

The Desert Rains Blood

By

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INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

MUSIC CUE: GERMAN HYPERTECHNO

Plastic and metal panels RATTLE as an ambulance drives down an empty road.

QUICK CUTS:

-A STRETCHER swaying with the ambulance.

-VALVES connected to OXYGEN TANKS jitter.

-GPS System on the ambulance CENTER CONSOLE.

The hands on the steering wheel tap to the beat.

Driving the ambulance is EMT 1, his partner EMT 2 sits passenger side. They both sport EMT uniforms.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT ROAD - CONTINUOUS

FROM ABOVE

The ambulance lights break through the Moon's blue hues on a vast, empty desert... the SILENCE is cut by the ambulance IN THE DISTANCE flying down the only road around.

INT/EXT. AMBULANCE, VAN CRASH SITE - LATER

The ambulance lights shape out a car in the distance.

EMT 1 steps on the breaks, the EMTs peer out the window as they roll up to the scene: An OLD BLACK VAN crunched into a telephone pole, smoke spews out the hood. Across the street, a WITNESS hunkers in his car. His headlights are the only source of light besides the ambulance.

EMT 1  
What in the hell?

EMT 2  
(muttering)  
Oh boy, this is gonna be fun.

EMT 1  
(into radio)  
It's a Code 1 traffic accident.  
(to partner)  
What kinda psychopath is out here at 2  
am?

EMT 2  
Us. Let's go.

EMT 1 rolls the ambulance forward. The Witness spots the ambulance and steps out-- COLLAPSES to the ground.

EMT 1  
Damn.

EMT 2  
Who's that?

The EMTs unbuckle, rush to the back. They slide on their protective gear.

EMT 1  
Take care of the witness first, I'll check out the van.

EMT 2  
How come you get the exciting part?

EMT 1  
How come you always complain?

EMT 2  
How COME you always have a stick up your fuckin' ass?

The EMTs grab their medical bags and walk toward the scene. EMT 2 crosses the street toward the witness.

A nasty stench seeps from the van. Not good. EMT 1 scans the front. No driver. He pries open the door, looks for any leads. It's pitch black-- he can't see ANYTHING.

He moves to the sliding side door, pulls. Jammed. Pulls again harder: the door FLIES open. The stench hits EMT 1 with FULL FORCE, he has to turn away.

EMT 1  
(gagging)  
Jesus!

Finn dry heaves, plugs his nose. He turns back around...

A pile of DEAD BODIES stacked in the backseat. A fly utopia. Finn shudders. The world goes SILENT. It's like it STOPS.

EMT 1 takes out his flashlight, shines it on the bodies. SCALES OF JUSTICE are TATTOOED on every face. He spots

something on one of the bodies: a bloodied FIRE & RESCUE patch. Etching is caked, but it's a company crest of some sort. He shivers: *it could've been him instead.*

EMT 1  
YO, it's one of ours!

No response. EMT 1 turns around. EMT 2 is gone, along with the witness and his car.

EMT 2  
(playful)  
Hellooooo?

EMT 1 scans the area, to no avail. He hops in the ambulance, reaches for his radio. He clicks it, looks to his right.

The WITNESS sits in the passenger seat smiling, a potato sack in hands.

WITNESS  
Let's make this easy, yeah?

A beat...

The Witness JUMPS at EMT 1! EMT 1 immediately kicks and pushes the witness away. The Witness THRASHES out. He kicks viciously. EMT 1's grip is slipping.

The Witness lands a KNOCKOUT blow. EMT 1 slumps forward, forehead pressing the HORN. The Witness is taken back. Not supposed to knock him out. Shrugs. Oh well, *no harm no foul.*

The Witness leans EMT 1 back, slides the sack over his head.

BLACK.

Title Card: **THE DESERT RAINS BLOOD**

INT. SMALL DINER - EVENING

A small, run-down diner with dusty tables, a broken piano,

and a rickety bar. LOCALS dine and chat, dressed in shabby clothes, trucker hats, and cowboy hats. A *dull town*

We find FINN FESSENAMEIER (22, a stalky young German man with curly blond hair, a big ego, and bigger trust issues) and EMILY (50, Finn's estranged mother and ex-fire chief) studying menus in their Sunday best outfits, a stark contrast to the dusty environment.

EMILY's plate is empty, and Finn pokes at his untouched meal.

EMILY  
(concerned)  
Are you okay?

FINN  
(sullen)  
Not really hungry.

EMILY  
(probing)  
Then why did you order?

Finn drops his fork, a sigh escaping him.

EMILY  
Alright, what's bothering you?

FINN  
(grumbling)  
I hate it here, Mom.

EMILY's face darkens as she hears this.

EMILY  
(defensive)  
What do you mean?

FINN  
(frustrated)  
WHAT DO I MEAN? My partner's useless, our quote-on-quote low call volume lands me on the wall for fucking HOURS, and the locals all hate me. This job is a fucking joke.

EMILY  
Can you stop being so negative and just appreciate what you have?

FINN  
(accusing)  
You transferred me here, didn't you?

ON EMILY: *I see.* Her face grows sinister.

EMILY  
What are you getting at?

The WAITER interrupts them, arriving with a SIZZLING plate.

WAITER  
This is on the house--

The Waiter accidentally-on-purpose tips SIZZLING OIL onto Finn's lap. Finn YELPS!

Finn jumps up, trying to WIPE off the oil. His hands SIZZLE. Finn SCREAMS.

FINN  
(agitated)  
Nononono, it's going through the pants! IT'S GOING THROUGH THE PANTS!

CUT TO

INT. EMILY'S CAR - LATER

Emily drives now. Finn sits with ice packs wrapped around his hands and groin. Awkward SILENCE.

Emily glances at Finn-- she wants to say something.

EMILY  
(apologetic)  
I'm sorry I wasn't there when you needed me.

FINN  
(dismissive)  
What?

EMILY  
I was so focused on my career, Finn. I should've been there for you. It was the most important thing for me to be the best of the best. We have to be, then and now. And you know how being the fire chief is--it's hard to find structure.

FINN

(resentful)

Thank you. But it doesn't change anything.

EMILY

Finn, I regret everything looking back now. But now that you're here, I want to start again. Can you give me the chance to start again?

FINN

(angry)

You saw the waiter, right? They hate me. They would still cut my balls off if they find my door unlocked at night. And it's your fault.

EMILY

(defensive)

What is with your attitude?

FINN

(outraged)

You requested my transfer here. Now after a fucking CHILDHOOD of neglect. You want to get dinner? What the hell are you smoking, Mom? Why else am I in this dump?

EMILY

(disbelieving)

Is that how you see it?

FINN

You were never there, even after Dad-

EMILY

(yelling)

Watch your mouth!

They ride in SILENCE.

CUT TO

INT/EXT. EMILY'S CAR - LATER

Emily pulls up to the curb.

Finn fumbles with the seatbelt, finally UNCLICKS it. His mummified hands slip on the door knob.

Emily chuckles, steps out around to Finn's door and opens it. Finn sighs, finally letting his guard down. He steps out of the car, looks at the sidewalk

FINN  
(resigned)  
I'm just having a tough time  
adjusting.

EMILY  
(apologetic)  
Listen. I know you're not a fan of  
this whole... situation. But I'll  
always be your Mom. And I'm sorry. And  
now instead of being 2 hours away, I'm  
2 minutes. Can we start over?

FINN  
(grudgingly)  
Fine.

EMILY  
See? Already thinking positive.

FINN  
I guess one good thing is this person  
I've been talking to.

EMILY  
(teasing)  
Ooooo. Is it a they?

FINN  
(annoyed)  
She's a girl, Mom. And "it"? Really?

EMILY  
That's great, honey.

Finn nods, still looking down in guilt.

EMILY  
Finn, look at me.

Finn looks at Emily.

EMILY (CONT.)  
We're both here for a reason. It's  
time for you to learn who you really  
are.



They hug tight. They pull back, WE SEE two large blots of water on Emily's shirt back. Emily brushes Finn's hair back.

Emily walks back into the car, pulls away. The tires KICK UP dust that drifts toward Finn.

WE LINGER on Finn as Emily drives away. The dust from the tires SWIRL into Finn's face--he COUGHS violently. He covers his mouth--SMACKS his face with the ice packs.

FINN  
(under his breath)  
Motherfucker.

INT. FINN'S ROOM, FINN'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

A small desk, bed, and cabinet make up his small, and only, personal space.

BEGIN SUIT UP MONTAGE:

- Buttons his work shirt.
- Finn slides his work pants on.
- Zips up his pants--ah! Caught on the goods-- finishes zipping.
- Buckles his belt.
- Tucks a ZYN into his upper lip.

END SUIT UP MONTAGE

Finn slides his hat on to complete the suit up. He SMILES in the mirror.

FINN  
(sour)  
Another day another fuckin' dollar.

CUT TO

EXT. REMOTE OUTLINE STATION - LATER

MUSIC CUE: GERMAN HYPERTECHNO

The sun peaks over the distant dunes. Heat waves already bend the desert hills

A LIZARD crawls across the gravel. A sheltering snake hisses

at it.

The lizard scampers across the driveway of a small old house attached to a new apparatus bay.

A flagpole with the USA and California flags tie it all together: "San Bernadino County Fire Station - Temescal".

WE MOVE through a cracked window into...

**INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM, REMOTE OUTLINE STATION - CONTINUOUS**

.... the Kitchen/Living room. A small dirty couch, a broken tv, an uneven dining table, and some torn up lounge chairs mix with a kitchenette. It's small enough that every spot in the room is within earshot.

CHRIS (18, a cocky new kid who loves cooking almost as much as Cameron), CAMERON LEE (23, a young Korean Woman with straight dark hair, a dirty mouth, and a short temper), and AXEL (30, a gentle giant EMT in the middle of an early mid-life crisis) chat at the dining table and eat eggs. Cameron and Axel both unbuttoned their uniform collars, sport bags under their eyes.

Finn BURSTS through the door, killing the rest of the crew's vibe.

**END MUSIC CUE**

**FINN**

You guys didn't wait for me?

Finn PLOPS at the table, notices his plate is empty. His eyes SHOOT DAGGERS at Chris.

**CHRIS**

(shrugging)

Sorry, we ran out. Station tradition.

**FINN**

Fuck yourselves, I don't need it anyways.

**CAMERON**

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, retard.

**FINN**

Oh my god, shut up and take your dementia pills, Grandma.

AXEL

You're late. Again. I thought it was clear you only get breakfast if you get here for the shift swap on time.

FINN

Cry about it, Terminator.

Axel gets DIRECTLY in Finn's face.

AXEL

Get here on time and maybe I will. You think you're hot shit because you spent a year dicking around the city?

FINN

It's better than fucking cousins and getting heat stroke every day.

AXEL

I think I speak for everyone when I say, SHUT THE FUCK UP.

Finn stands his ground, looks to Cameron.

FINN

(to Cameron)

What's his fuckin' problem?

CAMERON

I don't think it's his.

AXEL

Don't look at her. Look at me. I'm talking to you.

FINN

It feels like there's a wall between us, that is prohibiting us from communicating clearly.

Axel SLAPS Finn across his FACE.

AXEL

(sarcastic)

IS there a wall there?

Finn looks back, smirks. He REELS his hand back-- KNEES Axel in the stomach. Axel lets out a HMPH, clutches his abdomen.

FINN

What about that, partner? Did that hurt, cowboy?

Cameron sighs, SHOVES herself between Finn and Axel.

CAMERON

Do you both take shots of straight testosterone before you come in? Goddamn.

FINN

No, I think Axel's on a estrogen prescription.

Cameron scoffs, SLAPS Finn across his face. Again. Finn holds his cheek as he watches Cameron sit back at the table. ON FINN: *She's interesting.*

Chris walks to Finn, SLAPS Finn across his face.

CHRIS

Yeah, fuck you Finn!

Axel recovers, grabs his keys. Finn SHOVES Chris aside.

AXEL

Later, fuckers. I'm gonna go drink myself to sleep.

Axel walks out, SLAMS the front door behind him.

Cameron takes her last bite, reaches in her pocket. TOSSES a fob to Finn.

CAMERON

Rig's washed. You're next up.

Cameron walks into the equipment room. Finn's newfound love fills his smile and googly eyes. Somehow she moves in SLOW MOTION.

Chris scoffs.

FINN

(offended)

What?

CHRIS

(chuckling)

Don't worry about it.

FINN

Before I arrived to this sausage fest  
of a station, I had girls in the city  
BEGGING for me.

CHRIS

Begging you to stop?

FINN

(dryly)  
Hahahaha.

CHRIS

I wouldn't if I were you.

FINN

I'm the best EMT here. And the only  
thing I'm better at than EMS work, is  
pulling chicks.

Finn shakes his body out, gets into character: SMOLDER face  
activated.

FINN

(deep voice)  
Watch and learn, loser.

CHRIS

Did you just try to deepen your voice?

He adjusts his collar, brushes his air, puffs out his chest,  
walks into...

INT. EQUIPMENT ROOM, REMOTE OUTLINE STATION - CONTINUOUS

... the Equipment Room. A row of rusty lockers house EMS  
gear: jackets, boots, helmets, and any personal  
paraphernalia.

Cameron sits at her locker, typing on her phone. Her locker  
is decorated with band stickers and framed family photos.

Finn strolls in.

CAMERON

What do you want?

