

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY ENGLISH  
DEPARTMENT

**THE PATRIARCHAL FRAMEWORK OF EXTREME  
RELIGIOUS CULT COMMUNITIES AND THE  
POST-EXIT AFFECT ON FAMILIES**

A Thesis Submitted to

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## ABSTRACT

THE PATRIARCHAL FRAMEWORK OF EXTREME RELIGIOUS CULT COMMUNITIES  
AND THE POST-EXIT AFFECT ON FAMILIES

*The Lies We Keep* is a screenplay about Pinnacle, a patriarchal cult community that employs mind control and narcotics to subjugate the women in the community. They follow a false religious doctrine and community framework that were created during the Victorian era when the Mormons migrated west and ended their culture of polygamy to avoid prosecution. This thesis brings to light the many facets of extreme religious cults and their daily lives within a controlling framework including specific gender roles, abuse, manipulation, and inequality. Government intervention and Freedom of Religion are also discussed in parallel to the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas and how FBI and ATF mishandled that situation. The research also discusses the difficulties of post-exit rehabilitation for community members which mirrors the screenplay. The people of Pinnacle must learn the true Christian doctrine and the lessons of faith, forgiveness, and redemption in order to rebuild their lives.

Abstract length: 150

## DEDICATION

I would like to thank my family for giving me the support and encouragement to continue my education and follow my passion for writing. My parents instilled in me a desire to reach for lofty goals so that I would never have to say that I didn't at least try to achieve them and be proud of myself if I did. Dreams are a gift from above and from that seed the most wondrous of flowers may bloom. I thank the Lord for one of those dreams—my miracle children: my daughter Haley, a complicated and beautiful creature that stole our hearts from her first breath. Her strength in overcoming her fears and inferiorities brings tears to my eyes from pride and insurmountable love.

My son, Adam, whose early struggles with focus made him determined to overcome his obstacles and through his clear and monumental gifts of creativity, found his way out of that fog. Although his journey is far from over, may he one day find satisfaction and peace in his life. He will forever have my love and admiration. My husband, Paul, has been a steadfast companion, a fierce and competitive rival in all manner of games and sport, and a true friend, my best friend. I would not have succeeded without their love and confidence in me.

I thank them all as I thank the Lord God for seeing me through my own tumultuous journey. He alone knows my heart. I am truly blessed.

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There are a few people in this world that I must acknowledge, people who have helped me in some manner to traverse the path that I now find behind me, zigging and zagging, uphill and down, never straight but often narrow. I blazed a trail of my own choosing, which led me on many strange journeys. Perhaps those journeys will translate into a story or two that will both entertain and enlighten the soul.

-Mr. Brown, you let me see that there is hope if one chooses to see it. Thank you for your kindness, guidance, and for not letting me fail of my own accord.

-Jane Anne Webb, you enabled me to see that one is never too old to get a degree, or two. Thank you for encouraging me to get on with it! Empowerment for the mature women!

-Professor X, from the bottom of my heart, I thank you for seeing a shred of writing ability in my stories. Your encouragement gave me reason to open an old door and nurture a new passion for creative writing. It's all your fault! Thank you.

-Mother, our journey was perilous, but we made it through to the other side. You lifted me when I wasn't looking, even though I didn't deserve it. You never gave up on me. It paid off. Although your mind has drifted away, I hope that my love for you holds fast in your heart. Please don't let go. Never let go.

-Dad. What can I say except that you influenced me more than you could know; I feel your presence everywhere, watching over me, helping me get back up when I fall. Do you still have a pieces of candy for us in your pocket? My heart still smiles when I think of you. I'll always be your little monkey. Love you. Always.

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## CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

### Statement of Importance and Purpose

The creative work for this thesis, a screenplay entitled *The Lies We Keep*, is a narrative about a fictional town called Pinnacle, in southern Arkansas, whose community lives apart from the American expectations of the twenty-first century. Pinnacle is an isolated community whose faith doctrines dictate the patriarchal nature of the power hierarchy and the absolute obedience and piety of the women. The community abides by a religious doctrine in the “Covenant of Reverend Amos Hardy” (circa 1897) under the Victorian attitude of that time, similar to that of the Mormons that migrated west for religious freedom.

Pinnacle could be called a cult—a religious group that has split from mainstream Christianity with regard to their beliefs and behavior (Waters 4), however, the term cult has varied definitions that lean towards toxic cultures and a decisive lack of self-preservation. Pinnacle is more in line with a PMG or Psychologically Manipulative Group (Almendros et al. 61) as an extremist religious community dominated by male supremacy using psychologically manipulative methods such as mind control/suggestion and narcotics to ensure obedience. Although evidence shows that a few cult factions, such as the FLDS, illegally practice polygamy and specific evidence and testimonies confirm that child abuse does exist within some of these communities, however, the screenplay represents a faction that is similar to the FLDS structure, but honors traditional family structure and non-deviant intimate behavior.

The focus of this research paper is to understand the baseline premise of religious “splinter groups” that have strayed from the mainstream religions practiced in America and how the members of such factions behave under specific structure. Since the screenplay is based upon



such a faction, the research embodies how a patriarchal structure affects the community, family dynamic, second-generation members born into the group, and if the dissolution of the cult structure would enable forgiveness and redemption to occur within the population.

### Artist Statement

#### *Introduction of Creative Manuscript*

The Creative Writing manuscript is a screenplay that was developed during this author's first introduction to screenwriting at Liberty University. The course required three narratives that were of personal interest but should also be of some commercial interest. Each narrative should hold the interest of the reader and evoke some sort of emotion or reaction, whether that be dread, excitement, humor, suspense, enlightenment, inspiration, or hope, and could be translated into a visual media outlet such as television or motion pictures. The narrative that this author embraced for the screenplay is titled *The Lies We Keep* and is the story of a young heroine, Mattie Lewen, living in an isolated religious community in a town called Pinnacle in rural Arkansas. The town is comprised of a Bus Depot, Library, an Orphanage/School, Diner, Town Hall, residential areas, and at the heart of the community is the Pinnacle Protestant Church where the Elders, all men, hold court and also make up the town Council—but there is darkness behind the seemingly normal façade.

The Mayor and Senior Elder of Pinnacle is Graham Lewen, who also happens to be the heroine's father, a descendant of the town founder, Amos Hardy, that established the church and the town in 1897. Amos was a man with questionable motives that was quite successful at manipulation and intimidation. He was a charlatan and a swindler and was by no means ordained by any church. He was raised by a Mormon family in a patriarchal society, but before Brigham Young took the community to Salt Lake Valley, Utah, Amos broke away and convinced several

families to migrate southwest across the American landscape to stake his property claim in southern Arkansas and establish himself as the next Messiah. He imposed his will and his own vision of how his new church would honor the Lord, by means of coercion, intimidation, and a little Laudanum to smooth out the wrinkles of his new plan. Amos Hardy preached of power and authority for the men of the congregation, and the need for piety and obedience from the women, following the Mormon Church of Latter-Day Saints doctrine. He tore apart the good book and compiled excerpts into a smaller booklet that suited his whims, all of which were out of context of the Bible proper. He named this revision *The Book of Amos*. This is what he demanded of his congregation—to be resolutely faithful to his new religion under the guise of Protestantism, to deflect any scrutiny of their LDS origins, and to swear fealty to his new Bible and the resulting covenant, full of lies and forced behavior preached by a false Messiah.

This way of life was so ingrained into the community, controlled by a tyrant and his male congregation, ignorant and full of self-importance from their newly acquired status of power, that generations of families that followed would be just as blinded by the lies of the covenant and the power to exert control over the weaker female population. Arranged marriages were expected when the young girls reached the age of seventeen, bartered for with dowries and back-handed dealings; any resistance from the girls was coerced with Laudanum and fear, known only as “the cleansing,” until they could no longer think critically of the situation. When Laudanum went out of use, the Council members processed opiates made from poppy plants in the open fields or a hallucinogenic made from psilocybin mushrooms grown in the maze of tunnels beneath the church. This process would continue into the twenty-first century until one bright and courageous young woman, our heroine Mattie, discovers the secrets hidden behind the lies with the aid of some new friends in the nearby town of Bushmill that had once been a “cleansed”

mother, Lorraine McIntyre, and then five-year old daughter, Faye, in Pinnacle and had escaped after the premature death of Lorraine's husband. Mattie quite innocently causes the dissolution of the covenant and the false way of life in Pinnacle with the unexpected intervention of the FBI, DEA, and the ATF after she is rescued from Pinnacle by her friends in Bushmill and they convince her to report the cleansing that she experienced.

When Mattie learns of the true history of Pinnacle from Lorraine and Faye, she struggles between her loyalty to her family and the possibility of a better future for the people of Pinnacle. Rev. Roald had been living with his doubt of the covenant and his shame of reluctant participation after finding an intact copy of a Bible in a box of donated books from Bushmill at the Pinnacle Library years ago. Through his renewed faith in God and his newly found courage, he reaches out to Faye McIntyre, now an ordained Pastor, and together they guide Mattie towards rebuilding the community through forgiveness and redemption. He helps her understand how and why Pinnacle existed under a false understanding of faith, life, and love. But Mattie also understands that a new beginning in the town would mean an end to her father's position of authority and the structured way of life she had understood since childhood.

Magnus Roald, the Reverend's only surviving child and a few years older than Mattie, grew up with her in Pinnacle and was known as the town bully. Prior to losing his mother and unborn baby sister during a complicated birthing process, he was a normal youth full of playfulness and vibrancy and was utterly enamored with Mattie, but he turned dark and withdrawn after losing his mother. As a child, he directed his grief and anger at the community children and their pets, and as an adult his job as a police officer in Bushmill permitted him to vent his darkness on those he asserted his authority upon. But his feelings for Mattie never altered, they were simply disguised beneath the callousness of his brooding countenance until he learns of Mattie's "cleansing" which spurs him to change his ways and ask for forgiveness.

It is up to Mattie and Magnus to fill the void of leadership and bring Pinnacle into the light, but Graham Lewen and the men in town must be willing to repent, to ask for forgiveness and be forgiven, to truly change their hearts and find redemption before Pinnacle can begin to heal.

This was the impetus behind this author's vision.

#### *Author's Vision and Process*

The opening scene begins with a nine-year old Mattie and her best friend, Ginny—an orphan, playing with other children around a pair of trees in a field of golden poppies behind the church and adjacent to a deep culvert. Mattie and Ginny are standing on the edge of the culvert where they see a desiccated rabbit laying at the bottom. Ginny says a prayer for the dead rabbit, and for the rabbit's mother to not be sad; the girls then run to the trees where Mattie climbs one. From her vantage point, she sees a group of boys walking in their direction and she recognizes the tallest one as Magnus, the twelve-year old town bully. The girls have a quick discussion about why Magnus is so mean, and Ginnie believes it is because God took his mother away from him. Mattie points out that God took both of Ginnie's parents, but she didn't turn out to be like Magnus.

The entourage of ruffians approach the playing children who see them, and all run away screaming except for Ginnie, Dumpy (Mattie's Golden Retriever), and Mattie up in the tree. Magnus threatens Ginnie and Dumpy but Mattie cuts to the chase and inquires as to what Magnus wants. Magnus, trying to impress his followers, challenges Mattie to a dare of leaping from one tree to the other tree without falling. When she succeeds, but is injured, she doesn't cry or fall, and this impresses Magnus. He looks at her with admiration as he and his group take their leave. This shows Mattie's early character in her strength and her resolve. She wasn't afraid of Magnus and had no problem standing up to him. We see this trait in her character as a youth,

knowing that she has the capacity for strength and courage to confront obstacles and the resolve to get through them.

The next scene is several years later when we find Mattie and Ginny, now seventeen, sitting on the edge of the same culvert, scraped and disheveled, except it is the middle of the night with flashing emergency lights and people shouting in the distance by the church. The girls are looking down into the culvert at a body just as they did with the dead rabbit when they were nine. We know that something big has taken place in Pinnacle, and that the girls have been in some kind of scuffle, perhaps with the person down in the culvert. The next scene is six days earlier where Mattie and Ginnie are sitting in church as the service concludes and people begin to exit down the aisle for fellowship. This is where the real story begins and the reader knows that in only six days, Mattie and Ginnie will end up sitting at the edge of that culvert staring at a body and the story will build towards climax and reveal all—or not.

It is this mixture of time frames and scenes that will pique a reader's/viewer's interest. There is a sense of foreboding as the scenes snap into different shots in time, revealing only enough backstory to increase curiosity to find out what transpires. By withholding the resolution, tension builds and the conflict increases, adding interest and suspense to the script.

In learning the format for writing scripts through studying the course textbooks, a great deal of processes became evident that would be necessary for a cohesive and readable manuscript. The process of using templates to lay out the narrative, as well as identify characters, enabled this author to loosely think through the initial storyline from beginning to end. Connecting these characters within the story concept and creating back stories for each one in relation to the narrative is a unique lesson. This gives each character dimension, and these templates are referred to in the course of writing and editing. The most important process that is

employed in writing the script is the use of screenwriting software. The numerous formatting requirements of the script are built into the software application which enables this author to focus on dialogue within each scene without considering corrections to margins or indents. Character names become organic to the software through repetition which makes selections quicker and in the correct format. This prevents a disruption in creative flow during writing.

It also became clear that writing an outline for a script is much easier than writing an outline for a novel. This took some time to figure out, but it is simply that the story in a script is pared down to mostly dialogue, devoid of characters' internal thoughts and movements, motives, and monologues, whereas a novel is full-bodied and expressive. Writing a chapter in a novel can lead to "falling down a rabbit hole" in three thousand words or more expressing the inner anguish of the lead character's thoughts on finding her pet goldfish floating belly up, as an example. It can be difficult to "kill your darlings" as Hemingway put it. A script is built scene by scene, act by act, and therefore already structured in such a way that makes it easier to organize.

#### *Literary Content and Christian Significance*

When considering a narrative for a script, works that elicited a range of emotions and thoughts came to mind: *Divergent*, *The Hunger Games*, and even Disney animations such as *Rava and the Last Dragon*, *Brave*, and *Tangled*. These young women needed to succeed and overcome obstacles that blocked their path onward. What all of these incredible movies have in common is the fact that young women are posed as heroines. But none of them began their story as a heroine, in fact, they began as rather mundane and naïve, but they all had the capacity for strength and resolve. Only through odd circumstances outside of their control were these heroines forced into their true characters as combatants in conflict. This is how Mattie Lewen is to present in the script, to grow and mature with each scene of writing.

These movies were all based upon the oldest and most used plot in history: good versus evil. The weak overcoming the powerful, the small yet swift outsmarting the large yet cumbersome, the faithful victorious over the lost, and so on. It is known, in the end, that good will always triumph over evil. This gives people hope, it gives them suspense, and even inspiration when, at the last moment at the end of Act 2 when the hero rebounds from a great loss, that he now has the resolve to go on, to cross over into Act 3 and march up the mountain, face the evil enemy, and vanquish him to the great unknown where he will be trapped for all eternity in another dimension...or simply dies. Then comes the resolution of the whole narrative when evil is vanquished and the sun gleams down on the hero. This is the best plot to leave a reader/viewer in a good place at the end of the story.

As a Christian, this author finds these stories to be uplifting. They leave a good feeling about the great battle to come. This author pictured the epic battles between good and evil in Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring*, where Frodo must complete his nearly impossible quest in order for the world to be saved from Sauron and the fires of Mordor. In Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, four siblings must battle Jadis the white Witch, and in R.R. Martin's *A Story of Ice and Fire (Game of Thrones)* where White Walkers slowly consume the Seven Kingdoms until the children of the north defeat the prime with dragon glass or Valerian steel. Then there is Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* when young Harry willingly confronts Voldemort in the forest, knowing that he will be killed, only to weaken the Dark Lord until his horcruxes were finally destroyed and Harry could return and kill him as a mortal.

These are some of the most imaginative stories of our time, beautifully written and then re-written for the screen so that viewers need not rely on their imaginations to picture the scene in the story, they simply have to open their eyes and process the vivid images and expansive

landscapes of the movies. But the most influential movie that impacted this author as a youth was the release of *Star Wars*. The same plot applies here, in a winning combination of futuristic sci-fi, unforgettable characters, and a well written script: Luke Skywalker in his white costume with his blue-lightsaber against Darth Vader, imposingly dressed in head-to-toe black with his red-lightsaber. A classic presentation of good versus evil, light versus dark, and blue versus red.

This plot never fails to entice, pulling this author in, commanding it to be read or seen on the screen or streamed on television. It appeals to this author's basic desire to see goodness prevail, to see faith in action over an atheist's empty future. If one were to peel away the computer graphics and the epic landscapes and simply reveal the beauty of the story, it is always there. It is the spirit working to reveal the promise of the next coming of the Lord. This author cannot continue without a mention of an incredible story. *The Shack* was first read by this author years ago, based on the book author's claims that what took place actually occurred. Curiosity prevailed, simply put. Who was I to say that this did not happen? What was read shook this author to her core. She finally got it. She understood how God could "allow" bad things to happen to good or innocent people. This author had always internally debated that question and did not have an answer that was satisfactory. That story provided a deeper understanding of a God that loves all of his children, not just the good, but also the good ones turned bad. Can a parent choose between his own children?

It is believed that people have the capacity for change. This author likes to believe that people can repent and receive forgiveness. Redemption is the result of a choice made to correct the wrongs and know that it was truly the right thing to do. In *The Lies We Keep* an entire town is living a lie. Some people, such as Rev. Roald and all of the wives in the community, know that their way of life is not what God intended, but they have been conditioned by fear and



intimidation and Rev. Roald is battling his conscience to thwart the whole process if he can only find his courage. When Mattie starts the process of change, the floodgates open and the playing field is leveled. The women, confused but grateful, begin to gather the courage to speak out to their husbands. The husbands, confused and bewildered, are at a loss for words.

What occurs in Pinnacle with the FBI, DEA, and the ATF is now a mainstream national news story and strangers in news vans sporting satellite dishes and news channel logos are flooding the small town, bustling to get the story of just what happened. Mattie and the community must remain calm and focus on the future. A processing center will be required to provide privacy, support, and therapy to the families as well as host various medical and legal advocates that have come to Pinnacle to offer their services pro bono. Friends from Bushmill introduce Ginnie to the internet and teach her how to navigate the internet and set up a Fund Me page to raise money for new bibles and for revamping the underground network of secret rooms beneath the church where generations of young women were cleansed. Mattie must give them courage and Rev. Roald must give them hope in order for these families to move forward through forgiveness and redemption.

For generations, the families of Pinnacle have endured under a false ideal of Christian worship and existed in a framework of skewed reality where the women and children bent to the patriarchal dominance that demanded subjugation and obedience. Can a community such as Pinnacle, once dissolved through government intervention, rehabilitate itself through forgiveness and redemption and reestablish itself under a traditional Christian faith? The research in this area, although limited in nature, does show that people have a capacity for forgiveness, even those most cruelly treated can find forgiveness in their hearts with the appropriate compassion and therapy. However, there are those members that fall the farthest from the pedestal that have the difficult task of redemption. Power and position are two of the most difficult temptations to

acquiesce. Even with the arrest of the Elders for drug related charges in the cleansings, it is even more difficult to prosecute these men for violation of human rights under the Freedom of Religion Act. Pinnacle will find it a monumental challenge to convert those in power and liberate those that were suppressed into subservience all of their lives following the tradition of generations of families in order to find stability and healing through acceptance and forgiveness.

