

STATIC

EXT - DRIVEWAY - MID MORNING

Aerial wide shot of FATHER asleep on couch. He is in his underwear and a wrinkly button-up. Dog barks. FATHER rolls over. Shot zooms out to a very wide shot that displays the entire living room. It is messy: empty beer cans are strewn across the table. The TV is on, but muted. A lamp with a dull light bulb sits in the corner. Cutaway to the ham radio sitting on the table. Distinct sound of static coming from the radio. Camera zooms out to a wide shot of FATHER again. He sits up quickly, glances at his watch, and mutters under his breath. Runs out of shot and returns quickly with a trash bag. Picks up all the cans and places them into the bag. Exits again. Static continues to grow in volume. FATHER runs into the living room wearing a different button-up and a pair of khakis with a toothbrush in his mouth. He quickly straightens up the room: rearranges the pillows on the couch. The dog barks again stopping the static.

Cutaway to shot of car pulling into driveway. It is raining. EMMA gets out of car, turns and pulls her suitcase out of the back seat. Cutaway to shot of the front of the house. Wide shot of FATHER sitting on doorstep, waves. EMMA smiles slightly. FATHER takes her bag.

Cut to:

INT. KITCHEN - MID MORNING

EMMA sits at the counter, FATHER looks through the cabinets.

EMMA

Does the pond ever flood?

FATHER stops looking through the cabinets and faces EMMA.

FATHER
(confused)
What?

EMMA points to the pond 50 yards from the house. It is raining harder.

EMMA

When it rains, I guess.
The pond?

FATHER

Well, not really.

FATHER turns and opens the fridge. Beer lines the shelves. Pulls out a carton of milk and a styrofoam container.

FATHER

It has to rain really a lot,
you know? A few winters ago
it snowed up to those windows
right there.

EMMA

Really?

FATHER

The power was out for a week.
I burned a few table chairs because
I couldn't go outside for firewood
and the heat wasn't working.

Beat.

But, the problem came later. As soon
as February turned March all the snow
melted at once. I woke up one morning
and the sun was coming through the
window. All of the ice went into that
pond.

Shot of pond flooding. Water spills over the bank and comes closer to
the house.

Then I was standing in water up to my
ankles.

EMMA

Here?

FATHER

Into the kitchen. I got my floors replaced,
but you have to be careful about walking

in here. If you step and hear a crack, move out of the way. I think the floorboards are rotting.

EMMA stares at the floor.

FATHER

(with a laugh)

Don't worry it would take a lot to fall through though, just don't jump.

FATHER turns back to the counter and puts the container in the microwave.

FATHER

You like pad thai?

EMMA shrugs.

FATHER

It's never too early, right?

FATHER pulls the container out of the microwave and sets it on the counter in front of her.

EMMA looks out the window again.

EMMA

How did the water even get in?

FATHER

Through the door.

EMMA

How?

FATHER

It opened it.

EMMA

Oh.

Shot of the flooding kitchen.

FATHER

I was standing on the table because the water came fast into my kitchen. It was funny really, I mean as funny as it could possibly be. A school of minnows swam through into the hallway down there. Later, I found them in the toilet. I had algae growing on my walls for months.

EMMA
Really?

FATHER

And tadpoles in my sink.
Beat.

And if I leave the faucet running for too long sometimes I think I see something shiny fall through like a wedding ring or something. Your mother's wedding ring fell into the sink once. Did she ever tell you that story?

EMMA nods.

EMMA
She said you dropped it down the drain on purpose.

FATHER
(laughs)

I did, well kind of. But did she tell you I was hiding it from a thief?

EMMA
No.

FATHER
I was.

FATHER pauses and takes a bite of pad thai.

After the water came through my door, every time I turned the faucet on, I'd run over and look into the sink. You know, I wanted to see what it was. The shiny thing. I thought for a while there

were still fish in my pipes.

EMMA
There weren't?

FATHER
Well, I decided one day to plug the drain
and let the water run. Of course my water
bill took a hit, but I didn't want to
accidentally swallow a fish or something
like that. But you'll never guess what came through.

EMMA
What?

FATHER
Gold.

EMMA
What?

