

EDNA LEAVES CHRISTMAS

Written by
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INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

ANTHEM Hayes, 50's, is in a physicians office. She is staring at a DOCTOR, 40s, as she speaks. Her eyes are moist.

DOCTOR

I hoped it would be different this time...

Pause

ANTHEM

Time?

DOCTOR

Hard to say.

ANTHEM

Bullshit. Say it.

DOCTOR

Not long. We could...you could go back to kemo..

ANTHEM

No. Not again.

She rises.

DOCTOR

Do you want to explore other options?

ANTHEM

We've discussed and explored them before. The universe is still speaking to me. I'll think it over the next few days. If it's my time, I've got a few goals until it's time.

Doctor writes prescription and hands to her.

DOCTOR

Here, for those bad days.

She nods, and takes a deep breath.

ANTHEM

Thank you.

Pause

For everything.

INT/EXT. CHARLESTON SC CLINIC - DAY

Anthem takes a stoic walk into the sunlight. She breathes in deeply along the way. She gets in the car and begins to scream and beat on the steering wheel.

INT/EXT. CHARLESTON WATERFRONT - DAY

The home of Anthem's home along Battery and White Point Park. Anthem is at her home=office with TONYA BRIGHTON, 30's.

INT. ANTHEM HOME OFFICE/STUDIO - DAY

Anthem and Tonya are finishing a Zoom session with Anthem's clients. Anthem is on screen with the participants. Tonya is off-screen producer managing the technical side of the session. It is a two screen set up for both women.. Anthem is talking to client CLARA, 60's, Irish accent.

Transition:

On Anthem's Video Screen

ANTHEM

Say that again...

CLARA

I won't do Christmas this year.

ANTHEM

When you say you "won't do Christmas," what are you feeling?

CLARA

Anger.

ANTHEM

Are you angry at Christmas?

CLARA

No.

ANTHEM

Then what?

Clara tears up. The words come slowly.

CLARA

I can't have *my* Christmas.

ANTHEM

Why?

CLARA

I won't be able to hold my grand little ones.

ANTHEM

Where are they?

CLARA

America.

ANTHEM

Ah. I understand. Clara, can you take a deep breath with me?

CLARA

Yes.

They both take a deep breath.

ANTHEM

Exhale slowly.

Pause.

Cara, I can a tell you that we share the same lifeshock?

CLARA

We do?

ANTHEM

Yes, I can't see my grandchildren either this year.

Clara weeps again and wipes her eyes.

CLARA

Are they far away too?

ANTHEM

Yes, California, I fear getting on a plane right now. My health has disrupted doing many of the things important to me.

CLARA

That makes me sad.

ANTHEM

Yes. We're all sad. But not angry at Christmas.

CLARA

Not angry, sad. Very sad.

ANTHEM

Yes. I am very sad too. We want to be with our loved ones in a time of hope and joy, but this kind of the mindtalk away from that to sadness to anger. Can you understand?

CLARA

Yes, I can understand that now.

Tonya motions to Anthem that the session is running out of time.

ANTHEM

My dear friends, what Clara has been feeling is felt by many of us right now. Especially this year. Remember to look inward, recognize and breathe in your personal truths, and breathe out your personal influence of love, joy, and grace. As next week is our American Thanksgiving, we will reconvene in two weeks. Tonya will send you all an update. Thank you for sharing your time with me. Bless you all.

Tonya closes out the session and prints her notes from the session. Anthem pushes her chair back and stands up. She covers her face and weeps. She takes a deep breath. Picks up a towel. Wipes her face. EXHALES and sits down in her chair.

TONYA

I don't know how you do it.

ANTHEM

I don't know how I don't.

TONYA

What are you thinking right now?

ANTHEM

I'm thinking if this could be my last Christmas, I want a Christmas I've never had.

TONYA

What's does that look like?

ANTHEM

White.

TONYA

Like actual snow and cold?

ANTHEM

Yes. *Actual* snow and cold on Christmas day. I'm putting it out into the universe.

She raises her arms upward, and then opens up her computer and starts searching for a destination.

TONYA

But your..tumor.

ANTHEM

Tumor. Shmumor. I feel good today.

TONYA

Your doctor...

ANTHEM

Stop it.

TONYA

Well, there *is* the pandemic residue and a weak immunity....

ANTHEM

I'm sure you must be a little tired of your place, my place, and Charleston's essential services.

TONYA

I would have hoped things would have gotten better by now. But it hasn't.

ANTHEM

No, it's very different.

Anthem gestures towards the tech hardware on the desk and around the room.

A BURST of energy.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

Let's take our classroom on the
road for the holidays.

Very apprehensive.

TONYA

Where would that be?

ANTHEM

Do you know where the sun comes up
first in America?

TONYA

No.

ANTHEM

Maine.

TONYA

No way!

ANTHEM

My treat. Two months in Maine.
It'll be fun. An adventure.

TONYA

Can we go there...now?

ANTHEM

Who says we can't? If we do it
right.

TONYA

I'm going to say yes because I
don't want you to be by yourself. I
know you. You'd go by yourself.

ANTHEM

Indeed I would.

TONYA

Besides, you won't find that kind
of place. Especially for eight
weeks and just five weeks before
Christmas.

ANTHEM

Care to wager?

TONYA

Wine of choice for Thanksgiving.

ANTHEM

Done.

EXT. CALDER'S OVERLOOK - DAY

JACOB CALDER, late 50's. Mature chocolate Labrador Retriever **MOLLY** at his side.

They sit at a clearing on the top of a hill which to the east overlooks the Maine Coast. Behind, to the west, is the higher hardwoods, now a bare tree forest.

He sits on a wooden serpentine wood loveseat, where half looks out to the east, and the other looks to the west. In front of the east side of the chair is a fire pit. On the other side is a half circle granite stone rock wall that is crescent-like that peaks at the seat height of the loveseat. The peak stone has the modest engraving "Edna" directly across from the loveseat.

EXT. CALDER'S OVERLOOK - DAY

Jacob sits towards the east on the loveseat. Winter has arrived. His breath is visible. **MOLLY** is sits on westward seat. He is petting Molly's head.

EXT. CALDER'S OVERLOOK - DAY

EDNA Spirit, 30's, sits on the walk wall across from Jacob.

EDNA

All I could see where I stood, was three long mountains and a wood; I turned and looked another way, and saw three islands in a bay.

EXT. CALDER'S OVERLOOK - DAY

The wind's slight breeze is heard through the barren trees. Smoke crosses Jacob's dark eyes when hear him light a match to smoke a cigar. He exhales the smoke. He looks at Molly, and then at the engraved "EDNA" on the high point stone on the rock wall.

JACOB

I don't think I can do this anniversary anymore.

Edna Spirit walks behind him.

EDNA

Your sorrow from our love is deep.

Edna Spirit disappears, and the wind picks up. Jacob looks at Molly and puts his hands on both sides of her head.

JACOB

Well girl, another bonus day.

A MESSAGE TONE from a cell phone is heard from the inside of Jacob's pocket. He reaches for the phone and reads the message. He responds by calling real estate broker SHARON, 40's.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Got your text. Do they meet the prelim?

Emphatical.

SHARON (O.S.)

Yes. And I'd say yes on this one if I were you.

JACOB

How long?

SHARON (O.S.)

Two months!

JACOB

Really? Huh. They say why?

SHARON (O.S.)

Does it matter? Wait, I'm talking to Jacob Calder. You understand I'm trying to make a living in the off season? It's two months! Up front with your hefty deposit.

JACOB

They say why?

SHARON (O.S.)

Snow. She says she's never had a white Christmas.

JACOB

She? That's it? Christmas?

SHARON (O.S.)

Christmas. A *white* Christmas! Most of us like white Christmas'.

JACOB

Smiles.

I remember.

SHARON (O.S.)

Jacob Calder. It's an excellent thing that you're an important client.

JACOB

Okay, send me her profile, I'll do the research and let you know in a few days.

SHARON (O.S.)

Jacob, you should take this one.

JACOB

In a few days.

He disconnects and looks at Molly.

JACOB (CONT'D)

How do you feel about some company?

Jacob stands up and Molly reacts likewise. He walks over and picks up an axe next to cordwood for the fire pit. He and Molly walk down the hill to an ATV with a bed loaded with a few narrow diameter hard wood logs. He opens a storage box on the bed. He removes a holstered sidearm and puts it in the box and locks it. Molly hops on the passenger side, and they head back down the narrow road.

EXT. CHARLESTON BATTERY DISTRICT - DAY

Tonya walks along the waterfront with boyfriend ADAM, mid-30's. There is a long silence between them as they walk along the walkway.

ADAM

You didn't talk about Anthem during brunch...

TONYA

Talk no. Thoughts, yes.

ADAM

Care to share?

TONYA

Why?

ADAM

It's like she's always here with us. I was missing her presence.

TONYA

That's cruel.

ADAM

That's the truth. Isn't that what you want.

TONYA

Yes.

ADAM

Well, what's going on?

TONYA

Several things. Some, I can't share with you. Won't share.

ADAM

Why?

TONYA

We have a special relationship beyond employer or friend...

ADAM

Or between lovers?

TONYA

You know better.

ADAM

You're right. I apologize.

TONYA

Jealously?

ADAM

In a way, yes.

TONYA

Accepted.

ADAM

So what is it? You know I care deeply about you..

TONYA

I know. I know you want this to be more.

ADAM

Yes. Yes, I do.

TONYA

I not sure "more" is the same thing for both us. I pretty sure of that.

ADAM

I thought we could be more than a couple.

TONYA

I've been a couple.

ADAM

Almost pleading
But I love you..

TONYA

My friend is in trouble, and I need to be with her.

ADAM

But you are here with her.

TONYA

No. I going to go with her to Maine for two months.

ADAM

Two months? Why?

TONYA

You've just answered why this won't work for me.

She kisses him on the cheek.

TONYA (CONT'D)

Goodbye Adam. I'm sure you'll find someone for the new family, or whatever you think will complete your life.

She turns and walks away. As she walks, she breathes in deeply and slowly exhales with a smile.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Anthem is in her oncologist's office. DOCTOR, Mid-30's. Doctor is looking at a report as Anthem comes in and sits across from his table.

DOCTOR

Anthem.

ANTHEM

Jonas.

DOCTOR

How long to you plan to be out of town?

ANTHEM

At least two months.

DOCTOR

I not sure that a good idea.

Anthem gives him a look.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Okay, you're not interested in that opinion.

ANTHEM

Any change?

DOCTOR

Not really. Headaches?

ANTHEM

Occasionally.

Doctor scribbles a script and hands it to her with another piece of paper.

DOCTOR

When you decide where you're going, let me know. I want you to check in with a talented physician, wherever it is.

ANTHEM

Rockport, Maine.

DOCTOR

You sure?

ANTHEM

Certain.

DOCTOR

You put that out into your universe too?

ANTHEM

I am just a girl who can't say no.

DOCTOR

Hmm, Rockport. I hear it's beautiful. You going alone?

ANTHEM

No, I'll still be consulting and Tonya is coming with me.

DOCTOR

Is she aware?

ANTHEM

Yes. She's become a great comfort for me.

DOCTOR

Good to hear.

ANTHEM

Yes, I'm very happy about it.

DOCTOR

Give her my number just in case. And Anthem.

ANTHEM

Yes?

DOCTOR

I hope you get your white Christmas.

ANTHEM

Thank you, Jonas. Merry Christmas.

DOCTOR

Merry Christmas, Anthem.

EXT/INT. ANTHEM'S HOME - DAY

It's Thanksgiving Day. Tonya arrives and knocks on the door to announce her arrival. She has a bottle of wine in her hand.

EXT/INT. ANTHEM'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Anthem answers door, and opens. Greeting hugs.

TONYA

Something's smells like heaven!

ANTHEM

My creole dumplings'. In the kitchen.

They walk to the kitchen. Tonya begins to put the wine in the refrigerator.

TONYA

Did you call the family yet?

ANTHEM

Yes. All's well. The kids were missing the parade.

TONYA

Another expectation that's become a memory.

ANTHEM

Let's keep the mind-speak to a minimum today.

TONYA

Agreed.

ANTHEM

Your parents?

TONYA

Same. The Villages *is* their nirvana.

ANTHEM

It that my winning bottle?

TONYA

Did you win something?

ANTHEM

Sorry to say, not yet.

TONYA

Sounds like no.

ANTHEM

Sounds like not yet.

TONYA

No, it's for later.

ANTHEM

No, it's for now.

Anthem hands her a cork screw. She gets two white wine goblets, and waits for Tonya to pour.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

I am really amazed how much I want this to happen. I really want *this* place.

TONYA

What place?

ANTHEM

A cabin.

Apprehensive.

TONYA

A cabin? Like in a *rustic* wood cabin?

ANTHEM

No but, come on....

She raises her hand with a finger to "follow me".

INT. ANTHEM'S HOME - DAY

They go to her office. She opens her computer to the webpage with Jacob's guest cabin. The first screen is the entrance to the property. It has a western stylized wooden entrance. The name of the property is in French "Esprit de Bois."

ANTHEM

Esprit de Bois. Spirit of the Wood.
It's calling us.

Tonya puts her hand on Anthem's shoulder.