## CHAPTER 2 - RESEARCH

### Critical Paper

This research covers the definition of what religious cults are, models of cult formation, methodologies of cult activity, the patriarchal cult structure and charismatic leader, the role of women in such a structure, and the abuses they endure with specific focus on the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS). Freedom of religion, government intervention, and the post-intervention chaos within the dissolved community are discussed with emphasis on rebuilding the community under a traditional Christian framework through counseling and support. Forgiveness and redemption play an integral role in the possibility of transformation.

#### *What is a Cult?*

In retrospect, when most people hear the term “cult” an image of LSD-tripping hippies playing guitar in sing-a-longs and spreading free love may come to mind, however, the notoriety of religious extremists in the media over the decades has changed that outlook to one of toxicity. Cults may arise from both religious and non-religious sects; many religious sects accept society’s traditional church standard where other sects break away from tradition completely (Bainbridge and Stark 293). For a cult to form, an idea is invented and then that idea must be socially accepted. Bainbridge and Stark (283) have described three models of cult formation:

- 1) The Psychopathology Model, which is the most widely used model by social scientists, centers around individual psychopathology that is socially accepted. The individual creates a deviant perspective and delivers it as truth regardless of any

- evidence. There is usually some form of reward involved that may be as simple as acceptance or as lofty as immortality.
- 2) The Entrepreneur Model focuses on technology and artistic creativity as a successful business; an example of this is *Dianetics*, later branded as *Scientology* by L. Ron Hubbard, who sold books and seminars to improve one's mental power in order to find success in life. These cult founders will often copy features of other successful cults and apply their own tactics to boost the salability of their product and may be regarded as fraudulent. Within this model are three modes of cult movement:
- a. Audience Cults- offers very mild rewards such as entertainment with no long-term followers/clients.
  - b. Client Cults- offers valued rewards such as alleged cures and may have a stable clientele that are not specifically members of the cult.
  - c. Cult Movements- gives complete religion with a much more elaborate reward system based on mythology or the supernatural and have committed members. Real religious functions are performed for the followers even though the founder may be a fraud. It is believed that many older cults that began under deception have transformed into genuine religious organizations by people who believed in their founder's message.
- 3) The Subculture-Evolution Model emerges as a group environment in lieu of a single leader. The group shares similar ideas and accepts those ideas thus promoting some sort of affect that generates more ideas and concepts within the group. Affirmation increases the feeling of affect.

Some cult experts refer to these types of groups as HDG's or High Demand Groups, closed groups, or destructive groups (Kern and Jungbauer 207); in Europe the term "sect" is commonly used as is the term "intentional communities" in Australia and New Zealand (Whitsett and Rosow 74). As Almendros et. al. discussed in their paper *Assessment of Psychological Abuse in Manipulative Groups*, another term for cults is Psychologically Manipulative Groups (PMG) and this is the construct that is utilized for the screenplay town of Pinnacle. In order for the community to fulfill their religious doctrine, it was necessary to manipulate the residents when the slightest hint of resistance was noted. Since the construct is a patriarchal society, most of the manipulations involve women. As with the cult movement mentioned above, Pinnacle formed under fraudulent circumstances but over generations became a viable religious community following the self-serving doctrine of the founder.

#### *Methodologies of Religious Factions*

Many, if not all, of the extremist religious cults rely on intimidation, fear, and lack of knowledge regarding scripture to control its members (Waters 78). Scripture can be used as a weapon to prophesy the end of days, the apocalypse, and an attack from the government. These prophecies are usually delivered by a single person, allegedly chosen by God, to lead the members to salvation (Waters 22). Scripture would be withheld, modified, or altered in order to support the claims of the Prophet and ensure subjugation from its members. Many cult members came into the cult with their parents and were raised to believe in the Prophet.

The extreme cult controls the members by stripping them of their identity and pressuring them to conform to the community's framework. They are instructed on what to wear, what to eat, how long to pray, how to discipline their children, and how to spend their money. God's grace is typically not discussed but is replaced with salvation through "works" to enter paradise

(Waters 79). This is what the women of Pinnacle experience in their lives as wives or young ladies awaiting their time of betrothal. Religious fervor and constant and consistent suggestion can create mental illusions of what is the “will of God” (Pretorius, Religion 204).

In order for the cult community to be protected from the sinful and harmful “outside,” two principles are required: isolation and insulation (Pretorius, Religion).

Isolation can be consciously created through group dynamics and unconsciously accepted by the members, and can entail physical isolation, as is the case with a commune. It can also be social isolation established through discouragement to socialize[sic] with outsiders. This isolation will ensure that cult members are “unsullied by the world” and an ideal environment for control is created (207).

With the isolation of the cult community, it is quite easy to formulate new behaviors that would not be acceptable to normal society and through insulation of the inner self, by hiding one’s true self and releasing identity, the member can truly be accepted into the cult. The isolation of cults provides a breeding ground for many forms of abuse ranging from coercion, intimidation, threats, physical and verbal abuse, manipulation, and sexual bullying to forfeiture of personal finances. In a cultic construct, there are three factors that are important in assessing the nature and function of the community: 1) the leader, 2) the structure of the group, 3) and the mind control or thought reform (Pretorius, Mind 610).

### *The Charismatic Leader*

Most cults are initiated by a self-appointed leader, often an ordained priest or minister, and are typically charismatic and persuasive. They are excellent orators and are well versed in scripture. They have very strong personalities which serve them in convincing impressionable people that what they are preaching is the undeniable truth and is exclusive only to the members

of the cult. The leader is the single authority and allegedly channels the message of God to the people (Gilliland 12-13; Pretorius, Mind 610).

In the framework of Pinnacle, the leader is not the religious leader, but the Senior Elder and Mayor of the town. Under the Mayor is a council of men, not including the Reverend, that do the Mayor's bidding. Although the founding father of Pinnacle was called "Reverend," he was not ordained. The Mayor is a direct descendant of the founding father and through the generations, the power shifted from the pulpit to the dominant figure in the community. The founding father produced his own reduced version of the Holy Bible by only retaining excerpts that supported his vision of an idealistic world of male dominance where women bore the burden of labor, isolated within the community, and the men had the freedom and means to enjoy life inside and outside of the community. This also reflects the nature of the Entrepreneur Cult Model where founders copy successful constructs and introduce their own notions and Cult Movement where full religious ceremony is maintained.

#### *The Patriarchal Nature of Certain Religions*

Almost all of the religious cults are headed by men, with very few having a dominant female as the leader, but typically it is a male dominant framework. In such a community, the men have the role of provider and leader, or priesthead in the FLDS (Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) community. The women are relegated to domestic duties as wife, mother, and provider of labor. In communities where polygamy is practiced, sister wives often share the duties of the household and rearing of the children, including homeschooling, however, this type of construct can also create competition and jealousy within the hierarchy of wives (Matthews and Salazar 195).

The quality of education is in direct relation to the educational level of the teacher, which after generations of families born and raised within the isolation of the community, is less than average since it is the husband's duty to instruct the wife on how to educate the children and the curriculum is typically cultic in nature. For the girls in the families, the education centers around their duty to their father and then to their future husband. Disobedience would result in public humiliation and/or abuse (Matthews and Salazar 193). Many cults prohibited the use of television, music, internet, and written material that are not religious in nature or approved by the leader. Television is considered a conduit to evil, filling peoples' minds with lies and propaganda (Griswold 48).

This is what the women of Pinnacle experience, although a patriarchal framework with strict gender roles, there is no polygamy and no deviant sexual practices. Pinnacle is a clean, all-American town full of families that attend church every Sunday under the guise of Protestantism, but there is a closer similarity to the FLDS in their construct of gender division. The Pinnacle women homeschool the children through middle school when the boys are provided a standard education at the orphanage schoolhouse and the girls continue being homeschooled with the curriculum shifting to the preparation of becoming a wife and mother.

#### *The Role of Women in a Patriarchal Structure*

In the Mormon and FLDS communities, there exists a strong presence of a Victorian-era paradigm. Women in the 1800's were pious, pure, submissive, and domestic. This nature has settled in and remained throughout the generations. The perfect woman is the "True Woman" whose core held her God-given sense of morality and religious virtue (Griswold 18). The women of Pinnacle also have these core values and if they feel the least bit resistant to that structure, they would be "cleansed" of their evil thoughts and reconditioned to comply.



It is unfortunate that most women within these communities have a lack of proper education, or any skills aside from domestic duties, which leaves them with little hope of having an independent life outside of the community; their sole purpose was to serve a man. As a small girl, they had to be subservient to the boys, preparing them for their future roles (Whitsett and Rosow 73). These communities control women's destinies in a state of "over control" which leads to a sense of powerlessness as they become depersonalized and see one another as a part of the whole and no longer individuals (Gilliland 8). They are made to wear specific clothing, no makeup, long hair, and demure countenance. They are expected to be grateful for the life they have and should not expect more (Pretorius, *Mind* 611; Griswold 16; Whitsett and Rosow 87). When people are alienated they may feel a need to exact change. Sublimators try to change through creativity, to work through conflicts, whereas avengers take drastic action and can be dangerous and unpredictable (Gilliland 9).

Many people that were interviewed by Griswold recalled that their fathers were authoritarian figures somewhat removed. The mothers were the day-to-day surrogate fathers to the children as well as the disciplinarians and educators (38-40). As for the heroine of the screenplay, her father was the leader of Pinnacle and was domineering yet charismatic. He did not dole on her but provided for the family and expected strict behavior from her and her mother. She feared him as she did not really know him. There was no warmth or tenderness in him to give to her. Her relationship with her father is dissociative in nature.

### *The Abuse of Women*

#### Physical Harm:

Many of the religious cults that were researched have an unbelievably high account of physical abuse towards female children and adult women. Within the framework of the cult's doctrine and expected behavior of submission, there exists abuse in the form of overwork,

beatings, dietary restrictions, and sexual abuse. The media has brought forth varied stories of sexual assaults and compelling evidence was discovered at the Short Creek, AZ compound of the FLDS that the Prophet, Warren Jeffs, raped an eleven-year-old girl as his “wife” with the help of two of his numerous adult wives. He was convicted and is currently serving time in prison. This appeared to be a norm in some of the affiliated communities, especially in Canada at another FLDS site where young brides were given as rewards to older men, which resulted in their being taken out of school and expected to bear as many children as possible following the LDS construct (Whitsett and Rosow 79). One young girl from the Twelve Tribes of Israel faction grew up expecting to be raped. Her mother and other women in the community normalized the unwanted encounter and made it clear that this was to be expected as a part of being female. Another cult that was recently discussed in the media was NXIVM whose leader branded his initials on the hips of his sex slaves (Whitsett and Rosow 81-3).

In Pinnacle, any discipline/abuse between a husband and wife, of which the youngest bride is the age of seventeen, are kept private within their household. The only real form of physical abuse that takes place is when a woman has to be “cleansed” of her resistance. This includes mind control through the use of narcotics, starvation, and information overload over a period of days. The messages that are repeatedly delivered supports the patriarchal framework in which God demands the obedience of the woman to man.

The process of sensory deprivation can restrict a person’s ability to think critically and resist changes of thought. Social influences are easier to absorb under the stress of overstimulation where ego is broken down and the person is left with a suppressed personality, unable to reason or resist (Pretorius, Mind 612).

*Church Versus State*

## Religious Freedom:

Thomas Jefferson created the Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom in America to “protect the minority religions from the potential tyranny of larger religious groups, the state may not pass laws preventing individuals from practicing their religion according to conscience” (Gilliland 32). By the Victorian era, many people felt that freedom of religion was a natural right and government should not impose their interference there.

Since the United States places such high value on the Constitution, it is difficult to oversee all of the religious factions that practice in America. Intervention is not as clear as it could be in determining if any action should be taken against a religious faction. Many of the groups feel that their religious laws take precedence over national laws of society (Gilliland 14). This is the premise for the founding of Pinnacle in rural Arkansas, isolated from society, the nearest town of Bushmill twenty miles away. There is a bus that stops at the Pinnacle Depot but is mostly utilized by the men of town. Much like the Short Creek community, they are protected by isolation, insulation, and the Constitutional right of religious freedom.

Castano, Belanger, and Moyano wrote about improvement proposals regarding legal delimitation of the cultic phenomenon and greater awareness of the dangers of cult involvement. The families of their survey emphasized that early education through information and awareness campaigns would aid in avoiding future cult recruitment and involvement for the general public (157).

*Fundamentalists Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS)*

The Fundamentalist movement began as a splinter group from the Mormon Church of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) after Brigham Young disavowed the earthly practice of polygamy from

the Salt Lake Valley. Those that chose to practice polygamy relocated south across the state line in the border area known as Short Creek, AZ to avoid prosecution (Griswold 2). The new Fundamentalists Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS) continued the Victorian and Christian structure and patriarchal framework of the LDS keeping the strict gender roles of responsibility (Griswold 23, 96). Originally, the FLDS was led by a Council of men but eventually became a one-man leadership construct.

According to Griswold, the historian Bennion (regarding the FLDS Desert Patriarchy) had six components of her desert patriarchy model: 1) male supremacy, 2) female networking, 3) non-secular education, 4) imbalanced sex ratio, 5) alternative sex and marriage forms, and 6) geographic and social circumscription. She also had five conditions that produced a greater risk of abuse and human rights violations when combined with polygamy: the low parental investment of the father, an isolated rural environment and circumscription, the absence of a strong female network, overcrowding and economic deprivation, and male supremacy (12-3). It became evident that this faction had little regard for women and used them like property to be sold or traded at the slightest whim of the Prophet, who could “reassign” a wife to another man or to himself.

While researching into cult communities, a striking similarity was noted between the screenplay town of Pinnacle (without the polygamy and sexual abuse) and the real town of Short Creek. In studying the framework of the FLDS, some of their particular tendencies may be introduced into the creative manuscript for a deeper and more authentic back story of Pinnacle.

### *Government Intervention*

The Branch Davidians and WACO

In 1992 the Branch Davidians, under the leadership of David Koresh, began to purchase and accumulate an arsenal of high-power weapons in preparation for the end times. (Gilliland 67) A United Parcel Service driver reported the deliveries to the local County Sheriff's Office due to the suspicious packages of black powder, grenade casings, and firearms. The sheriff's office contacted the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF) and they began their investigation of the Branch Davidian compound in mid-1992. They were thought to be potentially dangerous and unpredictable (Kerstetter 456; Gilliland 63).

The BATF decided to raid the compound using a "dynamic entry," which is said to feel like an attack. During the execution of this raid, Koresh had been forewarned of the attack by a reporter and opened fire on the agents. Later during recorded negotiations, Koresh stated that this was simply "the American way." You fire back when being attacked...you protect your own (Kerstetter 455). The negotiations stalled as Koresh recounted his religious doctrine and the Federal agents shut him down and pressured him to surrender. According to Agne, had the ATF and FBI utilized someone schooled in theology for the negotiations with Koresh, things may have ended differently (550). Law enforcement cannot use the same tactics normally deployed with other extremist groups such as terrorist groups. They must understand that a different mindset is called for when dealing with religious avengers (Gilliland 94-5).

The Waco incident was researched for the actions of the ATF and FBI in particular as to initiation, implementation, and just cause for the raid. It was not the Branch Davidian's religious doctrine that alarmed the government, but the very public show of armament and explosives coming into the compound. As the compound was only nine miles distance from Waco, there was a responsibility on the government's behalf to protect the public from a possible threat. A similar situation is portrayed in the screenplay where the Mayor of Pinnacle sanctions a pipe

bomb attack on the Church of Hope in Bushmill that is harboring the heroine of the story and triggers the subsequent involvement of the ATF. However, the initiating action and point of interest by the FBI and DEA stems from a phone call by the Bushmill Police Chief reporting the abuse (cleansing) of the heroine by the Pinnacle Council.

*Can There be Forgiveness?*

When former cult members were interviewed by social scientists, there were mixed feelings about how they viewed certain people from the cult community. There were thoughts of distrust in believing in something Godly that only ended up being the fantasy world of one individual who held such power over an entire community of people. He controlled their lives, their identities, their happiness, and security. They felt betrayed overall, but they also admitted to missing the friendships that they made while in the community (Waters 58). According to Kern and Jungbauer, many of the second-generation participants they interviewed considered their relationship with their parents as impaired, such as emotional distance with one or both parents, a lack of cordial feelings, superficial communication, and cold, conflicted, and tense attitudes. Others described feelings that varied between fear and hate, or love and desire for closeness but typically fear was the dominant feeling regarding their parents.

For the screenplay, after the town of Pinnacle is emancipated from the patriarchal structure by the FBI, DEA, and the ATF, a great deal of contemplation on behalf of the families in the story will be necessary to process what is revealed as the truth. When they are told that the gender roles no longer apply, that they are free to leave Pinnacle as citizens, and that the dominant men of the town may no longer force suppression over the women, there is confusion and fear among the residents. Many of the women are married to men that they would not have chosen to marry. The men now face possible divorce demands and there may be nothing that they can do to change their wives' minds or force them to revert to their former roles.

It will be an emotional journey for the families. They must endeavor to discover whether or not forgiveness and redemption can be employed between family members and neighbors.

*Can the Fallen Find Redemption?*

In most cults, the father's role is one of authority, using anger and discipline to make the children obedient. A certain amount of fear is also present if the father is prone to violence. The mother's role is to nurture and guide the children. Fathers tend to be more focused on the religious doctrine than on the family dynamic. If the children in the family leave the cult without the parents, the father will typically renounce the children and cut off all communication with them—essentially they are dead to him. The mother will try to keep the communication open but keep it secret from her husband (Matthews and Salazar 195).

The power of the patriarchal community may be too strong for some men to admit any wrongdoing. It would be a prideful thing to stand behind your convictions even at the cost of losing your family and their trust. Again, this would be an emotional journey to see if the Mayor of Pinnacle and the other men in the town would renounce their former way of life and religious covenant when faced with being arrested for drug charges and the dissolution of their town hierarchy under federal intervention. As Pretorius states, regarding freedom of religion as specified by the United Nations, the other rights of freedom, such as freedom from torture and protection of human rights, should not be overshadowed by the freedom of religion (Spiritual 228).

*Building a New Community Through Healing*

Much of the research for this thesis includes papers that study the former cult member and the need for organizations that cater to this specific niche of mental health disorders.

Therapy for this area is lacking. Pretorius wrote that cult members face unique challenges when re-entering society and that most members had been part of the cult community for years, if not decades, and experienced feelings of:

...depression and sense of alienation; loneliness; low self-esteem and low self-confidence; phobic-like constriction of social contacts; fear of joining groups or making commitments; distrust of professional services; doubt of own ability to make good choices; problems in reactivating a value system to live by and needed adjustment in five areas: practical living, psychological-emotional, cognitive, social-personal and philosophical-attitudinal (Mind 619).

