

WOLFMEN - FOURTH DRAFT (22.08.21)

Written by

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**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM - MORNING.**

WILL (20), average in almost every respect save for his remarkably pale face, stands before the mirror. Examining himself.

His legs are CRUSTED with long-since-dried-mud. Same as the right side of his torso. On the other side, just under his rib cage, there's a DRIBBLING GASH.

But Will ignores all of this. Too preoccupied with a forensic investigation of his own gaunt face. There's something wrong about it. The skin around his eyes is loose. Like it doesn't fit. A mask.

A painful *CRACK!* brings with it a shifting cheekbone!

Will flinches! Bends double with the sudden pain, leaning out of frame...

When Will finally rights himself, he looks different...

His face has shifted... Changed... But looking back is not a beast. No, another young man peers back at him.

Slightly older than Will. More handsome maybe.

**- MOMENTS LATER.**

Will sits on the edge of the tub, now reverted to his less-handsome facade.

HELEN (56), Will's mother, dabs gently at the gash with an antiseptic wipe the way only a retired teacher would. Carefully but also apparently disappointedly.

Will winces but Helen doesn't stop. She lets out a tut.

HELEN  
Don't fidget.

Will stays quiet.

HELEN (CONT'D)  
If you're going to fidget you can start doing this yourself.

WILL  
Sorry.

HELEN  
This is worse than last time.

WILL  
It's not that bad.

She dabs and Will flinches again.

HELEN  
It's deep. How did- where did you  
get this one?

Will looks sheepish. As though he'd done this to himself  
purposefully - he hasn't.

WILL  
Are you going to tell Dad?

HELEN  
I suppose that depends.

WILL  
On what?

HELEN  
On what you tell me, now, Will. Is  
this you?

WILL  
No, Mum. I wouldn't.

Helen looks at him. Knowing.

WILL (CONT'D)  
I didn't.

WILL (V.O.)  
(Reading as he writes.)  
*"The 12th of August.*

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, WILL'S ROOM - LATER.**

Will starts writing in a blank document on his laptop.

WILL (V.O.)  
*"I'm starting this journal in an  
attempt to document every morning  
anything vaguely noteworthy from  
the night before. The aim obviously  
being to externalize what's going  
on internally. To identify  
patterns."*

**EXT. COUNTRY LANE - MORNING.**

Dew slicks the patchy grass and turns the dirt to mud. A cold, mid-August morning.

Centre frame is Will. Crumpled on the ground. HALF-NAKED, muddied and cold.

WILL (V.O.)

*"It happened again last night.*

Just then, a LARGE, BLACK HOUND walks into frame. Sniffs Will, then looks up at someone out of frame. Wags its tail. Trots away.

WILL (V.O.)

*"I've given up on wearing anything other than boxers to bed because I just know any substantial clothing will get caught in something and ruined. Doesn't make it any less embarrassing, though. Wonder what Mum would think if she saw me- out there.*

Will groans and rolls over, clutching his side. THE GASH.

He looks over at the hound and we see as he does: a man resting on his haunches petting it.

The man doesn't pay Will any mind.

WILL (V.O.)

*"Every time it happens, my dreams are bad ones. The ones last night: I can only really remember what they felt like. Anxious, feverish. Like stress dreams, where your teeth fall out or you're driving and you hit someone and you keep driving because you're scared. Like that.*

The man feeds the hound a treat.

Eventually, he looks up at Will. Considers him. Apprehends him. Then, the flicker of a frown.

WILL (V.O.)

*"That's all I've got for now. I'll try to keep this updated. It might come out a bit garbled at times but that's the nature of things.*

Will gets to his feet with a sudden urgency but the man only gets up and walks off, black hound in tow.

WILL (V.O.)  
*"Forgive me."*

**CUT TO BLACK.**

**TEXT OVER BLACK:**

"SOMEWHERE IN MIDDLE ENGLAND."

AUNT KATH (V.O.)  
 And you just wake up somewhere new  
 every time?

**INT. QUEENSMADE INN - ALMOST TWO WEEKS LATER, LATE-AFTERNOON.**

The extended Popper family stretches down a long table; Aunt KATH, Uncle PETER (both 50s), Grandpa TEDDY (late 70s), and LAURA (mid-20s) - Will's kind yet strong-willed sister, the spitting image of their mother, if only they saw eye to eye.

An EMPTY SPACE at the end of the table denotes a NOTABLE ABSENCE.

Across from Will sits his cousin HARRY (his face is familiar: Will's handsome metamorphosis from earlier.) Will watches him with a kind of reverence.

There's a distinct sense of formality to the occasion. Smart clothing worn by all.

Aside from the Poppers and a number of hurrying waiters and waitresses, the place is EMPTY.

WILL  
 Not new, exact-

HELEN  
 (Cutting in)  
 It's a little odd to hear about, each time, Kath. We started off finding him around the house but recently he's been telling us about all these places he ends up. It's quite frightening to be perfectly honest.

WILL  
 That's a bit of an exaggeration, it really only happens occasionally.

HELEN

It's starting to happen more frequently, though, isn't it? Or am I remembering wrong, darling?

Will squirms a little in his chair, which Laura picks up on. She scowls at Helen. No one notices.

KATH

Has it been much of an issue at university? Not been locked out or anything like that, I hope.

WILL

It only started this summer. I suppose I'll start having to lock myself in when I move back to London.

There's a polite chuckle around the table.

A waitress enters the room with two plates of food. Another waiter follows behind her with another load. Helen flags them down, directs them to the correct recipients.

TEDDY

Maybe he's trying to escape.

Teddy chortles at his own joke. Will joins him.

WILL

I don't know *what* you're implying, Grandpa.

KATH

When do you go back, Will?

WILL

Not entirely sure on the day, yet. Stay here another month, probably. Term doesn't start until-

KATH

Hopefully we can see you again, soon, then.

WILL

Hopefully, yes. Will you be back anytime soon?

KATH

Maybe you all could come to see us.

HELEN

Sounds like a plan. Email me with some dates you're free, Kath.

TEDDY

You could swing by and pick me up too. Maybe even bring that man of yours along next time, too.

HELEN

Oh yes, he's terribly sorry he couldn't-

TEDDY

And how are things with you, Laura?

LAURA

Good, Grandad.

TEDDY

Good.

HELEN

She's doing very well, Dad.

LAURA

I did just say that-

HELEN

She's had a piece picked up in a show at a local gallery, in fact.

KATH

Oh! How splendid.

Harry smiles to himself. A shit-eating grin. Will glances at him. Takes it on board.

TEDDY

And how does it work from there? Are you working with them, now?

LAURA

No. I suppose it's back to working on the rest of my portfolio after this.

TEDDY

I see-

LAURA

Though, hopefully this time around  
I'll have a little bit more of a  
reputation in the local art  
community and-

TEDDY

And you'll be able to support  
yourself on what you earn from that  
exhibition?

LAURA

Not exactly.

Beat.

HELEN

We're still helping her out on that  
front, Dad.

Laura looks stone-faced. Teddy looks at her meaningfully,  
almost accusingly.

Another beat. Then, finally,

TEDDY

Ah. Well. I think it's important to  
have some kind of understanding of  
where you are in life, anyway.  
Which you do. Not just that, but an  
understanding of where you should  
be.

HELEN

Harry's been doing rather well with  
the firm, hasn't he, Pete?

PETER

Oh, rather. Pride of the firm.

**EXT. THATCH HOUSEHOLD - EVENING, LATER THAT DAY.**

Will pulls up alongside the curb, the bungalow featuring no  
driveway.

A young woman ambles out of the front door, backpack in tow.  
ELLIE (20), a youthful, free soul, weathered beyond her years  
by an almost impressively overbearing household. She clambers  
in.



**EXT. HANWALL HIGH STREET - MOMENTS LATER.**

The sun's ALMOST FULLY GONE DOWN. Will's car chugs along the main highstreet. The road is only lit by a few lamps, most of which are covered over by ancient trees the parish has refused to cut down.

ELLIE (O.S.)

You reckon he actually enjoys it there?

During the day the village is relatively still, but at night it's something else entirely. An idyllic storage facility for bodies that really belong to the large nearby towns. In the moments that Will's car vanishes from sight, the village left behind is VERITABLY GHOSTLY.

WILL (O.S.)

I dunno. I assume so. He seems fine.

**INT. WILL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS.**

ELLIE

Just seems like you don't get any choice in the matter. Like it'd be a bit of a coincidence that it just so happens to be his dream job too, right?

WILL

He's moving somewhere in life.

ELLIE

How's it pay?

WILL

It doesn't in the first year. Or so.

Ellie looks at Will and frowns: *you can't be serious.*

WILL (CONT'D)

That's how it works.

Ellie doesn't say anything. Will squirms.

WILL (CONT'D)

You can't seriously be judging someone our age for getting a job after all the complaining you do over not being able to get a decent one.

ELLIE

It's not a job if he's not being paid, though, Will. It's slave labour. Is this what you've got to look forward to?

Now Will doesn't say anything.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

(Mocking)

And this is what you want, right? You love accountancy that much too?

Will shifts, looks about at the scenery whizzing past.

WILL

At least I'll be doing something with myself.

ELLIE

What's that supposed to mean?

WILL

I'm just saying, I probably wouldn't be able to drop out of university and expect a roof over my head still.

ELLIE

You're on a roll tonight, keep going. What's next?

WILL

Come on, I was joking.

Ellie stares out the window. Silence.

WILL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Ellie.

Beat.

ELLIE

I know. It's okay.

They've reached the edge of the village and are plunged into darkness as they enter the unlit OCEAN OF FIELDS that surrounds Hanwall.

After a while Will takes a turn and Ellie looks over at him.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Wait hang on, we're going to the usual spot right?

WILL

Yeah but I gotta hide the car.

ELLIE

Oh, right. Max usually just puts his on the road.

WILL

Max has had his car towed multiple different times in multiple different cities.

ELLIE

If you hadn't noticed, we're not living in the city, Will.

**EXT. NARROW SIDE LANE, OUTSIDE HANWALL - MOMENTS LATER.**

The kind of road you wouldn't know existed unless you lived locally.

Will's car slows to a crawl then stops. He puts it into reverse and the accompanying rear-lights blink to life, revealing a SMALL GAP in the hedgerow behind them. Just large enough to store a car. Beyond that, QUIET, EXTENSIVE WOODLANDS.

WILL (O.S.)

How are things with your Dad?

**INT. WILL'S CAR.**

Ellie sits quietly, looking on into the night. Eventually she glances at Will.

**EXT. FIELD, OUTSIDE HANWALL - MINUTES LATER.**

Will and Ellie trudge across the field, torches in hand.

In the distance is a soft orange glow. Some kind of campfire. Tents surrounding it. A LARGER TENT stands out.

ELLIE

...like I'm not sure if that's the problem. It's just he doesn't want it shoved in his face and-

(She falters)

-and that's okay, right?

WILL

Uh, yeah- I mean sure.

ELLIE

I just don't want to be *that* kind  
of-

She stops herself short, suddenly self-conscious.

WILL

What?

ELLIE

No it doesn't matter.

As they get closer, the sound of music grows LOUDER AND LOUDER. Some kind of Indie Rock, par for the course. Figures float about, casting long shadows down the field towards the late-comers.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

How much did you have to drink?

WILL

Not enough that I couldn't get us  
here.

ELLIE

We'll have to get those numbers up  
then. I want you incapable of  
getting us back, tomorrow.

WILL

That seems entirely  
counterproductive.

ELLIE

I'm saving your soul.

HARRY (O.S.)

But my point is - it's not our job  
to cater to the worst-off.

**INT. QUEENSMADE INN - EARLIER THAT DAY.**

Staff-members swarm around the table, clearing dishes away and replacing them with hot drinks. Will sits back, sips a half-pint.

HARRY

We've made something of our lives,  
so-

LAURA

You're fucking twenty-one, Harry.

HELEN  
*Language, Laura.*

LAURA  
 (To Helen.)  
 No. I'm sorry, Mum, but he hasn't made anything of himself. He's twenty-one.

(Back to Harry.)  
 All you've accomplished is that you belong to the right family. And anyway, you're missing the point, they're not going to be able to get to that stage if people - like us, probably - don't help. And that will affect you in the long-run-

Laura glances at Will and widens her eyes in disbelief. Will turns away. Looks about at his family's face. Unimpressed. Helen looks apologetically at Kath.

PETER  
 We haven't heard anything from you, though, Will! How are you doing?

WILL  
 Oh I'm fine, aside from the sleep stuff.

PETER  
 Have you thought much about the end of this year?

WILL  
 I don't suppose so, no.

KATH  
 You've got some time yet-

PETER  
 Richard seemed to indicate you'd be following in Harry's footsteps.

WILL  
 Mm-

HELEN  
 We haven't had that discussion fully yet, Peter.

LAURA  
 Don't push him, Mum.

HELEN

No one's pushing anyone, Laura.  
It's a helpful discussion to have.

Will sinks in his chair a little.

KATH

You've put him in it now, Pete.

PETER

Well, we need all hands on deck if  
we're going to weather all that's  
going on at moment, isn't that  
right, Teddy?

Teddy doesn't say anything. GLARES down the table toward the  
empty chair.

LAURA

All I'm saying is: let him decide  
what's next.

HELEN

*Yes, darling,* but we need to  
prepare at least a little bit.

LAURA

No, but- he's doing incredibly  
well, and all you can think about  
is the future. He'll be perfectly  
fine deciding for himself.

Harry looks at his mother, Kath. Arches an eyebrow. She  
doesn't humour him.

HELEN

He is doing well, yes. But it would  
be helpful to know what he's  
thinking so we can really help him.

LAURA

That's not really why you want to  
know, though, is it?

HELEN

I haven't the slightest idea what  
you mean, Laura. You're being  
obtuse.

LAURA

I'm not being obtuse! You should  
stop pushing him!

HARRY

Maybe she just doesn't want Will turning out like you.

Laura goes SILENT. EVERYONE LOOKS AT HARRY.

KATH

Harry.

Laura gets up quickly, hurt. Glances about at her family. They all avert their gazes. She shakes her head, then STORMS OUT.

Beat.

The waitering team looks stunned. Helen notices them staring.

HELEN

Well-

Helen picks up her her mug.

HELEN (CONT'D)

She'll be okay. Don't let your drinks go cold.

**EXT. CAMPSITE, OUTSIDE HANWALL - LATER.**

Ellie, Will and LIAM (20) sit across from MAX (19), HANNAH (21), THOMAS (20) and RACHEL (also 20), looking slightly out of place herself but with an immediate air of warmth to her.

Liam's listening to the music, some kind of modern jazz, but the rest are listening to Ellie, who reads:

ELLIE

'Now there are times when a whole generation is caught in this way between two ages, between two modes of life and thus loses the feeling for itself, for the self-evident, for all morals, for being safe and innocent. Naturally, everyone does not feel this equally strongly. A nature such as Nie-'

She struggles with the sentence a little. Will looks over, amused.

WILL

You alright, there?

ELLIE

'A. Nature. Such as. Nietzsche's. Had to suffer our present ills more than a generation in advance. What he had to go through alone and misunderstood, thousands suffer today. I often think of these words while reading the records. Haller belongs to those who have been caught between two ages, who are outside of all security and innocence. He belongs to those whose fate it is to live the whole riddle of human destiny heightened to the pitch of a personal torture, a personal hell. There, as it seems to me, lies the meaning these records can have for us, and because of this I decided to publish them. For the rest, I neither approve nor condemn them. Let every reader do as his' -  
(She interjects)

Or her.

- 'conscience bids him.' -

- Or her. Come on Hermann.

LIAM

Who'd have thought a novel from the 20's could be so backwards in its language choices.

MAX

Why'd you pick this one, Will?

WILL

It resonated and I wanted to see what you all thought.

HANNAH

He just sounds whiny.

MAX

I swear to God, you're incapable of feeling. He's a tortured soul.

HANNAH

I mean you can be both.

Ellie lets out a low chuckle.

MAX

Is that the prologue?



ELLIE  
Yeah. Who's next?

THOMAS  
Rachel. You go.

Rachel looks hesitant. Thomas doesn't notice but Ellie picks up on it.

ELLIE  
It's like when you read in front of class. But ten times worse.

Ellie smiles. Rachel snorts.

RACHEL  
Will you hold my hand?

Ellie raises an eyebrow, smiles knowingly.

THOMAS  
Are you flirting with my girlfriend?

ELLIE  
She started it.

THOMAS  
I'm never bringing her again.

HANNAH  
You're so insecure, it's unreal.

Thomas looks scornfully at her.

Ellie leans over a little to Rachel and chucks her the book. Rachel flicks to the page they were on.

RACHEL  
(Teasing)  
She's far better at it than you, anyway, Thomas.

WILL  
(To Ellie)  
You're in.

**- LATER.**

A HAZE lingers in the air. Smooth jazz struggles out of the tinny speaker. Ellie takes a drag from the joint between her fingers.

Everyone's sitting in a circle - at least, a kind of circle; the tent's only just large enough to fit all of them.

Will looks out of it. Pupils dilated. In the background Rachel touches a finger to Thomas' tongue.

Will closes his eyes for a moment and the music fades out...

Somewhere, he starts to hear something... Something's *brushing against the tent*...

Will opens his eyes again. Sees a silhouette, just standing there taking everything in. It's difficult to tell exactly *quite what it is*.

The silhouette shifts slightly and extends a limb. Paws against the surface of the tent.

Will sits up.

The shade moves away from the tent's surface and swims down the side of the tent, prowling around the group...

No one else seems to take notice.

Soon, the shade starts nearing Will. He raises a hand to greet it. Reaches out slowly...

SUDDENLY, the song SKIPS, SHATTERING the tension with THE ANGST-RIDDLED RUMBLINGS OF BRITISH PUNK. Will turns away from the shade.

Liam jolts upright and makes a grab for his phone.

RACHEL

Keep it- keep it on.

MAX (O.S.)

She has taste too, Thomas, damn.

Will looks back to where the entity had been. Gone now.

THOMAS

I don't think there's anything left for me here.

ELLIE

We're here.

THOMAS

I'm cutting ties. I'm serious. Any day now. Don't even like your music.

RACHEL  
They know you don't like the music.

HANNAH  
No I'm with him on that one. Lefty  
bullshit.

MAX  
(Only half-joking)  
Oh, fuck off.

Will closes his eyes. Everything goes black.

ELLIE (O.S.)  
(To Will)  
I'm heading back to the tent. Don't  
wake me up coming in.

Will opens his eyes, LINGERS ON RACHEL LOOKING UP AT THOMAS.

WILL  
Alright.

**INT. HELEN'S CAR.**

Helen's focussing on the road. CHOIR MUSIC plays. Will stays  
quiet.

He looks up and sees the moon, full and dulled by the  
remaining daylight - an odd sight.

HELEN  
You and Teddy look so alike these  
days.

WILL  
Mm?