TONYA

This place has its own name?

ANTHEM

Of course.

TONYA

Well, *that* would be speaking to you.

ANTHEM

Here's the 360 interiors.

TONYA

That's a little more than a rustic cabin.

As the view the site, cabin interiors are shown. It the room is featured with artwork, and custom colorful aniline wood furniture. There's a fireplace with a large portrait of "Edna" above it.

TONYA (CONT'D)

Where is this place?

ANTHEM

Outside of Rockport, Maine.

TONYA

Is that close to anything?

ANTHEM

It doesn't matter. This is the place of us.

TONYA

For you.

ANTHEM

If we go, The doc suggest we have to quarantine for 14 days.

TONYA

I think not. Is it close to anything? A store? A Starbucks?

ANTHEM

That doesn't matter either.

TONYA

Latte is does! I'm going to be changing my personal needs with this living and work environment with you?

ANTHEM

My half-full, my friend. Half-full. Take a breath. Look at this. It's fresh air for the soul!

TONYA

I'd don't see any photos of snow.

ANTHEM

Drink your wine. Give me some
positivity.

TONYA

I'm positive I don't see any snow.

EXT. CALDER'S OVERLOOK - DAY

Jacob is sitting on the bench looking at the fading light over the western wood. Molly is on the ground but has her head on his lap.

Standing behind Jacob is Edna Spirit.

EDNA

Love, if I weep it will not matter,
and if you laugh I shall not care;
Foolish am I to think about it, but
it is good to feel you there.

CELL PHONE

Incoming text signal. Spirit Edna fades out.

Jacob removes his phone from his coat's inside pocket and Sharon's message: "Accept or Reject?"

Jacob voice-texts Sharon.

JACOB

Accept. Period. Starts Monday.
Period.

Jacob looks at Molly. Leans in to her and rubs both her ears.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Well girl, maybe this will get me
through the holiday.

INT. ANTHEM'S HOME - NIGHT

Anthem and Tonya are cleaning up their Thanksgiving meal.

TONYA

I think we've achieved one
Thanksgiving tradition.

ANTHEM

What's that?

TONYA

Human stuffing.

Laughs.

ANTHEM

More wine?

TONYA

You will have to couch me tonight.

ANTHEM

No problem.

Anthem receives a message on her wristwatch.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

We got it!

She gets up to get her cell phone and wallet.

TONYA

Got what?

ANTHEM

The cabin! I need to call the broker.

TONYA

I have no winter clothes. More wine, and open up Amazon for a parka and new boots.

EXT. ROCKPORT MAIN STREET - DAY

Jacob is stepping out of a law office with SIMON McKenna, 40's. The town is decked with traditional Christmas signage and decorations over the street on street lights. It's cold, cloudy, and light flakes of snow.

JACOB

Thanks again, Simon. If it snows, bring the boys over for sledding if you're up for it.

SIMON

Thanks. I'll keep it in mind.

He looks around and shakes his head.

I'm looking forward to what
Christmas won't be like this year.

JACOB

You say that every year. Keep those
boys close.

SIMON

Always.

Jacob walks down the street.

EXT. ROCKPORT MAIN STREET - DAY

Anthem and Tonya arrive in downtown Rockport. Anthem is driving, and Tonya is giving her GPS directions. They approached at an intersection. Anthem sees Jacob's patina pickup truck parked in front of an art gallery. Molly is sitting in the truck bed. Jacob is standing in front of the gallery with **CHARLOTTE**, 40's. They are exchanging small fabric bags.

As Anthem and Tonya pull up to the intersection, Molly notices Jacob's truck. Molly sees Anthem and begins barking.

ANTHEM

This is lovely. Quite lovely. Look,
all the stores are local. *And*
they're open.

TONYA

To us in time.

ANTHEM

Doesn't matter. We're almost there.
How far.

Tonya looks at her GPS on her phone.

TONYA

Not far. Five more miles.

Anthem sees Molly and waves.

Molly continues to bark and be excited. Jacob breaks off his conversation, and comes back to Molly to calm her down.

ANTHEM

What's the rush?

TONYA

I want to get there before it really snows.

ANTHEM

You think?

TONYA

When was the last time you've driven in snow?

ANTHEM

Never.

Traffic light turns and they proceed through the intersection.

TONYA

That's my point. And look, it's mid-afternoon, and look, it's already getting dark.

ANTHEM

Tonya, this part of our journey is about over. I am forever be in your debt for driving over all those bridges.

TONYA

And a tunnel.

ANTHEM

And a tunnel. I couldn't have done it. But now we're almost there. This is everything I imagined.

TONYA

A living postcard.

ANTHEM

With Christmas.

As they drive out of town, a heavier snow flurry begins.

EXT. - ESPRIT DE BOIS - DAY

Anthem drives under the entrance "Esprit de Bois" and up the driveway to the cabin they can see from the entrance in a clearing. As they arrive, they notice what appears to be a large old barn further beyond the cabin.

TONYA

For a cabin, it is even more impressive than the photos.

ANTHEM

Strange that he didn't include photos of the barn on the website.

TONYA

You're not renting a barn.

ANTHEM

That's a fact. Do you want to see the inside first?

TONYA

That's all I want to see.

They get out of the car and walk up steps to the front door of the cabin. There are two sets of snowshoes hanging on a freestanding rack on the front porch.

ANTHEM

Look. Snow shoes.

TONYA

They don't look like shoes.

ANTHEM

You slide your boots in them to walk on the snow.

TONYA

Why would I want to walk on the snow?

ANTHEM

You sure you're from the Midwest.

TONYA

Indianapolis born. New Smyrna bred.

Anthem puts her hand on the front door.

ANTHEM

He said the door would be unlocked.

EXT/INT. - ESPRIT DE BOIS - CONTINUOUS

She open's the door. They look at each other as if this is an amazing thing.

The vestibule and pathways to the first floor rooms are a mixture of native stone tile. The primary room in is more colorful than the online photos. It is organic, appointed in an eclectic collection of Adirondack based woodwork, but with unique appointments. They are aniline stained and very colorful.

There are three key elements:

- A large painting of a women above the fireplace. She is dancing as fall leaves swirl around her. The paintings have only the artist's last name on the paintings "Alarie."
- Below is an ornamental walking wand with a bejeweled finial headpiece. It is mounted below the painting, and above a carved fireplace mantle.
- There is a grouping of four Warhol-esk paintings of a woman's face. Four different color arrangements, except they all have the same ice-blue eyes.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

The two women walk in awe of the appointments. Anthem walks around the room and touches the stone, wood, and fabrics. It Tonya begins to looks at the artwork and is drawn to the piece above the fireplace. She takes a deep breath.

TONYA

Anthem?

ANTHEM

Do you feel it?

TONYA

Feel what?

ANTHEM

The energy.

TONYA

I'm not sure that's what I'm feeling, but there is a difference here.

ANTHEM

How's that?

TONYA

The paintings. I can see it from here.

ANTHEM

What?

TONYA

Look at it. Look at them.

ANTHEM

Yes,

TONYA

Don't you see it?

ANTHEM

See what?

TONYA

Your eyes. She has your eyes.

ANTHEM

You think?

TONYA

I know.

Anthem sees a three-ring binder on a table with post-it note on top. Note reads "Anthem Hayes." She opens the notebook, and there is a personalized note left by Jacob Calder.

JACOB (V.O.)

Anthem, Welcome to Esprit di Bois. Please consider it your home for Tonya and you. This notebook explains everything you need. I have left a second set of keys to my truck for your use. I suggest you use it for a while. Even here, it's a small town. Your South Carolina plates will be noticed. I've left a space in the living area if you want to have a Christmas tree. There are some boxed ornaments in a closet on the first floor if you choose to use them. Maggie, your housekeeper, comes every Friday AM with clean linen. I ask you please not be here when she is in the cabin. I hope you and Tonya enjoy Esprit de Bois. Jacob.

TONYA

The Christmas ornament offer is very sweet and considerate.

ANTHEM

Caring.

TONYA

Yes, caring. I had visions of stringing cranberries and popcorn.

ANTHEM

Keep that thought. Shall we explore?

She points to a staircase.

TONYA

Oh yes.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

The women go upstairs to see the rooms, and determine where they plan to set up their office. Tonya finds an existing reading room.

TONYA

This will work nicely.

Anthem follows in.

ANTHEM

Yes.

She pauses and steps out to the hallway, and picks a bedroom.

EXT/INT. EDNA'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Anthem examines the bedroom, and looks out the window that has a rear view of Jacob's barn. As she looks out, she see's Jacob's pickup truck pull into one of the openings on the barn. She waits and watches for a moment, but Jacob stays inside. Anthem recognizes Molly coming out of the barn and running to her car.

ANTHEM

What are the odds?

Molly goes back into the barn, but neither Jacob or Molly come out.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

Privacy? Not very welcoming. Oh Anthem, your minds-peak is talking. You don't know what you don't know.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

She turns and starts down the stairs. Tonya comes out of her room.

TONYA

Where are you going?

ANTHEM

To meet our host.

TONYA

Why?

ANTHEM

It's the proper thing to do.

TONYA

Is that what you're doing?

ANTHEM

Of course. It's being courteous.

TONYA

Curious?

ANTHEM

Of course. And courteous.

Anthem continues down the stairs. Tonya follows, but slowly.

TONYA

At a distance!

Anthem stops at the door and pulls a mask from her coat pocket, but leaves it in her hand. She waves it at Tonya, turns and goes out.

Anthem walks out to the drive, and Molly comes out of the barn and runs to Anthem.

EXT. EDNA'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

From inside barn.

JACOB (O.S.)

Molly!

Jacob walks out of the barn to get Molly.

The moment Molly gets to Anthem, Anthem kneels and Molly rolls over before her. Jacob is stunned. He stops at a distance.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Well.

Jacob then looks at Anthem. She looks at him. Their eyes meet and they have a moment. A long pause.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Anthem Hayes.

ANTHEM

Jacob Calder.

EXT. EDNA'S CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Tonya has watched the meeting from the porch. Then comes down the steps as Anthem and Jacob are still transfixed.

Loudly.

TONYA

AHEM.

Molly gets up to greet Tonya.

ANTHEM

Tonya. This is our host, Jacob Calder.

TONYA

Mr. Calder. Who's this?

Looking at Anthem.

JACOB

Just Jacob, please. This is Molly,

They continue to look at each other.

TONYA

Well, you're all sorts of friendly, aren't you girl? How old is she?

Looks at Tonya.

JACOB

I never ask a woman her age.

Both women smile.

TONYA

Flirting

I bet you're all kinds of special too.

JACOB

Have you had time to get situated?

ANTHEM

Not really. We just arrived and wanted to see the cabin..

TONYA

All our things are still in the car.

ANTHEM

Your note was very welcoming.

JACOB

I hope you enjoy your stay. Given your doctor's distance protocol, I'd be happy to help get your things inside, but...

ANTHEM

Yes. Thank you Jacob, we can manage. Hopefully in a few days...

TONYA

No worries.

JACOB

Very well, I'm not going anywhere the rest of the day, and there's only coffee in the cabin. Seriously, please use my truck to get what you need at the market. The keys are in the glove box.

ANTHEM

Thank you.

He turns and walks back to the barn. He whistles for Molly. She looks at Anthem. Anthem nods and points in Jacobs's direction. Molly takes off towards Jacob.

TONYA

What's that about?

ANTHEM

What?

Tonya points towards the barn and makes a grand gesture with her arms.

TONYA

That! You're not a dog person.

ANTHEM

Nope. I am not.

TONYA

Lifeshock?

ANTHEM

Was it?

Tonya throws her arms up in the air, and points to the loaded SUV. Anthem smiles and has a soft laughter.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

Let the unpacking begin.

They turn and start walking to the vehicle. Anthem stops and takes another look back at the barn. Tonya catches her pause.

TONYA

Ya think?

ANTHEM

My time has passed.

TONYA

Yet, here we are....

Anthem makes a face at her.

EXT. EDNA'S CABIN - AFTERNOON

Anthem and Tonya have finished getting their things into the cabin. They come out of the cabin with masks in their hands and are going to the market. They approach the barn. It is cold as they can see their breaths.

TONYA

It's a barn.

ANTHEM

Your point?

TONYA

Isn't there supposed to be an open area nearby? Pasture. Farm stuff.

ANTHEM

We can that explore tomorrow.

Anthem can see the three open stalls which have Jacob's truck, an ATV, and an organized rack of cut wood logs. There is a sizeable stack of cordwood on the side of the barn. It is set on a rack that keeps the wood off the ground. The barn has a second floor with a window that faces the cabin. One light is on. As they get close to the barn, they can hear soft jazz.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

He's burning wood. I can imagine the wood stove.

TONYA

Interesting..

ANTHEM

What?

TONYA

You envisioning a wood stove, and I wouldn't think of him as a Jazz guy.

ANTHEM

You should try that.

TONYA

Try what?

ANTHEM

Something else that people would not think you had an interest in?

TONYA

Like what?

ANTHEM

Oh, say playing a harmonica.

Tonya laughs as they get in the truck.

TONYA

Yeah, I can hear how bad that would be.

Anthem takes in a deep inhale through her nose.