For cult members that were recruited, it is easier to ease back into a life that they previously understood as “normal” having family and friends that were part of that life prior to participation in the cult. Transitioning back into society can cause tremendous anxiety as these people process and deconstruct a life and mindset that they have lived for, sometimes, decades. According to Matthews and Salazar, a counselor can discuss the trauma of living in a cult and “normalize for the client the spiritual and religious confusion, mistrust, guilt, depression, confusion, feelings of alienation, and anger that former members may feel” (199). Often decision making and goal setting are difficulties experienced by the member due to the loss of identity as part of the cult. Reaffirming identity and confidence and encouraging them to make mistakes without fear of punishment in order to build back that confidence is recommended. Counselors can assist members in making small decisions, empowering the member to process their authority issues.

For most women, leaving a cult can reveal post-traumatic stress disorder in which they will require psychological help. Also, they will need rehabilitation, vocational training to enter



the workforce, training on how to manage money, and guidance on how to be self-reliant. After years of living in a culture that dictated her daily routine and provided for her dietary needs and comfort, she will need to learn how to think critically and have confidence in making decisions and learning to speak up and be heard (Whitsett and Rosow 88).

For second-generation members, those born into the cult or brought into the cult with their parents when they were very young, were vulnerable to mental, physical, and even sexual abuse. These early traumas may have had a negative effect on brain development (Kern and Jungbauer 208). Other disadvantages involve inferior education and impaired parental relationships. Since they grew up within the cult community, they have no outside friends or relatives that they know. All of their family and friends were part of the cult. There is no other reality for comparison and studies show that these people feel different from others around them. They feel lost, confused, lonely, and isolated, almost like small, naïve children who have no experience in society and the world. Unlike first generation cult members, they have no identity, low self-esteem, and need to redefine themselves. They often present a strong dependence on others for guidance (Kern and Jungbauer 208). However, some second-generation cult members felt a sense of freedom and excitement at the possibilities of life outside the confines of the cult.

Second-generation cult members have the added challenge of dealing with neglect, abuse, lack of education, attachment disorders, and many other psychological and emotional challenges while trying to integrate into society. In Kern and Jungbauer's interviews with these members, almost all participants described a lack of interest from their parents. Some stated that they experienced emotional neglect, social humiliation, and threats from their parents as well as public humiliation at cult gatherings. Many were disciplined with excessive force not only by their parents but by other cult members (210).

Many lack the social skills to make new friends, build meaningful relationships, and tend to feel that outsiders are judging them for their cult involvement. Cult members often tend to be too trusting or not trusting enough, therefore, setting boundaries in exploring new relationships is helpful. Support groups are also a means of healing for survivors of cults where like-minded people can share similar experiences and feelings. This can be beneficial in learning to build new relationships and make it easier to share their experiences with others (Matthews and Salazar 195-98). However, many second-generation members suffer from psychological or psychosomatic issues and have been diagnosed with mental disorders such as drug addiction, eating disorders, anxiety and panic attacks, phobias, mental exhaustion, borderline personality disorders, self-injurious behavior, and severe depression (Kern and Jungbauer 212).

There exists a five step process, developed by social justice counselors, to assist second-generation cult survivors to feel more confident: 1) education regarding cults and recovery from cults, 2) evaluating individuals' cult experience, 3) helping survivors to understand the nature of cults and their power dynamics, 4) helping survivors to understand what affect growing up in a cult has on an individual, and 5) helping survivors to learn new skills and encouragement in gaining control in their lives. Counselors may also request that survivors become advocates and help other survivors transition, thereby helping themselves heal in the process.

According to Matthews and Salazar, a recent study suggests that these individuals typically choose one or more of the following options: 1) become cynical and distrustful about religious organizations, 2) search carefully for a home church organization, or 3) develop deeply personal, spiritual attachments very different than those prescribed by the cult. (196 -201) However, if second-generation survivors cannot cope or transition back into society, their only option may be to return to the cult.

Thankfully, more and more experts in the mental health, sociology, psychology, exit counseling, and law fields are gathering at conferences to share their knowledge and experiences regarding extreme cults and HDGs. Cult survivors and family members may also attend via local, national, and international workshops to share their experiences and family members may learn how to help their loved one heal which is also beneficial in helping the family heal as a whole. Information about interventions and exit counseling is also provided with a strong emphasis on maintaining relationships with a cult-involved family member (Whitsett and Rosow 88).

## CHAPTER 3 - CONCLUSION

With involvement in any PMG cult, anyone exiting that environment can find it extremely challenging both physically and psychologically to adapt to normal society. The psychological damage that these people are left with can be so deeply ingrained that they may never be able to function in normal society. Cult members that were born into such an environment, with no exposure to the outside world, have no frame of reference with which to compare what is morally acceptable. These people have been raised in a cocoon of isolation and fear, never having questioned, or objected to, whatever was asked of them. Such second-generation members require special attention and therapy to retrain them as an individual, to help them find their identity and their voice.

As related to the end of the manuscript, Pinnacle must find help from outside resources to set up therapy and counseling for the residents. After such a harrowing experience, similar to the Waco raid and stand-off, the people of Pinnacle are faced with a new challenge. The social structure that has been their way of life for generations is now broken and they face uncertainty. Opportunity is there for many of the families to re-educate themselves about society and Christianity in the current world, to access information and internet capabilities, to see the world through the screen of televisions, and to communicate with anyone they choose at any time they choose to do so.

This newfound freedom can be quite a shock to those who have been suppressed, and for the suppressors, the loss of control and power can likewise be a brutal shock. Reverend Roald, the town's religious leader, along with numerous outside entities, tries to get his congregation to build new relationships with one another, to gather in support groups and talk about what they are experiencing together so they may lean on one another as they process what is taking place.

The Reverend and another church leader from Bushmill reveal the true Christian doctrine in the Holy Bible and begin to teach about the trials of Jesus and about forgiveness.

The FBI and ATF arrest the Council members that enacted the “end of days plan” and put the families in harm’s way as hostages, not to mention the use of narcotics as a means of subjugation and revenue. The remaining families must decide whether forgiveness can be given and if any of the suppressors are willing to ask for forgiveness and make a conscious effort to change and redeem themselves for their actions and behaviors. Only through acceptance and faith can the people of Pinnacle find redemption and peace.

CHAPTER 4 - CREATIVE SCREENPLAY

The Lies We Keep

Pamala Schievelbein

Dr. Durrell Nelson

WRIT 690

June 28, 2024

ACT 1

FADE IN:

SUPER: "PINNACLE ARKANSAS 2015"

EXT. OPEN FIELD - DAY

The sky is clear blue and sunny with just a few wispy clouds floating above. SEVERAL YOUNG GIRLS, around age 7-9, play under two large trees in an open field of golden poppies and tall meadow grass. All the girls are wearing homemade dresses of simple, undyed cotton, like uniforms. They start chasing each other around the trees, squealing in delight. A large Golden Retriever, DUMPY, chases the children playfully.

The church and auditorium are not far off in the distance. A deep drainage culvert extends from the direction of the church, ending a few yards before the trees. MATTIE LEWEN (9) and GINNIE HARPER (9) stand at the edge of the culvert, looking down the six-foot sloping walls at a desiccated animal at the bottom.

MATTIE

Poor little rabbit.

GINNIE

Why's he look so diff'rent?

MATTIE

He's been down there a long time.  
He musta fallen in and couldn'ta  
got back out.

GINNIE

Holy moly, you mean he starved  
himself to death?

MATTIE

Prob'ly so, I reckon. Poor little  
rabbit.

Ginnie closes her eyes and brings her hands together into a steeple to pray.

GINNIE

Jesus, take care a' this here  
little bunny. Amen. Oh! also,  
don't make his mama sad. Amen,  
again.

Mattie looks up towards the church and sees movement. The girls run back to the trees and Mattie starts to climb one to get a better look at what was coming. Ginnie is on the ground looking up at Mattie, shading her eyes from the sun, breaking through the leaves.

GINNIE

Be careful, Mattie! Don't you fall...pleeease!

MATTIE

Aw, Ginnie, I'm a monkey, 'member? Monkeys don't fall outta trees, silly.

Mattie looks toward the church and sees a group of boys heading their way, one of which is MAGNUS ROALD (12), the Reverend's son and neighborhood bully, who pushes the other boys as they walk.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

Aw, crap. Magnus is comin'.

GINNIE

Shoot, why's he gotta ruin everythin'? Someday I'm gonna clobber him, right over the head!

MATTIE

Not if I clobber him first!

She looks towards Magnus, thoughtfully.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

I wonder why God made Magnus so mean?

GINNIE

I think it's cuz' He took his mamma. All the love he had he gave to her to go to heaven. He ain't got no love left for nobody else.

MATTIE

But Ginnie, your parents died too, and you got lots'a love to give. You ain't nothin' like him.

GINNIE

I don't really 'member them that well no more.



Magnus and the boys approach, stopping at the end of the culvert. The other girls scream at the sight of Magnus and run away, all but Ginnie. The boys start laughing. Dumpy starts barking at the boys. Magnus looks at Ginnie and then up into the tree and sees Mattie.

MAGNUS

Well, well. There's *Ma-til-da*.

All the boys start mimicking the name *Ma-til-da*.

MAGNUS (CONT'D)

You better get that dog under control. If he bites us, I'll hurt him. I'll hurt him bad.

Mattie, no fear in sight, glares down at Magnus.

MATTIE

Ginnie, hold Dumpy's collar. What d'you want Magnus?

Ginnie kneels next to Dumpy and holds the braided collar that Mattie made for him. The other boys fan out either side of Magnus like a line of soldiers. Some start picking up small rocks in their hands. Magnus stares at Mattie, thinking.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

You gonna talk or a cat got your tongue? What d'ya want, Magnus?

MAGNUS

Tell you what. If you jump from that branch over to that branch,  
(points to adjacent tree)  
Then I won't hurt your dog. If you don't do it, my boys are gonna stone that dog...and the orphan.

Magnus nods his head in Ginnie's direction.

GINNIE

Go on, you do it! When Mattie's daddy finds out, he'll beat the tar outta you all.

MATTIE

Stop it, Magnus...you leave Ginnie and my dog alone. I'll do it.

Ginnie looks up at Mattie as the boys whoop and holler up at Mattie.

GINNIE

No! Mattie, you crazy- you'll get hurt bad! He ain't worth it!

Mattie lifts herself to a standing position and walks the length of the large branch. The boys jeer at her from below, except for Magnus, who watches in silent wonder. Dumpy barks incessantly. Mattie takes a deep breath and launches herself midair as the boys below watch in anticipation.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

Mattie! Noooooo!

Dumpy stops barking as Mattie lands on the other branch, crashing through smaller branches that tear at her dress and scrape her bare arms and legs; she struggles to hold on. She's hurt but refuses to cry out. She lifts her head up and stares down at Magnus, steely eyed and defiant. Magnus stares back, admiringly, then winks at Mattie with a smile. The other boys are disappointed that she didn't fall, crying.

MAGNUS

The men run this town and one day I'll be in charge. You better get used to it. Don't you forget that.

GINNIE

Well, you ain't in charge yet! Mattie's daddy runs this town and I'm gonna tell him what you did.

Magnus smirks at Ginnie. He gathers the deflated and grumbling boys, and they leave. Dumpy barks at their backs. Ginnie releases Dumpy and runs to look up at Mattie.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

Mattie! Mattie, you okay? Mattie! you hurt?

Mattie rolls off the branch and falls the five feet to the tall grass below, cushioning her landing. Ginnie and Dumpy run to her. Dumpy is whining and licks Mattie's wounds as Ginnie cradles Mattie's head in her lap. Mattie looks up at Ginnie, both girls have tears cutting through the dust on their faces. Mattie smiles.

MATTIE

I did it, Ginnie. I really did it.

GINNIE

Holy moly, I was so scared, Mattie.  
Why'd ya do it? You didn't have to,  
ya know.

MATTIE

Nobody ever stands up to him,  
Ginnie. Somebody had to. I ain't  
scared of him, not no more.

GINNIE

Just look at you. You all bloody.  
You broke any bones?

MATTIE

Naw just scrapes and cuts, I think.  
I can move most parts, see?

Mattie moves arms and legs. Both girls giggle as Dumpy moves in  
to lick Mattie's face.

GINNIE

Well, that's good. You a dope, ya'  
know that?

SUPER: "EIGHT YEARS LATER"

EXT. THE DRAINAGE CULVERT - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

Mattie (17) and Ginnie (17), breathing heavily, sit on the  
ground above the culvert, looking down into it. Dark shadows and  
a pair of legs in black pants and black tactical boots, leaning  
up against the sloping wall, are all that can be seen. Police  
and FBI lights strobe in the distance, shouts and verbal  
commands are heard at the auditorium not far away.

Mattie holds her neck, angry, red abrasions are apparent. She  
tries to catch her breath. Ginnie gingerly touches the right  
side of her face; her eye starts to darken. The girls were in a  
serious scuffle. They're both a mess.

GINNIE

You okay, Mattie?

MATTIE

I'm alive, Ginnie, thanks to you.

GINNIE  
Holy moly. What a night.

MATTIE  
He went down hard...

GINNIE  
He didn't see that comin', did he?  
He got clobbered by two girls.

The girls look at each other.

MATTIE  
  
If my throat didn't hurt so bad, I  
would actually laugh at that.

GINNIE  
Think he's dead?

They both lean over and look into the culvert. The body wasn't moving.

MATTIE  
Could be, but I'm not going down  
there to check.

GINNIE  
It was self-defense, Mattie. Him  
going over the edge was an  
accident.

MATTIE  
But what if he is dead?

GINNIE  
Holy moly.

SUPER: "SIX DAYS EARLIER"

INT. PINNACLE PROTESTANT CHURCH - DAY

Mattie and Ginnie, wearing their Sunday dresses of muted florals, sit at the back of the circa 1897 ornate Victorian church as the service concludes. The ancient female organist belts out a departing hymn as the congregation walks down the aisle. Mattie, fidgeting with the tight bun of hair at the nape of her neck, watches the people file out, row by row. GRAHAM

LEWEN (38), the Senior Elder, Mayor of Pinnacle, and Mattie's father speaks light-heartedly to Magnus, now twenty, as they come down the aisle. Magnus shoots Mattie a wink as he passes.

Mattie rolls her eyes and looks over at Ginnie, who also rolls her eyes. Mattie's mother, CLAIRE LEWEN (35), walks behind her husband, head down, and suppresses a slight yawn. Mattie notices that all the wives walk behind their husbands, head bowed and quiet.

INT. CHURCH KITCHEN - DAY

The women bustle in and out of the kitchen with dirty coffee cups and dessert plates/forks. Fellowship winds down and families start to leave. Mattie and Ginnie wash and dry dishes at the sink under the window. Men's laughter is heard in the background amid the din of clinking dishes.

MATTIE

Geez, is this all there is in this life? Washing dishes after church?

Magnus enters the kitchen and saunters past the girls at the sink, on his way out the back door.

MAGNUS

Gotta go to work, ladies. Law and order do not wait in Bushmill- too many bar fights to break up...or loose women to handcuff...

Mattie and Ginnie give him a brief look as he goes backwards out the door, grinning wickedly at Mattie.

MATTIE

Lord help the poor woman who gets stuck with that wretched soul.

They look at each other and break into giggles. Ginnie goes somber.

GINNIE

He's still sweet on you, Mattie. You know that, right? You're seventeen now- he could ask for you.

Mattie looks at Ginnie gravely.

MATTIE

Yeah- we still have that to look forward to, don't we?  
Betrothals...

GINNIE

What we do now is child's play compared to that life. At least you don't have to tend to dirty children, even though they are the sweetest things, 'specially that little Bethy.

Ginnie smiles, thinking about the newly arrived orphan girl.

MATTIE

When did she show up? You know where she came from?

GINNIE

She came about two weeks ago. Sweeny said she was transferred from another orphanage- they were overcrowded or somethin' like that.

MATTIE

Weren't you about that old when you came here?

GINNIE

I s'pose so, I don't really remember. You about done?

MATTIE

Yeah- it seems like they're always around four when the kids come here.

(the thought fades)

Let's slip out before they find something else for us to do.

EXT. PINNACLE CHURCH - DAY

Mattie and Ginnie exit from the kitchen door and walk down the street towards the Boxcar Diner.

GINNIE

You sure your parents are gonna let us go?

MATTIE

Yeah- I've been doing extra chores and being really sweet. They said it was a reward for my "extra efforts."

GINNIE

Did your dad get Sweeny to sign off on me going too?

MATTIE

Yeah, but it wouldn't have been necessary anyway since dad's the Mayor and all. He's got Magnus meeting us at the bus station in Bushmill. He's supposed to keep an eye on us.

GINNIE

You mean he's supposed to spy on us.

MATTIE

Yup. Isn't that what I just said?

The girls break into giggles again as they reach the diner and read the daily specials on the window.

GINNIE

(sucks in breath)

They have pumpkin spice milkshakes! We gotta split one of those, Mattie. You got enough money?

MATTIE

I always have some spare change in my pocket; that should get us one shake and two straws. Let's go.

INT. BOXCAR DINER - DAY

The girls walk in. They see old MR. JENKINS (78) and his wife SHEILA (75) behind the counter and wave to them as they find two seats at the counter.

MR. JENKINS

What'll it be today, girls?  
Strawberry ripple? Chocolate chunk?

MATTIE

Today, we shall try the pumpkin  
spice, please. Two straws.

Mr. Jenkins winks at Ginnie, who cannot contain her excitement. Ginnie sees MYRON GROVER (19) and his father LESTER GROVER (39), both dressed in their dirty mechanic coveralls, sitting in a booth in the corner. Myron smiles and waves a grease-stained hand at Ginnie.

GINNIE

Good grief. It's Myron over there.  
He just waved to me.

MATTIE

So, wave back.

GINNIE

Matilda Lewen, you of all people  
know my feelings on *moron*, oh,  
I mean Myron...

Both girls look toward the booth and start to laugh. Myron lowers his head, dejected.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

Holy moly! I can't believe we get  
to go into town! I can hardly  
control myself!

Ginnie grabs Mattie's arm and hugs it, laying her head on Mattie's shoulder. She exhales in sheer bliss.

MATTIE

I know. I can hardly believe it  
myself, especially since most of  
the women never go into town.  
Dad says town is temptation for the  
mind...but he trusts me.

GINNIE

I don't know what that means, and I  
don't care. All I know is that we  
get to see the Harvest Fair...I  
can't believe it! You think  
they'll have rides? You think we  
can win a huge stuffed bear? Do  
you have enough money? What if we  
run out of money?



MATTIE

Good grief, Ginnie! Slow down! Mom said she'd give me enough for us to get her pumpkins and have some snacks and play some games. Don't worry, I got you covered, Ginnie. I always do.

Ginnie kisses Mattie on the cheek as Sheila brings their milkshake and two straws. Myron looks longingly at the back of Ginnie's head as he and his father exit the diner.

SHEILA

Here ya' go you two. Thick as thieves you are- never see one of ya'll without the other. Enjoy ladies!

The girls break open their straws while giving Sheila a thumbs up.

EXT. LEWEN HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Mattie and Ginnie walk together arm in arm from the street to the corner of the backyard. They find a small wooden cross stuck in the grass, the name "Dumpy" scratched on the cross. They take a seat on the grass.

MATTIE

Hi Dumpy...you'll never guess what we get to do today! We are going to the Harvest Fair...in Bushmill!

