

The Chronology of Water

Screenplay by
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Based on the memoir by Lidia Yuknavitch

06-05-24

1 INT. MISC. WATER 1 *

SOUND: Slow, lobbing water butting up against a pool filter. Then your own body DIVING into a body of water. The crash and fill of pressure. Over... *

Collage. Images of LIDIA swimming in every shade of blue. Her body parts converging, conversing. All ages, all out of order, metamorphosing seamlessly. Thrashing through a life in less than a minute's water color wash... *

PICTURE DROWNS IN A DARK BLUE.

SOUND: Rushing, digging, kicking... SWIMMING. *

TITLE CARD: *I. Holding Breath*

Too long to hold... Lidia GASPS as-- *

2 INT. HOSPITAL SHOWER 2 *

Blood enters water against a stark white.

NURSE (O.S.)
That feels good, doesn't it... the water. You're still bleeding quite a bit. Just let it.

The DNA plumes, diluting... pink... clear...

LIDIA (V.O.)
(submerged)
I became water.

Blood shot, blue eyes. Water cascades over exposed blood vessels and drop like tears. She doesn't flinch. She doesn't even blink. She is struck, dumb.

...but then her pupils twitch, minutely. Something like memory.

FLASH: (EUGENE HOUSE) Lidia's shaking hand wipes bright red blood from between her legs. *

FLASH: (BELLINGHAM HOUSE) Lidia's much smaller little girl hand, shaking... covered in the same bright red. *

BACK: Lidia, early 20's, hunched on the shower floor, long blond hair covering her face. She touches the red liquid running out of her. She retches, vomits between her legs where the blood comes from. Pees. The shower washes it all away. The harsh spray is LOUD. *

Her hands. In fists. Squeezing her own thumbs.

LIDIA (V.O.)
I remember things in-

*
*

3 INT. CLAUDIA'S HOUSE - DAWN

3 *

Baby clothes lie folded in neat rows across the floor.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
...retinal...

*
*

A river rock separates each small garment.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
Flashes.

*
*

4 INT. CLAUDIA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

4 *

Rocks fill glasses and line the windowsills. Piles of rocks organized by texture and size and shape.

LIDIA (V.O.)
It's all a series of fragments,
repetitions...

Settle on Lidia who also appears... lithic. Sitting at a breakfast table.

LIDIA (V.O.)
Pattern formations.

Someone unseen is washing dishes. Lidia chews slowly. Her eyes far away.

The off camera water is shut off. The first sonically dry moment is somewhat halting. She looks toward the silence.

*

Claudia (O.C.)
Lidia...? You finished, hon? You
want some more?

*
*

Lidia says nothing, slowly turns back toward an open window.

Then lets out a belly laugh, spraying scrambled eggs across the room. And eventually, she stops. The respite, brief.

*
*

5 INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

5

Lidia zombie strolls the diaper aisle, her face, drawn as another woman walks by and turns, recognizing her.

*

WOMAN (O.C.)

Lidia?

Lidia turns slowly. Nothing registers.

WOMAN (O.C.) (CONT'D)

My god, how have you been??

(long beat)

You *look* amazing... So skinny,
already!

Awkward. Then... Lidia smiles. Kind of.

LIDIA

She's the most beautiful baby girl.
She has the longest eye lashes. I
never thought I'd be so lucky-

LIDIA (V.O.)

I never thought *stop lying*.

With that, Lidia keeps walking. She turns a corner and finds herself at the check out counters.

When she unbuttons her pants or pulls her skirt up, she squats down, her face relaxes.

An employee notices. He bends down to see if she's alright but sees the puddle of piss inching towards him and recoils.

LIDIA (V.O.)

I'm going to tell you something
that helps.

6 EXT. MACKENZIE RIVER - DAY

6 *

Lidia wades in. Her hair long against her back.

LIDIA (V.O.)

*Let your imagination change what
you know.*

Lidia POV: The water's surface reflects the clouds until she closes in on the rocks beneath. A whole geo-rainbow. She whispers. She mutters their overlapping stories to herself.

Zero in on a rock with a ring around it...

LIDIA

Ring around a rock is luck--

FLASH: The up close texture of stretched skin, rounded and pregnant, a dark ring lining the curve from the naval down. A male finger traces it, runs the line of it. *

BACK: A red rock.

LIDIA (CONT'D)
--red rock is earth blood--

FLASH: The pink pulsing lips of an about-to-be-born little girl in utero. *

BACK: A blue rock. *

LIDIA (CONT'D)
--You believe in blue-- *

FLASH: The tiny blue fingers of a perfectly still infant, frozen in time. *

7 INT. CLAUDIA'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - DAY 7 *

Lidia washes the blue rock, delicately. She puts it in her pocket. Stops. Takes it out. Smells it deeply before popping it into her mouth and holding it there. *

She turns to leave and stops at the sight of the door handle. *

FLASH: Lidia's hand covered in bright red grabs the door handle smearing it with blood. Reveal, CLAUDIA, Lidia's adult sister on the other side of the door. She sees the blood. *

8 INT. CLAUDIA'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS 8 *

The shower is on now. From behind the curtain-- a deep mournful sound, low, sustaining. The curtain is pulled back to reveal Lidia on the floor, still fully clothed, moaning in the falling water. *

Claudia steps in, kneels behind her. She rests her head on her back and holds her a long time. Long enough for Lidia to go quiet. *

LIDIA
(choked)
Claudia... She comes with me
everywhere. *

The blue rock drops from Lidia's weak, open hand... with a thud. *

LIDIA (V.O.)
 Turn to the rocks. They carry the
 chronology of water.

*
 *
 *

9 INT. HOSPITAL SHOWER - SAME AS SCENE 1

9 *

Shower shuts off.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
 All things simultaneously living
 and dead in your hands.

*
 *
 *

Lidia reacts to the water going away. Her center is swollen
 and colored by the fresh loss of a child. It's a quiet
 picture of an animal, ravaged. She considers her wrinkly
 hands, tries to make a weak fist. Squeezing her thumbs.

*

NURSE (O.C.)
 (a little joke)
 Come on now... save you from
 drowning in here...

*
 *
 *
 *

Lidia looks up. Opens her mouth to speak. She smiles instead.
 She's almost laughing. Picture blows out...

*
 *

10 INT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT

10 *

SOUND: The voice of a small child... GASPS for air...

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
 It is possible that it would be
 impossible for me to drown.

*
 *
 *

A tiny hand in a balled up fist slowly defines itself against
 the white of a bathtub. The shape, the way she grips her
 thumb, is the same. It clearly belongs to (TODDLER) LIDIA
whose perspective is now predominately our own.

*
 *

She massages soap into a lather across a set of small
 shoulder blades. Her wrinkly little finger traces a picture
 in the suds. A flower.

*

Lidia leans, her POV revealing, CLAUDIA (PRETEEN, 12 or so)
 in rear profile, totally still.

PRE-TEEN CLAUDIA
 (finally, barely)
 ...flower.

A small victory. Lidia draws two eyes and a smile.

PRE-TEEN CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
Smiley face.

Now she draws a wonky but identifiable Christmas tree across her entire back... a star on top.

Nothing... until Claudia's shoulders start to shake. Her head bows. It is the silence of it that's painful. Lidia washes the sudsy picture away and covers her with her own small body. Holding on. A familiar gesture. *

11 INT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, LIDIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 11

Lidia smears little hieroglyphs onto the wall with a red crayon: a fish, a bird... an L... A great THWACKING sounds off camera. The silence in between leather on skin, stings... *

Lidia rhythmically rocks and thuds her head on the wall. *

Claudia's off camera cry spills out of her into the darkness, briefly. She sucks the sound back into her body. *

ECU: Lidia's mouth opens, shaping that sound. *

Off camera foot steps. The crayon stops moving. She stops rocking. *

Through a crack in the door: DOROTHY, her mother, walks languidly by in a nightgown. *

Lidia throws off the covers and SPRINTS down the hall.

12 INT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, BATHROOM 12 *

Lidia hugs and peers through Claudia's knees at their ghost of a mother as she prepares a bubble bath. Her long hair hangs past her waist. She does have an exhausted... elegance. She sings or hums the tune to *You Are My Sunshine* or *I See the Moon*. *

The water starts to drown out all sound except for the clanking ice in Dorothy's glass of vodka. She turns toward us, the girls... a remote vacancy in her eyes...

DOROTHY
(avoidant)
Come on, sing with me,
Liddibelle... *

ECU: Her baby blue eyes look up. Her mouth opens. Nothing. *

LIDIA (V.O.)
It was my voice that left.

*
*

13 INT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

13 *

KID LIDIA's hand writes, furiously in a red notebook. The actual words are blurry. Focus is her tight grip.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
Sometimes I think it arrived on
paper.

*
*
*

What follows is a mad dash overlapping whisper.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
I wrote--

*
*

KID LIDIA (V.O.)
--pictures and true things--

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
--and lies. Interchangeably. Made
me feel like--

KID LIDIA (V.O.)
(whisper)
--someone else.

*
*
*

MIKE (V.O.)
(stern)
LIDIA.

*
*
*

14 INT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

14 *

Tight on the corner of two walls, an edge of the wall paper coming away from the molding, sharp breaths and sniffles indicate crying.

*
*
*

MIKE (O.C.)
Let me know when you've finished.

*
*

PRETEEN CLAUDIA (O.C.)
--LIDIA--

To CLAUDIA (PRETEEN) turned away from an adjacent corner of the room, stoic, face of an adult, tearless, staring right at us...

MIKE (O.C.)
When you cry, you cry in the cry
baby corner.

*
*
*

...willing us... *STOP. CRYING.*

MIKE (O.C.) (CONT'D)
Claudia... Go.

Claudia holds the look a beat and leaves. Our eyes follow her past her parents. MIKE sits on a couch smoking a cigarette with an air of sophistication, his square jaw, set.

MIKE (CONT'D)
We can do this all night.

Dorothy in a near by chair, rocks slightly back and forth, absently patting her hands in turns, on her lap.

ECU: The veins in Lidia's neck bulge, they nearly explode. She can't hold it in any longer. She starts crying again, hard.

FLASH: Pencil digging paper, a fuller page.

LIDIA (V.O.)
I wrote words to belong to.

15 EXT. SCHOOL POOL, BELLINGHAM - DAY

15

Kid Lidia digs into the water, SWIMMING.

KID LIDIA (V.O.)
To SWIMMER.

Her speed and power is visceral. The bubbly silence and the low resonant hum she releases in between heaving breaths is intimate. Peaceful. The water and the words ripple the skin on her face.

LIDIA (V.O.)
To safety.

16 INT. BELLINGHAM SCHOOL SHOWERS

16

LIDIA (V.O.)
To GIRLS--

She runs into a locker room haven.

KID LIDIA (V.O.)
--make my skin hot--

The room is wet and teeming with girls in suits and in showers, shivering, talking over each other, their ways around each other instinctive, unashamed.

KID LIDIA (V.O.)
 --my head hurt my--

*

17 INT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, BATHROOM - EVENING

17

*

Dorothy brushes her hair. Lidia, on the floor sits by her,
 with a small memory box of family photographs, notes,
 drawings.

*

*

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
 (dry)
 --Mother--

Dorothy swirls her hair up into a bun. A long scar runs the
 length of her calf.

*

*

KID LIDIA (V.O.)
 (admiring)
 --her hair, her stories, her scar--

*

*

DOROTHY
 I won a prize for that story,
 Belle. And your daddy won a prize
 for that drawing...

*

*

*

*

She turns to us glassy eyed, a little too red in the face.

*

ADULT LIDIA (V.O.)
 How gone she was.

18 INT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, HALL - EARLY MORNING

18

*

Teen Claudia, seen through the crack of Lidia's bedroom door.

*

KID LIDIA (V.O.)
 And my sister--

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
 --my adoration--

KID LIDIA (V.O.)
 --my sister--

*

Lidia cranes to get a better look. A curtain of hair hides
 Claudia's face...

LIDIA (V.O.)
 --my awe--

...from Mike, who looms close enough to smell it. Claudia is
 nearly expressionless, her art and literature books like a
 shield at her chest.

MIKE

Christ Claudia you look like a bum
in that dumpy sack shirt. Are you
trying to look like a man?

His tone is hushed, casual. He tries to see behind her hair,
moving even closer to her.

KID LIDIA (V.O.)

My sister...

She lifts her eyes to meet his. Inches from one another.

LIDIA (V.O.)

*Taking everything before you were
even born.*

19 INT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE - DAY 19 *

Teen Claudia looks down at us. A stuffed duffel slung over
her shoulder. She makes sure they are alone, peering into the
kitchen. She kneels down and hands us a book. Saint Joan of
Arc by Vita Sackeville West. She rises, pained. She opens and
shuts the front door quietly behind her.

Kid Lidia looks at the cover of the book, Joan's upturned
expression of stoic persistence... and shrinks like a prey
animal in an open pasture. She SPRINTS back to her bedroom.

20 INT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT 20 *

The tip of her pencil breaks. Her hand grips it. Like she
could break it in half.

She squeezes the shit out of her thumb.

KID LIDIA

(whispers aloud)

In the house. Alone in my bed. My
arms ache. My sister is gone. My
mother is...

21 EXT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT 21 *

KID LIDIA (V.O.)

...gone.

Dorothy is visible through a window to the kitchen. Her
figure doesn't move at all. We drift toward another window.
Mike in his office at work.

KID LIDIA (O.C.)
My father designs buildings in the
room next to mine.

22 INT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, MIKES OFFICE - NIGHT 22 *

Mike, at his drafting table, works with precision.

KID LIDIA (V.O.)
He is smoking...

He stops. Leans back. Drags his cigarette. Takes off his
glasses. Looks at his watch. Maybe he's done for the night.

23 INT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT 23 *

Lidia's eyes flick up at a rustling outside her closed door.
She almost stops breathing. *

KID LIDIA (V.O.)
I wait for 5 a.m.

Back to her journal: Lidia opens her sweaty grip and throws
the pencil down. It lands in two broken pieces on the page
next to the child-like penmanship of the final line... *

KID LIDIA (O.C.)
I pray... to swim.

24 EXT. SCHOOL POOL, BELLINGHAM - EARLY MORNING 24 *

The relief of bodies and light and color and water. *

Through goggles: passing other girls to the right, reveal a
COACH speed walking the length of the pool. He keeps up with
us shaking a fist in encouragement. As Kid Lidia touches the
edge he meets her there. He pulls her, us, UP, out of the
water into sunlight and a grin of approval just as bright. He
slings a towel around her shoulders. Her breathing quick and
proud. He checks his stop watch and shows it to her. *

COACH
Beautiful, Lidia! See that? I told
you! *

25 INT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT 25 *

ECU: Lips, red tear streaked cheeks. Lidia is older. Around
15. Her head is exploding. *

DOROTHY (V.O.)
 Your daddy's been *promoted*...
 Besides Belle, it's sunny!

*
 *
 *

MIKE (V.O.)
 Lidia, we're moving. That's that.

She chews on a pillow case, rips open a spit soaked hole.

LIDIA
 (small, present explosion)
 Fuck you.

She adjusts her eyes to her window: a lush Pacific Northwest landscape: the trees VERY slowly begin to melt like crayons in the condensation.

*
 *
 *

MIKE (V.O.)
 Forget about your *coach*. The
 Florida aquatic swim team is the
 best in the nation.

*
 *

The trees are now leveled puddles that reflect the sun in her raging blue eyes.

*
 *

LIDIA (V.O.)
 Hurricanes go to Florida.

The hot flare blows out and into...

26 EXT. OUTDOOR POOL, GAINESVILLE - DAY

26 *

RANDY REESE (O.C.)
 Alright... Line up, ladies, weigh
 in. Let's GO.

Lidia stands in line with 20 girls wearing one piece bathing suits. At the front of the line COACH REESE stands next to a weigh beam scale near the entrance of the locker room. He finishes weighing in the last girl, logs her weight on a clip board. She falls back in line.

RANDY REESE (CONT'D)
 You know the drill. One lick for
 every pound you're over. Torres?

SIENNA TORRES, defiant, developed, curvy, assumes the position, leaning her torso into the cinder block wall.

*

ECU LIDIA'S POV: A kick board lick-stings the back of Sienna's thighs and ass.

Lidia's mouth falls open. Her eyes snap back, taking in the Floridian terrain.

RANDY REESE (O.C.) (CONT'D) *
Reimer... THREE pounds. *

ECU LIDIA'S POV: Again, the kick board licks flesh. Closer.

Lidia licks and bites her lower lip. The hot horizon ripples as she de-focuses her eyes... *

RANDY REESE (O.C.) (CONT'D) *
(directly behind us now)
Yuknavitch... One for you newby so
we'll make it count...

Her eyes squeeze shut. The THWACK is actually...

27

INT. OUTDOOR POOL, GAINSEVILLE - DAY

27

A GUN SHOT that starts a race. Lidia waits on the blocks. She is nearly 18. She is an adult. She has a swimmer's body and a LOT of blonde hair. She looks like a fucking animal. She waits for her relay partner to swim the length of the Olympic-sized pool as a large crowd cheers from the bleachers. *

WITH THIS, OUR VISUAL PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS BACK TO AN OBJECTIVE STAND POINT. AT TIMES WE WILL RETREAT BACK INTO HER BODY. BUT FROM HERE ON OUT WE HAVE OUR GIRL IN BROAD VIEW. *

Along side the pool FATHERS speed walk, urging their daughters to "DIG, GO... COME ON BABY!" Mike is nowhere to be seen. *

Suddenly she springs into the air, her body stretching out and forward cutting into the water. *

Swimmers on either side of her kick and dig up bubbles with their arms and legs. Lidia reaches the end wall and kick turns, PULLING herself through and ahead. *

On a particular breath, as one ear lifts out of the water... **Time slows WAY down:** her gulping of oxygen as slow as picture... like a gasp. *

MIKE (O.S.)
COME ON.

