGS populate the landscape down below: *active fracking derricks*.

A handful of WORKERS in jumpsuits and hardhats work the rigs. A PARKING LOT and MOBILE OFFICES sit between the derricks.

MOMENTS LATER

Charlie and Will lie flat on their stomachs, *rifles* - now with silencers attached - pointed toward the oil field.

WILL'S RIFLE SCOPE POV: Searching for movement. An old compact car parks. A black man exits in a SECURITY GUARD uniform. The crosshairs finds his chest.

WILL

I have him.

Will is calm -- cocks the rifle -- finds the trigger.

CHARLIE

No. He is not a target.

Will exhales. The Guard strolls into the office, oblivious.

Will's scope finds one of the workers.

CHARLIE

No. We do not perpetrate senseless violence.

A chubby, sharp-dressed oilman, NAT CLOUMIN (50) exits the mobile office, barking into his phone. Charlie narrows his eyes. Will aims at Nat.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Nat Cloumin. He's ravaged the earth via hydraulic fracturing for decades to extract the almighty oil and natural gas.

Will tracks Nat with the crosshairs, focused.

Nat approaches his pristine RANGE ROVER -- paces as he continues his phone conversation.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Contributes more than 250 million dollars per year to heartless, pro-oil, climate change denying politicians and lobbyists. True criminal. Do it.

Will steadies on Nat -- closes one eye -- inhales -- *thwap!*

The bullet soars just over Nat's shoulder -- shatters his car window. Nat startles -- lowers his phone, frozen.

CHARLIE

Too high. Weak, William.

Charlie calmly finds Nat in his scope -- settles on his chest -- pulls the trigger -- *thwap*.

Nat crumples to the ground: dead. Clean kill.

Charlie and Will stand -- stride into the woods. Composed.

END OF FLASHBACK.

INT. RENEE'S HOUSE - DINING AREA - RESUMING

BEN

Will you teach me to shoot?

Will stares at Ben vacantly.

RENEE

I don't think your behavior has
earned an invitation.

AMOS

I'm a bit of a sportsman myself,
Will. Maybe we could go out
sometime.

Will looks at Amos, not sure how to reply.

INT. RENEE'S CAR - LATER THAT NIGHT

Renee parks outside the Cahill home. Will looks straight
forward. Renee leans over and kisses him on his cheek. He
blushes. Awkward silence.

WILL

Thank you.

RENEE

(laughing)

You're welcome.

Renee turns his head, closes her eyes, and plants a long kiss
on his lips. Will's wide eyes remain open. His mouth stays
rigid. Renee pulls away:

RENEE

You can move your lips around on
mine... if you want.

Will nods. They share a proper closed-mouth kiss.

Renee tilts her head -- slips in her tongue. He lets it
happen -- blinks. She pulls away. Will turns serious.

WILL

I have to tell you something.

Renee is intrigued. A pregnant pause.

WILL

The school nominated me for the
scholar program.

RENEE

I know.

WILL

I'm sorry.

RENEE

Stop. Are you kidding? You absolutely deserve it. It wasn't even close... I'm happy for you.

WILL

I couldn't have done it without you.

RENEE

(smiles)

I know.

Renee kisses him again.

RENEE

Good night.

WILL

Good night.

Will exits -- watches her go with an ambiguous look: *is he falling for her or playing her as a pawn in his mission?*

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NASY PROPERTY - DAY

The last signs of winter recede from the property. Birds *chirping*. New blooms. The neglected crops sprout haphazardly.

INT. PRISON VISITATION ROOM - DAY

Charlie looks sleep deprived, manic -- joins Will -- slips him a sheet of paper. Will unfolds it to find a handwritten scientific equation and a handdrawn diagram.

CHARLIE

A synthetic aerosol form of abrin - untraceable via x-ray. And it's nonvolatile as a liquid, so use a plastic vial - a metal detector won't be an issue. You'll fashion a bulb sprayer - similar to an antique perfume sprayer. The tube will run up the inside of your pant leg and exit your shirt.

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

When you shake the President's hand, look him square in the eyes and hold your breath. With your left hand, squeeze the bulb in your pocket, spraying a small cloud into his airspace. He'll inhale it. Less than a microgram is fatal - three days later he'll drop dead. You'll be long gone.

WILL

(unsure)

I haven't even been selected yet.

CHARLIE

I have full confidence in you, *son*.

They lock eyes. Will nods, impassioned by the compliment and first-ever familial term of endearment.

INT. CAHILL HOME - NIGHT

Will and Mrs. Cahill enter to find Mr. Cahill watching the news. Mrs. Cahill joins him with a kiss on the cheek.

MRS. CAHILL

Hi, honey.

Mr. Cahill is unresponsive. Will lingers.

ON THE TELEVISION: A NEW ANCHOR reports.

NEWS ANCHOR

Services were held today at the site of the KCH Industries Headquarters bombing...

FOOTAGE of the burning building. OFF THE FLAMES, we...

FLASHBACK - EXT. CHARLIE'S TRUCK - MOVING - LATE NIGHT

Charlie and Will drive down the highway, the city SKYLINE fading in the background.

A prominent building - the building from the new report - burns, spewing flames and smoke into the sky.

Charlie's eyes remain focused on the road ahead.

CHARLIE

You did well. We are heroes. This is just the beginning.

Will watches the burning building in the sideview mirror, proud to accept the rare compliment.

END OF FLASHBACK.

INT. CAHILL HOME - RESUMING

ON TV: The news anchor continues the report.

NEWS ANCHOR

The bombing - which claimed 112 lives - took place one year ago today. Authorities still have no concrete leads, but eco-terrorism is highly suspected. KCH is a chemical engineering conglomerate, major backers of conservative and libertarian political groups, and adamant climate change deniers.

Will intently watches, then slips away to his room.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - NIGHT

Four rows of book stacks. INMATES make use of 10 computer stations while the rest of the facility collects dust.

SURVEILLANCE CAMERA FOOTAGE: Desaturated. Four cameras cover the library from the corners. The book stacks are too tall, creating a blind spot within.

Charlie sits at a computer, rapidly typing up his handwritten notes. He hammers on the keys, focused.

Gobi appears over his shoulder.

GOBI (O.S.)

How'd you learn to type so fast?
Thought you lived off the grid - no electricity. Thought we were Luddites.

