

THE WAKE OF LIGHT

An original screenplay written by

Renji Philip

(C) Library of Congress
WGA Registered

AXISPACIFIC FILMWORKS
12400 Ventura Blvd., #174
Studio City, CA 91604
818.605.1194

TITLE CARD OVER A BLACK SCREEN:

"How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery."
Ephesians 3:3,4

WOMAN'S V.O.

What is this light that calls to
me...

EXT. BLUFF - DAWN

MARY BLAKE sits on a rock, high upon a bluff, staring at the setting sun, sinking past the horizon of a vast valley. The voice we hear is hers.

MARY (V.O.)

...this truth?

Though Mary is only in her late 20s, and quite pretty, there is an emptiness in her eyes, as she stares at the distant sun.

MARY (V.O.)

If you are real, show me how to
find you.

Mary stares at the sun, as it dips beyond the horizon, waiting for an answer that does not come.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: THE WAKE OF LIGHT**EXT. CASPER CREEK / STREET - MORNING**

The following montage is MOS and moves between the present and a little later, this same morning.

Morning sun glimmers through a crate of antique water bottles that Mary Blake carries down an empty street in Casper Creek, Colorado on a hot summer day. Casper Creek is an old mining town, stuck in time, surrounded by the dry hills of the Colorado's Eastern Plains.

Mary's bottles have been filled with water, each sealed with plastic wrap and a rubber band, each holding a candy-striped straw.

Mary makes her way towards the center of town.

She passes a house with toy pinwheels stuck throughout the yard.

The wings of a toy dragon on a pole turn in the hot breeze.

Mary approaches an OLDER MAN IN A PLASTIC CHAIR, on the sidewalk next to his house.

She sells this man a bottle of her special water for a dollar, then continues on her way.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - LATER THAT MORNING

Mary pours a bowl of pre-scrambled eggs into a hot skillet.

She adds two strips of uncooked bacon to a 2nd skillet.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / STREET - PRESENT

Mary continues down the sidewalk with her crate of bottles.

She approaches a MAN ON A BENCH, offers him a bottle, which he refuses, so Mary continues by, making her way towards the center of town.

INT. FARMHOUSE / STANLEY'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT MORNING

Mary quietly enters the room and comes to the bed where, STANLEY BLAKE, Mary's father, is sleeping soundly.

Stanley is 65 years old. A big man who's stature informs a life of physical labor, though now rendered mute and physically limited from a stroke. He speaks with his looks and gestures and only wears his pajamas.

Mary carefully sits on edge of Stanley's bed, gently wakes him.

MARY

Daddy?

Stanley wakes.

MARY (CONT'D)

Eggs are on.

Mary brings over a glass of water from his bedside table and gives Stanley a sip, which brings a peace to her face.

Stanley hands the water glass back to Mary, which she returns to the table, then gets up, smiles at Stanley, and heads back to the kitchen.

Stanley watches after Mary for a few moments, revealing a weariness on his face.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / TOWN CENTER - PRESENT

An American flag in the shape of a fish whips in the wind.

Mary makes her way through the crowded town center, of townsfolk gathered for the annual tomato festival, complete with fire engines and a ukulele band.

She sells a bottle of her water to a LOCAL VENDOR, there to sell his own bloody mary mix to the townsfolk.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - LATER THAT MORNING

Stanley sits at the kitchen table, staring out the window, into the dead wheat fields behind the house.

Until Mary brings two plates of food, sets Stanley's down, before her own.

MARY

The tomato festival started today.

Stanley ignores Mary, waiting impatiently for her to unfold his napkin and lay it across his lap.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / TOWN CENTER - PRESENT

A VETERAN holds up a bottle of Mary's water to say "thank you" to Mary, who smiles back as she heads along her way, looking for more sales.

Though the townsfolk of Casper Creek accept Mary, a person of her youth and beauty seems strangely out of place here.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / BRIDGE - MOMENTS LATER

Mary passes over a small bridge, looking down to the creek bed that gives the town it's namesake. Dry now.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - LATER THAT MORNING

Stanley and Mary continue eating breakfast at the table.

MARY

You want anything special for
dinner tomorrow?

Stanley ignores Mary's question, continues eating.

He suddenly chokes on a piece of food and Mary is lightening quick to bring his glass of water to him, for him to sip, which clears his food.

Stanley sets the glass of water down, but Mary picks it up again, offering him more water.

Stanley makes a motion "I've had enough - leave me alone," revealing an ongoing conflict between father and daughter.

Mary resumes eating, occasionally glancing to Stanley to make sure he's okay.

Stanley's attention drifts out the window again, to the dead wheat fields behind the house.

In the sky above, three condors cross in flight, continuing on, in opposite directions.

JUMP CUT:

Mary helps Stanley out of the kitchen, holding him as he slowly walks with his cane into the living room.

INT. FARMHOUSE / LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mary adjusts the dial on Stanley's radio to his favorite old time radio show and brings him the newspaper.

MARY

I wish we could get some rain.

Stanley takes the newspaper and starts to read, ignoring Mary.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / TOWN CENTER - PRESENT

Mary offers water to TWO OLDER WOMEN ENJOYING ICE CREAM at a sidewalk cafe. They politely refuse her, so Mary continues on her way.

CASPER CREEK / TOWN CENTER - LATER

Mary leans against the wall of an old antique store, counting her money from the day's sales. Eight-odd dollars.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / TOWN CENTER - LATER

Mary approaches a BOY WITH CEREBRAL PALSY sitting on a step, with one of her empty water bottles next to him. His name is RUSSELL. Mary comes up behind Russell and surprises him.

MARY
Hi, Russell.

Russell bounds to his feet, as if he's been waiting for Mary all morning, his face lighting up at the sight of her.

RUSSELL
Hi, Mary!

MARY
How are you today?

RUSSELL
I'm good.

Russell carefully selects the perfect place in Mary's crate to put his empty bottle, then thrusts both of his closed hands out in front of her, wanting Mary to choose one.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
Guess which hand?

Mary chooses his right hand, to Russell's delight. He opens his hand, revealing a piece of candy, just for Mary, which she takes.

MARY
Thank you. That's so sweet.

Russell eagerly nods.

RUSSELL
You're welcome, Mary.

He beams at her.

JUMP CUT:

Russell sits back down on his step and watches Mary head down the alley, on her way again. He calls after her.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
Bye Mary!

Mary turns back, with a smile, calls back to him.

MARY
Bye Russell!

Russell beams as he watches Mary go.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / STREET - LATER

Mary passes the same house of pinwheels, this time, from the other direction, on her way towards home.

MATCH CUT TO:

Mary's mid-stride, in 48 FPS.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / FRONT GATE - LATER

Mary approaches a little farmhouse and passes through the rusty gate, which she re-latches behind her.

Their farmhouse is a dilapidated, two-bedroom house, with missing screens and peeling paint that sits on a surrounding plot of dead wheat fields.

At the front door, Mary removes her crate, sets it down on the porch, picks up the newspaper and quietly enters the house.

INT. FARMHOUSE / BARN - LATER

Mary refills a plastic water bottle for an OLD WHITE RABBIT in a cage.

She discovers the feed dispenser has fallen from the wall, above the cage, which Mary picks up, along with the screw that's fallen out.

Mary does her best to hand-tighten the screw back into the wall, then re-hang the feeder on the screw.

On her way out of the barn, she grabs one of her empty bottles next to the rabbit cage, leaving the feeder hanging precariously on the loose screw.

INT. FARMHOUSE / MARY'S BEDROOM - LATER

Mary sits at her desk, hair still wet from a shower, counting her money from a week of water sales, 30-odd dollars, which she neatly folds, inserts into the hole of a birdhouse/piggy bank. Perhaps, saving for a rainy day.

INT. FARMHOUSE / STANLEY'S BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Mary quietly enters Stanley's bedroom with a glass of water, comes over to his bed, where he's fallen asleep with a book over his chest, and his reading glasses still on.

Mary carefully removes his book, along with his glasses, and softly kisses Stanley's forehead.

She places the full glass of water close by, on his bedside table, next to an old framed photograph of Stanley and MARY'S MOTHER FROM YEARS AGO, holding each other arm in arm, smiles on their young faces.

Mary turns off the light and quietly exits Stanley's room.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT - THAT MOMENT

The tiny farmhouse sits dark now, crickets and critters filling the night with the rural sounds of a distant farm.

Mary's day has finally ended.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / SIDEYARD - MORNING

Mary hand-pumps the lever of a water well, on the sideyard of the farmhouse.

She fills her water bottles, one by one, carefully placing them back into her crate, sealing them with plastic wrap and inserting a straw, preparing for yet another day of the same thing.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / OUTSIDE DINER - LATER

Mary rounds the corner from the alley behind a diner, carrying 3 empty bottles and a sack lunch.

She comes to the bench next to the front window of the diner, inserts the empty bottles into her crate, then sits down and removes a sandwich from her sack.

As Mary unwraps the sandwich, and takes a bite, COLE PERKINS, a hippy young man of Mary's age, with an eagerness in his eyes, comes out of nowhere and approaches her.

COLE

You know there's probably rocket
fuel in that?

Cole nods to her sandwich, and leans against a pillar, staring at Mary with a grin on his face.

COLE (CONT'D)

Yeah, they're finding rocket fuel in the soil now, where they're growing vegetables and wheat. Bet you didn't know that.

Mary regards him, unsure what to think, not comfortable.

Cole comes closer to Mary, leans against the wall next to the bench.

COLE (CONT'D)

Yeah, I mean, for a while there, all you had to worry about were the cows, you know; cause they'd give hormones to the cows to make them grow faster, then the hormones would get into the milk and...

Cole looks at Mary, who looks at him as if to say "you can move along now."

COLE (CONT'D)

Oh, don't tell me your mom let's you drink milk?

MARY

My mom's dead.

An awkward moment passes between them, which Mary intended.

COLE

Ooof.

But, Cole gathers himself, tries again.

COLE (CONT'D)

So, what kind of sandwich is that?

MARY

Meatloaf.

COLE

MEATLOAF? God, you're going to be flying to the moon on hormones and rocket fuel.

Mary looks at him with a blank face, rebuffing his attempt at humor.

Cole spots the last full bottle of water in her crate.

COLE (CONT'D)
Look, is that water?

MARY
Yeah.

COLE
Is it clean?

MARY
Yeah.

COLE
Yeah? Can I...can I buy some? Is
that okay?

As Cole reaches for his wallet, Mary simply grabs the bottle and holds it out, preferring he would just take it and go.

MARY
Here you go. Just take it.

COLE
Really?

Cole takes the bottle, checks out clarity of the water inside.

COLE (CONT'D)
It's not from a radiator or
anything, is it? I'm not going to
keel over and die and get poisoned?

Mary ignores his humor, wraps up the remains of her sandwich, gathers her crate and prepares to go.

MARY
Just leave the empty bottle inside.

Meaning the diner. Cole takes a sip, analyzes it's taste.

COLE
Oh man, this is really good.

Mary picks up her crate and heads out, passing him.

MARY
Leave the bottle inside.

Cole watches Mary walk away. Then, suddenly calls after her.

COLE

Hey, you know, I'm only hear for a couple of days. I could really use some good water and stuff.

As Mary rounds the corner to the alley, she looks back at Cole for the slightest second, before disappearing.

Cole shouts after Mary again, louder.

COLE (CONT'D)

I'll refill it with rocket fuel!

Meaning her bottle. But Mary is gone. His joke lands like a lead balloon. He calls after her one more time.

COLE (CONT'D)

Hey, I'm Cole by the way!

He waits for Mary to re-appear at the corner. But, she doesn't.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / FRONT GATE - LATER

Mary quickly approaches the front gate, carrying her crate of bottles and large grocery bag.

She passes through the gate, latching it behind her, and heads up the walk.

