

A QUIET PLACE

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FIRST ACT:

EXT. HILLTOP - DAY

The hilltop is lined with corn. Golden and brown. Shimmering in the morning heat.

There's a structure in the distance...

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

A FARMHOUSE built from old lumber. There's no cattle or livestock in sight. Unusual for this fertile land.

INT. FARMHOUSE, DEN - DAY

APRIL (8) gazes out the window pane. Nervous, eager, sweet. She has a HEARING AID in one ear.

She's focused on a TOOL SHED one hundred feet away, isolated under a crooked apple tree.

Her eyes drift from the shed to her older brother **WILL** (10) who stands outside. He sticks his tongue out. She ignores him. This is their dynamic.

EXT. SHED - DAY

April picks weeds outside the shed. She pockets a PURPLE IRIS and wipes dirt on her sweater.

Will plays nearby with a GOLDEN RETRIEVER. It wears a MUZZLE.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

April empties the weeds into a tin TRASH CAN. She places the lid back on the trash slowly, ensuring that it doesn't make even the slightest sound.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Will approaches the front door. The retriever follows closely behind. He motions for the dog to "stay".

Then slips a pair of disposable SHOE COVERS over his feet before entering.

INT. FARMHOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

Will's mother, **MIA** (30s), holds a RED CRAYON to her lips. She has lovely green eyes and auburn hair. She balances a LAUNDRY BASKET next to her PREGNANT BELLY.

She stands before a CALENDAR on the wall, charting each day of her pregnancy. She crosses off another day and hands the crayon back to --

Will, who colors in a NEW DRAWING. His hands dig loudly through a tin of crayons.

Mia waves her finger. Will freezes, reprimanded for the hundredth time.

He reaches under his parent's bed for a pair of oversized WINTER GLOVES. He places the gloves over each hand, then quietly resumes his search.

INT. FARMHOUSE, HALL - DAY

Mia walks past April and collects her dirt-stained sweater into the laundry basket.

INT. FARMHOUSE, LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

We follow Mia to the WASHER AND DRYER. The machines have been unplugged.

She empties the basket into the washer. Adds water and soap. Lightly stirs the clothes with her hands.

Mia stops momentarily. The purple iris floats in the water.

An idea strikes her - she leans over to a MARKER BOARD labeled BABY NAMES and adds IRIS to the list.

A hand cuts the frame, immediately crossing out IRIS.

JOHN (40s), the patriarch of the family, shakes his head. An MP3 PLAYER plays MUSIC in his headphones that we can't hear.

John points to another name on the list: HOLLY. Mia playfully purses her lips. He places a comforting hand over her bump.

John puts one of his EARBUDS into her ear. Our world is filled with MUSIC - maybe a song from when they first met.

INT. FARMHOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

John & Mia slow-dance through the living room, very much in love after all these years.

They both wear SHOE COVERS on their feet. And as they move together about the house, a theme materializes in the background: Every inch of wall and floor has been painstakingly covered with THICK PADDING. Sometimes FOAM, sometimes WOOL INSULATION. Too ugly to be an aesthetic choice. Must be product of necessity.

INT. FARMHOUSE, DINING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Mia sets the table. All of their plates and cutlery are plastic. She gestures to John to gather the children for dinner.

INT. FARMHOUSE, UPSTAIRS - LATE AFTERNOON

John tops the stairs. He opens a DOOR, labeled "Will" in stenciled letters.

Will sits at his desk, finishing his drawing. John MIMES an eating motion. Will acknowledges.

John moves on to the SECOND DOOR, labeled "April" in a flower-patterned alphabet. Peeks his head inside...

It's empty.

John moves further down the hall to a THIRD DOOR. No letters on this one - only a sun-faded patch, suggesting a name was once removed.

He hesitates before opening the door --

INT. FARMHOUSE, BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

April sits on a stripped MATTRESS FRAME in a sparsely decorated room. Looks like someone used to live here long ago. She closes the DIARY she's writing in, annoyed by the intrusion.

John MIMES the eating motion and extends his hand, encouraging her to join.

April rises from the bed and approaches, her arm outstretched as if she'll grab John's hand BUT --

APRIL CLOSSES THE DOOR IN HIS FACE.

INT. FARMHOUSE, DINING ROOM - EVENING

The rim of the sun sets outside, casting an orange glow over the dinner table.

The family finishes their supper. Mia clears the table.

John unfolds a MONOPOLY game board as April finally joins from upstairs. She takes the furthest seat from John.

April's mood changes as she tussles with Will over who gets to roll first.

They play the game mostly with hand gestures, never speaking a word. They roll the DICE on a soft blanket so that it doesn't make a sound.

Will is five spaces away from landing on April's BOARDWALK. He silently prays for a miracle.

Will rolls a... five.

He throws up his hands in protest.

April lets out a GIGGLE. The first sound we've heard this whole time --

JOHN'S EYES WIDEN. APRIL COVERS HER MOUTH.

EVERYONE GETS DEADLY STILL. AFRAID.

AND THEN WE HEAR IT.

A SCREAM IN THE DISTANCE. IT IS NOT HUMAN.

The family exchanges worried glances.

John edges over to the window, watching the horizon for any sign of movement. Nothing.

THEN THE SCREAM SLOWLY STARTS TO MOVE AWAY.

April removes her hand from her mouth.

Everyone starts to relax.

They go back to playing Monopoly in silence.

TITLE: A QUIET PLACE

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

The farmhouse sits in moonlight. A thin fog hovers just above the ground. All the lights are off.

The family dog is tied outside. It stirs awake. Focuses on the wall of corn lining the backyard.

Tries to bark through the MUZZLE but can't.

EXT. CORN FIELD - NIGHT

There are no crickets or insects of any kind. Just an unnatural silence that hangs in the air.

AND THEN SOMETHING MOVES.

STALKS OF CORN WHIP AND BEND AS A LARGE FORM MANEUVERS THROUGH THE CROPS...

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAWN

Morning. The yard is serene and still. A heavy layer of frost covers the grass.

INT. FARMHOUSE, HALL - MORNING

April's tiny face peeks out into the hall. She wipes the sleep from her eyes.

INT. FARMHOUSE, BATHROOM - MORNING

April lifts the toilet seat. There's no water inside the bowl, just a red BIOHAZARD BAG curled around the rim.

She pees into the bag and her face goes from agony to relief.

INT. FARMHOUSE, BASEMENT - MORNING

April descends the BASEMENT STAIRS with the biohazard bag.

There is a NAIL sticking up about ten steps down, and if someone were to step on it...

...it would REALLY, REALLY HURT.

APRIL'S FOOT COMES DOWN ON THE NAIL, but just misses it.

She disposes of the biohazard bag in a DEEP HOLE cut into the basement floor. She heads back to the stairs, but something stops her...

An old WORKBENCH cluttered with family PHOTOS from ages ago.

April glances at a POLAROID of a **TEENAGE GIRL**: braces, dark eyes, beautiful. She's hugging April. They're both laughing.

The Polaroid seems to be attached to a PAINFUL MEMORY. And like everything in this basement, it has the look of something that was abandoned long ago.

A HAND TOUCHES APRIL'S SHOULDER.

John is standing behind his daughter. April doesn't look over. Doesn't react.

If we hadn't noticed before, we realize now that there is an enormous amount of tension between them.

April's face starts to quiver. Tears filling her eyes. She pushes her father's hand away and leaves.

John opens his mouth as if to say something, but of course... he can't.

EXT. VALLEY - MORNING

John has a LARGE DUFFLE slung around his shoulder. He leads Will down a steep trail into a lake valley.

As they walk, we may or may not notice how they always:

- 1) Avoid dry leaves and sticks
- 2) Walk heel to toe
- 3) Distribute their weight evenly
- 4) Keep their arms close to their sides
- 5) Breathe steadily
- 6) Match the cadence of each other's gait

EXT. LAKE - MORNING

Will sits into a small ROW-BOAT with no paddles. He hides his trembling hands. Doesn't want his father to know he's scared.

John sits behind him and gazes at the placid water.

A layer of RED ALGAE covers the entire basin. It is thick and milky along the shore, where the SKELETONS of cows, horses, and fish waste away.

There's a long ROPE that extends from one side of the lake to the other. It's been secured to a post on each end and pulled taught, hanging no more than a few inches above the surface.

The men begin pulling themselves along the rope, slowly at first; careful not to disrupt or splash the water in any way.

Their boat glides across the calm lake, gaining momentum, heading to a SMALL GROVE OF TREES on the other side.

EXT. WELL - MORNING

Under the trees rests a WATER WELL made of laid stones.

John shines a MINI-FLASHLIGHT into the well. The beam fades into darkness, unable to reach the bottom.

John begins pulling a bungee cable that's looped through a pulley system.

Sixty feet below, a LEATHER BUCKET envelopes a gallon of water, and as the bungee is pulled, the leather cinches itself closed, trapping any leaking water.

Will opens the duffle and removes four COLLAPSIBLE WATER CONTAINERS.

They begin the process of painstakingly filling each of the containers with water from the well.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

April is lying outside the farmhouse writing in her DIARY. Her HEARING AID is removed.

She flips the page and stifles a scream. Inside is a DRAWING.

A DARK RED CREATURE SCRIBBLED IN CRAYON. ANIMAL, YET OTHERWORLDLY. BLOOD POOLED AROUND ITS LEGS.

Her brother smirks as he hauls two WATER CONTAINERS across the yard. April is not amused by Will's prank. She plugs her HEARING AID back into her ear.

INT. FARMHOUSE, DEN - DAY

Mia crosses off another day on her CALENDAR. We see that she's still several weeks out from her DUE DATE.

She glances outside the window - sees the boys heading toward the SHED with the WELL WATER.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Mia wanders outside to the back porch. Her eyes narrow.

THE DOG IS GONE. THE END OF THE LEASH FRAYED, AS IF TORN.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Mia searches everywhere for the dog. An impossible task when you can't hear your pet, and your pet can't hear you.

