

THE TREK OUT

Written by

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INT. SUBURBAN HOME - KIA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Rays of sunshine peek through the bedroom curtains. It lands on a dark, lanky arm poking out of purple bedsheets, and a pink alarm sitting on a matching bedside table that reads 8:55AM. Before the alarm sounds, KIA GIDEON (10, energetic, intelligent), sits upright in bed. She stretches, yawns, puts on her slippers and gets out of bed.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Kia excitedly shuffles along the hallway carpet. The house is so silent you can hear a pin drop.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - PARENT'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Both parents, ISIAH GIDEON (39, protective, outgoing) and SIMONE "NONI" GIDEON (38, caring, meticulous), are sound asleep in bed when Kia jumps on them.

KIA

Get up! Get up! Get up!

Isiah grunts.

KIA (CONT'D)

It's time to go hiking! Let's go!

NONI

Kia, it's too early for this.

Noni and Isiah both turn to face their pillows but Kia nudges them.

KIA

I woke up just in time because I knew you guys were gonna wake up late.

Off-screen, an alarm goes off.

KIA (CONT'D)

See? Just in time.

Kia nudges her father once more. He pulls her in for a hug and kisses her on the forehead but she quickly wipes it away.

KIA (CONT'D)

Ew!

ISIAH

What?

KIA
I'm ten! I'm not a baby anymore.

ISIAH
So you think you're too grown for
my kisses, huh? Fine, fine. Turn
off your alarm and we'll get up.

KIA
Promise?

ISIAH
Yes I promise. Now go.

Kia jumps up and down as she hurriedly leaves her parents
bedroom.

KIA (O.S.)
REMI! MOOSE! WAKE UP! Let's go!

Noni looks at Isiah.

NONI
That's your daughter.

Isiah moans again and they both plop their heads back in bed.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

It's a sunny Saturday but the crisp morning air blows away
any heat. The Gideon family move from their garage to
driveway as they pack up the small family Prius.

KIA
Why does Remi and Moose have to
come with us? You guys know this is
just a me and Dad thing.

MUSA "MOOSE" GIDEON (8, individualistic, inventive) lifts his
face from his tablet.

MOOSE
Hey!

Noni emerges from the garage and places a backpack in the car
trunk.

NONI
Because -I- need a breather from
all of -you-. It's my self-care
weekend.

KIA

Remi can stay with you. He
literally doesn't even do anything.

Kia gestures to her eldest brother, REMI GIDEON (13, studious, reserved), who sits on the doorsteps, cramming his face in a book.

NONI

And that's exactly why he should
go, he needs to get out there.
Plus, I need complete, utter,
peace.

Kia groans and rolls her eyes. Noni walks straight up to her.

NONI (CONT'D)

After work yesterday I went to this
little antique shop and found the
cutest thing.

Noni hands Kia a brass compass with a chain. Behind it is a small locket.

KIA

There's an owl on it!

NONI

I knew you'd like it. So, to use
it, hold it straight-

KIA

Hold it straight in front of me,
make sure its flat and that this
arrow points straight ahead. Then I
move to align this arrow with the
red line.

Noni looks surprised.

KIA (CONT'D)

When they're aligned then I follow
this arrow because it'll be in the
direction I want to go.

NONI

(playfully)
Okay, little miss know-it-all.

KIA

Remember I told you about sleep-
away camp?

(MORE)

KIA (CONT'D)

I looked up everything we were gonna do so I could be prepared and Daddy would say yes to me going.

NONI

Look at you! Well, there's a little pamphlet in the back with instructions in case you forget. Keep it on you and don't take it out unless you really need to use it. Understand?

Kia nods. Meanwhile in the background, Isiah calls Remi and Moose to the car.

NONI (CONT'D)

(whispers)

And don't tell your dad but I bought some slim jims and beef jerky. They're stashed in your bag.

KIA

Thanks Mommy.

She winks and gives Kia a hug. They both walk over to the car.

KIA (CONT'D)

Daddy, can I ride shot-gun?

ISIAH

Nope.

KIA

But I always ride shot-gun.

ISIAH

Not today. The oldest sits in the front seat.

Kia reluctantly gets in the backseat after Moose. Remi sits passenger side, still reading his book.

NONI

Rem you're the oldest. You have as much of a role as your dad when guiding Kia and Moose. Be vigilant, you hear me?

He nods, still focused on his novel. Noni snaps her fingers.

NONI (CONT'D)

Hey! Hear me?

REMI

Yes, Mom.

NONI

Good. Got your inhaler?

Remi feels his pockets for his asthma pump and pulls it out. Satisfied with his response, Noni walks over to the driver's seat and bends to face Isiah.

NONI (CONT'D)

You'll be fine with all these kids, right?

ISIAH

Noni, please. These kids have been my priority since they were in your belly.

NONI

Ok, text me when you get there so I know you've made it. I tracked the hike, it should take you about three hours- maybe four or five if you're slow, take breaks-

ISIAH

Noni. You got it. I'll text you.

The mother starts backing away from the car.

NONI

Mhm, and if you forget you'll have me to deal with.

Isiah playfully shoos her away and starts the car.

ISIAH

Everyone have their seatbelts on?

Remi reads, Moose toys with his trinkett, and Kia has her headphones in.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

(stern)

Seat belts, now!

Moose quickly puts on his seatbelt as does Kia.

KIA

Jeez Dad.

ISIAH

With just you its fine, but now
there's two more of you. Gotta make
sure everyone's good. We ready?

The kids give a collective "yes" and Isiah backs out of the driveway. He honks his horn as Noni waves goodbye.

INT. CAR - NOON

Everyone is in their own little world as the radio plays. Isiah sings along to whatever song is on, Moose fiddles with one his inventions, Kia looks out the car window, and Remi continues to read his book.

Kia's phone blinks with a new text message.

BRIANNA: DID U ASK UR DAD YET?

KIA: NO IM ABT TO.

KIA

Hey Dad, I don't think I ever
asked, why do you like hiking?

ISIAH

I'm inside all day for work, job
always tells me what to do, your
mother always has something for me
to do. Don't tell her I said that
though.

Kia chuckles.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

It's suffocating. So it's nice to
breathe some fresh air.