At the front door, Mary removes her crate, puts it on the porch and quietly enters the house.

INT. FARMHOUSE / LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mary quietly enters the house, gathers Stanley's empty dishes from the end table and heads towards the kitchen, passing Stanley, sleeping soundly on the couch, with his old time radio show playing on the radio in the background.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Mary enters the kitchen and places Stanley's dirty dishes on the counter, before setting down her heavy grocery bag.

She starts washing Stanley's dishes and looks up to the clock on the wall above the stove. It's 5pm exactly. Time to start making dinner.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - ESTABLISHING - LATE AFTERNOON

The long shadows of late afternoon fall over the quiet farmhouse.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - THAT MOMENT

Mary and Stanley eat dinner in silence at the kitchen table.

As Mary eats, she looks for a place to start a conversation, but Stanley ignores her eyes, stays focused on his food.

MARY

It's getting hot out there.

Stanley ignores her, continues eating.

MARY (CONT'D)

You know, I got you that fan so you can put it on.

Stanley ignores her, continues eating.

MARY (CONT'D)

Be sure to put it on.

More silence. More eating.

MARY (CONT'D)

It's pretty busy in town, all the tourists coming in.

But, Stanley ignores Mary, takes a sip of his water, continues eating, leaving Mary in silence for the rest of the meal.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - LATER

Mary wipes down table after dinner, takes the empty glasses to the sink and starts to scrub the dirty dishes.

INT. FARMHOUSE / LIVING ROOM - LATER

The radio blares Stanley's old time show.

Mary quietly approaches, turns the volume down and walks to the couch, where Stanley is asleep again.

She quietly re-folds today's newspaper, then lays a blanket over Stanley, careful not to wake him.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / SIDEYARD - LATER

As the sun sets, beyond the trees, as Mary brings her crate of bottles to a tree stump next to the well.

She sets her crate on the stump, and gives the lever three hard pumps. She fills a bottle with the clear water.

Gold light glimmers through the water as she fills another.

Mary takes a break, reflecting on the deafening silence of life with her father...

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / TOWN CENTER - NEXT DAY

Mary sits on a step, fixing the frayed strap of her crate.

Suddenly, Cole appears out of nowhere.

COLE

Hey!

Mary looks up to see Cole, approaching her, holding out her empty bottle in his hand.

COLE (CONT'D)

Got your bottle.

Mary doesn't take it, goes back to trying to fix the strap.

MARY

I told you to leave it at the diner.

COLE

Yeah, I know...

Cole hold the bottle out again.

This time, Mary takes it, puts it in her crate, goes back to fixing the strap.

COLE (CONT'D)

So, that's like, really, really good water. So what do you do, filter it? Or is it ionized?

MARY

No.

COLE
It's some of the best I've ever
had. Where do you get it?

MARY
A well.

Cole's face lights up.

COLE
Like a well, well...from the
ground?

He makes a pumping motion with his hand.

COLE (CONT'D)
From the ground?

Mary nods, as if it isn't obvious.

Cole thinks about a water well in this day and age, is
delighted by the thought.

COLE (CONT'D)
I guess that makes sense...

He sits down on the step next to Mary.

COLE (CONT'D)
Sediment filtration, no chloride in
it.

Mary is clearly uncomfortable with Cole next to her. She
avoids eye contact, nervously trying to fix the strap on her
crate.

COLE (CONT'D)
So, is that what you do, sort of go
around town and you sell water?

MARY
Yes.

COLE
They buy it?

MARY
Sometimes.

Cole loves this.

COLE
That's really cool.

An awkward beat passes between them. Mary doesn't know what to say.

MARY

I need to go.

COLE

Hey, do you mind if I come with you?

Mary clearly doesn't trust his motives.

COLE (CONT'D)

I'm only going to be in town for a couple days. I'm getting a new timing belt put on my car, so I have some time to kill. I'm on my way to Grand Flats, Utah. You ever been?

MARY

No.

COLE

People say it's the Eight Wonder of the World. It's the lowest point in North America. Everyone thinks it's Death Valley, but it's not. This is two hundred and seventy feet below sea level. That's eleven under Death Valley.

MARY

(indifferent)

Wow.

COLE

Yeah. I could just tag along, kind of walk with you. We don't have to talk. We could be silent.

Mary has enough silence in her life.

COLE (CONT'D)

I could really use the company.

So could Mary.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / AROUND TOWN - A LITTLE LATER

The following montage is MOS.

Cole walks alongside Mary, talking incessantly to her the entire time, as Mary looks for water customers.

Cole shares random facts upon facts about everything.

They ascend a flight of stairs, as Mary looks for customers, Cole continuing his monologue of facts.

Cole and Mary walk alongside a picket fence, approaching a MAN ON THE SIDEWALK, who Mary offers a bottle of water to, but he refuses.

Mary and Cole continue down a little corridor of shops, with Mary walking beneath the awning, as Cole weaves in and out of the pillars next to her, talking and talking.

They descend a flight of stairs that Cole makes in a giant leap, still talking to Mary a mile a minute, a far cry from the silence Mary is used to.

They walk back, along the picket fence, with Mary still looking for customers and Cole still talking.

A WOMAN ON THE CORNER buys a bottle of water from Mary, which brings a smile to everyone's faces, before Mary and COLE continue on their way.

Cole and Mary walk down a path through a park.

Cole finds what he thinks is an arrowhead. He shows it to Mary, who clearly thinks it's a rock. But Cole is absolutely convinced it's a genuine arrowhead. He places it into his pants pocket, like a treasure, continues on, ahead of Mary.

Mary hangs back, watching Cole, for a few seconds, starting to warm to his childlike charm.

Cole and Mary walk through the grass of an old baseball field, and come upon one of Mary's empty bottles, on the ground, next to some trash.

Cole picks it up, brushes it off, cleans it with his shirt, and hands it to Mary with a smile.

Cole and Mary head down an alley, with Cole still sharing infinite facts about the places he's been. Mary is now interested in everything he says, revealed by a smile that breaks across her face, as they continue on their way.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / OUTSIDE DINER - LATER

Mary and Cole round the corner from the alley, with a few of Mary's empty bottles, gathered from inside, and head towards the bench.

COLE

You know where I'm going after Grand Flats, did I tell you?

MARY

Where?

Mary's demeanor is more comfortable with Cole now.

COLE

Sawtooth National Forest. You ever been?

MARY

No.

COLE

It's the ninth tallest point in all of Idaho. It's twelve thousand and nine feet above sea level.

Mary sits on the bench next to her crate.

COLE (CONT'D)

These go here?

Meaning the three empty bottles in his hand, into the three empty spots in Mary's crate.

MARY

Yeah.

Cole puts the bottles into the crate and takes a seat on the bench next to Mary.

MARY (CONT'D)

So, this is what you do? You just travel the country going to different places?

COLE

Yeah. That's the plan.

Mary can't even imagine a life like Cole's.

COLE (CONT'D)

What's the coolest place you've ever been?

MARY

Here?

COLE

Yeah, here or outside of here.

MARY

I've never been outside of here.

COLE

(surprised)

Really?

Mary nods.

COLE (CONT'D)

(back-peddalling)

No, I mean that's cool.

Cole looks around at their surroundings.

COLE (CONT'D)

This is a cool place.

Mary doesn't know what else to say. Awkward moment passes between them.

COLE (CONT'D)

Hey, thanks for letting me come with you today. I kind of needed it. I was getting a little sick of myself.

MARY

Are you staying at the motel?

COLE

Casa Ceviche.

MARY

Where's that?

COLE

It's my car. It's a Honda Civic.

Mary doesn't get his joke.

MARY

(surprised)

You're sleeping in your car?

COLE

Yeah, it kind of came to a stop on the side of the road, right outside of town. I didn't want to leave it there and go to a motel. I was kind of afraid my stuff would get stolen so...

Mary goes along.

COLE (CONT'D)

But, I mean it's nice. It's great. There's like a creek right there, and the sun kind of rises above the hills. It's really pretty.

Mary listens.

COLE (CONT'D)

Plus, I'm used to it. When I was a kid, my dad used to take me to all these kind of cool different places. He used to say "we owe it to ourselves to see everything we can."

MARY

So, why didn't he come with you? A road trip sounds like a father-son thing to do.

COLE

Yeah, it does....

A moment passes. Mary notices some emotion that Cole pushes back.

COLE (CONT'D)

He passed away.

This catches Mary off-guard, an even-deeper connection between them now.

COLE (CONT'D)

He was a painter, he used to paint landscapes. He always wanted to paint Grad Flats, but he never did. So, in a way, this trip is like kind of for him.

Mary is touched by this.

MARY

That's cool.

She sees Cole in a new light now.

MARY (CONT'D)
Would you want to see the well?

COLE
Huh?

MARY
The well.

COLE
Like your well? Like the water
well?

MARY
Yeah. If it's interesting.

COLE
(immediately)
Yeah. It's interesting.

MARY
It's a bit of a walk from here.

COLE
(eager)
Sure, yeah.

MARY
Alright.

Mary stands, prepares to head out.

COLE
Yeah, let's do it. Alright. Cool.

Cole carefully hands the crate to Mary, unsure if he should offer to carry it for her or not.

COLE (CONT'D)
There ya go.

She takes it.

MARY
Thanks.

COLE
Okay.

Cole stands up next to Mary.

COLE (CONT'D)

Lead the way.

Mary starts off. Cole eagerly follows her.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / FRONT GATE - LATER

Mary and Cole approach the gate, with Cole taking in the farmhouse and the surrounding property.

MARY

This is it.

COLE

Wow.

Cole checks out the farmhouse, as Mary unlatches the gate and the two of them pass through.

MARY

It's around to the side.

As Mary walks towards the well, Cole latches the gate behind him, then hustles after Mary, all-the-while, taking in the wonder of the little farmhouse, stuck in time.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / SIDEYARD - CONTINUOUS

Mary and Cole approach the well.

MARY

That's it.

Cole hustles up to the well to get a closer look, a big smile on his face.

COLE

Oh, man. This is awesome.

Mary removes her crate, sets it on the tree stump.

MARY

You can pump it if you want.

Which excites Cole, even more.

COLE

Yeah?

MARY

Yeah.

Cole sizes up the well, as Mary comes over to show him how it works.

COLE
Okay, what do I do?

Mary steps in and places one hand on the side of the well for balance.

MARY
Okay, so you're going to put your hand here.

Cole follows, puts his hand next to Mary's.

COLE
Okay.

MARY
And then you're going to put your hand there, on the handle.

Mary shows him. Cole follows.

MARY (CONT'D)
And then you're going to go up...

As Cole readies himself to pump the handle, his shoulder brushes against Mary, sending a jolt of electricity through both of them, which causes Mary to take a step back.

COLE
Okay.

MARY
Three times.

Cole readies himself.

COLE
Alright.

MARY
And it's going to be a little hard when you come back down.

COLE
Alright, I'm going to look like a man now.

Cole heaves up the lever, surprised by the strength it takes to draw-up the suction.

MARY
There ya go.

He makes one hard pump.

MARY (CONT'D)
One...

COLE
Uh huh.

Cole makes another hard pump.

MARY
Two...

Cole makes a third hard pump.

MARY (CONT'D)
Three...

A moment passes. Then, just like that, clear water flows.

MARY (CONT'D)
There it goes.

Cole giggles, kneels down to eye-level with the water, eagerly fills up a bottle, a big grin on his face.

MARY (CONT'D)
My dad used to tell the story of
the guy who drilled this.

Cole holds up the now-full bottle of water for a clarity check. It's crystal clear. He places the full bottle into Mary's crate and grabs another empty, starts to fill it.