INT. FARMHOUSE, UPSTAIRS - DAY

Mia stops at the top of the stairs. She cringes, feels a small pang in her stomach. It passes.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Outside, April crumples up the drawing. Her eyes trained on the SHED as its doors sway in the wind. She approaches.

INT. SHED - DAY

April's tiny hands open the large shed doors and we see inside for the first time:

In the center is a CRIB with a MOBILE hanging over it. The surrounding walls are built like a bomb shelter of sorts - heavily reinforced with sound dampening materials. Much like the farmhouse, but more extreme.

...they've been preparing for the baby's arrival for months.

INT. FARMHOUSE, CHILDREN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mia gets down on all fours and peers under April's bed. She sees something that puzzles her. Takes a moment to register.

The POLAROID OF THE TEENAGE GIRL from the basement is buried under a pile of clothes. Mia examines it for a moment, then places it back.

Mia moves to the hall. She staggers a little. Feels dizzy.

INT. SHED - DAY

April sets down her DIARY. Tries to get Will's attention, but the boys are focused on a WATER CHART.

They are TWENTY GALLONS shy of their TARGET GOAL.

We see other CHARTS and LISTS around the shed, specifying food and supply rations that would roughly last the infancy period of a child.

John notices one of the SOUND PROOF SHEETS has fallen off the wall. The glue has come undone in the heat, revealing OLD NEWSPAPERS that have been fused to the wall with paper-mache.

We catch a glimpse at a headline:

CROW MIGRATION THREATENS HARVEST SEASON

John encourages April to help hang the fallen sheet back up.

She refuses.

INT. FARMHOUSE, UPSTAIRS - DAY

Close on Mia's face as all the blood drains from it. As all SOUND fades around her. As her heart begins to pound against her chest. AS HER WATER BREAKS. AS FLUIDS FROM THE AMNIOTIC SAC FLOOD DOWN HER LEGS AND FEET.

She gasps in disbelief. It's too soon. They're not ready.

Mia stumbles down the hall. Grabs a towel, holds it between her legs. With her free hand she HITS A BREAKER ON THE WALL --

INT./EXT. VARIOUS - DAY

-- all over the farmhouse POWERFUL RED FLOODLIGHTS turn on.

INT. SHED - DAY

But her family can't see the lights from inside the shed.

Unaware, John and Will carefully drive nails into the wood walls, silently suspending the fallen SHEET.

They then turn their attention to the corner, where DOZENS more sound proof sheets sit in a pile, ready to be hung up.

INT. FARMHOUSE, HALL - DAY

Mia staggers toward the bathroom. Every step takes extraordinary effort.

INT. SHED - LATER

John and Will hang each sheet from the pile. One by one. The process is SLOW and DILIGENT, with no room for error.

April teases Will while he works. He pushes her away. A little too hard. She frowns, her feelings hurt.

INT. FARMHOUSE, BATHROOM - DAY

Mia sits in a BATH TUB. Her face red. Doing everything she can to not make a sound. Fighting an immense amount of pain.

INT. SHED - LATER STILL

John stands on a LADDER, fastening a sheet to the ceiling. About half the stack has been put up.

When no one is looking, April pulls one of the sheets off the wall. She smiles to herself, almost wants to get caught, but no one sees her.

INT. FARMHOUSE, BATHROOM - DAY

Mia's contractions increase.

INT. SHED - EVEN LATER

The sun is lower in the sky. Much progress has been made on the walls and ceiling, which are now 60% covered in sound proofing.

April wanders past THREE BUNKS: one for John & Mia, one for Will, and one for herself. April's bunk is half-decorated with STICKERS and a Wizard of Oz SCARECROW plush toy.

April grabs a PILLOW from her bed. Looks to her brother mischievously.

INT. FARMHOUSE, BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

Mia grips the side of the tub as --

INT. SHED - AFTERNOON

April SMACKS Will with the pillow. He's in no mood. He fights back. John breaks them up, scolds April. Points at his daughter, motioning for her to leave.

April sulks away, angry. Steps outside the shed and STOPS.

She sees the RED FLOOD LIGHTS ARE ON. She panics, runs back to the shed and grabs her father. He starts to get scared when he realizes how scared she is.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

John runs across the lawn as fast as he can. Throws the front door open. No time for shoe covers.

INT. FARMHOUSE, UPSTAIRS - AFTERNOON

Sprints up the stairs.

INT. FARMHOUSE, BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

Finds his wife in the bathtub. She's in labor.

EXT. SHED - AFTERNOON

Will and April run off in the opposite direction of the farmhouse. It's as if they've been rehearsing for this moment for months.

EXT. WOODS - AFTERNOON

They enter a small patch of forest. Fast as they can.

EXT. WOODS, PATH - AFTERNOON

April trips and falls. Will doesn't stop to help her.

INT. WOODS, HORSE STALL - AFTERNOON

Will lunges into an empty horse stall. He tips over a TOOL BOX and grabs a pack of MATCHES.

INT. FARMHOUSE, BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

Mia's face is flush and sweaty. A pool of blood surrounds her. She breathes heavy as...

A NEWBORN BABY BEGINS TO **CRY** --

EXT. WOODS, PATH - AFTERNOON

-- April gets very still. She turns up the VOLUME on her hearing aid.

Just faintly, through the high frequency static, we hear the baby CRYING in the distance.

April stifles her breathing.

The sound of SOMETHING else continues breathing behind her.

OUT OF FOCUS, JUST TEN FEET AWAY, WE SEE **IT** MOVE SLOWLY TOWARDS THE SOUNDS.

INT. FARMHOUSE, UPSTAIRS - AFTERNOON

Mia takes the crying baby in her arms. She covers it with a FLEECE BLANKET, trying to dampen the cries.

John looks out the window at the shed. Wondering how to get there safely.

AND THAT'S WHEN THEY HEAR THE FLOORBOARDS CREAKING DOWNSTAIRS. SOMETHING IS INSIDE THE HOUSE WITH THEM.

Tears stream down Mia's face. A look that says, "It's too late. We're already dead."

EXT. WOODS, TRACTOR - AFTERNOON

Will arrives at his destination. Out of breath and sweating. He reaches under a RUSTED-OUT TRACTOR, searching for something. His hand sweeps back and forth...

...we see a BLACK FUSE just barely out of reach. His fingers getting

closer

closer

CLOSER!

INT. FARMHOUSE, UPSTAIRS - AFTERNOON

The FOOTSTEPS creep up the stairs. Nails scrape and click against the wood. They don't sound human.

EXT. WOODS, TRACTOR - AFTERNOON

Will reaches as far as he possibly can...

...grabs the FUSE and LIGHTS IT. It takes. The spark disappears under the tractor.

Will immediately starts running back to the house.

INT. FARMHOUSE, UPSTAIRS - AFTERNOON

The FOOTSTEPS stop at the top of the stairs. We can hear the creature BREATHING now. Wheezy and hollow, like air slowly being sucked through a straw.

Mia and John stand frozen, too afraid to move. They are staring at THE SILHOUETTE OF A NIGHTMARE...

IT STANDS ON FOUR LEGS, HUNCHED LOW, PREDATORY AND DANGEROUS. ITS SKIN DEEP DARK RED - THE COLOR OF DRIED BLOOD.

THERE ARE NO EYES ON THE MONSTER'S FACE. AND AS IT SAUNTERS TOWARD JOHN AND MIA, WE REALIZE IT CANNOT SEE THEM. IT SIMPLY HEARS THE BABY'S MUFFLED CRIES.

THE CREATURE'S JAW UNHINGES, AND THEN --

-- **BA-BOOM!!**

EXT. CORN FIELD - AFTERNOON

FIREWORKS EXPLODE over the crops.

April looks up, startled at first. Then smiles, Will pulled it off!

INT. FARMHOUSE, UPSTAIRS - AFTERNOON

The creature retreats downstairs, pursuing the loud noises outside.

EXT. WOODS, PATH - AFTERNOON

Will races back towards the farmhouse. Fireworks igniting in the background as he runs. It would be beautiful if it weren't so terrifying.

EXT. CORN FIELD, WEATHER VANE - AFTERNOON

Deep in the corn field, April kneels at the base of an iron WEATHER VANE that points back toward the farmhouse.

She plugs a RED CABLE into the back of a SPEAKER BOX and... BOOM! A small electrical explosion knocks her unconscious.

EXT. PORCH - AFTERNOON

Mia and John sneak the newborn out the back.

Mia moves in slow, pained steps. She struggles to stand on two legs, but musters all her courage to continue.

John motions for Mia to make a run for the shed. He signals a silent countdown with his fingers...

...three

...two

...one

MIA RUNS FOR IT.

EXT. GRASS FIELD - AFTERNOON

Will peels away a patch of TALL GRASS, revealing a GREY BOX. He flips a switch on the box.

A RED LIGHT turns on and --

INT. SHED - AFTERNOON

-- a series of MEDICAL MACHINES roar to life inside the shed.

Mia attaches a BREATHING MASK to the infant's face and places it in the crib, carefully draping blankets over the baby.

INT. FARMHOUSE, DEN - AFTERNOON

John sneaks through the den. Grabs his MP3 PLAYER. Unplugs the HEADPHONES.

INT. SHED - AFTERNOON

Will slips into the shed and DEAD BOLTS one door. Leaves the second open...

EXT. FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

John comes out the front door --

THE MONSTER STANDS BETWEEN HIM AND THE SHED.

BETWEEN HIM AND HIS FAMILY.

John looks to his NEWBORN BABY.

His eyes well with joy and fear.

Mia tries to muffle the weeping infant.

The monster senses their presence, but can't quite place their exact location.

John walks slowly but urgently to the shed, as --

THE WIND STARTS BLOWING.

THE LEAVES OF THE TREES BEND AND RATTLE.

