

THE RAINFOREST BROUGHT THEM HOME

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FADE IN:

EXT. BRITISH COLUMBIA RAINFOREST - MAY 18, 1998 - DAY

A logging road has been cut like an ugly gash in the dense, primeval rainforest. Parked nearby are three empty logging trucks and a massive yellow bulldozer, fresh dirt and broken tree limbs hanging from its blade.

Fifty protestors stand in a double line across the muddy road, and a "NO CUT" banner hangs from trees behind them.

Facing them are a band of weathered, unwashed and angry-looking loggers, with six uniformed members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police standing between the two groups.

The protestors are a mix of average-looking young men and women; Canadians in jeans and tee shirts, several German and Dutch twenty-somethings in all black clothing with dark green headbands, and four tribal members of Nuxalk Nation, with one - CHIEF CARLTON MACK - in traditional dress.

His traditional dress indicates his status as Hereditary Chief, or tribal spiritual leader.

It consists of a cylindrical felt hat with fabric flaps on both sides and a small, colorful wooden bird-face mask mounted on the front of the hat; a pale maroon collar-less shirt with bright red rectangular panels decorated with pearl buttons on the front.

CHIEF CARLTON MACK

We stand here today to say you are trespassing on our ancestral lands, lands you call Clayton Valley, lands we have never ceded to Canada.

Chief Mack raises one hand to quiet the protestors behind him.

CHIEF CARLTON MACK (CONT'D)

For ten thousand years we harvested the great trees by cutting a single plank from their trunks. You call them culturally modified trees. We say it's how we honor the Creator.

LOGGER

Yeah, and our creator gave us this forest to use, so move out of the way.

The logger throws a clod of dirt toward Chief Mack, just missing him. The protestors start to yell and surge forward, and Chief Mack holds his arms out to stop them.

CHIEF CARLTON MACK

We see your great anger at the Creator, and we wonder why. Your way of logging, killing so much life, is wrong. And your injunction holds no meaning for us.

Chief Mack holds the injunction high and his tribal colleague NORVAL holds a match to it. The protestors cheer and a logger throws an empty beer can at them. MOUNTIE OSWALD, the lead Mountie, shoots a hard look at him, then turns back toward Chief Mack.

MOUNTIE OSWALD

Alright, Chief. You know we have no choice but to enforce the injunction, and I know you have no choice but to burn it. So how do we resolve this?

Norval steps forward from the block of protestors.

NORVAL

You do what you have to do and we'll do what we must.

MOUNTIE OSWALD

Okay, Norval. If I arrest you and two or three others, will that take care of it today?

NORVAL

You must answer my question first: Do you concede that you will be violating the laws of Nuxalk Nation by allowing this logging?

MOUNTIE OSWALD

Hell, no! And you damn well know I'd have the entire provincial government down my back if I did.

Mountie Oswald throws his hands up in the air in frustration and turns to look at his troops.

MOUNTIE OSWALD (CONT'D)

Alright, let's get started.

Norval turns to face the block of protestors.

NORVAL

Double up!

The protestors shuffle together to form a double line.

NORVAL (CONT'D)

Again! And, again!

The protestors form a block of humans eight feet deep and six feet wide, and link arms. Some begin singing traditional Nuxalk songs of resistance.

The seventy-ton bulldozer roars to life, shaking the ground, and lurches toward the protestors. The loggers throw dirt at the protestors and start to charge them.

LOGGERS
Move 'em out! Bury 'em!

The six Mounties spread out to form a line between the protestors and loggers.

The two youngest tribal members, teenagers ROY and DURAN - dash toward the bulldozer.

They scramble around the six-foot-high blade, jump onto the slowly turning treads and rush the operator.

Seeing this, a few of the loggers yell and pull them down to the ground. Others join them and some begin to beat the teenagers.

One young logger, GEORGE, hesitates briefly, looking troubled. As an older logger raises his fist to pound on Roy, George jumps into the crowd and wrestles him away. Roy watches.

GEORGE
Stop it! Stop!

Mountie Oswald fires a shot in the air. Everyone freezes.

MOUNTIE OSWALD
The next joker takes a swing at
anyone gets a bullet in his ass.

Loggers and protestors begin moving away from each other. The older logger whom George grabbed shoves him roughly. Duran blocks George's fall, and they nod at each other.

MOUNTIE OSWALD (CONT'D)
Everybody get real serious about
making nice or you'll end up in the
tank for a few days, understand?

PETER, a fifty-something, white male American ex-pat, helps Roy and Duran to their feet. Roy's right eye is swelling shut and Duran has two small cuts over his eyes; both have bruises and abrasions.

MOUNTIE OSWALD (CONT'D)
Alright, Norval, last chance: you
and the Chief here get your people
off the road, or we'll arrest
everyone.

The protestors look to Norval for guidance.

He shakes his head, and the protestors form another line across the road. The Mounties begin arresting them one by one.

As a Mountie puts handcuffs on Chief Mack, Norval charges toward them. The chief shrugs him away.

CHIEF CARLTON MACK
You get out of here and get the
bail money.

Norval nods and slips away with Peter, Roy and Duran.

Mountie Oswald turns away, pretending not to see them leaving.

PETER
Let's get back to the boat before
anyone cuts it up.

As the protestors are led away in handcuffs the bulldozer operator starts the massive machine again.

The blade of the bulldozer pushes a thirty-foot fir tree onto the protestors' soggy camp, and begins to bury it under a pile of red earth.

EXT. BRITISH COLUMBIA RAINFOREST - MOMENTS LATER

Norval, Roy, Duran, and Peter are trekking down a muddy slope toward an inlet where the Zodiac is tied up along with a dozen other boats.

DURAN
Chief Mack shouldn't be the only
Nuxalkmc arrested, we need to-

PETER
Not here, not now. You need to be
out organizing for the Skowquiltz
fight coming up this fall, not in
jail.

NORVAL
Let me see your faces. Duran, Roy,
let me see.

The teenagers stop and turn slightly, their anger at being pulled away from the action still obvious.

Norval examines their wounds and ruffles their short dark hair.

NORVAL (CONT'D)

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Not too bad. Still got your
earplug, Roy. Your moms will be
upset, though.

He smiles broadly, puts his arms around Roy's and Duran's
shoulders and runs down the slope, pulling them along and
howling loudly.

INT. BELLA COOLA, B.C. BIG WOODS CAFE - MAY 19, 1998 - DAY

Norval enters the café with Peter and Roy at his side.

Norval and his companions dodge chairs and waiters, ignoring
the wary stares of various grizzled loggers and Canadian
forestry officials seated at tables as they head towards the
back room.

INT. BIG WOODS CAFÉ BACK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

GERALD, Norval's cousin, is seated alone at a round table.

He is a broad-shouldered, dark-haired man in his mid-
fifties, impeccably dressed and groomed, who owns a
successful Native art gallery in Vancouver.

Beyond the table a picture window shows a view of the town's
main street and blue-white glaciers in the high valleys of
the distant green mountains.

NORVAL
Hey, Gerald. Okay if we join you?

GERALD
Of course.

Chairs scrape the floor and creak as the men sit at the
table.

GERALD (CONT'D)
Nice face, Roy. Where's Duran?
Wasn't he with you this morning?

NORVAL
On his way. How'd you know that?

Gerald half-turns his head to indicate two forestry
officials sitting at a nearby table.

GERALD
Bad news travels fast.

NORVAL
Ah. They must've been monitoring
the loggers' radios.

Peter takes the silverware out of his napkin and moves it about on the table restlessly.

PETER
Roy and Duran are the real heroes.
They jumped the 'dozer and wrestled
it to the ground. Norval and I were
just along for the ride.

ROY
Mostly, they just got in the way.

GERALD
But what happened? I thought this
was going to be a peaceful delaying
action.

NORVAL
We had no leverage to delay any
longer, so we ran a symbolic
blockade and burned their
injunction.

ROY
We jumped the 'dozer and headed for
the operator's cage-

He breaks off as Duran arrives and throws himself into a chair next to Roy.

DURAN
-And then the loggers jumped us and
it all went down from there.

ROY
Charlie didn't though.

DURAN
Yeah, I saw that.

PETER
Who?

DURAN
Charlie. Played football with us
last year in school. He dropped out
and started logging.

ROY
Maybe he hasn't gone completely to
the dark side, hey?

Peter reaches for a pitcher of water and begins pouring himself a glass.

PETER
Do you guys ever hang out with him?

DURAN

See'em once in a while around town.
Went hunting with him and a couple
of other loggers last month.

NORVAL

Be careful about that. Some of
those guys are dangerous.

ROY

We know who is who. We're not crazy
kids anymore.

He pokes Duran.

ROY (CONT'D)

I'm not, anyway.

Duran fakes a scowl and shakes his fist at Roy, then turns
back to Gerald.

DURAN

But Chief Mack and 10 others got
arrested.

ROY

Yeah, and now Norval has to bail
them out.

GERALD

That right, Norval?

Roy glowers at Gerald.

ROY

Whadda ya mean, is that right? It's
what I said, isn't it?

NORVAL

Easy, young warrior. Rhetorical
question.

ROY

Yeah, yeah, whatever.

DURAN

Chill, dude!

Roy grabs Duran by the shirt.

ROY

Screw you.

As Duran starts to stand, JON JORGESON, café owner, steps
quickly up to the table.

JON JORGESON

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Okay, fellas, no fighting in here.
Give me your orders or take a walk,
please.

Norval reaches over and casually detaches Roy's hand from Duran's shirt. Duran sinks back into his seat. Both boys look slightly abashed.

NORVAL
They won't be fighting, Jon.

GERALD
I had the smoked salmon salad
already.

NORVAL
Sounds good. Everyone?

There is a general nodding of heads in agreement.

ROY
Whatever...

He pulls a crumpled graphic novel out of his back pocket and begins reading it.

JON JORGESON
Fine, then, four more salmon
salads.

PETER
And four coffees.

Across the room, HAROLD, a mixed-blood member of Nuxalk Nation and a troubled loner, pokes his head in the door and then hesitantly steps through it.

He looks nervous and confused. Blue paint is spattered on his clothes and face.

GERALD
Make it five, and five salads. Our
friend Harold is coming this way
and he looks hungry.

Waving his hand in acknowledgement, Jon walks away.

NORVAL
Hey, Harold, come on over.

Still some feet from the table, Harold stops abruptly, shaking his head.

PETER
Aren't you hungry? Grab a chair.

Harold moves backward a step and gestures at Norval, who stands and walks towards him.

NORVAL
What's up, Harold?

They stand close to each other and speak quietly.

Peter looks away and plays with his napkin.

PETER
We shouldn't stare. He has a hard
enough time being with people.

GERALD
Right. Looks like he's not going to
sit. Roy, go tell Jon to make one
of those salads and coffees to go.
And put it on my tab.

Norval returns to the table as Roy gets up and intercepts
Harold by the door.

They stand talking as Norval sits back down.

GERALD (CONT'D)
What's going on with Harold? Same
old issues?

NORVAL
Can't keep the odd jobs coming in
steady, needs some help to get by.

GERALD
His face is haunted, like the
tribal masks William Baxter makes
in his studio up the river. Bought
four this morning. They sell well;
people seem to want to look inside
themselves through those masks.

Norval leans forward and stares at Gerald.

NORVAL
Oh yeah? Too bad Harold can't sell
his look.

GERALD
The real thing, the living mask, is
too dangerous for most people.
(beat)
But I get your drift, cousin. I'm
willing to help out if we can do
something for him.

NORVAL
It's not easy to know how much to
give him. Some of it goes for
booze, but he's not a drunk and he
works hard when he's got work.

PETER
Does he still do odd jobs for BC
Logging?

Norval glances at Peter, clearly not happy that Peter has asked him this.

NORVAL
I think so. Man has to make a
living, damn it, so let's not-

PETER
-I'm not trying to put him down,
just wondering what we could do to-

Gerald leans his large, broad-shouldered body back in his chair and pulls a money clip from his pocket.

GERALD
Tell you what, here's a fifty. You
give it to him. If you think of
anything we can do to keep him away
from the loggers, let me know.

NORVAL
That's good, Gerald, that's good.

He takes the money from Gerald and puts it in his shirt pocket.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Of course, I'm gonna need some bail
money, too.

GERALD
How much?

NORVAL
Don't know yet. Have to wait 'til
they're booked, but probably a few
hundred. You'll get it back after
the trial.

Gerald stands, his chair screeching loudly.

He brushes an invisible something off his black-on-black silk shirt and brown leather pants.

Two silver and turquoise Navajo bracelets jangle on his wrist.

GERALD
Then let me know before I leave on
Friday. Right now I'm going over to
the Community House to talk with
the elders. Pay some respect. Maybe
get some guidance on Harold.

He gives a goodbye salute.

GERALD (CONT'D)
Peter, I'll see you at the airstrip on Friday. Jack's coming in for us at noon?

PETER
Closer to one. Meet me here at eleven for lunch? I'll pay Harold to drive us up to the strip.

GERALD
Alright, then.

He turns to Roy and Duran.

GERALD (CONT'D)
Keep these guys honest, okay?

ROY
Not possible.

GERALD
Well, I guess you'll just have to tolerate 'em, then.

Duran pokes Roy with his elbow and gestures towards a pretty young woman sitting by herself at another table.

DURAN
Not really. Let's go sit with Betty. She shouldn't have to eat lunch all alone.

ROY
You are so right, dude. See you guys later.

They get up and walk towards the young woman's table.

NORVAL
Much later, no doubt.

INT. BIG WOODS CAFE BACK ROOM - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

Peter picks lazily at the remains of his salmon salad, drops his fork on the plaid plastic table cover and looks at Norval.

Gone quiet and distant, Norval leans on his crossed arms and gazes our the window, apparently listening to something Peter can't hear.

PETER

Gerald's very interesting.
Sometimes seems deeper than he lets
on.

Norval shakes his head slightly, as if waking himself up.

NORVAL
What?

PETER
I said, Gerald's-

NORVAL
-I heard you.

PETER
He seems totally focused on the
success of his Vancouver gallery.
Looks at everything else through
that lens most of the time.

NORVAL
That's what makes him successful,
Peter. Why would you even question
that?

PETER
Just making an observation, not
questioning.

NORVAL
Un-huh. And what would you think of
him if he weren't successful, would
that fit the backward-Indian
stereotype better?

Red-faced, genuinely irritated, Peter throws a spoon at
Norval.

PETER
Fuck off. Thirty years and you
still need to test me?

Catching the spoon before it hits him, Norval grins.

NORVAL
My history makes me keep testing
your history, friend. We're both
creatures of our peoples' pasts,
and it's hard to shake.

Peter picks up his half-empty water glass and raises it
towards Norval.

PETER
See this glass of water, Norval?

NORVAL

Oh no, don't do it. I might deserve
it, but-

Rising from his chair, Peter dumps the water on Norval's
head.

PETER
There! Wash your past away.

NORVAL
Ahh, damn you, that's cold.
(beat)
But thanks for the baptism,
reverend Peter.