Shot of flooded kitchen. FATHER stands over the running sink. The
water flashes gold for a second.

FATHER
Gold, tiny little flakes, like pepper
or something.

EMMA
How do you know it was gold?

FATHER
I studied geology in college, minored
actually. I think the sudden surge of
water spilled gold into the aquifer under
my house. It's really hard to notice.
You have to look very carefully. Squint.
Nobody believes me. But you really have
to look, I promise you. I bought a pan,
you know to catch the gold. You see this
watch?

FATHER pulls up his sleeve and displays a watch.

FATHER
You see the hands.

EMMA
Of the watch?

FATHER
Yeah, look closely.

EMMA looks towards his watch.

FATHER
Look at that. It's definitely
gold. I melted it down.

EMMA
How?

FATHER
It's easy, if you know how, I
mean. Finding the gold is the hard
part, Emma, believe me.

EMMA stares at the plate of Pad Thai.
FATHER stands.

FATHER
I'm going to go put your bag in
your room.

Before FATHER leaves he turns the faucet on and lets the water run.
Exits.

EMMA watches the water but nothing happens.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT - PORCH - NIGHT

EMMA and FATHER sit across from each at the patio table. In front of
them are bowls of spaghetti. Both are eating until EMMA puts
down her fork.

EMMA
Do you go to church?

FATHER

(confused)
No. Not really.

EMMA
Mom made me go.

FATHER
You like it?

EMMA
Well, maybe. I guess so. I'm supposed
to, right? It always smells like rotting wood. Like the old picnic
table we left
in the rain. I hate that. But I really
like the way the stained glass looks.

FATHER
I don't.

EMMA
Why not? I like the way the light
shines through the faces. I wish
the light could shine through mine
like that.

EMMA and FATHER are silent for a few seconds.

FATHER
I've only been to church a few times since school. Once
to grandpa's funeral. I didn't really listen
to a thing said. I wish I had instead of
watching the way the stained glass distorted
the light. I was scared that it would make his
face red in the casket. Like the little glass Christ in the top right
pane came and brushed grandpa's hair out of his face
with his bloody fingers. Then I was thinking it looked
like someone spilt the sacramental wine there. I could
see his silhouette swaying back and forth. I swear I
was delusional. I stayed behind in the chapel and
stared at the stained glass.

FATHER stands in pews at the church. The light comes through the
stained glass.

FATHER

(voiceover)

You know what bothered me the most. The way Mary seemed to look at me with her upturned palms. *What do you want?* I thought. God, I was psychotic riddled with grief or something, I don't know. Then I punched out the glass.

FATHER in the pews punches the stained glass and shatters it. Cut-in to shot of FATHER's cut hands Cutaway to shot of shattered stained glass on the carpeted floor.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT - PORCH - NIGHT

Shot of FATHER and EMMA at table on porch again.

FATHER

You know, one night I heard God on the radio.

EMMA

(skeptically)

How did you know it was Him?

FATHER

(laughs)

I can't really explain it.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT - POND - NIGHT

FATHER sits alone on the patio. His skin is tinted yellow and he has bags under his eyes. He sips from a can of beer, fiddling with the channels on the ham radio until voices come through the static.

CUT TO:

FATHER

(slurred)

I can hear you.

VOICE

It's dark outside tonight, real dark. If you're out here, watch for the strong rip. I've never seen it so black out here. The water's black, the sky's black. I'm

alone.

A MAN approaches FATHER and sits next to him. We can't see his face very well, but he is wearing a yellow fishing rain coat. The ham radio is between the two. Neither make eye contact. Neither react to each other's company.

FATHER
So am I.

MAN
(same as the voice)
It's quiet out here.

FATHER
I know.

The voice is replaced by static and the man is gone. FATHER opens another can of beer. CU of FATHER's hands as he adjusts the knobs on the ham radio. Shot zooms out to a two-shot of the MAN, who has reappeared, and FATHER.

VOICE
Beloved.

FATHER
Is it raining?

VOICE
Come in, Beloved. Are you listening?

FATHER
It's quiet tonight.

VOICE
It's dark out here tonight.
But you can really see the
stars.