TONYA (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

ANTHEM

You should do it?

TONYA

What?

ANTHEM

Go ahead, do it?

Anthem closes her eyes and repeats the inhale. She looks at Tonya, who repeats the process.

TONYA

Okay, it's a guy's truck.

ANTHEM

That too.

TONYA

Oh...

Tonya takes a long inhale of the truck.

ANTHEM

Well?

TONYA

It's him.

Anthem smiles, and backs the truck out carefully, and they go into town. Tonya starts poking around and opens the glove compartment. There's a handgun and cassette tapes. The gun has a trigger lock. She pulls out a cassette.

TONYA (CONT'D)

You recognize this?

Anthem extends her hand and Tonya places it in her hand. Anthem finds the tape player in the dash, and begins to play the tape of 70's classic soft rock.

TONYA (CONT'D)

Gawd, that is some old shit!

ANTHEM

Yeah. When there was the just idea of me.

They listen as they head down the road.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

My daddy said if he wanted to close the deal, he'd play this.

Tonya turns up the volume.

EXT/INT. GROCERY PARKING LOT - DAY

Gallery owner CHARLOTTE, has just pulled into the parking lot and is about to get out of her car when she see's Jacob's pickup truck pull in nearby. She smiles as she gets out of her car. She sees Anthem and Tonya get out of Jacob's truck. She stops and watches them and then follows them in at a distance. Anthem and Tonya mask up on their way in.

INT. GROCERY - MOMENTS LATER

Anthem and Tonya are in the deli section. Charlotte will slowly "shops" near them. They're looking at cheeses.

ANTHEM

A baguette, cheese, and a good chardonnay.

TONYA

Sound like breakfast.

ANTHEM

Maybe soon.

TONYA

Dining out?

ANTHEM

Who thought that would be a luxury?

TONYA

I sense a lot of experimental cooking during the next week.

ANTHEM

Eight.

TONYA

Yeah....eight.

ANTHEM

Don't worry, we'll get lots of exercise.

TONYA

Not if I have to put on snowshoes.

ANTHEM

I think we have enough for tonight and tomorrow. We can come back after the session for the rest of the week.

TONYA

Sounds good.

INT. GROCERY - MOMENTS LATER

Anthem and Tonya are at the checkout line. The CASHIER, 40's, does notices Anthem's southern tone. Charlotte is watching from another checkout line.

CASHIER

Do you find everything you needed?

ANTHEM

Why yes. Thank you.

CASHIER

Where are you from?

Speaking in a heavy Irish brogue.

TONYA

From a dairy section far, far away,
my aunt is here to taste your
finest cheeses.

She turns to Anthem.

TONYA (CONT'D)

Or is it curds?

ANTHEM

That's Wisconsin. Now apologize to
this nice lady.

TONYA

My lady, my lord deems I request
your forgiveness for my
impertinence. Your forgiveness?
Please?

Sheepishly.

CASHIER

Yes. That is 35-82. Would you like
a Preferred Customer Card?

Tonya looks at Anthem.

TONYA

Wouldst thou?

ANTHEM

Yes, please.

Anthem takes the card and hands it to Tonya. Tonya reverts to her normal voice. Anthem pays through the dialog.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

You know what this means?

TONYA

Yes. I have to come back here.

ANTHEM

Alone.

Tonya sighs and puts on a sad face.

TONYA

Alone?

Anthem rolls her eyes. Tonya gives another sigh and picks up the bagged groceries. They walk out.

EXT. GROCERY PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Anthem and Tonya are walking to their car.

ANTHEM

We certainly don't have to worry about letting the local citizenry know there're outsiders in their town.

Imitates Anthem's speech tone and cadence

TONYA

Bless your heart. You thought you'd sound like them.

ANTHEM

Is this our first fight on this trip?

Tonya takes a deep breath.

TONYA

Doesn't have to be. Want one?

Anthem takes a deep breath. Laughs.

ANTHEM

No. I want to sit in front of the fireplace with a glass of that boxed wine. It's been a long day of stuff.

TONYA

Stuff is a better word right now.

TONYA (CONT'D)

Hey.

ANTHEM

What?

TONYA

What was the diddly-yo with the black-haired woman?

ANTHEM

What woman?

TONYA

You didn't notice we were being shadowed.

ANTHEM

Ooooo. Shadowed. If so, I'm sure we'll find out soon enough.

They get in the truck and drive off into the night.

EXT. JACOB'S BARN - PREDAWN

Outline of the barn as light goes in the. Jacob's footsteps and Molly are heard as the headlights of the ATV come on. Jacob pulls out and drives up the path to the overlook.

EXT. HILLSIDE OVERLOOK - DAWN

Jacob stands near at the serpentine loveseat watching the sun come up. Molly is walking. Light breeze as Jacob lights up a cigar and sits in the chair.

EDNA (V.O.)

There are so many colder nights,
Ney, it never changes,
Empty, but not soul less,
Longing without your comforts
Release me now, for now the sun
rises.

The breeze picks up, and lightning can be seen over the ocean in the distance. Thunder rolls in a few seconds later. Jacob looks at Molly.

JACOB

Thunder snow. That fits.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - MORNING

Anthem is in the main room. The fireplace is lit. With a cup of hot tea in her hand, she is looking at a highly decorative walking wand suspended over the fireplace by wooden hooks. Tonya comes down the stairs.

TONYA

We're all set for today's session.

ANTHEM

Good. It's almost a Talking Stick.

TONYA

What is?

ANTHEM

This pole.

TONYA

The walking wand?

ANTHEM

Yes. It's that too. Native American tribes used them in council. If you held the wand, it was your turn to speak.

Pause

It's quite beautiful.

Tonya pulls her smart phone and takes a photo. She taps an app. Her eyes widen.

TONYA

Oh, my God. He's that Calder?

ANTHEM

That Calder?

Tonya holds up a photo of a similar walking wand on her smart phone.

TONYA

Siri. What is a Calder walking wand?

Tonya has set up Siri on the main floor.

SIRI (V.O.)

Artisan Jacob Calder personalize walking wands are considered a work of art within the creative and outdoor communities.

(MORE)

SIRI (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Although he makes a number of styles of walking wands, his personalize pieces can bring as much as \$ 15,000 each.

ANTHEM

Oh my!

Tonya lifts the decorative wand off the resting hooks and looks at the headpiece. It is silver with a compass on the top of the crown and rimmed by three gemstones and a round piece of granite.

TONYA

Are those sapphires?

ANTHEM

Yes.

TONYA

Why is he renting a cabin?

ANTHEM

Now, aren't you glad you came?

Tonya puts the piece back to its proper place with great care.

INT. TONYA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tonya is reading in her bed. She gets a Facetime request from Adam. She takes a moment to answer it.

TONYA

Hey.

ADAM

I miss you.

TONYA

What do you miss?

ADAM

You.

TONYA

Really?

ADAM

Come on, Tonya. I'm trying here.

TONYA

What is it you're trying to do?

ADAM

I wanted a relationship.

TONYA

You wanted something I'm not interested in.

ADAM

What did I do?

TONYA

It's not you. I made a decision.

ADAM

That you had to go to Maine?

TONYA

Maine had little to do with it. Well, maybe a little.

ADAM

What can she give you?

TONYA

More than you're capable.

ADAM

That was cruel.

TONYA

No, that was honest.

ADAM

Didn't we have something?

TONYA

Yes. You gave me a window to an orthodox life. But I realized it was a life I didn't want or need.

ADAM

Tonya, I love you.

TONYA

I think you love the idea of me.

Hurt.

ADAM

Wow!

TONYA

I thought about it. When your son is grown and gone, I'll still be in the same place. That's not what I want for the rest of my life.

ADAM

The Living for Life is your alternative?

TONYA

It's not an alternative, it's a path to something better. It's stimulates me. It's living for my life. She makes me stretch. You don't have the capacity for that. I would be a part of your life. Not a partner.

Long pause.

ADAM

I don't understand.

TONYA

You've just answered your own question. Goodbye, Adam.

Tonya disconnects the call, deletes him from here contacts and then works the screen. She looks at the black screen and weeps.

INT. TONYA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tonya unable to sleep. Toss and turns. Lays with eyes opens. Her hears a door close from the barn, and gets up.

EXT/INT. TONYA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tonya sit on a chair at her window. It's snowing lightly. She smiles. She sees a light come on in the barn through a first-floor window. She is curious and gets dressed to go outside.

EXT/INT. BARN WORK SHOP - NIGHT

Jacob is prepares the wood wands in this portion of his studio.

He is preparing a computer-guided lathe:

He goes over to a stack of small diameter milled maple posts.

He loads one of the stock five foot long, 3 x 3 piece of maple onto the lathe.

EXT/INT. JACOB'S BARN - CONTINUOUS

Tonya slowly walks close to the window to see Jacob heading to a computer.

EXT/INT. JACOB'S BARN - CONTINUOUS

Jacob walks over to a computer at a stand-up desk. Puts on safety glasses. Pulls up a screen. Makes a music selection. Pulls up another screen and clicks a green go button.

The lathe turns, and the rock music is loud and in rhythm of the turning and creating a walking wand with slight waves and a handle grip center post.

Jacob picks up a completed turned wand and dances with it as he lip-syncs the song.

EXT/INT. JACOB'S BARN - CONTINUOUS

Tonya watches in amazement. She covers her mouth from laughing.

EXT/INT. JACOB'S BARN - CONTINUOUS

The first cutting is completed. Jacob removes it and walks by the window, turns and winks at Tonya. She runs back to the cabin. He sets up a second post to repeat the process.

EXT. JACOB'S BARN - DAY

It has snowed a few inches. Amanda's car is covered. Jacob's walks out with Molly, and looks around as Molly runs around. He whistles for her and they go back into the barn. He and Molly leave in the truck. Sky is clear.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

Tonya is in the kitchen with a cup of coffee. Anthem enters. A plain wood walking wand in on the kitchen table.

ANTHEM

Snow!

TONYA

Yes. Lots of it.

ANTHEM

I'm so excited.

Sarcastically. Mocking with the Pointer Sisters song.

TONYA

I just can't stand it.

Anthem pours herself a cup of coffee.

ANTHEM

You have an unpleasant night?

TONYA

Let's just say disruptive.

ANTHEM

Why is this on the table?

TONYA

It was next to the front door. He makes these too.

ANTHEM

Okay, and?

TONYA

I saw him make them. Well, make one.

ANTHEM

This morning.

TONYA

Yes.

ANTHEM

Where?

TONYA

In the barn.

ANTHEM

You were in the barn with Jacob?

TONYA

No, I watched through a window.

ANTHEM

Where you like...spying?

TONYA

No, well yes. I couldn't sleep. I'll get to that later, I was looking out the window, and the light from the barn came on.

ANTHEM

What time was this?

TONYA

Maybe 5:30. It was dark.

ANTHEM

I would think so. Even in Charleston.

TONYA

Anyway, I walked up to the window. He's got this machine turning fence posts into his wands.

She picks up the walking wand.

ANTHEM

That would be a lathe.

TONYA

He's rockin' out!

ANTHEM

Rockin' out?

TONYA

Yeah, the wood's spinning, chips are flying off this thing, he's dancing.

ANTHEM

Dancing?

TONYA

And lip-syncing.

ANTHEM

Lip syncing?

TONYA

Really into it.

ANTHEM

What was the song?

TONYA

I don't know. Something before I was born, I'm sure.

Soft sarcastic chuckle.

ANTHEM

Of that, I agree. Is he a good dancer?

TONYA

Still got some skills.

ANTHEM

Good to know. What about the other thing?

TONYA

Other thing?

ANTHEM

You were up all night thing.

TONYA

Adam called.

ANTHEM

And?

TONYA

He still wants a relationship.

ANTHEM

And?

TONYA

I told him I'd moved on. *For the last time.*

ANTHEM

And now?

TONYA

Relieved. Yes. Relieved.

ANTHEM

Are you happy?

TONYA

Yes. I am glad we're here.

They hold each other's hand.

ANTHEM

Yes. I'm very happy too.

They hear a car pull up, and the sound of children.

EXT/INT. EDNA'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

They go to the front window. Simon McKenna is with his two **BOYS** of seven and nine. They have sleds and snow boards. The women put on coats and walk out on the front porch.

EXT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

SIMON

Hello. I'm Simon, Jacob's friend.

ANTHEM

Good Morning. This is Tonya. I'm Anthem.

SIMON

Welcome to Maine. This is Todd and Anthony.

THE BOYS

Hello.

ANTHEM

I don't think Jacob is here.

SIMON

That's okay, I'm taking the boys sledding.

ANTHEM

Where?

SIMON

The best hill around at the overlook.

ANTHEM

What overlook?

SIMON

Up the trail next to the barn.

ANTHEM

Really?

SIMON

The best view of the entire area.
Come on up.

Anthem turns to Tonya.

ANTHEM

Day?

Tonya raises three fingers.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Jacob is sits in an examination room. There's a knock on the door and **DR. JOANNE** Thompson, 40's enters.

DR. JOANNE

Jacob.

JACOB

Joanne.

DR. JOANNE

I understand you've rented out the cabin.

JACOB

Three days.

DR. JOANNE

What?