Back under. A fast, blue, rushing relief. Until she takes another breath and we **slow back down.** *

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 STOP crying Lidia what is the
 matter--

*
 *

Back under. Two hard fast strokes and another breath...

MIKE (CONT'D)
 HEY. What is the matter with you.
 Look at me.

*
 *

BACK UNDER. She swims without breathing now, hiding from his voice. This has the power to creep into the water...

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You don't know how far I can go.

*

Her eyes squeezing shut. Pushing it out. Digging.

*

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (nurturing, barely there)
Baby-

*

Her hand hits the edge. SHE GASPS. And rips her head around to see how her team placed. They won. Her eyes, fierce. Wide. Panting. Intensely in her body. The crowd is cheering. Her team is hugging and screaming. She joins them, elated. ALIVE.

*

28

INT. OUTDOOR POOL, GAINSEVILLE - DAY

28

*

Lidia stands on a podium with three other girls. They are presented with a gold medal.

PA ANNOUNCER
 We are proud to announce that our
 200 yard medley relay gold medal
 winners from the Florida Aquatic
 Swim Team have achieved the best
 time in the entire nation!

The crowd hoots and hollers.

PA ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Scouts are watching, seniors.
 Congratulations.

Lidia scans the crowd. Zeros in on her mother alone in the stands. She squints at her surroundings, glassy eyed.

*
 *

ECU: Her hands patting one another in turns.

*

The Star Spangled Banner blares through the announcement speakers. Lidia places her hand over her heart and closes her eyes.

*
 *

29 INT. GAINESVILLE HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT 29 *

Lidia washes dishes. Day dreamy. She takes in the spray on the surface of her skin...

FLASH: Goosebumps on the thigh of a suited up swimmer. *

BACK: The hair on Lidia's arm stands on end. *

FLASH: Team mates wash each others backs and rub each other down. *

BACK: Lidia rubs water on her both of her arms. *

FLASH: A suit is pulled down. Steam fills the space... obscuring a huge bush. *

FLASH: Lidia looks at herself in a little mirror. Steel eyes and a chiseled jaw. *

BACK: Lidia turns away from the sink to see Mike observing her from the next room. They stay locked in on each other until Lidia looks down and passively walks from the sink back to her bedroom. *

30 EXT. OUTDOOR POOL, GAINESVILLE - NIGHT 30 *

Lidia's fist SLAMS down on top of the hand of a boy about to become a man. She wears a long puffy dress... he wears a tux. Apparently it's senior prom for the class of 1980, a song emanates from a more formal area of the function as the swim team is having an arm wrestling competition by the pool. *

The JOCK who is shocked to have lost to a girl, takes a bottle from under the bleachers... before he can take a swig Lidia takes it and chugs. Sienna Torres cracks up. Despite her physical prowess, Lidia is still shy. Gives him the bottle back, smiles sweetly. Loaded. *

The gaggle of teenagers are buzzing. Whatever they're all saying about college and more weed floats over us. Sienna and Lidia roll into each other. Kind of kissing. Laughing like idiots. *

SIENNA

We arrre out we are the fuck outta
here!! California here I come!
Lidia!!!

As Sienna whoops Lidia responds by pulling her dress over her head and stepping out of her underwear. Without stopping for a second she DIVES into the deep end. Starts doing laps, naked and alone.

31 INT. GAINSEVILLE HOUSE, KITCHEN - EVENING 31 *

Lidia sits at the table with her parents, post dinner. Everything in the room is still and quiet except for the smoke swirls. A short stack of mail sits in front of Mike. Lidia side eyes it... waiting.

Dorothy sips a drink. Mike, a cup of coffee. He smokes the very last drag of a butt. He stubs and stubs it out. Drains his cup of coffee. Sits back.

FINALLY... he reaches for the stack of mail. *

The royal emblem of Brown university rips in half. The letter comes out. He holds it for himself to read. Lidia tries to not chew her own tongue off. *

FLASH: Lidia beats the shit out of the water, doing laps. *

Her mother's hands beside her, on the table, fucking patting themselves. His hands folding the letter back up. *

MIKE
You only got a three quarter
ride...

Jump-cut: Her name on an envelope from Notre Dame. Mike's hands ripping through the official seal.

MIKE (CONT'D)
It's a snob school for silver spoon
girls and rich assholes. *

A letter from Cornell. A letter from Purdue... ripping open. *

MIKE (CONT'D)
...didn't even get a full ride. The
answer is no. *

He lights another cigarette. Drops a letter on the table.
Sits back. *

MIKE (CONT'D)
What. *

He studies her.

Smoke making shame swirls around Lidia's face. As though someone was squeezing her neck. She can only stare at him. *

32 INT. GAINSVILLE HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT 32 *

MIKE (V.O.) *

Did you think you were special? *

Lidia in bed staring at the ceiling, anger taking her breath away. She masturbates under the blankets. *

FLASH: A huge black suitcase nestled somewhere in the garage. *

A car pulls up out front and headlights pour over her, lighting her face. She goes straight to the window and climbs out. Hits the ground running to the waiting car. *

33 INT. CAR, GAINSEVILLE - NIGHT 33 *

On a TOWNIE GUY (we don't even see his face) as he looks down at himself fucking Lidia in the back seat, one arm holding his tee shirt up. *

MIKE (O.S.) *

(soft) *

Hey honey, open up. I wanna talk. *

At first the male voice seems to be the guy she is with. But his mouth isn't moving. *

MIKE (V.O.) *

Hey. Look at me. *

Lidia closes her eyes. *

34 INT. LOCKER ROOM, GAINSEVILLE - DAY 34 *

Lidia and Sienna Torres kill a fifth of vodka, hiding in a lower locker, badly. A few other well behaved swimmers step over them, leering, judging. *

A GIRL in the showers is hunched over trying to see her own pussy, shaving carefully, a leg hitched--Lidia watches intently... faded. *

SIENNA (O.C.)

Earth to Lidia!

Sienna grabs the bottle takes a swig.

ASSISTANT COACH (O.C.)

You should all be out there warming up! Sienna, Lidia that means you. *

Sienna stashes the bottle just in time. The girls grab their gear, stumbling, leaning on each other.

*

35 EXT. GAINSEVILLE OUTDOOR POOL - DAY

35

*

Lidia makes her way to the blocks with nine other girls and readies for the start. A starting pistol fires and they dive into the pool. Almost in unison the swimmers open up into breast strokes. They flip turn at the end and come back.

*

Lidia takes second place.

*

She hops out of the water, slips, hits the deck. A woman with stringy hair and thick glasses suddenly appears.

TEXAS TECH COACH

Hi, Lidia? I'm a coach for Texas Tech...

The woman holds out her a hand. Lidia looks up from the floor, dripping... dumb...

*

*

TEXAS TECH COACH (CONT'D)

You need a hand?

36 INT. GAINSVILLE HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

36

*

Lidia shuffles past her mother to the fridge.

DOROTHY

(not sober)

Must be hungry. Good job tonight, Belle.

She stuffs her mouth with something as the phone rings. Then she STOPS... remembering. Her mother moves for the phone but Lidia instantly steps past her and picks it up herself.

*

*

She walks around the corner into the living room, the chord stretching straight, as far as it will go. She forgets to chew. Her mouth is so full she can't say hello.

LIDIA

Mmhmm...

Mike enters the house.

Holding the phone to her ear, Lidia watches in silence as he walks past. He looks her, us, up and down... stepping into the kitchen.

*

The secret she holds has taken the air out of her lungs, completely.

Lidia re-enters the kitchen and hangs up the phone. When she looks to her mother, she is staring back at her. Lidia implores her not to ask.

*
*

37 INT. GAINSVILLE HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

37

A tall glass of ice and vodka sweats. Dorothy picks it up and swallows hard from her drink. Down with a thud. She glances at Lidia who stands stunned in the doorway. She reaches for a pen.

*
*
*
*

Dorothy signs the papers and puts them in a pre-stamped envelope. She grabs keys and her purse and heads for the front door.

*
*
*

DOROTHY
(southern, slurry drawl)
C'mawn, Belle...

*

Lidia could almost... love her. She catches up.

*

38 INT. GAINSVILLE HOUSE - NIGHT

38

*

Mike returns from work and drops his briefcase by the couch. Lidia can be seen through the door to the kitchen, washing dishes. He quietly takes her in. Something begins brewing inside of him. He opts to sit down. He leans back and breathes deep to calm himself. But then catches sight of Lidia's swim bag... and gets up.

*
*
*

MIKE (PRE-LAP)
(yelling)
OPEN YOUR FUCKIN BAG.

39 INT. GAINSVILLE HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

39

*

In the middle of the family room Mike tears Lidia's swim bag to pieces, her swim suit and goggles fly into the air.

MIKE
You think *I* don't know you. I *know*
you. I KNOW what you do.

*
*

Lidia walks quietly to her bedroom. He practically chases her down the hallway.

MIKE (CONT'D)
YOU should be ASHAMED of yourself--

*
*

--She crosses her threshold where her shoulders turn and square off. Stopping him.

*
*

MIKE (CONT'D)
This is control. I'm controlling myself...

They stare at each other. He's seething.

*

MIKE (CONT'D)
You don't know how far I can go.

*

40 INT. GAINSVILLE HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

40

*

Lidia writes in a journal. Holding her pencil the same weird way, too hard: *My bedroom holds the wet and the dark of my body. It smells like my sweat and chlorine.*

*
*
*

She lays back and closes her eyes.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
Every room in the house carried the weight of him, except mine.

*

41 INT. GAINSVILLE HOUSE, KITCHEN, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

41

*

Lidia drains a carton of milk in front of the open refrigerator. She screws the cap back on and closes the fridge, very quietly. When she turns to go we find Mike sitting on the couch in the living room, watching her.

*

MIKE
I can't sleep either.

It rains hard against the windows.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Come here. I want to talk to you.

He's being nice.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Have a seat, Lids, c'mon...

...she does. His face is warm, the calmest he has ever been.

*

MIKE (CONT'D)
You're really my kid aren't you...
(he shakes his head,
smiles)
I'm sorry I've been hard on you lately, Lidia.
(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

I don't wanna fight with you. I
just worry, honey. I'm your dad.

Lidia doesn't really know how to take this. Blank. *

MIKE (CONT'D)

I just want you to hear this from
me. You know things are going to be
different when you go away to
college. It's so far away. I worry
about you out there. For a lot of
reasons... *

His hand comes down on her shoulder... his thumb, making
creepy circles on her arm.

MIKE (CONT'D)

But, with boys, specifically.

Lidia looks down at her shoes, then out the window at the
pelting rain, so, so do we. *

MIKE (O.C.) (CONT'D)

(gently, like good advice)
I want you to listen to me.

Reverse ECU of Lidia. In her ears there is water, submerging
his voice which creeps through but is overridden by...

LIDIA (V.O.)

He narrated what boys would want to
do to me. How they would put their
dirty hands up my skirt and part my
legs and finger fuck me. How they
would reach inside my shirt and
fondle my tits. Suck them. How
disgusting boys would be. Their hot
hips wanting in and up and their
dicks-- *

Lidia closes her eyes, it goes black. *

LIDIA (V.O.)

And *his*. And *feeling* the heat of
him. *

She opens them again to the window and the rain. And the
silence. He is no longer talking.

LIDIA (V.O.)

Without even looking.

An off camera rhythmic rustling, barely there. But there.

MIKE

Look at me.

*
*

Suddenly, her father's face fills our view.

LIDIA (V.O.)

And how I should say--

*
*

FATHER

No.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)

How I should have always said no.

FATHER

You can do that by remembering
you're *my* daughter. That I am the--

*

42 INT. GAINSEVILLE HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

42 *

LIDIA (V.O.)

*--Only man for me.**
*Her eyes open again but we stare into them now. They burn
holes into the ceiling. It's a look that registers her
father's insanity. Years of bracing.*
*

Lidia gets out of bed and moves slowly to the door.

43 INT. GAINSEVILLE HOUSE, GARAGE - NIGHT

43 *

Lidia flips a switch next to the garage door that illuminates
a dangling bulb above her mother's station wagon. She digs
behind some cardboard boxes and pulls out a large black
suitcase.

*

Lidia unzips the mouth of the suitcase as quietly as she can.
Two of her fathers shirts folded inside stick slow anger pins
in the back of her neck. Wadding one up, she chews on it so
hard her head shakes.She throws both in a nearby trash bin. She plucks a comb, a
pack of certs, an empty pack of cigarettes, and two condoms
out of a compartment, dumps them too.She picks up the empty bag and gives it a feel. She rises.
Her future in her hands. When she turns to leave... Mike is
there framed and silent. Backlit in the doorway. She
startles.*
*

MIKE

Sorry I didn't mean to...

*

She squares off to him and becomes very still.

*

MIKE (CONT'D)
...interrupt.

*

She stands her ground, like she is ready to physically fight.

MIKE (CONT'D)
What are you doin out here? You
wanna take my suitcase, Lidia, all
you have to do is ask.
(beat)
What's the matter with you. Stop
it.

*

*

*

*

*

*

He takes two steps forward but with one small precise movement Lidia feels the weight of the case in her hand and makes him very aware... she could swing it at his head.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(actually trying)
Hey.
(hurt)
I didn't want you to leave like
this... I want you to know. I...

*

*

*

She looks like somebody's son. She feels like it too. He does not know what to do with this. Girl. His anger suddenly swelling like a wave.

*

MIKE (CONT'D)
(very sudden)
SO YOU'RE GONNA LEAVE AND DO WHAT.
Hm? You don't appreciate a goddamn
thing. You and your sister, you
high and mighty assholes.
(Lidia stares)
WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING??

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

His words don't penetrate. He looks her up and down.

*

MIKE (CONT'D)
I know. I know you.
(slips out)
You fucking whore.

*

*

*

*

There it is. He feels exposed. She stares at that. How insane that is.

*

*

MIKE (CONT'D)
You have something to say?

*

*

Lidia... steadily breathing...

MIKE (CONT'D)
DO YOU. HAVE SOMETHING. TO SAY.

*
*

LIDIA (V.O.)
(deep)
I am a very good swimmer.

*

You wonder if this is a dream. It is not...

LIDIA
(small)
Fuck you, motherfucker.

Hearing her voice out loud for the first time is seriously arresting. Her lips really moved. And said that.

MIKE
Excuse me?

Lidia looks him in the face and doubles down.

LIDIA (V.O.)
I am a very good swimmer. And you
are not.

LIDIA
(swimmer lungs)
I said FUCK you, motherfucker. GET
the FUCK OUT of my way.

Baffled in the doorway, Mike raises his fist, shaking over her until his knuckles go white and his skin turns red. She doesn't flinch. She leans in to the blue eyes and rage they share.

*
*

He doesn't back down but he doesn't hit her either. Finally, Lidia simply takes a step to her right and pushes past him. Leaving him panting.

*
*

44

INT. GAINSEVILLE HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

44

*

She enters her room and closes the door, leans against it. Sets the suitcase down at her feet. She feels her heart pounding in her throat.

*

A car goes by. A dog barks. Cicadas. The house remains quiet. After a while she doesn't wait anymore.

*
*

She takes her clothes off. She smells her own skin, her hands, under her arms. She moves toward her bed and lays her head on the pillow, closes her eyes...

*
*
*

When she opens them again she is masturbating hard to the idea of leaving forever. The entire build and resolve of a wildly aggressive self-fucking.

LIDIA (V.O.)
I thought about Sienna Torres
shoving her fingers up my wide open
cunt. As open as a mouth.

Lidia CUMS. Her mouth OPENS WIDE.

LIDIA (V.O.)
Screaming. Motherfucker.

*

45 INT. GAINSEVILLE HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAWN

45

*

Lidia tapes a lock of hair onto a photograph of her mother and places it into the empty suitcase, followed by a flask and *Saint Joan of Arc*.

*

*

*

46 INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

46

Through a window, her family home is felt somewhere in the clusters of the town that grows smaller. Condensation building a vignette. Her finger draws a flower. A tiny x-mas tree. A smiley face. She wipes the images away to reveal her own reflection.

*

*

*

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
I didn't know until that night a
girl body could do that... *shoot*
cum.

*

*

...a tiny smile curls her mouth.

*

47 EXT. LUBBOCK - SUNSET

47

A GREAT RED DUST STORM.

*

Lidia steps off the plane and through it. Her hair blows, she covers her eyes.

*

*

48 INT. LIDIA'S DORM ROOM, LUBBOCK - NIGHT

48

*

Lidia steps awkwardly into her new dorm room.

AMY, bandana, big tits, looks up from her one-hitter... containing the smoke in her puffed out cheeky smile. She pushes her lips forward and exhales, coughing.

*

*

AMY
(Chicago)
You have a fight with a dust storm
or what...?

Lidia self-consciously dusts off. *

AMY (CONT'D) *
You look like you could use a *
drink... *
(she could) *
Too bad it's a dry county... *

Lidia looks alarmed. Amy reaches into a dresser drawer and
pulls out a small bottle of cheap vodka. Tosses it over to
Lidia who barely catches it. *

LIDIA
(SHY)
Think I just fell in love with you. *

Lidia takes a meaningful pull from the bottle.

AMY
I'm Amy... *
(faux accent)
Welcome to TexASSS. Get ready to
brave the cretins.

LIDIA
My mom is from Texas, so.