Mattie gleams at the cross, then her smile fades.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

I wish you could come with us on this adventure, boy. I know you'd have so much fun...sniffin' all those new smells and seein' all those new people. You would've really liked it.

GINNIE

I know he would'a, Mattie. I can just picture him, happy as can be, followin' us around like he always did.

MATTIE

He was the only thing that I had

of my own. I don't know where he came from, but when he showed up, all dumpy and dirty, I loved him on the spot. He was all mine.

Mattie twirls the braided dog collar that she wrapped around her wrist. Ginnie notices and lays a hand on Mattie's hands.

GINNIE

And he was loved so much. He'll always be with us Mattie. You know that.

Mattie nods her agreement. They both get up, blow kisses to the cross, and head for the kitchen door.

INT. MATTIE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Mattie and Ginnie stand at the kitchen table as Mattie's mother, Claire, gives her money for the fair. Mattie puts it in her dress pocket.

MATTIE

Thanks, Mom.

GINNIE

Yeah, thank you so much, Mrs. Lewen!

CLAIRE

Now, you girls be careful in Bushmill. It's a big town with a lot of people and things going on. Find the pumpkins first, then you can look around and maybe get a caramel apple or something, okay?

Mattie and Ginnie nod their heads in acknowledgement.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Don't stray from the Fair, you hear? Remember to come home on the 8:20 bus tonight. No later.

Claire walks around the table and hugs Mattie. She holds Mattie by the shoulders.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Mattie, you do know how special this is, you going into town? I actually can't believe your father

permitted it, but he said you've been working really hard lately, and well, it's almost time for your next chapter.

Claire moves a tendril of hair from Mattie's face and puts it behind her ear, then secures a pin in the low bun at the back of Mattie's head.

GINNIE

Chapter? What chap...oh, bridegroom, that chapter.

CLAIRE

And remember who you are- you aren't like those townie girls, you are Pinnacle girls. The purest of the pure. You are special-untainted.

MATTIE

Thanks Mom. I know. Can we talk about that later? We really want to get going, please?

Claire looks longingly at her daughter.

CLAIRE

Alright, get going. Don't forget my pie pumpkins- and be careful!

Mattie and Ginnie race out of the kitchen door, look back and wave at Claire. Claire runs to the door, and shouts after them.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Don't forget! Magnus will meet you at the bus stop when you get there! And be nice to him! Both of you! And keep to yourselves!

Claire closes the door and turns around. Graham stands in the kitchen.

GRAHAM

You still think this was a good idea?

CLAIRE

Well sure, she's a good girl, Graham. She knows her place.

GRAHAM

She better. She'll have had a taste of temptation- I just hope she's strong enough to fight it off...if not, well then...you know what that means.

Claire stares anxiously at her husband as he turns around and exits the kitchen.

EXT. BUSHMILL BUS DEPOT - DAY

Mattie and Ginnie step off the bus together, they look around like tourists fresh off the cruise ship. They giggle and hurry through the depot. They see a handsome, uniformed police officer by the exit doors- when he turns around they realize it's Magnus. He smiles dazzlingly at Mattie as they approach.

MAGNUS

I see you made it safely- no issues on the bus? No one bother you?

GINNIE

Seriously, Magnus? We're not five, ya' know.

Magnus shoots Ginnie a warning look then focuses on Mattie and smiles charmingly.

MATTIE

No, we're okay, no issues. Thank you, Magnus.

MAGNUS

I'll drop you at the Fair.

Magnus' shoulder radio goes off, he answers it and goes into cop-mode; he turns to leave. He swings back around to the girls.

MAGNUS

Uh- I'm sorry Mattie, I gotta go- just follow the sidewalk into town, it's not far. I'll find you both later on.

He winks at Mattie and jogs to his patrol car parked on the curb out front. Mattie and Ginnie look at each other and relax.

GINNIE

Thank you, Jesus, for that call!

MATTIE

Amen to that- let's go!

EXT. BUSHMILL TOWN CENTER - HARVEST FAIR - DAY

The girls approach the Fair, and marvel at the lights, sounds, smells, and people milling around. COUPLES, both young and old, play games, eat, ride rides and have a ball. TEENS are hanging out, making out, and laughing. They are dressed in the latest fads: cut up jeans, crop tops, colored hair, makeup, etc. Some have tattoos.

Mattie and Ginnie pass the group of teens and try not to stare. They locate the Farmer's market and look over the pumpkins. Sitting at a nearby picnic table are FAYE MCINTYRE (42) and her mother, LORRAINE MCINTYRE (60), sipping on apple cider and chatting jovially. Faye looks over and notices Mattie and Ginnie.

FAYE

Oh, my days, Mom. Look over there.

LORRAINE

Hmm? What'd you say? I can't  
hardly hear you, the noise is too  
loud!

Faye points inconspicuously over to the pumpkin patch. They look at one another surprised. The two girls stand out like sore thumbs in their drab attire and wholesome looks.

LORRAINE (CONT'D)

What's this? Pinnacle girls in  
Bushmill? That's a first, I think.

Faye nods her agreement.

FAYE

They don't look like runaways.  
What'd ya think? Is He giving us  
a sign?

Lorraine looks meaningfully at her daughter. She thinks long and hard about what to say.

LORRAINE

Well, if we do nothing, then we  
accept that what is going on over  
there is none of our business.

Faye cocks her head at her mother.

FAYE

But we know that what's going on  
over there will never stop- and it  
is our business.

Lorraine nods her head slowly. Both women smile at one another.

LORRAINE

I never thought...when God sends  
a sign...

FAYE

Then we must act on it.

Lorraine puts her hand over Faye's hand on the table. They look  
each other in the eyes and smile.

EXT. HARVEST FAIR - FOOD STAND - DAY

Mattie and Ginnie purchase the pumpkins and decide to purchase  
some cider and a candied apple to share from a bowl of pre-cut  
slices. They find an out of the way haybale to sit on so they can  
people watch as they eat and take in all that is going on around  
them.

GINNIE

Holy moly, is this good or what?  
Mmm. So good.

MATTIE

I feel like we're in Omaha or  
someplace exotic like that, don't  
you? Just like in the magazines at  
the library. Ginnie gives Mattie a  
sidelong look.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

Okay, maybe not Omaha, but  
certainly the lights and all the  
excitement is just, well, it's just  
amazing, isn't it?

Ginnie nods her head, her mouth full of apple. Mattie scans the  
Fair, completely happy and content.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

This is the best - day - of - my -  
life!

GINNIE  
(swallowing)  
Yeah! I know, right?

As the girls sit and enjoy their momentary happiness and brief departure from Pinnacle, Lorraine goes home, and Faye approaches the girls.

FAYE  
Well, you two look like you're  
having a wonderful time- are you?

Both Mattie and Ginnie, still in wonder, look at Faye.

MATTIE  
Yes, ma'am. We certainly are! This  
is our first Fair, to be honest.

Faye smiles broadly.

FAYE  
I'm Faye and, well, we do put on a  
pretty nice Fair, that's for sure.  
Say, are you girls from Pinnacle  
by chance?

MATTIE  
Why, yes- yes we are. How did you  
know?

FAYE  
Oh, my mom used to know several  
families in Pinnacle, so we  
thought maybe you could be from  
there. We haven't seen you in town  
before. The Fair brings in a lot  
of folks from neighboring  
counties.

GINNIE  
Sure, that makes sense. So, you  
live here in Bushmill?

FAYE  
I do, yes. I actually work at the  
church, just over there-

Faye points across the Fair to the other side of the square.

FAYE (CONT'D)  
It's called the Church of Hope.

MATTIE

What a lovely name for a church,  
it's so uplifting. We go to the  
Pinnacle Protestant Church. Is  
your church Protestant, too?

FAYE

Actually, our church is non-  
denominational. Everyone is  
welcome in our church.

MATTIE

Really?

Mattie and Ginnie share a look of astonishment.

GINNIE

You mean, *anybody* can attend?

FAYE

That's right- anyone can come and  
praise the Lord. We have a few  
different services throughout the  
week- as a matter of fact, we have  
a contemporary service starting in  
a bit...are you both interested in  
experiencing that? It's very  
different from traditional  
services, it's meant for younger  
folk, to be more engaging.

Mattie and Ginnie stare at Faye as if she has two heads.

FAYE (CONT'D)

I mean, it's not a large group  
that attends on a Sunday  
afternoon, especially with the  
Fair going on and all...but you  
are both very welcome to  
come and check it out.  
I mean, it's okay if you don't  
want to come, no pressure, but the  
music is kinda awesome...

She continues to solicit them gently.

MATTIE

Are you sure- we'll be welcome  
there?



FAYE

Of course! Oh my goodness, ya'll are gonna flip your heads when you experience a contemporary service. It's like nothing you've sat in before, I'll bet.

Faye leads the girls across the Fair to the other side of the town square to the church, a short walk.

INT. BUSHMILL CHURCH OF HOPE - DAY

Mattie and Ginnie, in their dull, faded dresses covering their knees and upper arms, sit in a pew at the back of the church, stunned, a bag of pumpkins between them, as Faye gives the departing blessing and the CONGREGATION of teens and twenty and thirty-somethings filter down the aisle as the afternoon contemporary service concludes.

Energetic Christian Pop music is heard through the speakers. Some of the teens, dressed in miniskirts and cropped tops with heavily applied makeup, see Mattie and Ginnie so obviously out of place, that it makes them laugh and whisper amongst themselves as they pass by. The music eventually fades out.

GINNIE

Holy moly. Would ya' look at the way they're dressed? And listen to that music! Whoa!

Mattie, open-mouthed, is speechless as she watches the last of the people filter out. Ginnie finally looks at Mattie.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

Are you trying to catch flies in that mouth, Mattie?

Mattie closes her mouth and looks at Ginnie as Faye steps off the altar in her robes and walks towards them. The girls look up at Faye as she approaches.

MATTIE

What just happened, Faye? What were you doing preaching up there? Where's your real Reverend?

Mattie looks around in fear, thinking that Magnus would be tearing down the doors at any moment to take them home. They weren't supposed to leave the Fair.

FAYE

Relax, relax, Mattie. This is the house of the Lord, and we are in His presence. So, what did you think of the service?

Faye takes a seat next to Mattie and smiles.

FAYE (CONT'D)

This is what being a Christian is supposed to be like- not what you're used to, is it? And yes, I am an ordained Pastor.

Mattie is horrified. Ginnie hangs on Faye's every word.

MATTIE

You're ordained? How is that possible? I don't understand, Faye. This is wrong! Women can't preach.  
(whispers)  
*This is sinful!*

FAYE

Why, honey? Why can't a woman lead folk in worship?

She raises her arms and looks up.

FAYE (CONT'D)

Are we not in a church, singing praises to Him? Are we not happy to be together sharing the words of the Bible?

GINNIE

(under her breath)  
Not *our* Bible.

MATTIE

This is all wrong, Faye. Look at how the girls were dressed- look at how they behaved! Shameful! They acted like- like *jezebels*.

FAYE

Oh, they're not so bad as that.

GINNIE

Yeah! They were half naked...in church even! Holy moly!

Mattie picks up a Bible from the pew in front of her and looks at it, turning it over so she can see it from all sides.

MATTIE

And these Bibles- these Bibles are different from ours. They're massive...

Faye smiles, takes Mattie's other hand in hers.

FAYE

Girls, I need to tell you something- something that will be very difficult for you to hear. You need to know the truth...the truth about Pinnacle.

MATTIE

What do you mean? What truth?

Mattie puts the bible down and looks at Ginnie, who shrugs her shoulders; Mattie looks back at Faye and pulls her hand back.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

What's wrong with Pinnacle? It's our home.

Mattie starts to get up. Faye stands and gently stops her. They sit back down.

FAYE

Mattie, Pinnacle has cut itself off from the rest of the world, don't you want to know why? Don't you want to know why the women have no voice? No life aside from what their fathers or husbands say they can have?

Mattie sits there, confused, trying to work out what she is hearing.

FAYE (CONT'D)

Girls, Pinnacle is controlled by men. They want the women to be submissive to serve them. They say that this is what the Bible says is right- that the sole purpose of women is to serve men. Is this right? Isn't this what you were brought up believing?

Mattie and Ginnie look at each other, confused, then look back at Faye.

MATTIE

Well, kind of. What God says in the Bible is that women show their love and faith by tending to their families. They don't force us! Women are supposed to serve their husbands and they in turn provide for the family. Women take care of their families and their homes and have, um, babies...and stuff.

GINNIE

(under her breath)

And do everything else, too.

Mattie looks at Ginnie for affirmation, Ginnie rolls her eyes. Faye suppresses a smile and continues to tell them the truth.

INCITING INCIDENT

FAYE

(gently)

Pinnacle...is a lie.

The girls listen intently, Mattie is suspicious, Ginnie is intrigued.

FAYE (CONT'D)

The real Bible, not the one Pinnacle prints, says that men and women should live together in love and respect, that they should worship our Savior together, work together, and build a family together. They are supposed to be happy! Look at the people that were just here- didn't they seem equal? Happy? Enjoying their faith together?

Mattie and Ginnie now look worried, holding their hands in their laps, not really trusting what Faye is saying, but curious all the same.

FAYE (CONT'D)

Life isn't only about serving your husband and doing every little thing he says. You two girls are the first women we have ever seen from Pinnacle to come to Bushmill.

MATTIE

W-well...I guess that's about right...the women don't usually leave town- there's no reason to. Our fathers and the husbands provide everything we need, so, we don't have to leave Pinnacle. That's not a crime.

Faye presses on, gently.

FAYE

No, it's not a crime, but don't you think they would like to get away once in a while? To enjoy a day of shopping or go see a movie? Have lunch at a little cafe?

Mattie and Ginnie look worried and glance at one another.

MATTIE

The women don't do that. They don't need that. Movies are Satan's window. We avoid all outside contact in order to keep our minds pure. It's for our own good! To keep us safe!

Faye leans back and lets Mattie's words linger in the air.

FAYE

Then what are you two doing here?

Mattie was at a loss for words. Ginnie is perplexed.

FAYE (CONT'D)

Listen, I don't know how or why the two of you showed up today, but I'm so grateful that you did. You both look like you're old enough to get married now. Am I right?

Both girls nod yes.

FAYE (CONT'D)

Did you know that people outside of Pinnacle get to choose who they marry? They get to go on dates and get the time to learn about one another, to make sure they're a good fit with one another...the man and woman mutually agree and consent to be wed. This is how normal society works...outside of Pinnacle.

MATTIE

So, you're saying that we don't have to marry someone we don't want to? That we are supposed to be equal to the men? But how is that possible?

GINNIE

(intake of breath)

Oh! Hallelujah, Mattie! You know what this means? I don't have to marry that wretch, Myron, from the garage! That's such a relief. Holy moly. I wasn't lookin' forward to *that*...he's always so dirty!

Mattie looks at Ginnie incredulously.

MATTIE

Ginnie! What are you going on about? Life doesn't rewind here! We still have to go home. My mother is expecting these pumpkins...we can't stay here. We have to go. We don't even know her-

(eyes dart to Faye)

we don't even know that she's telling us the truth!

GINNIE

What? I'm not going back, no way.

(looks at Faye)

Faye, I can stay here with you, right?

(looks at Mattie)

I don't have a family, 'member? I don't have anyone 'cept you. I'm at the mercy of Mrs. Sweeny.

(looks at Faye)

She runs the Children's Home for us orphans.

(looks back at Mattie)

You know she's gonna marry me off to that Myron...I can't do it, Mattie...I just can't. There ain't enough bleach in the world to clean the filth from that family!

Faye interjects, somewhat hesitantly.

FAYE

Listen girls, you can both stay with me if you want. I don't want to send you back there, but I can't keep you here if you don't want to stay.

(she hesitates for a moment)

Say, has anyone, uh, has anyone ever hurt either one of you?

Ginnie and Mattie look at one another and shake their heads from side to side, somewhat confused by the question.

GINNIE

Wait- yes. Mrs. Sweeny smacked my hand with a ruler yesterday. Does that count? Geez, I only wanted a cracker for little Bethy, for cryin' out loud. She was hungry.

MATTIE

(turning to Faye)

What exactly do you mean by "hurt?"

Faye laughs nervously.

FAYE

Oh, never mind for now, just me being nosy. Don't worry. Girls, what I said is true about Pinnacle. You don't have to live that kind of life. You're both at an age where your parents,

(looks at Ginnie)

or Mrs. Sweeny, has an obligation to have you married, but you have a choice now.

Mattie is anxious and is unconsciously pulling at the tendrils of her hair as she listens to Faye.

GINNIE

I made my mind up already. I'm stayin' here- no weddin' bells for me, no sir. Right, Faye? I can stay and help you here in this church!

FAYE

Yes, Ginnie, you can stay with us, Mom and I, until we get you settled, but we have to be quiet about it. Mattie, what about you?

MATTIE

I can't. My mom needs me...I have a job to do, my father is the Mayor, he's the Senior Elder at church. What would they think of me if I just ran away? How would that look to everyone?

GINNIE

Who cares! Mattie, goin' back means your dad will marry you off to someone real soon. Look at your hair, the way you have it pinned up now, they're preparing you to be a wife. Do you really wanna be mowin' the lawn when you're nine months pregnant like Mrs. Lewis? Are you even ready to be pregnant? Much less getting that way...ew.

MATTIE

Ginnie, they care for me. My mom wouldn't let anything bad happen to me and my father would protect me! I know it.

GINNIE

What about Magnus, huh? You don't think about that? He's the prize pig in Pinnacle- the "prodigal son" because he's Reverend Roald's



boy. He likes you Mattie, he always has. Why isn't he married already, huh? He's overdue for a wife...he's waiting on you. Think about it!

FAYE

Wait- you mean Officer Roald? Our young police officer?

The girls nod affirmatively.

FAYE (CONT'D)

Yes, we know all about Officer Roald, he has quite the reputation around here. Not one to mess with. A lot of people have filed complaints against him, but there's been no real proof that he did any wrong.

MATTIE

No. No way my mom would let that happen. He's cruel- he's a psychopath. Everyone in town knows it. No. Not him.

FAYE

Mattie, your mom can't stop it from happening if that's what your father wants. She has to obey him, even if it means you will suffer. It's not her fault. She was made submissive.

MATTIE

(scoffs)

What do you mean by "made" submissive? That's ridiculous!

FAYE

There are certain things that go on in Pinnacle that aren't nice, Mattie. A lot of the women in that town didn't want to be who they are now.

MATTIE

That doesn't make any sense, Faye. Those are good, Christian women following the word of God. How would you know what goes on there? What gives you the right?

At this point, Faye's mother, Lorraine, enters the church and walks towards the group. She's dressed in slacks and a floral blouse, a string of pearls around her neck.

FAYE

(looks over her shoulder)

Hi, Mom.

(looks back at girls)

Girls, this is my mother, Lorraine. She's what gives me the right to speak about Pinnacle. I wasn't completely honest with you. We lived there once- we were both born there.

Both Mattie and Ginnie look wide-eyed, stunned.

LORRAINE

Hello girls. We spotted you both a mile away. Those frumpy dresses, my, I hated wearing those.

Lorraine sits sideways in the pew in front of the girls, so that she can speak with them.

