

HARE

WRITTEN BY

JASON A. ROSTOVSKY

JUNE 12, 2018

BLACK.

A THOUGHTLESS VOID.

Monstrous roars absolve the silence.

Blinding white rends through the emptiness, revealing a stormy night sky. Rain falls. Clawing at the blackness.

Decrying the thrashing treetops and sneering mountain faces of a lush green expanse.

Mother nature seeking revenge against mankind.

This wild world is...

EXT. GALLOWAY FOREST (SCOTLAND) - NIGHT

Blurry chaos as the frightening summer storm rages above the bewitching Scottish woods.

Rain blankets the flora floor.

WE SWEEP... VERY LOW ON THE GROUND.

Through shuffling rich moss and rocks folded into hills.

Pools collected in craters carved in the ground by time's ire. Fallen branches and petrified ghosts of wooden giants.

Wise old fungi hunker down.

Tiny sprouts of burgeoning plants war to remain uncrushed.

All beauty in life and death and life again.

Until we reach -- a **HOLE** in the base of a GREEN HILL.

Amongst the pouring rain a steady TRICKLE of water flows off to the right of the hole. Never ending. Not in this lifetime.

Thick leaves, twigs, and mud pressed together near the mouth.

It's an above ground NEST of some sort... **A HOME**.

LIGHTNING and THUNDER rock the area. And for a moment, the trickle becomes a jet stream.

Small rocks break from the hill above. Tumble down and CRASH into the ingress of black mud and leaves.

It collapses.

INT. NEST - NIGHT

It's dark inside. Quaking throws dust from the walls.

Moonlight glimmers past the specks. Landing on --

CONSTELLATIONS of brown fur weaving through itself. The surface below it undulating and wrinkling.

Twisting and changing. Untamed waves of undercoat.

It's beautiful. Soft. Kinetic.

Our world expands. And we see --

HARES. A family of them. Huddled for warmth.

Four small creatures, sheltered from weather's wrath.

HARE and her **MATE** flank the shared embrace.

They move closer in together.

Protecting their **ELDEST OFFSPRING** and a pale **RUNT**.

Thunder howls. Lightning bleeds from the broken entrance.

Runt shivers. His tail wet. Shakes water from his back. He's now on the outside of the huddle. Trying to press through.

Hare moves her head behind him. As his little feet tread air, trying to squeeze deeper into the alp of warm fur.

She nudges him into the center. Safer. Drier.

As she does so, we notice a small WHITE MARK on her back leg that looks like a BUTTERFLY. Innocence uncorrupted.

Hare looks to her Mate, who places his head on Runt. They exchange an anthropomorphic look of concern and hope.

That they'll make it through the night. That they'll survive.

She looks back to the entryway, blocked by the fallen rocks.

Steady water building on the cold floor.

Sneaking in from outside.

Worry amplifies in her little black eyes. As she watches --

Crushed leaves spinning in the growing pool of water.

Danger drawing near.

EXT. GALLOWAY FOREST - NIGHT

The fallen rocks quiver in the slamming rain. Swaying back and forth as if readying to jump.

Spray from the trickle leads us away from the rocks.

AND WE FOLLOW the flowing water -- up the side of the hill.

Combing across the soggy sea of moss and tall grass.

To a stark raving mad **RIVER** winding through the ancient oaks.

SMALL FISH fight the pull of the stream. Dipping deeper to gain headway. They struggle to escape the tumultuous waters.

We move with them -- FOLLOWING the river.

Weaving and bending at its command.

Til we reach a **RUN-OFF PIPE** emptying into the river.

Food wrappings, can lids, and other trash flicking from it.

Darkness eclipses as we -- travel through the run-off. A straight shot for some time. Into the wet dingy shadows.

The pipe turns sharply, but we keep going through a RUPTURE.

Back out into nature. Continuing our journey.

Under low hanging branches. Piercing through cities of fog. Growing denser, until the FOG is too thick to see through.

All white for a while, and then --

A **SHARP BROKEN BRANCH** jumps out of the pale abyss. Like it's about to impale us. But it passes over head.

And we continue through the labyrinth.

Through overgrowth of tall brush and low fanning leaves.

And suddenly, the ground disappears.

AS WE PUSH OFF -- over a **DROP-OFF** in the rocky hills.

It's a good height. Would be a dangerous fall...

Clearing the drop, we move down an incline. For a while.

Through another tough thicket. Until we come to a **CLEARING**.

Where a sorrowful excuse for a **HOUSE** is beaten by the storm.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Old and rickety, the nearly broken abode fights to stay afoot against the abuse of the gusting wind.

WE'RE WIDE -- staring at the entire property.

Several rusted **GAS PUMPS** stand a few yards from the porch.

Nearby, a decaying **SHACK** with a window impersonates a convenience store. Hasn't been used in years.

The windows molded. Old bags of snacks and fogged water bottles trembling inside the shack.

A bolt of blue strikes the structure. Sparks fly.

The roof curls. Melting into itself. Water flooding in.

The main house sways.

Gales threaten to rip shingles from the roof.

THREE SHADOWS move within.

We can just barely make them out...

On the first floor is -- **PAH** (40s), a slouching silhouette fused to a couch.

He raises the outline of a **WHISKEY BOTTLE** to his face. For a moment, they unite. A singular darkness. Then split again.

Grey light flickers from a TV. Challenging the lightning outside to a fight.

Upstairs -- **SAMUEL** (14) is at a desk facing out his window. He fidgets with a **BLUE BANDANA** wrapped around his neck.

Behind him, a pair of **FEET** hang from a bunk bed. Kicking to and fro, shadow play forcing them through Samuel's head.

This is **DONNIE** (16). His older brother.

WE PUSH IN -- on the bedroom window.

Finer details reveal themselves as we breach their world.

In Samuel's hands is a **JAR**.

In the **JAR** is a **MOTH**. Desperately trying to break free.

He loosens the lid. Peeks inside. The moth moves for the opening but Samuel pushes the lid back down.

Withdraws another JAR from below the window. Out of view.

Sets it on his desk. The home of a huge JUMPING SPIDER.

Samuel slowly unscrews the lid, so as to not spook it. The spider shakes a leg, but stays inside.

Donnie's feet still kick wildly behind his brain.

Samuel opens the moth's jar. And presses the mouths of both jars together. Shaking them. Trying to force confrontation.

The spider remains still. Watching the moth panic.

Throwing itself against the walls of its invisible prison.

He shakes the jars harder. And then -- the spider strikes.

Sinking its teeth into the poor creature. Ripping it apart.

Pulling it back into its jar, as if it knows its own home.

It's brutal.

WE START TO PULL AWAY as --

Samuel screws the lid back on the spider's jar. Sets it back on the desk. Watches calmly as his pet feeds.

A shadow falls behind Samuel as Donnie hops off the bunk bed.

He hangs over Samuel. Flicks his ear.

Elbows his head out of the way as he GRABS the spider's jar.

Sam turns, rubbing his head. Grabs for the jar.

We can hear the faint murmurs of SIBLING RIVALRY. Barely audible over the sounds of the storm, growing stronger.

SAMUEL

Get off!

DONNIE

Shut up.

SAMUEL

Hey! Give that back. Please.

They're BRITS. Not well educated. They fight over the JAR. An uneven tug of war. Donnie shoves Sam back into the desk.

His hand slips off the jar. And it FLIES into the wall --

Bursting into a confetti of glass and remnants of moth. The spider falls out of view.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
Look what you did!

Pah's shadow jerks forward. His head lifts to the ceiling at all the noise. He leaps up from the couch.

Withdrawing the shape of a BAT from below frame.

Then heads upstairs with a rageful drunken gait.

Samuel tries to locate the spider as Donnie harasses him.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
Help me look. It's around here.

DONNIE
It's gone.

SAMUEL
You want it crawling on your face
when you sleep? If we don't find
it...

Donnie pushes him. Pulls his hair. Samuel tries to smack his hands away. But Donnie's persistent. He grabs at the bandana.

Samuel ducks away. Super protective over it. Donnie continues to rough-house, making it impossible for Sam to search.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
It's over there. Donnie!

DONNIE
Don't be such a twat.

SAMUEL
Just help me.

DONNIE
I find it, I kill it.

SAMEUL
Seriously -- !

Suddenly -- the DOOR flies open. Slams heavily into the wall. Revealing Pah, in the shadows. Bat in hand. He's menacing.

Sam freezes at his appearance. Donnie immediately moves away from Sam. He runs back to the bed and hops onto the top bunk.

As Pah stalks toward Sam. Bat dragging behind him.

Spit flings from his mouth as he screams. Points the bat to the broken glass. Sam looks away. Avoids eye contact.

WE PULL BACK -- TOO FAR AWAY to hear anything now.

The SHACK comes into view. Pah yells at Sam, who cowers.

Another BOOM of thunder. Flash of lightning.

Pah shoves him. Sam flinches. Head hung low.

AS WE CONTINUE CREEPING AWAY -- from the house.

They become shadows again.

Then he strikes Samuel across the face.

Donnie's feet curl upward. Reacting to the skirmish.

Pah throws Sam into the wall, out of view.

WE DESCEND LOWER. CRAWLING ACROSS THE GROUND.

Pah throws a few fists. Shouting at Sam as he strikes.

Donnie dangles his feet. Starts kicking them again.

The rain grows even heavier. Fog rolls out from the trees beside the house. Kissing the front porch.

AND WE STOP. GROUND LEVEL.

RIGHT UNDER -- the leaking nozzle of a GAS PUMP.

Gasoline drips with the freezing rain. Steady.

Almost in time with each blow Pah lands on Sam.

Soaking into the ground.

Some evaporating into a frosty mist.

Finally, Pah stops. His silhouette heaving breaths.

Stumbles back. Unable to stand properly.

The gas still drips. Fog covers the front porch. Reaches us.

Bending around the pump. Clinging to the cool metal.

Until it fills the screen...

SMASH TO.

EXT. NEST - DAWN

Water drips from the collapsed entrance to the nest.

Everything glistens with the remnants of rain water and dew.

Still eerily silent. The sparse chatter of SQUIRRELS awakens.

A single bird calls, far off in the distance.

Then it's silent again. As if the entire forest were afraid of calling attention to itself.

Some MOVEMENT off in the corner. The wings of a HEATH BUTTERFLY scrape the frame. Hardly giving us a glimpse.

A DROPLET falls from above. Presumably from a branch out of sight. It lands into a small puddle of collected rain.

The ripples dilate. Hypnotizing.

And then -- one of the tiny rocks blocking the nest shakes, ever so slightly... Shakes a bit more. Then stops.

A few seconds go by, and it shakes again.

Tilts forward. Pushed from behind. But falls back into place. Once again the rocks are still.

Another DROP falls into another puddle. Then a second drop. The ripples intertwining. Creating concentric rings.

The ROCK jumps once more.

This time, it FALLS out of the pile. Rolls down the incline.

Another of the rocks shakes. Then jumps out from the pile. Giving way to a few more and a burst of dust.

Creating a small peep-hole in the cairn.

Twitching pink squeezes through. Mate's brutish nose.

Sensing the smells of the outside world. Testing its safety.

Then it disappears. Brown moves in its place.

As Mate rams his head against the rocks. The smaller ones roll away. The larger tremble. Putting up a fight.

Brown and pink and darker brown swirl in the darkness behind the growing hole. And with a loud -- THUMP. THUMP. THUMP.

The ROCK PILE breaks apart in an avalanche.

CLEARING the entrance. Ripping out the grassy mud facade.

Their hard-work destroyed. But at least they are freed.

Mate moves into the light. Hare right behind him. Both shake dust from their selves. Blink at the blinding light.

Hare's ears flutter. She rubs her face with her paws.

It's the cutest fucking thing.

They gaze out into the aftermath of the storm.

Cautiously, they EXIT the nest. Looking for signs of danger.

Something BUMPS Hare from behind and as she tries to turn back, Runt comes squeezing out of the hole behind her.

Knocking her shoulder forward. He DARTS eagerly for a patch of sunlight beaming down from above.

Without missing a beat, Hare grabs him by the scruff.

She lifts him off the ground as his little feet continue to pedal the air. He realizes he's no longer running. Goes limp.

Runt hangs sadly from his mother's mouth as she cranes him back into the nest. Sets him down beside his sister.

Who SHIFTS herself in front of him so he stays put.

Hare blinks slowly, exhausted by her little one.

Mate has already made his way further out into the open. It seems safe enough. He glances to Hare. She heads for him.

Eldest Offspring examines the destroyed entrance. Assesses the damage. She stands. Puts her paws to the stripped clay.

Runt watches curiously. Tilts his head. Thinking.

Hare reaches Mate, as he stands high. Looking out over tall grass into the forest. Ears back. They start for the trees.

Eldest Offspring pulls some grass from an uprooted patch.

Brings it back to the nest. Sets it down. Then starts back for more grass. Right as she turns her back on him --

Runt starts to exit and she gently nudges him back in.

He deflates like a bummed kid. Wags his tail. "You suck."

Hare and Mate disappear into the forest...

EXT. GALLOWAY FOREST - DAWN

Solar systems of dust swirl in thick pillars of sun. Light pours over a FALLEN TREE as if chosen by god, or whatever.

Hare and Mate trek through the forest.

Crawling along. Still on guard.

Moving over tufts of hornwort. Through packed suburbs of blackthorn hedgerows and beech.

Graveyards of branches.

Pointing and retracting their ears at multitudes of sounds. Most of which we can't even hear.