FATHER
(slurred)

The Greeks, I think, yes, the
Greeks thought they were, well
stars were holes in the universe.

VOICE

The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky.

FATHER

It's quiet. What happens when all the stars fall?

VOICE

Rip. (Static) Apart.

Static fades out the VOICE again. Shot of FATHER fiddling with the radio again. Zooms out to two-shot of both men sitting stoic besides one another. Again neither acknowledge each other's presence.

FATHER

(slurred)

I'm scared of the dark, isn't that, that just pathetic?

VOICE

Fallen Angel's on deck. Running lights.

Beat.

Beloved. Come'n, come'n.

Fog. We've lost connection.

Watch for the rocks.

Camera zooms out the an EWS of FATHER sitting next to the pond alone.

FATHER

Watch for the rocks.

Dissolve out:

EXT - POND - DAY

Cut to:

VWS of FATHER standing alone at the beach, pans around to show the calmness of the day. It's sunny. He clutches the ham radio and stumbles along the water's edge. His face is sunken in and he has deep, dark bags under his eyes. He mutters incoherently to

himself as he takes off his socks and shoes and rolls up the cuffs of his khakis. He steps into the water, stumbling. Soon he is up to his waist. Then he is up to his neck. He still holds the ham radio. Then he is underwater. EWS of him sinking with the ham radio. From it there are voices. Shot of him turning the dial and adjusting the sounds.

The VOICES are muddled and overlap each other to create a chaotic mood.

VOICE #1
It's clear skies in Annapolis.

VOICE #2
Sun in San Diego.

VOICE #1
Break.

Static grows. Shot of FATHER underwater. His eyes are closed.

VOICE #3
Break. Break. Wendy is under. Wendy.

VOICE #2
Clear skies.

VOICE #4
Gray line.

VOICE #2
It's festival day. Look out for the schools of bonfish.

VOICE #5
Alaska. Storm. Ice caps.

WS of FATHER underwater holding the ham radio to his chest. He stares up at the surface of the ocean. Static becomes prominent and the voices fade. Cutaway to shot of the surface still from an underwater perspective. The light cuts through the water and is distorted.

Dissolve to:

EXT - YARD - DAY

It is raining and FATHER is asleep on a lawn chair. He is wet. EMMA watches from inside and after a few seconds she opens the door.

Cut to:

EMMA
(shouts)
Dad.

FATHER remains asleep. CU of his face as rain hits his forehead.

EMMA pulls the hood of her jacket over her head and runs into the yard.

EMMA
Dad.

EMMA shakes FATHER and he wakes up.

EMMA
What're you doing?

FATHER
I was waiting for a mayday.

EMMA
A mayday?

FATHER
I was listening in and I heard signal.
Four staticy seconds then a mayday, then
a coordinate. It was right out in the bay.
A clear morning. Icy from the night before, you know. I had fallen
asleep, I heard a voice. It sounded like a child.
Like a
little girl. She said she saw lights, she
was cold and alone. She said she was afraid of looking down. She said
it was like she
was drifting on night, because the sky was lighter than water.

EMMA
Are you cold?

FATHER
I drove to the docks.

Cutaway to shot of an old pickup driving quickly down the road.
FATHER's voice is present as a voiceover.

FATHER

It was still dark out. I brought the radio and was listening. I pulled into the docks and asked a fisherman to take me out. He told me he was from Samoa, heard no call, laughed and told me I was psychotic.

Over the shoulder shot of FATHER talking to the fisherman. FATHER's speech is slurred. The FISHERMAN lights a cigarette.

FATHER

(slurred)

Believe me.

FISHERMAN turns, leans over his dingy fishing vessel and pulls an eel out of the cooler on the boat. He tosses it onto a cart filled with ice on the dock.

FISHERMAN

They're carnivores. That means they'll eat your legs off.

FATHER

A girl.

FISHERMAN

(laughs)

The eels probably already got 'er.
Go home sir, it's early. Go home.

FATHER turns then sprints off of the dock. He dives and begins swimming. The FISHERMAN laughs and calls out.

FISHERMAN

Watch out for them black eyes.
You'll know 'em when you see 'em.