KIA

And what about fishing? Why do you
want to learn?

ISIAH

I don't know, something new to try
out. Hey, what's up with all these
questions?

KIA

Oh, nothing.

A beat.

KIA (CONT'D)
You know I like outside too.

ISIAH
Okay?

KIA
Just as much as you.

ISIAH
Kia, what do you want?

KIA
(hesitantly)
Well, my friends were talking about this summer. They were saying how they're going to camp, and I really want to go too. So, can I go?

ISIAH
Yeah, sure.

KIA
I had a feeling you would- wait, really?

ISIAH
Why not? Camp seems like fun.

KIA
Yay! This is gonna be the best summer ever! I need a cute suitcase, new bedsheets-

ISIAH
Hold on, hold on. This is sleep-away camp?

KIA
Yeah.

ISIAH
Oh, in that case absolutely not.

KIA
But I already know how to hike, we go every weekend I'm practically a pro. I even know how to use a compass!

ISIAH
Kia, I said no. You're too young.

KIA
That's not fair.

ISIAH
Well, life's not fair.

KIA
(mutters)
Ugh, I knew you were gonna say no.
I don't even know why I asked.

Kia huffs back in her seat and crosses her arms. She jams her headphones back in her ears and opens her messages.

KIA: HE SAID NO.

BRIANNA: :'(

INT. TRAIL WELCOME CENTER - DAY

The Gideon Family approach a small welcome desk where PARK RANGER HARRIS (friendly, knowledgeable, 18) completes paperwork.

ISIAH
Hi, we're here to hike the Great Horned Trail.

PARK RANGER
Welcome! Nice to meet all of you, let's get you situated.

Park Ranger begins to shuffle some papers.

ISIAH
Thanks. Wait, are you the park ranger?

PARK RANGER
Yup. Is there an issue?

ISIAH
Forgive me but, aren't you a bit too young to be a ranger?

PARK RANGER
Well I've been hiking since I was eight years old.

MOOSE
Hey I'm eight!

PARK RANGER
Really? That's awesome kid.

She gives him a high-five.

PARK RANGER (CONT'D)
I've been to hiking retreats and hiked this trail more times than I can count. I'm pretty qualified if I do say so myself.

ISIAH
Oh, that's great to hear. My apologies, I just want-

PARK RANGER
No need to explain. I get this all the time.

The park ranger motions the family to follow her and hands them a few pamphlets. The park ranger gestures to the wall.

PARK RANGER (CONT'D)
So, these boards here contain all the information you need to know about the trail. The pamphlets I gave you are maps of the route.

Isiah, Moose, and Remi take a look at theirs.

PARK RANGER (CONT'D)
These symbols here are trail markers you should look for on trees to make sure you're on the right path.

Kia wanders away as she spots an info board with all kinds of wildlife fun-facts. The one about owls catches her eye.

PARK RANGER (CONT'D)
We had a heavy storm about two days ago so the markers and path might be a bit messed up, but you all should be fine. Over here are a list of animals you might see on your way. Any questions?

ISIAH
Will the path be muddy?

PARK RANGER
No, my co-workers and other hikers have re-worked the trail.

(MORE)

PARK RANGER (CONT'D)
 Keep in mind to follow the markers
 if anything.

ISIAH (NODS)
 Okay, I think we're good for now.
 C'mon kids lets check these animal
 facts.

The park ranger heads back to her seat.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
 Where's Kia?

Moose looks around and points to her.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
 Kia, come here! Look at the animal
 facts!

KIA
 Dad, I already saw it. Can we go?

ISIAH
 Just because you did doesn't mean
 we're all ready to hike. Remi,
 Moose let's read.

While her family brushes up on the animal safety tips. Kia
 toys with her compass, checking out her coordinates.

They meet back at the welcome desk.

PARK RANGER
 Are we all ready?

ISIAH
 (confidently)
 I think we are.

PARK RANGER
 Sounds good. Here's the check-in
 list. Sign everybody's name, your
 contact information and an
 emergency contact. Who do you have
 here with you today?

While filling out the form, Isiah says:

ISIAH
 I have my eldest son, Remi here. My
 daughter Kia, and my youngest Musa.
 We call him Moose though.

PARK RANGER

Well, its nice to meet you all. The trail might be a bit difficult for young Moose here but if he's just as strong as his name he'll be just fine.

Moose flexes his arms to show his scarwny muscles. Remi chuckles to himself and Kia looks at him oddly.

PARK RANGER (CONT'D)

If you have your phone, you can take a picture of this number to call in case of any emergencies.

ISIAH

Will we have service?

PARK RANGER

It varies on where you are. I've heard some people say they get spotty service in certain areas so it really depends.

ISIAH

Okay, great. I think we're officially all set. Thanks....

Isiah reads the park rangers nametag.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

...Blaire.

PARK RANGER

Of course. You can head out, make a right and read the signs to begin the trail.

The family walks out the center.

EXT. TRAIL WELCOME CENTER - CONTINUOUS

The weather has warmed since morning, causing little critters to hop about. There's a sudden calmness in the air, as the family finds they're the only ones at the trail. They gather at the entrance.

ISIAH

Before we go in, let's make sure we have everything.

The kids remove their backpacks.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Water? Granola bars? Fruit?

KIA, MOOSE, REMI
Check.

ISIAH
Hand sanitizer? Remi you have your
inhaler?

KIA, MOOSE, REMI
Check.

ISIAH
Baby wipes?

KIA, MOOSE, REMI
Check.

ISIAH
The maps?

KIA, MOOSE, REMI
Check.

ISIAH
Great! And I have the flashlight
and pocket knife.

Kia stuffs the slim jims deep in her bag.

REMI
Dad, can I hold the pocket knife?

ISIAH
No. This is for emergencies only.

Remi looks disappointed.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Ok. We're good to go. Let me just
text Mom.

After putting his phone away, Isiah leads his kids into the
trail.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - LATER

The trees tower over them like skyscrapers as birds bounce
from branch to branch. Fall had just begun, so mixes of
green, brown, red and yellow leaves populate the forest
floor.

ISIAH
You all getting tired?

KIA
Maybe these sissies but I'm
not.

ISIAH
Ha, that's my girl! What about you
two?