Amy chuckles... Lidia swigs again. *

LIDIA (CONT'D)
I'm Lidia.

She tosses the bottle back over. Amy turns to some speakers,
puts on a song. Lidia looks at her side of the small room. *

LIDIA (CONT'D)
I guess this is... *mine*.

She rolls this notion of, *mine*, over in her head. She hoists
her suitcase up on to her bed. Drinking in the freedom.

49

INT. TEXAS TECH PRACTICE POOL, LUBBOCK - MORNING

49

*

Lidia stands at the edge of possibility and a new Olympic
sized pool. She shakes out her arms and legs.

LIDIA (V.O.)
MINE.

Lidia DIVES IN. She swims laps in unison with the rest of the team. Arriving at the end wall, she kick turns and continues the other direction, slamming her strokes down and breathing in time with this...

FLASH: Lidia (and Amy) scarf powdered eggs in the cafeteria. *

LIDIA (V.O.)
Mine...

FLASH: Lidia listens attentively to the professor at the front of the class. She takes notes. *

LIDIA (V.O.)
...mine...

FLASH: Amy and Lidia take shots and dance hard in a dark strobe lit club. *

LIDIA (V.O.)
Mine.

FLASH: Lidia fucks unnamed cock outside in the quad. (MONTY) *

LIDIA (V.O.)
MINE

FLASH: Lidia rolls around in 10 inches of water.

LIDIA (V.O.)
MINE.

FLASH: Lidia takes a couple of red and yellow pills from Monty's hand and pops them into her mouth. *

BACK: Lidia SURFACES, poolside, in slow motion. *

LIDIA (V.O.)
Mine, mine, mine, my...

She leaves the water with such speed she wears it like a shroud for a brief moment, taking a giant BREATH as gravity unsheathes her. *

Lidia stands heaving, dripping. *

LIDIA (V.O.)
Like something pressed so far down
in a body...

FLASH: Lidia races someone (MONTY) into a shrub. Crash and burn. She rolls out of it, sitting up, smiling wildly. *

LIDIA (V.O.)
It *had* to explode.

50	INT. TEXAS TECH PRACTICE POOL, LUBBOCK - DAY	50	*
	Lidia swims. A little slower.		*
	She hits the end wall several seconds after three other girls. She crawls out, scraped and bruised.		
	Texas Tech Coach kinda double takes when she sees her. Gives her a stern warning with a look that says, <i>You're SLOW...</i>		
	MIKE (V.O.) (faintly) Where do you think you're going.		
	Lidia shakes the water and the voice out of her ears.		
51	OMIT	51	*
52	INT. TEXAS TECH CLASSROOM, LUBBOCK - DAY	52	*
	Lidia is fully sleeping in class.		*
	MIKE (V.O.) (fast) <i>Nowhere.</i>		*
	She startles awake as people rise to leave around her. Drool connects from her mouth to a notebook she was using as a pillow.		*
53	INT. TEXAS TECH HALLWAY, LUBBOCK - DAY	53	*
	Lidia drags ass out of the classroom. Slumps against a wall with a graded paper... a red D as a header. She pulls a sneaky hair of the dog swig from her flask and opens her notebook. The page is full of scribbles.		*
	In an instant, a very low, resonant VOICE nearby infiltrates her. It sings <i>I see the Moon</i> . With sudden possessed confidence she drops her notebook on the floor and turns toward the voice.		*
	PHILLIP, a lithe and beautiful deer in the headlights, holds a guitar. He looks at Lidia, trailing off. Her mouth falls open...		*

54 INT. LIDIA'S DORM ROOM, LUBBOCK - MORNING 54 *

Lidia is hungrily pulling at Phillip's belt on a single bed. *

PHILLIP

Ey... *

He slows her down by taking her hands. She adjusts to his speed. Phillip is a little embarrassed.

LIDIA

I love your voice.

PHILLIP *

It's my father and brother who have the real voices. I always hear em in my head.

LIDIA

(protective)

Really? What are they saying?

PHILLIP *

They're singin' amazing grace.

LIDIA

Oof. Voices of God... ? Fuck me. *

Phillip laughs and nods. *

PHILLIP *

Yeah. *

Lidia identifies his shame. She wants to take it from him. *

She rubs his solar plexus with her fingers. She does the same to his temples. Kisses his face... in his ear... *

LIDIA

(softly)

...really... fuck me. *

PHILLIP

Um...

She moves to blow him but he pulls her toward his face and kisses her. He compromises and moves her hand into his pants. *

After a few beats of a fumble-y hand job she pushes him down. *

When she puts her mouth on him there's no going back.

LIDIA (V.O.)

Poor Phillip. I wish I could go back and apologize. *

55 INT. RANDOM LIVING ROOM, LUBBOCK - NIGHT

55 *

Lidia and Phillip fuck in the dark on the floor of a nicely furnished family home.

LIDIA

FUCK me your cock makes me feel
forgiven...

PHILLIP

What if these people came home
right now.

She rides the shit out of him, tits like full moons pointed up as he cranes his neck to see out the window.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Wait is someone coming??

She puts her hands over his mouth and reaches towards a lamp, flicks it on. He scrambles to turn it off but she starts to cum. He claps his hand over her mouth. And does the same. They are quiet for a breath, deep in each others eyes.

*

LIDIA

I felt that in my spine.

But suddenly Phillip is jumping up and zipping his fly, shutting off the lights.

PHILLIP

Ok come on... Lidia...

Lidia laughs naked on the floor. He leaves out the back door. Her laughter losing steam, alone in the dark.

56 EXT. BUDDY HOLLY STATUE, LUBBOCK - NIGHT

56 *

Lidia perches/hangs on the top of a bronze sculpture of Buddy Holly. Haggard. Howling into the night sky. Phillip is below her in the snow, strumming his guitar. She lifts her shirt flashing the stars. Monster truck drunk.

*

*

LIDIA

Fuck all "Y'ALLL"... EAT me.

*

*

She looks at the top of Phillip's head.

*

LIDIA (CONT'D)

Just singing the night WIDE open
this one... a regular James Taylor
here in TEX-ASSS.

*

*

*

*

He remains in his song. *

Lidia lays her head on Buddy's, listening to his sweet
rendition of *Suzanne*. A light snow fall starts. *

She can't take it, his beauty. A drunk tear falls. But she
sucks the feeling back into her body and instead... lets a
mouth FULL of spit fall directly onto Phillip's head. *

The song and the moment is over. *

LIDIA (CONT'D)
Did that make you hot baby?

He looks up at her, seriously. Wipes his head off. *

PHILLIP
(small)
Lidia. Why do you do this? *

He gets up and walks to his yellow Pinto. Her laughter
subsides, watching him make his way, away from her.

LIDIA
(clamoring down) *
Oh come ON, don't be--

57 INT. PINTO, LUBBOCK - NIGHT

57 *

The windshield wipers graze the frost obscuring the glass. *

LIDIA
--SUCH a pussy! *

Phillip drives with his head out the window in order to see
or to muffle the sound of Lidia screaming. His eyes are
tired, every bit a pacifist. *

LIDIA (CONT'D)
LEARN HOW TO TAKE A JOKE! You're so
fucking sensitive.

Phillip ducks in to let his face defrost for a second and
positions his head on the door so one eye can see the road.
It looks like he's bracing himself against her. He YAWNS. *

LIDIA (CONT'D)
This is probably one of the most
pathetic things I've ever seen.

He just won't engage. Looking sleepier and sleepier.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

God, it's like talking to a door knob this is what I'm saying. Go ahead! Say something, anything! I'm being a BITCH so why don't you DO something about it...

*
*

She's staring at him all wide eyed with her hands up.

*

PHILLIP

You're not a bitch.

Her drunk rage opera is nearing a crescendo.

*

LIDIA

FUCK YOU, phillip! You don't fuckin KNOW me PHILLIP.

*
*

Phillip's eyes are actually having a hard time staying open.

LIDIA (V.O.)

Phillip. Means lover of horses.

*

Lidia notices the car veering to the right, into a snow bank. It slows. And stops. Phillip's head falls forward. Asleep.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)

Or brotherhood.

*
*

Dumbfounded, Lidia sits there. Anger orgasm interrupted. She stares at him. She sees... really sees and appreciates how beautiful he is. His long fingers, his lips...

*
*

LIDIA

Goddamn.

A long mile of green-yellow-red streetlights blink in front of them. She sees the poetry in this image and looks... sadder than sad.

*

MIKE (V.O.)

Did you think you were special?

*
*

Right before she fully breaks she SNAPS out of it.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)

It was my father's voice I used.

*
*

LIDIA

WAKE UP MOTHERFUCKER! YOU FELL ASLEEP YOU COULD HAVE KILLED US.

*

She throws the door open and runs out of the car. Not looking back, crying black eye liner down her face and laughing. Carving a dark line through deep snow, into nowhere.

58 INT. MONTY'S BASEMENT/FREEWAY OVERPASS, LUBBOCK 58 *

Lidia snorts a line of brown powder off a glass table. She looks for more, her fingers wipe the surface. She slumps against the couch. We remain in her reverie as voices drift.

AMY (O.S.)
Hey Lids, wanna get outta here?

MONTY (O.S.)
She's good I'll take her back... Ey man, shut that door... *

FATHER (V.O.)
(flies by)
DOROTHY shut that door... *

LIDIA
I'm Dorothy... poppies...

MONTY (O.S.)
Haven't seen you at practice...

LIDIA
(sweet)
I flunked out.

MONTY (O.S.)
Heh that's cool. *

PHILLIP (V.O.)
Lidia... *

MIKE (V.O.)
Lidia... *

LIDIA
I can still feel my face.

She reaches forward, grabs and places the SPOON from a full set up directly into her mouth. She sucks on it. *

-She smacks her arm to raise a vein. Takes a good look at it. She extends it in front of her like an offering. Monty's dirty thumb nail rubs it, hard. *

-She feels everything fall away as her face contorts in a pleasure that aches... *

-Monty nails Lidia from behind.

FLASH: (sc. 58A) Lidia wakes up under a freeway overpass, face to pavement, her underwear around her ankles. She sits up disoriented.

LIDIA (V.O.)
I would have put anything in my
mouths.

59 INT. AUSTIN APARTMENT - DAY

59

Lidia sits on the floor of a shit-ass unfurnished apartment. There are some notebooks around her. A pen in her hand at the bottom of a full page. She watches another version of herself across the room, dipping her hands into a can of paint, covering a white wall with blue hand prints.

The buzzing of a bare incandescent light bulb hums as the blue hands start to squirm menacingly. When she looks up they sing her to sleep through little mouths on their palms: her mother's You Are My Sunshine. She reaches her hand out...

MOTHER (V.O.)
...sing with me Belle...

60 INT. GAINSVILLE HOUSE (FLASH BACK) - DAY

60

Teen Lidia POV: her hand reaches and softly knocks on her parent's bedroom door. She waits for an answer. She can hear Dorothy singing or humming on the other side of the door.

LIDIA (O.S.)
(conversational)
Addiction is in me, sure. But
there's something else. Something
smaller. A smaller word.

TEEN LIDIA
Mama?

DOROTHY (O.S.)
(from behind the door)
Go away, Belle.

61 INT. GAINSVILLE HOUSE, BATHROOM - FLASHBACK

61

Lidia slams the door behind her and sits on the toilet. The muffled sound of a tv blasts GENERAL HOSPITAL.

LIDIA (O.S.)
(in trauma)
She's just in there watching
soaps... What do I do...

CLAUDIA (O.S.)
(through a phone)
Call an ambulance. Have you called
Daddy? Hang up and call 911. Then
call Daddy... Lidia, NOW.

She shoves a wad of toilet paper into her mouth, chews.

LIDIA (O.S.)
Claudia. I wish you were here.

A cry that brings guttural grunting rather than sobbing. She punches a tile next to her head. It cracks. A noise alerts Teen Lidia to some movement in the house.

62 INT. AUSTIN APARTMENT - DAY

62

Lidia in the same spot on the floor of her apartment. On the nod. As her eyes open and close, filled in pages of scribble begin to float away from her. It's as if the floor boards around her were dark water. She reaches for them but her hands sink, her body follows.

63 INT. GAINSVILLE HOUSE (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

63

Lidia peers in through the now open door to her mother's bedroom as she passes, catching sight of pills and empty pill bottles scattered on the floor, an empty bottle of vodka. Continuing down the hall she slows down as she approaches Dorothy, seated, facing the television.

LIDIA
Mama...

Dorothy very slowly turns toward us. She speaks with an unsettling clarity, octaves lower than usual.

MOTHER
Stay away. This isn't anything for
you. I'm not talking about
anything.

She turns back toward the tv. An ambulance siren BLARES.

64 INT. AUSTIN APARTMENT - NIGHT 64 *

A PARAMEDIC with latex gloves pulls Lidia out of the dark water and begins resuscitation. *

PARAMEDIC 1 *

Stay awake for me, Lidia. *

65 INT. GAINSEVLILE HOUSE - FLASHBACK 65 *

Teen Lidia watches as Paramedics resuscitate Dorothy in the television glow of General Hospital. *

PARAMEDIC 2 *

Stay awake for me, Dorothy. *

They get her on a stretcher and swiftly to the front door. *

Lidia follows but before the paramedics sweep Dorothy away, *

she shoots a glare of hatred at her daughter. *

TEEN LIDIA *

I... I'm sorry... *

66 INT. MEDICAL CLINIC BASEMENT - PRESENT 66

Lidia, less athletic than her previous self, is seated in a circle. A cleaned up PASTOR missing a few teeth...

PASTOR

Lidia? You can talk to us. It helps, trust me.

Lidia's thinks of how to put this. What words. *

LIDIA (V.O.) *

That woman's pain could kill you.

She shakes her head. *

LIDIA *

I'm not talking about anything. *

67 INT. YELLOW PINTO, AUSTIN - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT 67 *

Lidia walks to the car. Certificate of completion in hand. *

Phillip in the driver's seat. She opens the door, gets in. *

PHILLIP *

How ya doin.

She waves the sheet in the air and looks at him, blankly.
Lidia busts out laughing. And stops.

*
*

LIDIA
Rehab relapse remember...
(doesn't know what else to
say to him)
All start with the letter R.

PHILLIP
I'm proud of you. Ya know.

*

She scoffs. But that hits. In this moment it actually hits
surprisingly hard.

LIDIA
Yeah?

PHILLIP
Yeah.

*
*

She looks slightly... sick.

LIDIA
Would you marry me?

*

He laughs sweetly then realizes she is serious. And looks
abruptly pretty sleepy about it. Gobsmailed.

*
*

68 EXT. OREGON COAST DAY, HACETA HEAD

68

*

Phillip plays the guitar under a make shift altar, his
backdrop, the ocean. His simple song is impossible to
describe, it's that beautiful.

*
*
*

Lidia sits on a piece of driftwood. Bawling. She may not even
know she's doing it. Claudia is beside Lidia, holds her hand.

PHILLIP
Children have their dreams to hang
on to. How they fly and take us to
the moon. They flow from you...

He speaks to the little girl she has hidden inside of her. It
has more compassion in it than you can imagine.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)
...they flow from you.

When the song is over, she kind of laughs or something. Can't
fathom how she deserves this. On impulse she kisses her
sister and walks toward the altar.

The young couple link hands. Their fear as palpable as their hope. Through the two of them, sit her parents. Dorothy wipes her eyes and Mike sits upright, his arm around her. *

Dorothy gets up suddenly looking behind her. She turns around, revealing a blooming red blood stain on her ass. *

69 INT. AUSTIN APARTMENT, BATHROOM - MORNING 69 *

Lidia pukes into the toilet with the shower on. Acoustic guitar heard through the door off-screen. She squeezes her eyes shut. *

70 INT. AUSTIN APARTMENT - DAY 70 *

Lidia busts out of the bathroom, looking a little pale. *

PHILLIP
I made you some tea.

LIDIA
I don't want any fucking tea.

He can't engage like this and stays quiet. She gestures wildly for his attention.

LIDIA (CONT'D)
(waving)
HI... So? What are we gonna do?

Snaps her fingers in his face. He recedes. *

LIDIA (CONT'D)
Don't tell me you're gonna start crying.

PHILLIP
I love you, Lidia. Whatever you wanna do. I'll support it. *

LIDIA
That's it?

He doesn't know what else to say.

LIDIA (CONT'D)
You don't want anything. You're killing me with your not wanting anything. *

She grabs her leather jacket from a chair and heads for the door.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

I need more than nothing from the
most passive man on the fucking
planet.

*

PHILLIP

I think we should go to therapy.

Lidia comes back in, pops him one right in the face. He holds
his bloody nose as she leaves again.

*

71 INT. PAYPHONE, AUSTIN - NIGHT

71

*

Lidia hangs her head out of a phone booth and pukes again.
She wipes her face and picks up the hanging receiver.

*

*

LIDIA

(out of it)

Sorry I've been kinda sick...

She washes her mouth out with a single shot bottle of vodka.

*

CLAUDIA (O.S.)

What are you going to do?

LIDIA

If I leave Phillip out of it...
abortion. But something about him.
And something even deeper down...
in me. Like this hidden... blue...
smooth... *stone*.

*

Fear and vulnerability rise in her throat like bile she
resents, so she swallows it.

*

LIDIA (CONT'D)

I don't know. It's fucking
impossible. I can't STAND his
gentle kindness it makes me sick,
but I can't kill it either.

*

She peers down the length of herself to her center.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

(mumbled)

...and maybe, uh.

(clears her throat, a
little slurry)

Can I come live with you in Eugene?
Take some classes where you're
teaching. We could make a little...

*

*

*

Silence on the other end. Only they can share the weight of this. Lidia basically has to bite her knuckle to say...

