

**NIGHTLIGHT**

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**THE FOLLOWING STORY WILL UNFOLD EXCLUSIVELY  
FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF A SINGLE FLASHLIGHT**

ON BLACK, the quiet lull of metal threading being unscrewed. THUNK, THUNK. Two D BATTERIES pounded into a FLASHLIGHT.

SNAP. With the flick of a switch --

INT. CHEVY SUBURBAN - SUNSET

-- a powerful LIGHT flares out around us, establishing our point of view from inside a FLASHLIGHT.

The tungsten filament burns blue for a fraction of a second, before diffusing into a gold beam, strong enough to light the interior of this SUV.

We glimpse a few items strewn about: SIX FLAGS PHOTO KEY-CHAIN, THE SELECTED WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, and a BATTERY OPERATED AIR PUMP (sans batteries).

The FLASHLIGHT is placed on the front seat. We hear CLOTHES being removed. A BEN & JERRY'S UNIFORM is tossed into the foreground, followed by a PLASTIC NAME TAG that reads simply:

Name:  
ROBIN

Favorite Ice Cream:  
CHUNKY MONKEY

The light is lifted out of the vehicle as the front door is slammed shut. In the reflection of the driver's side window, we see the innocent face of the girl who holds the light.

This is **ROBIN** (17), and even though the light is obscuring most of her face, we can tell she's quietly crying.

Using the window as a mirror, she dries her eyes and applies makeup. She tests a couple fake smiles, before heading around back.

She opens the trunk door. A GOLDEN RETRIEVER (**KRAMER**) is sleeping in the cargo.

ROBIN  
Wake up, Kramer.

Robin sets the FLASHLIGHT on the bumper and crawls back to her dog.

It's the first time we've seen her in full and she has the slightly awkward feel of someone who just recently came into her good looks.

She unwraps a STICK OF GUM while studying her CELL PHONE:

ROBIN  
 (to Kramer)  
 So according to Facebook, Ben likes: sports (boring), rock climbing (yikes), Abercrombie & Fitch (gross), "The Da Vinci Code" (illiterate), and hates Chunky Monkey ice cream (total bullshit).  
 But...

Robin tosses her phone into the front and lets Kramer lick her face.

ROBIN  
 (to Kramer)  
 ...for some reason he loves dogs.  
 So I need you to play wingman for me tonight, okay boy?

Robin slides out of the Suburban with the FLASHLIGHT and confronts the wilderness in front of her.

EXT. FOREST ENTRY - SUNSET

Kramer leads Robin into the forest. Dead leaves crunch beneath their feet. Clouds of breath leave their mouth.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (softly to herself)  
 Hey, Ben. Hi. Ben! How're you? How Are You Ben?  
 (no big deal)  
 ...oh this is just my dog. Yeah, my dog, Kramer. Yeah, golden retriever.  
 (beat)  
 Really? That's crazy, we have so much in common.

Kramer sprints ahead.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Hey! Kramer!

Robin chases.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Come! Sit! Bad dog!

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - NIGHT

Two GIRLS WITH FLASHLIGHTS are the subject of Kramer's affection.

**AMELIA** (17) is the redheaded cheerleader with the bashful smile. And then there's **NIA** (17), who has an apparent air of superiority.

NIA  
What's your name?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Robin.

NIA  
I was talking to the dog.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(covering)  
I know. That's Kramer.

NIA  
Well keep Kramer away from me.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Okay, sorry.

AMELIA  
Does he know any tricks?

NIA  
I just think it's weird you brought a dog.

AMELIA  
(to Kramer)  
Shake.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(self conscious)  
...it's not weird.

NIA  
It's weird.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(softly to herself)  
...it's not weird.

NIA  
It's weird.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Does anyone know when Ben is coming?

NIA  
Why?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
What?

Nia steals the FLASHLIGHT from Robin's hand and shines it in her face, interrogation style. Robin squints.

NIA (O.S.)  
Why?

ROBIN  
Just wondering.

NIA (O.S.)  
You're so weird.

ROBIN  
Just wondering when everyone's coming.

NIA (O.S.)  
Do you wanna know when everyone's coming, or do you wanna know when Ben is coming?

Robin turns red.

ROBIN  
Can I have my flashlight back, please?

NIA (O.S.)  
(off look)  
Everyone knows you have a fuck-crush on Ben.

ROBIN  
I don't... like Ben.

-- as a face appears behind Robin.

NIA (O.S.)  
Ben!

**BEN** (17) heard everything. Robin's frozen face turns from embarrassment to horror.

NIA (O.S.)  
 (to Ben; disapproving)  
 Your guest brought a dog.

Nia throws the FLASHLIGHT back to Robin. Robin watches Ben as he pets her dog. Clean-cut all-American boy. We can see why the girls are in love with him.

BEN  
 (to Robin)  
 Excited for your first flashlight games?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (trying too hard)  
 I know, right? It's... totally gonna be so much fun! Thanks for inviting me, so... much.

Nia crosses, glaring at Robin.

CHRIS  
 Whoa, where did you guys find the dog?

Robin whips around to find **CHRIS** (17), the final member of the group. He playfully shines his FLASHLIGHT back at Robin, temporarily blinding us.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (covering)  
 I'm, just to, 'cause I had to - my mom, who's really annoying, said I had to walk him --

CHRIS  
 -- so we have to baby-sit all night.

NIA  
 Exactly.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 No, we can just tie him to a tree. It's all he does all day anyway.

BEN  
 What's his name?

Robin pans back to Ben and Kramer, who are getting along famously.

ROBIN (O.S.)

Kramer.

BEN

Hi Kramer, buddy.

NIA

Robin.

Robin's in love.

NIA

Robin!

She hears nothing else.

NIA

ROBIN!

Whips back to the girls.

NIA

(sabotage)

Do you work at Ben & Jerry's now?

ROBIN (O.S.)

Me?

AMELIA

Kathy told Nia that she thought she saw you yesterday cleaning counters or something.

ROBIN (O.S.)

No, I, no I wouldn't work there.

NIA

It's so nasty. Like, I don't have a job because I'm busy studying to get into Berkley, but if I did... I'm not working in that shit hole for minimum wage.

AMELIA

People think because we don't have jobs that we don't work hard, it's like, we work just as hard, if not more hard, than you.

NIA

Yeah, like, congratulations, you scoop ice cream. I'm studying to be a lawyer.

(MORE)

NIA (cont'd)  
That's really ambitious of me. I  
have, like, no free time. Ever.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(softly)  
Yeah.

CHRIS  
Girls what's your battery  
situation?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Oh, I looked for more in my car.  
Got a couple from a tire pump.

CHRIS  
(serious)  
We're not here for cliff jumping,  
we're here for flashlight games -  
they have to last all night.

AMELIA  
Mine are old too.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(to herself)  
...we're playing kid's games all  
night?

CHRIS  
Take my extra batteries.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Amelia can have them.

Robin pans back to Ben and Kramer, who have since been joined  
by a flirtatious (and sudden dog lover) Nia.

NIA  
(to Ben)  
Isn't he adorable?

CHRIS (O.S.)  
Robin... just, I don't know. Try to  
conserve battery please.

...she's not listening:

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Hey Ben.

Ben looks up. So does Nia. She doesn't like where this is  
going.



ROBIN (O.S.)  
I'm reading this book, "The Da Vinci Code", and it's really creepy so far. Do you know if it's any good?

BEN  
It's pretty sweet. Which part are you at?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Oh, uh, you know, the part with the painting by Da Vinci, and the code.

BEN  
That part's tight.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Totally tight.

NIA  
(to Ben)  
The movie's so great. Tom Hanks is the best.

BEN  
(hates the movie)  
Yeah, it was okay.

Chris jumps in front of Robin's beam.

CHRIS  
Robin, Walmart's an hour away, I'm not going back for batteries!

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Sorry.

Robin turns off her FLASHLIGHT.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. PERIMETER FENCE - NIGHT

The light comes back on a little later. Kramer is awkwardly caught in a BARBED WIRE fence. While Ben and Robin help Kramer through, the group squeezes past one by one. Some have their flashlights on, some don't. We UPCUT mid conversation --

NIA  
-- we're definitely going to Cabo for spring break, and I want to stay at a resort hotel.

AMELIA  
All inclusive.

CHRIS  
With a big ass pool.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
...and a water slide.

NIA  
A water slide? Are you four?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
They're kinda fun.

NIA  
I'll have fun at the bar.

Ben slides through the fence with ease. Robin follows. We may or may not notice the ALUMINUM SIGN that reads:

**TRESPASSING PROHIBITED  
JUMPING FROM CLIFFS HAS RESULTED IN INJURY AND DEATH**

There's a CREEK churning up ahead where the group impatiently waits for Robin.

BEN  
I didn't say Cabo, I said like  
Cabo. Google it. Covington Woods is  
on the same list as the Golden Gate  
Bridge, some mountain in Japan, and  
that place like Cabo.  
(beat)  
People come here to die.

AMELIA  
Sure, so statistically speaking,  
you're more likely to commit  
suicide in this forest than any  
other place in the Midwest.  
(beat)  
It's the altitude, right? Makes you  
do stuff you don't want to do.

CHRIS  
The only thing that makes me "do  
stuff I don't want to do" is  
vagina. So there must be a high  
concentration of vagina here.

BEN  
(to Chris)  
Yeah, you're here.

AMELIA  
Or maybe suicidal people just like  
jumping from high places.

Robin is the only one struggling through the fence. The longer she takes the more embarrassed she gets. Her sleeve snags a staple. She yanks it with force --

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(sudden pain)  
...mmhh!

-- and slices her finger. Her bloody skin fills the frame.

BEN  
Everything okay?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
I'm cool.

NIA  
(almost under her breath)  
No you're not.

Robin turns off her light.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. CREEK - NIGHT

A massive fallen tree extends the width of this creek, acting as a bridge over the violent current below.

One by one, the teens cross. Ben holds Nia's hand as he cautiously helps her over. We UPCUT mid conversation --

AMELIA  
-- and they built a church.

CHRIS  
Who?

Amelia crosses.

AMELIA  
Here (maybe in the 30's?) To stop  
people from jumping off the Crest.

BEN  
"Here's a Bible, don't kill  
yourself."

AMELIA

Exactly.

NIA

You know it's true because of all the memorials.

AMELIA

The white crosses.

Amelia is followed by Chris who crosses the tree backwards like a balance beam, holding a RED COOLER, showing off.

CHRIS

No, if I was gonna commit suicide I'd do something cool, like drive my Vespa into a tornado. Or swallow dynamite. You can't just go to some gay ass forest and jump off a cliff  
--

-- as Chris jumps onto the bank.

CHRIS

It's cliché.

Robin gets down on all fours, scared, practically hugging the tree as she crosses, aware of how uncool she looks. She occasionally looks down to remind herself it's a big fall.

NIA

Yeah, like that kid from our school. What was his name?

CHRIS

Which kid?

NIA

(air quotes)  
The dude who "fell" off the cliff here.

AMELIA

Didn't Robin know him...?

NIA

(to Robin)  
Oh God, you didn't socialize with that failure did you? I'm sorry, but suicide is the path of least resistance. If you kill yourself, you deserve to literally lose at life.

(MORE)

NIA (cont'd)  
 (laughing)  
 Is that mean?

-- as Robin turns off her light.

CLICK TO BLACK:

TRUTH OR DARE

EXT. TREE STUMP - NIGHT

A bit later. Robin's light comes in on her nervous hand which holds her SIX FLAGS KEY-CHAIN like a vise.

AMELIA  
 -- dare.

