

The Balance
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Based on:
A Just Cause by Jason Offutt

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BLACK

The sound of strong wind rushes through the air. With it, the sound of sand as it beats against itself. A slow fade from the darkness reveals:

1 EXT. SAND VALLEY - NIGHT

...a steel cable, bouncing up and down in the wind, held tight, parallel to the ground. Sand is blowing through the air. The distance is sand, the ground- sand, and the air-sand.

DAVID

(V.O.)

*It wasn't always like this. Before
the sand...*

The cable continues bouncing lightly in the wind, still tight and alone, the sand swirling around it and then away into the distance.

Two poles held down by large concrete blocks hold the cable tightly, and then it continues on into the infinite distance.

DAVID (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

Before the war...

2 EXT. MOUNTAINS - MORNING

The area is evenly divided between two groups. Both have structural defenses guarding a few men. In front of each barricade stands an army, heavily armored and ready.

The two large groups of men begin to run towards each other atop a snow-covered battlefield, muskets drawn. A faint battle cry echoes through the air as the men run.

Behind them stand rows of armored men. Their hands pulled back, energy flows from the air itself into their hands. On one side, fireballs form in their hands. On the other, orbs of water.

Just as the men clash in the middle of the frozen battlefield, the fireballs and orbs of water fling from the men's hands towards each other. Gunfire echoes off the mountain walls.

The water turns to ice as it hurls through the air. The fire

(CONTINUED)

explodes as it smashes into people and the ground. Smoke begins to cloud everything, making it impossible to see.

FADE TO BLACK

DAVID

(V.O.)

Before everything began to die.

3 EXT. PAST VALLEY - DAY

A gravel road stretches into the distance, where snow covered mountains line the horizon. Along both sides of the road are small trees, young and flush. Beyond the trees, a small patch of lush grass, and then fields of crops.

DAVID

(V.O.)

Before we knew what the Balance was doing to our planet.

The closest tree, however, is not full of life. Its leaves are brown and wilted. They begin to fall from it one by one, quicker and quicker. As the bark begins to turn gray, the remaining trees begin to do the same.

In a slow fade the road becomes:

4 EXT. SAND VALLEY - NIGHT

...the cable. It still bounces tightly in the wind. The sand blows hard and steady, never relaxing. Never letting up it's recurring beating against the Earth.

A hand grasps tightly against the cable. Large leather gloves cover the flesh, protecting them from the sand. The arms and wrist are also covered with thick leather.

The figure of a man, DAVID, caucasian 35, slowly moves his way through the sand, pulling himself against the wind. Holding tightly to the cable, he never has both hands free.

He is carrying a large leather satchel with a thick leather strap. With one step it almost falls from his shoulder, but he pauses momentarily as it hangs on his elbow and flutters in the wind.

David wraps his left arm around the cable to keep steady, and carefully moves the satchel back to his shoulder.

Before continuing, David wipes dirt and sand from his thick

(CONTINUED)

goggles. His head is covered in a thick cloth hat, as well as a bandana over his mouth. Barely any skin is open to the piercing sand.

He wipes the goggles again and squints his eyes tightly at the cable. The line is frayed.

In the distance a faint blurred box is barely visible. Home.

David begins to pull himself faster, using both hands as he moves to the dark blurred box.

When David reaches his home it is a large wooden cabin, resembling a barn.

He grips the cable tightly, and uses his other hand to pull open the front door to the cabin.

He struggles a bit, using his whole body weight to move the door against the wind. It opens only a few inches and gets caught in the sand.

He pulls again and the satchel smashes into the ground, throwing off David's balance. He falls to the ground beside the satchel, and quickly reaches for the cable.

It is out of his reach. He scoots himself across the ground, staying low to avoid being thrown away in the wind. After a moment he reaches the cable, and pulls himself to it.

The satchel is almost completely covered in sand. David wipes his goggles once with his free hand. The leather strap is still around his wrist.

He spins his wrist to tighten the strap around it, and pulls the satchel out of the sand back to his body. He frees his hand and before picking up the satchel he pulls the door once more, opening it enough to get through.

David pulls the bag a little closer, and with a loud grunt tosses it through the open door. He places a hand inside the door and pulls himself into the cabin.

5 INT. CABIN, SAND ROOM - CONTINUOUS

David's silhouette stands in front of the open door and reaches out into the sand for the handle. He grasps it, and pulls the door shut with all his might. Darkness.

David leans against the wall, breathing deeply and gathering himself from the walk.

(CONTINUED)

He sets the satchel close to the door that leads to the inside of the cabin. He pulls the dirty goggles from his head and drops them to the floor. His face is covered in dirt and small cuts.

His face is rough, rigid, and hairy. He is exhausted and dirty. His movements are slow and careful.

He removes his cloth hat and drops it to the floor. Next he removes the gloves, and then his boots. He removes his thick leather jacket and sets it on a nearby chair. He removes his thick leather pants, and reveals cloth pants beneath.

Finally, he removes a dirty and sweat stained white t-shirt and drops it to the floor. He looks to his right shoulder where a massive bruise has formed from the strap of the satchel.

David picks up the satchel and steps through a large cloth curtain into his cabin.

6 INT. CABIN, LIVING SPACE - NIGHT

David steps cautiously through the dark as he stumbles trying to find a chair. Sand litters the wood floor. Faint wheezing is buried behind the darkness.

DAVID
(dry)
Marta.

David continues making his way through the small cabin. He bumps his shin on a chair and stops.

DAVID (CONT'D)
(dry)
Marta, are you awake?

He places the satchel onto the chair and un-snaps it. He pulls out a small wrapped package and places it on the table.

He pulls out a couple of cans of food and places them on the table. David then pulls out two large bottles of water and sets one on the table.

David licks his lips.

DAVID (CONT'D)
(dry)
Marta, I've brought you some water.

(CONTINUED)

Taking a bottle with him, he moves again through the darkness. His feet trudge through shallow sand; it covers the entire floor.

David walks slowly toward the wheezing MARTA, caucasian 34, his hand extended to feel his way in the dark.

His fingers lightly brushed the top of a chair that sat next to Marta's bed. David sank into the chair, still breathing deeply.

DAVID (CONT'D)
(dry)
How do you feel?

Marta only continues wheezing.

David opens the bottle of water and leans it to Marta's mouth. She takes a small sip.

DAVID (CONT'D)
(dry)
Do you remember when we were
children, Marta?

David dabs minute amounts of water onto Marta's skin and smooths it over her with his hand.

He places his hand on her forehead.

DAVID (CONT'D)
(dry)
It's getting better out there,
Marta. I'll need to replace the
cable again, but the wind seems
less harsh, so it shouldn't be as
hard as last time. And the drop had
enough bottles of water so each of
us could have one.

Marta sighs heavily, pulling in as much oxygen as she can.

David dabs a small blot of water onto Marta's lips. He quickly places the lid back onto the bottle.

He leans back in the chair, his body tired and sagging.

DAVID (CONT'D)
(dry)
If only it could be like the way it
used to be. Remember when we were
young?

7 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - DAY

A younger David, 15, is standing on one side of the field while his little brother KARL, caucasian 13, is standing on the opposite side.

Karl's hands are pulled back behind him. A fireball slowly spins between them.

KARL

You ready?

Before David can answer Karl throws the ball as fast as he can. A smoke trail follows the ball as it heads straight for David's head.

Seconds before the ball reaches David his hands fly above his head. A wall of water pours out from his fingertips, shielding him from the fireball.

The ball bounces off the water wall and hisses into nothing against the grass.

David's hands drop, and the water vanishes, leaving a small puddle by his feet.

DAVID

That makes the fifth in a row.
Aren't you tired of this game yet?

KARL

Not yet.

Karl runs quickly to his right into chest high crops.

KARL

See if you can hit me in here,
David.

David pulls his arm back like he's ready to throw a baseball.

DAVID

Ready?

David's arm begins to glow slightly as electricity forms in his hand from the air.

CHARLES

Boys.

David clenches his fist, the electricity pulling into his arm. He shakes it vigorously as he turns to his father, CHARLES, caucasian mid-40s.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

You two need to stop.

Charles places his hand onto David's shoulder. He is a rough man, worn from working in the fields.

CHARLES

Karl, come here. Now.

Charles leans in close to David's ear and whispers:

CHARLES

Karl is still a child. But you are almost a man. A man knows better than to pull the Balance from the Earth. And worse, you've been doing it for play.

Karl approaches the two. Charles leans back and finishes his sentence to the both of them.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

The Balance is for keeping plants alive. For providing fresh water. For giving life to our Earth. It is not to be abused any longer. Understand?

Both of the boys nod.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Good. Now, I have a favor to ask both of you. A new family has moved into the valley and needs help building their home. You boys will go in my place. I must tend to the crops before dinner.

DAVID

Yes, father. We'll represent the family well.

The boys begin walking toward the road to the rest of the valley.

CHARLES

Just see you get home by nightfall.

Charles stands by the fields for a moment watching his boys walk away. His head drops and he walks to the house.

8 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, ROAD - DAY

David and Karl walk slowly down the road. David is kicking rocks into the grass.

Small trees line both sides of the road.

KARL

What do you think they're like?

DAVID

I don't know. Maybe, they'll be monsters with horns and long noses!

David acts out his words, making horns with his fingers on top of his head.

KARL

Stop it, David. That's not funny.

David stands on his tip-toes making himself taller, horns still affixed to his head.

DAVID

Rawr!!!

KARL

Stop.

A fireball forms quickly in Karl's hand. He lets it fly. It sizzles to nothing at David's feet.

DAVID

Karl.

David drops his hands to his sides, and lands flat on his feet. He is very serious.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Father said we can't use the Balance for playing.

KARL

I'm sorry. It's just going to be hard not to.

The boys continue walking in silence.

9 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, MUD ROOM - DAY

Charles enters through the front door of the cabin. He sits in a white wooden chair and takes off his dirty boots. A soft sigh comes from Charles as he leans back in the chair.

His head tilts over to a small plant on the window sill. The plant is short, but vibrant green with healthy leaves.

Charles pushes himself out of the chair and enters...

10 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Charles makes his way across the room to his bed. His wife, ANGELA, caucasian early-40s, sleeps silently on top of the covers.

Charles smiles at her for a moment, and then lies down on the bed next to her. He places his hand on her side, and spreads his fingers. The slightest light blue hue begins to glow around his fingers before it cuts to...

11 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, MARTA'S FARM - DAY

David and Karl approach a newly built cabin.

KARL

Everyone in the valley is here.

Men from all the families in the valley are gathered around a barn. THOM, caucasian 12, is running back and forth from a wagon to the inside of the cabin, carrying only one item with him at a time.

David looks to a wagon and sees JENKINS, caucasian 30s, who smiles at David.

David reaches over and grabs Karl's wrist, pulling him closer.

DAVID

Stay close to me.

The boys continue walking until they reach the front door of the cabin.

MARIA, caucasian mid-30s, walks out of the house empty handed. She stops at the wagon and pulls out a crate. She puts the crate on the ground, and turns to the cabin.

(CONTINUED)

MARIA

Marta, come out here and get this crate please.

Maria looks at David and Karl.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Are you two from the farm at the top of the hill? Charles and Angela's boys?

DAVID

Yes, Ma'am. I am David, and this is my younger brother, Karl.

Karl waves at the woman.

MARIA

How old are you Karl?

KARL

I'm thirteen years old, Ma'am.

MARIA

I'll tell you what. Why don't you keep my son, Thomas, entertained? Your brother can help my daughter and me unpack the wagon.

Karl's eyes seem to light up. Thom walks out of the house and looks at the boys.

MARIA

Thomas, you and Karl go play now.

Karl steps forward and tags Thom's arm.

KARL

You're it, try and catch me.

Karl takes off into a dead sprint away from the cabin; Thomas follows as quick as he can.