Their senses flooding. Little noses fidgeting. Hyper-aware of all around them. Searching for food.

NEARBY RUSTLING startles Hare. She's easily spooked. Keeps her ears up. Stands up. Not sure it's safe.

Mate CLICKS his TEETH -- "it's okay." Her ears relax. She lowers herself. And they carry on.

It's a beautiful journey. Grace. Peace. Tranquility.

They take their time. We take our time.

For it won't last long.

EXT. SNOWDROP FIELD - DAWN

The floor is carpeted in bluish white SNOWDROPS.

Exquisite flowers that hang heavy headed. Blossoms facing toward the ground. They've become rare sights these days.

Stocks of SNOWDROPS shuffle and bounce. Swing side to side. As Hare and Mate push through an endless sea of them.

CLUSTERS of SMALL BUGS buzz around patches here and there.

Hare sniffs at the flowers. Mate shakes his face away from swarming gnats. He sneezes at them.

Hare stirs at his sneeze. Mate clicks his teeth.

Reminds her that everything is still okay. Wind picks up.

They glide through the flowers. Moving forward into the snowdrop void. The entire field sways.

EXT. DEEPER INTO THE FOREST - DAY

WORMS sprout from underground. Wriggling their way out of soft dirt. Sliming off earth from its back.

THUMP! Mate's foot flops down beside one. Nearly crushing it. But it's one lucky worm.

Hare saunters ahead. Mate catches up to her. Gives her a little nudge. She GRUNTS. He nudges her again. Playful.

She stomps off ahead. And jumps up -- ONTO A FALLEN TREE.

Little higher than the ground Mate walks on. She treads carefully across it. Mate following down below.

UP AHEAD -- a FLY leaves a **ROTTING PEACH**.

Looks like something bit a chunk out of it and left the rest. The pit has separated itself from most of the peach.

Lies resting in the decaying carcass of the fruit.

Hare comes upon the peach. Considers it. Sniff it. Recoils at the rot. She pushes it forward with her nose. Rolls it a bit.

Mate stops right below her. Isn't looking at her.

Hare nudges the peach until the pit rolls out.

She pushes it off the edge of the tree with her nose -- -- and it PLOPS right on Mate's head.

He winces. Rubs his head. Hare chatters. Like she's laughing.

Mate glares up at her. Then SPRINTS after her. Hopping up onto the tree. Hare takes off. Much faster than he is.

And Mate chases her, through the forest.

Tearing across the landscape.

Mate catches up for a stretch. Sportively knocking into her. She knocks back. He tries to take her down.

But she leaves him in her dust.

Gracefully leaping over debris. Around bushes and rocks.

She looks back. Sees that Mate has fallen way behind.

And as she turns back around -- she SKIDS TO A STOP.

Sliding up the edge of the DROP-OFF. Narrowly avoiding plummeting off... A plume of dust kicking up at her feet.

EXT. DROP OFF - CONTINUOUS

She looks down at the drop. Worried. It's not too wide across, but if she fell it would surely kill her.

Too scared to jump, Hare takes off along the side of the gap.

Mate adjusts his trajectory.

Hare glances down into the drop-off as she runs alongside it.

Until she reaches a WIDE LEDGE that leads safely down.

She runs down it and scurries across the bottom of the drop-off over to another LEDGE leading up -- the SAFE WAY.

Mate's almost there.

As Hare hurries up the LEDGE on the opposite side.

And right as she reaches the top --

She sees Mate coming at her, full speed.

Watches as he fearlessly leaps over the gap. And pulls off an expert landing, right beside her. He slides into her.

They tumble. Split. And then take off running again.

EXT. FURTHER DOWN - MOMENTS LATER

They pass under the SHARP BRANCH. Hare slows down.

But Mate's only getting started.

She looks back to see where he's at and --

Mate tackles her. They roll, fumbling forward.

Wrapping around each other. Until they come to a stop.

Still entangled in one another.

Mate rubs his face on hers. Chinning her. Marking her as his. He licks her. She licks back... Love.

Hare squints her eyes. Twitches her nose. Adoring him.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY

SPARKS FLY across frame.

The tooth-shaking grind of metal against metal. Liquefied silver glows orange. Pouring off the side of -- THE SHACK.

Pah peels the collapsed tin roof from the structure. Rips it free. And throws it onto the grass with a loud WOBBLING BOOM.

Wipes rust and sweat from his face with gristly hands. Large POWER SAW in his grip. Eyes red and swollen. Drunk already.

He pulls debris from the shack. Grass CRUNCHES behind him.

Coming through the tall field down the road are two teens --

ASH (15), a timid freckle-faced and wide-eyed belle, with a ratty MESSENGER BAG thrown over her sharp shoulders. TEXTING.

Hurrying up ahead of her, as if life were a race to the finish, and flicking a stick in hand is her cousin --

BEAU (16), slightly overweight, huge bottle-cap glasses and crazed hair make him look like a rural mad scientist.

He waves wildly at Pah as he trudges through leftover mud.

Ash politely sinks her head. Smiles from her low angle.

ASH
Mister Hewitt.

Pah starts down the ladder -- as the FRONT DOOR opens.

Donnie comes out, dressed for an adventure. HUNTING RIFLE strapped to his back. Sam follows, blue bandana on his neck.

Dark ring around his eye to match. A thick cut on his cheek, only a fist could do. He shuts the door, avoiding Pah's gaze.

There's a HATCHET tucked into the back of his pants.

Pah meets them at ground level. Donnie pockets a CELL PHONE.

Shields his eyes from the sun as he looks across the way at --

-- his boys meeting up with their friends. Ash kisses Donnie on the cheek. He wipes it off. Beau playfully punches Sam.

DONNIE
You all right?

ASH

Mhm.

BEAU

Gimme' that --

Tries to grab the gun. Donnie taps him on the head with it.

DONNIE

It's mine. Get your own.

BEAU

Just for a second.

DONNIE

Fuck off.

Donnie shoves him with the butt. He laughs. Adjusts his glasses. Ash sees Sam's eye. Gives him a look of sympathy.

He brushes past her. Won't accept it.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

We'll be back.

PAH

From where?

Donnie points to the forest. Hoists the gun higher.

DONNIE

Grocery shopping. Won't be long.

They start toward the tree-line.

PAH

Sam! Thought I told you to take the bin out to the fucking pit.

SAMUEL

Sorry.

PAH

Don't apologize.

SAMUEL

Sor--.

Samuel shakes it out of his mouth.

He heads back to the house as the others head into the trees.

Pah watches him like a prison warden. Then starts back at carving up the shack. Drives the saw into WOOD AS --

EXT. PIT - DAY

-- a TRASH-BAG flies into the home-made land fill.

The bag tears open with a loud CRASH. Tons of glass shattering inside. Bottles breaking. Ripping through.

Samuel stares into the pit.

His angry face deep in shadow... Then his eyes grow soft and somber. An inkling of sadness inside him.

He cocks his head at something in the pit.

DARK WOOD peaking through the bag.

It's a PICTURE FRAME.

He leans over to try and get a good look. Kneels down and reaches into the pit. Holding onto the ground for stability.

His finger tips cling to the bag and pull it open.

The FRAME slides out into the trash. Out of his reach. A shard of glass slices his thumb on the way.

He pulls back. Wipes off blood. Stares at --

Glass cracked. Wood bent. But inside is a POLAROID PHOTO --

Of Sam and Donnie, one on each side of their MOTHER (40s), in a hospital bed. She's colorless and crumbling. Sick.

The BLUE BANDANA around her bald head. Sam's got a split lip.

On the BOTTOM of the photo is written -- "**NEVER GIVE UP**".

Samuel grabs that same bandana, around his neck.

He swallows a lump in his throat. Not showing much more emotion than a blade of grass.

A soft wind blows at the brush by his feet. The trash swirls in the dump. The lid of a CAN flutters like cards shuffling.

Still half-attached. A moment of ghostly calm and then --

-- Samuel is knocked forward. About to fall into the pit, but Donnie GRABS HIM and pulls him back.

Sam damn near pisses himself. Beau cackles.

DONNIE
Saved your life!

SAMUEL
Jesus what the f--

BEAU
You almost pissed yourself. Wait.
Did you? What is that?

Beau grabs Sam's pants, mockingly. Samuel swats his hand away. Donnie holds Sam still. They harass him.

SAMUEL
I didn't piss!

ASH
Donnie.

DONNIE
What?

ASH
Leave the kid alone.

DONNIE
Come here.

Donnie puts his arm around her. Flicks Samuel on the back of his head as they walk off. Beau skips ahead of them all.

Samuel takes one last look down into the pit. At the photo of him and his mom... unreachable. It flutters in the wind as --

EXT. ANOTHER SNOWDROP FIELD - DAY

-- their feet plow through another snowdrop field. This one is thicker. They crush the poor beauties as they wade across.

Donnie gazes around. His hunter's eye seeking a target. RIFLE resting in his grip. Ash admires the flowers.

Beau tries to catch bugs in his hands. Buzzing around like a wild animal snapping at them. Samuel lags behind. Head low.

Flowers falling like victims at his feet.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY

Pah's HAMMER SMASHES in the shack's windows. Green glass rolls to the ground like a crashing wave.

AT THE PUMPS -- GAS still leaks from the faulty HANDLE. Forming a POOL in the muddy grass. Growing with each drop.

EXT. GALLOWAY FOREST - DAY

Mate chews on a wad of fresh grass. Hare comes up beside him. Grabs a LONG piece straight out of his mouth. Devours it.

EXT. NEARBY - DAY

Samuel stands on the head of a hill. He stares out at the calm forest. The trees caressing the air.

Donnie and the crew come out of the brush behind him. Samuel's face quickly falls at the sound of their arrival.

Ash hands Beau a BOW and ARROWS from her bag.

BEAU
It's real nice, right? I got it in
Southport.

DONNIE
When were you in Southport?

ASH
When my mum took us.

DONNIE
When were you in Southport?

ASH
We take holiday you know...

DONNIE
No shit.

Donnie retrieves a **METAL LIGHTER** from his shoe, along with a **CIGARETTE** from inside his sock.

Three other loose cigs are left. He lights it. Takes a long drag. Blows. Ash wafts smoke away from her face. Coughing.

Donnie takes another drag. Grabs Ash by her head and forces a kiss on her lips.

Ash tries to pull away, as he blows smoke in her face. She play hits him. Laughs. Even though she chokes on it.

ASH
Sto-oop!

She rubs her eyes. Donnie laughs. Kisses her again. Like school children at recess. Sam stares into the wilderness.

Donnie comes up on his side, pocketing the LIGHTER. Sam wipes sweat from his chin with the BANDANA. Donnie blows smoke.

DONNIE
You still wear that stupid thing?

SAMUEL
You still light those?

DONNIE
Whatever. Don't fall behind.

Donnie starts down the hill. Brushing past Sam's shoulder as he heads out. Beau and Ash follow, gliding past Sam. Ash stops for a second and offers, nodding at his bandana --

ASH
I think it's cute.

DONNIE
Let's go!

Donnie ashes his cigarette into the wind. Ashes blow through the BREEZE toward us. Glowing orange dies to grey and we're --

EXT. FURTHER DOWN - DAY

Hare and Mate travel. Searching for sustenance. Crunching on crispy wet leaves. Sound carrying through the thin air.

EXT. NEARBY - DAY

They continue through the forest. Donnie looks for something to shoot. Sam adjusts his bandana. Scratches his neck. Beau squats at some FUNGI. Pokes them with a ROCK. Ash swats bugs.

Donnie's skeleton fingers tap the rifle. Impatient.

His eyes darting around the horizon. SOMETHING scurries up a tree. He snaps into action. Aims the rifle --

But it's gone. He lowers the gun, disappointed.

EXT. CLUSTER OF TREES - DAY

Hare and Mate come upon a PILE OF SEEDS by a wall of bushes. They're scattered in a burst, like they were dropped in a hurry. Mate checks for signs of predators. Nothing.

EXT. NEARBY - DAY

The kids come out of a heavy tangle of oak. Ash still swatting bugs. Beau now holding a fungal souvenir.

CLOSE ON -- the MUSHROOM. Beau blurred behind it. He twists it in his hand. Examines it closely. Pulling chunks off.

Then he slowly lowers it... his eyes excited. As he spots SOMETHING nearby, through a cluster of trees. He points --

BEAU
Over there.

Donnie looks to where he's pointing. Breathes out smoke.

DONNIE
Whoa...

He bites the cigarette in place. Lifts the rifle as --

EXT. CLUSTER OF TREES - DAY

-- Hare and Mate arrive at the seed pile. Backs turned to the forest. Eyes on the prize. They sniff out the seeds.

EXT. NEARBY - DAY

Donnie starts to take aim, but sees Samuel off to the side of him. Behind Ash. A strange emptiness in his eyes.

DONNIE
Sam.

Sam looks to Donnie. Cigarette hanging from his mouth.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
You have it.

SAMUEL
It's all right.

DONNIE
I'm not asking.

Donnie slams the rifle into Samuel's hands.

He looks down at the gun, begrudgingly. Then lifts it. Takes aim. Trying to find his target and steady his hold.

It takes a while...

DONNIE (CONT'D)
What're you waiting for?

SAMUEL
I can't find my aim.

DONNIE
Just shoot it.

Sam closes one eye. Staring down the length of the rifle, trying to focus. Sweating. Breathing hard.

Hesitation burning in his face...

