

GRIZZ

Written by

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EXT. NORTH CASCADES FOREST - DAY

A gray, gloomy, impenetrable sky.

It hangs above a SEA OF TREES.

Spindly pines stretching like a rumpled blanket, veiling a labyrinth of uneven cliffs and valleys.

WE MOVE LOWER

Descending into forest. Drifting through the canopy. Passing needled fronds, storm-beaten trunks dappled by beads of moisture.

Until we settle on

A FOOT

Dangled amidst the swaying branches.

The foot covered by a FLANNEL SOCK. Torn, flapping in the wind. A modest amount of blood has saturated the fabric and drips little by little.

Drip. Drip. Drip.

The WOMAN stirs.

Her frame sags like a hotdog between two branches. Clothing mostly torn. She's early 30s, hiker garb.

A BREEZE ripples the tree, causing branches to groan & undulate.

Woozily the woman blinks awake -

BLURRY POV

THE GROUND, 30 feet below.

WOMAN

AHHH!

The sight of it jolts her to consciousness.

She flails, grasping wildly for the branch. Motion sending her lower half SLIPPING OFF -

Wraps arms around the forward branch. Legs & torso dangling, weighing her down.

Fingers starting to slip...

With a grunt she HOISTS herself onto the branch. It sways beneath her weight, but holds.

She breathes deep, recovering.

BELOW

The tree juts from the bottom of a U-SHAPED CANYON.

A MERCEDES SPRINTER VAN is smashed on some rocks near the opposite canyon wall.

RUGGED CLIFFS rise above both van & tree, creating a fortress. Or a cage.

As the woman's mind processes:

Van.

Canyon.

Cliff.

Gaze panning up to

THE CLIFF'S EDGE

*Flash to:*

*The Sprinter Van careening off the cliff. The Woman ejected thru the windshield -*

THE WOMAN

Attention shifting to BRANCHES that entangle her. Preventing her from certain death, improbably.

But for some reason

SHE LAUGHS.

A bleak, ironic thing.

Eventually the laughter fades. Abandoning her to the creaking, gloomy forest.

Head rested wearily on the branch. A long beat. Might just stay here forever.

Then her eyes reopen.

Canyon floor, rock & fern...

AND HER MISSING BOOT

The woman scowls. Something about it angers her. Her frustration given focus.

She forces herself UP --

EXT. PINE TREE - MOMENTS LATER

FINGERS dig into grooved bark.

The woman lowers herself off the branch. Still weak. BARE FOOT descending...

THE BARK RIPS

She tumbles onto the next branch, bounces off.

Almost falls but - wraps around it like a tree monkey. Lemurs a moment. Then carefully lowers again.

Vision swims. Stops, holds her head.

She refocuses. Peering down. Ground closer now. Reaches her foot toward the next branch.

Applies her weight onto it...

The branch SNAPS!

SHE FALLS --

EXT. BOX CANYON - FOREST - DAY

Crashes into a CROP OF FERNS at base of tree.

Groans, taking a moment to recover. Shakes it off and crawls to her boot.

Puts it on. Still out of sorts.

THE CANYON FLOOR, still a mysterious place. Dotted with boulders and ferns.

On the opposite side is

HER VAN.

Shakily, unsteadily, The Woman staggers toward it -

INT. SPRINTER VAN - CAB - DAY

The Woman enters the cab and sits heavily in the driver's seat. Ignoring the utter mess resulting from the crash.

On a dashboard dock, HER PHONE. Toggles it.

There is one bar of service.

Surprised, she dials.

Ringing...

911 OPERATOR  
911, what's your emergency?

A beat.

911 OPERATOR (CONT'D)  
Hello?

WOMAN  
(weirdly calm)  
This is a Code 901. In North  
Cascades Park...

The CALL DROPS. Service now at zero.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
Huh.

Finds herself staring out THE WOMAN-SIZED HOLE in the windshield.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
You really did it this time, Care  
Bear.

CARI (as the woman will henceforth be known) lets out a weary sigh.

Ducks out of cab, climbing into

MAIN CABIN

We see it for the first time.

A narrow SITTING AREA, SHOWER VESTIBULE, raised BEDFRAME in the back. A LATTICE covered in hooks for storage.

It's not Insta-worthy, van-life posh. But a living space, perfectly functional refuge... which is currently a DISASTER ZONE.

Cari wades knee deep through **FALLEN BELONGINGS**:  
A yoga mat.  
Empty bottle of bourbon.  
A cheesy book, '*The Case For Hope*'  
Makes her way to the sink. Greedily sucks water. Rinses off scratches & scrapes.  
Discovering **BLOOD** on her ear.

Cari raises a finger, sweeps it across her eyeline. Then holds it steady & swivels her head. A practiced, professional movement.

From her neck

A CADUCEUS NECKLACE hangs. Winged staff of Hermes entwined by two serpents.

As Cari finishes the test. Considers her wounds. Nothing major or life threatening.

Time to get on with it.

A beat as she lingers -

EXT. SPRINTER VAN - DAY

Cari exits onto CANYON FLOOR.

A boxed-in space beneath high canyon walls. About 20 yards behind the van, the canyon terminates.

This direction is called UP CANYON.

Gazing

THE CLIFF WALLS.

From below, the drop looks massive.

She investigates the rock. Runs her hand along the smooth, unblemished granite... *climbing is not an option*.

Steps back from cliff. Phone, still no service. Turns, reorienting DOWN CANYON.

IN THE DISTANCE

The canyon meanders, path disappearing.

The only way out.

Cari considers, then -

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - DAY

A pile of STICKS clatters unceremoniously.

Cari stands over the pile. A RED GAS CANISTER in hand. Liberally applies.

Sets the canister a safe distance away and flicks her lighter... WHOOSH.

Watching SMOKE rise out the canyon.

CARI

Okay, come and get me.

Stated more like an admission of fact.

As the THE PLUME wreathes upward. Distorting as it hits wind. Mixing with clouds hanging low.

CU

White woodsmoke against the gray cloud.

Cari frowns. It's barely visible.

Gets an idea, tromps back to the van.

A SPARE TIRE hangs from the undercarriage. Held by a big screw. She struggles to twist it.

CARI (CONT'D)

C'mon...

It's bent from the crash, won't turn. Cari heads to van. Returns with a SMALL, SERRATED KNIFE.

She saws and saws. It takes as long as you'd expect. Eventually, there's a SOLID GROOVE in the screw.

Shimmies under the chassis. Lines up her boot - KICKS HARD AT THE SCREW. But it holds. She kicks again.

CARI (CONT'D)

Fuck you.

The screw, obstinate. So she kicks again.

And again.

Something breaking in her.

A deep WELL OF ANGER spilling out -

CARI (CONT'D)  
FUCK YOU FUCK YOU FUCK Y--

Screw suddenly SNAPS. Tire falls on her leg.

Cari extricates herself, rolls it to the fire. The tire POPS, sizzling.

BLACK, THICK, ACRID SMOKE

An ebony plume, foil to the clouds. *Far more visible than before.*

Cari watches, face a mask.

Hard to tell if she's happy.

EXT. SPRINTER VAN - HOURS LATER

Shadows have lengthened. Cari leans against the van.

It's clear NO ONE HAS COME.

A POP from the fire brings her back. She reluctantly gets up to search for more wood.

EXT. CLIFF WALLS - SAME

Cari ambles, granite looming like a prison wall. In a small overhang, she discovers

A SERIES OF ETCHINGS

Scraped into the rock. Tribal, pictorial.

Simple images of every day life. Reminders of a not-so-distant past. For a moment, Cari's enrapt.

She lands on ONE FIGURE, sitting alone. Its face crinkled in FROWN. The similarity not lost on her.

It's sort of humorous.

EXT. SPRINTER VAN - EVEN LATER

DARKNESS. Can't even see the smoke, now.

The fire embers. Gas can, still plenty full. Best saved for tomorrow, though.

Her boots stomp out COALS -

INT. SPRINTER VAN - CAB - NIGHT

Cari works on the windshield hole, covering with a thick layer of DUCT-TAPE.

Halogen lantern projects strange light. Breath mists, it's gonna be chilly either way.

MAIN CABIN

Hangs duct-tape & lantern from the lattice.

Opens mashed-up granola bar. Picks crumbs off the mattress. Finishing 'dinner.'

Idles. Fingers twiddling her necklace.

Eyes sweeping her belongings, now gathered on the counter. Book. Yoga mat. Empty bottle.

Gaze landing on

THE KNIFE

Cari gets up & snatches it. Returns to 'bed.'

Considering the blade.

Doesn't hold the metal up to the light. Doesn't trace its jagged edge along her wrist.

Just looks at it.

...

After a beat, Cari sets down the knife & flicks off the light.

EXT. CANYON - NIGHT

Silhouettes in the gloom. The van amidst boulders. Could easily be one of them.

INT. SPRINTER VAN - MAIN CABIN - NEXT MORNING

Gray light filters thru small porthole windows.

Cari extricates from sleeping bag, groaning.

Literally every part of her is sore.

She sits, stretches. Agony she didn't know existed. Elbows, thighs, back. Muscles fucked by the crash.

Creakily pours some water. Opens a pack of oatmeal and dumps it straight into the mug.

CARI

Yum.

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - MORNING

Her delicious breakfast rests on a rock beside the signal fire. Cari sits, palms extended. Warming.

Tosses the oatmeal wrapper on the fire. Checks the gasoline, NOW LESS THAN HALF. Eyes her meager stick pile.

Powers on the phone. Still no service.

Above, a HAWK wings to freedom.

A MONTAGE - OF CARI IN THE CANYON

-Gathering sticks, feeding the signal fire.

-Sitting on the running board, eating another destroyed granola bar.

-Wandering the canyon. Holding her phone aloft. Searching for SERVICE.

-Checking her cabinets, inventorying food.

-Piling items from the van that she can BURN.

-Digging under the bed platform where the water & electric systems hide. Removes THE FRESH WATER TANK -

END MONTAGE

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - DAY

Cari's arranged her provisions on a boulder.

5 or 6 granola bars. Oatmeal. Packet of beef jerky. Gas can still reasonably full, next to the pile of sticks and odds & ends from the van.

Most troubling, however:

THE WATER TANK

It's practically empty.

Cari considers. Drums fingers. Signal fire, still smoking. But it hasn't done shit.

Toggles phone. As always, no service.

Thinks, then presses the GOOGLE MAPS App. An EMPTY GRID appears. Cari, an arrow at the center.

And then, as sometimes happens... despite the fact she has no service...

THE GPS KICKS ON.

The gray grid is slowly replaced by a swath of GREEN. Indicating forest -

CARI

Okay...

She can see the ROAD snaking atop the canyon. The thin line bends away.

Moves the map. It reverts to gray, featureless grid. Then loads again... Cari zooms out.

A NEW ROAD appears in the opposite quadrant.

This line is bigger, thicker. Not some measly forest road. A STATE HIGHWAY.

She checks the map scale. About 8 miles.

CARI (CONT'D)

OKAY.

Said with a little more energy than before.

But not ready to act yet.

Cari's gaze returns to the SMASHED VAN. The hole in the windshield. Somehow it pulls at her, keeping her here...

She pushes it aside.

CARI (CONT'D)

Okay.

EXT. SPRINTER VAN - CANYON FLOOR - DAY

Cari emerging. Fresh jeans. Light hiker coat.

Filling a STRING BAG with gear. Granola bars. Water bottle. Pockets phone, her lodestar.

Considers van. What the hell. She LOCKS IT.

EXT. CANYON - DAY

Making her way down the canyon. Weaving between BOULDERS dotting the ravine floor.

Up ahead, THE CANYON TURNS

There's a SLASH OF DARK where cliff meets ground.

A NARROW CAVE

Entrance only 10 inches high. Cari continues on. The canyon widens, leveling.

The OPENING visible ahead -

She stumbles, nearly falls into a DITCH. Natural cross-drainage across the canyon floor.

Cari catches herself, skirts it. Reaching CANYON'S MOUTH.

It opens to DENSE FOREST.

The cliff walls extending left and right. Some part of a larger valley structure.

Cari checks phone. The ARROW points the road. Straight into the forest. She takes a breath.

HER FEET

Squish down, entering THE SEA OF TREES -

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Cari literally wades through wet, primeval woods.

Unlike the rain-shadowed canyon, the forest floor is dense, old growth fecundity. A cold Northern jungle.

Boots sink six inches into the 'ground,' layers of decomposed wood & pine needles.

Skirting fallen logs, layered in moss. 200 year old giants soaring into clouds -

She looks back. Canyon barely visible. Cari ties a RED BANDANNA to a low-hanging branch.

MOVING DEEPER

Into forest. Scrambling, hacking, climbing uneven terrain. Going to be a hard 8 miles.

THE GRAY SKY

Seems to descend now. Becoming a haze. Trees skulking, wraithlike.

Checks phone. Reorients.

Passing through a thicket of GIANT CHAIN FERNS. For a moment, she could be in the Jurassic period...

Emerges back into forest. Skirts another big log.

Phone again. Woods a featureless ocean.

The GRAY DIAL starts to spin.

CARI  
Come on...

A beat. Then -

THE PHONE SHUTS DOWN.

Cari frozen, disbelief.

CARI (CONT'D)  
No.

Thumbs power, begging it to reload.

AS THE FOG GROWS DEEPER.

Rolling in, ENVELOPING HER. The forest suddenly gone. Can't see five feet ahead.

Even her BOOTS, a vague shape.

Cari stares into the mist. No idea which way she was heading. Which way she came.

She is terribly lost.

Surrounded by the vast stillness. Cari, A TINY SPECK. As if she's the only thing in the world.

The mist a powerful, impenetrable, invincible thing. Cari stranded in the emptiness.

So alone. So powerless.

She sinks to the unseen ground.

Hand cradling brow, blocking out the void. It's all too much. She closes her eyes.

Stays like that a moment.

But then her ears prick at

THE SOUND OF WATER

Gurgling faintly. Cari, refocusing.