HELEN  
You and Teddy, you're his spitting  
image.

WILL  
Really?

HELEN  
If you've seen a picture of him  
when he was younger-

Silence again. She doesn't have the heart.

WILL

He told me to give Dad a kick for  
him.

Helen smiles politely. Pauses, then,

HELEN

Maybe it's about time someone did.

Will glances at her. She shakes her head.

HELEN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. That was uncalled for.  
I'm tired.

Will turns away.

WILL

I'll be out tonight.

HELEN

Where are you going?

WILL

Just seeing some friends.

HELEN

Can you tell me where you're  
staying?

WILL

Not entirely sure on that, yet.

Helen doesn't say anything for a beat, then,

HELEN

Be safe.

CUT TO BLACK.

**OVER BLACK.**

DEEP THUNDER ROLLS again in the distance.

A KIND OF SHOUTING can be heard far off. HEAVY BREATHING.  
Fast, disoriented footsteps through the mud.

**EXT. CAMPSITE - EARLY MORNING.**

IT'S STILL DARK.

The music has stopped. Silence but for the quiet smoldering of the dying campfire. NO ONE TO BE FOUND.

SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT...

A tent has been TIPPED ON ITS SIDE. The largest one from which everyone spilt earlier has been SLASHED, the interior of the tent visible. Belongings strewn about...

**EXT. COUNTRY LANE - CONTINUOUS.**

The shouts that we earlier heard in distance continue on, MORE FRANTIC AND CONFUSED THAN BEFORE.

LABOURED BREATHING closer to us and a pair of HEAVY FOOTSTEPS approaching fast.

Someone sprints past. TOO DARK TO SEE WHO.

A large silhouette darts past a gap in the trees off to the side. Footsteps SCRABBLING across dirt and grass. Following? PURSUING?

The person fleeing takes a SHARP RIGHT into a field in an attempt to get away...

**EXT. QUIET STREET, EDGE OF HANWALL - THIRTY MINUTES LATER.**

It's gotten brighter; the period in which the sun, slowly rising, joins forces with the street-lamps.

Will hurries down the street, SKIN COVERED IN CUTS AND MUD. He's EXHAUSTED and still drunk. Every other breath ends in a wretch.

He COLLAPSES ONTO THE CURB. Barely conscious, VOMITS, then passes out.

FADE TO:

**- LATER.**

Concerned neighbours peer out of their front windows at Will, still laying unconscious. A younger couple approach.

YOUNG WOMAN

You stay here, make sure he's okay,  
I'll get his Mum.

**- MOMENTS LATER.**

Helen, dressed in a morning gown, leans down and drapes a blanket over her son. Places a hand over his cheek.

He stirs.

HELEN

Let's go inside, Will. Come on, darling.

(To the young couple)

Thank you.

WILL

*Mmph-*

Will's eyes screw tighter before eventually opening. His face is tinged with a grave kind of green.

HELEN

I know. I know.

WILL

Mum?

The pair rise together, Will leaning on his mother.

HELEN

Are you hurt?

WILL

My head hurts... I- I-

HELEN

Alright, let's go inside. Come on.

Helen feels the eyes of the onlookers on her skin. Tries to ignore them by fussing over Will. Guiding him into the POPPER HOUSEHOLD. A two story Tudor-revival. A lavish mixture of blacks, whites, browns and the green of an immaculate garden. There's something cold about it.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, LIVING ROOM.**

Murmuring can be heard outside the room.

Will sits in a large, comfortable arm chair, sipping tea, his mother's blanket still wrapped around him. He glances timidly across to room to-

-RICHARD (50s). His father. The furtive patriarch. A man who never did quite fit but kept shaving edges until he did. He smolders silently as he watches Will.

Will looks at the floor, ASHAMED.

The murmuring stops, then Helen enters, standing between the two.

HELEN

Ellie's fine. Paul went and found her after he got a call from someone in the village. Found her in a field. Must've gotten lost last night when you all- do you know what happened?

WILL

I don't remember much of anything. It was dark and I was...

HELEN

Not a thing?

Will stays quiet.

HELEN (CONT'D)

You weren't having a-?

Will shakes his head.

WILL

Can I-?

RICHARD

Where are you going?

WILL

(Exasperated)

My *room*. I'm *tired*. I don't feel like - doing *this* - right now.

Richard frowns. Fury building. There's an interminable pause.

HELEN

I'll start you a bath.

Helen leaves first without saying anything. Richard lingers... then leaves. Whispers immediately start to reverberate down the hall.

RICHARD (O.S.)

...that boy...

HELEN (O.S.)

You think he's okay? Physically at least?

RICHARD (O.S.)  
 We'd be able to tell if he wasn't-  
 and that's the least of our worries  
 right now. We don't know anything  
 about the others-

Will gets up and leaves the room.

**INT. KITCHEN.**

The whispering stops. Helen smiles uncomfortably at her son as he passes by. Richard DOESN'T TURN TO LOOK.

Creaks can be heard as Will ascends the old staircase.

Helen glances warily at Richard then leaves the kitchen. A beat, then the sounds of PRESSURISED WATER hitting a bathtub. Richard retreats to the master bedroom, CLOSES THE DOOR BEHIND HIM.

**INT. WILL'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER.**

A CELL-LIKE ROOM. The low ceiling inherent to the architecture but no less oppressive. Bare, white walls. A single window. In the farthest corner is a standing mirror. In the centre of one wall, Will's bed.

Will stands at his door. Breathing deeply. Trying to get himself under control. Eyes screwed tight...

...Then he lurches to action. Picks his phone up and opens it. RINGS ELLIE. Puts it on speaker. Finally, she picks up.

WILL  
 Are you okay?

There's a CREAK on the landing as someone moves about outside. Will takes his phone off speaker.

WILL (CONT'D)  
 I heard you woke up in a field.

**- HOURS LATER.**

Will sits at the window. It's gotten dark out...

Suddenly, A LIGHT CUTS across the room. A car has pulled into the driveway outside.

Will leans closer to the window to see: a POLICE CAR pull to a stop. TWO OFFICERS climb out.



**INT. LIVING ROOM.**

Will sits by Helen across from the two fluorescent-jacketed police officers. ROBSON (39) and JONES (48). Richard stands in the doorway, behind his family.

Will picks nervously at one nail with another. Helen notices.

WILL (V.O.)  
*"The 16th of August.*

JONES  
You don't remember anything?

WILL (V.O.)  
*"I was dreaming last night. I must have been.*

Everyone turns to look at Will.

WILL  
I'm sorry-

ROBSON  
Don't be sorry, mate. You can only tell us what you know.

Jones shoots Robson a look. Robson sits back.

WILL  
It was so dark, we were all pretty out of it.

WILL (V.O.)  
*"But I can't tell the police about a dream I had.*

JONES  
You can account for the others?

Will pauses.

WILL  
Account for them?

JONES  
For their whereabouts. Their mental states. That sort of thing.

WILL  
I- don't suppose I can exactly. I don't know how long it had been.

JONES

Did you see any of them after you were awoken?

WILL (V.O.)

*"What would they think of me?"*

WILL

I don't remember seeing any of them, no. I assumed we all went different directions.

Jones writes something down.

WILL (CONT'D)

Have you spoken to the others?

ROBSON

Heard from some parents. But you're the first we've spoken to from your group of mates.

JONES

Just- one more thing- and we'll be out of your hair. Have you been able to get in touch with Rachel?

WILL

Rachel?

Will thinks for a moment. Glances at the DARK MIRROR of his locked phone screen. We linger on it.

WILL (CONT'D)

No... no. I haven't heard from her. We're not terribly close - she was there with Thomas. He might know.

**INT. WILL'S ROOM - LATER.**

Will taps at his laptop.

WILL (V.O.)

*"But I am missing time. And something happened in that lacuna. Something at the camp. What I do remember is that feeling I had. The same feeling I get when I'm not quite awake. From the waking nightmares."*

**INT. DINING ROOM - THAT NIGHT.**

Laura's arrived for the evening. She, Will and Helen sit about the rectangular table, nothing being said. Richard's nowhere to be seen.

WILL (V.O.)

*"I was being followed. Chased. I don't know by what. Didn't stop to check. I just had the compulsion to run. To get as far away from wherever I was as I could. That same suffocating, anxious feeling I get from all the nightmares. I suppose I'm a coward in my dreams too, but those screams..."*

Will's hand is in Laura's. She's reassuring him but also forgiving him for the night before. They've both stopped eating.

WILL (V.O.)

*"In my head I hear Rachel. But I don't know if that's just because of what-*

Will lets Laura's hand go and starts eating again.

**INT. WILL'S ROOM - LATER.**

Will stops typing and rethinks. Highlights, then deletes the last few lines. Starts typing again.

WILL (V.O.)

*"I won't get bogged down in conjecture. None of this can be guesswork. I need to stick to the facts. To what I know. This isn't some murder mystery-*

**INT. BACK ROOM - EARLY HOURS.**

Will pauses at the back door leading out to the garden. Somewhere in the room a clock ticks loudly. Finally he opens the door and exits.

WILL (V.O.)

*"The real difficult part is working out where the dreaming must have ended."*

**EXT. BACK GARDEN - MOMENTS LATER.**

Will makes himself comfortable on a lawn chair.

He places a few items on the table beside him. A bottle of Heineken, his phone, some headphones.

WILL (V.O.)

*"I remember running in my dream and then when I woke up, I remember the pain in my legs. I remember feeling the fear as I woke - I assume it residue from the nightmare."*

Will adjusts seat's back then equips his headphones. Picks up the bottle and cracks the top off on the side of the table. Takes a sip. Taps his phone.

CALMING VOICE (V.O.)

Hello again. Welcome to tonight's body scan.

Will sits back in his chair. Closes his eyes.

CALMING VOICE (V.O.)

You've gotten enough practice by now to know the early few steps, but I'll guide you through them again in case you need the help... Alright then, I want you to sit in a comfortable position you can hold and close your eyes.

Will opens his eyes, distracted for a second, then closes them again.

CALMING VOICE (V.O.)

Now... We're going to start with a deep breathing exercise to get you focusing in on your breath. So, breathe in deep through your nose, feeling your chest rise and your lungs fill... And hold it for a few moments...

Will breathes in.

CALMING VOICE (V.O.)

And out through your mouth...

**- MOMENTS LATER.**

Will's asleep, but the deep breathing continues over everything.

CALMING VOICE (V.O.)  
 Feel your body start to relax. Let  
 the tension start to ebb away. In  
 through your nose...

**EXT. A FIELD, OUTSIDE HANWALL - THE NEXT DAY.**

- A breath in.

A line of villagers COMB THE COUNTRYSIDE. Thomas, Will and Max are amongst their ranks.

CALMING VOICE (V.O.)  
 And out through your mouth...

- A breath out. Then another deep breath in...

Will looks over at Max, catches his eye. They both look over at Thomas, clearly concerned. He looks terrible.

- And a deep exhalation...

**INT. BOAR'S HEAD, HANWALL - THAT NIGHT.**

A mid range GASTROPUB. Folksy, charming but incredibly sleepy. A hub for all the village. The only real place there's a regular intersection of the various societies of Hanwall - contractors, retirees, youths, middle-managers.

- We hear a sudden, sharp inhalation that will never be released.

Everyone present - Will, Ellie, Hannah - sits silently, sipping on an array of pale ales. Max is at the bar, talking to someone.

Liam enters, spots his friends in the far corner and moves over. Eyes around the room on him.

LIAM  
 Hey.

Hannah and Ellie acknowledge him. Will stares off into space.

LIAM (CONT'D)  
 Where's Thomas?

ELLIE  
Still out there.

Liam looks tired. Same as them all. He takes a seat by Hannah, who slides her pint over to him.

HANNAH  
I don't want it.

Ellie turns to Will and lowers her voice.

ELLIE  
(To Will)  
How'd you sleep last night?

WILL  
Fine.

ELLIE  
You sure?

He shrugs. Doesn't want to talk about it.

WILL  
How about y-

Will stops for a moment and stares into space. Ellie watches his face.

ELLIE  
Yeah it was weird-

WILL  
(To Ellie)  
Ah, fuck, sorry. Just- fuck... the car...

ELLIE  
What?

WILL  
Been something in the back of my mind. Only just realised what it was. The car, it's-

ELLIE  
It's still at the-?

WILL  
Yeah.

ELLIE  
Do you think it *is* actually still there?

WILL  
I mean, I hope so.

ELLIE  
They'll probably have found it by now.

WILL  
No. The party we were in went in the opposite direction. And you saw how slow they were all moving. Won't have gotten there yet. Maybe. Come with me.

ELLIE  
What, now?

WILL  
No. Later.

ELLIE  
Why do you need me there?

WILL  
I don't know- to keep look out. If one of the parties sees me-

ELLIE  
They're not gonna think anything of it.

WILL  
It'd be-... it'd be easier with you there.

Will stops and looks about. A few nosy onlookers are glancing their way.

WILL (CONT'D)  
We're already the last ones to have seen her.

ELLIE  
I don't think-

WILL  
Just- please. It'll be quick and I'll drive you back to yours after. I won't drink tonight.

ELLIE  
Alright.

An older couple across the room aren't being subtle in their staring. Hannah meets their gazes defiantly. Only after a moment do they finally turn away.

Max wanders back from the bar.

MAX

Hey, do you guys remember Simon?  
From school?

Max gestures over his shoulder toward the guy he was just chatting to. Everyone else looks a little lost.

MAX (CONT'D)

Like three years up or something  
like that. He's just here to drink  
but-

LIAM

Oh yeah, Simon. What's he doing  
here? Thought he lived closer to  
school?

MAX

You guys know he did a policing  
degree, right? He says he's working  
for Thames Valley now.

LIAM

Really? I never took him for- wait-

MAX

(Cutting him off)  
Yeah...

LIAM

You wanna buy him a drink?

MAX

I was thinking you pay, but yeah.

WILL

You really think that'd be a good  
idea?

LIAM

(Short)  
Why wouldn't it be?

Liam gets up. Max follows.

To Will's surprise, Ellie gets up too. She glances at him meaningfully.



ELLIE

I'll pay.

**- MINUTES LATER**

Liam and Max sit to one side of SIMON (22) at the bar. A little past tipsy at this point, his head LULLING FORWARDS to the point that he's staring mournfully into his umpteenth glass of bitter.

Ellie sits on Simon's other flank, listening in and supplying the drinks. Will watches from the group's corner with Hannah.

SIMON

We were good friends at school,  
weren't we?

MAX

Yeah.

SIMON

So what happened?

LIAM

You left.

MAX

Well, yeah, but-

Simon turns to address Liam.

SIMON

We could've stayed in touch.

Suddenly Liam looks sheepish.

LIAM

Well. Sorry about that.

SIMON

Come on... I missed you guys.

Silence. Simon finishes his drink, leans back in his chair. WOBBLES A LITTLE.

Max's hand goes to Simon's back reflexively. Tips him forwards, back to equilibrium.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Buy me a drink first.

He snorts with laughter.

ELLIE  
 (Sick of him)  
 Already done that.

Simon doesn't hear.

MAX  
 You had friends in your year,  
 though, didn't you?

SIMON  
 We fell out of touch, too. Some  
 moved away. Some stayed here and  
 burned out, like - did you ever  
 meet Billy?

MAX  
 Yeah, I think so.

LIAM  
 Yeah.

Simon clumsily mimics the TYING OF A NOOSE around his own neck. Makes a show out of tightening it, then lets out an ugly, amused snort.

HANNAH  
 (Quietly, to Will)  
 This fucking guy.

ELLIE  
 (To Simon)  
 Why'd you come here?

SIMON  
 Why'd I come to Hanwall?

He leans across Max to face Ellie, LOOKS AT HER STERNLY... She matches his gaze... Then he forgets whatever it was he was going to say and turns away.

MAX  
 Yeah. What's your role? I don't  
 mean to pry or anything. I know the  
 rules. But I don't suppose you're  
 in on any of the information going  
 about at the moment?

SIMON  
 Information? Oh- hey, you're in on  
 all this shit too!

Simon looks excited. Claps for himself. Like it's some INSIDE JOKE.

ELLIE  
Christ. Do you know anything,  
Simon?

Simon turns round to face Ellie. Narrows his eyes at her.  
Remembers who she is.

SIMON  
Well, I can't really discuss any of  
it...

Ellie forces a smile.

LIAM  
Get you another one, Si?

SIMON  
Yes, my lad.

Simon turns back to Liam and Max.

Liam looks down to Ellie, who begrudgingly turns to the  
bartender, taking out her purse.

SIMON (CONT'D)  
I can tell you it's big, though.

MAX  
Big?

SIMON  
Bad shit.

Ellie reels back around.

SIMON (CONT'D)  
There's bad shit going on in this  
here village. They got the big guys  
coming out here tomorrow. Proper  
police. There's more- but-

He purses his lips and MIMES A ZIP closing over them. He  
snorts again at his own performance.

SIMON (CONT'D)  
Your friend. Thomas. He knew the  
girl didn't he?

He smiles cruelly. Ellie's ears perk up. She frowns...

SIMON (CONT'D)  
What was her name again?

MAX

Do they not tell you guys the names?

ELLIE

Wait hang on. *Knew* the girl?

Simon looks back to Ellie. Confused.

SIMON

What?

ELLIE

No, Simon, you said *knew*.

He pauses. Caught.

SIMON

We don't *know* it. But-

He looks her dead in the eye.

SIMON (CONT'D)

-there are probabilities and numbers for these kinds of things.

**EXT. DARK COUNTRY LANE, OUTSIDE HANWALL - LATER.**

Will walks quietly behind Ellie. The moonlight only barely illuminating the scene. The pair's cold breaths act as our only real visual marker. To their left is a STEEP EMBANKMENT, putting them a level lower than the field adjacent.

Ellie takes out her phone. Switches the torch on.

WILL

You sure that's a good idea?

ELLIE

Well, *I can't see*.

WILL

Cool it.

In the distance, the beams of bright torches can be seen.

WILL (CONT'D)

What's on your mind?

ELLIE

What's on my mind?

WILL

Okay. I know what's on your mind. I mean, which part of it.

ELLIE

I'm cycling between things.

WILL

Right. Just- don't let what Simon said get under your skin.

ELLIE

It's already under my skin, Will.

WILL

You remember what he was like in school. The guy's a piece of shit.

ELLIE

I know first hand what he was like in school. You remember what he said about-

Will doesn't say anything.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

I don't suppose he remembers either. He's a piece of shit but he's also a police officer and now he's pretty close to our single source of inside knowledge on this.

WILL

No, but I mean, the guy revels in fucking with people, he always did. That's all he's really doing. He probably doesn't even know if- I don't know why Max thought-

ELLIE

Wait. Shut up.

WILL

Sorry, I-

Ellie has frozen in place. She switches her torch off.

ELLIE

(Whispering)

No. Shut up for a second.