JACOB

They've only been here three days and you know.

DR. JOANNE

Hamm. Is she self quarantining?

JACOB

I didn't asked. They haven't left the cabin.

DR. JOANNE

Ever been to Charleston?

JACOB

No.

DR. JOANNE

Beautiful town. Their low country cuisine. Your renter have a name?

JACOB

Anthem Hayes.

DR. JOANNE

Oh. It's her.

JACOB

Her?

DR. JOANNE

Nothing. Anyway, It's not been a good year down there.

JACOB

Not a good year anywhere, period.

DR. JOANNE

True.

JACOB

You got anything for me?

DR. JOANNE

Nada. Sad to say. You're in good shape. Physically. I'd tell you to knock off the cigars, but..

JACOB

I think you just did. Well, I am having a little trouble sleeping.

DR. JOANNE

Physical discomfort?

JACOB

No.

DR. JOANNE

Dreams or thoughts?

JACOB

Apples or Oranges?

DR. JOANNE

Don't pull that crap with me, Jacob.

JACOB

Thoughts.

DR. JOANNE

Creative or life?

JACOB

Life.

DR. JOANNE

I'm not that kind of doctor.
Melatonin of CBD gummies, Jacob.
Over the counter. Try them first.

JACOB

I'm not a gummy bear guy. Not Mela-
tow-bin either.

DR. JOANNE

At this time. Those are me
recommended option. No alcohol. You
have plans for Christmas?

JACOB

You know better.

DR. JOANNE

I'm always hoping for better.
One needs to keep hope alive. You
know there's always an open
invitation for you at our table.

JACOB

Thank you.

DR. JOANNE

How's business?

JACOB

Good. Since the pandemic has been a
boon to hiking, if that was
possible. Heading down to Freeport
with a load of wands. Christmas
gifts it appears.

DR. JOANNE

Great. Merry Christmas, Jacob.

JACOB

Merry Christmas, Joanne.

EXT. CALDER'S OVERLOOK - DAY

Anthem and Tonya are walking up the path to the overlook. The sound of the children become louder as they reach the opening to the overlook. The boys are sledding. Simon is stands near the bench.

SIMON

Hello again. Glad you made it.

TONYA

Thank you. We had to see it.

Anthem takes a moment to take in the view of the outlook.

ANTHEM

This is..*spectacular!*

Both women are drawn to the serpentine chair.

TONYA

That's different.

Anthem goes to sit in.

SIMON

Please don't sit there.

ANTHEM

Why?

SIMON

It's Jacob's chair. Only he sits there.

ANTHEM

How do you know?

TONYA

How would he know?

SIMON

It's just understood.

TONYA

Another story is revealed.

SIMON

No. No revealing.

ANTHEM

Why?

SIMON

Besides being a close friend, I'm also his lawyer.

ANTHEM

And holder of secrets..

SIMON

I prefer it as honoring his requests.

ANTHEM

Fair enough. He made it.

SIMON

Yes. I think it's the third one here.

TONYA

The stonework?

SIMON

By his hand.

Tonya looking them touching the Edna engraved capstone in the wall.

TONYA

Who's Edna?

SIMON

A local artist who owned the property.

TONYA

She passed?

SIMON

A while ago...

ANTHEM

I can see why it was a special place for her.

Simon walks over to a backpack, and removes a thermos and cups.

SIMON

Yes. Would you like some hot chocolate?

TONYA

Yes. Please.

ANTHEM

No, thank you. How long has Jacob been here?

SIMON

A while. Some time.

TONYA

5 years? 10? His adult life.

SIMON

Some time.

ANTHEM

Attorney all the time?

SIMON

His attorney.

ANTHEM

Is there anything you can tell us?

SIMON

Having any guests in the cabin is rare. And at this time of year. You're the first.

TONYA

Wow, *his* first.

She gives Anthem the eye.

ANTHEM

Anything else?

SIMON

He knows more about you than you'll ever know of him.

ANTHEM

Simon. You know where we might get a Christmas tree.

SIMON

Easy. Look around you. It's all his property.

The women look at each other, and look one more time around the vistas.

EXT. JACOB'S BARN - MORNING

There's fresh snow on the ground and the air is calm. Anthem has come out and walks by the barn. She walking up to the overlook. It is dazzling with the sun reflecting off the snow. She has sun glasses on.

INT/EXT. JACOB'S BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Jacob works at his lapidary section of his studio. He is polishing an aquamarine crystal. Sounds of a stone tumbler is heard. He has headphones on. Molly is laying near him. She gets up and brushes his leg. He looks at her, and she goes by the window. Jacob follows and just catches Anthem walking up the trail to the overlook.

Jacob stops what he's doing.

JACOB

You want to follow?

MOLLY

Barks

JACOB

Let's go.

Jacob turns off the tumbler and goes to the ATV. Jacob gets hand gun from the back and puts it in his pocket. Molly hops onto the passenger seat.

JACOB (CONT'D)

This time we walk.

He snaps his finger, and she hops off. They step outside into the sunshine. He too has put on shades.

EXT. CALDER'S OVERLOOK - DAY

Jacob approaches the opening of the path with Molly. He can hear Anthem in the distance laughing. When he reaches the clearing, he sees Anthem with her arms out twirling in a vortex of snow.

Molly bolts to Anthem and the vortex disappears.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

Tonya is pulling the Christmas ornaments out of the closet. There are a four boxes. She sets them in the middle of the floor and opens the first box.

TONYA

Gasps.

What are these?

She looks at a neatly packed delicate glass cylindrical ornaments. They are clear glass with bright holiday decorations and crystals on the cap and bottom of each ornament. Inside is a scrolled piece of what looks like parchment.

She picks one from the box and holds it close to her face. Then she carefully removes the top from the cylinder and slides out the paper and unrolls it. It is a handwritten poem in delicate cursive.

EDNA (V.O.)

Morphed to trees around
Their joy in the winter's sleep
Whose secrets they keep

EXT. CALDER'S OVERLOOK - MOMENTS LATER

Jacob is walks to the overlooks as Molly and Anthem are playing with each other. They never remove the sunglasses at the overlook.

JACOB

Good Morning.

ANTHEM

Good Morning. What a beautiful view.

JACOB

Yes.

ANTHEM

Hope you don't mind.

JACOB

No. It goes with the cabin.

Anthem smiles.

ANTHEM

Simon's sons are a handful.

JACOB

Yes. But they're good boys.

ANTHEM

You have children?

JACOB

Yes. A son.

ANTHEM

What's he like.

JACOB

That is not open for discussion.

ANTHEM

Why not?

Lengthy pause.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

Okay. I'm good with silence.

He points to the serpentine loveseat, and Molly continues to work the open area for smells.

JACOB

Have a seat.

Anthem tilts her head. She chooses the eastern horizon. Jacob sits looking west. They never look at each other during the following conversation. Molly is just walking around the overlook. Anthem nods at the crescent wall.

ANTHEM

Who's Edna?

JACOB

I like to think of her as an homage to a spirit of Maine.

ANTHEM

Are you spiritual?

JACOB

In what context?

ANTHEM

Let's say, faith based.

JACOB

Let's not. What makes this, us, spiritual?

Jacob reaches for a cigar from the inside of his coat pocket, and also a lighter. Anthem hears the lighter.

ANTHEM

You're not going to light that thing, are you?

He stops extinguishes the lighter.

JACOB

Sounds like don't.

ANTHEM

I'd prefer...

Jacob ignites the lighter. The turns it off.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

Why do you smoke?

He holds the cigar in front of his face, and rolls it between his fingers.

JACOB

There are very *few* things I love. The feel, look, smell, and taste of a quality dark cigar. Especially it's smell from the humidor. The taste of a good liqueur at the business end of it. It comforts me.

Pauses, and lights it up.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Aren't you a confessional lodestone?

ANTHEM

I hardly think there's an analogy there?

Molly heads down the hill into the woods.

JACOB

Really? Your clients? Do they not bring you comfort?

ANTHEM

Not usually? They're in pain. Unhappy? Out of balance. I'm not there to *comfort* them.

JACOB

You are their Whisperer. A published enchantress of self-fulfillment.

ANTHEM

Self-realization.

JACOB

You're an artisan of your craft.

ANTHEM

Artisan?

JACOB

Good artisans don't paint
landscapes, they carry their pain
through their work.

ANTHEM

You know my pain?

JACOB

You're a cancer survivor.

ANTHEM

That's one, true. And you?

JACOB

At my time in this universe, I have
a few.

ANTHEM

Care to share?

JACOB

I used to have a son, but he's goes
by someone else's name.

ANTHEM

Sorry.

JACOB

Don't be.....

Molly is heard barking in the woods, and then she HOWLS out
in pain. Jacob jumps up and runs in her direction toward the
path and into the woods. Anthem follows him to the path.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Stay there!

Lengthy pause. She can faintly hear Molly crying. Jacob comes
out of the wood. There is blood on his sleeve. Anthem gasps
and covers her mouth.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Go to the barn and bring back the
ATV.

ANTHEM

Is she...

Surprisingly calm.

JACOB

Please go now.

Anthem turns and starts hurrying on the snowy path. She hears a single GUNSHOT, and stops.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

Tonya has the four ornament boxes open in the space left for a tree. Anthem comes in and sees Anthem has been crying.

TONYA

What's wrong.

ANTHEM

Molly was attacked by another animal.

TONYA

Is she all right?

ANTHEM

She's gone.

TONYA

Oh, my Lord!

ANTHEM

We're devastated..

Lengthy pause. Tonya walks over to Anthem and they embrace each other. Anthem WAILS loudly.

EXT. JACOB'S BARN - DAY

There is a large burlap bag with the dog's body inside. A heavily ornamented walking wand is resting over the bag. Jacob is loading cut logs onto the bed of the ATV. There is also an axe lying against the drop-down gate of the vehicle.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

Anthem and Tonya are in their consultant studio preparing for a scheduled Zoom conference with her subscribers. Anthem is meditating before the screens and takes a deep breath, and releases a large sigh.

TONYA

Are you sure?

ANTHEM

Yes, I need it more right now.

Tonya makes a few keystrokes, and her face is the first to be seen on the screen. Diverse faces appear on the screen. They are predominantly female faces.

TONYA

Good morning, everyone.

There are waves and smiles from most of those on-screen.

SUBSCRIBERS (O.C.)

Not in unison, and accents reflect national or regional origin.

Good day. Hello. Buena Tardas.

TONYA

For our new friends, I'm Tonya. Anthem's super-zoomer to help you through the session. Anthem will be with you shortly. We're here in Maine for the holidays. Here's a photo from a special place near our cabin. It's the eastern view at sunrise.

SUBSCRIBERS (O.C.)

Smiles and ooohs and ahs are heard.

Pause

Tonya looks at Anthem. Anthem nods yes.

TONYA

Anthem is here.

Tonya opens Anthem to her audience. Her eyes are red.

ANTHEM

Hello everyone. For our new subscribers, the first thing we do in our sessions is to ask our new participants to give us a single word to describe what their feeling. Then we'll open it up to the rest of your new friends. As I call your name, Sandy.

GROUP (O.S.)

(Male)

Anxious.

ANTHEM

Teresa.

GROUP (O.S.)

Fearful.

ANTHEM

Max.

GROUPS (O.S.)

(Female)

Conflicted

ANTHEM

I see we have some interesting issues to discuss. For our regulars, if you want to go to a five minute chat room to discuss one feeling, raise your hand and Tonya will make the connection. We'll all meet back in ten minutes.

GROUP (O.S.)

Male

Anthem, aren't you going to tell us your word?

ANTHEM

Alive.

EXT. CALDER'S OVERLOOK - NIGHT

Molly's pyre is completed. Molly's body bag on top of the neatly stacked logs. It is to the near of the serpentine chair and at the crest of the sledding hill. Jacob wraps the end of the ornamental walking stick with cloth, soaked it in lighter fluid. Lights it and touches bottom sections of the pyre. He is cries.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - NIGHT

Tonya and Anthem are sat front of the fireplace. They are sharing a bottle of wine. They are calmly watching the fire burn. The Christmas ornament boxes are still in the corner on the floor.

ANTHEM

I have a doctor's appointment tomorrow.

TONYA

With whom?

ANTHEM

Dr. Joanne Thompson.

TONYA

Are you okay?

ANTHEM

I believe so, My oncologist forward my docs to her. She called me to consult. That's it.

TONYA

Mind if I come? I'd like to walk around some place other than here right now.

ANTHEM

I understand.

TONYA

What about the keeping a distance from people?

ANTHEM

Screw it. This is definitely a needed essential service , for both of us.

Tonya smiles and toasts her friend.

TONYA

You haven't looked at the ornaments.

ANTHEM

I just can't. Not today.

Tonya puts her arm around her friend, and they watch the fire in the fireplace.

EXT. ROCKPORT MAIN STREET - DAY

Masked Anthem and Tonya walk down Main Street and stop in front of the doctor's office.

ANTHEM

This shouldn't be long. Let's get some coffee after.

TONYA

Fine. I'll just window shop. Text me when you're done.

ANTHEM

I really want to start our Christmas today.

TONYA

Even better.

Anthem enters the office as Tonya walks down the main street.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Anthem is waiting for Dr. Joanne. The doctor knocks on the door and enters.