Charlie turns, blocking the screen from Gobi's view.

GOBI

'Know thy self, know thy enemy,' eh?

Gobi chuckles, uninterested in what Charlie is typing -- walks away. Charlie glances around -- continues typing.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

The bell *rings*. STUDENTS pour out, minding their phones. Will emerges after the initial onslaught. Not far behind, Renee rushes to catch him.

RENEE

Wait up... What movie do you want to see tonight?

WILL

I have other plans.

RENEE

Really?

Will smiles. Renee smiles bigger than ever before.

RENEE

William Nasy. We should record this, maybe build a statue. This is a big deal. Your first joke...

Will nods with a grin. Renee bites her lower lip, then looks down to her phone -- starts texting. Will looks around, everyone enslaved by their phones -- *scoffs*.

RENEE

What?

WILL

Technological dependency.

RENEE

I'm texting Polly about the movie...

WILL

There could be an armed invasion of the school right now - nobody would notice if it wasn't posted online.

Renee looks around: everyone stuck on their devices. She pockets her phone -- looks Will in the eyes.

RENEE

You're right. I'll try to be more present.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - LATER THAT NIGHT

Will, Renee, Polly, and Pops each laugh uniquely: Renee with her entire body; Will, a reserved smile;

Pops open-mouthed, spilling popcorn; Polly chuckles, then notices Pops and goes stone-faced.

Renee slides her hand to hold Will's.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - NIGHT

THREE INMATES on computers. Gobi sits behind the circulation desk looking at a chessboard. Charlie enters.

GOBI
Chess match?

Charlie ignores Gobi -- continues to the bookshelves -- peruses the selection.

Jacob and three Skinheads enter the library. Fast and silent, they motion for the reading inmates to disappear.

JACOB
You missed our appointment last night.

Gobi utters a nervous laugh. Jacob grabs him by the throat.

One of the Skinheads sweeps the library -- notices Charlie -- rushes toward Jacob -- points to the book stacks.

SKINHEAD
Nasy.

Jacob releases Gobi, who gasps for air, massaging his throat.

JACOB
You two go around back. We'll pin him in. Don't fuck it up.
(turns to Gobi)
Good - massage that throat. I'll be back to deal with you.

Jacob arrives at the end of Charlie's aisle -- removes a long SHANK from his waistline. Charlie spots him.

Two Skinheads appear on the far end, eliminating his exit. Charlie assumes his fighting stance, focused.

JACOB
Thought you could stroll in here, throw a few punches, and everyone would just leave you be.

Charlie stares Jacob down, unafraid.

JACOB

I run this place. I decided you'd die after that first scrap. You're going to feel every second of this.

The massive Skinhead blocking Charlie's exit moves closer, pulls a SHANK from his waist.

The Skinheads close in. Charlie *darts* toward the massive Skinhead, who *swipes* his shank. Charlie *ducks* it, *kicks* him in the balls with amazing force. He keels over in pain.

Charlie steps on his hand, tries to remove the shank, but Jacob *rushes* in, lands a *crushing blow* to Charlie's back that sends him to the ground.

Jacob raises his shank, but Charlie *kicks* him simultaneously in both shins, launching Jacob forward.

The shank flies from Jacob's hand. He lands on Charlie -- rears an arm back -- lands a *violent blow* to Charlie's face.

Charlie, fazed, reaches for the shank: just out of reach.

Jacob rears back to swing, but Charlie delivers a *powerful head butt* to his nose: BLOOD *explodes* from his nostrils.

The other two Skinheads move in. They *kick* Charlie, but Charlie maneuvers -- picks up the shank.

Charlie *slices* one of the kicking Skinhead's Achilles tendon -- pops to his feet.

He *drives the shank* deep into Jacob -- then *stabs* the massive Skinhead who was ailing from the kick to his balls.

The last Skinhead flees, leaving ruptured Achilles Skinhead at Charlie's disposal. Charlie stands over him -- *plunges the shank* into his heart.

GOBI (O.S.)

Holy shit, Nasy.

Charlie, covered in blood, looks at Gobi, hollow-eyed. Gobi surveys the dead -- hocks a loogie on Jacob's dead body.

GOBI

I was a slave to that monster. You ever need a favor, you name it. I'll tell the warden this was gang-related.

Covered in blood but composed, Charlie exits the library.

INT. SHED - EVENING

TIGHT ON WILL. We don't see his full surroundings in the shed. He wears a gas mask and lab coat -- mixes liquids in a beaker. Intensely focused.

He ignites a Bunsen burner -- carefully mounts the liquid over the flame.

Charlie's equation and diagram rests on the table.

EXT. ABANDONED STRIP MALL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Picturesque night. Will and Renee lie on the hood of her car, gazing at the stars, totally at ease.

RENEE

What do you want to do? In life?

WILL

(earnest)

I will change the world.

RENEE

I believe in you.

She burrows into his chest.

WILL

What do you want to do?

RENEE

(takes her time; sincere)

Maybe change the world... but I want to see it first.

Her answer strikes Will. He stares at the sky, pensive.

RENEE

Travel for at least a year before college. Maybe India. I've been saving up for the flight. Then work random jobs to keep it going. Maybe you could come...

They lie in silence, then:

RENEE

Tell me something about you that no one else knows.

WILL

You may need to narrow the category.

RENEE

(smiling)

Good point... Okay, mystery boy. I'll ask some questions.

WILL

Doesn't seem fair. Do I get to ask you questions?

RENEE

Sure - one for one. But I go first.

WILL

Why?

RENEE

Because I made up the game. That logic seemed reasonable in elementary school, but I suppose you wouldn't know about that.

WILL

Low blow.

RENEE

Withdrawn, but I'm totally going first. Nice slang by the way.

(off Will's smile)

What's your full name?

WILL

William Nasy.

RENEE

No middle name?

WILL

I don't think so. That was two questions, so now I get two.

RENEE

I've got nothing to hide.

WILL

What's your full name?

RENEE

Renee Elizabeth Barbin.

WILL

Why do you like hanging around with me so much?

RENEE

I knew you'd take this to serious town. I'm going over basic info, and you dive into feelings.

WILL

Answer the question please.

RENEE

I like you because you are unique and intelligent and... genuine... and handsome.

She kisses him on the cheek. He turns his head and they share a long kiss. Finally, Renee withdraws.