MARY (CONT'D)
My mom really wanted a well and so
he had a couple of different men
from the city come out with their
fancy equipment. They drilled all
over the place, couldn't find
anything. So dad had this old man
come out with this handmade,
rickety trailer...and he had these
sticks that point down-

COLE
A dowsing rod?

Cole loves this.

MARY

A dowsing rod. So he had a dowsing rod, and he was walking around, and they tilted down, and this is where he drilled. And water came up on the first shot and it hasn't gone dry since.

Cole looks at the well. This is the exact kind of story he loves.

COLE

That is really cool. That is a REALLY cool story.

Mary smiles, brimming with their new-found connection. She points to an empty bottle.

MARY

Take that. I want to show you something else.

COLE

Yeah?

MARY

Yeah.

Mary heads for the barn. Cole quickly grabs the bottle...

COLE

Okay.

...and hustles after her.

As Mary and Cole walk towards the barn, Mary points out to an empty corral in the field.

MARY

We used to have horses out there.

Cole looks out over the wheat fields with wonder, as the two of them head towards the barn.

INT. FARMHOUSE / BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Mary and Cole enter the dusty old barn. It's a large room, with a vaulted ceiling and decayed wood planks.

COLE

This is cool.

Mary walks over the rabbit cage.

MARY

There she is.

Cole sees the rabbit and a big smile break across his face.

Mary takes the water bottle from Cole, so he can move closer to the cage.

COLE

(to the rabbit)

Hey!

Mary bends down next to the cage and removes plastic water dispenser, unscrews the lid.

COLE (CONT'D)

Boy or girl?

MARY

Girl

Mary refills the plastic dispenser, with the water from her bottle.

COLE

(to the rabbit)

Girl. Hey!

Cole watches the nervous rabbit regard him.

COLE (CONT'D)

(to Mary)

What's her name?

MARY

Pepper.

COLE

(to the rabbit)

PEPPER, what's up Pepper?

Cole crouches next to the cage, tries to get the rabbit's attention, as she scratches her hind quarters with her back foot.

COLE (CONT'D)

What, are you itchy?

The rabbit looks up at him, continues to scratch.

Cole cracks up.

Mary fastens the lid back on the plastic water dispenser, and hangs it on the side of the cage.

COLE (CONT'D)
She's shy, huh?

MARY
Yeah.

Cole sticks his fingers through the cage, tries to coax the rabbit to sniff him.

COLE
Hey.

A few feet away from the rabbit cage, Mary notices the feeder has fallen to the floor again, which embarrasses her.

She hustles over and quickly gathers the food, along with the screw that's fallen out of the wall again. She tries to insert the screw pack into the worn-hole.

Cole notices her trouble, comes behind her to help.

COLE (CONT'D)
Can I take a look?

Cole touches the small of Mary's back, as he steps up, next to her.

MARY
Yeah.

Mary hands him the screw, and takes a step back.

COLE
Let's see, what are we working with?

Mary watches Cole size-up the screw, to the worn-out hole in the wall, which he sees is not going to hold.

COLE (CONT'D)
Okay, do you have any longer screws and a screwdriver?

Mary suddenly feels like bringing Cole home was a bad idea. She tries to play it off.

MARY
It's inside, so...

COLE
Yeah, that's okay. Go grab them real quick.

MARY
No, that's okay.

COLE
It's going to take me, like, two
seconds to fix.

Mary tries to stall, but Cole doesn't see the problem,
leaving Mary no choice.

MARY
Okay.

COLE
Yeah, go grab them.

Mary turns and nervously exits the barn.

Cole turns back to the hole in the wall, sizes-up where he
intends to insert the longer screw.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Mary quietly enters the back door, glancing in to the living
room to see if Stanley is sleeping, as she comes over to a
drawer, and removes a screwdriver.

She looks up to the clock. It's 5pm. She knows it's time to
start dinner.

She turns and quietly heads into the living room.

INT. FARMHOUSE / LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mary quietly enters living room, to find Stanley, asleep on
the couch, with the newspaper on his chest, and the old time
radio show playing in the background.

Mary slowly comes up to him.

MARY
(quietly)
Daddy?

Stanley's eyes start to move.

MARY (CONT'D)
(a little louder)
Daddy?

Stanley wakes, looks up to Mary.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Someone's fixing the feeder. I'll
 start dinner as soon as he
 finishes.

Stanley immediately moves the newspaper from his chest,
 reaches into his pajama pocket, and removes a decent-sized
 roll of money, which he holds out for Mary. She doesn't take
 it.

MARY (CONT'D)
 No, we don't have to pay him. He's
 just doing it to help.

This doesn't make sense to Stanley.

MARY (CONT'D)
 It's okay. It's just someone I met
 in town. I'll fix dinner in town as
 soon as he finishes.

It makes no sense to Stanley that a handyman wouldn't want to
 be paid, so he motions "if someone's fixing the feeder for
 free, ask them if they'd like to eat with us."

Which is the last thing Mary wants.

MARY (CONT'D)
 I'm sure he has to go.

Stanley motions "ask him" and stares at her.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Okay. Okay.

Mary turns and goes, leaving Stanley wondering what kind of
 handyman doesn't expect to get paid.

INT. FARMHOUSE / BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Cole stands near the cage, watching the old rabbit scratch
 and hop around, when Mary abruptly enters, holds out the
 screwdriver and a bag of screws.

MARY
 Here ya go.

Cole takes them.

COLE
 Perfect.

He checks out the screws.

COLE (CONT'D)
Oh yeah, these are great.

Mary stands there for a nervous moment, then:

MARY
My dad wanted to know if you wanted something to eat in exchange for fixing the feeder.

Hoping he'll say no.

COLE
Is that cool?

Catching Mary off-guard.

MARY
Yeah...

COLE
Yeah, I'd like that a lot. Thanks.

Leaving Mary no choice at all.

MARY
Twenty minutes?

COLE
I'll be here.

MARY
Okay.

Mary awkwardly smiles and goes, avoiding Cole's eye contact on her way out of the barn.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Mary quickly dons her apron and opens the fridge.

She removes some pork chops, along with a bag of potatoes.

JUMP CUT:

Mary lays the pork chops across the hot skillet.

JUMP CUT:

Mary opens the bag of potatoes, then starts chopping lettuce.

She brings the potatoes to the stove, places several into a large pan of water about to boil.

She looks up to the clock on the wall, then glances out the window, towards the barn, as dinner with dad and Cole ticks closer and closer...

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. FARMHOUSE / BARN - LATER

Cole sits in a chair playing the "air drums" on his stomach, when Mary enters.

COLE
Hey.

MARY
Hey.

Cole pops up.

COLE
All fixed.

He motions to the feeder, securely fastened to the wall.

He demonstrates a test-pour of rabbit feed into the receptacle. It's strongly secured.

COLE (CONT'D)
There ya go.

MARY
Wow. Thank you.

Cole grins at his handy work.

COLE
Welcome.

Mary takes a breath, trying to ease her obvious nerves.

MARY
You hungry?

COLE
STARVING.

Mary takes another breath and heads out the door of the barn.

COLE (CONT'D)
Great.

Cole eagerly follows Mary.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Mary and Cole enter the back door and come to the kitchen table, where Cole sees three place settings, along with spinach, potatoes and pork chops.

MARY

You don't have to eat the pork chops if you don't want to.

COLE

No, this is great. Thanks.

MARY

You can wash your hands over there.

She points to the sink.

COLE

Cool. Yeah.

As Cole walks over to the sink, Mary quietly heads into the living room to get Stanley.

A few seconds pass, as Cole washes his hands.

Then Mary enters, helping Stanley slowly walk with his cane, to the table.

MARY

Dad?

Stanley looks at Mary, who gestures across the room, to Cole.

MARY (CONT'D)

This is Cole. Cole, this is my dad.

Stanley immediately cinches the belt on his bathrobe, not expecting the "handyman" to be a handsome young man, Mary's age.

Cole walks over him, holds out his hand.

COLE

How are you sir? It's really great to meet you.

As they shake hands, Stanley sizes Cole up, isn't sure what to make of him.

Mary gestures to the third chair at the table, for Cole.

MARY

You can sit over there.

COLE

Cool.

Cole heads to his chair, starting to get a little nervous himself, as Mary helps Stanley into his chair.

She opens Stanley's napkin, lays it across his lap, as she does, which Cole observes.

MARY

Cole's just here for a couple days
He's going to see....

(to Cole)

What was it?

COLE

Grand Flats, Utah.

Stanley isn't sure what to think of Cole.

COLE (CONT'D)

People say it's the Eight Wonder of
the World.

Stanley looks at Mary as she fills his water glass, as if to ask her "what's the real story with this guy? Don't lie to me."

COLE (CONT'D)

It's the lowest point in North
America. Everyone say's it's Death
Valley it's not...

Cole stops himself, realizing how nervous he sounds.

COLE (CONT'D)

(to Mary)

Did I tell you that...already?

MARY

Yeah.

COLE

Yeah.

Mary offers potatoes to Cole.

MARY

Potatoes okay?

COLE

Yeah, great. Thanks.

As Cole helps himself to the potatoes and spinach, Mary cuts Stanley's pork chop into little bites on his plate, which Cole also observes.

COLE (CONT'D)

(to Stanley)

So, your water is the best I've ever had. Seriously. Mary was telling me the story about the guy who drilled the well...using a dowsing rod.

Stanley shoots a glare to Mary, surprised she would tell a family story to a stranger.

COLE (CONT'D)

That's so cool. It's a great story.

Stanley watches Mary squirm as she fills her own plate with food. He can see there's more to Cole than Mary's told him.

COLE (CONT'D)

I was with Mary earlier when she was selling the bottles around town.

Stanley glares at Mary, well-aware she's down-right lied to him, now.

Mary drops her eyes to her plate.

COLE (CONT'D)

(to Mary)

Did you tell your dad that we found an arrowhead today?

MARY

(quietly)

It was a rock.

COLE

It was an arrowhead. I'm telling you, it was an arrowhead.

Suddenly, Cole gets an idea.

COLE (CONT'D)

(to Stanley)

You know what, you can be the judge of this for us.

Cole pops up, searches his pockets for the arrowhead.

COLE (CONT'D)
I picked it up...

But he doesn't find it.

COLE (CONT'D)
You know what? It must've fallen
out.

Cole sits back down, looks at Mary.

COLE (CONT'D)
I think we're both right, though.
Because an arrowhead is a rock,
right? I mean what else are you
going to make an arrowhead out of,
something squishy, like a worm, or
a dead fish?

Mary tries to focus on her food, as Cole tries to make her
laugh, regaining his old confidence with every word.

COLE (CONT'D)
Although maybe you would. Maybe you
would use a dead fish. You wouldn't
even have to tie it to anything.
All you'd have to do is hold it out
in front of you.

In spite of her best effort, Mary cracks up.

Stanley observes Mary, who tries, unsuccessfully to stop
giggling.

COLE (CONT'D)
That's a good idea. I don't have a
lot of good ideas but that's a good
idea. I think that one could work.

Stanley takes in the obvious connection between his daughter
and this young man...

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - LATER

Cole is telling an animated story to Stanley, at the table,
as Mary clears the dishes.

COLE
So, he grabs this thing with both
hands, and it's huge, it's
enormous.

(MORE)

COLE (CONT'D)
 And it's fighting and it's
 flipping, and it's kicking him; I
 mean, come on, it's so much work. I
 wouldn't do that, would you?

Stanley shakes his head, fully-engaged to Cole's story. Mary comes over, refills Stanley's coffee.

COLE (CONT'D)
 ...noodling, come on.

Mary offers coffee to Cole.

MARY
 You sure you don't want some?

COLE
 I'm okay, thanks.

Stanley suddenly prepares to get up.

Mary quickly moves to help him, but Stanley gestures "I got it," grabs his cane, causing concern for Mary.

MARY
 Dad?

Stanley gets up on his own, nods to Cole, as if to say "follow me."