DR. JOANNE

Ms. Hayes.

ANTHEM

Anthem, please.

DR. JOANNE

It's rare to have a whisperer in my office.

Anthem smiles.

ANTHEM

You're the second person who's called me that here.

DR. JOANNE

Really?

ANTHEM

Yes. Well, I hope by Christmas you can be a whisperer for me.

The smile is returned. The doctor begins some standard functions.

DR. JOANNE

I've reviewed having the file your doctor sent. Open.

Anthem opens her mouth.

ANTHEM

Awwww

DR. JOANNE

How many years had you been in remission?

ANTHEM

Three years.

DR. JOANNE

Any changes in your day to day physically since you arrived?

ANTHEM

No.

DR. JOANNE

Let's get your blood pressure.

ANTHEM

Same as in Charleston. Airs a little colder.

Dr. Joanne smiles.

DR. JOANNE

B P a little high. Would you be opposed to taking an M-R- while you're here?

Surprised and concerned.

ANTHEM

No. Why?

DR. JOANNE

Your doctor suggested it.

ANTHEM

Really?

DR. JOANNE

Yes. She said you were scheduled for one in January, but you're staying here until February.

ANTHEM

That's the plan. When would you like to do this?

DR. JOANNE

There's an opening at a clinic in Bangor next week.

ANTHEM

Bangor?

DR. JOANNE

About an hour's drive.

ANTHEM

I guess. Yes. That's fine.

DR. JOANNE

Good, given your situation, it would be good see if anything has changed.

ANTHEM

Great, Tonya and I want to do some shopping for our tree.

DR. JOANNE

Tonya?

ANTHEM

My good friend and assistant who's staying with me at the cabin.

DR. JOANNE

Where's the cabin?

ANTHEM

Esprit de' Bois.

Long pause and Dr. Joanne's eyes widen.

DR. JOANNE

Edna's cabin.

ANTHEM

Edna's cabin?

DR. JOANNE

That's what we call it.

ANTHEM

Hmmm, that's four. Well, now is not the time to discuss it. I'm still reeling from Molly.

DR. JOANNE

What happened to Molly?

ANTHEM

She was attacked by some animal. Jacob had to put her down.

The doctor gasps.

DR. JOANNE

What?

ANTHEM

It was horrible.

DR. JOANNE.

Jacob is a patient of mine. For some time. I'm sure you could see how close they were.

ANTHEM

Yes. Inseparable.

DR. JOANNE.

Yes. You never see Jacob in town without Molly. Had you two spoken much since you arrived?

ANTHEM

No, not much really. Why?

DR. JOANNE.

Professional and personal protocols.

ANTHEM

Ah. One's code.

DR. JOANNE

That too. Could you do me a favor?

ANTHEM

Is it within our personal integrity?

DR. JOANNE.

I've read your book. Yes. If you don't see or hear Jacob for the next few days, please call me.

ANTHEM

Promise. Who's Edna?

DR. JOANNE

Have you seen any of her paintings?

ANTHEM

Not that I am aware...

DR. JOANNE

You have her eyes.

EXT/INT. CHARLOTTE'S GALLERY - MOMENTS LATER

Tonya walks down Main Street and stops at a Art Gallery windows. A Calder Walking Wand is displayed in the window. Tonya enters the gallery. Charlotte is in the back.

TONYA

Hello, I wanted to ask about the...

She recognizes Charlotte.

TONYA (CONT'D)

It's you!

CHARLOTTE

I'm sorry?

TONYA

The woman from the grocery store when we arrived.

CHARLOTTE

I don't know what you're talking about.

Pause

TONYA

Okay.... Let's start over. What can you tell me about the Calder wand in the window?

CHARLOTTE

Why?

TONYA

There's a similar one in the cabin where I'm staying.

Feigning ignorance.

CHARLOTTE

Really?

TONYA

Really.

Charlotte removes the walking wand from the window display, and speaks with arrogance.

CHARLOTTE

This is one of the most prized of Calder's walking wands. He makes what he calls a simple wood wand.

(MORE)

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

They begin at \$400. They're only available through one of Maine's national outfitter's catalogs. By application request only. This is the top of the styles he makes. Hand made. Custom aniline colors. Usually top third with native Maine hardwood inlaid veneers. This is a walnut post with white birch and red maple. An ergonomic cork handgrip wrapper. The silver cap finial is my contribution. I made the finial, for the stones or other items Jacob mounts the stones in the headpiece. Quartz, Amethyst, granite. They're never the same.

TONYA

Each walking wand is unique?

CHARLOTTE

Now in full rapture talking about it.

Oh, yes! He makes *maybe* ten a year. Here's the real signature part.

She holds the pole in one hand and points to the small granite button on the side of the finial.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

They have a secret compartment. See the granite button? Mine is engraved with a two. It's the second one he ever made. Anyway you push it in.

There is a click. Charlotte removes the finial to reveal a bored hole at the top of the pole.

TONYA

A secret compartment?

CHARLOTTE

To keep something special of yours.

TONYA

Say...a special poem?

Charlotte feints a small insincere laugh,

CHARLOTTE

Just a message. A joint. Whatever I want.

Tonya mimics Charlotte's speech softly.

TONYA

I must ask Jacob about the one in the cabin, but not now. He's in mourning over the death of his dog.

Charlotte FREAKS.

CHARLOTTE

Oh, my God! Molly's dead? Get out! Get out!

She chases Tonya out of the shop. She flips the open sign to closed on the door. She locks it. Tonya can hear her emotional pain fade to the back of the gallery.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Anthem and Tonya are at a corner table.

ANTHEM

I need you to do the session this afternoon.

TONYA

Why?

ANTHEM

I think it's time. We need to get your transition moving forward.

TONYA

Are you sure?

ANTHEM

Very. The doctor, who's very good by the way, reinforced what we discussed for our little business. It's a small group today, right?

TONYA

Yes, should be five to eight.

ANTHEM

I saw something on the way over here about an exhibition at the local art gallery.

TONYA

Today?

ANTHEM

It's a Christmas exhibit. I can explain. It was like..a calling.

TONYA

I understand. Say, I met the stalker today.

ANTHEM

Stalker?

TONYA

The grocery stalker. You know. At the grocery store when we arrived.

ANTHEM

Sounds like there's a good story here. Tell me on the way back to the cabin.

TONYA

Oh, it just gets better.

EXT/INT. JACOB'S BARN - DAY

Anthem and Tonya are pulling up to park the truck in the barn. Charlotte's car is at the barn and to the side. As they pull past her car, Tonya can see Charlotte sitting in her car. She's sobbing.

TONYA

It's her!

ANTHEM

Who?

TONYA

The grocery stalker..the gallery owner!

Anthem parks the pickup, and the women get out and walk to Charlotte's car. They knock on the window. Charlotte rolls down the window.

CHARLOTTE

He's locked me out.

TONYA

What do you mean?

CHARLOTTE

The door's locked. I knocked and knock. Hard. He won't answer.

ANTHEM

Did you try another door?

CHARLOTTE

That's the only door.

ANTHEM

Do we need to break in or call someone?

CHARLOTTE

No! He's in mourning.

TONYA

How do you know?

CHARLOTTE

I've seen this before.

TONYA

Recently?

CHARLOTTE

No.

ANTHEM

How long ago?

Grief turns to ANGER.

CHARLOTTE

That's none of your business!

Charlotte turns on the ignition and drives out nearly losing control of the car on the way out. The two women watch.

TONYA

She right.

ANTHEM

About?

TONYA

It is none of our business.

ANTHEM

I know you're ready.

Tonya turns and goes back into the barn and tries the door herself. Anthem follows.

TONYA

She was telling the truth.

ANTHEM

Why are you surprised?

Tonya gives her a look of skepticism. Anthem gives her a pointed hand signal of checking off to Tonya's on-point statement.

EXT/INT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

Anthem is standing next to Tonya as she is prepares for the teleconference.

ANTHEM

You good?

TONYA

Yeah, just waiting for everyone to come on line.

ANTHEM

I'm sure it will go well. Nervous?

Tonya gives a hand signal to acknowledge. Anthem puts her hand on Tonya's shoulder.

ANTHEM

Don't worry, your listening skills are up to the task. Love ya. See you a few...

TONYA

Love you...

EXT/INT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

Tonya watches Anthem leave in the truck.

TONYA

She surely has become attached to that thing.

EXT/INT. EDNA'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Tonya is at the consultant video station. Her screen is lit up with the participants. She is saying hello to the participants.

TONYA

Good day friends. I'm Anthem's consultant partner for your journey today. She apologizes for missing you, but she's been called away unexpectedly. Let's go around the room and give us your one word of what you're feeling right now?

VOICE 1 (O.S)

Female

Sad.

VOICE 2 (O.S.)

Mature Male

Concerned.

VOICE 3 (O.S.)

Younger Female

Hopeful.

CAROL (O.S.)

Female, American heavy Appalachian accent

Pain.

TONYA

The family member feeling pain. Can you please raise your hand at the bottom of the screen.

Pause

TONYA (CONT'D)

Carol. Thank you, Carol. Welcome to the family.

CAROL (O.S.)

Thank you. I'm also scared.

TONYA

Let's stay on the first word for a moment. Pain.

Pause, the slower with her words.

CAROL (O.S.)
I am in a lot of pain.

Very empathic. Matches Carol's cadence. Not accent.

TONYA
Emotional or physical?

CAROL (O.S.)
Both.

EXT. ART MUSEUM - DAY

Anthem arrives at the town's art museum with it's Christmas fund raiser signage.

INT. ART MUSEUM - DAY

Anthem is in the lobby of the Farnsworth Museum of Art. CURATOR, 60's, is behind the welcoming counter. They are alone.

CURATOR
Welcome to the Farnsworth.

ANTHEM
Thank you. I came to see the exhibition.

They talk as she pays with a credit card.

CURATOR
It's almost closing.

ANTHEM
That's okay.

Curator pauses, looks around and smiles.

CURATOR
I don't think anyone else is coming today, we can go over.

Anthem's face lights up.

ANTHEM
You are so kind.

CURATOR

Zeke Thompson.

ANTHEM

Anthem Hayes.

The curator walks over to the front door and locks it.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

Dr. Thompson recommended I some see your exhibit.

CURATOR

Joanne.

ANTHEM

You know the doctor?

CURATOR

Miss Hayes. The better question is who I don't know in Rockport?

ANTHEM

Smiles

True enough, Zeke.

CURATOR

You can give me your coat right here. He takes her coat and hangs it on the back of his chair.

ANTHEM

You are most gracious.

The Curator's eyebrows raise as a slight tell to how attractive she is.

CURATOR

I hope you don't take offense from an old Mainer, but you are a very handsome women.

ANTHEM

None taken. You've just made my day.

CURATOR

What part of the South do you claim home?

ANTHEM

Charleston, *South* Carolina.

CURATOR

Esprit de Bois?

Anthem nods with modest surprise.

ANTHEM

Yes.

CURATOR

Small town.

ANTHEM

Rockport is just like the town I was born in that regard.

They walk to the Christmas exhibit.

CURATOR

Here's our Christmas exhibit, and dare say the charity fundraiser of the year for us. All the pieces here are made by Maine artists and artisans. The funds are used for less fortunate in our area.

ANTHEM

'Tis the season...

CURATOR

I wish that were only true this time of year.

ANTHEM

Yes. Harder times now.

CURATOR

I'd never thought this would happen in my lifetime in this country.

ANTHEM

You are not alone.

Anthem sees a cylinder ornament identical to the ones still on the floor at the cabin. The cylinder is empty.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

We have these at the cabin.

CURATOR

I would hope so.

ANTHEM

Why.

CURATOR

Their Edna's.

ANTHEM

Edna?

CURATOR

You don't know about Edna?

ANTHEM

No.

CURATOR

Edna Alarie,

Anthem's eyes widen as she puts the two names together.

CURATOR (CONT'D)

She was an artist and poet in the region. Her parents named her after our Maine poet, Edna St. Vincent Millay. The house is where Edna's cabin used to stand. Jacob's Edna. It was just a small cabin and a studio. Not the showplace it is now.

ANTHEM

What was it before?

CURATOR

A just a three-room cabin. And her makeshift "studio" for her painting.

ANTHEM

What happened to her?

CURATOR

There was a fire. Jacob was away at the time. She passed about thirteen years ago. About this time of year.

Anthem covers her mouth.

CURATOR (CONT'D)

He'll never talk about her. He won't talk about it with anyone. It's was a wonderful time that year, but a very sad episode for us at the end of it. Come with me.

He leads her to an art gallery. He dawdles and allows Anthem to enter first.

The center piece art is a large brightly colored nude portrait of a woman's back. The subject is looking back over her shoulder. She recognizes the face as the same woman in the cabin. Anthem walks up to the card that identifies the portrait:: Self Portrait, Edna Alarie, On Loan.

CURATOR (CONT'D)

Again, without being forward in my older age, you have such beautiful eyes.

ANTHEM

I have to ask.

CURATOR

Jacob just drifted into town one day. Despondent. She still had a few animals in the barn that needed care, couldn't really take care of the property. He needed something. He started being the caretaker for a place to stay.