*The world is offering her a chance.*

SHE STUMBLES THRU FOG

Blind, no landmarks to guide. Echo-y forest playing tricks. That TRICKLE the only thing she's got.

Stumbles precariously. Stops, reorients. For all she knows, about to step off a cliff.

Instead, her boots SPLASH WATER --

EXT. SMALL MEADOW - SAME

Cari stands beside a babbling brook.

Visibility better here. She can see about 20 yards, to a COLUMN OF TREES on the meadow's perimeter.

Thick crab grass crunches beneath. The little stream passes, bubbling toward the trees.

She breathes. Happy to be there. Happy to be anywhere.

Checks phone again. It's still off. Returns it to the bag. Attention shifting to THE FLOW OF THE STREAM.

Realizing

*If all else fails, she can follow the brook. It will lead uphill. Back to the cliff.*

She considers this course of action. Still recovering her senses.

Trees swaying in a light breeze, open canopy gleaming brightness on the fog. Ethereal, dreamlike.

An oasis, respite from the forest gloom. But at the same time, something feels OFF.

She pivots to look upstream as -

SQOOOSH

Steps in something THICK.

Cari looks down.

CU BOOT

Half-submerged in what can only be described as a big pile of SHIT.

Cari's a bit confused. Processing.

Sweeps her murky range of sight, seeing -

FUR

Rubbed along stream's edge. Patchy in the dirt.

And suddenly, Cari is on HIGH ALERT.

Scanning the meadow. Row of tree-sentinels. Searching any sign of movement -

Nothing. Calm and peaceful.

But Cari deeply motivated to leave this place.

She orients upstream. Takes a last look at the meadow - downstream, A LARGE BOULDER.

Following the brook. Heading against the flow. Reaching the treeline -

Behind her, the boulder silently UNFURLS ITSELF.

Cari sensing movement. As the giant brown blob silently floats toward her.

Resolving in the mist. Giant claws click rock.

This is a

Feral

Emaciated

Bloodthirsty

ADULT MALE GRIZZLY BEAR

Nothing like a Nat Geo episode. Not a rotund and curious thing. Its filthy fur sags from malnourishment. Scrapes and scars cover its frame.

An apex predator whose world has been stolen. One of the few surviving in the Lower 48.

Stalking Cari. Head low. Ears pinned.

The DEEPEST GROWL you've ever heard. Bass note on a cello. Resonating from its cavernous frame.

And Cari stares. Frozen.

Quaking horror as she fights every instinct.

THE GRIZZ nearing closer. Massive shoulder bones rippling as it stalks...

CARI DOES THE BRAVEST THING IMAGINABLE

She falls to the ground. Playing dead.

Exactly what you should do.

The Grizz circles her. Prods.

Hot breath rippling crab grass. Bloody patch of MANGE rubbing grotesquely against her cheek.

But Cari barely notices. She is frozen saucer-eyed at the sight of

JAWS

Filled with decaying, brown-spotted SPIKES.

The Grizz stalks around her. Greasy torso passing slow like an oil tanker.

And then it's GONE.

On Cari, petrified. No way she's gonna move. Not a damn chance. A looooonngg beat.

Presence seems to lift.

For a moment it feels safe.

Then - almost quicker than we can see -

THE GRIZZ NOSES HER ON HER SIDE, WRAPS JAWS AROUND CARI'S MIDSECTION AND

SINKS A FOUR INCH TOOTH RIGHT BETWEEN HER SHOULDER BLADES

CARI FUCKING SCREAMS

And all hell breaks loose

The bear chomps down, bellowing, LIFTING HER IN THE AIR. Cari suspended, thrashing, SHRIEKING -

It SHAKES HER in its jaws. Rattling her spine - Cari's whipped around violently.

No time to process. Just die. Pretty sure that's what's gonna happen when

Grizz suddenly LETS GO. Flinging her into air.

She flies into the

FOREST

T-bones a pine, bark shattering as she tumbles thru dense coil of BLACKBERRY BUSHES.

Razor thorns puncture her clothes, slice skin - coming to rest on FOREST FLOOR.

Should be in agony. But ADRENALINE's pulsing, staccato breaths -- head immediately rising from the dirt as

GRIZZ'S FACE CRASHES THRU THE VINES

Dead black eyes, lips curled back. It tries to burrow thru but

THE SHARP BRAMBLES IMPALE ITS FUR. RESILIENT VINES HOLDING IT BACK -

Allowing Cari to army crawl away. THE GRIZZ, pushing forward, ROOTS tearing out as it comes -

But she's smaller, moving under vines with ease.

ON CARI

Emerging from blackberry bush. Without second thought SHE TAKES OFF, legs pumping -

EXT. FOREST - SAME

Sprinting thru forest, running FULL TILT despite nil visibility.

Foot catching invisible log, SPRAWLING. Face landing inches from a jutting dagger rock -

Back to feet. Somewhere not far off, THE MURDER ROAR --

Cari dashes on. Nearby, POUNDING FOOTSTEPS.

THE CAMERA PANS

Landing on Grizz loping thru the mist.

Seen now from odd angles. Filthy, mite-infested fur. Drips of blood off its jaw. Claws obsidian blades.

Searching Cari in the dense fog.

Stops. Sniffing. Sensing.

CARI'S FORM SUDDENLY DASHING OUT OF THE MYST.  
GRIZZ SWIPING A MASSIVE PAW -

Talons slicing her STRING BAG, still attached as she RUNS.

THE GRIZZ

A single piston BOUND and it's on her.

Claws raised for the kill. Expecting her beneath it but... nothing but fog. SHE'S GONE.

The bear snuffles, peeved. Darts off.

EXT. FOREST - MEANWHILE

CARI'S FORM emerging from dense fog.

Glances back, starting to SLOW. Ragged, terrified, overcome. Even adrenaline runs out.

The HOLE in her back oozing. Skin torn & flapped. A bottleneck stab.

Muscles faltering. She's WEAVING now. Gait loosey goosey as she

COLLAPSES

Supine in the dirt. SHOCK takes over.

Pupils wide, sweat pouring. Body starts to SHAKE.

She pushes a CLENCHED FIST into ground. Trying to get up. Instead just flops onto her back.

Silent, hoping the thing has gone... A GROWL disabuses her of that notion.

Paw-steps crunch. Unseen. But close. Cari gazing straight up. Right above her -

#### THE RED BANDANNA

Cari locked on it. Her only chance.

As a VAGUE SHAPE moves in the haze. Shark in the drift. Slasher in the dark.

Waits for it to pass and then DRAGS HERSELF UP, stagger-sprinting onward -

#### INT. CANYON - DAY

Skirts boulders. Hops ditch. Passes cave.

Wincing, moaning, spattering blood ooze as she goes. Trembling fear & pain as she beelines for

#### THE VAN

Relief as she REACHES IT. Pulls handle... CLACK. Oh yeah. It's locked.

Reaching behind for STRING BAG. Screams as THE HOLE IN HER BACK contorts.

BLOODY HANDS searching bag - fingers piercing ribbons shredded by the bear's claws -

#### THE KEYS ARE GONE

They must have fallen out.

Cari freaking. Not sure what to do. Runs to check the passenger door. It's locked too.

Comes back around the van. Considering windshield. As she does, THE GRIZZ ENTERS THE CANYON.

Halts, appraising her. Still a good ways off. Cari, FROZEN. For a beat they just ogle each other.

Glances back at the tree when - her vision PANS.

In the ferns - just 20 feet away

THE KEYS

So fucking close.

Rack focus on Grizz, so very distant.

Cari fixed on keys. Knees slightly bending. Ball of foot digging into ground.

THE GRIZZ

Seeming to understand this proposition.

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

THEY BOTH EXPLODE FORWARD.

CARI, sprinting, pain forgotten. THE GRIZZ, galloping. Covering the distance two body lengths at a time -

Cari reaches keys, grabs & turns. Van quickly growing close. Almost there...

Shouldn't look back. Most definitely not.

BUT SHE DOES

Perceiving in full horror the COARSE-HAIRED DEMON lasering at her as though fired from a gun.

Reaches the van, gasping, out of breath. Jams key in door. Pulling open as

BEHIND HER

The Grizz at full gallop. PASSING US FAST, shaking our fixed perspective. A monster freight train -

Thunderclap stride taking it UP a large boulder. It PUSHES OFF, sinew tensing -

As Cari dives into van. Falls over seat. Has to reach back out TO PULL THE DOOR CLOSED -

GRIZZ LUNGING DOWN. As Cari's arm extends. GRABS HANDLE -

THE DOOR SLAMS SHUT

Revealing

GAPING JAWS crashing right into frame -

SMASH TO BLACK.

INT. DRAB OFFICE - TWO WEEKS EARLIER

A RADIO DISPATCH CONSOLE. Dark at the moment.

Cari slumped nearby.

She wears a nondescript uniform, surrounded by files & cheap furniture. An interior window opens to a HOSPITAL WARD -

SUPER (O.S.)  
...I've tried to cover, but at a  
certain point my hands are tied.  
There's liability involved...

Cari's SUPERVISOR (50s). Years of stress line face. Looks almost as tired as Cari.

SUPER (CONT'D)  
You assaulted a patient.

CARI  
Restrained.

SUPER  
You've been drinking on the job.

No argument there.

SUPER (CONT'D)  
You're erratic. Caustic.  
Disengaged. Sometimes you scare  
people. Other times they're scared  
for you.

Cari fiddling. Scratching a stain on her sleeve.

Little flecks of red.

SUPER (CONT'D)  
It's gotten bad, Cari.

Super waiting for some reaction.

CARI  
... Can I go?

SUPER  
Can you go? What do you think this  
conversation is?

CARI  
You haven't told me yet.

SUPER  
I have to suspend you. Two weeks.  
It's protocol.

Super not looking happy about it. Shaking head. But there's concern there, too.

CARI  
Yeah. Okay.

SUPER  
It's not a thing you get to agree or disagree with.

CARI  
When do I start?

SUPER  
Now. We're counting this. So I only have to deal with that idiot sub for 13 days.

Handing a document. Cari filling out. Super, watching.

SUPER (CONT'D)  
I need you to get your head on straight.

Cari not responding. A beat. Super sighs.

SUPER (CONT'D)  
Maybe it's a blessing in disguise.

Cari handing back paperwork. Gets up to leave. Super, empathetic.

SUPER (CONT'D)  
Hey. Care Bear.

CARI  
What?

SUPER  
*Take a vacation.*

BACK TO:

INT. SPRINTER VAN - CAB - PRESENT

Just moments have passed.

WE ARE RIGHT BACK UP WITH CARI

Who GURGLES in agony. Hands flopping behind her. Fingers desperately clawing at

THE HOLE IN HER BACK

As Cari traces it, perturbed look on her face. Focusing her breath.

In out.

In out.

Innn... A constricted falsetto-ing WHEEZE.

She opens a drawer, retrieving SARAN WRAP. Angles her back to the mirror & slaps saran over the wound.

OVER THE WOUND

Saran wrap SUCTIONS AS SHE BREATHES.

Fuck fuck fuck.

Her lung is punctured

Struggles to control breaths. Fear on face. Reaching DUCT TAPE off the lattice.

Tears more saran. Sticks it DEEP into the hole.

CARI  
Owwwffffuuuccckkkkk

Quickly tapes over it. Wrapping tight, until she has a duct tape PAULDRON over her shoulder and chest.

Steadies. Tightens core, controls breaths. Can't inhale deep. But wheeze is gone.

RELIEF. Returning to senses...

Noticing a STRANGE STILLNESS in the canyon.

OUTSIDE

The Grizz nowhere in sight.

Cari limps to the cab, peers out the windshield.

*Is it gone?*

EERIE CALM pervades what was moments ago a scene of desperation.

Scanning between boulders. Ferns lilt in breeze. The TREE rustles, undisturbed.

DOWN CANYON

The FOG has crept in, hanging like a forcefield near the canyon turn. The cave invisible, obscured...

MOVEMENT IN THE MIST

A MULEY (black-tailed deer) emerges.

Cari shocked as it delicately picks its way thru the canyon.

Moving with intent. In its sights, A GRANOLA BAR WRAPPER pinned beneath the red gas can.

Passing van, heading with confidence toward wrapper -

CARI (CONT'D)  
HEY!

She bangs on the wall of the van.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Get out of here! Go!

Deer stops, looks curiously. She bangs again.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Run stupid!

The deer just stares. A beat.

Then continues on, deciding she's either harmless or trapped in there.

Reaching its quarry. Tongue extending in long delicate slurp. Ahhhhh. Licking every sugary bit.

Such elemental pleasure...

THE DEER ABRUPTLY FREEZES

Sensing something.

Cari scans canyon, searching - nothing.

THE DEER, getting spooked. Abandons wrapper, hop-trotting back up canyon when

THE GRIZZ

EMERGES FROM BEHIND A BOULDER.

WINDMILL SWIPE - Shiv-sharp talons EVISERATE the deer's midsection with a single chop.

The deer TUMBLERS, ribbon tear on its side. Guts spill out. Bleating horror whine.

Bear holds it down, CHOMPING. A BIG CHUNK torn from its neck. Deer's head flopping, STILL ALIVE...

Cari watches in horror.

But something else, too.

A RESOLVE washing over. There's meaning here.

The deer a torture victim, dismembered, disemboweled. Cari tempered by this suffering.

SHE VOWS:

CARI (CONT'D)  
Not like that.

Ducks back into

MAIN CABIN

As deer's tormented bleats echo & fade.

Cari spying SERRATED KNIFE. Grabs it. Searching other weapons. The van not exactly an armory.

Refocuses, extricating PHONE from pocket.

Surface sticky with blood. Plugs into wall outlet, fiddling with the wire...

Screen stays BLACK.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Apple you used to be good.

MOVES ON

Bigger fish to fry. Goes to window, checking on bear. Only makes it halfway there when

THE VAN SHAKES

Grizz pushing against it. Chassis shudders on shocks.

FILTHY FUR filling porthole windows. Van quavering again as Grizz JOSTLES IT.

Cari quiet, gripping knife.