*
*

LIDIA (CONT'D)
...family.

Claudia's answer is small and immediate.

CLAUDIA (O.S.)
Yes.

Lidia doesn't catch the answer. Steam rolls through nerves.

LIDIA
Because my life with him would be
some sad fucking country song and
this is. This is just the only-

*

She doesn't know what else to say.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
It was the only story I could think
of that might live.

*

*

*

CLAUDIA (O.S.)
Lidia... I said yes.

*

Lidia finally takes that in.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
Because she left me once to save
her own life.

*

*

*

72 INT. SIMCA STATION WAGON - DAY

72

*

Claudia pre-teen and Lidia toddler, share the back seat.

The family ascends a mountain road lined with enormous snow covered fir trees. Christmas music on the radio. Lidia is in and out of sleep as her sister pulls a book out and tenderly, a blanket over their laps. She moves quietly, as to not ever be noticed. She begins reading when Mike's voice suddenly booms from the front seat. His face in the rear view mirror.

*

*

MIKE
What are you two doing back there,
playing with yourselves??

Claudia's eyes show quick hot humiliation.

*

MIKE (CONT'D)

I bring you to the most beautiful
scenery in the world and you're
playing grab ass. LOOK out the
GODDAMN WINDOW.

*
*
*

Lidia wakes up. The two girls look out the window. The side
of Claudia's face looks made of stone.

DOROTHY

Don't you think we could find a
nice tree around here... Mike?

He suddenly pulls over.

*

MIKE

(in "jest")

Girls. I'm surrounded. Whining,
crying, going to the bathroom.

*
*
*
*

He gets out of the car.

*

MIKE (CONT'D)

Come on Claudia, grab the hack saw
from under your mom's seat.

*
*
*

Mike walks around the car. We glimpse the saw and Claudia
getting out of the car, the glare on the ground, blinding,
her red pants like blood on the snow. Her father's hand
grasps hers, he closes the door on us.

*
*
*
*

We scoot over on the seat to see Mike and Claudia disappear
up a hill, perfect Christmas trees line their path.

*
*

73 OMIT

73 *

74 INT. SIMCA STATION WAGON - DAY

74 *

Lidia shakes like a leaf in the back seat of the car. Mike
took the keys and the heater is off.

*
*

DOROTHY

Well, shit.

*

Dorothy checks on Lidia, whose teeth chatter.

*

DOROTHY (CONT'D)

Lidabelle...

*

She removes her jacket and fixes her coat as a sort of tent
around her. She leans over her seat into the back. Lidia is
fixated on the window...

*
*
*

DOROTHY (CONT'D)
 Ok, Belle. Listen to hear.
 (Lidia's eyes meet hers)
 Now. I want you to pretend... that
 I am Becky Boone. And YOU are
 Israel Boone. And we can go
 anywhere we want.

*
*
*
*
*
*

Glee flashes on Lidia's red cheeked face, staring at her mother, playing pretend.

DOROTHY (CONT'D)
 Because *this...* is our adventure...

*
*

Dorothy reaches into her pockets and retrieves a butterscotch candy like she's doing magic.

DOROTHY (CONT'D)
 Here ya go, Israel. For sustenance.

She gives her a sip of coffee from a thermos. Lidia grimaces.

*

DOROTHY (CONT'D)
 Hey now, remember now, you're
 Israel Boone. You can do anything!

*
*

Lidia is feeling a little warmer now and remembers her sister. She looks out the window. Dorothy does her best to distract her.

*
*

DOROTHY (CONT'D)
 When we get home I'll make you a
 buck skin shirt, little lady!

*
*
*

Dorothy pats Lidia's leg, takes a sip from her thermos... glazing over a little herself.

*
*

DOROTHY (CONT'D)
 Sing with me...
 (singing, lightly)
Sunshine, my only sunshine... come
on, Belle... You make me happy...

*
*
*
*
*

TODDLER LIDIA
 (out the window, singing)
You make me happy...

DOROTHY
When skies are grey...

TODDLER LIDIA
...skies are grey...

DOROTHY
You'll never know dear...

Angle on the window. Bright white snowy nothingness.

DOROTHY (CONT'D)
...how much I love you...

No sister. The condensation building from the outside edges, creating a slow vignette. The sound, drowning. Lidia breathing. She tries to keep her eyes open and on the window. *

ANGLE: Dorothy in an isolated world of her own making, staring out her window. *

Lidia, dozing. *

DOROTHY (CONT'D)
 Oh, thank god... *

Lidia's eyes open to the window... finally, two small, blurry figures slowly become clear. Mike opens the car door for Claudia. Her cheeks are red like apples. Her eyes puffy. There is snot under her nose. No tree. Was she crying? *

DOROTHY (O.C.) (CONT'D)
 Where's the tree?? *

Then she looks STRAIGHT AT US. Her eyes colder than the snow. The frame freezes. *

LIDIA (V.O.)
 Mm. That's the picture.

75 EXT. CLAUDIA'S HOUSE - DAY

75

Claudia, opens the front door, smiling at us shyly. Her voice is slight. *

CLAUDIA
"Welcome home."

LIDIA
 Pfff... Right...

Claudia tries to wrap her arms around Lidia. Her belly which is substantial now, makes it... different. *

Claudia takes Lidia's bags, sets them inside. Lidia follows her into the house. This space which we once knew to be swollen with rocks and grief, in this moment... holds hope. *

Lidia finds her way to the couch. Sighs out some nerves.
Claudia comes back from the kitchen with a glass.

CLAUDIA

Here have some water.

Lidia suddenly feels very pregnant. She realizes she is
sitting on something... and pulls a small garment meant for
an infant out from under her ass.

LIDIA

Oh... fuck... Thank you.

*

She holds it up to look at it. The gift is surprising and
beautiful and confronting.

*

LIDIA (CONT'D)

Remember when you used to make me
do things?

CLAUDIA

(remembers)

Like... here bite this apple...?

*

*

LIDIA

And you would *sock* it out of my
mouth--

CLAUDIA

--here, see this ash tray--

LIDIA

--*Blow in it, one, two...* ashes in
my face.

(laughs)

I would have done *anything*. You
were mythic to me.

*

Lidia is trying to say thank you.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

I'd go down stairs... after you
moved into the basement...

*

Claudia looks down, darkening ever so slightly. Lidia
involuntarily reaches and finds her sister's hand.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

I didn't realize how smart that was
then. I'd look at all your things
and *touch* them. I'd go cross eyed
loving you. Feel like fainting.

*

*

Claudia is overwhelmed by memory. How the same but different theirs are. *

LIDIA (CONT'D)

I remember one time I cut my finger
on a razor blade I found in your
purse... *

FLASH: Toddler Lidia's finger feels the edge of a razor blade, blood emerges... *

BACK: Lidia, kinda shining, looks knowingly at Claudia. *

LIDIA (CONT'D)

Made the fact that I had to pee
hurt. *

Claudia's eyes cloud for a moment. Lidia sees how much this is to hold. And diverts. *

LIDIA (CONT'D)

I know this is a sacrifice... *

CLAUDIA

No.

(beat, sorry)

You were so little. *

Lidia guides Claudia's hands to the roundness of her belly. Looks at her, squarely.

LIDIA

Hey.

(fuck it)

This is one way to Frankenstein
your life... *

They look... ready to make a family. Claudia's voice sounds like a child's. *

CLAUDIA

Maybe I was waiting for this.

76

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM, EUGENE - DAY

76

Lidia at the edge of a bed in slow anguished labor. There is no rush or buzz in the air. It has been 38 long hours. *

A small contraction. An animal sound. Claudia enters with a cup of coffee to find Phillip sleeping in a chair in the corner. She wakes him up and basically drags him out by the hair. *

A sudden very SHARP contraction-

*

-And Claudia's face behind Lidia's. She draws her into her body.

*

CLAUDIA

Yes. Breathe.

The act is pure animal mother from a sister. Lidia makes a sound like she may not be able to do this.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

I know. Come on. You can do it.

Lidia bears down into a great final push and... the inevitable silence.

DOCTOR (O.C.)

THERE... she is. Good job, Lidia.
You're all done.

*

*

Everything it took to get through this... falls out of her. She goes totally limp against her sister. Sound submerges.

You can hear the "clean up" off camera, underwater. Despite Lidia's disorientation her eyes flick up and search for the baby.

*

LIDIA

(hoarse)

Where is she.

An awkward pause.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

Can I hold her?

NURSE (O.C.)

(far away)

Of course... One second...

After a few beats the girl is placed in her outstretched hands, she brings her to her chest. She takes in her rosebud lips and long eyelashes. Realizes...

*

LIDIA

(stunned)

Her lips are pink.

*

She looks to Claudia.

*

LIDIA (CONT'D)

They're pink.

*

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
So, this is death.

As this starts to sink it's teeth in, her face contorts.

77 EXT. OREGON COAST DAY, HACETA HEAD - DAY

77

Oregon wind whips Lidia in the face. She looks up at her family a ways off, observing, pretending to be a family.

She turns and picks up a rock. The blue stone. She wipes sand from its surface. Smells it. Shoves it in her pocket and joins Phillip who stumbles over rocks to the water's edge.

They walk over to where the river joins the ocean. Lidia holds up a tiny pink box.

LIDIA
Throw it as far as you can.

Phillip takes it. Looks at its size. Then chucks the box with all his might into the ocean. The box just floats back in the cross-current.

LIDIA (CONT'D)
Kick it...

Phillip kicks it. It doesn't go very far. It launches soggly into the air and plunks down in the water, slowly, circling back. Lidia lets out a short snorting laugh.

LIDIA (CONT'D)
(stops herself)
That's not funny. Go get it.

Phillip grabs the box. It has begun to disintegrate. Lidia takes it, peels the paper away and sees that the ashes are actually in a tiny little plastic bag. She snorts again.

He peeks over her shoulder. He also has to stop himself from laughing.

She pulls the plastic bag out, takes in it's size... and rips it open with her teeth. She pours all of the ashes into her cupped hand and makes a fist. She keeps her hand over her head and walks out into the ocean... without removing her red wool coat. Phillip doesn't follow her.

When the water reaches her stitches she inhales sharply. She carries on until the water is up to her abdomen. She lowers her fist to the surface of the water.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

She opens her hand. The ashes are gone in an instant. Ripped away.

She searches for a second but... no trace. She stands there, alone, letting the ocean move her body. The waves slowly push her back to shore. The time it takes to find herself standing next to Phillip again is uninterrupted and spiritual.

Phillip reaches and pulls her into an embrace. She feels his shoulders shaking.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

Are you fucking laughing?

Phillip points to the side of Lidia's red coat at a huge smear of ash clinging to her.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

Oh.

She cackles. They clutch each other, laughing or crying. Lidia looks over Phillip's shoulder to the posse of sadness that is her family, small far away dots.

ECU: Mike as he looks on. Strangely, emotional...

LIDIA (V.O.)

He told me that was the bravest thing he ever saw.

MIKE POV: From far off Phillip and Lidia laughing or crying, holding one another in the distance. A hard rain falls, blotting them out.

LIDIA (V.O.)

Laughter can shake you from the delirium of grief.

Superimpose: *II. Under Blue*

78

EXT. KESEY FARM HOUSE, POND - NIGHT/DUSK?

78

Lidia surfaces. Takes a huge breath. She dives again. We stay above water and rack to KEN KESEY, floating on his back like a glowing, puffy cheeked angel. Lidia breaches again, spits water out in a stream. He big belly laughs.

KESEY

Goddamn girl, what are you some kind of mermaid?

LIDIA

Hah. Yeah.

They're both a little fucked up.

KESEY

Lots to pick through with this one.
Hope you can hold it.

They take in the moon. Their feet poking out of the water.

KESEY (CONT'D)

Shit. No one is big enough to hold
what happens to us.

This hits her. He turns toward us. There's an invitation on
his face.

KESEY (CONT'D)

You have something to say?

79

INT. CLAUDIA'S HOUSE - DAY

79

Find Lidia where we met her at this kitchen table, surrounded
by rocks and scribbled pages.

LIDIA

No way.

Her swimmer's body, gone... she wears a hard year of grief
and alcohol abuse. She nurses a beer.

CLAIRE (sweet, mousy) sits at the table with her.

CLAIRE

Come on, enough crappy things have
happened to you. Just come with me.

LIDIA

What, that's crazy. I'm not even a
grad student. I'm basically just
trolling the English department.

CLAIRE

Who cares. You think Kesey gives a
rat's ass about U of O rules? You
will regret not doing this.

LIDIA

They won't let me enroll.

CLAIRE

Bullshit. I told him about you.

Claire picks up a few of Lidia's pages for emphasis.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
He's gonna love you. Trust me.

Lidia looks down and shakes her head.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
You don't want to write a novel
with Ken Kesey???

She wants to. Badly. But, no way.

80

INT. U OF O, KESEY'S CLASSROOM - DAY

80

10 chattering grad students sit around a large dining table.
Claire stands next to Lidia whose arms hang at her sides.

CLAIRE
EVERYONE...?
(they go quiet)
This is Lidia.

Lidia feels like a moron about to barf. Can't think of anything to say. They just stare at her. She takes a small step back from the table, about to leave... when suddenly a chair is behind her and she turns to see KEN KESEY pushing it up under her ass, sitting her down.

KESEY
Well, HELLO. What do we have
here... A triple A tootsie?

Everyone laughs. Lidia feels like a human match about to burst. She focuses on these MFA students inhabiting this space and shrinks... but then... in her ear...

KESEY (CONT'D)
I know what happened to you.

He slips her a flask.

KESEY (CONT'D)
Death's a motherfucker.

She gets her first look at him. His face is round and puffy and vividly veined, his hair like cotton glued in odd places on his head. He takes up the entire room. Entire house. Her face gets hot. He walks to the head of the table.

KESEY (CONT'D)

Jeff, you think you could roll one?
I've always hated sitting in a room
with *writers*.

*

She lifts the flask, accepts the warm embrace of a drink and
incomprehensibly *eases* into how much she loves, loves this...

Jeff goes about rolling the perfect joint. As Kesey talks, a
quarter flashes through the fingers of his right hand.
Disappearing into thin air.

*

KESEY (CONT'D)

I want you guys to be WINNERS.
Shit, somebody's gonna create the
culture for the next 50 years and I
want it to be you. You're ALL good
writers. Better than me, even.

Kesey lights and passes the joint...

KESEY (CONT'D)

Now, there are only TWO RULES...

*

Claire hits the joint and passes it to Lidia. And back to
BENNET who takes another big toke...

KESEY (CONT'D)

ONE. Don't talk the plot of our
novel to anyone outside of the
class. TWO. I comprise 50 percent
of the class. AND we ONLY write...
together.

The students murmur a little "Why?" "Isn't that three rules?"

KESEY (CONT'D)

Because we will publish or perish.
Together.

Kesey receives the roach. Hits it, hard.

KESEY (CONT'D)

Because if NOT you'll do what all
Oregon writers do and become
enamored with your own individual
voices.

*

He pauses to look down at Bennet who is now EXTREMELY high.
Bennett closes his eyes and falls to the floor, passed out
cold. Kesey releases the smoke in his lungs.

KESEY (CONT'D)

(peering down)

Nelson Algren said, *"The job of a writer is to pull the judge down onto the dock. To make the high and mighty feel what it's like to be down low."*

(chuckles)

He'll be ok. SO. GO. Right now.
Write some bizarre sentences. You
are free.

*

Lidia, charged, easily starts scratching up a piece of paper.
Another grad student, aggressive hippie, Bochner pipes up.

BOCHNER

Right now? I can't write on the
spot like this.

Ken spins on a heel and addresses him intensely...

*

KESEY

Then write like a terrorist just
busted in and threatened to kill
you all. Like you have a semi-
automatic machine gun at your
temple.

*

He catches Lidia's eye. It sparks.

81

INT. KESEY FARMHOUSE

81

*

The place has seen better days, but those days haunt the
space. Big front windows overlook the property. Members of
the group build small writing stations on the floor like
altars. Kesey's voice is heard telling old stories about Tim
Leary, Mason Williams, Jerry Garcia, Neal Cassidy. He
gesticulates, red in the face... vodka marbles for eyes.

*
*
*
*

KESEY

I gotta climb my old ass into the
attic and find the reels. Betcha
never seen Neal Cassidy throw a
hammer 50 feet in the air and catch
it. But you've HEARD about it!

*

Lidia rolls her sleeping bag out in a corner, lines up a few
rocks, pens, a feather and a flask on a small stack of books.

*
*

KESEY (CONT'D)

(windy)

HEY you not-so-merry-pranksters...
(MORE)

*

KESEY (CONT'D)

let's get outside before that sun
goes down. We're goin to see
someone.

*
*

Lidia looks up. Pig in shit.

82

EXT. KESEY FARMHOUSE - EARLY EVENING, DUSK

82

*

Kesey walks, leading the group. Lidia digests his image...

KESEY

(barely over the wind)

Some day GOD will appear to you...
nipples like shiny red
raspberries... and he will COMMAND
you to write advertisements for
him. DON'T DO IT! FUCK YOU, GOD.

*

(running out of steam)

Don't ever kiss any ass. No matter
how big and white and smooth it...

She sees a fragility in his performance and something inside
her moves closer to him.

CLAIRE

(suddenly beside her)

Ey. Think he's got one more in him?

*

*

Even from afar you see a shadowed darkness wash across Ken.

*

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

One more perfect book...

*

*

Ken pulls out his flask and tips it back... until it's empty.

*

Bennet walks up and offers her a tab. She considers it. Puts
it on her tongue. When she looks back up Kesey is walking off
into a clearing toward a bronze orientation table/monument.