IT DISGUISES THE SOUNDS OF JOHN'S FOOTSTEPS.

JOHN CLOSES HIS EYES.

FOCUSING ALL OF HIS ENERGY.

DOING HIS BEST TO NOT MAKE A SINGLE SOUND.

THIS IS THE LONGEST WALK OF HIS LIFE.

John is 30 feet away from the shed...

20 feet away...

10 feet...

5 . . .

... *SNAP* .

John looks down in horror. A BROKEN TWIG under his foot.

The creature whips around. Rears up.

JOHN RUNS FOR IT --

THE MONSTER SCREAMS --

INT. SHED - AFTERNOON

MIA PULLS JOHN INSIDE. JUST BEFORE THE MONSTER LUNGES, WILL SLAMS THE DOOR CLOSED. DEAD BOLTS THE LOCK.

JOHN RUNS TO THE BACK OF THE SHED, PLUGS THE MP3 PLAYER INTO THE WALL, FLIPS A SWITCH --

EXT. GRASS FIELD - AFTERNOON

The light on the GREY BOX turns GREEN, and then we hear...

MUSIC

EXT. CORN FIELD, WEATHER VANE - AFTERNOON

...coming from the SPEAKER BOX at the base of the weather vane.

EXT. SHED - AFTERNOON

The creature retreats from the shed toward the sounds.

EXT. HILLTOP - AFTERNOON

High above rolling hills under day-blue sky. The farmhouse just a dot on the horizon.

MUSIC reverberates off the walls of the empty valley.

We hear a HORRIFYING ROAR, and then just as soon as it started, the music goes **SILENT**.

...

...

...

Now just wind.

Wind pulsing through dry corn stalks.
The rustles and whispers of dead silence.

INT. SHED - AFTERNOON

The FAMILY holds each other. Emotional and raw.
John pulls away from their tight embrace, slowly realizing...
HIS DAUGHTER IS NOT WITH THEM.

John runs to the door but it's JAMMED.
He pushes as hard as he can. LOUDLY shoving the padded frame.
Just when the door is about to BURST, Mia grabs John. She pulls him back as the MONSTROUS FORM returns outside...

LISTENING AND WAITING

FOR EVEN THE

FAINTEST

LITTLE

SOUND

FADE TO:

DARKNESS

*A bird CHIRPS. Benign at first, growing louder. A single
WARBLE. Then many. We see --*

*THOUSANDS OF CROWS. Filling the screen with their dimension
and sound. Billowing like an OMINOUS BLACK CLOUD over --*

*Recently planted CROPS. The crows descend upon fresh SEEDS.
Annihilating the soil. Lightening quick glimpses of --*

A Young April. Before she had a HEARING AID. She smiles --

*Her father John places a SCARECROW in the field. He wipes
sweat from his forehead. We see --*

*The TEENAGE GIRL FROM THE POLAROID. She picks April up into
her arms --*

APRIL (V.O.)
*How come you and daddy don't talk
 anymore?*

*We're not sure if this is DREAM, or MEMORY, or SOMETHING ELSE
 entirely, and before we can comprehend --*

A HUGE CONCUSSIVE BLAST!!!

SECOND ACT:

EXT. CORN FIELD, WEATHER VANE - NIGHT

April's eyes snap open.

She climbs out from under a pile of dead corn husks.

She is alone. Long deep shadows fall in the maze of corn that
 surrounds her. Every direction looks exactly the same. An
 eerie chill permeates the cold night air.

Nearby, we see the monster's warpath. The SPEAKER BOX is TORN
 TO SHREDS. Wires and circuits everywhere.

April lifts what's left of the WEATHER VANE. At one time it
 pointed right back at the farmhouse. But now...?

She aims it FORWARD △

...doesn't seem right...

She aims it LEFT ◁

...that's not it....

She aims it BACKWARDS ▽

...oh no...

April is completely lost.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

Mia is asleep next to Will. The newborn lies on her chest.

John is kneeled on the other side of the small shed.

His eyes trained on the wall...

Peering through the razor-thin slats...

Focusing on the DARK SHAPE that waits outside. The shape is backlit by moonlight, and from the look on John's face, it has been idle now for several minutes.

John stands up and thinks it over. Goes to the shed door. Puts his fingers on the HANDLE.

Loses his nerve.

EXT. CORN FIELD - NIGHT

April maneuvers through an endless harvest tract. Nothing but crops disappearing into blackness.

She slows to a stop.

Looks deep into the darkest path.

She inhales.

And her throat closes.

One hundred paces away from where she stands, nestled between two rows of corn, is a **MAN STARING RIGHT BACK AT HER.**

INT. SHED - NIGHT

John sits on April's bunk, biding his time until the monster is gone. He nervously squeezes her scarecrow plush toy as he studies a hand-written list titled *Kill Attempts*

May 17: ~~poison~~
 Mar 15: ~~shotgun~~
 Jan 23: ~~lake drowning~~
 Aug 10: ~~fire bomb~~

It appears they've tried and failed several times to kill the beast. John shakes it off. Doesn't have time to think about how fucked they are.

He kneels before the shed door. Tries to look underneath where the frame meets the dirt.

All he can see is grass and a LONG SHADOW...

He lowers his head closer.

Places his cheek to the ground.

THE SHADOW MOVES.

John lets out a GASP. His breath kicks up a tiny cloud of dust.

THE SHADOW STOPS MOVING.

John is frozen like a statue. His mouth open a little.

He stays like that for a long time.

John carefully moves back to the wall. He looks through the slats once more...

The DARK SHAPE has vanished from view.

John wipes sweat from his forehead. The silence grows heavy, and then --

THERE'S SUDDEN MOVEMENT OUTSIDE. THE SOUND OF RUSTLING GRASS.

John jerks back, startled. Hits his head on a tie-beam, creating the slightest *THWAP* and --

WE HEAR A HORRIBLE HIGH-PITCHED SHRIEK IN RESPONSE, WHALING LOUD EVEN THROUGH FOURTEEN INCHES OF REINFORCED SOUND PROOF PADDING and then **BOOOOOOOOM** the far wall shakes as a clawed hand comes down hard from outside.

The entire FAMILY jolts awake.

EXT. CORN FIELD - NIGHT

April's shoulders graze stalks of leaves as she moves toward the figure, whose stark form remains threateningly still.

She's not exhaling.

Not even a breath.

She takes the last few steps to the figure.

She waves at him.

No response.

His eyes sunken and dark. His body rocks back and forth, as if agitated.

April reaches for him.

She pulls a piece of STRAW from the outline of a SCARECROW.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

John and Will frantically patch a ten inch PUNCTURE HOLE with sound proofing material. The sheets are now ripped back, revealing AGED NEWSPAPER HEADLINES we didn't see before --

**EMERGENCY U.N. MEETING S GLOBAL MASSACRE LEAVES BILLIONS DEAD
MILITARY EFFORTS FAIL IN AMERICA, ASIA, E END OF CIVILIZATION?**

The breach is sealed and John covers the make-shift mend with a MATTRESS.

He stops. Looks at his hands...

THEY'RE WET.

HE SEES...

WATER.

EVERYWHERE.

POOLING.

WHERE THE WALL MEETS THE GROUND.

THE DIRT FLOOR DRINKING UP EVERY LAST DROP OF LEAKING WATER.

THEIR ENTIRE SUPPLY HAS BEEN COMPROMISED BY THE CREATURE'S BLOW TO THE WALL.

Will grabs a CARTON and places it under one of the damaged WATER CONTAINERS, trying to collect the runoff.

drip...

drip...

drip...

drip drip drip drip drip drip drip drip drip...

John KNOCKS the carton away. The DRIPPING SOUND is too loud, could get them killed.

They watch helplessly as their stock goes from

TWELVE GALLONS to THREE

Mia motions to John, trying to engage him - trying to understand what's going on.

John is catatonic.

Doesn't know what to do or say.

Doesn't know how to keep his family safe.

Will taps his father on the back, snapping him out of his trance.

Will points to a SKYLIGHT in the ceiling.

EXT. SHED, ROOF - NIGHT

John's head pokes out of the small SKYLIGHT HATCH on top of the shed roof.

It's so cold outside he can see his breath.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

John climbs back down into the shed. He nods at Will, thanking him.

John has an idea. He quickly unpacks a MONOPOLY set onto the floor. He offers his family one of the eight PEWTER TOKENS.

Will chooses the **RACE CAR**.

Mia chooses the **THIMBLE**.

And John chooses the **TOP HAT**.