Cole doesn't understand what's going on, but plays along, nods to Mary "I got this," and follows Stanley out the back door.

Mary nervously watches them go.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / WHEAT FIELDS - MOMENTS LATER

This scene is MOS.

A lone tree stands in the dead wheat field behind the farmhouse.

Cole carries a folding chair, and helps Stanley walk through the field with his cane.

A few feet behind them, Mary follows, carrying the rabbit in it's cage, along with two more folding chairs, and Stanley's blanket.

They get to a clearing in the field and Stanley nods for Cole and Mary to set up the chairs, which they do.

Then, Mary and Cole help Stanley sit down, into his chair.

As Cole takes a seat next to Stanley, Mary removes the old rabbit from the cage, brings her over to Stanley, who tenderly holds her on his chest.

Stanley leans over to Cole and lets him pet the rabbit. Cole pets her, nervously laughing, unsure if it's going bite him.

Mary sits down on the other side of Stanley, reaches over, gently pets the rabbit, remembering when her mother was alive, the three of them would sit in the field just like this. Mary carries this sadness on her face.

This scene shifts to the surreal, in 48 FPS, with Mary, Cole and Stanley taking in the haunting sky above them.

Stanley turns and looks to the sky above, as if waiting for a sign, that doesn't yet come.

Stanley, Mary and Cole sit in this field together, connected by some kind of strange truth of life and it's mortality.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. FARMHOUSE / BARN - LATER - NIGHT

Mary puts the rabbit back into her larger cage, as Cole steps up next to her, with a folding chair.

COLE

So, did something happen to him?

Mary takes the chair from Cole.

MARY

My dad?

COLE

Yeah.

MARY

He had a stroke.

Mary carries the chair over and leans it against the wall.

COLE

Recently?

MARY

After my mom died.

COLE
When was that?

MARY
When I was six.

Cole starts to understand Mary's larger circumstances.

COLE
And you've taken care of him ever
since?

MARY
He can't be on his own.

COLE
And selling water pays the bills?

MARY
He gets disability checks. I do my
best to help.

A moment passes between them. Cole takes a step closer to
Mary.

COLE
That's really sweet.

Mary knows this can't go any further.

MARY
You should go.

Their eyes lock for a beat and Cole steps in and kisses
her...until Mary stops herself, pulls back.

MARY (CONT'D)
I can't. Please go.

Cole suddenly feels like he overstepped.

COLE
I'm sorry, I thought-

MARY
(more forceful)
Please go.

COLE
Okay, yeah, yeah.

Cole starts to back away, towards the door.

COLE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I-

He decides he's already done too much, turns and goes, leaving Mary standing there, frozen, her mind racing...

EXT. FARMHOUSE / FRONT GATE - MOMENTS LATER

Cole heads around the side of the house toward the gate.

He let's himself out, then stops. He turns back, takes in the dilapidated little farmhouse, his emotions racing.

After a moment, he re-latches the gate and goes.

INT. FARMHOUSE / BARN - SAME TIME

Mary hasn't moved. She stands perfectly still in the middle of the barn, her mind connected to a troubling memory.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / WHEAT FIELDS - FLASHBACK

In 48 FPS, a floating POV floats behind the tiny red sneakers of LITTLE MARY, six years old, making her way through the wheat field.

WHITE FLASH:

Floating behind the same red sneakers, larger now, belonging to GROWN MARY, making her way through the same wheat field.

WHITE FLASH:

The ghostly POV now drifts, on it's own, through the wheat field, moving through the long stalks, their little gold spikes, until it comes to a stop, at specific place.

WHITE FLASH:

Following again, behind the tiny red sneakers of Little Mary, making her way through the wheat field.

WHITE FLASH:

Following behind Grown Mary, making her way through the same wheat field, until she comes to a stop at the same specific place as the ghostly POV.

Grown Mary stares down, to a disturbing sight on the ground, in front of her, unable to look away, unable to move.

INT. FARMHOUSE / BARN - PRESENT

Mary stands frozen in the barn, remembering this disturbing memory from so many years ago...

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / COLE'S CAMP - NEXT MORNING

The morning sun of a new day peeks through the trees.

Mary carries her crate of bottles into a clearing, where Cole's car is parked.

She slowly approaches his car, seeing Cole sleeping in the driver's seat, windows open.

As Mary creeps closer, she steps on a twig that snaps, which wakes Cole with a start. He sees Mary.

MARY

Sorry!

Cole catches his breath.

COLE

You scared the heck out of me.

MARY

I'm sorry.

COLE

That's okay.

Cole quickly exits the car, trying to catch his breath, looking around, embarrassed by the mess of his camp.

COLE (CONT'D)

You found me.

He picks up a couple empty chili cans, shoves them into a large trash bag.

MARY

It wasn't hard.

Cole sets the trash bag aside and walks over to Mary.

COLE

What are you doing here?

MARY

I brought you this.

Mary reaches into her crate, removes a bottle of water for Cole.

MARY (CONT'D)

I thought you could use it.

Mary hands Cole the bottle of water, as a peace offering. Cole takes it, though obviously stung from last night's rejection.

COLE

Thanks.

He sets the bottle on the hood of his car.

An awkward beat passes between Mary and Cole.

MARY

I'm sorry about last night. I-

COLE

No, I'm sorry.

MARY

The way I reacted.

COLE

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have-

MARY

I just can't.

Cole forces himself to accept this.

COLE

I get it.

Another awkward beat passes between the two of them.

Mary looks around his camp, changes the subject.

MARY

So, this is you?

Cole looks around his pathetic camp.

COLE

Yeah, this is me.

Mary regards his old Honda Civic.

MARY

(pronounces incorrectly)
Casa Ka-vich?

COLE
(corrects her)
Ceviche.

Which breaks the ice between them a little bit.

COLE (CONT'D)
It's raw fish in lime juice.

Mary takes his joke in stride.

MARY
(pronouncing correctly)
Oh...Casa Civiche.

COLE
There ya go. She's reliable most of
the time.

Mary gathers some courage.

MARY
Um...before, you had asked me where
my favorite place was. I was just
wondering if...before you
leave...if you wanted to see my
favorite place, here, I could show
it to you.

Cole isn't sure how to take this, after last night's
rejection, which Mary understands.

MARY (CONT'D)
Unless you don't want to
and...that's fine.

Cole considers everything.

COLE
Boy, you sure that's a good idea?

MARY
If it's interesting.

COLE
Yeah, no, it's very interesting. I
would...I would love that.

A wave of relief passes over Mary.

MARY
Okay. Meet me outside the diner
tomorrow at 9:30?

COLE
Sounds good. I'll bring sandwiches.
You bring water?

MARY
Deal.

COLE
Okay.

A new understanding is born between Mary and Cole. Perhaps a friendship?

EXT. CASPER CREEK / TOWN CENTER - LATER

Mary carries her crate along the picket fence of Main Street, looking for customers.

There is a new hope in her eyes today.

A new spring in her step...

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

The farmhouse sits quiet, the faint sound of morning doves are heard in the distance.

In 48 FPS, a drop of water forms at the end of the spout of the well. Until its weight becomes too heavy to hold and it slowly pulls loose, falling through the air, landing in the center of the frame.

INT. FARMHOUSE / MARY'S BEDROOM

Mary sits in front of her mirror, prettier than usual today, attaching a yellow ribbon to her hair.

She carefully applies some lipstick.

Mary takes a deep breath, unsure of the beautiful young woman that stares back at her from the mirror.

INT. FARMHOUSE / LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Stanley sits on the couch, reading his newspaper, the old radio show playing in the background.

Mary quietly comes in with Stanley's sandwich and his full glass of water, which she places on the end table, adjusts the tuner on the radio, making the station a little clearer, then slowly walks over to Stanley.

MARY

Are you sure you're okay with this?

Stanley looks from his newspaper to Mary. He's never seen her like this. Beautiful. Stanley barely manages one nod.

MARY (CONT'D)

Okay. I'll be back in time to make dinner.

Mary comes over, and softly kisses Stanley on the cheek, then goes, leaving Stanley, anxiously looking after her.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / OUTSIDE DINER - LATER

Cole sits on the bench outside the diner, waiting for Mary. His face lights up when he sees her approaching.

COLE

Hey!

MARY

Hey!

Cole pops up, as Mary gets to him. She looks beautiful.

COLE

Wow, you look great.

Mary accepts the complement.

MARY

Thanks.

She holds up a cooler bag.

MARY (CONT'D)

I brought water.

Cole picks up his backpack from the bench.

COLE

I brought sandwiches.

MARY

Great. You ready?

COLE
Let's do it.

Mary starts off, a smile on her face.

MARY
Let's go.

Cole slings his backpack over his shoulder, happily follows Mary.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / BACK ROADS - MOMENTS LATER

This MONTAGE is MOS.

Mary and Cole walk the back roads of Casper Creek.

They pass broken-down buildings from another time. An abandoned blacksmith's shop. An abandoned mechanic's bay.

Mary shares facts upon facts about the town.

They pass a dilapidated coral, delightful fodder for Cole's infinite curiosity, absorbing every detail Mary shares about the town.

There is a happiness on Mary's face, not seen before.

The morning sun beams down on Mary and Cole from above.

As they walk up a path, Cole picks up another rock he thinks might be an arrowhead, AGAIN. They go through the same routine they did before, both cracking each other up, Cole CONVINCED it could be an arrowhead.

JUMP CUT:

They start to ascend a hill.

JUMP CUT:

Mary and Cole make their way through the dry creek bed, tall wheatgrass on either side, talking to each other the entire time.

JUMP CUT:

Mary and Cole look radiant in each other's company, as they walk down the dry creek bed.

JUMP CUT:

Mary and Cole sit on a rock, try to make thick blades of grass whistle between their thumbs.

JUMP CUT:

Mary tries, nope.

JUMP CUT:

Cole tries, nope.

JUMP CUT:

Cole tries again. Not even a squeak.

INT. FARMHOUSE / LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Meanwhile, on the coffee table in the living room of the farmhouse, Stanley's untouched cup of coffee sits next to his still-full glass of water, and uneaten sandwich.

Stanley sits on the couch, frozen, the clock ticking, the old time radio show playing in the background, listening to the silence of Mary's absence...

EXT. CREEK BED - SAME TIME

Mary tries to make a grass whistle between her thumbs again.

JUMP CUT:

Cole suddenly swats a fly from her head, catching her off-guard, sending them both into a fit of laughter.

JUMP CUT:

Mary and Cole continue down the creek bed towards Mary's "favorite place."

EXT. BLUFF - LATER

Mary leads Cole up a steep hill through the wheat fields.

A bird's-eye view tracks Mary and Cole from high above, revealing the vast expanse of the wheat fields in every direction. Miles of it.

Mary and Cole make their way up the hill, through the field, towards Mary's rock on the bluff.

Mary unslings her cooler bag, and takes a seat on the rock.

Cole sits next to her, takes in the massive view of the valley.

COLE

Wow...

MARY

You can see the sun rise from here.

As the wind blows through the sweeping valley, Mary feels the sunlight on her face.

MARY (CONT'D)

I like the way the light feels.

Cole watches Mary, taking in the warmth of the sun on her face.

MARY (CONT'D)

It takes away my fear.

COLE

Fear of what?

MARY

Messing up.

Cole watches Mary, connecting to a source of shame.

COLE

Hey, can I ask you something?

MARY

Sure.

COLE

What happened to your mom?

MARY

One day, my dad said she had a stomach ache, and it never went away. It ended up being cancer. By the time they figured it out, it was too late.

Cole listens.

MARY (CONT'D)

My dad worked really hard to take care of everything. The doctor said he overdid it.

COLE

Is that what caused his stroke?

MARY

I found him in the field one day,
on the ground. He couldn't talk. I
froze.