Ellie grabs Will by the arm. Looks pointedly up at the embankment.

A slight breeze ripples through the lane. Then, the sound of SHUFFLING FEET through grass... Then it stops...

Ellie scans the treeline opposite the embankment. IT'S TOO DARK...

MORE SHUFFLING. A twig breaks underfoot.

Without warning, a torch beam SHOOTs THROUGH A GAP in the tall hedgerow above them and sweeps overhead.

Will nearly lets out a yell. Barely manages to stifle it.

The torch moves ONE WAY then ANOTHER. Ellie crouches slowly. Will follows suit.

WILL  
(Whispering)  
Do we go? We should go, right? Fuck-

ELLIE  
Shh-

The light SWEEPS BACK the other way one last time, then the beam recedes as the person moves away.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
Are we almost there?

WILL  
Yeah, we're close.

ELLIE  
Well it'll be quicker to go back by car, then, wouldn't it?

**EXT. NARROW SIDE LANE, OUTSIDE HANWALL - MINUTES LATER.**

Darkness except for Ellie's phone light. An engine turns over. Car headlights spring to life and flood the scene.

ELLIE  
(Hissing)  
Switch them off. Switch them off!

**INT. WILL'S CAR.**

Will reaches down and turns a dial. The headlights go dead.

**EXT. NARROW SIDE LANE.**

Ellie directs Will out of the cubby hole, gesturing distances silently; concluding the maneuver with a thumbs up. She moves to jump in, but suddenly pauses...

Over the noise of the engine: music... repetitive... like a ringtone...

Ellie turns about herself trying to identify the source. The now-empty hiding spot bathed in red light.

She focuses in, **NARROWING HER EYES...**

**INT. WILL'S CAR.**

Will watches Ellie in the rearview. A fly starts **BUZZING ABOUT**, distracting him.

**EXT. HANWALL STREET - SAME TIME.**

Thomas sits on the curb beneath an old orange streetlight, alone, resting his tired legs for a moment. He holds his phone to his ear, not saying anything.

Moments pass, then he lowers the phone. Stares at it.

**EXT. NARROW SIDE LANE.**

The ringing has stopped, but Ellie's still staring. Waiting for something else...

Near the edge of the hedgerow, in the mud, are **DEEP FOOTPRINTS**.

**SUDDENLY**, that ringtone again! This time, Ellie sees a kind of light too... An illuminated phone screen...

She hesitates, then trudges over. Crouches down. Plucks A **HALF-SUBMERGED PHONE** from the mud... Accepts the call.

ELLIE  
(Whispering, breathless)  
Thomas...

**EXT. HANWALL BACKSTREET.**

Thomas, phone to his ear again, frowns suddenly. Gets to his feet with a start.

THOMAS

Rachel-? Rachel- speak to me.  
Please- Where are you?

**INT. WILL'S CAR.**

Will just watches and watches.

Eventually, something in his peripheral vision jumps out...

He turns, sees it: a figure, in the distance, MOVING DOWN THE LANE TOWARDS THEM, torch in hand, sweeping from side to side. Searching.

**EXT. NARROW SIDE LANE.**

Ellie stands with the phone to her ear, listening to Thomas' pleas... Unable to say anything...

She looks down at those deep footprints in the mud. Traces them into the woodland...

**EXT. HANWALL BACKSTREET.**

THOMAS

(Increasingly panicked)  
Rachel, I'll come and get you, just tell me where you are. Turn on- send me your location or something- you just need to tell me where you are.

**INT. WILL'S CAR.**

Will looks on as the figure moves ever closer. He leans out of the window, twists to Ellie's direction.

WILL

(Hissing, quietly)  
Someone's coming- Move-

He pauses as he sees Ellie staring into the dark.

**EXT. NARROW SIDE LANE.**

Ellie takes the phone from her ear, switches on its torch, shines it into the thicket...



WILL (O.S.)  
NO. Switch it off!

Up ahead, on the floor of the woodland, the phone's light reflects off something pale... A COLD, MOTIONLESS ARM... The rest of the body obscured by mud and flora-

Suddenly, TORCHLIGHT CUTS through the thicket and SWEEPS over the body, BLINDING ELLIE.

**INT. WILL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS.**

The torchlight swings over to Will, DAZZLING HIM TOO.

VOICE (O.S.)  
(Shouting)  
Who's there!?

Ellie WHIRLS around on PANICKED INSTINCT. Dashes over to the car. Jumps in.

VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Hello!?

**INT. WILL'S CAR. CONTINUOUS.**

Will peels away.

WILL  
Do- do you- do you think they saw us?

Ellie just stares on, wide-eyed. Then realises. The call. She hangs up. Switches the phone to silent. Pockets it.

**EXT. HANWALL BACKSTREET.**

THOMAS  
Hello? Rachel? RACHEL?!

Thomas takes the phone from his ear. Unbelieving. Defeated. He tries to dial again.

We hear the tone as it goes on forever...

**EXT. HANWALL MAIN ROAD - MINUTES LATER.**

Will's car SPEEDS ON, headlights finally re-lit.

**INT. WILL'S CAR.**

Will's struggling to keep his breathing in check. Ellie sits silent, dwelling.

WILL

...Ellie-

Ellie snaps out of it. Turns about herself to check behind.

ELLIE

If they did see us, they're not chasing us.

(To Will)

Take your breaths. Slowly.

WILL

(Virtually manic)

They don't actually do that do they? Don't they get your address and come find you after? Follow you home in their own time?

ELLIE

No one's gonna turn up on your doorstep.

WILL

The police would.

ELLIE

The police? Will what about the k-

Ellie frowns at Will. He just stares on. She goes silent.

WILL

Fuck- FUCK. We shouldn't have run.

ELLIE

We shouldn't have run? We had no idea who that was-

WILL

Do we go back? We can report ourselves in somewhere, tell them why we were there.

ELLIE

Will, stop-

WILL

This can't wait, Ell-

ELLIE

Oh so there's a cut off point to implicating yourself in someone else's death?

WILL

Well, yeah- wait. Someone's death? Who the fuck brought that up?

Ellie goes silent. Stares out the window.

WILL (CONT'D)

There's still a chance-

He finally gets the hint. Drops it.

A long beat.

The quiet actually helps. The rise and fall of Will's shoulders steadies. Ellie looks utterly shaken, she holds herself tight.

Will looks over but just sees the back of her head.

**EXT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, DRIVEWAY - LATER.**

Will, alone now, pulls in and gets out. Goes to pocket his key. Notices his hand, trembling. Focuses on it. Tries to calm his nerves.

And then he spots it... out of the corner of his eye...

Will turns back to the car, moves to door just behind the driver's side... THE HANDLE GLINTS RED. COVERED IN DRIED BLOOD.

Will's breathing quickens. He takes his jacket off and uses it to wipe the blood away frantically. He steps back, examining. There's nothing there, and yet he continues.

Will takes his phone out and turns the torch on, starts moving around the car. Inspecting every surface, corner and angle.

**INT. ENTRANCE HALLWAY - LATE THAT NIGHT.**

Will virtually falls into the hallway. Turns to close the door quietly. Then he notices the light's been kept on.

RICHARD(O.S.)

Where've you been?

Will folds his bloodied jacket in on itself, then turns to see Richard, sitting in the kitchen, waiting for him.

WILL  
Out. Just- out.

RICHARD  
It's too late for "just out." Your mother was on the brink of calling the police. Where were you.

The words cut into Will. He lowers his gaze. Richard's expression softens.

RICHARD (CONT'D)  
What's wrong?

WILL  
Nothing. Just- a lot- going on.

Will looks up at his Dad. Richard's expression hardens reflexively.

RICHARD  
Go to bed. You'll feel better after you get some sleep.

Will nods solemnly. Traipses off down the hallway.

**INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM.**

Will soaks the coat in the sink. Removing as much as he can of the crimson stains from both it and his hands.

MATCH DISSOLVE  
TO:

**INT. DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM - TWO WEEKS LATER.**

Will showers down. SMALL TRACES of BLOOD trickle down his leg and mix with the WATERY MUD already on the floor.

WILL (V.O.)  
*"The 4th of September. Third night this week I've had that nightmare. The one I had the night Rachel died. I've been walking too.*

The gash on his side has SCABBED OVER.

WILL (V.O.)

*"That dread from before, it's-  
changed... into something else. The  
anxiety, that's still there, but  
the fear's gone. Whatever the new  
feeling is, though, it's so much  
worse- and- the more I feel it, the  
more I seem to remember of the  
dream.*

He PULLS A LONG THORN from his hip. Some nasty scratches  
GLISTEN just above the wound.

WILL (V.O.)

*"As if my mind's priming itself to  
hold onto the stuff it reckons I  
should be worried about. My lizard  
brain latching onto information  
pertinent to survival. Every night,  
I'm running, being... hunted. The  
same as the night that- but- I've  
started to stop and look behind me.  
But then I feel the wet grass  
beneath my feet, or grazing my  
cheek and that's it. I wake up."*

Will looks at himself in the mirror. Bags under his eyes.  
He's exhausted.

He turns away. Can't stand the sight of himself.

**INT. SAINT PETER'S CHURCH, HANWALL - A FEW DAYS LATER.**

A stream of mourners brush up against and past a CLOSED  
CASKET at the front of the church.

A number of them let out loud blubbers but Rachel's family,  
seated at the front, are themselves silent - as though the  
initial, numbing shock of the news hasn't yet left their  
systems.

Thomas sits near them, quietly.

The rest of the group, all in black, line a pew a few rows  
back.

**EXT. HANWALL CRICKET CLUBHOUSE - AFTER THE FUNERAL.**

The building is a monument to the village's prudish  
affluence. The group sit outside on the steps. They're all  
still dressed in black. Max and Liam have taken their jackets  
off. Inside, Rachel's wake plods on.

The sun slowly sets on the scene, painting it with a palette of pinks, oranges and reds.

LIAM

(Quietly, to Hannah)

-I heard it was closed because of what happened to her body.

HANNAH

And what happened to her body, Liam?

LIAM

(Still quiet)

Completely brutalized. Complete bloody mess.

Hannah looks at him. She can't tell if she's intrigued or outraged at his inability to read the room.

MAX

They kept it closed because the police haven't released the body yet.

LIAM

Could be both.

MAX

They're still trying to figure out-

Thomas' ears PRICKLE a little, but he doesn't turn. He's almost entirely ZONED OUT, just staring out over the green, green cricket pitch.

Ellie turns to the talkative trio.

ELLIE

(Virtually hissing)

Have some empathy. Holy shit guys.

HANNAH

Hey don't rope me into their morbid shit. I didn't do anything.

MAX

And I was just correcting Liam.

Will watches a scene unfolding within the clubhouse: Rachel's mother SILENTLY BREAKING DOWN. Facing away from everyone so as not to kick up a fuss. A relative moving to comfort her.

HANNAH (O.S.)  
I hate that it's sunny. It's not right.

MAX (O.S.)  
I know what you mean.

LIAM (O.S.)  
(Sarcastic)  
Yeah, Rachel really deserved a spot of rain.

The remark lands like an anvil. Awkward silence.

LIAM (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
(Awkward, to himself)  
Maybe a clap of thunder.

Will turns back to the group.

WILL  
Do you think we should do something? For the family?

MAX  
What were you thinking?

WILL  
I don't know, when Jane's mum died in primary school - you remember, they did a collection and bought a bench to dedicate to her?

HANNAH  
You think Rachel would want a bench?

WILL  
I don't know.

He looks to Thomas for some kind of guidance. Thomas still doesn't turn.

WILL (CONT'D)  
Maybe?

HANNAH  
Are we the right people to do that? It sounds nice, but like, is that our job now?

WILL

I really don't know, it just seems like a nice thing to do. The decent thing.

There's a pause. Some people are thinking, but mostly they're just waiting on Thomas.

ELLIE

We can figure it out.

THOMAS

You only knew her because of me. She has friends who'll do all this. No need to meddle.

HANNAH

Will was just being thoughtful.

THOMAS

Will feels guilty and is trying to alleviate it.

Will shifts uncomfortably but stays quiet.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Just, please don't get involved in any of this, it's weird. And annoying.

No one really wants to engage.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I'm gonna head back to university tomorrow. I'm gonna leave, I think.

ELLIE

You want to talk about it?

THOMAS

It's close enough now. The start of term. No point in being here.

ELLIE

Alright. You know we're here.

THOMAS

I do.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, HELEN'S OFFICE - LATER.**

It's not a particularly grand room, but functional. Helen sits at her desk, working away.



An ASSURED KNOCK at the door distracts her.

HELEN

Yes?

She looks down over her reading glasses at the door. It opens.

WILL

Hey, Mum.

HELEN

Oh, darling. How did it go at the doctors?

She takes her glasses off and smiles across the room at her son.

Will looks past her, notices the sofa in the corner. Dressed as a MAKESHIFT BED. Clearly in regular use.

WILL

Mmph- I'm fine.

Helen frowns.

WILL (CONT'D)

You're not busy are you?

HELEN

No not right now. Just catching up on some things from work. Teacher training things I need to sort out. Do you need something?

WILL

You're going back?

HELEN

Thinking about it. It might be helpful for Dad.

The two look at each other as this soaks in. Helen smiles thinly.

WILL

You wanted help with the books.

HELEN

Right. Of course. Did you want to do it now?

WILL

If that's okay with you.

HELEN

Come and sit over here then.  
Actually, you might want to grab  
something to sit on.

Will leaves the room for a second as Helen reaches under her desk for some files.

Will returns with a chair, moves over to his mother, places it next to her desk and sits down. The chair clearly isn't adjusted for a desk that tall. It's an odd sight - she TOWERS OVER HIM.

Will makes a point of getting off and readjusting it to the right height. Then sits again.

Helen hands a file over to him.

WILL

How come we haven't done this before?

HELEN

Your father usually helps.

WILL

Oh.

HELEN

Oh and before I forget to mention, we had a call earlier, from the police.

Will freezes, stops breathing. Doesn't look at Helen.

WILL

What?

HELEN

No need for alarm. You can collect some things they picked up from-

She stops. Still hasn't worked through the anxiety.

HELEN (CONT'D)

If you want them that is.

Will exhales silently, nods, then adds,

WILL

Will you drive me?

HELEN

Can't you drive yourself?

WILL

The car- it- I need to take it to the garage. Acting up.

HELEN

Didn't you use it just the other day?

WILL

A light came on as I was coming home.

HELEN

Ask your father, then. He could do with getting out of the house.

Will goes quiet. Considering which choice might be worse.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Now- come on. Read that one first.

She puts her reading glasses back on. Will takes the first page from the file in his lap.

**- MINUTES LATER.**

Will looks concerned. He starts skimming down the list of expenditures on a page. Puts it down.

Picks up another, a sheet for one of the family's credit transactions.

LARGE, RED, OMINOUS numbers jump out at us.

Will looks up at his mother.

MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. RICHARD'S CAR - LATER THAT DAY.**

Will stares at Richard. Interrogating him silently. Turns away after a moment.

Richard watches the road silently. There's no music on. THE SILENCE IS STUFFY.

**EXT. THAMES VALLEY POLICE STATION - LATER.**

Richard sits parked just outside the Thames Valley police station. Waiting.

A group of clerks walk by. Richard looks away, trying to save himself the embarrassment.

**INT. TVPS, EVIDENCE LOCKER - LATER.**

A junior clerk watches as Will goes through the CARDBOARD STORAGE BOX containing his things. Checking everything's his.

He gets passed a muddied book. STEPPENWOLF. Will pauses. Ruminating. Then carries on.

WILL

Did you have my coat?

The clerk checks the clipboard in his hands, slightly annoyed by the request.

CLERK

We have to keep that. It's still in use. Sorry.

Will frowns.

**INT. RICHARD'S CAR - LATER.**

The way home. Silence again. Then,

RICHARD

I don't kn-

He catches himself. Then tries again, taking on a sterner tone.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Listen. I need you to sort things out. Mum needs help. It's not easy for her right now.

Will clenches his jaw.

WILL

And what about you?

There's a cruel implication behind the words.

RICHARD

What?

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I'm working on my end. You work on yours, alright?

Will leaves it. But Richard doesn't.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I don't think going out as much as you have been is a very good idea, given the present-

WILL

I haven't even been out that much, really.

RICHARD

Three times so far this week, however many times last week. Last night-

WILL

It was Rachel's wake last night.

RICHARD

I'm glad you went to the wake. It was important that you did.

WILL

So that's only twice.

RICHARD

It's dangerous out there. Something's going on, none of us know what and your mother's concerned for your safety. You don't seem to appreciate about how she feels-

WILL

There's nothing *dangerous* about Hanwall. What happened was just an accident.

RICHARD

Even if that were the case, it wouldn't make things any easier on her.

Richard's tone changes.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

...and it doesn't look good.

WILL

What?

RICHARD

We can't account for you when  
you're out and about, it looks bad.

WILL

What does that mean?

RICHARD

It means: we haven't had any  
concrete answers for what's  
happened. We need to be prepared  
for if anything comes down-

WILL

Oh for-

Richard turns to his son. Will stops. He looks like a kid  
again.

RICHARD

If anything's coming down the line.  
We need to know what you've been  
doing. We need to be prepared for  
anything dumped on our doorstep.

Will doesn't respond.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Do you understand what I'm saying?

Still no response. There's a pause. New topic.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Have you thought any more about  
signing on with the firm after you  
finish?

WILL

What?

RICHARD

Have you decided?

WILL

I'm still thinking about it.

RICHARD

It's the smart thing to do.

WILL

I know.

RICHARD

The proper thing. We have a  
responsibility to the-

He stops himself again. Genuinely conflicted over whether or  
not to continue.

Will watches the countryside zip past. Fields and fields  
lined by the same three kinds of tree.

Richard stares on through the window.

WILL

Actually, I was considering a  
master's.

RICHARD

You know you don't need that to  
come and work with us.

WILL (V.O.)

*"The 12th of September. No bad  
dreams. Actually, I feel good.  
Since there's nothing particular to  
report, I'll write a quick update  
on everything else.*

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, UPSTAIRS LANDING - MORNING.**

The landing outside Will's room isn't quite dark. Illuminated  
by a full-moon. Will's bedroom door is closed.

We hear DEEP, METHODICAL BREATHING.

WILL (V.O.)

*"I've stopped the medication. It  
dulled my mind. Besides, I don't  
need it. Why would I? I'm not the  
right sort for that kind of thing  
to work. I think Dad knows that  
too.*

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, WILL'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS.**

Will sits by the window again. Breath comes DEEP IN THROUGH  
HIS NOSE, DEEP OUT THROUGH HIS MOUTH.

WILL (V.O.)

*"There was something about that  
doctor, he was so... pitying. The  
same way Mum can be.*

Somewhere in the room, a FLY BUZZES.

WILL (V.O.)

"Besides, I've been making some progress by myself. I've continued the mindfulness, stepped it up a little, even. Do it just before I go to bed and just after I wake up.