EXT. CLUSTER OF TREES - DAY

Hare chews on a seed. Then starts to collect the rest. Mate joins her. Eating some for himself. Both blissfully ignorant.

EXT. NEARBY - DAY

Sam tries to steady his aim, but he's too shaky. He blinks. Re-centers himself.

DONNIE
Come on...

SAMUEL
I'm trying.

His trembling finger hovers over the trigger.

EXT. CLUSTER OF TREES - DAY

Hare gathers more seeds. Mate eats. Both of them distracted. The CRUNCHING loud in our ears. Whiskers twitching.

EXT. NEARBY - DAY

Sam's about to pull the trigger. But then there's A LOUD THUMP and RUSTLE. He blinks hard. Releases his breath.

And as he lowers the gun, we SPIN AROUND to see that he was aiming at -- A DEER. A few yards away. It huffs.

Kicks its back legs at BUZZING flies. THUMP. THUMP. And adjusts position to a new patch of vegetation.

Still unaware of the kids.

DONNIE
(whispers)
Fucking gash.

Donnie rips the rifle from Sam's grip. Raises it.

EXT. CLUSTER OF TREES - DAY

The TREES above Hare shake wildly. Mate looks up, waiting for birds. But instead, the BUSHES behind Hare part.

And out steps a **SNARLING FOX.**

Mate sees the FOX. GRUNTS and THUMPS his foot to warn Hare. She gets the message. Turns and sees FOX behind her.

Fox growls. Bares his teeth to attack. Hare hides behind Mate, who stands his ground. Protecting her. They face off.

Neither take their eyes off each other. Fox steps toward them. Saliva swirling over his sharp teeth.

Hare shakes with fear.

EXT. NEARBY - DAY

Donnie's eyes narrow. Focused and angry. The tip of his gun goes still in the air. His finger pulses on the trigger.

The DEER senses a disturbance. His ear twitches.

EXT. CLUSTER OF TREES - DAY

The fox crouches. About to jump. Hare takes a step back.

EXT. NEARBY - DAY

The deer looks up from his feast of grass. Sees the teens. REFLECTED IN HIS DEEP BLACK EYES -- there's a muzzle flash.

Red explodes off his back thigh. And he disappears into the forest. A string of blood flying from him like a thread.

EXT. CLUSTER OF TREES - DAY

The GUN-SHOT rings through the trees. Spooks FOX. It flees, leaving Hare and Mate cowering in their place.

EXT. NEARBY - DAY

The kids take off running after the deer. Jumping over rocks. Hopping off overgrown tree stumps.

EXT. FAR OFF - DAY

The DEER sprints. Blood flinging off him. Splashing on everything in his wake. It's beautiful. Graceful.

EXT. SMALL CLEARING - DAY

Hare and Mate hurry away from the seed pile. Coming into a small clearing surrounded by a ring of towering birch.

They hear SOMETHING coming through the forest, and stop in their tracks. Just as -- the KIDS burst into the clearing.

Hare watches as Donnie looks around for the deer. The others see the HARES. Standing still in the clearing.

Donnie automatically swings the gun around -- aiming at Sam. All of them completely out of breath. He lowers the gun.

DONNIE
Fuck! It's gone.

ASH
Look.

BEAU
It'll bleed out.

DONNIE
A thousand miles away.

ASH
Look at you little things.

DONNIE
Which way did it go. Did you see?

BEAU
(nods to the Hares)
Hey...

Hare stands frozen as Ash takes a step toward them. Mate moves between Hare and the girl. Her guardian.

They watch Ash cautiously approach them.

ASH
Don't run.

Ash kneels before Mate. Almost close enough to touch him. He watches her carefully. Ears perked. Ready to sprint.

She extends a closed hand for him to sniff. Harmless.

Mate hesitates, but greets her knuckles.

ASH (CONT'D)
There you go.

He lets her scratch his head. Then behind his ears.

Mate slowly moves closer toward her. Warming up to her. Hare stays back. Still fearful of them.

Donnie's riled up from the chase. His hands wrap tighter around the rifle. Thirsty for a kill.

Sam sees his clammy grip on the gun. Sharp eyes on the hares.

BEAU
Move off, I wanna' try.

Beau kneels beside Ash. Pets Mate. Ash taps on the ground before her, trying to summon Hare over.

ASH
Come here. You're okay... They're so cute. Always wanted one.

DONNIE
It's not a pet.

ASH
Not these. But they sell them.

DONNIE
Back in Southport?

ASH
Yes in Southport. Pet it.

DONNIE
That rat?

ASH
Not a rat. It's a rabbit. A hare.
(turns to Hare)
Aren't you?

Ash extends her hand to Hare, who stares suspiciously.

ASH (CONT'D)
Come. Come over here.

Hare focuses on Ash's hand, TAPPING ON the ground. Ash crawls toward Hare. Who doesn't move. Just stands there, shaking.

DONNIE
Look. It's just a scared little cunt like you.

SAMUEL
No it's not... I'm not.

DONNIE
Nice save -- shit for brains.

Donnie sucker punches Samuel in the arm. He just takes it. Turns his body away from his brother, who lands another blow.

Ash's hand inches toward Hare's head. They make contact.

Hare winces with fright. Eyes shut tight.

But as Ash softly rubs her fur, she realizes there is no danger... And she takes a tiny hop forward.

Ash rubs her ears. Fixes her fur. Gaining her trust.

Sam starts to walk toward them. But Donnie stops him, holding the gun out in front of his chest.

He raises an eyebrow at Sam.

Gives him a look -- "It's all yours."

Hare closes her eyes. Leaning her head to get the scratching right. She opens her eyes to --

Donnie coming up behind Ash. Sam by his side. Gun in his hands. Beau stands from petting.

Hare watches, through Ash's moving hand, as Donnie towers over them. Staring down at Mate. Casting an ominous shadow.

Mate takes a step toward Donnie. Puts one paw on his shoe. Anyone would've melted. But Donnie kicks him off.

Mate stumbles back. Looks up at the boys. Confused. Hare grows nervous. Shrinks into herself.

Donnie nudges Sam. Pushes his shoulder forward. The gun shifting in his hands.

Sam lifts the rifle, aiming at Mate. Places his finger on the trigger, but doesn't pull it yet.

Hare takes a step back from Ash. Realizing they're in danger.

Donnie eggs Sam on. Ash stands.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Pah's right... You are useless.

Anger surges through Sam's face. His hand shakes under the barrel with rage. But he still doesn't pull.

In a swift motion -- Donnie reaches over and pushes Sam's hand. Forcing him to fire.

BANG!

Mate's shoulder explodes.

Blood and fur fly everywhere. Splattering Hare's face.

Hare blinks off the blood. In shock. Ears ringing from the loud gun shot. She looks to Mate -- who TWISTS in pain.

Writhing and jerking in an abysmal death stretch. Hare is still. Her whole world crashing down.

She looks around in desperation.

Sam watches. Sorrow behind his stale expression.

Ash yelps. Covers her mouth. Surprised by the sudden slaughter. She backs away. Donnie turns to Sam.

Beau grabs the HATCHET from his Sam's back.

Hare looks up as a shadow befalls her.

Beau swings the hatchet down -- CUTTING MATE'S HEAD IN HALF.

WE SEE IT -- reflected in her DEVASTATED EYES.

The hatchet ascends. Blood splashing from it.

Mate's head falls open like a dropped egg.

Horror fills her little blood spattered face. She looks to the trees. Then back to her dead mate.

Sam aims the gun at her. Swallows his breath. And FIRES.

The GROUND explodes in a cloud of dirt.

As HARE runs for the treeline.

Quicker than his trigger finger. Gone in a flash.

A stripe of red on her back leg. Grazed by the bullet.

It hurts. Slows her down to a human speed.

BEHIND HARE -- in the flurry of green, Donnie grabs the hatchet from Beau. And takes off. Beau right behind him.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
DON'T LET IT GET AWAY!

ASH
WAIT UP!

Ash scrambles after them. Wiping blood-spray off her arm.

BACK IN THE CLEARING

Sam looks down at what's left of Mate. Wipes a drop of blood from his bandana. Then sprints after the others.

Into the trees...

EXT. DEEP FOREST - DAY

Hare runs for her life.

Her dark eyes wide. Fur bent back in the wind.

Drops of blood flying free from her soaking red face.

HARE'S POV -- grass parts before us. Paws thumping insanely fast, right in front of our nose.

We sharply pivot around a LARGE STUMP.

WAY BEHIND US -- SNEAKERS tear up the grass.

Sprinting as fast as they can.

WE SWITCH to each pair.

Then to their owners.

Donnie. Soul burning with determination. Hatchet in hand.

Beau. Holding his glasses to his skull. Hair attacking his face like a weedwhacker.

Ash. Wiping sweat from her cheeks. Swatting bugs.

Sam. Trying to balance the rifle over his shoulder. His eyes start to water. Maybe from exhaustion. Maybe from remorse...

ASH
It's so fast!

DONNIE
Keep on it.

BEAU
Hell'd it go --

DONNIE
There! There!

Donnie points to Hare as she SPRINTS --

UP AHEAD

Trying her darnedest to stay low.

But she keeps coming up on SWOLLEN ROOTS and debris from the storm, forcing her to leap and bound high.

The teens pick up speed.

Hearts pounding out of their chests. Trying to catch their breaths as they lose them.

Each party soaring through a sea of swirling colors.

Passing through dust cluttered columns of light.

Like a Picasso painting behind them.

It's thrilling. Remarkable.

Hare's ears fold back in the wake of her sprint.

Leg still bleeding.

She springs over a cluster of branches.

Her foot clips a limb -- and she tumbles. Rolls into a bunch of twigs. Flopping onto her side.

Struggles to get to her feet again. Finally gets up.

Looks back over her shoulder and sees --

Donnie coming up fast. Grinning like he's won a board game.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
SAM!

Sam passes Ash. Coming up on Beau.

SAMUEL
Got it...

Hare shifts her hips. Gets back to sprinting.

DONNIE
Hurry!

Sam lifts the RIFLE and FIRES --

Missing Hare. WHACK! Tearing off a shred of BARK from the base of a tree instead.

SAMUEL
It's too fast.

ASH
I don't... think I can...

Ash falls behind.

Hare swings a sharp right.

At a pair of HUGE entangled trees. Trying to lose the kids.

Donnie zips right after her. Not missing a beat.

Beau turns early. Heading down a different path.

Samuel skids to a stop at the trees. Leaves fly up at his ankles. Cling to his high socks.

He wipes sweat from his sour face.

Then tears after Donnie.

Ash stops to catch her breath. Winded.

EXT. FURTHER DOWN - DAY

Hare keeps running. No teens in sight. She looks around. Seems to be in the clear. Starts to slow.

And then -- Donnie bursts into view.

A few feet in front of her. She tries to stop.

But the ground is too wet.

As Donnie jumps for Hare, arms stretched out --

He crashes to the ground.

Hare slides to a STOP just out of his reach.

His filthy hands grabbing at her.

DONNIE
GOTCHU' LITTLE --

She hops over his swinging hand. Accidentally scratching him, drawing blood. She goes left. Away from Donnie.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
-- FUCK!

Sam barrels into view, off to the side.

Then disappears into the forest. Fast as fuck.

Beau runs into the area. Stops in front of Donnie. Looks down at him, hopping to his feet.

Then they kick back into gear.

After Hare and Sam.

EXT. UP AHEAD - DAY

Hare is starting to lose her energy. Growing faint from her injured leg. She needs a break. Or a miracle...

EXT. WAY BEHIND HER - DAY

Sam grits his teeth. He's never been more focused. Spots Hare way ahead of him -- through breaks in the twisting branches.

He FIRES. Misses again.

The GUNSHOT spooks a flock of BIRDS in a nearby nest. They flutter into the sky, like smoke from a fire.

Samuel RELOADS as he runs. It's just him and the HARE.

EXT. SLOPE - DAY

Hare goes down a small slope. Running at an angle. Pivoting and changing directions. Zagging to confuse her predators.

HIGH ON -- the SHARP BRANCH. As she passes underneath it.

EXT. CLOSE BEHIND - DAY

Samuel pushes toward the slope. Fast as ever. Gun in hand. Ready to fire off another round. Nothing to hear but the sound of his labored breathing. Grass rustling beneath him.

EXT. UP AHEAD - DAY

CLOSE ON -- the TIP OF THE SHARP BRANCH.

A tiny LEAF sprouted on it, dancing in the wind. Silence shattering as we hear Sam's muffled footsteps approaching.

EXT. SLOPE - DAY

Samuel dashes down the slope. Low hanging branches flying in his face. Blinding him as he comes down incline. Unstoppable.

SAM'S POV -- senses numbed by flying green and brown. No chance of regaining vision. Bombarded by whooshing wind.

WE PUSH IN FAST ON -- the sharp branch. Impaling our vision.

As Sam comes barreling out of the flurry and --

-- SMACKS right into the SIDE of the branch.

He's thrown flat on his back. The gun slides off his shoulders. Into mud. He goes deaf and blind for a moment.

Doesn't move. Just groans. Tenses. Then goes limp.

EXT. RIDGE - DAY

Hare hurries toward a RIDGE.

Jutting up from the earth. A tiny cliff face in the middle of an ocean of prehistorically thick grass.

EXT. SLOPE - DAY

Donnie comes down the slope. Sees Samuel lying on the ground.

DONNIE

GET UP!

SAMUEL

Agh...