WS of FATHER swimming through the ocean. Static plays in the background.

FATHER
I never found her.

FISHERMAN
(voiceover as if on the radio)
There's a Samoan myth I heard from my Le
Tina a lo'u Tina, grandmother, about an eel
who fell in love with a beautiful young girl, Sina. She ran from him
and sought refuge in
her village. When she went to get water, she
saw him staring at her from the pool. 'You
stare at me, with eyes like a demon!' The
village chiefs came and killed the eel and
it asked Sina to plant its head in the ground.
She did so and from it grew a coconut tree.

FATHER is back at the dock. The FISHERMAN stands across from him.

FISHERMAN
(laughs)
You want the eyes? They stare like
a demon.

FATHER says nothing.

FISHERMAN
(laughs)
One day they'll plant your severed head
in the ground, except you cut it off
yourself. Trust me, sir, you'll grow
into somethin' nice.

FATHER
Mayday.

FISHERMAN
Maybe, you'll grow into stinging
nettle.

FATHER
A girl called over the radio, she's
floating in the bay.

FISHERMAN

(laughs)

These fish migrate. They travel the world, sir, swim from Newfoundland to here. If I were a fish I'd be an eel.

FATHER

Mayday.

Shot of FATHER lying asleep in lawn chair asleep. It's raining. EMMA watches for a second before pulling her raincoat over her head and walking over to FATHER.

EMMA

Dad, you're going to get hypothermia.

FATHER opens his eyes.

EMMA

It's freezing.

FATHER

(laughs)

Don't worry, darling. My skin is thick, can't feel a thing.

EMMA

Come inside.

FATHER stands. Static plays in the background. A voice comes from the static.

VOICE

(soft)

Mayday. My vessel is sinking. Young child is aboard.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

FATHER is still wet and sits on floor with a towel around his shoulders. He appears ill: pale and sweating. EMMA sits across from him on the couch, knees to her chest. They are silent for a few minutes.

FATHER

(slurred)

I, I met your mother. Twenty years ago. She, well, she walked into this party at my neighbor's house. I just came from work. I used to work as a mechanic in this, this shitty stop downtown. I walked in with grease all over my fingers, and there she was standing in the corner with a cigarette.

FATHER holds out two fingers and pretends to be MOTHER.

FATHER

And I walk up to her. She's smoking. I walk up to her and ask for her name and she's crying. I ask her why and she said that she's dying. I asked her how.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

FATHER and MOTHER stand facing each other. MOTHER is crying with a cigarette still in her mouth. FATHER awkwardly stands in front of her. Framed like a MS of both facing each other.

CUT TO:

MOTHER

These cigarettes.

FATHER

What do you mean?

MOTHER

My father just died of lung cancer from working in Kentucky mines. The doctors say he had black lungs, that they became ash. And here I am smoking this cigarette and my lungs are going to become black too. And I don't even care.

MOTHER laughs. Then she takes the cigarette out of her mouth and puts it out on the carpet.

FATHER

(voiceover)

She burnt a hole into the rug and almost caught the place on fire and she was crying the whole time too even as she poured her cup of beer onto the charred rug. It was her first cigarette though.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Time jump. Later FATHER and MOTHER in their apartment. There are cardboard boxes scattered everywhere.

MOTHER
You're drunk.

FATHER
What makes you say that?

FATHER and MOTHER say nothing for a few. FATHER stares out the window from the couch. MOTHER stands a few feet away.

MOTHER
Emma's at home.

FATHER
Why the hell did you leave her alone?

MOTHER
For Christ's sake, she's with Muriel.

FATHER and MOTHER are quiet for a few seconds. Camera zooms out into a wide shot of the apartment. FATHER is seated on the couch and MOTHER stands off to the side facing the wall.

FATHER
You know what's funny? Your parents were good Catholics, right, and your grandparents and probably your great grandparents, they all carried their bibles around, right?

WIFE
(annoyed)
Something like that, I suppose.

FATHER

(laughs)

It's illegal to divorce if you're a Catholic, right, I'm sure that's a law at least in the Vatican it is. Do you think they'd call the bishop and call you in for a confession?