MOOSE
I'm fine. I'm younger than you Kia.

KIA
So?

MOOSE
That means I'm faster and have more
energy.

KIA
(eye roll)
Yeah, sure.

ISIAH
Remi? How are you holding up?

Beat.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Rem?

Isiah turns to see Remi behind everyone else, breathing
heavily and painfully taking slow steps.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Woah, woah, woah, Rem you okay?

Everyone stops walking. Remi catches his breath.

REMI
(gasping)
Yeah. I'm. Fine. Just. A little.
Tired. But.

Everyone looks at Remi with concern and confusion. Isiah
hands him a water bottle. He takes and drinks.

REMI (CONT'D)
Whew, okay I'm ready.

ISIAH
Are you sure? Need your inhaler?

REMI

No. Aren't we almost at the top
anyway?

ISIAH

Good thing you mentioned that
because...first one to the top gets
to ride shot-gun!

Isiah, Kia, and Moose all race each other to finish their
last leg of the hike. Isiah yells back at Remi:

ISIAH (CONT'D)

No rush! Meet us at the top!

Remi drops his head in agony and slowly jogs up with them.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - DAY

Kia makes it to the top first.

KIA

(sings)

Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah! I got here
first!

Moose follows shortly behind her.

MOOSE

I'm second! I beat you Dad!

Moose points to Isiah. He follows quickly behind clearly
winded.

ISIAH

Yeah, yeah bet if I didn't have all
this extra stuff in my bag I
would've whooped both your asses.

Isiah turns to look at his surroundings, while Kia and Moose
mockingly stick their tongues out at him.

Eventually, Remi makes it to the top, panting. Desperate for
rest, he plops down on a slab of rock.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

How ya feeling there Rem?

His son gives him a thumbs up.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
You know, when I did some research
they said you could see the city
from here. Hold on...

Isiah rummages through his backpack and pulls out a pair of binoculars. He raises them to his eyes and looks around.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
I'm trying to find it but-

KIA
Here Dad, let me try!

Isiah hands the binoculars to Kia. She looks around then gasps.

KIA (CONT'D)
There it is!

ISIAH
Pass it. Where?

He takes them from her and Kia points to her left.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Wow, would you look at that. Remi,
want to look?

Still catching his breath:

REMI
In. A. Second.

ISIAH
Moose?

MOOSE
Yeah!

Moose excitedly takes the binoculars from his father and looks through them.

MOOSE (CONT'D)
That's so cool!

Isiah, Kia, and Moose take their time looking at their surroundings. Remi walks up to Moose and gestures to the binoculars. Moose hands it over and Remi finally gets his chance at the view.

ISIAH
Are you guys hungry? I'm thinking
we can eat then head back down.

Kia and Moose nod.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Okay great. What do you guys think
of the hike so far?

Isiah pulls out everyone's sandwiches and hands it to each
kid.

KIA
Oh, it's no problem for me. Easy
peasy. I'll kill it at camp.

ISIAH
And we're killing the camp idea.
Everyone else?

MOOSE
I didn't see any animals.

ISIAH
(amused)
You thought you were going to see
an eagle?

MOOSE
Maybe not an eagle but a rabbit or
something like that.

ISIAH
Moose, look around you, there's
rabbits all around.

MOOSE
Where?

ISIAH
They just look like squirrels.

Kia and Isiah laugh. Remi chuckles to himself.

MOOSE
That's not what I meant. And that's
not funny.

ISIAH
Aw, relax Moose! We'll probably
find some animals when we head back
down. Speaking of which, everyone
ready?

REMI
Let me finish this.

ISIAH
Better hurry up, we want to get
back down before it gets too dark.

REMI
(full mouth)
Mhm.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - LATER

The rest of the Gideon family pack up their trash and other belongings. Everyone waits for Remi as they marvel at the trees, river, and vast expanse of New York in front of them.

Remi zips up his backpack, signaling he's ready to hike.

ISIAH
Alright let's finish this!

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - AFTER NOON

Using the map as a guide, the family chooses their steps wisely as they hike down the trail.

They come to a clearing. The floor is flat and the trees are extra tall but they can't spot a marker on any of them.

REMI
Wait, where are we?

ISIAH
I'm trying to figure that out right
now.

Kia takes out her map and inspects it as well.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Based on our last marker, we should
be somewhere over here.

He circles his map with his finger.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Because the path kinda veers off to
the left, and it felt like we made
that left turn.

KIA
Should we go back?

Isiah looks behind them and sees no markers on the trees.

REMI

I don't think that's a good idea.

MOOSE

What happened to the marker?

ISIAH

Not too sure. Maybe the storm messed it up or something.

REMI

But the ranger said they checked everything and it was all good.

ISIAH

They also said they re-worked the trail, so if we find footsteps we could follow that.

Moose walks around and spots a trail of footsteps.

MOOSE

I've found them!

Remi doesn't look too sure.

ISIAH

Okay listen, based on the map, and where we left off, we're somewhere over here- at least I think. Let's just follow the map and footsteps and see where it takes us.

Isiah speaks definitively, so his children reluctantly agree.

Assuming the leader role, he walks down the path as everyone follows closely behind. Remi intensely studies the map.

The once flat floor slowly turns to a steep downhill with rocks and pebbles poking out. They continue walking down, this time Kia behind instead of ahead.

KIA

This is kind of hard.

MOOSE

Wait, can someone hold my hand?

KIA

Here, Moose.

Kia extends a hand and Moose takes it. Together, they slowly trek down.

All kinds of rock formations protrude from the ground. Some are covered in moss while others are covered with hundreds of tiny, jagged rock. The trees thick roots pop up to say hello, spreading far and wide.

Isiah almost trips.

ISIAH

Woah, be careful around here kids,
it's kind of slippery.

MOOSE

Dad, I don't think I can do this

ISIAH

Ah, I'm sure we're almost down the
hill. Look, the ground is levelling
up.

REMI

(mutters)
Barely.

ISIAH

What was that?

REMI

Carefully. I'm telling Kia and
Moose to be careful.

ISIAH

Mhm. Listen here Remi, you know
sometimes you take after your moth-
woah!

In a blink of an eye, Isiah trips on a tree branch and tumbles down the hill. His body moves so rapidly it almost appears as if he teleported. By the time he loses momentum, he's covered in branches, bruises, and leaves.