He tries. It hurts. Donnie grabs the RIFLE. Throws down the hatchet by Sam's head.

DONNIE
Which way?

Sam points. Donnie leaves him. Sam grimaces as he gets back on his feet. Grabs his head -- still feeling like static.

EXT. RIDGE - DAY

Hare reaches the ridge. Swings around the side of it toward the jagged face. Rocks and shrubbery line the scree.

She hears rustling all around her. Not sure which direction. As Donnie and Beau close in. And she has no choice but to --

Dart into the mess of bramble and shrub. Trying to hide.

Just as -- Donnie and Beau come running up to the ridge.

IN THE SHRUBBERY

Hare buries herself deeper into hiding.

DONNIE (O.S.)
Shit. SHIT!

ON THE RIDGE

Donnie runs to the peak. His sneakers kicking small pebbles off the edge. That FALL RIGHT IN FRONT OF --

Hare HIDING IN THE GREEN.

The falling pebbles alarm her.

She backs all the way up to the rock wall. Nowhere left to go. No better place to hide. She crouches as low as she can.

Sam enters. Wanders off to the right of the ridge. Beau goes around the left side. Hare stays well hidden.

She keeps watch through a curtain of green.

As Beau and Sam flank her hiding spot. Donnie's voice booms from above.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Anything?

SAMUEL
Grass.

DONNIE

At all?

BEAU

Rocks.

DONNIE

Keep looking.

BEAU

Hey, mate! A branch!

DONNIE

Fuck off. Bloody rat's meat when I
fucken' find it.

ASH

Huh... It's not a rat!

ON THE RIDGE

Ash comes panting up the side. Bends over to catch her
breath. Donnie rubs the back of her head, "affectionately".

ASH (CONT'D)

And wouldn't make much for a meal.

DONNIE

Doesn't matter.

ASH

You chase *doesn't matter* through
the trees much?

DONNIE

Chased you, did I?

ASH

Prat.

Ash scoffs. Pushes Donnie off her. He tries to grab her back.
She huffs forward. Away from his grabbing hands.

DONNIE

Slag.

Donnie spits into the dirt.

Ash sits on the edge of the RIDGE. Her feet dangle off.

Hare looks up at Ash's shoes. Swinging overhead. Soggy laces
knocking into each other.

SHADOWS like a pendulum over the ground.

Hare keeps quiet and still. She could be discovered at any moment. One wrong move. One small noise. And it's over...

Sam ventures toward the treeline. Squinting into the depths of the wild. Hatchet in fist.

Absolutely nothing in sight. No sign of Hare.

HARE'S POV -- as Sam continues to scan the trees.

Beau stares into the forest on the opposite side. Head fanning back and forth like a searchlight.

He takes a few steps back.

A LARGE BEETLE buzzes around him. Lands on his neck. Beau swats it. Smashing it on his skin.

He peels his slimy hand off his neck. Rolls the dead bug in his hand. Smells it. Then eats it. Licking the slime off.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Bloody mank.

SAMUEL
Seriously?

BEAU
People do it all the time.

SAMUEL
No people do that.

BEAU
It's like beef.

DONNIE
Fuck it's not.

ASH
Means protein.

DONNIE
Dead from the neck up, mate.

Beau stares at the goo in his hand. Wipes more from his neck.

BEAU
At least I'm not dead from the
waist down.

ON THE RIDGE

Ash laughs. Donnie blushes. Fights it.

DONNIE
Retard.

They watch Beau lick his hand. Everyone is audibly disgusted.

BEAU
No longer hungry "retard" to you.

He wipes the rest on his pants. Ash mumbles to herself.

ASH
I am a bit hungry. Or I was...

ON THE GROUND

Hare still watches the boys through the shrubs. Her tiny breaths stifled as much as she can.

DONNIE
Probably would've ate that bunny's head raw if you had the chance.

BEAU
Still might. If it's not gone bad.

SAMUEL
Gone bad? Think it started bad.

DONNIE
Think you started bad, fuckhead.

Samuel looks down at the ground. That kinda' stung. He turns to Beau. Then looks back, toward Hare's direction.

But UP AT DONNIE.

SAMUEL
Your rabbit's gone.

ON THE RIDGE

Donnie's smile fades as he snaps back into anger. He raises his eyebrows at Sam's snarky remark.

DONNIE
Then go find it.

SAMUEL
Yeah, right. It could be anywhere.

DONNIE
Then start looking, before I shoot you instead.

Sam buries his frustration and sets out.

ON THE RIDGE

Donnie pulls another smoke out of his sock. Flicks his LIGHTER open and lights up.

This time we see -- there is an INSCRIPTION cheaply etched into the cold metal, definitely home-done. "**NEVER GIVE UP**".

His little piece of mom. Something to destroy with.

ON THE GROUND

Beau picks a BEETLE LEG from his teeth.

BEAU
I gotta' piss.

He struts toward the ridge.

Unzipping his pants as he -- WALKS STRAIGHT TOWARD HARE.

Closer and closer. Until he's RIGHT ABOVE HER.

Just a foot or two off to the side of her hiding spot.

Beau places a hand on the rock face. Starts pissing in the dirt near Hare. Still unaware that she's there.

Staring up at the sun hemorrhaging over the ridge.

Ash's feet kick overhead. Beau swats her foot away from his face. She kicks back, annoyed. Then sees he's pissing.

ASH
Ew, stop! Go over there!

BEAU
You go over there.

ASH
There's like a million places to
piss you animal. You're so gross.

BEAU
Only you think so.

DONNIE
Nah, not only her.

Hare turns away from it all.

As steam rises in the cool air. His stream stops.

BEAU

Stop talking to me. You're making
it hard...

DONNIE

Fucking puff.

BEAU

To go, mate. Cutting my stream.

Hare shifts further behind the rock separating her and Beau's piss stream. A TWIG cracks underneath her foot. She freezes.

Beau hears it. Looks around. Back to the forest.

Then up at Donnie and Ash on the ridge. Thinking it was them.

He can't locate the source of it over the steady PATTER of his own piss, starting up at full force again.

It grows louder and louder.

Then slowly morphs into --

EXT. FURTHER ON - DAY

-- LEAVES crunching beneath Sam's feet.

He ventures for a bit. Hacking at brush and low hanging branches with the hatchet as he goes.

Suddenly, he smells something putrid. Stifles a gag.

Pulls the bandana over his nose and mouth. Pressing it tight to his skin. Shielding his face.

Sam's piece of mom... something to protect with.

He continues on. No longer affected by the stench.

Then -- his shoe SQUASHES something gross.

He stops. Looks down at a mess beneath his foot. Lifts his shoe. String of goo sticking to it like chewing gum.

At closer inspection, he sees it's a **ROTTED PEACH**.

Sam wipes his shoe in the dirt. Then he sees --

TONS OF ROTTED PEACHES. Covering the ground.

They've been knocked from their life-source by the storm. Summer's sweet gift slaughtered.

Flies buzzing around. Eating their remains.

Sam is overwhelmed by the sight.

The stench returns.

Sam grows more disturbed by the decaying fruit. His eyes start to gloss over. His stoic face hardens.

More FLIES SWARM. Landing on the pink corpses.

He stares at the black masses swirling in the air. BUZZING getting louder and harsher in his ears. Death all around him.

Suddenly, something MOVES behind him.

He spins around, toward the noise and sees --

-- the DEER. Blood dried on its back leg. But it's alive. It looks over. Locks eyes with Sam for less than a moment.

And then takes flight. Sam just stares... filled with gloom.

Then, **RAIN** builds on his face. Another downpour coming.

EXT. RIDGE - DAY

Donnie kills his cigarette. Sucking it down to the last deadly breath. He releases his cloud of smoke.

Rain smacks his forehead. He wipes it off.

Ash puts her hair up to shield it from the building humidity.

ON THE GROUND

HARE'S POV -- as Beau zips up his pants. Done with the deed.

Rain spits on the dirt. Lands in our vision. WE BLINK it out.

As we clear our sight -- Donnie's CIGARETTE BUTT lands about a foot in front of us. Flicked from above.

We RACK FOCUS to the cigarette, as it continues to smoke.

Still glowing orange. Not dead yet. Rain avoiding it.

Ash sprinkles off. Landing in the dry leaves.

CATCHING FIRE.

Hare steps back as the ground before her lights ablaze. Beau is walking away. Doesn't notice the tiny fire yet.

As Sam steps out of the trees. Sees the fire.

SAMUEL
HEY! FIRE!

He gestures to it. Runs for it.

ON THE RIDGE

Ash looks down. Sees the fire. Pulls her legs up in a panic. Donnie chuckles. Watches Sam scramble for it.

ON THE GROUND

His foot crashes down on the fire. Stomping it out before it gets any bigger. Smoke leaks from the dead flames.

Burnt grass cools down. Rain getting stronger.

Sam wipes smoke from his eyes with the bandana, now red and sore. When his vision finally clears he sees --

Hare... hiding in the shrubs.

His eyes goes wide and he shouts --

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
HERE! IT'S HERE!

Donnie leaps down off the ridge. Sticks his landing.

Hare is gone in an instant.

INTO THE FOREST... DEEPER AND DEEPER

Odds most definitely not in her favor.

Rain now falling heavily.

The TEENS close in behind her.

Visible in the background. Blurs of angst and frustration.

GUN-SHOTS fire off. Echoing throughout.

Bark and nature bursts in fireworks before us.

As the bullets rupture trees and split the earth.

A few shots RICOCHET off rocks. But Hare keeps going.

BAM! A bullet strikes the ground right beneath her foot.

She trips and rolls. Springing back to her feet.

Just as Sam reaches her --

He hesitates. Overriding his instinct.

Lifts the hatchet and swings it --

SHUNK! It cleaves the ground.

She slips away just in time to avoid being halved.

Samuel rips the hatchet from the ground and swings again -- but she's out of his reach. Already YARDS AHEAD.

Hare looks back.

Sees Donnie passing Sam. Catching up to her.

And Beau coming in hot, shoving past Sam's shoulder.

His bow drawn. Arrow ready to fire. And with the slightest twitch of his hand -- an ARROW FLIES at her.

Hare side-steps it, but it slows her down.

Beau draws another and fires. Misses again. She hurries.

Covered from their shots by the disorienting brush.

Hare looks forward and sees -- the RUN-OFF PIPE. Just big enough for her to fit through. But they're almost to her.

BAM! BAM! More shots FIRED. They dance around her.

She ignores them. Now only a few feet away.

Almost there when -- Beau comes up, right behind her.

Bow in his hand. Reaching his other hand out to grab her by the scruff. His finger tips around her fur and --

-- she slips through them.

Escaping into the PIPE.

INT. RUN-OFF PIPE - CONTINUOUS

Hare hurries further into the pipe.

Now slowly filling with rain water.

Beau reaches it. Drops down onto his knees and shoves his arm inside. Trying to grab Hare. His hand flying everywhere.

Splashing murky green water all over the place.

She shuts her eyes at the sloshing muck. Rubs the water off.

Beau's hand slides out of the pipe. Then his FACE appears in the opening. Glaring at Hare.

BEAU

Fuck you.

Hare scurries away.

BEAU (CONT'D)

Furry little bastard.

Beau jumps up. As Hare runs deeper into the dark wet tunnel. THUNDERING FOOTSTEPS sound above --

ON THE PIPE

-- as Beau runs across it. Trying to intercept her at a LARGE HOLE in the top of the pipe, a few feet down.

IN THE PIPE

Light pours through the hole.

Growing closer and closer as she rushes to pass it.

Water splashes up from underneath her pounding feet.

ON THE PIPE

Beau's almost at the hole. Donnie arrives.

Sam and Ash in tow. Donnie slides to a stop in a mud puddle at the other end. He looks inside the pipe as --

IN THE PIPE

Hare reaches the hole. She's about to run by the beam of light -- just as Beau's hand falls into view.

Blocking her exit. She stops. Sliding in the water.

Beau's hand flounders around, trying to seize her.

She turns around and heads back the other way.

Donnie sees Hare coming back his way. She stops right in the middle of the pipe. Realizing both her exits are blocked.

He drops onto his stomach. Shoves the gun inside the pipe.

Beau removes his arm from the hole.

As Donnie fires off two rounds --

IN THE PIPE

Sparks fly as the bullets ricochet. Hare runs from the shots.

Back toward the light, where Beau awaits.

Donnie fires again. It flies right over her head. Piercing through the wall of the pipe. Nearly hitting Beau's leg.

Hare hurries under the hole. As Beau's hands return, soaring in from above. Just a moment too late...

She jumps and bounces off the side of the pipe. Twisting around Beau's hands, right through his fingers.

Escaping from the desperate flurry of his paws.

Beau removes his hands. He leans his face toward the hole.

Donnie looks in the pipe. They're losing her.

BAM! Donnie shoots again. The bullet bounces around.

And blasts through the top of the pipe --

OUTSIDE THE PIPE

Beau screams. As his glasses burst in his face. Plastic and glass cascade down his cheeks. Fall into the grass.

BEAU (CONT'D)
WHAT THE FUCK?!

Donnie fires until the rifle CLICKS. Out of ammo.

DONNIE
NO! NO!

Beau pulls the wreckage of his frames off his face. Hit by the ricochet. He wipes blood from a SCRATCH on his cheek.

SAMUEL
Oh, Jesus...

BEAU
MY FUCKING GLASSES! I CAN'T SEE
ANYTHING! IT'S ALL FUZZED!

ASH
I got you.

Ash helps Beau along.