The other customers in the room have turned to stare. Norval
waves at them genially.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
It's all right, folks, I asked for
it. All is well in Nuxalk country.

He turns back to Peter while reaching for his own water
glass.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
And now, my son...

INT. CAFE. BETTY'S TABLE - DAY

Betty, Roy and Duran watch as Peter runs out of the cafe
doorway with Norval close behind, water glass in hand. The
two men are laughing. Jon Jorgeson follows them into the
street, a great shock of his white hair sticking almost
straight up.

Roy snorts in derision.

ROY
Adults! Who needs them?

Betty stands and picks up her knapsack.

BETTY
Anyhow, why don't you come over
tomorrow night and talk to him? He
didn't turn toxic just 'cause his
stepdad got him a logging job.

ROY
He didn't have to--

DURAN
--He didn't have to save your ass
this morning, either.

ROY

He did not save my ass!

Laughing, Betty starts to walk away.

BETTY

C'mon. You guys've known George forever. See you tomorrow?

DURAN

Yeah. See you tomorrow.

EXT. BELLA COOLA - MAIN STREET - DAY

Still laughing, Norval and Peter look up as Jon Jorgeson bursts out of the doorway behind them. Peter's back is wet, and Norval's glass is empty.

JON JORGESON

The entertainment was nice, but it don't make payment, you know.

PETER

Norval's buying today.

NORVAL

Me? Why me? How much, Jon?

JON JORGESON

Two meals plus coffee comes to fourteen-fifty, plus a generous tip for all the mopping.

NORVAL

That's all? What about the other three meals?

JON JORGESON

The big guy paid for those when he left.

NORVAL

Fine. Here's a twenty, it's all I have. Go ahead, white man, strip the Indian of his last dollar.

Jon takes the money from Norval and turns to go back into the cafe.

JON JORGESON

Thank you kindly, gentlemen.

Norval starts to laugh.

NORVAL

Hey, wait a minute! What mopping? All the water landed on me.

JON JORGESON

Like I said, thank you kindly.

As the door to the cafe closes behind him, Norval and Peter look at each other, as Peter tries to dry his face and hair with a handkerchief.

PETER

Norval, that was not a happy event at Clayton Valley today. Losing that place must hurt, especially for your tribal elders.

NORVAL

Yeah, but we've got a good chance of getting our own injunction to delay them a few more months. I'll hear something more about that from our legal guys in Vancouver pretty soon.

PETER

Yeah, well, it's still crap. And then there's industry eyes on the biggest prize...

NORVAL

We'll be more than ready for the Skowquiltz, Peter.

PETER

Hope so. But I won't see you 'til September. I'm staying at home the next few months.

NORVAL

Working on your book?

Peter nods.

NORVAL (CONT'D)

When I'm in Vancouver I'll drop by Tofino afterwards to see you and Sarah.

PETER

Sarah's been a little off lately. It'll do her good to see you.

NORVAL

It's been a couple of years. Time goes by too fast, hey?

He turns and takes a few steps away, waving a hand behind his back, then swings back around quickly.

NORVAL (CONT'D)

Peter.

PETER

What?

Norval walks back to Peter until their chests are just a few inches apart, his pupils glowing with some secret inner fire even as his left eye floats lazily sideways.

He looks down into Peter's face, his warm breath a bridge between them.

NORVAL

The Skowquiltz is the big one. You know that, right?

PETER

I know that. We've lost far too much already. The bastards can't have this one.

NORVAL

It will get very ugly and dangerous. Everyone has to know that going in.

Peter nods. He smiles grimly. Norval smiles back, teeth showing between tight lips, and pulls Peter close for a quick bear hug.

Keeping his right eye on Peter, he backs up several steps, turns quickly and walks up the main street of Bella Coola toward the Nuxalk Community House.

EXT. BELLA COOLA. MAIN STREET - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Bending forward in the afternoon heat, Norval watches his feet working their way through the dust and gravel.

A sudden, high-pitched mechanical whine startles him and he jumps. Looking back, he sees two elderly men forty feet away unwinding a winch cable from the front of a dented, rusty pickup truck.

He looks out over the town from this slightly higher elevation. Only a few humans move in the distance.

The two elderly men look down at the winch cable and shake their heads as sunlight glistens on the truck's windshield.

Norval looks across the street at the Nuxalk tribal headquarters [a longhouse design with a totem pole in front] and turns his face up to the sun.

HEREDITARY CHIEF CECIL, a short, gray-haired man dressed in jeans and a tee shirt, walks toward Norval from the direction of the Community House.

CHIEF CECIL

I heard about this morning.

NORVAL

Yeah. Didn't work out so well. So what's up with the big treaty talks, Cecil? Has the BC government bought out anyone here?

CHIEF CECIL

Norval! You know better than to joke like that. We are not treaty Indians.

NORVAL

I apologize. Just feeling somewhat cynical today.

CHIEF CECIL

That's not good, son. Stand still a minute.

Chief Cecil places one palm on Norval's forehead and the other over his heart. He closes his eyes and breathes deeply.

Norval's face goes blank. Suddenly Cecil pushes him away.

CHIEF CECIL (CONT'D)

Stay grounded. Some day they will be gone, and we'll still be here. The Nuxalkmc don't erase.

Cecil walks away toward the center of town. Norval puts his hand to his forehead, then turns and walks quickly toward the Community House.

INT. BETTY'S HOUSE, BELLA COOLA - NIGHT - MAY 20

Canadian rap booms in the background of a somewhat dilapidated but comfortable living room half-filled with Nuxalk and white teenagers, drinking beer, smoking weed, and talking.

Roy and Duran sit off to one side with George and Betty, who are holding hands.

GEORGE

So he said it's either start bringing in some money or find another place to live, an' it's not like there's a shitload of jobs out there.

ROY

It still sucks. You, a logger now-

-

DURAN

--yeah, but now that you are,
George, maybe you can tell us
what's going on with the
Skowquiltz. We've heard some
rumors--

GEORGE

--don't know anything about that,
but I can keep my ears open.

DURAN

Secret agent man!

Roy leans forward excitedly and elbows Duran.

ROY

Hey, man, we can be the first ones
in!

EXT. TOFINO, VANCOUVER ISLAND, B.C. - MORNING - MAY 22

Tofino and Clayoquot Sound gleam in the early light, boats
and float planes tied up at docks in the Sound, waves slowly
breaking on the Pacific side of the island.

Past art galleries and restaurants, a general store and a
post office is the Common Loaf Bake Shop, where there are
the sounds of a coffee machine whining and a screen door
slamming.

INT. COMMON LOAF BAKE SHOP, TOFINO - AFTERNOON

Light-colored wood and potted plants predominate within the
many-windowed shop, closed now for the afternoon.

SARAH, a casually dressed woman in her early fifties, leans
against a wooden column near the counter where BRIGETTE, her
long-time friend, fellow activist, and owner of the bake
shop, is spraying whipped cream on two cups of coffee.

Off to the side is a table where sit several other women,
longtime fellow activists, talking animatedly.

BRIGETTE

I don't think there's much you can
do about that, you know? If he's
totally obsessed with carrying out
this last action-

Sarah shakes her head impatiently.

SARAH

But it won't be his last, I know
that, so what's the point?

BRIGETTE

Then you make it his last. When he gets back home tonight, you make him understand!

Sarah takes her cup of coffee and rolls it slowly between her palms.

SARAH

He said that when the time comes to defend the Skowquiltz, he'll cut off his hair, paint his face, merge with the forest-

BRIGETTE

-What?

SARAH

He said cutting his hair would be a ritual preparation for the most important action of his life.

BRIGETTE

Good Lord. You do have to put up with, girl!

(beat)

Hey, we could write a book, couldn't we? All these years...

SARAH

We've paid our dues, haven't we?

BRIGETTE

Three months in that hellhole in Victoria, I'd say we have, not to mention all the hours we've put in right here, planning actions.

She gestures towards the group of women at the table.

SARAH

But I'm done with that now.

BRIGETTE

Done with what, exactly?

SARAH

Putting my body on the line, or going to jail to make a point.

BRIGETTE

Me too, girl. Too damn old, for one thing.

One of the women at the table calls out to Brigitte and Sarah to join them and the others look over at them.

BRIGETTE (CONT'D)

Hang on, gals, we'll be there in a New York minute. Gotta save the planet first.

She turns back to Sarah and looks at her closely.

BRIGETTE (CONT'D)

Well?

SARAH

I've been having dreams...

She stops for a moment, sips her coffee, and resumes rolling the cup between her palms.

BRIGETTE

Tell me.

SARAH

Dreams about losing my baby just before we left the States.

BRIGETTE

You never told me that!

SARAH

I never told anyone. It was thirty years ago. Peter was there. It was a miscarriage.

Brigette takes Sarah by the arm and nods towards an empty table set somewhat apart from the others.

BRIGETTE

Come on. I need to hear more, and I bet you need to say more.

INT. SARAH AND PETER'S HOME, LIVING ROOM - THAT NIGHT

Dressed in a white terrycloth bathrobe, Sarah puts another log on a fire in the fireplace. She sits in a nearby wicker chair and stares at the fire as tears run down her cheeks.

She wipes the tears from her eyes. Suddenly she stands, mouth set firmly. She picks up the chair and moves it away from the center of the rug.

Sarah looks around the living room, walks briskly toward a small sofa near the kitchen door and pushes it up against the wall. She wipes tears from her face again, looking around uncertainly.

The faint sound of a car sliding to a stop on the gravel driveway outside startles her, and she looks toward the kitchen doorway.

She removes her bathrobe and carefully step up onto the sofa back. There she catches her balance and crouches.

EXT. OUTSIDE TOFINO - SAME NIGHT

The headlights of Peter's truck illuminate the forest on either side of the dirt road as he drives towards their house.

The night sky is dark turquoise and the spruce trees alongside the road have turned black.

The truck turns a sharp corner and an aging A-frame comes into view, an old black sedan parked next to it. There are no lights in the house.

Peter brakes the truck quickly a few feet from the sedan, making the gravel crackle to announce his arrival.

INT. SARAH AND PETER'S HOUSE - MUD ROOM - NIGHT

PETER

Sarah!

Pausing in the small mud room, Peter listens for a response. There is none. He looks into the kitchen and beyond that sees a fire in the living room fireplace.

INT. SARAH AND PETER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Firelight flickers across furniture and floor as Peter walks into the room.

Sarah jumps on Peter's back, grasping his hair and kicking him behind the knees. He lands hard on a rag rug near the fireplace. On top of him Sarah pulls at his clothes, crying.

PETER

Sarah! What the hell?

She pins his neck with her forearm and bites his right earlobe open.

Peter yells and tries to pull away, but she slips between his outstretched arms and kisses him hard with blood on her lips.

They hold each other tightly, with more desperation than desire. Sarah cries and buries her head in Peter's chest while small bits of pine sap explode in the fireplace.

PETER (CONT'D)

Sarah, my god, are you okay? Honey?

Sarah raises up on her forearms, green eyes wet and ablaze. She puts her leg over his, pulling him tight, and licks blood from his ear.

PETER (CONT'D)
What brought this on?

SARAH
I feel like I've lost you.

Peter flinches at her words and stares at her in disbelief.

PETER
What?

SARAH
You're not here anymore. Even when you're home, you're gone.

PETER
What do you mean, that's not true.

SARAH
We used to talk about our dreams, even our disappointments, about whatever was inside us. We don't do that anymore. We live separate lives now.

PETER
But-

SARAH
-And I've been having dreams, disturbing dreams...

She shivers in his arms and wipes tears from her face.

PETER
About what?

SARAH
My miscarriage, our miscarriage, over and over.

PETER
What? Why in god's name-

SARAH
-There's no why, it just is. Brigitte thinks the dreams are telling me to go home and look for whatever it was I lost when we moved here.

PETER

You didn't lose anything. What the hell does Brigitte know that we don't?

SARAH
How old were we then, Peter?
Twenty?

PETER
I think so, but-

She starts to pull away. Peter hangs on to her tightly.

SARAH
-It was so horrible, seeing that tiny being lying on the bloody towels.

PETER
Sarah, stop. Why do you have to re-live that? It's not-

SARAH
-Why did we decide not to try again? What were we so afraid of?

PETER
Afraid? Sarah, we were just kids, and we put that decision aside for a while. Then we moved here-

SARAH
-I know. We moved here, and got swept up in saving the rainforest, as if... But it leaves a hole in me now, Peter, I don't know why.

PETER
I'm sorry, baby, but what can-

Sarah takes his face in her hands and brings her own face close to his.

SARAH
-Right now I need you here to help hold this pain. Here, not off saving the rainforest.

PETER
Honey, I'm trying to understand-

SARAH
-Don't, Peter. Just try to feel all the loss, all the things we didn't do.

She kisses his cheek, and then rests her head back on his chest.

SARAH (CONT'D)
I'm sorry if I scared you. I just did what my instincts told me to do, to get through to you.

PETER
Well, you did that all right.

Sarah smiles and touches his earlobe.

SARAH
Will you forgive me for biting you?

PETER
I'll try not to make you do it again.

The phone rings loudly.

PETER (CONT'D)
Let's not answer it. Can't be important as this.

SARAH
No, it can't.

PETER
Although maybe it's Norval...

Sarah sits up and crosses her arms over her breasts.

SARAH
See what I mean?

PETER
It's just that Chief Mack and some others got arrested, and-

SARAH
-I really don't care, Peter. We're talking about us now, remember?

PETER
I'm sorry. I won't even listen to the message tonight, okay?

SARAH
That makes no difference. But it's probably the best I can get.

PETER
Please lie down with me again, Sarah. I'll shut up.

INT. SARAH AND PETER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

Sarah's eyes are closed. She sighs and shivers. She stands up and puts her bathrobe on.

SARAH
I'm going to heat some water for tea, Peter. Do you want a cup?

PETER
Yes, please.

SARAH
Go ahead and listen to that message. I know you want to.
(beat)
Oh, that reminds me, Ted called today. Left a message. Something about having a new lover named Anna.

PETER
Good for him. Anna who?

SARAH
Didn't say. But he did say something about how being with this new woman kicked up feelings about divorcing Cathy.

Peter closes his eyes as if concentrating as Sarah turns to leaves the room.

PETER
Ted and Cathy. Huh...

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS, FAYETTEVILLE CAMPUS - 1967 - DAY

Sarah and Peter stand alongside Ted, Cathy and Rennie in an anti-war demonstration.

Some 150 students dressed in the counter-culture garb of the 'sixties sing and chant, some carrying anti-war signs, as they march along a campus lawn.

They are heading towards the University administration building, a forbidding five-story Victorian building of brick and stone, where a dozen or so security guards stand casually near the entrance.

INT. SARAH AND PETER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Peter starts, his eyes opening wide.

PETER
Rennie!

Startled, Sarah comes back into the living room and looks at him quizzically.

SARAH
What's the matter? What brought up Rennie?

PETER
Thinking of Ted and Cathy reminded me of Rennie... And he just died...