CHRIS  
 I dare you to text me a naked  
 picture.

AMELIA  
 (deadly serious)  
 That's not funny. My cousin sent a  
 naked picture of herself to her own  
 Gmail account and got charged with  
 distribution of child pornography.

CHRIS  
 How is that even possible? Sexting  
 is our generation's first base.

AMELIA  
 She's a registered sex offender.

CHRIS  
 So you're not sending the picture --

AMELIA  
 -- truth.

CHRIS  
 (disappointed)  
 Truth. When was... the first time  
 you ever touched yourself in your  
 swimsuit area in an inappropriate  
 fashion? And Robin wants all the  
 disgusting details.

Upon hearing her name, Robin focuses her light on the group, who we see are gathered around a tree stump.

AMELIA

(thinks a moment)

Christmas vacation. My parents were outside caroling with the neighbors. And I was watching Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer on cable.

BEN

The claymation?

CHRIS

That's hot on some level.

AMELIA

I've never forgiven myself. There was just something about that nose.

NIA

Okay, I feel better. I had an affair with Mr. Grinch.

AMELIA

(gross)

What?

NIA

It's like, he stole Christmas, so he's a bastard, but... he was so damn exotic.

CHRIS

This is why Katy Perry's boobs can't be on "Sesame Street".

BEN

(exactly)

Kids are perverted as shit. Disney movies? Princess Jasmine was my Kryptonite.

AMELIA

What about Robin?

ROBIN (O.S.)

Me?

(fuck it)

Uh, I went through a cereal box phase. Capn' Crunch. Tony the Tiger. To an eight-year-old, Count Chocula is like Johnny Depp. My parents had to start buying off-brand cereal.

CHRIS  
 (nodding)  
 The shit that comes in bags.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Never tastes as good.

Ben lifts a BOTTLE OF BEER.

BEN  
 Robin?

ROBIN  
 I'm fine, Thanks.

Nia immediately takes the beer. Robin turns off her light.

CLICK TO BLACK:

GREEK STATUE

EVERYONE (V.O.)  
 One... two... three!

EXT. TREE STUMP - NIGHT

Everyone's FLASHLIGHTS TURN ON simultaneously, creating a spotlight on Ben who stands half-naked on the tree stump, frozen like a statue, showing off his eight minute abs and BOXER BRIEFS. This is a game the teenagers play called:

BEN  
 (yelling)  
 "I'm a Greek Statue", "I'm a Greek Statue", "I'm a Greek Statue"!

On the third chant, everyone turns off their lights.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EVERYONE (O.S.)  
 One... two... three!

EXT. TREE STUMP - NIGHT

This time Nia stands on the tree stump in her BRA and PANTIES, proudly displaying a lower back TATOO.

NIA  
 "I'm a Greek Statue", "I'm a Greek  
 Statue", "I'm a Greek Statue"!

CLICK TO BLACK:

EVERYONE (O.S.)  
 One... two... three!

EXT. TREE STUMP - NIGHT

Amelia stands on the tree stump, flashing her BRA and sticking out her TONGUE RING.

AMELIA  
 (mumbled)  
 "I'm a Greek Statue", "I'm a Greek  
 Statue", "I'm a Greek Statue"!

CLICK TO BLACK:

EVERYONE (O.S.)  
 One... two... three!

EXT. TREE STUMP - NIGHT

Chris stands on the stump with his cock hanging out. Everyone reacts violently. Chris milks the attention, dancing sexy. The flashlights preemptively turn off one by one.

CHRIS  
 "I'm a Greek Statue".  
 (long beat)  
 "I'm a Greek Statue".  
 (long beat)  
 "I'm a Greek --

CLICK TO BLACK:

NEVER HAVE I EVER

EXT. TREE STUMP - NIGHT

Later. There's an OWL moving in the tree canopy. Robin's FLASHLIGHT searches for it as the group carries on:

BEN  
 "I never"... abused Adderall to  
 study for a test.

Chris reluctantly takes a drink from his beer.



CHRIS  
(defensive)  
Dude, you know my psychiatrist  
diagnosed me with ADHD.

BEN  
Your psychiatrist is your brother,  
and that was two and a half years  
after you were already addicted to  
Adderall.

CHRIS  
I'm not addicted, I'm dependent.

BEN  
What's the difference?

AMELIA  
"I never"... walked in on my  
parents boinking.

Ben, Nia, and Chris all take a drink.

AMELIA  
It's okay guys, they weren't having  
intercourse, they were just  
wrestling.

NIA  
"I never"... tried to kill myself  
in Covington Woods.

Robin's hand comes into frame as she knocks back her first  
beer. The group CHEERS. We're not sure if she's serious or  
joking.

CHRIS  
Oh shit! Robin's on the board  
muthafuckas!

CLICK TO BLACK:

THE NERVOUS GAME

EXT. TREE STUMP - NIGHT

Later still. Ben's smiling face fills the frame. He's close  
to Robin. Very close. Robin's light follows his hand as he  
places it on her thigh. It's almost romantic.

BEN  
Are you nervous yet?

ROBIN (O.S.)

No.

Ben's hand moves to her waist. It takes us a beat to realize they are playing the flashlight equivalent of "The Nervous Game".

BEN

Are you nervous yet?

ROBIN (O.S.)

(voice cracks)

No.

Ben's hand moves to Robin's stomach.

BEN

Are you nervous yet?

ROBIN (O.S.)

(softly)

No.

Ben moves his hand to Robin's breast.

BEN

Are you nervous yet?

ROBIN (O.S.)

(beat, confessing)

...nervous.

Ben removes his hand like a gentleman and smiles, acknowledging the awkwardness.

NIA

(almost under her breath)

Prude.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. TREE STUMP - NIGHT

We come in on Chris' smiling face. He winks at us. It's creepy. He places his hand on Robin's thigh.

CHRIS

Are you nervous yet?

ROBIN (O.S.)

Nervous.

CHRIS  
 What the hell, Robin! Ben got to  
 grab your --

CLICK TO BLACK:

THE TRAIN GAME

EXT. RAILROAD TRACK - NIGHT

A line of track cuts the forest for miles. In the faraway distance, we can barely see the glow of a FREIGHT TRAIN fast approaching.

BEN  
 Okay, I think it's close enough.  
 Who's first?

Chris runs onto the track, sets his FLASHLIGHT onto a WOODEN SLEEPER between the rails, then sprints toward the oncoming train.

CHRIS  
*One, two, three, four...*

He counts aloud for each wooden sleeper he runs past.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (to Ben)  
 What happens if you don't get to  
 your flashlight in time?

CHRIS  
*...seven, eight...*

BEN  
 I don't know, that's never happened  
 before.

CHRIS  
*...nine, ten.*

On "ten", Chris races back to his FLASHLIGHT and lifts it.

CHRIS  
 Amelia!

Amelia runs onto the track as Chris runs off. She sets her FLASHLIGHT onto the same sleeper, then runs toward the train which is now only a few hundred feet away.

AMELIA  
*...seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven.*

On "eleven", Amelia runs back to her FLASHLIGHT.

AMELIA

Ben!

Ben repeats the same action. Everyone watches in suspense as the train gets closer and closer.

BEN

*...nine, ten, eleven, twelve.*

On "twelve", the train is only a couple hundred feet away. Ben grabs his FLASHLIGHT.

BEN

Nia!

Nia looks at Robin with a wicked smile. It's chilling. She then sprints up to the track and repeats the same action.

NIA

*...ten, eleven, twelve... thirteen.*

On "thirteen", Nia stands frozen on the track for a beat, prolonging the moment, letting the train gain some ground. By the time Nia grabs her FLASHLIGHT, the train is dangerously close.

NIA

Robin!

Robin stumbles onto the track. She sets her flashlight onto the wooden sleeper. Our vision starts to tremor as the train gets closer. Crushed stone rattles around in the foreground.

ROBIN

*...one, two, three, four...*

AMELIA

Robin, wait!

Robin gets smaller as the train gets bigger.

ROBIN

*...seven, eight, nine...*

BEN

Robin, get off the track!

ROBIN

*...twelve, thirteen...*

*(triumphant)*

*...fourteen!*

THE TRAIN'S HORN ROARS. TWENTY FEET AWAY. ROBIN SCREAMS. TEN FEET. SHE RACES BACK TOWARD US. REACHING OUT. THE ENORMITY OF THE TRAIN HULKING BEHIND HER LIKE A GIANT.

BUT IT'S TOO LATE.

ROBIN DIVES OFF THE TRACK JUST AS --

THE TRAIN SCUDS OVER US, EACH CAR VIOLENTLY WHOOSHING OVERHEAD, THE UNDER-CARRIAGE MERE INCHES AWAY FROM CRUSHING THE LENS OF THE LIGHT.

The final car passes. Our vision stabilizes. Robin crawls into frame, panting nervously.

CHRIS

Holy shit. Your light still works...

BEN

(utter excitement)

Good. Because you're definitely gonna need it.

Robin picks up her FLASHLIGHT.

ROBIN (O.S.)

(breathless)

For what?

CLICK TO BLACK:

## N I G H T L I G H T

EXT. TREE STUMP - NIGHT

The FLASHLIGHT is propped up on a toppled tree, aimed at Robin who sits isolated on the stump ten feet away.

The other members of the group move in and out of our field of view as they prepare for a game called "Nightlight".

ROBIN

I don't feel good.

NIA

Like how?

ROBIN

Sick. To my stomach. I haven't eaten all day, and --

NIA  
 -- well anorexia is unhealthy,  
 Robin.

Nia ties a BLINDFOLD around Robin's terrified face.

ROBIN  
 No, I'm... have a sore throat.  
 Someone feel my forehead.

Nia snaps a picture of Robin using a DIGITAL CAMERA.

NIA  
 You're fine.

ROBIN  
 I just think it's stupid. Covington  
 has wild animals and cliffs and I  
 have to work early in the morning --

NIA  
 (wait)  
 -- so where do you work?

ROBIN  
 (covering)  
 Not work, I mean. I have to get  
 Kramer back, for something, and...

Ben sits on the stump and wraps his arm around Robin.

BEN  
 I know it seems lame, but the first  
 time's always the best.

He rubs her arm to warm her up. It's flirtatious.

ROBIN  
 (enamored)  
 Really?

BEN  
 It's so scary.

ROBIN  
 (shit)  
 Cool.

NIA  
 (discreetly to  
 Chris/Amelia)  
 The old church.

CHRIS  
(discreetly)  
Huh?

NIA  
(discreetly)  
If we get separated.

AMELIA  
Head start!

NIA  
Bitch, wait!

Nia and Amelia race into the woods. Chris and Ben stay back a moment longer to tie Kramer to a nearby tree.

CHRIS  
Shiiiiit, can you believe what  
Nia's wearing?

BEN  
Disgustingly hot.

CHRIS  
I came in my pants a little.

Robin looks around as if she's not listening to the "guy talk", but the truth is she's hearing everything. She quietly straightens her back, teases her hair, and sucks in her tummy.

CHRIS  
I love slutty chicks. And I will  
not apologize for that.

BEN  
No one's asking you to.

CHRIS  
Something about "tramp stamps" and  
"tongue rings". I'm always gonna  
talk shit about girls who have  
them... but the truth is, it's  
instant Viagra.

(beat, introspective)  
Plus, I watched "Jersey Shore"  
before coming here and that show  
always gets me horny for some  
reason.

BEN  
Right, now I'm asking for an  
apology.

The boys finish tying the dog and grab their FLASHLIGHTS.