Finn plops on the bench next to Cameron, fake stretches his  
arms up. Cameron picks up on the move.

FINN  
I've been thinking--

CAMERON  
What're you doing?

Finn SNAPS his arm back, readjusts his seat.

FINN  
I've been thinking--

CAMERON  
Nope.

FINN  
You don't even know what I was gonna say.

CAMERON  
I don't need to. You gave me my answer a minute ago, hot shit. Your ideal first date is probably

FINN  
Axel is fucking delusional. You know that.

CAMERON  
Is he?

--Two SHORT BEEPS followed by a LONG BEEP ring from their radios.

CAMERON  
(shrugging)  
Saved by the bell.

He closes his eyes, takes a DEEP breath.

FINN  
You'll say yes. Eventually.

Finn FLEES the room, a look of disgust on his face. Chris smirks at Finn-- Finn walks THROUGH Chris towards the apparatus bay.

MUSIC CUE: INTENSE GERMAN UNDERGROUND TECHNO

CUT TO

INT. AMBULANCE - LATER

The ambulance RATTLES down the road. Finn checks the GPS, WHIPS the ambulance off pavement onto a dirt road.

Chris reaches for the volume nob-- Finn SMACKS his hand away.

FINN  
Don't touch my fucking music.

CHRIS  
(mocking)  
Don't touch my music.

Finn turns the volume a bit LOUDER.

FINN  
What do we got?

Chris scans the center computer.

CHRIS  
55 year old man on the 63 highway  
going West just off West Braithie. Non-  
injury traffic collision. Man lost  
control of his car and slammed into  
the center divider. Records show  
previous signs of aggression and  
alcohol abuse. 2 police are already on  
scene.

FINN  
Sounds like our boy.

Finn punches his radio.

FINN  
(into radio)  
AMS Unit 1 en route.

Finn clicks the radio back into the center unit. He head bangs to the music. Chris watches. He's frightened.

CUT TO

EXT. CRASH SCENE, 63 HIGHWAY - LATER

MUSIC CUE: INTENSE GERMAN UNDERGROUND TECHNO

The ambulance SKIDS to a stop, clouds of dust envelope the vehicle. A mangled sedan is folded headfirst into the center

divider. Smoke BELLOWS from the engine. A cop car is parked to the side, siren lights flickering. 2 COPS lean against the car, chatting.

Finn and Chris walk to the back of the ambulance, open the back doors.

QUICK CUTS:

-Chris pulls out the gurney

-Chris hoists the medical bags onto the gurney

-Chris slides a pair of thick gloves on

-Chris throws a jaws of life over his shoulder

-Finn walks away from the ambulance

Chris pushes the gurney, it doesn't budge. He looks to his right for Finn to help-- Nobody's there.

CHRIS  
(under his breath)  
Not again.  
(yelling)  
Finn!

FINN  
You know the drill!

CHRIS  
(nervous)  
No! I am not doing this alone again!

FINN  
Don't worry, you got this!

CHRIS  
What if I fuck up?

FINN  
You won't. I trained you.

Chris throws a TANTRUM. He composes himself, walks the gurney to the smoking car.

CHRIS  
(muttering)  
You got this. I trained you. I'm  
better. You do everything, Chris.



Finn saunters over to the cops. He approaches BLAKE (50, a buff friendly and protective local chief of police), the larger of the 2.

BLAKE  
What's up, bud?

FINN  
Hey, Blake.

Finn gestures towards the smoking car.

FINN  
It's our favorite guy.

CUT TO:

Chris steps around the debris to the smoking car's driver seat. TREVOR (45, a bald high-school-burnout-turned-alcoholic with a free spirit) droops in his seat, his legs lodged between metal.

CHRIS  
Trevor! My man! How we doin'?

TREVOR  
(slurring)  
Oh shiiiiit! What's good, Chris?

Chris kneels down, places a Spacer on the points where Trevor's leg is pinned.

CHRIS  
Last time you promised to slow down the drinking man. What happened?

Chris pries the metal apart, REVEAL Trevor's left leg completely shredded and oozing with blood.

TREVOR  
(slurring)  
I made some new friends who introduced me to something beautiful.

Trevor pulls a small baggie of COCAINE out of his pocket and takes a bump.

CHRIS  
(investigative)  
Oh, man...

Chris PUKES in his mouth, swallows it. He shivers, fumbles through the medical kit, pulls out a tourniquet. Trevor MUMBLES incoherently as Chris reaches in, fastens the tourniquet around Trevor's stub.

Trevor looks down at his leg.

TREVOR  
(exhilarated screaming)  
OOOHHHH! DAMN! IT BURNS! THAT IS  
WICKED!

CHRIS  
Wicked is... one way to put it.

Chris stands up, looks across the highway to Finn. Finn is busy chatting up the cops.

IN THE BACKGROUND: Chris sighs, ties up the bandages, helps Trevor out of the car. Chris hoists Trevor onto the stretcher--it slips under Trevor's weight and he FLOPS to the ground. Chris pulls the stretcher back, throws Trevor across it and walks it back to the ambulance. Trevor sits up as Chris throws a door open, KNOCKS OUT Trevor. Chris fixes Trevor back on the stretcher, hooks up the monitors, straps him in.

BLAKE  
Hey Finn, how's your Mom?

FINN  
(shocked)  
Excuse me?

BLAKE  
Sorry-- that came out wrong. I used to  
work with her. Back in the day.

FINN  
How about we start with that next  
time, huh?

BLAKE  
My bad. She never mentioned me?

FINN  
She never mentioned anyone. Too busy  
fighting fires to connect with her own  
son.

BLAKE  
Alright, changing subjects--  
(quickly)  
How about that girl you were talking  
to? How long have you been laying the  
groundwork now? 2 weeks?

FINN  
I play the long game, Blake. An  
intricate method too complicated for  
old heads like yourself.

BLAKE  
The only thing you're playing with is  
your dick.

FINN  
So are you?

COP 2  
Ooooh. Burn.

BLAKE  
(to Cop 2)  
Don't encourage him.

FINN  
Suck a fat one, old man.

BLAKE  
You're lucky I like you, boy.

CHRIS (O.S.)  
Finn! We gotta go.

Finn glances at Chris: He stands at the ambulance with Trevor  
fastened to a stretcher. He writhes around manically.

FINN  
(to Blake)  
Great, look who's calling. The retard.

BLAKE  
(chuckling)  
Hey, don't be too hard on him.

FINN  
Eh, too late for that. I'll see you  
around.

Finn and Blake fist bump. Finn trots back to the ambulance.

CHRIS  
Coke and alcohol running all through  
his blood.

FINN  
Alright, Trevor! Expanding your  
rotation, I like it!

TREVOR  
(slurring)  
Just let me go, I'll stop using. I  
swear-

FINN  
Shut up.

CHRIS  
Gotta take him to the ICU for his leg.

FINN  
Damn. You think we could just let  
him... bleed out?

Trevor panics.

TREVOR  
(slurring)  
Heeeeelp! They're gonna kill me!

FINN  
Always a pleasure to see you, Trev.

Finn boops Trevor on the nose. Trevor writhes in anger.

Finn and Chris hoist Trevor and the stretcher into the  
ambulance. Chris climbs in, Finn shuts the doors.

CUT TO

INT. ICU, LOCAL HOSPITAL - LATER

Finn and Chris sit on a bench against the ICU wall. Trevor  
lies on the gurney between them, wriggling. Other EMTs crowd  
the wall with patients of their own. NURSES walk back and  
forth, preoccupied.

FINN  
Now it's the waiting game. Everyone's  
busy.

CHRIS  
Fuck. For real?

TREVOR  
(slurring)  
I have to pee.

FINN  
Hold it.

Finn and Chris sit on either side of the stretcher. They nod to the other EMTs.

CHRIS  
So how'd it go with Cameron this morning?

FINN  
Why do you care?

Trevor writhes uncontrollably.

TREVOR  
I need to PEE!

FINN  
Hold it, fuck face.

CHRIS  
Just curious.

FINN  
We're going on a date tomorrow.

CHRIS  
For sure.

FINN  
What's that supposed to mean?

TREVOR  
(screaming)  
I'M GONNA PISS MY PANTS!

The ENTIRE HALLWAY stops, looks at Trevor. The other EMTs against chuckle. Finn looks up from his phone.

FINN  
Pee on my stretcher, I'll kick your fuckin' ass.

Trevor continues squirming.

EMT 3

Coke?

Finn looks across the hallway to another EMT 3. He sits with another patient.

FINN

Mix in some alcohol and you're golden.

EMT 3

We just ran a Code 1 MCI, had to transfer this guy all the way over here 'cause our hospital was full. Crazy shit. All the patients had at least one crushed limb.

FINN

Shut the fuck up. What happened?

EMT 3

Multiple car collision on Eastbound 63 about 40 miles South.

FINN

Same thing happened to this guy, except we were on Westbound.

EMT 3

Wild. My chief always gets pissy whenever we get routed over here.

FINN

Why?

The sound of SPLATTER and DRIBBLING rise.

EMT 3

I dunno, some freak string of calls years ago that never sat right with him. Or something like that.

FINN

Where are you guys stationed?

EMT 3

Just outside Calico Ghost--

EMT 1 sniffs the air.

EMT 3 (CONT.)

Is that... piss?

Finn and EMT 1 whip around: Trevor unbuttoned his jeans and is pissing on the wall.

TREVOR

That's better.

Chris starts CRYING.

FINN

Oh no you....

Finn SQUEEZES Trevor's goods, HALTING the piss stream. Trevor WINCES.

FINN

I thought I told you to fucking hold it.

Trevor smirks, starts peeing again. Finn winds up to punch--

CUT TO

INT. ETHAN'S OFFICE, REMOTE OUTLINE STATION - NIGHT

Finn holds his right hand, touches his raw knuckles.

He surveys the office-- it's **overwhelmingly decorated with military awards, metals, and plaques.**

**ETHAN KING (53, a hard ass ex-military chief with no room for failure) sits on his throne of a chair. His large desk is furnished with prestigious military awards, along with a clean nameplate: ETHAN KING - FIRE CHIEF.**

FINN

You wanted to see me?

Ethan ignores him, saunters to the corner of the room, admires his model jet fighter. Finn rolls his eyes.

FINN

(sighing)

You wanted to see me, SIR?

ETHAN

There's the magic word!

Ethan gets into Finn's face. He sniffs-- GAGS, backs away

IMMEDIATELY.

ETHAN

You smell like piss.

FINN

I was in the splash zone, sir.

ETHAN

(stern)

What you did today is UNACCEPTABLE. Punching a patient? Betting on calls? Refusing to do work and making your partner do everything? **You are here on assignment, Finn. You are here to train Chris. You have experience and it is your duty. But you've demonstrated that you lack the capacity. We don't like quitters here... In fact, I heard from a little birdie that you quit on every call. Do you even WANT to be an EMT?**

FINN

Man, my behavior issues, not training Chris.... Guess you gotta fire me, huh?

ETHAN

(angry)

If I could, I'd have you working 72's for the next 6 months. You're lucky nobody else wants to work in this hellhole. **You're stuck here, boy, and there's nothing either of us can do about it. So you best fix your attitude 'fore I fix it for you.**

FINN

Why are you always on my fucking ass? Why is it always me? You're a fuckin' asshole.

ETHAN

I may be an asshole, but I'm not a dick. This is a bad town. Y'all are lucky you have some authority over the general population here. So until you figure out whatever fucking mental issue you have, I'm assigning you to Cameron--



Finn perks up. *Oh?*

ETHAN (CONT.)

--so Axel will actually get off his depressed ass and do something.

FINN

With all do respect, sir-- this station is a fucking joke. I love being an EMT, I do. Being part of a team, helping out people, asserting my power... Just not here.

ETHAN

Here's some advice. Keep your fuckin head down and do your goddamn work.... You and Cameron start next week. Now go shower before you stain my floors.

FINN

Yes, sir.

**Finn rolls his eyes, slides another Zyn into his upper lip as he walks out. A smile CREEPS onto his face.**

CUT TO

**INT/EXT. AMBULANCE, SUPERMARKET PARKING LOT - MORNING**

The Ambulance is parked diagonally across 4 spaces in the center of the parking lot. The sun SCORCHES the area. The ambulance thermometer reads: "108 F".

Faded retro stripes stretch across a standalone building with patio furniture and a large parking lot. A few LOCALS walk out with their coffees, pour shooters in as they chat loudly.

**Cameron and Finn sit, eating breakfast burritos. SILENCE, save for their CHEWING and the turning engine. Awkward.**

**Finn takes a deep breath. *Time to break the ice.***

FINN

So what do you like to do for fun?

CAMERON

We've been sitting here for 30 minutes in complete silence, and that's the best question you could think of?

FINN

I don't have much to go off of. You're not exactly an open book.

CAMERON

Oh, and you are?

FINN

Well, what do you know about me?

CAMERON

That you're lazy. You're arrogant. You never carry your weight.

FINN

You're fucking nuts. I've never spent more than 30 minutes with you.

CAMERON

Your old partner says otherwise.

FINN

That yapping, tattle-tailing little shit. You really believe him?

CAMERON

Over a lazy arrogant pissy dick head? Any fucking day.