SARAH
It's been a year, Peter. I know you're having a hard time with that, and I miss him terribly too, but you need to come back here now because it's our life that-

PETER
-But you mentioned Ted and-

SARAH
-I know, and I'm sorry I did.

INT. PETER'S WRITING STUDIO - ONE HOUR LATER

An old desktop computer sits on the middle of Peter's desk.

Above it is a bulletin board covered in sticky notes, a "Welcome to Bella Coola" sign, and photographs of clear-cut forests, Orcas, and Sarah.

A tattered, 8 by 11 envelope bulges on the desk next to the computer.

Also on the desk is a manuscript of about thirty pages, with the title in large bold letters:

AN ECO-WARRIOR'S GUIDE TO THE NEW DARK AGES

Peter picks up the manuscript and leafs through it, stopping to extract one piece of paper. He scans it quickly and then thumbtacks it to the bulletin board.

He looks at it and takes it down again and reads the introductory quotation aloud.

PETER
The final reason for Rome's defeat was the failure of mind and spirit to meet the challenge of new and great events.
(beat)
Material development outstripped human development; the Dark Ages took possession of Europe, and classical antiquity ended.

He puts the paper down on the desk, shaking his head.

PETER (CONT'D)
 Rome. Not sure that's right. But
 everyone references it, and...
 Hell, it's too late to be thinking
 about this.

He sighs loudly. After a moment he picks up the manila envelope and empties the contents on his desk.

Dozens of old photographs slide out of the envelope. They are pictures from Peter and Sarah's college days and the period just after that.

Peter rights a few that have landed upside down, and we see a photo of a young Peter and Rennie, grinning widely. He takes his hand away from the photo as if it has burned him.

Peter flips through the Rolodex on his desk, picks up the phone and dials. The phone can be heard ringing several times before it is answered by a tired-sounding voice.

TED (V.O.)
 Hello?

PETER
 Ted? Did I wake you? This is Peter.

TED (V.O.)
 Well, hell, Peter, it's only
 midnight here in DC. What do you
 think?

As the conversation continues Peter sorts slowly through the collection of photographs, pausing now and then to stare at one or another of them.

PETER
 Sorry. Sarah said you called with
 good news and I couldn't wait 'til
 sunrise, amigo.

TED (V.O.)
 Wait a sec while I go in the living
 room so I don't wake Anna.

PETER
 Anna, huh? Tell me about her. How
 long has this been going on?

TED (V.O.)
 A few months. She's an attorney,
 advocates for an International
 Criminal Court. Met her at a pizza
 shop in Georgetown and life has
 never been the same since. Or as
 good.

PETER

Smart. Good work. When's the wedding bells?

TED (V.O.)

Umm, little too fast for me, Peter.
(beat)
Hey, I've got a consulting gig coming up in Kentucky in July. Might be a good opportunity for you and Sarah to hustle back to the States, hang with me and Anna and some good country people.

PETER

When? Sarah sure needs a break. Been giving me some serious signals.

Peter looks at a photo of Sarah from 1967, looking serious and determined. He touches his wounded earlobe gently.

TED (V.O.)

I'll be there from the fifth through the ninth.

PETER

Sweet. I'll give you a strong 'maybe' and check it out with Sarah in the morning. Where is it?

TED (V.O.)

Harlan, Hazard, Cumberland area. Coal country originally, now it's chip-mill country with clear-cutting of the oak and hickory forests.

PETER

Same old keep-'em-in-poverty story.

TED (V.O.)

And the same old grind for me. Just one more fight in an endless stream of fights.

Peter flips another photo over and sees himself and Ted in an anti-war demonstration.

PETER

Gotcha there. Same feelings Sarah's expressing loud and clear. She's actually trying to talk me out of helping Norval defend the Skowquiltz.

TED (V.O.)

Isn't that where the longhouse is, the one you showed me a few years ago? Incredible forest. Is it up for logging?

PETER

Yep. Zillions of board feet of old-growth spruce and fir, a predatory logging company's wet dream. Oh yeah, it's up.

TED (V.O.)

Shit. Well, it never ends, does it? Hey Peter, I'm crashing here. Let's talk again soon about Kentucky. Love to Sarah.

A photo falls from Peter's hand and lands face up on his desk, and Peter sees twenty-year-old Rennie staring at him from a clearing in the jungle of Viet Nam.

PETER

Wow.

(beat)

Back at you Ted. Tell Anna she better be good to you, or we'll be real sad.

TED (V.O.)

Right, that'll scare the hell out of her, for sure!

Peter disconnects the phone and puts it on the desk. He picks up the photo of Rennie and stares at it, then gazes around his studio, lost in thought.

His expression of excitement shifts slowly to one of fatigue and sadness.

Pushing some of the photos out of the way, he picks up the manuscript again and reads another paragraph aloud.

PETER

It will take many voices to reawaken the profound and powerful eco-warrior spirit of our species, our last hope to reclaim our lost soul.

Peter looks back at the photo of Rennie, shakes his head and continues reading.

PETER (CONT'D)

Let us hope for a thousand more voices to help the eco-warriors of the 21st century bring forth a new way of living with respect for all the Great Spirit's creatures,

including that rogue species called
human.

He drops the page on his desk and looks up at the bulletin board.

Pinned to the board is a rectangular card commemorating a Memorial Service for Rennie, dated January 10, 1997, and indicating his two tours as a medic in Vietnam.

PETER (CONT'D)
Shit. Damn it all to hell, Rennie.
Damn it all to hell!

He buries his face in his hands.

EXT. EASTERN KENTUCKY - JULY 7 - LATE AFTERNOON

An oxbow river lined with oak and Osage orange trees cuts through the landscape of low, wooded mountains and green river-bottom farmland stretching to the horizon.

Amidst this is a rugged, two-story log building with a "Yellow Mountain Lodge" sign hanging off the porch roof.

Ravens circle nearby and two young hounds sniff around the porch steps. Three people sit in large wooden rockers.

EVERRET, the lodge owner, a raw-boned and hefty fifty-ish Kentucky former farm boy, comes out of the front door in his worn coveralls. The hounds jump on his legs as he throws food scraps to them.

He parks himself against a roof pole and begins talking and laughing with the people in the rockers.

INT. YELLOW MOUNTAIN LODGE - COMMON ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

The common room is cavernous, with log walls, a yawning fieldstone fireplace and deep hearth, a number of worn, overstuffed chairs and sofas, and a heavy wooden pool table strewn with balls and cues.

A desktop computer sits on a low table in one corner of the room.

Sarah sits on a couch next to Peter. Near them Ted is half-lying on an overstuffed chair with a faded floral print cover, legs dangling over a bulky arm rest.

Dim light comes from the windows on one side of the room and a low-voltage incandescent light hangs over the pool table.

Despite his laid-back position, Ted has a look of discomfort on his face.

SARAH

I don't know why you keep bringing that up, Peter. You know how I feel about you going off on another dangerous mission.

PETER

And I promised that this will be the last, unless-

SARAH

-Always the 'unless.' You just can't be counted on any more.

PETER

Whoa, now. That's going way out there, Sarah-

TED

-So what's going on here? Is there something more dangerous about defending the Skowqulitz than any others in the last thirty years?

SARAH

Thirty years. That's part of the problem, Ted. And every forest seems to be more crucial than the last one, and you know I've been there in body and soul, so I'm not-

PETER

-No one's accusing you of anything.

TED

So look, how about-

SARAH

-And there are other things, things most important in our lives, mine and yours, not just what always seems to be the only thing that can save the fucking world.

She stops for a moment, aware that both Peter and Ted are staring at her.

SARAH (CONT'D)

There. I finally said it. Fuck the world, I'm sick of it.

Peter looks at her with a mix of apprehension and sadness. Ted shakes his head as if to clear it out and pulls himself upright.

TED

Okay, then. Lots to talk about this week, huh?

Everret enters the room, humming an old Hank Williams tune.

EVERRET

Say, everyone, looking forward to the confab tomorrow? Bobby and Annetta, two Cherokee activists, will get in later tonight, and there's a large and long breakfast table where everyone can get acquainted in the morning.

He looks at the silent trio, finally becoming aware of the tension in the room.

EVERRET (CONT'D)

Er...

TED

I know Bobby and Annetta from the meeting in February, Ev. Great people.

EVERRET

Alright then, Ted, you can make the intros. Tomorrow night there'll be a short period of drumming. Bobby wants to set a tone, so don't anybody wonder what's going on.
(beat)
Oh, almost forgot.

Everret winks at Ted.

EVERRET (CONT'D)

There's a young woman just drove up outside. Thought you might know her.

TED

Hey, Anna's here! Thanks, Everret, I'll-

SARAH

-No, Ted. I'm going to go meet her first.

She stands and begins to walk towards Everret and the door.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I need to know her, unfiltered.

TED

Unfiltered, huh? Okay, that is what you'll get, any day. That woman is totally unfiltered.

SARAH

Good. I like her already. We won't be long.

Sarah and Everett leave the room.

Ted looks at Peter inquiringly.

Peter raises his hands in frustration.

PETER
We're working on it, amigo.

TED
Seems pretty intense. Anything you want to tell me?

PETER
Yeah, well... Sarah gave me a deadline. September 30th--

TED
--for what?

PETER
To decide between continuing direct action in the forest, or being with her...

TED
What? How can--

PETER
--this has been coming a long time, Ted. She's looking for something new, wants to spend more time back here in the states, and I'm not really sure what else exactly.

TED
Damn! But why September 30?

PETER
Thirtieth anniversary of our move to Canada.

Ted lets out a low whistle. They contemplate each other for a moment.

TED
Thirty years, huh? Lots of memories, my friend.

PETER
Yeah. Lots.

INT. YELLOW MOUNTAIN LODGE - ENTRY FOYER - LATE AFTERNOON

The heavy wooden door to the porch swings open. In the dim light, a dark-haired woman in her thirties struggles with a suitcase. Sarah steps towards her.

SARAH
Anna? I'm Sarah.

ANNA
Oh! You startled me. Yes, I'm Anna.
It's good to meet you, Sarah.

SARAH
I'm so glad you could be here.
We've grilled Ted about you,
naturally, but I want to get to
know you woman to woman.

ANNA
Yes, of course. Is Ted around?

SARAH
He's in the common room with Peter.
Let me show you to your room.

INT. YELLOW MOUNTAIN LODGE - COMMON ROOM - 20 MINUTES LATER

Sarah enters the room carrying a tray with a coffee pot and four cups.

TED
Hey, Sarah. Where's Anna?

Sarah puts the tray on a wooden side table near the sofa.

SARAH
She said she wanted to take a quick
shower so I showed her to your
room. You have found one terrific
woman, Ted! And yes, she is
unfiltered.

TED
Speaks her mind...

SARAH
More than that, Ted. Her whole
being speaks, not just her mind.
Congratulations!

PETER
When do I get to meet Wonder Woman?

SARAH
I just said she'd be right down,
Peter.

Tension settles in the room again. Sarah pours out coffee and begins handing around cups as Peter and Ted look at each other awkwardly.

PETER

Oh, yeah, Ted. You've gotta hear this! A brand new branch of the movement showed up on our doorstep recently.

TED

Who?

SARAH

Some west-coast young people in their twenties and early thirties, planning a mass tree-sit from Northern California to Alaska.

PETER

Maybe a hundred sitters, if they can pull it off.

TED

A hundred sitters! Holy hell! How many people does that take on the ground? Who's coordinating this thing?

Sarah smiles slightly at his excitement.

SARAH

I think they're saying, 'Move over, we're taking it from here.' And that's something I can support. Take over now, please!

Peter forces a smile.

PETER

It's like a human ecosystem has popped up from the soil, something like the anti-war days, but much calmer, more matter of fact. They have arrived.

TED

Who? The eco-warriors from your book?

PETER

Maybe. Whoever, they just appeared one day, fully fledged. And they were recruiting us!

Anna walks quietly into the common room, stopping far enough back in the shadows that she remains unnoticed.

She wears a black crew-neck pullover, faded jeans and brown leather sandals, and her damp hair is combed back away from her ears.

SARAH

These kids came up from Oregon and said they wanted to link a chain of a hundred tree-sitters to the BC coast, to make an international chain.

PETER

They had only thought of linking into Tofino. So I said, 'No, you have to go all the way up to the Tongass in Alaska, and sit in Bella Coola where the forests are the wildest and the most threatened.'

TED

When is this supposed to happen?

Anna steps forward into the light.

ANNA

Hi, everybody. What's this about a hundred tree-sitters?

INT. YELLOW MOUNTAIN LODGE - DINING ROOM - JULY 8 - MORNING

Multiple glass doors open along one wall of the large room, bringing the Kentucky forest inside.

Some thirty people mill about, talking and laughing as they serve themselves from a long buffet table with mounds of ham, bacon, home fries, scrambled eggs and toast.

The group includes Cherokee men and women in their twenties in a mixture of traditional garb and contemporary tattoos and piercings, young locals, activists in black from Frankfort, and two weathered-looking farmers in their sixties.

A large fruit bowl and a coffee urn rest on a side table and the two hound pups linger hopefully near the buffet.

There are eight round tables covered with oilcloth and surrounded by an eclectic mix of chairs.

Everret and his wife LEE ANN, a forty-year-old, mixed-blood Cherokee woman, sit at one of these tables, drinking coffee with the two farmers.

Peter and Sarah, carrying full plates and steaming coffee, walk towards a table where BOBBY and ANNETTA, a Cherokee couple in their late forties, sit with Ted and Anna.

BOBBY

We know the battle is engaged, that we are all warriors seeking to know where we will be arrayed on the field of our opponents.

Peter grins, instantly intrigued by Bobby's rhetoric, as he and Sarah reach the table.

PETER

We who? Hi, are you Bobby? I'm Peter and this is Sarah. May we join you?

BOBBY

Hi Peter, Sarah. Sit right down. We're talking about what circumstances got all of us to-

ANNETTA

-Something new is stirring, and whether we say the Creator is throwing a pattern on the winds or simply call it a critical mass of discontent, it's here.

Peter and Sarah sit at the table next to Bobby.

SARAH

Hi, Annetta? I'm Sarah.

ANNETTA

Welcome to our lands, Sarah. I've heard so much about you and Peter-

PETER

-But what were you saying you've been seeing that's new?

SARAH

Peter, slow down. You interrupted Annetta.

Annetta smiles at her and reaches across the table to pat her hand.

ANNETTA

It's not a problem, Sarah. We're all eager to know what's next. What we're talking about, Peter, is a shift taking place in how people relate to what is happening to the earth.

BOBBY

Once you key in you can see that there is a great vacancy, an

enormous emptiness spilling out of
the eyes of the people.

Anna reaches across the table for the salt shaker, and Bobby hands it to her.

ANNA

Which people do you mean by 'the
people'?