A young MARTA, 14 exits the cabin and looks at David as he picks up the crate at Maria's feet. David looks to the doorway and makes eye contact with Marta.

MARIA

That is my daughter, Marta.

DAVID

Hello, Marta.

Marta smiles at him.

12 INT. CABIN, LIVING SPACE - NIGHT

Marta's breathing is barely audible over the wind outside. David, sitting at the table, pours water into a small cup. He places a lid over the water. He picks up a small metallic looking packet and shakes it a couple of times. He looks back toward his bed.

DAVID

This soup is terrible, Marta.

David tears the edge of the metallic package, and uncovers the water. He pours a powder into the water and then quickly covers it again. He stands, bringing the cup with him. He shakes the cup gently as he makes his way through the dark to the bed.

DAVID

Don't blame me for the bad soup.
It's all that was left at the food
drop when I arrived. The others
must have missed it.

David's hand grabs the back of the chair near the bed. He sits down, and uncovers the soup. He picks up a spoon from the night stand and scoops up some soup.

He places the spoon against Marta's lips. Her tongue slowly comes from her mouth and touches the soup.

DAVID

I heard a report on the wireless
while I was at the food drop.

David fills another spoon with soup.

DAVID (CONT'D)

A team digging atop the Old Forest
has found viable acorns and a few
other seeds.

Marta takes another small sip of soup.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Trees, Marta. Trees. If they can
grow enough trees, perhaps the sand
will go away.

Marta starts coughing again, more violently than normal. David sets the cup on the night stand, and leans in to Marta.

13 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, ROAD - TWILIGHT

The sun sits just atop the mountains in the distance. David and Karl make their way up the road towards their farm.

DAVID

What did you think of Thomas?

KARL

We're friends, now. We played lots of fun games. Did you know his father's name is Thomas as well?

DAVID

I spoke to him for a bit. He was asking about father.

KARL

That seems silly to me, to name your son after yourself.

DAVID

It's not that silly.

Karl jumps ahead of David and turns to face him, walking backwards.

KARL

I saw you making flirty eyes at Thomas' sister.

DAVID

Her name is Marta.

KARL

I saw you making flirty eyes at Marta.

David says nothing.

KARL (CONT'D)

You like her.

DAVID

She was quite...

CHARLES

(O.S. yelling from a distance)

Boys, hurry up now.

Karl turns and runs to the house as quick as he can.

(CONTINUED)

David looks to his right at a small elderberry tree next to the road. It's leaves and stem are completely grey. The berries cover the ground around the stem.

David kneels and picks up a berry. He rolls it between his fingers for a moment and then drops it on the ground.

14 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - NIGHT

Karl picks up a large stack of dishes from the table and carries them to the counter and sets them next to his mother.

ANGELA

David.

David is sitting at the table staring at a glass of water.

DAVID

Yes, mother?

ANGELA

Your father wanted to talk to you outside.

David sullenly pushes himself from the chair and walks to the door.

15 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - NIGHT

David walks out of the front door and closes it behind him. Charles is sitting on a rocking chair in the grass. David approaches.

DAVID

Father?

CHARLES

David, I need to speak with you about something.

David sits in the rocking chair next to his father. The full moon sits silently in the sky, providing a large amount of light.

Charles stops rocking, and turns to David.

CHARLES

Son.

David watches his father; his eyes looking over his son as he forms his thoughts.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Your mother is sick, son. The doctor can't tell what is ailing her.

DAVID

Can't we use the Balance to...

CHARLES

No. That wouldn't be fair to the world to use its life source to save only one person.

David looks down to the grass. The way he holds himself seems to change.

DAVID

How long does she have?

CHARLES

We can't tell. Could be a few years. We're going to have to cut back on some things so we can get supplies to take care of her, alright?

David nods at his father, his eyes beginning to well up.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Don't tell your brother. He's too young to understand.

Charles turns and looks to the moon. They sit quietly together for a moment.

DAVID

Father.

Charles looks to David.

DAVID (CONT'D)

One of the elderberry trees along the road is dead. I saw it on the way home tonight. All the berries were on the ground, and...

David pauses; tears built up on his eyes.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Karl and I killed the elderberry tree, didn't we?

Charles smirks at his son.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

No, son. Just because what we see
on the outside is dead, doesn't
mean it's dead inside.

David looks at Charles with confusion on his face.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

It's been a long day. You should
head to bed, son.

David stands and walks slowly back to the cabin.

Just as David reaches the door, Charles speaks again:

CHARLES

Everything will work itself out,
David.

David nods understandingly and then enters his house.

16 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - NIGHT

David enters the living space from the mud room. Angela is
washing the dishes in a water filled basin.

David wraps his arms around his mother and holds her
tightly.

Angela runs her fingers through David's hair.

ANGELA

It'll be alright, son. Get some
rest.

17 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LOFT - NIGHT

David climbs up to the loft and sits onto his bed. Karl is
already asleep in his bed.

David removes his shoes and lies down on his bed, staring up
at the ceiling. Tears begin streaming down his cheeks. After
a few moments he rolls over and curls into a ball.

18 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - MORNING

The valley is quiet. Dew covers the grass and reflects the
sunlight across the land.

Charles walks out of the cabin and looks over the valley. He yawns quickly, his breath appearing as he exhales. He begins walking toward the road.

19 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, ROAD - MORNING

Charles approaches the dead elderberry tree. He reaches out and gently holds the dry leaves between his fingers. He looks up again into the distance at the mountains. He pulls the leaf from the branch and puts it in his pocket.

He begins walking again.

20 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, MARTA'S FARM - MORNING

Charles walks up to the front door of the cabin. He knocks twice and waits a moment.

THOMAS SR., caucasian late-30s, opens the door.

CHARLES

Hello.

Thomas extends his hand out to Charles.

THOMAS SR.

Hello, you are?

CHARLES

Charles. I live at the ranch at the top of the hill.

THOMAS SR.

Oh, yes. I met your sons yesterday.

CHARLES

Yes. I hope they were helpful.

THOMAS SR.

They were. Fine young men you are raising.

CHARLES

Thank you. I am on my way to the valley council meeting. The head of each household is to attend.

THOMAS SR.

Oh. I was not aware. Let me tell the misses that I am going.

Thomas Sr. enters the cabin.

(CONTINUED)

Charles waits patiently outside the cabin. A few moments later Thomas Sr. exits the cabin.

The two begin walking back toward the road.

CHARLES

How are things outside of the valley?

THOMAS SR.

They are getting worse. Last I heard the war was spreading.

CHARLES

What did you do before you came to the valley?

THOMAS SR.

I grew trees. The older trees were fine and still strong. The younger trees were hit and miss, the use of Balance was taking its toll on the weaker trees.

CHARLES

And of new trees?

THOMAS SR.

We couldn't get any new trees to start growing.

CHARLES

Just as I feared.

21 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, ROAD - MORNING

The two men continue walking down the road toward a small wooden building.

THOMAS SR.

Marta is my oldest. She is 14. And Thomas junior is my son.

CHARLES

And your wife?

THOMAS SR.

Maria. We met a long time ago.

Charles and Thomas Sr. walk up to the wooden council building. Charles opens door and motions for Thomas Sr. to enter.

22 INT. COUNCIL BUILDING - DAY

In the middle of the room sits a large table with 14 seats. Only 11 of the seats are filled.

Thomas Sr. enters the room followed quickly by Charles.

AKANE IMIAGA, japanese 41, sees Charles enter.

AKANE

Charles, welcome. Is this the new man to the valley?

CHARLES

Yes, this is Thomas.

THOMAS SR.

Greetings all.

Akane stands and shakes Thomas Sr.'s hand.

AKANE

Akane Imiaga.

THOMAS SR.

A pleasure to meet you.

Charles motions again to Thomas Sr. to a chair. Thomas Sr. sits down in the chair. Charles sits down in the next chair.

The oldest man in the room, RICHARD O'LAUGHLIN, caucasian 63, is sitting at the head of the table.

RICHARD

Who is missing?

All of the men look around.

Another man, FRANKLIN, african american 50s, speaks up.

FRANKLIN

Jenkins is missing, Richard.

RICHARD

Hmmm.... Late again I see. That's fine, let us begin.

The door swings open and Jenkins enters.

JENKINS

Sorry I'm late, council.

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

Try to be on time. We are not
afraid to start without you.

Jenkins sits in the only empty chair.

RICHARD

Our first order of business is to
welcome Thomas and his family to
the valley.

The council members smile at Thomas Sr. again.

RICHARD

(cont'd)

I know many of you helped him and
his family raise their house and
barn yesterday. I'm sure he
appreciates it.

Thomas Sr. nods.

THOMAS SR.

I do, thank you all very much.

RICHARD

Our second order of business is a
very important matter. Charles will
explain.

Charles stands from his chair to address the council.

CHARLES

Fellow council members, I try my
hardest to make it my business to
know what is going on outside of
this lush valley. I spoke with my
resources recently and Thomas this
morning about the outside world.
Both gave me grim news, as
expected.

Jenkins slams his hand against the table. All of the council
members jump in surprise and look to Jenkins.

JENKINS

You're not going to stand up there
and blab about the "Balance" are
you?

Charles stops speaking and looks at Jenkins.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

Just because you don't believe in it, doesn't mean that it doesn't exist.

JENKINS

Every month you come in here and tell us about the Balance and how it is killing our plants. None of my plants are dying, none of your plants are dying. This seems like a hoax to me.

Charles shoves his hand into his pocket and pulls out the dead leaf and slams it against the table.

CHARLES

The effects of using the Balance have started making their way into the valley.

The council members look down at the leaf.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

That leaf is from one of Akane's elderberry trees that he planted near the road.

Jenkins stands and stares at Charles.

JENKINS

There are other things that can kill plants: insects, disease... But the "Balance?" I think not. This valley is peaceful because of our laws. The war out there is being fought over land and in no way can effect our valley.

CHARLES

And if we cannot find a way to keep the Balance then there will be no more land to fight over.

Charles remains stoic as he and Jenkins stare at each other.

23

INT. CABIN, LIVING SPACE - NIGHT

David sleeps quietly on a small bed next to Marta's. His eyes open slowly. He looks more worn down than normal. He sits up and looks to a wheezing Marta. He looks to the far wall.

(CONTINUED)

A small metal box with a glass front is mounted to the wall. The glass is tinted red; the box is the only electronic thing in the entire cabin.

His skin is sweat covered. He coughs once to clear his throat. He stands from the bed and takes slow cautious steps toward the sand room.

DAVID

Marta... I'm going early to the food drop. I'll bring you home something good. A potato, perhaps.

David stops at the table and places his hand on it to brace himself and rest.

DAVID (CONT'D)

The man on the wireless said there are still potatoes and sometimes they're at the drops.

He starts moving again to the curtain. He pulls it aside and steps through...

24 INT. CABIN, SAND ROOM - CONTINUOUS

David braces himself on the wall and picks up his thick pants, pulling them on slowly. His movement is slow and precise as he puts on his boots, followed by his heavy leather jacket.

He turns to the wall next to the curtain and picks up a small knife from a hook and places it into his pocket. He places his hat on his head and then pulls the goggles over his eyes.

He wraps a scarf tightly around his face and then tucks the ends into his jacket. He takes a couple of steps toward the door.

He bends over and picks up his bag from the chair and places it over his shoulder. Finally he puts on his gloves and pulls the sleeves of his jacket over his wrists.

He leans against the door, takes one last breath and then pushes the door open with all his might.

25

EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, MARTA'S FARM - NIGHT

A bonfire burns a good distance away from the cabin. David, 20, stands by Marta, 19, near the bonfire.

Thom, 17, and Karl, 18, are talking with each other.

Charles is sitting at a table with a much more frail Angela, Maria and Thomas Sr. Charles lifts a glass into the air.

CHARLES

Here is to four years of prosperous
living in the valley.

Thomas Sr. lifts his glass.

THOMAS SR.

And to many more.