LORRAINE (CONT'D)

When my husband, Harold, died of a heart attack, Faye was only five or so. I had to make a choice. Stay in Pinnacle, a widow servant to the church, and watch my daughter follow in my footsteps, or we could get out.

(looks at Faye)

We left in the middle of the night. Since I never learned to drive, nor was I allowed to, I pulled Faye in a little wagon all the way to Bushmill- twenty miles. We never looked back.

MATTIE

But what's so terrible about Pinnacle that you had to leave in the middle of the night? We never heard about anyone leaving.

LORRAINE

Honey, it was almost forty years ago. That place is a trap...a den of wasps hidden behind pretty poppy flowers. If you go back there, you may never come away again. They'll make you stay there...you'll become just another servant in the service of men, pretending to be doing the good work.

MATTIE

I- I don't know what to say...this is all so sudden and incredible...

LORRAINE

I know it sounds unbelievable, but what I tell you is true. You are on the threshold of change and if you aren't in line with what your father has in mind for you, then your fate is sealed, and you will have no choice but to do it. They'll make you do it.

MATTIE

But how can they make me do anything? What if I refuse?

LORRAINE

Sometimes I think they want the women to refuse, just so they can flex their power and feel good about themselves. It's all about control. They pass it down, from generation to generation. Those men...

Faye interrupts Lorraine.

FAYE

(looking at Mattie)

We all have a choice in this life, Mattie. Will you at least think about it? Just remember what you saw here today and outside at the fair, how all the folk were having a good time together, equal to one another. That's how life is

supposed to be.  
(looks at her watch)  
It's getting late, the next bus  
back to Pinnacle leaves in twenty  
minutes. If you're sure you won't  
stay, we'll walk you to the  
depot.

They all get up to leave the church.

EXT. BUSHMILL BUS DEPOT - NIGHT

Faye, Ginnie, and Lorraine say their goodbyes to Mattie in the depot.

GINNIE

I wish you would stay, Mattie. I'm  
afraid for you- what will happen to  
you. You deserve to be happy.  
You're so smart, so pretty, you  
should be free. (starts to tear up;  
hugs Mattie)

MATTIE

Don't you worry about me, silly  
girl. I'll be just fine. I just  
don't know what I'm gonna say about  
where you are. They'll be looking  
for you, especially Mrs. Sweeny.  
I'll try and figure  
something out, but I don't know  
what they'll do.

GINNIE

Thank you, Mattie. You're my best  
friend. I love you. Please think  
about coming back.

Ginnie steps back and Faye comes forward and hands Mattie a piece of paper.

FAYE

This is my phone number. Keep it  
hidden. If you ever need me, if  
things go upside down, you call  
this number, no matter the time you  
hear?

(hugs Mattie)

MATTIE

Thank you, Faye.

Mattie puts the paper in her dress pocket and looks at Lorraine.

MATTIE

Thank you too, Lorraine. I have a lot to think about. I need time. Please take care of Ginnie.

Across the street, Magnus watches the exchange from his Bushmill PD patrol car then slowly pulls into the street.

EXT. PINNACLE BUS DEPOT - NIGHT

Magnus arrives before the bus and stands in the shadows, waiting for Mattie. The bus pulls into the parking lot and Mattie steps off with her sack of pumpkins, deep in thought. Magnus swaggers towards her.

MAGNUS

Mattie- hi there.

Mattie jumps back a bit, surprised to see Magnus in Pinnacle.

MAGNUS

I missed seeing you in Bushmill but knew you'd be on the late bus here. Thought I'd give you a ride home now since it was dark. You never know what can happen to a lovely, young lady walking alone in the dark.

MATTIE

Thank you, Magnus, but I prefer to walk, really. It's nice out tonight. You don't have to bother.

Magnus moves in close to Mattie and takes the bag of pumpkins from her arms. He stares down at her, unsmiling.

MAGNUS

I insist.

Mattie looks up at him, matching the tension. She tries to take the bag but Magnus shifts it away from her.

MATTIE

Well then, I guess I'll have to accept your offer. Thank you.

Magnus escorts her to his patrol car. He opens the front passenger door and helps her in, setting the bag on her lap. He leans into the car, staring into her face. Mattie avoids his eyes.

MAGNUS

You look scared, Mattie. Why is that?  
(leans closer and whispers)  
So, where's Ginnie, hmm?

Mattie goes stiff- for the moment she has forgotten about Ginnie. She sits perfectly still as Magnus relishes the moment.

MATTIE

I... I believe you already know that don't you. So why ask?

MAGNUS

Yeah- I kept an eye on you two. I already know where she is. I'm just wondering why she didn't come back with you, hmm?

MATTIE

Well...maybe she really liked Bushmill. Maybe she wants to live there, get a job, you know, like you did.

MAGNUS

Ah. I see. She already has a job here as a future wife for one of our young men. Where's she gonna live, hmm?

MATTIE

I expect she'll find a room to stay in, I'm sure the church will help her.

MAGNUS

She already has a church, right here in Pinnacle and I also know that she has a future husband lined up. I don't think he'd be too pleased to find that his intended up and left, do you, hmm?

Mattie, thinking about Ginnie's dislike for Myron Grover, turns slightly to look Magnus dead in the eyes.

MAGNUS (CONT'D)

(sarcastically)

There she is. That's the Mattie we all know and love. Ever since we were kids, you wouldn't back down. You always stood your ground. You're a fighter. Do you know how happy that makes me, hmm?

MATTIE

I need to be getting home now. My father will be looking for me.

(adjusts the bag)

Please.

MAGNUS

Okay, beautiful. I'll deliver you right to your doorstep. As for Ginnie, I'll smooth things out with that.

(softly at Mattie's ear)

Consider it a *wedding gift*.

Magnus pulls back from the car and shuts the door. Inside the car, Mattie suddenly can't breathe. She looks up and notices Magnus staring at her through the windshield. He just stands there, smiling at her distress.

INT./EXT. PATROL CAR - NIGHT

Magnus is driving, a cocky smirk on his face. Mattie sits next to him, trying to keep herself together, unable to speak. They pull up in front of Mattie's house, and Mattie has the door open before the car comes to a complete stop.

MAGNUS

Hey! Slow down, Mattie. I can't have you getting hurt on my account.

(feigning innocence)

I couldn't live with myself if that happened.

(smiles coyly)

Mattie hugs the bag with one arm and bolts out of the car, slamming the car door, and runs up the front porch steps. She stops at the front door and turns to look at Magnus. She slowly shakes her head from side to side as if to say she would never be his.

Magnus rolls his window down and returns her stare. He blows her a kiss and smiles wickedly, then slowly pulls away.

CATALYST

INT. LEWEN HOUSE - NIGHT

Mattie walks to the dimly lit kitchen. Her mother, Claire, sits at the table, drinking a cup of tea. Mattie sets the bag on the table.

CLAIRE

Hi. I was starting to worry about you. So, how was it? Did Magnus take care of you and Ginnie in town?

(gets up and digs in the bag)

I see you got my pumpkins, oh they're lovely!

MATTIE

Ah, yeah, sure. Um, Mom...can I ask you something- something about Magnus?

Claire looks at Mattie and freezes- Claire's face shows anxiety.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

Mom- Magnus said something to me...

Claire looks over Mattie's shoulder. Graham stands in the doorway, leaning against the doorjamb, hands in pockets. Still in his Sunday slacks and crisp white shirt, his sleeves rolled up, he looks relaxed. Mattie turns, following her mother's gaze.

MATTIE

Dad.

Mattie turns to face her father. She squares her shoulders and takes a breath, gathering her courage.



MATTIE (CONT'D)

Is it true, then? About Magnus?

Her father simply stares at her, taking his time, studying her.

GRAHAM

It's time you were married. I've already received seven dowry offers. Seems you're quite the blue-ribbon mare.

Mattie's shoulders tense and she waits for what comes next.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

Yes, Reverend Roald put in a very fine dowry offer on you. Seems that Magnus is very taken with having you as his bride...he should have married three years ago. He's been waiting.

He stares hard at Mattie, then looks at Claire and chuckles.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

Huh- I even got a sizeable dowry offer from the widower Douglas...he lost his wife last year in childbirth, remember? His three children need a new mother.

He looks back at Mattie and his smile disappears. Mattie turns to her mother, hoping for some back up. Claire drops into her chair, head lowered, letting Graham steer the conversation.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

Magnus will make a fine husband. He has a bright future here in Pinnacle. He'll be a strong leader one day- he'll take over when I retire, and you'll be right behind him, supporting him as your mother does for me.

Mattie turns to her father; tears form in her eyes as she pleads with him.

MATTIE

Please, Dad, no. Please don't choose him. He's mean- he's cruel. Don't put me with someone like him! Please! Anyone but him...even the widower Douglas!

Graham stares at his daughter, his face softens as he takes his hands out of his pockets and walks towards her. Mattie goes in to hug her father, but his body language stiffens. He doesn't return her hug. She releases him and takes a couple steps back.

GRAHAM

(unsympathetic)

You will marry whoever I tell you to marry, do you hear me, girl? You will do as you're told. Now, I will gladly accept the Reverend's offer. Let this be your first lesson. One of many to come, I'm sure.

Mattie looks at her mother, who cannot look at her.

MATTIE

Mom?

She then faces her father.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

It's true then. Is it all true? Mom was made to submit, wasn't she? Look at her! How was it done, then?

She looks at Claire.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

Mom? Say something, please! Help me!

Claire sobs quietly but doesn't answer Mattie. Mattie stands her ground, her face wet and shiny from tears. Graham stares at Claire. When she looks up at him, he nods his head to a cabinet across the kitchen.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

I see, and now you're gonna try and make me. No. I won't do it.

Graham walks slowly towards Mattie, forcing her back against the kitchen counter. He puts his left hand around the back of Mattie's neck, not tight, but enough to get her attention.

GRAHAM

Careful, girl. Now, where did you hear such things, hmm? Who did you talk to in Bushmill, eh?

Claire gets up and retrieves something from a locked drawer then starts to prepare dinner for Mattie. As she does so, she silently weeps.

MATTIE

It's all a lie, isn't it, Dad?  
Pinnacle is just a lie. I won't do  
it. You can beat me if you want,  
but I won't do it. I *refuse*.

Graham, still holding Mattie's neck, just inches from her face, softly laughs at her. Mattie holds her ground but is now terrified of her father.

GRAHAM

Oh, you'll do exactly what I tell  
you to do.

He smirks and looks over his shoulder at his weeping wife.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

You're just like your mother  
was...once.

He lowers his hand and backs away from Mattie, then turns and starts walking out of the kitchen.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

(over his shoulder)  
You better eat some dinner now,  
then off to bed.

Mattie is stunned at her father's change in behavior. She looks at her mother, preparing a sandwich and a bowl of pudding.

MATTIE

Mom? Please tell me. Tell me what  
they did to you. Tell me what  
they're going to do to me. Please?  
Help me!

Claire sets the sandwich plate on the table for Mattie as she wipes her wet face with her forearm.

CLAIRE

Come and eat, Mattie. I can't talk  
about it right now. How about we  
wait until morning, huh? Then we  
can discuss it, okay? I promise.  
I'll explain everything then.

Mattie stares at her mother, trying to process the change in her family dynamic. She sits at the table and obeys. Claire returns to the counter and pulls a capsule from her pocket. She empties the powder into the pudding and stirs it. She faces Mattie and hesitantly sets the bowl on the table.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Here you go, Mattie.  
Butterscotch- your  
favorite...I love you. *I love  
you so much...*eat up now.

INT. SECRET/HIDDEN BASEMENT - NIGHT

Mattie slowly regains consciousness, fading in and out, still woozy. She is in the middle of a small, dimly lit room. Her vision is blurry, but she can make out two figures, two men in front of her, her father and KARL DEITRICH (44), her father's former para-military comrade and right-hand man. She realizes that her body is strapped tightly in an extended recliner.

GRAHAM

Mattie. Mattie, you hear me, girl?

Graham snaps his fingers in front of Mattie's ace.

KARL

Now that she's awake, shall we  
begin the cleansing?

GRAHAM

Yes, but she's a fighter,  
like her mother was. She was  
good stock, Claire was. I  
almost lost her along with  
our son. Too bad he was  
afflicted- he would've been a  
fine man of Pinnacle. Damn  
that gene pool.

KARL

Yes- he would have taken  
after you. Sons are a  
blessing. Daughters...well,  
they're necessary, aren't  
they? Although your son was  
an abomination, you are being  
rewarded with Magnus as a  
son.

Mattie is confused, she isn't sure she understood what her father said about a son dying...an abomination.

MATTIE

Wha'? Wha' son- die? Who?

The men observe Mattie like a laboratory cat in a cage.

GRAHAM

Let's get going. This is going to be a long night. Why don't you start the sequence, I'll get some whiskey. I'm parched- you?

Karl goes to a control panel in a closet by the door to the room.

KARL

Yeah, thanks. Whiskey will do nicely. This first part of the sequence always makes me nauseous until I leave the room.

He presses some buttons on the panel then closes and locks the door. The room goes black; lights begin to strobe wildly, and a pre-recorded voice begins to speak. Mattie tries to free herself but is still under the influence of the narcotic.

MATTIE

Mo-m, Mo-m- I nee' you- Mom!

RECORDED VOICE (V.O.)

(booming)

"God created man in his own image. He made woman from man's rib. Man is the mighty one under God; man is in control. Women are made to serve man..."

Karl and her father leave the room as Mattie screams.

**END OF ACT 1**

ACT 2

INT/EXT. MATTIE'S BEDROOM/OUTSIDE HOUSE - DAY

MONTAGE: DAWN BREAKS AS MATTIE REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS. (A DULL BUZZING TONE IS HEARD)

--Mattie slowly opens her eyes.

--She sits up, nausea hits and she vomits on the floor.

--She tries the doorknob- it's locked.

--She opens the window, sees the trellis, haphazardly climbs down, falling off the last five feet.

--She stands up slowly, still dizzy.

--She and Claire see one another through the kitchen window.

--Mattie can see Claire mouth the words, "I'm sorry."

INT. KITCHEN- MONTAGE CONTINUES

Claire uses her hands to make a "shooing" motion. The buzzing tone stops.

CLAIRE  
(whispers to herself)  
Go!

--Mattie nods her head then turns and runs/stumbles across the field towards the bus depot.

END MONTAGE.

EXT./INT. - PINNACLE BUS DEPOT OFFICE - DAY

Mattie stumbles up to the back of the bus depot. She makes her way to the front and sees the STATION MASTER (65) opening for the day. He sees her struggle and he helps her inside and to a bench.

STATION MASTER  
Goodness, girl, are you alright?

MATTIE  
Please, please help me- I need to make a phone call, please.

STATION MASTER

Do you need a doctor? Are you hurt?

MATTIE

No! No- thank you, I just need to make a call, please.

STATION MASTER

Alright, young lady, let me open up the office and you can use the phone in there.

The station master walks to a door and unlocks it, turning on the lights and getting ready for the day.

Mattie sits there and settles down. She finds the pockets in her dress and puts her hand in one. She sighs with huge relief. She pulls out Faye's phone number.

INT. FAYE'S CAR - DAY

Faye is driving with Mattie in the passenger seat, heading back to Bushmill. Mattie is nodding off due to exhaustion and anxiety. Faye looks over at Mattie. She smiles triumphantly.

INT. FAYE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Faye and Mattie enter Faye's home where Ginnie and Lorraine have been waiting for their arrival. Ginnie runs to Mattie and hugs her tightly.

GINNIE

Jeez, I'm so glad you're here! Are you okay? What happened? Tell me everything!

FAYE

Hold up there, Ginnie. Let's get Mattie cleaned up and rested before we pump her full of questions- she's had a rough go of it from the look of her.

MATTIE

Thanks, Faye. You were right. You were right about everything. I just can't believe it. I just can't...

Mattie starts to cry. Ginnie brings her to the couch and holds her while she cries.

GINNIE

Oh Mattie, holy moly, you must have been through some kind of mess back home. Shhh. Shhh. You're safe now, safe with us.

MATTIE

My own father. My mother...I can't believe it.

Faye comes closer to the couch to hear what Mattie has to say. Lorraine comes over from the kitchen table to get a better listen.

GINNIE

What's that? What do you mean about your dad?

Mattie sniffles and pulls herself away from Ginnie. She nestles into the corner of the couch and hugs one of the pillows as she curls up.

MATTIE

When I got back to town, Magnus was waiting for me. He knows where you are Ginnie and he knows about the both of you.

Mattie looks at Faye and Lorraine.

MATTIE

My dad accepted Pastor Roald's dowry offer, Ginnie.

Ginnie sucks in her breath and covers her mouth with her hand.

MATTIE

You were right, Faye. My mom did what she was told to do. She didn't say a word and she couldn't even look me in the eye last night.

Mattie is speaking as she is remembering- staring down at the coffee table, focusing on a stained coaster. The others move in closer.

MATTIE

When Magnus told me that we were going to be married, I couldn't breathe, I couldn't speak, I could barely keep myself together. But then I had to find out if it was true. I confronted my dad.



GINNIE

Wait- Magnus? You saw him last night?  
Jeez- Louise, Mattie! And you spoke out  
at your dad? Holy moly, girl! What'd he  
do, huh?

MATTIE

Magnus was waiting for me at the depot.  
He told me he would cover for your  
disappearance...as a wedding gift.

(sobs even more)

Then my father- I've never heard him  
speak that way. He wasn't ever an  
emotional man, but he was always kind  
to me. I begged him not to choose  
Magnus. I told him that Magnus  
was cruel- that I'd take anyone else-  
anyone!

(stares at Ginnie)

He didn't care, Ginnie. He didn't care  
that Magnus might hurt me. All he cared  
about was me talking back to him,  
defying him.

GINNIE

I'm so sorry, Mattie. I'm so sorry that  
it's all true.

FAYE

Did he drug you? Did your father drug  
you?

Mattie nods no and starts to cry again.

MATTIE

I think my mom did- something in my  
dinner last night. But that wasn't  
all...when I came to I was in a chair  
in some room...it smelled musty, like a  
basement...

(shuts her eyes tight)

They were talking like I was nothing-  
like I had no worth or value. And then  
they started the flashing lights and  
the loud voice...like God's own voice!

Mattie bursts into tears.

LORRAINE  
(looking at Faye)  
The cleansing.

Faye nods and Lorraine puts her hand on Mattie's shoulder.

LORRAINE (CONT'D)  
Honey, what they did to you is called the *cleansing*. It's a mind control technique that they've perfected over the decades. It usually goes on for several days until the woman breaks. They starve you and keep you sedated until your mind is no longer your own. You hallucinate. You were lucky to escape when you did.

GINNIE  
(wide-eyed in shock)  
That's it- you are *never* going back there. *We* are never going back there! Do you hear me, Mattie?

EXT. STREET IN BUSHMILL - DAY

Magnus sits in his patrol car across the green space from Faye's home, which is adjacent to the church, staring intensely at the house. He dials a number on his cell phone.

MAGNUS  
It's me. I know where she is.

INT. LEWEN HOUSE- MORNING

Graham holds a cell phone to his ear. He ends the call and takes a deep breath. He looks over at Claire, sitting at the kitchen table, silently weeping.

GRAHAM  
Did you know she'd gone?

CLAIRE  
Not until you told me. You have the key to her room. I came down to make breakfast, that's all.