ASH (CONT'D)
We should go back.

BEAU
No. I'm fine. I can still...

Beau rubs his eyes. Sam is worried. Donnie's already gone.

IN THE PIPE

Hare reaches another JUNCTION. And squeezes through the hole. A ghost disappearing into the darkness...

DONNIE (O.S.)
Follow the pipe.

INT. RUN-OFF PIPE - MOMENTS LATER

Hare fights her way through the tight quarters. It's incredibly dark. Her pupils rapidly adjusting.

Evolution gaining her a better view in the dark.

She splashes in the water rising quickly at her feet. Blood and bright green mud streak off her wounded back leg.

Stops for a moment to catch her breath. Panting heavily.

But she can't catch it.

She splashes water on her face. Trying to cool down.

Clears some excess mud from her nose. Ears. Mouth.

Finally starts to relax. Gets her breath back. Pulse lowers.

Then, a LOUD RUMBLE calls Hare's attention to behind her.

She looks back. The water ripples behind her.

Then up at the pipe -- a pitch black emptiness shuddering around her, like a throat about to swallow her whole.

It stops... then a larger TREMOR hits.

THRASHING WATER echoes behind her.

She turns around again and she sees -- a huge black WAVE rushing through the pipe, right at her.

The water swells under her as she springs into a dash. Trying to outrun the flood. But it's catching up.

She turns a CORNER -- into another junction.

THWASH! The wave jackhammers into the wall of the pipe.

Spraying everything as it wraps around the wall.

And corkscrews above Hare. She tries to lunge out of the way, but it slams down on her back. Knocks her off her feet.

Violently throws her into the side of the pipe as she spins around it, like laundry in the wash.

She smacks her head, swirling faster than she can see.

But lands right-side up, heavy on her stomach, in a huge blast of the revolting water.

It carries her forward. Pulling Hare along, out of her control. She tries to stop herself, clawing around the pipe.

The water pressure builds. Pushing her faster and faster.

And she's heading toward -- a **BLOCKAGE** in the pipe.

Twigs and debris, caught up in each other. No way through.

Hare sees the blockage. Coming at her fast. Too fast.

She panics. Desperately tries to dig her paws into the surface beneath her. Paws scraping along the smooth metal.

Her NAIL snags a BOLT and -- RIPS OFF.

A cloud of blood bursts in the water, like a tripped mine.

She squeals from the pain. Keeps trying to find her grip on something, anything... but there's nothing to grab hold of.

And it's too late.

WHAM! She CRASHES into the blockage. Bone rattling.

The water keeps coming at her, pressed up against the clot.

Filtering over her like a drain, passing through the spaces in the blockage. Ruthlessly waterboarding the poor girl.

She fights it. Twisting and moving every which way. Battling to get out from under the current.

Finds footing against the twigs and pushes herself up, just above the flow of water. She stays there.

Still held against the debris, but now able to breathe.

Until the flood eventually slows to a stop.

And the water levels out to a calm pool up to her shoulders.

Hare gulps air. Blinking hard to clear water from her eyes and face. She wipes herself with her paws, but all is wet.

Once she's calmed a bit, she assesses the situation.

The route behind her is flooded. And the route in front of her is blocked.

On the other side of the blockage, she sees **DAYLIGHT**.

Pouring in from far away, but an exit nonetheless. She needs to get through no matter what. So close to salvation.

Hare stands up as much as she can in the small space. Matted and dripping a steady stream. A poor sight.

Puts her front paws against the blockage. Pushes on it. It gives slightly. Then she pounds, as hard as she possibly can.

A few twigs fall off, but it won't budge much more.

She drops down... *Shit*. She'd curse if she could.

Water falls from the ceiling. Leaking in from outside. Onto her head. Into the sea behind her.

Reminding her that at any moment, more water could come.

Hare tries to push through the blockage again. Thumps her front paws against it, repeatedly. Despairing.

THWOP! She's able to knock out a slate of rock and some thick mud, but it's not enough. *Come on!*

There's another TREMOR. Bigger than any of the previous. She stops and looks behind her.

Wide eyed as the water folds and coils, like a snake about to strike. She turns back to the barricade.

Starts pounding at it. Hard as she can. Fast as she can.

The pipe cries as the tremor grows. Then -- a WALL OF WATER rounds the corner at lightning speed.

Hare doesn't even have a moment to blink before the washes over her completely -- **FILLING THE PIPE.**

It lifts her up and smashes her face first into the blockage. She holds her breath. Now trapped in the watery abyss.

A suspended state of hell. Drowning...

Can't tell which way is up. Water thrashing all around.

She flips around. Puts her feet up against the wood. And KICKS with her back feet, over and over and over again.

Twigs start to split. Mud and moss release from the cluster like frightened fish. She keeps going.

Bubbles float from her nose. Running out of air.

THWUMP! THWUMP! THWUMP! She kicks and kicks.

The blockage bends. Folding into itself under the force of her feet and the increasing strain from the torrent.

She's almost through... and out of breath.

Her small mouth is forced open -- involuntarily warring for oxygen. Bubbles pour out of her face.

As she KICKS one last time, with all her energy.

CRACK!!! It splits open.

The branches and leaves SHOOT OUT. Fast as torpedoes. Whizzing through the pipe. Clearing the way.

And Hare is sucked THROUGH.

Giant bubbles EXPLODE all over the place.

She's tossed around, but this time she's not fighting it.

Nothing but the hollow subaqueous symphony.

As **DAYLIGHT** approaches through the murky depths, swallowing her up and spitting her out.

It grows brighter, illuminating the scratches and flaws of the metal coffin tumbling around her. Her eyes closing.

OUR VISION fades. Almost gone. When a BURST OF WHITE brings the sounds of nature back to life.

And she's purged out into --

EXT. RIVER - DAY

-- the SHALLOWS of a mellowed river.

With a quiet SPLASH, Hare falls atop a bed of pebbles, submerged in an inch of water.

Run-off pours out the pipe. Pushes her a few inches away.

She's awake... alive. But struggles to move. She's hurt and exhausted. Bones and muscles tender from the ordeal.

Lifts her head. Cleans water from her face. Eyes adjust to the bright sun.

The rain has dwindled, but a few drops speckle her ears.

Half lying down, she scours the area. Searching for danger. Not that she could do anything about it.

Her head falls back into the water, heavy as an anchor. Her chest rises and falls in large leaps.

Finally a moment to rest. The cool water reviving her joints. Mending her spirit. Cleaning the filth off.

Rays of sun glisten off the river. Warming her back up.

EXT. RIVER - MOMENTS LATER

Hare's back on her feet. Mobility returned to her body. Pain starting to subside, or at least becoming tolerable.

She sips ravenously from the stream. Pausing to breathe. Then continues drinking. Something MOVES in the water.

Her eyes shift to the movement and -- a FISH breaches. Splashing her. She lifts her face away from the water.

As more swim past. The traveling fish reflect off the surface. Passing before Hare, who watches them intently.

Nearby, down the river bank -- an ORANGE BLUR materializes.

Hare hears IT BREATHING and slowly looks up.

Turning to see -- the FOX.

Back to finish what he started.

He glares at Hare with starving eyes. His lips curl back to reveal teeth slathered with saliva.

He takes a step forward. Anxious to attack.

Hare freezes. She looks to the water.

The tree-line. Back to the run-off pipe.

But before she can move, the Fox lunges.

Hare whips around. His JAWS SPRING OPEN -- lurching for her. She side-steps. His bite CLOSES around the tips of her fur.

Missing her flesh only by an atom.

She heads for the pipe -- but she's too slow for the Fox. Weakened from her injuries and exertion.

Fox comes up right next to her. Trying to cut her off. He turns and snaps at her, but misses.

He swings his head back at her, KNOCKING her into the bank.

She tumbles into the water. Flips over, into a run.

But Fox is already right on top of her. Before she can get running far, Fox rams into her.

Throws her onto her back and rushes her. He dives in for a bite and -- THWAP! Hare kicks him in the snout.

He reels back. Goes in for another bite. Hare kicks again. Clocking his nose. He keeps SNAPPING at her, rabidly.

Teeth snag her foot. She knocks him in the eye. Fox steps back, surprised. Hare leaps up, about to make her escape.

Fox's mouth flies open and --

-- HE GRABS HER by the back leg.

Sinks his teeth into her thigh. Hare lets out a horrid YELP. Her blood streaks down his chin.

He bites harder. Digging his fangs deeper.

Hare thrashes. Flailing around like a fish caught by a bear. She clobbers at his snout with her paws.

Scrapes his nose. Drawing blood.

Fox SHAKES HARE back and forth, angry.

Swinging her around like a chew toy.

She scratches at him wildly. Clips his ear. Smacks his snout. Kicks him in the mouth with her other back foot.

He swings her up and to the side. Throwing her upper body back toward his own head.

She SWIPES AT HIS FACE --

-- TEARING OPEN his eye-ball. PINK GOO bursts out.

Fox throws Hare a few feet away. Crying out awfully.

She skids into the shallows. Shakes her shoulders out as she gets back up and takes an offensive stance.

Fire in her little eyes. Ready for more.

Fox whimpers. He stumbles back, blinking rapidly. Runs his paw over his face. Closes his bleeding eye. Already swelling.

Hare watches him suffer. Her eyes soften with sympathy.

There's a faint RUSTLING behind her, but it's mostly inaudible. The fox glances up, then back at Hare.

Her blood dribbling from his mouth.

His own milky mess oozing from his destroyed eye.

He lets out a sharp painful whine.

And runs away...

Hares stays tense for a long beat. Not ready to let her guard down. Then a tiny glow of pride surfaces in her eyes.

Finally, she relaxes.

As her adrenaline wears off, pain powers on. She winces. Hurt, but no longer shrinking in fear.

Something about her is different.

Not just in the patches of hair missing along her back. Or the scratches across her face. But something in her demeanor.

The CUT on her back leg bleeds heavily, torn to a fault-line of flesh by the fox. Not fatal, but certainly excruciating.

A DEEP RED stream pours from the now SPLIT BUTTERFLY SHAPE on her leg. Torn apart by her misfortune.

Behind her -- TWO PAIRS OF LEGS appear.

The real reason the Fox fled the scene... Beau and Ash, stumble out of the trees. Following the run-off pipes.

ASH

Oh --

BEAU

Shhhiiit.

Beau rubs his eyes. Through his BLURRY POV --

WE SEE -- Hare's outline over by the bank. Ash confirms.

ASH

THIS ONE! IT'S OVER HERE!

Hare turns to Ash. Calling across the river to --

Donnie and Samuel, who stand up from investigating another run-off outlet. They both see Hare, mangled and tired.

DONNIE

Go!

Donnie tears across the river. Submerged up to his thighs. Gun in his hands. Sam moves to a shallow crossing.

Beau separates from Ash. She staggers after him. She now holds the BOW and ARROWS. No intention of using it.

ASH

Beau! Wait!

And the chase starts again.

EXT. HEAVY TREE LINE - DAY

Hare powers up hill. Through tangles of oaks. Over her shoulder, Beau shreds dirt after her.

Squinting his watering eyes. Almost blind, but too stupid to give up. He barely clears each tree, by luck.

BEAU'S POV -- of bleary trees flying at us. The small brown blur that is Hare, not too far in the distance.

TWHAM! Beau accidentally smacks his shoulder into one.

He grunts and carries on.

BEAU

Ah! Shit. Shit.

In the distance, Ash's concern rings out.

ASH (O.S.)
BE CAREFUL!

He's trying. Fumbling his way around. Hurrying after her. Branches smack at his arms, held high to shield his head.

Hare weaves through it all.

Beau stumbles behind her.

Closing in, despite his poor vision.

Grumbling and moaning, trying to stay concentrated.

Greeted in the skull by several branches.

Hare nears the top of the hill. Coming up fast on the horizon is the DROP-OFF from earlier that she was too afraid to jump.

She looks back at Beau following, only a few yards back.

Too close for her to slow down.

Hare turns back to the drop-off, now only a few feet away. Her brows narrow. Determination pumping through her veins.

She speeds toward the ledge. Beau right behind her.

BEAU'S POV -- we're catching up. Almost at her. Our blurry hands bouncing out in front of our face.

Hare's little paws hammer at the grass. She picks up speed. Only a foot away from the drop... Moment of truth.

Beau's feet crash into the sticky mud with each step.

And as she reaches the ledge, fearless -- she **JUMPS!**

Soaring over the drop-off in a beautiful arch. Time slows as she passes OVER the fall. And -- SHE CLEARS IT!

Tumbling to safety on the other side of the gap. She twists around as she brakes to a halt. Looks back at Beau.

BEAU'S POV -- as he approaches Hare fast. But he can't see the drop. The ground looks level, obscured by blindness.

His foot beats the edge of the drop-off and suddenly, there's nothing below him. Arms reach out for dear life. Beau falls --

BEAU
Ohf--

-- into the drop-off. Bashing his head on a rock below. Blood splatters out, all over the green and grey.

His body slams into the rocks with a FUCKED CRUNCH.

Hare looks down at the boy's body, unmoving. Blood pouring out of his opened head. Coursing down the rocks.

A CRIMSON WATERFALL.

Then, the SHUFFLING of feet bring forth -- Ash.

She slides to a stop at the edge of the drop-off.

ASH
OH MY GOD --

She screams. Horrified by what she sees below.

DONNIE (O.S.)
What?!

Sam comes up to the drop-off. His eyes go wide. Hand goes to his mouth, not sure how to react.