FINN

**That's all you think I am?**

CAMERON

**That's all I think you are.**

FINN

**I am not a lazy egotistical pissy dick head.**

CAMERON

You show up to every shift late, complaining about some stupid small thing instead of having the common human courtesy to carry your goddamn fucking weight. You're so high on your own fucking arrogance you can't even see the shit you're standing on. You're so self-centered you've got your own gravitational pull. **When's the last time you ran vitals on a patient?**

**Finn draws blanks.**

**CAMERON**

Point proven, motherfucker.

**FINN**

Just wait and see. You'll take all that back by the end of today.

**CAMERON**

I'd love to see you try.

**FINN**

You know, I was going to ask you again to go out. But I don't think I wanna anymore.

**CAMERON**

(sarcastic)

Awww, I was looking forward to it.

**FINN**

Yeah, fuck you too.

Finn takes a HUGE bite out of his burrito.

**CAMERON**

You're gonna choke on that.

**FINN**

You're gonna choke on this dick.

**CAMERON**

Huh. I didn't realize M&Ms were a choking hazard.

Finn wraps up his burrito, swings his door open.

**FINN**

I'm gonna use the bathroom.

CUT TO

INT. BATHROOM, SUPERMARKET - CONTINUOUS

Finn walks in, heads to a URINAL. He UNZIPS his pants, starts DRIBBLING-- his RADIO BEEPS TWICE.

**FINN**

**No fucking way.**

He waits for the magic words.

DISAPTCHER

(over radio)

AMR Unit 1, you're gonna be running a  
Code 3 on a 20 year old--

FINN

Fuck me.

Finn ZIPS UP, walks up to the sink. He hesitates, SPLASHES his hands with water and STROLLS out.

CUT TO

EXT. TIKTOKER'S BACKYARD, SMALL HOUSE - LATER

An INFLUENCER stands on top of a trampoline spotted on the edge of his patchy yard and concrete patio. Set in front of him is a pile of barbed wire and lightbulbs sitting on 2 folding chairs.

The INFLUENCER'S FRIEND on the patio behind a sliding door, filming the whole thing on his phone.

INFLUENCER

Is it going?

The Friend gives a thumbs up. The Influencer claps his hands, gets into character.

The Friend crab walks to the other side. He STRAINS as he tries to keep the phone steady. He reaches the other side, WHIPS the camera up.

INFLUENCER

(over-enthusiastic)

What's up everyone! It's  
NickDoesCrazyShit481 back with another  
dare! I said in my last video I'd do  
whatever the top comment was next. So  
today, I'm jumping onto this pile of  
dangerous shit!

The sliding door FLIES open, out marches INFLUENCER'S MOM.

INFLUENCER'S MOM

Nicholas Adams, get down from there  
right now!

INFLUENCER

Shut the fuck up, Mom! I'm making a video!

(a beat)

3! 2! 1.... FUCK. THIS. SHIT!

The Influencer LEAPS onto the pile-- He CRASHES into it, the lightbulbs SHATTER into his back, the CHAIRS bend from his weight.

INFLUENCER

AHHHHHH!!! AHHHHHHH!!!!

CUT TO

INT/EXT. AMBULANCE, TIKTOKER'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The ambulance pulls into the driveway. Finn unbuckles his seatbelt and pulls out his phone.

FINN

Alright, go do yo thang.

Cameron does the same. A beat.

FINN

What the fuck are you doing?

CAMERON

What? Just carrying my weight.

FINN

Ahhhh. So you're PETTY petty.

Finn stretches his arms out, closes his eyes and settles in for a nap. He opens an eye, peeks at Cameron. She smiles at her phone.

FINN

You have a patient out there calling your name, you know.

CAMERON

Then I guess you better go, huh?

FINN

(frustrated)

GAAHH! What is going on?

CAMERON  
(shrugging)  
Just following Ethan's orders...

FINN  
Oh ho ho ho... Ethan's orders--  
Ethan's orders. This isn't gonna work  
on me. No it's... no it's... IT'S A  
HUNDRED AND EIGHT DEGREES OUTSIDE.

CAMERON  
Oh man, better bring some water with  
you!

Finn's eyes SHOOT DAGGERS at Cameron. He FLIPS her off as he  
exits the ambulance.

CUT TO

INT. ICU, LOCAL HOSPITAL - LATER

Finn sways back and forth, NODDING in and out of sleep. His  
uniform is SOAKED with sweat. His hair is matted against his  
head.

Cameron chats with another EMT next to Finn against the wall.  
The Influencer sleeps on the gurney next to them, patched up  
and monitored.

A NURSE walks by, notices Finn's odd demeanor.

NURSE  
(to Cameron)  
Is he ok?

CAMERON  
Yeah, he's fine. Long shift.

The Nurse CACKLES.

NURSE  
A long shift? Good one.

The Nurse walks away. Finn THUMPS onto the ground head first.  
He stands right back up.

FINN  
I'm up! I'm up.

CAMERON  
Good morning, sunshine.

Finn looks at the clock above them: "11:35 AM."

CAMERON

Only 20 more hours!

Finn CRUMBLES back into his seat.

MUSIC CUE: INTENSE DEATH METAL ROCK

BEGIN MONTAGE:

-Finn SNORES in the ambulance.

-Finn DRIPS SWEAT as he performs CPR compressions.

-Finn NAPS on the wall.

-Finn TOSSES medical bags onto the gurney and misses. He throws a TANTRUM. He wipes his SWEAT.

-Finn cries.

-Finn peers over a cliff edge. He hesitates-- RAISES a leg over the barrier.

-Cameron pulls Finn OFF the barrier.

-Finn mindlessly bandaging a YOUNG PATIENT'S ARM. A drop of Finn's SWEAT falls into the patient's eyes.

-Finn reaches for the volume knob in the ambulance. Cameron SLAPS his hand away.

END MONTAGE.

INT/EXT. AMBULANCE, SUPERMARKET PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Finn CHUGS a sports drink-- finishes it, opens another and CHUGS it. His face is GHASTLY PALE.

END MUSIC CUE.

CAMERON

Alright, I'll admit it. At least you know what to do.

Finn finishes the second drink, GASPS for air as chucks the empty bottle aside.

FINN

Seem to? You threw me into the fire on

possibly the hottest day in the  
fucking history of the universe. I  
think I KNOW what I'm doing.

CAMERON

You see how that feels? Now imagine  
what Chris must have been thinking  
that ENTIRE WEEK.

FINN

Man, he probably wants to murder me.

CAMERON

I would.

They smile. Finn scoffs, checks his watch: "11:30PM"

FINN

11:30. Almost there.

The usual tone RINGS from their radios.

DISPATCHER

(over radio)

All units, please respond to Code 3  
MCI--

Finn and Cameron look at each other, excitement on their  
faces.

FINN

Finally, something fucking worthwhile.  
(into radio)  
AMS Unit 1 en route.

The Ambulance FLIES out of the parking lot.

CUT TO

INT/EXT. AMBULANCE, WINDING TOWN ROAD - CONTINUOUS

CAMERON

Whaddawe got?

Cameron looks over the dispatch notes on the center console.

FINN

We got 5 unresponsive young adult  
males identified near at the Harmony  
hiking trail. Nature of incident is  
undetermined, all responding units



approach with caution. Activate resources as needed.

Finn re-reads the notes.

FINN (CONT.)

Harmony Trail?! That's 50 minutes away!

CAMERON

Oh, stop bitching. If anything, you should be happy you'll be spending 50 minutes sitting here instead of running a call on some retard who's jumping on barbed wire for views.

FINN

Fair enough.

A beat.

FINN

Alright, I'll start.

CAMERON

Start what?

FINN

5 says they fell into a sinkhole.

CAMERON

5 what?

FINN

Bucks.

CAMERON

You're betting on the call?

FINN

(shrugging)

What? Keeps things interesting. We've got a good drive ahead of us.

Cameron considers.

CAMERON

10 says they'll be dead on arrival.

FINN

And here I thought I was the dark one.

The Ambulance roars down the road.

CUT TO

EXT. MCI SCENE, MOJAVE DESERT - LATER

The ambulance and a cop car are parked next to each other a few feet from the scene. Finn and Cameron chat with the YOUNG COP.

YOUNG COP  
Anyways, check this shit out.

Finn and Cameron follow the Young Cop. They CREEP up to a bare tree, the Young Cop shines his flashlight at the tree, REVEAL 5 TEENAGERS GIGGLING TO EACH OTHER-- they JUMP at the light. Their eyes are BRIGHT RED.

FINN  
Hey boys, what seems to be the problem?

A beat. SILENCE.

TEENAGER 1  
RUN!

The 5 teenagers SCRAMBLE and RUN into the blackness. The Young Cop chases them.

YOUNG COP  
Hey! Get back here!

They disappear into the darkness. Finn and Cameron scan where the teenagers were camping with their flashlights. Finn STOPS on a reflective material buried half-way in the sand. He walks up and pulls it out-- an empty BAG OF THC EDIBLES.

FINN  
Cameron, come look at this.

Cameron emerges into Finn's light. She looks at the bag.

CAMERON  
They're fuckin high. How many milligrams are in here?

Finn holds the bag close to READ:

FINN  
A THOUSAND MILLIGRAMS! Holy fuck, they

might as well just take shrooms.

CAMERON

If the bag is empty, that means  
between the 5 of them, they took 200  
each.

FINN

They are ZOONOOOOTED. That cop called  
a fucking MCI for a bunch of kids  
taking edibles for their first time.

CAMERON

(to the Young Cop)

Sir, I think we found the--

The Young Cop and his car are GONE.

CAMERON (CONT.)

Where'd he go?

Finn and Cameron survey the area. Nobody.

FINN

I didn't hear his car start.

CAMERON

Neither did I.

Finn STOPS, squints-- desert vegetation in the distance  
faintly FLICKERS a RED hue.

FINN

Hold on. Turn off your lights for a  
sec.

Finn and Cameron flick their lights off. The FLICKERING red  
colors illuminate the sky around it. Almost like a fire.

CAMERON

What's that?

Finn shrugs. He gestures they move toward it. They do.

CUT TO

EXT. DESERT VEGETATION, OPEN DESERT - CONTINUOUS

Finn and Cameron CREEP through the vegetation towards the  
flickering red. Now it's red, orange, and yellow.

FAINT SCREAMS and SINGING echo from the flickering red. Finn and Cameron exchange a look of worry. They continue forward.

Cameron pushes a branch out of her face. Finn trails closely behind, BRACES for the branch-- IT CRACKS. Finn continues moving forward-- another branch SMACKS him in the face.

FINN

Ow!

CAMERON

(quietly)

Shhhhhh!

VOICE (O.S.)

(faintly)

What was that?

Finn and Cameron FREEZE. A FIGURE walks into view from the darkness. They wear long RED ROBES and a hood with a mask: A CULT MEMBER.

Another Cult Member approaches.

CULT MEMBER 2

It was probably a fuckin' snake or something. C'mon, we gotta get back or we might be up next.

CULT MEMBER 1

(cackling)

Poor Ethan.

The two cult members walk back towards the flickering red.

Finn and Cameron exchange worried looks. They push some shrubbery aside to find....

EXT. ORDER OF HARMONY RITUAL SITE, OPEN DESERT - CONTINUOUS

... a TALL WOODEN CROSS with scales on either side sits in the center of a clearing. Along the outer edge of the clearing is a SHEER CLIFF. A ring of fire circles the cross. Etched in the sand are OBSCURE SYMBOLS, drawn in ornate patterns around the clearing.

CULT MEMBERS DANCE, SCREAM, and SING chaotically as they prance in circles around the scales.

Hung in the center of the scales is ETHAN.

CLOSE UP: Blood drips from Ethan's forehead down his face, dribbling onto the sand. His body is limp.

FINN

(whispering)

What in the Hereditary Midsommar  
nightmare mashup is this shit?

CAMERON

(whispering)

Is that Ethan? Is he dead?

FINN

(whispering)

He died for our sins--

Cameron slaps Finn.

CAMERON

(whispering)

What the HELL is wrong with you?

Finn shrugs. Cameron shakes her head, disappointed.

CAMERON

(whispering)

C'mon, let's get closer.

Cameron's pants get caught on a thorn bush. She wiggles. It's stuck.

FINN

(whispering)

I don't think that's a good--

Cameron TWISTS away from the bush, ILLUMINATING her flashlight. She turns it off--too late. The Cult Members HALT their celebrating. MURMURS arise from the gathering.

CULT MEMBER 1

Who the fuck are you?

(to Cult Member 2)

I told you it was something.

CULT MEMBER 2

Whoever you are, come out of there.

Finn and Cameron are FROZEN in place.

FINN  
(whispering)  
What do we do?

CULT MEMBER 1  
Hey! We see you two!

CAMERON  
Run.

Finn and Cameron SPRINT back towards the ambulance.

CULT MEMBER 3  
GET THEM!

A heard of Cult Members break the circle and RUN towards the bushes.

Finn and Cameron scamper through the darkness. Branches and sticks scrape their faces as they NEAR the ambulance. They look behind them.

The Cult Members are HOT on their trail. Finn spots the ambulance in the distance.

FINN  
C'mon, we're almost there!

Finn and Cameron emerge from the bushes. A few 100 meters or so away sits the ambulance.

They CLIMB into the ambulance, shut the doors just as the Cult Members emerge from the bushes.

CAMERON  
Go! Go! Go! Go!

Finn turns over the engine, pulls the ambulance back. The leading Cult Member JUMPS onto the hood. Finn WHIPS the ambulance around, sending the cult member FLYING off the side.

The ambulance SPEEDS OFF, the cult members watch the ambulance disappear down the road.