Cole now understands the cross Mary bears. He decides to
change the subject.

COLE

Let me show you something.

He reaches into his backpack, removes a map of the United
States, opens it up, points to hand-drawn red star in South-
Eastern Virginia.

COLE (CONT'D)

That, is where I'm from.

Mary looks at the star.

COLE (CONT'D)

Danville, Virginia.

MARY

Is it nice?

COLE

It's okay. It's mostly rednecks and
hillbillies. The CIA and FBI
headquarters are up north.

Mary looks over the hand-drawn red stars that are scattered
across the map.

MARY

Wow. This is everywhere you've
been.

COLE

So far.

She gets to Colorado, doesn't see a star.

MARY

You have a pen?

Cole reaches into his back pack, pulls out a red sharpie,
hands it to her.

Mary draws a red star in the Eastern Plains of Colorado,
writes "CASPER CREEK."

MARY (CONT'D)

Now, you know you've been here.

Mary smiles at Cole. The two of them connect. Then, she hands the sharpie back to him.

COLE
Alright, if you could go anywhere,
where would it be?

Mary thinks about his question, as Cole folds his map, and puts it back into his backpack.

MARY
I've seen pictures of the ocean
that were amazing.

COLE
Oh yeah? Which ocean?

MARY
Um...I don't know which one it was.

This embarrasses Mary.

Cole sees her embarrassment, takes in the beautiful surroundings of where they are in this moment.

COLE
Well, this is pretty amazing too.

MARY
Yeah...

Mary's embarrassment is obvious.

The wind blows through the wheat.

Cole changes the subject.

COLE
You ever had kale?

MARY
No.

Cole reaches into his backpack, pulls out two sandwiches.

COLE
It's vitamins A, C, E, B6,
magnesium, pantothenic acid.

He hands Mary a sandwich.

COLE (CONT'D)
That's yours.

And opens his own sandwich, proudly holds it up for a toast.

COLE (CONT'D)

Cheers.

Mary toasts her Kale sandwich to Cole's.

MARY

Cheers.

COLE

After you.

Mary takes a large bite of the leafy sandwich, is immediately hit with the bitter taste of the kale.

Cole eagerly nods, knowing the taste of kale, and loving it.

Mary tries her best to chew and swallow her mouth of leaves.

MARY

It's very...

She barely manages to swallow, without gagging.

MARY (CONT'D)

Very green...

COLE

Yeah!

Mary struggles to swallow again.

MARY

Like a bush.

Cole thinks Mary completely loves it.

COLE

Not bad, right?

Mary takes a large swig of water, trying to wash all remaining tastes of kale, away.

MARY

Mmmmm.

Cole takes a bite of his own sandwich, grins like a Cheshire cat, proud of loving Kale the way he does.

EXT. FIELDS AROUND THE BLUFF - LATER

The following montage is MOS.

Mary's hand grazes over the tops of the soft wheat as she and Cole walk amid the golden field in the warm afternoon sun.

Mary looks back at Cole, smiles to him, as he takes in the beauty of their surroundings.

A birds eye view sweeps over Mary and Cole as they make their way back through the massive wheat field.

JUMP CUT:

Mary and Cole stand beneath a giant oak tree, shafts of light reaching down around them, as they take in the wonder of the world around them.

JUMP CUT:

They chase each other, laughing.

EXT. FIELDS AROUND THE BLUFF - FLASHBACK

Mary walks the wheat fields, alone, on a day before she met Cole, her hand drifting over the tops of the golden prairie flowers.

EXT. FIELDS AROUND THE BLUFF - PRESENT

Mary and Cole stand within some kind of wooden doorway, the last evidence of some long-disintegrated structure in the middle of nowhere.

They take each other in.

EXT. FIELDS AROUND THE BLUFF - FLASHBACK

Mary is alone in the wheat again, crouching to inspect a single beetle clinging to a tiny flower, in the vast field.

EXT. FIELDS AROUND THE BLUFF - PRESENT

Mary turns from half-disintegrated wooden doorway, walks away from Cole, who stands in the doorway, looking after her.

JUMP CUT:

Mary and Cole head down the dirt path back towards town.

EXT. FIELDS AROUND THE BLUFF - FLASHBACK

Mary stands in the wheat field alone, feeling the flowers at the tips of her fingers, ever-craving the answers to the mysteries of her life.

EXT. FIELDS AROUND THE BLUFF - PRESENT

Mary and Cole heads down the dirt path towards town, the warm afternoon sun illuminating the joy on their faces.

JUMP CUT:

Cole runs up the path towards Mary, picks up another rock he thinks might be an arrowhead, AGAIN.

This time, Mary knocks the rock out of Cole's hand, and takes off running down the hill.

Cole gives chase, as Mary laughs all the way down the hill...

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / BRIDGE - LATER

Mary and Cole cross the bridge, that leads back to the center of town, riding the positive momentum of their day.

MARY

So, where are you going to go after the Sawtooth place?

COLE

Sawtooth National Forest?

MARY

Yeah.

COLE

I don't know. Get a job.

MARY

You?

COLE

Yeah, right?

MARY

Doing what?

COLE

I don't know. Something outside,
maybe.

MARY

I'd be seriously impressed.

COLE

Thanks.

They walk for a while. Then, Cole stops.

COLE (CONT'D)

I have a son.

Which stops Mary in her tracks.

She turns around to him, isn't sure she's heard right.

MARY

What?

COLE

He's two. He lives in
Pittsburgh...with my ex.

Mary's at a loss for words.

COLE (CONT'D)

I'm not with her anymore, or
anything. She wanted to be with
another guy, so she was.

MARY

Oh...You have a son?

COLE

Yeah.

Cole removes his wallet, shows Mary a picture of a little TWO
YEAR OLD BOY with bright eyes.

COLE (CONT'D)

That's Sam. I've never met him
before. She was pregnant and I was
going to marry her, but...she left,
so...

Mary tries to process all of this.

MARY

You didn't stop her?

COLE
I didn't try.

MARY
Is she still with him?

COLE
I don't know. It kind of messed me
up.

MARY
(deflated)
Wow...

COLE
I don't love her, my ex. I don't
love her anymore.

An awkward beat passes.

COLE (CONT'D)
You should probably get going, huh?

MARY
Yeah...

COLE
Thanks for today.

Mary doesn't know what to say or do. She nervously nods
"you're welcome."

Cole steps in and awkwardly hugs her.

He removes his backpack, takes out Mary's cooler bag, hands
it back to her.

MARY
Thanks. See ya.

Mary turns and goes.

This time, Cole doesn't follow her. He lets Mary go, watching
her walk away, then looks out at the dry creek bed.

EXT. CASPER CREEL / PARK - LATER

Russell, the young boy with Cerebral Palsy, and LAURA, his
young mother, are having a picnic in a gazebo in the park,
when Russell notices Mary, quickly heading through the grass.
He rushes to the edge of the gazebo.

RUSSELL

Hi Mary!

Mary glances over, sees Russell, but doesn't wave or stop, continues rushing home. Mary's late and she knows it.

Laura watches after Mary, concerned something might be wrong.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - LATER

Mary quietly enters the back door, hears Stanley's radio show in the living room, walks to the counter and puts her cooler bag down, looks up at the clock.

It's 5:30.

Mary heads towards the living room, to face her father.

INT. FARMHOUSE / LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mary quietly comes in to the living room, to find the couch empty. No sign of Stanley.

Stanley's newspaper and his reading glasses are on the coffee table.

His uneaten sandwich, untouched cup of coffee and glass of water are on the end table.

Mary's eyes drift to the closed door, of Stanley's bedroom. It's never closed.

She walks towards it, quietly puts her ear the door, listens within. She doesn't hear anything.

Mary turns the knob and opens the door.

INT. FARMHOUSE / STANLEY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mary quietly opens the door, to find Stanley laying sideways in the bed, in a strange position, his eyes closed.

Mary quickly comes over to him.

MARY

Daddy?

Stanley doesn't respond. Mary's concern grows.

MARY (CONT'D)

Daddy?

Stanley doesn't move. Mary shakes his shoulder, panic rising.

MARY (CONT'D)

DAD?

Stanley suddenly opens his eyes, gathers his senses, looks up to Mary.

MARY (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

Stanley slowly props himself up.

MARY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I was late. I'm going to start dinner. Are you okay?

Stanley nods, giving Mary some re-assurance he's okay.

She starts to move towards the door.

MARY (CONT'D)

Okay. I'll be back.

When Mary gets to the door, she looks back at Stanley, opens his door all the way, and looks at him as if to say "let's keep this open, okay?" Then, heads to the kitchen to make dinner.

Stanley watches after Mary, the weariness on his face, growing heavier.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Mary brings Stanley's lunch dishes to the sink and let's out a sigh of relief.

She suddenly remembers the yellow ribbon in her hair, reaches up and removes it, throws it in the trash beneath the sink, the quickly grabs her apron, and prepares to make dinner.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - LATER

Mary stands at the table, cutting Stanley's chicken into bite-sized pieces on his plate. All-the-while, Stanley sits in his chair on the opposite side of the table, staring at Mary, as to say "tell me what happened today."

Mary avoids Stanley's eyes, as she finishes cutting his chicken for him.

MARY

There you go.

She sits down and starts to eat.

But, Stanley doesn't touch his food, continues staring at her.

Mary avoids his gaze, dishes out broccoli for both of them and goes back eating.

Stanley continues to stare at Mary for an answer.

Mary finally gives in.

MARY (CONT'D)

It was no big deal. It was just a walk. It was a mistake.

Mary goes back to eating, avoiding Stanley's continued stare, clearly not buying her story.

MARY (CONT'D)

(with an edge)

Sorry, I overcooked the chicken.

Mary continues eating.

Stanley continues staring at Mary, having never spoken to him like this before...

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / TOWN CENTER - NIGHT

The following montage is MOS.

Cole walks down the, now-deserted, streets of Casper Creek.

He passes the cozy restaurants, where the happy couples share cheer inside.

Cole continues on, feeling the isolation of being alone.

JUMP CUT:

In 48 FPS, Cole heads down an empty sidewalk, now, a stranger to himself.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / WHEAT FIELDS - FLASHBACK

In 48 FPS, Mary, Cole and Stanley, sit in their chairs in the field, holding the rabbit, taking in the sunset.

Stanley turns and looks to the sky above, waiting for a sign, that doesn't yet come.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / OUTSIDE DINER - PRESENT

Cole sits on the bench outside the diner where he first met Mary, staring into the distance, remembering sitting in the fields with Stanley and Mary.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / WHEAT FIELDS - FLASHBACK

A ghostly POV drifts through the wheat, the very same place where Grown Mary came to a stop, staring down, to a disturbing sight, in front of her, unable to move.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / COLE'S CAMP - LATER

Cole returns to his car, gets into the driver's seat, slams the door, his mind racing.

He removes the picture of his son.

Sam's bright little eyes stare up him.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / TRUCK STOP - LATER

A pay phone sits in the empty lot of a truck stop.

Cole approaches the phone and comes to a stop. He takes a deep breath, then inserts a coin into the slot and picks up the receiver.

He dials a number on the keypad, then holds the receiver to his ear.

It rings on the other end.

It rings again.

Then, a young woman answers.

YOUNG WOMAN (FILTER)

Hello?

Cole freezes.

YOUNG WOMAN'S VOICE

Hello?

Cole stares at the keypad, unable to find his voice.

He hangs up the receiver, stares at the phone for a another beat. Then, turns back and walks away...

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / TOWN CENTER - NEXT MORNING

Mary walks down the sidewalk with her crate, looking for customers, when Cole's Honda Civic pulls up next to her, an eager smile on Cole's face.

COLE

Hey.

Mary turns, surprised to see Cole's working car.

MARY

Hey. Your car's working.