ROBIN  
 (summoning courage)  
 Ben, you know, uh...  
 (clears her throat)  
 I wanted to thank you, again. For  
 inviting me. It's been fun, hanging  
 with the cool kids for once.

Silence.

ROBIN  
 (suddenly flush)  
 Did we start?

Robin steals a quick peak from her blindfold. They're gone.

She pulls the blindfold back down and shivers, a little embarrassed, a little cold. She sighs and a cloud of breath leaves her mouth. The temperature's dropping fast.

The tall grass and greenery in the foreground seems to be stretching and unfolding towards the warmth of the light. Subtle but unnerving. Almost imperceptible.

Just then, twigs SNAP in the distance. Must be Robin's friends hiding.

The black corners of the frame are stagnant, until...

A heavy breeze awakes the canopy above. Leaves swirl down around Robin.

THROUGH THIS BLIZZARD OF DEAD FOLIAGE, WE NOTICE THE FLASHLIGHT ROLL SLIGHTLY, AS IF NUDGED BY AN UNNATURAL FORCE.

Kramer approaches the flashlight with caution, fighting the leash around his neck. His face edges into the lens of the light, fogging it up. His eyes dilate. He BARKS.

THE FLASHLIGHT FLICKERS. And then...

Kramer gets quiet. He begins WHIMPERING. The dog backs away, terrified by something only an animal with an innate understanding of nature can sense.

Robin begins getting scared when she realizes how scared Kramer is.

She removes the BLINDFOLD.



ROBIN  
(softly)  
Kramer?

She looks around and smiles. It's almost funny how scary this place can be when you're alone. Almost.

BARK!

The smile fades.

KRAMER'S GROWL BECOMES DEEP, MENACING. HIS BODY TIGHTENS.

ROBIN  
Kramer.

Dust particles seem to levitate in front of the lens.

Robin's eyes dart around, searching the forest behind us. Her eyes try to pin point the source of every CREAK and CRACK.

A whisp of wind absorbs the floating dust.

Robin stands and lifts the FLASHLIGHT.

Kramer's body momentarily relaxes as she pets his cold fur. She kisses Kramer's forehead before leaving him behind.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

A sphere of light creates a window into the dense forest. Everything else is PITCH BLACK.

We can assume from Robin's quiet descent into the dark that the object of "Nightlight" is to find your friends using a flashlight.

She marches onward, hyper aware. Every nuance of the forest - every subtle crack of a dead leaf, or tree limb fluttering in the wind - has the weight of Godzilla marching through Tokyo.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
I give up. "Nightlight".

SILENCE. Robin notices something glowing in the distance. But it's not a flashlight.

The glow burns brighter when Robin rakes it with her light. It's like nothing we've ever seen before.

She takes a couple steps forward.

BARKING IN THE DISTANCE.

Robin whips back to where she came from. Too far away to see anything.

THE BARKING GETS MORE VIOLENT.

ROBIN (O.S.)

Fuck.

(louder)

I said, "Nightlight"!

Again nothing. As Robin waits for her friends to reveal themselves, a wind moves through the trees like a presence. Robin's breathing tightens. Something's wrong.

ROBIN (O.S.)

"NIGHTLIGHT"!

And like clockwork - BOOM BOOM BOOM - beams of light explode in the distance, all around, one after the other, until all four of Robin's friends have unveiled their hiding position.

The lights close in around her, accompanied by laughter.

ROBIN (O.S.)

(feigned excitement)

That was cool.

CHRIS

Did you see the Covington ghost?

ROBIN (O.S.)

Yeah, the glowing herbaceous moss --

BEN

-- shhh, there it is.

(whispering)

If you get really quiet you can almost hear it.

Beyond the ambient hum of cicadas and crickets, there is a sound. It's like a siren, only it's not a siren. Something more dangerous. A faint drone that sounds like a million voices crying out.

CHRIS

(whispering)

Sweet!

AMELIA

(whispering)

What is it?

NIA  
 (whispering)  
 Sounds like voices...

CHRIS  
 (whispering)  
 What if it's the voices of everyone  
 who's died here?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 It's a river.

Beat. Everyone listens.

CHRIS  
 (agreeing)  
 Yeah.  
 (beat)  
 A river of voices.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 I have to get the dog home.

BEN  
 Robin, you're not leaving.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 I kind of have to.

BEN  
 You kind of can't.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Why not?

BEN  
 Because...

Ben steals Robin's FLASHLIGHT. She doesn't seem to mind.

BEN (O.S.)  
 ...I'm using your flashlight for my  
 turn.

ROBIN  
 (smiling)  
 Careful, it's sentimental.

BEN (O.S.)  
 Was it a present from someone  
 special?

ROBIN  
 Something like that.

BEN (O.S.)  
Well here's a present from me:

Ben hands Robin his BLUE COLEMAN.

ROBIN  
(flirting)  
I can't believe you're gonna leave me with this piece of shit. What if the Covington Ghost comes after me?

BEN (O.S.)  
(laughing)  
I don't think that light is bright enough for the Covington Ghost to find you.

Nia steps between Robin and Ben.

NIA  
Ben, you can use my flashlight if you want. It's a Mag-lite, so... it's pretty much the best.

BEN (O.S.)  
(no thanks)  
Yeah, maybe later.

NIA  
Okay.

We catch Robin giggle at Nia's desperate fail just before Ben turns off the light.

CLICK TO BLACK:

FEMALE SCREAM --

EXT. TREE STUMP - NIGHT

-- the light comes in on a MUTILATED RODENT. Its head twisted back and much of its fur removed.

ROBIN  
Kramer! Bad dog!

AMELIA  
How do you know it was Kramer?

ROBIN  
He was barking at it when we were playing.

(MORE)

ROBIN (cont'd)  
 (to Kramer)  
 Bad boy!

CHRIS  
 One time my dog, Sprinkles, caught  
 a bird out of thin air and  
 swallowed it whole.  
 (beat)  
 Sprinkles is 400lbs. He can barely  
 get off his ass to play fetch. But  
 if there's food within six feet of  
 his mouth, all the sudden he's Kobe  
 fuckin' Bryant.

ROBIN  
 Feel like we should have a burial  
 for it or something.

BEN (O.S.)  
 Yeah, we could find that old church  
 in the woods and hold a service.

CHRIS  
 (problem solved)  
 Here.

Chris lifts a GIANT ROCK and drops it on the dead rodent.

AMELIA  
 Fuck Chris. Could you be anymore  
 insensitive?

CHRIS  
 Hundreds of people have died here,  
 and you're mourning the life of the  
 dead squirrel.  
 (beat)  
 I'm beginning to think you guys  
 aren't taking this haunted forest  
 shit seriously.

As Chris preaches to an unsympathetic audience, Ben sets Robin's FLASHLIGHT onto the toppled tree. He then sits on the stump facing the light, while Robin ties the BLINDFOLD around his face. The others casually disappear into the background.

ROBIN  
 I heard you're the best at  
 "Nightlight".

BEN  
 Well. I'm only as good as my  
 flashlight.

ROBIN  
Then you're welcome.

Kramer hugs the forest floor, still suspicious of the FLASHLIGHT.

BEN  
So, Robin...  
(beat)  
I'm glad you came tonight. We  
should hang more often, you know?

Silence.

BEN  
(awkward)  
Did you say something?

They're gone. Ben quietly counts to himself "*One one-thousand, two one-thousand, three one-thousand, etc...*".

Kramer makes a noise - a slight whimper. A SIMILAR NOISE IS HEARD FROM THE WOODS.

Again the foliage in the foreground subtly leans into the light.

Kramer stiffens, tail between its legs.

The wind picks up. The temperature drops. Fast.

KRAMER PEES ON HIMSELF.

He then hides behind the tree he's tied to, occasionally peering back at the light.

A BRANCH SNAPS IN THE WOODS. Ben's head flicks up. He removes the blindfold.

He listens.

There are noises all around. Wood SPLINTERING and BREAKING. A flock of CROWS screeching.

THE FLASHLIGHT RATTLES in a micro, almost imperceptible, manner.

BEN  
(to Kramer)  
Did you see that?

Dust particles begin levitating in front of the lens. It's almost beautiful.

Ben approaches the light with caution and awe.

The dust dissipates as abruptly as it congregated.

He picks up the flashlight and stares into the bulb. He spits on the lens and wipes it clean with his sleeve. Then aims the light into the forest. Nothing unusual.

BEN (O.S.)  
(softly)  
I love this game.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Moments later. Ben creeping through the forest in stealth mode. Maybe taking the game a little too seriously.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Later still. The light is focused intently on dense brush. We approach quietly, as if hunting something hidden.

BEN (O.S.)  
Shit.

Ben slowly reaches into the thicket.

BEN (O.S.)  
No way.

He PLUCKS something from within the bush...

BEN (O.S.)  
(singing to himself)  
"...because I got high, because I  
got high..."

He pulls out a MARIJUANA LEAF.

BEN (O.S.)  
"...because I got hiiiiigh."

Ben marvels at his find before going back in. Deeper this time. His hand blindly sweeps the forest floor.

SHINK! Ben's hand retracts as a METAL TRAP snaps closed where his hand used to be.

BEN (O.S.)

SHIT!

Ben composes himself as he inspects the steel jaw trap.

BEN (O.S.)

Covington potheads don't fuck  
around.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Later. Ben pounces around a tree.

BEN (O.S.)

Gotcha!

No one's there. HE HEARS SOMETHING.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Close on Amelia's SCREAMING face right as Ben finds her.

AMELIA

(disbelief)

I'm the first, and I had this bad-  
ass hiding spot?!

BEN (O.S.)

You're hiding in poison ivy.

AMELIA

(playing it off)

I know.

She unconsciously scratches her arms.

BEN (O.S.)

This is a terrible hiding spot.

AMELIA

You're a "terrible hiding spot".

Amelia starts to head back to the stump, but stops.

AMELIA

Nia didn't say anything to you  
about this, did she?



BEN (O.S.)  
This?

AMELIA  
Nia.

BEN (O.S.)  
About what?

Amelia takes a long beat.

AMELIA  
Nevermind.

BEN (O.S.)  
Good talk.

Ben moves in the opposite direction.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

The light comes in on the "Covington Ghost". Sure enough, just luminescent moss growing in patches on a tree trunk.

BEN (O.S.)  
Boo.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Moments later. Ben carves the finishing touches on his addition to the "Covington Ghost":

**"BEN WAS HERE"**

He lowers his POCKET KNIFE and regards the tree which is covered with vandalism from countless teens.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

On the move. Fast. Breathing heavy.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Further. Ben's movement becomes more erratic, less strategic. Is he still looking for his friends? Or is he running from something?

Faster.

Faster.

Faster...

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Ben is frozen. Everything is static, everything is calm. The flashlight trained on the ground.

He takes a few cautious steps forward until the beam of his light reveals --

EXT. RAVINE - NIGHT

-- the EDGE of a steep ravine. Ben's feet straddle the rim, his light looking down.

Ben laughs, relieved he found the ravine before it found him.

BEN (O.S.)  
(joking to himself)  
Don't do it Ben. You've got a good  
life.

Ben slowly turns around. Swallows a deep breath. Then takes a step --

SNAP. THE LEDGE COLLAPSES UNDER HIS FEET. HIS HANDS GO OUT AS HE FALLS. HE GRABS THE EARTH AS IT SLAMS INTO HIS ARMS.

THE FLASHLIGHT LANDS ON THE BROKEN LEDGE AS BEN DISAPPEARS DOWN THE RAVINE.

WE HEAR SOUNDS OF VIOLENT CRACKS AND SNAPS ALL THE WAY DOWN, UNTIL --

SILENCE.