The buzzing gets louder, more incessant.

Will breathes in, but this time he holds onto it. CLENCHES his jaw. GRINDS his teeth. Suddenly, he opens his eyes and lets go.

WILL (V.O.)

It makes things clearer. Makes sense to me why. Just got to cultivate a strength of mind.

He sits there. Trying to catch his breath, squirming in his chair. Almost *allergic* to his own skin. Looks about the room for the fly. Deep into the dark corners...

**INT. ENTRANCE HALLWAY.**

Helen, half-asleep, still dressed in her gown, slinks down the hall from her room. She frowns as she sees: the front door left ajar.

WILL (V.O.)

Been waking up more refreshed than ever. Nothing to it really.

**EXT. FIELD, JUST OUTSIDE HANWALL - EARLY MORNING.**

No life makes itself known. A still frame but for a gentle breeze sweeping through. Then,

A MUFFLED WAILING. Sounds like a WOUNDED ANIMAL.

WILL (V.O.)

I can do this myself.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, BATHROOM.**

Will sits nude in the bathtub. Covered in scratches. Dripping wet. Spaced out. DARK BAGS under his eyes. Holding himself tight.



**INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER.**

Will watches as Laura pulls into the drive and parks.

**INT. DINING ROOM - THAT EVENING.**

Helen, Laura and Will eat quietly. Without Richard again.

LAURA  
Where's Dad?

HELEN  
He isn't feeling great.

**INT. WILL'S ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT.**

Will hunches over his laptop. Clicks a button and a mindfulness session commences. He straightens and moves to the edge of his bed. Sits. Puts his headphones on.

The rhythms, angry tones of an ARGUMENT rises, MUFFLED, through the floorboards...

**- LATER**

Will sits by the window, breathing deeply. Mindfulness has halted. Replaced by loud, heavy music.

Outside the room, the old stairs creak as someone ascends.

LAURA (O.S.)  
(Whispering)  
Will? Are you up?

Will doesn't notice. Laura knocks. He hears that. Walks over and opens the door to reveal Laura in a terrible state: cheeks and eyes stung red by tears. Choking on her breath, like she's just run a marathon.

He doesn't say anything. Doesn't know what.

LAURA (CONT'D)  
I can't stop thinking about- I  
can't stop. I keep trying and I  
can't.

A terrible sob erupts from her diaphragm.

WILL  
Alright.

He embraces her awkwardly.

WILL (CONT'D)  
 Deep breaths, alright? Fill your  
 lungs all the way then out through  
 your mouth.

He tries to show her what to do himself. His best performance  
 of the mindfulness-man.

Her breathing softens a little, but then all of a sudden the  
 pressure mounts and she gasps for air again.

LAURA  
 I can't breathe. I can't-

WILL  
 Yes you can. Come on, don't be  
 silly. Don't be silly.

LAURA  
 (Through heavy lungs)  
 I'm not being silly- don't say  
 that, Will. Please, Will-

She looks up at him, pleadingly. He looks back, unspeaking.

**EXT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, BACK GARDEN - MINUTES LATER.**

Will and his sister sit side-by-side, bundled in warm  
 blankets. Both are sipping on beer plundered from the fridge.

Will's on his phone. Laura stares out at the night.

LAURA  
 It really hurts when Mum's like  
 that.

WILL  
 Like what?

LAURA  
 You know what I mean.

Will puts his phone down.

WILL  
 I'm not sure I do.

Laura pauses. Doesn't really want to have to explain. Does  
 anyway.

LAURA

Like, when she thinks she's being helpful but all it amounts to is questioning every decision you've made.

WILL

I feel like that's not being entirely fair to her.

LAURA

You don't get it as much.

WILL

Well- it depends.

LAURA

On what? You do everything they ask.

Will shifts awkwardly. Shakes his head.

WILL

She just wants what's best for us.

Laura snorts. Incredulous. A silent beat.

LAURA

We're losing money aren't we? The family.

WILL

What?

LAURA

There was something in what Mum was saying. The way she was saying it. "You've got to be careful with all the extravagances." Extravagances...

She scoffs. Will doesn't say anything.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I'm right, though, aren't I?

WILL

(Shakily)

Yeah. The ship's sinking. Slowly. But it's sinking.

Laura's expression softens. She puts a hand on Will's shoulder.

LAURA

We'll- we'll be alright. We always have been.

WILL

I think the firm's stopped paying Dad. He's not working. No sign of returning.

LAURA

They have to pay him sick pay.

WILL

I was thinking they might have an arrangement. Something Dad's agreed to. They're struggling too. You heard Uncle Peter at the dinner. Virtually crying for help. And Dad, one man down, paying him what they pay him to sit about all day.

LAURA

He's not sitting about all day. And he's not that stupid to agree to something like that.

WILL

Well it's either the firm or the family. Same thing at the end of the day. I'd say that's a hard call for anyone. Nothing to do with stupidity.

They go silent.

WILL (CONT'D)

It's not fair on Mum. Any of it.

LAURA

She'll be okay. Early retirement was always a risk. Regardless of how they thought things were going.

WILL

But they did it for a reason. Didn't want her to have to work anymore. She shouldn't have to.

LAURA

Mum can make decisions for herself. Can work for herself too. Much as Dad seems to think he needs to carry this family on his shoulders.

(MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)

Or make you try to do it for him  
for that matter.

WILL

Why do you have it in for her so  
badly?

LAURA

I don't "have it in for her,"  
that's not fair.

WILL

I'm being unfair?

LAURA

Look, Will. Mum's not what Dad  
makes her out to be. She's not for  
either of you to protect from the  
big bad wolf, alright? She's just-

WILL

I don't know why you're lecturing  
me on this. Of course I know that.

LAURA

Doesn't seem like it sometimes.  
You're always treating her like the  
family China.

WILL

...Maybe if you'd help.

He pauses, then adds,

WILL (CONT'D)

Maybe pull your weight too.

LAURA

You're lashing out now.

WILL

No, I'm not.

Laura shoots him a look. Will seems to shrink in on himself.

Eventually, he gets up, walks back inside.

Laura stays put. Moments pass before her stoic front finally  
drops. Tears forming in her eyes.

**INT. BOAR'S HEAD, HANWALL - A FEW NIGHTS LATER.**

Will clenches his jaw. Just trying to cling to the waking world. Ellie looks on, concerned for him.

Ellie glances at Max, who concurs with a look of his own.

The group are in their usual spot in the corner by the window. Thomas has left for university. Seems like A KIND OF WEIGHT has been lifted.

WILL  
How's work been?

ELLIE  
Who, me?

WILL  
Who fucking else in this group works, Ell?

ELLIE  
It's fine. Business as usual. Maybe a few less cyclists I suppose, less people from out of the village. We're getting a bad name, us Hanwallians.

Will laughs at the absurdity of it. Ellie gives a half-smile.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
A few people have come up and asked me questions about... but-

WILL  
How close are you to a deposit?

Ellie laughs bitterly. Shakes her head. Takes a sip of her pint.

WILL (CONT'D)  
Have you asked your Dad?

ELLIE  
No. And I'm not going to.

WILL  
He might be able to-

ELLIE  
Why would he?

They go quiet. Ellie looks Will over.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

You on the other hand look like  
shit.

WILL

It's not as bad as it looks. Just  
need a good night's sleep.

ELLIE

Well that *is* the exact problem,  
Will. You went to the doctor's  
right?

WILL

Yeah.

ELLIE

Good.

Will goes quiet.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

-so how was it? Did they help?

WILL

Look, I really don't think-

ELLIE

Come on, Will.

WILL

What?

ELLIE

What did they do?

WILL

They gave me a referral for a  
therapist and some medicine.

ELLIE

And how's that been going?

WILL

...it didn't take.

Will looks sheepish.

ELLIE

Christ, pull yourself together. Do  
*something* to help yourself.

WILL

I'm sorry.

ELLIE

Don't be sorry, just- I don't understand why you're making things so difficult for yourself.

WILL

I'm not making things difficult, Ellie.

ELLIE

You're privileged enough that you've got the ability to pick literally anyone you want to talk to, take any meds you want to, and you're fucking about just-

MAX

I think what Ellie's trying to-

WILL

I know exactly what she's trying to say.

Will glares at Ellie and she holds his gaze. Eventually, Will has to stifle a yawn then turns away to let it out guiltily.

ELLIE

It's hard watching you just fucking implode, Will. Especially given everything we've all seen- I for one would love to have someone sit and be paid to listen to how I *still* feel about- you know.

WILL

I appreciate that, but I really never asked for any spectators.

The group fall into silence. What seems like an age passes before Max slaps his thighs and stands.

MAX

Right, I'm buying another round. Will, come with me.

WILL

I don't want another drink.

MAX

Even so.

Max holds Will's faltering gaze. Will gets up. Has to steady himself as the blood rushes to his head, dizzying him.



He goes with Max to the bar and they sit there in silence for a moment or two.

MAX (CONT'D)  
(Nonchalant)  
Have you been following the investigation at all?

WILL  
No.

MAX  
You should. It's interesting.

Will stays silent.

MAX (CONT'D)  
I mean, scary too. They've gotten nowhere, it's a massive fuck up. Bigger papers are starting to pick it up. No one knows how it's taking this long to figure it all-

WILL  
Have you been talking to Simon?

MAX  
A little. Yeah.

WILL  
What's he saying?

MAX  
Same thing. It's a cluster fuck all the way down too.

A rotund, red-faced man sits down beside Will. BRIAN (48), a little unsteady, himself.

BRIAN  
Evening, lads.

He claps Will on the back and he virtually falls from his chair. Brian doesn't seem to notice.

MAX  
Evening.

Will smiles awkwardly, turns back to the bar. The bartender comes over to Brian, who gestures towards Max and Will.

BRIAN  
They were here first.

MAX

Oh. Yeah. Cheers, pal.  
 (To the bartender)  
 Can we just get, like, five  
 Morlands.

BRIAN

Good choice.

The bartender nods and disappears round the corner. Max nods at Brian appreciatively. Brian pauses.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Hey, you're those lads aren't you?

MAX

Hm?

BRIAN

Your lot's the one everyone's  
 talking about. I mean your friend,  
 the lass was the one who died.

His words are slurring. Will braces for the worst.

MAX

That's us.

Max smiles obligingly. Sensing Will's frustration.

BRIAN

Condolences, lads. Let me get this  
 one for you.

WILL

You really don't have to-

BRIAN

No, no. I insist.

MAX

Well. Cheers.

Another man walks over, puts a hand on his friend's shoulder and looks into his face. Clearly the SOBER one. At least by comparison it looks that way. MARK (42). Leaner, but just as SCRUFFY as Brian. Both just finished work.

MARK

Sorry to interrupt, lads- Bri, are  
 you buying people drinks on my  
 card?

Max bursts into laughter. Brian looks at his friend. Almost got away with it.

BRIAN

Almost.

He gives Max a half-wink, now fully ignoring, Will.

MARK

You twat.

The bartender reappears from around the corner with the pints. Will takes them, Max pays. They leave but WE STAY WITH MARK AND BRIAN.

The bartender turns to Brian and Brian orders.

**- LATER.**

Brian and Mark sit with a group of other old lads across the room. Contractors, the lot, just off work. Haven't had the chance to shower, change.

In the background we see Will, Ellie and the others GETTING UP TO LEAVE. As they pass by, Brian LIFTS HIS GLASS and nods to Max.

BRIAN

In a bit, "pal."

Max nods awkwardly at him which Liam finds hilarious, and the group leave.

Brian takes a swig from his elevated glass, spilling a little.

**EXT. BOAR'S HEAD, CAR PARK - LATER, NIGHT.**

The doors to the pub are being locked from the inside. The owner waves at Brian from the inside and nods.

Brian turns away and waves behind him.

Looming overhead, a cruel FULL MOON smiles down.

BRIAN

Cheers!

He stumbles over to his car and fumbles at the lock with his keys.

MARK (O.S.)  
You're not fucking driving home,  
are you?

BRIAN  
Yeah mate, five and drive.

He turns to his friend.

MARK  
You're well beyond five.

BRIAN  
You drive me?

MARK  
It may not seem like it to you, but  
I'm also well beyond five, you  
absolute stain. I'll walk you.

BRIAN  
I'm not walking.

**EXT. DARK COUNTRY LANE - MINUTES LATER.**

Mark storms ahead, Brian flags behind. He looks cold, his jacket virtually hanging off him.

BRIAN  
Mark...

Mark ignores him.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
Mark!

MARK  
What?!

Mark turns abruptly and angrily stares at his friend.

BRIAN  
I've really gotta piss.

**EXT. WOODED AREA.**

Brian relieves himself on a tree. Lets out a sigh.

Brian's breathing gets heavy, like there's something wrong with it.

Eventually, it becomes apparent that it's out of sync with the rise and fall of his shoulders...

The someone - *something* - else out here with him...

That ragged breathing, panting, it's almost... ANIMAL...

Brian CLOSES HIS EYES... then loses balance and stumbles slightly, splashing himself in urine.

BRIAN  
For fuck's sake.

Suddenly, a HEAVY SCURRYING can be heard in the undergrowth.

Brian FREEZES, looks about himself...

WE SEE HIS POV, swaying to and fro. It's nauseating.

Brian WHEELS ABOUT and-

-Nothing there...

TURNES THE OTHER WAY-

-Still nothing.

**EXT. DARK COUNTRY LANE - MOMENTS LATER.**

Brian BURSTS from the undergrowth, moving AS QUICKLY AS HE CAN, STUMBLING all the way. PANICKING.

His foot catches something, A THICK ROOT, and he stumbles the rest of the way into the road.

Out of breath, SCARED, Brian searches about himself. Something's missing. SOMEONE'S MISSING.

BRIAN  
Mark...?

HARD CUT TO:

**EXT. A FIELD, OUTSIDE HANWALL - EARLY DAWN.**

Will lies naked in the dewy grass. Reopened scabs have had time to OOZE, rendering his body more DIRTIED and BLOODIED than we've ever seen it...

WILL (V.O.)  
*"14th of September. Still going strong. Nothing to really report."*

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, WILL'S ROOM - LATER.**

We see only Will's hands AS HE TYPES.

WILL (V.O.)  
*"I'm still waking up refreshed as  
 ever."*

**- LATER.**

Will sits on his bed, hunched over. Looking away from the long mirror in the corner in the room.

WILL (V.O.)  
*Is this really what Dad struggles  
 with? Stuff in his head? "Negative  
 thoughts?"*

**EXT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, BACK GARDEN - AFTERNOON.**

Richard stands at the edge of his garden. Tools by his side. Radio by his feet playing old pop hits.

He peers out over the field beyond the household's perimeter, at the slowly encroaching HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS going on a town over.

RADIO PRESENTER (O.S.)  
 ...You're listening to Radio  
 Oxfordshire and this is the news.  
 We look back to Hanwall, now, where  
 last we heard from the village was  
 of the tragic death of the twenty-  
 year-old Rachel Pruce. It is now  
 being reported that, last night, in  
 circumstances similar to those  
 surrounding Rachel's case, another  
 individual has disappeared. The  
 individual has been identified by a  
 close friend as one Mark Shaw.  
 Searches have already started in an  
 attempt to find Mister Shaw.  
 Details will follow shortly with  
 how anyone in the local area can  
 get involved in this search-

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, ENTRANCE HALLWAY/DINING ROOM - A FEW DAYS LATER.**

From where we are, we can see both the front door and the dining room, the wall between them BISECTING THE FRAME.

The Poppers eat SILENTLY... Eventually, Richard stops eating.

RICHARD

Will-

But he stops when a strong light sweeps the room. Marking an unexpected arrival.

Richard frowns. Helen stops eating now too. Puts her cutlery down. Will glance timidly at her.

Moments pass, and footsteps approach the front door. THE BELL RINGS.

Helen gets up and walks out of the room. Richard turns to Will, eyes him. Communicating everything he needs to.

Finally, Will gets up and lingers at the threshold of the dining room. Out of sight from the front door.

As Helen opens the door, we see Officer Robson, NOTICEABLY MORE TIRED than last we saw him, but still trying to appear amiable.

ROBSON

Good evening, Missus Popper. I hope I'm not interrupting anything.

HELEN

We're eating dinner, actually.

ROBSON

Oh, my apologies, then. This really shouldn't take long. Is Will about?

HELEN

Yes.

(Turning back.)

Will?

Will hesitates but finally does slink to the door. Helen remains by his side. Looming. defensive.

ROBSON

Hi, Will.

Robson smiles unconvincingly.

ROBSON (CONT'D)

Sorry to disturb you again. I suppose you've probably heard about Mister Shaw, by now, right?

Will nods.

WILL

News travels pretty quick around here. It's a bit perverse.

Robson gives a low chuckle. Helen furrows her brow.

ROBSON

I suppose you could call it that. Anyway, this isn't anything scary. We're just checking in on pretty much everyone. Doing the rounds. Seeing where they were the night he disappeared.

WILL

When was that?

ROBSON

Would've been the early hours of the 5th. You remember where you were?

Will pauses. It's clear he does. Unwilling to admit it.

HELEN

He was asleep, here. I remember checking in on him before I went to bed.

Robson looks to Will.

WILL

Must have been. Yeah.

ROBSON

Alright, then. Sorry again to be a hassle. I won't keep you. Please do stay safe.

He steps away, nods, then walks away into the night. Helen closes the door after him.

Will looks at Helen meaningfully. She holds his gaze, then,

HELEN

You slept fine that night, didn't you?

Will doesn't respond.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Alright. Come and finish dinner.

Helen walks away.



**EXT. VILLAGE HALL, HANWALL - EVENING, THE NEXT DAY.**

A long building that often doubles as the village's scout hut. It's dark out, but the many windows and external lights illuminate the area like a beacon. Outside, the car park is packed.

A mid-range SUV pulls into the car park. Will and Helen get out and make their way to the entrance.

**INT. VILLAGE HALL.**

Helen enters first, dressed up for a public appearance. Will shuffles in behind her, far less put together. The hall is heaving. The atmosphere is electric. Families murmuring to other families. A hotbed for gossip. Rows of seats line the hall from the very front to the very back. Most are occupied at this point.

Will receives a few GLANCES as he moves to the central partition between the chairs.

He spots Ellie sitting with Max and Liam.

Ellie glances about and returns his look, gives a HALF-SMILE. Will ignores her and FALLS BACK IN LINE with Helen. Ellie frowns.

**- MOMENTS LATER.**

Will and his mother sits near the back. A greying gentleman, ALEC (64), nearby, addresses Helen,

ALEC  
Frightful business this.

HELEN  
Mm.

ALEC  
You must've been terrified, hearing what happened to that girl. What with Will-

The man's wife, Molly (same age) shushes him with a tut.

HELEN  
It was a shock.

ALEC  
Terrible, terrible business.

The pair of them go quiet as someone shuffles to the newly installed podium at the front of the hall.