BOBBY

We live on the global rez, with
everyone, so we see all kinds of
people. The extreme nihilism
driving our world now, turning
people against each other, invades
everyone's-

ANNETTA

-It began long ago, when many of
our people were slaughtered, moved
from their homelands, torn from
their cultures. Now, in a different
way, that's happening to everyone,
not just Native people, through the
dominance of rampant commercialism.

Ted sets his coffee cup down and leans forward.

TED

But people in this country have
been walking dead for decades,
shuttling between corporate
cubicles and cookie-cutter malls.

Bobby nods, chewing a mouthful of food and looking
deliberately into Ted's eyes.

BOBBY

What we see now is the end-state of
runaway, shallow materialism.
Except for the hard-core angry man-
child, everyone seems to have
discovered the death-in-life
they're living.

ANNETTA

It may be the signal, or the
opening that had to occur before
battle could begin with any hope of
victory.

Sarah draws in a deep breath, her palms flat against the
tabletop.

SARAH

What do you mean by 'the battle'?
And what else do you see?

ANNETTA

We also see a powerful healing force, holed up for centuries, now ready to release itself. This spirit is called out as we and others create space for the healing.

Everret arrives at the table with a coffee pot and begins refilling cups.

EVERRET

Lee Ann and I'll join you all in a few minutes.

He nods toward the table where Lee Ann sits with the farmers.

EVERRET (CONT'D)

Got a little work to do first.

BOBBY

I can see that!

As Everret leaves, Peter looks at Annetta.

PETER

That's very interesting, Annetta. In the late Middle Ages, a similar spiritual energy was released over more than a century when all the great cathedrals were built.

Sarah looks at Peter with surprise.

SARAH

That's right, Peter, but now the healing energies will restore the earth rather than build monuments. About time, isn't it?

PETER

Except then the controlling powers commissioned the cathedrals. Today they commission the degradation of the earth.

Sarah pulls her chair closer to the table and leans in.

SARAH

That assumes today's industrial and financial powers have the same control over the human spirit as the religious orders did then.
(beat)
But you know it's quite different than that.

BOBBY

Yes, there is that difference. May I have the salt back, Anna?

Annetta grabs the salt shaker and hands it to him.

ANNETTA

Here. Some say it's a turning of the ages approaching, but it won't happen unless and until we finish preparing the way.

Peter leans in as if to better know the meanings of their words by being closer to them. Sarah's hand squeezes his leg under the table, and his hand covers hers.

PETER

What you see means we are no longer struggling alone, each of us in our own small pods of two or three souls, or even groups of fifty... And it fits well with-

Bobby grins at him.

BOBBY

-The hundred tree-sitters? Ted told us that incredible story this morning.

ANNETTA

He also told us about the work that Sarah and you have been doing in British Columbia for thirty years. What a commitment to Mother Earth you two have made!

Bobby turns to look more directly at Peter.

BOBBY

Ted also mentioned your writing project and something about your sense of writing into the void, of wondering if anyone could understand.

ANNETTA

You have your receptive audience here and all around the world. From what we know of your book it is part of the pattern. You finish it, Peter, and get it out.

BOBBY

She's very direct.

Everyone at the table laughs.

PETER

I appreciate that, Annetta. But tell me more about what you see coming.

Loud laughter and howling break out across the dining hall.

The young Cherokee and Frankfort activists begin drumming loudly with their hands on tabletops and dancing in a rotating circle around two tables.

Everyone in the hall watches, some howling or whistling in support.

ANNA

Looks like that's what's coming next!

SARAH

Isn't it wonderful? Such a cultural change from the 'fifties and early 'sixties. There's hope! We should just get out of the way.

INT. YELLOW MOUNTAIN LODGE - DINING ROOM - JULY 8

Across the room, the two farmers look alarmed at the ruckus taking place a few feet from their table.

EVERRET

You boys don't start worrying none, we're all on the same side here. You know I wouldn't be behind anything that's against your interests.

FARMER

Well, I reckon so, Everret. I know your old man would'na been anyway.

His face red, Everret raises his voice above the noise.

EVERRET

You got that right, amigo. I'm a chip off that old block and you know it.

He leans towards them conspiratorially.

EVERRET (CONT'D)

Kill this chip mill and we'll have leverage with Congressman Rodgers on that industrial hemp bill you boys want passed. Since you're ready to start planting the day it's legal, we could be the first

state in the Union to be producing,
get a jump on the market.

Both farmers continue looking warily at the dancers.

FARMER

All right, Everret, all right.

INT. YELLOW MOUNTAIN LODGE - DINING ROOM - JULY 8

Back across the room, Bobby, Annetta, et. al., are still talking as the dancing and singing wind down.

ANNETTA

And Sarah, our generation is moving into the traditional role of Wisdom Keepers, so-

TED

-But many think we don't have any wisdom to give because we haven't stopped the destruction of the earth.

SARAH

But how could we, Ted, in one generation? And we do have wisdom! We've been challenged in so many ways.

(beat)

Just remember the horror of dropping napalm on children in Vietnam, for god's sake, and we stopped that. We've been in the trenches for decades, protecting the earth! How can we not have some degree of wisdom to pass along?

Annetta and Bobby exchange a quick look.

ANNETTA

We agree, Sarah. But we have a much longer perspective from our cultural position. Our people have been living along this very river for three hundred generations.

SARAH

But you just talked about a turning of ages!

ANNETTA

Yes, but again, our perspective is much longer, and who knows how many generations have passed since this genocide on the land began, or for how many generations the

countervailing forces have been assembling. Do you see?

Sarah looks puzzled, as if holding contradictory images in her mind and heart, and begins to shake her head. Then her face changes, her lips firming.

SARAH
Yes, of course, Annetta.

Everret and Lee Ann walk up to the table, holding their plates and cups.

BOBBY
Everything okay with Harold and Fred?

EVERRET
Yeah, but I had to do a little nerve-settling after that outbreak. But don't let us interrupt you all.

BOBBY
We're talking about how we see an opportunity for a great healing to take place, a turning-

ANNETTA
-Lee Ann, come sit next to Sarah, Anna and me.

Annetta looks quickly sideways to indicate Sarah as there is a switching of chairs and places to accommodate Lee Ann and Everret.

ANNETTA (CONT'D)
We need our woman power bunched up over here so we can guide this conversation, before the men screw things up again.

BOBBY
Seriously, this isn't about gender politics.

ANNETTA
Oh, I was serious.

She punches his arm lightly, laughing.

BOBBY
All right, I'm all over this woman power thing, so show it to us!

ANNETTA
Damn right you are, lover man. We women can put our ears to the ground to hear what's coming in a

way that men haven't learned, most men anyway. But you had a powerful feel for where we are a little while ago, Bobby. Start us off again.

Bobby is silent a moment, still looking at Annetta. Finally he addresses the full table.

BOBBY

All the guiding energies of the heavily industrialized culture are coming loose from the moorings they've been tethered to for centuries, and there is a titanic struggle for where these elemental energies will be re-tethered.

(beat)

Everything is out of balance. Our many crises are calling out to everyone to create a different world, a chance for the many species to escape extinction.

PETER

But how is there time? Chaos is gaining momentum rapidly - glaciers are melting, the superheated global casino is unraveling, the immune systems of frogs, fish and humans are collapsing-

ANNETTA

-There is a narrow passage ahead, Peter, and those that make it through will need to be creators and restorers to shape the new societies. The time for decision has come.

TED

Where do the hundred tree-sitters fit into that bigger picture?

LEE ANN

It could be the trigger! Let's organize a hundred people to sit-in at the US Capitol Building to echo the hundred sitters in the west.

ANNA

Let's make it international! Identify five or so places worldwide where crucial species are threatened, and encourage local leaders to organize something similar to happen on the same day.

LEE ANN

What are you thinking of?

ANNA

Well, for example, parts of Indonesia are getting stripped bare by illegal logging, putting many species at high risk-

PETER

-Yes, Indonesia!

He all but rises out of his chair in his excitement.

PETER (CONT'D)

It's a time bomb, emblematic of the larger globe. Look at the numbers: a population of twenty million that will skyrocket to three-hundred and fifty million by 2050; several million hectares of old-growth rainforest being clear-cut annually, leaving nothing but bare, washed-out earth incapable of growing anything but weed trees, polluting the fishing streams, devastating the small, local economies that depended for centuries on small-scale, selective logging-

SARAH

-Peter, stop!

PETER

And over ninety million of the two-hundred million inhabitants live on less than two US dollars per day. Since 1985 the island of Sumatra has lost at least six million hectares of old forest, putting the orangutan, tiger and elephant at greater risk of-

SARAH

-Peter! Stop!

She takes hold of his arm and shakes it rather roughly.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Let Anna talk. We don't need a catalog of catastrophes right now. We all know how bad it is, so just let Anna talk.

PETER

But we've got to have Indonesia involved, that's all I'm trying to say.

Everret clanks his knife and fork against the side of his plate.

EVERRET

We do need reminders once in a while, that's for sure. Anna, you seem to be traveling in wider circles than most of us, me anyway, so-

LEE ANN

-Do you have contacts in other countries that would be interested?

ANNA

I'll be seeing some people in Italy next month, including some delegates from Indonesia. They'll be focused on getting a court treaty signed, but I'll try.

LEE ANN

Great! We're already organizing globally.

TED

Look, I'm one-hundred percent behind this, but we can't let go of what's going on right here. The chip-mill threat has to be our priority this week.

Everret leans forward over the remains of his eggs and sausage, a loose shoulder strap of his coveralls dragging over the plate.

EVERRET

Amen, Ted. We have to keep focused. Lee Ann, I know you're excited about this, but if we let it distract us from-

LEE ANN

-But we can do both, I know we can. We have to, and I know you know it too, Everret. And now you have egg yolk on your coveralls.

Glancing down at his clothes, Everret grins sheepishly and begins dabbing at the yolk with his napkin.

EVERRET

I did that to demonstrate how important it is to pay attention to what's going on right here.

LEE ANN

Of course you did.

EVERRET

Okay, you got me, but when things
start coming apart at the seams
because we took on too much,
remember what you just said,
because-

SARAH

-If you'll excuse me.

She stands abruptly and steps away from the table, holding
her hand to her forehead.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I'm going out to get some air.

Annetta also gets up and gestures at Lee Ann and Anna.

ANNETTA

Great idea. All women outside.

SARAH

Oh, I didn't mean to-

PETER

-Are you okay, Sarah?

Annetta takes Sarah's arm gently and begins walking with her
towards the outside door. Anna and Lee Ann follow.

ANNETTA

She'll be with us. It's what she
needs now.

At the table, the men watch as the women walk out the door.

BOBBY

Annetta was responding to something
she saw in Sarah. I recognize her
behavior.

PETER

Sarah's confronting some old
challenges, some stuff from when we
left for Canada in '68. She feels
she lost a piece of her soul then.

BOBBY

Soul loss! Everyone has it.
Annetta's done many retrievals.
Takes special care and preparation.
Maybe our drumming and singing
tonight will be part of it.

EVERRET

Bobby, the drumming session tonight
is more important than ever now.
Our people becoming aware of their

soul loss is a sign that something is happening, and I'm a little worried about all of this, frankly.

BOBBY

Why?

EVERRET

Until now, I saw all the unraveling as something that hadn't quite happened yet. It was probably on the way, but there still might be time to turn it all around.

BOBBY

And why not now, because one of us became aware of soul loss? Isn't that awareness a good thing, a positive sign?

EVERRET

Sure, on one level I guess it has to be. But it spooks me, makes me think everything is in play now. It feels like we're walking neck-deep into a pool of grief, an old swamp that's been around as long as anyone can remember, knowing that sooner or later we had to enter, had to-

BOBBY

-That's not the same as soul loss, Everret.

EVERRET

Doesn't matter, does it? Either one will get you to the other. Grief, soul loss, aren't they twined together?

PETER

Hell, Everret, I've been feeling serious grief for decades, watching the degradation continue on and on.

EVERRET

It's that damn swamp! I'm telling you it's everywhere, there's no way around it. It's time to just say it.

BOBBY

If that's true, then this swamp is opening people to what needs to happen next in their lives.

Everret leans forward to look Bobby in the eye.

EVERRET

Bobby, this thing is coming apart quickly, and we have to prepare somehow.

BOBBY

Is that some kind of ancient white-man ritual you've got going there?

Everret stares at him blankly.

EVERRET

What?

BOBBY

Dragging your coverall strap through the egg yolk again.

Everret looks down, then back at Bobby without pausing.

EVERRET

Yes, it is, Bobby. Comes from an old Germanic tribe of nomadic plunderers, and you are the first Indian ever to be allowed to see it. We've kept it secret for a hundred generations, but I guess now that everything's falling apart, you might as well know about it. It's about fertility, of course.

BOBBY

Of course. Well, thank you for the privilege, Everret.

EVERRET

Any time, amigo, any time.

EXT. YELLOW MOUNTAIN LODGE - PORCH - LATE AFTERNOON

Heat and humidity press down on the land.

Bobby and Annetta sit in rockers on the porch, watching clouds gather over the rolling landscape as the wind rustles the trees along the river.

Ravens call loudly from high perches, dive and seem to chase an invisible wave of energy preceding the change in weather.

BOBBY

I love to listen to the land talk in these summer storms. Something opens up...

He scans the trees along the riverside intently.

Annetta rocks slowly, her arms crossed over her chest, one leg crossed over the other and bobbing up and down lazily under a full blue embroidered skirt.

She looks back and forth between the trees and Bobby's face.

ANNETTA
What are you looking for?

BOBBY
Something moving along the river. I think I saw the ancestors here this morning, but the sun was so bright I couldn't-

Annetta uncrosses her legs and sits forward excitedly.

ANNETTA
-The ancestors! Be careful! What are they doing? They don't come around just to visit.

BOBBY
Not sure, too soon to know, but I've been seeing them lately...
(beat)
Here comes the storm.

The thunderstorm opens up over the river valley, briefly hammering the tin roof of the porch with pea-sized summer hail, followed by a drift of light rain.

Annetta touches Bobby's arm gently.

ANNETTA
Why haven't you told me before now about seeing the ancestors, Bobby?

BOBBY
I had a feeling they were here only for me.

He strains forward in his chair, staring at the riverside.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Annetta! They're back!

Four figures are silhouetted against the oak and Osage orange trees along the river.

There are three adults and one child, their images flickering in and out of the muted browns and greens of the landscape.

They walk through the rain in animal skins, carrying large bundles on their backs.

ANNETTA

Where? Where?

BOBBY
Under the tall oak by the bend in
the river.

The figures move in and out of focus, the rain occasionally obscuring their slow-motion movements.

Finally they stop and look towards Bobby and Annetta questioningly, as if trying to see through the rain and the centuries.

ANNETTA
They aren't showing themselves to
me. Tell me what you see.

BOBBY
One adult male, two adult females,
I think... One small child...
Animal skin clothing.

ANNETTA
Animal skins! Bobby, these are the
ancient ones, the Ani Gaduwagi!

The four figures turn away and fade into the trees.

BOBBY
Disappearing... Damn, it's always
like this, connected, but not
enough to hear, not enough to know
them the way I need to.