RENEE

My turn: When's your birthday?

WILL

I don't know. We don't do holidays. He doesn't see a point in arbitrarily celebrating random, consumer-driven days each year.

Renee wraps an arm around him -- strokes his side.

RENEE

I'm very glad you were born, Will - no matter which day it was.

They snuggle, looking up at the stars.

LATER

Same position, but Will has dozed off. Renee regards the sleeping, peaceful Will.

She carefully straddles him -- leans in to wake him with a kiss -- moves closer -- OFF WILL'S SLEEPING FACE, we...

FLASHBACK - INT. CABIN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Will's sleeping face. PULL BACK slowly to reveal a RIFLE pointed between his eyes, point blank. MOVE UP the barrel to reveal Charlie holding the rifle, straddling Will.

Charlie *cocks* the rifle. Will's eyes dart open. He immediately tries to topple Charlie, but his arms are pinned by Charlie's knees. He struggles to no avail.

Charlie's finger nears the trigger. Will thrashes. Charlie doesn't budge -- pulls the trigger: *click*. Not loaded.

CHARLIE
(stern)
You're dead.

Will tries to catch his breath. Charlie keeps him pinned.

CHARLIE
If immobilized by a stronger
opponent, what do you do?

WILL
Look for any possible advantage.

CHARLIE
Why did you thrash recklessly?
Wasted energy.

WILL
I couldn't figure a way-

CHARLIE
Nonsense! If your legs are free,
kick to immobilize. If you hands
are free, go for the eyes. If
you're pinned, use your head...

Charlie - still pinning Will - pulls two SHOTGUN SHELLS from his pocket -- loads the rifle -- points it at Will's face.

CHARLIE
Go.

Will tries to move his legs: nope. Charlie *cocks* the rifle. Will wiggles to dislodge his arms: nope. Charlie's finger dances near the trigger...

Will uses a shoulder to shove the rifle to his side -- lunges forward and *head butts* Charlie directly in the nose. Charlie's nose gushes blood. He teeters back.

Will uses his leverage to hoist Charlie to the ground. Will jumps to his feet, into fighting stance.

Charlie stands, ignoring the blood flowing from his nose -- stares at Will, betraying no emotion.

CHARLIE

We must always be prepared. Always alert. Never expose yourself. Never leave yourself vulnerable.

Charlie turns and exits the cabin.

END OF FLASHBACK.

EXT. ABANDONED STRIP MALL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT - RESUMING

Renee hovers, about to plant a kiss on him. Will's eyes dart open. He immediately hoists his legs -- topples Renee to the ground -- springs to his feet. She *screams*, startled.

RENEE

What the hell was that?

Will snaps out of it. His face drops. Renee stands -- brushes herself off. She looks at him, waiting for an apology.

WILL

I was just having a bad dream.

RENEE

And?

WILL

And I was startled.

RENEE

And...

WILL

That's it. That's what happened.

Will looks at her. Stubborn. Programmed never to apologize. She searches his eyes. He softens:

WILL

I'm sorry.

She hesitates, conflicted... then hugs him. He hugs back.

WILL

Can I ask you something?

RENEE

Anything.

WILL

Do you know how to ride a bike?

She smiles.

EXT. CAHILL DRIVEWAY - DAY

Will walks the bicycle into the driveway. Renee titters.

RENEE
So exciting!

WILL
Do you want to just show me first?

Renee hops on -- pedals into the street -- gains some speed, then turns back. Will is in awe.

WILL
Nice moves.

RENEE
(laughs)
It's nothing. However I must warn
you that I learned with training
wheels - much easier.

WILL
Do you still have them?

RENEE
Maybe. My mom kept everything from
childhood. Not joking: she has
several bags full of our hair.
Maybe training wheels made the cut.
Be they'd be for a kid's bike.
(off Will's anxious look)
Relax. You'll be absolutely fine...
Do you trust me?

A seemingly innocuous question - but weighted to Will. He considers... then half-nods.

Renee dismounts -- secures a grip on the seat. Will steps on.

RENEE
I'll hold you steady. You just
pedal. Ready?

WILL
I think so.

Will starts pedaling. Renee jogs along. After several strides, she lets go.

Will feels her release -- looks over his shoulder. His balance shifts. The bike *swerves* -- *hits the curb*. Will falls off into a neighbor's yard. Renee runs to him.

RENEE

You okay? I'm so sorry.

WILL

You said you would hold on.

RENEE

I know - but that's how you learn.
I say I'll hold on, but I let go to
show how easy it is alone.

Renee plants a kiss on his cheek. Will mounts the bike.

RENEE

I'm sorry. Ready to try again?

WILL

This time just tell me that you're
going to let go.

RENEE

This time I am definitely going to
let go. Just keep pedaling.

Renee takes out her phone -- snaps a photo of Will on the bike -- smiles. Will turns stern:

WILL

Don't do that.

RENEE

What? Everyone on earth has a photo
of their first bike ride - for most
us it's before age 8, but still.

WILL

No. Erase it.

RENEE

Nothing to be embarrassed about.
You look cute.

WILL

(fierce)
Erase it.

Renee's smile disappears, put off by his overreaction -- deletes the photo.

RENEE

Never talk to me in that tone of voice again.

Will softens -- faintly nods.

INT. PRISON DINING HALL - DAY

Charlie walks to his usual place between the gangs. The Black Prisoners give nods of respect, but he keeps his head down.

The Skinheads, down in number, don't even look at him, unsure what to do without their leader.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Birds celebrate the spring.

INT. CHEMISTRY LAB - DAY

MRS. DALTON (60s) lectures. Will sits front and center. His CLASSMATES are far nerdier than in the previous courses.

A knock on the classroom door, then it opens. Ganthon and Counselor step inside, beaming, staring at Will.

INTERCOM (O.S.)

Students, we have a very special announcement.

From the corner, WE SLOWLY PUSH IN toward Will.

INTERCOM (O.S.)

For the first time in school history, we have a U.S. Presidential Scholar. Please extend your biggest Golden Lion congrats to Will Nasy. One of just 140 scholars out of the entire country.

Titters among the class as we continue to slowly PUSH IN. Will is composed, breathing methodically.

Mrs. Dalton smiles. Ganthon and Counselor approach -- pat him on the back. Counselor hands Will a plaque emblazoned with the Presidential seal and a small AMERICAN FLAG PIN.