We hold for what feels like forever.

THROUGH THE SETTLING DUST...

TWO RED ORBS APPEAR. FLOATING IN UNISON. GETTING CLOSER.

We hear RAW PANIC in the faint sound of voices calling for Ben. His friends must have heard the fall.

The orbs rock back and forth, side to side, in a threatening manner.

THE WIND PICKS UP.

The orbs move into the pool of light before us, and we realize they are RACCOON EYES reflecting the flashlight.

The creature is eerily drawn to the light.

DISTANT VOICES (O.S.)

Ben!

The raccoon scurries into the shadows as two beams of light happen upon us. It's Robin and Nia.

ROBIN

Oh my god, Ben?

NIA

Ben?

Robin lifts her FLASHLIGHT off the ground and rakes the ravine. Patches of broken land scattered below.

BEN IS GONE.

They were expecting an unconscious body, perhaps paralyzed from the fall.

ROBIN (O.S.)

Ben!

NIA

Ben!

NOTHING.

ROBIN (O.S.)

Did it sound like he fell?

NIA

What are we supposed to do?

ROBIN (O.S.)

What did you see --

-- SCREAMS reverberate through the trees. Robin turns the light on Nia who is suddenly pale and clawing at her sleeves.

ROBIN (O.S.)

Did you hear that?

No. NIA

Let's go. ROBIN (O.S.)

Hear what? NIA

(pleading) ROBIN (O.S.)  
Nia...

Where's Ben? NIA

What? ROBIN (O.S.)

I'm waiting for Ben. NIA ROBIN (O.S.)  
What was that scream?

I don't know... NIA ROBIN (O.S.)  
...did you hear it?

I'm waiting for Ben to come back. NIA

Come back from where? ROBIN (O.S.) NIA  
...I'm staying here.

Nia kneels down and wraps her arms around her legs like a child.

Let's look a little further, ROBIN (O.S.)  
because --

-- you're jealous Ben likes me. NIA

Nia, you can have him, I just want ROBIN (O.S.)  
to make sure everyone's okay.

Why wouldn't everyone be okay...? NIA  
You don't actually believe those  
stupid stories, do you?

Hell no. ROBIN (O.S.)

Robin steps into the forest. There's a path that seems to lead safely down the ravine.

NIA

Robin?

(beat)

Did you really know that boy who died here?

This stops Robin cold.

ROBIN (O.S.)

His name was Ethan.

NIA

I know.

(oddly sympathetic)

Must be hard being here, because Ethan was your friend.

ROBIN (O.S.)

(lying)

Doesn't matter.

Robin snaps on the BLUE COLEMAN and places it on a bed of leaves in front of Nia, creating a beacon.

ROBIN (O.S.)

I'm leaving Ben's light, so I can find my way back.

Nia shifts around, uncomfortable with sounding "sympathetic". She switches back to "bitch".

NIA

Good for you.

ROBIN (O.S.)

You have to wait for me, because I don't know how to get out of the woods from here.

NIA

We'll see.

ROBIN (O.S.)

I'm serious.

NIA

Okay.

ROBIN (O.S.)

I'm serious.

NIA  
 Okay.

                  ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Okay?

                  NIA  
 OKAY!

                  ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Thank you.

Nia waits by the BLUE COLEMAN as Robin forges ahead.

EXT. RAVINE PATH - NIGHT

Robin maneuvers down a slight incline.

                  ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Ben! Is everything cool?

She scans the trees.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. HORSESHOE-SHAPED TREE - NIGHT

A little further. Robin commits passing landmarks to memory as to avoid getting lost:

                  ROBIN (O.S.)  
                   (to herself)  
 Horseshoe-shaped tree...

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. RED BERRY PATCH - NIGHT

Further still.

                  ROBIN (O.S.)  
                   (to herself)  
 ...red berry patch...

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. ROTTING TREE HOUSE - NIGHT

Even further.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (to herself)  
 ...rotting tree house.

After several moments, Robin stops and looks back. She can't see the light from the blue Coleman anymore.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Nia?

Her voice echoes. She listens.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (louder)  
 Nia!

There's a long SILENCE.

NIA  
 (distant yell)  
 What?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Nothing.

Robin turns.

THERE IS SUDDEN MOVEMENT AHEAD. LEAVES AND BRANCHES SNAP AS WE SEE, FIFTY FEET AWAY, A DARK FORM STRIDE INTO THE THICKNESS OF THE FOREST.

EXT. COMPACT CLIFF - NIGHT

Robin pursues the form to a thick rock wall. The light reflects off a dangling ORANGE CLIMBING ROPE, as a sheet of dust trickles to the ground. It's as if someone or something just scurried over the ridge.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Ben, you found us. It's over.

Robin examines the rope: **COVINGTON COUNTY RESCUE DEPARTMENT**

She grabs the rope and wedges her foot into a split in the wall.

There's a BLACK BOULDER hanging over our heads at the top of the ridge. Robin climbs toward the boulder. One step at a time.

AND THEN WE HEAR IT. THE SOUND CARRIES THROUGH THE AIR AND BLEEDS INTO THE WIND.

IT IS NOT HUMAN. IT IS LIKE A SIREN ROARING FROM ALL DIRECTIONS.

Robin steadies herself.

Her light examines the forest below. It is calm.

THE SIREN SLOWLY STARTS TO MOVE AWAY.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Ben, I can't climb this thing, so  
just come out!

Robin steps higher. Her foot gets tangled in a THICKET OF VINES. She tries to wrestle free, her weight tugging on the rope...

PEBBLES roll off the BLACK BOULDER.

Robin clenches, shielding herself from the raining dust.

She removes her SIX FLAGS PHOTO KEY-CHAIN from her pocket and carefully uses the KEYS to cut the vines around her foot.

Her weight shifts, pulling on the ROPE...

THE BLACK BOULDER MOVES.

Robin realizes: THE ROPE IS TIED TO THE BOULDER.

She continues to cut as fast as she can. The rope pulls the giant rock to the edge of the ridge.

THE SIREN ROARS AGAIN.

Robin drops the KEY CHAIN to the ground.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
...shit.

THE SIREN FADES.

Robin's light illuminates the ground, searching for the KEYS.

-- A DEER CHARGES THROUGH FRAME.

ROBIN SCREAMS, THEN SLIPS.

The FLASHLIGHT falls and thuds against the ground,  
highlighting the KEY-CHAIN in the foreground.

Robin's feet land nearby. She steals a glance at the flashlight.



BOOM.

THE BLACK BOULDER LANDS HARD, CRUSHING THE KEY-CHAIN.

Robin's arms wrap around the boulder. She summons all her strength to roll it over.

She immediately picks up the light and examines the CRACKED KEY-CHAIN with reverence, knowing it could've been her.

We see the key-chain PICTURE clearly for the first time: A YOUNG ROBIN (14) rides a roller coaster with a BOY (**ETHAN**). They look happy.

Robin starts to back track.

We know she's scared because she freezes. Her eyes must be zeroing in on a detail that we can't quite see.

THERE'S SOMETHING ON ONE OF THE TREES.

Robin approaches a bare tree trunk that has been SLASHED with an UPSIDE DOWN CROSS. She pans her light left...

THERE'S ANOTHER SLASHED TREE TRUNK.

FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER.

AND ANOTHER.

Below each of these trees there is a WHITE WOODEN CROSS stabbed into the ground.

Robin tries stepping past the marked trees.

HER FLASHLIGHT BEGINS FLICKERING.

ROBIN (O.S.)

...no.

She steps back, and her light returns to normal.

She tries to pass again, and... again, her FLASHLIGHT FLICKERS, nearly dying.

ROBIN (O.S.)

Nia!

SILENCE.

ROBIN (O.S.)

(louder)

Nia, I found Ben!

(beat)

(MORE)

ROBIN (O.S.) (cont'd)  
 I'm giving him a blow job, you  
 better come out and stop me!

Still nothing. Seemingly unable to pass the trees without her light faltering, Robin arcs around back into the forest.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

But where is the HORSESHOE-SHAPED TREE, RED BERRY PATCH, or ROTTING TREE-HOUSE? All the familiar landmarks she made sure to remember along the way are gone.

RIGHT TOWARD US --

A BLINDING SHAFT OF LIGHT OPENS A DOOR IN THE DARKNESS.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Jesus, Nia... you scared me.

Robin moves ultra-cautiously toward the light. A tangle of branches from two intersecting pine trees slows her.

The light holds steady, ominously looking into us.

She makes it a few feet before stumbling over a tree root.

THE LIGHT ECLIPSES TO BLACK.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Nia?

Robin catches her balance. The light reappears thirty feet back. If it is indeed a flashlight, it would've been impossible for someone to move away so quickly.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Nia...?

The light starts moving in long-fast strides away from Robin.

She chases the phantom light, which seems to appear and disappear in equal measure.

The closer Robin gets, the farther the light moves...

...until it DISAPPEARS ALTOGETHER, leaving Robin stranded even deeper in the woods.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Guys! Stop fucking around, I'm  
 lost!  
 (silence)  
 Help!

THE LIGHT REAPPEARS.

Robin slides down a gravel bank in pursuit.

At the bottom of the bank there is a horizontal sinkhole ripped into the Earth. The light refracts out of this sliver of an opening.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (truly scared)  
 I want to leave!

The closer we get to the hole, the bigger it appears. What once looked ten inches wide, is now ten feet wide.

INT. CAVE, MOUTH - NIGHT

Robin lowers herself into the mouth of the cave which levels off into a shallow downward slope.

Water drips along the rocks and cracks of the corridor, flowing to the cavern floor. Robin follows this running water, as the cave tunnel fluctuates in size and shape.

The phantom light flares out again, forging shadows on the walls from the stalactites and stalagmites.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 If I don't show up for work  
 tomorrow my boss is gonna fire me.  
 (listening)  
 That's right, my boss, at Ben &  
 Jerry's where I scoop ice-cream  
 because I'm a fucking loser whose  
 parents don't pay for everything!

"...everything, everything..." Her voice reverberates off the walls and then it gets silent.

All we hear is the dripping of water.

And Robin's manic breathing.

And a cold wind.

A rock CLATTERS to the ground. Robin turns to make sure she's not being followed...

Empty.

Up ahead, the color of rock turns deep iron red where a narrow fissure resides at the top of a small scree.

There are vivid SCRATCH MARKS along the wall leading up.  
It's the only passage through.

THE WIND INSIDE HAS A VOICE-LIKE QUALITY. IT'S AS IF TWO VOICES ARE WHISPERING IN CONVERSATION.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
I can hear you guys.

THE SOUNDS CONTINUE. THEY BECOME SHORTER AND FASTER. HARDER, ANGRIER.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
If you want to make fun of me...  
make fun of me to my face.

INT. CAVE, FISSURE - NIGHT

Robin climbs the scree and edges into the fissure. The SCRATCH MARKS are more intense inside.

As the rocks wrench inward, the cave gets smaller, and smaller, and smaller --

Until Robin must slump, then crawl through mud and ice into this tight passage.

THE LIGHT FLASHES AGAIN. Three feet away. Just for a second.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(softly)  
Guys...

Robin crawls head first through this suffocating passageway, barely big enough to move, contorting herself along the way, until she reaches a shallow pool of muddy water.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
I can't hear you? What did you say?

THE WHISPERING VOICES ARE GETTING CLOSER.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
What?

She dips her head and flashlight and crawls through the shallow pool. We barely push through and out into a tiny chamber that is clearly a DEAD END.

Robin gasps.

The cave is empty...