The four clank their glasses together and then take a drink.

Karl and Thom are sitting next to the fire playing instruments and singing about the war. At the end of their song, Karl turns to Thomas.

KARL

I'm going.

THOM

What?

KARL

I'm joining the army to fight our
oppressors.

THOM

You can't, your father won't let
you.

KARL

Then I'll sneak away. This is what
I want to do. I'm eighteen now. I'm
a man and this is my life.

THOM

This is crazy Karl.

There is a pregnant pause between them.

KARL

You can come with me, if you want.

(CONTINUED)

THOM
I'll think about it.

Thomas Sr. and Charles are standing away from the women at the table. David and Marta have joined the company at the table.

THOMAS SR.
So when is your son going to make
an honest woman of my daughter?

Charles laughs quickly.

CHARLES
Just as soon as she gets it through
his head.

Thomas Sr. laughs.

THOMAS SR.
Charles, I want to thank you for
helping us out during the dry
season.

CHARLES
Even though you're not family yet,
you will be someday.

Charles looks back to the table.

Marta is sitting next to David, their hands holding each other on top of the table. The air is filled with laughter as Maria just finished a joke.

A LOW RUMBLE spreads through the air. Charles and Thomas Sr. turn and walk quickly back to the table. They set their glasses down on the table and continue walking toward the council building.

David runs up behind his father and follows them to the council building.

26 INT. COUNCIL BUILDING - NIGHT

The door opens; Charles steps in and turns on the light.

In the center of the table is the wireless receiver. A small red light blinks continuously. Charles picks up the unit and presses the play button.

(CONTINUED)

WIRELESS

Attention all colonies. Our oppressors have failed. We have pushed them back to their native country. With steadfast research we have contained the desert. Know that we will continue this war until not a single of our oppressors can stand. We are calling for another group of volunteers to help with our last push.

The room stands quietly. Richard enters the room with Akane.

RICHARD

What did it say, Charles?

CHARLES

They're calling for volunteers.

RICHARD

Then it seems we should have an emergency meeting, Charles.

CHARLES

Shall I gather the rest of the members of the council.

RICHARD

That's not necessary. The meeting can wait until tomorrow.

Charles puts the wireless receiver back on the table.

Richard and Akane leave the room. Thomas Sr. places a hand on Charles' shoulder.

THOMAS SR.

I know.

27

EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - MORNING

Charles sits in the rocking chair outside his cabin. His hands are cupped in front of his face. His eyes are tired, and the bags under them are very apparent.

David walks out of the front door and down to his father.

DAVID

Father, can we speak?

Charles seems to wake from another world. He looks to David.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

What about, son?

David sits in the chair next to his father. Charles takes a drink from a cup of water.

DAVID

Father, I want to ask about Marta.

Charles sets the cup in his lap, still holding it tightly.

CHARLES

You want to marry Marta?

David smiles at his father. Charles looks away from his son off to the distance. David's hands start to fiddle in his lap.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

She is a pretty girl. And smart.

Charles turns to David and smiles.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Are you sure you want to marry a woman smarter than you?

David smiles and lightly chuckles.

DAVID

Didn't you?

Charles reaches over and pats David on the back.

CHARLES

Where will you live?

DAVID

I was hoping we could live in the loft until I build us a home. I've cleaned it and built some furniture.

CHARLES

And your brother?

DAVID

He's expressed interest in sleeping in the loft in the barn.

CHARLES

When is the wedding?

(CONTINUED)

DAVID
To... Hopefully, tomorrow.

CHARLES
You haven't asked Thomas, have you?

DAVID
I wanted you to tell me I am ready.

Charles stands, as does David.

CHARLES
You love this girl?

David nods once at his father.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Then you are ready.

David hugs his father, and Charles wraps his arms around his son. Charles pats David's back twice.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Now go ask her father.

David starts walking toward the road.

28 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, MARTA'S FARM - MORNING

David is pacing in front of Marta's house, talking to himself.

DAVID
I just wanted... no, no, no. I
wanted to demand... no, wanted to
ask for your daughter's hand...
Marta's hand, in marriage. We've
talked about it and want to get
married tomorrow, my father's
approved...

David stops pacing and looks at the door. He takes a deep breath and knocks on the door. There is no answer. David knocks again.

Thomas Sr. answers the door.

THOMAS SR.
David. What can I help you with,
son?

(CONTINUED)

DAVID
Sir, may I talk to you in private?

29 INT. MARTA'S CABIN - MORNING

Marta looks around a corner to see David outside her cabin.
As Maria walks by Marta:

MARIA
Marta. Come, let the men talk.

Maria takes Marta's arm and pulls her from the corner.

30 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, MARTA'S FARM - MORNING

Thomas Sr. steps out of the cabin and closes the door behind him.

THOMAS SR.
What's on your mind?

DAVID
I wanted to ask for your permission
to marry Marta.

Thomas Sr. squints at David and crosses his arms across his chest.

THOMAS SR.
You think you can provide for my
daughter? Where will you live?

DAVID
My father has given me the loft in
his cabin until I can build a cabin
of our own.

THOMAS SR.
And where will you work?

DAVID
My father has hired me as a hand on
his farm.

Thomas Sr. extends his hand to David.

THOMAS SR.
Then you have my blessing.

DAVID
(surprise)
Really?

Thomas Sr. opens the door to the cabin and yells inside.

THOMAS SR.
Maria, Marta come outside please.

Thomas Sr. turns to David.

THOMAS SR. (CONT'D)
You have a ring?

DAVID
Uh...

THOMAS SR.
It's ok, son.

Maria and Marta exit the house.

MARIA
What is it dear?

Thomas Sr. pulls Maria to his side and motions for Marta to go to David.

THOMAS SR.
Marta, David has a question for you.

David drops to one knee and takes Marta's hands.

DAVID
Marta, will you take my hand in marriage?

Marta's face lights up.

MARTA
Yes! Of course!

David stands and embraces Marta as tight as he can.

THOMAS SR.
When is the wedding, son?

David turns to Thomas Sr.

DAVID
Tomorrow, sir.

Thomas Sr. nods approvingly.

(CONTINUED)

THOMAS SR.

Good. Now go tell your family, boy.

David and Marta begin walking toward David's house, excitedly.

Thomas Sr. turns to Maria.

THOMAS SR.

Finally.

Maria lightly slaps Thomas Sr.'s chest.

MARIA

Oh, hush. You can't rush love.

31 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - DAY

Charles and Angela are sitting at the kitchen table. An empty syringe is between them on the table.

CHARLES

The doctor says that if you keep getting sick in the morning that we'll have to increase your prescription.

ANGELA

I know. Some days, Charles, I wish I could just give up.

Charles stands and takes Angela by her hands. She stands up next to him. He wraps his arms around her. Angela begins to tear up.

CHARLES

I'll understand when it's your time to go, but I will miss you. You are my better half.

Angela's arms are wrapped tightly on Charles' back. The sound of the door opening echoes off the walls.

DAVID

(O.S.)

Father!

Angela pulls away from Charles and wipes her tears away. She smiles up at Charles and then turns to face the doorway.

David and Marta enter the living space.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID
Mother, father; she said yes.

Marta smiles widely at Charles and Angela. Charles smiles, while Angela steps forward and gives David a kiss on the cheek and then hugs Marta.

David steps over to Charles.

DAVID
Where is Karl? I want to tell him
the news.

Charles looks up to the loft.

CHARLES
I haven't seen him.

32 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, MARTA'S FARM - DAY

Thom is working in the fields. He pauses for a moment and wipes his face with a handkerchief. In the distance, Karl is walking towards him from the council building.

Thom looks around quickly for his father, drops his shovel and runs to Karl.

THOM
So, what'd you find?

KARL
The transmission they got last
night was asking for volunteers.

Karl's eyes are searching, as if he's not really thinking about being in the valley.

KARL (CONT'D)
We need to leave tonight.

THOM
Karl, have you heard the news?

KARL (CONT'D)
If we go out the south end of the
valley then we can go through the
mountains.

Thom grabs Karl by the arms and shakes him.

(CONTINUED)

THOM
Karl. Karl. Karl. Karl. Karl.

Karl stops talking and looks at Thom

THOM (CONT'D)
Have you heard the news?

KARL
Yeah, the army is pushing back the
oppressors.

THOM
No, Marta and David are to be
married...
(beat)
tomorrow.

Karl is looking through Thom after a moment he looks
directly at him.

KARL
We still have no choice; we have to
leave tonight if we want to get
there in time for the last battle.

THOM
And miss the wedding?

KARL
We have no choice.

A look of disappointment crosses Thom's face. Thom looks to
the distance, seeing Charles as he approaches the house.

Charles knocks on the door to the cabin. Thomas Sr. opens
the door almost instantly. Charles is a little shocked.

THOMAS SR.
Saw you coming.

Thomas Sr. and Charles begin walking toward the council
building.

Karl and Thom watch patiently from a distance.

KARL
You pack and I'll see you tonight
after sun down.

THOM
Are you sure?

Karl stares at Thom.

(CONTINUED)

THOM

Ok.

Karl makes his way up the hill towards his house.

33 INT. COUNCIL BUILDING - DAY

Charles and Thomas Sr. enter the building. Everyone is already seated. They had been discussing something, but suddenly become awkwardly quiet as Charles enters.

Thomas Sr. and Charles sit.

RICHARD

It has come to our attention,
Charles, that your son and Thomas'
daughter are to be wed tomorrow.

Charles nods.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

You both are well aware of the
rules and laws of this valley. No
two families are to marry together
without the council's express
permission.

Thomas Sr. begins to interject, but before he can get out a single sound, Richard continues.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

If, two families are joined
together than their wealth must be
shared, and that could upset the
entire economy of our valley.

Akane diligently writes the meeting notes onto a pad of paper.

CHARLES

Richard, the thought of using this
marriage as a way to gain more
wealth had never crossed our minds.

RICHARD

Then why have you arranged for this
marriage between your eldest
children?

Charles chuckles lightly to himself.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

Our children are in love. I support their love for each other. If this marriage changes the economy of the valley in any way it will only be for the better.

RICHARD

How's that?

CHARLES

My son and his future wife will soon build a house of their own and grow their own crops, some which we don't have many of, potatoes perhaps.

Richard smiles at Charles and Thomas.

RICHARD

Then congratulations are in order. I hope this bond between your families flourishes.

Richard turns his attention to the rest of the room, as Thomas Sr. and Charles sit.

RICHARD

The second order of business. Doctor Rogers has something they'd like to bring to the table.

An older gentleman, DR. SAMUEL ROGERS, caucasian 54, stands from his chair.

SAMUEL

As most of you know, it is the perfect time to begin planting my corn. However, two bags of my corn seed have gone missing.

Akane stops writing.

AKANE

Come to think of it. Some of my pea crop is missing.

RICHARD

Do any of you have any clue as to who might be taking the foods?

(CONTINUED)

THOMAS SR.

I do. Two days ago I caught someone snooping around in my barn.

RICHARD

Who?

Thomas Sr. points slowly to Jenkins.

After a split second Jenkins stands abruptly, shouting.

JENKINS

This is outrageous.

Jenkins slams his hand down on the table.

JENKINS (CONT'D)

I was never in your barn, Thomas.

SAMUEL

Your chickens are looking awfully fat this year, Jenkins.

JENKINS

Listen old man, what I do with my chickens in my business.

RICHARD

Calm down everyone. Sit down, Jenkins.

Everyone in the room has a seat.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Jenkins, did you steal the seeds and peas for your chickens?

Jenkins is quiet. His arms are crossed tightly in front of his chest.

JENKINS

Yeah, I took them.

RICHARD

I'm sorry to hear that, Jenkins.

JENKINS

Why? My chickens have got to eat if you all want eggs and meat.

RICHARD

You know the punishment for stealing. Until the next meeting

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD (cont'd)
you are confined to your land and
your land alone. Your fate will be
determined at the next meeting.