ANTHEM

The barn?

CURATOR

Yes.

ANTHEM

How long was that?

CURATOR

Fifteen, maybe sixteen years ago.

EXT. ROCKPORT WATERFRONT - DAY

Tonya is standing looking out at the Rockport harbor. It is still and cold. **KETCHEN**, early 30's, walks up and stops about five feet away.

KETCHEN

I love the calmness. It's the best time of the year.

Tonya looks over.

TONYA

Why the best?

KETCHEN

Well, winter, the tourists are gone. I imagine how it used to be back in the day.

TONYA

I'd like to imagine that. It's seem like an agreeable town.

KETCHEN

Most days. Where's home?

TONYA

Charleston, right now. You?

KETCHEN

Here. I'm Ketchen.

Tonya takes a few steps toward him.

TONYA

Tonya. Ketchen, an unusual name.

KETCHEN

Actually, it's Kevin, but I prefer the nickname.

TONYA

Tell me about that.

KETCHEN

I'm a chef. "Kevin in the kitchen," is what mom would say. Got compressed into "Ketchen". Helped me get a few doors open.

TONYA

Mama was a good marketer.

KETCHEN

Smarts for sure. A better teacher. You?

TONYA

I'm here with a business partner who, luckily for me, is the best friend I've ever had.

KETCHEN

That's rare.

TONYA

Yes. Yes, it is.

KETCHEN

What do you do?

TONYA

You'd say we're in the human
environmental reclamation business.

KETCHEN

That's a mouthful.

TONYA

To our clients it's "Life
Training."

KETCHEN

I'd like to hear more. Would I be
out of line asking you to get some
coffee?

TONYA

Right now, some bold coffee sounds
pretty good. Thank you.

EXT. JACOB'S BARN - DAY

SUPER: Three Days Later

Anthem walks into the barn and knocks on the door. She tries to open it, but it is still locked. She walks around and sees an axe in the bed of Jacob's truck. She backs the truck out of the barn. Gets the axe, and goes back into the barn. We hear her taking the axe to the door.

INT. JACOB'S BARN - DAY

Jacob is lying in bed asleep. There are two empty Jack Daniel bottle next to the bed.

There is the sound of a Kerig coffeemaker started by a timer.

INT. JACOB'S BARN LOFT - DAY

Jacob wakes up hearing the coffee dripping. He gets out of bed. He's naked and the bedroom is a mess. He stumbles to the bathroom.

INT. JACOB'S BARN LOFT - DAY

Jacob stands at the sink and stares the mirror.

He turns and goes to turns on the shower. He waits for the hot water and then gets in.

INT. JACOB'S BARN LOFT - DAY

Jacob enters the small kitchen. On the table is another bottle of Jack Daniels with a note wrapped around it by a rubber band. He looks at the hand-written note:

ANTHEM (V.O.)

You stink. This place is a shit hole. Maggie's not cleaning this. Get up. Clean up. You've got work to do. I want some breakfast.

A.

P.S. I want a tree.

Jacob rubs his head. Takes a deep breath.

JACOB

Wow.

INT. JACOB'S BARN - DAY

Jacob has cleaned up and is walking through his tidy workshop to the one door to the outside. He stops. The door is shattered. He walks though the opening. The pickup is gone. The remnants of the door are scattered on the floor. The axe on the top of the remains.

JACOB

A tree.

He picks up the axe, and walks up the road to the overlook.

EXT. MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSE - DAY

Ketchen, Tonya and Anthem returning to the clubhouse from the cross country skiing. They are breathing heavily and are in wonderful spirits.

ANTHEM

Whew. I bet I've lost five pounds.

TONYA

I...am...hot!

Anthem looks at Ketchen.

KETCHEN

No comment.

The women laugh.

TONYA

I'm spent. Thank you, Ketchen.

ANTHEM

I'm in on this for the rest of our stay.

KETCHEN

Great.

ANTHEM

So how good a chef are you?

KETCHEN

It's chemistry, really.

ANTHEM

You are such a child. If it were that simple.

KETCHEN

Is this a challenge?

ANTHEM

Are you asking and ready for a culinary throw down? My low country kettle to whatever you want to go up against me?

KETCHEN

Lady Anthem. Your throw down is on.

ANTHEM

I'll go first at our cabin. We'll have a couple surprise guests. As judges.

TONYA

Jacob?

ANTHEM

No. He's not back. I was thinking of a couple of other people.

KETCHEN

Who's Jacob?

Anthem ignores the question.

ANTHEM

If invited, I'm sure they'll accept.

KETCHEN

Who's Jacob?

TONYA

Our....landlord.

KETCHEN

Oh.

ANTHEM

We've sessions this afternoon.
Invitees to contact.

KETCHEN

When are we going to do this?

ANTHEM

How's tomorrow night!

KETCHEN

Let me do the appetizers. A
dangling of better fare to come.

ANTHEM

It won't matter, but I am curious
to what that might be.

KETCHEN

I got to get shopping. I have to
marinate!

TONYA

I thought you were a professional?

KETCHEN

Stay out of Ketchen's kitchen.

TONYA

Oh! Going third person. The Tonya
is down with that.

KETCHEN

What are you going to be doing
during all this?

TONYA

I learned early. When Anthem's got
her culinary on, stay out of her
way. 'Cause we become the Eat-
wells!

KITCHEN

Well, get ready for the Eat-betters!

ALL

Laughter

EXT/INT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

Anthem and Tonya are returning from skiing in the pickup and are driving up to the cabin. There is a cut Christmas tree on front of the steps.

ANTHEM

We got a tree.

TONYA

We got a tree.

They smile and giggle.

INT. JACOB'S BARN - DAY

Jacob is back in the wood shop at the lathe. This time he is cutting the post by hand-held cutting knives.

We see his progress on the walking stick to the point he is hand cutting swirling spirals up that spin up to the bottom curb.

He anilines the white oak post with a Carolina Blue. In swirl inlays are of red cherry veneer.

EXT. JACOB'S BARN - DAY

Jacob comes out of the barn and is walking around the vehicles to the cord wood stack.

INT/EXT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

Anthem is standing at the window and see's that Jacob has reemerged. She pivots and gabs a coat to go out and talk to him.

EXT. JACOB'S BARN - DAY

Jacob catches Anthem approaching from the corner of his eye and stops.

ANTHEM

Good afternoon.

He looks up at the sky.

JACOB

It is.

ANTHEM

Thank you for the tree.

JACOB

Thank you for the kick in the ass.

ANTHEM

It's what I do.

JACOB

For everybody?

ANTHEM

Not everybody.

JACOB

I'm sure Tonya and you will give it the trimming it deserves.

ANTHEM

Indeed. We're very excited about it.

JACOB

How's she adjusting?

ANTHEM

She's....happy too.

JACOB

That's good. That's a good place to be.

ANTHEM

How 'bout you?

JACOB

Not today whisperer.

ANTHEM

Not everything I do is about that.

JACOB

My apologies.

ANTHEM

Look, we're having.....

JACOB

Thank you no.

ANTHEM

But..

JACOB

Your invitation is sincerely appreciated, but..

ANTHEM

I don't understand, but...

Jacob stops, and steps toward her and speaks with a moment sincerity, and reaches for her hand. She takes it.

JACOB

You don't get to look behind the curtain. This is a troublesome time of year for me. Always has been. Maybe after the holiday we can have that conversation. Maybe. Please know your presence saved me. So this is a bonus day.

He leans over and kisses her on the cheek. He turns and goes back in the barn.

JACOB (CONT'D)

No pity party..

She just stands and stares as he walks back into the barn.

ANTHEM

I don't do pity. Evidently you've made self-pity a skill.

He stops, but doesn't look back.

JACOB

Fair enough, whisperer.

He resumes walking.

ANTHEM

To herself

Yes, Like you said. We'll still be here after Christmas.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - NIGHT

It's Anthem's dinner party. Attending are Dr. Joanne, Curator Zeke, and Ketchen. Anthem and Tonya are welcoming Dr. Joanne into the room.

ANTHEM

Welcome, Joanne.

DR. JOANNE.

Thank you. I'm very excited to be here.

CURATOR

Joanne.

DR. JOANNE.

Zeke.

ANTHEM

Stop it.

Zeke and Joanne laugh and hugs each other.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

This is Ketchen, tonight's challenger

KETCHEN

Merry Christmas.

DR. JOANNE

Merry Christmas.

She looks at him longer and tilts her head as remembering.

DR. JOANNE (CONT'D)

The Havana?

KETCHEN

Yes, ma'am. Sous Chef there.

She extends an elbow bump.

They bump.

KETCHEN (CONT'D)

Joanne.

DR. JOANNE

Can't wait to go back again.

Ketchen looks at Tonya and tilts his head.

TONYA

Or tell us if he's has been up to the challenge.

CURATOR

What challenge?

TONYA

These two have little competition going on. Low Country Christmas versus his Latin Navidad. And you two are the judges.

CURATOR

Judges?

DR. JOANNE

How do we determine a winner with only two?

TONYA

We have an elaborate scoring system.

ANTHEM

We'll taste who's creations best represents the season.

DR. JOANNE

It smells fantastic! What a beautiful Christmas Tree.

TONYA

We just finished it this morning.

The curator sees the bejeweled tree topping finial she bought at the museum at the top of the tree.

CURATOR

I see the finial found a home.

ANTHEM

Yes.

Anthem walks over and puts her hand on Zeke's shoulder. Dr. Joanne is just standing in the room, taking it all in now.

CURATOR

What do you think, Joanne?

DR. JOANNE

You were right. It's always better in person.

ANTHEM

You've never been here?

DR. JOANNE

Never.

TONYA

Ever?

DR. JOANNE

Never. Ever. Ever. It's part of its
lore.

Tonya and Anthem look at each other. Tonya walks by Anthem
and whispers.

TONYA

The hits just keep coming.

Joanne sees a small guest book on a table by the door. She
walks over to it.

DR. JOANNE

Do you mind?

TONYA

It's a just a guest book.

Surprised.

DR. JOANNE

Yes, but I'm surprised there is
one.

She opens it and turns the page and leafs through some pages.
She lets out a small gasp.

DR. JOANNE (CONT'D)

Have you looked at this?

TONYA

A little. Why?

DR. JOANNE

Have you heard of these people?

TONYA

I really didn't think about it.

DR. JOANNE

Zeke?

CURATOR

I've met most of them...at the museum. We have some of their work there.

ANTHEM

Now I'm really bursting with curiosity.

CURATOR

There are unique things about everyone in that book. From my perspective, they're artists of their professions.

Still looking at the book.

DR. JOANNE

Crème de la crème.

CURATOR

But...only after they've been here.

KETCHEN

What else?

CURATOR

There's never been a dinner party allowed here, or house visitors to have visitors for that matter.

Anthem has to sit down. Tonya watches her reaction.

CURATOR (CONT'D)

Did he sign a waiver?

ANTHEM

There were no restriction.

Dr. Joanne puts her hand on her chest, and looks at Anthem.

DR. JOANNE

Oh my.

CURATOR

What's the phrase? DIY. No, FYI. Only Maggie is allowed in the cabin when a guest is here.

TONYA

But the guest has to leave when she's here.

CURATOR

Correct. And Jacob never comes in here when anyone else is on the property.

KETCHEN

Ever?

CURATOR

Never.

ANTHEM

To herself whispers.

The tree.

Tonya is now standing next to Anthem.

TONYA

Yeah, the tree.

CURATOR

Well, well. It appears our Miss Anthem is a very elevated guest.

Joanne takes Zeke's arm.

DR. JOANNE

Now that we have you alone Zeke, can you share all that knowledge about what we're looking at.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

Jacob is meeting with Simon. Jacob is terse with Simon.

SIMON

Again Jacob, as your lawyer and your friend...

JACOB

Simon, I came to you to do this as my lawyer.

SIMON

This is so unlike you.

JACOB

How many lawyers are in this town?

SIMON

More than one.

JACOB

I not asking you. I'm instructing you. Prepare the documents I've asked.

SIMON

Okay. I'll get them ready and call you.

JACOB

Fine. I just...

SIMON

I'll be available for your call.

Jacob gets up and walks out.

EXT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

It is a bright sunny day. A light dusting of more snow as Anthem and Tonya are coming out of the cabin.

ANTHEM

I feel good.

TONYA

Me too. You anxious?

ANTHEM

No. That past after the first time. I got a magnificent gift.

TONYA

Me too.

Anthem smiles at her friend. They hug.

ANTHEM

Let's take the pickup.

TONYA

You sure?

ANTHEM

I have a feeling.

TONYA

You have a need.

ANTHEM

A little.

TONYA

Think he'll come out again.

ANTHEM

One day.

TONYA

Soon?

ANTHEM

Well, he did rebuild the door. It's unlocked.

TONYA

Snooper. Did you go in?

ANTHEM

No. When he wants to talk again, or whenever that moment is, he'll decide.

Tonya raises her hand and moves it like she's holding a magic wand.

TONYA

The Whisperer *knows* these things.

ANTHEM

I do.

They get in the pickup and Anthem start it up. Tonya puts in a different cassette.

EXT/INT. JACOB'S BARN - DAY

Jacob is standing in his lapidary area. He hears the start-up of the pickup and walks to a window to watch them drive away.