ANNETTA
Just to know they're out there,
watching, isn't that enough?

BOBBY
I always want things spelled out,
to let me know what I need to do
next.

ANNETTA
You'll know, when it is demanded of
you. But now you know the ancient
ones are with you, whatever comes
next. That's enough.

Lee Ann opens the door to the lodge and pokes her head out.

LEE ANN
Annetta, can you give us a hand in
the kitchen?

ANNETTA
You stay here, Bobby. Take this in.
We'll talk later.

Annetta stands and stoops to kiss Bobby on the cheek as he continues to stare at the trees along the river. He nods abstractedly.

Annetta turns away and walks into the lodge.

ANNETTA (CONT'D)
Oh, Bobby.

Bobby steps off the porch into the soft wind and cool rain.

EXT. RIVER SIDE NEAR YELLOW MOUNTAIN LODGE - AFTERNOON

Bobby is heading toward the spot where his ancestors just vanished. Pulling his collar close, he enters the cover of trees and looks at the ground.

He laughs at himself.

BOBBY
As if they would leave footprints.

He stands on the river bank in the shelter of the trees and watches the slow movement of the muddy brown water between the steep banks.

After a moment he turns to look back at the faint image of the lodge through the rain.

There is a determined look on his face beneath the raindrops as he begins walking back to the lodge.

EXT. EASTERN KENTUCKY, NEAR THE LODGE - JULY 8 - NIGHT

The cloudless sky is full of stars, as if the entire universe were visible. In a small meadow surrounded by forest is a gathering of sixty or so people, seated or lying on blankets around a huge bonfire.

On one side of the gathering there are five young Cherokee men in a tight circle, drumming, singing and chanting a variety of traditional Native songs.

Others in the clearing follow along energetically, singing, chanting, and adding whistles and howls to punctuate the music.

The drums and voices rise to a thundering peak. Suddenly the drummers fall silent and freeze in place, and the audience falls quiet too.

Silence commands the attention of the universe.

EXT. THIRTY FEET BEHIND THE DRUMMING CIRCLE - NIGHT

Just off the edge of the meadow, inside the thick forest, Sarah, Annetta, and Lee Ann sit in a small clearing adjacent to a slowly running creek.

Four heavy wool blankets are piled on the ground. Several large, moss-covered stones are arranged along the edge of the blankets opposite the creek bed, and a smudge pot sends the aroma of burning sage over the clearing.

In the deep silence, Annetta motions to Sarah to lie down on her back on the blankets.

As she does so, Annetta lies down about a foot away from her. She touches Sarah's shoulder lightly, smiles as Sarah looks at her with a mixture of anxiety and longing.

Abruptly the drumming and chanting begin again. Annetta motions to Sarah to close her eyes.

Closing her own eyes, she joins in the singing and vigorously shakes two gourd rattles.

As the gourds are rattled, Sarah experiences a heavy blackness broken with brief flickerings of harsh white light that cause her body to twitch.

As Annetta continues to rattle and chant, she experiences a rapidly moving sequence of images and sounds: immense prairie grass fires, thundering hooves of a herd of wild horses, a split-second view of a younger Sarah and Peter in front of an old farmhouse with startled expressions.

Next comes a rapid-fire sequence of images from the Vietnam War: a naked girl running down a dirt road with napalm burns, a Viet Cong prisoner being shot in the head with a pistol at point-blank range, soldiers wading through marshes, B-52s on a bombing run...

Simultaneously, Sarah experiences an extremely bright explosion of white light followed by a rush of images in grainy black and white: their old white clapboard farmhouse in Fayetteville, she and Peter exchanging vows at their wedding in the forest, the towel on which, in contrast to the black and white, a bright red stain of blood blossoms...

Annetta next sees a pod of Humpback Whales--mothers and new offspring--in a slow-motion dance of love and connection, with loud clicking, guttural growling and the whales' plaintive, questioning song...

Now Sarah sees brief images of herself and Brigitte being dragged off a protest line near Tofino and booked into the Victoria Prison for Women.

Next she sees herself on the front porch of their farmhouse, talking heatedly with Peter, stalking back into the house to look at the empty rooms with despair, returning to the porch where Peter waits looking helpless and confused as he leans

against an old pickup stacked high with suitcases and boxes...

Now Annetta swims alongside the pod of Humpback Whales, watching each as she approaches the adult females one by one, until she reaches the oldest whale, peers directly into one of its eyes and then dives into the eye, disappearing...

Annetta's body jerks and she puts her hand on Sarah's solar plexus.

ANNETTA

Come home!

Sarah cries out with a sound similar to the Humpback's wail. Annetta sits up, leans over Sarah and blows hard into Sarah's heart space.

Sarah experiences plunging into dark green ocean water, surrounded by brilliant black and white Orcas that form flying wedges to escort her to a shore.

She rises up from the shore, sea water running off her white robe and seaweed clinging to her hair.

She sees her younger self, from 1968, just inches away. They kiss and merge, and disappear.

Sarah's body trembles. Beside her Annetta smiles and wraps her arms around Sarah's shoulders, absorbing the shaking motion, and hums gently.

As Sarah cries, Annetta's smile grows. She looks at Anna and Lee Ann, who are watching wide-eyed.

ANNETTA (CONT'D)

First, bone-shaking grief. Then, love of life. It's the right sequence. It makes the glue that will hold the new Sarah together.

Annetta looks at Sarah, then back at Anna and Lee Ann.

ANNETTA (CONT'D)

Nothing else will do.

INT. LODGE - TED AND ANNA'S ROOM - JULY 9, 3 AM

Anna and Ted are in bed, the sheets pushed down.

Ted is snoring lightly; one arm hangs off the bed near the balcony doors, which are thrown open to the night.

Anna tosses and turns, eyes closed, clearly in the midst of very active dreaming.

A breeze from the balcony rustles the sheets. An oak tree adjacent to the building bends in the breeze and rubs loudly against the balcony railing.

Bright moonlight flickers through branches and leaves.

EXT. OCEAN SIDE, GULF SHORES - EVENING

Anna is dreaming.

The ocean is everywhere. Starfish screaming, beached whales wail, wet green seaweed okra, bright yellow-purple coral fish dart star to star.

ANNA (V.O.)
 Something's pulling me, pulling at
 me, wanting me, daring me, what do
 I do?

A white seagull wheeling, floating like a single feather, landing weightless, softly, bright yellow eyes burning through gray fog, faint marks of pink on her white breast feathers.

GULL (V.O.)
 Anna, Anna, we are still here, you
 have survived, and little children
 call you nana.

ANNA (V.O.)
 My gull, my life, passing so
 quickly, can it be me?

GULL (V.O.)
 Yes, Anna, it is you and me again,
 look through the fog, see the earth
 spinning, cleansing itself, washing
 away its sorrows with floods,
 grooming itself with the wind and
 swelling its ocean waters to drown
 the pestilence.

INT. LODGE - ANNA AND TED'S ROOM - 3 AM

Anna tosses in the bed, mumbling incoherently. Her feet are wrapped in the sheets, and each twist of her restless body wraps the sheets more tightly.

EXT. OCEAN SIDE, GULF SHORES - EVENING

ANNA (V.O.)
 No, it can't be this way, it can't
 be time...

GULL (V.O.)

Look at your grandchildren playing,
Anna...

ANNA (V.O.)
Where's Ted, what's happened to the
earth?

GULL (V.O.)
You did what you could, Anna, lots
of people did what they could, but
the sea bottom and the permafrost
released their methane, Greenland's
ice melted, the Arctic is all
water...

INT. LODGE - ANNA AND TED'S ROOM - 3 AM

ANNA
No, no!

Anna sits bolt upright in bed, yelling her resistance to the
dream, to this strange and powerful message.

Thrashing her trapped feet, she grabs Ted and shakes him
again and again.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Ted, wake up, wake up, I need you!

TED
Wha? What? What's going on?

ANNA
A dream, a powerful dream. No, more
like a vision, yes, a vision, and
my seagull told me I was a
grandmother, that the earth was
cleansing itself with floods, and-

TED
-Anna, what the hell are you
talking about?

ANNA
It was back on that Gulf Shores
motel balcony where we stayed in
May, ocean waves were breaking over
the balcony floor, the sea was that
high... My seagull told me I was a
grandmother, and it was all so
vivid and real...

TED
A grandmother? Anna, it's 3 AM, can
we-

ANNA

Please listen, because this involves you, and... Okay, remember that seagull that landed on the balcony railing and fell to the sand dying and I wanted to save it, but there was nothing to do?

TED

Yes, but what's a dead sea-

ANNA

-Listen. That seagull just came to me in this vision, and told me I am, or will be, a grandmother. I must have chosen that path when we made love on the sand dune the night before. Do you remember?

TED

Yeah, yeah, I... with pelicans patrolling the shoreline, seven of them flying in single file.

ANNA

And you said they looked primordial and we floated back through time together, so in love. Nothing existed but the warm sand dune under us and the night sky where every star in the universe was hovering just over our heads, and we were the only humans on earth.

TED

Anna, I must be the one dreaming, with you waking me in the middle of the night to tell me you had a vision of the earth doing something. And it means you're pregnant?

ANNA

The earth was cleansing itself with floods, sea water rising, windstorms... I was a grandmother in the distant future when the oceans are high, but it's now that I'm pregnant.

TED

But...

ANNA

This vision is telling me I will be a grandmother and that means being a mother first.

TED

Right, but Anna, shouldn't we check this out before we say you are pregnant?

ANNA
We, Ted, we are pregnant.

TED
Right, right. But do you really believe it?

ANNA
We don't need a test. I missed my last period.

Ted jumps out of bed. Standing above Anna, he rakes his fingers through his hair.

TED
What? Why didn't you tell me?

ANNA
I just chalked it up to work stress...

TED
So it could still be that?

Anna gazes up at him for a moment and pulls her knees up to cover her breasts.

ANNA
Not after this powerful vision. Trust my instincts on this, Ted.

Ted begins pacing the room nervously.

TED
Pregnant. Well, that is, well hell, I don't know. Are you okay with this?

ANNA
Yes, I am. In the vision I couldn't believe I was a grandmother and I resisted it, but that was about not wanting so much of my life to be over and not having you around.

TED
I wasn't there?

ANNA
Ted, it was 2038!

TED
Well, damn! But I'd be what, only ninety-two or so?

Ted laughs loudly and shrilly. Grabbing a pillow from the bed, he tosses it up to the ceiling.

ANNA

You could still be around then and
I hope you are, but yes, I am okay
with this, I have to be.

Ted stands quietly for a few seconds, looking at Anna.

Closing her eyes, Anna sees fragments of her vision: the sea rising up over the balcony flooring, the gull wobbling on the railing, herself holding her wet tiny newborn grandchild high above the threatening waters.

Anna opens her eyes and sees Ted staring at the wall above her. She climbs out of bed and puts her arms around him.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Ted, take your time getting used to
this if you must, but don't take
forever! I'm going to have this
baby and you will need to decide if
you are with me or not.

Ted shakes his head briefly, as if to wake himself up, then hugs Anna tightly.

TED

Good god, of course I am with you,
even if it scares the hell out of
me right now.

EXT. LODGE - JULY 10 - MID-MORNING

Peter, Sarah and Anna are in the driveway, loading cars with suitcases. The two young hounds are playing and getting underfoot.

Near them on the lodge porch, Annetta, Lee Ann, Bobby, and Everret stand talking with Ted.

EVERRET

Lee Ann, you go if you want. I'd
love to, but someone's gotta run
the Lodge.

LEE ANN

I do want to go, badly. Just for a
couple of weeks so you aren't alone
here too long in our busy season.

TED

Bobby, Annetta? Can you get to
Tofino that first week of
September?

Peter lifts a suitcase into the trunk of a car.

PETER

We can get a flight up to Bella Coola and boat out to the Skowquiltz, if Sarah will let us, that is. Just kiddin', hon.

Sarah looks away from Peter, studiously pretending not to hear.

TED

The donor I called yesterday will put up fifteen grand for the one hundred sitters project. That'll get everyone up there and back and then some.

BOBBY

Hell, yes, sign us up!

ANNETTA

Of course we'd like to spend some time with you, see the lands and people of British Columbia. Give our thanks to your donor, Ted.

ANNA

But I can't be there, Ted, until the second week, that is.

Ted puts his arm around her.

TED

We can stay on an extra week, honey. We need some down time together.

PETER

Bring lots of rain gear! Hey, I know, let's all go out to the longhouse with Norval. After you get there, Anna.

ANNETTA

What makes the longhouse so important to you, Peter?

PETER

Coupla things. It's a Nuxalk Nation spiritual retreat for their Hereditary Chiefs, in the Skowquiltz. Several hours from Bella Coola. And some serious vibes, ancestral, Norval says.

BOBBY

What's your experience been with those vibes?

PETER
All I can say is something special happens there. It's alive in a way I can't explain.

SARAH
Maybe that would be a good thing to do together, Peter.

PETER
Really?

He smiles at her quizzically.

PETER (CONT'D)
I'm surprised you say that.

SARAH
Good. We need to surprise each other more often.

Annetta smiles broadly at Sarah.

EVERRET
Hey, now I'm getting jealous! I'll just trod back to the office and undertake the thankless job of lodge keeper.

LEE ANN
Stop whining, big boy! This is just the beginning; we'll get up there together.

EVERRET
Alright, then. You folks have safe journeys home today, y'hear?

INT. SARAH AND PETER'S HOUSE - TOFINO - SEPT. 9 - 10 AM

Peter is scrambling around the house stuffing things into a large backpack: energy bars, water bottles, beef jerky, a first aid kit, rain pants, slicker.

He is wired, his face tense, and he is talking aloud to himself.

PETER
Something's very wrong... helicopters... so this is how the big one starts...

He stops in front of a large mirror in the bathroom and stares at himself. He appears to have aged much since being in Kentucky. Slowly the tension drains from his face.

PETER (CONT'D)
All these years, leading to this?
Am I ready?

His expression in the mirror is one of grim acceptance.

PETER (CONT'D)
It's time to go beyond.

He picks up a pair of scissors lying on the counter and chops at his hair. Big, irregular chunks of hair fall to the floor.

He stops, stares at his ragged hair, looks himself in the eyes again.

Pulling a tube of camouflage paint out of the backpack, Peter smears the dark green paint on his forehead and cheeks.

He smile grimly at himself, lifts the backpack and heads out the front door.

INT. COMMON LOAF BAKESHOP - TOFINO - SEPT. 9 - 10:20 AM

Sarah is inside the Bakeshop, sitting at the counter on a break from her shift, a half-eaten pastry in one hand and coffee cup in the other.

Brigette is standing behind the counter; she looks up as Peter appears in the doorway behind her.

Sarah lifts the coffee cup to her mouth as the door slams shut.

BRIGETTE
Holy hell! The dogs of Satan have
been turned loose!

Sarah looks up at Brigette, smiling.

SARAH
What did you say?

Brigette nods toward the door. Sarah turns.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Peter! What...