Jenkins stands again in a rage. Charles watches quietly.

Jenkins slams his chair under the table and storms out of the council building. After the door swings closed, Charles turns to Richard. The rest of the room begins chatting amongst themselves.

CHARLES
He's a risk, sir. His anger will
only lead to bad things happening
in the valley.

RICHARD
We'll discuss it at a later time,
Charles.

Richard turns his voice to the rest of the council.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Our last order of business is the
radio transmission we received last
night.

All the men at the table refocus and begin listening to Richard.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
The army is calling for volunteers
for the final push. This is a very
serious discussion to have with
your first born sons. Now, if no
one volunteers then that is fine. I
understand.

Richard pauses and looks at each of the men in the room.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
We'll meet again in two days to
discuss Jenkins and volunteers.
Good day, gentlemen.

Richard stands. The rest of the table stands as well and slowly make their way to the door.

34 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - DAY

Charles enters the living space. Marta, Angela and David are all sitting at the table.

Angela stands and gives Charles a small hug.

ANGELA

What did the council say?

CHARLES

They gave their blessing for the marriage.

Charles motions for Angela to sit again. She does, and he sits in the last empty chair.

CHARLES

Jenkins was stealing crops to feed his chickens and the council wants us to discuss sending volunteers to help the war effort.

Karl enters the living space from mud room.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Karl, sit son.

Karl grabs a nearby chair and pulls it up to the table.

CHARLES

The council is seeking volunteers, however, you both know how I feel about the war and what it is doing to our planet. If anyone asks we discussed it.

Charles stands and walks toward the mud room.

CHARLES

I must get back to work. A lot must be done for the wedding. David, come help.

David stands, his hands still holding Marta's. He let's go of her hands and exits the room. Charles exits.

35 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - DAY

Charles closes the door behind him and takes a couple of steps toward the barn when the door flies open. Karl closes the door quickly and runs up to his father.

KARL
Father, I want to go.

CHARLES
Go where?

KARL
To the war. I can help.

CHARLES
No, it's not up for discussion.

Charles continues walking, leaving Karl behind him. Karl turns and kicks the ground, sending dirt into the air.

36 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LOFT - DAY

Karl climbs up to the top of the loft and grabs a bag. He throws it onto his bed and begins filling it with clothes from his dresser.

37 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - NIGHT

The front door to the cabin opens slowly as Karl sneaks out. His bag is on his back. He closes the door as quietly as he can.

He turns and quickly begins running down the road toward Thom's house.

38 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, MARTA'S FARM - NIGHT

Karl runs up and crouches next to the family's wagon. He cups one hand near his mouth and makes an owl call.

A couple of seconds later the front door opens slowly as Thom exits his house. He also has a bag on his back. He runs over to the wagon and crouches next to Karl.

THOM
Are you sure you want to do this?

(CONTINUED)

KARL

This is the only way we can make a difference. You think we can accomplish anything staying in this valley?

THOM

I guess not.

KARL

Come on, let's go.

Karl and Thom run off toward the road and the mountains in the distance.

39

INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - DAY

Charles and Angela are sitting at the kitchen table. A small piece of unfolded paper sits in front of Angela. She is staring at Charles.

ANGELA

What do we do?

CHARLES

There is nothing we can do. The boy has made up his mind, and he's gone.

ANGELA

Do you think Maria and Thomas know yet?

CHARLES

I'm almost certain, but I suppose I should go check and see how they are doing.

Charles gets up from the chair and pushes it under the table.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I'll return soon. Tell David when he comes down. Nothing else must go wrong today.

Charles leans down and kisses Angela on the forehead. He exits the room.

Angela sits quietly, staring off into space.

David climbs down from the loft. He is dressed in his finest clothes.

(CONTINUED)

Angela rises from the kitchen table and walks to him.

She pulls on his jacket and sizes him up. A smile crosses her face; however her smile isn't a happy one.

DAVID
What's wrong, mother?

ANGELA
Have a seat, David.

Angela motions to the table. Her and David both sit down. Angela takes David's hands into her own.

ANGELA
David.

Angela pauses. Her eyes begin to well up.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Your brother. He's gone off to
fight in the war.

David stands quickly.

DAVID
What?

ANGELA
Sit down. There's nothing we can do
to stop him.

David sits again.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
He left last night with Thom.

David reaches out and grabs his mother's hands.

DAVID
He'll be alright, mother. The
Balance will watch over him.

Angela smiles again at her son, her cheeks damp with tears.

ANGELA
Now, let's not think about that.
Today is your special day.

Angela reaches into her pocket and pulls out a small ring. She places it into David's palm.

ANGELA

Take this. It was your
grandmother's on your father's
side. I want you to give it to
Marta.

David closes his palm. He leans forward and hugs Angela.

DAVID

Thank you.

40 EXT. MOUNTAINS, PATHWAY - DAY

Karl and Thom are walking closely up a steep hill. Karl pulls himself up to the top of a large boulder. He pauses and looks up, and then down to Thom.

KARL

We're about to cross above the
treeline.

Thom breathes out, his breath is visible.

THOM

How far out do you think we are?

KARL

A couple more days hike, at most.

Thom grabs the root of a plant and pulls himself up. The root gives out and Thom falls, sliding down only a couple of feet before he clutches onto a rock.

Karl reaches down and extends a hand to Thom.

KARL

We'll stop as soon as we find some
place safe.

Thom grabs Karl's hand and climbs up.

41 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - DAY

A clearing near the edge of a pond is laid out with dozens of chairs. The seats are filled with people from all over the valley.

Richard is standing in front of the entire crowd. David is standing next to him.

Marta and Thomas Sr. begin walking down the aisle toward Richard and David. A huge smile crosses David's face.

(CONTINUED)

Charles watches his son, and then looks to his future daughter. Thomas Sr. and Marta reach David. She hugs her father and he steps away and takes his seat next to Maria.

RICHARD

Ladies and gentlemen. We are gathered here today...

David smiles at Marta. His hands hold hers tightly. Marta smiles at David as Richard continues talking. Angela's eyes are welling up.

Thomas Sr. grabs Maria's hand as her eyes begin to well up. Charles watches the ceremony with a tight smile on his face.

David slowly places the ring on Marta's finger. Marta smiles, and begins to cry at the surprise of the ring. Her and David make eye contact. David mouths "I love you."

RICHARD

You may now kiss the bride.

David leans in and slowly kisses Marta. They step back and begin walking down the aisle away from Richard. Everyone begins clapping.

42 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, BARN - NIGHT

The barn is lit up and decorated with flowers. Music is playing from a live band. Everyone is dancing in the barn. Marta and David are standing together by the door. A line of people walk up and greet them.

43 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - NIGHT

Charles and Thomas Sr. are standing outside the barn staring off at the mountains.

THOMAS SR.

How far do you think they've made it?

CHARLES

They're probably near the peak of the mountains by now.

THOMAS SR.

Think they'll make it all the way?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

If this truly is what Karl wants
then he'll make it.

The two of them stand quietly looking up at the mountains.

44 INT. MOUNTAINS, CAVE - NIGHT

Karl and Thom stumble into a small cave. Both of them are shivering; their skin is a faint shade of blue.

THOM

So cold.

KARL

I know.

Both of them scoot across the ground to the back wall of the cave. They are breathing short visible breaths.

Karl reaches out and pulls Thom to him.

KARL

Keep close.

Karl pulls his glove from his hand, and holds it out in front of them.

His palm begins to glow faintly. Karl inhales deeply through his nose.

THOM

What are you doing?

KARL

Shhh... I have to focus.

Thom watches Karl's hand anxiously.

KARL

It's hard to find any heat in the
air.

THOM

For what?

Karl doesn't answer. The glow in his palm begins to grow to his whole hand. A very small fireball begins to form in his hand.

(CONTINUED)

KARL

In my bag is a small sheet. Get it.

Thom grabs Karl's bag and begins digging through it.

Karl continues focusing on the fireball. A strong breeze comes into the cave. The fireball flickers lightly.

Thom hands the sheet to Karl, who immediately rolls it into a ball with his free hand. He places it on the ground between them.

Karl then carefully turns his hand over and presses the fireball against the sheet. Slowly it catches on fire. After a couple of seconds Karl pulls his hand away and puts his glove back on.

Thom stares intently at the fire.

THOM

How did you do that?

KARL

The Balance.

THOM

It's real?

KARL

That's why this war matters so. They are using the Balance to fight, but it's draining the life from the planet.

THOM

Wait, you mean...

Karl interrupts.

KARL

Some plant somewhere died so I could create that fire and keep us alive.

45 EXT. MOUNTAINS, CAVE - NIGHT

A flickering light comes from the entrance to the cave. Snow swirls around the opening. From a distance only a small shimmer is visible.

46 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - MORNING

The sound of birds chirping echoes through the air. The barn sits lifeless as does the cabin. The sun shimmers lightly off the grass. Peace seems to have settled on the ranch.

The front door to the cabin opens quietly. Charles steps through and closes the door. He stretches and yawns. He takes a couple steps forward and pauses to stare out over the valley.

47 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LOFT - MORNING

David and Karl's beds are pushed together. David and Marta are curled up next to each other in the middle. David's eyes open slowly.

He rolls away from Marta and frees his arm from under her head.

DAVID

Agh...

He rolls his shoulder and then flexes his fingers.

Marta sighs lightly in her sleep. David leans over her and whispers in her ear.

DAVID

(whisper)

Good morning, Marta.

She rolls over and looks up at him.

MARTA

Good morning.

David leans in and kisses Marta softly.

MARTA

How'd you sleep?

DAVID

Spectacularly.

Marta smiles at David.

MARTA

So what do we do now?

(CONTINUED)

DAVID

Today? I build us a larger bed.

Marta and David share a laugh.

48 INT. COUNCIL BUILDING - DAY

Charles enters the building. He is the first one to arrive. He sits down in his usual seat and places his hands onto the table. He runs his hands against the grain of the wood.

Slowly, one by one each member of the council arrives, save Jenkins. Richard sits in his chair and nods to Charles.

RICHARD

Charles, you're here awfully early.

CHARLES

I just needed some time to think before our meeting begins.

Richard nods again at Charles, and then looks to the rest of the room.

RICHARD

Are we all here?

(beat)

This meeting is to decide what the punishment for Jenkins is to be.

Akane has his pad of paper and begins taking notes.

SAMUEL

Kick him out.

AKANE

Excuse me?

SAMUEL

You heard me; kick him out of the valley. Banishment.

RICHARD

That seems a tad harsh, don't you think?

Thomas Sr. turns his head to face each person that speaks.

COUNCILOR #1

He has only been a burden to this valley since he arrived.

(CONTINUED)

COUNCILOR #2

Yeah.

The rest of the council begins to agree and quickly becomes loud.

RICHARD

Quiet down, now.

CHARLES

I have something to say.

The whole crowd quiets and looks to Charles.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

He can stay; let him keep his cabin, but take away his chicken and land rights. The chickens will go to Richard, and he will no longer be a council member.

SAMUEL

Charles, the man has been a problem since he arrived. Remember what he did to your boy?

Charles looks up to Samuel.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Stealing the food for his chickens was just as low as convincing David to release those cows. Everyone in this room knows that David would have never done that on his own. We're all sorry David had to pay the penalty for that, but now is our chance to get rid of Jenkins, for good.

Richard looks back and forth between Samuel and Charles.

RICHARD

Have we reached a decision? Take his land, divide it amongst the remaining families and then banish him from the valley?

Charles turns to Richard and nods. Richard motions to COUNCILOR #3 by the door.

Councilor #3 stands and opens the door. After a moment, Jenkins enters the council building. Councilor #3 closes the door and takes his seat. Jenkins remains standing at the end of the table.

(CONTINUED)

Richard stands from his seat.

RICHARD
Jenkins, the council has decided
your punishment.