SPEAKER

Ahem-

The noise slowly dies.

SPEAKER (CONT'D)

Thank you. It's good to see so many of you here tonight. I'm just sorry it's under such tragic circumstances. A few bits of housekeeping to get out of the way first then we can get to the important pieces for tonight.

(The speaker's voice fades into the background as they start to indicate to fire exits and lay out emergency plans.)

ALEC

(Whispering)

Molly says the parish council are really panicking.

MOLLY

(Whispering)

They're all over the place. Everyone's jumping over themselves to help the police find anything resembling an answer. The county council are leaning quite hard too, holiday-goers are starting to avoid the area.

HELEN

(Whispering)

It's no wonder really, is it? People are scared.

MOLLY

Oh yes. Especially the farmers. This is really affecting their livestock.

HELEN

I hadn't heard.

MOLLY

Haven't you? They're being cleaned out. Starting to dent bottom lines.

ALEC

That's a bit of an exaggeration,  
dear.

Molly shoots him a look.

MOLLY

No one wants to talk about it  
except the farmers. For obvious  
reasons I suppose. Awful stuff.  
Dead animals turning up everywhere.

HELEN

Hm-

(The speaker's voice returns to the fore.)

SPEAKER

Right, now - onto what you're all  
here to hear. First. We have a...  
tragic update from the police that  
I've been permitted to relay to you  
here, tonight. In the earlier hours  
of this morning, a body-

A gasp reverberates about the room. Will notices his mother  
closing her eyes at the impact.

SPEAKER (CONT'D)

-thought to be that of Mark Shaw,  
was found. This comes as tragic  
news to many of us in the village  
who knew Mark as a reasonable and  
hard-working gentleman. I'm sure  
I'm not alone in saying Mark and  
his family will be in my prayers  
tonight.

Molly nods exaggeratedly.

SPEAKER (CONT'D)

What the police would also like to  
let us all know, though, is that,  
given the circumstances of their  
disappearances and the...

He adjusts his collar a little. Coughs awkwardly.

SPEAKER (CONT'D)

...states... in which their bodies  
were found.

(MORE)

SPEAKER (CONT'D)

The two deaths, that of Mister Shaw and also the recent loss of Miss Rachel Pruce, have been connected and a wider-scale investigation is underway.

At this a wave of hushed whispers ripples through the room. Molly looks at Helen as if to brag: *what did I tell you?*

SPEAKER (CONT'D)

The council met immediately after we received this news earlier, and we've come to the conclusion that it would be reasonable to suggest - *without* wanting to cause any panic - that some measures should be put in place to keep everyone safe in this troubling time.

He pauses.

A scruffy looking gentleman standing off to the side pipes up.

SCRUFFY MAN

I'm sorry, what do you actually mean? *What measures?*

SPEAKER

Now, there's no need to panic.

SCRUFFY MAN

I didn't say anything about panicking, George. I'm asking you, *what measures?*

The speaker smiles at the man.

SPEAKER

The council has deemed it prudent to advise some caution in the coming days, even weeks. What we suggest is that *as a community* we begin to enforce some temporary measures... such as a curfew.

The whispers suddenly stop.

SPEAKER (CONT'D)

Now, of course we don't technically have any legal authority to enforce this - this would be a community effort- a community effort to keep everyone here safe from any further harm.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, WILL'S ROOM - MORNING.**

Will sits with a bowl of cereal, barely touched. Browsing Facebook on his laptop. The Hanwall community page. Research. It's a grey day outside. His face matches it.

A message pings - Ellie: "Just checking in."

He ignores it. Closes the chat window. Keeps scrolling.

Soon, a post stands out. An image, blurred, categorised as sensitive by Facebook, or some admin. Will reads the text.

Please, please, please keep your dogs under control when you're walking them and keep them locked in at night! This is the third - THIRD! - time our livestock has been attacked! Beyond the fact that this is trespassing and damage to property, this is my family's livelihood.

He clicks the image. It illustrates the message nastily...

INSERT:

**EXT. FIELD OF SHEEP - LATE NIGHT.**

A sheep lays dead amongst the flock. Disemboweled. A CLOUD OF FLIES BUZZ ABOUT.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, UPSTAIRS BATHROOM.**

Will dashes in and empties the sparse contents of his stomach into the toilet, then collapses to the side. Leans against the bathtub. The door swings shut behind him...

**EXT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER.**

The door has been closed to us. From inside, we hear Will's muffled sobs. Helen approaches the door. Listens quietly.

**INT. HARDWARE STORE, A TOWN OVER - DAY.**

We watch Will from the reflection of a convex mirror, high above the tall aisles.

Will prowls up and down. GENTLE MUZAK plays in the background. Will stops at an intersection. Looks up at the signage hanging from the ceiling.

**- MOMENTS LATER.**

Will's stopped before a number of door locks. Grabs a rather HEFTY-LOOKING SLIDE-BOLT and leaves to pay.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, UPSTAIRS LANDING - LATER THAT DAY.**

Will stands before his bedroom door, pulling the lock's packaging open. TOOLS NEATLY LAID OUT on the floor of the landing.

Heavy footsteps behind him on the stairs. He doesn't pay them any attention. Richard emerges.

RICHARD  
Mum said you might need some help.

WILL  
I can do it.

RICHARD  
You sure?

Will pauses. Doesn't humour him with a reply.

RICHARD (CONT'D)  
Why the *outside* of your door?

WILL  
I figured- I don't know. I make it out of the front door, right? That's not that easy to open.

RICHARD  
What is it? A bolt?

WILL  
Yeah. The ones with keys were expensive.

RICHARD  
A little bit overkill, too, don't you think?

Will doesn't say anything.

RICHARD (CONT'D)  
You really need this?

Will remains silent.

Richard lingers. Will notices. He turns to his dad.

WILL  
Did you need anything else?

Richard exhales sharply through his nose and shakes his head. Turns to leave.

WILL (CONT'D)  
Will you make sure it's locked  
before you go to bed?

RICHARD  
I might forget. Have you asked your  
mother?

WILL  
She doesn't feel comfortable with  
it.

RICHARD  
Hm?

WILL  
She's worried I'll get stuck.

RICHARD  
I see.

Richard turns to leave.

RICHARD (CONT'D)  
I'll lend a hand then.

Will holds the lock up to the door frame, marks a position on the door adjacent to a corner on the lock with a pencil.

Then Will picks up the drill, raises it to the wall, then fumbles it, slightly.

Richard looks unimpressed, huffs and trudges back downstairs.

**EXT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD - NIGHT.**

Through the window: Helen eats alone. Quiet out here. Just as quiet in there.

**INT. KITCHEN.**

Helen washes up. Choir music from the radio keeps her company.

**INT. MAIN HALL.**

Just outside the master bedroom. Door closed to us. The choir music playing in the background.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM.**

Richard sits on the edge of the bed in the dark, facing away from us.

After a beat, he checks the digital clock by the bedside. Gets up.

**INT. KITCHEN.**

Helen hears the bedroom door opening. Stops what she's doing and goes to the door. Spies. Only catches a glimpse of Richard moving upstairs.

**INT. WILL'S ROOM - THAT NIGHT.**

Dark except for the glow of Will's laptop and his desk lamp. Will taps away at his keyboard. Writing an entry.

The mirror in the corner has been TURNED AROUND to face the wall.

WILL (V.O.)

*"This feels better. No way for me to get out."*

There's a knock at the door. Will looks up.

WILL

(Calling out)

Ready.

There's a loud *SHUNK*, as the bolt on the door slides closed.

With it, Will's lamp starts to flicker violently for a few moments... Will frowns, then it stops.

WILL (CONT'D)

Thanks, Dad.



Will looks put off. The long night stretching out before him. He types the last few sentences then shuts his laptop down.

**- LATER.**

WILL (V.O.)  
(More frantic than before;  
each word spilling forth  
in a stream of  
consciousness.)

*"I don't know why I lied before.  
It's all pointless if I just lie. I  
need to keep things in focus, when  
everything real is becoming so  
hazy.*

It's near pitch black. We hear movement under bed sheets. Restlessness. Will pulls the covers over his head, frustrated.

Across the room, we see Will's digital clock glowing.

A beat. Then, the sound of a fly *BUZZING* about...

Suddenly, a shadow shifts, crossing over and blocking the clock for a moment.

**- LATER.**

WILL (V.O.)  
*"I can't sleep more than an hour at  
a time before the nightmares come.  
Each one's clearer than the one  
that came before.*

Will is back at his laptop, writing just as frantically as he sounds.

That *BUZZING* sounds MORE PROMINENT than before...

WILL (V.O.)  
*"I'm no longer just being chased.  
I'm also chasing someone. Pursuing  
them. Locked in this - alternating -  
cycle. I'm not sure what's pushing  
me onwards, whether I'm running  
from my pursuer or if I feel some  
compulsion to follow that figure up  
ahead.*

Will seems aware of something behind him and is actively attempting to ignore it...

WILL (V.O.)

*"I feel like a runaway car on the motorway. It's pure bliss... Just for a moment before reality comes crashing in and the airbag rushes up to meet me.*

HARD CUT TO:

**- DAWN.**

The sun has almost fully risen. A terrible dawn.

Will's still at his desk. Dozing off.

Suddenly, there's a *SHUNK* and the door opens, letting the sun in. Whoever opened the door doesn't make themselves known.

WILL (V.O.)

*"My head hurts."*

**INT. BOAR'S HEAD, HANWALL - THAT AFTERNOON.**

Will and Hannah sit in their usual corner. Ellie is AWOL. Liam has left for university. Max is late.

Will looks almost entirely out of it...

We hear the BUZZING OF A FLY... Will looks about himself nervously. Hannah notices. Frowns. Will turns back to her.

HANNAH

When are you going back to uni?

WILL

Same day as you and Max.

HANNAH

Ah.

She takes a sip and an awkward pause creeps in.

After a moment Hannah looks up at someone approaching, seems relieved.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Speak of the devil.

MAX

How are we all? Not dead yet?

HANNAH

Not sure you're allowed to make that joke yet.

MAX

Calm down, thought police.

HANNAH

It's not a thought if you say it out loud.

MAX

I don't suppose you guys have read the latest Mirror?

He keeps the paper close to his chest. Will and Hannah look at one another. *No, they have not.*

HANNAH

To be fair it's not a snobbery thing, I just don't read the papers.

MAX

Neither do I usually, but since all this started-

He can't contain the discovery any longer. Unfurls the paper on the table between them.

And there it is in bold typeface: HANWALLIAN RESIDENT SPOTS BEAST.

Max looks back and forth between his two friends, expectant. Will picks the paper up, slowly. Hannah rolls her eyes.

HANNAH

Oh, give me a break.

MAX

This is huge, Hannah-

HANNAH

Max-

MAX

It's the first eye-witness account of anything remotely tied to the case. This is huge!

CLOSE ON THE NEWSPAPER TEXT AS WILL READS it:

- *'...some kind of large dog ...'*

MAX (O.S.) (CONT'D)

It's Brian. You know. Will and I bumped into him. He was here, with Mark, and this is what he saw that night... The question is, why'd it take so long for this to get out?

- *'... quicker than anything he's seen ...'*

- *'... "put the fear of God in me" ...'*

RICHARD (O.S.)

Quite clearly it means the man's testimony was refused by the police. I imagine he went to the broadsheets next and they refused it too, so off to the Mirror he merrily goes.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, DINING ROOM - NIGHT.**

Will, Helen and Richard are joined by Laura. Everyone seems tense.

LAURA

Seriously?

Will glances at Helen. Who meets his gaze.

RICHARD

What do you mean, "seriously?"

LAURA

You're assuming a lot there, Dad.

RICHARD

I don't have the energy to argue about this.

LAURA

You can't just put your opinion out there and not expect any push back.

Richard glares at her.

LAURA (CONT'D)

He clearly believes his story enough to persist. Like, why not just give up when the police say they won't use it?

RICHARD

Plenty of reasons. I can imagine there being a financial element.

HELEN

That's probably enough...

WILL

We- uh- saw them, the both of them, that night. At the pub.

Helen looks across at Will, frowns at him for defying her.

RICHARD

They were drinking, then.

Laura rolls her eyes.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

"Beast of Hanwall." I can't fathom why you're defending the man, Laura.

LAURA

I don't care about what he said. I just think what you're alleging he's doing goes beyond just what.

RICHARD

What're you accusing me of now?

LAURA

I'm not accusing you of anything, Dad. I'm sorry. You just have a tendency to-

She rethinks.

LAURA (CONT'D)

This family has a tendency towards judging people unfairly. And sometimes for some pretty unjust reasons.

HELEN

Not everyone in the world is a bigot, Laura. You can be fairly quick to judge us, these days, if you hadn't noticed.

WILL

Glass houses.

HELEN

Will.

Laura scowls at him. Holds her tongue.

RICHARD

(To Laura)

What do you think's going on?

LAURA

I didn't say I had an answer.

HELEN

(Cutting in)

-I think... That's enough on that topic for dinner.

Everyone goes quiet but a cold war of pointed glances ensues.

**INT. WILL'S ROOM - NIGHT.**

WILL (V.O.)

*"I've started writing in my dreams. Obviously there's nothing actually there on the page when I wake.*

Will starts packing a large suitcase. Empty boxes sit around him. A pile of clothes nearby. Getting ready to leave.

WILL (V.O.)

*"But I've considered writing messages to myself from the waking world. Maybe I'll see them."*

There's a soft knock at the door.

Will swivels. Sees Helen in the doorway. An apologetic look painted onto her face.

WILL

Everything okay?

**INT. WILL'S ROOM - NIGHT.**

Will's at his laptop, emailing his university. Behind him, his suitcase. Unpacked again.

The sliding *SHUNK* of the lock comes before there's even a knock, taking Will by surprise.

Will gets up, goes over to the door. Puts his ear to it. Hears the footsteps descending the stairs. Then glances back into the near dark of his room...

Just then, his desk lamp **BLINKS, FALTERS, THEN GOES OUT**. Will looks over. His laptop is **NEXT**, going **DARK**. The room **PLUNGES** into night.

**- LATER THAT NIGHT.**

Will's in bed. Has his covers over his head. We hear sharp, irritable breathing... Then he erupts from beneath. Sweating.

Will rolls over, screws his eyes shut. But he can't resist the temptation to open them again and does so...

...stares into the dark of the room once more. Then **FLIES** start buzzing again and Will hurriedly closes his eyes once more.

Beat.

Something in the room creaks. The floorboards maybe.

A long beat...

Out of the dark, two legs step into frame. Pale, cold legs... The flies seem to be following whoever this intruder is...

Will screws his eyes even tighter. We linger for a moment. Then, he starts to open them just as we-

CUT TO:

**- MORNING.**

Will stands before his bedroom door, dazed.

*SHUNK*. The door opens... But no one's there on the other side.

Will glides out and down the stairs.

**INT. BOAR'S HEAD - NIGHT.**

Will suddenly finds himself at the bottom of the stairs in the centre of the Boar's Head.

He doesn't know why he's here. Starts scanning people's faces.

And then he sees BRIAN. Sitting at the bar. Drinking by himself...

As though out of some nightmare: one by one everybody turns to face Will. STARING, ACCUSATORY. Brian starts to turn to stare too...

Though nobody's lips are moving, the incessant background chatter seems to be GETTING LOUDER and LOUDER and LOUDER. OVERWHELMING.

Will's spies a table in the corner. His group's usual spot. Sees his friends sitting there looking at him. Then sees... HIMSELF?

MAX (O.S.)

Will?

- AFTERNOON.

Will comes back to the room. Turns to his friends seated about that table in the corner: Max, Hannah and Ellie - though she's sat with her head turned away from him defiantly.

WILL

Hm?

MAX

I asked if you knew how long you're being kept here.

WILL

I don't know.

MAX

Until this is all over?

WILL

Maybe. Who knows *what* they're thinking. Mum said they're worried about my leaving. Want me here to support me.

HANNAH

What about your flatmate?

WILL

Ryan? I don't know if they trust him.

A quiet beat.



WILL (CONT'D)  
(Almost to himself)  
I can't bear it here. I can't. Not  
for much longer.

Ellie frowns to herself.

HANNAH  
Quit being dramatic.

ELLIE  
Hannah-

Will turns to Ellie. Ellie shuts up. Turns away again.

HANNAH  
Will. Chin up. We've had a good  
summer.

MAX  
What? No. We haven't. We've reached  
a record-breaking low.

HANNAH  
You know what I meant. Aside from-

MAX  
-Dunno about you but that was a  
pretty major part of my summer.

HANNAH  
The rest of it, though. While it  
lasted.

MAX  
The summer doesn't just end when  
something bad happens.

HANNAH  
It kind of does. You don't ever get  
that feeling?

MAX  
No.

HANNAH  
Summer stops when the fun stops and  
you're back to the real world.

MAX  
I think maybe since I don't tend to  
hold as much contempt for the world  
as you do, I actually enjoy things  
year round.

There's a pause as they sit quietly. Attempting to soak in their last chance to hang out before they have to split up for term.

HANNAH

You ever think of leaving, Ellie?

Will turns away. Starts people-watching. Ignoring the conversation. *A message to Ellie.* She notices.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, DINING ROOM - EVENING.**

Will and Helen eat. Both are silent. Every now and then Helen glances up at her son.

WILL (V.O.)

*"Uni will have started by now. No one will be missing me. Why are they keeping me here?"*

In the distance, a police car's siren can be heard. Will looks up. Listens. *Where's it going?*

The wailing gets closer and closer, until... It stops dead.

Beat.

Suddenly, in a manner rather similar to something we've seen before, lights cut across the room and Will sinks into his chair.

Helen looks at Will fixedly, then gets up. Leaves the room. Will sits frozen in his seat.

HELEN (O.S.)

(Muffled)

Hi there.

(Pause)

Yes. Yeah. He's in. Do you want me there? Okay. Come on in.

Will watches the doorway intently as the pair of footsteps approach... Then PETER leans round the corner.

Will looks stunned. Relieved, too.

PETER

Oh, hello, Will.

He smiles at his nephew, then turns back to Helen.

PETER (CONT'D)

I seem to be intruding on dinner.

Helen reappears.

HELEN

It's fine. It's fine. You just  
carry on down the hall. He's in the  
bedroom.

Peter plods on down the hall. Helen glances in at Will.  
Guilty for some reason. Then she disappears, following Peter.

We hear Peter knocking on the door at the end of the hall.

PETER (O.S.)

Richard? It's Pete.

Will sits dumbstruck.

**EXT. HANWALL BACKSTREET - LATER THAT NIGHT.**

Will walks alone. It's starting to get cooler and he's  
dressed accordingly.

WILL (V.O.)

*"A question keeps coming to mind:  
if I don't sleep at night, what use  
is being locked in when I'll just  
sleepwalk out the door when they  
unlock it."*

He looks exhausted. It's a wonder he's still on his feet.