*

83

EXT. KESEY FARMHOUSE, PROPERTY - NIGHT/DUSK?

83

*

Everyone surrounds a blazing fire. Our perspective is Lidia's
so our view is just slightly psychotropic. Kesey remains at
the monument not far off. Lidia strolls into this picture and
sits beside him.

*

She takes in the name JED etched into the stone. Then, Kesey.
He's expended. She reaches into her pocket. Places a few
small rocks and a shell or two on the shrine. He clocks it
with some appreciation.

*

*

*

*

KESEY

What are you some kinda mermaid.

LIDIA

Hah. Yeah.

He fills his lungs... doesn't say anything. They lean on each other, quietly.

KESEY

(very drunk now)

When Jed died. My boy. Everyone who talked to me said something asinine. No one understands death anymore. Death used to be sacred. Look at the Upanishads. Goddamn religion has killed death.

He tips his head back.

KESEY (CONT'D)

Shit, no one is big enough to hold what happens to us.

LIDIA

I feel most alive around death anyway.

He squints at her. Sees something. A kinship. Something to worry about. A daughter.

This hits her. Her perspective of him blurs, slightly, giving a strange feeling of floating... there's the invitation on his face.

FLASH: Back to Kesey and Lidia floating in the water together, chatting, laughing, moonlit, on their backs, like otters.

LIDIA (V.O.)

Our children curled around us, keeping us twinned and floating.

BACK: To where they sit together, at his son's memorial. She gazes at him, her mouth open.

KESEY

You have something to say?

He laughs to a wheeze.

KESEY (CONT'D)

It's in your hands, ya know.

84

INT. KESEY FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

84

*

Lidia sits at her writing station, staring at her hands. They pick up her pen and writes, *Everything about my father was in his hands.*

*
*
*

FLASHES: Mike's hand elegantly slashes architectural lines onto tracing paper, a cigarette burning at the base of his thick fingers. He is gestural, passionate, compelling.

*
*
*

LIDIA (V.O.)

Before my father was my father he
was an artist.

MIKE

It's all about coordination, Lidia.
A perfectly balanced ballet of
shadow and light.

*

ECU: Lidia's 8 year old set of awe inspired eyes. And then his.

*
*

LIDIA (V.O.)

Before my father was an artist he
was an athlete.

*
*
*

FLASH: Kid Lidia goes through a box of old photographs on the floor of the bathroom in Bellingham... one of Mike in a vintage baseball uniform, smiling proudly, a bat over his shoulder.

*
*
*
*

LIDIA (V.O.)

Before my father was my father...

*
*

FLASH: A picture of Mike and Dorothy late 1950s. Red lipstick, beehive hair-do. His hair slicked back. His strong arms and his hand gripped around her shoulder.

*
*
*

LIDIA (V.O.)

He was beautiful. And she was.

*
*

FLASH: A picture of a little boy.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)

Before my father was my father he
was a boy.

*
*
*

FLASH: He stares at his hands crossed in front of him.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)

Just a boy. Whose own mother cut
his tongue

*
*
*

85

EXT. BELLINGHAM HILL - DAY

85 *

The meat of Mike's hands grip the handle bars of a bike right next to KID Lidia's. Hers are like doll hands next to his.

LIDIA (V.O.)
Before I hated him *I loved him.*

MIKE
It's time to learn.

Her mother from inside the doorway...

DOROTHY
Mike, she doesn't know howah...

MIKE
Let's try the hill, c'mon.

He starts pushing her.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Goddamnit, look UP. If you don't
look where you're goin you're going
to crash.

Her feet interrupt the pedals like clubs.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Now, don't start crying for
christ's sake.

Lidia's not crying. She can barely breathe.

MIKE (CONT'D)
You back pedal to break. Down at
the bottom you break enough to make
a turn. And turn. Left.

She peers down a steep hill. Nauseating. She loses focus.
Lidia looks up at her dad. She does the unthinkable.

*
*

LIDIA
Daddy, I can't do it.

MIKE
You sure as hell CAN.

And he pushes her. She starts screaming and gripping as the world blurs around her. Hair streaming. The bike rattling. Her head droops, her face shakes, she gets sleepy almost and BAM. She crashes.

86 INT. KESEY FARMHOUSE - NIGHT 86 *

Lidia digs the story into paper.

DOROTHY (O.S.) *

Mike? *

MIKE (O.S.) *

GET A FLASH LIGHT. *

87 EXT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, HILL - DAY 87 *

KID Lidia is again careening down the hill on the bicycle but we are now closer to this memory, time is slower.

DOROTHY (O.S.) *

What for?? *

MIKE (O.S.) *

Get it goddamnit. I think she's *

hurt *down there*. *

DOROTHY (O.S.) *

Whawt?? *

FLASH: Lidia's small hands, shaking... covered in bright red. *

Mike's hands push them away. *

MIKE (O.S) *

She's bleeding. *

BACK: Something terrified in Lidia's face gives way... to *

utter rage. *

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D) *

Dorothy, you're hysterical, shut *

the door. *

She lets her hands release the handle bars and fly beside *

her... *

She wipes out without breaking or making any turns for her *

house. *

88 INT. KESEY FARMHOUSE - DAY 88 *

Lidia comes to... with sheets of filled in pages next to her.

On the page: *All I was, was my body. Bleeding.*

Her hand is sore, wrapped around a pencil. She shakes it out. *

BOCHNER

Hey, Lidia, you done with that chapter?

She stashes the notebook and hands him some other pages.

89 OMIT 89 *

90 INT. GERLINGER HALL - DAY 90 *

Lidia approaches a podium as a fellow prankster finishes reading their excerpt to an audience. She clears her throat and looks up to see... Mike. In a twill suit. Hands in his lap. Architectural gaze. *

Her eyes find Kesey who holds her gaze and smiles. He pinches his nipples. She clears her throat to begin reading. *

91 INT. GERLINGER HALL RECEPTION - DAY 91 *

Kesey and everyone at a signing table. Audience members are lined up for their signatures. Mainly Ken's.

Lidia looks down to see the two unmistakeable right hands of Kesey and her father, shake each other. Pressed together.

Mike stands at the head of the line, a copy of the book in his other hand. He seems a little nervous.

MIKE

I'm Lidia's father. I'm a great admirer of yours. *

Lidia takes in this exchange, silently.

KESEY

Thank you... Mike right?

Her father is surprised he knows his name.

MIKE

That's right. *

KESEY

Glad you could make it.

Her father nods once. Feels out of place. *

MIKE

We saw Cuckoos Nest. And Once a
Great Notion, together. Great.
Great books.

Keseey smiles.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Well, I won't keep you--

KESEY

You know...

He looks at Lidia, understands the weight. Takes a big swing.

KESEY (CONT'D)

Lidia can knock it out of the park.

Keseey mimes wringing a bat. He gives Lidia a wink and turns
toward the next person in line.

Mike takes this in... Lidia stares, wondering what goes on in
there.

LIDIA

Thanks for coming, dad.

She smiles tightly and looks down.

92

EXT. KESEY FARMHOUSE - NIGHT/DUSK?

92

Lidia sits in a wooden chair on the porch. Keseey pours a tin
cup of whisky. Lights a candle, used dinner plates between
them. He feels older. Worse for wear. They are alone here.

KESEY

What's the *best* thing that ever
happened to you in your life?

LIDIA

Swimming.

KESEY

Why swimming?

LIDIA

Because it's the only thing I've
ever been good at.

Ken side eyes her.

KESEY

That's not the only thing you're
good at...

He pushes the small table aside and puts his big wrestler arm
around her. She eyes his grip around her arm. Then looks out. *

LIDIA (V.O.)

I waited for the hands of a man to
do what they do to-- *

KESEY

--Ya know...

He gives her a rigorous pat on the back. Like he would a son. *

KESEY (CONT'D)

I've seen a lot of writers come and
go. You've got the stuff.

(he points at her hands)

It's in your hands, kid. *

She looks at her hands. They feel dumb. He sees this. *

KESEY (CONT'D)

Soo? What are you going to do next? *

LIDIA

Next? *

She doesn't say anything. He doesn't necessarily expect her
to answer but he looks at her, expectantly. *

She empties her cup of whiskey in a gulp. He does the same. *

LIDIA (CONT'D)

I wanna write the Sound and the
Fury. *

The waves still crash, audibly. His laugh rings out. *

KESEY

Course you do. *

SUPERIMPOSE: "III. The Wet" *

93 OMIT

93 *

94 INT. FENTON HALL U OF O - DAY

94 *

A door to a classroom with a sheet taped to the window:
GRADUATE FICTION WORKSHOP. *

Inside, Lidia is arguing with CHAD, a nerdy, fellow student. She sits next to a quiet but attentive Claire.

LIDIA

--CADDY is CLEARLY sexually insatiable. And because her neighbor boy man scares her with his giant pants bulge and the sound that comes out of him instead of language she goes over to his house and takes all her clothes off in front of him so he FINALLY fucks her. And nearly crushes her.

Claire appreciates this part.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

She loves it. She laughs until she cries. An ambulance has to come. But it's too late...

CHAD

Trite.

Lidia's face turns almost purple.

CHAD (CONT'D)

I've already read The Sound and the Fury. Re-working Faulkner is the most college shit ever.

Chad looks at her blankly.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Maybe try something original.

Lidia is taken aback. Claire scoffs.

95

INT. U OF O HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

95

Lidia rages out of the classroom, Claire tagging along at her heels. Lidia turns and slams the wall. Fuming.

CLAIRE

What does he know, it IS original, it's fucking pastiche--

Lidia doesn't see a huge GUY (Andy) turn a corner and SMASHES into him, hard. They clock each other, she spins off...

LIDIA

God I fucking hate men.

Lidia angrily tosses her story in a trashcan.

*

CLAIRE

--HEY--

Claire retrieves it, wiping sticky shit off of Lidia's story.

*

HANNAH

--HEY.

*

HANNAH (boyish, crooked smile) walks up to the girls.

*

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Wanna go to the coast? I got us a room.

*

Lidia clears her throat, giggles.

LIDIA

Wo, hi... Hannah.

CLAIRE

We were actually gonna work on these.

Claire holds up Lidia's and her own noted pages.

LIDIA

Right.

HANNAH

Come on...

Hannah plucks the pages, rolls them into a paper megaphone. She slyly puts one hand on Lidia's first few ribs below her tits. She speaks through the rolled pages into her ear.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

I already bought the weekend.
Complete with a kitchenette.

CLAIRE

Lids, we shouldn't...

Hannah bops Claire on the top of the head, plucks something from Lidia's shirt and flicks her FUCKING hard in the nose when she looks down. It makes Lidia's eyes and mouth water.

HANNAH

I dare you.

96 INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

96

Lidia's head hangs out the window. The air whips her. She fills her mouth with it, puffing her cheeks. Hannah jerks the wheel playfully, sucking Lidia back into the car...

She smacks her head, HARD.

97 INT. SEE VIEW INN - NIGHT

97

Lidia opens the door to the "Cottage house". It is a themed room with a kitchenette.

HANNAH

I'm gonna grab some fire wood.
Don't do anything I wouldn't do.

She double takes at a nervous looking Claire and leaves. Claire and Lidia look at each other. Claire's eyes flash a little crazy. She scratches the top of her head.

LIDIA

Are you ok? Why are you scratching your mole.

CLAIRE

I'm not.

LIDIA

I mean, you are-

CLAIRE

-I'm NOT.

LIDIA

Ok.

CLAIRE

OK, I'm not ok, OK!? Is this like a... *fuck trip*???

Lidia lets out a big laugh.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

It's NOT funny! I've never...

She opens her eyes wide, insinuating.

LIDIA

You mean literally... *never*? But you're in grad school.

CLAIRE

I'm just afraid I'm gonna, like...

Lidia lets her figure out the rest of the sentence, enjoying it. *

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Gag or something I don't know!

Lidia cracks up again. Claire looks genuinely upset.

LIDIA

Christ, come here... I'll do you right now...

She reaches down and grabs Claire by the jeans, shoves them down a few inches. Claire tips her chin down, looks back up with some feeling. Lidia looks back feeling a lot less.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

You really want me to?

Claire nods. Lidia gets on her knees. Claire's eyes close. Her eyebrows crawl up to her hairline.

CLAIRE

Ok.....OK.

Claire stands Lidia up. She wipes her face and shoves her own pants down. She isn't wearing any underwear. *

CLAIRE (CONT'D) *

Whoa. *

LIDIA

What.

Claudia gets on her knees. Now Lidia is kind of shocked.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

WHOA. For someone who never-- *

98 INT. SEE VIEW INN - NIGHT

98

Hannah opens the door and stops when she sees Lidia and Claire naked in bed, sheet below their tits and cheshire cat smiles. Crisis diverted.

99 INT. SEE VIEW INN - NIGHT AND DAY

99

SLOW frames move almost imperceptibly: Lidia, Claire and Hannah's perspectives: A blurry fist. Crook of the neck. *

Mouth. Stomach. Ass up. Sometimes it takes a moment to know what it is you are seeing.

*
*

LIDIA (V.O.)
I wanted to stay like that.

-They smoke pot drink beer drink wine eat fruit.

LIDIA (V.O.)
Outside of any word.

-All fours, let loose, gone primal, cum and spit and tears. And laughter.

*
*

LIDIA (V.O.)
Inside the unnamed wet.

-All three women run head long into the ocean's waves.

100 EXT. BEACH - DAY

100

Hannah grabs Claire by the wrists and spins her around. Hannah loses grip. Claire ends up on the ground, fallen over rocks. Her face is scratched up pretty badly. Hannah and Lidia laugh hysterically and dance around. Not noticing Claire, actually in pain and kinda pissed. She gets up and walks back toward the hotel.

HANNAH
Accident! Hey, Claire you ok??
Sorry about that!

Lidia feels bad and kinda responsible. Shoots Hannah a look.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
What she slipped...

101 EXT. U OF O CAMPUS - AFTERNOON

101

*

The truck pulls to a stop and Lidia and Claire get out. Hannah peels out. The two of them look at each other.

*

LIDIA
Hey if you're lucky you'll have a scar over your eyebrow. A little body braille to commemorate your first...

*
*

Lidia makes a V with her fingers at her lips. Claire looks tired. She doesn't respond and isn't smiling, so Lidia trails off. They both feel self conscious, dumb, dirty.

*
*
*

LIDIA (CONT'D)

(awkward)

Sorry about Hannah. She's funny but kind of it always hurts or something. I always wonder if she actually hates me.

*

She laughs.

CLAIRE

She doesn't even know you.

Lidia shifts her weight.

*

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

I love you.

Lidia just stands there has no idea how to accept that. Claire looks down... and does her a favor.

*

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Yeah... I'll see you later.

*

Claire reaches into her pocket and pulls out the folded story that Lidia's tried to trash previously, ketchup stain and all. She hands it to Lidia and goes.

*

*

*

Lidia watches her. She wishes she knew what to say. But she doesn't.

*

*

102

EXT. CEMETARY - DUSK

102

*

Hannah shoves Lidia against a tree. It expels the air from her lungs in a humph but she likes it. Hannah bites her in the cheek. Lidia laughs hard almost crying until she lets go. It puts her in her body. It leaves a serious mark.

*

*

*

*

Hannah pulls a silver dollar out of her pocket and tosses it in the air so the bats dive at it. She falls back into what we now see is a grave, with a tiny tomb stone, crushing a row of lilies. A mini Christmas tree, adorned with decorations flashes colored lights.

*

*

*

*

*

*

HANNAH

I signed us up for kayaking.

*

Lidia laughs. Takes a long pull from the bottle. Lands on top of Hannah.

*

*

LIDIA

Thanks for letting me talk about dead things.

*

*

*

*

103

EXT. MCKENZIE RIVER - DAY

103

Lidia's eyes are blood shot. She is putting on her life jacket. Very slowly. Hannah is beside her, dressed and ready to go. She is watching Lidia, kind of annoyed.

*

HANNAH

Hey you ready. Come on...

*

Lidia follows Hannah into the woods on the trail to the river's edge. She is taken with her own extremely red converse high tops. She get distracted and turns, looking up.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

LIDIA.

Lidia looks up at Hannah who scrutinizes her.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

What are you doing exactly?

The tip of Lidia's kayak is stuck in some brush.

LIDIA

I thought. There were hats in that tree.

Hannah looks into her eyes and sees how high she is.

HANNAH

Lidia. What the fuck. You have to go in the water...

Hannah reels back and slaps her hard across the face. Lidia's eyes pin. She wants to ask for another.

*

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Let's go.

*

*

104

EXT. MCKENZIE RIVER - DAY

104

Stunned into focus is a dead steelhead, silver, black and blue, floating half in and out of the water on a rock. The sheen of her underbelly, split open and leaking eggs. Lidia looks up to see Hannah joining the rest of the class. She heads into the water.

*

*

*

*

*

JEFF, KAYAK INSTRUCTOR waits for the last person in the class to settle into their kayaks. She rests her paddle on her lap and feels the cold dark water with her hands.

*

*

*

JEFF INSTRUCTOR

Ok, remember your enders and eskimo
rolls, pry strokes and wet exits...
We are not in the pool anymore,
it's different in the white water
folks...

*
*
*
*
*
*

Lidia fixates on the touch of the cool water...The lace from
her childhood bed floats on the surface.

*

HANNAH

Lidia. Pay attention.

Lidia doesn't listen. She lets the current take her vessel.

When they hit the whitewater Lidia veers away from the group
taking a different path, distinctly rougher.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

*

LIDIA!