Charles stares straight forward at the table. The rest of
the council looks up at the two standing.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
For the crimes of stealing various
seeds from the members of this
valley, your land will be taken
away.

Jenkins is angry and tries to interject. Richard does not
let him.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
You have one day to take what you
need and leave our valley for all
time. Anything that you leave in
our valley will be divided amongst
those that live in the valley.

Jenkins has both hands firmly planted on the edge of the
table.

JENKINS
You are exiling me from my home?
Fine.

Jenkins stands up right.

JENKINS
Each of you will regret this.

Jenkins turns and pulls the door open, he exits and slams
the door loudly behind him.

49 EXT. MOUNTAINS, PATHWAY - DAY

Karl and Thom are walking along the edge of the path. Karl
stops and looks down to the base of the mountain. A camp is
set up.

Karl points at the camp.

KARL
There, we've almost made it.

Karl and Thom quickly begin moving down the path.

50 EXT. MILITARY CAMP - DAY

Karl and Thom are walking along the center of the camp. Tents are propped on each side of them. A single tent at the end of the row is guarded by two soldiers.

Thom and Karl stop at this tent.

SOLDIER 1
Can I help you boys?

KARL
Is this where we sign up to
volunteer?

SOLDIER 1
This is the Captain's quarters.
Volunteer sign up is over there.

Soldier 1 points to a long line beyond the tents.

Karl and Thom begin walking to the end of the line.

THOM
Are you sure you want to do this?

KARL
This is how we're going to make a
difference.

Karl picks up his pace, leaving Thom behind him. Karl gets into the line and looks back to Thom.

Thom looks both ways, drops his head and begins walking to Karl. Thom joins Karl at the end of the line. They both wait in silence.

EMEM, African American 30s, is standing, with his arms crossed, in front of the boys. He turns around and sees the boys.

EMEM
Aren't ju boys a little yung?

Thom looks at Karl.

KARL
No, we're of age.

Emem extends a hand.

(CONTINUED)

EMEM

I'm Emem.

Karl, grasps Emem's hand firmly.

KARL

Karl. And that's Thom.

EMEM

Plehzure to meet ju both.

KARL

Likewise. How long have you been waiting in line?

EMEM

'Bout firthy minutes. Wheeh ju boys frum?

KARL

A small...

Thom grabs Karl's arm. Karl looks back at him. Thom shakes his head, "no." Karl pulls his arm free from Thom.

KARL

A small valley on the other side of the mountains.

EMEM

Ju boys made da jurny tru da mountins? How long it take ju?

KARL

A few days.

EMEM

Wow, prowd tuh see sum yung min helpin' da effoyht.

51 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, BARN - DAY

David is standing by a long piece of wood. He slowly runs sandpaper over the wood, he is meticulous. He is humming to himself.

Marta enters the barn, but doesn't announce her presence. She watches David work.

David drops his sandpaper on the ground. As he kneels to pick it up he sees Marta, and smiles.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID

How long have you been there?

MARTA

A couple of minutes.

Marta steps completely into the barn and closes the door behind herself. She walks to David, grabs him and starts kissing him.

52 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, COUNCIL BUILDING - DAY

All the members of the town, except Marta and David are gathered near the council building.

Charles' hand is firmly holding Angela's hand. At the head of the group Richard and Akane are standing. In front of them is Jenkins.

Jenkins has a bag on his back.

RICHARD

Jenkins, as decreed by the council of this valley, you have been exiled. You understand that what you take with you is yours. What you leave will now be the property of all the citizens of this valley. Do you have anything you'd like to say before leaving?

Jenkins stands quietly, head down.

RICHARD

Very well, if you have nothing to say.

JENKINS

I do have something to say.

Jenkins lifts his head.

JENKINS (CONT'D)

You all will regret this decision. Before you know it, the desert will spread to the rest of the world and you soon will know the rejection and shame you have given me.

Everyone is quiet.

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

You may leave now, Jenkins.

Jenkins turns away from the crowd and begins walking away. Everyone stands and watches until he is too far away to see.

53 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, BARN - DAY

Marta finishes putting her dress on. David is quickly putting his shirt back on.

MARTA

I wanted to talk to you about something.

David tucks his shirt in quickly, and then drops to the ground to put on his shoes.

DAVID

What's that?

MARTA

When would you like to have children?

David stops, and looks up to Marta.

DAVID

Honestly?

MARTA

Yes.

DAVID

Not until we have a farm of our own. I wouldn't want to burden my mother and father with a crying baby.

MARTA

Fair. They've already done so much for us.

David stands.

DAVID

Why? You're not...

MARTA

No... at least I don't think so.

David smiles at Marta, steps in and wraps his arms around her. Marta rests her head comfortably on his shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID

Father will be back soon, and if we want to sleep on this bed tonight, I better return to work.

MARTA

Ok, love.

The hug ends and Marta walks to the barn door. David picks up his hammer and starts a nail. She opens it and turns to David.

MARTA

I'm glad we're married.

DAVID

Me too.

Charles enters the barn.

MARTA

Oh, hello, Charles.

CHARLES

Afternoon, Marta.

Marta exits.

CHARLES

How is the bed coming along, son?

DAVID

After this board I have the headboard to finish. Then I'll be done.

CHARLES

Good.

Charles looks to the door, and then back to David.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Jenkins is gone.

David puts down his hammer.

DAVID

Is he?

CHARLES

The council saw him off just now.

David looks down at his bed.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES (CONT'D)

It seems we've finally gotten
justice for the cows.

David smiles at his father. Charles gives him a nod. There is a moment of silence. Charles looks down at the bed.

CHARLES

You want some help with the bed?

DAVID

I think I can handle it.

Charles begins walking toward the bed.

CHARLES

Are you sure? Looking at it from
here, you might need more support
at the foot of it.

Charles kneels near the foot of the bed.

DAVID

Oh...

David grabs the hammer and kneels near his father.

54 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - CONTINUOUS

Marta is standing beside the door to the barn. She begins to walk away.

MARTA

Cows?

55 EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

A full moon rests on the edge of the mountains in the distance. Karl and Thom are walking along a stream with the rest of their platoon. Their captain, JACK, caucasian 30s, is leading the group quietly. He stops suddenly and raises a closed palm into the air.

The whole platoon stops and kneels in the mud. Emem looks back to Karl and Thom.

EMEM

(whisper)

Ju boys smell daht?

Thom lifts his head slightly and begins smelling the air.

(CONTINUED)

THOM
(whisper)
What is that?

Karl looks up to Emem.

KARL
(whisper)
Death?

Emem tilts his head at Karl. Jack turns to Emem, Karl and Thom.

JACK
(whisper)
You three. I want you to cross the stream and scout ahead. Wait for us at the treeline.

KARL
(whisper)
Sir, what are we looking for?

JACK
(whisper)
A platoon of our own went missing a fortnight ago. A scout reported he spotted them near the treeline. Understand?

Karl nods.

JACK
(whisper)
Good, now go.

Emem, Karl and Thom, quickly start running low through the stream and into the crops on the other side. They run quickly, covering their face from tall stalks that try to smack them in the face.

Suddenly the crops stop. Emem stops about a foot out of the crops, Karl and Thom stop just behind him in the crops.

Emem stands completely upright.

KARL
(whisper)
What is it?

EMEM
Deat.

KARL
(whisper)
What?

Karl stands next to Emem and faces the clearing. The ground and the remains of crops are singed and still glowing with orange embers. Thom walks up between Emem and Karl, and sees what the two are staring at.

Thom turns back into the crops and begins vomiting. The clearing in front of them is covered in corpses. Many of the bodies have been partially eaten by buzzards.

EMEM
Dey got no ehspect foah da dead.

THOM
Do we go back to the platoon?

KARL
No, we continue to the treeline and wait there.

The three walk around the edge of the bodies and pass beyond toward the woods.

56 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LOFT - NIGHT

David and Marta are lying in their new bed. David is holding Marta tightly.

MARTA
(whisper)
I have a question.

DAVID
(whisper)
About what?

MARTA
(whisper)
I overheard Charles and you talking about cows. What cows?

David rolls onto his back and stares up at the ceiling.

DAVID
(whisper)
Oh.

David lets out a harsh sigh.

(CONTINUED)

MARTA

(whisper)

You don't have to tell me if you
don't want to.

DAVID

(whisper)

No, it's fine.

(beat)

When I was eight, I was playing in
a field near Jenkin's land...

57 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, FIELD - DAY

Young David, 8, is playing in the middle of a field. He has a stick and continuously stabs it into the ground. Then he drops to the ground, pulls the stick out and begins digging where it stuck.

When he finds nothing, he fills the whole with dirt and moves on to do it again.

58 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, JENKIN'S FARM - DAY

Jenkins watches David from a distance. He is leaning on the side of his cabin, hidden in the shade. He steps forward and begins walking to David.

59 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, FIELD - DAY

David is on his hands and knees digging in the dirt. Jenkins approaches.

JENKINS

Hey there.

David looks up to Jenkins and squints his eyes to see the man.

JENKINS (CONT'D)

You're Charles and Angela's boy,
aren't you?

David stands.

DAVID

Yes, sir.

Jenkins smiles.

(CONTINUED)

JENKINS

Have you ever played with Mr.
O'Laughlin's cows?

David shakes his head.

DAVID

Father says I'm not supposed to go
near the cows.

JENKINS

Well, I just talked with Richard
and he says that his cows are
getting pretty stiff. They need a
good run.

David seems unsure.

JENKINS (CONT'D)

He asked me to find someone who
could chase the cows and get them
moving. You want to help me out?

DAVID

I guess.

Jenkins begins walking toward Richard's land. David follows.

60

EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, RICHARD'S FARM - DAY

David leans on Richard's fence. A large pasture of cows sits
in front of him. Jenkins is standing next to him.

JENKINS

Alright, I'm going to go by the
gate. You start chasing them toward
the gate and I'll let them out so
they can run around.

David climbs under the fence and begins running out to the
cows.

JENKINS

(to himself)

And then there will only be
chickens to eat. And who has the
chickens? I do.

Jenkins begins walking toward the gate.

(CONTINUED)

JENKINS (CONT'D)

Oh, I'm sorry, Richard. The price
of chickens just tripled.

61 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LOFT - NIGHT

Marta is facing David.

MARTA

(whisper)

What happened?

DAVID

(whisper)

I chased the cows, and he let them
out. When Richard noticed what was
happening, Jenkins told him that he
had caught me letting them out.

Marta is paying close attention to the story.

DAVID

(whisper)

I had to go before the council and
explain what happened. They all saw
that I had been tricked, but since
I was in the pin with the cows I
had to receive the punishment.

(beat)

It took a couple of years before
Richard got more cows.

MARTA

(whisper)

What was your punishment?

DAVID

(whisper)

Off in the woods behind the council
building was a small shack, with no
windows and one door, that locks
from the outside.

Marta covers her mouth with her hand.

DAVID

(whisper)

I had to spend three days alone in
the cabin.

(CONTINUED)

MARTA
(whisper)
I'm sorry.

DAVID
(whisper)
It's alright. I understood that the council had to make an example to make sure others wouldn't violate the valley's laws.

MARTA
(whisper)
That's still horrible. Is the shack still there?

DAVID
(whisper)
No, it burned down.

Marta smiles and rolls over to face the window to the outside.

DAVID
(to himself)
I burned it down.

David curls up next to her and spoons her.

62 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Angela is lying in the bed. She looks more ill than she has before. Charles walks through the dark room with a glass of water in his hand.

He places the glass on the nightstand and sits on the bed next to Angela.

CHARLES
(whisper)
Are you ready?

Angela doesn't respond. Charles turns his waist and places both hands on Angela. His eyes close heavily. His fingers spread, and slowly a faint light blue begins to glow between them.

Angela's eyes open, her pupils are full of color. She takes a deep breath, filling her lungs and lifting her body.