PETER
Jack's flying me up to Bella Coola
in fifteen minutes.

SARAH

What?

PETER

Roy and Duran took off for the Skowquiltz yesterday without telling Norval. They saw helicopters flying that way.

Peter waves and slips out the door. Sarah jumps up and runs after him.

SARAH

Peter, wait!

EXT. OUTSIDE THE COMMON LOAF BAKERY - SEPT. 9 - 10:23 AM

Peter is hoisting the heavy backpack onto his shoulders. Sarah grabs his shirt and pulls at him.

SARAH

Peter, your hair! Your face, what...

PETER

The copters mean that BC Logging is going in... the shit is hitting the fan, Sarah, and -

SARAH

-Just how are you and Norval going to stop this, Peter? You, Norval, Roy, Duran... four against the international logging industry...

Peter stops in his tracks and stares at Sarah.

PETER

Can't say exactly. Depends on whether or not we can get an injunction-

SARAH

-You could do that from here-

PETER

-Probably, but Roy and Duran are in trouble.

Peter wipes his hand across his forehead, looks at his hand and then smears paint on his nose.

Sarah steps away from him, looks out toward the Sound where Jack's plane is tied up.

PETER (CONT'D)

Sarah?

Sarah very slowly turns back toward Peter.

SARAH

I know it would kill you to be sitting here waiting, Peter. You go on, go. Just come back in one piece. Do you hear me?

PETER

I will, I promise. And I'll call with Norval's satellite phone when I catch up with him at the longhouse.

They look at each other silently. Peter crosses the distance between them and they kiss quickly.

EXT. DEAN CHANNEL - NEAR BELLA COOLA - SEPT. 10 - MID-MORNING

Peter is climbing out of a small motor boat at the edge of Kleiner's Valley, with a full day's hike between him and the longhouse at the edge of the Skowquiltz.

When he pulls his backpack out and grabs his slicker from the floor of the boat and backs away a couple of steps, the boat operator waves quickly and turns back toward the Channel.

Peter looks around briefly, checks his map and heads inland.

EXT. KLEINER'S VALLEY - SEPT. 10 - FOUR HOURS LATER

It is raining heavily. Peter is hunkered down in the shelter of a giant red cedar.

He is wearing a faded yellow slicker and black rain pants.

The rain is falling in sheets, its pulsing sounds hypnotic.

Suddenly the rain shifts direction from its first slant and falls harder, gushing like a waterfall.

Peter pulls the slicker hood tighter.

PETER

Jesus! I've seen some big ones up here, but this one is spooky, like it has a mind of its own.

He reaches into his backpack and pulls out an energy bar. As he begins to unwrap it he sees a piece of white paper taped to it, with the words NO MORE written on it in black ink.

PETER (CONT'D)

No more, huh?

He sits quietly for a few moments, as if lost in thought. Then he tears the wrapper off the energy bar and stuffs half of it in his mouth.

Chewing rapidly, he stuffs the remaining half of the bar back into his backpack, a frown on his face.

Taking out a bottle of water, he gulps from it to wash the food down.

Zippering his slicker up to his neck and tightening the hood still more, he throws on his backpack and steps outside.

In the wind-whipped deluge, he looks upward to let the rain sting his face.

PETER (CONT'D)

This is where I'm positioned on the battlefield, Bobby!

A gust of wind hits him hard from behind and he staggers.

He pushes his body back into the wind until another gust whips at him from the front and knocks him to the ground.

He lies there briefly, eyes shut tight, laughing loudly.

Standing again and cupping his hands around his mouth, Peter lets out a long, piercing wolf howl.

Breathing heavily now, he checks a compass attached to the zipper of his slicker and sets out for the longhouse, bending forward into the rain and wind and yelling defiance.

EXT. DEEP IN THE SKOWQULITZ VALLEY - SEPT. 10 - 3 PM

Norval is standing on a ridge in the forest. He looks down upon a wrecked white helicopter lying on its belly, bent and buckled from the impact of a crash.

Three giant red cedar logs, heavy steel cables twisted around them, lie adjacent to the helicopter.

A cold silence reigns, and Norval's expression registers shock and fear. He speaks in a whisper.

NORVAL

Roy? Duran?

Slowly working his way down the ridge slope, he comes to the helicopter and sees the pilot's body slumped over the steering mechanism.

A tree limb falls nearby and the loud sound startles Norval.

He jumps behind the pile of cabled logs, looking rapidly in every direction.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Tree limb. Gotta get a grip. Look
for clues.

Walking toward the tail end of the helicopter, he sees a blue patch in the brush.

He stoops and finds a baseball cap with blood splattered all over it.

Norval violently throws the hat back into the brush, stomps on it several times and screams his denial.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
No! No! No!

He freezes, staring at the ground and the bloody cap.

His nostrils are flaring, his teeth are showing and his walleye scans the forest for danger.

He tilts his head back to smell the breeze.

He runs toward the edge of the ragged clearing, stops and looks around at the ground wildly.

Suddenly he freezes again, staring at a confusion of muddy boot prints going in every direction, more blood-soaked earth, and deep boot heel and scratch marks made from dragging something away.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Roy! Duran! Roy!

The wind suddenly picks up and thunder rolls in the distance.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Thunderbird! Come to me now!

Norval runs into the thick forest, which he experiences as if under water, and begins slashing his way through in slow motion.

His arms have become steel blades cutting through the watery brush, and he is transformed into his tribe's mythical, ferocious Thunderbird.

He travels horizontally through the forest now, ten feet above the ground, his powerful steel blades parting the water in front of him as if diving through the forest.

He screams and the piercing sound evaporates the water before him and boils the earth below.

Suddenly the forest returns to its natural state and Norval/Thunderbird pulls his legs up beneath him and lands on the forest floor.

Human again, Norval is crouched on a bear path, scanning the forest in all directions, every molecule of his body on high alert.

Just off the bear path ten feet ahead, he sees a hump, a human body under a light covering of earth.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Only one. Where's the other?

He dashes to the hump, sees Grizzly prints and disturbed earth, and he runs along the bear path without breathing, his feet just skimming the earth.

Then he sees Duran lying face down over a cedar log, his right leg chewed off below the knee.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Duran! No! Duran...

He grabs Duran's arm and finds the body stiff and swollen.

He lifts Duran over one shoulder and runs heavily toward the helicopter.

EXT. KLEINER'S VALLEY - TWO HOURS LATER

The rain has stopped and daylight is waning.

Peter stands along a creek bed, looking intently at his map and checking his compass.

His yellow slicker is now rolled and strapped to his backpack.

Stuffing the map back into his backpack, he begins walking along the creek bed, one sleeve of the slicker hanging loose and flapping jerkily.

He slips and his foot slides down the creek bed. His knee smacks the ground hard.

Standing, Peter flips mud out of his boot top with his fingers and plods onward to a low rise.

There he stops, pulls binoculars out of the backpack, and lifts them to his eyes.

Through the binoculars fragments of daylight reflect off a body of water.

The giant spruces, cedars and firs are large, dark, amorphous masses slowly swaying in the wind, their shadows creating the night's blanket.

The silhouette of the longhouse comes slowly into view.

PETER

Yes!

EXT. SKOWQUILTZ VALLEY - AT THE LONGHOUSE FACADE - NIGHT

Peter approaches the longhouse.

Its facade is covered in traditional Nuxalk images of mythological Thunderbird, Orcas, Ravens, Eagles, and various other animals, all incised into cedar planks and painted in red and black.

Opening the longhouse door, he flicks on a flashlight and moves the beam back and forth.

Several chairs are set close to a wood stove, flannel shirts hung over the chair backs, but there is no one in the building.

Peter enters, bangs his foot against a chair, then holds his hand over the wood stove.

PETER

Cold. Where the hell are they?

He lights a propane lamp and starts a fire in the wood stove.

PETER (CONT'D)

Need something hot in me.

After placing a saucepan of water on the stove top, he strips, drapes his muddy clothes on chairs near the stove and pulls an army blanket off a small bed and wraps it around himself.

Peter picks up the lamp and begins to walk around the longhouse, looking for clues to where Norval might have gone.

As he nears the far end of the building, the lamp light reveals four heavy sawhorses supporting a large cedar log, and piles of wood chips littering the floor.

He moves closer to inspect and sees that someone has carved a chaotic field of miniature bulldozers, chain saws and tree stumps along the central section of the log.

The top of the log, which was taking shape as something of a totem pole, is adorned with the naked body of a corpulent white man with a cigar jutting out of his mouth.

PETER (CONT'D)
 A shame pole! Excellent! Sticking
 this on BC Logging's corporate lawn
 in Vancouver will raise a good
 storm.

Peter hears the water boiling and walks back to the stove,
 grabs a mug and tea bag from the counter and pours.

He sits at a long table cluttered with papers and spots a
 muddy envelope with a BC Logging logo printed on it.

PETER (CONT'D)
 What the hell?

Opening the envelope, he sees a crude, hand-drawn map
 labeled Upper Skowquiltz Valley.

There are several small purple circles on the map and a key
 identifying them as culturally modified trees.

PETER (CONT'D)
 Uh huh. This and the helicopters...
 I wonder where they found this?

He looks toward the window where bright moonlight is
 streaming in and flickering as tree limbs sway in the wind
 outside.

PETER (CONT'D)
 Or, who gave it to them? Is there a
 mole in BC Logging's crew?
 (beat)
 Jesus!

He stuffs the envelope and map into his backpack, walks to
 the stove again and washes himself down with the hot water.

The piercing, staccato call of a Western screech owl comes
 through a nearby window, over and over, more and more
 loudly.

Peter walks to the window to investigate.

He stares into the full moon, visible now only through fast-
 moving clouds, and the owl screeches again and flies away,
 silhouetted by the moonlight.

PETER (CONT'D)
 I hear you. I get it. Everything's
 in play now, isn't it?

EXT. LONGHOUSE - SEPT 11 - 5 AM

Peter is fully outfitted with backpack, binoculars, maps and
 the faded yellow rain slicker tied to the backpack as he
 emerges from the longhouse.

He walks toward the nearby cove and searches the brush near the water's edge.

PETER
No boats. Crap.

EXT. SKOWQUILTZ VALLEY - TWO HOURS LATER

Peter is sloggng through the forest along the edge of the cove.

He stops, swings his backpack down to the ground and peers into the brush where he sees a small version of a red cedar war canoe, crudely carved and painted with rudimentary traditional images.

The canoe is empty and turned on its side.

PETER
This is new. Roy, Duran probably.

He looks at his maps, glances at the canoe, pulls pen and paper out of his shirt pocket, scrawls a note, places it in the canoe and starts walking inland.

EXT. SKOWQUILTZ VALLEY - LATE AFTERNOON - SEPT. 11

Peter trudges slowly through the undergrowth.

A heavy rain has set in, and a wind from the west is gaining strength.

He pauses to catch his breath, looking to the left and right of the path he is following, and starts walking again.

He stops abruptly.

Pushing the thick brush aside, he finds a large patch of low cover pushed to the ground, and fresh boot prints in the mud.

PETER
Someone's been here!

He follows the boot prints down the slope until he sees the wrecked helicopter and cabled logs lying in a heap.

PETER (CONT'D)
Oh, hell. Norval! Roy! Duran!

He plunges down the steep slope, slips and slams against a cedar trunk, and falls hard into the thick undergrowth.

He stands slowly, limping when he tries to walk.

When he runs his hand down his left leg he finds blood oozing through his torn rain pants.

PETER (CONT'D)

Shit!

Painfully, Peter limps toward the crash scene.

PETER (CONT'D)

Norval? Duran? Anyone?

Hearing a faint sound of movement from some distance away, he climbs over and around the logs towards it.

He stops when he finds the scars on the logs where a wide and long plank had been cut from each long ago.

PETER (CONT'D)

Culturally modified trees. Roy and Duran were right...

He looks up, wipes the rain off his face and limps to the helicopter.

Looking past the battered body of the helicopter pilot, he sees that the cabin behind the pilot's seat is dry.

He pushes past the body, trips and falls heavily on the cabin floor.

INT. HELICOPTER CABIN - LATE AFTERNOON

Peter lies on his back, breathing heavily.

He slips out of the backpack, pushes it aside, and takes a first aid kit out of a side pocket.

Pulling his pant leg up carefully, he sees a nasty-looking, three-inch-long gash in his leg.

Wincing, he wipes an antiseptic pad over it and closes it with a butterfly bandage.

Leaving the first aid kit on the cabin floor, he leans forward and looks out the helicopter. The wind and rain are continuing unabated.

Peter scoots back inside, leans against his backpack and falls into an exhausted sleep.

INT. HELICOPTER CABIN - TWO HOURS LATER

The rain has declined to a light drizzle and the wind has stopped.

Peter awakes with a start as the sound of a human voice is heard from outside.

He grabs the edge of the cabin door opening and pulls himself out of the helicopter, stumbling on the wet earth as a sharp pain rips through his wounded leg.

PETER
Norval! Is that you?

A gunshot rings out.

Peter is slammed back against the side of the helicopter. He slides to the ground, screaming from a shoulder wound.

He is pulling himself upright when another shot rings out and ricochets off the helicopter to the left of his head.

Turning his head, Peter sees Harold standing forty feet away. He does not recognize him, registering only a broad-shouldered, brown-faced man in heavy denim pants, oversized rain jacket and a cracked white hard hat.

Harold holds a pistol in his hand and stares at Peter with a wild, deranged expression.

PETER (CONT'D)
Who are you, bastard... Harold?
What the hell, Harold, is that you?

HAROLD
I didn't do it, I, I... I didn't do it!

Harold throws the pistol at Peter, screams his denial into the forest again.

He turns and runs away as the pistol bounces off the side of the helicopter and grazes the side of Peter's head.

Staggering from the blow, Peter presses his hand hard against the bullet wound in his shoulder, trying to staunch the bleeding.

PETER
Fuck.

Blood oozes between his fingers as he stands up, yelling against the pain.

Leaning against the side of the helicopter, he slides slowly along the outside cabin wall until he falls through the door and onto the cabin floor.

Sitting up, he grabs a large gauze compress and a roll of tape from the first aid kit, pulls his shirt open to reveal a bloody, ragged-looking bullet wound. Peter grimaces at the sight and stuffs the compress over the wound.

Releasing the compress, he grabs the roll of tape and pulls a long piece loose with his teeth and manages to maneuver the tape over the compress.

He finds a bottle of painkillers and swallows four, and falls back to the floor to rest. Water drips steadily on his face.

PETER (CONT'D)
 So this is how it ends... bleeding
 to death in a wrecked helicopter,
 shot by a madman. Harold?

Suddenly the rain comes down hard and the wind whips the forest violently.

A loud crack pierces the sound of the rain and wind and Peter jerks his body as if to avoid another bullet, then cries from the pain in his shoulder.

A giant red cedar tree slams down across the helicopter cabin, bouncing it a foot off the ground and flattening it to two-thirds of its original height.