His children run immediately after him.

KIA

DADDY!

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - TREE STUMP - CONTINUOUS

Kia meets him first.

KIA (CONT'D)

Daddy are you okay?

ISIAH

Yeah, yeah I'm fine.

Moose and Remi catch up.

REMI
Dad, are you good?

ISIAH
I said I'm fine. Please, I've gone
through worse.

MOOSE
You have a...

ISIAH
What?

Moose points to his father's leg. Everyone stares in shock.

KIA
Dad you have a stick in your leg.

ISIAH
(chuckles)
I guess the adrenaline from the
tumble numbed the pain huh?

KIA
Does it hurt?

ISIAH
It'll probably hurt when I take it
out.

KIA
Whos going to take it out?

ISIAH
Remi-

REMI
No, no. Not me. I don't like blood.

ISIAH
You're the oldest, it makes sense.

REMI
What does age have to do with
taking a stick out of someone's
leg?

ISIAH

This is what's going to happen:
Remi is going to take the stick
out, we're going to use the baby
wipes to clean the blood, then were
gonna finish the hike. Understood?

Everyone nods.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

Okay on three, just rip the stick
out okay? Grab it-

Remi does so.

REMI

It's not budging. I think you
should just leave it in.

ISIAH

Remi, please, on three okay? One.
Two.

Remi pulls out the branch. Isiah screams in excruciating
pain. His leg gushes out blood.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

Hurry get the wipes and press down.

Moose passes the wipes to Kia as she covers the wound.

KIA

There's a lot of blood. Remi help
me!

REMI

I don't think I can-

KIA

Don't think just do, help me.

Remi finally helps Kia. They grab the wipes and clean up as
much blood as they can. Isiah winces in pain.

MOOSE

Should we use the hand sanitizer?

ISIAH

No! No, no get the water and rinse
it out.

Remi uses water from his own canteen to clean the wound.

KIA
Moose give him some water.

The youngest brother does as instructed. Isiah takes small sips.

KIA (CONT'D)
Better? I think the blood stopped gushing.

REMI
We have to make it back down. Dad, can you get up?

ISIAH
Only one way to find out. Come here guys.

The kids all get under Isiah to help him up but they can barely stand straight.

KIA
Sheesh Dad how much do you weigh?

ISIAH
You all have to be stronger than this, c'mon.

They try standing him up again but fail.

MOOSE
What are we going to do?

REMI
The phone! Didn't the park ranger say if we're in a good spot we can get service?

ISIAH
Good thinking.

Isiah checks his phone but:

ISIAH (CONT'D)
There's no service.

KIA
Here, give me the phone. I can walk around to see if I get service.

ISIAH
I don't know- I want us together.

KIA
I can take Remi with me.

ISIAH
No, no it's fine. No, we're okay.

Everyone looks at his leg, uncertain.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
You know what? Don't go too far.
Moose stay with me. I want you guys
back in ten minutes. Agreed?

Kia and Remi nod their heads. They take the phone and walk off.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Moose, help me with these wipes.

Moose grabs a bunch of wipes and aids his father.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - CONTINUOUS

Kia raises the phone to the sky as she and Remi look for connection.

REMI
Find anything?

KIA
No, but - I've got one bar! Lets
keep going.

REMI
Wait, I think a bar can send a
text. Try it out.

KIA
What's that emergency number again?

REMI
Dad took a pic of it.

Kia finally finds the number and types out a message. She sends it.

REMI (CONT'D)
What are we going to do if it
doesn't go through?

KIA
Maybe we could try the mountain
top?

REMI

I think we're way too far away.

Kia looks at the phone. The message is at the halfway mark of being sent. Then it just stops.

KIA

Remi, the message isn't sending. We should keep on walking.

Remi agrees and they continue to walk. With each step they find something new about the environment they haven't seen before.

REMI

Kia, look! A cave.

He points to his left. She follows his arm.

KIA

Wow! You think there's anything in there?

REMI

If there is, I don't even want to find out.

They pass the cave and keep on exploring. Remi checks his watch.

REMI (CONT'D)

It's getting close to ten minutes...

KIA

If we find service I don't think Dad would be mad we came a few minutes late. Let's go.

Reluctantly, Remi follows Kia. They continue exploring, Remi paying close attention to their environment. Eventually, they make it to a small clearing, a different one than before.

REMI

Anything?

Kia looks at her brother uncertainly.

REMI (CONT'D)

Kia?

Beat.

REMI (CONT'D)
What are we going to do?

KIA
(sighs)
Let's just go back to Dad. We'll
figure it out.

The siblings head back down to Isiah.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - TREE STUMP - CONTINUOUS

Moose ties the wipes together to create one long towel. Isiah
nurses his wound as best he can.

ISIAH
Well? You better had found
connection.

Silence.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Kia? Remi?

REMI
No luck.

ISIAH
Damn! Okay, what else can we do?

Beat.

REMI
I can go.

ISIAH
What?

REMI
I can try to find the park ranger
for help.

ISIAH
That's not happening. We're
sticking together.

REMI
Dad you can barely move. Time is
passing, what other options do we
have?

ISIAH

You have asthma Remi you couldn't even make it up to the top.

REMI

But this time I'll be going down. And I'll bring my inhaler with me.

KIA

How about I go?

ISIAH

What?

REMI

What?

KIA

I can go. I'm the fastest, I don't have asthma, I can do it.

ISIAH

No to you especially. Are you crazy? You're just a little girl.

KIA

When we go hiking who always makes it first?

ISIAH

You but-

KIA

Exactly. Daddy, I can do this I promise. Mommy got me a compass too so if I get lost I can use it.

Isiah still is not convinced.

KIA (CONT'D)

Moose is too young. Remi has asthma. We have no phone connection. I'm the only one that can do it.

Isiah lays his head back against the tree stump.

ISIAH

You have your map with you?

Kia nods enthusiastically. He shakes his head and his eyes land on his injury.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

Nope. Nope. I'm not doing it.

Kia frowns.

KIA

Daddy!

ISIAH

I'm the Dad and I know what's best.
You're not going out there by
yourself.

KIA

(rude)

Okay so what're we going to do?