Donnie spots Hare. Immediately fires a bullet into the ground near her and she flees. No longer the speed demon she was.

As he goes for another arrow, he glances down and sees Beau. Dead in the rocks below. The arrow falls into the drop-off.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
What happened?!

Sam just shakes his head. Ash is in tears. Pale as a gothic ghost. She turns and throws herself on Donnie.

ASH
We have to help him!

DONNIE
Help him what?

ASH
We have to go down there. He could still be alive.

SAMUEL
All that blood...

ASH
BEAU!

DONNIE

Stop. Look at him!

ASH

Please. We have to get him out!

Beau's chest moves, **STILL ALIVE.**

SAMUEL

He's still breathing.

Beau lets out a GROSS SOUND. Clinging to life. Trying to call for help, but his face is too swollen.

BEAU

GLACK-RGH!

Ash starts for the edge. Donnie pulls her back. Ash pulls out her CELL PHONE. But there's NO SERVICE this far out...

ASH

Can't get anything. No, no.

Donnie grabs her by the shoulders. Brings her down a notch.

DONNIE

Go get help.

ASH

We can't leave him.

DONNIE

He weighs a fucking ton. Go get your other cousins. Tell them it was an accident. You'll get service when you reach the road. Ash --

She just stands there, staring at him in shock.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Go.

Ash nods frantically. She hands Donnie the bag. Wipes her face with her sweater, and then books it into the forest.

The sound of her running fades, until the boys are alone...

Sam stares at Beau. Then looks over to Donnie, right as he runs and jumps across the drop-off. He lands with a THUD.

SAMUEL

What're you doing?

DONNIE
I'm not done.

SAMUEL
Are you serious?

He gestures down to Beau.

DONNIE
That's not my fault.

SAMUEL
Yes it is.

DONNIE
No it's not.

SAMUEL
He could see if wasn't for you!

DONNIE
He shouldn't have ran off.

SAMUEL
Do you hear yourself? We can't keep
chasing your stupid fucking rabbit!

DONNIE
I'm not letting it get away. You
can either come with, or you can
crawl home and cry. Which is it?

Sam looks down at the large fissure separating him and his
brother. Then up at Donnie, red in the face.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
What did she always used to say?

SAMUEL
What?

DONNIE
What did she say? All the time,
when it was bad.

Sam looks down. Shakes his head.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Never. Give. Up.

SAMUEL
That was different.

DONNIE

How?

SAMUEL

It just was! You know it was. She meant never give up on hope... or the things you really care about. Not your horrible ideas...

DONNIE

We can't give up. Not now. We have to find it and finish this... Or Beau got hurt for nothing.

Sam says nothing. There's no winning this one.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

3... 2... 1....

Donnie's about to take off, and then --

SAMUEL

Wait! Okay.

He gets a running start, and JUMPS across the gap.

DONNIE

Thought so.

Donnie pats him on the back. Sam draws the hatchet.

SAMUEL

How will we even find it now?

DONNIE

We won't have to...

Donnie looks down at -- a **TRAIL OF BLOOD**. Left behind by Hare's hemorrhaging leg. Donnie starts off on the trail.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

C'mon.

Samuel swallows his emotions, then follows.

EXT. NEARBY - DAY

Hare hastily limps along. Blood trailing behind her. Looking back every few steps. Nowhere is safe. Her leg festers.

Toward a lush area full of tall shrubs. Great for cover.

EXT. CLOSE BEHIND - DAY

Donnie and Samuel continue along the blood trail, quickly approaching Hare's location. Donnie steps on the blood.

It sticks to the bottom of his sneaker. Pulls up with it in a thick strand hanging off the rubber. And snaps...

EXT. IN THE SHRUBS - DAY

Blood drips from a SEA OF SHRUBS. Pressing up to a HILL.

Hare MOVES through the dense clusters of green.

Through several groupings. Until she spots a thick PUDDLE OF MUD. Winces at her stinging leg. Dripping blood.

She drags herself over and collapses into the cooling mud.

It clumps over her wounds. Stopping the bleeding. She takes a second to rest. Well hidden, for the moment.

EXT. CLOSE BEHIND - DAY

The boys are only a few yards away. Trail getting warmer. Weaving through the sea of shrubbery, until it finally ends.

DONNIE

Look.

He nods to the SHRUBS drenched in blood. They both slow as they come up to it. Have they finally got her?

EXT. IN THE SHRUBS - DAY

Hare's face, hidden behind greenery. She hears their footsteps. Looks around in full panic mode. Nowhere to run.

EXT. SEA OF SHRUBS - DAY

Samuel looks to his brother. This is it. Donnie aims the rifle. His mouth fills with saliva. Soaks up the moment.

Finger caresses the cold metal of the trigger. Then pulls it.

CLICK -- CLICK! Out of ammo again. Donnie reloads.

Not many bullets left in his bag. His grimy fingers slide in the greasy rounds. With each one, there's a LOUD SH-CLICK --

EXT. IN THE SHRUBS - DAY

-- Hares ears twitch. She closes her eyes. Recognizes the noise. Death drawing near. SH-CLICK... SH-CLICK... SH-CLICK.

A beat. And the gun RACKS. Her eyes flash open. This is it.

Silence... Waiting. A milky tear spills from her eye.

EXT. SEA OF SHRUBS - DAY

Donnie FIRES into the bush, four times.

Blood flings from the leaves in leaps. Shards of green explode like glass. If anything was in there, it's dead now.

DONNIE

Check it.

Donnie stays ready to fire as Sam creeps up to the shrub. He peels the leaves back to reveal --

-- it's empty. He looks back to Donnie, confused.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

What?

Then Sam sees -- most of the area is spotted with blood. Fading off into the sea of shrubs. No real direction.

Behind Donnie -- another shrub SHAKES lightly.

Sam gives him a look, "THERE".

Donnie looks back to the other bush. Whips the gun around. Fires off TWO SHOTS. Another flurry of green.

And a BUZZING BEETLE flies out. Scurrying up into the trees.

BUT NO HARE.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

It couldn't have gone far. Look how much blood there is.

Donnie's frustrated. Sam watches him, concerned about his rising temper. The rage blooming in his face.

He looks around at all the shrubs and bushes. Too many places to hide... Too many to search.

Wind picks up. Sweeps across shrub floor. Shakes a cluster.

BAM! BAM! Donnie shoots it to mulch.

Quickly reloads. Fingers SCRAPING the bottom of his bag.

EXT. FURTHER AWAY - DAY

Ash hears the barrage of gun-shots. She looks around, lost. Then picks a direction and starts running. Frantic.

EXT. IN THE SHRUBS - DAY

BAM! Hare flinches at each SHOT. At this point, it's luck of the draw. Another SHOT RINGS off. But she's still safe...

EXT. SEA OF SHRUBS - DAY

Donnie's lost it. BAM! BAM! BAM!

He shoots haphazardly at every moving thing, unhinged. Sweeping the gun around chaotically. Reckless.

SAMUEL

Hey!

The barrel passes over Sam -- who ducks out of the way.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

HEY!!

Donnie blows a chunk out of a tree, right behind Sam's head, leaving him stunned. Sam stays down.

Donnie FIRES AT RANDOM. In all directions.

Howling through his teeth with madness.

Sam shields his face.

EXT. IN THE SHRUBS - DAY

In the chaos, the GUN aims toward Hare. Donnie fires. Slicing off the TIPS of the leaves above her. Barely misses her head.

PANG! PANG! The rounds slam into the side of the hill. DIRT RAINS down on Hare. Donnie FIRES once more and --

-- it passes right through the HILL. Without a sound.

Hare looks over as THICK VINES and ROCK FALL. Revealing --

A SMALL CAVE in the side of the hill.

EXT. SEA OF SHRUBS - DAY

Donnie hears a LOUD RUSTLE behind him.

He spins around and without looking, pulls the trigger -- -- aiming right at ASH. Her eyes shut as... CLICK. CLICK.

Donnie immediately lowers the gun. Completely out of ammo. Ash opens her eyes. Realizing she's not swiss cheese.

DONNIE

What the hell are you doing?

ASH

What am I --? You almost *SHOT ME!!!*

She stumbles forward. Donnie catches her. Ash pushes him away, pissed. Can't even look at him. She gathers herself.

DONNIE

You're supposed to be getting help.

ASH

I couldn't find the road. You're still going after it...?

Donnie ignores her disgust. From on the ground --

SAMUEL

It's north.

Sam points. She just shakes her head, frazzled. Donnie turns her to face NORTH. Gives her a little push.

DONNIE

That way. Just keep fucking going.

ASH

Okay.

DONNIE

Tell them by the big gap. They'll know the way back...

She does. Samuel turns onto his hands and knees to get up.

As he lifts his sweaty head -- he locks eyes with Hare.

Who looks back at him. Running through the SMALL CAVE. Fading into the darkness of it. Sam scrambles for the entrance.

SAMUEL

Donnie!

DONNIE

Wait --

Donnie digs into his bag. Scrapes around for more ammo, but he's clean out. Only arrows left.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

-- shit.

He throws the gun around his shoulder. And runs.

INT. SMALL CAVE - DAY

Dark and damp. Thick roots slither in from above ground. Carving through the sediment. Decorating the cave walls.

Hare hurries through the cave. Sam is right on her tail.

UP AHEAD

The cave constricts to an even **SMALLER PASSAGE**.

Hare slides through the entrance. Into a PITCH BLACK abyss.

Sam hesitates, but drops down onto his stomach and SQUEEZES through the passage. Donnie follows. Rushing Sam along.

INT. SMALL PASSAGE - SAME

Hare moves through without any trouble. At the advantage. Gaining some distance from the boys. Their voices echo --

DONNIE

MOVE!

SAMUEL

I'm trying! It's too dark.

DONNIE

It's a bloody cave!

SAMUEL

Not helping.

DONNIE

Hold on!

FURTHER BACK

Sam keeps pushing forward blindly. Dragging his hands along the rough walls. Using them for guidance.

Donnie stops. Hugged tight by the cave.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
I can't fucking --

He worms around, trying to get into his jacket pocket. Finally manages to twist his wrist just right and --

PULLS OUT THE LIGHTER.

CLICK! The passage illuminates.

Hare looks back as she runs.

Sees Sam, now only a few feet behind her. Sam is hit with a second wind, realizing how close he is to capturing Hare.

And then --

SAMUEL
GLAGH!

His BANDANA snags on a jagged piece of rock. Choking him.

He instinctively pulls and -- RIP! The BANDANA TEARS.

Freeing him. Sam stops. Stares down at --

THE SHRED OF BANDANA. His ripped memory.

Goes to grab the piece but --

Donnie shoves Sam forward. Away from the shred.

And we're --

WE'RE TIGHT on Hare.

As Samuel is eaten by the darkness in the background. His hands land on his neck. On what's left of the bandana.

The passage moves around Hare in a blur.

Heading for a FAINT BLUE RING of light at the end of it all.

Growing bigger and bigger. She's about to reach it. Nearly to freedom. She leaps through the ring and is spit out to --

INT. CAVE - SAME

-- another section of the cave. Blue glowing all over the place. Just PHOSPHOROUS in the rocks. Mimicking daylight...

Hare carries on.

INT. SMALL PASSAGE - SAME

Sam climbs through the last leg of the passage. Struggles to pull himself through the tiny opening out into --

INT. CAVE - SAME

The rest of the cave. Donnie's hand flies out right after him. Sam pulls him out of the passage. And they hurry.

Lighter bouncing in Donnie's hand as he runs. And then --

WHOOSH! The flame goes out.

Sam keeps running. Deeper into darkness.

Donnie slides to a stop. Shakes the lighter.

Right underneath another BLUE GLOW. Lining the cave wall beside him. More large POCKETS of PHOSPHOROUS.

He flicks the lighter. But it just grinds. Doesn't spark.

Tries again and -- CLICK!

The lighter flicks on... WHOOSH!

IGNITING THE PHOSPHOROUS in the rocks next to him.

BLUE FLAMES shoot up the wall.

Donnie throws himself to the cave floor.

As fire climbs up the rocks.

He shields his face from the blast.

UP AHEAD

Hare stops in her tracks.

Dirt and rock shake loose. Sprinkling Hare. As she looks back at Donnie -- curled up like a child.

Blue and yellow swirl in her eyes.

Sam turns back, surprised. As the **CLOUD OF FIRE** dissipates. Eating itself from the lack of oxygen.

Donnie's on the ground. Below it.

He's all right. Just a little shell shocked.

Smoke clings to him. Wraps him in a blanket of gray.

EXT. SMALL CAVE - SAME

Hare shoots out of the cave. Through a wall of leaves. Into a large open clearing. That goes for a few hundred yards...

Without missing a beat, she gathers her bearings.

And presses on. Toward the trees.

Too exposed out in the open.

INT. SMALL CAVE - SAME

WHITE LIGHT blinds Sam as he nears the exit. He throws up his arms. Covers his eyes from the glare of the setting sun.

About to surface when -- THUNK!

His foot snags a rock. And HE TRIPS --

EXT. SMALL CAVE - SAME

-- right out the entrance of the cave. Sliding face first into mossy muck. Cutting his chin on a bed of rocks.

INT. SMALL CAVE - SAME

Donnie hurries toward the exit.

Sees Sam on the ground as he pops out of the cave --

EXT. SMALL CAVE - DUSK

-- and lands over his brother. He extends a filthy hand, unexpectedly. Sam stares for a beat. As if it were a lie.