MOTHER

(mockingly)

Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It's been ten years since I've last confessed. My husband's psychotic and I smoke too much. I haven't been to church in twelve years besides my grandad's funeral in the chapel and I didn't even stay the whole thing because I had to pick Emma up from daycare.

FATHER

(mockingly)

Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. I went to a private Catholic school for twelve years and my father paid for me to board there because he wanted me out of the house and that bastard left me in New York. When I came home for the summer, he was gone. You know what's funny, I'm glad he did because I hated him. I never saw him again, until my mother called me from New Hampshire to ask me to attend his funeral.

MOTHER

You're drunk.

FATHER

Yeah.

WIFE pulls a cigarette and a lighter from her pocket and lights it. HUSBAND and WIFE are silent for a few more seconds.

FATHER

(points towards the door)
Could you go outside with that?

MOTHER

You know, I'm gonna get out of here, maybe I'll call you up from a gas station phone 1000 miles away. That's what leaving is, right? I sure as hell know you'll never want to see my face again. That's one of the only things I *really* know. I'll take a bus so I won't have to spend all that gas money. But
I think I'll take Emma.

FATHER doesn't react. He takes a sip of beer. After a few seconds, MOTHER breaks the silence.

MOTHER

(says with disgust)

Christ, what if I live in motels for the rest of my life. Emma'll grow up and realize that her mother is a broke loser. We'll drive around in my shit Pontiac listening to Janis Joplin and one day she'll jump out the car and I'll never see her again. She'll write me postcards from Reykjavik: "Dear Mom, I'm the bassist in a shitty, alternative band and we play bars every weekend. I'll write you soon."

FATHER

"Dear Mom, I'm in Baton Rouge with my Bobby McGee. Freedom's just another word for nothin' left to lose.
Yours"

MOTHER

(laughs)

Oh God.

FATHER

Would you like some dinner? I've still got some take-out in the fridge, don't mind heating it for you.

MOTHER

Pad Thai?

FATHER nods.

MOTHER

God, you're drunk.

Static plays in background

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT - YARD - DAY

EMMA runs to grab FATHER who sits on the porch reading newspaper.

EMMA
(out of breath)
Dad.

FATHER
What?

EMMA
A bird. I think it fell from its nest
after the storm.

EMMA leads FATHER to the bird in the corner of the backyard. Cutaway to shot of bird. It's breathing quickly and its wing is broken.

FATHER
It's going to die.

EMMA
What about the mother? She's probably
alone in that tree, crying.

FATHER
Yeah.

EMMA and FATHER watch the bird struggle to breathe. Its chest moves quickly.

FATHER
Let's just make a nest for it. I'm sure
the mother will come down for him once
we leave. She's probably just waiting.

EMMA
Ok.

EMMA and FATHER walk around the yard picking up sticks and leaves. Then they both go back to the corner of backyard where the bird rests.

EMMA
We learned about birds in school.

FATHER
Yeah?

EMMA
Their bones are hollow.

FATHER holds the bird in his palms and places it in a nest that the two have made. The bird is breathing heavily. FATHER watches it intently. Close up of the bird. EMMA talking, but the shot remains on the bird.

EMMA
The hummingbird's egg is the size of a pea. Imagine that. Being that small.

FATHER
(laughs)
Aren't we? I mean if you really think about it. Scale us next to the Earth. The sun.

EMMA
I don't like thinking like that.

FATHER
Why not?

EMMA looks back at the nest. The bird has stopped moving. The two are silent. FATHER cannot look away from the bird.

EMMA
If you were a bird what kind would you be?

FATHER
I sure as hell don't know the answer to that, Emma. A peacock?

EMMA

(laughs)

No. You'd be an egret.

FATHER

Why? Because my hair's turning gray?

EMMA

Well, sure. But you also like to be by yourself.

FATHER

Well, if I could chose to be any bird I'd be an albatross.

EMMA

An albatross?

FATHER

I would fly across oceans. Imagine skimming your fingertips through the Indian Ocean. Do you think your fingers would be stained orange like spices? When you fly through the Pacific you'd follow a pod of whales and when you reach the Arctic your breaths will begin to freeze and your breathing would slow. Everything would be white and you would melt away. The polar bears would host a requiem and the water would sing for me.