She doesn't make any move to correct. She drifts backwards
and then sideways and actually puts her arms over her head.
Paddle high in the air, smiling. Then she flips and is under.

Underwater things are calm. Green-blue clear and quiet.
Rocks, sand and plant life fly by. A few steelheads shape
themselves and disappear.

Her heart starts pounding. Her hands squeeze around her
paddle. It gets very bright before her eyes shut. Total calm.

A HUGE SCRAPING SOUND alerts her to the paddle in her hands.
Very slowly, she... lets it go. The sky conducts silver and
blue electricity.

*

FLASH: Lidia as a child, ON THE BIKE, careening down the
hill, her hands leaving the handle bars. Floating beside her.

*
*

FLASH: Lidia's hands float off of the steering wheel of a
car, as if in water.

*
*

FLASH: The first time we saw Lidia smile in scene 1.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)

It is possible that it would be
impossible for me to drown.

BACK: Surfacing to take the biggest breath of her life Lidia
coughs. Snot all over. Blood running down from her cheek.
KAYAK INSTRUCTOR arrives, exasperated.

CLAUDIA KAYAK INSTRUCTOR
Let's get you in. You gave us a
scare. You gave us a goddamn scare,
girl!

*
*

LIDIA
Let go, Jeff. I can swim it. LET
GO.

*

She cuts through the current easily, swimming up stream,
leaving him bewildered.

*

105 INT. HANNAH'S PLACE - LATE AFTERNOON

105

*

Hannah looking pale and VERY serious, busies herself in the
kitchen. She boils water for tea. Peels an orange. Lidia sits
on a couch.

*

LIDIA
Those steelheads...

HANNAH
Huh?

LIDIA
You see any steelheads today?

HANNAH
No.

*

LIDIA
Some get released, some get
eaten... and others just float away
too weak to survive all the body
blows...

Hannah is out of her depth. She puts mugs out.

HANNAH
You want some tea?

*

LIDIA
Or when they swim upstream to spawn
then die. Do they know they're
making life. Or are they just
killing themselves?

Hannah doesn't answer. She walks over and stands Lidia up.

HANNAH
You wanna lay down with me?

She touches the small of Lidia's back, leads her into the bedroom. But Lidia grabs the door frame with two hands.

*

LIDIA

Come on. Fuck me up.

*

Hannah gently nestles in behind her, wraps her arms around her waist. Lidia's eyes FLICK. She turns over her shoulder, presenting her cut cheek.

*

*

LIDIA (CONT'D)

*

I wanna see stars.

Hannah's lips hover near Lidia's gash, caring, female.

*

HANNAH

(hesitates)

*

Lidia... you could have died.

*

Lidia drops her arms. Looks down... not what she wants.

*

MIKE/LIDIA (V.O.)

*

(barely there)

*

You don't know how far I can go.

*

And leaves Hanna alone in her house.

*

106 EXT. MCKENZIE RIVER - DUSK/NIGHT

106

*

Alone, Lidia wades into the water for a night swim.

*

The sound of some hoodlum kids splashing around. She dives under and shoots the rapids.

*

*

107 EXT. DOCK, OREGON - DAY

107

*

Underwater view of a dock, wobbling.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)

I remember a happy childhood.

A centering breath, in, out. The scratch of a pencil... A penny plops into the upper left hand corner of the frame. It dances down catching and throwing light.

Two bodies crash in, racing to grab it. A teenage Claudia, beats Toddler Lidia to the punch.

*

KID LIDIA (V.O.)

We dive we swim we race we...

*

108 DOCK, OREGON - DAY 108 *

Toddler Lidia marvels at the fullness of her sister's breasts, drying in the sun. Teen Claudia lays on a towel reading Joan of Arc. Their parents in the background on lawn chairs, Mike smoking. Claudia notices Toddler Lidia and envelops her in a towel. *

CLAUDIA
(whispers)
Water color covers. *

LIDIA (V.O.) *

We laugh like other people's children. *

109 INT. BELLINGHAM LOCKER ROOM - DAY 109 *

Soap sliding down the smooth skin of girl swimmers...

LIDIA (V.O.) *

I remember first and last names
like *Evie Kosenkranius* and--

KID LIDIA (V.O.)

--*Lynn Collella Bell-Lyn Collella*
BellLynnCollella--

LIDIA (V.O.)

Making song loops in my skull.

Shaving, letting their hair down from caps, brushing and tying it back with rubber bands... SNAP.

110 INT. BELLINGHAM BATHROOM - DAY 110 *

Behind the curtain of the shower, Kid Lidia's toes curl around the faucet as a rubber band goes, *SNAP, SNAP, SNAP*.

LIDIA (V.O.)

I resort to hair care items.

Her hand pops out from behind the curtain and drops a hair tie and a hair brush on the floor.

111 INT. BELLINGHAM LOCKER ROOM - DAY 111 *

Kid Lidia, her eyes squeeze tight to steady herself. She shoves her head in her locker. *

Another girl is seen through a crack in her locker door. Her partial smile. Her eyes, peering. Their faces move close to one another in reverse angles.

KID LIDIA (V.O.)
(whisper)
I want to stay.

*
*
*

112 INT. BELLINGHAM BEDROOM - NIGHT

112 *

Kid Lidia is in bed, listlessly under the covers. Her skin is a yellowish pale color. She tries to make weak little fists.

*

MIKE (O.S.)
Mono? Isn't that the kissing
disease??

DOROTHY (O.S.)
Don't be silly...

Her mother, dressed to go out, checks in on her.

*

DOROTHY (CONT'D)
Oh, Belle. You'll get better.
You'll see.

*

She gives Lidia a kiss and makes her way out. Mike fills the frame, replacing Dorothy, tenderly feels Lidia's forehead. The front door is heard, shutting. An engine turns.

MIKE
(nurturing)
Baby...

She blinks. Doesn't have the strength to hold her head up. Mike comes into focus in her pupil, looming over her.

*

Slowly increasing exposure, the memory slipping and elongating in a moment.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
It is narrative that makes things
open up so I can tell this.

His hand moves closer, blurry in the mirror of her glassy eye... just as it gets a little too bright to see. The scratch of a pencil, sounds.

*
*

LIDIA (V.O.)
It is language letting me say how
four weeks can be years...

Very bright now. Almost white. The pencil digs audio and words into picture. *No one is going to save you.*

LIDIA (V.O.)

It is the yielding expanse of a white page.

113 INT. BELLINGHAM HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

113

Kid Lidia's hand is weak as she drags the tip of a pencil across a page.

SAINT JOAN (O.C.)

No one is going to save you.

Lidia up at SAINT JOAN herself, standing in her doorway wearing an upper armor breast plate and chain mail. Her face and hair... burning.

ECU: The image of JOAN OF ARC on fire. A possessed smile at the edges of her mouth. It's gruesome.

114 INT. GAINSEVILLE BEDROOM - DAY

114

Lidia, WAKES UP sweaty on her bed. She clutches the Joan of Arc book to her chest. Re-gaining her breath.

LIDIA (V.O.)

When I was 13 I confessed my father secrets to another father in the house of our father... who told me I should not tell lies.

115 INT. NEW YORK LOFT - DAY

115

An exquisitely airy, minimal space. THE PHOTOGRAPHER sits in one of two chairs separated by 10 feet. Lidia faces her like a sheepish puppy who has been told to sit and stay.

PHOTOGRAPHER

It is wicked to make up stories.
(refers to a stack of pages)
Have you shown these to anyone?

LIDIA

...No

PHOTOGRAPHER

(clear)

What do you know about pain?

This catches Lidia off guard. Doesn't have an answer.

LIDIA

(swallows hard)

I know it... matters to me.

This is gentle, astute...

PHOTOGRAPHER

I'm going to take care of you. Do
you understand?

Lidia's face FLUSHES.

116 INT. U OF O AUDITORIUM

116

Lidia is seated in a packed University auditorium, scribbling in a notebook, cheek still healing from the kayak accident. The crowd hushes as the PHOTOGRAPHER walks out onto the stage, a long braided rope of hair down the length of her back. The lights dim.

When huge projected images flash above the her, she turns to face the audience.

Lidia freezes, her mouth fills with spit. She goes deaf.

FLASH: Toddler Lidia sits by the coils of a radiator. Her mother limps over to the sink, hums to herself and lets her long hair fall to her calves. Lidia is eye level with the pearly gleam of a surgical scar running down her mother's shorter leg. She can't take her eyes off the white of it.

BACK: On the photographer as the podium light illuminates her face from below, revealing a thin web of white scars that curve around her cheek bone, cup her jaw and continue down her neck into the plunge of her shirt.

PHOTOGRAPHER (V.O.)

I want you to call me momma.

117 INT. NEW YORK LOFT - DAY

117

Lidia is strung up to a cross beam in broad day light, the sun bathing her in white and gold.

LIDIA (V.O.)
I didn't know yet how many times a
person can be born.

*
*
*

PHOTOGRAPHER
Now ask me for what you want.

*
*

LIDIA
(struggling)
A kiss...

PHOTOGRAPHER
No. That's not right, angel.

Lidia is frustrated. Inarticulate.

*

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)
Try again. Tell me what you want.

*

LIDIA
I want you to...

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
Knock it out of me.

LIDIA
...whip me.

*
*

Lidia is starting to split open. The photographer leans in.
Calm. Intellectual. Lowers her voice...

PHOTOGRAPHER
(tenderly)
Ask me again.

Lidia quakes.

LIDIA
Mama... I would like to be whipped.

PHOTOGRAPHER
Where would you like to be whipped,
angel?

Her tears are hot.

LIDIA
Everywhere.

Beside the tub, the photographer, fully clothed, cradles
Lidia and hums You Are My Sunshine into her ear.

*

The sound of her soothing over the sound of her whipping,
Lidia crying, cumming.

*
*

119 INT. NEW YORK LOFT - NIGHT

119

*

Lidia and the photographer have sex in the dim light that's
left in the apartment. The sound of the city creeps in.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)

My safe word was Belle... I never
used it.

TITLE CARD: IV. Resuscitations

120 INT. U OF O CLASSROOM - DAY

120

Lidia stands in front of a classroom reading an excerpt from
Empire of the Senseless by Kathy Acker.

LIDIA

*At the moment my mother was
whining, daddy was smelling my
cunt. 'I've reached the best
moment, no!' He explained... 'I'm
going off off off jacking it off!!!
My hand's gonna be broken from this
one!!!' You're seeing your actual
father at this moment of truth. God
almighty. 'I beg you to do it, show
I can please you!!!'... 'Now look
at it, it's big in my corkscrew
hand!!!... Kiss it!!!...'*

A girl gets up from her seat and leaves the class.

STUDENT 1

This is making me sick.

*

Another student pipes up interrupting Lidia.

*

STUDENT 2

Me too. Come on, this is just porn.

*

LIDIA

This is pornography. Very different.
She's deconstructing the laws of
the father i.e. patriarchy and
capitalism. Or more precisely the
effects they have on the bodies of
women and girls.

*

*

Believers may speckle the class but this is not widely
received. *

LIDIA (CONT'D)
It's also just... literal. *

121 INT. RENTAL HOUSE EUGENE - DUSK 121 *

Surrounding Lidia are stacks of books. Rocks everywhere.
Empire of the Senseless by Kathy Acker open beside her.

She titles her dissertation: *Allegories of Violence*. Hits
save. She opens a fresh window. Closes her eyes and thinks.

MIKE (V.O.)
(faint)
Who in hell do you think you are?

LIDIA
(without thinking)
My father's daughter.

Slightly disturbed, she responds on paper... *I am a woman
who talks to herself and lies*. She looks at it intensely.
Goes to write another sentence but stops at the sound of a
can CRACKING open.

We find she is not alone. DEVIN, long black curls, shirtless,
lounges half off the couch, shit canned. *

Lidia takes him in. Sort of painfully. She leans back in her
chair. Sighs. She also cracks open a can of Guinness.

LIDIA (CONT'D) *

Goddamn it.

She KICKS the desk sending her chair BACK and her notes and
work flying into the air... *

122 INT. VET'S CLUB BAR - DAY 122

Lidia lands ass first in a dingy office chair. *

LIDIA (V.O.)
Year one- *

LIDIA
-I drink Guinness mostly all the
time- *

LIDIA (V.O.)
-And felt nothing about myself. *

Devin appears and spins the chair. She grabs his hand and flings herself sideways to the bar. They do shot. After shot. He hungrily pushes her out of frame.

*
*

LIDIA (V.O.)
We drink we LAUGH we make-

*

123 INT. EUGENE RENTAL HOUSE - DUSK

123

*

LIDIA
-FUCK-

*

Against a freshly painted wall, paint all over them, many bottles of Guinness at their feet clanking and breaking.

*
*

LIDIA (V.O.)
-body paint shadows-

*
*

124 INT. STAGE - DAY

124

*

Lidia and Devin in front of a small crowd. Devin wears a bloody pig head on his own and Lidia is wrapped in Saran wrap. Suddenly Devin the pig runs toward Lidia and into...

LIDIA (V.O.)
--we make performance art, we
perform our selves, a life--

*

125 INT. EUGENE RENTAL HOUSE - NIGHT

125

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
--our first yell fight, we--

*

...Devin arrives naked banging on the bathroom door holding a kitchen knife. He breaks the door down. We past the door into the bathroom to find Lidia on the floor naked. She gets up, digging cuticle scissor into her skin.

*

LIDIA
(tears streaming)
CARVE EACH OTHER'S NAMES INTO OUR
ARMS!

She falls. Breaks the toilet. She tries to push him away but he cradles her cut arm. The fight turns... fucking.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
We fuck septic water.

126 INT/EXT. VET'S CLUB - DAY 126 *

Lidia and Devin scream at each other outside. Lidia shoves Devin... he grabs her by the shoulders and shoves her harder. *

DEVIN *

You don't even realize you're going *

to marry me. *

EXT. EUGENE RENTAL HOUSE - DAY *

LIDIA (V.O.) *

In our backyard. *

Lidia falls backwards into Devin's arms, post ceremony, he stumbles. Both of their parents and Claudia, stand by. *

LIDIA (V.O.)

With the oedipal fakers.

Devin raises his glass to Mike and Dorothy. *

LIDIA (V.O.)

To drink each other blind.

127 INT. EUGENE RENTAL HOUSE - DAY 127 *

LIDIA (V.O.)

To escape to year six. When

underwater stories start ITCHING.

Lidia at her writing desk, cracks a Guinness. Devin shouts at her from across the room. She tries to focus. *

DEVIN

EY!

LIDIA (V.O.)

And yelling begins a rhythm where

drinking gets louder and him--

LIDIA

(turns)

--KISSING WOMEN I KNOW AND KISSING

WOMEN I DON'T KNOW!

She attempts to return to her work. He charges the room toward her. She stands up and faces him.

LIDIA (V.O.)

What IS a couple over time but a

LINE... *

DEVIN
I'LL SHOW YOU A FUCKING LINE. YOUR
BULLSHIT IS...

LIDIA (V.O.)
...ART AND CHAOS RAGING OUT AND...

DEVIN
...TAKING OVER THE HOUSE...

LIDIA (V.O.)
It WAS taking over the house.

He kisses her hard. Lidia BITES HIM in the mouth and PUSHES
him off her. They heave at each other like animals, squared
off. She sits at her desk.

LIDIA
I don't want to fuck I want to
read.

Lidia STARES AT HER COMPUTER, breathing.

He leaves.

LIDIA (V.O.)
I didn't want to drink. I wanted to
write.

Computer screen: *I am a woman who talk to herself and lies.*

Devin re-enters the house, hammered. Lidia hasn't moved.

LIDIA (V.O.)
Year seven I finish my
dissertation. Year eight I get a
Ph.D. and--

She turns over her shoulder.

LIDIA
(defeated)
And we just keep on being married
and married and married--

Devin interrupts her by pissing in the corner of the room.

129 EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS, EUGENE - DAY 129 *

LIDIA (V.O.) *

Year ten we pretend... *

Devin is passed out on a blanket. There's a melty cake that says "ten years!" and a bottle of scotch between him and Lidia. He snores. She kneels beside him and searches his face for a sign of life. *

LIDIA *

You said you would love me until I died you said we would die together in love. *

She strokes his face. *

LIDIA (CONT'D) *

You said when I was 75 we'd laugh our saggy skinned laughs and drink to our old ass love... you said it to me. You did. *

(imploring) *

Where are you? Where is the man. *

Lidia stops searching. Something visibly falls out of her. *

LIDIA (V.O.)

Who would love a woman like me.

A train roars by... even just the sound of it... feels like running. She gets up and rips after it. *

130 INT. EUGENE RENTAL HOUSE - DUSK 130 *

Lidia enters the house. Slowly turns the lock. She has fresh scrapes and abrasions on her hands and face. *

At her desk. She begins typing. She borders, frenzy. She is slamming the keys. *

Suddenly she STOPS typing. Her face looks to have run a fucking marathon. She looks across the room to where Devin once was. The empty home. *

MIKE (V.O.) *

(barely there)

Don't you dare start--

She starts crying. But she turns back to the screen and titles a story. We find THE CHRONOLOGY OF WATER among many other titles in a collection called *Her Other Mouths*. *

131 INT. EUGENE RENTAL HOUSE - DUSK 131 *

Lidia stands by her printer as it spits out four copies of The Chronology of Water. She folds each copy into envelopes. *
 She moves quietly and carefully, feels secretive, even though *
 nobody is there to witness. She seals the last envelope. *
 Makes a shit sound with her mouth.

132 INT. EUGENE RENTAL HOUSE - DUSK 132 *

Lidia in a T-shirt and underwear sips from a nearly empty glass of vodka and ice. She pours herself more. She stares at the letters on the formica table... then succumbs to the potentiality and rips one open.