CUT TO

INT/EXT. APPARATUS BAY - LATER

The ambulance CATCHES AIR as Finn WHIPS it into the Apparatus Bay. The ambulance is caked in dust, the front hood dented

from the weight of the Cult Member.

A beat. Finn and Cameron process what exactly just happened.

FINN  
What the hell was that?

CAMERON  
They killed Ethan.

FINN  
Meh, he had it coming. Either way, we don't even know who THEY are.

CAMERON  
Why Ethan, though?

FINN  
You know just as much as I do.

CAMERON  
(worried)  
But it means our entire station is probably a target.

FINN  
(confident)  
Relax, we'll be fine. We don't know who or what those people are, so there's no way we can connect whatever their intentions are back to our station.

Cameron hops out of the ambulance, SLAMS the door behind her. Finn follows her to the back of the ambulance.

Their uniforms are caked with dust, dirt, torn up from branches.

They unzip the medical bags, take inventory.

CAMERON  
(frustrated)  
How do you know that? How are you so calm about all this? We just found Ethan DEAD, TIED TO A FUCKING CROSS. We just found a goddamn cult, Finn.

FINN  
(defensive)  
What're you getting mad at me for?

CAMERON

If you weren't such a pretentious  
douchebag, we would've never switched  
partners in the first place.

FINN

So you're blaming me there's a  
murderous cult on the loose in the  
bare California desert?

CAMERON

Not that, you fucking tree.

FINN

Then what is it?

CAMERON

What're we gonna do about this? We  
can't let them know we know.

Finn checks his watch.

FINN

Axel and Chris should be here any  
second. Maybe they'll have some input--

CAMERON

No, Finn! We can't tell ANYONE. If  
what I think is true, we have no idea  
how high up this thing goes.

FINN

C'mon, you're just paranoid. Even Axel  
and Chris--

CHRIS (O.S.)

What about Axel and Chris?

Chris and Axel approach the apparatus bay from the street.

CAMERON

(casually)

Oh, nothing important.

Finn and Cameron resume taking inventory. Chris and Axel  
exchange suspicious glances.

AXEL

How was the shift?



FINN  
Same ol' same old.

AXEL  
Your uniforms and the rig say  
otherwise.

FINN  
So we ran a few extra calls today. Big  
deal?

CHRIS  
Big enough to dent the fucking hood.

FINN  
What is this, an investigation? We met  
some new friends, alright Truman  
Capote? We'll wash it next shift. Calm  
your tits.

Chris rolls his eyes. Finn and Cameron ZIP UP the medical  
bags, toss them back in the ambulance.

FINN  
(to Cameron; under his breath)  
You owe me one.

CHRIS  
Wait... aren't you guys gonna stay for  
breakfast?

MATCH CUT

INT. FINN'S ROOM, FINN'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

BLACKNESS, save for Finn's face, illuminated by his LAPTOP  
SCREEN. Finn TYPES hastily.

ON LAPTOP SCREEN: "Calico Remote Outline Station". The MOUSE  
hovers over "RECORDS/ARTICLES".CLICKS-- "ACCESS RESTRICTED"

FINN  
(under his breath)  
Fuck.

Finn SHUTS his laptop. He fumbles through the BLACKNESS--  
SLAMS into something.

FINN  
(agony)  
OW! Motherfucker.

Finn PUNCHES the invisible item. He HOBBLER around, feels for the light switch. FLIPS it on.

Finn PACES. Suddenly, he's hit with an idea. He takes out his phone, dials, holds it to his ear.

FINN

Yo. Are you on tomorrow?

(a beat)

Yeah, I'm off. I got some shit for you.

CUT TO

INT. LOBBY, POLICE PRECINCT - LATE MORNING

A plain waiting lobby with a few rows of plastic chairs and a bulletproof-windowed kiosk. Framed accolades and photos of old cops systematically decorate the otherwise dull room. A hallway leads to a room of cubicles.

Finn walks up to the RECEPTIONIST, busy typing on her computer.

FINN

Hi, I'm here to meet Blake?

RECEPTIONIST

Who are you?

FINN

Finn Fessenmaier. Blake said he'd leave y'all a note.

RECEPTIONIST

I haven't seen one. And it's Captain Blake.

FINN

Oh, it's ok. We're friends.

RECEPTIONIST

(hostile)

What's your business here?

BLAKE (O.S.)

It's alright Whitney, he's with me.

Blake walks up through the hallway. He gestures Finn over.

They walk down the hallway.

CUT TO

INT. BLAKE'S OFFICE, POLICE PRECINCT

Blake's office is the polar opposite of Ethan's: warm colors, a few decorative medals, a laptop and stacks of papers on Blake's center desk.

Instead of accolades on the walls, movie posters and band posters neatly garnish the room.

Blake WALKS IN, holds the door open for Finn.

BLAKE

Take a seat.

Finn strolls in, surveys the room.

FINN

Man, if I didn't know any better I'd think the cops were run by a bratty teen with a septum piercing, black hair, and an anxiety disorder.

BLAKE

You're not too far off.

(sits)

So what's up? You said had some shit for me.

Finn sits down.

FINN

So Ethan's dead.

BLAKE

WHAT?

FINN

Yup. Ran a false MCI last night and stumbled across some sort of.... ritual? I don't know. There were people in robes dancing around a cross with scales on the ends? And Ethan was tied to it.

Blake's face goes PALE.

FINN

Are you ok?

BLAKE

Did any of the people get a good look at you?

FINN

Ummm... I don't think so. One of them hopped onto the rig while we were driving away but that's it.

BLAKE

Are you sure? Nobody followed you?

FINN

Yeah--is there something I should be worried about? You're freaking me the fuck out, man.

BLAKE

Do you guys have a backup chief until the higher ups find someone?

FINN

Yeah, we threw Axel in the fire.

Blake nods. His eyes dart to the window to the office-- he SHUTS the blinds.

Blake turns, a somber look in his eyes. The world behind him dissipates into a wall of flames. From it emerges...

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. DESERT - DAY

YOUNG BLAKE (35) and YOUNG EMILY (35) BANDAGE a YOUNG PATIENT.

Other EMTs HUSTLE down a line of PATIENTS, some are EMS WORKERS and some are LOCALS. The line of patients resembles words on a page--

MATCH CUT TO

INT. OFFICE CUBICLES, POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Young Blake types HASTILY on an OLD DESKTOP COMPUTER. He flips through a book, references it with what's on his SCREEN: "Order of Harmony".

Young Blake JUMPS out of his seat, collects the books and files, rushes out--

MATCH CUT TO

EXT. OPEN DESERT - NIGHT

Young Blake and Young Emily creep through VEGETATION towards an OLD STATION. RED and ORANGE flicker from the windows, the building glows against the blackness of the desert night.

They HUSTLE through the leaves and branches, PISTOLS in hand.

They climb up the rotting-wood entrance--

MATCH CUT TO

EXT. OLD STATION, OPEN DESERT - DAY, CONTINUOUS

The building is EMPTY. TUMBLEWEEDS hop across the sand. Young Blake and Young Emily, disappointed, walk away with their heads low.

BLAKE (V.O.)

You didn't just stumble across anything, Finn... When I worked with your Mom, we investigated a string of connected calls. EMTs finding rituals, locals disappearing, coming back with the same exact injuries. Something was off. So we hit the books, chatted with locals, investigated sites. One thing lead to another, we found ourselves on top of a local cult. "The Order of Harmony." We got close. So close. But right when she thought she had a lead, they disappeared. For 15 years. Nothing out of the ordinary....

BACK TO PRESENT

BLAKE (CONT.)

Then, 2 months ago, the weird stuff started happening again. Locals reporting flickering red lights in the sky, some of them disappearing and coming back with the same exact injuries a few days later, or not at all.

FINN

I ran a call last week on a dude who had his leg torn off. While we were on the wall, I talked to another EMT who

said the same thing.

BLAKE  
Right. And now rituals are popping up.

FINN  
So they're back?

BLAKE  
It looks like it, but I have no idea what for.

FINN  
Shouldn't we tell others? Get more people involved and--

BLAKE  
NO-- no. Have you told anyone else?

FINN  
No.

BLAKE  
Ok. Keep it that way. We have no idea who could be listening.

FINN  
So what should we do?

BLAKE  
I'm gonna go through my files on what we still have on record of them. You need to go back to that ritual site you found, look for any hints on who they are and what their motives are.

FINN  
(paranoid)  
Are you insane? They're probably waiting for us to show up right now.

Blake stands, strolls to the blinds-- OPENS them.

BLAKE  
Why are you an EMT?

FINN  
(unsure)  
To protect and serve the people.

Blake walks back to his desk, OPENS a drawer-- pulls out a

small BLACK BRIEFCASE. He grabs the handle, holds it to Finn.

BLAKE

Then this is the best thing we can do  
right now. To protect the people. And  
ourselves. There's too much risk  
letting more people in on this....  
Here, take this with you.

Finn takes the case. He sets it on the desk, opens it-- A  
VINTAGE REPEATER PISTOL. Finn's eyes WIDEN in shock.

FINN

(shocked)

Jesus, fuck! What is this, Red Dead  
Redemption?

He SHUTS the case, PUSHES it across the desk. Blake SLIDES it  
back.

BLAKE

(stern, reassuring)

Only use it in self defense. And self  
defense ONLY--

Finn PUSHES the case back.

FINN

I am not taking your fucking gun--

Blake picks up the case, THRUSTS it into Finn's chest.

BLAKE

That's my personal property, so  
nobody'll know you have it. I know  
what these people are capable of--  
just, take it. Please.

Finn thinks-- ACCEPTS. They NOD in agreement, Blake shows  
Finn out.

CUT TO

INT. ICU, LOCAL HOSPITAL - EARLY MORNING

Axel and Chris NAP against the wall. Axel looks comfortable,  
Chris LEANS his head against the GURNEY between them.

Axel JERKS awake from his snoring. He checks his watch: "2:03  
AM". *He's not pleased.*

AXEL  
(muttering)  
We might as well fucking live here.

He looks at Chris's sleeping position, GETS AN IDEA-- he SHOVES the gurney from under Chris.

Chris's body DROPS to the floor, he SNAPS awake.

CHRIS  
(groggy)  
What the hell is wrong with you?

AXEL  
Don't talk to your captain like that.

Chris sighs, stands and STRETCHES. He examines the hallway, a few other EMTs SLEEP along the wall.

CHRIS  
We're still here?

AXEL  
4 hours in.

CHRIS  
I'm gonna kill myself.

AXEL  
Not if I do it first.

CHRIS  
At least people will care if I do it.

AXEL  
Low blow, man. Low blow.

A beat.

CHRIS  
What was up with Cam and Finn today?

AXEL  
Dunno, don't care.

CHRIS  
Didn't they seem... off?

AXEL  
(annoyed)  
They probably fucked and realized it



was a bad idea.

CHRIS  
But Cam skipped breakfast this  
morning. And she--

AXEL & CHRIS  
(simultaneously)  
Never skips breakfast.

They both GASP, come to a realization.

CHRIS  
(whispering)  
You don't think they're part of the--

Axel ELBOWS Chris to shut up. A NURSE approaches, gestures  
them to move the PATIENT down the hallway.

Chris and Axel walk side by side with the gurney.

AXEL  
(quietly)  
The dented hood, the missing  
equipment, their demeanor when we  
showed up. It's all gotta mean  
something.

CHRIS  
If they are indeed, what we think they  
are, are they gonna kill us?

AXEL  
Let's not find out.

CUT TO

EXT. DESERT VEGETATION, OPEN DESERT - AFTERNOON

Heat waves WARP the horizon. DEAD STILL-- wind is a rarity  
here.

An OLD SEDAN SKIDS across the dirt to a stop. Finn steps out,  
SHIELDING his eyes from the beating sun.

Finn takes out his phone, DIALS and puts it to his ear. He  
walks towards the clearing.

FINN  
So what exactly am I looking for?

BLAKE (V.O.)  
Blood splatters, torches, ashes, any  
evidence that suggests they were there  
when you found them.

Finn ducks through the vegetation...

CUT TO

EXT. ORDER OF HARMONY RITUAL SITE, OPEN DESERT - CONTINUOUS

...Finn emerges from the shrubbery. His face DROPS in HORROR:  
THE SITE IS EMPTY.

An untouched clearing of sand sits where Ethan was hanging,  
just last night.

FINN  
So what if there's nothing here?

BLAKE (V.O.)  
(frustrated)  
Damn, those fuckers are quick. Just  
look around for anything. They  
couldn't have recovered EVERYTHING.

FINN  
Alright.

BLAKE (V.O.)  
You got my pistol?

Finn reaches under his shirt back, PULLS the pistol out from  
under his pants.

FINN  
Yessir.

Finn ADMIRES the pistol. He ROLLS the chamber down his arm,  
it CLICKS as it spins.

BLAKE (V.O.)  
I can hear that. We're not playing  
Russian fucking Roulette--

FINN  
(whiny)  
But it's so much fun!

BLAKE (V.O.)  
Don't fuck around with that thing, I'm

serious--

FINN

So am I--

A CAR DOOR SLAMS nearby.

BLAKE (V.O.)

Hello? Finn?

FINN

(quietly)

I'm gonna put you on hold.

Finn HANGS UP, crouches down behind the vegetation. He tries to look for the car, but the vegetation OBSTRUCTS his view.