The glow on Charles' hands disappears. He opens his eyes, and looks down to his wife.

(CONTINUED)

ANGELA
(whisper)
We can't keep doing this forever.
Someone will find out.

Charles lies down next to his wife.

CHARLES
(whisper)
I know.

63 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, MUD ROOM - NIGHT

The window is dark.

The small plant sits on the window sill. It is larger than when we last saw it, however, a single leaf is brown, while another is resting on the mud in the pot.

The darkness outside the window moves away, as it was a silhouette of Jenkins.

64 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - DAY

Angela, Marta, and David are sitting at the table eating lunch. Charles enters the living space, with a couple pieces of mail.

Angela stands and hugs Charles.

ANGELA
Any news?

CHARLES
The desert is growing.

Angela looks distraught. Marta and David look to each other.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
There was a single piece of mail
for you, David.

Charles extends his hand over the table to David; a small folded and sealed piece of paper in his hand. David reaches out and takes the envelope.

David looks it over quickly.

DAVID
It's from Karl.

David stands and walks to the...

65 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, MUD ROOM - DAY

David enters as he opens the letter. He sits on the chair and begins reading.

KARL

(O.S.)

David, These past six months have completely changed things. I now understand what father was talking about, and why he didn't want me to come here. The smell of death is everywhere. There are no longer plants, and the wind is slowly gaining strength.

David leans forward as he continues reading.

66 EXT. FIELD - DAY

Karl is walking through a completely dead field. The ground is covered in glowing ash. Dead trees in the background are swaying in the wind.

67 INT. TENT - NIGHT

Thom is asleep on a cot, while Karl is sitting on the edge of his. A lantern is lighting the room, but the fire is small. Karl is staring at his hands; they are covered in burns and calluses.

68 EXT. MILITARY CAMP - DAY

Karl is watching the medic tent.

MEDIC, african american 20s, is dressed in long white robes. She is standing over WOUNDED SOLDIER, caucasian 30s. Wounded Soldier has burn marks covering half his body. He is writhing in pain.

Medic calmly places a hand on the burns. Her palm begins to glow light blue. Wounded Soldier stops writhing as the burns begin to fade away and are replaced by fresh skin.

Karl cocks his head to the side in astonishment.

69 EXT. MILITARY CAMP - NIGHT

Thom, Emem and Karl are walking across the camp. As they pass the medic tent Karl looks over at Wounded Soldier. His skin is pale and he is coughing violently. He then drops onto the ground and begins vomitting.

Thom and Emem continue walking, not noticing that Karl has stopped.

Medic runs to Wounded Soldier's side. She helps pull him from the ground. Her hands glowing blue again. Color returns to his skin. He nods at Medic who is smiling at him. Karl begins to walk again.

70 EXT. MILITARY CAMP - MORNING

Karl exits his tent, the air is cold and he can see his breath. He begins walking across the camp. On the ground is a row of the dead, placed in a line on the ground. He stops for a moment and looks at the corpse of Wounded Soldier.

He looks over to the medic tent. Medic is inside, placing a glowing hand onto ANOTHER WOUNDED SOLDIER, african american 30s.

71 EXT. MOUNTAINS, PATHWAY - EVENING

Groups of soldiers are walking through the pathway. Snow begins to fall slowly. The soldiers continue walking.

A soldier in the background collapses into the snow. Another soldier stops and checks his vitals. After a moment, he stands and continues walking, leaving the soldier in the snow.

KARL

(O.S. cont'd)

My use of the Balance has even begun taking a toll on my body. I have the shakes after using it, and my hands are covered in burns. I'm afraid everything we thought the Balance is, was a lie. David, what if the Balance is what's killing us? I know using it kills things, but what if using it to heal someone actually poisons their bodies. I've seen the medics use it to help the wounded. Days later they are sick with other things,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KARL (cont'd)
*coughing and vomiting until they
 can't stand. I'm afraid that the
 Balance may be killing us. We've
 been pushed back into the
 mountains. Everyday gets colder,
 and our numbers are thinning. I'm
 afraid that soon we will be
 fighting in the valley. Thom says,
 "hello," and we both wish we could
 come home soon. Karl.*

72 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, MUD ROOM - DAY

David sits quietly in the chair. He folds the paper and places it in his pocket as he stands. He exits into...

73 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - CONTINUOUS

David enters and stops at the doorway.

CHARLES
 What did he say?

DAVID
 We're losing the war.

Charles looks down at the table, and then up to Angela. Marta rises from her chair and hugs David. After a beat, David turns to Charles.

DAVID
 What do we do?

CHARLES
 We continue with life. We cannot
 let bad news keep us from living.

DAVID
 Yes, father.

74 EXT. SAND VALLEY - DAY

The cable bounces tightly in the wind. David pulls himself along with both hands. The wind is at his back, and blowing his bag in front of him.

He holds onto the cable so not to get blown away. Each time a hand releases the cable he slides a short distance down the line. His eyes are focused through his goggles.

75 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - DAY

A year has passed.

Charles is out in the field with his plow. A LOW GRUMBLING passes through the air. Charles stops his work and turns to face the rest of the valley.

David comes out from the barn and stops, with a rag in his hand.

The front door of the cabin opens as Marta and Angela exit.

Charles walks up behind David.

DAVID

What is it?

CHARLES

It's the council's warning alarm.
Something is coming into the
valley.

Charles starts walking toward the road, David follows behind.

MARTA

Where are you going?

DAVID

To see what's going on. We'll
return shortly.

76 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, ROAD - DAY

David and Charles walk to the council building as a small wagon pulls to a stop near it. Officers dressed in uniform jump off the wagon.

DAVID

Is that?

Thom climbs from the back of the wagon. His arm is in a sling. His face is scruffy, and clothes are dirty. David runs to him.

DAVID

Thom.

A small smile slides across Thom's face.

(CONTINUED)

THOM
Hey David.

DAVID
You're back? Where's Karl?

Charles is standing motionless where David left him.

THOM
David, he...

Thom extends an arm and places it on David's shoulder.

DAVID
No.

David freezes in shock. Thom wraps an arm around David.

Charles begins walking toward the wagon. His pace quickens with each step. He reaches the back of the wagon. A coffin fills the entire back of the wagon. Charles leans down and stretches his arms across the coffin.

CHARLES
My son, I have failed you.

Thom stands behind Charles.

THOM
He fought bravely sir. In the midst
of all trials he...

CHARLES
Silence, Thom.

David is staring at the ground as Thomas Sr., Maria, Marta and Angela arrive at the council building.

THOMAS SR.
Son?

THOM
Father!

Thom runs to his father and mother.

Marta walks up and grabs David's hand.

MARTA
What's the matter, David.

DAVID

Karl.

Charles quickly leaves the wagon and walks to Angela.

CHARLES

Sweetheart.

Charles grabs Angela and keeps her from walking.

ANGELA

It isn't... is it? Tell me its not
our baby.

Angela is fighting to get free from Charles. Tears are streaming down her face.

ANGELA

No. No. It can't be true. No. Karl,
no.

Angela drops to the ground. Charles falls with her and holds her.

ANGELA

(screaming)

Why?

David moves quickly to his mother. He drops down on his knees and hugs her with his father.

77

EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, RICHARD'S FARM - EVENING

Richard and Akane are walking toward Richard's cabin.

RICHARD

It's a horrible thing when parents
lose a child.

AKANE

I agree. I suppose we should
prepare for his service.

Richard and Akane pause when they reach the front door. A small folded piece of paper is jammed in the door.

Richard pulls the paper from the door and opens it curiously.

The note is written in a messy handwriting, it says:

RICHARD

(CONTINUED)

MEET ME TONIGHT AT THE COUNCIL'S BUILDING. WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT THIS WAR.

CHARLES

Richard hands the note to Akane, he reads it quickly.

AKANE

What do you think it means?

RICHARD

I'm not sure.

78 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, CEMETERY - DUSK

All of the residents of the valley are gathered at the cemetery. Richard stands at the head of a freshly dug grave.

RICHARD

We have lost one of our youngest members to this war. We can only hope that his loss is not forgotten, and that in time we will all be healed.

Angela is crying, while Charles holds her. David steps forward and kneels in front of the headstone.

DAVID

(whisper)

I will never forget you, brother.

79 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, POND - NIGHT

A large crowd of people are gathered near the pond. A bonfire lights the entire area. Charles and Angela are standing near the bonfire talking with Thomas Sr.

David takes Thom by the arm and walks away from the fire with him.

THOM

Something wrong, David?

DAVID

I want to know how. My parents may not want to know, but I need to.

THOM

Are you sure?

David says nothing.

(CONTINUED)

THOM

We were seperated from our platoon
in the mountains...

80 EXT. MOUNTAINS, PATHWAY - DAY

Snow is pouring down from the sky, at least a foot of it has gathered on the ground. Karl and Thom are walking side by side. Emem is walking in front of the boys. Jack is walking in front of Emem.

THOM

I miss the smell of home.

KARL

I miss the food.

Emem turns around and walks backwards through the snow.

E MEM

I used ta make da bes' toukey. I be
sick uh dees rashons.

KARL

Any kind of cooked meal would be
better than these rations.

Jack stops. Emem almost walks into him. Karl and Thom stop.

JACK

Something isn't right.

Karl and Thom look around the area. There are no plants, only rocks and snow. Emem plants his feet and extends his hands, ready to fight.

Karl removes a glove and holds it away from his body.

KARL

There's heat in the air. It's
not... cold?

Thom looks up at the sky; the snow is falling harder. As Karl begins to put his glove back on the snow on the side of the mountain begins to slightly glow orange.

He turns his head slowly.

KARL

(yelling)
Ambush.

(CONTINUED)

The tail of his yelling is overcome by fire bursting through snow. All four of them are thrown into the snow. Jack quickly stands, his hands circled by electricity. Bolts of electricity shoot through the air at the attacking soldiers.

ENEMY 1, moves his hands to the right; a stream of water forms in front of him. The electricity hits the water and is absorbed. ENEMY 2 and ENEMY 3 stand behind the wall of water. Their hands are close together, each with a small fireball in it.

Jack takes a step back. Karl pulls himself from the snow.

KARL

Thom!

Emem's hand is sticking out of the snow. Karl reaches and grabs Emem's hand and begins pulling.

KARL

Thom where are you?

JACK

Help me out here.

Jack shoots off another electricity bolt toward the attackers.

ENEMY 1 moves the water to block the electricity bolt.

Karl pulls Emem's head free of the snow. The side of his face is burned.

E MEM

Tanks, brudda.

Emem gets clear of the snow, and dusts some off his shoulder. He screams, lifting his hands into the air.

KARL

Thom!

Karl is digging through the snow looking for Thom.

A semi transparent ball has formed in Emem's hands. He throws it toward Enemy 1.

E MEM

Jack, noah!

Jack throws another electricity bolt at the attackers.

(CONTINUED)

Enemy 1 moves the water to block Emem's attack. The burst of air hits the water and sends it flying, the electricity hits Enemy 1, shocking him. He screams in pain. His body drops to the ground.

The fireball in Enemy 2 and Enemy 3's hands has grown substantially. They turn and throw it at Emem.

Emem prepares for it. Karl looks as the fireball spins through the air, he extends a single hand in front of Emem. A wave of water shoots in front of Emem, the fireball hits it, bounces off and hits the side of the mountain.

The snow on the side of the mountain begins to shift.

Karl drops down to all fours.

Enemy 2 and Enemy 3 begins running toward Emem and Jack.

EMEM

Fine Tom.

Karl turns and begins digging in the snow again.

Enemy 2 forms a small spiral of water in his hand. It freezes, he grasps it and lunges at Jack. Enemy 2's weight knocks Jack down; he begins stabbing Jack repeatedly with the frozen knife.

Emem grabs Enemy 3 as he approaches. He lifts him into the air and throws him to the side. Upon release, two air bursts form in his hands, he quickly fires them at Enemy 3. The bursts hit Enemy 3 and throw him into the side of the mountain.