The pilot's body is knocked off the steering gear by the jolt and his right arm is pinned between the crushed roof and the seat top. He swings freely in the doorway.

PETER (CONT'D)
 God... never make it out...
 Sarah...

The big cedar shifts toward Peter's end of the cabin and the screech of metal pulling apart at the seams pierces his consciousness. He screams in fear.

PETER (CONT'D)
 Stop! Just stop!
 (beat)
 Let me die quietly...

He looks up through the foot-long tear in the roof and sees rust-colored bark and thick bunches of dark green needles.

He attempts to sit up, doubles up on the floor in pain and passes out.

INT. TOFINO - COMMON LOAF BAKE SHOP - SEPT. 12 - MORNING

Sarah enters the bake shop carrying a brown slicker over her arm. She waves and smiles at Brigette, who is pouring coffee for a customer at the counter.

Brigette silently motions her over, and steps away from the counter.

SARAH

Hey, what's up? Please don't tell me you need me all day, what with Ted and Bobby and Annetta coming next week I've-

BRIGETTE
-Girl, your to-do list just got a lot longer.

SARAH
Brigette, no! I can't take on anyone else's shift, I just-

BRIGETTE
-That's not what I mean. Hold on a minute.

Brigette glances around the bakery, sees Francine and waves to get her attention.

BRIGETTE (CONT'D)
Francine, cover for me at the counter.
(beat)
Come with me, Sarah.

INT. BAKE SHOP BACK OFFICE - MORNING

Brigette closes the door after they enter the office.

SARAH
What's going on, Brigette, closed doors and all?

BRIGETTE
Just to give you some privacy if you need to scream.

SARAH
What?

Brigette pulls a chair away from a desk and motions for Sarah to sit.

BRIGETTE
Norval just called-

SARAH
-Norval called here?

BRIGETTE
Said you didn't answer at home, so-

SARAH
-and?

BRIGETTE

(beat)
Peter is missing.

Sarah jumps up and grabs Brigette's arm and pulls hard at her.

SARAH
What do you mean? Missing from where? How-

BRIGETTE
-That's not all.
(beat)
He said Roy and Duran are dead, murdered out in the rainforest.

Sarah lets go of Brigette, staggers backward.

SARAH
What? Why... Oh my god, where is Peter? Where-

Brigette puts her hands on Sarah's shoulders and steers her toward the chair.

BRIGETTE
-Take a breath, Sarah, sit down. Norval said he thinks Peter is probably holed up at the longhouse, waiting out the monster storm up there.

SARAH
But who knows for sure? And who killed Roy and Duran?

BRIGETTE
I've called Jack over at the pier and he'll fly you up to Bella Coola once the storm breaks.

Sarah jumps up again.

SARAH
I can't just sit here and wait for the storm to-

BRIGETTE
-There's no flying north of here, Sarah. They say it's the biggest storm in five years.

Sarah holds herself tightly, looking down for a few seconds, then directly at Brigette.

SARAH
Part of me has been resigned to this for some time, ever since

those two kids from Germany were killed in a so-called accident here on Vancouver Island.

BRIGETTE
Yes, I imagine so.

SARAH
But the rest of me has been fighting it, not wanting to acknowledge it.
(beat)
Now it's here, and I need to go on with life, until I can fly up and-

BRIGETTE
-You don't need to work your shift today, for god's sake, Sarah!

Sarah takes a step toward the office door.

SARAH
Yes, I do. That's exactly what I need to do.

Sarah steps back toward the office desk.

SARAH (CONT'D)
But first I need to call Ted and see if he can get up here now instead of next week. We'll need help, Brigitte.

Sarah picks up the desk phone, then looks up at Brigitte.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Don't tell anyone else, not yet anyway. I need some time to see what this is like.

BRIGETTE
What on earth do you mean?

SARAH
Being me, here, without Peter.
(beat)
It's bound to happen sooner or later, isn't it?

INT. HELICOPTER CABIN - SEPT. 12 - 1 PM

A heavy rain is hammering the helicopter cabin.

Peter is lying in a pool of water on the cabin floor with rain dripping steadily from the roof.

There is a large blood stain on his shirt and he is shivering. He slowly sits up, looks at his wristwatch and reaches for his backpack.

PETER
Gotta move... death here...

He pulls dried fruit and nuts from the backpack and stuffs a handful into his mouth, looks up at the split roof.

PETER (CONT'D)
Dumb luck so far... gotta get out...

He washes the food down quickly with water and takes several painkillers.

Digging in his pack, he finds a package of beef jerky. As he pulls it out, a small color photo of Sarah falls in his lap.

He picks it up and stares at it.

PETER (CONT'D)
I hear you. Maybe you're right.

He sticks the photo in his shirt pocket under the slicker, grips the jerky in his teeth and stands slowly, crouching under the lowered ceiling.

Water runs off him and he drags the backpack to the door, gently pushes the dead pilot aside and slips out of the cabin into the rain.

EXT. SKOWQUILTZ FOREST - FOUR HOURS LATER

Peter is lying across the small, wooden war canoe that he had found on his trek into the forest.

His backpack is on the ground.

His eyes are teared up with pain and exhaustion, and his mouth hangs open loosely.

A gust of wind shakes him and he awakens and looks around as if not recognizing where he is.

PETER
Oh yeah... Shit, how long have I been asleep...

He stands up slowly and looks at his watch.

PETER (CONT'D)
Five o'clock. Damn.

He takes a deep breath and with his good arm starts dragging the canoe toward the cove.

After a few steps, he falls to his knees, sobbing with the pain in his shoulder.

He stands again and goes back to pick up his backpack and drops it in the canoe.

Peter wipes his face in his sleeve, looks around at his situation and pulls the bow of the canoe into the water, wading in knee deep.

He sashes through the water to the stern of the canoe and pulls the paddle out from under the seat planks.

He leans on the paddle while he climbs in the canoe and sits slowly on the rear seat plank.

With his left hand he pushes off gently, holding his stinging right arm tight against his body.

Soon he is thirty feet out, and with the wind behind him, continues to float away from shore.

He lays the paddle down across the seat planks and opens his slicker with his left hand to look at the wound wrapping. There is fresh blood soaking through.

PETER (CONT'D)

Not good.

The canoe rolls slightly from a small cross wave hitting its side.

Peter quickly squats, placing his knees on the canoe bottom and his elbows on the middle seat plank for a lower center of gravity.

PETER (CONT'D)

Drifting too far out. Need a rudder.

He finds a heavy cord in his pack, whips it around the middle of the paddle and then around the rear seat. He pulls the paddle handle upward to test the rudder and the paddle dips below the surface of the water.

The wind and waves are still pushing the canoe outward.

PETER (CONT'D)

Just keep at it, Peter, keep at it...

EXT. OFFSHORE OF THE RAINFOREST - THREE HOURS LATER

The rain falls in a light drizzle.

Peter sees the forest crammed up to the shore ahead another thirty yards where the land cuts back in and disappears from his view.

He leans hard against the oar to steer the canoe closer to shore. He is shaking from cold and exhaustion.

As he approaches the point where the land turns a corner, he sees a flat, protected beach strewn with long, dark-green kelp bottles, several broken tree trunks and large limbs.

PETER

Shelter...

EXT. SKOWQUILTZ RAINFOREST BEACH - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Daylight is waning rapidly, and the rain is a light drizzle.

With his one good arm, Peter drags the canoe and several hemlock branches, one at a time, high up on the beach.

The canoe is lying in its side some fifteen feet from the water, and the thickly needled branches form a tight, slanted wall against the rain.

On an impulse, he pulls a long kelp bottle inside the shelter, to propitiate the sea, to lie down with one of its own beautiful creatures, as if that act would bring the sea itself to his aid.

Dragging his backpack, Peter slides under the branches and lies down in his shelter.

The heavy, sour odor of the decaying kelp bottle fills the makeshift shelter. Peter breathes deeply, reveling in it.

INT. CANOE SHELTER - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

PETER

The sea, the sea... come for me...

It is dark. Shivering badly, he wraps himself in a lightweight emergency blanket, and pulls his knees up to his chest to conserve body heat.

The rhythmic waves breaking forty feet away are the only sound Peter hears.

Something like a drugged sleep is rapidly taking over.

He opens his eyes to the moonlight coming through the hemlock needles, and something breaks the light briefly.

PETER (CONT'D)

Clouds... bear maybe... doesn't
matter now...

He closes his eyes.

PETER (CONT'D)
Sarah...

A gust of wind shakes the canoe. Peter opens his eyes.

PETER (CONT'D)
Take me if you must, silver moon...
shake the earth, shift molecules,
release the energy of creation once
again...

He coughs deeply, then calms himself.

PETER (CONT'D)
We have sinned against creation and
our hearts are broken, and broken
open... we await a last chance...

A faint scraping sound emerges from somewhere and grows into
a hoarse whisper.

VOICE
Peter!

Peter's arms and legs clinch and close more tightly, but his
eyes remain closed.

VOICE (CONT'D)
It's me, Rennie!

PETER
Rennie, where-

RENNIE
Right here, Peter, with you.

PETER
Rennie, what-

RENNIE
Don't try to figure it out, just
listen.

We see Rennie's face emerge from the blackness, the hairless
blue skin pulled tight over his skull, just as he looked
when Peter visited him in the hospital before Rennie's
death.

Rennie chuckles almost maliciously.

RENNIE (CONT'D)
So, this is quite the fix you've
gotten yourself into, isn't it?

PETER

Had to go beyond, Rennie. Are you beyond?

RENNIE

Oh, I'm beyond, alright, but the question is, where are you trying to go?

PETER

Beyond limitations... better than we are...

Rennie rolls his eyes.

RENNIE

Ah, yes, Peter, of course. You never accepted the limitations, did you?

PETER

Out there, the duality, Rennie. Full of light. No shadows. Nothing about us hidden...

RENNIE

Très noble, Peter, très noble.

Peter starts to rise up from his prone position.

PETER

Rennie! It's too horrible, isn't it?

RENNIE

What is, Peter?

Peter falls back down on the ground.

PETER

Knowing we are capable of saving the creation, and knowing we won't.

RENNIE

Perhaps, Peter, but how does your dying under a canoe help any?

PETER

Rennie! Hold both truths at the same time - we are capable, but we won't.

RENNIE

Alright, Peter. You may not have a lot of time to be debating the dualities, given the conditions you've made for yourself.
(beat)

Let me give you something even more interesting to chew on while you tempt fate.

PETER
What's that, Rennie?

RENNIE
Just this: Humans have been magnetically drawn to their shadow side forever, war, murder... So perhaps the catastrophic meltdown you fear is actually necessary for the species to evolve?

PETER
Huh?

RENNIE
You know, like the bad-ass boy that has to finally get arrested and serve some time before he can grow up?

PETER
Rennie, you don't really believe that.

RENNIE
Probably not, Peter, but I thought you needed a radically different perspective to balance your grief.

PETER
Yeah, well, thanks, Rennie.

Rennie looks at something moving near the canoe.

RENNIE
Look, Peter, I have to go now, but I want to burn this one word into your brain, just in case you survive. It's the most important thing I can say to you as I leave. So let's say goodbye now-

PETER
-Don't go, Rennie, I love you.

RENNIE
Yes, Peter, I know, and I love you.

Rennie's face begins to fade out.

PETER
Come back.

RENNIE

I can't, so be quiet now, Peter,
and listen hard, very hard, to this
message from the beyond.

PETER
Goodbye then...

RENNIE
Yes, goodbye. Here's the word,
Peter.

PETER
Yes, then... Rennie!

Rennie's face fades more quickly, receding into the distance
with a look of sadness and concern for Peter.

RENNIE
SARAHHHHH.....

INT. SMALL PLANE - SKOWQUILTZ VALLEY - SEPT. 15 - AFTERNOON

Norval is in the pilot's seat, Sarah in the copilot's seat
and Annetta in a passenger seat.

The plane is flying at a low altitude, following the forest
coastline.

The sky is overcast with occasional gusts of wind up to
sixty-four kilometers per hour. There is no rain.

Norval banks the single-engine plane hard against the
westerly wind and makes a sweeping turn over the deep green
blanket hiding the valley floor a thousand feet below.

Sarah and Annetta scan the forest intently with binoculars.

SARAH
Nothing, nothing! Where is it?
Shouldn't we be able to fly lower?

NORVAL
We can fly at treetop, but being up
here gives us a much larger view.

SARAH
Annetta, anything at all on your
side?

ANNETTA
Nothing yet...

NORVAL
I'm gonna go back out over the
water again to see if we can find
the coastal path.

The plane turns toward the cove and a tailwind pushes them forward. Norval rides the wind.

It recedes as they reach the cove and he lets the plane drift slowly downward to less than five hundred feet.

The choppy water below reflects the cold gray of the sky.

SARAH

I don't know how much longer I can stand just flying around looking. I'm starting to go blind. What if you land and we walk inland to find the trail?

NORVAL

Let's try this one more time. If it works, it will be a lot faster than dropping you two in the cold water to wade into the woods.

ANNETTA

And safer. Until we know better where Peter most likely is, we could make ourselves useless from exposure, trudging around wet and cold looking for the trail.

SARAH

But what about the raft, couldn't we use it to get to shore?

NORVAL

Once it inflates, that's it. Can't get it back in the plane without pulling the plug.

SARAH

Damn him!

Annetta reaches forward and puts her hand on Sarah's shoulder.

ANNETTA

Why don't you close your eyes and see if you can call up an image of Peter wherever he is right now, his surroundings?

SARAH

I'm afraid to do that. What if he's dead? I don't want to see-

ANNETTA

-It's just another way of seeing, of looking for a clue.

SARAH

If I have to...

Norval pulls the nose of the plane upward.

NORVAL

The cove turns in up ahead at a small beach where the creek empties. Anyone hiking from the longhouse to the valley would have to come by here, so we have a good chance of picking up the trail...

ANNETTA

That sounds very good, very logical. Sarah, has anything come to you yet?

SARAH

Green darkness, waves nearby. Just that. Not helpful.

ANNETTA

No, it is! Waves nearby means he's not far inland.

NORVAL

If he's near the water he should be near the trail, if we can just find that.

Annetta strains forward, her binoculars nearly touching the window.

ANNETTA

What's that?

SARAH

What?

ANNETTA

That green thing on the beach. Can you get lower, Norval?

The wind gusts against the plane and Norval cuts sharply away from the beach, making a tight circle back over the beach at a higher speed into the strong wind.

ANNETTA (CONT'D)

Damn. Just a pile of branches.

NORVAL

I'm gonna have to circle out again and come back in. Hang on.

They fly out over the water. Norval turns back toward the beach, flying only thirty-five feet over the water, and yanks the gear all the way backward as soon as his pontoons are over the sand.

The plane shakes violently from the stress and wind as it turns upward.

SARAH

That's a war canoe under those branches, that's a shelter!

Annetta strains against her seat straps to get a view of the canoe.

The plane is nearly vertical now as it clears the two-hundred-foot wall of Sitka spruce trees and a gale-force gust of wind from the west slams against its belly, blowing it back out over the water.