He PEAKS over, spots a PERSON standing near his car. Finn CROUCHES back down.

Distant FOOTSTEPS CRUNCH under the stand.

They GROW closer. Finn READIES the pistol. Another step-- Finn JUMPS out from cover, AIMS the pistol.

FINN

(yelling)

PUT YOUR HANDS IN THE AIR!

Cameron puts her HANDS in the air.

CAMERON

(confused)

Finn?

FINN

(confused)

Cameron? What are you--

CAMERON

Before we start, how 'bout you point that somewhere else?

FINN

Oh yeah, my bad.

Finn HOLSTERS the pistol back in his jeans. Cameron walks to Finn.

CAMERON

What are you doing here? And where the

hell did you get that gun?

FINN  
(shrugging)  
Curiosity kills the cat.

CAMERON  
I don't think you know what that  
saying means.

Finn gestures to the bare clearing.

FINN  
Either way, I think the cat's already  
dead.

Cameron surveys the empty plot of land. She treads across the  
plateau to the cliff edge, PEERS over it.

CAMERON  
You weren't lying about the Midsommar  
shit.

FINN  
What do you mean?

Cameron gestures to the bottom of the cliff. Finn walks over,  
PEERS down. Finn's EYES widen--

CUT TO

EXT. CLIFF BASE, OPEN DESERT - CONTINUOUS

Finn and Cameron approach the BODY...

Ethan's mangled, lifeless body lies awkwardly across a few  
jagged rocks. His HEAD split open, the insides SPILL across  
the rocks.

They CRINGE at the scene.

FINN  
(grim)  
Goddamn... You ever seen something  
like this?

CAMERON  
(quietly)  
Not like this.

Finn uses the pistol barrel, TURNS Ethan's HEAD-- SCALES OF

JUSTICE are drawn on his face, caked in blood.

CAMERON

Have you?

ON FINN: He sits, EMOTIONLESS--

MATCH CUT TO

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. FESSENMAIER HOUSE - FLASHBACK

FLASH!

YOUNG FINN (10) sits on a LARGE BED, FROZEN and EMOTIONLESS. Across the room is a small bathroom. Lying on the bathroom floor, a SHOTGUN-- and lifeless FINN'S DAD. His blood pools on the white porcelain floors.

Finn's Dad's head is splintered open.

MATCH CUT TO

BACK TO PRESENT:

EXT. CLIFF BASE, OPEN DESERT - PRESENT TIME, CONTINUOUS

Finn sits on the ground, FROZEN. Cameron walks over, sits next to Finn.

IN THE DISTANCE, a DARK FIGURE watches.

Finn hesitates--

FINN

(wavering voice)

When I was 10 years old.... I found my Dad dead on the bathroom floor with a shotgun...

Cameron's eyes WIDEN in horror.

A beat. SILENCE.

FINN (CONT.)

... He blew his head off. I couldn't save him. I was frozen. I didn't know what to do. My Dad. My best friend.

A few TEARS stream down Finn's face. He SNIFFLES, WIPES them

away. He STANDS up, turns away.

The figure disappears into the shrubbery.

Cameron watches SOFTLY, a new perspective on Finn.

CAMERON

I'm sorry... that's horrible.

FINN

(chuckling)

I don't know why I told you that...

Cameron STARES at Ethan's body. Something's on her mind.

CUT TO

EXT. DESERT VEGETATION, OPEN DESERT - SUNSET

Finn and Cameron walk back to their cars. Cameron STOPS. Finn takes a few steps, STOPS and looks back:

The SETTING SUN casts a BEAUTIFUL SUNSET over the horizon. A nice contrast from the usual hot orange. They both gaze in awe at the unnatural beauty.

CAMERON

When I got transferred here, it wasn't because I wanted to...

Finn stares into the sunset, listening intently.

CAMERON (CONT.)

...I was a trainee. First call of my first shift, we get a cardiac arrest. We arrive on scene, get the gear, I'm excited for my first call... And I find my grandma seizing on the floor.

Finn glances at Cameron. She's TEARY EYED.

CAMERON

I push past my shock and start doing compressions....

(a beat)

She died in my arms.

SILENCE. Finn looks down. Cameron's fists are CLENCHED.

He INCHES his hand towards hers-- Cameron WIPES her tears. Finn SNAPS his hand back.

CAMERON  
(chuckling)  
Nothin' like some good ol' trauma  
bonding, huh?

FINN  
My favorite past time.

They look at each other-- almost TOO long.

CUT TO

EXT. DESERT VEGETATION, OPEN DESERT - LATER

Finn's old sedan ROCKS BACK AND FORTH. The headlights DANCE up and down with the rhythm of the car. Muffled GROANS and MOANING seep into the SILENCE of the desert.

The figure LOOKS ON behind Cameron's car. It DISSOLVES into the night.

MUSIC CUE: Sugar, Sugar by the Archies

BEGIN MONTAGE:

EXT. TIKTOKER'S BACKYARD, SMALL HOUSE - DAY

Finn and Cameron make GOOGLY EYES as they patch the Influencer's cuts. The Influencer WRITHES in pain.

Cameron takes out a POLAROID CAMERA, SNAPS a photo of the 3 of them.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Finn and Cameron MAKE OUT on the gurney in the patient area.

INT. FINN'S ROOM, FINN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ON LAPTOP: "Resurgence of Notorious Desert Cult Sends Shockwaves Through Region".

Finn and Cameron lie on Finn's bed, LAPTOP in one hand, DRINKS in the other. They sip and discuss.

INT. AMBULANCE - DAY

Cameron drives now. Finn ROLLS the windows down, STICKS his hands out to feel the wind.

Their hair DANCES in the wind. This is what freedom feels

like.

They pass a CITY SIGN. Sitting idly is a SMALL SEDAN, Chris and Axel sit inside. They watch the ambulance pass intently.

INT. ICU, LOCAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Finn and Cameron fidget in their seats on the wall, they're ANTSY. A PATIENT SLEEPS on the gurney between them. Finn looks at Cameron, gestures towards a room in the distance.

INT. CUSTODIAN CLOSET, ICU, LOCAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Finn and Cameron have PASSIONATE SEX in the custodian closet. Cleaning supplies and brooms JIGGLE with their movement.

Finn grabs Cameron's POLAROID CAMERA, SNAPS another photo.

EXT. REMOTE OUTLINE STATION - DAY AND NIGHT

Days turn into nights, turn into days, turn into nights...

INT. SMALL DINER - DAY

Finn and Cameron chat at a table, Finn POINTS at his PHONE: "Mysterious Desert Cult Vanishes Without a Trace: From Devotion to Disappearance".

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM, REMOTE OUTLINE STATION - MORNING

Chris and Axel set 4 plates of eggs on the table-- Finn and Cameron stroll past, preoccupied with their own conversation.

The hurt is evident on Chris and Axel's faces.

END MUSIC CUE

CUT TO BLACK

TITLE CARD: "3 MONTHS LATER"

EXT. BACKYARD GARDEN, OLD WOMAN'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

FROM ABOVE

The open desert. A few rickety shacks and a dirt road make up the only civilization for miles. Finn's GRUNTS echo through the desolate space--

Finn and Cameron KNEEL at either side of an OLD WOMAN. Finn gives CPR COMPRESSIONS while Cameron nurses the Old Woman's



neck. Sweat splatters the concrete with each compression.

Cameron breathes THREE TIMES through the resuscitation mask.

OLD HUSBAND

(frantic)

Is she going to be okay? Is my wife  
going to be okay?

CAMERON

Please remain calm sir.

FINN (CONT.)

(strained)

Cam, can we please switch off?

CAMERON

Compressions can be done by one  
person, right?

FINN

Yeah. If you wanna kill her.

OLD HUSBAND

(angrily)

Hey! What did you say?!

Cameron SHOOTS Finn a death stare as they switch places. Finn  
smirks.

CAMERON

Don't worry sir, he didn't say  
anything, sir.

The Old Husband panics, evacuates inside the house.

Cameron resumes compressions. SILENCE, save for Cameron's  
GRUNTS.

FINN

Have you told anyone about us?

CAMERON

(between compressions)

You're asking me this now?

FINN

Yes I am. What are we, Cameron?

A beat.

CAMERON

(between compressions)

I really don't think we should keep doing this.

FINN

CPR?

CAMERON

No, us! You dumb fuck.

Finn disapproves, breathes THREE TIMES through the resuscitation mask. Cameron resumes compressions.

FINN

We've been together for 2 months now. What's wrong with us being open about it?

CAMERON

You don't understand. My dad is a hard ass. He'd flip his shit if he knew I was seeing someone, especially you.

FINN

(concerned)

Cam, we can't hide forever. Why are you so scared? Are you guys not talking or something?

CAMERON

(stern)

No, we're great, thanks for asking.

FINN

If your relationship with your Dad is so good, why won't you tell him? What if I tell my Mom? What then? Are you just gonna stop talking to me?

CAMERON

Bullshit. You don't even talk to your Mom. You told me. And I love my Dad. I'd end things with you for him in a heart beat.

Finn OPENS his mouth to respond-- CLOSSES it. Finn pulls out his PHONE, pulls up his messages with Emily.

CAMERON  
(between compressions)  
You're seriously on your phone right now?

FINN  
Don't worry, I can handle it.

Cameron STOPS. Finn texts: "U free for dinner later?", pockets his phone.

CAMERON  
(apologetic)  
I wanna keep my relationship with my Dad. And I wanna keep this. Can we PLEASE just keep it between us?

FINN  
Fine.

They begin compressions again. Suddenly, the Old Woman GASPS-- begins breathing. She's still unconscious.

FINN  
There she is!

CUT TO

INT. SMALL DINER - EVENING

The small diner is busy. WAITERS rush food to tables full of CUSTOMERS. A chaotically warm atmosphere compared to their first meal.

FINN  
I hope they fired that fucking waiter.

EMILY  
Finn, don't say that. What if he has to provide for someone?

FINN  
Then I'm glad that someone isn't me.

Emily rolls her eyes, looks at the menu.

EMILY  
So... How are things going? I was shocked you took the initiative to set this up.

FINN

Pretty good, actually. You know, I'm enjoying the shifts, I'm finally getting to know my crew. That sorta stuff.

Emily can't help but smile.

EMILY

See what happens when you listen?

FINN

Yeah, yeah.

EMILY

What about that girl you were talking to?

FINN

Her name's Cameron.

EMILY

Holy shit, you actually know her name?

FINN

Please, mom!

EMILY

Sorry. Keep going.

FINN

You'd like her. Shit mouthed, smart, super nice until you slip up. She's my shift partner, too.

EMILY

(suspicious)

How many times have I told you not to date another EMT? ESPECIALLY your partner?

FINN

Who fucking cares! What's it gonna do?

EMILY

(angry)

What if you guys break up? You think that'll affect the calls you run? What if you fuck up and get transferred far from me again?

FINN  
Wouldn't be the worst outcome.

EMILY  
How long have you been dating?

FINN  
3 months. Since the day Ethan died.

EMILY  
Who's Ethan?

FINN  
Our station chief.

EMILY  
Oh...  
(moves on)  
Do HER parents know about this?

FINN  
No, that's why I wanted to talk to you.

EMILY  
Then you know what my answer is.

FINN  
(angry)  
Wow, not even a second to think about it?

EMILY  
I have nothing to think about. I don't care about her, her name, or her feelings. And frankly, you shouldn't either.

FINN  
When I transferred here and complained, you told me to see it through. And I did. So can you please see THIS through? For me?

A look of resolve fills Emily's face.

EMILY  
Alright.

FINN

(calm)

Thank you. When should I bring her?

EMILY

What about next Sunday? We can eat brunch and go for a hike.

FINN

Sounds perfect.

Emily SIGHS of relief.

EMILY

(relieved)

Whew! I'm so glad you set this up. I've been so stressed and busy lately, so hearing your good news was a nice change of pace.

Finn grabs his menu, scans the options.

FINN

What's keeping you so stressed? Maybe I can help.

EMILY

Oh no, it's nothing you can help with. At least, not yet. And the last time you volunteered to help you made more work for me.

FINN

C'mon, Mom! You're retired, I'm a young working man--

EMILY

(stern)

I appreciate the sentiment Finn. But it's something I can handle. It just went a little off-track for a while, but I can handle it.

FINN

(confused)

Off track? I thought you were retired?

EMILY

That doesn't mean I just sit around! I have a life too, Finn.

A beat. Finn sneaks a SUSPICIOUS LOOK at Emily behind the menu.

Emily hides behind her menu, her face shows ANNOYANCE. She removes the menu, her smile SNAPS back on her face. Finn hides behind his menu.

CUT TO

INT. FINN'S ROOM, FINN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Finn and Cameron lie together on Finn's bed. They scroll through their SOCIAL MEDIA feeds.

Cameron drops her phone on the bed.

CAMERON

Do you think the cult is still around?

FINN

That's what you're thinking about right now?

CAMERON

You don't think it's weird? Sudden activity for a few weeks after YEARS of nothing. Then radio silence again?

FINN

I mean, you're not wrong, but what can we do about it? If it comes up, it comes up. As long as they're not doing anything, I'm just gonna live my life and...

Finn puts his phone down, intimately kisses Cameron.

FINN

(intimate)

...enjoy what I have. And on the topic of enjoying what we have...

CAMERON

What is it?

Finn takes a DEEP breath--

FINN

I set up a day with us and my Mom.