John places the three tokens in FREE PARKING and in BLACK MARKER writes: **SHED**

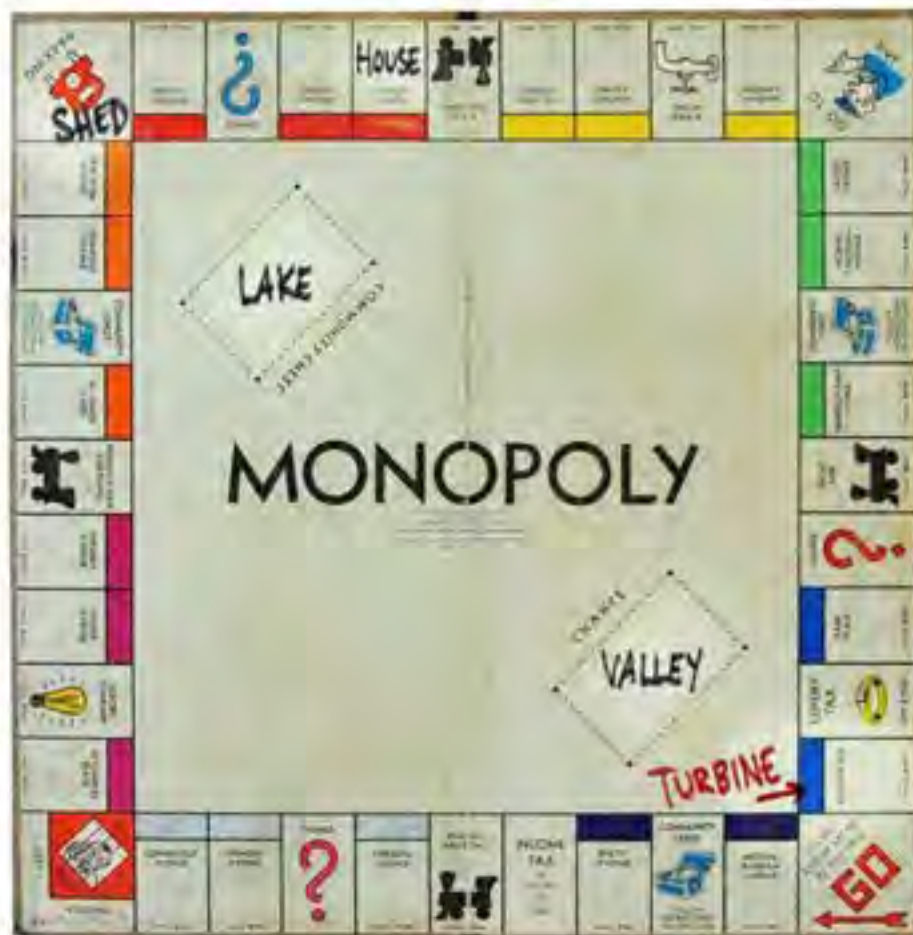
The nearby ILLINOIS AVENUE space becomes **HOUSE**

The blank area where the COMMUNITY CHEST cards go becomes **LAKE**

Further down the board where the CHANCE cards go becomes **VALLEY**

And faraway on the other side, BOARDWALK becomes **TURBINE**

John has converted this
game board into a make-shift MAP:



EXT. CORN FIELD, CLEARING - NIGHT

April carries the SCARECROW through the harvest tract.

Her face is looking pale from the cold. Her fingers are purple and stiff.

April sets the SCARECROW down and begins removing its CLOTHES...

ELKSKIN WORK GLOVES

FLANNEL JACKET

AVIATOR SUNGLASSES

Underneath the clothes, attached to the scarecrow's spine, is a **SIGNAL GENERATOR**; a small device used for generating electronic sounds. It appears broken, with thin circuits that unravel from each side, and a frequency DIAL that ranges from a few kilohertz (kHz) to hundreds of gigahertz (GHz).

It has the look of something that was abandoned long ago.

April shivers.

She puts on the GLOVES, JACKET, and SUNGLASSES.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

The family studies the Monopoly board.

John picks up the THIMBLE (Mia) and slides it to the space labeled **HOUSE**

John looks to his wife. Mia nods.

John picks up the RACE CAR (Will) and slides it to the space labeled **LAKE**

John looks to his son. Will takes a breath. Very afraid. But he nods too.

John picks up the TOP HAT (John) and slides it all the way to the other side of the board to the space labeled **TURBINE**

Mia and Will react. Their concerned faces betray a deep FEAR of that side of the board.

Mia takes the TOP HAT (John) and moves it closer, to the space labeled **VALLEY**

Will nods in agreement.

John shrugs. Wrestles with the idea internally. Decides he's not okay with that.

John stands the MARKER upright on TURBINE, creating a TOWER. He places the TOP HAT (John) on the tip of the marker. He gestures as if to suggest a high vantage point that looks down over the valley.

Mia and Will don't seem to care. They've already made up their mind.

Mia takes the TOP HAT (John) and returns it right back to VALLEY.

John concedes. He's been outvoted.

Everyone looks long and hard at the board.

They have a plan.

EXT. CORN FIELD, TREE - NIGHT

April sits in a TREE that hangs above the crop line. Her eyes fixed on the top of a GRAIN SILO in the faraway distance.

She blinks. Makes up her mind. That's where she's headed.

April climbs down to the dismantled SCARECROW.

Her arms and legs feel heavy. She looks like a stranger in her oversized attire. Her mind starts to drift.

Just then...

Nearby...

Only a few yards away...

A CROW CAWS!

April looks up, startled.

The CAWING continues all around her. Or is it in her mind?

We hear a displaced VOICE, feminine and soft...

VOICE (V.O.)
Can you tell Dad, that I'm not a
child anymore...

FLASHBACK: EXT. CORN FIELD, SCARECROW - DAY

The voice belongs to April's sister, **IRIS**, f.k.a. teenager from the Polaroid. She's in a heated argument with John.

IRIS
...and that I can go out with my
friends whenever I want.

Young April relays to John as if he didn't hear Iris.

APRIL
Iris says, "She's not a child
anymore, and can go out --"

JOHN
Can you tell your sister that
as long as she keeps acting
like a child, she's going to
be treated like a child.

APRIL
Dad says, "As long as you act
like a child --"

IRIS
Tell dad that he's the one
acting like a child, and that
it's ridiculous that he won't
talk to me because I forgot
to cover the seeds last week.

APRIL

Iris says, "You're the one acting like a child —"

JOHN

Tell your sister that she needs to take responsibility for her actions, and that by forgetting to cover the seeds, she may have cost us an entire harvest season.

IRIS

Tell Dad he doesn't get to suddenly take an interest in my life when he's NEVER had anything to say to me before, and that I'm not having this conversation right now.

JOHN

Tell your sister she's not doing ANYTHING right now because she's grounded.

John removes his ELKSKIN GLOVES and AVIATOR SUNGLASSES and FLANNEL JACKET and dresses them on the SCARECROW.

IRIS

Can I at least help with the scarecrows?

John walks away.

IRIS

Dad?

It's quiet for a moment, then Iris places SOMETHING inside the POCKET of the FLANNEL JACKET.

BACK TO:

April opens the POCKET of the FLANNEL JACKET. She removes a handful of BUTTON PINS, each with a unique design:



A tear rolls down April's face from under her sunglasses.

She stands for a moment in the pale moonlight, wearing the CLOTHES of her FATHER.

She's taken by an overwhelming sense of loneliness.

She fights her feelings at first, but eventually surrenders to the sadness...

SHE WEEPS.

A DEEP MOURNING THAT QUIETLY GROWS IN INTENSITY --

EXPLODING INTO --

A SOFT WHIMPER --

JUST AS --

She cups her hand over her mouth.

Almost forgot how dangerous it is to cry.

April composes herself.

She begins her long journey to the GRAIN SILO.

EXT. SHED, ROOF - DAWN

John looks out from the SKYLIGHT HATCH.

The sun is just starting to climb over the horizon. Its warm light spilling down onto the field of crops, giving the corn a yellow glow.

John carefully hoists himself onto the SHED ROOF. He scans the yard for any sign of movement.

Nothing.

The yard appears completely EMPTY.

John moves back to the hatch and gives Will a thumbs up.

Will climbs onto the shed roof.

The men close the hatch.

John carefully lowers himself over the rim of the roof. His hands clinging precariously to LOOSE SHINGLE.

He doesn't see the STAPLE that snags his shirt, so much as he hears it...

...the fabric beginning to RIP...

John tries to steady himself.

But his fingers are slipping on the rough surface, all the way to the edge, dangling there, suspended ten feet off the ground. The more he slips, the LOUDER the shirt gets.

Will tries to un-snag the shirt from the staple, but it only makes MORE NOISE. To us it's no louder than a whisper - but to the monster, it could be DEAFENING.

John's hands begin to shake. His face turns red. He's using all of his strength not to shift further down.

Desperate, Will pulls off one of the rotted shingle TILES and uses the jagged corner to cut the speared fabric. It works!

The shirt goes slack.

Just as the SHINGLES are about to give, John releases his grip and falls silently to the ground.

But it's too late --

AN ENTIRE ROW OF TILES COMES SLIDING DOWN THE ROOF AFTER HIM.

John catches each tile. One by one. Just barely.

John and Will look at each other.

That was close.

EXT. CORN FIELD - MORNING

John and Will walk in opposite directions through the corn field.

EXT. VALLEY - MORNING

Will has the LARGE DUFFLE slung around his shoulder. It's almost twice his size.

He nervously maneuvers the steep trail that leads into the LAKE VALLEY. It's the first time he has ever done this alone.

INT. SHED - MORNING

Inside the shed, Mia watches her sleeping newborn hold the Monopoly DICE in its tiny hand.

She notices something under the crib. It's APRIL'S DIARY. Mia flips to the first page and reads:

do not read, especially mom and dad.

Mia tries to smile but can't. She closes the diary.

She moves to the far wall and begins the difficult process of FIXING THE DOOR JAM.

EXT. CORN FIELD, WEATHER VANE - MORNING

John stops dead in his tracks. Can't believe what he sees...

The SPEAKER BOX and WEATHER VANE lay in pieces beneath his feet.

He frantically searches around.

No sign of April.

Starts to assume the worst.

John lifts the weather vane.

Aims it BACK AT THE FARMHOUSE ▷

EXT. LAKE - MORNING

Will stands at the edge of the lake. He is trembling.

The small ROW-BOAT rocks gently in the still water. Will approaches, places the duffle inside.

But he can't bring himself to get in the boat.

He's too afraid.

EXT. CORN FIELD - DAY

April moves toward the GRAIN SILO in the distance. She feels herself getting hungry.

April shucks an EAR OF CORN and bites into it. It's raw, but nourishing. She takes an even bigger bite...

...SPITS IT OUT. Realizes the maize is INFESTED WITH WORMS.

April tosses the sweet corn.

It lands with a THUD.

JUST THEN WE HEAR AN IDENTICAL THUD BEHIND HER!

That's odd...

April turns up the VOLUME on her hearing aid.

She hears stalks of corn MOVING.

THE CREATURE...

April hides under a PATCH OF OVERGROWN WEEDS.

We hear the RUSTLING SOUNDS approaching...

they are so faint

you almost

can't even

hear them

AND THEN --

JOHN APPEARS FROM THE WALL OF CROPS.