Grimacing at each earthquake jolt. As

THE FLOOR TILTS

The Grizz throwing its full weight against the van. Linebacker's push -

POOM!

The van CRASHES DOWN, chassis settling HARD back on suspension. Cari's knocked off feet -

RANDOM SHIT falling - THUNK! Empty bourbon bottle rolls off counter, clocks her right in the noggin.

Rubs head, scowls. As Grizz's BIG FRAME circles van. Portholes flicker as it passes.

Continuing to prod & shake. Cari getting idea.

Heads back into

CAB

Sits behind wheel. Checking mirror. Waiting until Grizz is visible thru the rear doors.

Sticks the keys in the ignition, turns -

Click click click.

Tries again, hoping. Electric systems flicker, some juice in there. But the motor's totally shot.

No bother. Cari still intent on Grizz. Waiting for the perfect moment -

OUTSIDE

THE GRIZZ, behind and slightly under the big boxy van. The bear might be big but the Sprinter's bigger.

And heavier.

As Cari waits. Hand dangling over

THE SHIFTER

The little 'R' somehow drawing our attention.

## OUTSIDE

Grizz, upright on two back legs. Clawing rear door.

Settling back on all fours, in a SLIGHT DEPRESSION behind the van. The van looming over it -

CARI, sensing time is right. SHE JAMS THE SHIFTER. Transmission suddenly popping.

## THE VAN LURCHING BACKWARD

About to crush over the bear when...

WHEELS LOCK, caught fast by a SMALL ROCK.

The little granite wedge holding firm as the van shakes, stutters to a halt.

CARI, mirror-glancing in frustration.

GRIZZ pondering. Meeting her gaze. Terror and pain morphs to ANGER deep inside her.

CARI (CONT'D)

GO AWAY!

Cari pops out of the driver's seat, grabs a COOKPOT off the floor. Bangs it against counter.

CARI (CONT'D)

GO. THE. FUCK. AWAY!

Making a real ruckus. Attempt to scare off. Or maybe it's, I'm still here asshole. You aren't getting me.

And the Grizz, as if in response,

ROOOAAAAARRRRRS BACK

It ambles around the van, close to Cari's position. A TAUNT. A CHALLENGE.

Infuriating Cari, who bangs the pot harder.

Bear winds up a microwave-sized paw -

SHUNK

Cari gaping horror as 6 INCH CLAWS sink thru the wall panel just beside her face.

(yes, a Grizzly actually CAN do this)

(in case you were wondering)

Back to Cari, mind boggling at the CLAWS.

Wriggling, lodged in the metal paneling.

Cari's lips curl. She swings pot, bashing claws. Bear bellows, enraged, claws twitching -

She slams & slams until claws retract, leaving 4 JAGGED HOLES.

CARI, gripping pot. As Grizz shuffles outside. Eyes & ears track unseen movement.

Waiting for the next strike... when all of a sudden - on the counter -

HER CELL PHONE LIGHTS UP

But not only that. NOTIFICATIONS cascade. Missed emails, calendar reminders -

CARI HAS SERVICE

If there is one moment in which she is faster than a Grizzly Bear, it is how deftly & quickly Cari snatches that mother fucking phone...

And dials 911

911 OPERATOR  
911, what's your emergency...

CARI  
Hello! Code 901!

As she says this the van SHAKES.

CARI (CONT'D)  
There's a bear...

911 OPERATOR  
Okay ma'am. Whatever you do, don't leave your vehicle.

Claws shunking thru another section. Cari bashes them.

CARI  
Yeah thanks!

The Grizz roaring. Slams van once more. Cups and kitchen oddities rain down on CARI, trying to focus -

CARI (CONT'D)  
You need to send rangers stat. And  
a meat wagon, I'm hurt bad -

911 OPERATOR  
Copy...  
(breaking up)  
What's... location...

CARI  
Can you hear me?

911 OPERATOR  
I can hear you.

CARI  
I'm on Forest Road... 184. 841?  
Fuck...

Cari drops the pot, TOGLLING PHONE. Swiping over to GOOGLE MAPS. Waiting for it to load...

911 OPERATOR  
Ma'am? What Forest Road? You're  
very faint.

CARI  
I'm checking, hold on.

The grey grid resolving. SLOOOWWWLLLY. Cari tries moving map... van SHAKES again.

But it's a different shake now. THE GRIZZ HAS CLAMBERED ONTO THE ROOF.

Aluminum composite paneling undulating as Grizz shuffles overhead.

It's RIGHT ABOVE HER.

Cari grimacing. But forcing attention back to  
THE MAP

Which FINALLY LOADS. The ROAD, snaking above her.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Got it! Can you hear me?

911 OPERATOR  
(garbled)

CARI  
Forest Road 481! It's 4,8,1...

911 OPERATOR  
Forest Road...

CARI  
I'm in the canyon. I need rangers,  
animal control...

Ceiling buckling, distorting as the Grizz rotates. Cari's attention grabbed by movement -

OUT THE WINDSHIELD

The bear's furry haunches appear along the edge of the windshield.

CARI (CONT'D)  
It's trying to get in.

911 OPERATOR  
Just remain calm. We'll be there as soon as possible.

But Cari barely hears her. Focused on THE WINDSHIELD.

One of the bear's paws sliding down... OTHER PAW appears. Scraping and scrabbling, no purchase on the slick glass.

Cari realizing

It's right above THE HOLE IN THE WINDSHIELD.

911 OPERATOR (CONT'D)  
Which Forest Road did you say again?

Wait. What?

AS THE BEAR'S PAW SINKS THRU THE DUCT TAPE.

CRASHING WEIGHT ONTO BROKEN GLASS. THE WHOLE WINDSHIELD SPIDERWEBS, SHATTERING

GRIZZ FALLS INTO THE VAN

Lower half filling the cab.

Cari recoils, falls. Drops phone -

Grizz writhes, contorting its spine. Wriggling head thru the now-gaping hole.

Front paws smashing down, hitting VAN FLOOR -

CRUNCH! Goodbye shitty phone. May you rest in Hades.

## THE GRIZZ

Orienting itself. Facing Cari. Squeezing its body thru the opening INTO THE MAIN CABIN.

Which is only 14 feet long.

IT'S CLOSE

Meanwhile

CARI ON HER ASS

Crab-scrambling away. Grizz undeterred, shimmying past the bathroom vestibule.

Mud & blood & filth streaking the interior as it slithers like a tubeworm -

CARI'S POV

Beast approaching, FILLING ENTIRE VAN. Head lilting, python-bob, ribbon of saliva dripping...

She bumps into the RAISED BED PLATFORM.

NOWHERE ELSE TO GO

Grizz mere feet away. Blood and deer chunks cake its lips. Sniffs deeply, preparing to enjoy this -

Cari rips out a DRAWER built into the bed frame. Flings at bear. Grizz just bats the drawer aside...

...But Cari's already wriggling away.

Slipping thru the DRAWER-HOLE -

INT. UNDER THE BED - VAN

Entering the space below the bed where the pipes and water tank hide.

Squirms between wires, bending torso around fixtures.

Very quickly REACHING THE END. A small space. Slats hold up the MATTRESS above.

Cari curls, cocooned amidst the mechanisms.

Listening to Grizz outside. Its SNOUT enters the cupboard hole, quickly immured in wiring. Retracts -

Unseen bear scrambles ONTO THE BED.

It can't fit its whole body between mattress and ceiling.  
But we don't know that, now.

WITH CARI

On her back, as bedframe GROANS under pressure. Wide structure dispersing Grizz's weight.

Remembers

SHE STILL HAS THE KNIFE

Eyes mattress. The bulges between slats.

She focuses on one particularly drooping section - there's some part of Grizz on there, anyway -

CARI JABS THE KNIFE INTO IT

Twisting, skewering, digging blade thru thick mattress material until

Grizz THUNDERS, mattress shaking, protuberating -

A BLOODSTAIN BLOOMS THRU THE PADDING

CARI  
Yeah? You like that??

She STABS AGAIN, erupting a second BLOOM -

CARI (CONT'D)  
FUCK OFF!

She jabs & jabs & jabs. As the unseen bear roils. Blood seeping, dripping Crimson on her face -

A SHARP INDENT as fabric tears, exposing

SLOBBERING JAWS

Exploding into the cavern. Cari slashing at it but FANGS nearly snag her arm -

Knife falls out of reach. Cari escaping as far as she can. Crawling away from -

GRIZZ'S WHOLE HEAD

In the space now. A WRECKING BALL, thrashing, chomping - Cari curled, inches out of reach.

*This refuge is no longer safe.*

Cari wriggles out the cabinet-hole, avoiding snapping jaws.  
Back into the

MAIN CABIN

Scrambling past HIND LEGS. Gets up & RUNS.

Grizz, sensing movement.

Extricates from mattress, has to 180 in the small space.  
Cabinets rip off wall as it turns -

Spying CARI leap out the door -

EXT. SPRINTER VAN - CANYON FLOOR - DAY

Dashing to center of canyon. Stumbling, grimacing, clutching her chest. The WHEEZE returned -

Gasps, controls breaths. Head on swivel. Mind on overdrive -

THE CAVE

Visible down canyon. Stygian GASH in fog.

Another refuge, maybe. But it's so far... as GRIZZ emerges from windshield, dispelling the possibility.

Cari backs away. She's painfully exposed.

A BRANCH enters field of vision.

Nearby, THE TREE.

Cari's mind instantly made up.

As the bear pulls itself out... cut to: ARMS ladderling up, pulling us into -

EXT. PINE TREE - DAY

Cari grunting as she climbs, blood oozing from the duct tape pauldron. Continuing UP, UP, UP.

Passing gore caked on the tree. HERS. From not so long ago... continues on, into UPPER REACHES OF THE PINE.

Looks down. Fronds obscure view.

Branches quickly becoming THIN.

The tree itself narrow, barely fifty feet tall. A sad, trapped-in-the-shade, dinky little thing.

ABOVE

THE CLIFF'S EDGE. Not too far. Actually, it's painfully close.

You can almoooosstt make out THE ROAD.

But the tree stops just below it.

Not a jump that's feasible.

Cari finally halting. Waiting.

Then the whole trunk SHUDDERS as though something very large has pushed against it.

She grips truly tiny branches. Less than half-an-inch-thick. Boots digging into crook between twig & tree.

And waits. Looking down.

CARI

Bears don't climb trees bears don't  
climb trees

THE GRIZZ

Appears beneath, CLIMBING. Clawing stolidly upward.

Cari freaks, nowhere to go. Clutching wrist-sized trunk. The Grizz reaching smaller branches...

THE TREE SWAYS

Freezing them both. A beat.

And then

A MASSIVE GROAN as the trunk BENDS.

Distorting under bear's weight. Bowing backwards, both Cari & Grizz holding on for dear life -

TOP HALF OF THE TREE ALMOST HORIZONTAL NOW

Grizz hanging off it, pulling it down.

Cari, in an OPPOSITE PREDICAMENT:

She's PRONE ATOP THE HORIZONTAL TRUNK, like a failed tightrope walker.

As Grizz swipes at her. Loses balance. Recovers, digging claws into bark.

Mere feet beneath. Yet can't engage.

A stalemate. Except -

Grizz stops swiping and SHIMMIES AROUND THE TRUNK. The shift in weight causing the trunk to PITCH THE OTHER WAY -

CARI'S VIOLENTLY FLUNG BACKWARDS.

Holds. But she's UPSIDE DOWN NOW -

DANGLING like from a jungle gym.

The bear in similar position, RIGHT BENEATH HER. Jaws snapping at her feet -

She KICKS OUT AT IT. It's so close. Grizz curls paw around the trunk, preparing to swipe -

Cari swings her legs just as talons swipe, missing by INCHES. But this isn't tenable.

With a pained grunt she hooks her wrists around the trunk and wriggles back on top.

Grizz, still dangled below. The barest hint of a WITHERED LOOK.

It prepares to shimmy again -

But Cari senses this. Idea forming. Gazing down the HORIZONTAL TRUNK.

Shaking, Cari rises. CROUCHES -

Balancing on NARROW TRUNK. Knows this is absolutely insane. But she's gotta do it -

CARI LAUNCHES FORWARD.

Taking 3 quick steps.

LITERALLY TIGHTROPEWALKING THE TRUNK

Steps over bear's paws, two furry knobs. Once she's past Grizz's position, the trunk returns to VERTICAL.

Cari leans back, lets her feet slip.

FALLING THRU BRANCHES

Plummeting, Grizz roaring, slashing futilely as she passes.

She ends up TANGLED IN FRONDS. Trunk swaying and shuddering as the unseen bear scrambles.

Spider-monkeying. JUMPS LAST 10 FEET. 2nd time she's fallen from this frickin tree -

Hits ground. Oof.

RUNS

Cari hoofing down canyon. Behind her, THE GRIZZ reaching solid ground.

It revs up that same loping bound, covering the distance in seconds.

She full out sprints. Getting nearer to

THE CAVE

Its gape growing larger as

CARI MAKES IT. Sliding thru the narrow slit seconds before Grizz arrives.

She pulls herself into the coffin-like cavern. Bear crashes to a halt. Paws grasping BUT IT CAN'T REACH HER.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Haha fucker!

Bear snorts and slashes. BUT CAN'T EXTEND FAR ENOUGH INTO THE CAVE -

Cari watches, taking pleasure in it.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Nice try. But you lost.

As Grizz continues to scrapple. Steps back, tries jamming snout into hole. No dice.

A beat as Cari finally able to UNCLENCH.

CARI (CONT'D)  
(relief)  
You lost.

Reaches behind, checking PAULDRON. It's still locked in place. Cari reassured.

Measured breaths returning.

Something sort of like CALM washing over.

Until she notices

THE GRIZZ'S EYE

Pushed against the cavern slit. Cari stares back. Unsure what to think.

Grizz shifts, face leaving the slit. Narrow view of its shaggy hide shifting around.

Stands on its hind legs... and

SHHOOOOOM

The whole CAVERN SHAKES.

Dirt falling, ENGULFING CARI. She covers her face. Wipes away muck, the cave entrance still visible.