EMMA

No, they would eat you. The polar bears.

FATHER

They wouldn't. If they did they'd have to hang my body around their neck.

EMMA

Why?

FATHER

They hold the souls of lost sailors. Killing one's dishonorable.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT - GAS STATION - SUNSET

FATHER places a can of nightcrawlers, two ham sandwiches and a bag of BBQ potato chips on the checkout counter.

CASHIER
\$7.50.

MS of FATHER pulling out his wallet and paying. Cutaway to shot of his car driving down the road, behind him is a trailer with a small motor boat. They arrive at the lake. FATHER drives the car to the loading dock. EMMA carries the fishing poles and places them on the boat.

Shot of EMMA and FATHER in boat in the middle of the lake. EMMA has her shoes off and hangs her feet out the side.

FATHER
It looks like the *Starry Night Over Rhone*.

EMMA
What?

FATHER
Your mother liked painting. Van Gogh. He had a thing with painting distorted skies, didn't he? The sky looks weird tonight. I guess because we're farther from the city.

EMMA
I guess.

FATHER
I've never liked his work too much.

EMMA
Why?

FATHER
I guess I don't like the way the colors blend together.

FATHER and EMMA are silent. FATHER takes a bite of his ham sandwich and stares up at the sky.

EMMA
I like painting especially with
watercolors.

FATHER
Watercolors?

EMMA
What?

FATHER
(laughs)
I've always seen you as more of an
acrylics person. Although your mother's
more of a watercolor person too.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT - FRONT YARD - DAY

MOTHER sits by the side of the road with a canvas. FATHER stands on
the front porch for a few seconds before approaching her. Her
canvas is set up in front of a dead squirrel on the side of the
road.

FATHER
What the hell are you painting?

MOTHER
It's a squirrel.

FATHER
Why the hell are you painting that?

MOTHER
It's dead.

FATHER
I know that, but why are you painting that?

MOTHER
It's nature.

FATHER
It's a carcass.

MOTHER
Nature.

FATHER
It has maggots crawling out of its
eye sockets.

MOTHER
It's illusionist, John. I can show
its skeleton, its flesh. You know,
the line between life and death and

FATHER
Why the hell don't you paint something
alive?

MOTHER
(laughs)
It's easier, I guess.

DISSOLVE TO:
EXT - LAKE - SUNSET

VWS of FATHER and EMMA on the boat in the lake. We see their
silhouettes as the sun sets.

Cut to:

FATHER
After your mother moved out I decided
to clean out our old apartment. I mean,
we had both moved at this point, but I
hadn't had the heart to sell it. I'm not
sure why it was really a dump.

EMMA
(interrupts)
I think I have a bite.

FATHER
Reel it.

EMMA reels in the line and the bait is gone.

FATHER

It got your bait. That's good. It must've been big. Huge even. I knotted the worm on there real good, my father taught me how.

FATHER opens the can of nightcrawlers and restrings her line.

EMMA casts it. After a few seconds, FATHER speaks again.

FATHER

I lit the fireplace in the living room and soon there was smoke everywhere, and I realized I forgot to open the damn flue. I was so scared I was going to set off the fire alarm so I opened all the windows even though it was the middle of January and freezing.

Beat.

I sorted through the trash can and found an old pamphlet to an art museum and a pack of Camel cigarettes. Have you ever seen the painting *Skull of a Skeleton with a Burning Cigarette*?

EMMA

Yeah. I mean I haven't seen it in person, but mom bought me one of those collectors books of famous artists' paintings for my birthday a few years ago. That painting was in it. I really liked the Andy Warhol ones though.

FATHER

Me too. I like Andy Warhol paintings. At least I think I do. Your mother dragged me to so many museums.

Beat.

Anyway, in that moment I felt like I was the *Skull of Skeleton with a Burning Cigarette*.

EMMA
Why?

FATHER
(laughs)
I guess I inhaled so much smoke I felt like I was smoking or something like that. You know what's crazy though? I flipped through the entire pamphlet and felt like I was every single painting. *The Night Cafe*, your mother gave me this print before we moved.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT - LAKE - DAY

FATHER and MOTHER are sitting by the same lake. MOTHER is sitting in front of a canvas, acrylics spilled across the rocks.