He walks right past his daughter, who remains motionless, hidden under leaves and grass.

Both father and daughter, completely unaware of how close they were to finding each other.

INT. SHED - DAY

Mia has REPAIRED the shed doors. She cautiously swings them open. Glances at the FARMHOUSE.

Checks to make sure the baby is still asleep, then slips out the door.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Mia carefully crosses the lawn.

Doesn't realize the REPAIRED DOOR didn't shut all the way.

INT. FARMHOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Mia enters the farmhouse. Dust hangs in the air. There's something unsettling about being back. Knowing the monster could be anywhere. Even inside her home.

She starts packing as much FOOD as she can find: APPLES, POTATOES, WALNUTS, TOMATOES.

EXT. CORN FIELD - DAY

April climbs out of hiding. Dusts herself off. Keeps moving.

We hear RUSHING WATER ahead...

EXT. CREEK - DAY

The last obstacle separating April from the GRAIN SILO is a raging FRESHWATER CREEK.

There's a series of BOULDERS that form a dangerous path across. April maneuvers over with relative ease.

EXT. SILO - DAY

She arrives at the base of a 40 ft steel SILO used for bulk storage of grain. A STAIRCASE spirals around the structure to the roof.

April doesn't notice the graffiti scratched into the wall:

Why are they here?

And then, in different handwriting, an answer:

TO SHUT US THE FUCK UP

EXT. SILO, ROOF - DAY

April tops the stairs and crawls up the sloped tower to a PLATFORM on the center of the roof.

The platform feels a little unstable. Rusted metal CREAKS and GROANS dangerously beneath her feet.

She scans the entire horizon. Realizes she's never been this far away from home before. DOESN'T RECOGNIZE ANY LANDMARKS IN THE DISTANCE.

Hopelessness starts to creep in. It's a suffocating feeling - like the steady ring of silence all around her.

April looks to her feet. Sees an IRON ROD protruding from the platform. She gets an idea.

She wrestles the iron rod free. The platform moves slightly.

She positions the rod upright in the center of the platform, and we start to comprehend what her plan might be...

The rod casts a long SHADOW. April marks the very tip of the shadow with her



She waits several moments. As the sun travels, the rod's shadow starts to move to the right.

April marks the new tip of the shadow with her



...April is creating a SUNDIAL COMPASS in order to find NORTH.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Will is halfway across the lake. And for a moment, he thinks he sees SOMETHING UNDER HIS BOAT.

The water is murky with RED ALGAE.

Impossible to see anything clearly.

Maybe it's nothing.

Don't be afraid.

There.

Is.

Nothing.

Under.

Your.

Boat.

Will steadies his SHAKING HANDS, summoning all of his courage, as he pulls himself along the ROPE.

INT. FARMHOUSE, UPSTAIRS - DAY

Mia's arms are full of FOOD. She's about to leave for the SHED, when --

INT. FARMHOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

-- something grabs her attention.

The POLAROID OF APRIL'S SISTER, IRIS, poking out from under the bed.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Now holding the POLAROID and FOOD, Mia makes her way back to the SHED.

Wait, the DOORS are open....

WIDE OPEN...

BOTH SHED DOORS WIDE FUCKING OPEN NO NO NO NO NO NO --

THE WORST IMAGINABLE
THING HAS HAPPENED

THE CREATURE IS INSIDE THE SHED.

Mia goes white.

Looks to her BABY...

The infant is about to WAKE UP!

THE BABY WIGGLES. YAWNS INTO ITS BREATHING MASK.

The monster doesn't move. It has no idea Mia is here. In fact, it probably has no idea where "here" even is. But the second it figures it out, it's ALL GOING TO BE OVER.

Mia removes her shoes. Tip-toes to the crib. One foot precisely placed in front of the other. Lifts her newborn.

THE MONSTER STIRS, SENSING SOMETHING.

Mia carries her baby out of the shed, mouthing "Shhhhh" the whole way, as the baby's eyes

...BLINK OPEN!

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Mia rushes the waking baby into the house.

INT. FARMHOUSE, DEN - DAY

Through the den.

INT. FARMHOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Through the living room.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Into the basement.

Down the stairs.

MIA STEPS ON THE NAIL!!!!!!!!!!!!

STABBING ALL THE WAY THROUGH TENDON AND MUSCLE.

MIA RECOILS.

WRITHES IN PAIN.

WANTS TO SCREAM.

ALMOST FALLS.

BUT SHE IS UNBELIEVABLY FUCKING TOUGH AND NOT ABOUT TO LET THIS BE THE END OF HER BABY'S LIFE.

Mia hobbles the rest of the way down, leaving BLOTCHES OF RED on the steps behind her.

She hides the infant underneath the WORK BENCH.

Then moves to a row of small windows that run across the top of the walls. They look out to the back yard...

WHICH APPEARS EMPTY.

BECAUSE...

THE MONSTER IS NOW IN THE LIVING ROOM.

WE HEAR A LOW, STACCATO CLICKING NOISE UPSTAIRS.

INT. FARMHOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

A LONG SHADOW snakes through the living room. The creature's CLICKING NOISE reverberates off the walls and furniture.

IT'S USING A FORM OF SONAR ECHOLOLOCATION TO SEE.

The rate of pulses increases, building to a terminal buzz of 200 clicks per second, until --

The shadow stops at the top of the basement stairs. And releases a deep malevolent ULTRASOUND.

EXT. SILO, ROOF - DAY

The sun is high in the sky.

April sees the IRON ROD'S shadow has moved a little further. She marks the new tip with her



She stands perpendicular to the trio of BUTTONS, creating a straight line revealing NORTH.

The platform GROANS ominously as she settles into place.

She looks ahead. And then, as if to confirm her findings, something appears on the far horizon...

BLACK SMOKE RISING OVER THE CROPS --

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD - DAY

-- we find John fanning a small FIRE. He has made a SMOKE SIGNAL for April.

EXT. SILO, ROOF - DAY

Relief washes over April's face. She recognizes the pattern in the smoke. Knows it's her father.

She dismantles her sundial. Collects the BUTTONS into her pocket.

Takes a HARD STEP on the platform and --

THE RUSTED METAL BUCKLES --

SUDDEN AND EXPLOSIVE --

AS SHE FALLS INTO THE SILO --

AND LETS OUT A **SCREAM!!!**

INT. FARMHOUSE, BASEMENT - DAY

-- **which ECHOES ALL THE WAY ACROSS THE DEAD AIR TO THE FARMHOUSE.**

Mia hears the FOOTSTEPS above her suddenly retreat from the house.

She looks out the window in time to glimpse the creature running off into the crops.

Mia grabs the baby and hobbles back to the shed.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD - DAY

John puts out the FIRE. Notices CORN STALKS crackling with movement.

EXT. WELL - DAY

Will, who is now retrieving WATER out of the well, hears the monster's ROAR reverberate all around him.

INT. SILO - DAY

April lands on her stomach with a TREMENDOUS SLAP on the layer of ROTTEN GRAIN that fills this structure.

It is 140°F inside the steel silo. And there are MAGGOTS and WORMS everywhere.

April looks up to the broken platform.

She can almost reach it.

April tries to stand.

BUT HER ANKLES BEGIN TO SINK.

THE GRAIN IS LIKE QUICK SAND.

THE MORE SHE MOVES, THE DEEPER SHE DROWNS.

UNTIL HER ENTIRE BODY IS SUBMERGED.

AND WE CAN NO LONGER SEE HER FACE.

THE 80,000 BUSHEL GRAIN BIN DEVOURS APRIL ALIVE.

Five seconds. That is how quickly someone can become engulfed in flowing grain and unable to get out.

Thirty seconds. That is how quickly someone can be completely submerged in flowing grain and suffocate.

Zero. That is how many people can survive being buried under grain without air for a few minutes.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD - AFTERNOON

John sprints after the movement in the crops.

INT. SILO - AFTERNOON

April's body thrashes in the dark. Fleeting trickles of light come through as the grain stirs, but it's mostly BLACK.

April takes huge desperate breaths. She tries to swim to the top. The grain wraps her body tighter with every movement.

SOUNDS OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD START TO FADE AWAY

A tiny shaft of light punches through just long enough for us to glimpse WORMS crawling into April's hair and clothes.

...the least of her problems.

Because she's starting to die. There's no oxygen left to breathe. Her esophagus is only gulping down heavy grain.

All we hear now is the SOFT LULL OF ASPHYXIATION. It sounds like marbles grinding in a glass jar.

BOOOOOM!!

Pounding.

BOOOOOM!!

Outside. On the walls.

BOOOOOM!!

Again. The pounding grows louder and more intense. It travels through the grain like a distorted sonic --

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!!!!!!!!

The wall RUPTURES below. Grain starts spilling outside. April is carried with the current, edging closer and closer to the puncture hole. Closer and closer to DAYLIGHT.

Someone has saved her. Maybe Will? Maybe her father?

That's when April hears the HISSING sound behind her head...

NOT SOMEONE. SOMETHING.

She pulls at the grain, clawing/thrashing, flailing her arms and legs, moving to the daylight as fast as she can, and we see --

EXT. SILO - LATE AFTERNOON

-- thousands of yellow beads pouring out of ripped steel at the base of the silo, creating a hazy diffusion in the air.

April spills into the golden fog.

SHE RUNS FOR IT.

We hear the familiar sound of RUSHING WATER ahead --

EXT. CREEK - LATE AFTERNOON

April doesn't look back. But if she did, she would see the TERRIFYING ABERRATION pursuing her...

GAINING SO QUICKLY

THAT IT'S ALREADY ON HER HEELS AS SHE

LEAPS INTO THE RAGING FRESHWATER CREEK --

EXT. UNDERWATER - LATE AFTERNOON

April is sucked under the surface.

She OPENS HER EYES long enough to glimpse a distorted view of the creature above. The monster is confused and searching - losing its prey in the LOUD ROAR OF THE WATER.