Once more the bear stares. Fixated.

Rearing up again - SMASHING ITS FRONT PAWS against the section of cliff wall above the cave.

And Cari, mouth opening to scream but

Dirt falls, FILLING IT, as

THE CAVE COLLAPSES!

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - TWO WEEKS AGO

Wide open spaces.

The Sprinter Van drives along a ribbon of highway. Beyond, forested hills & mountains.

INT. ROADSIDE DINER - DAY

Cari sits in a booth, sipping coffee. SERVER, a middle-aged woman.

SERVER  
Just the coffee?

Cari nodding. Server laying check.

LATER

Cari waits beside a clouded glass case full of tzotchkies for sale. A quaint family run place.

SERVER (CONT'D)  
That's 3.35... Out of five...

Same Server ringing her up. Cari looks around. Noticing - A TEENAGE GIRL bussing tables.

Something about her. Thin wrists. Sallow skin.

SERVER (CONT'D)  
Here's your change.

Cari snaps out of it.

INT. SPRINTER VAN - FOREST

The van parks in a flat pullout on the infrequently-trafficked dirt road.

Cari hops out, gauging.

Thick pines all around. Air fresh from rain. Not a soul in sight.

Perfect.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

As Cari sets up camp. Puts out a folding chair. Gathering stones for a fire ring.

Unloading things we've seen before:

A yoga mat.

A book, *The Case For Hope*.

Her cell phone. Now turned off.

Using the serrated knife to strip some kindling. Opens a shrink-wrapped package of beautiful, dry, store-bought firewood.

Sprinkles a little gas on it -

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Cari hikes thru dense forest. Emerging on a VISTA TURN.

Vast sea of trees. Mountain faces white & sheer like tooth enamel. Cari takes them in.

EXT. SPRINTER VAN / CAMP SITE - DAY

Cari does yoga on her mat. Tries to balance. After a beat, she topples over.

EXT. SPRINTER VAN / CAMP SITE - DAY

Cari with her book. Reading the foreword. Incredulous.

EXT. SPRINTER VAN / CAMP SITE - NIGHT

Cari sits in a camp chair beside crackling fire. Stoking the flames. Contemplative. Looks up at the SKY.

There's a star peeking thru.

She takes it in.

EXT. FOREST - A NEW DAY

Hiking again. A blistering pace.

SPRINTER VAN / CAMP SITE - DAY

Yoga. Holding the pose. Deliberate breaths.

In outtt. In outtt. Innn...

EXT. SPRINTER VAN / CAMP SITE - DAY

Reengaging the book. Considering.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Emerging onto EVEN HIGHER VISTA. Clouds hang in valleys below.

EXT. SPRINTER VAN / CAMP SITE - DAY

More yoga. Her movements gaining fluidity.

EXT. SPRINTER VAN / CAMP SITE - NIGHT

Cari mouthing as she reads. Engrossed.

INT. SPRINTER VAN - MORNING

SFX of birdsong filtering.

Porthole windows glowing. Cari blinks awake.

The bags beneath her eyes are GONE. Lays there a moment - checks phone.

CARI  
8 hours.

A look of sheer & profound RELIEF.

She gets up, stretches. Listening to the birdsong outside. Tries mimicking it.

A new lightness about her.

BACK TO:

INT. CAVE - PRESENT

A scratching sound fades in.

There's movement in the dark.

We can just makes out a dim outline: CARI IS COMPLETELY ENTOMBED IN DIRT.

Sinew straining but she can BARELY MOVE. Smothered by Earth.

CARI SCREAMS

But all sound absorbed by the dirt.

She attempts to dig, causing MORE DIRT TO TUMBLE. It weighs down, locking her in.

An elemental fear growing. Grunting, gritting, impotent. Mind about to spiral.

Just visible in the gloom is

HER HAND.

Cari focuses on it. Delicately moving. Pushing dirt from face, packing it to the side.

Clearing a small space.

Breathing into it. Gently twisting - shrugging a shoulder, extracting HER OTHER ARM.

Dirt collapses... but she uses both arms to windshield wiper it away.

Body starting to come loose. Dirt shifting. Cari groaning, clawing.

MORE BRIGHTNESS filtering from above.

Cari wriggles for the light -

EXT. CANYON - DAY

Face & hands emerge from dirt.

Like Han Solo frozen in carbonite. Eyes blink away brown. Neck unable to turn -

THE GRIZZ

10 feet away. Its back to her. Piston-shoulders DIGGING in the muck.

It's searching for her.

But not sure where to look.

The collapsed cave just a long slit of dirt.

The bear shovels with abandon. Cari watches. Slowly, carefully, starts to PULL HERSELF OUT.

Shoulders emerging. Knees.

As Grizz pauses, SNIFF. Goes back to digging.

Nearby

A BOULDER

Big enough to hide behind.

Grizz's back still turned as Cari slooowwwllllyyyy crawls from the mud. So excruciatingly slow.

Ferns rustling, Cari silent...

GRIZZ STOPS, TURNS

Cari, PRESSED FLAT IN THE FERNS.

Grizz looking right at her. But can't see her. It cranes its neck to the wind.

CU

THE BEAR'S NOSE

Nostrils flaring as it takes a big sniff. Sure seems like it should detect her...

Instead, GRIZZ TURNS AWAY.

As Cari crawls thru the ferns. Stealthy as dead leaves crunch beneath her. Reaching

THE BOULDER

Presses against it. Claws muck from eyes. Above her, THE SKY. Cari basking in brightness.

After the cave, so happy to be released.

She peeks back around the rock.

Cari POV

GRIZZ IS GONE

Like it vanished into thin air. What. The. Fuck.

Cari frozen, eyes darting. It could be ANYWHERE. It's deeply unsettling.

She orbits boulder. Moving for a different vantage. When suddenly -

VOICE (O.S.)

Hello?

A MALE VOICE echoes thru canyon.

Cari startled. Almost like she imagined it. Glances back to the collapsed cave.

Still no Grizz.

DOWN CANYON

Two TINY FIGURES emerge from the fog. Matchsticks in the distance.

Cari registering, terrified to make noise. But those figures in the gloom. Unwitting and exposed.

She pushes away fear & STANDS.

CARI  
Watch out! There's a bear!

FIGURE  
What?

CARI  
BEAR!

The two figures, motionless. Unclear if they heard.

Suddenly one of them POINTS. They shuffle backwards. One of them is swallowed by fog.

Cari petrified, expecting Grizz to strike...

As the other figure raises something LONG AND THIN.

## CRACK!

A GUNSHOT

echoes.

Followed by two more in short succession. Fading to a quiet we didn't realize before.

THE FIGURE, still a distant silhouette in the gloom. Rifle at shoulder, ready...

THEY MUST BE HUNTERS.

And Cari, suddenly daring to hope.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Is it dead?

The figure still pointing rifle. A beat.

The OTHER FIGURE reappearing in the mist. They linger there, surveying, cautious. Then -

FIGURE  
It ran off!

Cari processes these words. For a moment it's hard to believe. She pulls herself together.

WAVES to them.

CARI  
I need help!

They begin to make their way toward her. Passing between two high boulders. THE PERFECT SPOT FOR AN AMBUSH...

But no Grizz materializes.

This is happening.

CARI

Sitting in ferns. Relief washing. Rubbing face, adrenaline finally subsiding.

UP CANYON

The van.

Cari staring hard at it. *At the broken windshield.*

A faint glimmer. Something akin to acceptance.

As - FEET crunch canyon in front of her.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Boy am I glad to see you...

Staring back at her:

TWO GUYS IN HOODIES AND RIPPED JEANS

Mid-20s, muddy street shoes. Only one guy holds a rifle, an old woodstock .22. They don't look like hunters.

CLAYTON  
Whoa. You're all fucked up.

CLAYTON (rifle) obviously in charge. Greasy hair, skinny. A neck tattoo of a Furby.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
(squinting up canyon)  
Is that a van? You crashed?

CARI  
Yeah...

CLAYTON  
You crashed and then a bear showed up?

Cari nodding. Something's off.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
That's bad luck.

RYAN just looks uncomfortable.

RYAN  
Dude. This isn't what we talked about...

CLAYTON  
(ignoring him)  
That campfire earlier, that was you right?

Clayton smiling. An attempt to be reassuring.

He's not.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
Are you alone?

Cari doesn't answer. Looking at his HANDS.

CU WRIST

Track marks.

As Clayton peers. Gauging situation. Then nods to Ryan.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
Watch her.

As he turns and heads UP CANYON. ENTERING THE VAN. Crash sounds emanating.

But we stay with Cari.

For some reason, this all seems familiar to her. Doesn't plead or argue. Resigned:

CARI  
I just need help.

Ryan uneasy. Doesn't answer.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Hey.

RYAN  
How bad is it?

He's guiltily eyeing her blood-soaked PAULDRON.

CARI  
I think my lung's collapsed.

RYAN  
Holy shit.

CARI  
I can walk though. Wherever you're going, I can make it.

They're interrupted as CLAYTON returns with a trash bag of valuables + her wallet.

CLAYTON  
(re: items)  
Waste of fucking time.

He hands Ryan her stuff. Turns to go.

RYAN  
Hey man. We gotta take her with us.

CLAYTON  
What?

RYAN  
She's injured, dude.

CLAYTON  
That's not our problem.

Ryan hesitating. Clayton shaking head.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
We bring her into town. She gives the police a description of your truck. Both our faces. Your license plate...

CARI  
I won't tell. I don't care.

CLAYTON  
(to Ryan)  
You gonna back on that?

RYAN  
Aren't we like required to help?

CLAYTON  
Can't prove we were here.

RYAN  
But it's fucked up.

Clayton sighing. Ryan, not convinced.

CLAYTON  
Remember that show we watched?  
About the quasars and shit. The one  
where he said we're all star stuff.

Ryan no idea where this is going.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
Just interplanetary dust. That's  
all this is.

Clayton looks around the canyon. At Cari. At Ryan.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
So yeah, you can help her. You can  
risk going to county, detoxing in  
some cell. But what's that pain  
for? Cause the universe does not  
give a fuck.

He walks off.

CARI  
Don't listen to him.

Ryan guilty & conflicted.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Please. Just do the right thing.

He's already backpedaling.

RYAN  
I'm sorry.

CARI  
Wait.

RYAN  
Sorry.

He turns & hustles off, catching up with Clayton. Cari pulling herself up.

Watching as

THEY WALK THE FUCK AWAY

Little forms receding. Obscured by haze & looming rocks. The canyon profoundly empty.

She's alone again.

But safe now. Sort of.

A sigh. She turns UP CANYON. Starts to drag herself back toward the van.

Only makes it a few steps when -

A GUNSHOT

Cari whips around.

DOWN CANYON

Distant SCREAMS & SHOUTS. All of it muffled. Another shot followed by silence.

Cari doesn't need another invitation.

She dashes behind a rock & HIDES.

Somewhere, sounds of someone running. Cari, peeking.

CLAYTON

Hides against opposite cliff wall.

As Grizz roots around somewhere. Unseen, but its presence can be FELT. Pawsteps. Heavy snorts.

Cari recoiling, making herself small-

A STICK OF BEEF JERKY

Lands at her feet.

Wtf?

Looking up - as CLAYTON frantically searches thru his pack. Any sense of coolness gone. He unabashedly

Hurls a candy bar toward her.

It bounces off the rock where she's hiding.

*That motherfucker...*

Cari filling with rage. As vague shape of Grizz passes behind some rocks.

Bear's proximity morphing anger to fear.

Cari pressed against boulder. So hard the craggy rock dents her skin.

A beat.

Grizz diverts down canyon. Phew.

Cari heart racing. Still crouched behind boulder. Eyes searching other options. Wants to get as far away from Clayton as possible.

Spying

THE RED GAS CAN

Up canyon.

A bold move. But maybe, the only move. She makes up her mind AND RUNS FOR IT.

Rounding canyon turn. Clayton disappearing.

WITH CARI

Passing boulders, tree, van. Reaching gas can. Opens & pours on ground in a WIDE ARC.

Digs in pockets for LIGHTER. But it's CAKED IN MUD. She tries to claw muck from the little wheel.

Schkk schkking desperately. BUT IT JUST WON'T SPARK

Noticing

A PATCH OF DARK ROCK

Cari getting idea. Rips off her caduceus necklace. Scrapes the medallion across the dark rock.

Crescent of sparks arcing thru air.

SCCHHHWWWWOOOOOOOMMM!

Stripe of gasoline catching fire. Spewing flames upward.

CREATING A PROTECTIVE BARRIER

As Cari drops the can. Peering over the arc of flame. Boulders. Fog.

A FAINT WHIMPERING

Then silence once more.

DOWN CANYON

RYAN emerges from behind a boulder.

He's dragging a foot behind him. Absolutely drenched in blood. Holding a piece of SHATTERED GUN.

Cari waving to him. Frantic.

CARI  
Come here!

He looks around. Shock ridden. In some private hell.

Turns - EXPOSING HIS SIDE. A HUGE CHUNK missing from his torso.

Whole section torn out, ALL THE WAY TO HIS SPINE. Cari dismayed.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Oh no.

It's hard to be encouraging.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Come on. You can make it. Just  
try...

Ryan stumbling forward - as GRIZZ appears behind him. Ryan sees. Tries to run. FALLS -

Twists on ground, FACING UP. Blood pooling around him. Divots of face torn away.

A SHADOW LOOMS.

He can only manage a SOB. Crimson bubbling, waterfalling down lips.

Grizz filling his vision. FOREST DEMON.

RYAN  
HELP -

A SWIPING CLAW ERASES HIS FACE

Grizz tearing into Ryan. A proper feast. Cari helpless. A terrible sinking feeling.

The bear pauses. Looking up.

CARI  
FUCK YOU!!!

It pulls rubbery sinew from his chest. Cari, stricken by the scene. There's nothing she can do.

Deflated. Hopeless...

CLAYTON EXPLODES FROM THE UNDERBRUSH.