GRAHAM  
She crawled down the trellis. I didn't think she had it in her.

Graham accepts what his wife says and punches numbers into his cell phone. Claire's lips curl into the tiniest of smiles.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

Yeah, it's me. We have a problem.  
Gather the boys.

INT. LEWEN HOUSE- FRONT ENTRY- DAY

Claire makes sure Graham is occupied and slips quietly out the front door.

INT. PINNACLE CHURCH- DAY

Claire sits with REV. DAVID ROALD (44) in his office.

REV. ROALD

Claire, are you certain that Mattie  
got away?

CLAIRE

Yes, yes. I saw her outside of the  
house at dawn. She ran towards the  
depot.

Pastor Roald sits and thinks with his arms across his rotund belly, hands clasped.

REV. ROALD

Does Graham know where she is?

CLAIRE

I-I'm not sure. He received a phone  
call early this morning...

REV. ROALD

Ah- that was probably Magnus. He  
seems to know everything that goes on  
here and in Bushmill- especially  
anything to do with Mattie.

He smiles and looks at a framed photograph on his desk.

REV. ROALD (CONT'D)

He takes after my late wife, Cynthia.  
Well, in looks at least. I don't know  
where his disposition came from. I  
thought perhaps he was just angry at  
God for takin' his mother away from  
him.

CLAIRE

I miss her, Cynthia- we were friends  
in fellowship. She was a really  
lovely person.

He looks at Claire and smiles.

REV. ROALD

Mattie is a lovely young woman,  
Claire. She takes after you. Hair  
like corn silk, skin like  
milk...Magnus is smitten with her.  
Has been since they were kids.

Claire looks down at her hands, hesitating to speak.

CLAIRE

I-I'm concerned about that, Reverend  
Roald...about...Magnus'  
disposition...Mattie is afraid of  
him.

The Reverend takes a deep breath and looks out of the window.

REV. ROALD

Yes, I suppose she is. Everyone is.  
I don't know why he turned out the  
way he did. I thought he would  
outgrow it. He just became so angry  
at God for taking his mother, that  
no one around him can be happy  
either.

He starts to tear up. Claire sits quietly, waiting for the  
pastor to pull himself together.

CLAIRE

I'm so sorry for you.

The Reverend shakes his head and takes another deep breath,  
his head drops.

REV. ROALD

He was so very different when  
Cynthia was still alive.

He looks up at Claire, hopeful.

REV. ROALD (CONT'D)

I was hoping that Mattie could help  
him! I-I think that his being with

her, so gentle, that she could bring him back to us, bring him back from that dark place...I know she's strong enough. I just hope it isn't too late.

He takes Claire's hands in his as he leans towards her.

REV. ROALD (CONT'D)

Claire, she got away. They only did the first sequence last night, isn't that right?

Claire nods her head and breaks into tears.

CLAIRE

Oh, heavens, why did I do it? Why did I allow it? I'm so ashamed! My own daughter...knowing what I do about what goes on here...how could I do that to my little girl?

Reverend Roald comforts Claire.

REV. ROALD

Claire, if you hadn't, things would have been much worse, and then you may not have been able to help her. The way we live, our way of life here in Pinnacle...I struggle to understand how the Council thinks this is the way. I don't condone what they do to our women, but what can I do? They chose me to lead them spiritually, I made an oath to God to uphold the Covenant...

Claire dries her eyes.

CLAIRE

Reverend, you're the only man in this town that has any kind of compassion...any sympathy for us...I think you're as trapped as we are. The Lord knows your heart. Just remember that.

The Reverend takes Claire by the shoulders.

REV. ROALD

I won't let anything bad happen to Mattie, Claire. Trust me on this. Once she's married to Magnus, I can protect

her, I *will* protect her! I failed  
Cynthia- I won't fail Mattie too.

INT. FAYE'S LIVING ROOM- DAY

Faye and Lorraine sit on the couch in quiet conversation.

FAYE

What do you think, Mom? Do we push  
her?

LORRAINE

We have to be careful here,  
Faye...she's been through the wringer  
and needs time to settle down. Let's  
give her a bit and see what she says.  
Let her rest.

Faye nods her agreement and leans back to stretch her neck.

FAYE

I still can't believe we have two  
Pinnacle girls under our  
protection...it makes me wonder what  
wrath we've brought down on  
ourselves...

LORRAINE

With great risk comes great reward,  
honey...but I gotta admit, we poked  
the bear here and that bear has big  
teeth.

FAYE

What do you think they'll do, Mom?  
Really, we can't underestimate  
retaliation on their part, right?

LORRAINE

Honey, they can do just about  
anything they want to. They don't bow  
to society and the rules of  
civilization. No, they follow the  
Covenant and only the Covenant. The  
laws of the land mean nothing to  
them.

Faye leans forward and rests her elbows on her knees and  
clasps her hands together.

FAYE

Well...I suppose the first thing we ought to do is pray for strength and wisdom. We set the wheel in motion, Mom...

LORRAINE

And they'll be coming...no doubt about that.

INT. FAYE'S HOUSE- GUEST BEDROOM- DAY

Ginny and Mattie are lying on the bed, their bodies turned towards one another, their heads touching as they whisper to one another.

GINNIE

So, what really happened last night?

Mattie snuffles a bit but begins to think about her experience.

MATTIE

Dad made my mom get something from the locked cabinet in the kitchen. She put something in my pudding... that's the last thing I remember. She was crying when she did it.

GINNIE

You think your mom wanted to do it or not?

Mattie shakes her head on the pillow.

MATTIE

No...no. I don't think she did, but she was afraid of my dad. He was a different man, Ginnie. I've never seen him like that before. He was like a stranger. He treated *me* like a stranger.

Mattie thinks for a moment. She starts to put the pieces together.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

Magnus must be a spy for my dad. Oh my God, Ginnie...that means he knows that I'm here!

GINNIE

But surely they won't do anything here,  
will they? I mean this is Bushmill--a  
large town! With police!

Both girls get up and leave the bedroom to find Faye and  
Lorraine.

INT. FAYE'S LIVING ROOM- DAY

Mattie and Ginnie find Faye and Lorraine on the couch.

MATTIE

Excuse me? Um, I'm not sure about  
this, but I think I've put you both in  
a bad situation...I'm worried about  
what the Council will do.

Faye and Lorraine turn to face the girls as they sit down.

LORRAINE

Girls, we knew the risks when we  
approached you. Don't you feel  
responsible for whatever happens.

FAYE

We were thinking that perhaps they  
would use Officer Roald as an  
intermediary...to communicate with  
us.

Mattie and Ginnie look at one another.

MATTIE

Well, I guess that could work, but  
what would we say?

Lorraine ponders for a moment then looks up at Mattie.

LORRAINE

We report your abuse to the police.  
It's the only bargaining chip we  
have. Once you are on their radar,  
there is some hope that it may shield  
you--and us.

FAYE

Hmm...not bad, Mom. That just might  
work.



Faye turns to Mattie.

FAYE (CONT'D)

Do you think you can do it, Mattie?  
Can you tell the police what happened  
to you?

Mattie freezes between an obligation to see things through and pure terror.

MATTIE

I don't know if I can do this. I know,  
I know...I understand why it must be  
done, but honestly, I'm scared to my  
core.

Ginnie sits on the arm of Mattie's chair and puts her arm around her shoulders.

GINNIE

Mattie- you gotta do it. You know you  
gotta try! Who else is gonna get the  
chance? You could set us all free,  
Mattie...

Mattie buries her head in her lap and wraps her arms over her head. She takes three deep breaths then raises her head.

MATTIE

Okay...okay. I'll do it.

Faye hands Mattie her cell phone.

FAYE

Just call 911, Mattie.

Mattie looks at the phone and hesitates.

MATTIE

I...I don't know how to use this...I've  
never had one of these...what's 9-1-1?

Faye takes the phone back and dials 911.

FAYE

Of course, I'm sorry Mattie. Here, I've  
dialed the police emergency number, 9-  
1-1, now you tell them what happened,  
okay?

She puts the phone to her ear and then hands the phone back to Mattie. Mattie puts the phone to her ear.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)  
Nine-one-one, what is your emergency?

MATTIE  
Uh, um...I was drugged last night, and,  
um, they...they...

Faye motions for Mattie to hand the phone back.

FAYE  
Hello, this is Pastor Faye McIntyre  
from the Church of Hope. I have a young  
lady here that was restrained and  
psychologically abused last night. We  
need to report it.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)  
Does the victim need an ambulance?

FAYE  
No, but she was drugged, she's still  
a bit woozy from the experience and  
shows extreme exhaustion.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)  
What is the victim's name and age?

FAYE  
Matilda Lewen, 17. She lives in  
Pinnacle.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)  
Ma'am, I need you to take the victim  
to the ER for examination and tox  
screen. I'll call ahead and let them  
know you are coming. Since she's a  
minor, Social Services will be  
called. An officer will meet you  
there to take her statement.

FAYE  
Yes, thank you, we'll do that.

INT. BUSHMILL POLICE DEPT. - DAY

The 911 operator disconnects and turns to the dispatch radio.

911 OPERATOR  
All units, we need an officer at the  
Bushmill ER to take a statement--  
Domestic assault.

INT. BUSHMILL P.D. PATROL CAR - DAY

Magnus sits drinking coffee as he listens to dispatch. His shoulder radio squelches again.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)

Victim's name is Matilda Lewen, age 17.

Magnus sits up, almost spilling his coffee and looks over at Faye's house as Faye and Mattie come out and head for the car.

MAGNUS

Crap. What the hell did you just do, Mattie?

Magnus grabs his shoulder radio.

MAGNUS

This is unit 4, heading there now.

INT. LEWEN HOUSE - GRAHAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Graham, Karl, and SEVERAL MEN are seated in Graham's office. Graham addresses the Council.

GRAHAM

Boys, we seem to have a situation. Mattie has decided to leave us. Ginnie Harper is with her.

The men stir and start speaking over one another.

KARL

I can't believe it. She actually had the wherewithal to make it out of the house and run away?

Graham holds up his hands for silence.

GRAHAM

She had help. Somehow, she met up with Lorraine McIntyre in Bushmill.

KARL

Harold McIntyre's widow? Man, that was almost forty years ago now...I remember my father talking about it. She made it to Bushmill, then. Didn't she have a child? A girl?

The men mumble in recognition of the missing widow and child.

GRAHAM

Yes. Her name is Faye, according to the archives. Magnus has confirmed their involvement. He has eyes on them.

LESTER

You say Ginnie Harper is there too? We have a dowry offer to Mrs. Sweeny for her. My Myron has taken a fancy to that one. What we gonna do then, Graham?

GRAHAM

We must keep the sanctity of our town intact. Our way of life is threatened by outsiders. When Lorraine McIntyre fled our beloved Pinnacle, she made her choice.

The men raise their voices in agreement.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

The Elder chose not to pursue her back then, and she made no trouble for us. Until now. Magnus has reported that Faye is an ordained minister. Huh, a *woman!*

The men recoil in shock.

KARL

Blasphemy! The outrage! Who does she think she is? She has tainted the Gospel and overstepped her earthly bounds. This is what happens when women are given free reign!

The men nod and voice their agreement. The men look at Graham for guidance and direction.

GRAHAM

Yes, yes. Indeed. She will have to pay. Who knows what nonsense she has fed our girls? What lies she has woven to turn them against us? We will take back our own and continue what tradition mandates. Our sons need faithful wives to bear children. Pure women who know their place in our community!

In collective agreement, they shout out their support.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

Pinnacle exists because we have been faithful to our Creed through all these generations, since Amos Hardy established our Covenant in 1897.

KARL

Praise be to Reverend Hardy!

The men murmur their praises.

GRAHAM

Reverend Hardy was a self-made man of the church. He struck out with a handful of faithful, purchased this land, built this town, established our way of life!

The men shout out hallelujahs and praises.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

We must keep to our Covenant! We must protect our way of life! Outsiders are the enemy. They want to destroy what we have. They condemn how we live!

LESTER

We can't let 'em! We gotta fight to keep what's ours!

The men continue to shout in agreement.

GRAHAM

My brothers of Pinnacle...we must act. We will show Lorraine McIntyre what the price of harboring two of our lambs is. She must pay for her transgressions!

LESTER

Shouldn't we get Reverend Roald on board? To bless our efforts, I mean.

The men go quiet and stare at Lester. Graham approaches Lester.

GRAHAM

No need to bother the good Reverend with this situation. We can take care of it within the Council. As Mayor of Pinnacle, I make the decisions outside of the church proper. This is a town matter, Lester. Wouldn't you agree?

The group stares at Lester. He realizes that he made a grave mistake.

LESTER

Yes, of course. You're right. This is a town matter, not the church's. Ah, sorry.

Everyone relaxes as Graham puts his hand on Lester's shoulder.

GRAHAM

Good man, Lester. We'll get Ginnie back for your Myron. Think how good it will be to have a woman back in your household. Since your wife passed, you and your boy have been toiling by yourselves! A woman will set things right again.

The men nod and talk in agreement.

LESTER

Oh, don't I know it! Neither of us can cook...we been eatin' at the Boxcar most days now. Havin' Ginnie around to cook, clean, and keep up the property sure will be a blessing!

GRAHAM

That's right, Lester. We need our women. We need their obedience and their working hands to keep Pinnacle running smooth as butter.

The men shout, "Here, here!" And "Amen!"

Graham's cell phone rings and he answers.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)  
Yes?

Graham's face slowly loses color.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)  
Keep up the surveillance and keep me informed. This calls for a change in plans.

Graham ends the call and thinks for a moment before speaking.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)  
Gentlemen, this situation has just taken a new tack. It seems that Mattie has reported something to the Bushmill Police. Faye is taking her to the hospital to be examined.

The men look around at one another, confused and then concerned.

KARL  
We have to intervene.

GRAHAM  
Hmm. Yes...perhaps a little persuasion is in order to make them understand the gravity of their error. They need to get Mattie to recant her story, whatever she told them. Now, let's get a plan together. Karl has what we need, I say we send a powerful message tomorrow morning. That will set the proper tone and get things moving in the right direction.

INT. KARL DEITRICH GARAGE- DAY

Graham, Karl, and a few of the men from the meeting are carefully preparing devices that look like pipe bombs. The garage is set up with professional gear, very organized, very military.

GRAHAM  
You think this will do it?

KARL

I know it will. One will do the job, properly positioned by the propane tank, and will definitely bring it down.

GRAHAM

I've got Magnus doing some recon later, to make sure it'll be empty. They'll get the message...

KARL

Loud and clear. No doubt about it.

INT. BUSHMILL ER - TRIAGE UNIT- DAY

Mattie sits on an examination gurney awaiting the doctor's return. A SOCIAL WORKER (45) sits in a chair against the wall. DR. SAMPSON (38) enters the triage area.

DR. SAMPSON

Hi Mattie, you seem to be under some duress, from what you've told me, that would be appropriate. The blood work that was taken will be sent to a toxicology lab, so we'll give that evidence to the police when the results come back.

Mattie nods her acknowledgement and eyes the social worker as the doctor leaves.

MATTIE

Um...when can I leave?

SOCIAL WORKER

We have to wait on the police to arrive, they will need to take your statement.

Mattie exhales and feels the tension in her body.

MATTIE

I just want to go back to Faye's house. I'm really tired. Can't I do that? Can't the police go there?

SOCIAL WORKER

I'm afraid not, Mattie. Why don't you lie down for a bit right here.



The social worker gets up and helps Mattie under a thin sheet. Mattie closes her eyes and falls into a fitful slumber. Slowly, the flashing lights and booming voice of God begin to close in on her. She sits up screaming, cupping her hands over her ears, her eyes squinting shut.

SOCIAL WORKER

Mattie! Mattie--are you alright?

Mattie opens her eyes and looks around wildly; the social worker has her by the shoulders, trying to calm her. Dr. Sampson runs to Mattie's area, throwing open the curtains.

DR. SAMPSON

What is it? What's going on?

SOCIAL WORKER

I think she had a nightmare, she nearly gave me a heart attack!

Mattie cowers and begins to shake.

DR. SAMPSON

(over her shoulder)

Nurse! I need 10cc's of Valium, stat.  
Mattie, this will help you relax and  
sleep a bit. You need to rest.

Mattie lies back down as the nurse administers the sedative and soon Mattie is going under.

DR. SAMPSON

I'll let her friend know that we gave  
her something to relax her.

The doctor leaves Mattie and finishes her rounds before heading to the waiting area.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

Faye is sitting in a chair, lost in thought as the doctor enters.

DR. SAMPSON

Ms. McIntyre?

FAYE

Yes. How's Mattie doing? She isn't used  
to...well, she isn't used to being away  
from home.

DR. SAMPSON

She's resting now. We had to give her something to calm her. She nodded off a bit and must have had a nightmare. She started screaming in her sleep. She must have endured something very traumatic last night.

FAYE

Is she injured in any way? Any evidence of physical harm?

DR. SAMPSON

I'm sorry Ms. McIntyre, since you're not family, I'm not at liberty to say. All evidence will be turned over to the police.

I just wanted to let you know that she was resting. If you were her acting guardian, you would have more leverage. You can set that up with admin if you would like.

Magnus enters the waiting room from the opposite door. Faye turns to see who enters and opens her mouth as if to speak. Magnus cuts her off.

MAGNUS

Dr. Sampson? I'm Officer Roald, here to take a statement from a...  
(looks at notepad)  
...Matilda Lewen. I was told that you could escort me to the victim.

DR. SAMPSON

Oh, yes. Please follow me. I'm afraid we had to sedate her, so she won't be able to give you a statement right away.

MAGNUS

That's alright. I can wait.

Magnus turns and looks hard at Faye. He follows the doctor into the triage unit where Mattie is resting behind curtains. Magnus enters the space and sees Mattie, twitching as she sleeps.

SOCIAL WORKER

Oh, you're here. It may be a while. Lord knows she needs the rest, poor girl.

MAGNUS

Yes, it's okay. I can wait. Why don't you go grab some fresh air; I'm sure you've been here a while. I can stay with her.

SOCIAL WORKER

Well...are you sure? I really shouldn't leave her, but I certainly would appreciate a cup of coffee and a stretch.

MAGNUS

No problem. Take your time. She's in safe hands, don't worry.

The social worker leaves and Magnus pulls the chair next to the bed and sits down. He studies Mattie as she sleeps fitfully.

MAGNUS (CONT'D)

Mattie, how did we get here, huh? Why did you have to make your father angry? We're supposed to be betrothed soon and have a spring wedding...we were meant to be together, just you and me. Our lives would have been perfect. This wasn't supposed to happen to you, Mattie.

Magnus looks around to make sure no one is listening. He moves closer to the bed and strokes Mattie's hair.

MAGNUS (CONT'D)

(quietly)

You know, ever since we were kids, I've known that you were the perfect one for me. Even my mom told me, before she died, that you were a bright and beautiful soul that I should keep in my sights as a future wife. See? Even my mom knew it. She wanted us to be together.

You are mine and nothing is going to change that Mattie, do you hear me?

He studies Mattie's face for any sign of comprehension, but she appears to be firmly under the veil of the sedative. He grunts in frustration and walks out of the triage unit and past the waiting room.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

Faye paces the floor, biting her nails. Her phone rings and she answers.