The plane is upside down and parallel with the water at an altitude of two-hundred and fifty feet.

Norval regains control with difficulty, slowly rolling the plane upright.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Go back, Norval, Peter's there!

NORVAL

We can land on the water right close to the beach, but I'll have to stay in the plane while you two take the raft and get Peter.

ANNETTA

You just get us down and we'll do the rest.

The plane's pontoon skids smack the water hard and Norval turns sharply left, coasting in with the right side of the plane facing the beach so the women can jump out close to shore.

NORVAL

Take the inflatable, and tie the loose end of the rope to that hook by the door so I can pull the raft back.

ANNETTA

We got it. Go, Sarah, I'm right behind you.

Sarah throws the raft out ahead of her and jumps into three feet of water. Annetta lands next to her.

Annetta pulls a cord on the raft and it inflates rapidly.

They push it hard into the wind and cold water, yelling Peter's name.

SARAH

Are you there, Peter?

They reach the beach and run up to the canoe shelter, dragging the raft.

Sarah screams Peter's name, grabbing one of the hemlock branches and yanking it off of the canoe.

Peter is visible inside the shelter, lying unconscious.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Peter, damn you, you better be
alive. Peter!

She grabs him and begins shaking him.

ANNETTA
Don't shake him to death. Let me
look...

Annetta crawls under the remaining branches and puts her fingertips on Peter's throat to feel for a pulse.

He is curled in a near-fetal position, eyes closed and mouth slightly open.

ANNETTA (CONT'D)
He's alive. He's cold, low pulse,
but strong enough to survive.

SARAH
He's stiff, Annetta, his arms are
stiff. Are you sure?

ANNETTA
He's just cold, too cold. Let's get
him out of here.

SARAH
Damn you, Peter, damn you for doing
this.

ANNETTA
Here, you lift his feet and I'll
lift his shoulders. On the count of
three.

They wrestle Peter's dead weight onto the raft and drag it toward the shoreline.

Norval taxis back toward the shore in the choppy water.

SARAH
Pull, Norval, pull!

Norval kills the engine, steps to the side door and pulls the raft tight to the strut.

He looks down at Peter lying motionless on the bottom of the raft.

Sarah and Annetta are slogging through the water almost waist-deep. The plane is drifting outward slowly.

Norval steps down on the pontoon skid, grabs Sarah's hand and pulls her up onto the skid.

NORVAL
You pull Peter in as we lift.

Annetta is now chest-deep in the cold water.

ANNETTA
It's too deep here, you have to get closer in so we can get the footing we need to lift him.

Norval pulls Annetta up on the pontoon, restarts the engine and slowly slips the plane closer to shore.

They lift Peter into the plane and place him on an old felt blanket on the floor.

NORVAL
Let's get the hell out of here.

INT. GERALD'S GALLERY - VANCOUVER, B.C. - SEPT 20 - 8 PM

Gerald's low-ceilinged, narrow, two-story gallery is crowded with large wooden sculptures, a totem pole, a dozen bentboxes, dozens of traditional masks and cedar baskets from the coastal tribes, as well as contemporary art from British Columbia tribal artists tied at least loosely to traditional styles.

The lighting is low, and the elongated shadows cast by the larger pieces and four tree ferns create an impression of being in the forest, darkness blurring the edges of everything.

The gallery pulses with the quiet heartbeat of the Orcas, ravens, grizzlies and other beasts of the sea and forest carved into the western red cedar masks and Douglas-fir boxes.

A dozen brightly painted transformation masks of various animals used in traditional coming-of-age rituals hang along a side wall in the rear of the gallery. Raven and Thunderbird have exaggerated beaks, three feet long, with searing eyes and flashing teeth evoking an incomprehensible time when humans communicated directly with their animal cousins of the wild.

The gallery is closed. Gerald is closing out the books for the day when someone raps loudly on the glass door.

He looks around and sees Norval's face through the glass, looking at him.

Gerald unlocks the door and pulls it open wide.

GERALD
Norval! Hey, what's up, come in.
(beat)
Harold?

NORVAL
Shh. Keep it quiet, cuz, we're on
the lam. Harold is anyway, and
probably me too for hiding him.

Gerald locks the door and pulls a drape over the glass.

GERALD
Harold, are you okay, where have
you been?

Norval watches Harold closely.

HAROLD
Okay. Away.

NORVAL
Harold was right near the beach
where Peter built his shelter. He
had been watching Peter.

Gerald lets out a guffaw.

GERALD
Right under our noses. And watching
over Peter, Harold? You are sharp,
Harold, sharp.

NORVAL
We need to hide him here for a few
days, so our attorneys can
interview him.

GERALD
Here? You mean here, in the
gallery?

NORVAL
There's no other safe place we have
access to in Vancouver. No one will
look for him here.

GERALD
So now we're both accessories, or
something.

NORVAL
Haven't we always been?

GERALD

Right. So Harold, I've got a good cot in the back room, use it for naps, myself. And a small fridge, all the comforts. And I live upstairs, so you can...
(beat)
Harold?

Harold is walking along the wall of transformation masks, mumbling to himself.

HAROLD

Raven!

NORVAL

I think he's going to like it here, cousin!

GERALD

Well then, we're good, aren't we?

EXT. BELLA COOLA - MAIN STREET - SEPT. 22 - LATE AFTERNOON

The small town is in a post-lunch lull. The bright sun slips in and out of gray clouds, and a single-engine plane drones in the distance.

The river valley town is cradled by green ice-capped mountains to the north, south and east. A commercial boat dock is visible to the west, where the Bella Coola River empties into Dean Channel inlet from the Pacific Ocean.

Ted, Anna and Sarah walk toward the town clinic, passing the Nuxalk Community House and the tribal headquarters building with its tall, imposing totem pole.

They pause near the clinic and speak briefly.

Ted and Anna then walk back toward the Community House.

Sarah turns in a slow circle, taking in the town and the river splashing against boulders and dead spruce trees crossing the flow of the current.

A young eagle screams from a tree top.

SARAH

Alright, I'm going...

INT. BELLA COOLA CLINIC - PETER'S ROOM - THREE MINUTES LATER

Sarah enters the small, spare clinic room. There is a washstand, one folding chair, and a single bed, in which Peter lies with his eyes closed.

The floor's orange tiles are worn and the walls are painted pale green and off-white. Overhead fluorescent lights cast a ghostly pall.

Sarah walks to the window and pushes drapery to the side, letting sunlight into the room.

The movement and noise wake Peter from a light sleep.

He sees Sarah is wearing a lightweight, green cotton sweater he gave her years ago. Her long, dark brown hair is tied up loosely, resting on one shoulder.

PETER
Nice sweater.

SARAH
Oh, you're awake. How are you feeling?

PETER
Cold and hot, back and forth.

SARAH
Uh huh, kinda typical, the nurse says, for someone in your condition.

PETER
Thinking a lot... how close I came to dying...

SARAH
Well, yeah! You get shot, edge into stage-three hypothermia under a canoe on a rainy beach, spend two days in shock after we drag you back here.
(beat)
All that could make a person think about what they're doing.

They stare at each other for a moment.

PETER
Yes.

Peter looks down at his hands resting on his thighs.

Sarah folds her arms in front of her, restraining herself.

SARAH
So what exactly have you been thinking, Peter? I need to know.

He looks up, noticing her distancing and her new tone of voice. He speaks loudly and quickly, mounting a defense of sound and speed against possible accusations.

PETER
 ...dead pilot, Roy, Duran, tree
 falling on me in the helicopter...

Sarah reaches out to touch his arm.

SARAH
 Slow down, Peter. Don't get your
 blood pressure-

PETER
 -Too much to bear, not just that I
 might die, but I wouldn't see you
 again, or-

SARAH
 -Well here you are, alive, with me.
 You look pale. Did you sleep well
 last night?

She puts her hand on his forehead.

PETER
 Dreams... Under the canoe...
 helicopter...

SARAH
 Oh hell, your fever is worse! I'm
 going to call the nurse.

Peter grabs her wrist.

PETER
 No, not yet, not yet.

SARAH
 What is it, what's so damn
 important? Do you want to die, is
 that it?

Peter pauses for a second as if considering her question,
 then resumes his fevered intensity, bending his legs up
 under the sheets and twisting his body toward Sarah.

PETER
 No... tell you first... dreams...
 waves crashing... moonlight through
 hemlock needles... me floating high
 over the beach...

SARAH
 And?

Peter coughs deeply.

PETER
 Incredible cold beauty, moonlight
 on water, trees bending in the

wind, a moaning sound out there,
too much to bear, earth going on in
its endless cycles, with or without
us-

SARAH
-Take a breath, Peter, slow it
down-

PETER
-In the helicopter, bleeding, chain
saws screaming, copters thundering
away with butchered trees, my heart
exploding and-

SARAH
-Peter, stop now, you're too-

Peter's face darkens with his rising intensity.

PETER
-I can't, Sarah, I have to tell you
everything, you have to hear it.

Sarah quietly reaches for the call button cord and presses
the red button.

SARAH
Alright, Peter, I'm listening, but-

PETER
-You and me, Tofino, you and
Brigette, locked down across
logging road, humans fighting, cold
beauty of earth, can't not see-

Sarah puts her hand on his chest.

SARAH
-It's your special burden, Peter,
to be unblinking in the face of the
full and mean scope of human
nature. Not everyone can do it and
it sounds like you've reached your
limit now also.

PETER
Don't want easier, or blind to
everything humans are, do. Must be
an answer.

A nurse appears in the doorway.

NURSE
What's happening?

SARAH

I think his fever is worse, he's
hyperventilating and-

NURSE

-Let me see.

Sarah steps back as the nurse takes Peter's temperature and
blood pressure.

NURSE (CONT'D)

He's at 102 Fahrenheit, about where
we expect him to be today, but if
we can keep this cool cloth on his
forehead and chest that will help.

She steps away from Peter's bed and looks at Sarah.

NURSE (CONT'D)

I'll ask the doctor to stop in soon
just to make sure he's alright.

SARAH

You expected him to be this warm?
What about tomorrow?

NURSE

Should be going down a degree or
two each day now. He's mending, but
it takes time. We're upping his
nutrition supplements and he's
taking them well. That's a good
sign.

SARAH

Okay, thanks.

NURSE

Sure.

Sarah sits on the side of Peter's bed as the nurse leaves.

Peter's eyes are closed and his mouth is open. His stomach
rises and falls as he breathes through his mouth.

PETER

Rennie!

Sarah starts at this exclamation of Rennie's name, and bends
close to Peter to see if he is awake or asleep.

His eyes remain closed, so she speaks softly to him.

SARAH

What? Rennie? What-

PETER

Rennie came to me, under canoe.

SARAH
Rennie, under the canoe? Tell me
about that.

PETER
Won't see him again, he said.

SARAH
Anything else?

PETER
Laughed. Joked about humans. Angry
at me.

SARAH
Angry? When you were close to
death?

PETER
Good friend, that's okay, talked
about not going beyond.

SARAH
Who, not going beyond what?

Peter opens his eyes and looks at Sarah.

PETER
Me. Should stay with you, he said,
stop looking for answers. You are
it, the answer, that is...

Sarah stands up quickly and holds Peter's hands together.

SARAH
Oh my god, Peter! If you have ever
listened to Rennie, listen now,
please. I may not be the answer to
the big existential questions that
seem to haunt you more and more,
but I am the one who has loved you
all these years.

PETER
Yes, yes Sarah, yes...

Peter tries to sit up and starts coughing. Sarah gently
pushes him back down on the bed.

SARAH
Peter, stop. Stop struggling. Take
a drink of water. Here...

She helps him take a sip of water. He lies back and his
coughing stops.

PETER
I can't live without you.

SARAH
 You don't have to, Peter. You just
 have to decide what is most
 important to you: me or-

PETER
 -can't abandon earth, or you. Must
 fight-

Sarah pulls back from him, releasing his hands.

SARAH
 -Peter, listen carefully. This is
 the last time I'm going to say
 this.
 (beat)
 You must decide. I'm not going to
 continue a life of not knowing if
 you will come back alive. You were
 just shot, almost killed. Can't
 you-

PETER
 -He didn't know it was me, he
 didn't-

SARAH
 -That's a great epitaph for your
 urn, Peter: He didn't know it was
 me he shot. I'll try to remember
 that when I get the next phone
 call.

PETER
 Okay, I know, but-

SARAH
 -No more 'buts,' Peter. That's
 over.

The nurse reappears.

NURSE
 Excuse me. Time for his evening
 shot.

Sarah backs away from his bed.

SARAH
 Alright. Good timing, actually.

NURSE
 Oh yeah?

She injects Peter and looks back at Sarah.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Sometimes it just works out that way.

SARAH
Yes, I guess so.

The nurse smiles and leaves the room.

PETER
What did she say?

SARAH
Nothing. But I have to tell you something unpleasant, Peter. Seems like now is the time.

PETER
What do you mean?

SARAH
Once you've recovered and you can be on your own in Tofino, I'm taking some time away.

PETER
What? Why? I just said-

SARAH
-I heard everything you said. Let me finish. I'm going to Kentucky with Annetta for a few weeks. I need some time to think, Peter, to find what's next for me, and you do too, so-

PETER
-For how long?

SARAH
Long enough to clear my head and see my future. And to give you time to do the same.

PETER
Sarah, I love you, I-

SARAH
-I know, Peter, and I'll always love you. You know that.

PETER
But that sounds too much like-

SARAH
-Stop, Peter.

Sarah fights back tears.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I'm not ready to throw away all of our history, or love, but I'm not ready to accept the status quo either. That's all I know right now.

They look at each other in silence.

PETER

It feels dangerous, Sarah, could all fall apart...

SARAH

Not now, Peter. You need to rest.

PETER

But-

SARAH

-I'll come back at dinnertime, and bring some smoked salmon for you, if you like.

PETER

Sarah! Wait...
(beat)
Okay, yes, some salmon... Thank you.

Sarah bends over him and kisses his forehead.

SARAH

Now sleep.

She turns and quickly walks out of the clinic, stifling tears.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BELLA COOLA CLINIC - EVENING

Outside, standing at the edge of the Bella Coola River, Sarah listens to the rushing waters, and the cry of an eagle calling out to the wind.

She wipes her tears, slowly slides her hands down her body, places one hand on her belly and one on her heart.

The eagle screams on its high perch and dives toward the river, pursuing its prey.

Three large ravens burst noisily from the deep green trees across the water.

Sarah smiles sadly and turns to walk up the slope toward Big Woods Café.

INT. BIG WOODS CAFE - BELLA COOLA - EVENING

People are beginning to gather for the evening meal.

Anna and Annetta are sitting at a table near the picture window looking out to Main Street. A waiter approaches.

WAITER
Time for some of that cool evening
light.

He goes to the window and raises a shade.

ANNA
Great idea. Thank you.

WAITER
Be right back for your order.

Annetta nods toward the window.

ANNETTA
Look, here comes Sarah!