Running full tilt towards fire-boundary. Grizz clocking. It leaves Ryan's corpse, firing up that BOUNDING STRIDE -

Clayton moving swiftly up canyon. But GRIZZ right behind him. He's looking just ONE STEP TOO SLOW -

HE LUNGES

Endzone-diving thru flames. Crashing hard. Feet still in the fire.

HOLY SHIT HE MADE IT

But

GRIZZ SUDDENLY DRAGS HIM BACK

Clayton clawing, kicking, thrashing. Torso flopping thru flames. Grizz whipping him around.

Cari, pure instinct. SHE GRABS CLAYTON. Pulling -

A BATTLE OF WILLS

Grizz shaking him, fangs locked in his shoe. Clayton flailing- Cari tugging with all her might.

She reaches bare hand into fire. Flings a FIERY STICK at Grizz's face.

GRIZZ SNARLING, LETTING GO

Pawing at eyes. Allowing Clayton to heave himself back over the fire. He lies panting as -

Grizz recovers. Ready to rumble.

Discovering

CARI

Standing in its way.

FACE-OFF.

Except - She now holds the gas can.

CARI SWINGS IT, SPRAYING GASOLINE.

Fresh gas hitting flames. The fire BLOOMING UP -

Grizz mere feet away. But separated by A BLAZING, BROILING BARRIER. Cari continues to pour.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Go on! Get!

Bear pacing, a malevolent shimmer thru flames. CARI STANDING TALL. Urging it off with all her willpower.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Leave.

The bear pausing. Considering.

IT STARTS TO LOPE AWAY. Walking to edge of clearing. The very limit of the fire-arc's sheen.

Cari waiting it to finally disappear.

Almost... gone...

It stops.

Lingering, looking up at CANYON WALLS. As though appraising the situation. And then

IT SITS.

Watching her. Challenging.

Bathed in flickering glow. The whole canyon illuminated - but then the light starts to recede.

As the fires, fed by gas, DIMINISH. The protective arc no more than a foot high.

Grizz's silhouette fading. Only its eyes.

Shining in the dark.

Still there.

As we

CUT TO:

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - LATER

HANDS break sticks,

Feeding what is now a semi-circle of FIVE FIRES. Cari hunched, tending them.

Moves on. Checking one after the other.

She gets up to search for more fuel. CLAYTON, crouched against cliff wall.

Hoodie up. Not helping whatsoever.

A STICK by his foot.

CARI

Can I have that.

A beat. She bends down and picks it up herself.

Moving on.

Scouring the oval-ish space between fires & cliff. Returns to fires with a MEAGER SUPPLY.

Feeding flames. Still a little annoyed. Glancing Clayton over shoulder.

He LAUNCHES A PINE CONE at the distant bear.

Cari incensed.

CARI (CONT'D)

What the hell are you doing?

CLAYTON

Seeing if it's still there.

CARI

It's still there. Don't.

Shaking head. Refocusing. Gauging the SMALL STICK PILE. Clearly not enough.

Eyes scanning their little oasis -

Spying a LUMP in the ground. Goes to it. Digs into the pine needled sod, revealing

An OLD ROTTING STUMP.

CARI (CONT'D)

Jackpot.

Using bare hands to excavate the GNARLED, TWISTED SLAB.  
Center cracked open, a splintered spiral mouth.

Cari pulls with all her might. Nada. Tries pushing.

Roots straining, rippling dirt

CRAAACCK

It comes loose. Cari falls on her ass. Victorious.

CLAYTON  
That's too wet to burn.

Cari ignoring him.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
I'd bet you twenty bucks but Ryan  
had your wallet.

CARI  
Why don't you make yourself useful?

She nods to the cliff's edge.

CARI (CONT'D)  
There's sticks over there.

CLAYTON  
Nah. You can get em.

He watches as she heaves the heavy stump towards the fires.

CARI  
You really  
(heave)  
Don't care about him?

CLAYTON  
Who?

CARI  
Your friend. Ryan.

CLAYTON  
He wasn't my friend.

Cari scoffing.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
What?

As Cari, grunting, drags the stump the rest of the way.  
Setting it by the flames.

CARI

I said that sounds about right.

Clayton huffing at the insinuation.

CLAYTON

You don't know me.

As she pushes stump close to the flame. Stripping off the wet outer bark, revealing DRY WOOD BELOW.

CARI

You've been using since high school. Your parents had jobs, an okay house. But you were bored and liked getting high.

Clayton frowning. Cari monologuing as she works.

CARI (CONT'D)

They kicked you out for stealing. Sometimes you still stay with them. Well, until they moved to get away from you. Not that you give a fuck.

Her FINGERS clawing thru the crumbly wet casing.

CARI (CONT'D)

So you rob people and shoot dope and rob some more. You don't really think about it too much. Except for quoting some nihilist bullshit you watch on the internet.

CLAYTON

Shut the fuck up.

CARI

Sounds familiar, huh.

CLAYTON

Nah. You're way off.

She throws more sticks on the fire, coaxing the blaze higher. Angling the bare stump toward it.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)

You probably read that in a pamphlet.

CARI

Is that because it's wrong.

CLAYTON

What are you, a psychologist or something?

Cari shakes her head.

CARI

Just something I see.

She gets up, goes to cliff's edge. Gathering the sticks she told him to get.

CARI (CONT'D)

So now you're stuck out here and you're wondering, how do I get myself out of this? Do I feed the bitch to the bear? Do I push her in the fire and run? That's how your mind works.

CLAYTON

Whatever.

CARI

The sad thing is, there's people who care about you. Who care about me. And they don't even enter your equation.

Cari shaking head ruefully. She means this.

CLAYTON

Who are you?

Ignores him. Goes back to the fire. Distributing the new sticks.

Clayton watching her.

Pretending he doesn't give a fuck. But he's bothered. Doesn't like this power dynamic.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)

You're right about one thing.

CARI

Yeah?

CLAYTON

That bear's not leaving.

He throws another pine cone at it.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
You can't keep those fires going  
forever. When they go out, Smokey's  
gonna come.

He smirks.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
Between you and me. I wonder who  
runs fastest?

Cari sighing. Disappointed but not surprised.

CARI  
I know you wonder that.

Clayton once again shut down. He huddles into his hoodie,  
disengaging.

Cari checking the gloom.

THE BEAR

As motionless as the boulders around it.

She turns her attention to THE STUMP. Pours a little gas over  
the tan woodflesh. Pushes it right against the fire. Waiting -

IT IGNITES. Radiance growing. Flames crackling. Cari  
satisfied.

Sense of equilibrium.

Takes out broken CADUCEUS NECKLACE. Starts to rethread the  
chain. A private moment.

Hangs it back around her neck.

A GUST OF WIND

Abruptly snuffs out the trunk's flame.

Cari, frowning.

AS A SINGLE SNOWFLAKE FALLS

She looks up. Searching dark clouds. For a moment there's  
nothing.

Then, a SECOND ONE appears.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Oh fuck off, September.

Shaking head. So unfair. As MORE FLAKES fill the air.

Clayton just laughs.

CLAYTON  
We're so screwed.

Above, the trees start to rustle. Wind picking up. A proper storm brewing. Cari, powerless.

FROM A HIGH ANGLE

As thick flakes rush past -

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - LATER

THE STUMP. Now frosted in snow.

It is very much NOT on fire.

The 5 LITTLE FLAMES, pummeled by wind. On verge of extinguishing.

CARI

Works feverishly. Keeping them alive.

GAS CAN in hand. Pouring a modest amount. Then rearranging kindling, ensuring it burns.

SNOW ACCUMULATING

As Cari races between one fire and the next.

Looks to Clayton. Desperate for help...

*BLECH*

He's retching in the snow.

CLAYTON  
Goddamnit--- fuck.

Body wracked by shakes. But not from cold. He wipes his mouth. Grimacing in physical pain. A shell of himself -

Withdrawals.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
Thought I... had more time...

CARI  
Try to think of something else.

CLAYTON  
Yeah right.

Cari returning to fires. Noticing a small snowbank perilously close to one of the flames.

She pushes it away, digging a MOAT around the fire.

Behind her, Clayton moans.

CARI  
I called 911. They'll have suboxone.

CLAYTON  
Fuck suboxone.

CARI  
If I were you I'd take what I can get.

As he fights off another wave of shakes. Cari grabs his backpack. Digging out water.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Dehydration will only make you feel worse.

Reluctantly he takes it. Painfully chokes down water. Fighting not to puke.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Talk to me.

CLAYTON  
Why.

CARI  
Why not. Take your mind off it. If you're not gonna help.

DOWN CANYON

Grizz stands. Shakes off hide. Circles before sitting back down in snow. Doesn't seem to care -

CARI (CONT'D)  
How about family. You have brothers and sisters?

CLAYTON  
No.

CARI  
Your parents then.

CLAYTON  
Thought you knew all about them.

CARI  
Surprise me.

CLAYTON  
My mom stays at home. She's a real  
cunt. Gets her nose in other  
people's business.

Cari not surprised. Returns to her work. Sloshing the gas,  
checking the level. Barely an inch left.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
Dad's a firefighter.

CARI  
...Really.

The way she says it hardly belies her interest.

CLAYTON  
Why do you care?

Cari backtracking. Not sure how much to reveal.

CARI  
No reason. Coincidence.

CLAYTON  
Okay.

CARI  
My dad was a firefighter too.

Clearly significant. Cari thoughtful as she works.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Growing up we lived down the street  
from the firehouse. I'd hear the  
siren and go running out in the  
yard to watch.

A beat.

CARI (CONT'D)  
My dad never waved. Too serious for  
that. But every time he drove past,  
he'd tug his ear.

CLAYTON

His ear? The fuck are you talking about?

CARI

It was just our little thing.

Cari snapping out of it.

CLAYTON

Congratulations on your happy childhood. My old man's a prick.

He erupts in coughs.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)

Unggghh...

Hugging himself, looking miserable. As Cari dusts off THE STUMP.

Considering its thick sustaining wood. Big fissure in the top. It's SALVATION. If she can just get it to burn...

Tries pulling it apart. Straining with bare hands - no dice.

Sits back. Watching wind buffet fires. Whipping & howling. Somehow they stay alive. A beat.

Suddenly realizing

CLAYTON

Is now standing.

CARI

Hey.

CLAYTON

What the fuck are we doing?

He's obviously in pain. But strangely invigorated -

CLAYTON (CONT'D)

We're dying out here.

CARI

You should sit down.

CLAYTON

Nah. This is bullshit. It's unnecessary pain.

He stumbles to the stick pile. Rooting around. Pulls out - an ARM-SIZED BRANCH.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
No one's coming.

CARI  
They will.

CLAYTON  
You're lying to yourself.

CARI  
Rescue's our best shot.

Clayton shaking head. Looking around.

CLAYTON  
That bear's scared of fire.

He grabs the backpack. Rips out the liner. Wraps it around the stick.

Then, shaky fingers tearing at the ZIPPER - he uses it to tie the liner in place.

In his hands

A TORCH.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)  
We can make it.

CARI  
No we can't.

CLAYTON  
Just gotta show it who's boss.

Clayton, hardly listening. Stumbling past her.

CARI  
Hey. HEY. You're being stupid.

Clayton not engaging. Focused on something.

CARI (CONT'D)  
It's the dope talking.

Realizing too late - as he picks up THE GAS CAN --

CARI (CONT'D)  
WAIT --

And pours THE REST OF THE CONTENTS over his torch. Jams it into the fire. IT FLARES UP -

Clayton enrapt. A beacon in swirling snow.

Turns to Cari. She's grabbed his BACKPACK. A vain attempt at a bargaining chip -

CARI (CONT'D)  
Please. You'll die.

CLAYTON  
I'll be fine.

CARI  
You don't know that.

CLAYTON  
No one knows anything.

HIS SHOES

Stepping over flames. DOWN CANYON, Grizz perks.

Clayton progressing into storm.

CARI  
CLAYTON DON'T!

He keeps moving. Becoming a VAGUE FORM. The glow of the torch, still visible.

Grizz rising. Following.

Both their silhouettes fading into storm.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Come back!!

She watches desperately.

THE TORCH

Suddenly stops.

IT WAVES BACK & FORTH. A few wide, sweeping arcs. Cari enrapt.

And then

THE TORCH CONTINUES ON.

Growing fainter. Just a tiny prick of light. HE'S GETTING AWAY. It's working...

Torch abruptly STOPPING again.

Muffled shouts.

And then it SNUFFS OUT.

CARI (CONT'D)  
CLAYTON!

Eyes desperately searching tempest. But the light is gone.

Just empty wind & snow.

Cari refusing to look away. Refusing to give in. Hoping against hope. But

THE FIRES

Buffeted. Narrow tendrils.

They'll extinguish without her help.

Reluctantly she pulls away. Kneeling over fires. Feeding sticks from the dwindling pile.

Face tightened in steely sorrow. Glancing back into wind. No one's there.

THE STORM

Swirling. Somehow evil in its way.

CARI

Hands shaking in snow -

INT. DINER - DAY - THE PAST

Hands around a stained coffee cup.

Cari, in the same booth.

It's busier today. Breakfast rush. Mostly locals, a lot of hunting jackets.

The middle-aged Server flits, an army of one.

LATER

Cari's coffee dry.

Looks around for Server. Still busy as fuck.

Digs in wallet, finds a 10. Puts it on the table. Preparing to leave, when - THE COOK, a burly guy in a greasy apron, rushes to the Server. Speaking in urgent tones.

The Server races to little bathroom.

Diners turning.

A hubbub starts to grow.

Cari instantly on her feet. Heading toward bathroom. Server kneeling in half-open door.

Revealing

THE TEENAGE GIRL slumped on the floor.

SERVER

Charlotte... what's going on...  
wake up... Why won't she wake up...

CARI

Let me help.

Server nodding. Cari all business. Kneeling beside the girl. Fingers palpitating, checking airway.

The girl's LIPS, blue. Server flustered.

SERVER

Are you a doctor?

Cari not answering.

She abruptly stands - DASHING OUT OF BATHROOM. Pushing thru crowd of hunters & church wives.