COLE

Yep. Got the belt put in, checked into the motel, took a shower. I feel great. Do you want a ride?

MARY

Oh, I can't.

COLE

You sure?

Mary gesture to her crate, as if it's obvious.

MARY

I'm working.

COLE

That's okay. Put them in the trunk.

MARY

I can't.

COLE

Come on, I'll help you.

Cole hops out of the car, walks around to the trunk, pops it open, gestures for Mary to hand him her crate.

Mary finally gives in to Cole.

MARY

Okay...

Cole helps Mary remove the crate from around her neck and puts it into the truck.

They both walk to the doors, get into the car.

They fasten their seat belts. Cole puts the car in drive, and off they go.

INT. COLE'S CAR / DRIVING - MOMENTS LATER

The following montage is MOS.

Mary holds her hand out the window, as they drive, feeling the rushing air through her fingers.

They pass the wheat fields.

Their interaction is awkward, with Cole's focus on the road and Mary's focus on the passing scenery.

JUMP CUT:

But, soon enough, their awkwardness melts and Cole and Mary merge with the enjoyment of each other's company.

JUMP CUT:

They're into a conversation before they know it.

JUMP CUT:

Which turns to laughter, a fist bump.

JUMP CUT:

But, then, Mary turns from Cole's smiling face to the passing scenery out the window, and her face becomes withdrawn, fully-aware this moment can't last.

JUMP CUT:

Cole drives on, a smile on his face, unaware of the sadness in Mary's eyes, as she takes in the passing scenery, feeling the rushing air through her fingers.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / RIVER - LATER

Mary's reflection on the surface of the river is broken by a stone, thrown by Mary, who's sitting on a boulder, just above the water. She heaves another stone at her own reflection, as Cole walks out on the boulder next to her, wiping oil from his hands with a rag.

COLE

What's going on?

Cole takes a seat next to Mary, aware something is off with her.

COLE (CONT'D)

Everything okay?

Mary stares at the water.

MARY

(curtly)

So, when are you leaving?

COLE

I was thinking about early tomorrow morning, getting a head start. It takes eight or nine hours to get to Grand Flats, figured I'd get there by nighttime.

Mary stares at the passing water, avoiding Cole's eyes.

MARY

Then what?

COLE

Sawtooth National Forest...then I don't know.

MARY

That's right. You have a whole map of red stars to fill in.

Which, catches Cole off-guard.

COLE

What is that supposed to mean?

MARY

Must be nice, that's all; go wherever you want, do whatever you want, just keep on moving.

COLE
Come with me.

Which is preposterous to Mary, who turns to him.

MARY
To Grand Flats?

COLE
Yeah.

MARY
And Sawtooth National Forest?

COLE
Sure, why not?

As if it's not obvious.

MARY
Can I bring my dad?

COLE
If you want, bring him. I don't
care.

Which sounds ridiculous to Mary.

MARY
Right.

COLE
Or don't. Leave him here. It seems
like he can take care of himself.

Inciting Mary further.

MARY
Is that what you think?

COLE
He seems okay to me.

MARY
Because, you're the expert on
everything.

COLE
Mary, he walked out in the field
with us. He held that giant rabbit,
but yet, you feel like you need to
cut his food for him, clean up
after him?

Mary is astounded at Cole's gall.

COLE (CONT'D)

He gets disability checks but you still sell water around town to "help out the best you can".

(more direct)

That doesn't make any sense.

MARY

You don't know!

So, Cole drops a bomb.

COLE

He can take care of himself and you don't want him to.

Which clearly lands.

COLE (CONT'D)

Mary, you can't go through life too afraid to act on something you feel because you're too terrified that something's going to happen to your dad and you're not going to be there to take care of them.

MARY

Because things do! Things happen and you need to be there to deal with it!

COLE

Okay, so they happen and then you deal with it.

So, Mary drops a bomb of her own.

MARY

Like you are, with your son?

Which lands on Cole, leaving him without a words, for once.

MARY (CONT'D)

Right...of course.

Mary's had enough. She gets up from the rock and goes.

Cole sits there for a moment, unsure of what to say or do, then calls after her.

COLE

Mary!

But Mary's not coming back.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / HIGHWAY - LATER

Mary hurries down the side of the highway, turns on to the road that leads towards home.

Cole's car pulls-up behind her. Mary quickens her pace.

Cole pulls his car to the side of the road, leans his head out the window, and calls after Mary.

COLE

Mary!

But, Mary continues on her way.

Cole gets out of the car, calls after Mary again.

COLE (CONT'D)

Mary, come on!

But Mary doesn't even look back.

Cole hustles after her a few steps, then stops himself, calls after her again.

COLE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, okay?

Mary continues on her way, starts to run.

COLE (CONT'D)

Mary!

Cole watches Mary go, facing the aftermath of his words...

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / FRONT GATE - LATER

Mary quickly approaches the farmhouse, flings open the gate, storms up the walk, towards the front door, then suddenly stops.

On the stoop, is her crate of bottles, dropped-off by Cole.

Mary stares at the crate, remembering Cole's words.

COLE (V.O.)

He can take care of himself and you don't want him to.

As Mary stares at the crate, she starts to realize the truth to this. Mary closes her eyes to the dawning awareness.

WHITE FLASH:

EXT. FARMHOUSE / WHEAT FIELD - FLASHBACK

Little Mary sits on a blue blanket in the field, playing with her doll. She's a happy little girl, without a care in the world.

JUMP CUT:

Little Mary picks up a stuffed animal, holds it to the ear of her doll, imagines a conversation between the two.

JUMP CUT:

Little Mary tosses the stuffed animal into the air and catches it again, brings it to the ear of her doll again.

JUMP CUT:

Little Mary tosses the stuffed animal into the air again, brings it back to the ear of her doll.

JUMP CUT:

Little Mary puts her stuffed animal into a little yellow bucket and picks up her doll, whispers into her ear.

WHITE FLASH:

Little Mary makes her way through the wheat field, her head barely taller than the passing wheat stalks.

She carries a large pink cup of water, careful not to spill a drop, as she makes her way, scanning the field for her father.

Little Mary continues through the wheat, until she comes upon something on the ground, in front of her, and comes to a stop.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / SIDEYARD - FLASHBACK

In 48 FPS, Grown Mary fills a bottle beneath the flowing water from the well.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / WHEAT FIELDS - FLASHBACK

In 48 FPS, the ghostly POV floats through the wheat, comes to a hovering stop at the very place where Little Mary stopped.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / FRONT GATE - PRESENT

Grown Mary stands inside the gate, staring at her crate of bottles, on the stoop, starting to connect these imagines in her mind.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / SIDEYARD - FLASHBACK

In 48 FPS, water flows from the well into one of Mary's bottles.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / WHEAT FIELDS - FLASHBACK

In 48 FPS, Little Mary's giant pink cup comes crashing down on the ground, next to her little red shoes, sending water splashing over her feet.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / FRONT GATE - THE PRESENT

Grown Mary stands inside the gate, staring at the crate of bottles on the stoop, reeling from this memory.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / WHEAT FIELDS - FLASHBACK

Drifting around Little Mary's red sneakers and now-empty pink water cup on the ground, is the object of her view.

Stanley lays motionless on the ground, unable to speak or move.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / FRONT GATE - PRESENT

Grown Mary stares at her crate of bottles, starting to understand her compulsion to bring water to the people of Casper Creek.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / WHEAT FIELDS - FLASHBACK

Stanley lays motionless in the field, his eyes open, unable to move or speak, gulping for air.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / FRONT GATE - PRESENT

Grown Mary stares at her crate of water bottles, on the stoop, now seeing the connection in her mind, between selling water and finding her father on the ground, unable to move.

If she had only brought the water to her father in the field that day, sooner...

Grown Mary stands there, staring at her crate of water bottles, in the stop, aware now, of her dysfunction...

FADE TO WHITE:

EXT. BLUFF - SURREAL

The following is 48 FPS, with a surreal, oversaturated look.

White light evens to reveal Mary, sitting on her rock upon the bluff, staring at the sun, holding her hand up to the light, feeling it's warmth, communicating with it.

MARY (V.O.)

What is this light that calls to me?

The sun floats in the sky above the ridge, as if just there for Mary, who stares at this light.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / WHEAT FIELDS - SURREAL

In 48 FPS, the ghostly POV floats over the top of the wheat. Mysterious. Just out of the reach from the tangible understanding, yet somehow comforting.

EXT. BLUFF - SURREAL

In 48 FPS, Mary sits on her rock upon the bluff, holding her hand up to the light.

MARY (V.O.)

Warm to my skin...

She makes a circle with her thumb and forefinger, allowing the light to shine through, to her eye.

MARY (V.O.)

To my heart.

EXT. FIELDS AROUND THE BLUFF - SURREAL

In 48 FPS, Mary slowly ascends the hill, with her crate of bottles over her shoulder, moving towards the bluff.

She crosses in front of the sun, creating a momentary silhouette, as she continues ascending the hill, the vast wheat fields stretching to the horizon in every direction around her.

MARY (V.O.)

Where do you go when you leave me?

EXT. BLUFF - SURREAL

In 48 FPS, Mary sits on her rock, high atop the bluff, staring at the sun, on the horizon, communicating with it.

MARY

Or, is it I that strays?

Mary stares at the distant sun, waiting for an answer that does not come.

EXT. FIELDS AROUND THE BLUFF - SURREAL

In 48 FPS, Mary's silhouette descends the hill against the evening sky...

FADE TO BLACK.

There is a knock over a black screen.

INT. FARMHOUSE / LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Mary approaches front door, still in her pajamas, and opens it to find Laura and Russell, with a fresh baked pie, which Russell immediately offers to Mary.

RUSSELL

We brought you a pie for the Fourth of July, Mary!

Mary takes the pie. Though moved by the gesture, she looks exhausted, like she hasn't slept.

MARY

Thank you, Russell.

LAURA

It's blueberry. We baked it last night.

MARY

That's so nice.

LAURA

Do you and your father have any plans for tomorrow?

MARY

We're just going to be here.

LAURA

I was going to fix some food, nothing fancy; just thought, maybe you guys want to come join us?

Russell suddenly explodes with excitement.

RUSSELL

Do you still have a rabbit, Mary?

MARY

We do.

RUSSELL

How is she? How is your rabbit?

MARY

She's fine.

RUSSELL

(suddenly concerned)

Does she get enough to eat?

MARY

I think so.

Russell implores Laura.

RUSSELL

Mom! Can we come here tomorrow for the Fourth of July instead so we can play with the rabbit?

LAURA

We came over here to invite Mary and her father to our house, honey.

RUSSELL

But if we came here, we'd be able to play with the rabbit.

He whips to Mary.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
Wouldn't we, Mary? We would be able
to play with the rabbit if we came
here?

Mary exchanges a smile with Laura.

MARY
Do you guys want to come over here?

Laura covertly shakes her head to Mary, mouthing the words
"It's okay."

RUSSELL
YES, PLEASE, MARY!

LAURA
Russell, honey-

MARY
It actually would be easier for my
dad if you guys came here.

Russell shrieks with delight.

LAURA
Are you sure?

MARY
Yeah, it'd be good to see you guys.

RUSSELL
Would you like us to bring some
food for the rabbit, Mary?

MARY
Do you want to bring some carrots?

Music to Russell's ears.

RUSSELL
Okay Mary. I will bring some
carrots for the rabbit.

MARY
Two o'clock?

Laura smiles.

LAURA
Okay.

MARY
 See ya then.
 (holds up pie)
 Thanks.

Russell and Laura turn and go. After a few steps, Russell calls back.

RUSSELL
 Bye, Mary!

MARY
 Bye, Russell!

Mary watches them go for a second, then closes the door.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - THAT MOMENT

Stanley finishes his breakfast at the table and pushes his plate out of the way, as Mary ENTERS, having come from the front door.