He grabs it and Donnie pulls him to his feet.

DONNIE

You okay?

Sam nods. Wipes blood from his lip. Nods. As they look over and see Hare just barely disappearing over the horizon...

EXT. FOREST - SUNSET

Hare RUNS. Panting.

Sun starting to set over the hill behind her. It would be a glorious sight if it weren't so horrible a moment.

Further up ahead --

She spots **ANOTHER HOLE** in the side of a hill. This time, only big enough for her to fit. Somewhere to hide.

She races for it. Completely out of breath.

Moments from safety. This nightmare almost over.

Then, SAM APPEARS right behind her and -- **GRABS HER!**

Rips her from the ground with a single swipe.

And throws her up against a **MONSTROUS TREE**.

His hand wrapped tightly around her little neck.

Samuel draws the HATCHET and raises it.

Getting ready to kill her. She squirms and kicks and **BITES**. Tries her best to escape, but Sam tightens his grip.

This is it... her end.

And as he's about to bring down the hatchet --

Sam notices SOMETHING.

The thumping of her chest against his hand.

Her heart beat... Fast. Desperate. Sad.

Matted fur rising and falling on his rough skin.

The warmth of her blood. Snaking up his arm.

In a blink, his rage is gone.

Hare's deep eyes reflect his softened face.

Sam crumbles. Seeing himself in the poor grieving creature.

Hare watches the tears breaking through his ink black eyes.

SAMUEL
I'm sorry... It's not you...

He loosens his grip on Hare. And she relaxes.
Like she knows he won't hurt her. Like she understands him.
Her feet dangle. Arms slump.
Behind Sam, a threatening shadow appears.
Donnie, in soft focus.
WE STAY ON SAM. His back turned to his brother.

DONNIE
What are you doing? Kill it.

SAMUEL
Just -- wait.

DONNIE
For what? We fucking have it! Sam!

Sam swallows his silence. New resolve in his face. Strength.

SAMUEL
NO.

DONNIE
Kill it or I will!

Donnie raises the BOW & ARROW. Arms wavering. Draws back.

SAMUEL
I SAID NO!

Sam stands his ground. Donnie steps forward, drunk with rage.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
There's no point.

DONNIE
We came out here to get food.
That's what it is...

SAMUEL
How can you say that now?

DONNIE
What?

SAMUEL

Look at her... She just wants to live. Like anything else.

DONNIE

That's life... isn't it? Things just die and you get over it.

SAMUEL

Stop.

DONNIE

What's it even got left? You killed it's fucking mate.

SAMUEL

Shut up.

DONNIE

Might as well put it out of its misery...

SAMUEL

SHUT UP!

THWAP! Donnie's finger slips. He releases the arrow and --

-- it IMPALES Samuel's shoulder. Blood sprays Hare.

The ARROWHEAD stopping only atoms from her face.

Sam screams. He drops Hare. She slides down the tree. Slams onto the ground. Rolls to her feet. Shakes off the fall.

Sam collapses to his knees. Grabbing at the arrow protruding from his flesh. Blood running down his shirt.

Horror strikes Donnie, suddenly sobered by his mistake.

DONNIE

Oh shit...

Hare starts to run. Donnie fumbles for another arrow, but drops it. He dives. Throwing the BAG out like a net.

TRAPPING HARE.

INT. BAG - CONTINUOUS

It's dark as hell.

Waves of fabric crashing. Spinning and collapsing.

Hare kicks and thumps.

Trying to find a way out. Bag jumping around.

But it's hopeless. She's totally screwed.

Shadows course around her, as Donnie wrestles with the bag from the outside. Pressing the canvas walls in on Hare.

He slides his hands under the bag and closes it.

DONNIE (O.S.)

Got you.

Our world flips. Hare tumbles. Slamming into the bottom of the bag. Trying to stand. As she's lifted into the air.

Tossed around in forward motion. There's a sharp -- ZIP!

As the **EXIT** is sealed shut.

INT. BAG - MOMENTS LATER

Hare is thrown about. Bouncing with the swing of the bag. Nails clawing against the fabric. Trying to find a way out.

She can hear Sam's labored breathing outside. Painful wheezing. Their footsteps moving through the forest.

DING! DING! Donnie's CELL PHONE chirps in his pocket. Now that they're nearing the road, in range of cell service.

SAMUEL

You think it's Ash? Maybe she --
agh... made it back?

DONNIE

I don't know.

SAMUEL

Can't you check?

DONNIE

Can we just worry about one
bleeding idiot at a time?

SAMUEL

Both of which are your fault.

DONNIE

So what?

SAMUEL

So what? That's all? You nearly took Ash's head off, I'm a bloody bulls-eye, and for all we know Beau's still at the bottom of a pit. And all you've got is so what? What the hell is wrong with you?

Donnie stops, frustrated. He pulls out his CELL PHONE.

DONNIE

It's a voicemail.

SAMUEL

And?

Hare shifts in the bag. Adjusting her view. He plays it...

ASH

(on the phone)

Don', we got him out and we're almost at the hospital... And he's still awake. Think he'll be okay --

It's muffled by tears and a bad connection. Rumbling of a car-ride in the background. Donnie shuts it off.

DONNIE

Happy now?

SAMUEL

Oh yeah, just proper thrilled...

They get moving again. Donnie pushing Sam along.

DONNIE

We're almost there. Just hurry up.

SAMUEL

Slow... down...

Then, the sound of Sam -- CRASHING THROUGH BRUSH.

He SCREAMS. And then -- THUNK!

We're set down on the ground.

Hare pushes against the side of the bag. Manages to roll it a few inches. And KNOCKS UP against SOMETHING.

Finds a SMALL HOLE near a POCKET. Where she PEEKS OUT. Can't see anything but a DENIM WALL. Sam's leg.

With no time to waste, she starts chewing and tearing at the small hole. Pulling thread...

Then SOMETHING lands on the outside of the bag.

BLOOD drips onto Hare's foot.

Soaking in through outside. She can hear desperate efforts outside as Donnie STRUGGLES to help Sam. Catches glimpses --

DONNIE

Get up.

SAMUEL

AGH!!! STOP! I CAN'T!

DONNIE

Here.

SAMUEL

No no no, no! Stop stop! Leave it.

DONNIE

You think that hurts... Pah sees that and you're dead.

SAMUEL

He sees this and we're both dead. Only mine might happen sooner...

DONNIE

We've got to get it out.

SAMUEL

Not here... Please.

DONNIE

Then get up.

More screams from Sam. Leaves rustle. And Hare is thrown onto her back, as the bag is PICKED UP AGAIN.

She drowns in the canvas...

All goes **BLACK**.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - NIGHT

Night washes over the sky. Glowing eerily with swirls of teal and orange. STARS breaking through the dense clouds.

Backlit by the beauty of falling darkness and shouting galaxies, pouring through the forest.

SILHOUETTES of Sam and Donnie surface from the tree-line.

Donnie keeps Sam standing. BAG in hand.

As they move toward the DARK HOUSE.

Awaiting their return.

INT. BAG - NIGHT

HARE'S POV -- as she peeks through the hole. Approaching a brown mass. Wood sinew weaving through flaking paint.

The FRONT DOOR.

Sam leans up against the side of the house. Grabbing at the arrow still sticking through his bleeding shoulder.

Donnie's hand reaches out in front of the bag.

And pushes the door open REVEALING --

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - NIGHT

The monster's den. Old and rickety. Heavy wood interior with obsolete furniture and curdling wallpaper. Archaic.

INT. THE BAG - NIGHT

Still through HARE'S POV. Through the hole in the bag...

WE MOVE INTO -- THE LIVING ROOM

Sam stumbles forward into view.

He knocks into a STANDING LAMP. Green sconce. Throwing unearthly shadows against the gold and emerald walls.

The lamp falls forward. Donnie's hand reaches out and --

GRABS IT. Sets it right. WE SWING -- from the quick motion. Getting a good look at the rest of the room.

Rustic FIREPLACE on the far wall. Mantel lined with **MASON JARS**. All full of bugs. Moths. Fireflies. Beetles.

They're everywhere. The boys speak quietly. Cautious.

DONNIE
Just wait there.

SAMUEL
What are you doing?

Donnie leaves Sam near the entrance.

WE KEEP MOVING.

Past Pah's couch. Small square TV on a retrofitted credenza.
And through a wide opening INTO --

INT. JOINT KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

It's tiny. Nearly the size of a closet. Not enough room,
especially with the mountain of discarded BEER BOTTLES. WE
APPROACH the counter. Where Donnie reaches up and -- SHLINK!

The sound of metal sliding against wood.

Hare tries to make out what he's got. Pushes her face up to
the hole. Sees a bright silver GLINT. Pulled out of view.

And we move BACK INTO --

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Our world still only what HARE can see THROUGH THE HOLE.

SAMUEL
Don...

Sam limps over to Pah's couch. Closer to the DINING AREA.

Where Donnie throws us onto a rustic WOODEN TABLE.

BUTCHER'S CLEAVER gripped tightly in his hand.

EXIT HARE'S POV --

Hare jumps. Pushing the bag around. Donnie pulls us back.

Holds the bag down. Hare runs up against the side of the bag,
but she's stuck. Donnie's fist firmly gluing it to the table.

Donnie raises the cleaver and --

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
Just help me take this out.

-- he freezes. Cleaver suspended in mid-air, OVER HARE. Sam
REFLECTED in the edge of the blade. Injured. Pained.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
Please. It fucken' hurts, real bad.

Donnie looks back.

DONNIE
Shit. You're bleeding all over the place. Stay off the couch.

SAMUEL
Okay -- where would you like me to bleed, then?

Donnie sets the cleaver down. Walks over and helps Sam move away from the couch. He sits him down on the FLOOR, leans him up against the WALL.

DONNIE
Be right back.

SAMUEL
There's a kit under the sink.

DONNIE
I know.

Donnie runs off. Sam reels from the pain. Throws his head back against the wall. Looks down at the arrow in him.

Hare watches him for a moment. Then attacks the HOLE in the bag. Clawing and biting. As it tears wider and wider.

Sam looks up. Sees her chewing through the bag. She freezes.

Their eyes meet through the blooming hole. Hope in Sam's. Power in hers. Then she continues to chew. Almost there...

SOUNDS OF RUMMAGING. Then Donnie yells from the other room.

DONNIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Sam.

SAMUEL
Next to the soaps.

DONNIE (O.S.)
Are you sure?

SAMUEL
I'm SURE.

DONNIE (O.S.)
I don't see it. Shit.

More rummaging. Bottles and such being thrown around. Door SLAMS! And Donnie STOMPS back into the room. Into view.

With CHEAP GAUZE and RUBBING ALCOHOL.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
It was above the pipes, you idiot.

SAMUEL
Sorry -- AGH!

Sam throws his head back in pain.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
FU-UCK.

DONNIE
Shhh. Shut up. Radio's on
upstairs... Don't wake him.

Sam nods. He'll try. They can hear the faint MURMURS of the RADIO above them. Dread fills both of their faces...

Donnie grabs the ARROW with both hands.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Okay?

SAMUEL
Okay... Just. Just count down.

Sam looks away. Shuts his eyes. Steeling himself.

DONNIE
Three --

And -- SNAP! Donnie breaks the arrow in half. Sam tries to hold it in, but he SCREAMS.

Donnie throws his bloody hand over Sam's mouth.

AS WE PAN UP. Through the ceiling...

INT. PAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

... and the floor. UP TO PAH -- lying unconscious in his bed, his clammy pale arm hanging off the side.

A RADIO on his night stand plays ambient shows on low volume. He tosses and turns. But doesn't wake up. Grinds his teeth.

Scary and angry. A monster even in his sleep.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Donnie waits until Sam's still. Removes his hand. He leans Sam forward, then pulls the other half of the arrow out.

Sam keeps quiet this time. Donnie helps Sam get his shirt off. Then pours the RUBBING ALCOHOL onto his wounds.

IN THE BAG

Hare's almost through the hole.

She runs against the side of the bag. Rolling it so the hole faces away from the boys. Squeezes her head through --

Gets to about her shoulders. But it's too tight.

Pulls herself back in.

ON THE FLOOR

Donnie wraps Sam's shoulder with the grungy gauze.

SAMUEL

That's old.

DONNIE

It's all we have.

Finishes the bind. Donnie starts to get up. Sam stops him.

SAMUEL

It's too tight.

DONNIE

It's supposed to be tight.

SAMUEL

Not this tight.

DONNIE

Are you kidding?

SAMUEL

Were you when you shot me?

Donnie sighs. Leans forward to undo the binds. Revealing -- the BAG on the table in the background. Squirming forward.

Hare still working away. Sam watches. Deliberate. Then JUMPS in excruciating pain.

IN THE BAG

Hare RIPS the final few inches of the hole open. More light pouring in. She stops. Stares at the way out...

ON THE FLOOR

Donnie finishes Sam's new bandage.

DONNIE

There.

He stands. Wipes blood and alcohol on his pants. Turns to head back to the table. Leaving a worried Sam on the floor.

Nearly knocking over the same GREEN LAMP. He rights it.

Donnie grabs the CLEAVER. Realizes the BAG is flat. He picks it up and SHAKES IT.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

What...

And as he looks down from the empty bag in his hands --

Hare jumps off the DINING CHAIR.

Donnie throws the bag. Barrels at the chair, shoving it out of the way. He swings the cleaver, slicing air.

Missing Hare as she dashes under the table.