CARI

Move!

Out the door, racing to VAN. Throws open back doors.

Digging beneath tools, retrieving a SMALL BAG. A clear plastic slot on the side. In it, A PARAMEDIC ID BADGE.

Cari's face, a barcode & numbers.

She extracts

A SINGLE-USE NARCAN KIT.

Dashes back across the lot - into Diner - thru crowd -

## BATHROOM

Removes small pair of scissors & deftly cuts the girl's sleeve.

SERVER

What can I do?

CARI

Just hold on.

The Cook appears, consoling Server. They both watch from the doorway.

CARI & THE GIRL

Alone now, sort of.

An intimacy to it.

Cari injects the Narcan.

Waits. Nothing. Checks girl's breathing. Reaching kit, grabbing the SECOND DOSE.

SERVER

What's happening?

Cari mentally counting. Spying BATHROOM FLOOR. Paraphernalia scattered. Charred foil, lighter, syringe, etc.

Finishes count. Injects second dose -

Still nothing.

Cari smoothing the girl's hair.

CARI

Come on mama.

A beat. And another.

Then, like a miracle - THE GIRL COMES TO.

Blinking. Woozy. But alive.

SERVER

Oh my god. Oh my god. Charlotte.

Server hugs her. The girl, consciousness flickering.

CARI

She'll be loopy for a few minutes.

Server standing. Relieved. Choking up.

SERVER  
I'm gonna... call the doctor...

Heads off. Cari tending girl.

CARI  
Shh. It's okay. You're back now.

Cari gently rolling the girl on her side.

CARI (CONT'D)  
You just took a little detour.

The girl seeming to fall back asleep. Cari watching over.

She coughs. Cari checking for vomit.

The girl's color returning.

Cari satisfied. Repacking...

A GAUNT HAND reaches up.

GIRL (O.S.)  
...What did you do?

Cari turning. The girl, awake again. But there's a CREEPINESS to this moment. Like she's possessed.

GIRL (CONT'D)  
What'd you give me?

CARI  
Shh. It's okay.

GIRL  
Gone... why's it gone...

The girl's nostrils flare with deep breath.

She suddenly seems to STRENGTHEN.

GIRL (CONT'D)  
WHAT DID YOU DO TO ME?!?! YOU  
FUCKING BITCH!!!!

The girl agitated, FLAILING. Cari trying to restrain.

GIRL (CONT'D)  
AHHHHHHHH!!!!

DOOR BURSTING OPEN

Server and Cook dashing in, pulling her off Cari. Girl spying HER RIG ON THE FLOOR. She throws herself at it. They struggle to hold her down.

The girl wails, clawing.

GIRL (CONT'D)  
GIVE IT TO ME!!!!

EXT. DINER - LATER

Cari sits behind wheel of parked Sprinter.

THRU THE GLASS

The Cook & girl walk shakily to his pick-up. He gently lifts her into the cab...

RAP RAP. Server outside Cari's window.

SERVER  
The doctor said he'll meet us at  
the clinic. It's, umm. It's small.  
The hospital's an hour away...

CARI  
Just tell them she's had .8  
milligrams of nalaxone. They'll be  
able to handle it.

SERVER  
.8. Okay. Got it.

Server lingering. Shaking head. She tears up.

SERVER (CONT'D)  
If you hadn't been there. I - I  
dunno...

CARI  
It's nothing.

SERVER  
My daughter will get better,  
right?  
(a beat)  
We'll do the rehab. The therapy.  
That stuff works, doesn't it?

Cari's heart breaking.

CARI  
Yeah.

That's all she can muster. Server grateful.

SERVER  
Thank you so much.

Cari, forcing a smile. Server steps back. Sprinter turning wide out of lot. Passing

THE GIRL

Slumped in the pick-up. A ghost.

BACK TO:

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - PRESENT

Cari huddled beside flames.

Teeth chattering. Ice frosting eyelids.

The FIRES small & dwindled, hardly providing warmth. STICK PILE laid in front of her.

Not much left. She glances up toward

The ROAD.

Unseen beyond high cliff walls. Knowing it's so close. And yet so far.

As big fat flakes fall all around her. Wind tapered off. A silent, barren cold.

Suddenly

A WHEEZE

Cari concerned. Hands going to chest.

Takes another breath. It hurts, rattling in her throat. The cold locking up her lungs.

She checks THE DUCT-TAPED PAULDRON. Tape starting to fray. But still holding on.

Breathes into coat. Warmer air flowing to lungs.

After a beat

Her diaphragm relaxes. Wheezes growing fainter. Concern fading.

Just frigid catatonia.

GRIZZ EMERGES

Out of the storm.

An apparition at first. Resolving thru snow. Carrying something in its mouth -

THE TORCH.

Drops it like a dog. Cari scowling hate.

But for the first time she notices:

RIVULETS OF RED dribble from its torso. The snow beneath it stained crimson. Oozing from LITTLE HOLES.

Cari, grim satisfaction:

CARI  
You're hurt.

Grizz lumbering closer. Taking an elliptical path. Stalking, aware of the flames.

Cari invigorated.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Clayton shot you. Yeah he did.  
(a beat)  
You'll bleed out eventually.

Grizz exhaling a massive plume.

Pausing. As if considering her words -

IT ABRUPTLY VEERS. Stalking right up to the flames. She's suddenly nervous.

It doesn't seem afraid.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Whoa whoa hey !!

Cari frantically tossing sticks into flames. EMPTYING HER PILE.

Desperately dribbling the few remaining drops from THE GAS CAN-

FIRE BLOOMING UP

Growing to knee-height. Bold beacons once more. GRIZZ coming within feet of flames.

Considering. Sits on haunches. Deterred for now.

CARI

Panic subsiding. Grizz a statue, regal & imposing. Blood dripping from those little gunshot holes.

But all it does is STARE.

Cari deflating.

CARI (CONT'D)  
You don't feel it at all, do you?

No indication otherwise.

Attention returning to the spot where her meager stick supply once was.

She gets up & digs thru snow.

Freezing hands struggling in powder. Coming away with just a few small twigs.

Returns to fires with her minor kindling. The flames instantly devouring.

Cari at a loss.

THE STUMP

Completely useless.

She scans the protected arc. Everywhere she looks, the snow is lumpy & torn up.

SHE'S SEARCHED THE WHOLE DAMN SPACE.

Shaking head. Muttering to self. A DARKNESS rising. She pushes it aside.

Gets an idea - trudges to the

STUMP HOLE

Nearly filled with snow. She goes to it & plunges both arms elbow deep into ice -

CARI (CONT'D)  
Uggggh...

Cari stolidly excavating snow.

Revealing A TANGLE OF ROOTS.

She grabs at one. Pulls. It's springy, doesn't break. A subterranean web clinging the earth.

Cari undeterred. She leans into the hole.

Twisting the wood, pinning it down with forearm. Another root DIGS against her arm.

Skewering her, flesh tearing -

CARI (CONT'D)  
COME ON --

Bending wood finally SNAPS.

Cari now holds a SPRINGY LANCE. Maybe four feet long.

Checks out the hole in her arm - it's deep. Bleeding freely. But hardly her chief concern.

Carries the root back to the flames.

Grizz sitting JUST OPPOSITE. Uncomfortably close. Cari forcing to ignore.

Snaps the root in two, lays across fire. Intent on the dark, supple wood.

CU

Flames licking.

Cari, a flicker of hope...

When WATER bubbles from the encasement. Droplets falling, steaming. It's too wet to burn.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Dammit.

Stone-faced. Defeated.

After a beat, she pulls it off the fire.

Cari at a loss. Vexation growing. Eyes sweeping the fires, the snow. But there's nothing she can do.

Suddenly

ONE OF THE FIRES SNUFFS OUT

Startling her. Despite the inevitability, it catches her off-guard.

She pulls herself up & goes to it.

Gathering its cinder. Deposits over the remaining 4 flames.

Watching them bloom up. Only for a second. And then, they once again flicker low.

Cari glancing to

GRIZZ

Looming. A sentinel, a rock. This near, it looks fucking massive.

Cari holding its gaze.

*A SUDDEN FLASH*

*The Sprinter Van careening off the cliff. Cari ejected thru the windshield -*

Cari

Affected by this image. Pushes it aside. But a FEELING rising, impossible to escape.

Glances toward ROAD once more. Unattainable.

As

ANOTHER FIRE FLICKERS OUT. Just 3 remaining. Cari eyeing the smoking cinder...

But this time, she doesn't reach for it.

Beneath her anger & defiance - a WEARINESS. As Grizz just waits & waits.

Always waiting.

Always there.

**CLAWS**

Sabers clenching in the snow. Dark bone skewers, already crusted with blood.

**JAWS**

Hanging open. Hellish cavern of SPIKES, extending to dark oblivion. Demon breath gusting thru.

Cari, resignation growing.

She drags herself behind the 3 remaining fires. Huddled between them.

All her fight gone. A spent, collapsing core.

Another glance at claws & jaws. At the agony they promise. And then A SHAKE OF THE HEAD.

Small & fatal.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Not like that.

Words we've heard before.

Her focus drifts.

Not looking at anything, now. Retreating deep within herself.

GRIZZ

Eyes shining. Muscles rippling. Snow swirling around its scarred, resilient hide.

Somehow, it looks darker than the darkness.

Cari

Begins to FIDDLE beneath her coat. Unclear what she's doing. It doesn't really register, at first.

Her mind in a distant place.

FINGERS

Rustling beneath the fabric.

Cari, awash in darkness. Facing a simple truth she can't overcome.

As HER HAND

Retracts from beneath jacket. In it - a strip of DUCT TAPE.

Cari tosses it aside. Fingers return to chest. Staring off with a face of stone.

And we realize:

SHE'S PEELING OFF THE DUCT-TAPE PAULDRON

The breath catching in her chest. Lungs spasming with pain. But Cari hardly notices.

She's far, far away --

CUT TO:

EXT. SPRINTER VAN / CAMP SITE - THE PAST

Van rolling into same camping spot.

Cari emerges, looks around. For some reason, it feels different from before.

She considers. Then gets back in the van. Pulling back onto road.

HEADING FURTHER UP THE MOUNTAIN -

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Cari hikes at fever pace. Sweat beading forehead. Tearing up the switchbacks.

Suddenly - amongst the trees

*THE TEENAGE GIRL*

An apparition. Eyes full of hate.

Cari speeds up.

INT. SPRINTER VAN - NIGHT

Cari rolls in bed. Can't sleep.

She flops around, readjusting -

*SERVER (O.S.)*  
*She'll get better, right?*

Lies on her back, staring up at the ceiling.

Then gets up.

EXT. NEW CAMPSITE - MORNING

Cari sits awake by the fire.

Eyes bleary. Lack of sleep. A heavy & profound FRUSTRATION roiling.

Glances at her book. Yoga mat. Like that's gonna help.

Struggling against these emotions. Overpowered by them. Doesn't know what else to do.

After a beat, she reaches beneath the camp chair. Extracting a BAG we haven't seen before.

Inside, a BOTTLE OF BOURBON

Birdsong trilling in morning air.

Cari drinks.

A MONTAGE - AS CARI DRINKS & DRINKS

-Stumbling around campsite, sucking bourbon.

-Staring into grey sky. Sun just a rumor thru cloud. Tendrils swirling in wind.

-Tripping & falling into big crop of FERNS.

-Driving perilously down mountain. Emerging w/ more bottles from a RURAL LIQUOR STORE.

-Stoking fire, face hardened & dark.

-Passed out in dirt. Empty bottle beside.

-Her PHONE lighting up.

END MONTAGE

INT. SPRINTER VAN / CAMPSITE - CAB - MORNING

The big back doors slam shut.

Cari pulls herself into driver's seat. Vacant, hungover stare.

BEHIND HER

Her belongings have been re-loaded into main cabin. Camp gear & other accoutrements hang from the LATTICE.

Wiper fluid sharpens up windshield.

Another sigh.

Affixes PHONE to center console.

INT. SPRINTER VAN - DRIVING

Cari pilots van down the dirt road.

Empty, hollow gaze. Glazed eyes watching road. Bottle rolling at her feet.

Phone lighting up. A CALENDAR NOTIFICATION -

*Go back to work*

OUTSIDE

The narrow, ridgeline road extends in a straight path. Traversing thru mountainous forest.

At the end, a HAIRPIN TURN.

Cari focused on road. Phone blazing again.

CARI  
Goddammit.

Tries to darken it. But needs to watch the road. Phone staying lit. Cari awash in darkness.

The protection of her binge fading.

She shakes her head. Lets out a sharp exhale.

Grimaces.

Trying to PUSH IT ASIDE -

Emotions keep welling.

It all comes back.

CARI BREAKS DOWN

Sobs & sobs. Impotent despair. Van slamming to halt. Stopped in middle of road.

Head in hands. Quickly becoming ANGRY with herself. But more than anything a sense of failure.

Slams fists against wheel. Until she tires.

Finally toggling the phone. Closing the reminder.

Noticing she has TEXTS from 'BossLady':

*Shitshow today. Pls get here soon.*

*We need you, Cari.*

She stares at the texts. Then looks away. Palming her face. Erasing the world.

*She can't fucking do this.*

Fingers pulling at scalp.

Thru them

THE HAIRPIN TURN.

Not so far off, now. A steep embankment dotted with trees. Beyond that, emptiness. An open space where mountain seems to drop away.

Thru her sorrow, Cari perceives it.

And something changes.

Exhaustion & pain giving way. Replaced by twisted understanding. *In this moment, it makes sense.*

*It's the way out.*

Shakily, Cari's hands return to wheel. Tires once again crunching gravel road.

Van picking up speed. Embankment growing closer. Beyond, a SHEER CLIFF dropping off.

Deep canyon beneath.

We recognize it.

CARI

Tears staining weary face. Eyes locked on her fate. Forest road rushing past.

She grits. Pushing aside fear.

As

SHE DELIBERATELY TWISTS THE WHEEL.