The snow begins to shift again.

Karl shoves a single hand into the snow as hard as he can. His hand hits Thom. Karl forms a fireball in his free hand and places it over the snow, melting it.

Emem runs to Jack. Enemy 2 is standing over Jack's corpse, knife in hand.

Thom is unconscious as Karl pulls him from the snow.

Enemy 1 starts to get up, shaking.

Karl leaves Thom's side and stands next to Emem.

ENEMY 2

You rebels are nothing.

(CONTINUED)

Karl notices Enemy 1's movement and turns to face him. Emem and Karl are back to back.

Enemy 2 lunges at Emem with his knife. The knife hits Emem in the chest. Emem double slaps Enemy 2 in the ears; they both fall back.

Enemy 1 forms a fireball, he stares blankly at Karl. A wicked smile crosses his face and he throws it quickly at Thom. Karl turns quickly and begins sprinting to block the fireball.

In slow motion, Emem grabs Enemy 2's neck. Electricity shoots down his arm and begins shocking Enemy 2 to death. Emem's teeth are clamped tightly together; his eyes full of anger.

Karl runs as quickly as he can, throwing snow into the air. He forms an air burst in his right hand and throws it forward with his step. The air burst hits the ground just in front of Thom, throwing his body to the side.

Karl stops, panting deeply. Time returns to normal. Emem drops Enemy 2 and grabs the knife. His palm glows orange and the knife melts. His chest is covered in blood.

Thom opens his eyes, and begins pushing himself from the snow. He looks over to Karl and Emem.

Karl and Enemy 1 begin approaching each other slowly.

ENEMY 1

What are you made of boy?

Karl stops and lifts his hands in defense. Enemy 1 points both of his palms at Karl.

Emem helps Thom get up from the ground. Thom holds his arm loosely.

EMEM

Is ju o-k?

THOM

I'm fine. Should we help him?

A fireball forms in each of Enemy 1's hands. He fires both of them at Karl, who quickly creates a wall of water in front of him. The fireballs bounce off the water in opposite directions.

The first fireball goes out in the snow. The second flies up and hits the side of the mountain.

(CONTINUED)

The wall of water freezes solid in front of Karl. He creates a quick air burst and pushes the wall toward Enemy 1.

Enemy 1 covers his face with his arms as the wall of ice crashes into him. The ice shatters as it hits the ground. A LOW CRACK echoes through the air.

Karl looks up to the side of the mountain as the snow cracks and begins falling. Thom tries to run forward to Karl, but Emem grabs him.

The large chunk of snow and ice collapse onto Karl and Enemy 1. Emem covers Thom as snow blows toward them.

The pathway is completely silent. The snow is falling very softly. A patch of snow starts to move as Emem and Thom climb out.

Thom runs to where Karl was standing and drops in the snow. He starts digging as quickly as he can, with one arm.

Karl is buried near the surface of the snow. His body is lifelessly facing the sky.

81 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, POND - NIGHT

David and Thom are sitting on the ground by the pond.

THOM
I'm sorry, David.

David is staring out at the calm water. The water line is lower than normal.

DAVID
Thank you for telling me, Thom.

Thom stands and puts a hand on David's shoulder; he turns and walks away.

David sits alone for a few minutes. The crowd in the background begins to dissipate as people leave.

Marta walks up, wrapped in a blanket. She sits next to David.

MARTA
Is everything alright?

David seems to come from a trance. He grabs Marta's hand.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID

Yes. I was just talking to Thom.

Marta leans over and kisses David on the cheek. She pulls the blanket off her side and wraps it around David.

82 INT. COUNCIL BUILDING - NIGHT

Richard opens the door and slowly enters. Akane enters behind him. Richard reaches for the light. As the light comes on, Jenkins moves into it from across the room.

He moves around the table slowly, sliding his hand across the top of each chair. In his other hand is a small knife.

JENKINS

You know. Taking my land was quite a brave move. Who's idea was it?

RICHARD

You know that the council makes only unanimous decisions.

JENKINS

Then who brought the idea to the table?

AKANE

Jenkins, you violated a law. For this you must pay the penalty.

JENKINS

We've all violated some law in this God-forsaken valley. Akane, you and Samuel's wife have had some very inappropriate meetings in their barn.

Richard looks to Akane. Jenkins looks to Richard.

JENKINS (CONT'D)

And you, what was it that killed your wife? Sickness or poisoning?

RICHARD

You bastard.

Akane looks over to Richard.

JENKINS

Yes, maybe. However, my favorite of all is Charles. The master

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JENKINS (cont'd)

hypocrite. He tells everyone that the Balance is this mystical power, never to be used.

RICHARD

Using it takes life from something else.

JENKINS

Exactly,
(beat)
and yet he uses it to keep his precious Angela alive. The woman is frail and dying. And has been for years.

Jenkins is now standing face to face with Akane. There is a short moment of silence.

JENKINS

So tell me, what are your punishments?

Jenkins slams the knife quickly into Akane's stomach. Richard steps back in fear.

JENKINS

You think taking my land, no, *stealing* my land and then exiling me from the valley is the proper penalty for stealing seeds to feed chickens? Chickens, mind you, that feed us all.

Akane doesn't answer, but stares at the knife.

JENKINS

I don't.

Jenkins throws Akane to the ground.

Richard turns to escape. Jenkins grabs the back of Richard's clothes, pulls him back into the room and slams him against a wall.

JENKINS

Want to know a secret?
(beat)
The Balance is real. You know it; I know it. I only pretend not to believe in it, but who do you think is killing our crops? The war? It
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JENKINS (cont'd)
wouldn't effect our valley so far
away. I've only been strengthening
my grasp on its infinite powers.

Jenkins' hands begin to glow orange. Richard's clothes begin to smoke.

JENKINS
Who was it?

Jenkins pushes Richard against the wall harder.

JENKINS
Who was it and I let you live.

Richard is in tears of pain as Jenkins' hands have burned through his clothes and begin scorching his skin.

JENKINS
Who?

RICHARD
Charles.

Jenkins throws Richard onto the table.

JENKINS
Thank you. You old bastard.

Jenkins grabs a chair.

JENKINS
Burn in hell, Richard. If there is
such a place.

Jenkins exits the building.

83 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, COUNCIL BUILDING - NIGHT

Jenkins pulls the door closed and jams it with the chair, the top of the chair is scorched. His hands still glow orange. He walks ten steps from the building and turns to face it.

An evil smirk crosses his face. He lifts his glowing hands. They become brighter until a fireball forms in each palm.

The grass around the building begins to turn brown and fall over as the fireballs grow larger. When each fireball is about the size of a bowling ball, he pushes his hands together, creating a larger fireball.

(CONTINUED)

He lifts the fireball above his head. The grass is completely dead, pieces of it turn to dirt and blow away. The dead patch grows as the fireball grows.

With all his might Jenkins throws the fireball over his head at the council building.

The fireball splashes like liquid as it hits the building. The whole building engulfs in flames.

Jenkins turns and begins walking up the hill to Charles' home.

84 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, POND - NIGHT

David and Marta are lying fast asleep. David's ranch sits close in the background.

85 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, MUD ROOM - NIGHT

A rock flies through the window, knocking the plant to the ground.

86 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Charles shoots up from his slumber, turning quickly, placing his feet onto the ground.

He stands, opening a drawer in his night stand and pulls a small knife. He begins walking toward the mud room.

CHARLES
(dazed)
Hello?

A more frail Angela opens her eyes and looks into the room as her husband disappears in the dark.

ANGELA
Charles, what is it?

87 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, MUD ROOM - NIGHT

Charles enters. The front door is wide open. The faint silhouette of a figure stands in the darkness, watching Charles.

Charles closes the door, and before he can lock it he notices the plant on the floor. He looks up to the window and sees the broken glass.

(CONTINUED)

The silhouette comes from the shadows and pushes Charles against the front door. The knife falls from Charles' hand and slides under the chair.

Off guard, Charles lifts his arms to protect his face.

The silhouette, Jenkins, grabs Charles by his arms and throws him through the doorway into...

88 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Charles crashes into the table, knocking it over.

Angela screams.

89 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, POND - NIGHT

David's eyes fly open.

DAVID

Mother?

He rolls and looks up to his house. Another faint scream comes from the house.

DAVID

Mother!

David pushes himself from the ground, and sprints toward the house.

Marta wakes and watches as David is running away.

MARTA

What is it, David?

She looks down the hill toward her family's house and sees the blazing council building in the distance.

90 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Charles is slowly pushing himself from the ground.

Jenkins reaches under his arm and pulls out a flintlock pistol, pointing it down at Charles.

CHARLES

What do you want Jenkins?

(CONTINUED)

JENKINS

You had the council take my land
away from me.

CHARLES

It was a unanimous decision.

Angela is sitting upright against the far wall of the room,
her breathing deep.

JENKINS

You take my land, and then lie to
me about it?

Jenkins turns and points the gun at Angela.

CHARLES

Damn it, Jenkins. There are bigger
things going on in our lives than
your farm.

JENKINS

Like what, Charles? Like Angela's
sickness?

Charles looks up to Jenkins.

JENKINS (CONT'D)

The whole valley knows that you've
been trying to hide it. We're all
sick of you running the valley,
Charles.

Jenkins pulls back the hammer to his pistol.

91 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, MUD ROOM - NIGHT

The door flies open as David enters and runs through...

92 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - CONTINUOUS

David enters the room.

CHARLES

David, stop.

David sees Jenkins for the first time.

DAVID

Jenkins, you bastard.

(CONTINUED)

JENKINS

Your father has been hoarding supplies to keep your ill mother alive, boy. He's been stealing from the whole valley. I'm just doing what's right.

David looks to Charles. Jenkins' finger begins to squeeze tighter against the trigger.

DAVID

No, I am.

CHARLES

David, no.

Electricity engulfs David's hands. He lifts them and points them at Jenkins; lightning shooting from his hands and slams into Jenkins. The pistol goes off, almost unnoticeably.

93 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - NIGHT

Marta is just outside the house, blanket in hand. A blue light flickers through all of the windows of the house.

94 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - CONTINUOUS

David begins screaming, as his hands start to burn. Charles pushes himself toward his son and knocks him to the ground. The electricity stops.

The charred and dead corpse of Jenkins falls to its knees and then to the ground.

Charles looks up to Angela; she is lying on the bed. Her hand is pressed against her chest, covered in blood.

Charles leaves his son and comes to his wife's side. David sits up from the ground.

Angela's eyes are closed and her head lies limp to the side. Charles moves her hand away from her bloodied chest. He lowers his head against her stomach and begins crying.

Marta enters the room and stops just behind David.

95 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, MUD ROOM - NIGHT

The plant on the ground is completely shriveled and brown.

96 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, CEMETARY - DAY

Most of the citizens of the valley are all gathered around. Charles is standing tall over his wife's freshly covered grave.

Thomas Sr. places his hand on Charles' shoulder. David watches from the back of the group. Marta stands firmly at his side.

The entire crowd leaves. Only David remains. He stands quietly with a single tear on his cheek. He looks down at the two headstones, marked Angela and the other Karl.

97 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - DAY

Charles is nailing a board over the front window of the cabin.

98 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, MUD ROOM - DAY

David is sweeping up the plant, and its dirt.

99 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - NIGHT

A large bonfire sends smoke high into the air. Charles stands by the fire, with the sheets from his bed in his hand.

David approaches from the house.

DAVID

Father.

CHARLES

Yes, son?

DAVID

I'm sorry, Father. I know you've told me not to use the Balance, not for anything, but...

CHARLES

I know, David. You were only trying to protect your family.

(CONTINUED)

David looks off to the side, down the road to the rest of the valley.

DAVID

Is it true? Were you stealing resources to save mother?