Cameron SPRINGS off Finn.

CAMERON  
(frustrated)  
YOU TOLD HER?

FINN  
Yes, I did. I care about you, Cam. If  
you do too, what is the point of  
hiding anymore?

CAMERON  
What were you thinking?

FINN  
C'mon! You'll love her. She's just  
like you, a pain in my fucking ass.  
Plus you owe me one.

CAMERON  
Don't you dare pull that now you  
fucker.

FINN  
Oh, I am pulling it SO hard!

Cameron stifles her chuckling--

CAMERON  
(chuckling)  
You can't-- no. No! You can't--

FINN  
That sounds like a yes to me.

Cameron gives up.

CAMERON  
I hate you.

FINN  
I know.

They kiss-- they kiss more. They strip to their underwear  
HASTILY. Finn FILES through his wallet--

FINN  
(under his breath)  
Shit.

CAMERON  
Did you bring protection?



Finn doublechecks his wallet, grabs his jeans.

FINN  
I'll be right back.

He slides them on as he SCAMPERS out-- TRIPS on the jeans.

CUT TO

INT/EXT. LOCAL SUPERMARKET - LATER

A dimly lit supermarket with a few registers and aisles of off-brand product. The CASHIER puffs a cigarette in the corner, watching something on his PHONE.

Finn walks through the double doors.

He heads down one of the aisles-- JUMPS at Blake crouching near the CONDOM selection. Blake CHUCKLES. Finn surveys the arrangement of SMALL COLORFUL BOXES. He spots one marked SMALL SIZE, makes sure Blake isn't looking. SLIPS it into his pocket.

FINN  
Fuck you!

BLAKE  
(teasing)  
Fuck me? Is that what you're here for?

FINN  
You couldn't handle it.

FINN  
Who's the lucky lady?

BLAKE  
You wouldn't wanna know.

FINN  
Yeah, you're right.

They walk to the registers, wait in line.

FINN  
Have you heard anything from the cult?

BLAKE  
Nothing since the whole Ethan situation. You?

FINN

Nothin'. I'm not the only one who thinks that's weird, right?

BLAKE

No, you're not. But they're not a priority anymore.

They reach the CASHIER, pay for their boxes. They walk out the double doors.

BLAKE

(to cashier)

Thanks.

FINN

Are you sure?

BLAKE

We know what to look for now. But with me taking over for Ethan and running the police at the same time, my plate is full.

FINN

But they got away from you last time. Don't you wanna just put this thing away for good? Something doesn't feel right with this.

BLAKE

I already said I can't do it. Don't stress about it, alright?

Blake PATS Finn on the back, gestures to Finn's box.

BLAKE (CONT.)

Plus, I think you've got something better to focus on right now.

FINN

(unsatisfied)

Yeah.

BLAKE

That wasn't convincing.

gets into his car and drives off.

Finn thinks, troubled-- takes out his phone and pulls up MOM'S CONTACT. His eye catches the box in his other hand,

resumes program. He gets in the car and drives away.

CUT TO

EXT. BLAKE'S HOUSE - LATER

Blake pulls into the driveway.

CUT TO

INT. LIVING ROOM, BLAKE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

He strolls into an ornate living room, furnished with leather couches and an expensive entertainment center. He TOSSES his keys onto the counter, they SKID next to a FRAMED PHOTO.

ON THE FRAMED PHOTO: YOUNG BLAKE and YOUNG EMILY embrace each other, SMILING.

BLAKE

Helloooo?

Blake walks around, looking for a sign of his guest. He walks into...

INT. BEDROOM, BLAKE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

... his bedroom. A closet and a large bed takes most of the space, and a door leading a bathroom.

Blake playfully THROWS the closet doors open. Nobody.

EMILY (O.S.)

Did you get it?

Blake smirks, turns around. REVEAL Emily in a sheer dress, posed against the doorframe.

BLAKE

Wow, you look...

EMILY

Good. I know.

BLAKE

(chuckling)

So that's where Finn gets the attitude from.

They move closer... kiss PASSIONATELY. They move to the doorway, Blake SHUTS the door--

CUT TO

INT/EXT. FINN'S ROOM, FINN'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Finn BOUNCES to his bedroom door, KNOCKS. No answer.

FINN  
(playful)  
Cameruhhhnnn?

He pushes it open-- The room is empty, save for a FOLDED LETTER on the bed.

Finn creeps to the bed. His eyes are locked on the letter. He grabs it, examines the outside. He FLIPS it open, reads--

CUT TO

CAMERON (V.O.)  
Finn, I'm sorry.... I can't do this. I  
can't trust you anymore.... I'm going  
to request a transfer to--

Finn TEARS the letter to SHREDS. He SCATTERS it across the room, watches the pieces flutter slowly to the ground.

He stifles his crying, slumps onto his bed. He stands, snatches his pillow and CHUCKS it into-- his LAMP, SHATTERING it across the floor.

FINN  
(crying)  
What did I do?

He CRINKLES to the floor, sobs SILENTLY into his arms. The world goes dark.

CUT TO BLACK

EXT. REMOTE OUTLINE STATION - LATE NIGHT

CANDLE LIGHT reflects off the Apparatus Bay doors.

INT/EXT. APPARATUS BAY - CONTINUOUS

Chris walks in holding a HAMMER, sets it on a pile of other CONSTRUCTION TOOLS and EMERGENCY GEAR.

Axel PAINTS something on the wall. He REPLENISHES his brush, continues painting.

CHRIS  
Are you sure about this?

AXEL  
It's the best we can do without giving  
ourselves away.

CHRIS  
What if they figure it out?

AXEL  
Then we'll be ready. You got the  
fingerprints.

Chris NODS. Axel puts the LAST TOUCH on the wall, sets the  
paint can down and ADMIRES his work. Chris steps next to  
Axel, LOOKS at the wall with Axel.

Axel nods, SATISFIED. He strolls to the pile of tools and  
gear, picks up a HAMMER.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. BATHROOM, BLAKE'S HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

Emily RINSES her face under the sink. She lets the water drip  
from her face.

She's in a tank top and undergarment. She dries her face,  
walks back into...

INT. BEDROOM, BLAKE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Blake watches Emily STRUT back to the bed, climb under the  
sheets next to him.

Emily smiles... something's on her mind. She BREAKS eye  
contact.

BLAKE  
(softly)  
Hey, are you ok?

EMILY  
Yeah.

A beat. Blake SNORTS.

BLAKE  
A make-a-wish kid wouldn't buy that.

EMILY  
(astonished)  
That's fucked up.

BLAKE  
It's true.

EMILY  
You can't just throw that into the  
sentence and expect it to work.

BLAKE  
You tell me.

EMILY  
Tell you what?

BLAKE  
If it worked.

EMILY  
It didn't.

BLAKE  
Did it?

Emily SCORNS at Blake. He smirks. Emily SIGHS, gets out of  
bed. She paces the floor.

EMILY  
I'm only telling you this because Finn  
trusts you....

Blake sits up. He's LISTENING.

BLAKE  
What is it?

EMILY  
He's dating this girl... an EMT.

BLAKE  
Ok, that's not that bad.

EMILY  
She's his shift partner.

BLAKE  
I mean, I get it. But it could be  
worse.

EMILY  
It gets worse.

BLAKE  
(chuckling; doubtful)  
Worse? Like she's part of the cult  
worse?

Emily has a GHASTLY look on her face. She NODS slowly.

BLAKE  
Do you know her name?

EMILY  
I think it started with a C. I don't  
know.

Blake thinks.

BLAKE  
That doesn't help. Do you have any  
proof?

EMILY  
Proof of what?

BLAKE  
That whoever this girl is is in the  
cult?

EMILY  
No. All I know is that they started  
dating the day their chief or someone  
died. The day the cult went silent  
again.

BLAKE  
(muttering)  
Ethan...

EMILY  
Who?

BLAKE  
Their station chief. I knew him.

EMILY  
Can you do anything?

BLAKE  
Do anything?

EMILY

What if this mystery girlfriend is  
inducting him into the cult?

A beat. Emily STOPS pacing.

BLAKE

I don't think that's gonna happen.

EMILY

(worried)

How do you know that? Are you in the  
cult too?

Blake gets out of bed, reaches out to hug Emily-- she STEPS  
AWAY.

BLAKE

(soothing)

Hey, hey, hey. C'mon, Em.

EMILY

I'm sorry, it's not you. I just don't  
feel comfortable doing anything  
knowing Finn could be out there  
somewhere.

BLAKE

We can go check on him--

EMILY

No, I shouldn't go. He'll think  
something's wrong or I'm high on  
something.

Blake sighs. He face says he knows what's coming.

EMILY

(off Blake's look)

I know it's a tough ask. But could you  
go and check on him? Please?

BLAKE

I don't wanna get in between you and  
Finn over this little thing.

EMILY

You're not, it's just a little  
friendly check-in. Blake, he trusts  
you more than me right now. I've never  
asked for much. I'm taking them out to



hike the Harmony Loop, just cruise into their station while we're out and do some investigating. Easy.

Blake shakes his head disapprovingly.

BLAKE  
(unsettled)  
Right.

EMILY  
Please? He'll never know what happened, and it'll make me feel a lot better.

BLAKE  
Alright, alright!  
(chuckling)  
I very very much regret that make-a-wish kid line now.

EMILY  
(shrugging)  
Not my fault.

BLAKE  
Can I take it back?

Emily playfully SLAPS Blake's arm. They kiss--

EMILY  
Maybe.

They kiss passionately.

CUT TO

INT/EXT. FINN'S CAR - SAME TIME

Finn's car FLIES down the road. One hand on the steering wheel, the other holding his PHONE. It RINGS for Cameron-- No answer.

His eyes DART back and forth as he redials. He looks down the road, HEADLIGHTS are heading STRAIGHT FOR HIM-- Finn SWERVES out of the way, aligns back on the road.

He takes a breath, SETTLES himself down.

EXT. DRIVEWAY, CAMERON'S APARTMENT - LATER

Finn's car SCREECHES to a stop at the bottom of the driveway. He HOPS out, walks up to the front door.

An apartment complex with a few WINDOWS to each unit.

FINN  
(under his breath)  
Shit. Which one is it?

Finn scans the area, grabs a few PEBBLES nearby. He feels the larger of the handful, CHUCKS it at a window. It RATTLES off the window.

A beat. Finn THROWS another, it SMACKS the window again-- the lights FLICK on. A pair of hands pull back the drapes, SLIDES the window open.

Finn looks up anticipately.

BIG BLACK MAN (O.S.)  
(deep voice)  
Yo, who the fuck is throwin' shit at my window?

FINN  
That doesn't sound like Cameron.

A BIG BLACK MAN pops his head out of the window, SURVEYS the area for the perpetrator.

Finn HURRIES, DUCKS behind a bush.

The Man ducks his head back in, STOMPS downstairs. He BURSTS out the front door, armed with a SHOTGUN and a FLASHLIGHT. He SCANS the driveway, his flashlight passes the bush Finn ducks behind.

BIG BLACK MAN  
Show yourself, pussy! I ain't afraid of some fake ass cult. I've killed more KKK members than a--

Another window OPENS, an OLD WOMAN 2 pops her head out--

OLD WOMAN 2  
(heavy accent)  
Ey, shut yer ass up 'fore I do it for ya.

BIG BLACK MAN

Oh, shut up you goddamn bag of flour.  
You lucky I got a shotgun instead of a  
pistol, 'cause if I did I'd shoot ya  
right in those snake eyes you got.

The Old Woman GASPS.

OLD WOMAN 2

(offended)

I'd rather get shot between these  
snake eyes so I can go to heaven and  
never have to ever see a stupid ni--

FINN (O.S.)

Woah!!

Finn STEPS OUT from the bushes. The Big Black Man AIMS at the  
mysterious man. The flashlight BLINDS Finn.

FINN (CONT.)

Everyone chill out, alright?

The flashlights dissipates as the Big Black Man drops his  
gun.

BIG BLACK MAN

Why the fuck you got brown skin?

FINN

(shocked)

Why the fuck-- what?

BIG BLACK MAN

I ain't ever seen brown skin before.  
Only blacks and whites 'round here  
boy. What you is?

FINN

(hesitant)

Filipino?

BIG BLACK MAN

More like filip-hell-no. What the hell  
is that?

FINN

(under his breath)

Why does that feel offensive?

(to Big Black Man)

I'm an Asian-American, man.

A beat.

BIG BLACK MAN  
... then where's your yellow?

FINN  
(shocked)  
WOW.

OLD WOMAN 2  
I don't like your attitude, young man.

Another window BURSTS open-- it's CAMERON!

FINN  
Oh thank god! Cam, can you tell these lovely people here that I'm a friendly?

CAMERON  
He's with me guys.

BIG BLACK MAN  
(to Cameron)  
How do we know he's not part of the cult? Or the KKK?

FINN  
(to Big Black Man)  
Are you for real?

CAMERON  
He's an ally like me.

BIG BLACK MAN  
(doubtful)  
An ally?

CAMERON  
(to Big Black Man)  
Just listen.

Finn NODS. The Old Woman SCOFFS, retreats into her apartment and CLOSES her window.

CAMERON  
What in the living fucking hell are you doing here?

FINN  
Before we talk, can we get Green Mile

here a fuckin' smoke or something? I can feel his finger sexually assaulting that shotgun trigger.

CAMERON

Whatever you have to say, I'm sure you can say here and now.