ISIAH

Watch your tone. I'm protecting you
here.

KIA

It doesn't make sense.

ISIAH

You may not understand now but when
you get older and have kids of your
own then you'll understand.

Kia rolls her eyes and turns her back to her father.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

Okay, let's figure out a game plan
guys. Anyone have any ideas?

REMI

Maybe we could just wait until
other hikers come along?

ISIAH

We veered off the path, I'm not too
sure if any hikers are going to
come our way.

MOOSE

Remi and Kia could go in the other
direction for connection.

ISIAH

If they didn't find connection
before I don't think this area has
any.

Kia shakes her leg.

KIA

I'm leaving.

ISIAH
No you're not.

KIA
Look at how you guys are
struggling! Sorry Dad, but I'm
going to find the park ranger and
I'll be back.

ISIAH
Kia! Come back here!

Isiah tries to catch Kia but she's too far from his reach.

KIA
Remi, you guys stay here so I know
where you'll be when I come back
with the ranger.

Remi nods.

KIA (CONT'D)
Stay together. I'll be back.

Kia tightens her backpack, opens her map and starts walking.
Isiah yells back after her.

ISIAH
When you come back you're in big
trouble little girl!

REMI
Don't worry too much Dad.

ISIAH
Your sister has some nerve.

Torn, Remi and Moose don't say anything else about it.

REMI
Here, let's fix = your wound.

The brothers move to better place the baby wipes on the
little gaping hole in their father's calf.

MOOSE
(to Remi)
Do you think Ki's gonna make it?

REMI
No doubt. She kicks everybody's
butt in gym- even mine. Here, hold
this end.

The brothers continue bandaging up their father.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - CONTINUOUS

Keeping her surroundings in mind, Kia finds her way. The winds dance with tree leaves more than they have earlier. She shivers.

KIA

Okay, find the park ranger then
save Dad. Park ranger, save dad.
Park ranger, save Dad.

She looks down at her map to make sure she's on the right path and keeps on going.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - TREE STUMP - CONTINUOUS

Meanwhile, Isiah munches on a snack, Moose naps on his lap and Remi deeply buries his head in his book.

ISIAH

I still can't believe your sister
went off like that.

REMI

I think she's fine.

ISIAH

Please. She's only 10. What could
she possibly know without me?

REMI

She's really strong dad. And you
guys go hiking together all the
time. I think she knows what she's
doing.

ISIAH

Hey- listen to me.

The father shakes his leg and Moose immediately wakes up. He looks at his sons.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

You boys better not follow in your
sister's footsteps. I'm the parent
here, alright? So, do as I say and
we'll all be safe.

Both Moose and Remi nod.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

Alright. Take Moose's backpack and blow on that whistle there.

Remi grabs his brother's backpack and begins to blow on the whistle attached to the straps.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

Take turns doing that. Hopefully someone'll hear it while we wait for Kia.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Kia stumbles over rocks as she walks but doesn't stop. She hears a whistle in the distance and raises her head. She looks around her.

KIA

Hello?

Nothing appears besides birds flying from tree branches. She hears shuffling.

KIA (CONT'D)

He-hello?

This side of the forest looks completely different than where she was before. All of the tree leaves are green, and it seems as if no one has ever stepped foot there since grass, moss, and other forms of greenery sprout from the ground.

It's eerily quiet. Kia stands still.

KIA (CONT'D)

Is anybody there?

She hears leaves crunching and whips her head to the sound. Mixed in with all the plants, stand three deers. They all have brown fur and white underbellies. They're as still as Kia and don't move an inch beside a wag of their tails or twitching of their ears. Kia whispers enthusiastically:

KIA (CONT'D)

Hello. Hi!

She puts her map in her pocket and slowly approaches the deers. One quickly moves but the others look around them.

KIA (CONT'D)

Shh. C'mon I'm your friend. Come here.

Kia gets closer and closer. The deers start to walk away from her so she stops. She slowly kneels and takes off her backpack. She pulls out a granola bar then waves it in front of her.

KIA (CONT'D)

Look.

She slowly gets up and begins stalking the agile creatures. The deers turn in her direction and slowly walk towards her, their curious heads looking down at the ground then back at her.

Suddenly, something in the distance moves. The deers immediately perk their heads up, and hop away. Kia drops her arms in disappointment.

KIA (CONT'D)

Ugh, I almost had them.

She drops the piece of meat on the floor and kicks a rock.

KIA (CONT'D)

And Daddy said I can't go to camp.
I'm already connecting with nature

Kia takes out her map, continuing the journey for help.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - TREE STUMP - CONTINUOUS

Clouds hover as the sun passes through the day. The once strong whistle notes trickle into airy ones as the brothers take long pauses blowing into it. Isiah tends to his wound.

MOOSE

I don't think anyone's coming.

ISIAH

Keep on trying. Somebody's got to hear us.

REMI

We've been whistling for so long, I don't-

ISIAH

Would you stop saying that?

Moose looks at Remi worried.

REMI

We should do something el-

ISIAH

Remi, if you don't have solutions
stop talking.

Remi refocuses his attention on Isiah still cleaning his wound and frowns. He takes out his book and begins reading. As he does so, his younger brother toys with his little trinkett. Moose bounces it off his leg, to the tree stump, to the sky. However, in the corner of his eye, he spots brownish-tan white fur in the distance.

Moose tugs on his father's shoulder.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

(sighs)

What, Moose?

MOOSE

Is that a bunny?

ISIAH

(looks at Moose)

A bunny? Now's not the time Moose.

MOOSE

No, wait look!

He points ahead of him. Isiah follows his finger and squints.

ISIAH

(trails off)

What the hell....

Remi follows their trail and looks closely.

REMI

Moose, that's not a bunny.

MOOSE

Huh? What else could it be the
fur's right there.

REMI

Moose, that's the tail of a coyote.

In the distance, they see full, dark brown, tan, and white mixed fur. It's tail is turned down but stands out among the bushes. The animal stops and howls.

MOOSE

What if it's a fox?

ISIAH

Whatever it is we have to get out of here.

MOOSE

Wait, what if Kia comes back with the park ranger?

ISIAH

We've got no other choice. We need to go now. Do you have any snacks on you?