With the exception of a BLUE COLEMAN FLASHLIGHT sitting alone in a puddle of mud.

Robin starts to hyperventilate. She feels the cave walls that are marked with deep scratches, looking for a secret passageway, but there's nothing - absolutely no way anyone could have crawled out of the cave without Robin seeing them.

She turns back into the fissure head first but it seems smaller than before. The ceiling holds her in place.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
...no, come on.

Robin wriggles back into the chamber.

THE SIREN FROM OUTSIDE ROARS AGAIN. The sound is even more ominous now, perverted and amplified by the cave's acoustics.

This time, Robin crawls into the fissure feet first, flashlight facing the chamber, hoping she can get out the exact way she got in.

THE COLEMAN EERILY STROBES IN THE BACKGROUND.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(screaming)  
HELP ME!

Robin awakes a NEST OF BATS. The creatures fly right up to the lens before averting contact. Robin SCREAMS.

She contorts her arm and submerges her head in the water to maneuver through.

She gurgles and coughs. Almost drowns. Before sliding out.

The cave opens up wide enough for her to crawl, then stand.

Caught up in the ecstasy of freedom, Robin's hand carelessly smacks against the lip of the fissure's exit.

The flashlight rolls down the scree and drops into a crack in the cave floor.

A plume of dust clouds the lens.

The sound is different in this crevice. There's a looming bass, and the shadows in the foreground suggest a supernatural presence.

Robin's hand dips into the hole. The dust dissipates as she feels around for her light.

In the background, etched into the rock, we see something Robin can't:

**"ETHAN WAS HERE"**

Robin snatches up the light.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

MOVING FAST --

The world shakes as we leave behind the cave at top speed.

HUNDREDS OF CICADAS FILL THE AIR WITH A HIGH PITCHED SCREAM.  
THE SOUND GROWS UNNATURALLY LOUD.

Robin tries to steady the flashlight, focusing momentarily as she passes the --

EXT. ROTTING TREE HOUSE - NIGHT

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Tree house...

EXT. RED BERRY PATCH - NIGHT

ROBIN (O.S.)  
...berries...

EXT. HORSESHOE-SHAPED TREE

ROBIN (O.S.)  
...horseshoe tree.

Robin has found her way back.

EVERY INSECT IN THE FOREST GETS DEADLY SILENT. A PREDATOR  
MUST BE NEAR.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Kramer...

Robin's dog steps out of the shadows GROWLING.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
How did you get over here?

Kramer's anger turns to fear the closer she gets. Her own dog  
doesn't recognize her.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
What's wrong with you? It's me.

Kramer rears up, then sprints. Robin chases through a corridor of gnarled tree-trunks.

Leaves whipping past at a dizzying speed, branches are dodged, fallen trees are jumped. We're gaining on him.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Kramer...

SHINK!

ROBIN SCREAMS.

KRAMER DISAPPEARS.

THE FLASHLIGHT FALLS.

WE SEE --

The patches of Marijuana crop surrounding the METAL TRAP that has closed around Robin's ankle.

She stumbles out of frame, giving us front row seats to the bloody mess that ensues as she pries the metal jaws off her leg in the foreground.

Robin discards the trap and rolls up her pant leg, revealing a small ANKLE BRACE, now broken in half, blood seeping through. The brace prevented any permanent damage.

She picks up her FLASHLIGHT and stands.

The forest has turned to shadows and black.

SOMETHING IN THE TREES MOVES. Branches and shrubs whip and snap in the distance. The sound is getting closer.

Robin pans her light around the forest. SOMETHING'S COMING RIGHT AT HER. Left. Then right.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Kramer, please.

Closer.

Closer.

Closer...

Robin turns in time to see CHRIS blow past. He's out of breath and terrified, barely able to whimper a warning:

CHRIS

Run!

Robin runs. As fast as she can. But her damaged ankle is slowing her down. Chris is losing her. It's too painful.

ROBIN (O.S.)

Chris, wait!

Chris disappears ahead.

ROBIN (O.S.)

My leg...

As Robin slows to a limp, her light discovers something partially obscured by tall grass. She stops long enough to see --

IT IS A HUMAN LEG.

She sprints twenty feet ahead and hides behind a tree.

Her light examines her own bleeding ankle, then peers back toward the obscured leg.

Robin takes a few breaths, soothing her nerves. She studies the surrounding trees. The forest is calm. It feels safe. As safe as it gets.

Robin backtracks to the tall grass.

Her light discovers an unconscious NIA.

Robin shines the light in Nia's face. Then checks her surroundings one last time. All clear.

ROBIN (O.S.)

(whispering)

Wake up.

Robin shakes her.

ROBIN (O.S.)

(whispering)

We have to go.

Nia is comatose.

ROBIN (O.S.)

Nia?

Robin sets down her FLASHLIGHT, using it to light the path ahead. She then drags Nia eight feet into the darkness.



She picks up the FLASHLIGHT again, walks to Nia, sets the FLASHLIGHT down, and drags her eight more feet.

As this action transpires, there's something in the darkness behind Robin and Nia that's frightening. Subliminal illusions. A knotted tree that looks like a face. Shadows that bend and shift in anomalous ways.

Robin picks up her FLASHLIGHT for a third time and walks back to Nia. She notices something SHINY has fallen from Nia's pocket.

It's a DIGITAL CAMERA. Robin aims her light at the view screen and flicks through the recent pictures:

IMG0279 -- Amelia peeing in a bush, annoyed

IMG0276 -- Robin blindfolded on the stump

IMG0275 -- Chris mock-humping Ben from behind

IMG0272 -- Self portrait of Nia posing with duck lips

IMG0270 -- Amelia getting felt up during THE NERVOUS GAME

VID0003 -- A video loads of Robin's turn during GREEK STATUE. She stands sheepishly on the stump, trying to look sexy, but really it's just awkward. She gives a quick bra flash as she spews:

ROBIN  
(on video)  
"I'm a Greek Statue, I'm a Greek  
Statue, I'm a Greek Statue."

The video ends. Robin clicks MENU. A box opens: "Would you like to delete VID0003?". Robin clicks "Yes."

IMG0267 -- Chris crossing the fallen tree

IMG0266 -- Kramer stuck in the fence

IMG0262 -- Amelia and Nia standing outside a WHITE BEAMER at sunset.

VID0002 -- A video loads of Amelia and Nia driving while eating Taco Bell and blasting top 40s on the radio:

AMELIA  
(on video)  
Okay, say it again, I'm recording.

NIA  
 (on video)  
 I said: I guarantee Robin won't  
 admit she got an after school job,  
 because she's fucking insecure...

AMELIA  
 (on video)  
 ...and tries too hard...

NIA  
 (on video)  
 ...and tries too hard...

AMELIA  
 (on video)  
 ...and insecure...

NIA  
 (on video)  
 ...and I'm gonna call her out in  
 front of the guys because she's a  
 dumb bitch...

AMELIA  
 (on video)  
 ...insecure bitch...

NIA  
 (on video)  
 ...and this video is gonna be  
 really funny in about six hours.

The video ends. "Would you like to delete VID0002?"

NIA (O.S.)  
 (groggy)  
 ...what happened?

Robin quickly hides the camera in her pocket and turns to Nia  
 who is just waking.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Are you okay?

Nia holds out her hand. It tremors. She tries to steady it  
 but can't.

NIA  
 What's wrong with me?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 What do you mean?

NIA  
My skin burns...

Nia pinches her index finger to her thumb. A SHOCK ZAPS between her fingers.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
We need to go, I hurt my leg and I don't feel safe here --

NIA  
-- why did you leave me?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Why did I leave you? What're you talking about? What have you been doing for the past hour?

Nia flicks the switch on her FLASHLIGHT but nothing happens. HER BATTERIES ARE DEAD. Robin helps her stand.

NIA  
You yelled my name, I don't remember after that. I was waiting...

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Nia, this isn't where I left you!

NIA  
I don't know --

ROBIN (O.S.)  
-- how did you get here!?

NIA  
I...

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Chris seemed scared, he told me to run.

NIA  
Forget what Chris says.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
What does that mean?

NIA  
I don't know, let's just leave.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
We can't leave, because I don't know where the fuck we are!

Nia looks around a moment. She starts walking.

NIA  
This way.

Robin's light finds a SILVER CANISTER on the ground as Nia continues walking ahead.

NIA  
Robin, I think I see it.

Robin lifts what appears to be an AIR HORN.

NIA  
Did you drive a truck? You know...  
uh, I, I don't think it's too far  
away.  
(beat)  
Robin?

THE AIR HORN'S CASING IS BRAND NEW.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(to herself)  
This is the sound I heard.

NIA  
Did you hear me? I know where your  
truck is.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(to herself)  
They bought this to scare me.

NIA  
Robin, what?

Robin looks up to Nia.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
You invited me here to make fun of  
me...?

NIA  
Who?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Don't lie.

NIA  
What're you talking about?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Nia don't fucking lie to me.

NIA  
 What are you saying? Because you  
 found some random air horn from Wal-  
 mart...

ROBIN STOPS COLD.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 ...from where?

NIA  
 What?

Robin's light pans back down to the AIR HORN where a STICKER  
 reads: **7.99 WAL-MART**

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 You bought this?

NIA  
 You're scaring me, right now...

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 It's yours?

NIA  
 Robin...

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Stop.

NIA  
 ...it isn't.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Get away from me.

NIA  
 I just want to leave too.

Robin buckles, then sits. She examines her ankle. The  
 bleeding has stopped.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 I'm not... with you.

Nia leans into Robin, pleading:

NIA  
 We'll just leave, let's just go...

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 GET AWAY FROM ME!

NIA  
Robin, I don't feel good.

Nia backs away, then sits across from Robin, her back against a THICK MAPLE TREE.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
I was nice to you.

NIA  
I don't know what's going on, I'm sick, I just want to leave.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
I don't want to be friends with you or your stupid group anymore.

Nia smacks her FLASHLIGHT, trying to get it to work but it's no use.

NIA  
Robin, we're almost to your truck. My flashlight's dead... I can't go by myself, I'm scared.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(to everyone)  
THEN YOUR DUMB FUCKING FRIENDS WILL HAVE TO COME OUT OF HIDING, AND APOLOGIZE TO ME...

NIA  
(softly)  
...don't make me go by myself...

ROBIN (O.S.)  
...'CAUSE I'M NOT WALKING ANY FURTHER JUST SO THEY CAN JUMP OUT AND YELL, "BOO"!

NIA  
I said I'm scared.

Nia wipes a tear from her eye. Robin tilts her light down to the ground.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
I said: Fuck. You.

CLICK TO BLACK:

LONG HOLD ON BLACK.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

The light comes back on. A lot of time has passed. We can tell from the layer of FROST now covering the ground.

Robin tilts the light to Nia, who's asleep against the maple.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(shivers)  
Nia?

The light continues up along the tree. Carved over twenty times into the bark:

**"NIA WAS HERE"**

Robin crawls over to Nia and shakes her. She's comatose. Her lips are purple and blistered. Her face is blue.

Robin picks at the eerie carvings in the tree before turning her attention back to Nia.

Clenched in Nia's fist is Robin's CRACKED SIX FLAGS KEY CHAIN (it's what Nia used to carve with).

Robin takes back her key chain, then pulls Nia's eyelids open.

Her eyes are rolled back in her head and we only see the whites of her sclera.

ROBIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
...you passed out again.

SUDDENLY NIA'S EYES FLICK DOWN, STARRING RIGHT INTO THE LIGHT. ROBIN PULLS BACK AND STIFLES A SCREAM WITH HER OWN HANDS. NIA'S EYES HOLD LIFELESS. IT'S UNNERVING.

ROBIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Nia... I can't feel my leg.

Nia blinks, suddenly conscious.

NIA  
(dazed)  
Where are we?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Covington.

Robin stands, then helps Nia stand.

NIA  
How long have we been here?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
I don't know. Since ten.

NIA  
No, I mean... right here?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
An hour. Maybe more. They left  
without us.

The girls start walking.

NIA  
Maybe we should try the church...?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(deflecting)  
Where did you see my truck?

NIA  
Isn't that where we're supposed to  
meet if we get separated? The old  
church?

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(deflecting)  
I think you were pointing this way.

NIA  
Robin: They're at the church.

Robin stops, turning the light back to Nia.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
No.

NIA  
That's where they're at. I'm  
serious.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
I want to find my truck and get the  
hell out of here.  
(beat)  
I can't believe they left us.

Walking. Silence.

NIA  
Ben's not so great, you know.  
(beat)  
I don't know why we like him.



ROBIN (O.S.)

...

More walking. More silence.

NIA

If I tell you an embarrassing dance story, you have to tell me an embarrassing dance story.

ROBIN (O.S.)

Huh? Okay.

NIA

I asked Ben to "Turnabout" last year. He said "Yes". I didn't sleep for a week. Bought a dress and heels. Bragged to all my friends. Posted a countdown on Facebook.

ROBIN (O.S.)

I think I remember seeing that.

NIA

And then he stood me up. And I never said anything to him about it, because I didn't want to look desperate or hurt. We both just acted like it never happened.

(beat)

Just because Ben's important to us, doesn't mean we're important to him.

Robin is moved. She doesn't know what to say. She may have misjudged this girl.

ROBIN (O.S.)

(beat)

Did you really masturbate to the Grinch?

NIA

Guess I've always had questionable taste in men.

Robin laughs for the first time in awhile.

EXT. OVERGROWN PATH - NIGHT

The girls have found a thin overgrown deer-trail marked with a WHITE CROSS. Robin's flashlight starts FLICKERING again.

ROBIN (O.S.)

Shit.

NIA

Why didn't you take those batteries  
from Chris...

ROBIN (O.S.)

...because I don't take anything  
from Chris.

Robin fumbles with the light.

WE FLICKER IN AND OUT OF DARKNESS.

She slaps it.

THE BEAM STEADIES.

NIA

Can I try something?

Nia takes the FLASHLIGHT and rubs her sweater against the  
shaft to create friction.

NIA (O.S.)

Helps the battery life if you keep  
it warm.

Robin nods. We glimpse her in full for the first time in  
awhile. Pale and vulnerable.

NIA (O.S.)

Jesus Christ.

Nia stops rubbing. It's as if she's been pricked with an  
adrenaline shot.

ROBIN

What?

NIA (O.S.)

Fuck, fuck.

ROBIN

What?

NIA (O.S.)

FUCK!

ROBIN

What is it?

NIA (O.S.)  
Your flashlight says "Ethan" on it.

ROBIN  
(so?)  
Yeah.

NIA (O.S.)  
Don't say it --

ROBIN  
-- was his.

NIA (O.S.)  
How could you bring this here  
knowing what happened to him you  
stupid bitch?

ROBIN  
Because I stopped believing in  
Santa Claus when I was three.

NIA (O.S.)  
You brought the flashlight of your  
deceased friend into the haunted  
forest where he mysteriously died?  
This is not a rational decision.

ROBIN  
Neither is fingering yourself to  
the Grinch, but here we are.

NIA (O.S.)  
(utter disbelief)  
You fucked us. You know that right?  
There's real Exorcist shit going  
on, and we're fucked because of  
your ridiculous idea that life is  
simple and what you see is what you  
get --

ROBIN  
(building anger)  
-- yes, because I didn't have a BMW  
magically appear in my driveway for  
my sweet sixteen. And the tooth  
fairy didn't bring me Lady Gaga  
tickets when I lost a molar. I live  
in the real world, Nia, where  
"magic" is what nerds play on  
Saturday nights, and what Chris  
Angel does for easy blow jobs.

NIA (O.S.)  
 It's not my fault my parents are  
 wealthy! If anything it's a stigma  
 I have to overcome.

ROBIN  
 Oh please.

NIA (O.S.)  
 (realizing)  
 Oh no, and I'm touching it. I'm  
 holding it. Fuck my life.  
 (beat)  
 I'm still holding it!

ROBIN  
 Fine give it back!

Robin grabs the light. Right then, with their hands both touching the FLASHLIGHT, a HARSH SPOTLIGHT FROM OVERHEAD BLANKETS THE GIRLS.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (truly scared)  
 Ohhhh shit.

They look up. The light is coming from a tall LAMP POST buried in the trees. It has no discernible power source.

NIA  
 Did that just turn on because we...

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 ...no. It has motion sensors.

The girls scrutinize the LAMP POST. It's a tall thin post, with a naked LIGHT BULB recessed into a TIN WRAP.

NIA  
 But it's just a wooden post.  
 There's no electricity running into  
 it...

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 How do you know there's no  
 electricity running into it? Let's  
 be thankful the scientific method  
 isn't based on intuition.

The girls continue walking. Nia discreetly clasps her hands.

NIA  
 (softly to herself)  
 Lord Jesus, I don't talk to you  
 often, as you well know, but please  
 watch over me --

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Are you kidding?

NIA  
 (softly to herself)  
 -- I mean us --

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Don't bring me into this.

Once they are ten feet removed, the LAMP POST TURNS OFF. Nia gives Robin a look of "See!"

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (uncertain)  
 ...it's just motion sensors.

A SECOND LAMP POST TURNS ON. This time the girls don't stop moving.

NIA  
 (softly to herself)  
 Also, I would like to ask  
 forgiveness for my sins, whatever  
 they may be.

Behind them, the SECOND LAMP POST TURNS OFF, right as a THIRD LAMP ignites above them. It's as if their proximity has powered each makeshift lamp, which appear to be built every 10-15 feet along the deer-trail.

Nia starts to steeple her hands once more but Robin grabs her arm in time to stop her.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 That's enough. Maybe this is a good  
 thing, you know? Maybe we're  
 getting out of here.

THE THIRD LAMP TURNS OFF.

A FOURTH LAMP IGNITES.

THEN DISAPPEARS as they pass.

Robin notices Nia searching her pockets frantically.

NIA  
I think we gotta go back.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
That's a horrible idea.

NIA  
No, I can't find my camera.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Who cares.

NIA  
It's got a strong flash we can use  
to light the woods.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
We're not going back.

NIA  
We don't want to be anywhere near  
these lights and I feel like if  
your flashlight dies...

Nia glances back at where they came from.

NIA  
...fuuuuuck.

Behind them in the darkness we can barely see the FIRST LAMP  
LIGHT UP as if someone or something has triggered it.

They watch in silence.

LAMP ONE disappears.

Long beat.

LAMP TWO lights up.

Long beat.

LAMP TWO disappears.

Long beat.

LAMP THREE lights up.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(scared)  
Dear God, I don't believe in  
you, but if there's any validity to  
your existence and this reaches you  
telepathically or otherwise, then  
(MORE)

ROBIN (O.S.) (cont'd)  
we would appreciate some serious  
consideration right now. Love,  
Robin.

LAMP THREE disappears.

LAMP FOUR lights up.

The light in the lamp lingers...

NO ONE IS THERE.

The tension is unbearable.

Robin's trembling hand lifts the AIR HORN into frame...

NIA  
(whispers)  
Robin, what're you doing?

...she BLASTS it. Nia covers her ears.

The scream of the horn is followed only by DEAFENING SILENCE.

And then...

The WIND ROARS as if responding directly to Robin's tantrum.

The girls start moving as the forest keeps reacting. Branches  
in the distance seem to collapse on command.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
Oh my god.

Our world shakes as Robin and Nia break out into a delirious  
sprint.

EXT. DENSE FOREST - NIGHT

Robin puts her hand out to protect her face and eyes, running  
as fast as she can. There is something coming behind them.  
SHE HEARS BRANCHES BREAKING.

Her hand slams into a tree, she CRIES OUT IN PAIN. We catch a  
glimpse of Nia who is lagging behind. Robin skirts around the  
tree and keeps moving.

Her light FLICKERS.

She cuts left.

IT STOPS FLICKERING. It's as if the light is guiding her.

Another tree catches Robin's arm. She almost falls before gathering her balance. She keeps running.

She stumbles into a clearing, out of breath and panting. The wind calms.

Robin realizes there are WHITE CROSSES all around her.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (confessing)  
 Nia, I... I have your camera.  
 (beat)  
 I heard what you said about me,  
 and... I want you to know in case  
 something happens: I forgive you.

No response. She's alone. Robin backtracks to find Nia lying UNCONSCIOUS on the forest floor.

Robin unfastens a SAFETY PIN from her jeans and raises the needle to Nia's arm:

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (almost crying)  
 Stop faking.

Robin PRICKS Nia with the pin. Blood trickles out.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (no voice)  
 It's not funny.

Robin pricks Nia again. Nothing. Nia won't wake.

Scared and confused, Robin sets her FLASHLIGHT on the ground and crawls into frame. She lifts Nia and drags her back against a tree. She then rests her head tenderly on Nia's shoulder. Exhausted. She's got nothing left. Long beat.

ROBIN  
 So here's my embarrassing dance  
 story:

A tear rolls down Robin's cheek. She wipes it away.

ROBIN  
 Sophomore year, my friend Ethan  
 asked me to "Homecoming". And even  
 though we had a lot in common... I  
 was tired of being "the smart girl"  
 who socialized with "the uncool". I  
 wanted to be pretty and popular. I  
 wanted to be you.  
 (beat)  
 (MORE)



ROBIN (cont'd)

So I told Ethan that I couldn't go because I was out of his league and that he shouldn't have even asked. It was the first time I ever acted like a total bitch, and I remember thinking to myself, "Wow. When did you get so cool?"

(beat)

That night, Ethan came to Covington, alone, with nothing other than this flashlight, hiked to the top of the Crest... and jumped.

(beat)

Soon as I heard, I knew it was because of me. I felt so guilty, that I came to Covington and tied a rope to one of the trees.

(beat)

But when I put the rope around my neck, the branch snapped and I fell. That's when I found his flashlight. I kept it, as a reminder...

Robin takes Nia's hand into hers.

ROBIN

Ghosts and demons don't kill people.

(beat)

People kill people.

Grass and greenery reach toward the light.

Long beat.

Twigs and tendrils hanging off the tree subtly reach into frame.

As the branches bend and flex ever so slightly, acorns begin to fall, rolling and piling in the foreground.

Robin doesn't notice.

A DARK SHADOW ENTITY moves onto Nia. It's as if there's a figure in front of the flashlight, its mass being projected onto the tree in front of us. But there is no one.

SNAP. A branch from above breaks.

Robin flinches, startled.

BOOM. Over a hundred ACORNS simultaneously drop to the ground. By the time Robin shields her head, it's already too late.

She looks around, alert, confused.

The SHADOW ENTITY moves off of Nia. Robin saw it out of the corner of her eye.

She watches it recess into the forest and freezes momentarily, assuring herself it's nothing. Robin brushes some acorns off Nia's comatose body. Her hand grazes something cold around Nia's wrist. She pulls Nia's sleeve up.

ROBIN

No...

We can't see what Robin's looking at, but whatever it is, the very sight of it has distressed her.

ROBIN

Nia, Goddamnit!

Robin shakes Nia, then hits her. Angry. Emotional.