His surroundings blur as we arrive TIGHT ON Will's face: Detached. Contemplative. Determined.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Bell. The double doors fly open. STUDENTS flee.

Will approaches the bike rack. Renee runs from the building to him, beaming -- throws her arms around him.

RENEE

Congratulations! So proud of you!
You've come a long way since
silently scowling in Ganthon's
history class...

Will lets a smile slip.

WILL

Let's do something different this
weekend.

RENEE

But we love our weekend movie
tradition.

WILL

Movies tonight... But tomorrow I
want to take you somewhere.
(off Renee's nod)
You have to give your word you'll
never tell anyone about it.

RENEE

You know you can trust me.

They share a kiss, then Will mounts his bike and adeptly pedals away. Renee glows.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Will cycles home - past the...

EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY - CONTINUOUS

He notices a scuffle in the school alley. Ben gets pushed around by FOUR LARGER CLASSMATES. One of them takes a video of it on his phone.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

WILL

Hey!

Will pedals toward them. They relent, startled. The main BULLY gives Ben one last shove.

BULLY

(to Ben)

You've got a big fucking wise-ass mouth to go with that scrawny body.

The Larger Kids walk away. Ben hangs his head, embarrassed.

WILL

What was that?

BEN

I'm the smallest kid in the fuckin' class. One day I'll grow - and I'll be able to defend myself.

Will stares at Ben for a long beat.

WILL

Defense is for the weak. You must learn to attack.

BEN

Great. I'll call once puberty comes knocking.

WILL

Size is inconsequential. When facing a larger opponent, you must strike first. You have the element of surprise.

Ben makes eye contact with Will for the first time. Will assumes the fighting stance. Ben mirrors him.

WILL

Throat or nose. Soft on the fists. Both will stun - possibly incapacitate - the opponent.

Ben nods, engaged in the lesson.

WILL

Hit me.
(off Ben's uncertainty)
Do it.

Ben throws a soft jab at Will's chest. Will easily shifts out of the way -- pushes Ben's shoulder in a fluid movement, knocking him off-balance.

Ben is taken aback by Will's aggression. Will continues:

WILL

On your toes. Firmly plant only
when you throw the punch - then
back on the toes. Stable.

Ben steadies -- throws another punch -- connects with Will's
chest. Will pushes Ben's other shoulder: Ben absorbs it.

WILL

Weak punch. But your balance is
better.

Will stops -- points to his solar plexus.

WILL

Solar plexus. The optimal target.
Solid contact will knock the breath
from your opponent.

(off Ben's nod)

Hit me. Solar plexus, throat, or
nose.

BEN

I don't want-

WILL

Do it.

Will pushes Ben forcefully, provoking. Ben bounces on his
toes -- grits his teeth -- swings at Will.

Will easily sidesteps it -- *strikes* Ben directly in the solar
plexus. Ben doubles over -- gasps for air.

WILL

Your emotions must remain in
control. Your attack must be
calculated.

Will helps Ben stand upright.

WILL

Breathe. Open the lungs. Now you
know exactly where the solar plexus
is. If you connect, the opponent
will double over. Then you can kick
or punch freely.

Ben starts to catch his breath. Will places a hand on his
shoulder.

WILL

Work on your strength and the speed
of your punches. Next time will be
the last time he bullies you.

Ben nods, half scared/half inspired.

EXT. CABIN DRIVEWAY - MOVING - DAY

Renee's car winds up the long driveway.

INTERCUT - INT. RENEE'S CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Renee drives, in awe. Will fidgets beside her.

RENEE

This place is unbelievable.

WILL

Maybe this wasn't a good idea. I-

RENEE

It's beautiful.

INT. CABIN - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Will opens the door. Light invades the cabin for the first
time in months.

Renee stands in the doorway, speechless. Will enters.

WILL

Everything looks so small.

Will stands over his bed, vulnerable, exposed. Renee joins
Will -- hugs him from behind.

WILL

See what I mean when I say that I
grew up differently?

She squeezes him tighter. He strokes her arms.

RENEE

Which was your bed?

Will points. Renee sits on it. Will joins her; they kiss,
then she rests her head on his shoulder.

RENEE

What's he like?

Will stares at Charlie's bed.

WILL
Efficient... He doesn't waste
anything. Not even words.

RENEE
What does he do for fun?

WILL
I don't think he knows that fun
exists. I sure didn't. I mean - we
would read a lot - but not for fun.

Renee marvels at the number of books, peruses the collection.

WILL
He's serious. Committed to his
beliefs.

RENEE
What were his beliefs?

WILL
We believe in respect for the
earth, maximization of personal
potential, and a deep sense of
personal responsibility.

Will turns his head, not ready to divulge more.

RENEE
What about your mom?

WILL
He never talks about her. And I
don't remember her... How about a
walk?

EXT. CABIN - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Will and Renee exit, carrying FISHING GEAR -- pass the shed.

RENEE
What's in there?

Will eyes the shed, then looks at Renee, uneasy.

WILL
Storage.

RENEE

You have no electricity in the cabin, but the *storage shed* is covered in solar panels?

WILL

We also filter the biodiesel fuel in there for the truck. Do carpentry. Sort of a workshop...

Renee lingers, expecting to be shown the interior, but Will brushes past. She doesn't push it -- follows him.

EXT. POND - MOMENTS LATER

Will and Renee emerge from the woods. Will dislodges a large stone -- digs out a plump WORM with his fingers.

RENEE

Nice find. Done this before?

WILL

Your turn.

Renee finds an even bigger worm -- baits her hook like a pro.

WILL

Have you done this before?

RENEE

My granddad has a lakehouse. I was the one who would run and dive off the dock, scaring the fish away. Dad and Gramps didn't mind though. Wasn't about catching fish. They'd just hang out all day. Mom and Gran would have to drag them in for dinner.

Renee looks at Will. He is staring at her, hanging on every word. Startled by his eerie gaze, Renee stops her story.

RENEE

You okay, Will..?

He baits -- casts -- stares into the pond while he speaks.

WILL

We came here everyday. We'd rarely speak. We'd catch one fish, then go home and cook it.

Will's line grows taut. He doesn't react.