FAYE

Hello? Oh, hi mom.

She's fine, they gave her a sedative so she's resting...but Magnus Roald showed up to take her statement.

That's right. I can't go back there because I'm not immediate family, but the doctor mentioned that I could be her acting guardian.

I saw the social worker leave so that means he is alone with her. Lord knows what that man might be doing to her!

INT. FAYE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Lorraine sits at the kitchen table with Ginny; Lorraine speaks into her phone.

LORRAINE

Calm down Faye, what could he do to her there?

Listen, Chief Matthews called me a bit ago. He asked me about Pinnacle and what I knew about it. He told me that he remembered when we arrived in Bushmill all those years ago with nothing but the clothes on our backs and that little red wagon.

He asked me if that's where we came from and I told him the truth. The cat's outta the bag now, honey. We gotta do this all the way. It's high time. I asked him about Magnus...about how much he knew about his officer, being from Pinnacle and all.

Well, I told him how it is there, how the women are treated, cleansed into

submission and that more than likely, Magnus was privy to all of it. He said he was going to call the FBI, Faye.

Yes, he said that what I described to him are human and civil rights violations not to mention administration of narcotics, and probably the manufacturing of the drugs as well, so the DEA will most likely become involved too, if we have proof. Uh-huh, this is about to get a whole lot bigger than either of us anticipated, hon.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

FAYE

(exhales slowly)

Oh my Lord, mom. What d'ya think? Can we do this? I mean, you have proof, you were a victim too. You and Mattie could blow the lid off of the whole mess.

I know, I'm gonna keep on praying about it. It's beyond our control now, right? I think he's still here, I haven't seen him come out yet...oh! Hang on, there's the social worker. I gotta go, mom. Bye.

Faye puts her phone in her purse and approaches the social worker.

FAYE (CONT'D)

Excuse me, ma'am? Hello, I'm Faye McIntyre or Pastor Faye to most people. I brought Mattie in this morning. I thought you were looking after her?

SOCIAL WORKER

Hello. Yes, I am. I just took a break for a bit since that nice young police officer arrived. Mattie was still sedated, so she couldn't answer any questions. He said he would wait with her if I wanted to grab a coffee.

FAYE

I see, um, it's just that I'm worried about Mattie waking up and finding herself alone with that man. He, um, well...he kind of has a reputation around town of being, well, less than cordial, let's say.

SOCIAL WORKER

(slightly concerned)

Really? Well, I certainly didn't get that impression and I certainly wouldn't have left her had I thought otherwise. Excuse me, please.

The social worker enters the triage unit leaving Faye alone. A few minutes later, she returns.

SOCIAL WORKER (CONT'D)

He's gone, Pastor. Mattie is fine, she doesn't appear to have regained consciousness, so I guess he decided to leave. Anyway, she's just fine.

Faye sighs in relief and nods her thanks to the social worker and sits on the couch, waiting for Mattie to wake up.

INT. BUSHMILL POLICE DEPT. - DAY

Chief Matthews sits at his desk, toying with a pen, looking at his desk phone. He presses the intercom.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Kathy, has Officer Roald returned from the hospital yet with the victim's statement?

KATHY (V.O.)

No sir, not yet. You want me to call him?

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Yes, find out where he is. I want to see that statement, A-S-A-P.

KATHY (V.O.)

Yes, sir.

Chief Matthews sits back in his chair, thinking. He looks at the desk phone again. He takes a deep breath, picks up the receiver, and punches numbers on the desk set.

FBI OPERATOR (V.O.)  
Federal Bureau of Investigation, Little  
Rock office. How may I direct your call?

CHIEF MATTHEWS  
Yes, Special Agent in Charge Davis,  
please.

FBI OPERATOR (V.O.)  
One moment while I transfer your call.

CHIEF MATTHEWS  
Thank you.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY

Magnus sits in his patrol car speaking to Graham on his cell phone.

MAGNUS  
She's under sedation. No, I wasn't able  
to speak with her, she was out cold. No,  
I caught the call. No one else will go  
there to speak with her.  
Yeah, I'll stall them. Right.

Magnus ends the call and leans his head back on the head rest, closes his eyes and takes a deep breath.

MAGNUS (CONT'D)  
(under his breath)  
Well, here we go.

He starts his car, backs out of the space, and burns rubber out of the parking lot.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

Faye returns with paperwork from the hospital administration office. She stands up as Dr. Sampson enters the room.

DR. SAMPSON  
Pastor Faye? Mattie is coming around  
now, she should be ready to leave

shortly. Are you acting as her guardian?

FAYE

Yes, thank you. I am her acting guardian, now.

DR. SAMPSON

Alright, I'll let the social worker know. You can go out to the front reception and someone will bring her out.

FAYE

Thank you, doctor.

INT./EXT. HOSPITAL RECEPTION DESK - DAY

Faye turns as Mattie calls out her name.

MATTIE

Faye? Oh Faye, I had the strangest dream while I was in there.

She falls into Faye's embrace.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

I thought I heard Magnus' voice...talking to me. Creepy, right?

FAYE

Oh Mattie, I'm so sorry you had to do this. Hon, I know this was very difficult for you. Actually, Magnus was here to take your statement, but didn't stay long, he left pretty quickly as you were sleeping.

MATTIE

Oh, I see. So he must have spoken to me. I wish I could remember what he said to me.

Faye calls Lorraine to let her know they'll be home soon. She and Mattie sign papers at the desk and turn to leave the building.

FAYE

Gosh, you must be starving. Want some lunch?



MATTIE

Um, yes please. I am kind of hungry.  
It's been a long day already.

As they exit the building, Mattie turns her face to the sun.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

Faye, I'm scared.

Faye looks at Mattie and wraps her arm around Mattie's shoulders to comfort her.

FAYE

You did a brave thing here, Mattie.  
There is no doubt about that. Whatever  
your father has in mind, we will deal  
with it, okay?

MATTIE

But with Ginnie and me both gone, they  
won't like that, not one little bit.  
You didn't see my father...the way he  
acted...the way he treated me. He spoke  
to me as if I were a stranger. If he  
could do what he did to his own  
daughter, what would he do to you and  
your mom for helping us?

Faye turns to face Mattie head on.

FAYE

Mattie, I have something to tell you. I  
don't want to scare or upset you, but  
mom called me while you were asleep.  
Chief Matthews, the Chief of Police,  
was very interested in your situation,  
hon. He began asking questions about  
Mom and me and what happened when we  
came here. He asked us if we came from  
Pinnacle. Mom told him the truth...about  
everything, Mattie.

MATTIE

I don't understand, what does that  
mean?

FAYE

It means that a whole lot of people are  
going to get involved, hon.

MATTIE

Involved, involved in what? You mean me and Ginnie running away from home?

FAYE

No, hon. People will find out about what your town is doing. They'll find out about how the women are treated there...about the cleansings that have taken place, the way the women are kept isolated and controlled, kept from enjoying certain rights as U.S. citizens.

They'll also find out about the drugs that they use to brainwash ya'll into submission and the arranged marriages.

MATTIE

Wait, wait...wait a minute. I mean, I know that what my father did to me was cruel and harsh, but...

FAYE

Mattie, what happened to you is called psychological manipulation. It isn't right to control someone's thoughts and behaviors.

MATTIE

My mom...your mom...it happened to them. I can't think straight. I need to lay down, I need to...I think I'm going to vomit, Faye.

(keeling over; breathing deeply)

Faye leads Mattie towards the car.

FAYE

Just hang on, Mattie! Let's get you in the back seat so you can lie down and we'll go home. You need some food in your stomach.

INT. FAYE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Lorraine and Ginnie sit at the table eating lunch.

GINNIE

What's gonna happen now? You said the

Police person was going to call the  
FBI?

LORRAINE

That's right, Ginnie. I think we're in  
for one helluva storm.

GINNIE

Um, what's the F-B-I?

Lorraine stops eating and looks at Ginnie.

LORRAINE

Oh honey- I'm sorry. I keep forgetting  
that you girls don't know much about the  
world outside of Pinnacle.  
The FBI is a government entity created  
to investigate illegal activity. FBI  
stands for Federal Bureau of  
investigation. The people that work for  
them are called agents.

GINNIE

Government...yes, we've heard about the  
government. The Council are always  
talking about them. They said the  
government will one day want to take  
over the town, so we have to protect  
ourselves to keep our privacy and our  
freedom intact.  
Mattie's father always says that we  
can't let our defenses down. They said  
that's why we stay inside the town, to  
protect us.

LORRAINE

Yes, I remember those same speeches.  
Blah, blah, blah...it's all a load of  
horseshit!

Surprised at Lorraine's outburst, Ginnie starts laughing.  
Lorraine joins in her infectious laughter.

LORRAINE (CONT'D)

You'll have to excuse my language,  
Ginnie. I lived that life once and got  
away, so when I'm reminded of that  
past, it gets me riled up so. Thank God  
we got away and Faye didn't have to go  
through it all.

(looks at Ginnie)

I also thank God that you were spared. We knew that Mattie would be at risk going back there, but we couldn't force her to stay here, see?

GINNIE

Oh, no Ms. Lorraine, please don't be sad! It's not your fault, what happened to Mattie. I still can't believe it, her own father..

LORRAINE

Honey, I don't want to defend those men, but everyone in Pinnacle was born into the Covenant..generations of families and orphaned children grew up believing that lie. Those men think upon women as beasts of burden, as tools. A tool for cooking, cleaning, raising babies, and keeping up the property, all while they do as they please, enjoying the liberties of freedom and technology while the women are kept ignorant of the world and isolated from it.

(shaking her head)

No, no. It just isn't right what goes on there. Even giving orphans a home and a future, I can't say that it's right. Those kids, even you, Ginnie, are there to keep the gene pool diluted.

GINNIE

W-what? I don't understand.

LORRAINE

Ginnie, if new blood isn't introduced into the community, bad things would happen...has happened through the generations. Birth deformities, still births, mental illness, and all kinds of horrible things. You and all those children that are brought to Pinnacle have saved Pinnacle. You are a blessing!

GINNIE

Thank you, Ms. Lorraine. Thank you both for...well, for everything. You opened our eyes to the truth. Holy moly! Little Bethy...I can't let her grow up in that place. We *have* to rescue her.

LORRAINE

You are just two lambs in a flock of many. We need to do more, Ginnie. We need to do a lot more.

As Ginnie and Lorraine clear the lunch dishes, Faye and Mattie come into the house.

FAYE

Here Mattie, lie down on the couch for now. I'll make you some herbal tea and something that'll be easy on your stomach.

Ginnie helps Mattie get comfortable on the couch and covers her with a light blanket and soft pillow under her head. They chat quietly as Faye and Lorraine talk in the kitchen.

FAYE (CONT'D)

So what do we do now?

LORRAINE

I think we wait to see what Chief Matthews has to say. If the FBI comes to town, then we should expect things to happen. They'll be running the show.

FAYE (CONT'D)

Well, I hope they learned their lesson from that Waco tragedy. Religious cults require a subtle hand. You think they'll try to storm Pinnacle?

LORRAINE

They need evidence of illegal activity first.

FAYE

But you're a witness! A first-hand account along with Mattie!

LORRAINE

Honey, they'll need more than just our testimonies. If they can get the results of Mattie's toxicology report, that will corroborate our statements of drug use.

They'll need to get a warrant to search the premises. A judge will want sufficient cause, not just witness testimony.

FAYE

You're right, of course. My goodness, why do things have to be so complicated?

LORRAINE

It's called due process, and we surely need that in this country, although I do wish it would hurry itself up.

The women look over at the couch where Mattie and Ginnie are quietly talking.

MATTIE

Magnus was there, Ginnie. He was at my bedside while I was sleeping. I think he talked to me, I can remember his voice, in a dream, kinda.

GINNIE

Holy moly, seriously? That is suuuuper creepy.

MATTIE

What am I going to do, Ginnie? Within twenty-four hours, I find that my family isn't what I thought it was and now I don't even have a family anymore...oh! Gosh, I'm so sorry Ginnie, I didn't mean...

GINNIE

No, no. Don't you worry about me, Mattie. I don't even remember my parents anymore. You are all the family I need. If I didn't have you, then I sure would be lost. You will always have me by your side, Mattie, you hear?

MATTIE

Like two peas in a pod, huh?

GINNIE

That's what Sheila always says!

The girls lock pinkies in a secret handshake.

INT. BUSHMILL POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Magnus stops in to brief Chief Matthews, as requested.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

(sarcastically)

Roald! Nice of you to stop by. Got any updates for me on the Lewen girl?

MAGNUS

Chief. So yeah, I took the call this morning and headed straight to the ER to get her statement.

Magnus saunters into the office and plops down in the guest chair opposite the Chief's desk.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

And? Where is it?

MAGNUS

She was sedated. The doc said she'd be out for a while, so I left.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

You left? You just left her, without her statement?

MAGNUS

You expect me to sit by her side for an hour until she comes to? Chief, there are better uses for my time than babysitting.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Ah, I see. Your time being so valuable I guess, is that it? Too important to wait for a statement, huh? A statement that I very much wanted to read?

MAGNUS

(scoffs)

Chief, she's just some kid that got into a bad situation, drugs I believe, wasn't it?

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Drugs...is there a problem with that in Pinnacle? Isn't that your home turf? I would have thought that you would know her, Pinnacle being such a tight community and all.

Magnus squirms in his seat, not liking where this conversation is headed. He chooses his words carefully.

CHIEF MATTHEWS (CONT'D)

Well? Do you know her or not?

MAGNUS

I know who her family is. Her father's the Mayor and Senior Elder at our church. I don't know her *personally*. She's younger than me, so we didn't socialize, not the same friend groups.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

So what do you know about the father? He allegedly drugged her, then subjected her to brainwashing. Does that happen often in Pinnacle? Is that the typical daddy-daughter bonding experience there?

MAGNUS

No. No, it is not. I don't know what went on there last night, I was pulling a double here in town.

The Chief realizes he has hit a wall with Magnus and wouldn't get much more out of him. He stands up and excuses Magnus just as his phone rings. He picks up the handset.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Chief Matthews speaking.

AGENT DAVIS (V.O.)

Yes, this is Agent Davis calling back.



CHIEF MATTHEWS

Oh, hello Agent Davis. I hope you have some good news for me about our little conversation.

AGENT DAVIS (V.O.)

Well, I'm sorry to disappoint you Chief, but I don't think we can do much for you on this one. It all comes down to the Freedom of Religion Act. It's a gray area, you see. It's like walking a tightrope.

Unless there is substantial evidence of physical harm, torture, or deviant behavior to this young woman, her father, under their religious doctrine, can do certain things that normal society would frown upon, but are perfectly acceptable within their own community and church.

I'm sorry. I know this is disappointing news.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Well, shit.

AGENT DAVIS (V.O.)

It's just with that Waco thing, we took so much heat from that, it's kind of made things a bit touchy where these cults are concerned.

Actually, it doesn't appear that Pinnacle is anything other than a nice little town that keeps to themselves. I mean, there's no reports of polygamy, sexual deviancy, or anything dangerous at all. They aren't on anyone's radar.

Chief Matthews sighs heavily and rubs his temple with his free hand.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Is there anything we can look at as evidence?

AGENT DAVIS (V.O.)

Well, as for the drug allegation, it would depend on a few factors, namely the type of drug and the quantity administered, once again, a touchy subject with religious entities. You have anything on that?

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Tox. report isn't back yet. Sample was just sent out this morning.

AGENT DAVIS (V.O.)

I see, well, if the report comes back with anything interesting, give me a call.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Will do. Thanks Agent Davis.

The call ends and Chief Matthews sits heavily in his leather office chair. He picks up the phone and calls Lorraine.

INT. FAYE'S KITCHEN - DAY

The old rotary wall phone rings in the kitchen and Lorraine answers it.

LORRAINE

Hello, McIntyre residence.

CHIEF MATTHEWS (V.O.)

Hey, Lorraine, its Chief down at the station. I have some news.

LORRAINE

Well, let's hear it then.

CHIEF MATTHEWS (V.O.)

Special Agent Davis from the FBI just called back, and well...not good news there. I'm sorry.

LORRAINE

What do you mean by that, *exactly*. Can they do anything or not?

CHIEF MATTHEWS (V.O.)

He said that because of their religious doctrine, what transpired may well be permissible, within reason of the Freedom of Religion Act. It's a fuzzy area, if you know what I mean.

LORRAINE

So, a man can drug his seventeen-year-old daughter, subject her to psychological manipulation, and call it religious freedom?

CHIEF MATTHEWS (V.O.)

Er...yup. Pretty much. I'm sorry, Lorraine. Without more compelling evidence, say the toxicology report, there isn't much we can do right now. But I won't give up. I promise you that.

LORRAINE

Well, I am truly at a loss for words. I thank you for your time, Chief.

Lorraine hangs up the phone and turns to the living room where Faye, Mattie, and Ginnie anxiously await the news, any news.

FAYE

I don't like that look you have on your face, Mom. Not what we hoped for?

LORRAINE

No, afraid not. Freedom of Religion. That's what they have for us.

FAYE

I see. That is a disappointment.

MATTIE

So, what does that mean? I told the truth so someone would stop it from happening again...I did this to help!  
(becoming anxious)

I've exposed myself and Ginnie, Magnus knows where we are and that I reported my father, which means that my father also knows everything.

GINNIE

So, no FBI then? No investigation? No storm coming to Pinnacle, is that what I'm hearing, Ms. Lorraine?

LORRAINE

I'm sorry, girls. I truly thought that this would light a spark. But, there is a silver lining to this. We have the two of you here, safely away from Pinnacle.

FAYE

(slightly upbeat)

That's right! That's something we can celebrate. I say we order some pizza for dinner and break out the apple cider. What d'ya say girls?

Mattie and Ginnie look at one another.

GINNIE

Sure! Wait, what is pizza?

INT. FAYE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is dark as Faye, Lorraine and the girls sleep. An orange glow can be seen filtering through the curtain sheers on the windows. A tremendous noise is heard and the house rattles from it, waking everyone at the same time.

Faye runs out of her bedroom, tying the belt on her robe. She opens the front door and sees burning roof debris in the front yard. Lorraine and the girls follow her. Faye walks through the debris towards the church as the full catastrophe comes into view.

The Church of Hope is ablaze. Window glass shatters and huge sections of wall topple. Faye drops to her knees on the grass, her face shiny with tears. Lorraine comes up beside her and puts her hand on Faye's shoulder, steadying her.

LORRAINE

Heavenly Father, help us!

Faye begins to shake with rage. Mattie comes forward, disbelief on her face.

MATTIE

Oh no, oh no...this is my fault...this is all my fault!

(looks down at Faye)

I'm so sorry...I'm so sorry! I never thought that...I never imagined..

Mattie drops to her knees next to Faye, as Ginnie comes forward.

GINNIE

Holy moly!!

The little group reels as another smaller explosion erupts and the church steeple falls over slowly, as if a tree felled by an axe. Sirens are heard in the distance and flashing lights can be seen in the darkness.

LORRAINE

Oh, my dear, sweet Lord. What have they done here?

MATTIE

This was my father's doing...it has to be! Karl, Karl Deitrich has to be behind this. He knows weapons and explosives...his garage is full of that stuff.

GINNIE

Mattie, you think your father did this? I don't get it. Why?