A beat.

FINN

So be it... I'm sorry, Cameron. I'm sorry I broke your trust, I'm sorry for being a dick, I'm sorry for not putting in the work.

Another beat.

CAMERON

Is that it?

FINN

(yelling)

The fuck do you mean "is that it?"

CAMERON

Are you done?

FINN

(decisive)

Yeah, I am.

Finn turns to leave. His face is full of REMORSE. Cameron looks at the Big Black Man, NODS in approval. They both walk back inside the building.

Finn WHIPS back around--

FINN

You know what--

Cameron and the Big Black Man are gone. Finn GIVES UP, MOPES back to his car.

CAMERON (O.S.)

What should I know?

Finn SMILES, turns around. Cameron walks CLOSE to Finn. A tense beat.

FINN

That when I got here, I was a whiny...  
cry-y, needle-dicked douchebag who  
thought the world owed me something. I  
never put the work in and I--

Cameron takes a few steps closer, their faces only a FEW  
INCHES apart.

CAMERON

Let's just skip the monologue--

Finn BACKS AWAY.

FINN

No. Not yet. I need to tell you this  
before we do that.

Cameron is off-put. And intrigued.

FINN (CONT.)

I never put the work in before. I  
thought I was better than everyone and  
I believed that nobody could be better  
than me. I didn't need to do the work,  
because I didn't have to. Most things  
came easy to me, so any challenge  
became an automatic no. And when I was  
transferred here, I felt...  
unappreciated, unvalued, unwanted.  
Nobody sticks with me, so I felt alone  
and afraid. That's why I think I was  
so hostile. But then I got partnered  
with you, the most stubborn, thorough,  
and ugliest person I've ever met. And  
the most important. Because you taught  
me to put the work in, when nobody  
else had the energy to try and deal  
with me. More than anything... thank  
you, Cameron. Thank you for motivating  
me to become a better person. Or at  
least try to. I haven't cancelled our  
plans with my Mom this weekend, but if  
you don't want to go--

CAMERON

--Yes.

FINN

Yes... what?

Finn LOCKS EYES with Cameron. They're both TEARY.

CAMERON

Don't be a fucking retard. Of course I don't want to go hang with your Mom for a day.

FINN

Good to know.

CAMERON

But I do want to keep helping you become a better person.

Finn SMIRKS.

FINN

If that's what you wanna call this.

CAMERON

(content)

I do.

Cameron pulls Finn in for a BIG KISS. They both pull back, smile, go in for ANOTHER.

They smile-- Cameron PUNCHES Finn's shoulder.

FINN

Ow, what was that for?

CAMERON

Sorry, I do that when I can't handle my emotions.

FINN

So you PUNCH people instead?

Cameron SHRUGS.

FINN

Let's get through this weekend, and then I'll just tell my Mom we broke up. We can enjoy the secrecy.

CAMERON

I can live with that.

They kiss again.

CUT TO BLACK

EXT. OPEN DESERT - EARLY MORNING

Finn PARKS his car in a small clearing attached along a dirt ROAD. A few DUSTY CARS occupy the remaining spaces.

A small valley is CIRCLED with ROCK FORMATIONS and ROLLING HILLS. The heat from the sun WARPS the horizon.

INT/EXT. FINN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Finn reads his car's internal THERMOMETER: "101 degrees".

FINN

It feels like Satan's just taking a  
shit.... everywhere.

CAMERON

Your mom HAD to pick another hot ass  
day to go on a fucking INCLINE HIKE?

FINN

(sarcastic)

That's why I love her.

CAMERON

Are you ready for this?

FINN

Are YOU ready for this? You're gonna  
be the one under the spotlight today.

CAMERON

If that's what you wanna think.

Cameron steps out of the car. Finn is left to ponder what  
that meant.

Finn gets out, walks to the trunk and OPENS it. Finn and  
Cameron grab their HIKING BAGS.

CAMERON

Did you bring it?

FINN

I'm not gonna bring my pistol on a  
HIKE, Cameron.

CAMERON

You never know.

Finn SHUTS the trunk.



FINN

It's a hike, not a shooting range. Why do you want me to bring it so bad?

FINN

My Mom texted she's already her--

Emily CREEPS up behind them.

EMILY

(songful)

HELLO!!

Finn and Cameron JUMP!

FINN

Jesus, Mom.

EMILY

Nice to meet you Jesus. I'm Mom.

Cameron LAUGHS, offers her hand to SHAKE. Finn STARES BLANKLY at Emily.

CAMERON

I'm Cameron. It's nice to meet you, Mrs. Fessenmaier.

EMILY

(surprised)

Addressing me by last name, I like you already. You can call me Emily.

They shake hands.

EMILY

Shall we go?

Finn and Cameron NOD in agreement. The trio CRUNCH towards the TRAIL SIGN in the distance: "Harmony Loop".

CUT TO

EXT. REMOTE OUTLINE STATION - SAME TIME

Blake pulls his COP CAR into a parking spot, steps out and OBSERVES the area. Nobody but him. He clicks his radio on--

BLAKE

(into radio)

This is Chief Blake going 10-7. Be

back in 15.

COP 2  
(over radio)  
Acknowledged, Chief.

Blake walks to the front door, KNOCKS. No answer. He KNOCKS again, the door OPENS on its own.

Blake is filled with suspicion. He places his hand on his GUN HOLSTER, walks through into...

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM, REMOTE OUTLINE STATION - CONTINUOUS

... the Kitchen/Living Room. FLAMES spew from a HOT PAN left on the stove.

Blake FILES through the kitchen sink, tossing out RANDOM ITEMS until he finds the FIRE EXTINGUISHER-- pulls the pin and SPRAYS the fire down.

He drops the fire extinguisher-- finds the ENTIRE LIVING ROOM trashed and painted over.

BLAKE  
What in god's name happened in here?

Blake steps over torn up COUCH CUSHIONS, SHATTERED PLATES, and other DEBRIS towards the...

INT/EXT. APPARATUS BAY - CONTINUOUS

...the Apparatus Bay.

Blake turns the lights on to REVEAL the bay completely TRASHED and PAINTED OVER. Medication, masks, and other EMS GEAR is spread across the floor. RED and WHITE paint is SPLATTERED across the ambulance and floor.

CUT TO

EXT. HARMONY LOOP TRAIL, OPEN DESERT - SAME TIME

Cameron and Emily STROLL along the traverse trail. Finn PANTS as he falls behind.

EMILY  
So Cameron, what do you do?

CAMERON  
Oh, Finn hasn't told you?

EMILY

He did, but I wanna hear it from you.  
You know how guys are, you don't  
always get the whole story.

Cameron CHUCKLES.

CAMERON

True... Well, I'm an EMT. A new one,  
only about 6 months in.

EMILY

That's great! Where are you stationed?

CAMERON

Actually, I'm stationed at the same  
station as Finn. That's how we met.

EMILY

(oblivious)

Oh, really? That's gotta be tough to  
deal with on the calls you guys run.

CAMERON

No, it's actually pretty nice. We  
switch off on who does the work each  
call, so I can take naps or watch tv  
every other call.

Emily FORCES a NOD and SMILE. They stop and wait for Finn to  
catch up.

Finn reaches Emily and Cameron, PANTING and RED FACED.

FINN

(panting)

Do.... you both do this... like...  
everyday? Or...

Emily chuckles.

EMILY

Let's keep going. This way.

Emily leads the way. Cameron follows. Finn POUTS, follows.

WE LINGER on a TREE surrounded by foliage and vegetation. It  
looks eerily familiar.

CUT TO

INT/EXT. AMBULANCE, APPARATUS BAY - SAME TIME

Blake goes through the GLOVE BOX for evidence. The ambulance is LITTERED with SHATTERED GLASS. Pulls out some old GLOVES, PAPERWORK, but nothing on Finn or cult involvement.

Blake moves to the PATIENT AREA, feels the CABINETS around the back. Nothing. He HOPS out of the back, shuts the doors-- REVEAL LARGE RED BLOCK LETTERS painted on the wall: "WE KNOW WHO YOU ARE".

Blake examines the lettering, steps closer and TOUCHES the paint. It's still wet. He steps back, SLIPS. He looks down, pulls a few POLAROIDs out from under his BOOTS.

ON THE POLAROIDs: Finn and Cameron lie in bed, Finn and Cameron researching, Finn and Cameron hugging.

BLAKE  
What the fu.....

He FLIPS the photo of Finn and Cameron in the custodian closet. Blake FILLS with RAGE.

BLAKE  
No fucking way.

CUT TO

EXT. HARMONY LOOP TRAIL, OPEN DESERT - CONTINUOUS

Finn stops at a view of the rolling SAND DUNES in the distance, CATCHES HIS BREATH. He turns around, spots a TREE in the distance. It feels familiar..... IT CLICKS.

Finn's EYES grow WIDE in horror. He HURRIES to catch up to Cameron and Emily.

ON EMILY AND CAMERON: They CACKLE.

CAMERON  
Wow, you were a fire chief? No wonder you retired early.

EMILY  
And not early enough. My body's taken a toll over the years, that's why I try and hike as often as I can.

CAMERON  
No yeah, it's a good way to stay in

shape. Clearly Finn has trouble in that realm.

They stop and look back at Finn. He is SPRINTING across the trail. Emily CHUCKLES, Cameron looks on with a WORRIED expression.

CAMERON  
Why is he running?

EMILY  
Maybe he's thirsty.

CAMERON  
I don't think anyone would run like that for some water.

EMILY  
You'd be surprised.

Cameron shrugs.

CAMERON  
Keep going, we'll catch up to you.

Emily accepts, continues her slow but steady hiking pace. Cameron turns back down the path, treks to Finn.

Finn STUMBLES to Cameron, PANTING hands on knees. She hands him her WATER BOTTLE, he CHUGS the rest of it, hands it back to her.

CAMERON  
(annoyed)  
Thanks, really appreciate that.  
(normal)  
I didn't know your Mom was a fire chief.

FINN  
(panting)  
Do you know where we are?

CAMERON  
Do YOU?

FINN  
(panting)  
Shut the fuck up. You know what I mean.

CAMERON  
It looks like any other part of this  
goddamn desert.

Finn gestures to the standalone TREE in the distance.

FINN  
You recognize that tree?

CAMERON  
(dumbfounded)  
It's a fucking tree, Finn.

FINN  
(annoyed)  
An how many trees have we seen in this  
shit hole town?

CAMERON  
Only that one, I think...

Finn gestures: *Annnndddd?*

Cameron processes.... IT CLICKS.

CUT TO

INT/EXT. APPARATUS BAY - SAME TIME

Chris and Axel PEEP their heads around the garage door of the  
apparatus bay.

Blake pockets the polaroids. His face is DISGRUNTLED, RIDGID.  
He's not happy. He clicks his radio--

BLAKE  
(into radio)  
This is Chief Blake requesting back up  
at the Harmony Loop Trail... I have  
evidence that Finn Fessenmaier is part  
of the cult.

Blake collects himself, STORMS out of the apparatus bay--  
Chris and Axel DUCK behind the wall before Blake sees them.

They watch Blake step into his vehicle, FLOOR it out of the  
parking lot, FLY down the road. They RUN to the ambulance,  
buckle in.

Axel STARTS the ambulance, maps the GPS to: "Harmony Loop  
Trail". They pull out of the apparatus bay and FLY down the

road.

CUT TO

EXT. HARMONY LOOP TRAIL, OPEN DESERT - CONTINUOUS

Finn and Cameron hike. Cameron gestures to Emily, farther along the trail.

CAMERON

Do you think we should be worried?

FINN

Probably not. If the cult's really gone. And it's not like anyone lives out here, anyways.

CAMERON

Well, let's not stay to find out.

Finn and Cameron catch up with Emily, continue hiking. They follow the trail along a cliff edge.

FINN

This is a nice trail, Mom. How'd you find it?

EMILY

Right? I was just out in the area with some friends and we came across this.

CAMERON

Are these friends from your fire chief days?

EMILY

No, I never really clicked with anyone besides the chief of police.

Finn PICKS UP on this. Cameron PICKS UP as well. He looks to Cameron.

FINN

Who is this chief of police? You've never mentioned him before.

EMILY

He was a great guy, he helped me investigate your Father's death.

CAMERON

Was?

They approach a point on the cliff edge, stop. Emily takes in the view: a sheer cliff drops to rolling sand dunes for miles. In the distance, snowy mountains.

EMILY

(in awe)

Wow, look at this.

Cameron fake LIMPS up to the edge.

CAMERON

It is really nice, but my feet are starting to hurt. I hate to cut it short but could we turn around?

EMILY

(begging)

Aw, c'mon, we're almost at the best part. It's just a little farther, and then we can turn around.

CAMERON

Yeah. Sounds good.

They move back down the path to a split, Emily takes the RIGHT path. Finn and Cameron follow.

EMILY

Don't worry, we're almost there.

They walk down the path through thick vegetation... EMERGE at the...

EXT. ORDER OF HARMONY RITUAL SITE, OPEN DESERT - CONTINUOUS

...ritual site. Emily HAPPILY treks through the clearing, Finn and Cameron FREEZE.

Emily stops, looks at Finn and Cameron.

EMILY

(confused)

Are you guys ok?

FINN

Yeah, just helping Cameron with her feet.



Finn KNEELS, pulls one of Cameron's SHOES onto his knee.

CAMERON  
(confused)  
What the fuck are you doing?