CUT TO:

MOTHER
What color is the sky?

FATHER looks up at the sky. It's overcast.

FATHER
Why do you need me to answer that?

MOTHER hands him two almost identical tubes of gray paint.

MOTHER
Chose.

FATHER
You're kidding?

MOTHER
No.

FATHER
They're identical.

MOTHER
(laughs)

You're impossible.

MOTHER leans in and kisses FATHER on the cheek before returning to her painting. She focuses deeply and FATHER watches with a small smile.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jump in time. MOTHER and FATHER are standing in the living room of their apartment deep in an argument.

MOTHER
Take the damn print.

FATHER
I sure as hell don't want it.

MOTHER
It's Van Gogh.

FATHER
I hate Van Gogh.

MOTHER
You remind me of him.

FATHER
Great. I'm going to mail you my earlobe in a week.

MOTHER
I want to pour acrylics down your throat.

FATHER
You're insane, you know that?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT - LAKE - SUNSET

EW of FATHER and EMMA on the boat in the middle of the pond. It is quiet.

EMMA
You know what Van Gogh painting reminds me of you?

FATHER
(laughs)
Probably not.

EMMA
At Eternity's Gate.

FATHER
Never heard of it.

EMMA
(interrupts)
I got something again.

FATHER
Reel it in.

EMMA reels in the fish and FATHER pulls it into the net then onto the boat. It flops at the bottom of the boat. EMMA laughs.

FATHER
It's a brim. Careful of the spines.

FATHER removes the hook from its mouth.

FATHER
Throw it back in.

EMMA carefully picks it up and puts it back in the lake.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

WS of FATHER sitting in a wooden chair in the living room next to the fire. He wears a blue, wrinkly button. His face is in his palms.

EXT - POND - NIGHT

Years later, EMMA who is now seventeen or eighteen sits by the pond. She is alone. Beside her is the ham radio. Only the sound of static is prevalent in the background.

She twists the dials a bit trying to clear up the signal. Nothing but static. She frowns and pulls a cigarette and lighter out of her jacket pocket. She lights it and starts to smoke continuing to fiddle with the radio. CU of her hands. Her knuckles are bleeding. The static stops. EMMA waits for a few minutes, but no voices come through. She throws her cigarette into the pond and walks towards the house. Shot of her entering the house. It is empty and most of the possessions are in boxes labeled STORAGE. EMMA steps, hears a creak, and does nothing to move out of the way. She sets the ham radio on the counter and sits at the table. After a few minutes a voice comes through.

VOICE

(barely through the static)

Contact. On board a circumlocuting vessel Orion. Studying bioluminescence in middle of Atlantic.

EMMA

From Long Island Sound, Connecticut. I can hear you.

VOICE

Copy. It's dark out here Connecticut. Water turned to glass. No wind. Clear skies. Moon sits on the horizon.

EMMA

Don't have that here. The peer lights are too bright. Smog interference

VOICE

Connecticut. That's a shame.

EMMA

Orion. What's bioluminescence like out there?

VOICE

Something you've never seen before. Underwater lightning bugs.

EMMA

Are you studying plankton?

VOICE

Yes.

EMMA

How?

VOICE

Connecticut, I hear you. Some species glow when startled. When I dive, it's like an aura.

EMMA

Orion. Bioluminescence can be used as a signal?

VOICE

Sure. Sailors from sunken vessels sometimes use this. The US Navy deploys scientists to study because bioluminescence can endanger military missions.

EMMA

Orion. Are you deployed by the navy?

VOICE

No. Compiling data for marine science thesis.

EMMA

Hihi. Orion. What is it like out there?

VOICE

Well, Connecticut. It's like the stars have fallen.

The voice is replaced by static. EMMA tries turning the dials but the static grows in volume. EMMA sighs. The static grows louder. She picks at her nail polish before rising to wash her hands off in the sink. She leaves it running as she turns to pack the ham radio into a box. As she turns the water glistens gold for a millisecond before returning to normal. Static heightens as the screen goes black.

END FILM.