TUMBLING DOWN EMBANKMENT. BOUNCING THRU TREES. CLIFF MAW  
OPENING. PROMISING DELIVERANCE. VAN CRUNCHING A PINE -

CARI EJECTED THRU WINDSHIELD. OUT OF VAN. INTO DARKNESS -

BACK TO:

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - PRESENT

The darkness resolving as Grizz.

Flames reflecting in obsidian eyes.

As Cari peels off the rest of the duct-tape. Air rasping,  
bassooning in her chest.

Soft & shallow breaths.

She lies in the pow. Eyes flickering.

Cheek resting in snow. A pitiful lump. GRIZZ, just a blob on  
her periphery.

Not like she's focused on it, anyway.

She waits to die.

Mind slipping. Storm painting canyon. Above, THE SKY. Dark  
clouds hang. Canyon socked in. Like a blanket, smothering,  
immense -

Cari perceiving it one last time.

A haze growing on the edges of her vision.

POV going dark.

The end

...

A CRUNCH emanates.

Cari, attention flickering.

A faint glimmer of awareness.

As - another crunch. Almost like footsteps. Cari dimly  
searching.

A FIGURE materializes.

A MAN, *just standing there*. Not entirely in focus. His appearance, completely impossible.

An illusion, surely.

And we realize - he's wearing an off-yellow jacket. Matching pants. Distinctive headgear...

A FIREFIGHTER

Watches. Grizzled brow. Unwavering eyes.

Offscreen

AN UNSEEN CONFLAGRATION. Big roaring fires. They dance across his face.

Beneath his chiseled exterior, a hint of recognition & love.

He tugs his ear -

And then turns away. Dashing TOWARD the blaze. Disappearing from view. He's gone.

BUT CARI

Restored by this image.

Life force returning before our eyes. Her jaw, setting. Staring at the spot the firefighter stood.

A familiar DEFIANCE rising.

Awareness focusing once more on AIR WHISTLING IN HER CHEST. Lungs refusing to inflate.

Nearby

Clayton's BACKPACK.

With all remaining strength she pulls herself to it. Grizz forgotten, a silhouette in B.G.

Cari weakly searching pack. Finding -

A BALLPOINT PEN

Inspects its tip.

As her OTHER HAND traces collarbone. Counting. Fingers brushing her caduceus necklace.

She pushes it gently aside.

Counting along upper rib cage. Seems to find THE RIGHT SPOT. Brings pen to chest.

Its point digging skin. FACE screwing resolve.

Takes deepest breath she can.

Then

SHE STABS HERSELF

Ballpoint tip skewering thru chest cavity. She struggles not to jerk... suddenly erupting a DEEP, SATIATING INHALE.

A *psssss* sound issuing from pen.

CARI  
(spluttering)

SHE CAN BREATHE AGAIN.

Deftly plucks the pen from her chest. Tears off the tip, then reinserts tube into the hole. It juts from her chest.

Grizz watching, curious.

With a groan she RISES TO KNEES.

Retrieving pieces of duct tape pauldron. Winding strips under armpit. LOCKING PEN IN PLACE.

Cari recovering. A beat.

Unclear what happens next.

Nearby

THE WALL ETCHINGS

Still visible thru storm. One tableau in particular:

A group of figures. Bipedal shapes. They surround a larger, BOXY FORM. Each holding a THIN SPEAR.

At her feet

The unburnt, springy root.

About 4 feet long. A jagged edge where she ripped it from the ground. MORE THAN VAGUELY SPEAR-LIKE.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Jesus fucking Christ.

Still she picks it up. Considering.

A GUST OF WIND

Clearing out storm. For just a moment, we can see further down canyon. Cari focusing past the van & tree. Gazing the direction of

THE CAVE

*Flash to:*

*Earlier. Cari lying in the muck. Grizz, searching for her. It SNIFFS the air. But can't seem to smell her -*

Cari remembering. Realization growing -

She staggers to the STUMP HOLE.

A tangle of roots. More than ample supply. She reaches down and pulls A SECOND ONE. Rips free easier this time.

Tosses it to ground.

Nearby

THE BEAR

Seething & immense.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Can't keep this up.

A simple fact. But Cari aware what it means. She kneels down to DIG in the snow.

CARI (CONT'D)  
You don't scare me. Well maybe you  
do. But I don't stand a chance  
while you're still here.

Grizz unmoved. Cari continuing to dig.

THE FINAL FLAME WINKS OUT.

Nothing separates them now. GRIZZ rising. About to pounce -

But then THE FIRE FLARES BACK UP. Flame still dancing. A trick of the wind.

Bear backing down.

CARI

Squatting in snow. Spear-like roots at her feet. She digs into the pow.

Hand retrieving a FISTFUL OF MUD.

Straightens. Locking on Grizz. The FIGHT once again rising. It's written on her DNA.

As

SHE WIPES THE MUD ACROSS HER FACE.

CARI (CONT'D)  
One of us dies tonight.

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

The last fire crackles.

Cari steps beside it.

HER BODY

Now caked in mud. Jeans & thermal top coated.

JACKET lashed across her chest. It holds a quiver of 'spears.'

Another spear gripped in her hand. Grizz mere feet away.

We expect a showdown. A moment between them. Two prize fighters circling in the ring.

But fuck that.

CARI ABRUPTLY STABS IT

And runs off.

Sprinting into the storm. Obscured by swirling wind & snow. She dives behind a BOULDER.

Quickly crawls toward a 2nd as -

GRIZZ

Bellows, twisting. Spear dropping to ground. It shakes off dripping blood, MORE ANNOYED THAN ANYTHING -

& turns, following her into storm.

CARI

Pressed against boulder.

Grizz sniffing. Searching. Padding thru the clearing. BUT IT CAN'T SMELL HER.

Cari waits & waits & waits

Springs from her hiding place and STABS IT AGAIN. Grizz slashing angrily. Talons missing by inches -

Cari once more dashing into fog.

Like a specter she's gone.

But Grizz swivels more quickly this time. Seeing which way she went -

It beelines forward. About to round a SPECIFIC BOULDER - As Cari appears ATOP THE BOULDER.

With a war cry she STABS DOWN. Catching it deep between the shoulder blades. *Right where it got her* -

Grizz roaring, twisting. Cari, trying to stab deeper.

Bear lurching, knocking her off the boulder.

Cari falling HARD to ground. Jarring her bones. She clutches her chest in AGONY -

Grizz lets out a WHEEZE.

It shakes loose the spear from its back. A pause as the bear stares at it. Somehow troubled by it.

A faint WHISTLING as it breathes...

Cari, momentarily invigorated.

When

IT LEAPS RIGHT AT HER

Swiping both claws at is launches toward her. Cari stumbling backward, trying to dodge. Off balance -

SHE FALLS

And GRIZZ IS ON HER. Cari held down. Jaws descending - crunching into her SPEAR QUIVER.

Wood splintering, spears tumbling.

Grizz tearing thru quiver.

But Cari shimmies out of her jacket. LAUNCHES HERSELF AWAY - grabbing a single spear.

Caught in the open. Grizz already clocking her.

She quickly dives -

UNDER THE VAN

An 18 inch space between chassis & ground.

Cari rolling, spear clutched to body. CLAWS EXPLODE BEHIND HER, SWIPING

Cari striking back. Lashing out with spear. PIERCING ITS FOOT. A satisfying howl.

Grizz backing off.

She watches it prowl. Ready.

Grizz, swiping again. Missing. Cari preparing to stab once more. PAWS lash out, speculative, but

SHUNK

Its claws RIP THRU A TIRE

Which instantly deflates. Sending the chassis crashing

DOWN

IT STOPS A MILLIMETER ABOVE HER FACE.

Chassis still held aloft by 3 INFLATED TIRES. But a silent, horrified beat.

Quickly crawls into the remaining angled space - body CRUNCHING in snow.

GRIZZ

Ears perking. Hearing movements.

CLAWS SWIPE AGAIN.

Raking her shoulder. Cari dragged, half-pulled from under van. Stabs the paw and ROLLS. CLAWS SHOOTING OUT AGAIN -

Catching OTHER BACK TIRE.

Chassis plunging.

Doesn't go all the way to ground. But it CRUNCHES HER BOOT, BANGING IT TO THE SIDE.

Cari trapped, writhing.

Manages to pop her boot free. Crawling beneath undercarriage. Nowhere else to go but

FRONT OF THE VAN

Huddled between the two inflated tires. Clutching her ankle. Grimacing as -

BEHIND HER

Grizz's legs, approaching.

Talons saber out, missing her face by inches. But - she watches them drag RIGHT PAST the front passenger tire.

If that tire goes, SHE'S PLAY-DOH.

CARI

Absolutely done with this shit.

She pulls herself out from beneath van. Spear still in hand. Limping around the side -

Grizz circling opposite. Doesn't realize she's emerged.

CARI

Tiptoeing toward back of van.

GRIZZ

Alerting thru porthole window.

It reverses course - as Cari turns corner - Grizz scrambling to meet her there -

Cari throws open the door.

Climbing up & over THE BED PLATFORM -

IN THE VAN

Skirting mattress hole. Crawling into MAIN CABIN.

BEHIND HER

Grizz attacks the bed platform. Pieces flying. The platform only a temporary barrier.

CARI

Popping head over top. Like some medieval fortress defender.

She stabs, sticking Grizz in shoulder. Ready to stab again - as a chunk of frame comes loose - the spear THUNKS INTO IT.

Cari retracting spear, discovering

THE SPEAR TIP IS GONE.

Grizz, pulling out the mattress. Cari, defenseless. And the platform won't last long.

Behind the bear's shoulder

THE FINAL FLAME

Still flickers in the snow. A tiny defiant glow. IT CONJURES AN IDEA -

Turns away from Grizz.

Ripping the LATTICE off the wall. Jams it into passageway between cab & main cabin.

Like a sewer grate.

Quickly piles shit against it.

As Grizz stops tearing at the bed platform. It looks about to COME AROUND THE FRONT.

Cari grabs her blunt, useless spear.

CARI

Come on!

She jabs the blunt spear. Grizz bellowing. Starts to TEAR once more at the bed platform.

Cari, satisfied.

SHE WANTS ITS ATTENTION

As she throws more shit against the lattice. Tests it, making sure it HOLDS IN PLACE.

GRIZZ

Progressing thru the platform. Dragging its upper half onto the mattress foundation.

Cari jabs it again.

CARI (CONT'D)  
What's the matter?! I'm right here!

Grizz incensed, IN A FRENZY. Windmilling claws as it digs toward her.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Let's goooo!!!

With a deep roar it finally SMASHES a shoulder thru rest of the bed platform.

Emerging thru splintering wood.

AS CARI BACKS OFF

Trapped between bear & lattice barrier. Grizz, RIGHT ON TOP OF HER. But Cari ducks into

BATHROOM VESTIBULE

Tiny airplane-like space. Built only of cheap composite paneling.

Cari punches the AIR VENT. Trying to get the fitted covering to pop out of place.

CARI (CONT'D)  
C'mon...

CLAWS pummeling cheap plasticy door -

It bursts off hinges, pushed into the compartment. SMASHING AGAINST CARI.

Half inch plastic separating her from Grizz.

Cari crunched against door & wall. Grizz millimeters away. As Cari keeps CLAWING THE VENT -

It pops open. AVALANCHE OF SNOW TUMBLES. Cari squirming, trying to climb -

As Grizz reverses into cabin. Pulling DOOR with it, clattering aside. Cari's exposed...

But all we see are DANGLING FEET.

## ON THE ROOF

Cari emerges out the little hole.

Beneath, van rumbles and shakes.

Quickly jump-climbs off the roof and dashes to rear doors.  
Slams shut. TRAPPING THE BEAR.

## CARI ON A MISSION

Staggering back up canyon. Clutching chest, limping on twisted leg. She drags herself to THE LAST FIRE -

When suddenly

IT SNUFFS OUT.

A sad sizzle in the snow. Cari undeterred. Pushes aside burnt fuel, removing

A TINY TWIG. Still embering.

She turns, stumbling, cocooning the little ember. Carefully carrying it to

## THE VAN

Where she unscrews THE GAS CAP.

The little twig, still burning. The bear, still trapped inside.

Cari's lips curling hate.

SHE JAMS THE BURNING TWIG DOWN THE GAS LINE

SHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMPPPP!!!

A massive jarring rumble as

THE GAS TANK IMPLODES.

Black smoke licking up side of van. Inside, the bear frenzies, deep roars becoming a series of PAINFUL SQUEALS -

Cari stepping back as FLAMES BLOOM UP. Watching the van BURN. Now COMPLETELY ENGULFED.

The bear inside, rumbling, roiling. AS IT'S BURNT ALIVE...  
The shaking, rumbling dying down.

A beat. And then

THE REAR DOORS BURST OPEN

GRIZZ EMERGES, WREATHED IN FLAME, A DEMONIC HELL BEAST,  
SINGED AND BLACKENED

BUT VERY MUCH ALIVE

It shakes its burning hide, extinguishing fires. Smoke rising  
from it as

IT STALKS TOWARD CARI

Retreating in horror. Trips over A BROKEN SPEAR. Grabs it,  
holding outstretched as

Grizz backs her up canyon. Bullet holes. Spear gashes.  
Literally on fire.

STILL IT COMES

Cari bumping cliff. Trapped. Defeated.

She gave everything. AND LOST.

Finally, the end -- AS TINY ROCKS FALL --

Cari glancing up, confused.

THERE'S MOVEMENT UP ABOVE

The sound of INDISTINCT VOICES. Grizz, freezing. It looks  
up, momentarily forgetting Cari as

# BOOOOOOOOM ! ! !

A chunk of the bear's shoulder disappears.

A MASSIVE GUNSHOT RESOUNDS. Not the crack of grandma's .22.  
This is a

Weatherby

Mark V

Game hunting rifle

A FUCKING CANNON THAT CAN TAKE DOWN AN ELEPHANT

Which FIRES AGAIN, thundering killshot whistling inches past Grizz's eyes - It turns and RUNS. Bounding away, out of sight.

A ROPE LADDER

Descends towards Cari.