WILL

Recently we started catching more fish so he could sell them in town. And he started doing odd jobs... He needed extra money for the projects.

RENEE

Projects?

Will looks at Renee.

WILL

I've done some horrible things.

RENEE

I'm sure it's not too bad. You were younger, so it probably seemed worse than it actually was.

Renee studies Will's face. She hugs him tight. Over his shoulder, her face exposes fear, uncertainty.

RENEE

That's all over now. What's done is done... You're going to Washington D.C. To meet the President in a week... That's amazing.

EXT. CABIN - AFTERNOON

Renee and Will stand at the cabin door. Will locks it, and they move toward Renee's car.

A silent anxiety exists. Renee attempts to cut the tension:

RENEE

Since you've mastered the bike...

Renee tosses him the car keys.

EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - ALLEY - EVENING

Ben walks down the alley. The same four Larger Classmates surround him. Ben bounces on his toes.

BULLY

(laughing)

What the fuck are you doing?

Ben quickly lunges at Bully -- *punches* him square in the throat. Bully chokes, grabbing his throat.

Ben turns -- swings a punch at one of the others but misses. They converge on him -- hold him -- start punching him. Ben falls -- curls into the fetal position while they beat him.

INT. PRISON VISITATION ROOM - DAY

Charlie and Will sit together. Will seems anxious.

CHARLIE

Have you tested the device?

(Will's look says 'no')

We cannot risk malfunction. Find someone random - someone you couldn't be linked to for any reason.

Will nods, half-hearted.

INT. SHED - AFTERNOON

TIGHT ON WILL wearing a GAS MASK. Again - we don't see his full surroundings. Sweat beads on his face. Tense.

He bores tiny perforations into the FLAG PIN with a DRILL -- affixes a small plastic tube to the back -- fastens the pin to his shirt -- runs the tube down the inside of his clothes.

Through a hole in his pocket, he screws the tiny ABRIN CONTAINER and BULB into the end of the tube.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DUSK

Empty. Most shops are already closed for the night.

Will strolls, wearing the flag pin -- passes the HARDWARE STORE. Old Clerk flip his sign from 'Open' to 'Closed.'

EXT. HARDWARE STORE - BACK ALLEY - DUSK - MOMENTS LATER

Old Clerk exits backwards -- locks the door from the outside.

As the Clerk turns, he jolts at the sight of Will, standing an arms length away.

OLD CLERK

Jeez, son. You startled me.

Old Clerk catches his breath. Will observes him in silence, hands in pockets. They stand chest to chest, the flag pin positioned perfectly to spray the Clerk's airspace.

OLD CLERK

Can I help you with something?

Will shakes his head. Slowly. Straight-faced. Old Clerk grows uneasy. Will locates the squeeze bulb in his pocket.

A pregnant beat: fear in the Clerk's eyes; intimidating confidence in Will's. Will inhales... then we CUT AWAY.

INT. CAHILL HOME - EVENING

Mrs. Cahill toils in the kitchen. Mr. Cahill occupies his post on the couch. Will enters.

MRS. CAHILL

I bought you some socks for your trip. Good socks are important.

Will smiles, pensive. She smiles back, unquestioning.

WILL

Blueberry.

(off Mrs. Cahill's look)

Cherry is delicious, but the way the blueberries interact with the sugar and crust... It's a complex series of consistencies, but they combine to be so sweet.

Mrs. Cahill smiles. Will gives her a big hug. She tears up -- embraces him tightly. Maybe her first hug in years. They release. Will turns to exit.

MRS. CAHILL

There's a letter for you on the table...

WILL

Thank you.

Will scoops the letter en route to...

INT. WILL'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will opens the letter -- quickly scans it -- throws it down on his bed -- blows out of the room, agitated.

INT. CAHILL HOME - SAME

Mrs. Cahill continues dinner prep. Will storms from his room out the front door. Mrs. Cahill looks in his direction.

INT. WILL'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mrs. Cahill approaches Will's bed -- picks up the letter.

ON LETTER: A formal letter from the department of corrections mentioning "EARLY RELEASE - GOOD BEHAVIOR."

Mrs. Cahill swallows hard.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - NIGHT

Empty save for Gobi. Charlie approaches with two thick printed documents, his MANIFESTO. Gobi doesn't look up.

GOBI

Closed. Just about to lock her up.

Charlie places one copy on the counter.

CHARLIE

(re: the Manifesto)

Make copies of this. Pick out any sharp, intellectual types and get them to read it.

GOBI

You save my life and all I can do is peddle your book?

CHARLIE

I need your word you'll never tell anyone that I gave this to you.

GOBI

You have it... Heard you're out. Drop the biggest assholes in this place - they set you free... That's karmic, brother. Take care. World ain't what it used to be.

Charlie nods, picks up his copy of the Manifesto, exits.

EXT. CAHILL HOME - NIGHT

Mrs. Cahill and Renee chat on the porch. They try to mask their anxiety as Will arrives. Will is dour.

MRS. CAHILL

There's a plate in the fridge, hon.

Will nods. With a forced grin, Mrs. Cahill leaves them alone.

RENEE
How about a ride?

INT. RENEE'S CAR - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

They sit in the parked car outside the Cahill's house. Will gazes into the night, confused.

RENEE
This isn't a great time to bring this up, but Ben got beat up... Did you encourage my brother to fight?

Will's demeanor is barely recognizable.

WILL
There are so few strong men left in this world.

RENEE
I know you're under a lot of pressure with the trip... and your dad getting out.

Will's mind races, conflicted, no idea how to react.

RENEE
Do you feel okay about everything?
(no response)
Come on. It's me.

Vulnerability - uncertainty - stress. Fifteen years of indoctrination wins... He jumps on the defensive:

WILL
What do you mean '*it's me*'?

Renee is stung.

RENEE
What about school?

WILL
I learn more in a day with my father than my entire time at that pathetic factory of mediocrity.

RENEE
How can you even consider going back to that lifestyle?

WILL
He's my father. That *is* my
lifestyle.

RENEE
What about this? What about us?

WILL
What *about* us?

Renee turns away, tearing up. Will turns to look at her, a hint of emotion returning. He tries to apologize.

WILL
I...

Renee pivots to face Will, a single tear creeps from her eye.

RENEE
You're nothing like him. You know
that.

She crossed a line. Will raises his voice, abrasive.