From the **San Diego University Hiring Committee**. The words: *We are excited to offer you a tenure track teaching position...*

Lidia folds the letter back up. *

The letters left on the table pull more weight. More water. Anxiety rises back up. She grabs the next one. Fuck it. It's a NO, anyway...

Shaky hands hold a letter from **Columbia University**. Reveal the words: *MFA Writing Program Selection Committee... accepted.*

Her eyes widen in disbelief. This can't be real. *

A check for three thousand dollars falls from the next envelope... She peers at it in awe.

Tear into one more letter from **Poets and Writers: Ms. Yuknavitch--** *We are delighted to inform you, you are the recipient of this year's Poets and Writer's award...*

She shrieks a little. *

Accommodations will be provided in New York City... The date of your reading...

She tips her chair back and stares at the letters and the check on the table. Laughs, thinly...

LIDIA
...the date of your reading... *

Her breath becomes shallow, her eyes blank. *

LIDIA (CONT'D) *

Right.

Then a look of sick fear flashes across her face.

*

133 INT. NATIONAL POETRY CLUB, NYC - NIGHT

133

*

Lidia hovers near a small staged podium, clutching a copy of Her Other Mouths, scanning the enormous New York City crowd, sickly afraid. Sonically, under water.

*

*

Her eyes settle on a distinguished and important looking woman with bright serious eyes sitting up front and center. This is CAROL HOUCK SMITH who looks at Lidia just at the moment the whole room goes totally quiet. The water rushes out of our ears. The moderator gestures to her spot at the microphone.

*

MODERATOR
(smiles at her)
Lidia? Please...

Lidia somehow moves her body forward and takes her place. Her mouth opens. She remembers the book in her hands, turns the first page. An extra beat...

*

*

LIDIA
The day my daughter was born...

*

She doesn't look back up at the crowd again.

*

LIDIA (CONT'D)
After I held the future stillborn
and pink and rose-lipped in my
shivering arms, lifeless tender,
the nurse gave me tranquilizers and
a soap and sponge. She said you
probably want to wash yourself.
Ripped from vagina to rectum, sewn
closed. She said you're still
bleeding quite a bit.

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

FLASH: Blood swirls against white tiles past her feet.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
Liquid out of the body, again. You
remember your first bleeding.

*

*

*

FLASH: Blood on her hands as a little kid. Her father's hands push them out of the way so he can inspect the injury between her legs.

*

*

*

LIDIA (V.O.)
And your fathers hands.

*

*

BACK: Lidia is red in the face.

*

LIDIA

Little tragedies are difficult to
keep straight.

(beat)

Chronology convinces us we are
moving toward a real place. If I
could get there a tenth of a second
before the splashing blue on either
side of me I could win.

"Swimmers to your marks."

A gunshot released our tensed
flesh. Fathers were often
uncontainable while the little
women swam for their lives. Some
men bellowed out their names. *Swim,*
hurry. Come on baby. Harder.
Faster. A cacophony of men swelling
and pressing down on the wet
motion.

Turns the page.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

How many times did I slip into the
chlorinated depths secretly hoping
to shed this useless skin and
emerge something... amphibious. And
without gender.

A sore, swollen anger. Rising in her like a slow fatal wave.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

(in one breath)

The thing is. This letting
everything IN... and waiting to see
what comes out is creepy and
idiotic and it's starting to PISS
me off that I even have to THINK
about that hole. I'm tired of that
pink muscle pushing for all it's
worth like a child's ache and I'm
tired of every word and every image
and every LAW pointing to or
thrusting up INTO or swimming
around in the DEEP, DARK, WET womb
of mother loving life...

Scrapes the bottom of the barrel for this.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

What I am saying is. There is a
woman in a room who is tired of
looking down. And bleeding.

(MORE)

LIDIA (CONT'D)

And bearing and itching and aching
and tired of remaining open with no
hope of suturing herself up.

She is very quiet now, forgotten the audience.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

It isn't that I want *it* gone it's
that I want, *wanting...* to come
from somewhere *else*.

*

She stops. Something like memory. Makes her shake her head.
Like if it wasn't so fucked it would be funny.

*

*

LIDIA (CONT'D)

There are moments, between years,
that surface with a great force...

134

EXT. FLORIDA BEACH - DAY

134

We find Lidia and Claudia and Mike a little ways off in the
shallow. They swim together in the ocean.

*

LIDIA

Remind me why we're here.

CLAUDIA

I thought this was your idea. I
came with you...

They laugh.

LIDIA

Delusion? Grown women are idiots. I
don't know why.

(beat)

She begged.

Dorothy in the sand under an umbrella a ways from shore.
Claudia doesn't look at her. The girls swim together and
forget their lives for a breath...

*

A sound dislodges Lidia from her swim and she turns to see
her mother yelling and pointing... to her father who lies
face down in the water.

*

LIDIA (CONT'D)

DADDY!

Lidia and Claudia trudge through knee deep water, finally
reaching him. Lidia flips him over. His purple face in a
grimace, eyes bulging, drowning. They begin pulling his 220
pounds up the beach.

*

Lidia stops scrambling and looks at him. Something in her freezes. Like. Paralyzed. His skin losing color. Claudia has faded as well. They stand side by side motionless, watching.

*

Mike's blue eyes, popping... Lidia's eyes...

*

SUDDENLY Lidia moves forward and holds his nose closed. She puts her lips to his. We are so close to this we feel his tongue. Spittle. Teeth.

*

*

LIDIA (CONT'D)
(into his mouth)
DADDY...

Lidia's lips on his until life guards arrive and she clears. She stands. Stares down at him. His trunks around his hips, half exposed, sputtering back to life...

*

*

*

The camera turns and suddenly barrels into the ocean.

*

135 INT. NATIONAL POETRY CLUB, NYC, HIGHRISE RESTAURANT 135

*

Lidia hovers over the mic.

LID
Kill? Or suck the killing back. And
pump it into the story of someone
else.
(beat)
My father lost his memory from
hypoxia that day.
(beat)
I did not kill him. I did not save
him. I am learning to live on land.

*

*

*

*

*

*

People are not sure if she has finished and remain silent. Lidia finally looks up from her page.

LIDIA
Thanks for uh. Yeah. That's it.

The applause is genuine and eruptive--Lidia shrinks, beaming inside.

*

136 INT. NATIONAL POETRY CLUB, NYC HIGH RISE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

*

Reception in full swing. Lidia finds herself in the center of a large, buzzy group of people. They chatter at her--

CROWD OF PEOPLE

That was absolutely incredible- Did you really almost go to the Olympics? Have your parents read this story? How do you like New York? Do you have an agent? Do you want an agent? Are you going to write a novel? Heard your dissertation beat your stories to print. What about Columbia... you goin for that MFA?

Lidia's expression reflects deep overwhelm. It seems as though they are continuing to step toward her.

*

LIDIA

Uh... I don't know.

Her instinct is, find the bar. Approaching with relief...

*

BARTENDER

Red or white?

LIDIA

Oh. Do you have anything stronger?

BARTENDER

I'll see what I can do.

She looks over her shoulder just a second to see handshakes and lively conversation. She eyes the extravagant culinary spread. Picks up a beautiful handwritten menu, hides in it.

*

*

*

Bartender appears, startles Lidia, hands her some brown liquid on the rocks. She takes the drink with one hand, gratefully. She folds the menu and shoves it down the front of her pants.

*

*

*

A laugh beside her swivels Lidia toward the lady with the bright, serious eyes from the front row.

CAROL HOUCK SMITH

Cheers.

Lidia's eyes widen a bit... awkwardly raises her glass.

CAROL HOUCK SMITH (CONT'D)

So are you gonna actually eat any of this stuff or just read about it later?

LIDIA

(busted)

Oh I was--

CAROL HOUCK SMITH
I'm Carol Houck Smith, of Norton
Publishing.

Lidia blanches. The woman extends her hand. Lidia takes it
like a little kid...

*
*

CAROL HOUCK SMITH (CONT'D)
That was really impressive up
there. And I say that as someone
who comes to a lot of these things.

*

Lidia chuckles.

CAROL HOUCK SMITH (CONT'D)
(smiles)
Really, didn't look easy. You got
me.

*

Lidia smiles sweetly, her heart beating. She looks shyly down
at the hors d'oeuvres

CAROL HOUCK SMITH (CONT'D)
Go on.
(points to a mini tart)
Go for it.

*

Lidia self-consciously puts one in her mouth. Holy fuck that
is fucking good.

CAROL HOUCK SMITH (CONT'D)
You have more where that came from?
Something longer? I find myself
wondering about your swimmer's
life...

Lidia's mouth is full. She chews. The woman waits generously
as the beats tick by.

*

CAROL HOUCK SMITH (CONT'D)
Well...?

Lidia takes a drink... clears her throat... smiles sweetly...

*

137 INT. AIRPLANE - DAY/MORNING

137

*

Lidia crammed in a window seat as she approaches the
evergreens of Oregon.

*

CAROL HOUCK SMITH (O.S.)
Send me something.

In her lap are the envelopes full of potential opportunities and the wrinkled menu from the reading. Keepsakes. She has gone through many, many little bottles of airplane booze.

LIDIA (V.O.)
Something in me had been born...

Looking into her eyes... it's not good. She draws a little smiley face on the window. It smears into a sideways grin.

LIDIA (V.O.)
Still.

V. The Other Side of Drowning

138 INT. SAN DIEGO COTTAGE, WRITING ROOM - NIGHT

138

The time cut is jarring: Lidia is ten years older. Her face is puffy, she wears glasses. She sits at a desk, marking up papers with a red pen. She gets to the end of one, puts it down on its face and grabs another from a thick stack.

At some point her eyes drift from the page. They find a spot on the wall. We are witness to a deep, long stare. Highly reminiscent of her own mother. It's... long.

JUMP CUT: Lidia is asleep in her work, head on her desk.

The phone rings. She startles awake. She has a red capital D on her forehead from a paper she fell asleep on. Lidia answers the phone by clearing her throat.

DEVIN (O.S.)
LIDS... It's me.

She only squints at this voice.

DEVIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I just wanted to hear your voice!
It's my birthday!
(wasted)
I just walked by our old place!

Beat. You've gotta be kidding me.

LIDIA
Devin?

DEVIN
S'been a couple years I guess.
Such a trip... time.

She crinkles her brow but that's it.

DEVIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Hey I'm in LOVE. Lids she's just
 like you. Looks like you acts like
 you SMELLS like you at 23. Heh. I'm
 an old dog now...

LIDIA
 Heh.

DEVIN (O.S.)
 Anyway, how's it goin in San Diego,
 Teach...?? You alright?

She leans over and hangs up the phone. When her hand lands,
 it's planted. She stares at it, the 37 years of it.

From this angle Lidia catches her reflection in a little
 window. The D on her forehead... taunting her. Sitting back,
 she smoothly retrieves a bottle of scotch from the desk. She
 unscrews the cap. She begins drinking steadily. Until three
 quarters of the bottle is gone.

139 INT. LIDIA'S CAR, SAN DIEGO - NIGHT

139

Lidia drives, reaching 90 mph. Her face is numb her hands are
 numb her brain is numb. She is blind and smiling.

A flare in her perspective sends the car swerving through
 thick ice plants between north and southbound lanes. In a
 kaleidoscope of a crash.

Time is slow for her. She lifts her hands off the wheel. They
float up as if in water. And BAM. Airbags deploy in a burst
 of WHITE.

140 INT. DRUNK TANK - DAY

140

Lidia looks like she's the visiting academic writer that she
 is. She is still **VERY** drunk. Very relaxed. She sits by a
 woman going through withdrawals, drooling in a tight ball and
 banging her head on the wall, spitting.

As the woman beside her shakes, Lidia clumsily, takes off her
 own socks and pulls them on the woman's bare feet.

JUMPCUT: She holds the hand of a lumpy 50 year old woman who
 is actually probably 28, self narrating to no one.

JUMPCUT: Lidia is on a payphone talking on behalf of a raging
 crack addicted young woman with tattooed eyebrows and mascara
 running down her face.

LIDIA
 (authoritative)
 Look... You need to call and drop
 charges. Drop charges because she
 has bruises. She has neck bruises
 and I'm a witness and--

Whoever is on the other end screams, taking her aback.

LIDIA (V.O.)
 Cunt. Whore. Ignorant bitch.

LIDIA
 Did you kill his cat?

JUMPCUT: Lucidity is on its way back. She isn't feeling too hot. The tank is super crowded now. She takes a seat on a bench. Someone shoves her off of it. Onto her ass. She stands up and moves to a corner. Crosses her arms over her chest.

JUMPCUT: Severe hangover has set in. It's suddenly a lot brighter and a lot louder. Suddenly this is incredibly fucked up. She really takes in her environment for the first time. *

A guard walks by.

LIDIA (CONT'D)
 (kinda rubbing her head)
 S'cuse me could we get some
 Tylenol...? This lady here needs
 it, Sir.

The guard doesn't stop. Suddenly an immense pressure takes over the pit of Lidia's stomach. She takes in the single exposed toilet. Looks around. *

We PUSH IN on her face, putting pieces of memory together. Only truly understanding the real shit she is in, now. *

PRE-LAP: A distant, female wailing... *

141 EXT. FREEWAY, SAN DIEGO - DAWN

141 *

The wailing continues off camera. Lidia blinks through smoke, unscathed. Her perspective seems smeared with vaseline. Through the windshield she can see the car she hit, at an odd angle. And beyond that a woman leaning against the guard rail. A white skirt billowing around her.

Lidia stumbles from the car, "assessing" the scene. Disoriented, shit-canned. The wreck is bad. Lidia approaches the woman as she continues to cry out in Spanish.

She has been trying to dial a number on her phone. Lidia pulls her phone out of her pocket but can't make it work.

Lidia puts a dumb arm around her. For some reason the woman allows it, rocking, inconsolably.

Lidia is dimly aware of officers arriving on the scene as the woman's arms reach down to subdue the skirt, revealing her belly... 6 or 7 months pregnant... *

142 INT. DRUNK TANK - DAY

142 *

Lidia's stomach is about to fall out of her ass as she remembers the scene. The sound of which runs over our present. We hear Lidia getting breathalyzed and arrested. We hear the woman crying.

Lidia can't take it anymore and makes her way to the aluminum toilet. She rips down her underwear and sits.

143 EXT. FREEWAY, SAN DIEGO - DAY

143

An officer loads Lidia into his cruiser. THE CRYING is muffled as the door shuts...

LIDIA

(ahh)

Thank you.

Lidia enjoys the quiet and the smell of the leather. The level of drunk is existential. Cars whiz by, gently rocking the car. She takes steadying breaths. Not a scratch on her. Her eyes close, her face, a serene smear.

LIDIA (V.O.)

In that moment without any drama I wished I was dead. And I thought of my mother.

FLASH: A picture of Dorothy as a 13 year old child. Chin down, sweet eyes, up. *

*

LIDIA (V.O.)

This was probably taken a few years before my grandmother divorced my grandfather for molesting her sisters.

TIGHT on DOROTHY's face.

LIDIA (V.O.)
 Something in the tilt of her head.
 In the lowered gaze. You can
 already see it.

BACK: Lidia's head tilted at the same angle. She makes the
 mistake of looking out the window...

The pregnant woman holds her center and wails, silently.

144 INT. DRUNK TANK

144

Lidia squeezes out a huge shit. In front of everyone. That's
 right. The physical relief is immediately overcome by
 immense, dehumanizing shame. The sound of cars whizzing by is
 disturbingly soothing as Lidia is heckled by fellow inmates.

145 EXT. FREEWAY, SAN DIEGO - DAY

145

The same angle of the same bit of freeway, sans Lidia, sans
 wailing woman. Trash behind the guard rail blows around as
 the cars whiz by and the heckling from the last scene runs
 over this one.

Lidia enters frame in an orange vest and baggy ass pants,
 holding a trash picker.

INMATES (O.S.)
 Bitch you STINK.

She plucks a styrofoam cup.

INMATES (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 NASTY...

She walks a full bag over to the other side of the rail which
 she puts her hands on for a second. Long enough to remember.
 She holds the rail hard. Makes it hurt.

LIDIA
 You are a trash advertisement--

--OFFICER KYLE barks at her to keep moving. She does.

146 EXT. SDSU CAMPUS - EARLY EVENING, AFTER SUNSET

146

Lidia gets off a bus holding a ton of crap. She has changed
 into her other work clothes. She has pulled it together,
 just. She looks like a teacher. She walks to a school
 entrance, passing students and coworkers.

147 INT. SDSU CLASSROOM - DUSK/NIGHT

147 *

Lidia slogs in, slightly hectic but perfectly on time. She puts her stuff down on her desk.

LIDIA
(getting organized)
Hey guys... so... here we are.
Again.
(she looks up)
Ok, chopping block, peer review who
wants to go first...

JUMPCUT: It's dark outside. Students leave the room. One particularly tall young man (Andy) lingers. He clocks Lidia's exhaustion. She clocks him, his judgment... and keeps it together until everyone is gone... *

She SLUMPS into her chair and a colleague enters. She just as soon, sits back up, puts on a smile. *

COLLEAGUE
Thought I'd bring you one of these.

She hands Lidia a cup of coffee.

LIDIA
Thanks...

Lidia reaches for the cup. But her blisters make it painful.

COLLEAGUE
Jesus...

Lidia puts the cup down. *

FLASH: Lidia hacks down seagrass with a giant dull lopper. The men on the road crew side eye the only woman there. The way she works is punishing. *

COLLEAGUE (O.C.) (CONT'D)
Do they do anything, you know,
weird around you...