Donnie scrambles after. Slides under the table. Pushing past more chairs. Sam tries to get up, but can't.

SAMUEL

Wait!

They run into --

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Close quarters chaos. Donnie chases, as Hare weaves across the floor. Behind the TRASH CAN. Donnie knocks it over.

And corners her -- at the SIDE DOOR.

She slides up to the glass inset of the door.

Donnie's REFLECTION running at HER. Hare whips her head around. Just as Donnie raises the cleaver. Brings it down.

She jumps. Banking off the cupboard. Over Donnie's forearm. As he plants the CLEAVER into the linoleum floor...

THUNK! It sticks.

Donnie tries to pivot and grab her, but she's out of reach. He loses his balance, crashing into the MOUNTAIN OF BOTTLES.

DONNIE
Fuck...

They tumble. A landslide of green and brown. SOME SHATTER. The tidal wave of bottles pours across the floor...

Following Hare as she scurries back OUT TO --

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Hare tears across the wood floor. Into an arena of CARPET...

INT. PAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Pah sits up. Disturbed by the noise. Wipes nightmares from his dry eyes. He looks down at the floor. *The boys.*

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Donnie pulls and pulls and finally frees the cleaver from the floor. He hops over broken glass. And runs --

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sam slides up the wall. Using it for balance. Tries to limp toward her, but he's woozy from the blood loss and pain.

Sees an EMPTY WHISKEY BOTTLE by the couch.

Donnie bursts out of the kitchen. Just as Hare dives under the couch. He slides up to it. Reaching --

UNDER THE COUCH

-- his hands grab at Hare. She moves down the length of the couch. Headed for the edge. Donnie hops over.

SAMUEL
Stop. Stop it!

Sam limps toward Donnie. Slow. Pained. Donnie tries to grab her from the other side of the couch --

But she's quick. Hops back to the other end...

Donnie grunts. Pissed. He drops the cleaver onto the coffee table. And shoves the couch forward. With a SHARP SCREECH --

INT. PAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

-- THAT carries up from below. Pah eyes the **BAT** leaning against the door.

His withering hand reaches over and switches OFF THE RADIO.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The couch knocks Hare into a somersault. Throws the WHISKEY BOTTLE aside, which rolls up to Sam's feet.

As Hare slides out from under the couch. Donnie dives at her.

Hare tries to run but he -- GRABS HER!

Lifts her into the air. And slams her up against the mantel. Both hands around her chest. Under her shoulders.

She lunges forward and BITES HIM! Donnie swallows the pain. As blood seeps from his flesh. Right above his thumb.

SAMUEL

Don't!

Sam keeps limping toward Donnie. Blood dripping onto his foot. All over the floor.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Killing it won't bring her back.

DONNIE

You think I don't know that?

Hare kicks and flails. Sam sees the CLEAVER, sat atop the coffee table. Out of Donnie's reach. Takes another step.

SAMUEL

Then why? Why do you care so much about a stupid animal?

DONNIE

Because... How do you wear that around your neck, all the time? How do you think about her all the time and not...

Donnie squeezes Hare tighter. Sam adjusts his bandana.

SAMUEL

I don't know... I wish I could tell you, but I really don't know.

DONNIE

She left us. She was all we had and she just left us here with him. She used to make everything okay. Kept him away from you...

SAMUEL

That's not fair.

DONNIE

Well what is?

Sam shakes his head. Says nothing. Because, well, *nothing is.*

DONNIE (CONT'D)

I just want it to go away, Sam. That feeling... I don't want to hold onto it anymore.

Donnie looks at Hare. Trapped between his dirty fists.

SAMUEL

You don't have to hold on. But maybe you don't have to let go... Maybe there's an in between.

DONNIE

Maybe.

Sam takes another step toward his brother. And something clicks behind Donnie's eyes. Both of theirs.

SAMUEL

Maybe we should let her go.

Sam takes another cautious step forward. Reaches the couch. Leans on it for stability. Resting.

Donnie's grip loosens. He looks like he's about to agree.

Sam's eyes go wide. He sees something we don't. And then --

The JARS on the mantel right in front of him EXPLODE!

Freeing creatures of all kinds.

WHAM!!! Pah's bat SLAMS into Donnie's face.

Donnie flies back. Tossing Hare. She slides across the coffee table. Knocking everything over. The REMOTE slides off.

Along with THE CLEAVER...

She slams into the floor. Lands on her back.

As the CLEAVER flies off the edge of the coffee table and barrels toward her. *Oh shit...*

THUNK! It IMPALES the floor beside her. Missing by a hair.

Donnie smashes through the coffee table.

As Hare flees from the debris.

Sam reels back in horror. Pah towers over Donnie. Standing in front of the fireplace. Eyes red. Pupils black as space.

Fireflies. Moths. Cicadas. All swarm around him.

A MENAGERIE of beasts flying through the air. Scattering up the walls. Flitting and buzzing. Trying to find a way out.

Pah raises the bat over Donnie and --

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Stop!

-- WHAM! Drives it down right into Donnie's stomach. He rolls onto his side. Spits blood from his busted lip.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

You're gonna' kill him!

Pah raises the bat once more.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

STOP! YOU FUCKING MONSTER!

Pah spins around to Sam. Slowly lowers the bat. Wasted.

He charges Sam. Pulling the bat up. Ready to swing. Sam backs away. Sees the WHISKEY BOTTLE at his feet. Grabs it.

Goes to swing but Pah hits him -- square across the chest. And tackles Sam to the ground. The bottle rolls away.

Hare watches from behind the couch.

Pah shoves the bat under Sam's chin and CHOKES HIM.

PAH

I have been here! I have taken care of you! And this is what I get?

He drives the bat harder into Sam's throat.

PAH (CONT'D)
... this is all I get. Not even a
thank you?

Sam looks over. Sees the bottle.

Tries to grab it, but it's just out of reach.

Hare watches them struggle. Hiding behind the couch.

As Donnie starts to come to.

Tries to gather his thoughts beyond the pain.

He rolls onto his back. Shakes wood from his face.

Sam sees Donnie. Starting to get up. But he's moving too slow. Too out of commission. And he's almost out of air.

Then he sees it -- the **TV**. Just above Pah's head. He grabs onto the bat. Puts one hand behind Pah's shoulder and --

WHAM! Shoves Pah forward. Smashing his head into the TV.

Providing him just enough leverage to reach out and GRAB THE BOTTLE. CRASH!!! Sam smashes it over Pah's head.

Pah falls off Sam. Releasing him from under the bat. Sam crawls back, away from his father.

Donnie stumbles over. Drops down next to Sam. Both winded.

They watch as Pah struggles to his feet. Blood running down the front of his face. From a small indent in his head.

Hare watches Pah stumble toward them. Swinging the bat blindly. Gone mad... Madder. She looks for an escape.

As the boys crawl back toward the wall.

Pah accidentally stumbles into the wobbly GREEN LAMP. Swarmed by MOTHS, hypnotized by the green light. It rocks and FALLS --

Hurtling toward Hare. Plug sparks as it rips from the wall.

Hare runs from the falling LAMP. Looking like it just might crush her. Feet slipping from carpet onto hardwood.

She slides up to the CREDENZA. Out of runway.

And looks up as it soars overhead and -- CRASH!!

The LAMP shatters through the FRONT WINDOW. Ripping open the window screen. The sconce explodes into a million pieces.

Pah is right on top of the boys. Nowhere left for them to go. Donnie moves in front of Sam, to protect him.

Hare scales the CREDENZA. She crawls out onto the wet windowsill. And stares down at the long drop below.

Pah launches toward Donnie, swinging.

Sam pulls Donnie back, as the bat SMASHES into the PICTURE hanging behind them. They run past Pah, for the foyer.

Hare slips out through the WINDOW SCREEN...

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

And tumbles onto the ground outside. She slides into a puddle. Exhausted and barely breathing, but she holds on...

Sam and Donnie throw open the front door.

And hurry out of the house.

Pah follows after them. Barely able to stand.

He grabs at Sam -- ripping the BANDANA right off his neck.

They stumble off the porch. Pah right behind them. Still swinging his bat. Losing energy. He trips. Almost falls.

But keeps dragging his feet through the mud.

As Sam and Donnie back away. Toward the GAS PUMPS.

SAMUEL
Just leave us alone!

Hare opens her eyes. Slowly cranes her head to watch.

PAH
Leave you alone?! I'm all you've
fucking got...

WHAM!! Pah slams the bat into Donnie's chest. Knocking him onto his back, into a huge puddle of mud. Swallows some.

Donnie laughs, through bloody teeth. Pah looks down at him.

PAH (CONT'D)
What's so damn funny?

DONNIE

Never got it before... But she's
the lucky one, isn't she? Mum got
the hell away from you!

PAH

That what you want? You wanna' get
away from me too?

Donnie coughs out blood and mud. Pah kicks him in the side.

PAH (CONT'D)

I never asked for this! To get
stuck with you!

DONNIE

Yeah, well no one did!

Pah swings the bat across Donnie's face. BREAKING HIS NOSE.

PAH

If you want your mum so bad, then
I'll take you her!

He raises the bat. Ready to kill. And --

WHAP!!! A LARGE ROCK clips Pah's head. Painting another line
of blood down his eyebrow... rolling down his cheek.

He turns to Sam, who lowers his arm from throwing.

SAMUEL

Please...

Sam stumbles back. Toward the GAS PUMP. His soggy laces
trailing through the RIVER OF GASOLINE. He crosses it.

And his SHOE catches a branch. THUD!

Sam FALLS onto the ground. Sliding across the grass.

Pah lurks toward him. Rubbing his head.

Sam crawls away through the mud. Pah stumbles and falls to
his knees near the pumps. He struggles to stand up.

Sam looks over at the leaking HANDLE. At the GAS dripping
steadily into the HUGE SHIMMERING PUDDLE, right under Pah...

Then over at Donnie --

On the grass across the way. Who's looking at the same damn
thing. Donnie grabs the LIGHTER from his sock.

Pah towers over Sam. He raises the bat. Then he smells the gas. He looks down at the murky puddle, swirling at his feet.

Donnie flips open the lighter. Moonlight bounces off the metal. He looks one last time at the inscription...

Then, with more clarity than he's had in his life --

CLICK! Donnie flicks the flame on.

And TOSSES THE LIGHTER.

Sam quickly scrambles back...

As the LIGHTER arcs toward the pond of GAS at Pah's feet.

And it **IGNITES!**

Pah goes up in a spectacular burst of flames.

The PUMP explodes, coughing fire out the top. The hose whips.

Hare watches as Pah burns in the middle of the driveway, still swinging the bat at the boys. Even in his last moments.

They watch as their ghosts go up in smoke with him.

Terror and sadness in their eyes... And something else. Hope.

Pah drops to his knees. Reaches out for his boys. A poltergeist made of fire. A nightmare.

And he falls forward. Skin melting from his bones.

Sam's BANDANA turns to ASH AND EMBER.

The heat melts the INSCRIPTION from the lighter.

Her memories erased...

Sam hugs Donnie. Who hugs him back.

Rain starts to pour down on them. And the fire dwindle.

Leaving Pah just a DARK MASS in the mud.

Hare shakes rain and dirt from her body. She stands. Falls at first, but finds it in her. She limps for the trees.

Past the BOYS. They watch with new eyes.

As she enters the darkness of the wilderness.

And we FOLLOW HER...

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Through the clearing. And the tough thicket. Now turned to swamp with the downpour. Up the incline.

For an even longer while.

Rain washing Hare clean. As it rolls down her back. Over her face. Bends over the thick stalks of grass leaning above her.

As she reaches the **DROP-OFF**. Beau no longer down there.

Just red left behind. Hare is slow as she comes upon it. Takes her time. The rain grows stronger, as it --

EXT. PIT - NIGHT

-- falls on the PHOTO. Sam, Donnie, and Mom. All together, ** somewhere in time. The ink starts to run from the rain, now --

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

-- drumming on the SHARP BRANCH. Hare passes beneath it. The tiny sprout dancing with each drop of water. And she --

EXT. RUN-OFF PIPE - NIGHT

-- hops over the run-off pipe. Can hear the water moving beneath her. Shaking the metal under her frayed feet.

Water snakes down the side of the pipe while --

EXT. RIVER - BREAK OF DAWN

-- the river wraps around Hare, crossing in a shallow bank. Clearing the last bits of blood and pain from her body.

She traverses the soggy moss. And the tall grass...

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - BREAK OF DAWN

The BOYS enter. Beat to hell. They stare in wonder at the TONS of BUGS filling the house. Swarming the ceiling lights.

Fireflies illuminate the darkness. All starting to GLOW...

EXT. NEST - DAWN

Hare stands outside her **HOME**. Waiting to go inside.

The entrance now repaired by her kids. She looks to the sky. At the bright drops falling. Sun rolling over the hill above.

And she ENTERS. Now a fighter... a **SURVIVOR**.

INT. NEST - DAWN

Runt and Eldest run up to their mother. Nuzzling and licking. Hare winces, hurt. But still nuzzles them back.

The kids look to the entrance, waiting for MATE to arrive. Their mother nudges them. Gives them a look that says it all.

And their faces fall... realizing he's not coming back.

Hare wraps herself around them. Comforting them.

And she closes her eyes. Finally safe.

Finally home.

EXT. NEST - DAWN

MIST pours over the hill. And WE HOLD. As it rolls over the entrance. Disappearing behind the cloud...

FILLING THE SCREEN.