Suddenly he stops. Swaying a little in the evening breeze. He  
tries to focus his eyes in the cold. Seeing something.

WILL (V.O.)

*"Do I unlock the door and just  
leave? Or do I keep it locked? Is  
that a choice?"*

Up ahead, a great, black hound sits upright.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, WILL'S ROOM - NIGHT.**

Will sits huddled in a corner of the room. He's wrapped  
himself in his duvet. A torch sits nearby.

The room is completely lit, the main light is being kept on.

We watch Will's eyes start to close...

**THUMP!**

The sound comes from the other end of the room.

Will's eyes shoot open again but there's nothing to be seen. There's no one there.

Then, the *LIGHTS GO OUT*...

Will fumbles in the dark for a moment, then his torch comes to life.

He shines it about the room. The pale spotlight creeping slowly. Finding nothing.

Then, the beam flickers. The torch faltering. Will apprehends the situation. Resigned, mournful.

**- MORNING.**

The bolt slides, *SOFTLY* this time, out of place and the bedroom door opens.

Helen pokes her head inside as Will rolls over to face her.

HELEN

I'm so sorry, darling, go back to bed. I didn't mean to wake you.

WILL

It's okay. It wasn't you. I won't go back to sleep.

Will sits up, facing away from his mother.

HELEN

How do you feel?

He stays quiet. She steps into the room. Dressed formally.

HELEN (CONT'D)

I was thinking it might do you some good to do something different. That it might be good to come out of your room - for a little while at least.

Finally, Will turns.

WILL

Like what?

HELEN  
I'm just leaving for Sunday  
Service. I was going to go alone,  
but I thought...

Will seems amused by this. Like he senses some hidden irony  
to it.

WILL  
Is Dad going?

HELEN  
No. Have you ever seen him in a  
church?

WILL  
Alright, then. Give me a minute. I  
need to get ready.

Helen leaves him to it and Will rises.

**INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER.**

Will submerges his face in the basin full of cold water  
before him. He closes his eyes beneath the surface. Exhales  
through his nose.

Beat.

He pulls himself out and allows himself a glance in the  
mirror.

On instinct, he looks quickly away again.

HELEN (O.S.)  
Darling?

Will flinches. Almost knocks ONE OF THE GLASSES by the sink  
to the floor.

HELEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Almost ready?

**EXT. SAINT PETER'S CHURCH, HANWALL - LATE MORNING.**

A stream of churchgoers trickles in through the church's  
large entranceway, mumbling hellos to the small welcoming  
committee standing out front.

Helen approaches. Will follows close behind.

REVEREND FARMER, a wizened priest of the Anglican Church, likely only a few years from retirement, spots him and calls over.

REVEREND FARMER  
Will! Welcome, young man! Oh, when  
was it that we saw you last?

Will offers an awkward smile and takes a programme before moving inside.

Helen speaks a few polite words to the Reverend before following him.

**INT. SAINT PETER'S CHURCH, ENTRANCEWAY.**

PAUL (59), balding, slightly stodgy and almost part of the scenery, stands handing out hymn sheets.

Will spots him and hesitates to move forward. Paul looks over and smiles.

PAUL  
Will!

Will compels himself to approach the man. Accepts a hymn sheet, enthusiastically offered.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
A lovely surprise seeing you here.

WILL  
Hi, Paul.

PAUL  
You'll have to convince Ellie to  
come with you one of these days.

Will remains quiet. Paul looks a little uncomfortable.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
She told me you were having some  
difficulties. How are you feeling?

WILL  
Oh you know. Just trying to get out  
of the house.

PAUL  
Good plan. It'll be good to be  
around people too. At least  
different people, I suppose.

WILL

Mm.

PAUL

Listen. I don't want to pry, but you haven't been over in a while. Is everything okay between you and Ellie? I couldn't get much out of her... You know how she is.

WILL

Everything's fine, yeah, just busy.

PAUL

I don't know what's wrong with that girl sometimes. Heaven knows she won't say a word to me these days. Needs a man back in her life- uh, to keep her on track, if you know what I mean.

**INT. CHURCH NAVE.**

Will stares fixedly at the back of Paul's head.

A JOYFUL HYMN being sung.

The CHURCH ORCHESTRA accompanying: a small band of young, fledgling musicians from the local school, middle-aged amateurs and volunteer semi-professionals.

The congregation itself is surprisingly characterful: devout retirees; young parents trying to set their children on a path familiar to them; nostalgic, older parents still coming even after their children have stopped.

Underneath the choral song, a kind of whispering commences. Secretive, conniving.

Will turns about himself. Scanning for the source.

His gaze falls on two elderly ladies, looking right at him. GOSSIPING. They stop quickly. Look away. Embarrassed.

**- LATER.**

Reverend Farmer has resumed his position at the front of the church, behind the slightly off-centre podium.

Will tries to hold it off but he's too tired. He starts dozing off, head in hand.

Helen notices. GLOWERS. Then thinks better of it. Turns back to the front.

REVEREND FARMER

I must admit, I do have a thing for bridges. The engineering that goes into them, the logistical challenge. But there is a far more important bridge that is far too often overlooked.

Suddenly, in the background the whispering can be heard again. Will wakes with a start. Turns about himself, but the ladies aren't staring.

He turns away quick. Ashamed.

He looks about again. Takes in the faces of the faithful: his mother's, zealous yet muted. Paul's, assured, unclouded by doubt, nodding along to the sermon.

REVEREND FARMER (CONT'D)

The story of the bible, the gospel message, is about the building of the bridge between Heaven and Earth and as a result of our rebellion against God-

The WHISPERING starts up again and Will picks out some words.

WHISPERING LADY #1

Look at him, how would he ever do something like-

WHISPERING LADY #2

It has to be-

WHISPERING LADY #1

It obviously isn't-

REVEREND FARMER

A gap opened up between humans and the source of all goodness; a gap that no human effort or ingenuity could bridge.

Will turns back to the Reverend at the front, attempting to ignore it.



REVEREND FARMER (CONT'D)

The mission of Jesus is, as the hymn 'Love Divine' puts it, about the joy of heaven to earth come down. It's about God, come to us in Jesus-

WHISPERING LADY #1

You have no idea what you're-

WHISPERING LADY #2

I'd like to see you come up with-

Will's patience starts to wear and his breathing gets heavier and more paranoid.

He turns his head back to signal to the ladies that he can hear them but they don't seem to even be paying attention to him-

The whispers are coming from somewhere else.

WHISPERING LADY #2 (CONT'D)

Weirder things have happened around here-

WHISPERING LADY #1

Now that you say it-

As Will looks about himself now, he starts to notice them. The glinting of their eyes as they turn their heads, the other parishioners, to glance at him; the freak, the spectacle, the aberration.

WHISPERING LADY #1 (CONT'D)

It would make sense. Did you hear about the father?

WHISPERING LADY #2

Oohh, yes, things like that tend to trickle down from one to the other-

Will flinches.

REVEREND FARMER

But Jesus shares his bridge-building work with his people. Whom he equips with his spirit to be bridge-builders-

WHISPERING LADY #1

Poison in the blood-

REVEREND FARMER

We know what you are Will, there's  
no point in hiding it.

Suddenly, Will explodes and - needing to direct his anger  
somewhere - he turns to the ladies behind him...

WILL

SHUT UP, you old CUNTS!

EVERYTHING STOPS. The gossiping ladies look at Will in  
perplexed horror.

WHISPERING LADY #1

We weren't...

Will turns to Helen and meets AN OPEN-PALM. A SLAP straight  
across the face.

Helen looks more horrified at HERSELF than at Will.

She glances sheepishly up to the front towards Reverend  
Farmer, who stands motionless and utterly speechless.

Will looks like he's about to cry.

They sit there like that for a number of interminable  
moments.

VOICE IN THE CONGREGATION

You should leave.

REVEREND FARMER

Yes. Please.

Reverend Farmer gestures to the door. Helen looks pleadingly  
at him.

HELEN

(Whispering)

I'm so sorry.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, HELEN'S OFFICE - THAT EVENING.**

Helen sits on her bed, talking quietly on the phone. A tense  
conversation emanates from below, MUFFLED BY THE FLOORBOARDS.

HELEN

I'm alright. Will is too. I can't  
believe-

She breaks down a little, stifling some sobs.

HELEN (CONT'D)  
I just hope Reverend Farmer can  
forgive us.

She pauses as she listens.

HELEN (CONT'D)  
No, no. Richard's talking to him  
now. He's been going through a lot,  
but... Yeah. It was unacceptable...  
(Pause)  
Yeah- yes.  
(Pause)  
It was.

The conversation below gets louder and soon Helen's not  
listening to the phone anymore.

WILL (O.S.)  
IT'S NOT MY FAULT-

RICHARD (O.S.)  
When has anything, EVER, been your  
fault?! Be a man, TAKE SOME FUCKING  
RESPONSIBILITY!

WILL (O.S.)  
WHEN HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN  
RESPONSIBILITY FOR US!?

Helen puts the phone to her ear.

HELEN  
I should go. I'll speak to you  
soon. Yes. Okay. Speak soon.

She hangs up. Listens carefully.

RICHARD (O.S.)  
You brought the POLICE to our HOME.  
Scaring your mother like that,  
TWICE. Now you've RUINED her  
relationship with the village- the  
family's relationship-

WILL (O.S.)  
What relationship?! It's a FUCKING  
village, for fuck's sake!

RICHARD (O.S.)  
You KNOW EXACTLY what I mean. I  
TOLD you we need to look after her,  
did you not fucking hear me?! HM?

WILL (O.S.)  
Keep talking about Mum-

RICHARD (O.S.)  
Oh, you think you're a BIG MAN?

WILL (O.S.)  
Keep talking-

RICHARD (O.S.)  
You're a big man now?

**INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING - MOMENTS LATER.**

Will storms up the stairs as Helen leans out of her office.

HELEN  
(Meekly)  
Will... Will-

Will ignores her, presses on to his room.

Helen's at a loss for where to go. Finally, she decides to go downstairs.

**INT. WILL'S ROOM - LATER THAT AFTERNOON.**

Will sits at the window. Headphones in. Eyes closed. Dark rings around his eyes

*SHUNK!*

Will checks the window: it's not even dark yet. Far too early. His breathing becomes staccato.

He gets up. Paces the room. A mixture of frustration, confusion and anxiety swirling.

Will quietens. Moves over to the door. Puts an ear to it, then yells,

WILL  
Mum? MUM?

He listens for a moment to see if she's coming...

...nothing. He paces again. Goes back to the door again.

WILL (CONT'D)  
MUM!

Listens...

... still nothing.

**EXT. UPSTAIRS LANDING - NIGHT.**

From inside we hear Will weeping quietly, muffled by the closed door.

**- LATER.**

The weeping has suddenly stopped. It's impossible to tell what's going on inside...

Beat.

A *THUD!* startles us! Followed by a long pause... Footsteps receding... Then *MOVING CLOSER AT SPEED.*

Another *THUD!* The DIY lock *RATTLES* slightly.

A pause... Footsteps... Then a *THUD!* Pause... Footsteps... *THUD!*

Over and over.

The hollow door starts to splinter and bend in the centre... Then a hole appears... Just large enough for Will to peer through...

The single eye we see is wide, *ANIMAL...* He disappears again.

Pause... Footsteps... *THUD!*

The cycle continues on and on. The lock rattling more and more violently with each repetition.

Then, finally, the lock *EXPLODES* from the door! *CLATTERS* to the floor...

**THE DOOR SWINGS WIDE OPEN.**

Will steps from the *PITCH DARK* of his room into the *MOONLIGHT* shining in from the skylight. Breathing *HARD*. A *HAUNTED* look in his eyes...

He staggers, *CLUTCHING* his shoulder, over to his mother's office and checks inside.

**INT. HELEN'S OFFICE.**

Nobody there. Helen's makeshift bed is empty.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM.**

Helen and Richard lay FAST ASLEEP next to each other. Richard has an arm draped over his wife.

**INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING.**

Will attempts to control his breathing, looks conflicted over what to do next...

**INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER.**

Will stands by the counter, finding a contact in his phone. MAX. He dials...

WILL

Max- Max... I- need information- on the case.

(Pause.)

No- no. I'm not in danger. I need to know... if-

He pauses. Can't get the words out. Knows what it'll sound like.

WILL (CONT'D)

I need to know if you think I'm a suspect in the case. From everything you've seen- I-

A pause.

WILL (CONT'D)

For fuck's sake, Max. I'm not fucking about.

A pause.

WILL (CONT'D)

Oh, FUCK OFF!

He SLAMS the phone on the counter. Considers what else there is he can do.

**INT. WILL'S CAR - LATER THAT NIGHT.**

Will pulls up outside a small house and switches the engine off. He hesitates. Then just about manages to will himself out of the car.

We watch as he walks up to the front door timidly. Waits for what feels like an eternity. Rings the bell, finally.

On the passenger seat, Will's phone is blowing up with messages. From Max, from Ellie.

It takes a while, and a couple more rings of the bell, but soon a light turns on upstairs.

Beat.

The door opens...

**EXT. SIMON'S HOUSE, PORCH.**

Simon opens the door. Tired, bleary eyed and incredibly pissed off at the disturbance.

SIMON  
What the fuck?

WILL  
Simon, I need-

SIMON  
It's fucking past midnight-

His words are slurring. Clearly half-drunk.

WILL  
I need to know-

SIMON  
What?

WILL  
I need to know everything.

SIMON  
Who the fuck are you?

WILL  
What?

Will's taken aback. Simon just squints at him through the haze of his own double vision.

SIMON  
I said: who ARE you?

WILL  
It's- it's Will...

SIMON  
Oh, for, fuck-

Simon tries to close the door but Will grabs it.

SIMON (CONT'D)  
You need to fuck off. You know I'm  
with the police, right?!

WILL  
Just, tell me. Please. I need to  
know about what's going on-

Simon stops.

SIMON  
What?

WILL  
I need to know what the police know  
about the killings. Wh- who they  
think did them. I need to know what-

Simon looks bemused.

SIMON  
Everyone wants to know that.  
Including the police.

WILL  
Don't fuck me about, tonight,  
Simon. Of all fucking nights-

Simon narrows his eyes.

SIMON  
Is that a threat?

WILL  
No. I didn't mean it like that-

SIMON  
You know I'll fuck you up, you  
piece of shit. Always fucking were.

Will lowers his gaze.

WILL  
I- I'm not letting go. Not until  
you tell me what I need to know.

He looks back up at Simon. Rabid determination.



**INT. WILL'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER.**

We see the conversation play out from within the car. Muted, inaudible.

Then, Will lets go of the door. Simon slams it. Will ambles back over to the car. Gets in. Just sits there.

He waits, quietly. Processing everything. His expression giving nothing away. It's like he's already been through the emotion of it all.

He turns the key in the ignition and drives away.

**EXT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD - MINUTES LATER.**

Tires squeal as Will peels into the driveway.

**INT. WILL'S CAR.**

Will looks up at the forboding house. Up towards his room. The dark window...

We see what he does: RACHEL. Standing in the window. Fully visible for the first time since that night - a horrendous sight, almost phosphorescent in the moonlight.

Her ravaged body sits frozen in time. Frozen in an advanced state of decay. Innards on display, half spilt out. Burgundy and blue. She smiles.

In the living room window, MARK. Or, who must be deduced to be Mark. UNIDENTIFIABLE for the PULPY STATE of his main identifiers.

Will thinks better of returning to the HORRORS of that house. THROWS the car into reverse.

**- MINUTES LATER.**

Will pulls out his phone as he drives across Hanwall. One hand on the wheel, only half glancing at the road.

He pulls up a contact card and dials. It takes a moment but eventually they pick up.

WILL

Ellie? Ellie- I- I'm sorry. About everything. I'm so sorry. I can't- go home- I- I just- I can't-

**EXT. THATCH HOUSEHOLD, FRONT PORCH - EARLY HOURS.**

Will walks up to the porch as Ellie opens it. When they see one another, they pause. Nothing being said.

**INT. THATCH HOUSEHOLD, MAIN CORRIDOR.**

We stare at a closed door.

ELLIE (O.S.)  
Go on through. Don't wake him.

Will walks past.

**INT. THATCH HOUSEHOLD, ELLIE'S ROOM - MINUTES LATER.**

Will sits nervously on Ellie's bed. Ellie comes in with a mug of tea, places it by Will and sits down across from him.

Will's knee is rocketing up and down. He can't get any words out. Ellie looks uncomfortable.

ELLIE  
Whatever it is. It'll be okay.

Will doesn't say anything.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
I can't stand seeing you like this, Will- it- it's not fair. Not to anyone. Not when you refuse to do anything.

WILL  
I know.

ELLIE  
I know it sounds harsh but-

WILL  
I'm so sorry, Ell. I know- I know how I've been.

A long beat. Ellie doesn't know what to do.

ELLIE  
Why did you come here?

Will stops. Readies himself.

WILL  
 (Quietly)  
 You remember that night, when we  
 went to go get my car and...

He trails off. Ellie goes quiet for a moment.

ELLIE  
 Yes.

WILL  
 (Struggling to get the  
 words out)  
 There was- I found blood on- my  
 car... I was scared- I wiped it  
 away. I bleached it the night after  
 that.

ELLIE  
 Will... I don't know what you're  
 expecting from me. You want me to  
 forgive you or-?

She stops. Gives it up. Sighs deep.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
 ...I saw- I saw *her* that night. She  
 was in there. Behind the car. Will,  
 she- She was just, there- in the  
 dirt-

Silence.

WILL  
 Are- are you sure?

Will looks up at Ellie.

ELLIE  
 Yes. I'm fucking sure, Will- I-

She stops. Gets up and moves over to a LITTLE CABINET. Pulls  
 from a drawer the PHONE she plucked from the mud all those  
 nights ago. Carries it back to Will. Places it next to him.  
 Retreats across the room as though repelled by it.

Will is stunned. Doesn't pick it up. Just stares at it.

WILL  
 What is this?

ELLIE  
 I- I've been- I've had dreams about  
 that night.  
 (MORE)

ELLIE (CONT'D)

She comes to me in my sleep- she- I thought about destroying it-

WILL

Is this- is this Rachel's?

ELLIE

I- it's stupid. I- can't believe I'm saying this- I thought it was bringing her to me. But then, I thought, I liked seeing her again... I missed her, Will, so I kept it.

WILL

I don't understand, Ell...

Ellie's a dam about to burst. She just stares at Will, wide-eyed. Eventually, she frowns, brings herself back from the brink.

ELLIE

I'm sorry. You don't need to hear any of this. I'm not that type of- I don't know why I'm telling you.

An awkward, empty beat.

WILL

I went and spoke to Simon. About what-

ELLIE

Why would you ever go to Simon about any of this?

WILL

You've changed your tune.

ELLIE

What?

WILL

I thought he was "the closest thing to a source of information we have."