FINN  
(under his breath)  
Buying us some fucking time to get out  
of here.

A twig SNAPS from the bushes. Finn and Cameron gaze through the vegetation.

FINN  
You heard that, right?

CAMERON  
I think we're out of time.

Finn and Cameron back away.

EMILY  
What's up, guys?

From the bushes and vegetation EMERGES CULT MEMBERS, dressed in LUSH WHITE ROBES. They slowly STAND, REVEAL the entire clearing is surrounded by CULT MEMBERS. They HUM in a low tone as they slowly MARCH forward, enclosing the circle.

EMILY  
(startled)  
What the hell is this?

FINN  
It's the cult!

EMILY  
The WHAT?

FINN  
Just get back!

EMILY  
What about Cameron's feet?!

FINN  
That is NOT the priority right now!

The cult members CIRCLE in on Finn, Cameron, and Emily. The trio slowly back towards the edge of the cliff.

CAMERON  
How'd they know we were here?

FINN  
They were supposed to be gone!

CAMERON  
I told you this was a bad idea.

FINN  
I don't think now is the best time to  
tell me that.

The cult members INCH the three closer to the edge of the  
cliff.

EMILY  
Finn!

Emily's foot SLIPS on the cliff edge, sends a few pebbles  
SPIRALING downwards.

EMILY (CONT.)  
What are we gonna do?

Finn HESITATES. The cult members CLOSE IN.

CAMERON  
I really wish you brought that fucking  
pistol--

FINN  
SHUT UP!

EMILY  
You have a PISTOL?!

FINN  
It's not mine!

CAMERON  
Not yours?

FINN  
It's a long story!

Finn takes a STEP back, FLICKS a few rocks down the cliff  
side. They're out of time. The cult members CLOSE THE CIRCLE.

FINN  
I'm sorry.

The trio accept their fate. They cower, CLOSE their eyes-- a pistol shot RINGS.

Finn slowly opens his eyes. Behind the cult stands Blake, his pistol POINTED to the sky. He stands with a unit of POLICE OFFICERS, their guns COCKED at the cult members. Blake lowers his gun, aims it down at the cult members.

BLAKE  
(calmly)  
Step away.

A beat-- The cult members JUMP at Finn and Cameron!

EMILY  
(yelling)  
WAIT!

The cult members HALT. Finn and Cameron look in CONFUSION. Blake keeps his pistol trained, spots EMILY. He drops it.

Cameron SCROUNGES her face. She knows what's about to happen.

BLAKE  
Cameron? What're you doing here?

Finn DOUBLETAKES--

FINN  
(to Cameron)  
You know Blake?

BLAKE  
I'm her Dad.

Finn REALIZES-- REALIZES again.

FINN  
Ohhhhh.....  
(to Cameron)  
And you NEVER thought to bring this up?

CAMERON  
We originally agreed not to tell anyone, but you went and fucked all that up, didn't you?

BLAKE  
(to Emily)  
So this is his mysterious girlfriend?

EMILY  
I didn't know! I told you in bed last  
night--

Emily SHUTS her mouth.

FINN  
In BED?

Blake smiles. Cameron GASPS.

FINN (CONT.)  
LAST NIGHT?

BLAKE  
What can I say?

CAMERON  
But if you're both with fire, Finn's  
an EMT.... who brought the cult back?

Chris and Axel STEP out from the bushes with a band of EMTS.  
They're armed with CONSTRUCTION TOOLS.

CAMERON  
What the hell are you retards doing  
here?

FINN  
You guys are with the cult?

CHRIS  
No, YOU TWO are. Stop trying to deny  
it.

AXEL  
We saw you driving off the weird  
places, acting strange around us.

CAMERON  
You ever think that we were just  
dating?

BLAKE  
Dating?

CAMERON  
Yes. I'm dating Finn, Dad. 3 months.

Blake AIMS his pistol at Finn.

BLAKE  
Alright, I've heard enough.

Emily RISES, stands between Finn and Blake.

BLAKE  
Em, what are you doing?

Emily walks through the cult, the members BOW as she passes them. She approaches two members at the end, holding EMBELLISHED ROBES and a CROWN. They help Emily put the robes over, SET the crown on her head.

Blake is in SHOCK. He gathers himself. Finn is DEVASTATED.

EMILY  
THIS... is the Order of Harmony.

The cult members remove their masks: it's the other EMTs! They have scales drawn in black on their faces. One of the cult members reaches for a rock, PULLS IT-- MECHANICAL SWIRLS echo as the center of the ritual site OPENS. From it EMERGES the large SCALES OF JUSTICE post.

EMILY (CONT.)  
Intrigued by the idea of perfection, you all gather here, drawn by the allure of a better world. I, your leader, have brought you together to usher in this utopia. A society where we revere and exalt those who truly hold the power of life and death in their hands, the emergency workers, the healers, and the enforcers. Our world, the world we know, has grown decadent, diseased, and corrupt. People take the tireless work of these saviors for granted, showing them nothing but disdain and disrespect. But in our vision, we change that. We ascend to a new order. We are the Gods here, chosen to wield the sacred gift of deciding who lives and who dies. We see the imbalance in society, the chaos, the lack of appreciation for those who rush into the fray, into the flames, into the darkness.

Emily SNAPS-- the cult members GRAB Cameron by her arms, DRAG HER towards the post. She THRASHES, to no result. Finn STEPS OUT.

FINN  
Mom, what are you--

The cult members LOCK Finn in their arms. Axel and Chris look on with SHOCK. Blake maintains his AIM. The cult members HOIST Cameron up to the post, CLAMP her arms in place.

EMILY (CONT.)  
The sacrifice is the path to redemption. It is the way we cleanse this world of its sins, its apathy, its ignorance. Our sacrifices are the ultimate act of devotion, the means by which we bring equilibrium back to our society. They are the price we pay for our ascension, the cost of perfecting our world. And now, as we stand on the precipice of our vision's realization, my own beloved, my heart's desire, is chosen for the ultimate sacrifice. She will become the beacon of hope, the symbol of our devotion to the cause. Through her, we will send a message to the world: We are not to be trifled with, and our mission is unstoppable.

Emily grabs a TORCH from one of the cult members, LIGHTS it on fire. She circles the scales as the cult members begin humming. Emily stops, brings the FLAME to a fuse-- a GUNSHOT: Blake SHOOTS the torch out of Emily's hand! Emily GASPS.

EMILY  
Get him.

The cult members CHARGE at the cops.

BLAKE  
Open fire!

The COPS reign fire on the cult members. A few get HIT and go down, most of them reach the cops and TACKLE them. Emily EVACUATES into the bushes.

Finn THRASES out of the cult members grips, PUNCHES one in the face and SPRINTS to Cameron.

FINN  
(panting)  
Don't worry, I'll get you out of here!

CAMERON

FINN!

A cult member JUMPS on Finn, they TUMBLE to the ground. Finn WINDS a punch--the cult member DECKS Finn in the face. Finn falls to the ground, WINDED.

The cult member TOWERS above Finn. He brings both FISTS over his head together, brings them down for the final blow-- Axel KICKS the cult member over. He offers Finn a hand.

Finn takes it.

FINN

Thanks.

AXEL

Don't get all sentimental. Help your girl out, we'll cover you.

Finn nods, appreciative. He goes back to the post, resumes UNBINDING Cameron.

Axel and Chris FIGHT off the cult members as they try to reach Finn.

Amidst the fighting, Blake SPOTS Finn help Cameron down the post. He pushes a cult member off, SHOOTS him. He clicks his radio.

BLAKE

All units, focus fire on those EMTs with the girl!

The police form up, BLAST their way through the cult members. They pass the post, when another WAVE of cult members ambushes them from the bushes. They tackle the cops and PIN them down. They kick their guns away. Blake's PISTOL skids to a stop near Finn.

Finn reaches for the gun-- a cult member STOMPS on his hand, pinning him down. The rest of the cult members ATTACK Chris and Axel, pin them down against the dirt. They SMUSH their heads against the sand and gravel.

Emily GLORIOUSLY EMERGES from the bushes, approaches Cameron and smiles. She GRIPS Cameron by the neck, walks her over to the cliff edge.

She THRUSTS Cameron over the edge--

FINN & BLAKE

NOOO!

Emily HOLDS Cameron on the edge of the looming cliff. Cameron holds herself on her TIPTOES, her hands GRIPPING to Emily's arms.

FINN

Who are you?

EMILY

I... am the grand master of the Order of Harmony--

FINN

Not my Mom?

Emily BREAKS her stance. She takes a few deep breaths, gathers herself.

EMILY

Cameron is a pawn. A pawn in this world in dire need of rebalancing. A world in need of healing. And I have taken that burden to ensure that. And so will she.

Emily HOLDS Cameron farther off the edge.

Blake and Finn make eye contact. FIRE in Blake's eyes. Finn MOTIONS not to make any moves. Blake MUSTERS the last of his strength, FLIPS the cult member off his back. He SPRINTS to the cliff edge.

Finn SPINS, PUNCHES the cult member pinning him down in the CROTCH. The cult members doubles over, Finn reaches for the gun. He grabs it, STANDS and AIMS-- Blake already has another pistol TRAINED on Emily.

FINN

Blake, WAIT!

Blake side-eyes Finn. Finn STEPS in between Blake and Emily.

BLAKE

(stern)

What are you doing? Get out of my fucking way.

FINN

No.



BLAKE

What?

FINN

I can't let you shoot my Mom.

BLAKE

Your "mom" is about to drop my daughter to her fucking death.

Emily smirks.

EMILY

Thank you, Finn. Protect your family, first. I always taught you that.

Finn turns.

EMILY

Help me, and we can fulfill a true world where we get to make the decisions.

Finn looks back at Blake. His gun still trained on Emily.

BLAKE

Think about this, Finn!

Finn looks back at Emily. Back at Blake. Then Cameron. The world FREEZES-- a GUNSHOT echoes.

CUT TO BLACK

EXT. ORDER OF HARMONY RITUAL SITE, OPEN DESERT - CONTINUOUS

Finn's eyes are SHUT. REVEAL his gun aimed, SMOKE steams from the barrel.

Blake pats himself down-- no gunshot wound. He looks at Finn, then to Emily.

BLOOD bleeds through her robes at her stomach. She's SHOCKED to her CORE.

EMILY

Finn....

Finn looks at her, TEARS stream down her face.

FINN  
(crying)  
I asked who you were.

Emily WEAKENS her grip. Cameron FLOPS the ground.

FINN (CONT.)  
You're not my Mom.

Emily's broken face changes to one of MENACE. She COLLAPSES to her knees.

EMILY  
(weak)  
For the order...

She GRABS Cameron's ankle, leans back down the cliff.

FINN  
NO!

IN SLOW MOTION

Blake SPRINTS to Emily. Finn reaches out, GRABS Cameron's hands.

Blake CHARGES, looks at Finn. They nod, both teary eyed. Blake has a look of gratitude, content on his face. He WRAPS his arms around Emily, TACKLES h

*Intrigued by the idea of perfection, you all gather here, drawn by the allure of a better world. I, your leader, have brought you together to usher in this utopia. A society where we revere and exalt those who truly hold the power of life and death in their hands, the emergency workers, the healers, and the enforcers.*

*Our world, the world we know, has grown decadent, diseased, and corrupt. People take the tireless work of these saviors for granted, showing them nothing but disdain and disrespect. But in our vision, we change that. We ascend to a new order.*

*We are the Gods here, chosen to wield the sacred gift of deciding who lives and who dies. It is a responsibility we take upon ourselves, not because we desire it, but because we are chosen to carry this heavy burden. We see the imbalance in society, the chaos, the lack of appreciation for those who rush into the fray, into the flames, into the darkness.*

*The sacrifice is the path to redemption. It is the way we cleanse this world of its sins, its apathy, its ignorance.*

*Our sacrifices are the ultimate act of devotion, the means by which we bring equilibrium back to our society. They are the price we pay for our ascension, the cost of perfecting our world.*

*And now, as we stand on the precipice of our vision's realization, my own beloved, my heart's desire, is chosen for the ultimate sacrifice. She will become the beacon of hope, the symbol of our devotion to the cause. Through her, we will send a message to the world: We are not to be trifled with, and our mission is unstoppable.*

*As we make this sacrifice, we solidify our legacy. We rise above the common masses who dare to question our purpose. We will not be deterred by their cries of despair, for they cannot comprehend the greater good we strive to achieve. Our world will become perfect, and we will be the architects of its transformation.*

er off the cliff.

They fall to their deaths.

END SLOW MOTION

CUT TO BLACK

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM, REMOTE OUTLINE STATION - MORNING

Finn walks into the kitchen-- Cameron, Axel, and Chris CHAT and LAUGH at the table. Steaming plates of eggs in front of them. And one at the open seat. A warm and comforting atmosphere.

AXEL

Ah, look who decided to show!

Finn smiles. He sits down.

FINN

You actually made eggs for me. I'm shocked.

AXEL

I stand by my word.

Axel offers his hand to shake. Finn shakes it. He looks at Cameron. She's quiet.

FINN  
(to Cameron)  
How are you holding up?

CAMERON  
Been better. You?

Finn shrugs

FINN  
I learned how to survive without her.  
I think I can do it again.

CAMERON  
Well, this time you don't have to do  
it alone.

Finn looks around the table. Chris and Axel laugh with each other. Cameron smiles at Finn. A new family.

END