April is pulled to safety downstream.

But the current is too swift and too strong for her to come up for air.

April flails underwater. She's knocked to one side, then another, then sinks to the floor, and --

BAM. The back of her head clips a BOULDER.

April goes limp. Her unconscious body is carried aimlessly downstream.

EXT. SILO - SUNSET

John arrives at the broken SILO but it's too late. He scans the horizon.

The sky is blood red. The crops sway hypnotically in an eerie breeze.

No sign of his daughter or the monster.

John surveys the damage to the silo. Something SHINY catches his eye.

He reaches into the spilled grain and finds --



EXT. CREEK - SUNSET

April washes onto a muddy creek bed. She's still unconscious. Her face half submerged in water.

THE WATER SHE RESTS IN TURNS RED.

Suddenly, her arms spasm and twitch.

APRIL JOLTS AWAKE.

She vomits creek water. Heaving and choking. Dazed.

April crawls out of the water. Wipes blood from the back of her head. She takes stock of her new location.

She is surrounded by dozens of CHERRY BLOSSOM TREES. The field of WHITE undulates as far as the eye can see.

She's been here before.

April stands before the gate of a small **GRAVEYARD**.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

Mia pries the NAIL from her foot with tweezers. She rubs alcohol into the wound.

Nearby, Will stacks two WATER CONTAINERS on the far wall, and adjusts their CHART from

THREE GALLONS to FIVE

Will smiles to himself. Proud he faced his fears.

Mia glances at APRIL'S DIARY.

do not read, specially mom and dad.

Mia thinks it over. Then flips to a random entry:

*my dad is not ~~so~~ nice.
he does not talk to my
sister he does not
care about us.*

THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN.

John enters. Mia closes the diary.

Will runs up and hugs his father.

John moves over to Mia. Kisses the side of her face.

There's a sadness in his eyes. A nervous determination. He blinks, as if to say, "I'm sorry. I have no other choice."

John hurries over to the MONOPOLY BOARD.

He picks up the TOP HAT (John) and slides it all the way to the space labeled **TURBINE**

FADE TO:

FLASHBACK: INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

A hand places two HOTELS on BOARDWALK.

The family is playing MONOPOLY. Like the opening scene, there is no conversation. But not because the family can't talk. Because they don't want to.

The hand belongs to Iris. She picks up her iPhone.

MIA

No texting. It's family time.

IRIS

So, should I just sit here in awkward silence like every week?

JOHN

What's your problem?

IRIS

Mom, may I be excused?

Mia nods. Iris gets up.

JOHN

Hey, I'm talking to you.

IRIS

Oh, you're talking to me? That's new. Wow. I thought we weren't talking because I'm soooo incompetent at helping with the farm.

Iris' face is hard, but tears start to fall anyway.

IRIS
I think I like it better when you
don't say anything to me.

Iris storms out of the room. A DOOR SLAMS down the hall.

John sits in stunned silence.

JOHN
I don't know what's gotten into
her.

MIA
You act like she doesn't exist.

John's confused. He was expecting Mia to take his side.

MIA
You don't talk to her anymore. You
don't tell her you love her.

JOHN
She knows I love her.

MIA
She needs to hear you say it.

FLASHBACK: INT. FARMHOUSE, IRIS' ROOM - DAY

John sits next to Iris.

JOHN
I, um... Iris, I need to tell you
something.

Iris hides her face.

JOHN
I got this nasty crow problem,
and... and I'm worried if I can't
solve it, we're gonna lose an
entire harvest season.
(beat)
Do you think you could help me?

Iris looks at her dad.

FLASHBACK: INT. PICKUP - DAY

John drives his PICKUP TRUCK. Iris and April ride shotgun.

IRIS

(excited)

It's called a frequency generator. It shoots out weird noises at different pitches and amplitudes that humans can't hear. It'll drive the birds completely INSANE, they won't know what hit'em. Much better than your lame scarecrow idea.

JOHN

(impressed)

Where'd you learn about this?

IRIS

Diplo.

JOHN

That an App or something?

Iris looks at John like he's from Mars.

JOHN

(winks)

Just playin'. DJ Diplo foreva.

Iris laughs. John laughs too. Feels good to be talking again.

FLASHBACK: EXT. ABE'S ELECTRONICS - DAY

John pays for the SIGNAL GENERATOR. Nearby, Iris and April play with an INSTAX POLAROID CAMERA.

APRIL

Dad, please?

IRIS

Please, Dad?

John buys the girls the Polaroid camera. Before they leave, John takes a PHOTO of Iris & April (the one we saw earlier).

FLASHBACK: INT. PICKUP - DAY

John drives the girls home. Something on his mind --

JOHN

Iris, uh, I wanted to say... well, and maybe I don't say this enough. But I wanted to say...

IRIS

Yeah?

John thinks about what Mia told him. How he doesn't communicate with his daughter. How he never tells her he loves her. He thinks about how this could be that moment.

IRIS

What is it?

A traffic light up ahead turns yellow. John drives right through it.

JOHN

Nevermind. It's nothing.

A SPEEDING VAN CUTS THROUGH THE INTERSECTION AND BROADSIDES THEIR TRUCK WITH TREMENDOUS MOMENTUM --

SUDDENLY AND WITHOUT WARNING:

THE TRUCK FLIPS

END OVER END

CRASHING TO A VIOLENT STOP

A silent beat. Smoke billows from the hood. Glass shards litter the street.

John crawls out of the overturned pickup.

JOHN

NO NO

He pulls April out of the wreckage.

JOHN

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE

There's a BODY forty feet away. She's not moving. It's Iris.

John stumbles to Iris. Picks her up. She's dead.

JOHN

NO PLEASE NO IRIS PLEASE IRIS IRIS

April stands behind John. Her ears are BLEEDING.

APRIL
I CAN'T HEAR YOU DADDY I CAN'T HEAR
YOU I CAN'T HEAR MY VOICE DADDY

THIRD ACT:

EXT. CEMETERY - SUNRISE

April sleeps at the foot of a HEADSTONE marked IRIS WALKER.

INT. SHED - SUNRISE

Dim sunlight peaks through the cracks of the shed wall.

John is focused on a SKETCH of a tower. Measurements scribbled in the margins. He checks his math.

The sketch is labeled: **BAD IDEA**

John collects TEN 20 ft segments of rope. He ties each segment together creating one long BRAIDED ROPE.

Mia privately passes John a NOTE:

YOU CANNOT TRAP IT
IT WILL KILL YOU

John crumples the note.

He hugs Mia and Will as if he may never see them again. John tries to leave but Will won't let go.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - SUNRISE

John crosses the lawn to the farmhouse, somber and serious.

INT. BASEMENT - SUNRISE

John goes to a SAFE in the basement. The combination is written on the sketch: 12,22,8

Inside the safe we see various NOISY OBJECTS (i.e. ALARM CLOCKS, WHISTLES, CELL PHONES, WIND CHIMES).

John gathers three KITCHEN TIMERS into his backpack.

INT. FARMHOUSE, LAUNDRY ROOM - SUNRISE

John stops by the MARKER BOARD labeled BABY NAMES.

He crosses off ~~HOLLY~~ and re-writes IRIS.

EXT. VALLEY - MORNING

John travels through the valley. The backpack around his shoulders.

EXT. LAKE - MORNING

John pulls himself across the lake.

EXT. WELL - MORNING

John reaches inside his backpack for a TIMER. He winds the DIAL. Places it on the well. It starts counting down:

TIMER #1: 59 minutes

John inputs the corresponding time into his WRISTWATCH. He's using the timers as LURES.

EXT. HILLTOP - DAY

John travels into the deep horizon. The scenery is truly breath-taking.

He checks his watch: 42 minutes

EXT. WIND FARM - DAY

John comes upon a shortgrass prairie. He sees a dozen WIND TURBINES in the distance. They each have three PROPELLER BLADES and make up what is called a WIND FARM.

John checks his watch: 30 minutes

We sense he's nervous about the time. John unpacks the second TIMER and winds the dial.

TIMER #2: 29 minutes

SUDDENLY, THE TURBINE PROPELLERS START TO MOVE --

A heavy WIND rips across the field, carrying a flurry of DEAD LEAVES into John's path.