She looks up it. To a female RANGER atop the cliff's edge, beckoning Cari up.

RANGER  
Grab hold!

Cari does. Wrapping fingers around the rope ladder. Looking over her shoulder for Grizz -

But it's GONE.

RANGER (CONT'D)  
Climb!

CARI CLIMBS

Hand over fist. Dragging body upward, one rung at a time. Blood sprinkling as she goes -

SHE REACHES THE TOP

Wrists clasped by Ranger (Sue) and RANGER DAN, Mark V slung over his shoulder. They haul her over -

Cari collapsing on the soft, flat ground.

Rangers gauging

THE OPEN HOLE IN HER BACK. Pen jutting from her chest. Tape oozing blood.

RANGER SUE  
I'll get the triage kit.

She runs to a nearby FORD EXPLORER, parked in a turnout by cliff's edge.

Cari, on all fours. Recovering.

Ranger Dan at cliff's edge.

RANGER DAN  
That was a big sucker. Maybe not  
the biggest I've seen. But up there-

He looks thru scope. BUT DOESN'T FIRE.

As Ranger Sue returns with MED KIT - examining the hole in Cari's back. Delicately tries to clean it - drops gauze.

RANGER SUE  
Sorry...

Cari noticing Ranger Sue's hands are shaking.

RANGER SUE (CONT'D)  
I usually just work campgrounds.

CARI  
You're doing good. Tuck the liner in before you tape it.

Ranger Sue nodding. Finishing the bandage. Goes to Cari's front - Cari waves her off. Gets up.

CARI (CONT'D)  
We need to go.

RANGER SUE  
I can do it. I promise.

CARI  
No. You don't understand. It's coming.

Ranger Sue glancing to Ranger Dan. He ambles over, full of authority.

RANGER DAN  
Just rest, sweetheart. There's medics on the way.

CARI  
I'll rest in the truck.

RANGER DAN  
Ma'am, we're the experts. The bear's gone.

CARI  
It's never gone.

The two Rangers sharing a look. Cari, adamant.

BETWEEN THEM

There's movement in the spindly tree that ends juuuussstt below the cliff's edge.

CARI (CONT'D)  
THERE!

Rangers turn. Nothing.

But - the spindly tree SWAYS, slightly.

Ranger Dan steps away to take a look.

RANGER DAN  
You're imagining things.

Lingering for good measure. Cari shaking head, needing to leave. Sue trying to calm her.

RANGER DAN (CONT'D)  
That Grizz got a taste of the Mark  
Five. He won't be ba--

HE'S HIT FROM THE SIDE BY A BARRELING FREIGHT TRAIN

Completely wiped from view. Stunned look on Ranger Sue's face. BUT NOT CARI'S.

CARI  
Run.

Cari grabbing her, nearly dragging Ranger Sue toward the Ford Explorer.

Cari climbs in PASSENGER DOOR. Ranger Sue circling to Driver's -

Stops.

RANGER SUE  
Dan??

No response. Just misty woods.

Takes a step into trees.

CARI  
No.. Don't...

DISAPPEARS FROM VIEW

Cari waits.

A LOG OF BLOOD AND VISCERA SUDDENLY SLAPS AGAINST THE WINDOW, RIGHT BEHIND CARI

It's a BLOODY STUMP where Sue's forearm used to be. OUTSIDE, RANGER SUE IS DRAPED AGAINST THE EXPLORER

RANGER SUE  
GAAAHHHHHHHHH!!!!

Cari fumbling door, helping her inside.

Ranger Sue, shaking, blood spurting. Convulsing hand struggling to access

THE KEYS

Drops them. Can't focus. HER ARM, skin spaghetti. CARI, retrieving. Dragging herself into

DRIVER'S SEAT

Starts the car. AS GRIZZ APPEARS BEHIND THEM.

Slamming against the back of the Explorer. Claws punching thru glass

As Cari punches gas - wheels spinning --

GRIZZ

Holding on. Explorer's tires finding purchase in the snow. Traveling up the embankment, TOWARD THE ROAD -

Grizz's legs touch back down. Digging hind paws into ground. Front paws GRIPPING TRUCK -

THE TIRES SLIP

Losing purchase. Spinning in the snow. Grizz, straining, HOLDING THEM BACK -

Cari fuming, stomping pedal. Engine whining.

BUT THE GRIZZ

IS TOO STRONG

Sinew rippling. A sheer power force. Cari glancing in rearview. Grizz, singularly focused. NEVER LETTING GO -

CARI  
When I say jump, jump out!

RANGER SUE  
What?

CARI  
Get ready!

Cari, watching Grizz. Dark eyes meet her. Tires skittering in the snow but the beast holds firm.

She abruptly JAMS TRUCK IN REVERSE.

## THE EXPLORER

Rolling back. SLAMMING INTO GRIZZ.

Who's CARRIED by it, claws locked into back panelling. Torso dragging beneath it.

The truck follows gravity, picking up steam toward

## THE CLIFF

CARI, throwing open her door.

CARI (CONT'D)

Now!

Mere feet from cliff's edge. SHE BAILS OUT THE DOOR. Ranger Sue does same, as -

The Explorer rolls over cliff. GRIZZ ALONG WITH IT. Suddenly gone from view.

Then a grinding, metal-twisting CRUNCH.

Cari looking to RANGER SUE, nearby. Clutching arm, moaning. But alive -

Shakily Cari rises.

Drags herself to

## CLIFF'S EDGE

Looking down into box canyon. A view not unlike our very first, from the tree.

To the right, the Mercedes Sprinter still smokes. Beside it, The Explorer on its side.

## A SHORT WAYS OFF

Grizz lies in the snow.

A beat.

IT STIRS.

Somehow. *It's not possible.*

But a shudder ripples its hide. Back arching. Paws clench, stretching, ALIVE.

IT STANDS. Cari, disbelief.

CARI (CONT'D)  
*What are you??*

As Grizz peers up. Inevitable & undeterred. It lopes toward the tree...

AND CLIMBS

Ascending swiftly thru the branches. Cari, dumbfounded. The tree trunk threatening to bow again, as -

IT LEAPS

Claws digging cliff's edge. Dragging itself up.

CARI

Backpedaling. Dismayed. Still hard to believe what she's seeing -

Nearly trips over RANGER DAN'S BODY

Beside it, The Weatherby Mark V

Cari palming big gun. Grizz, approaching. Swiftly traversing the u-shaped ledge. Hellbent on its mission.

Cari, leveling gun. Picking out a shot.

She exhales & pulls trigger &

Click.

No bullets.

Cari, hardly any time to register. The horror abruptly setting in.

GRIZZ

Emerging from swirling snow. A black hole growing larger. Terrible, immense.

A final bounding motion - fangs bared, claw slicing down -

IT SLAMS INTO HER.

And

CARI IS VIOLENTLY MAULED.

Frenetic. Chaotic. Almost hard to tell what's going on.

GRIZZ TEARS INTO HER. Claws raking, fangs sinking in. The bear bites, & stabs, & bites some more.

Cari screaming, struggling, fighting back. Incisors piercing arms, legs, torso. It's no use.

Grizz holding her down. Ripping away muscle and flesh. Her face, absolutely covered in blood.

Eyes rolling back in agony.

After a while, it's done.

Cari

Lying in the snow. Body covered in holes. Like a bucket of red was dumped all over her.

SHE'S COMPLETELY DESTROYED.

But still alive. Consciousness still there.

Almost makes it worse.

HAZY POV

Grizz, standing nearby.

Panting. Satiated. Regarding her with something like satisfaction.

Its job seemingly done.

It turns away.

And ambles toward A SMALL FIGURE.

RANGER SUE, huddled against a tree. Cari processing. Shaking, gritting, every body part leaking blood -

Hand curls around the useless fucking rifle

She uses it to STAND.

CARI (CONT'D)

Wait.

Bear pausing. Pivoting. BACK TOWARD HER -

Cari, somehow teetering upright.

Manages to raise the MASSIVE GUN. So powerful. And yet, it's worthless now.

A FURY ripples thru her.

SHEER ANIMAL RAGE overtaking. Cari points rifle, firing.  
Click click click click.

CARI (CONT'D)  
AHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!

Grizz growls, stalking, head low. Its lips, COVERED IN HER BLOOD.

Cari continues clicking the rifle. Fuming at the unfairness. Grizz not giving a shit.

Raising a cutlass claw - as Cari shoves the rifle right in its face.

An impotent, defiant gesture.

But as she does

Her hands RACK THE BOLT of the Mark V.

A distinct CLACK-CLACK noise.

The Bear, snarling.

But suddenly - IT SHIES AWAY.

Lowering back onto all fours. Cari confused, stunned.

Eyes landing on - *THE BULLET WOUND IN THE BEAR'S SHOULDER.*

Understanding washes:

CARI (CONT'D)  
You didn't like that.

She takes a step forward. RACKS again.

AS THE GRIZZ SHUDDERS. Grinding paws.

STEPS BACK.

Cari advancing her broken body. Brandishing gun. Racking again and again. BACKING GRIZZ DOWN -

CARI (CONT'D)  
You know what it means, don't you?

Grizz whining. IT WANTS HER SO BAD. But every time the gun racks -

It shudders. REPELLED.

Each time pushed back by a foot.

**A SERIES OF SHOTS:**

CLACK-CLACK

Cari in uniform, kneeling over a COMATOSE MAN. She injects him with NARCAN - the man awakens & SPITS IN HER FACE -

CLACK-CLACK

Cari desperately pumping chest of a TEENAGE BOY. His parents sob in the background. The room filled with XMAS DECORATIONS -

CLACK-CLACK

Cari piloting ambulance thru a DECAYED TOWN. Junkies shoot beside boarded-up stores. Addicted homeless wander -

CLACK-CLACK

Cari in uniform, haggard & full of darkness. She leans against her ambulance, SUCKING DOWN BOURBON. Radio crackling -

CLACK-CLACK

Cari with a patient. He's fighting, rejecting treatment. In frustration she SHOVES HIM HARD. A COP restrains her -

CLACK-CLACK

Cari stands in the middle of the chaotic Emergency Room. Overcrowded, beds lining walls. SHE LOOKS SO DAMN SMALL -

CLACK-CLACK

Still in ER. Hopeless, defeated. But then - on a gurney - she spies THE GUY SHE SHOVED. He sees Cari...& mouths 'thank you' -

CLACK-CLACK

As she racks the gun one more time.

CARI

Not today.

Grizz gazing her. Dark eyes & inscrutable mind. Then -

IT TURNS

And lopes away.

Not defeated.

BUT HELD BACK.

Approaching the trees. Looking over its shoulder. A final moment between them.

Then it's gone.

CARI

Scanning. Awaiting its inevitable return.

Can only manage a moment longer. She collapses into snow. Rifle tumbling from hands.

Lolling. Fading. Spent.

Becoming aware of FAINT MOANS.

Eyes reluctantly leaving forest. Traveling to RANGER SUE, lying in the snow.

Cari focusing. Elbows digging. Somehow

SHE CRAWLS

Muscles spasming. Every breath a tiny scream. Every inch a thousand daggers.

Reaching RANGER SUE, cradling her stump arm. Whimpering, unable to tie her belt-tourniquet with one hand.

She glances up -

Momentarily distracted by Cari's EXTREMELY SEVERE INJURIES.

RANGER SUE  
Oh my God...

As Cari drags herself beside the Ranger. Reaching with an unsteady, blood-drenched arm.

Woozy, struggling -

CARI  
Give me your hand.

RANGER SUE  
Wha- what-

CARI  
(guttural)  
LET ME TREAT YOU.

Ranger Sue, too in shock to argue.

As Cari grunts, wraps hands around the belt - TIGHTENS IT.

They both grimace. Unclear who it hurts more.

Cari collapses beside Ranger Sue. Struggling not to fade. She gazes up THE EMBANKMENT.

CARI (CONT'D)  
Won't find us.

Ranger Sue, hardly registering. Cari, with more conviction -

CARI (CONT'D)  
Got to reach the road.

The Ranger shaking & catatonic.

Cari already leaving her behind.

DRAGGING HERSELF ONCE MORE

Struggling uphill thru snow. Broken body leaving crimson smear. Until

Reaches a FLAT, OPEN SPACE. Fingers sinking beneath pow.  
Dusting away

ASPHALT.

Cari processing it. Something beginning to unclench.

As

Down the forest road - A BLUE & RED strobe.

An AMBULANCE approaching. Lights washing over. The scene growing muddy & indistinct. Sound far away -

PARAMEDICS dashing forward. EMTs treating, laying her on a stretcher.

Cari letting them take over.

Consciousness faltering. Unsteady gaze checking treeline.  
The snow.

GRIZZ'S PAWPRINTS

Slowly filling.

As Cari allows herself to look away. EMTs lifting her up.  
Loading her into ambulance -

INT. AMBULANCE - DRIVING - MORNING

Cari, festooned in IVs and wires. Gurney rattling.

Bloody bandages pass frame. Above her, an EMT works frantically.

But she's pale. Fading.

THE EMT

On a goddamn MISSION. Wipes sweat, barks into radio. Blood bag, quik-clot, a frenzy of controlled movement.

For a moment worried he's losing her...

Realizes she's looking right at him.

EMT pausing. Noticing her CADUCEUS NECKLACE. She gives him the slightest of nods.

He quickly returns it.

Then back to action. Replacing bandages, IVs. Hands racing, hooking drawers w/ his feet. A man possessed.

Ambulance BUCKS - slamming him against the wall. But he barely notices.

A strength of clarity & purpose.

Cari watches him work. Thoughtful.

EXT. AMBULANCE - DRIVING - MORNING

The ambulance travels beneath smothering, gray-bleak SKY.

But then...*there*. Seemingly impossible in the impenetrable gloom. There's a **SMALL OPENING**.

It's painfully narrow. Cloud tendrils swirl, threatening to erase. But somehow, improbably, the opening remains.

Tenacious, inexorable, refusing to be cowed.

A sliver of blue against the gray.

AND CARI

A sliver of light against the dark.

FADE TO WHITE.