ROBIN

Why didn't you tell me!?

Robin picks up the FLASHLIGHT and carries it over to Nia, aiming it at her wrist, and we see a PINK LEATHER BAND that holds a STAINLESS STEEL PLACQUE...

It reads "DIABETIC".

Robin removes Nia's MEDICAL BRACELET and reads the underside of the plaque: "ALERT: Insulin Dependant"

ROBIN (O.S.)

Why didn't you tell me? *Why didn't you tell me!*

Robin backs away from Nia, maneuvering into the forest.

ROBIN (O.S.)

(through sobs)

I'm gonna find the truck, gonna get help, gonna find the truck and get help, and get help, and get help, get help, and get help... and get insulin, get insulin, fuck.

(beat)

FUCK!

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. DENSE FOREST - NIGHT

A little later. ON THE MOVE through the forest.

THE LIGHT FLICKERS.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. CREEK - NIGHT

Later still. We hear the faint roar of rapids ahead.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(no voice)  
...thank God thank God thank God...

The light finds the creek with the FALLEN TREE across it. It's the same one from the beginning. Robin must be getting closer to her car.

Unlike her timid crawl earlier, Robin mounts the tree like a balance beam, edging across one step at a time, doing her very best not to look down.

Something moves in the trees, distracting Robin for a moment. She scans the canopy...

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(no voice)  
Hello...?

...then looks back down:

A BULLSNAKE moves around the trunk two feet ahead.

Robin's feet recoil in fear.

The bullsnake rears up.

Robin stumbles.

WHAP. Her body thuds hard against the trunk, knocking the wind out of her.

She coughs.

The snake hisses as if it's going to strike.

The FLASHLIGHT slipping...

Slipping...

Slipping...

Slipping...

SPLASH. THE IMPACT IS SUDDEN AND EXPLOSIVE.

EXT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

The creek pulls us downstream at breakneck. We thrash about, trading views between cloudy mud below water and passing landscape above.

The flashlight SMACKS against a boulder.

We spiral out. The blurred image of a distant figure above water materializes, then disintegrates as --

Bubbles crystallize around us. Robin's screaming face suddenly appears. The bubbles expand and pop.

A sudden concussive blast blows Robin away as we hit another boulder.

The FLASHLIGHT nosedives into the mud floor. We scrape along before being yanked back into the current.

Robin's flailing body passes. She's drowning.

BOOM. The back of her head clips a boulder and she goes limp.

We collide with the same boulder. As we TWIST and TILT, we catch fleeting glimpses of Robin's unconscious body driving aimlessly downstream.

She's knocked to one side, then another, then sinks to the floor, as we zoom overhead, rushing towards an "L" shaped bend.

EXT. CREEK - NIGHT

We wash onto a rock bed, half submerged.

Our vision strobos, then holds.

THE WATER WE REST IN TURNS RED.

Robin is thrust into frame. Her arms and hands purple. She vomits creek water. Heaving and choking. Dazed.

She lifts the FLASHLIGHT and turns to the trees.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(no voice)  
No...

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

The forest has grown up around an OLD PICKUP TRUCK, locking it in place, as if it's been waiting for Robin in this very spot for years.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (gasping)  
 No no no no no no. No.

Robin scrutinizes the familiarity of every detail of the rotting truck: striped hood, blue trim, personalized plate.

INT. PICKUP - NIGHT

She sits into the cab and examines the interior. Stuffing has been gutted from the seats by rodents. The dash has warped from the sun and rain. The doors rusted beyond functionality.

Robin checks her bleeding head in the REAR VIEW. Then notices the KEYS still wedged in the ignition...

A MATCHING SIX FLAGS PHOTO KEY CHAIN DANGLING JUST BELOW THE STEERING WHEEL.

Robin takes the KEY CHAIN into her hand. An identical picture of her and a boy riding a roller coaster.

THIS IS ETHAN'S TRUCK.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 (crying)  
 I didn't want to be here, Ethan. I  
 never wanted to come back.  
 (beat)  
 Why am I here?

Robin dries her eyes. Her attention moves from the key chain to the GLOVE COMPARTMENT. She gives it a half-hearted tug. The handle is STUCK.

She turns back to the REAR VIEW. Her head has stopped bleeding. In the mirror's reflection we see her eyes flick back to the glove compartment. Thinking.

Her fingers grip the handle. She YANKS with great force. CLANK. The door drops open. Inside: A HALF OPEN PACK OF BATTERIES.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
 Thank you, Ethan.

CLICK TO BLACK:

The sound of metal threading being unscrewed. THUNK, THUNK.

INT. PICKUP - NIGHT

The tungsten filament sparks blue, then dissolves into a beam slightly more vibrant than before.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Robin walks to the front of the truck, where a line of knotted trees, unusually close together, form a wall between her and the forest.

The trees give off a subtle glow - maybe it's the herbaceous moss. WHITE CROSS memorials are at the foot of each trunk. UPSIDE DOWN CROSSES are carved into the bark.

She takes five steps forward. THE LIGHT FLICKERS UNCONTROLLABLY.

Five more steps.

BLACKOUT.

Back on. Two more steps.

BLACKOUT.

Back on. She's inches away from the trees. The light flickers, then holds steady.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
(realizing)  
...it's not the batteries.

Robin takes out the digital camera. It's wet but still working.

She frames the forest beyond the wall of trees and snaps a pic. The FLASH explodes, giving a fleeting view of the forest that expires after a millisecond.

Robin highlights the camera with her flashlight as IMG0280 appears on the display. It's a seemingly normal picture of the woods at night, if you exclude the orange orbs and flares in the corner of the frame.

FLASH. Robin takes a second picture. SOMETHING MOVES IN THE TREES JUST AS THE FLASH EXPIRES.

The display turns blue with an ERROR MESSAGE: "Card Damage". The camera defaults to DEMO MODE, cycling through random presets and features.

Robin ejects the SD CARD, dries it off, then restarts the camera. The view screen refreshes. She aims it at the woods.

FLASH. Another picture. This time it worked. Robin holds the camera right up to the light until the view screen fills the entire frame.

IMG0282 confirms our collective fears. A DARK FIGURE, MAYBE FIFTEEN FEET AHEAD, IS HIDING BEHIND A TREE.

Using the touch screen, Robin flicks her fingers to enlarge the picture of the figure. We can't quite tell what we're looking at, but it seems like an arm and leg.

She flicks her fingers again. Digital artifacts and grain distort the image. It's like zooming into an abstract painting.

ROBIN YELLS. THERE'S A BLUR OF MOTION AS IF THE IMAGE IS ALIVE.

She jolts back and drops the camera.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
...shit.

She takes a beat, then picks up the camera to confirm what she just saw.

But the camera is in DEMO MODE again.

Robin slowly backs away to the pickup truck.

She places the FLASHLIGHT on the hood, aimed at the forest. We hear her open the driver side. There's a CLICK and a LOW TONE, then THUNK --

THE TRUCK'S HEADLIGHTS IMPOSE THEMSELVES OVER EVERY INCH OF SEE-ABLE FOREST.

No one is there.

Robin steps into frame, leaving the FLASHLIGHT behind on the hood, moving deeper into the forest than her dimming light would allow. We watch from the pickup as Robin gets further and further into enveloping darkness.

Everything gets calm and utterly still. No ominous wind. Or swirling leaves. No sirens or screams. Everything is perfect, like a postcard...

AND THEN THE HEADLIGHTS TURN OFF.

Robin jumps, her legs get weak, turning, seeing what we cannot.

A HAND REACHES INTO OUR PERIPHERAL AND STEALS THE FLASHLIGHT.

Robin SCREAMS as someone or something runs away with our point of view, stranding Robin alone in the dark.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. DENSE FOREST - NIGHT

Running. Darkness. Heavy BREATHING consumes the sound-track. OUR WORLD SHAKES as our host rapidly moves through the trees.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. DEAD FOREST - NIGHT

The pace of our sprint slows to a light jog. The trees around us are all marked with deep cuts and bruised bark. They are short and have no leaves. Most if not all possess an UPSIDE DOWN CROSS either made of twigs or scratched into the trunk. WHITE CROSSES are scattered over the ground. There is a clearing ahead.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. OLD CHURCH - NIGHT

The pace of our jog slows to a walk. Twenty feet away there is a dilapidated CHURCH. Painted in faded purple. Two stories, but small in depth. More like a hut than a cathedral. Water damage and wind has eroded the foundation. The wood walls are peeling and splintering.

INT. OLD CHURCH, NARTHEX - NIGHT

We step into the withering domain. There are TWO CLOSED DOORS before us, sealing off the nave of the church. A sun faded outline of where a large cross used to hang is stained forever on the doors.

THERE'S A CREAKING NOISE FROM THE CEILING.

The light pans to find a frail staircase. Shadows stretch along the walls as the light rakes the banister and climbs the stairs.



INT. OLD CHURCH, ATTIC - NIGHT

Feathers and animal bones cover the floor of this mostly empty space. There's a CRACKED MIRROR leaning against the far wall.

As we move toward it, the reflection of the FLASHLIGHT creates a diffraction pattern, manifesting into a lens flare that obscures the face of the approaching figure.

The figure pauses in front of the mirror, as if expecting something. The figure leans in close, and we see that it is CHRIS. Right as --

AMELIA

Boo!

AMELIA jumps out from behind the mirror. Chris jumps. The MIRROR tips and smashes against the floor, shattering into hundreds of pieces.

CHRIS (O.S.)

Shit!

AMELIA

Oops.

CHRIS (O.S.)

Damn, I was gonna hide behind that when Robin got here.

AMELIA

Sorry.

Chris sets down the FLASHLIGHT. He and Amelia start scooping the glass into piles. Amelia pricks her finger on a shard.

AMELIA

Owie, careful.

CHRIS

I got it.

Amelia sits back, examining her finger, kissing it to make it feel better.

CHRIS

Nia's still not here?

Amelia shrugs her shoulders, "I guess". She then fires up her IPOD. She puts one EARBUD in her ear, and offers the other to Chris.

CHRIS

Well we've waited all night...

Chris scoops one last pile of glass, then leans back to Amelia and places the EARBUD in his ear. We can faintly hear the high end of whatever MUSIC they're listening to.

CHRIS

After Robin finds us I think we should call it.

AMELIA

We should call it now before Robin never talks to us again.

CHRIS

Oh, we're too late.

AMELIA

What do you mean?

CHRIS

(laughing)

Robin does not find this funny.

AMELIA

She might after she thinks about --

CHRIS

-- I saw her. She is not laughing.

AMELIA

Well then we're done.

CHRIS

Hell no! Nia's paying for my room in Cabo for this shit.

AMELIA

She's not actually going to pay for your room in Cabo. That's like a thing people say. You know, like, "I'll give you a million dollars if you pick me up Starbucks."

CHRIS

She seemed pretty serious --

AMELIA

-- she's not serious. And we're inviting Robin to Cabo after this so I don't feel disgusting.

CHRIS

What for? Nia's right. Robin is fake as shit. She grew boobs and bought a new shirt and thought she was cool.

AMELIA

Nia's only doing this because she likes Ben and she's threatened by Robin.

CHRIS

Okay Oprah...

AMELIA

I'm just saying when Ben found me, I asked if he was in on Nia's prank, and he looked at me like I was insane. Nia didn't tell him about it because she's trying to embarrass Robin in front of him.

Chris looks to Amelia.

CHRIS

Why'd you stop the music?

AMELIA

I didn't, isn't that how the song ends?

They look down to her IPOD which has shut itself off. Chris' attention moves from the IPOD to something else.