The brothers nod.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

Give it to me. Now.

They hand whatever snacks they have left. Isiah takes them and throws it.

MOOSE

Hey! What if we get hungry?

ISIAH

We can't take the risk. C'mon help me get up.

Moose and Remi get under Isiah's arms but their father's weight drags them down.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

Hold on, Moose, come on this side.

Moose and Remi switch sides so Moose holds Isiah up where his good leg is.

MOOSE

Where are we going?

REMI

I remember seeing a cave when Kia and I were looking for cellphone service.

ISIAH

Where is it?

Remi looks far off into the distance and points.

REMI

Somewhere in that direction.

MOOSE

It seems kind of far.

ISIAH

Then we had better get moving.

The boys head off to their newfound safe-space.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

As Kia treks her legs tremble and arms shake. She drops them to the side walking aimlessly, and only brings them back up again to look track her location on the map.

She comes to a spot completely devoid of trees. It's barren and there's yards of hay strewn about the floor. Kia takes out her map.

KIA

Where am I?

She uses her fingers to trace her last location to the current one. However, as she stares at the map the lines on the map start to blur and mix together. Parts of connections look like one. The symbols and map key pop out at her.

Kia's head start to bob. Her knees buckle and she quickly finds herself on the ground. She uses her arm to keep her body steady, but struggles to keep eye eyes open.

As much as she tries to fight it off, her eyes flutter shut and she softly drops to the ground.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The boys struggle to get Isiah to the cave, but they make their way.

MOOSE

Sheesh Dad, how much do you weigh?

REMI

(playful)

What? You're getting tired weakling?

MOOSE

You're the one sweating, not me.

ISIAH

Hey- stop it.

Remi rolls his eyes as he adjusts his arm. They finally get to the cave.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Okay, slowly.

Remi and Moose duck into the tunnel, carefully placing their father at the entrance. Isiah lands with a thud.

REMI
Moose!

MOOSE
Sorry!

ISIAH
It's fine, it's fine. Now I've gotta get way in there. Whew- I'm tired.

Isiah lays on the ground.

REMI
How are we going to do that?

Remi looks at Moose.

MOOSE
(mumbles)
I don't know.

ISIAH
Moose you gotta do it.

MOOSE
What?

ISIAH
You're the only one that can stand semi-straight in there and drag me in.

MOOSE
I just dropped you.

REMI
Well I can't do it. I'm too big.

MOOSE
No, you're skinny.

REMI
(rolls eyes)
I mean I'm tall.

Remi puts his hands on his hips as he thinks.

REMI (CONT'D)
I wish you could crawl.

Isiah perks up.

ISIAH
Good thinking Rem!

Remi's eyes widen in surprise and he smiles contently.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Moose get in the cave behind me,
and I need help you can pull me in.

Still on the floor, Isiah gets on his elbows and uses his upper body to drag himself in the cave.

From the exterior, all that is seen is a body slowly disappearing, first the torso, then the thighs, and lastly the feet. Remi follows suit once Isiah is completely settled in.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Kia feels something furry on her face and wet on her nose. It moves from her nose to her eyes, causing them to flutter open.

She opens her eyes to see a bunny sniffing her face. She sits up straight, wiping her eyes and the wetness from her nose. She looks around.

KIA
(to herself)
What happened?

Kia winces and touches her head. The bunny stands on hind legs, alert.

KIA (CONT'D)
What do you want?

It twitches its nose and ears, then hops away. The little girl sits in stillness, using her eyes and ears analyze the environment.

She slowly gets up, brushing off the hay out her hair and clothes. She looks for the map but can't find it. Kia checks her pockets: nothing.

KIA (CONT'D)
Oh no.

She takes out her backpack and rummages through it: snack wrappers, napkin, hand sanitizer, ziplock bag- no map.

KIA (CONT'D)

It has to be here.

Kia whips her head around scanning the forst floor. Grass, sticks, red and yellow leaves. She paces, first walking back and forth, then in all directions to try and see if she could spot the map.

Just then, a strong gust of wind blows particles of dirt in her eyes. She takes a moment to wipe them, and in the corner of her eye, she sees the bunny from before. It hops to her.

KIA (CONT'D)

Stop poking fun at me!

It hops away, and stands still.

A beat.

It hops back to her, then hops away. Kia questioningly looks at the animal. She looks around, but the forest is just as dead as before. The bunny heads back to her, and this time as it leaves, she slowly follows.

The bunny doesn't go too far but quickly dips into a bush.

KIA (CONT'D)

Hey! Come back!

Kia tries to run after it. She kneels, trying to look after it, but instead finds her map crumpled near the bush. She grabs it and inspects it.

There are small rips and tears, but nothing too damaging. Kia walks back to her bag, puts it on, and takes a moment to figure out where she's headed.

Her trek continues.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Remi lays with his back to the cave as Isiah rests on his lap and Moose rests on Isiah's.

REMI

Hey, Dad get up. It's time to drink some water.

Isiah slowly wakes up.

ISIAH

Hm?

Remi passes him a canteen.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

What time is it?

Remi looks at his watch.

REMI

It's around four.

ISIAH

And nobody came by? You didn't hear anybody close?

Remi shakes his head.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

No park ranger with a walkie?
Nothing?

REMI

Nope.

ISIAH

Kia better know what she's doing out there. Jesus Christ.

MOOSE

How long are we going to stay in here?

ISIAH

I don't know Moose.

MOOSE

Maybe we should go back to the stump?

ISIAH

You're out of your mind.

MOOSE

How will Kia know where we're at if we're in here? She told us to stay by the stump.

ISIAH

Well she doesn't run things here. We saw a coyote and you want to risk going back out there?

Moose looks down.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

We're staying in this cave until someone comes to get us. Whether that be the park ranger, other hikers, or Kia. Understood?

The boys nod.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Kia looks down at her map to make sure she's on the right path. She keeps her eyes glued to the paper but in a flash, slips and tumbles down a short hill.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Unbruised, Kia gets up and dusts off the dirt on her.

She looks up, suddenly the trees look menacingly taller. The bark looks like evil smiles and mocking faces. The tree branches point at her in laughter. She turns and turns and turns around in circles. Her breathing intensifies. She closes her eyes and takes a few deep breaths. After a moment, she opens her eyes, and continues walking.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Moose plays with some sticks and his toy while they wait. The setting sun bothers Remi as he tries to read.