EXT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

The women are driving through the Esprit de Bois entry.

INT. JACOB'S BARN - DAY

Jacob has had a security alarm on the entry connected to the barn as a notice for movement through the entry. Lights flash throughout the barn, and an electronic signal triggers a single ring from an old school brass bell. As the women depart through the entrance, both go off. Jacob stops watching and returns to the lapidary work area. He picks up an ice blue stone.

EXT/INT. JACOBS PICKUP - DAY

Tonya takes a harmonica out of her coat pocket.

ANTHEM

What's that?

TONYA

A harmonica.

ANTHEM

Is this going to hurt?

TONYA

Probably.

Tonya breathes in and out on the instrument. It is bad. Anthem makes faces as Tonya replicates Muddy Waters' version of "I Just Want To Make Love To You."

TONYA (CONT'D)

I don't want be no slave.

Three note harmonica howl.

TONYA (CONT'D)

I don't want to wait all day.

Three harmonica notes.

TONYA (CONT'D)

I don't want to be played.

Three harmonica notes.

I just want to make love to you.

Three harmonica notes.

TONYA (CONT'D)

Make love to you.

Pause

TONYA (CONT'D)

Make love to you.

Harmonica three notes.

EXT/INT. CONVENIENCE STORE GAS STATION - DAY

Anthem and Tonya stop for gas.

TONYA

This is the first time we've had to get gas.

ANTHEM

We have been tourists the last few days. How's it going with the younger Ketchen?

TONYA

I'd say were into full contact sports.

Both smile.

ANTHEM

Uh-ha. How *is* the younger man?

TONYA

He thinks he needs to grow his skills in a major market.

ANTHEM

And how are his skills?

TONYA

Like all men, looking for the next happy ending.

ANTHEM

How 'bout yours?

TONYA

Just fine. Thank you for asking.

They pull up to the fuel pumps, and Tonya gets out to fill the truck. Anthem is watches a few people come out of the store. **ANGRY HUSBAND**, mid-30's, comes out of the store and visibly is in a hurry. The moment Anthem sees him, she visibly SHIVERS and continues to watch him get in his car and drive off.

Tonya gets in the car and immediately notices Anthem's face and demeanor has changed.

TONYA (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

ANTHEM

I don't know. I saw this guy come out of the store, and a I got this great sense of dread.

TONYA

You want me to drive?

ANTHEM

No. It was just a moment. It's passed. Let's go.

They pull out of the gas station in silence.

INT. ONCOLOGY CLINIC - DAY

Anthem is on the M-R-I table. She is talking to the MRI CLINICIAN.

MRI CLINICIAN (O.C.)

Ready?

ANTHEM

Yes.

MRI CLINICIAN (O.C.)

Remember. Still. Relax.

ANTHEM

I know the drill.

MRI CLINICIAN (O.C.)

Okay then.

The red laser passes over her body as the machine hums.

EXT/INT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Angry man drive on the road to Esprit de Bois. As he sees the entry and passes slowly to see the cabin. He sees Anthem's car and stops.

He opens his glove compartment and removes a rifle scope and handgun. He identifies Anthem's South Carolina plates.

He drives up the road and parks. He gets out of the car, and puts the handgun in his coat pocket walks back to Edna's cabin.

ANGRY MAN

Okay, bitch. Company's coming.

INT. ONCOLOGY CLINIC - DAY

Anthem and Tonya are sitting a waiting room. Dr. Joanne pokes her head out from the door from the MRI area.

DR. JOANNE

Anthem?

Surprised. Both Anthem and Tonya stand up.

ANTHEM

Joanne! Why are you here?

DR. JOANNE

As your doctor in residence, I wanted to be here. But mostly as a friend.

They embrace.

DR. JOANNE (CONT'D)

Are you ready?

ANTHEM

Waiting won't change the results.

DR. JOANNE

True.

The three leave the room for the viewing of the scan results.

INT. ONCOLOGY CLINIC - DAY

The three women walk into the room to review the MRI photos. Anthem's scans are hanging on the yet to be turned on backlit lighting wall.

DR. JOANNE

Anthem, I've reviewed these with the oncologist. I felt it would be better if I reviewed them with you.

Anthem and Tonya hold hands as Dr. Joanne turns on the light.

Pause

Anthem weeps. She knows what's she looking at.

DR. JOANNE (CONT'D)

Unbelievable! It's gone. You appear to be cancer free.

ANTHEM

Really?

DR. JOANNE

Truly. You've done it... again!

Anthem cries. The woman embrace.

INT. JACOB'S BARN - DAY

Jacob in his workshop area when the light and bell ring in the barn. He steps to the window to look at the road to the cabin. Angry Man is walking up to the cabin with gun in hand.

INT. JACOB'S BARN - DAY

Jacob opens a drawer in the workbench and pulls a Beretta M9 revolver. He goes into the space of the pickup and stands in the shadow and watches Angry Man's approach to the cabin.

Angry man stops at Anthem's car and looks at the South Carolina plate, and then walks to the front steps of the cabin.

Jacob comes out of parking space with a two fisted pistol grip and shoulder level. He positions himself around Anthem's car. Angry man is on the elevated porch looking through a window.

JACOB

Don't move.

Angry man turns.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Don't move. I won't say it again.

ANGRY MAN

I am a Rockport cop.

JACOB

I don't care.

ANGRY MAN

You better care. I'm conducting an investigation.

JACOB

Really?

ANGRY MAN

Yeah, we got a report about a woman from out of town. South Carolina. Name Tonya.

JACOB

Whoever she is. That's not her car.

ANGRY MAN

Look, buddy.

JACOB

Shut the fuck up! Turn around, slowly. Keep the gun where it is.

ANGRY MAN

Who the fuck are you?

JACOB

Doesn't matter. You move. You're dead.

Angry man begins to bring the gun down to shoot.

ANGRY MAN

Fu...

Jacob fires three non-lethal shots in the man's abdomen, and he drops and tumbles down the front steps. Landing face up, looking up as Jacob stands over him.

JACOB

My house. My rules.

Jacob fires the kill shot into his chest.

EXT/INT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Anthem and Tonya are driving back to the cabin. They are very near as they observe a wrecker coming in their direction. The wrecker has Angry Man's car on the back.

They say nothing. When they arrive to the Esprit de Bois entrance two Rockport police cars are coming out of the driveway. Jacob is in the backseat of the first car.

He sees the women in his pickup truck and mouths, "It's okay."

TONYA

Oh my God! It's Jacob!

The police cars are followed by an EMS vehicle. No siren.

The women pull into the driveway after the vehicles leave.
Simon McKenna is standing next to his car.

ANTHEM

It's Simon.

They stop the pickup near Simon and get out.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

Simon!

SIMON

Anthem. Tonya.

ANTHEM

Why do the police have Jacob?

SIMON

He killed a man.

They both cover their faces and look at each other.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Can we go inside? It's better to
discuss it in the cabin.

They head inside. Anthem and Tonya see blood at the bottom of
the steps.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

Anthem is making coffee as Simon peels off his winter coat.

SIMON

I understand you've went Bangor.

ANTHEM

Yes.

Tonya is sitting at the kitchen table. A stunned look. Simon
sits.

SIMON

I'm speaking as Jacob's lawyer. You
to need to understand you are
potential witnesses. I think it
would be best you think about
getting a local lawyer other than
me, just in case.

ANTHEM

Why?

SIMON

Let's me ask the questions this time.

ANTHEM

Got it.

SIMON

In short, the man came here looking for you.

He nods at Tonya.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Jacob's words to me. Not the Rockport police. They are treating it as trespassing and self-defense.

TONYA

Why did they take him?

SIMON

Jacob *did* kill the trespasser. The Rockport Police are very respectful and aware of Jacob's past before Rockport.

TONYA

How's that?

Anthem and Tonya look at each other bewildered.

SIMON

In conversation, one officer referred to his shots as making a point *with* emphasis.

ANTHEM

What does that mean, "emphasis?"

SIMON

Nothing. Cop shop talk. A formality. A man was killed. They have the shooter. I think he'll be released in the morning.

ANTHEM

Did the man say why he was looking for Tonya?

SIMON

No. Neither does Jacob. Anyway, the detective..

TONYA

Rockport has a detective?

SIMON

The detective said the man killed his wife and child in Pennsylvania two days ago.

TONYA

Carol.

SIMON

Pardon?

TONYA

Carol.

SIMON

Say nothing else in front of me. Are you two business partners? Legally.

ANTHEM

No.

Looking at Anthem.

SIMON

You're not licensed as a doctor, psychological, any medical like profession?

ANTHEM

No.

SIMON

The deceased *was* still a cop at the time of his death. I'm sure insurance companies, maybe a police fraternal organization, or other party may want to get involved. Hopefully so they don't have to pay anyone. *But*, some attorney may want look into your business as the precipitous incident for this, and come after your business for malpractice, or initiate of a wrongful death suit. *But*, I don't know what happened that started all this.

Anthem give Simon the eyes and nod of acknowledgement.

ANTHEM

No, you don't.

SIMON

Well. I don't know about you, but
it's been a full day. I still need
to go see my client.

Simon, get up and leaves the women at the table in silence.
The door closes.

ANTHEM

Tell me about Carol.

TONYA

I don't know. But she's the one
that came to mind. She said she was
in pain. You know..

ANTHEM

Yeah, describe your pain..

TONYA

She said emotional and physical.

ANTHEM

Shit!

TONYA

I'd bet the farm.

ANTHEM

We might just have done that.

EXT/INT. ROCKPORT POLICE STATION - DAY

Anthem pulls up in front of the police station. Jacob is
waiting for her. He gets in.

JACOB

Good Morning.

ANTHEM

Is it?

JACOB

Yes. Thank you for picking me up.

ANTHEM

I think if you wanted, you could've
of whistled for this excuse of a
truck to come get you.

JACOB

You seem to like it.

Lengthy pause.

ANTHEM

Thank you for saving my friend's
life.

JACOB

And yours?

ANTHEM

Yes. That too.

JACOB

Bangor?

ANTHEM

All is well. But you probably know
that by now.

JACOB

It seemed appropriate to ask.

ANTHEM

Since that's appropriate, I have
one request.

JACOB

Only one?

Lengthy pause.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Well...

ANTHEM

I want you to have dinner with
Tonya and me on Christmas.

JACOB

Sorry. Can't. Have a commitment.

ANTHEM

It's Christmas.

JACOB

Not for me.

ANTHEM

Please.

Very serious as in don't press it anymore.

JACOB

Every Christmas day I'm out of town. It's very personal. Very.

Long pause.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Can you do Christmas Eve?

ANTHEM

Yes. Very. Christmas Eve.

JACOB

No gifts.

Anthem makes a dramatic, sad face.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Seriously. No gifts.

ANTHEM

That's all right. I already got mine.

EXT/INT. EDNA'S CABIN - NIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE

It's snowing as Jacob is walking from the barn to the front entrance of the cabin. Instrumental Christmas music can be heard from the inside. He is walking with two long decoratively wrapped boxes in his hand, but leaves them on the front porch, and knocks.

ANTHEM (O.C.)

Come in.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - NIGHT

Jacob, Anthem, and Tonya have finished up their Christmas dinner. Tonya is opening another bottle of wine. Jacob is sitting down in a chair. Anthem is picking up two scrolled paper. One wrapped in a red ribbon, and the other in green. She also has a clipboard with paper and pen.

ANTHEM

Let's play a game.

Tonya acts surprised. She is mocking in her response.

TONYA

Oh yes, Anthem, let's play a game.

Apprehensive.

JACOB

What..is..the...game?

ANTHEM

Three statements.

She hands Jacob the clipboard. Tonya takes green scrolled paper. She keeps the red scroll.

TONYA

Anthem and I have written three things about ourselves. Two are true. And one is false.

ANTHEM

The person reads their "truths". And one of us has to guess which are true or false.

JACOB

This is unfair.

TONYA

Why?

JACOB

You two know each other so well.

ANTHEM

Do we now?

JACOB

Yes.

TONYA

Should we find out? Jacob, you could write three things and they that would all be lies. We'd never know.

JACOB

Is this one of your mind control tools?

ANTHEM

The phrase is "Mind-speak." No. And yes. Mr. Calder, are you a man of integrity as I am, a woman?

JACOB

Let's play!

Jacob writes his three truths They smile and giggle about it.

ANTHEM

We took a vote, and Jacob, you're last.

Sarcastically.

JACOB

I couldn't see that coming. Tonya, you go first.

TONYA

I'm afraid of heights. I've never been married. I'm an orphan. Anthem.

Pause

ANTHEM

Let Jacob make the call. I know you.

TONYA

Jacob.

JACOB

Truth. You've been married.

TONYA

Yes.

ANTHEM

Tonya!

TONYA

Six months. A very bad six months.

ANTHEM

I thought it was heights. You drove over all those bridges.

TONYA

Somebody had to do it.

Laughter by all.

JACOB

Anthem.

ANTHEM

This was difficult.

JACOB

You're stalling.

ANTHEM

Just for the record, I am a published author with a totally *honest* Wikipedia biography by three people.