CHARLES

I was trying to protect my family the only way I knew how. Karl had gone away. You've grown so much and married Marta. Your mother was all that I had left.

DAVID

What were you taking?

CHARLES

The one thing I told you never to use, David.

DAVID

The Balance.

CHARLES

I used it to keep your mother with me, son.

Charles throws the bloodied sheets into the fire.

DAVID

Father, I'm sorry.

100 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, COUNCIL BUILDING - DAY

The debris from the council building has left the ground completely black. A small band of people are raising a small tin building.

The people fade away and the building slowly fades to...

101 EXT. SAND VALLEY - DAY

The cable bounces to the small tin building in the background. A stake is in the ground next to the door of the building.

David approaches the building. He locks his foot next to the stake and slowly lets go of the cable, grabbing the door. He pushes the door open, and slides in.

102 INT. FOOD DROP - CONTINUOUS

The small room is lit by a single tungsten bulb hanging from the ceiling. The floor is covered in sand. Three people inhabit the room, MICHAEL, caucasian 40's, JENNIFER, caucasian 32, and DONNALY, caucasian 33.

Michael is standing in a corner by himself, while Jennifer and Donnalay make quiet conversation in another corner.

David removes his goggles, his eyes squinting, like he's been in the dark for years.

MICHAEL

David.

David stops and looks to Michael.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

The potatoes the wireless talked about. The potatoes are mine. If there's anything grown, I'm taking it.

Jennifer and Donnalay stop talking and stare at Michael.

David stands, looking at Michael, he is still winded from the walk. He places his hand into his pocket and grabs the knife.

DAVID

Marta is sick. I'm taking what I want for her.

Michael looks at David's hand in his pocket and then up to David's face.

MICHAEL

Sure, David. Whatever you want.

Michael backs away from David and up against the wall of the building.

David relaxes his grip on the knife and leans against a wall. He lets out a deep breath.

103 EXT. GRASSY VALLEY, DAVID'S RANCH - DAY

The ground is mostly dead. A few spots of green are splotchy across the land. The pond water is much lower than it has been. David is walking toward his house, sweat covers his face and his hair is wet. A musket is slung over his back.

104 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - CONTINUOUS

A cloth door separating the mud room and the living space opens as David enters. Marta stands up from the table.

MARTA
Did you see anything?

DAVID
I don't know if there are any
animals left. I'm afraid we'll
starve.

Marta grabs a bowl of soup from the counter and sets it on the table in front of David.

MARTA
We still have potatoes. We will
eat, don't worry.

DAVID
I suppose.

David looks at his soup and then to Marta. She sits at the table with a bowl of her own.

DAVID
I have something to tell you Marta.

She puts the spoon down on the table and looks up to David.

MARTA
What is it?

DAVID
I spoke to your father today.

Marta's eyes are searching David.

DAVID (CONT'D)
He told me that your mother and him
have been discussing leaving the
valley. Thom has already gone back
to the war, and they're afraid if
they don't leave they'll die here.

Marta's eyes begin to well up. She looks away from David. He reaches across the table and grabs her hand.

DAVID
However...

Marta looks back to him.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID (CONT'D)
If you want to leave with them, we
can.

Marta smiles.

MARTA
No. This is our home.

105 INT. FOOD DROP - DAY

The door opens slowly. David turns his head as two more
people enter the room. He eyes them oddly as he grips his
knife again. Michael jumps forward.

MICHAEL
Why are you here? This is our drop.

The man, FOOD DROP MALE, caucasian 20s, pulls his scarf down
from his face.

FOOD DROP MALE
Our drop has been shut down. We had
no where else to go...

Michael interrupts.

MICHAEL
You better find one. You two aren't
welcome here.

DAVID
Michael.

David takes a step forward.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Remember your place. These people
are hungry, we should treat them
well.

MICHAEL
Why are you saying this, David?
Your wife is dying. She needs the
food these people will take.

David relaxes.

DAVID
We all need it.

A red light on the wall comes on, quickly followed by the
drop alarm.

(CONTINUED)

David lets go of his knife and pulls his hand from his pocket.

The ceiling begins to shake as the center panel slides to the side. A large pneumatic tube sits over the center of the room.

A vacuum sound begins to rush into the room, louder than the alarm and the outside wind. Suddenly boxes, cans and bags of food drop from the tube into the center of the room.

Everyone charges for the food. The vacuum sound fades and the ceiling panel closes.

David grabs a can and shoves it into his bag. His other hand reaches for a bag. Donnaly kicks the bag away from David's hand.

Food Drop Male swiftly punches Donnaly in the face. Donnaly falls to the ground near the wall of the building, covering his bleeding face.

David grabs two more cans of food and stuffs them into his bag. Food Drop Male stands over Donnaly and grabs the bag he kicked away.

Michael runs to the door with a box in his hand. Jennifer drops to the ground next to Donnaly with only a single can of food.

Food Drop Male hands the bag to David.

FOOD DROP MALE

It feels like a potato, and maybe a carrot.

David takes the bag with a smile.

FOOD DROP MALE (CONT'D)

Tell your wife we hope it makes her better.

DAVID

Thank you.

106 EXT. DAVID'S RANCH - DAY

David is walking toward the house with a bucket in his hand. The wind is blowing forcefully. David blocks his face with his arm.

107 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, MUD ROOM - DAY

David enters the room with a bucket of brown water. He places it on the ground and drops into the chair. He is breathing deeply. He wipes the sweat from his face and then rises.

108 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - CONTINUOUS

David enters. An excited Marta runs to him and wraps her arms around him.

MARTA

I made you a new shirt.

She turns and grabs a grey shirt from the table. She holds it up in front of her.

DAVID

I can't wait to wear it.

Marta coughs a couple of small painful coughs and then looks up into David's eyes.

MARTA

What's the matter?

David hesitates to answer.

DAVID

Another family left today. That leaves only three families left in the valley.

MARTA

I know it's been hard since your father passed, and my family moved away. But we have each other.

Marta smiles at David, hoping it will cheer him up.

A small smirk crosses David's lips. Marta puts the shirt on the table and walks to the counter.

David removes his sweat stained shirt, drops it to the floor and picks up the new one. He slides on the shirt and begins buttoning it.

DAVID

Where did you get the cloth for the shirt?

(CONTINUED)

MARTA
I found it in a box.

DAVID
Where was the box?

Marta turns to face David, she is biting her lip.

MARTA
In the loft. It was your...
(beat)
mother's.

David stops buttoning the shirt. Marta coughs again. David sits down in a chair at the table. David takes a deep breath.

Marta quickly comes to his side. She places a hand on his rough face.

MARTA
I know the pain your mother had before she died. I know your father helplessly watched her die for years before Jenkins... That doesn't mean you should ignore her now. Think of this shirt as a gift from her, not me.

David pulls her hands down.

DAVID
There is something I haven't told you.

Marta refocuses her eyes on David's.

DAVID (CONT'D)
My father was using the Balance to keep her alive. He told me after she died.

Marta smiles.

MARTA
Of course he was. She was the love of his life. What would it have been without her?

David looks Marta directly in the eyes.

DAVID

Nothing. Just as mine would be
without you.

David looks away again, his eyes lost in thought.

MARTA

What is it?

DAVID

I just remembered something Karl
told me once.

Marta smiles again at David and kisses him.

109

EXT. SAND VALLEY - NIGHT

David is dragging himself along the cable. He stops for a moment and looks down at the cable. It is barely held together. His head lifts up to his nearby cabin.

After a pause he lifts his foot from the ground and takes another step forward. His hands shuffle across the cable without letting go. After another step, a strong wind gust blows from the side, knocking David from the cable.

He lays on his side in the sand. His arm reaches high into the air, inches from the cable. It continues to bounce in the wind.

A single of David's fingers touches the cable, and then it bounces away. The cable breaks, shooting away with the wind, nearly hitting David's fingers.

He pulls his hand close to his body.

DAVID

(faintly)

Marta... I'm coming.

David begins to pull himself across the ground, staying low. He reaches out and grabs the stake that once held the cable. He pulls himself to it and holds on tightly for a few moments.

He reaches up and grabs the door to his house.

110 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, MUD ROOM - DAY

The door opens and David walks in. He is wearing his leather coat, only it is brand new. His goggles are unscratched. He closes the door and looks to the ground.

He removes the goggles and his hat and sets them on a hook on the wall. He takes off his coat and puts it on the chair.

From the corner of the room he picks up a broom and starts sweeping sand into the far corner. He places the broom back into the corner and goes into the living space.

111 INT. DAVID'S RANCH, LIVING SPACE - CONTINUOUS

David enters. Marta is sitting at the table, wrapped in a blanket. A cup of water is sitting in front of her.

DAVID
How're you feeling?

MARTA
My cough is getting worse.

David opens a cupboard and pulls out a cup. He grabs a water bottle from the counter and fills his cup.

DAVID
The sand is getting worse. It's not that strong yet, but if more trees are lost then it will be.

Marta coughs, hard until she is hunched over the table. David comes quickly to her side and moves her water closer to her.

DAVID
Drink. It'll help.

Marta takes a small sip of the water and begins coughing again. Marta clears her throat.

DAVID
I think we're the last two in the valley.

Marta looks to David, her eyes tired.

DAVID (CONT'D)
I heard on the wireless that someone might be coming to the valley to evacuate us.

(CONTINUED)

MARTA

Where would they take us?

DAVID

I don't know. The wireless a few weeks back said that the whole planet was covered in this desert.

MARTA

If someone comes, do you want to go with them?

DAVID

They may have medicines for you.

Marta looks around the cabin.

MARTA

What do we do for food until they get here?

DAVID

The wireless said that food drops were being set up until evacuation teams could reach everyone.

112 INT. CABIN, SAND ROOM - NIGHT

David pulls the door closed behind him. He removes his bag and drops it to the ground. He falls onto the chair and then to the floor. He lies still for a moment, breathing deeply. He pulls down his scarf and removes his goggles.

DAVID

(winded)

Marta... I'm home, Marta. I've got fresh food... and cans...

Tears are gathered on the brims of his eyelids. David stands slowly, picking up the bag. He uses the chair to brace himself as he walks into the...

113 INT. CABIN, LIVING SPACE - CONTINUOUS

David walks across the room, stripping off his clothes as he goes. He is walking slower and dragging his feet. A very faint cough comes from Marta.

David stops and looks at her in the dark.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID
(winded)
Marta? I can't do this...

David drops the bag again and walks to the chair by Marta's bed. He drops into it. Marta coughs again, a more painful and wet sounding cough.

DAVID
(winded)
There's no air... I can't... we
can't breathe.

He grabs Marta's hand and holds it as tight as he can.

DAVID
(winded)
I have to see you...

Marta weezes hard followed by another hard cough.

David drops Marta's hand and grabs the lantern on the night stand. He fumbles with a match and barely manages to light it. He looks to Marta.

She is small and frail, her hair still brown and curly. Her skin is pale and yellow in the firelight. David takes in another deep breath.

DAVID
(winded)
You're still so beautiful, Marta.

David's head drops. He places his palm onto Marta's stomach. Her hand grabs onto his.

David begins to cough as his hand begins to glow the slightest shade of light blue. Marta's hand squeezes David's.

DAVID
I love you, Marta.

Marta's chest rises as air fills her lungs. She looks to David, placing a hand on his face.

MARTA
(weak)
David.
(beat)
What have you done?

DAVID
(winded)
I've made you well. We can be...

The lantern begins to flicker. David looks to Marta. Her hand falls to her side. The blue fades from his hand. The lantern goes out.

MARTA
(weak)
I...

The air leaves her lungs, as her body sinks into the bed.

DAVID
(weak)
Marta... I'm...

Marta's hand relaxes on David's.

A single tear begins to well up on David's cheek. His eyes become heavy and his body slouches forward until his face presses against the mattress.

He takes another deep breath and exhales.

David dies, his eyes open and staring out into the cabin.

FADE OUT