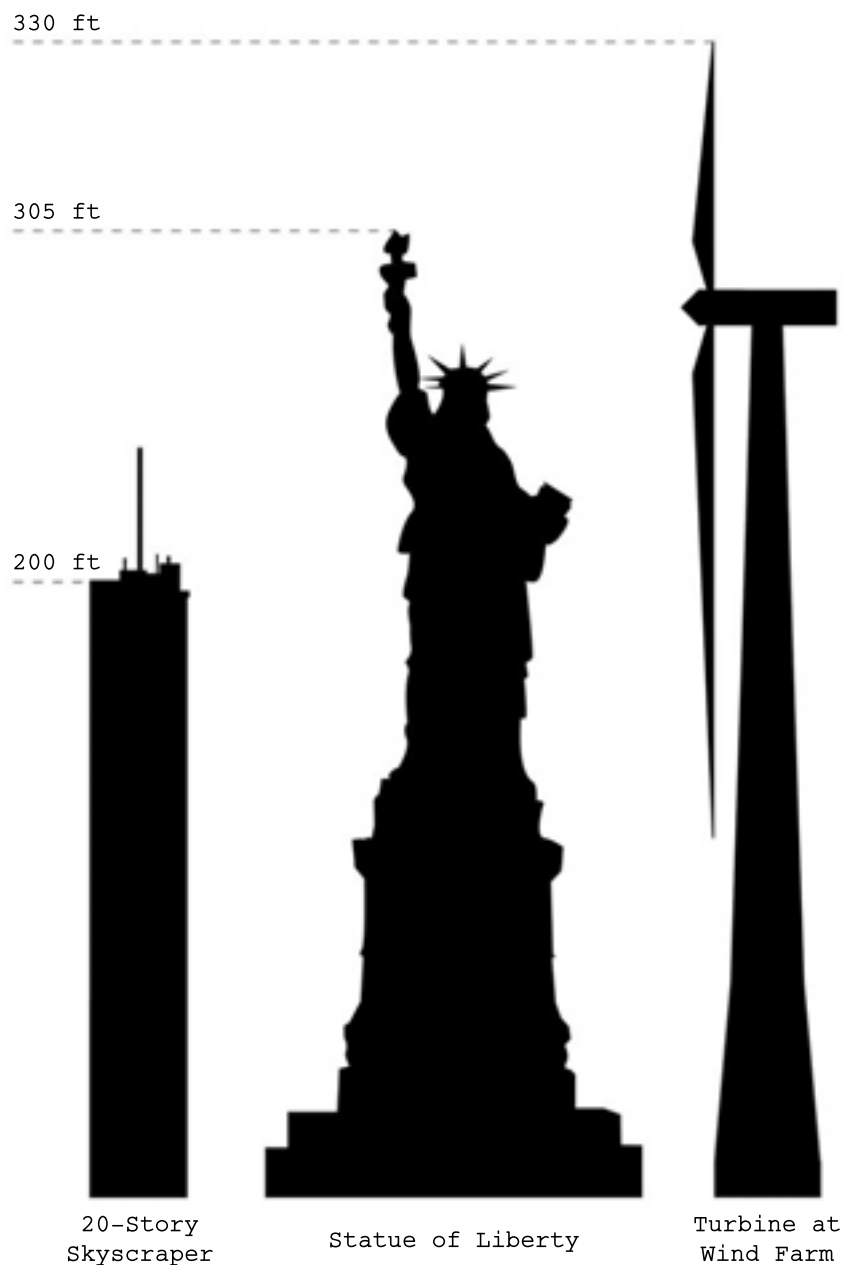
John proceeds cautiously. It's like crossing a MINE FIELD. One wrong step... one crunch of foliage... could end it all.

EXT. WIND FARM, TURBINE - DAY

John arrives at the base of the nearest WIND TURBINE.

He gazes up at the towering structure in front of him. It's a modern windmill of sorts; once used to convert kinetic energy from the wind into electrical power.

Now, it's just an abandoned monolith that stretches an astounding 330 ft into the sky. To put this into perspective...



INT. TURBINE, BASE - DAY

John climbs into the turbine. Leaves the door WIDE OPEN.

The first thing we notice are the DEAD BODIES. Probably WIND TECHNICIANS slaughtered by the monster long ago. They are decomposing. The smell of rotten flesh is unbearable.

They have one important thing in common - their necks are broken and all of their VOCAL CORDS have been ripped out.

Above is a mostly HOLLOW TUNNEL, with a single LADDER that runs all the way to the top of the tubular steel tower.

The tower itself is bisected by 3 platforms along the way, each with a GATE that can be opened or closed.

John is nervous. Keeps checking his watch. The journey took longer than planned.

He sets the final TIMER and starts to climb the ladder.

TIMER #3: 22 minutes

By the way, it takes approximately 30 minutes to climb the Statue of Liberty, so if John wants to get to the top of this turbine before the timers go off, he needs to HAUL ASS.

INT. SHED - DAY

COME IN ON WILL'S STRICKEN EYES. Reeling. Shock doesn't even begin to explain what he's seeing...

His hands hold a SEGMENT OF BRAIDED ROPE that John somehow left behind.

Mia sees it too. Can't believe it. Wonders for a moment what they can do. Decides: there's nothing they can do.

Will runs the ROPE to the shed door, prepared to bring it to John. Mia BLOCKS him. Too dangerous.

Will backs away. His heart pounds. No time to think.

EXT. SHED, ROOF - DAY

Will opens the hatch on the roof and climbs out.

Mia watches in horror.

INT. TURBINE, PLATFORM ONE - DAY

John is halfway up the turbine. It is COMPLETELY DARK up here except for the light coming through the doorway below.

John shuts and locks the LADDER GATE on platform one. It closes with a faint CLINK noise; a threatening reminder to stay QUIET.

Keeps climbing. He's moving fast, but each footstep ECHOES loudly in the chamber, tempering his escalation.

A NOTE about Wind Turbines: people who ascend the central ladder, in any other context, would only do so if they were properly HARNESSED TO A SAFETY CABLE, because to fall while climbing a turbine ladder, at this height, would be DEATH.

Which is why it's so terrifying when...

JOHN SLIPS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

EXT. VALLEY - DAY

Will runs with the ROPE SEGMENT. It's dangerous to move this quickly and recklessly.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Will jumps into the ROW-BOAT. Unlike last time, he is not afraid anymore.

Will pulls himself across the lake.

He can almost see the TIMER ticking away on the WELL.

How much time is left? 20 minutes? Or does it say 15?

Will gets closer. The dial on the timer coming into crisp FOCUS:

Oh no...

TIMER #1: 1 minute

He has to stop that timer!

INT. TURBINE - DAY

John hangs on for dear life. One hand on the ladder, the other holding his BACKPACK. Dangling in inky darkness.

He regains his footing. Takes a step.

THE RUNG BUCKLES

JOHN FALLS TO PLATFORM ONE

LANDS ON HIS ARM. THE BONE BREAKS WITH A DRY SNAP. JOHN WRITHES IN PAIN, UNABLE TO MOVE.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Will pulls himself across the lake as fast as he can.

TIMER #1: 5 seconds

His hands are bleeding.

4 seconds

Face red.

3 seconds

Tears in his eyes.

2 seconds

Will braces himself.

DING!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

ALL THE QUIET THAT HAS BEEN BUILDING UP SUDDENLY EXPLODES IN ONE DEAFENING **SHRIEK** AS THE CREATURE LEAPS OUT OF THE LAKE, CAPSIZING THE BOAT, PLUNGING WILL INTO RED ALGAE.

EXT. HILLTOP - DAY

The quiet prairie.

TIMER #2: *DING!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!*

INT. TURBINE, PLATFORM TWO - DAY

John climbs one handed. His BROKEN ARM completely useless.

He arrives at PLATFORM TWO. Locks the gate. Below we hear...

TIMER #3: *DING!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!*

John is rattled. Everything is going wrong. He looks down.

A horrible silent moment passes and then...

THE LARGE DARKENED FIGURE OF THE CREATURE CLIMBS INTO THE TURBINE. FUCK, THAT WAS FAST.

EXT. WELL - DAY

Will surfaces. He looks at the wet ROPE SEGMENT and tosses it to the ground.

INT. TURBINE, PLATFORM THREE - DAY

John arrives at the top of the turbine. Closes and locks the final gate.

He listens in **TOTAL DARKNESS**:

HEARS THE MONSTER BELOW. ITS BIO SONAR PULSE ENGULFING ALL THE SOUND AROUND US. THRASHING AND FIGHTING ITS WAY UP THE WALLS - BREAKING! THROUGH EACH GATE ALONG THE WAY - AS JOHN REALIZES IT CAN SEE PERFECTLY IN THE DARK.

EXT. TURBINE, ROOF - DAY

John climbs outside into BLINDING SUNLIGHT. He locks the ROOF DOOR behind him.

John's eyes adjust to a dizzying 360 degree view of Midwest landscape. Rolling hills and high plains that go on forever.

WE MAY OR MAY NOT NOTICE...

The CHROME SAUCER protruding from the Earth like a dot on the horizon. Its battered exterior encrusted with black welts. With DISHES that jut out like longwave receivers. A shape that could only be described as a crashed ALIEN DROPSHIP.

John reaches into his backpack for his BRAIDED ROPE.

Ties one end to the roof, throws the other end down the turbine, and then --

John learns what we already knew:

THERE IS NOT ENOUGH ROPE TO REACH THE GROUND.

The **ALIEN'S** bark reverberates through the tubular tower. Sounds of movement against the walls rush toward us.

THE ROOF DOOR CREAKS AS PRESSURE IS PLACED AGAINST IT.

There's a series of clanks and shuffling sounds. BREATHING. Then POUNDING and CLAWING.

THE ROOF DOOR BENDS OUTWARD IN THE SHAPE OF AN INHUMAN HAND.

JOHN REPELS OFF THE SIDE OF THE TURBINE.

ALL THE WAY DOWN.

FALLING.

FALLING.

FALLING TOO FAST.

FALLING WAY TOO FAST.

JOHN SLOWS HIMSELF DOWN.

THE ROPE BURNING THROUGH HIS HANDS AND SLEEVES BEFORE HE COMES TO A FULL STOP. HOLDING. DANGLING.

There's about a fifty foot gap between the end of the rope and the ground.

John spots a LADDER on the other side of the base. If he can just swing over to it, he can get down...

WE HEAR THE ALIEN DESCENDING THE TOWER FROM INSIDE.

John holds the rope with his good arm, and runs alongside the outer wall of the turbine.

A few tries and he's there. Grabs the ladder with his broken arm and climbs down in excruciating pain.

John lands at the base of the turbine.

HE THROWS THE FRONT DOOR CLOSED AND LOCKS IT FROM OUTSIDE.

THE ALIEN IS TRAPPED INSIDE THE TURBINE.

This is his chance. THIS IS WHAT JOHN CAME HERE TO DO:

JOHN
(at the top of his lungs)
APRIL!! APRIL!! CAN YOU HEAR ME?!

No response. John yells LOUDER.

JOHN
APRIL!! WHERE ARE YOU?! APRIL!!

THE LETHAL ARMS OF THE ALIEN SMASH THE TURBINE WALLS FROM INSIDE. THE STEEL BUBBLES AND BENDS AROUND THE BASE. DOING EVERYTHING IT CAN TO BREAK OUT OF THE TURBINE.

John yells EVEN LOUDER.

JOHN
APRIL!! APRI--

APRIL (O.S.)
(faraway)
--DAD!? DADDY!?