REMI

I'm going to go outside for a bit.

ISIAH

For what?

REMI

There's not a lot of light in here.

Remi flashes his book.

ISIAH

Okay. Don't go too far.

REMI

Yeah, yeah.

ISIAH

I'm serious.

REMI
I know dad. Don't worry.

Isiah nods. Remi starts to head out.

MOOSE
Can I come with you?

ISIAH
(abruptly)
No.

MOOSE
But I'm bored! And he isn't even
going that far.

ISIAH
You children are making it very
hard to do my job.

A beat.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Alright, alright. Moose you can go
with Remi.

MOOSE
Yes!

ISIAH
But! We need to establish some
rules. Don't go too far, come back
in twenty, and stay in the vicinity
of the cave where I can see you.
Got it?

The two sons nod their head in agreeance.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Alright, go on.

Moose and Remi walk out the cave together.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The brothers carefully choose their steps as they step out.

MOOSE
Why's Dad so uptight today?

REMI
I mean, Kia did run away.

MOOSE

Yeah but to get help.

REMI

He's probably just stressed. And he's hurt.

MOOSE

True. You think Kia's okay?

REMI

Oh, she's definitely okay. She's smart.

MOOSE

I just want to get out of here.

REMI

You and me both. Wanna sit here?

Remi points to two relatively flat boulders. Moose shrugs. They sit, Remi opening his book and Moose playing with his trinkett.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Kia looks up at the sky, noticing the sun starting to set and the weather getting chillier. She zips up her sweater.

As she walks, her stomach growls. She looks down at her stomach, then the map.

KIA

I think I've gotten far enough. Let me eat.

Kia sits down and takes off her backpack. She pulls out a small container of blueberries, a granola bar, beef jerky, and slim jims. She places the slim jim back in her bag.

KIA (CONT'D)

I'll save that for later.

Scarfig down everything in front of her, before she knows it she's looking at empty hands.

Kia grabs her water canteen, surveying its contents. She flips it upside down to reveal: one, lonely drop. Throwing her hands up in the air in defeat she rummages through her bag.

KIA (CONT'D)

That can't be all the water I have.
I know I've got some more.

She feels around: bent-up slim jims, some napkins. No water.

Kia looks at the container of blueberries. Droplets of water from the now-eaten berries sit on the hunk of plastic. She raises the container to her mouth.

She manages a sip or two before she's all dried out- again.

Kia places the things back in her bag and sits down, defeated.

She sits in stillness, when suddenly she hears a stream. Her head immediately perks up.

KIA (CONT'D)

A river!

Kia gets up, grabs her backpack and follows the sound of the stream.

During the walk, she hums the song that played on the car ride to the hiking trail. The birds overhead settle on their nests and branches, while squirrels jump from place to place.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

At this point, Moose lays completely flat on the rock, arms overhead and legs spread like a starfish.

MOOSE

I'm so bored.

Remi ignores him.

MOOSE (CONT'D)

Let's do something.

Remi looks up from his book.

REMI

Like what?

MOOSE

Let's play a game! How many birds can we spot.

REMI

There isn't any birds around here.

MOOSE
So let's look for some.

REMI
Dad told us not to go too far.

MOOSE
He isn't even going to know.

In the distance, not too far ahead the boys look back to the cave. They see Isiah there resting.

REMI
What if he wakes up?

MOOSE
Uhm, okay whoever can find five birds first comes back. We can yell our count so we know.

Remi contemplates this for a moment.

REMI
Okay, fine.

MOOSE
Ready, set, GO!

The boys run off. Remi drops his book.

REMI
Hey you cheated!

He runs off after Moose.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Kia finds the stream. It's clear so she sees rocks at the bottom. Farther ahead she sees tiny, little fish swimming along.

She washes her hands and moves on to rinse her face. After lapping a bit of it, she deems it safe to drink. She cups her hands and drinks from the stream. Kia then pulls out her canteen and fills it up.

She takes off her shoes, socks and dips her feet in the river, enjoying the flowing stream.

This part of the forest is less menacing, as the calm drift of the water adds to the serenity. Across from her she sees a squirrel hop from bush to bush, its ears twitching after every jump.

Noticing she's enjoying herself a bit too much, she pulls out the map, ready to trek again. According to the map, the river isn't too far off from a building. She follows the directions.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The sun casts shadows wherever it can as it dips into early evening.

REMI (O.S.)

THREE!

His voice echoes throughout the space.

MOOSE (O.S.)

FIVE! I COUNT FIVE!

The boys run back to the boulder seating area, Remi getting there first with hands on his knees.

MOOSE (CONT'D)

How'd you get back so fast?

REMI

Because I'm faster than you.

Moose looks at him seriously.

REMI (CONT'D)

Okay fine I didn't go that far.

MOOSE

Well you played yourself because you could've won but, oh well!

REMI

Yeah, yeah, whatever. Let's go back I think it's been twenty minutes.

The boys walk back to the cave.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Isiah still rests with his head leaned back against the cave wall. His eyes are closed.

REMI

Hey Dad.

MOOSE

Hi Dad.

ISIAH
How was it?

He asks with eyes still closed.

REMI
It was good. The fresh air was nice.

MOOSE
Yeah, definitely better than being stuck in here.

Moose's eyes widen.

MOOSE (CONT'D)
Oops, I didn't mean it like that.

Isiah waves it off.

ISIAH
That's good to hear. So, where did you boys go?

REMI
We didn't go too far. There was a spot with two boulders so we just sat on it.

Isiah opens one eye and looks at his son.

ISIAH
You sure?

Remi nods. Isiah looks at Moose.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Is he telling the truth?

Moose nods.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Why didn't I see you boys then?

The brothers look at each other.

REMI
We were sitting-

ISIAH
Cut it. You guys broke the rules. What if something happened to you while you were out there and I'm in here with a injured leg?

Moose and Remi bow their heads.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
How would I have protected you?

MOOSE
But we didn't go too too far.

ISIAH
It doesn't matter. We agreed on something and you guys broke the agreement. From here on out, you're not leaving my sight.