MATTIE

Because of what I did, Ginnie. I made him mad, I reported what he did to me.

LORRAINE

No, honey. This was aimed at us, me and Faye...for taking the two of you away from Pinnacle. Maybe for us leaving Pinnacle all those years ago. This was retribution.

Fire trucks pull up in front of the church and house and the firefighters quickly get the hoses connected and water on the burning church. One of the fire fighters inspects the exterior of Faye's house as another approaches the women.

FIRE FIGHTER

Are you all okay? Do you need any medical assistance?

The women shake their heads no.

FIRE FIGHTER (CONT'D)

Was there any one inside the church? would anyone have a reason to be in there at this time of morning?

Faye and Mattie stand up.

FAYE

No. No one should have been in the the church. We have the only keys.

FIRE FIGHTER

Good. Now, have you been having any issues with maintenance on the building? Any idea what happened here?

LORRAINE

The church was in good repair. This was no accident.

FAYE

Mom...

The fire fighter looks at Lorraine, expecting more information.

FIRE FIGHTER

Well, in light of that, the fire investigator will want to speak with you at some point later today. I'm sorry for what happened here.

The fire fighters rejoin the extinguishing effort. Across the green space from Faye's house, Karl Deitrich sits in a black van, taking photos with a 200mm lens. He focuses on Mattie and Ginnie as he watches the church burn to the ground.

INT. FAYE'S KITCHEN - DAY

The bright morning sun comes into the kitchen as Mattie and Ginnie prepare a light breakfast for Faye and Lorraine, who sit dejected at the table. Mattie tops off their coffee cups.

MATTIE

Faye?

Faye looks up at Mattie, still in a fog.

MATTIE (CONT'D)

What do we do now?

There is a knock at the front door. Lorraine gets up to answer it and lets Chief Matthews in.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Lorraine, dear God, what on earth is going on?

LORRAINE

Look Jerry, this was no accident. You have to know that, right?

The Chief mumbles his hesitation.

LORRAINE (CONT'D)

Dammit, Jerry. This is too much of a coincidence for it to be anything other than Pinnacle flexing its control on me and Faye. It's about forty years overdue, I'd say.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

You really think they would do this?

Lorraine turns towards the kitchen and waves her arm at Mattie and Ginnie.

LORRAINE

Two of Pinnacle's girls are here in our care. Mattie, Ginnie...meet the Chief of Police, Jerry Matthews.

Ginnie waves and Mattie starts to speak, but the Chief interrupts her.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Hang on, now. You mean to tell me that this young woman is the one that reported her father yesterday? This is Mattie Lewen?

The Chief is stunned momentarily, then becomes excited.

CHIEF MATTHEWS (CONT'D)

Lorraine, do you know what this means?  
If Pinnacle blew up your church for  
harboring two of their young women,  
we just might get the FBI interested!

LORRAINE

Well I hate that it had to come to this  
to get them involved, but something had  
to happen. Pinnacle needs to be stopped.

The Chief then notices Mattie looking very anxious.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Uh, Mattie, is it? Hello. I am very  
glad to meet you, young lady. Do you  
mind if I ask you a few questions?

He motions for Mattie to join him on the couch.

MATTIE

Um, yes, sir?

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Hello, Mattie. I know that you've been  
through a helluva time in the last coupla'  
days, but I'd like to hear from you  
about what happened to you, please.

Mattie takes a calming breath and begins to tell her story.

EXT. CHURCH OF HOPE - DAY

Magnus pulls up in front of the smoldering church and makes his  
way to the scene amidst the tired firemen who are clearing hoses  
and checking for any remaining hot spots. He looks at the house  
and sees the Police Chief's vehicle.

Magnus quickly scans the burnt remains of the church, looking  
for any obvious evidence that would point to a pipe bomb. He  
spies a flat disc of blackened metal with a wire, just peeking  
out from a section of timber. He leans in to pick it up.

FIRE FIGHTER

Hey, Roald! Yo! Get outta there, will  
ya'? The investigator is on his way.  
You're trampling all over evidence.

Magnus nods his head at the fire fighter and reluctantly pulls  
back to his patrol car.



INT. FAYE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The Chief sits back on the couch and exhales after hearing Mattie's story.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Well I'll be. I just don't understand people anymore.

MATTIE

Why won't the FBI get involved, sir?

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Well, young lady, your father is relying on an old standby in our country. The Freedom of Religion Act was meant to protect Christians from prosecution for having their own beliefs. But nowadays, it's a shield that some stand behind and use as an excuse for all manner of depravity and control. You see, although your experience chills my blood, your father can argue that what he did was for religious purposes.

The Chief bows his head and sighs.

CHIEF MATTHEWS (CONT'D)

Mattie, I'm sorry, but I have to ask. Did your father, uh, did he, or anyone else, do anything to you...uh, sexually?

Mattie's eyes go huge in her blushed face as she shakes her head no.

CHIEF MATTHEWS (CONT'D)

Okay, that's good. Did he hurt you, uh, physically harm you other than strapping you to that chair? Hit you? Cut you?

Mattie looks anxiously at Faye and Lorraine, then shakes her head no.

CHIEF MATTHEWS (CONT'D)

Alright. Well, I am thankful that you were not afflicted in that manner, Mattie. Had anyone caused you pain or suffering in a physical way, then the FBI could...

Before the Chief could finish his sentence, both Faye and Lorraine look at one another and Lorraine intervenes.

LORRAINE

Chief, hold on a minute! You're tellin' me that all you need is proof of physical harm, and we can get the FBI engaged?

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Well, yeah. But Mattie just said..

LORRAINE

It's not Mattie. It's me.

Lorraine pulls her blouse up and slowly pushes one side of her slacks down to expose her left hip.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

What the hell?  
(leans in)  
What is that...are those letters I'm lookin' at?

Mattie leans in for a closer look at the discolored scar tissue.

MATTIE

H, M.

LORRAINE

That's right, H-M. Harold McIntyre. I was branded, like cattle, after my cleansing. My future husband's initials...lest I forget my experience. Anyone that was ever cleansed got the same treatment.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Dear God in heaven!

Mattie looks up at Lorraine and their eyes meet.

LORRAINE

Honey, it was a miracle that you escaped. This would have been your fate as well.

Lorraine restores her clothing as Chief Matthews makes a call on his cell phone.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Hello, Special Agent in Charge Davis please.

Yes, I'll hold.

(waits momentarily)

Agent Davis, hello. Do you believe in gifts from above? Pennies from heaven? Well, hold on to your hat and get the Calvary saddled up. I do believe you'll be wanting to visit our little town after all.

Oh, I've got more than that. Who do you know over at the ATF? Uh-huh. In the wee hours of this morning, someone blew up one of our churches here in town.

Yessir...that's what I said...boom.

INT. BUSHMILL P.D.- CHIEF MATTHEWS OFFICE - DAY

Agent Davis and Chief Matthews stand at a bulletin board with a map of the county displayed. An ATF Agent, MARK PHILLIPS (32), sits on the corner of the Chief's desk listening and observing.

AGENT DAVIS

So, Pinnacle has one road in and one road out, huh?

(pointing on the map)

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Yes, usually the bus runs that road and stops at the depot. Not a tourism area. They don't like visitors and don't have a Chamber of Commerce to speak of. Isolated.

AGENT DAVIS

Yes, most cult communities are like that. Isolation and insulation. They control what comes in and what the people see, hear, and read.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

That sounds about right according to what Lorraine McIntyre told me. The men run the town and have all the freedom while the women toil under servitude.

AGENT DAVIS

So this Lorraine McIntyre, she came from Pinnacle...how long ago?

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Round about forty years now I'd say. Her husband, Harold, died of a heart attack and she seized the opportunity to escape with her daughter in the middle of the night. She walked all the way here, pulling her daughter in a little wagon. Twenty miles on foot.

Agent Phillips whistles long and slow.

AGENT PHILLIPS

Gotta give the woman credit. That place must be some kind of hell for those gals. Patriarchal hierarchy, para-military experience, explosives experience. You have any intel on those people? *Recent intel?*

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Well, there's a problem there. Ya' see, one of our patrol officers is from there. Young stallion, fulla' piss and vinegar. Has a quick temper and a mean side... according to some folks.

The men look through the office windows and scan the bullpen to see if Magnus was there.

AGENT DAVIS

I think I'd like a word with...

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Officer Roald, Magnus Roald.

AGENT DAVIS

With Officer Roald. Is he here?

Chief Matthews gets on the intercom and requests that Magnus be sent to his office.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

You think that's a good idea? Kinda showin' our hand, don't you think?

AGENT DAVIS

Well, if he doesn't already know that we're here, he's either deaf and dumb or he's laying low to see what move we make.

Magnus enters the bullpen and strides confidently towards the Chief's office, staring stonily through the windows at the men inside. He stops at the door and knocks on the glass.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Inside, Officer Roald.

Magnus enters the room and shuts the door behind him.

MAGNUS

You requested my presence, Chief?

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Roald, I want to introduce you to Special Agent in Charge Davis of the FBI and Agent Phillips of the ATF, Little Rock. They'd like a word if you don't mind.

MAGNUS

Ask away, gentlemen. I'm all ears.

Agent Davis smirks and looks at Magnus, trying to get a read on him.

MAGNUS (CONT'D)

Trying to profile me, already? I'm an open book.

AGENT PHILLIPS

Oh, I doubt that. Everyone has secrets.

MAGNUS

I've got nothing to hide.

AGENT DAVIS

Well, that's a good start. You're from Pinnacle, correct?

MAGNUS

Why, yes I am. It's a lovely, quiet town. The people keep to themselves.

AGENT PHILLIPS

Do they now? Anyone been in town recently...besides yourself?

Magnus stares at the agent before speaking.

MAGNUS

Two young ladies from Pinnacle came here for the Harvest Fair a few days ago. Only one came back.

Magnus looks at Chief Matthews.

MAGNUS (CONT'D)

Then yesterday, the other young lady is picked up at the bus depot and driven away towards Bushmill. The community is very concerned for them and their whereabouts. They have families waiting for them.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Ginnie Harper has a family? It is my understanding that she is an orphan.

Magnus smiles as he hears Ginnie's name.

MAGNUS

Well, well, Chief. Am I to understand that you know where Ginnie Harper is? She's only seventeen years old, a minor. You want to explain why she wasn't returned to Pinnacle and to the care of Mrs. Sweeny at the Children's Home? That applies to Mattie Lewen as well. Her family is bereft.

Both of the agents look at Chief Matthews in surprise and then disappointment. The Chief flusters a bit.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

Dammit, Roald. You knew where Ginnie was this whole time. She took refuge at the Church of Hope because she was afraid to go back. Mattie Lewen confirmed that.

AGENT PHILLIPS

You mean the same church that was bombed and burned to the ground yesterday?

MAGNUS

Bombed? What makes you think it was bombed? I heard it was a propane leak.

Agent Phillips gets up and retrieves a large evidence bag from his duffle bag and lays it atop the Chief's desk.

AGENT DAVIS

Never mind the cause. What's your job in Pinnacle? What's your position?

MAGNUS

I don't have a job in Pinnacle. My job is here in Bushmill. As for position, my father is the Reverend in the community. I guess that makes me the altar boy.

The agents ignore the verbal jab.

AGENT PHILLIPS

You still live there though? Not here in Bushmill?

MAGNUS

My father is a widower, he gets lonely. I'm still a bachelor, so I keep him company. He likes to play chess after dinner. We talk about our day.

The agents consider what Magnus says. It sounds reasonable but they keep pressing.

AGENT DAVIS

Why aren't you married yet? Isn't it a Community tradition to be engaged and married rather young?

MAGNUS

It's not a hard rule, no. I just haven't really found the time to think about taking a wife right now. It's *my* choice.

AGENT DAVIS

But not a choice for the girls? Why is that, I wonder?

MAGNUS

You'd have to ask their fathers, not me.

Agent Davis smiles at Magnus and then wraps up the interview.

AGENT DAVIS

Thank you for your time, Officer Roald.  
Don't go anywhere, please. I'm sure we  
will speak again.

As Magnus turns towards the door, he sees the large Ziploc bag on the desk, in plain sight. Inside is the blackened disc that he saw in the rubble at the church, the blasting cap that proves a bomb was involved. He leaves the office and exits the bullpen.

Agent Davis looks at the other agent.

AGENT DAVIS (CONT'D)

Are you certain he saw it?

AGENT PHILLIPS

Oh, yeah. He saw it alright. Now it's  
his move.

CHIEF MATTHEWS

You still think this will work?

AGENT DAVIS

Yes, he's just the type to take the bait.  
He's probably reporting in right now.

EXT. BUSHMIL P.D. - PARKING GARAGE -DAY

Magnus sits in his patrol car and calls Graham.

MAGNUS

It's me. The FBI and the ATF are here.  
They found the blasting cap at the  
church before I could retrieve it.  
They interviewed me just now, asked  
a lot of questions about me and the  
traditions of the Community.

GRAHAM (V.O.)

Well, isn't that interesting. I suppose  
the time has come after all these  
generations. But we are prepared.

MAGNUS

Where do you want me?



GRAHAM (V.O.)

Stay put and monitor the situation. Keep me informed of their movements. We'll start defenses on our end.

INT./EXT. LEWEN HOUSE - GRAHAM'S DEN/FRONT OF HOUSE - DAY

Graham ends the call and contemplates his next move. He walks to his ornate wooden desk and picks up some photos of Mattie, Ginnie, Faye, and Lorraine taken in the early hours of the church bombing. He takes out his lighter, and holding the photos by the corners, lights them on fire above a large metal tray. He drops them and watches as Mattie's face disappears in the flames. He makes a call on his cell phone.

GRAHAM

It's go time. Gather the boys and get the plan in motion. I'll join you in a bit.

Graham ends the call, walks to the window, and stares down the street. Minutes later, men are coming out of their garages, loading tactical boxes into trunks and truck beds. Other families are coming out on their lawns carrying duffle bags, and are herded into groups. Council members are hammering out orders and giving directions on where the families are to go and what they are to do.

It is very organized and very concise. The families start walking towards the church. Reverend Roald is seen opening the church doors, ready to accept the Community within.

Graham finds Claire and informs her that the "end of days" plan has been put into motion. Claire retrieves a prepared duffle bag from the front closet and walks down the front porch steps, heading for the church. She turns and looks back at her house and then looks across the fields towards Bushmill.

CLAIRE

(to herself)

Take care, Mattie. I love you.

She quickens her pace to the church with the other families. A school bus is seen being loaded with children from the orphanage, Mrs. Sweeny is speaking in a calm manner so as not to frighten the children.

MRS. SWEENY

Come along, children. This is just like we practice every month. Simon says, follow the person in front of you!

Little Bethy cries as she steps out of the line, searching for Ginnie, calling out her name. One of the aides picks her up and carries her back to the line and onto the bus.

INT. BOXCAR DINER - DAY

Old Mr. Jenkins and his wife Sheila are directing men to the boxes of food and pallets of bottled water stored in the back. Mr. Jenkins stops and leans against the counter, catching his breath.

SHEILA

You alright, hon? Anything wrong?

MR. JENKINS

I just never thought I'd live to see this day come to pass. We are being judged, wife. The Lord looks down on us and finds us deficient.

Sheila puts her arms around her husband's waist and hugs him warmly.

SHEILA

You were never deficient, my husband. I came to you freely, of my own accord, you know that. I've loved you from the moment I laid eyes on you when I was five years old.

MR. JENKINS

Even then you were like a shining star to me, wife.

SHEILA

I know it. I saw it in your eyes when you shared that apple with me under the old tree, back of the church. You 'member?

Mr. Jenkins takes his wife's hand to his mouth and kisses it like so many times before.

MR. JENKINS

Are we gonna survive this, wife?

SHEILA

Hmm...I suppose only God knows the answer to that, my love.

They go to the back store room and show the men where their packed duffle bag is. They turn and take a long, final look at their life's work and then are escorted to a waiting car. They hold hands as the car pulls away from the diner towards the church.

EXT./INT. PINNACLE PROTESTANT CHURCH - DAY

As the Community arrives at the church, the Elders lead them inside, through the church to a back door that leads to the cellar. Down below the stairs lead the people to a cavernous room filled with bunk beds, cots and mattresses, chairs and couches, shelves filled with canned goods, bottles of water, toilet paper, and candles. Refrigerators are at the back of the bunker with small, portable generators at the ready and solar panels leaning against their sides. Lanterns and oil lamps are sprinkled around the room.

Reverend Roald offers comfort and light humor to his flock to ease their anxieties. He looks up and see Claire across the room.

REV. ROALD

Claire! Oh, Claire, there you are.

(quietly)

Have you had any word on the girls?

Claire shakes her head no, clearly upset. Dark circles underline her eyes.

CLAIRE

Graham won't tell me anything. He's become so secretive the last few days. I'm frantic with worry! I can't sleep, I can't eat...I'm so scared for what will happen! I mean, truly, I never thought this day would come.

REV. ROALD

Claire, you must realize that Mattie has been chosen. She has been chosen to deliver us from this bondage. Don't you see that?

CLAIRE

Chosen...chosen, yes, I see it now. Why else would this have happened to them if God didn't put the McIntyres in their path?

REV. ROALD

Yes! Exactly! They are our warriors,  
Claire. They will deliver us. I know it!

Old Mr. Jenkins and Sheila find their way down the stairs and are given a place of honor on a comfortable couch. They are revered by the Community as historians and the oldest living members of the Community.

MR. JENKINS

(whispers)

Wife, if things start to go south, you  
follow my lead, you hear?

SHEILA

I'd follow you anywhere, north or south,  
husband.

MR. JENKINS

I know you would, my love. I've made up  
my mind. I ain't ready to meet my maker,  
not just yet, even if we are together.

SHEILA

You have a plan.

MR. JENKINS

My, aren't you clever?

SHEILA

Clever enough to marry the most  
intelligent man in Pinnacle, yes sir...  
and the *bravest*. I'm so proud to be your  
wife!

MR. JENKINS

I love you, woman. Always have. Let's  
just see what kind of trouble the Mayor  
has put us in.

Graham makes it down to the bunker and finds Claire.

GRAHAM

Are you happy that your daughter has  
driven us to this?

CLAIRE

What? What are you saying?

GRAHAM

Mattie did this. She started a chain of events that won't end nicely.

Claire stares at her husband in disbelief.

CLAIRE

You still don't see it, do you, Graham?

GRAHAM

See what? What is there to see but the craven act of a delusional teenager?

CLAIRE

She is *our* daughter, Graham. She didn't ask for this. She didn't ask to be a victim! I'll never forgive you for what you did to her.

GRAHAM

Watch your tone, Claire.

CLAIRE

Why? We're all going to die down here, Graham. It's the end of days, isn't it? That's what you started.

Claire turns to face Graham fully.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

All you had to do was promise her to anyone other than Magnus. She's afraid of him, Graham. He's cruel and she knows it. She begged you. But no, you had to show her who was in control, didn't you?

Graham clenches his jaw, trying to keep his composure in front of the Community.

GRAHAM

She would have settled into it, eventually. All she had to do was do as she was told. But she chose to listen to strangers' lies instead of her own kin.

CLAIRE

I thought you were smart, Graham. Now I see that you are simply full of it.

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