ELLIE

Will, that was a completely different time, I don't know what you want me to tell you- I don't even know what you'd want *him* to tell you-

A pause.

WILL

I got scared, I needed to know more about... everything. I thought he would help.

ELLIE

Did you tell him what we-?

Will goes quiet. Shakes his head.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

What'd he say? Is he even allowed to-

WILL

He told me... details. About things. About what happened to-

Ellie frowns, this time she shakes her head.

ELLIE

I don't want to hear them. Ever. Alright? Why- why would you?

WILL

I needed to find out- I don't think this is going to stop unless- I'm starting to understand- I think it's going to happen again, Ellie.

There's a flicker of fear in Ellie's eyes, but soon it subsides.

ELLIE

Will... What do you want from me? Why did you come here?

WILL

I couldn't go home. I don't know what I'd do if I was back there... I've been... I've had bad dreams too- Ellie-

ELLIE

Are your parents not at home?

WILL

They- it's complicated-

ELLIE

What's happened, Will?

WILL

I don't want to talk about that.

Beat.

WILL (CONT'D)

I need to figure some things out. I-  
I've seen things and I don't know  
if they're dreams. I need to know  
what's real- but I need to fall a  
bit further in to be able to tell-

ELLIE

I- I'm really not following you.  
I'm sorry.

WILL

Do you have any of that stuff left?

ELLIE

What?

WILL

From- from that night. The first  
night all this started.

ELLIE

The acid? You wanna drop acid right  
now? You can't be-

WILL

I need to try go back to that  
place, Ell, I know it sounds dumb,  
but I-

ELLIE

Will... Listen to yourself.

WILL

I know- I know it sounds dumb and I  
sound a bit funny. I know I've been  
a bit funny in general recently. I  
just-

ELLIE

Will...

WILL

I need to try this. It's all I've  
got that I can think of to do.

He looks at Ellie pleadingly.

WILL (CONT'D)

I need to go deeper into it. And if you could be here to make sure I didn't- I didn't do anything. Anything stupid.

ELLIE

When was the last time you slept?

WILL

I slept just fine last night.

ELLIE

Did you? I can't think of a worse thing to do in your current state than that.

WILL

Ellie-

ELLIE

Go home, Will. Please just get some rest. Try again. We'll talk in the morning. I promise you. Just not right now.

She moves over. PICKS UP THE PHONE and takes it back to the cabinet. She then collects up her mug and comes back over to get Will's too. Leaves the room quietly.

Will gets up. Looks about himself, considering... Then settles finally on the cabinet. Silently, he glides over and opens it.

Inside he sees THE PHONE. Moves it aside and uncovers more personal items. A picture of Ellie with her Dad, NEITHER OF THEM SMILING. Keeps digging.

At the bottom is a small box. He opens it quickly, takes something from within, then puts everything back as it was. Turns away, but... pauses before leaving. Turns back. POCKETS THE PHONE.

**INT. CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER.**

Will slinks by the kitchen. He's about to sneak out when he hesitates.

WILL

(Whispering)

I'm sorry, Ell.

**INT. KITCHEN.**

Ellie faces away from us. Sobbing quietly. She doesn't respond.

**EXT. HANWALL HIGHSTREET.**

Will's car cruises through the main artery of the village.

**INT. WILL'S CAR.**

Will puts a tab of LSD on his tongue...

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, WILL'S ROOM - LATER.**

Will sits on the edge of his bed. Hunched over. The broken door sits ajar in the background. Alone again. He's on the precipice of sleep...

The world seems to shift around him, the walls melting then reconstituting themselves...

KNOCK-KNOCK.

Will comes alive. His head swivels to the door...

But there's no one there.

Slowly, the sound of a *BUZZING* fly becomes audible...

In the corner a shadow shifts. Will's head turns again.

WILL  
(Whispering)  
I'm so sorry... I know- I know  
you're here.

In the background the door starts to close, picking up speed then... *BANG!* It slams shut.

The room is still dark, but moonlight just manages to break in through the crack in the door.

Then, something steps in front of the hole, blocking out the light...

CUT TO BLACK.

We hear Will's laboured breathing... A kind of *CREAKING*...

Something falls and there's a-



-CRASH! as it smashes to pieces!

WILL (CONT'D)  
 (Still whispering)  
 Please, please, please, please. I  
 know now. I know. Just show me.  
 Please. Just show me.

Slowly, MOONLIGHT starts to seep into the room as the curtains to the sole window are carefully peeled back by some unseen presence...

WILL (CONT'D)  
 Show me.

Will looks about the floor for whatever it was that smashed... He sees it: the mirror in the corner of the room, it's been pushed over, shattered into thousands of pieces.

Will hesitates, then compels himself to move closer. Looking about at the room all the while...

When he gets there, he frowns, trying to focus on his cracked reflection in the near-dark...

He sees himself - but something's very wrong. His eyes... THEY'VE CHANGED... They're... GLOWING... Like a dog's *TAPETUM LUCIDUM*...

Suddenly, Will's face WARPS, his TERRIFIED GRIMACE turns to a SMILE, then a SNARL. His jaw CRACKS VICIOUSLY and forces his lips to stretch unnaturally wide. His eyes ROLL BACK.

Will yells like a wounded animal but NOBODY COMES. Soon, the yell is reduced to a groan when Will's jaw dislocates and starts to protrude further and further from its natural position.

**INT. THATCH HOUSEHOLD, ELLIE'S ROOM.**

Ellie walks back into her room. Defeated. She drops onto the edge of her bed. Bows her head.

Eventually, she looks up. Sees the cabinet, left wide open...

**- MOMENTS LATER.**

Ellie's rifling through the cabinet, struggling to find what she knows deep down just isn't there.

She turns around to her door, considering. Leaves.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, WILL'S ROOM.**

Will's bones BEND and CRACK and SNAP, then slowly reset into abnormal, new positions.

His whole body is shifting, reshaping itself... The horrid squelches of rending meat the sole soundtrack to Will's reconstitution. His clothes tearing loose from his body...

Will manages to tear his gaze from the mirror and for just a moment the process pauses...

A pair of bare legs come into view. (We've seen these before.) Will grabs at them with his deformed, clawed mits.

WILL  
I'm so sorry...

His voice is low and snarling. Furtive and pathetic.

The figure reaches down with a pale hand forces Will to look back into the mirror...

POP! Something SHIFTS in Will's back and he HOWLS again. The process resuming.

Soon, thick, matted hair springs forth all over the creature's body, damped by the fluids exuding from the creature's metamorphic wounds.

**INT. CREATURE'S BODY.**

We see Will, the young man, trapped within; being SMOTHERED slowly by the TAUT WALLS of dark, membranous flesh; drowning in the internal fluids.

He struggles for breath, tries to reach a hand upwards, but gets stuck when the walls CONSTRICT even further.

**INT. WILL'S ROOM.**

The pale figure is nowhere to be seen.

The NEW BEAST lies defeated on the ground. In this large monstrous body, he barely fits in the small bedroom.

He rolls over and looks at himself in the mirror and catches a shrouded glimpse of his new appearance.

He does all he can to express his terror... emits a LOW WHIMPER. Crocodile tears from the big, sad wolf.

**INT. CREATURE'S BODY.**

The smothering slowly continues... Will gasps for air, swallowing GHASTLY FLUIDS, DROWNING in them...

Beat.

Something switches on inside, Will burrows his hand through a wall of flesh.

**INT. WILL'S ROOM.**

The beast's arm GOES LIMP for a moment, then COMES ALIVE with a new vigor. It reaches for a JAGGED SHARD of the smashed mirror...

**INT. CREATURE'S BODY.**

Beat.

The shard BURROWS through the wall of flesh. Appearing dangerously close to Will's face.

It RENDS downwards, SLOWLY. Opens a cavity just large enough for Will to taste fresh air.

Then, enough for him to kick free.

**INT. WILL'S ROOM.**

Will spills forth from the beast's body. Drenched. Panting.

It's out cold. He's bought himself a moment. Scrabbles to his feet. Darts out the door.

The Beast STIRS.

**EXT. HANWALL HIGHSTREET - LATER.**

Will hurries quickly down the middle of the road. Looking about himself all the while. No one else is about. The moon looms low and large.

**EXT. COUNTRY LANE - MINUTES LATER.**

Will DASHES down the road. The HINT of a EXHAUSTION setting in.

Soon, he comes to a crossroads. Searches for a signpost.  
Finds none.

Somewhere in the distance, a ghastly, unknown voice BOOMS...

VOICE IN THE DISTANCE (O.S.)  
WILL!? WILL!

Will checks over his shoulder. Turns back. Decides on a  
direction. RIGHT. Makes the turn.

**EXT. FIELD, OUTSIDE HANWALL.**

Will emerges from the undergrowth at the boundary. Hops the  
fence and starts progressing across the field. Ploughed.  
Uniform dunes of dirt.

VOICE IN THE DISTANCE (O.S.)  
WILL! COME BACK!

Will's foot lands awkwardly in a divot.

He stumbles HARD, almost TUMBLING. BARELY recovers his  
balance. Pace suffering for it.

He tries to keep moving, but with each step he slows...

He looks down, and sees, with a horror: he's sinking into the  
dirt. Feet submerging deeper into the field with every  
movement forward.

He looks over his shoulder, PANICKING NOW-

A moment, then the dirt gives way like SILT. He sinks fully.

**UNDER THE FIELD.**

We catch GLIMPSES of panicked SUFFOCATION. Will SCRABBLING to  
escape. Choking on DIRT.

Will reaches upwards. GRASPS something. SALVATION.

Beat.

**EXT. FIELD.**

Will SHOOTs UPWARDS. Coming free from the field. Rising into  
the night air, he realises he's moving alarmingly high...

THE FULL PICTURE:

Will SUSPENDED by his arm. Hand crushed by a CLAWED FIST.

THE BEAST dangling Will like a trophy. Our first full glimpse of it. Sinewy, tall, wiry. WOUNDED.

Will apprehends the damage. Spots the cavity running from the beast's chest to its pelvis where Will had cut himself loose. Then, the arm BENDS. No time for Will to react. The beast SWINGS him in CLOSE.

Will bounces hard off the edge of the rend but isn't going down without a fight. Claws for a grip. Clutches at pale flesh for dear life. TEARS clumps free.

The Beast SQUEALS, ROARS but doesn't relent. Pulls at Will greedily, attempting to force his body inside. Going to overpower him -

- And then it does. And the chest cavity swallows Will like some HEINOUS MAW.

CUT TO BLACK.

**OVER BLACK.**

A long, long moment.

Silence but for the sounds of a cold wind billowing across the field.

**EXT. CORNER OF FIELD, JUST OUTSIDE HANWALL. EARLY MORNING.**

The sun is just beginning to rise, casting a pale light on the scene. A marked levity to what may or may not have happened just hours before.

Will wakes with a start. He's fully clothed but still muddy. His eyes swim beneath their lids, before finally opening.

He sits up but doesn't notice *it* right away.

The thing that wasn't there before... The dark stain in his periphery. And then he does, turning and seeing, slowly, inch by inch, and with a deep horror -

- THE COLD, LIFELESS BODY.

He looks away again. Frowns. Unbelieving. We focus on him - the body's identity remaining hidden for now.

When he turns back, the corpse is still there...

Will sits very still just *staring* for a long while, unable to process what he's seeing.

Eventually, JUST BEFORE WE CUT AWAY he lets out the beginning of a deep wail from the pit of his stomach.

**EXT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, DRIVEWAY - 30 MINUTES LATER.**

Will stumbles into the drive. Having run all the way back home, he's on his last legs.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, LIVING ROOM.**

The house is still asleep.

Will slips through the front door quietly and glides slowly, numbly into the living room. Over to the land-line. Pauses. Contemplating. Then picks it up slowly. He goes to dial... But can't. Puts it back down. Leaves the room.

WILL (O.S.)  
(Hissing at himself.)  
Fuck- come on- fucking pussy-

A door closes. LOCKS.

**INT. HALLWAY.**

Just outside the bathroom. The door closed to us.

We hear a meaty *THUD!* as Will smacks himself. He starts hyperventilating.

A beat, then -

- *CRASH!* The sound of a glass shattering.

**INT. BATHROOM.**

Will SMACKS himself again. Calms his breathing.

He looks down into the sink basin. One of the SWILLING GLASSES lays shattered within.

He lightly takes up the largest piece of the fractured body. Examines the jagged edge... The curved edges and structure of the piece warp Will's face in their reflections...

**INT. HALLWAY.**

Will begins hyperventilating again. We hear pained groans... Then... A HEAVY SILENCE.

Moments pass before the sound of the glass shard being dropped echoes alongside Will's sobs.

**EXT. TVP STATION, RECEPTION - EARLY MORNING.**

The sun's only just started to rise.

Will pushes through the large, glass doors. The clerk on reception stands up, rather taken aback by the sight of Will, still muddy, half-dressed from the night before.

**INT. ROBSON'S CUBICLE - MINUTES LATER.**

Will, now wrapped tightly in a blanket, sits at the cluttered desk. Examining a photo of Robson and his two young sons. A fishing trip. All beaming widely.

ROBSON (O.S.)  
Right, they're on their way to  
check it out, okay?

Robson takes a seat before Will as he nods his understanding.

ROBSON (CONT'D)  
Why can't you tell me what it is  
you think they'll find there?

Will doesn't answer. Soft gaze fixed on a vent in the floor.

ROBSON (CONT'D)  
Did you drive yourself all the way  
here like that, Will?

Nothing.

Robson, at a loss, looks about at the humming early-morning shift.

ROBSON (CONT'D)  
It's a bit hectic around here, at  
the moment. I suppose you know why.

Will stays quiet, but looks up, finally. Gaze over at a row of tables, each with a phone and a member of staff manning it.

ROBSON (CONT'D)

We're trying to get a website or page or something set up, but tips and things are still coming through the phones for now. It's nightmarish, quite honestly. Since that article was published, you wouldn't believe the stuff we've been getting.

Will suddenly feels small again. Cold feet. He pulls the blanket even tighter around him.

WILL

(Hoarsely)

Could- could we talk somewhere more private?

Robson becomes serious again. Nods at Will.

**INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - MOMENTS LATER.**

Will enters and stops. Looks about the room: box-like, quiet, inconceivably plain. A table, pushed into the corner seats two. A mirror - obviously one-way - occupies a section of the back wall.

ROBSON

You can take a seat at the table if you'd like.

Will moves over and does so. Robson follows him in and closes the door, then lingers,

ROBSON (CONT'D)

Uh- actually, did you want another tea or something? You look-

He stops himself. Will has to think hard about it. Swallows hard.

WILL

Just some water. Please.

ROBSON

Alright.

Robson leaves again and the moments of absence trudge by.

Slowly, Will becomes more and more aware of the mirror.

He looks away, toward the wall. A mixture of the feeling that he's being watched and... something else.



**INT. INTERVIEW OBSERVATION ROOM.**

There's nobody inside. No-one watching.

It's from here we see Robson finally re-enter with Will's glass. Walk slowly over to Will in the corner. Put the glass down. Will doesn't look at it.

ROBSON  
How're you feeling?

WILL  
I'm... tired.

ROBSON  
You've been having issues with sleep, right?

Will stays quiet.

ROBSON (CONT'D)  
Rough thing, when the sleep goes.  
Breaks everything else down.

Yet more silence.

ROBSON (CONT'D)  
My wife always gets on my back about it when I don't come home early enough. She's right to. It always means the next night will be worse. On and on.

WILL  
You know about my sleepwalking?

ROBSON  
Uhhh- yes. A little. It's in the file.

WILL  
There's a file?

Will looks up at the file Robson's laid on the table. It's pretty thin. Not much in there, clearly.

ROBSON  
There's always a file. Due diligence. Nothing to worry about. We compile everything we hear. Just in case.

WILL  
But who told you?

Robson flicks open the file. Leafs through pages. Stops.

ROBSON

Uh- it doesn't say. That's odd. It usually would.

WILL

I- don't know what to say.

ROBSON

Doesn't mean anything, Will.

Will reaches slowly for the glass of water. Takes a sip.

ROBSON (CONT'D)

It's been getting bad, hasn't it?

Will's gaze lowers.

WILL

Yeah.

ROBSON

Have you... spoken to someone about it?

WILL

I don't suppose so. Not really.

ROBSON

Can I ask why not?

WILL

I don't know.

There's a pause as Robson reconsiders his line of inquiry.

ROBSON

What is it you're expecting them to find in that field, Will? Why couldn't you tell me on the phone?

WILL

I- don't know...

ROBSON

You don't know what's in the field or you don't know why?

**EXT. COUNTRY LANE - SAME TIME.**

A police car cruises along. The trees lining the edge of the lane create a dazzling pattern in the reflection of its wind shield.

**INT. INTERVIEW ROOM.**

WILL  
I'm sorry-

ROBSON  
Hey, there's no need to be sorry.  
You're okay. I'm just a little  
lost, alright?

Will starts to crack. Tears begin to roll down his cheeks. His tired repression springing a leak.

ROBSON (CONT'D)  
Will? Hey, come on bud.

Will looks up and over towards the mirror again.

**INT. INTERVIEW OBSERVATION ROOM.**

Will looks down at the floor again. Ashamed.

WILL  
I'm sorry.

ROBSON  
Can you tell me why you're sorry?

An interminable beat.

WILL  
I think... I think I did some  
things...

Robson frowns, perplexed.

ROBSON  
Is this related to what's in the  
field?

Will nods.

INSERT:

**EXT. CORNER OF FIELD.**

ELLIE'S LIFELESS FACE. Glassy-eyed. Pale. The hints of CRIMSON STAINS lower down.

**INT. INTERVIEW ROOM.**

Will puts a palm to his forehead, then lets out a mucousy blubber.

WILL

I- can't...

Robson puts a hand on his shoulder.

For a long while, neither of them say anything.

ROBSON

Do you want me to get someone else  
you can talk to?

WILL

No. Stay- please. I- I want you.

Will pauses for what feels like an eternity, then-

WILL (CONT'D)

I think I want to-

ROBSON

Will... why- what are we doing  
here?

Will takes a breath, then releases it. Looses the weight on his chest.

WILL

I want you to know this is me. All  
of it.

ROBSON

What?

WILL

Just- I think- I know. It's me. I'm  
responsible for the killings.  
Rachel, Mark. And-

He clenches his jaw. Balls his hand to a fist.

WILL (CONT'D)

Ellie.

ROBSON

Ellie?

WILL

My- she was my friend. She was there the night I killed Rachel.

ROBSON

Is that who's in the field?

Will looks at the floor. Wide-eyed. Doesn't speak.

Robson looks emotionally drained... He lets out a long sigh. Thinks for a moment.

ROBSON (CONT'D)

Look, I need something to go on, here. Okay? I need evidence. Do you have anything like that? I have zero reason to believe what you're telling- I don't know what you're telling me.