WILL
You don't know him! You don't even
know the real me! You think you can
use that body of yours to manipulate
me! That makes you a whore!

Will looks at her with unfeeling eyes. Tears start to stream down her face: a combination of anger and heartbreak wells.

RENEE
Get out! Get out of my car, you
fucking monster!

Will exits -- *slams* the door. Renee leans on the steering wheel, sobbing.

EXT. CAHILL HOME - PORCH - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Mr. Cahill slowly rocks in his chair, staring into the night. Will storms to the door -- grabs the knob. Still gazing off, Mr. Cahill speaks for the first time:

MR. CAHILL
Take a seat here a minute, boy.

Will spins, shocked to hear him speak. Mr. Cahill speaks slowly:

MR. CAHILL

Heard you're heading home... How do you feel about that?

(no response)

Returning home after a long absence is daunting. Likely to shake you.

WILL

What's with you people? I lived there 15 years. Less than a year here - you think I've changed? And think you know what's best for me?

MR. CAHILL

That's not what I'm saying. Only you should know what's best for you. As for changing... I know you've changed immensely.

WILL

I've never even heard you speak. Now you think you know me?

MR. CAHILL

I may not speak often - but I observe.

(off Will's scoff)

The more words, the less meaning, and how does that profit anyone?

WILL

You and my father would get along famously... Is that in the silent hermit handbook?

MR. CAHILL

The bible.

WILL

Now you're going to lecture me on religion? Save your breath. It's a trick used to control the lives of simple-minded creatures.

MR. CAHILL

That book has some serious wisdom in it. I'm an atheist, but I'd never say a word to discourage a devout believer.

WILL

They live a lie. They live their lives in vain.

MR. CAHILL

But they have something to live for. They believe enough to devote their lives to a cause.

WILL

Their cause is bogus.

MR. CAHILL

Who are you to judge the validity of someone else's cause?

WILL

Thanks, but I don't need a gloomy old man telling me how to live.

MR. CAHILL

Fair - but I have a reason to be gloomy. Not you. I'd hate to see you waste your chance to find your reason to live and possibly find happiness.

(off Will's scowl)

I see how you and that girl look at each other. Right now, being young and in love can be your reason. I'm not saying that it won't change. It probably will and should-

WILL

This is not about her.

MR. CAHILL

What's it about then - for you?

WILL

Nothing. That's the point. We live on this earth for a fraction of a second. What's the point in forming relationships and setting yourself up for pain. Emotional attachment is for the weak. We are going to open people's eyes. We are going to change the world.

MR. CAHILL

Before Mrs. Cahill and I got married, I was the best drag racer in the state. It was my passion. Then we got hitched, Luke came along, and my family became my reason to live. I lost my son to a war we had no business fighting. For years I've been miserable.

(MORE)

MR. CAHILL (CONT'D)

And I'll continue to be. I have issues with our society - sure - but I'll be damned if I condemn the society that allowed me to experience the ultimate happiness and love at one point.

Will eyes Mr. Cahill, who continues to gaze into the night:

MR. CAHILL

Emotional attachment could be all we have. Some people try to change this world - and a few may actually make a dent - but that's not what it's about for me. Bottom line: I choose what I live for, and the same should apply for you.

WILL

So you'll continue to be miserable yet refuse to try and change the system that made you miserable? How can you sit back and accept that other fathers will lose their sons the same way you did? How can you be so willing to watch history repeat itself?

MR. CAHILL

Because I still have love, boy.
(off Will's scoff)
My angel of a wife has not stopped loving me for a second.

WILL

How can you be sure?

MR. CAHILL

Know that feeling when the winter's ending? Sun's out but it's still cold. You get in your car and your whole body turns warm and numb.

WILL

I haven't been in too many cars.

MR. CAHILL

One day you'll feel that sensation, I promise you that. That's the feeling I get every time that woman looks at me. And she knows that I love her too, even if I may not come out and say it.

WILL

So you're content to live in an unjust world just because you've found a woman.

MR. CAHILL

That's exactly what I'm telling you, son.

Will shakes his head, but his eyes betray some emotion.

MR. CAHILL

If you feel like you can change this world, go for it. Nobody's stopping you.

WILL

That's exactly what I intend to do.

MR. CAHILL

I wish you luck. Just be sure you choose for yourself.

Will stands, moves toward the house.

MR. CAHILL

And ask yourself a few questions... Were you happier before? Would you trade this experience and go back, not knowing the things you've learned and the people you've met?

Will digests the question then enters the house.

EFFECT TO:

EXT. PRISON ENTRANCE - DAY

Will sits in the driver's seat of the parked truck. Charlie marches out, escorted by two guards. He notices Will, nods.

INT. CHARLIE'S TRUCK - MOVING - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie drives away from the prison, emotionless. Will stares at his feet in the passenger's seat.

WILL

What was it like?

CHARLIE

Irrelevant. When do you leave for Washington?

WILL
8:15 bus tomorrow.

CHARLIE
This timing is perfect. Fated to be. Is everything prepared?

WILL
Of course, Father... What did you do with all of your time?

CHARLIE
I had time to think. I achieved total clarity.
(off Will's vacant nod)
It's your time, son. This is what we've been preparing for. This is your destiny.

EXT. CABIN DRIVEWAY - DAY

The truck winds up the driveway -- parks. They exit. Charlie heads straight for the shed. Will follows.

INT. SHED - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

The door swings open, and we see the full shed for the first time. It looks like a high-tech laboratory, completely out of place in the wilderness.

CITY MAPS, BLUEPRINTS, SCIENTIFIC EQUATIONS, and NEWS CLIPPINGS (including a pic of Nat Cloumin with the President) line the walls. BEAKERS and TEST TUBES fill a set of shelves.

Charlie surveys the shed. Will lingers in the doorway.

WILL
I'm glad you're out, Father.

Charlie inventories the chemicals on his work table, oblivious to Will's comment.

CHARLIE
Show me the abrin.

Will carefully opens a box, revealing a tiny VIAL of liquid.

CHARLIE
And the device?

Will complies. Charlie puts the vial on the table -- puts on a gas mask.

CHARLIE

You tested it? Verified the kill?

Will and Charlie eye each other. Will faintly nods.

CHARLIE

I'll run some tests. Go prepare lunch.

WILL

I haven't tended the crops, Father.