She brings the pie to the counter, grabs the coffee decanter.

MARY
 That was Russell and Laura. They wanted to know if we wanted to go to their house for a picnic tomorrow. I told them, I thought it would be easier if they came here.

Mary comes to the table, refills Stanley's coffee, who notices her withdrawn demeanor.

MARY (CONT'D)
 I'll go to the store.

Mary clears Stanley's dirty plate from the table, and is about to go, when Stanley slowly grabs her arm, holds her firmly, looks at her as if to ask "what's going on with you?"

MARY (CONT'D)
 I'm fine. I'm fine.

Mary pulls away, takes Stanley's empty plate to the sink, then returns to the table.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Do you want anything special for tomorrow?

Stanley looks at her, shakes his head, which ignites Mary's frustration, even more.

MARY (CONT'D)

Fine! I'll get whatever's on sale.

Mary heads out of the room, leaving Stanley, disturbed by Mary's growing discontent.

INT. FARMHOUSE / MARY'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mary storms into her room, and over to her birdhouse piggy bank, tries to remove some bills through the round door, but her fingers don't reach.

She tears off the roof of the birdhouse, retrieves her cash, throws the birdhouse back down on the desk, breaking her little music-box-carousel, and heads out of the room.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - SAME TIME

Cole's car races down a desert highway towards Grand Flats.

INT. COLE'S CAR / DRIVING - THAT MOMENT

Cole drives, passing the vast, dead landscape, no-longer in wonder at the world around him.

He glances down, to his map in the passenger's seat to make sure he's headed in the right direction. He is.

He takes a breath, continues on down the desert highway, on his way to Grand Flats.

EXT. CASPER CREEK MOTEL / PARKING LOT - LATER

Mary stands in the parking lot of the Casper Creek Motel, looking up to a window of one of the rooms, imagining it to have been Cole's room, where he just was, last night.

INT. COLE'S CAR / DRIVING - SAME TIME

Cole drives, heading towards Grand Flats, with remorse on his face.

INT. CASPER CREEK / GROCERY STORE - LATER

Mary pushes a shopping cart down an aisle of endless cans.

She grabs some beans, on clearance, places it in her cart, continues down the aisle.

She grabs a discount can of corn, a generic can of tomatoes.

Mary stares ahead, to the endless cans on the isle, a fitting metaphor, for her work-a-day life in Casper Creek.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / CREEK BED - FLASHBACK

Mary and Cole are sitting on a rock trying to make blades of grass whistle between their thumbs. Mary makes the grass whistle! Success!

JUMP CUT:

As Mary tries again, Cole swats a fly from her head, catching her off-guard, sending them both into a fit of laughter.

JUMP CUT:

Mary and Cole continue the walk down the creek bed, sharing conversation, enjoying each other's company.

INT. COLE'S CAR / DRIVING - PRESENT

"CASPER CREEK" is written in red sharpie on Cole's map, that Cole stares at, on the passenger's seat, as he drives, remembering...

EXT. THE BLUFF - FLASHBACK

Mary and Cole sit on the rock upon the bluff. Mary writes "Casper Creek" on his map and makes a red star.

MARY (MOS)

Now, you know you've been here.

Mary smiles at Cole. The two of them connect, and she hands him back the red sharpie.

JUMP CUT:

Mary and Cole toast their kale sandwiches with smiles on their faces.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / COLE'S CAMP - FLASHBACK

Cole sits in a chair, next to his dead car, at his camp in Casper Creek, eating from a can of chili with a plastic spoon, feeling the isolation of being alone.

It seems Cole might not be the same, happy-go-lucky person, he presented to Mary. Perhaps, there is something in his own past, like Mary, keeping him from true happiness.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / BACK ROADS - FLASHBACK

Mary sits on a dirt hill behind the gas station, looking at a tiny flower in her hand, feeling her isolation of being alone.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / COLE'S CAMP - FLASHBACK

Cole stands on a mound of dirt, a make-shift pitcher's mound, pitches a stone into the trees, trying to pass the time. It would seem Cole's time along is different from always-cheerful story he presented to Mary.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / TOWN CENTER - FLASHBACK

Mary sits at the top of a flight of stairs near the center of town.

Her big green eyes stare into the sky as if to ask "what is the purpose of it all?"

EXT. CASPER CREEK / COLE'S CAMP - FLASHBACK

Cole stands on the dirt mound. Another stone, another pitch. Passing the time alone, emptiness in his eyes.

EXT. CASPER CREEK / BACK ROADS - FLASHBACK

Mary carries her crate of bottles up a dirt road toward home, unaware of the enormous flock of starlings that swarm in the sky above her.

INT. COLE'S CAR / DRIVING - PRESENT

Cole drives down the desolate highway, towards Grand Flats, unable to resist the urge to look back down to the map on the passenger's seat, and Mary's handwriting, "CASPER CREEK."

EXT. CASPER CREEK / HIGHWAY - SAME TIME

Mary walks down the side of the highway with her grocery bag, and comes to a tiny green church, she's always passed, but never entered.

Mary stops, today, looks at the tiny green church stuck on the side of the highway, in the middle of nowhere.

Mary puts down her groceries and decides to walk to the door of the church.

INT. CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

Completely silent. Empty rows of white pews fill the room. Everything is illuminated by the soft, white light that falls through the stained glass window on the far wall.

Mary appears at the doorway of the back of the sanctuary, she takes in the empty room, slowly starts walking down the isle, towards the pulpit.

Her hand grazes across the armrest of a passing pew, through a small pool of red light, shone from the stained glass.

There is a mysterious calm in this church, that Mary takes in, as she approaches the pulpit.

Her footsteps creak.

Mary comes to a stop at the front of the sanctuary, looks at the crucifix on the wall...

She suddenly feels as if she's being watched and turns around but doesn't see anyone. Only the empty room. Only the empty pews.

Mary walks over to the stained glass window, looks up at the white light that fills the frosted glass.

On the lower window panel, Mary traces her hand around crimson ornamentation.

Mary opens her hand and lets a shaft of red light fall across her palm, then turns her hand over, to see the light across her knuckles.

She slowly backs up from the window and takes a seat on the creaky pew, looks up to soft white light that shines through the frosted glass, studies the light on the palms of her hands. Then, on the backs of her hands.

She holds a hand up to the light coming through the glass. No warmth. No connection to the light Mary feels on the bluff.

She looks around the empty room again, then back up to the crucifix.

MARY (V.O.)
Tell me what you want from me.

The crucifix stares back at her.

A silent moment passes. Nothing happens.

Mary waits another moment, then gets up and simply walks out of the church, without the answer to her question...

yet...

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - ESTABLISHING - LATE AFTERNOON

The quiet farmhouse sits in the late afternoon sun.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - THAT MOMENT

The clock above the stove reads 5pm.

Mary quietly enters the kitchen with her bag of groceries, sees the time. It's quiet. No radio show. No Stanley in the living room. Nothing. Too quiet.

As Mary places her grocery bag on the counter, something catches her eye out the window, in the fields behind the house.

Concern comes over her face.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / WHEAT FIELDS - MOMENTS LATER

Stanley sits in a chair, staring out into the field.

Mary appears on the path from the house, running towards him.

MARY
DAD?

Stanley ignores Mary, as she runs towards him.

MARY (CONT'D)
Dad?

Mary rushes up to Stanley, tries to figure out if he's okay. Stanley ignores her, continues staring into the field.

MARY (CONT'D)
 (deeply concerned)
 What are you doing out here?

Stanley doesn't answer.

MARY (CONT'D)
 I'm about to fix dinner. Why don't
 you come inside?

Stanley doesn't answer.

Mary places her hand on his shoulder to see if he's okay.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Daddy?

Stanley abruptly stands and walks off.

MARY (CONT'D)
 What is it?

Stanley walks away from Mary, and heads down the path,
 towards the house.

MARY (CONT'D)
 (calls after him)
 Daddy, what is it?

Stanley continues on his way, leaving Mary without an answer,
 her panic rising.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Mary rushes through the back door into kitchen, just in time
 to hear Stanley's bedroom door slam down the hallway.

INT. FARMHOUSE / LIVING ROOM - SECONDS LATER

Mary races through the living room, to Stanley closed door,
 to find it locked.

She quickly on the door.

MARY
 DAD?

She rattles the handle desperately, more panic rising.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Open the door!

Mary desperately POUNDS on the door.

MARY (CONT'D)

DAD!

Suddenly, Stanley yanks open the door, glaring at her.

MARY (CONT'D)

WHAT IS GOING ON?

Stanley glares at Mary, his face boiling, motions for her to back away from his door.

He then, steps back into his room and slams the door in Mary's face.

Mary takes a couple steps back, staring at the door, her heart racing, not understanding what's happening.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Mary slowly enters the kitchen, looks at the clock that now reads 5:20pm, doesn't know what to do.

INT. FARMHOUSE / LIVING ROOM - LATER

Mary sits on the couch, staring ahead, across the room, at Stanley closed bedroom door, rocking herself back and forth.

JUMP CUT:

Mary sits on the floor in front of the couch, staring across the room at Stanley's closed door, rocking herself back and forth, starting to come undone.

EXT. GRAND FLATS - SAME TIME

Cole walks out on to vast expanse of Grand Flats.

The salt-covered flats stretch to the horizon in every direction. Desolate, otherworldly.

The sun sets, behind the near-purple horizon.

Cole stops, stares at the sun.

He takes in the desolate surroundings. It's not what he expected. The utter isolation grips him to his bones.

A realization comes over Cole's face, as he stands like a dot on the horizon of Grand Flats...

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. FARMHOUSE / LIVING ROOM - NEXT MORNING

Mary sleeps on the couch, her eyes puffy from the long night.

Footsteps are heard and a shadow moves over her.

Mary opens her eyes to see Stanley, standing over her, dressed in overalls, for the first time in years. He stands without a cane.

Stanley nods for Mary to get up and follow him, then turns and walks back to his open bedroom door.

Mary props herself up on the couch, noticing Stanley is dressed and walking without his cane.

She follows him towards the bedroom.

At the bedroom doorway, Stanley lets Mary pass and enter the room, then follows behind her.

INT. FARMHOUSE / STANLEY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Stanley's bed is made for the first time in years.

A photo album sits on the bedspread.

Stanley comes over, picks up the photo album, and sits down on the bed.

Mary sits next to him.

Stanley opens the photo album, and turns to a page with an old black and white photograph of a small, run-down house from many years ago.

Mary knows this picture.

MARY

The house you grew up in.

Stanley looks at house for a beat. Then, for the first time in twenty years, tries to speak.

STANLEY
(teaching himself the
sounds)
In this town.

Catching Mary completely off-guard. She looks at her father with disbelief.

Stanley courageously turns the page of the photo album, to the next photo. An even smaller house, even more broken-down.

Mary knows this picture, too.

MARY
Momma's house...

Stanley repeats himself.

STANLEY
In this town.

He looks at Mary, hoping she'll understand his words.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
We never left.

Mary listens.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
Your mother and I; never got a
chance to see other places. I would
like to have.

Stanley looks evenly at his daughter, then tells her.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
What happened to me was not your
fault.

Mary fights back a sudden well of tears. Stanley tells her again.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
What happened to me was not your
fault.

Mary fights back her emotion for all she's worth, afraid to believe him.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
Don't let me stop you from seeing
other places. Experiencing things.
Special things.

Silent tears falls down Mary's face.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
 You've taken care of me your whole
 life. I'm just fine.

Mary finally breaks and Stanley embraces his daughter in a way only a loving father can.

It was never anger Stanley had for Mary, but sadness in his daughter giving up her entire life, for him...

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / BACKYARD - LATER

In 48 FPS, Mary lays a brightly-checked tablecloth over the picnic table, set up in the yard, for their Fourth of July lunch.