Will looks up at him abruptly. Annoyed.

WILL

I'm fucking confessing-

ROBSON

And I need more than your word to believe you on this, Will. All I see right now is, frankly, a deeply troubled young man-

WILL

I- but Simon said-

He stops himself short. Slowly considering what it is he needs to do.

WILL (CONT'D)

I'm out at night. All the time- it lines up-

ROBSON

How would you know-

WILL

I just know- I just do. You know my mother lied about the night Mark died.

Robson shifts in his seat awkwardly. *He does.*

WILL (CONT'D)

I was there, that night and when Rachel was killed too. I was there. I know it. I wake up with these cuts and scrapes. My clothes in tatters... "Evidence of a struggle."

ROBSON

Will... Stop. I- don't know what to tell you... You're wasting your time. Please. Let me get you checked out. We have a medic in the building.

Will winces. His case against himself crumbling in mere sentences.

WILL

(Meekly)

You kept my coat.

ROBSON

That really doesn't have anything to do with-

WILL

(Interrupting)

And I have these recurring dreams- about- what happens. I have nightmares, where I do terrible things and-

Robson sighs. He closes Will's file. Picks it up and stands.

ROBSON

I think we're done, Will. You're ill. You need help.

WILL

No- please. Listen to me- you're making a mistake.

Will looks MANIC, his mind racing to find something he knows-

**INT. WILL'S CAR - FLASHBACK.**

It's the night Ellie discovered Rachel's body.

Will sits STARING into his rearview at the CRIMSON brake-light-soaked nook.

**INT. INTERVIEW OBSERVATION ROOM - PRESENT.**

WILL

I can tell you where the body was dumped. The exact time it was found. Other details too.

Robson stops. Pauses at the door. Will looks FEVERISH. Sweating now. Hands TREMBLING.

WILL (CONT'D)

A side lane outside Hanwall. Just off the road up to the woodlands. Would've been twenty-five past midnight when it was located. That's where it ended. Where I cornered her. She tripped. Something came over me that night. A rage... No-

He reconsiders. Tries again.

WILL (CONT'D)

That's a lie. I was the most lucid I'd been in months. The slashing of the tents sent everyone scattering. It was a distraction.

**INT. INTERVIEW ROOM.**

Robson lowers himself slowly back into his seat.

He says something... At least, Robson's lips move - but Will CAN'T SEEM TO HEAR HIM and nor can we.

We're alone with him in his world.

WILL

But it also helped with selection. It could have been any one of them. Someone had to die that night. That was just the way of things. In actual fact I was hoping it would be one of the guys. Just happened to be her. I chased her to the road. That's where she found my car. Tried to get into it. You wouldn't have found that when you got to her. But you know it was there. There were tracks.

Will taps the table. Robson writes. FINALLY.

WILL (CONT'D)

I went back there to cover them but I was clumsy and slow. Someone saw me. They wouldn't have recognised me. Didn't recognise me. That was at twenty-five past midnight too.

He pauses. Looks up at Robson. Deadly serious. There's a FLICKER of VIOLENCE in his gaze.

WILL (CONT'D)

She was desperate. Already hurt badly at that point. Cut up pretty bad. Left blood on the door. I had to wash that. She gave up when she saw me coming, though. Tried to get into the woods.

Robson continues to scribble. Needs to speed up. Does.

WILL (CONT'D)

Mark was another story. Did him pretty much beyond recognition. Know you must have had a pretty tough time with that. Heard your medical staff had a difficult time deciding what killed him too. It wasn't the trauma, though. I know you know that.

Will stops. Pauses. Looks Robson in the eye.

WILL (CONT'D)

You're starting to believe me aren't you?

Beat.

Robson speaks, but he's still inaudible. Will looks blankly at him.

A moment passes as Robson spews muted procedure. Will realises something. Goes slowly to his pocket. Feels the MASS there. Goes inside...

...draws from it RACHEL'S PHONE. Places it on the table solemnly.

Robson just stares and stares and stares. But then, he turns his head. Glances at the recording light by the mirror. OFF. Nothing recorded. He holds a hand up to Will: *stay right there*. Gets up and rushes out of the room.

Will looks up at himself in the mirror.



Laughs at his reflection. It laughs back. The laughs turn to sobs. Then to failed attempts at sucking in enough air.

He tries to get up from his chair, NEEDING to escape that cell of a room. But then he falls, knees BUCKLING beneath him. Landing FACE FIRST. HARD.

**INT. INTERVIEW OBSERVATION ROOM.**

Will lies out of view on the floor. The door opens. Robson and an older looking officer. They see Will. Robson rushes over, the older officer steps back out of the door and yells for help.

FADE TO BLACK.

**INT. PATIENT ROOM, J.R. HOSPITAL - LATE MORNING.**

Will lies asleep, now dressed in a patient gown. Tucked in tightly with a white sheet.

His eyes swim violently beneath their lids. Soon he opens them... and SHOCK grips him.

Staring back at him, from the end of the bed is RACHEL - that odious, decomposing facade from his bedroom window.

Will starts breathing hard again. Sucking in air. His heart-rate monitor goes haywire. Then, his eyes shift to the left.

In the corner of the room: MARK. What's left of him, staring accusatory, faceless.

He moves to sit up but can't. Beneath the sheet his wrists have been manacled to the bed.

In the periphery, a SHADE floats by the window.

Will follows it with his gaze: down the hallway just outside the room. When the light catches its face he sees her. ELLIE.

Will closes his eyes. Screws them shut. Refuses to open them again.

CUT TO BLACK.

WILL

I couldn't do it- I couldn't. I'm sorry. Forgive me. Please. Forgive me.

ELLIE (O.S.)  
 (Whispering)  
 Let me help you. Just relax, Will.  
 Relax. That's it. You know it  
 wasn't enough.

Will opens his eyes. Ellie stands by the bedside. Caressing his face. A tear rolls down his cheek.

Ever so gently, she untucks Will's sheet from the mattress. Pulls it upwards... Over his face, covering him.

With a free hand, she grips his neck. Lightly at first, then harder. And harder. Closing like a vice.

Will blubbers. Chokes on the sheet.

Beat.

Ellie, unrelenting, leans in close.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
 Will... Will. Come on, darling.

We watch Ellie's face before we,

MATCH CUT TO:

**- MOMENTS LATER.**

Helen leaning over Will. Will stirs. Helen plants a kiss on his forehead.

HELEN  
 It's time to wake up. Time to stop  
 all this.

Will's eyes slowly open. He looks about himself. Ellie has disappeared - in her place, his mother and Robson.

Helen smiles down at him. Strokes his hair tenderly, then steps away.

Robson moves close, a grave look on his face. Takes a key from his pocket. Looses him from the manacles.

Will looks at them both, bewildered.

**INT. WAITING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER.**

Will shuffles down the hallway towards the waiting room, Robson and Helen close by.

Will rounds the corner, then he sees her. Standing there...

...ELLIE. Unharmed. Talking to a police officer.

She glimpses Will, then turns. Gives a concerned half-smile. Will looks back at Robson as if to see if this is some trick...

WILL (O.S.)  
Are you real?

**EXT. PATIENT ROOM - MINUTES LATER.**

We see Will through the narrow door window, sitting on the edge of his bed. Talking to someone out of sight.

Beat.

Will's gaze follows the other person as they get up. The door opens. Robson leaves, walks out of frame.

ROBSON (O.S.)  
Let's get back to the station.

OFFICER (O.S.)  
Want anyone to stay here with him?

ROBSON (O.S.)  
(Exasperated.)  
We've wasted enough time on this.

**EXT. FIELD, JUST OUTSIDE HANWALL - LATER THAT DAY.**

We hold from a distance.

Will moves into the frame and storms ahead, away from us. Toward the corner in which he found himself waking just hours prior.

Ellie follows. Slow. Cautious.

ELLIE (V.O.)  
What happened, Will?

WILL (V.O.)  
I don't know- I- *I don't know...*

ELLIE (V.O.)  
They told me what you said. What you tried to tell them. You thought all of this was you? All this-...  
*Why?*

**EXT. CORNER OF FIELD.**

Will stares and we see what he does: NOTHING. No body. No signs of struggle.

**INT. WILL'S CAR - LATER.**

Will and Ellie sit side by side. Will stares straight ahead. Numb. Ellie frowns at him.

ELLIE

How long has this been on your mind?

WILL

(Meek, ashamed)  
The days have... *become a bit jumbled*. I- don't know.

ELLIE

That's okay. It's alright now.

Will looks at her.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

I talked to them. Told them what happened. They seemed reluctant to hold you as it was. Even after everything you said.

WILL

Why? Why did you- do that...?

Ellie looks at Will. Scared for him. For what's going on in his head.

ELLIE

They had to know, Will. The real danger's still out there. The deaths won't stop just because you told them... Whatever you thought you were telling them. Either that or you get a charge just for obstructing the investigation.

WILL

That wasn't right. You shouldn't have- You have no idea what's going on-

ELLIE

Will. Come on... You need to get out of here. Go back to school. That's your job now.

WILL

But-

ELLIE

I said you can stop now.

Will frowns. So much is going on beneath the surface. DISBELIEF. INDIGNATION. SHAME.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, WILL'S ROOM - LATER.**

Will sits on his bed. A solemn sight to behold.

He glances down at the shattered mirror beside him. Some kind of evidence as to what really happened the night prior.

He focuses on one piece in particular. COVERED IN BLOOD.

**INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT, DAYS LATER.**

Helen cooks. Choir music hums once again.

The front door opens behind her and Richard trudges in, dressed up in business casual, briefcase in tow. BACK FROM WORK.

Richard glides up to the kitchen.

HELEN

Honeybunch...

RICHARD

I'm afraid I'm not much hungry, tonight. I am sorry.

Helen is taken aback. She nods. Solemn. Richard moves away.

Helen turns back to her cooking. Looks mournfully on.

**INT. SHARED FLAT, LONDON - A FEW DAYS LATER, NIGHT.**

Will HAULS his suitcase inside. Moves to the centre of the room, looks about himself.

From behind, RYAN (21) - his cheery flat-mate - emerges, carrying another bag.

Will turns and smiles halfheartedly at him.

WILL (O.S.)  
 Next week-? No- yeah- that'd be  
 fine. Okay, yeah. Alright thanks so  
 much. Bye.

**INT. SHARED FLAT, WILL'S ROOM - A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER.**

Will takes the phone from his ear. Hangs up. Looks about his room for a moment.

He's sat at a cheap desk in the corner of the room. His laptop sits open on an article by the OXFORD MAIL about the HANWALL MURDERS...

**INT. SUMMIT MEDICAL CENTRE, SLEEP CLINIC - NIGHT.**

Will sits on the edge of a hospital bed. A technician moves about him, applying small electrodes all over his body.

WILL (O.S.)  
 It's a bit of weird request but  
 could you-

**- MOMENTS LATER.**

The technician leaves the room, locks the door behind him.

**INT. HELEN'S OFFICE - ANOTHER DAY.**

Helen works away. In the background the radio plays. Suddenly the presenter comes into the fore.

RADIO PRESENTER (O.S.)  
 ...another body has been found just  
 outside the rural village of  
 Hanwall...

**INT. SHARED FLAT, COMMUNAL SPACE - SAME TIME.**

Will has the TV switched to the news. His laptop is in his lap.

The breaking news scroll reads in bold: ANOTHER BODY IN HANWALL.

Will sifts through news-sites. Trying to corroborate the TV's announcement. Then he finds one. Leans back. Not sure what to make of it.

**INT. SHARED FLAT, WILL'S ROOM - NIGHT.**

Ellie's digital face - pensive, considering an offer of some kind - occupies the frame entirely before we cut to see Will sitting before it.

A long beat.

WILL

- I'm sorry I ran away, Ell.

ELLIE

You didn't run away, I'm doing fine.

WILL

It'll never be fine, long as you're in that house with him.

ELLIE

Even so. It's a lot to accept.

WILL

This is nothing. It's nowhere near as much as you deserve.

ELLIE

How would I even go?

WILL

You wouldn't even have to tell him until you'd gone. Laura's five minutes away. You call her once he's out of the house, grab what you need and go.

ELLIE

It's a lot to accept, Will. It's a lot of change too. A lot of risk. What if he cuts me off.

WILL

You'd still have a roof over your head. Still be making your own money too.

Another long beat.

WILL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I didn't think of this before. I'm sorry I've been so distracted, Ell.

But Ellie doesn't hear. Too deep in thought.

FLETCHER (V.O.)

Ah. Here... *The 4th of October...*  
You're sure this is okay?

(A pause.)

*"I used to play cricket, when I was young. In the summer, when it was warm and beautiful outside. I was at that age where I had to be driven to things, I couldn't take myself to the games, so my father would take me.*

*"I was always looking to quit cricket but never really could. Not because I was so in love with it that I was always dragged back in, but because I was afraid of what Dad would think. You know how they can be.*

We hold on Will's face, as he watches Ellie's before we,

MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. SMALL QUAIN T OFFICE - EVENING.**

DOCTOR FLETCHER, (mid-50s) a gentle soul, the kind with caring in her bones, sits reading from her tablet. We focus on her throughout, not revealing the reverse-shot of what seems to be some kind of therapy session.

FLETCHER

*"He used to smack me whenever I acted up, and sometimes, after the cricket he'd smack me then too. On the way home - if it was one of those days - he'd tell me I'd been pissing about too much during the game.*

*"Obviously, I didn't want to be smacked, so whenever I played, I started watching Dad out of the corner of my eye. Trying to gauge what he was thinking.*

(MORE)



FLETCHER (CONT'D)

*I was too young to know whether I was pissing about or just having fun, so I just started trying to use his expression to know when I should stop.*

Abruptly, we cut to RICHARD, listening to his own words being read back to him.

*"That turned out to be quite difficult, though. It being the summer - he'd always wear these dark sunglasses along with this blank expression. It wasn't a frown or a scowl, but it wasn't a smile either. Somewhere in between the two. At least from what I could see. And it never changed. No matter what was happening. It was just this blank slate. Impossible to read. So I never really was able to gauge what it was that was going through his mind. Never knew if I was doing the right thing or not. So I just sort of started assuming I always was.*

*"I still got smacked for being a twerp, though. And I almost certainly deserved it - but it would just come out of nowhere to me, and that was what got me. If I could have just gauged when it was coming, maybe I'd have adjusted better."*

Fletcher puts her tablet down. Takes off her glasses and frowns thoughtfully.

FLETCHER (CONT'D)

I appreciate you letting me read this one back to you. It stuck out when you sent it over. What was it that caused you to remember this? Or to put it to paper, at least.

Richard looks at his therapist. Deciding whether or not to confide.

**EXT. CAR PARK - LATER THAT EVENING.**

Richard shuffles through the empty, lonely car park to his car. Clambers in.

Drives off.

**INT. WILL'S CAR - DAY.**

Will on the motorway. He looks invigorated, the hint of a smile on his lips. Then a sign for a junction approaches steadily and, as it passes, Will's smile starts to fade.

He starts to look a little less sure of himself, a little less certain.

He flicks his indicators on.

**EXT. LAURA'S HOUSE - LATER.**

Will hauls waits at the door.

It's a small place, needs work, but it's quaint.

Laura answers. Smiles at her brother. Then steps aside, revealing Ellie.

She emerges slowly at first, then quickly. Wraps Will in a tight embrace.

LAURA

I'll put the kettle on.

**EXT. RACHEL PRUCE'S LANE - DAY.**

The new section of Hanwall. Recent developments. Ugly houses identical the whole way through.

Max and Hannah stand staring at a street name plate. They look unimpressed.

HANNAH

I take it this is what Thomas meant when he said her friends would handle it.

MAX

I suppose so.

Liam suddenly emerges from round the corner. A little out of breath.

MAX (CONT'D)

What're the others like?

LIAM

Uh - pub names. You've got 'Boar's  
Head Street' and 'Rose Road.'

MAX

Oh, fantastic.

Finally, we see what the street name plate reads: RACHEL  
PRUCE'S LANE.

LIAM

I'm starting to see why Thomas  
decided against returning.

**INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT.**

Will and Ellie sit on Laura's sofa, the news on. A breaking  
news bulletin reads: HANWALL KILLER SUSPECT SLAIN. Behind the  
graphics, a press conference is being set up.

Other graphics on the screen denote the up-to-date death  
toll: SIX. Another scrolls by with names of the victims.

Laura enters the room in hurry-

LAURA

I heard they-

Will nods towards the TV.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Holy shit. What happened?

WILL

A farmer shot him as he was trying  
to get onto their land.

Laura's stunned into silence.

ELLIE

He had what they described as like,  
um, a pack of dogs with him.

LAURA

What happened to the dogs?

ELLIE

The ones they caught, they put  
down. They were virtually rabid-

LAURA

Jesus.

WILL

They're just about to ID him.

LAURA

What?

WILL

They've taken him to hospital,  
they're doing the thing- you know-  
making sure they know who it is  
before they release a name- what is  
it?

ELLIE

They're making sure he is who they  
think he is. That he was doing what  
they think he was doing. Making  
certain of all the facts before-  
hang on-

Cameras all about the press conference start to flash.  
Liveliness grips the room, both the one on TV and Laura's  
living room.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Here we go.

Laura moves over to the sofa beside them and sits down.

They all watch in anticipation... Just as the POLICE  
COMMISSIONER strides into frame, we,

CUT TO:

**INT. BOAR'S HEAD - NIGHT.**

The group sit quietly, reunited, save for the notable  
absence.

Max looks distracted. Staring off to the side. A frown  
etched.

He's watching Brian at the bar. Sat alone. Drinking himself  
to an early grave.

Will looks over too.

**EXT. QUIET STREET, EDGE OF HANWALL - EVENING.**

A large, FULL MOON hangs low overhead...

Will trudges home through the dark. There's a worrying sway to his step. Maybe he's tipsy or *maybe he's...*

He stops. Seeing something, in an almost sightless way, ahead.

**EXT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, DRIVEWAY.**

A SMALL, RUNTISH black dog sits at the edge of the drive. Seemingly watching the windows, biding its time.

It turns to look at Will. There's a mournful look in its eyes.

Will walks over to it. Bends down. Pats it. The dog pants softly.

Will lowers himself to his haunches. Puts his arms around the hound's neck and hugs it. The hound rests its chin on Will's shoulder. Reconciliation.

Finally, Will gets up and the dog sits obediently by his side.

He glances upwards, in the direction of his room. Goes pale.

The dog starts barking. Over and over, incessant, like an upset child.

The curtains on the ground floor rustle, then a gap is made and light spills out briefly. HELEN pokes her head through. Sees Will. Stares.

**INT. POPPER HOUSEHOLD, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS.**

We see what Helen sees.

On the edge of the driveway: the black dog. Will: nowhere to be seen.

CUT TO BLACK.

The black dog continues to bark for a brief time, then goes quiet.

**THE END.**