Charlie closes his eyes, annoyed.

CHARLIE

Forget the crops. We'll need to vacate this place anyway. Go to the pond and catch some fish.

WILL

Yes, Father.

Will turns to exit -- looks back.

WILL

I love you, Father.

CHARLIE

(vicious)

What have they done to you? We were out of touch before. Things are more dismal than we thought.

Will gulps. Charlie's fervor increases:

CHARLIE

Surely you noticed the apathy, the ignorance, the laziness.

Will nods, conflicted.

CHARLIE

Our isolated attacks accomplished nothing. A new president will accomplish nothing. We must establish a completely new system. We must start a movement - to save the earth. Poisoning the President is an overture. 3 days later - when he falls dead, we will blow up the stock exchange. We claim responsibility. They will be forced to take us seriously.

Charlie pulls out his manifesto.

CHARLIE

We publish our beliefs. Demand to have them featured in every major news source. No more ravaging the earth for oil. No more factories spewing toxins into the sky. Everyone is held accountable. Our fellow brave revolutionaries will act. Independently we will attack politicians, oilmen, bankers. We must incite violence. We must create anarchy. We must collapse the economy to see an actual change. No more bailouts. We must start over new. Our movement will spread internationally. Money will no longer dictate social hierarchy. Legislation will no longer be bought. There will be a phase of chaos, there will be widespread death, but the future of life on this planet depends on it. Earth will be restored to a sustainable population. Only the fittest will survive - the way it is meant to be. *We are the fittest.*

WILL

What about all of the innocent victims?

CHARLIE

Nobody is innocent anymore. The evidence that we are destroying the planet is ubiquitous, yet nobody acts. Those who are aware and fail to act are the most guilty of all.

Charlie looks at Will, intoxicated with his own megalomania. Will tries to mask his uneasiness.

CHARLIE

Go get the fish, William.

WILL

Of course, Father.

Charlie turns back to his tests. Will exits.

EXT. CABIN - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Will hides the fishing gear behind a tree -- takes off running across the fields toward town.

EXT. RENEE'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - EVENING

WE WATCH FROM A DISTANCE, as if from the POV of someone spying on the interaction:

Will pleads, contrite. Renee eyes the ground, arms crossed.

Amos exits the house -- motions for Will to leave. Will lingers a moment -- then hops on his bike and pedals away.

Amos attempts to console Renee, but she pushes him away -- jumps in her car. We faintly hear her say:

RENEE

I just need to be alone right now.

She drives away in the opposite direction of Will. The CAMERA PIVOTS with her car, as if eyes following her.

EXT. ABANDONED STRIP MALL - PARKING LOT - EVENING

Renee lays on the hood of her car, listening to loud music in her headphones, parked in the same space where she and Will gazed at the stars. Puffy-eyed, but she's out of tears.

We hear a car *rumble* up, but Renee doesn't hear it over her music. We hear the car *park*. The door *opens* and *closes*.

Renee notices someone approach in her peripheral vision -- turns -- *pales*, terrified, as she realize who it is: Charlie stares at her, stern. Her lip quivers.

EXT. CABIN - DUSK

Will dismounts his bike. Charlie tosses MAPS and BLUEPRINTS onto the fire onto a BONFIRE, destroying evidence. He doesn't notice Will -- disappears into the cabin.

Will glances into the shed: the walls have been completely stripped. SIX LARGE HOMEMADE BOMBS rest on the ground.

INT. CABIN - DUSK

Charlie carries a duffle bag of supplies toward the door. Will enters the doorway, empty-handed.

WILL
I didn't catch any fish.

CHARLIE
I know. You still haven't learned
to always check behind you.

Will swallows, stung. His confidence falters:

WILL
I shouldn't have to worry about
being followed. I have nothing to
hide anymore.

Charlie eyes Will with pure disdain, then glances to the corner. Will follows his glance to find Renee, bound and gagged, wide-eyed with fear. His face drops.

WILL
We do not perpetrate senseless
violence.

CHARLIE
You did this. You involved her. Now
you have a decision to make.

Will takes a breath -- looks Charlie square in the eyes.

WILL
I already made my choice. I spoke to
the police. Told them everything.
Everything.

Intensity invades Charlie's face.

CHARLIE
You're as guilty as I am.

WILL
I understand that.

CHARLIE
You ungrateful little monster. You
absolute fool. This country is
broken. This world is broken.

WILL
Correct - but you don't have the
answer. This isn't the way to fix
it.

CHARLIE

Who else will make a difference? I am a patriot. I am the American dream.

WILL

They're coming now. I did this for your own good, Father.

CHARLIE

Don't you dare call me that. I'm not your father. I never was.

Will goes pale -- stammers -- can't find words. Renee looks on, helpless.

CHARLIE

I saved you from a indolent life of excess and materialism. Look at you physically and intellectually. I've unlocked your full potential and more. *This* is your gratitude.

Will's breathing quickens, but his inhales are thin, as if the air was siphoned from his lungs. His eyes dart around, attempting to process the information.

CHARLIE

You thankless bastard. Your family didn't even look for you. They went about their self-indulgent lives as if you'd never existed.

Faint sirens approach. Will looks up -- steadies his glare on Charlie -- fights to regain his breath.

Will and Charlie look toward the road. Then simultaneously, they look to the rifles, propped against a bookshelf, ammo sitting in a nearby box.

Equidistant, neither moves toward the guns.

WILL

They're not loaded.

CHARLIE

(spitting venom)
I don't need a gun.

They assume identical fighting stances.

CHARLIE
 (re: the police)
 They're about two minutes away. You
 won't live to see them die.

Renee struggles in the corner, frantic.

Charlie *lunges* at Will -- lands a *punch* to his head. Will *staggers* -- misses with a punch. Charlie strikes again with a *kick* to Will's side.

Will absorbs the kick -- jumps back into fighting stance.

The *sirens* grow louder.

Charlie attacks again, landing a *combination of punches* to Will's stomach and face. Will FALLS to the ground, injured.

CHARLIE
 You haven't been training, I see.

Charlie strides to the kitchen -- grabs the CARVING KNIFE -- stands over Will.

CHARLIE
 You are nothing. I created you. And
 now I will destroy you.

Charlie *rears back* with the KNIFE above his head. Before he can swing it down, Will lands a *kick* to the side of Charlie's leg with the bottom of his foot, DISLOCATING Charlie's knee.