Mary places a large, clear, water pitcher in the center of the table, and walks back toward the house.

Drifting in to the pitcher of water, as shafts of light glimmer down, thorough the crystal clear liquid, a loving light, we now realize has been with Mary the entire time, on her quest to sell water to the people of Casper Creek.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / FRONT DOOR - LATER

A knock is heard, and a giant bouquet of sunflowers are seen, held by Laura, who stands at the front door, with Russell. They've brought trays of food for the lunch.

Mary opens the door and her face lights up.

MARY
 Hey!

LAURA
 Happy Fourth of July!

MARY
 Happy Fourth of July!

RUSSELL
 Happy Fourth of July, Mary!

MARY
 Happy Fourth, Russell! Let me get this.

Mary helps Russell and Laura with their food.

RUSSELL

We brought carrots, carrots for the rabbit!

MARY

I see. Come in. Come in.

Mary welcomes everyone in, closes the door behind them, smiles all-round.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Russell charges into the kitchen, followed by Laura and Mary. Russell sets his food down, goes to the window, sees Stanley and the rabbit in the backyard, whips back to Laura.

RUSSELL

Can I go out?

LAURA

Sure, honey.

Russell bolts out the back door.

RUSSELL (O.C.)

Happy Fourth of July!

Laura watches Russell and Stanley through the window as Mary removes a tray of hotdogs from the oven.

LAURA

How's your dad?

MARY

He's good.

LAURA

I haven't seen him in a really long time.

Mary comes to the window next to Laura, still watching Stanley and Russell in the yard.

MARY

I'm glad you guys are here.

Laura turns to Mary with a tender smile.

LAURA

Me too.

A special connection passes between Laura and Mary. No so different from each other.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / BACKYARD - LATER

The following montage is MOS.

Russell feeds the old rabbit a carrot through the cage.

Stanley sits at the table, watching Russell, a smile on his face. He doesn't speak at this meal like he did with Mary, but his demeanor is open, speaking with his eyes and gestures, like a weight has been lifted.

Mary and Laura round the corner from the house, bringing food to the table.

Laura hands Stanley a bowl of chicken, who places it on the table, as Mary sets down the salad, a bowl of biscuits and corn on the cob.

Russell pops up from the rabbit cage, takes a seat at the table, as Stanley raises his water glass for a toast.

Mary, Laura and Russell follow suit.

Everyone toasts, drinks their water, and starts to eat the delicious meal.

Mary and Stanley a glance and a smile. Stanley is a new man today. He appears younger, more alive. And Mary a new young woman, the weight of her old life, now gone.

Food is doled out, and everyone starts to eat. It's delicious.

Conversation and laughter is had. Water is refilled. Mary and Stanley share another glance.

High above, the warm sun shines proudly down on them.

Russell finishes a story, then snatches a sunflower from the centerpiece, smells it, then holds it up to Laura's ear. She tilts her head, as if posing for a picture.

Everyone laughs. This meal could not be better.

Russell slips a biscuit through the cage, to the rabbit.

Mary comes around to the cage, takes a carrot from the table and feeds it to the rabbit.

Russell brims with joy, as the rabbit chomps and chomps.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. FARMHOUSE / KITCHEN - LATER

Mary enters the kitchen and heads to the oven and removes the freshly-warmed blueberry pie.

All of a sudden, Mary hears a knock on the front door.

She isn't expecting anyone.

Mary sets the pie on the stove and heads to the door.

INT. FARMHOUSE / LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mary approaches the door, opens it, to find...Cole, standing there, much to her surprise.

MARY
Hey.

COLE
Hey.

There's something different about Cole. There's a heaviness to him Mary's never seen.

MARY
I thought you went to Grand Flats.

COLE
I did.

Mary doesn't understand why he's here.

COLE (CONT'D)
You got a second?

He motions to the front step.

MARY
Yeah.

Mary exits the house, removes her apron.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / FRONT STEP - CONTINUOUS

Mary and Cole sit on the step, next to each other.

MARY
So...how was it?

COLE
It was big...empty.

Mary listens.

COLE (CONT'D)
When I was there, I thought about
what you said.

MARY
About what?

COLE
How things sometimes happen and you
have to be there to deal with them.

MARY
I'm not the one to be giving
advice.

A smile passes between them.

COLE
I'm going to Pittsburgh to be with
my son.

Mary wasn't expecting this.

COLE (CONT'D)
When I was standing in Grand Flats,
I realized you were right. I've
been making all of my decisions out
of fear. When I figured that out,
this calming feeling came over me
and for the first time things sort
of made sense.

Mary listens.

COLE (CONT'D)
We're not meant to live our lives
in fear and that's what I was
doing.

This lands on Mary. Something she can relate to as well.

COLE (CONT'D)
Come on. I got you something.

Cole gets up from the step, heads around the house to the
dirt driveway, where his car is parked. Mary follows him.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / DIRT DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Cole hustles over to the open window of the driver's door, pulls out a black T-shirt from the seat, walks back over and tosses it to Mary, who's standing there, waiting for him.

Mary catches the T-shirt, and holds it up to see the logo.

A silhouette of Grand Flats with the words "Ain't Life Grand?" It's funny.

Mary looks at Cole, a smile on his face.

Everything passes between them, without words.

MARY

Thanks.

Cole nods, a smirk on his face.

MARY (CONT'D)

We're having some food. Why don't you come in?

Cole thinks about it. Then thinks better.

COLE

I should probably go.

Mary accepts this.

MARY

Okay.

Mary and Cole stand there, take each other in one last time, before Cole backs up towards the car, still looking at Mary's face, as if to memorize it.

When he gets to his car door, he holds a simple hand up to say goodbye.

Mary does the same.

Cole gets into his car, makes a U-turn and rolls down the drive.

Mary watches Cole pull on to the country road, until his car disappears over the first hill.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Mary emerges from the house, with the blueberry pie. When she gets to the corner of the yard, she come to a stop, staring ahead in 48 FPS to Russell, Stanley and Laura, eating at the table, enjoying each other's company.

A Mary watches them, a peace comes over her. Perhaps a make-shift family some day...

JUMP CUT:

Russell feeds the rabbit a carrot, as Laura reaches over and tickles his ear. Russell bounds up, grabs the can of whip cream, tries to spray Laura, who snatches the can from him, tries to spray back. She chases him around the table.

Mary brings the blueberry pie to the table and everyone clears space.

Laura takes the first bite. It's delicious.

Everyone toasts their plastic forks together and start to eat the pie.

Laughing. Singing. Talking.

Russell shoots whip cream into the air and tries to catch it with his mouth, covering his face with a sticky blob, sending him and everyone else, into a fit of laughter.

Mary and Stanley share another glance.

It's a new day indeed.

EXT. FARMHOUSE / BACKYARD - THAT NIGHT

In 48 FPS, two lit sparklers are held together, by Mary and Laura.

Russell holds his glittering sparkler a few feet away.

Stanley holds his glittering sparkler up to the sky.

Mary and Russell interweave their sparklers together.

Laura waves her sparkler in a loop, watching the light trail.

Stanley stares into the white core of his sparkler.

Mary, Stanley, Cole and Laura stand together, watching the dancing light of their sparklers.

The sparkler's light dances on Russell's face of wonder.

The sparkler's light dances on Laura's face of hope.

The sparkler's light dances Stanley's face of re-birth.

Finally, the sparkler's light dances on Mary's face of forgiveness. Forgiveness for herself...

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. APARTMENT HALL - NIGHT - WEEKS LATER

The scene is MOS.

Cole heads down the hallway of a lower-income apartment building, until he comes to a door, sees it's number.

He stares at the door for a minute, takes a deep breath, then lifts his hand and knocks.

A few seconds pass before the door is opened, by COLE's EX-GIRLFRIEND, a pretty young woman in a hoodie, no makeup, completely caught off-guard by Cole, who stands there, looking at her with new confidence in his eyes.

She looks from Cole, back into the room, where Sam, Cole's son, is standing in a crib on the other side of the room, reaching out towards the door.

She invites Cole in.

INT. COLES EX-GIRLFRIEND'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Cole enters her apartment without his eyes ever leaving Sam.

He comes over to the crib and bends down to Sam, a smile of joy on his face, as Sam reaches over the top of the crib, towards him.

Cole's Ex-Girlfriend comes over, lifts Sam into her arms, and introduces him to Cole, his father.

As Cole takes in this amazing creation that's his son, his Ex-Girlfriend looks at him with remorse in her eyes, which Cole accepts. And forgives.

She hands Sam to Cole, who carefully takes him into his arms and brings him close, then gently tosses him up in the air, before handing him back to her.

Sam playfully swats at Cole's face, giggling all the while.

She swings Sam back and forth towards Cole, a huge smile on Sam's face, every time he gets close to Cole.

Cole takes in the wonder of his son.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. REDWOOD FOREST - DAYBREAK

A massive redwood forest is lit by pre-dawn light.

Bright green vines and ivy blanket the ground.

In the distance, Mary slowly makes her way through this forest, taking in the foreign world around her.

She holds herself tightly, to keep warm, as she looks up at the tree canopy, towering above her.

Drifting around Mary, as she takes in this new world she finds herself in.

JUMP CUT:

The Floating POV follows Mary, as she walks down a path that cuts through a large bed of electric green ivy.

Her hand gently runs over the moss, on the trunk of a fallen tree, that she passes by.

JUMP CUT:

Mary is crouched, inspecting the leaves of a fern. So green. So foreign. A tiny damsel fly lifts to flight from the leaf. Mary watches it go.

JUMP CUT:

Mary gently strokes her face with the leaves of the fern. Silk-like. Amazing.

JUMP CUT:

Mary inspects the baby damsel fly that has landed again, this time, on the back of her hand.

JUMP CUT:

Mary continues down the path that cuts through the green ivy bed, walking amid the gigantic redwood trunks again.

JUMP CUT:

Mary walks amid the gigantic black trunks, taking in this amazing new world.

JUMP CUT:

She descends a steeper path that leads to an even-thicker, more-densely populated forest.

White light hovers far above the tops of the tree canopy, hundreds of feet above Mary, that she stares up at.

CROSSFADE TO:

INT. TUNNEL OF LIGHT

Mary walks through a cave-like tunnel towards a blinding sheet of white light, that she disappears into.

WASH TO WHITE:

The white light evens to reveal a single cloud, in an open sky, above the setting sun, beyond a vast ocean, that Mary stands before, high atop a sand dune, taking in the majestic view.

EXT. OCEAN - THAT MOMENT

Rays of the setting sun dance between the fingers of Mary's hand, that hangs by her side, as she stands on the dune, taking in the ocean.

JUMP CUT:

Mary's boots walk through the sand.

She walks towards the water, into the foam, taking in the rushing waves around her.

Mary starts to play. She kicks the water, walks the shoreline.

She runs from an incoming wave with the innocence of a child.

Mary stands on the beach and takes in the most beautiful sun she's ever seen, floating above the horizon, just for her.

MARY (V.O.)

What is this light that loves me?

Mary faces this gorgeous light of the sun, taking a breath of the clean, ocean air, separated from the sun, only by the infinite body of water before her. Yet she's never felt closer. The very same peace as the light on the bluff. More.

MARY (V.O.)
Warm to my skin...

Mary's footsteps sink in the wet sand, as she makes her way up the deserted beach.

She suddenly takes off running.

MARY (V.O.)
...to my heart

She spins around, her arms out to the wind, and continues running, then spins again.

Mary faces the sun; this light, her companion, floating above the ocean's horizon. She is finally on her own. She is strong. She is happy. Standing in the wake of light.

The light shares a secret with Mary, which suddenly makes laugh.

BLACKOUT.

MARY (V.O.)
You are this light that loves me.

The end.