BACK: Lidia's brow furrows. She picks at her blisters.

COLLEAGUE (CONT'D)
Do they say lewd things to you?

LIDIA
Not really.

148 EXT. FREEWAY, SAN DIEGO - DAY 148 *

Lidia HOISTS a rotten piece of railroad tie the size of her own body over her shoulder. She slams the tie into a pile of shit. Grabs another. Sweat drips down her face.

She looks up to see JIMARCUS, arms crossed, head tilted. She keeps working. Tries not to make eye contact. Picks up another huge fuckin' thing... slams it into the heap. *

JIMARCUS (O.C.)

EY.

Behind Jimarcus, ERNESTO is also looking over his shoulder at her. Jimarcus sizes her up.

ERNESTO
(not great English)
Only more trash...

He gestures to how much trash surrounds them... it's a lot. Nice gesture... she slows down a bit.

149 INT. SDSU CLASSROOM - NIGHT 149

COLLEAGUE *

Is it ever kinda scary to be around those people?

Lidia raises her eyebrows at "those people". *

150 EXT. BALBOA PARK - DAY 150 *

Lidia wears yellow gloves and pulls shit covered needles, condoms, and cigarette butts from a clogged toilet. *

She steps out of the bathroom and takes her first breath in half an hour. The rest of the crew can be heard near by.

LIDIA (O.S.) *

Actually. I've never felt less like a woman in my whole life. *

She removes the yellow gloves and makes her way to a spot where a few of the guys sit and take their lunch break. *

Ernesto is playing classical air guitar and singing. It's captivating, actually. He turns to her, smiles and points.

ERNESTO

Eyy, Doc... what is in English meterse en lios?

LIDIA
To get into trouble?

ERNESTO
How about eh... un llamamiento a la
compasion?

LIDIA
To call for compassion.

She doesn't really know what else to say.

LIDIA (CONT'D)
Mmm. I can smell the sprinklers.

He doesn't understand.

LIDIA (CONT'D)
(points to her nose)
Huelo agua...

Ernesto fills his lungs. Officer Kyle comes from around the
county van, signifying that break time is over. *

151 INT. SAN DIEGO COTTAGE, BATHROOM - MORNING

151 *

Lidia lowers her body into a hot bath. She is in a tremendous
amount of pain.

JUMPCUT: Her hair is wet. She is in a deep grimace.

Tires shriek for a split second. She puts her hand over her
eyes. Just a second of the maternal roadside crying. And then
similar, familiar mammalian sounds of her life, echoing that. *

She turns her head into the water, hiding from it all. But
then she hears something else, something in the present...
vocal screeching, an altercation outside. She listens. That's
real. She gets out of the bath.

152 INT. SAN DIEGO COTTAGE - MORNING

152 *

Lidia peers through her front window at a woman with ashen
skin, tracked arms, dark circles. She's pencil-sized and
wearing almost no clothes, speed-walking jerkily away from a
sketchy guy. Lidia narrows her eyes, staring as she passes
the window. *

LIDIA (O.S.)
Something very small and specific
caught my eye...

153 INT. SDSU CLASSROOM - NIGHT 153

Lidia stands before her class in the middle of a lecture.

LIDIA

An important detail... a bruise at
the bridge of her nose letting me
see her eyes were blue. Like mine.

*

154 INT. SAN DIEGO RENTAL HOUSE - DAY 154

Lidia is staring, wide-eyed, out the window and boom, she
suddenly finds herself opening her front door and calling
out...

LIDIA

HEY... how much?

155 INT. SDSU CLASSROOM - NIGHT 155

LIDIA

I pay her pimp a hundred dollars. I
ask her in. I tell her to sit down.

156 INT. SAN DIEGO RENTAL HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 156

The woman is in Lidia's living room. She smokes. Her knee
bobs aggressively.

LIDIA (O.S.)

In the story... this is what it
feels like to be me...

*

*

Lidia looks at her, unsure what to do with her now.

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

A woman who teaches English looking
down at a woman who sucks dicks all
day as she sits on my couch...
smoking...

*

The woman holds her gaze, their blue eyes twinning.

*

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

When I look at her I think she
looks like Mary...

*

*

*

Lidia bites the inside of her cheek.

*

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

Whenever I see an image of Christ I
picture a Mary so drawn and gaunt
and tired and angry to the point of
emaciation that she can barely wear
her own face.

A slow stream of bright red blood emerges and runs from
Lidia's mouth.

157 INT. SDSU CLASSROOM - NIGHT

157

LIDIA

In the story, I say what am I gonna
do, teach her? This is what me, an
addict, upwardly mobile, given
something infinitesimally small to
believe in called words thinks
looking at her. Offer words.

Lidia's class is rapt. One young man in particular (ANDY)
catches her eye and holds the shit out of it. He is ultra
focused. She continues...

LIDIA (CONT'D)

People are often asking me if the
things in my short stories really
happened to me. I always think this
is the same question to ask of
life... did this really happen to
me?

158 INT. SDSU CLASSROOM - NIGHT

158

Lidia finds herself standing in the same spot in a now empty
classroom. Something lonely here. She gets her bag, walks to
the door, turns the light off.

ANDY (O.S.)

'Scuse me.

The very tall, lingering young man appears in front of her.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I was hoping to discuss my
manuscript...

LIDIA

Of course--

ANDY

I also wanna loan you my car.

Lidia is taken aback...

ANDY (CONT'D)

I saw you were taking the bus.

He holds a set of keys up between them.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I happen to have two cars. Take
one.

*

She doesn't say anything or take the keys. He doesn't move
either. He stares through her skull.

159 INT. SDSU POOL - NIGHT

159

*

ANDY MINGO beats the shit out of the water. All six foot
three inches of him. He is comically bad at swimming but he
keeps plugging as she laps him.

*

She comes to a stop at one end of the pool. He does the same.
He stands up and reveals a large amount of snot running down
his face. Out of breath. He looks down at her, sweetly.

LIDIA

You can tell a lot about a person
from seeing them in the water.

ANDY

Thank you.

LIDIA

(snorts)

For what?

*

*

ANDY

Letting me swim with you. I've read
a couple of your stories. I know
swimming is a big deal.

*

*

*

His presence is extremely... present. Disarming her totally.
He maintains eye contact.

*

LIDIA

I always let students choose the
venue. I guess I've always had a
problem with institutional
authority.

*

*

*

*

Um, your nose is really running.
You alright, or...

ANDY

Oh yeah. I have a minor allergy to chlorine. Sorry bout that. Doesn't bother me. Unless it bothers you.

He doesn't ease up with that steady gaze. Embarrassingly she is... affected.

LIDIA

So, should we talk about your book. It's good. It's uh... it's formidable. You wrote it in Italy?

ANDY

That's right. Ya know I've seen you before. I wanted to tell you... I read about Ken Kesey teaching at U of O when I was abroad. I applied to the program but it'd already happened.

LIDIA

Really, no shit. That's funny...

ANDY

Yeah. I know. I saw you in the creative writing department after that. I was at that reading at Gerlinger...

LIDIA

Whoa what a weird... huh.

Words feel... drawn from her.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

That was a weird day for me.

ANDY

Why?

LIDIA

My father was... My father... uh...

ANDY

Your father...?

Lidia realizes she probably shouldn't say this but it seems involuntary.

LIDIA

Was. Abusive.

ANDY
I'm sorry. How so?

LIDIA
...sexual.

ANDY
Oh. That sucks.

He isn't taken aback...

ANDY (CONT'D)
I hope something karmically fucked
happened to him?

Lidia laughs.

LIDIA
Yeah... kinda.

ANDY
Excellent, then.

Lidia really laughs.

LIDIA
Uh. Anyway. That was a long time
ago. I... yeah. I was a totally
different person then.

A shame creeps on her. He doesn't shy away at all.

ANDY
So who are you now?

She reaches for something to say after considering the
profundity of his question.

LIDIA
I'm your teacher.

They laugh at that. Her, especially hard. She looks around.

LIDIA (CONT'D)
I won the 100 meter breast stroke
here.

ANDY
Here?

LIDIA
Sometimes I think I've been
everywhere before...

Insert: REAL SUPER 8 footage of Lidia AS A CHILD, racing.

LIDIA (V.O.)

I don't quite know how to tell you
what it feels like watching the
little woman swim for her life.

160 OMIT 160 *

161 OMIT 161 *

162 OMIT 162 *

163 INT. SDSU CLASSROOM - NIGHT 163 *

Lidia teaches a full class.

LIDIA (V.O.)

I mean, from where I am now.

LIDIA

Sometimes I think things out in the
time it took me to win a race. 100
meter breast stroke 1:11.2... how
long it takes to walk from my car
to my office. Also how long it
takes to nuke a lean cuisine.

Class, chuckles.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

It's what swimmers do. It's muscle
memory.

Lidia get up to open a window, revealing a full, pregnant
belly. She's hot, rosy cheeked. Her physicality is
overwhelming.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

What is memory anyway. What are
writers doing when they scratch at
it. Technically memory is an
organism's ability to store and
subsequently retrieve information.
Remembering triggers nearly the
same activities in the brain as the
actual experience. It can send an
actual piss shiver down your
spine...

It's beginning to rain outside.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

However *narrating* what you
remember. Telling it to someone.
Does something else. I don't know
about you but I remember things
badly. The more a person recalls a
memory the more they change it.
Each time you open your mouth and
put it into language, it shifts.
Moving away from the "truth" of
things.

*
*
*

She lets that sit.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

The things that happen to us ARE
true. But writing. Is a whole other
body.

*

*

Her belly, kicks. She smiles.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

(encouraging)

It's a big deal to make a sentence.

*
*
*

A low rumble of thunder outside. A CERTAINTY and a warmth in
her we haven't seen...

*
*

LIDIA (CONT'D)

I'm for you.

*
*

INT. SAN DIEGO COTTAGE - NIGHT

*
*

Lidia and Andy sit on the couch, reading, scotches in hand,
legs entwined. Andy closes his book and takes Lidia's from
her. He turns to her, deliberately.

*
*
*

ANDY

I want to have a child with you.

*
*

Lidia has absolutely nowhere to put that.

*

LIDIA

Are you fucking crazy?

*
*

She perceives this as an actual threat. She thinks he's about
to ruin everything. It infuriates her in almost an instant.

*
*

LIDIA (CONT'D)
(deadly serious)

No.

Andy's steady nature is audacious. He is tender but he is a steel train.

LIDIA (CONT'D)
I think you think I'm someone else.

ANDY
I can see the mother in you.

Lidia is one hundred percent disarmed. She sits, slightly inscrutable, processing...

ANDY (CONT'D)
There's more to your story than you think.

She looks ready to fight him.

LIDIA (V.O.)
Can you hold life and death in the same sentence?

164 INT. SAN DIEGO COTTAGE, BEDROOM - DAWN

164

Lidia sits up in bed next to Andy. Lightning briefly illuminates and provides punctuation. Lidia calmly counts between contractions. Andy wakes up.

ANDY
There is water everywhere.

She looks to him. He looks back. Gets up in alarm.

LIDIA
You know the Japanese word Mizugo... Loosely translated means, water children.

He listens to her but formulates next steps, pulls jeans on.

ANDY
Uh huh.

LIDIA
In Japan there are these shrines where a person can deliver words to the water children. The ones who don't make it.

Andy grabs the phone by the bed. About to dial a number...

LIDIA (CONT'D)

Andy.

ANDY

Yes, baby?

LIDIA

I don't believe in god.

After a particular strike of lightening the image goes dark but there is a warmth and movement to the almost black. *

Vague and submerged, the sound of Andy getting her up and into the car. The engine. Sounds of the hospital. But mainly murmuring and water and Lidia... BREATHING and the sound of a newborn baby...

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

(in your ears)

I believe in waters... *

165 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

165

*

As BRIGHT LIGHT fills the frame we find MILES'S perspective of Lidia's face.

LIDIA

So. This is life.

After a blurry blink the shape of Andy, lets out a giant male sob.

166 INT./EXT. U-HAUL - PACIFIC NORTHWEST WILDERNESS - DAY

166

The GREEN of endless Douglas Firs. We're in a U-haul with Andy and Lidia driving along the Bull Run Wilderness in Oregon, Miles between them, gurgling. *

LIDIA

Why this house? *

ANDY

You'll see. *

As they wind through the trees. Lidia takes in the familiar terrain, this particular nature... The homecoming, emotional. *

When they arrive at the house, her jaw drops. She looks at Andy. *

LIDIA
I don't know how to...

*
*

ANDY
You don't have to thank me.

*
*

167 INT. SANCTUARY - DAY

167 *

Lidia sits at one of two dueling desks. She looms over massive layouts of photographs, text... pages and pages of a lot of work in progress. The trees out the massive windows cocoon them. Lidia bounces Miles in a chair with her free hand. Before her is a large cover page with the word... CHIASMUS.

*
*

She looks out the window suddenly and spots Andy pushing her aged father in a wheelchair up the driveway. She gets up. Removes her glasses. Picks up Miles.

*

When Andy opens the door and wheels Mike up to where Lidia is standing with Miles, he doesn't seem to recognize her. In his lap is a silver metal box, his wife's urn. He pats the urn without realizing it.

*

MIKE
We made it.

Andy helps Mike to his feet. He shuffles forward into the house. Miles wiggles out of Lidia's arms.

ANDY
His room'll be ready at Everly tomorrow.

*
*
*

LIDIA
... thank you.

*
*

Andy shakes his head. "You don't have to thank me." He moves toward the kitchen.

*
*

Lidia clocks Mike in the living room. Miles crawling around between his feet.

168 INT. SANCTUARY LIVING ROOM - DAY

168

Mike's kind, distant eyes gaze into the trees.

LIDIA
Hi, dad.

MIKE
Marilou...?

LIDIA
No, daddy. I'm Lidia.

MIKE
I know that, kiddo...

He is distracted by Miles...

MIKE (CONT'D)
A boy.

He is in awe of him. Lidia watches. Decides whether or not to pick up Miles or let him have this.

MIKE (CONT'D)
We never had one of those before.

She watches them together. Mike's eyes settle on a copy of her first book, *Her Other Mouths*, on a nearby table. He picks it up.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I've read this book many times.

LIDIA
Oh yeah? Do you know who wrote it?

MIKE
You.

His blue eyes, transparent. Twinning hers. Lidia, absolutely not expecting that, has to gather herself.

LIDIA
Yeah that's right. Have you read all the stories?

MIKE
I think so. I can't remember.

LIDIA
That's ok. It doesn't matter.

She looks into his face. Searches his vacancy for just a moment. Is he somewhere in there? She turns away.

MIKE
There's one about swimming.

She turns back and looks at him, hard.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I like it. It's a very good story.

LIDIA

Thank you.

MIKE

Not very flattering of me though.

Beat.

LIDIA

Fair enough.

What, now.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

You know, I won a prize for that story. I got to go to New York.

MIKE

Isn't that something.

Mike whistles and looks out at the trees. *

Lidia sits with him... doesn't say any more. *

LIDIA (V.O.) *

The safest memories are locked away
in the brains of people who can't
remember. *

169 EXT. DOCK, OREGON - DAY

169

Toddler Lidia breaks free from her mother's hand and runs to
the edge of the dock. She leaps into the water. *

LIDIA (V.O.) *

Underwater, forever. *

She sinks like a stone into the blue, her parents, blurry in
the background. *

DOROTHY (O.S.) *

Git her... *

MIKE (O.S.) *

You KNOW I don't swim DOROTHY.

Pre-teen Claudia jumps in. *

170 EXT. DOCK, OREGON - DAY

170

Lidia emerges and treads water, looking up at her son on the
dock. Miles is now a toddler. *

Andy sits on the edge, feet dangling. Miles navigates the steps of ladder. He wears lots of weenie water gear.

*
*

MILES

Look I'm doing 'wimming!

*

It drowns her heart. He doggy paddles into her arms. She bobs in and out of the water. He cranes his neck upward, clinging to her neck.

MILES (CONT'D)

*

LIDIA.

*

LIDIA

What's wrong?

MILES

The water will go in my nose and ears and go into my brain...

*

She looks at him a long minute. He doesn't back down.

LIDIA

I see...

She holds him steady so she can look him directly in the face.

*
*

LIDIA (CONT'D)

Miles, you know when you see mamma swimming and swimming in the lap lanes?

MILES

(solemnly)

Yes.

LIDIA

Well, water has never gotten into my brain. Not once.

Miles is not convinced. She does a back underwater summersault.

LIDIA (CONT'D)

*

See...

Miles paddles back to the ladder and begins shedding his life saving regalia.

*

MILES

Lidia! I have a VERY important game...

*

LIDIA

What is it?

MILES

I'm going to put my whole head
under water...

*
*

Moves toward him.

*

MILES (CONT'D)

No you stay over there and we look
at each other under water!

LIDIA

(playing it cool)

Ok. What game is this?

*

MILES

I made it up.

*
*

Miles holds his nose with one hand and counts down with the
other. One. Two. Three. He takes the hugest breath, like ever
and plunges his head into the water. She does too.

She can see him through the green. Holding his breath.
Squeezing his nose almost off of his face. He slowly... pulls
his hand away from his face. Open his eyes... smiles... and
laughs out all his breath in a ton of bubbles... he kicks up
to the surface. Leaving us underwater.

*

LIDIA (V.O.)

The key is. Make up shit.

*

The three sets of legs, Lidia's and Andy's and their son's
kick bubbles around each other. Their celebration is heard
from under water.

*
*
*

LIDIA YUKNAVITCH (V.O.)

I'm not speaking out of my asshole
when I say this. Come in. The water
will hold you.

*