JOHN RUNS TOWARD THE VOICE.

JOHN
I'm coming.

EXT. WIND FARM - DAY

John makes a sudden right turn through the field of dead leaves.

EXT. MARSH - DAY

Another sudden turn, this time left, into MARSHLAND. John's feet trounce loudly through puddles. Mud splashes everywhere.

EXT. CREEK - DAY

John lands at the edge of a CREEK and sees --

APRIL STANDING ON THE OTHER SIDE. WAITING FOR HER DAD.

EXT. TURBINE - DAY

THE ALIEN WRENCHES ITSELF FREE FROM THE TURBINE.

...and then it WAITS and LISTENS.

EXT. CREEK - DAY

The creek is too wide to cross over. John and April race along the bank on opposite sides.

The creek starts to narrow bringing them

CLOSER

CLOSER

CLOSER

CLOSER

CLOSER

CLOSER

CLOSER

John jumps over the narrow part of the creek and catches his daughter. The momentum carries him and April into a mountain of crops.

EXT. CORN FIELD - DAY

Leaves and stalks slap them from all directions as they run.

John slows down, gains control of his breathing. Hears the WHEEZY PURR of the alien nearby. Not sure what direction. Could be anywhere.

April loses her dad for a moment through the dense corn. She gets tangled and falls. Starts to panic.

April turns as a SHADOW PASSES OVER HER.

A HAND GRABS APRIL'S HAND.

Will pulls April to her feet. They run together. Will never lets go of her hand.

John stumbles into a harvest tract. He can see the top of the farmhouse materializing through the crops.

April and Will appear twenty feet away in the same tract. They're searching for John.

John tries to motion them over but -- **THUD**.

A SCARECROW DROPS OUT OF THE SKY AND LANDS BETWEEN THEM - AS IF THROWN BY THE ALIEN. EVERYONE DUCKS. FRIGHTENED AND SILENT. MUSIC SCORE RISES.

THERE IS MOVEMENT ALL AROUND THEM.

BUT WHERE IS IT COMING FROM?

IT'S COMING...

FROM BEHIND...

MIA (V.O.)

April?

A LINE FORMS IN THE CROPS. THE KIND OF LINE MADE BY SOMETHING TRAMPLING THROUGH A FIELD. HEADING DIRECTLY TOWARDS APRIL.

APRIL STARES AT THE THROWN SCARECROW. IT'S THE ONE SHE LEFT BEHIND EARLIER.

HER EYES BIG AND FULL. CONCENTRATING.

MIA (V.O.)

Can you hear me?

FLASHBACK: INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Mia watches as a DOCTOR adjusts April's new HEARING AIDS at an AUDIOLOGIST OFFICE. John stands quietly in the background.

APRIL

i can hear you

The Doctor inspects April's ears with an OTOSCOPE.

MIA

How's it feel?

APRIL

stings

DOCTOR

Your ears are going to be extremely sensitive for a while.

MIA

(quietly to John)

You should say something.

John opens his mouth as if to talk, but he can't find the words.

FLASHBACK: EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

They leave the doctor's office.

John tries to place a comforting hand on April's shoulder. She pushes his hand away.

FLASHBACK: INT. FARMHOUSE, UPSTAIRS - DAY

April stands sadly in the hall, studying playful letters on a bedroom door which spell out "Iris".

A noise grabs her attention --

FLASHBACK: INT. FARMHOUSE, LIVING ROOM - SUNSET

April moves through the house, testing the volume on her hearing aids.

She is taken with all the SOUNDS around her. THE HUM OF THE AIR CONDITIONING. THE REFRIGERATOR BUZZ. THE CROWS OUTSIDE...

APRIL RECOILS. A STRANGE HIGH-PITCH RINGING PULSATES IN HER EAR, LIKE AN IRRITATING, PAINFUL WHISTLE.

FLASHBACK: EXT. CORN FIELD - SUNSET

April follows the RINGING outside.

Hundreds of CROWS flock away from the corn field.

April sees her father placing a SIGNAL GENERATOR on one of the SCARECROWS.

The high pitched sound is coming from the generator. It holds uncomfortably resonant in April's ear.

April approaches the SCARECROW and turns OFF the SIGNAL GENERATOR.

JOHN

What are you doing?

APRIL

hurts my ears

John turns the generator back ON. Walks away.

April turns it OFF again, defiant.

JOHN

April, what are you doing?

APRIL

hurts my ears

JOHN

No it doesn't. Only animals can hear this. Go back inside.

John turns it back ON. Walks away again.

APRIL
I hate you.

John stops.

APRIL
I wish you died instead of her.

BACK TO:

STALKS BREAK AND BEND BEHIND THE CHILDREN.

THE ALIEN KNOWS THEY'RE CLOSE.

April crawls to the THROWN SCARECROW.

Will looks at his sister like she's crazy.

April reaches into the body of the scarecrow and retrieves:

THE SIGNAL GENERATOR

April and John lock eyes.

John sees where she's going with this...

April is going to use the signal generator against the alien.

John nods, encouraging her.

April sets the FREQUENCY DIAL on the signal generator to 500 GHz - its max setting.

The alien steps out of the corn.

April cranks the OUTPUT to 100%.

John gives April a thumbs up.

They are finally working together. They are finally starting to communicate.

April's finger hovers over the ON/OFF switch.

She can feel the alien's breath on the back of her neck.

WITH THE FLICK OF A SWITCH, APRIL TURNS THE GENERATOR **ON!**

But nothing happens...

John and April look on in horror.

She hits the switch again. Nothing.

April flips the generator over and pulls out the BATTERIES. They are CORRODED. John can't believe it. It's all over.

MIA (V.O.)
What are you thinking about?

JOHN (V.O.)
Nothing.

The alien hears April's breathing change. Her hands start to tremble.

MIA (V.O.)
Why won't you talk to us anymore?

JOHN (V.O.)
I don't know.

April goes white. She stares helplessly at her father.

MIA (V.O.)
You just disappear sometimes...
(beat)
Into a quiet place.

PUSH IN ON JOHN'S FACE, AS WE REALIZE, THE FLASHBACKS ARE HIS MEMORIES. THEY CONTINUE TO BUILD INTO AN OVERLAPPING CACOPHONY OF VOICES AND IMAGES. BARELY COHERENT. AGGRESSIVELY SENTIMENTAL. FOCUSING ON THE THINGS WE STRUGGLE WITH ON THE INSIDE. ALL THE THINGS THAT GO LEFT UNSAID. A MONTAGE OF THE SUBCONSCIOUS. THE UNSPOKEN. THE QUIET PLACE OF OUR MINDS:

APRIL (V.O.)
How come you and Daddy don't talk?

IRIS (V.O.)
I think I like it better when you don't say anything to me.

MIA (V.O.)
You act like she doesn't exist.

APRIL (V.O.)
I hate you.

JOHN (V.O.)
She knows I love her.

MIA (V.O.)
She needs to hear you say it.

*JOHN (V.O.)
I need to tell you something.*

*IRIS (V.O.)
What is it?*

Tears form in the corners of John's eyes. He knows what he has to do. John silently backs away. Opens his mouth. And says with everything in his lungs:

JOHN
I love you.

And with that, the alien turns its focus from the kids to John. This is John's final sacrifice for his family.

April and Will look up through tears. They see the alien rip across the tract toward their father.

Just before the alien LUNGES, Will turns the volume all the way down on April's hearing aid, drowning out John's CRIES as OUR WORLD GOES SILENT.

EXT. CORN FIELD, CLEARING - DAY

SLOW MOTION: April and Will escape into the corn.

EXT. CORN FIELD, WEATHER VANE - DAY

SLOW MOTION: April and Will pass the WEATHER VANE. They follow it to the FARMHOUSE ▷ ▷ ▷

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

SLOW MOTION: April and Will run to the shed. The alien close behind. BLOOD on its face.

INT. SHED - DAY

SLOW MOTION: April runs to the back of the shed.

She removes two BATTERIES from the MP3 PLAYER and slaps them into the SIGNAL GENERATOR.

April stands outside in front of the shed.

The alien somehow inches away.

April lets out a stunned cry.

Falls back.

Closes her eyes.

Activates the SIGNAL GENERATOR.

WE HEAR NOTHING OVER THE HIGH PITCHED RING OF THE GENERATOR, which seems to take on a music-like quality; heavy dissonance climbing to an unexpected harmonic crescendo.

April looks up, terrified at what she'll see.

SHE SEES --

THE ALIEN FROZEN IN A SEIZURE.

SHIVERING, ALMOST. FROM THE INSIDE.

A TINY VIBRATION MOVING THROUGH ITS COMPLEXION.

LIKE A SONIC TUMOR, GROWING, EXPANDING, EATING AWAY ALL THE VITAL PARTS THAT MAKE IT HEAR, THINK, MOVE, KILL...

THE ALIEN COWERS

CONTORTS

COLLAPSES DEAD

JUST AS --

SOUND BEGINS TO FADE BACK IN ALL AROUND US.

AND TIME SEEMS TO SPEED UP TO NORMAL.

April turns to close the SHED DOORS...

But Mia stops her. She pushes the doors WIDE OPEN.

They don't have to be afraid anymore.

The family embraces. Melting into a flurry of emotions that have gone unexpressed for far too long.

SLOW FADE TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - SUNSET

Autumn leaves blow over a recently harvested field. They swirl through the crisp air and fall on a pair of HEADSTONES.

April stands in a SUNDAY DRESS. Her hair braided behind her head. The SIGNAL GENERATOR hangs around her neck.

She places a PURPLE IRIS on a grave marked **JOHN WALKER**.

Mia and Will stand behind her with a STROLLER. A ONE YEAR OLD plays nearby.

Mia looks at April, she smiles, brushes her daughter's hair behind one ear.

WE HEAR THE LAUGHTER OF BABY IRIS FILL THE AIR.

THE END.