More laughter. Anthem takes a drink of wine, and a deep breath.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

Here goes. I'm afraid of being on boats. I was a bartender.

Pause

I had an abortion.

JACOB

That's unexpectedly deep. Tonya. She's your friend.

TONYA

Shit Anthem. That's both of us.

Jacob puts his hands up.

JACOB

I don't think we need to go any further. You two have so much explaining to do with other.

Anthem stands up with her one hand on her hip, and takes a long drink of wine. She points at him.

ANTHEM

Play..the..game!

JACOB

I grew up on a cattle ranch. I was a mechanic for the government. I speak three languages.

ANTHEM

I was hoping for more than that.

Mocking her southern drawl. Sarcasm.

JACOB

I didn't have a few days to think up some low country statements to draw out some irrelevant factoid from your host.

ANTHEM

Wow. That was really bad.

TONYA

I can do better.

She repeats Jacob's comment with Anthem's speech dialect. Her imitation is spot-on with cadence and tone but improvises with more drama by getting out of her chair in imitates her walk.

TONYA (CONT'D)

I didn't have a few days to think up these bullshit irrelevant scraps of knowledge. If allowed, I would have written your truths and lie myself.

Both Anthem and Jacob laugh. Anthem applauds.

TONYA (CONT'D)

Sir, *please* restate your truths to this court.

JACOB

I grew up on a cattle ranch. I was a mechanic for a government. I speak three languages. Tonya.

TONYA

Three languages.

JACOB

Actually, five.

He speaks English, but with each's cultural accents.

JACOB (CONT'D)

I speak Russian. I speak French, I speak Spanish, I speak Farsi, and American English. Anthem.

ANTHEM

I really can't see you under the hood of a anything. But there use to be livestock here.

JACOB

You have been a snooper.

ANTHEM

Guilty as charged. I think you're not a good herder.

JACOB

You are correct. I never grew up on a ranch.

Applause by Tonya and Jacob.

JACOB (CONT'D)

If you'll excuse me for a moment.

He gets up and walks to the front door and goes out for a moment. Anthem and Tonya look at other puzzled and then look to the door. Jacob comes in with the wrapped presents.

JACOB (CONT'D)

I know I said no presents. But it is your White Christmas, and you should have something under the tree. Now don't open them until the morning. Promise?

Both shake their head yes. No words are said from them.

JACOB (CONT'D)

I need to go. Thank you, it's been a wonderful evening. The best I've had in a long time.

ANTHEM

I'll walk you out.

Tonya moves to give Jacob a hug. She whispers.

TONYA

Thank you Jacob. For everything. Merry Christmas.

JACOB

Merry Christmas, Tonya.

EXT. EDNA'S CABIN - NIGHT

Jacob and Anthem are standing on the porch looking at each other. She put her hand on his chest. She starts to speak..

ANTHEM

I can't...

Jacob embraces her and she kisses romantically for a long time. They stop. Jacob steps back, and goes down the steps.

JACOB

See you for breakfast.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Anthem comes in and walks slowly to the kitchen. She speaks slowly.

ANTHEM

Wow.

TONYA

Wow what?

ANTHEM

Just wow.

TONYA

Oh, Anthem, I saw that train coming the day we arrived.

ANTHEM

Quite the good kisser.

TONYA

Really good?

ANTHEM

Uh-huh.

TONYA

Want a drink?

ANTHEM

Uh-huh. Straight.

Tonya goes to pour Anthem a glass of vodka. She pours herself one with ice. Anthem sits down in a chair facing the Christmas tree. The new gifts have been placed there. Tonya brings the drinks over and sits down, looking at the gifts.

Anthem takes a long first sip.

TONYA

What to do you think they are?

Sarcastically.

ANTHEM

I don't have a clue.

TONYA

Do you want to wait for the morning?

ANTHEM

Do you?

TONYA

No!

ANTHEM

You first.

Tonya picks up both, and places Anthem's on her friend's lap. Tonya opens the gift, and slides the walking wand out. It is a white oak, green aniline stain with red maple inlaid. Cork hand grip. The finial is fine jewelry with three emeralds, and the signature granite button with her initials. The top is gold inlaid of a crown on white mother-of-pearl.

They are speechless and in awe for a moment.

TONYA

Let's see what's inside

She presses the granite button, and hears the click. She removes the jeweled finial, and looks inside the cavity.

TONYA (CONT'D)

Nothing.

ANTHEM

You look disappointed.

TONYA

Maybe a little. But, Anthem I have no words for such a gift.

ANTHEM

Thank you when you see him tomorrow might work.

TONYA

Okay, let's see it.

Anthem works to open and save the wrapping, but she doesn't have the patience. She slides the ornamental wood out. It is white oaks anilines black stain with the red aniline inlaid swirls up the shaft. Below the base curb of the cork handle are squares of blue amethyst. The jeweled finial has three blue sapphires, and the granite button with Anthem's initials. The top is a gold nugget embedded around mother-of-pearl.

Anthem can't speak. She stands and holds up the rod to the light to see the stones better. Tonya finishes her drink. She puts her hand on Anthem's wrist, holding the gift.

TONYA (CONT'D)

You should open it.

ANTHEM

I'm in no hurry.

TONYA

I am. I bet you a year's salary something is in yours.

ANTHEM

Sure, why not at this point?

Anthem opens the finial and hands it to Tonya. She turns the post upside down, and a note falls out.

ANTHEM AND TONYA.

Gasps.

TONYA

I knew it!

Anthem picks up the note. It reads: Stay. Please. J

ANTHEM

Stay. Please. J.

TONYA

You can't make this up!

Tonya then notices the inside of the finial in her hand.

TONYA (CONT'D)

Oh, this just gets better!

ANTHEM

What?

TONYA

Hold out your hand.

Anthem does it. Tonya turns the finial over and smacks the gold piece on top of the finial. A gold band drops out of the finial into her hand.

Stunned. Anthem cries. Tonya does too as she goes and brings back the bottle.

TONYA (CONT'D)

Merry, Merry Christmas friend.

ANTHEM

Merry Christmas Tonya.

EXT. JACOB'S BARN - NIGHT

Jacob is loading some firewood in the back of the ATV. He puts small cloth sack on the seat. Drives the ATV to the outlook. There is a light snow.

EXT. CALDER'S OVERLOOK

Jacob stacks the firewood in the fire pit and lights it. He pulls a bottle of bourbon and a glass from the sack. He sits on the eastern facing seating, pours a glass of bourbon. He pulls a cigar from the inside pocket of his coat. Dips in in the bourbon, then lights the cigar. He is smiling and very content.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - PREDAWN

It's Christmas morning. Anthem is coming down the stairs and walks into the kitchen. Tonya is there staring, at her gift.

ANTHEM

Couldn't sleep?

TONYA

You either?

ANTHEM

Nope.

TONYA

I still can't believe it. Do you know what these are worth.

ANTHEM

It doesn't matter.

TONYA

No. It really doesn't. What are you doing?

ANTHEM

I don't want to wait for breakfast.

TONYA

Lucky girl.

ANTHEM

Yes, I am.

Tonya sits there and can hear Anthem go out the front door.

EXT. JACOB'S BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Anthem walks down to the barn. There's enough light that she can see Jacob's ATV tracks in the snow headed up to the overlook. She heads up that direction.

EXT. CALDER'S OVERLOOK - DAY

Anthem approaches the overlook, and can see Jacob's back facing the coast. She wants to surprise him and walks softly. As she get closer, she realized something is wrong.

ANTHEM

Jacob?

Screams.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

Jacob!

She runs to him and comes around and realizes he has died. She cries out.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

No! No! Noooo!

She sobs with her head in his lap.

EXT. CALDER'S OVERLOOK - DAY

Anthem's head is still on Jacob's lap, but she has stopped crying. She stands up and looks at him. She realizes that his cigar and glass are on the ground.

ANTHEM

Oh. My Jacob.

She reaches inside his coat pocket and finds another cigar. She reaches inside another pocket and finds the lighter. She picks up the glass and pours a shot of bourbon. She sits on the other side next to him and lights the cigar and dips it in the bourbon. She then pulls out her phone and dials 911.

911 (V.O.)

911. What's your emergency?

ANTHEM

My friend has died.

911 (V.O.)
Are you sure?

ANTHEM
Very.

911 (V.O.)
Where are you located?

ANTHEM
Esprit de Bois

911 (V.O.)
The Calder place?

ANTHEM
Yes.

911 (V.O.)
Who's dead?

ANTHEM
Jacob Calder.

911 (V.O.)
Oh, my God.

ANTHEM
He can't help us now.

She continues to smoke as eventually she hears sirens in the distance.

EXT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

Anthem and Tonya are putting the last of their belongings in Anthem's car. As they're getting in the car, Simon McKenna's car is coming up the driveway. He stops near them and gets out with a valise.

ANTHEM
Simon.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)
Simon, we were just leaving.

SIMON
I don't think so. Look, I couldn't say anything until after the memorial service. We *really* need to talk.

Anthem is emotionally drained. It's all she can do to respond.

ANTHEM

Let's go inside.

They walk back to the cabin.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

Anthem and Simon are sitting at the table. Tonya is still standing.

SIMON

Tonya, is there any coffee left?

TONYA

Sure. No half and half.

SIMON

That's fine.

Tonya is preparing the coffee during the conversation.

SIMON (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I couldn't approach you until after memorial service, but I had strict instructions.

ANTHEM

Simon, I'm not following you.

Simon takes a large folder and a ring of keys out of his valise and puts them on the table.

SIMON

I am following Jacob's instructions as the executor of his will.

ANTHEM

Simon, I really would like to get on the road.

SIMON

I have to confess, Jacob and I went to the mat over this, but as things turned out, unfortunately, he was right.

TONYA

Simon! You're not listening.

SIMON

What?

TONYA

Why aren't we on the way to Charleston?

SIMON

He left you everything.

Tonya drops the coffee cups. Anthem faints.

INT. EDNA'S CABIN - DAY

Anthem is laying on a sofa. Suitcases are next to it. She's coming to as Simon and Tonya are sitting on the kitchen chairs next to the sofa. Anthem is groggy.

ANTHEM

I'm still here.

Anthem sits up.

ANTHEM (CONT'D)

What's everything?

Tonya wags her index finger.

TONYA

Miss Charleston, you may faint again after you learn what "everything" is.

Simon holds a glass of water.

SIMON

Here.

Anthem drinks, and become more alert.

ANTHEM

Okay, I heard " left everything."

SIMON

Well, he had some investment accounts. Not a lot, but he could live comfortably.

ANTHEM

What's comfortably.

SIMON

A little over three million.

TONYA

That's some comfort.

ANTHEM

Non-pluxed.

What else?

SIMON

There's Esprit de Bois, that's 95 acres. Appraised ten million.

TONYA

What else?

SIMON

Well this part has my curiosity.

Reading from a page in the will.

SIMON (CONT'D)

And full contents of the barn. Ms. Hayes is to have full dominion over the Mechanical Room, the Calder Reserve, and the Gallery Reserve.

ANTHEM

When did this happen?

SIMON

Two weeks ago.

Tonya is absolutely giddy for her friend.

TONYA

Oh Anthem, it's still so clear to me when we arrived.

ANTHEM

What?

TONYA

The moment.

Anthem blushes.

ANTHEM

When we arrived?

TONYA

Yes.

Pause. Simon rattles the keys.

SIMON

I don't know about you, but I'd like to see what's behind doors one, two, and three.

INT. JACOB'S BARN LOFT - DAY

They walk up the stairs to and through Jacobs small residence: Kitchen, Bathroom, and Bedroom. There is only a small hallway to one side of the barn. The first room is the "Mechanical Room". Simon unlocks the lock on the sliding doors and opens it.

It is a contemporary office with two large video screens.

There is a large cabinet with another lock. Simon finds that key and opens the cabinet. It has a few high powered-rifles, handguns, suppressors, and a display of knives.

ANTHEM

Shit!

TONYA

That kind of mechanic.

SIMON

Aha.

They return to the hallway. There's a large dumbwaiter that drops to the first floor. There is a stack of basic Calder brand walking sticks and their packing boxes on the small elevator.

They arrive at the Calder Reserve and repeat the same process. The room is dark. Anthem finds the light. It is several rows of finish completed high end Calder walking wands.

TONYA

Fifty, maybe more.

SIMON

Not to sound cold..

TONYA

Don't stop now...

SIMON

If these were worth 10 grand a piece a month ago?

ANTHEM

That's not important..ever.

They move on to the last room. The room is longer than the others. They open the doors and Anthem find a light. It is rows of finished paintings.

SIMON

Good lord! Her life's work.

TONYA

Who's?

ANTHEM

Edna Alarie. His first love.

A tear falls from Anthem's ice-blue eyes.

EXT. CALDER'S OVERLOOK - DAY

Springtime in Rockport. Anthem and Tonya are sitting on a new wooden loveseat that only looks at the Maine Coast.

There is now a small stacked granite pyramid next to Jacob's firepit and crescent wall.

From a close up, there is a young chocolate Labrador Retriever next to Tonya.

ANTHEM

Come on. We have a session.

TONYA

Come on, Molly.

The awkward puppy stumbles around the pair as they head toward the cabin.

FADE TO BLACK.