Charlie CRUMBLES to the ground, but holds onto the knife. Will struggles to his feet.

Charlie *lunges* -- *swings* the knife -- rips a small gash in Will's neck -- then falls, immobilized by the knee injury.

Will applies pressure to his wound. BLOOD creeps through his fingers. The *sirens* grow louder still.

CHARLIE
 You're no better than the wretches
 you once helped me destroy. Better
 kill me now, or I *will* find you.

WILL
 I pity you.

CHARLIE
 My movement will spread, and you'll
 die along with the other wasteful,
 ignorant fools.

Will moves to Renee -- unties her.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Will and Renee exit as TWO POLICE CARS arrive. Still pressuring his wound, Will waves his free hand.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT - SAME

Charlie agonizingly pulls himself toward the rifles.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT - SAME

OFFICERS Lou, George, and EDDIE (30s) rush toward the cabin. George stops to check on Renee and Will. Lou and Eddie draw their guns, creep toward the door.

OFFICER LOU
You okay? He in there?

Renee crouches behind the police car.

WILL
Dislocated knee. He's immobilized.

Lou flings the cabin door open.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Charlie sits propped against the bookshelf with an eerie smile, and the RIFLE pointed directly at the doorway.

Before Lou can react, Charlie PULLS THE TRIGGER: *Crack!*

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Lou flies backward out of the doorway -- lands in the dirt.

George and Eddie duck for cover. GUNS DRAWN, they crouch along the side of the cabin.

Will's eyes grow large. He joins Renee behind the police car.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Charlie methodically breathes... survival mode.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

George shuffles to a position under the window. Eddie crouches next to the still-open door.

As George rises up to look in the window, the WINDOW IS BLASTED OUT by a shot from Charlie, inches from George's head. Broken glass showers the veteran.

Lou writhes in the dirt, clutching his abdomen.

OFFICER LOU

He got me, George. The asshole got me.

George and Eddie make eye contact. George POINTS to the window -- then holds up THREE FINGERS.

Eddie nods, his gaze steady on George's silent count.

TWO FINGERS.

Sweat pours down Eddie's face; his eyes grow wide.

ONE FINGER.

As George drops his last finger, he reaches up and breaks what is left of the window with his gun to attract Charlie's attention. Charlie FIRES toward the window.

Eddie draws in a deep breath, ready to hop into the doorway.

Before he budges, A SINGLE GUNSHOT from off screen.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Charlie receives the bullet in the chest, directly through the heart -- slumps dead instantly.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Will, pale from blood loss, stands above Lou, HOLDING his freshly discharged HANDGUN, still pointed at Charlie with a firm, steady hand. WILL HAS JUST KILLED CHARLIE.

Eddie rushes into the cabin, gun pointed at Charlie.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Charlie sits motionless. Surrounded by his books. Eddie checks for a pulse.

OFFICER EDDIE
No pulse.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Eddie dashes to Lou -- kneels -- grasps Lou's head.

OFFICER EDDIE
Stay with us.

Lou, barely conscious, mumbles incoherently. George rushes to the squad car, grabs the radio:

OFFICER GEORGE
51 to base. Send a bus to the Nasy residence. Officer down. Civilian injuries sustained.

Will slowly lowers the gun -- drops it in the dirt.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HARDWARE STORE - NIGHT

The Old Clerk reclines motionless in a folding chair. His mouth hangs ajar. Seemingly dead.

Beverly enters -- peruses the shelves -- notices the Old Clerk -- rushes to him.

BEVERLY
Are you okay?

She gently grasps his shoulders. He doesn't move... then suddenly *jolts* upright, awake.

OLD CLERK
Sorry 'bout that. Dozed off.

He stands, very much alive: Will didn't spray the abrin.

INT. HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

A NURSE stitches Will's neck. Renee sits next to him.

NURSE
You're a lucky guy. A millimeter deeper, you'd be in the basement. Gonna be one heck of a scar. It'll be with you the rest of your life.

Will's look says, *'More than you'll ever know.'* She finishes the last stitch, shows Will with a hand mirror.

WILL
I'll survive.

FADE TO BLACK.

ROLL CLOSING CREDITS

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK - EXT. MANSION - KIDS BIRTHDAY PARTY - DAY

Extravagant: CLOWNS, MAGICIANS, JUGGLERS, STILT WALKERS.

Spoiled white KIDS run amok, while their PARENTS sip mimosas and gossip in expensive attire.

YOUNG WILL (3) isn't interested in the performers -- jogs to his DAD holding a baseball and mitt.

YOUNG WILL
Daddy. Come play.

Will's Dad, sporting a polo shirt with an Oil Company logo, has his EARLY MODEL SMARTPHONE to his ear -- shushes Will.

YOUNG WILL
Daddy.

Will's Dad covers his phone, annoyed -- whispers to Will:

WILL'S DAD
Go play with Dominga. I'll come later.

Disappointed, Will jogs way.

MOMENTS LATER

Will plays catch with his portly Hispanic NANNY. Young Will misses a catch. The ball rolls down a hill into a bush.

The Nanny turns her attention to a crying child.

Young Will jogs after it -- nears the bush -- looks in...

Suddenly *two hands grab Will* -- pull him behind the bush.

A YOUNGER CHARLIE (30) trots away, muffling Young Will's screams with a hand over his mouth.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - MOVING - EVENING

Charlie steers down the empty interstate with Young Will bound in the passenger seat, eyes swollen from tears.

CHARLIE

I hope you're finished crying. Try to sleep. We have a long drive.

Charlie drives into the night, into the unknown.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Young Will wakes on a small cot, no longer bound. His eyes dart around the sparse room.

Charlie approaches, grasps him by the shoulders.

CHARLIE

I saved you from a dangerous world - a world that must be changed. This is our home. We are destined for great things. We must be strong.

WILL

I want my mom.

CHARLIE

You will never see your mother again. You are in a much better place now. We are destined to change the world.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - NIGHT

Several copies of Charlie's manifesto line a shelf in the Philosophy section. A hand removes one of them.

A discerning eye may notice the quote 'AND IF YOU GAZE LONG ENOUGH INTO THE ABYSS...' tattooed on the prisoner's forearm.

FADE OUT.

THE END.