CHRIS

Know what would be awesome? If you let me cop a feel.

AMELIA

(offended)

What!

(beat)

Only if you don't tell anyone.

CHRIS

Then what's the point?

AMELIA

Forget it.

CHRIS

Alright, I won't say anythi --

AMELIA  
-- shut up.

CHRIS  
What?

WE HEAR MOVEMENT.

AMELIA  
(whispering)  
Downstairs.

CHRIS  
(whispering)  
Robin's here.

AMELIA  
(whispering)  
Turn off the light.

CHRIS  
(whispering)  
Shit, okay...

Chris picks up the flashlight. It swings around the room as the two hunker down to hide.

AMELIA  
(whispering)  
So what do we say? Nightlight?

CHRIS (O.S.)  
(whispering)  
Surprise?

AMELIA  
(whispering)  
"Surprise! We're assholes!" And she'll be like, "That's not a surprise, I already knew that!"

CHRIS (O.S.)  
(whispering)  
Let's just say, "It was all Nia's idea".  
(realizing)  
Ha. That sounds like a show with puppets on Nickelodeon: "NIA'S IDEA".

AMELIA  
(not amused)  
Turn it off.

CHRIS (O.S.)  
(whispering)  
I'm trying.

We can hear Chris flick the switch on and off. THE LIGHT WILL NOT TURN OFF.

AMELIA  
(whispering)  
Hurry, she's coming.

CHRIS (O.S.)  
(whispering)  
It won't go.

AMELIA  
(whispering)  
Cover it...

Out of our peripheral we catch Amelia unzip her JACKET. She slams the flashlight on the floor and drapes the jacket over the light.

ALL WE SEE IS FUZZY BLACK LINEN.

The church GROANS and SETTLES.

Silence.

The front door GROANS as pressure is placed against it. FOOTSTEPS from below, crossing from one end of the church to the other.

A scratching sound interrupts. Rough. Frantic. Like a dog pawing at something.

The sound abruptly stops.

SOUNDS OF MOVEMENT AGAINST THE SIDE OF THE CHURCH.

FOOTSTEPS CLIMBING THE STAIRS.

BOOM. THERE ARE THUDS ON THE WALL BEHIND US.

THEY LISTEN AS THE THUDS INCREASE FROM FEW TO MANY.

BOOM. BOOM. BOOM.

AMELIA (O.S.)  
(whispering)  
Do you hear that?

BOOM. THE FLOOR SHAKES. OUR VISION TREMORS.

WE HEAR THE WALLS SHAKE FROM ALL SIDES AND ALL DIRECTIONS.

The FLASHLIGHT slides backwards a quarter of an inch, out from under the jacket. We see a frightened Amelia and Chris react.

AMELIA  
(whispering)  
Fuck my life, did that just move?

CHRIS  
(whispering)  
No, I kicked it.

Chris tosses the jacket back onto the light.

ANOTHER THUD ECHOES THROUGH THE CHURCH.

THE SCRATCHING SOUNDS LIKE IT'S COMING FROM RIGHT OUTSIDE THE ATTIC.

BOOM. THE FLOOR QUAKES.

The light slides back again. No one's near it.

DUST SWIRLS INTO FRAME.

They look at the light, unable to speak. Chris crawls toward it. His hand reaching for us...

Closer.

Closer.

Closer...

Until his hand is hovering just over the lens, when --

-- AT A TERRIFYING VELOCITY, THE FLASHLIGHT IS RIPPED OUT OF THE ROOM. THE DOOR SLAMS SHUT. WE VIOLENTLY FALL DOWN THE STAIRS AND OUT THE FRONT DOOR. LANDING HARD IN THE GRASS, FACING THE FOREST.

EXT. OLD CHURCH - NIGHT

SCREAMS ESCALATE AND CRESCENDO FROM INSIDE. FOLLOWED BY POUNDING AND DRAGGING.

AND THEN SILENCE.

Each blade of grass in the foreground bends back towards the light.

Gnats swarm the beam. Just a few. Then many.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. OLD CHURCH - NIGHT

Hours later. CONDENSATION obscures part of the lens.

We come in on Robin emerging from the forest. She is limping, freezing, hyperventilating. Cuts on her face from traveling in the dark.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. OLD CHURCH - NIGHT

Seconds later. Robin is closer. Moving towards us.

CLICK TO BLACK:

EXT. OLD CHURCH - NIGHT

Robin is now two feet away. She bends down to pick us up, squinting into the light. She rubs off the condensation with her shirt.

She turns the FLASHLIGHT onto the church, where we see NIA standing motionless on the front steps. She is calm, passive, frozen in a daze. Her hands are bloody.

ROBIN (O.S.)

Nia...

She reaches her arm out, her fingers shaking, pleading for Nia's attention.

ROBIN (O.S.)

(no voice)

What's happening...? What's happening?

Robin steps closer and closer until they are inches apart. Nia's emotionless face fills the frame. Her eyes are white. Her mouth slightly agape. Drool rolls down her chin. She's not breathing.

Robin steps around her, edging towards the church. Nia doesn't move. She just stands motionless, facing the forest.

INT. OLD CHURCH, NARTHEX - NIGHT

Robin steps inside, keeping the light on Nia for as long as possible.

THERE IS A NOISE ABOVE.

Robin climbs the stairs. She slips. Robin aims the light at her feet. THERE'S BLOOD ON THE STAIRS.

INT. OLD CHURCH, ATTIC - NIGHT

Chris and Amelia are gone. There is a pile of FOUR FLASHLIGHTS in the center of the floor, including the BLUE COLEMAN. Every flashlight accounted for.

The hair on Robin's arm stands up. It's not just fear. There's a current in the room...

LIGHTS SLOWLY FADE UP. ALL AROUND. ELECTRICITY WITH NO DISCERNIBLE SOURCE. VIBRANT LIGHT SPILLS THROUGH THE CRACKS IN THE FLOORBOARDS. MOST OF THE LIGHT SEEMS TO BE COMING FROM UNDERNEATH US.

Robin moves back downstairs.

INT. OLD CHURCH, NARTHEX - NIGHT

Nia now stands frozen in the doorway. Robin approaches. She reaches out and touches Nia's cold face. Nia doesn't react.

ROBIN (O.S.)  
You were right. There's something  
evil here and we're all gonna die.

Robin turns to the double doors behind her. She enters the adjoining room...

INT. OLD CHURCH, NAVE - NIGHT

...and locks herself inside.

The rectangle room is no more than ten feet deep. There are two sets of pews, divided by an aisle that leads to a CLOSED SANCTUARY DOOR on the opposite end of the nave. There is a TRAIL OF BLOOD that leads to this door, which itself is marked with an UPSIDE DOWN CROSS hanging by a single NAIL. A clutter of WHITE CROSSES cover the floor.

Hundreds of LIGHT BULBS dangle from the ceiling, each tied to a piece of string. ALL ARE MYSTERIOUSLY LIT.



Robin sets the FLASHLIGHT on a pew. She dodges the hanging light bulbs as she moves to the sanctuary door. She rotates the UPSIDE DOWN CROSS right side up, then opens the door.

She kneels into the sanctuary, facing us.

BOOM. We hear Nia try to open the locked door behind us.

Robin clasps her hands together. With the utmost sincerity and conviction, she bows her head in prayer. The last prayer she'll ever give.

ROBIN

(softly)

I'm sorry for being jealous. For looking at the world and wondering why I don't have "that dress", or "that car", or "that opportunity".

The piled flashlight from upstairs roll about on the ceiling above us.

ROBIN

(softly)

I'm sorry I'm fake and self-conscious. Mean and bitter. Pretentious and arrogant. I'm sorry I spent so much of my life trying to be someone I'm not.

A BANG echoes through the sanctuary.

ROBIN

(softly)

I'm sorry for being ungrateful. I'm sorry for being superficial. I'm sorry for being stupid. For coming here, to this forest, when I knew I should never return. I'm sorry I couldn't save us. And I'm sorry for killing my only real friend.

The lights begin dimming all around. The frightening sounds are moving away.

ROBIN

(softly)

But mostly...

(beat)

I'm sorry for not dying a long time ago.

Robin takes a beat. She wipes a tear off her face. She looks up from her prayer. The room is dark and calm and quiet. She lowers her hands.

A sad, painful smile leaks onto her face. She is flooded with the overwhelming feeling of peace. Every bit of sadness trapped in her body is released. It's as if her very words repelled the evil away. And then --

WHAM. The sanctuary door snaps shut.

ROBIN SCREAMS.

The dangling light bulbs start burning brighter and brighter.

THE WALL SHAKES. Robin thrashes about inside the sanctuary.

The FLASHLIGHT rattles, then falls.

Dust cakes the room.

The SCREAMING becomes violent.

THE LIGHT BULBS BEGIN POPPING.

Glass flies everywhere.

POP, POP, POP...

Until the only remaining light in the room is provided by the FLASHLIGHT.

There's an abrupt SHRIEK followed by SILENCE.

The dust settles.

The sanctuary door slowly CREAKS open.

ROBIN STEPS OUT IN A TRANCE AS IF POSSESSED.

She lifts the FLASHLIGHT, then a SHARD OF GLASS.

Robin opens the double doors.

Nia is waiting for her. Her eyes flick down as she suddenly regains consciousness. She blinks, staring into Robin's light. A tear rolls down her cheek.

NIA  
(barely audible)  
Robin... where are we?  
(beat)  
I wanna go home.

ROBIN PLUNGES THE SHARD OF GLASS INTO NIA'S THROAT.

Nia collapses to the ground, blood spitting everywhere. Robin leaves Nia's corpse and retreats back into the sanctuary.

INT. OLD CHURCH, SANCTUARY - NIGHT

With the FLASHLIGHT now illuminating the dark corners of this room, Robin stabs the floor with the shard of glass, her hand bleeding as she writes:

**"ETHAN WAS HERE"**

Robin stands.

INT. OLD CHURCH, NAVE - NIGHT

She returns to the nave. It is empty. Nia's body has vanished.

EXT. THE CREST - NIGHT

Robin walks outside and around the church.

Walking in silence to the end of the open field.

We stop, finding ourselves at the edge of a fifty foot cliff.

The flashlight looms over the edge, giving us vertigo. And then --

ROBIN JUMPS.

And we free fall with her.

All the way down. Fifty feet.

Cracking and smacking against the cliff wall.

THUD.

We hit the ground.

The lens SPIDER CRACKS.

The light FLICKERING.

BOOM.

Robin hits in the foreground. Bloodied and bruised. Her body convulses, then freezes.

SILENCE FOR WHAT FEELS LIKE FOREVER.

Robin stands.

She shuffles over to the light, dragging a broken leg behind her. She lifts us into her hand.

And walks.

Three steps forward.

The light looks down another cliff ledge. This time a ninety foot drop. And then --

SHE JUMPS AGAIN. AND AGAIN, WE FREE FALL. ALL THE WAY DOWN. TO FINISH THE JOB.

The light lands and the lens bursts. Flickering still. And we hold. Waiting for one last scare. And instead, we get --

-- the SUNRISE. Warm light expands across the forest.

For the first time, our POINT OF VIEW separates itself from the FLASHLIGHT.

We push out through the shattered lens and see the FLASHLIGHT HOVERING in mid-air, illuminated still, until --

The light DIES and the FLASHLIGHT drops to the ground.

We rise high into the canopy, looking down on ROBIN'S REMAINS and FOUR OTHER BODIES (Nia, Ben, Chris, Amelia), realizing our point of view was never that of the flashlight, but rather the presence that possessed the flashlight.

FADE TO BLACK.