MOOSE
But Dad-

ISIAH
No buts. No exceptions. We're all staying in here until help comes.

Isiah rests his head back and closes his eyes. The brothers look at each other then Remi glares at his father. He moves away from him and sits with his arms crossed.

INT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Kia shivers as she trudges along, night slowly creeping in as the sky casts a mix of orange and peach. She spots an elevated landing then heads towards it.

The wind nips at her exposed fingers but she ignores it, determined to reach the top. When she finally gets there, she's able to see much farther than when she was ground-level. In the distance ahead, she sees something that looks like a park ranger tower.

Kia leaps with joy. Not wasting another second, she runs to help.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

This time, instead of having his eyes closed, Isiah is fully asleep. His arms hang by his side as he snores lightly. His sons, on the other hand, sit wide awake. Moose plays around with some rocks using a stick and Remi sits with his head on his arms, shivering.

REMI
(whispers)
Psst! Moose!

His younger brother looks up.

REMI (CONT'D)
You're not cold?

MOOSE
I am, I'm just ignoring it.

A beat.

REMI
Why don't we go grab wood real
quick and come back?

MOOSE
Dad's already mad at us.

REMI
He's sleeping.

MOOSE
You don't think he'll notice we're
gone?

REMI
You know how deep Dad sleeps. And
his body needs rest.

Moose looks uncertainly at Isiah then Remi.

REMI (CONT'D)
Well I've already decided I'm
going. And I don't care how mad Dad
gets because we'll at least be
warm.

MOOSE
I'm not too sure...

REMI
He's been trippin' all day anyway.
What difference will this make? I'm
leaving.

Remi gets up and leaves the cave.

MOOSE
Wait, hold on!

Moose drops his stick and carefully walks over Isiah. He
follows Remi.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Moose struggles to catch up to his brother but eventually makes it.

MOOSE
Hey! Wait up!

Remi slows and his brother is soon by his side.

MOOSE (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

REMI
I don't get what Dad's problem is.

MOOSE
Yeah...like You said, he's probably scared.

REMI
But he's complicating everything.
It isn't fair.

Moose's silence suggests agreeance.

REMI (CONT'D)
It's whatever. We'll just grab the wood and go back.

MOOSE
How are we gonna carry the wood?

REMI
Oh shoot, we left our backpacks at the cave.

Moose nods.

REMI (CONT'D)
We could just use our shirts.

The little brother nods again.

REMI (CONT'D)
Look for thick and long branches.
Make sure they're dry though. Super dry, that's important.

MOOSE
Got it.

The brothers start collecting sticks and places them in their shirt.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Kia briefly stops to tie her shoelaces. She straightens out and walks to the tower. According to the map, it shouldn't be far, but it's still a sturdy walk.

KIA

Whew, almost there.

By now, the sky has turned to a mix of purples as night creeps in, a sign the trail is going to close soon. Kia picks up the pace.

She comes across a steady incline that seems to expand for miles. Before taking the first step, she breathes in deeply and bows her head.

A beat.

Once ready, Kia plants her right foot in front of her left and begins the march up. This incline proves challenging as she breathes heavily than she ever has before.

She slows down, each step more excruciating brings her knees closer to her chest. This time she gives up breathing through her nose and starts to pant, mouth open like a dog trying to cool off. Kia collapses to her knees, unable to move another step.

Sweat drips from her forehead like a waterfall. It runs from her hairline and dribbles off her nose. Each pant sounds like a plea for life.

Kia takes off her bookbag and pulls out her canteen. She gulps the river water and places her head on top of her bag to rest. She mouths something to herself, but it's inaudible.

A beat.

Kia suits up and crawls on her hands and knees. The dirt and leaves are drier on this side of the forest, making it easier for her to slip. She slides down a few times, but she tries to shift all her weight into her knees to get a better grip.

It doesn't work. Kia continues to slide down, little by little. She looks around for something she can use. To the left of her, stands a long, wooden stick.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The brothers inspect the forest floor for more wood they could use. It's getting dark but there is still considerable sunlight.

MOOSE

How do you think Kia's holding up?

REMI

She is taking longer than I expected. I hope she's okay.

They walk for a little while until they come across a large tree, one that stands out among the rest.

REMI (CONT'D)

You know what I'm thinking? What if we call out to her?

MOOSE

(confused)

What do you mean?

REMI

Like Tarzan. I bet if we get high up enough in this tree we can call her.

MOOSE

And you really think she'll hear us?

REMI

We could try.

They drop their firewood and walk to the tree. They stand before it.

MOOSE

So, how are we going to get up there?

REMI

I'll climb up. Come here, I'll get on your shoulders as a boost.

MOOSE

Remi.

REMI

Kidding, I'm kidding.

The brothers size up the tree, trying to figure out how Remi could climb up. A log catches Moose's eye. He points to it.

MOOSE

What if we use that!

REMI

Good eye.

Moose and Remi pick up the log.

MOOSE

It's kind of heavy.

They puff up their cheeks using their strength to stand the log vertically.

REMI

Okay. Here I go.

Remi stands on the log, wrapping his arms around the tree. He finds part of the trunk he can step on, and begins to climb. He uses some branches to help him up.

MOOSE

Are you okay?

REMI

Yeah. I just gotta concentrate.

Remi continues to climb until he finally reaches the first sturdy tree limb.

MOOSE

I think you need to climb higher and sit on that branch right up there.

REMI

Are you up here or am I?

MOOSE

(raises hands)

I'm just saying if you really want Kia to hear...

REMI

What if I fall?

MOOSE

I believe in you.

REMI

Moose, be serious.

MOOSE

It won't be a bad fall. You might bruise your hip, or your leg or your arm or something but you won't die.

REMI

Moose!

MOOSE

I'm kidding! Okay, let me think something.

Moose looks around him.

REMI

I have an idea. Gather some leaves and make something like a bed.

MOOSE

Of leaves?

REMI

Yeah. Get a lot of leaves though just in case.

Moose rushes to gather some leaves while Remi stays planted on the tree like a koala bear.

Considerably high up, Remi takes in his surroundings. In the distance, he sees a stream and the grey slab of rock that's part of the mountain.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Kia picks up the stick and uses it to help herself up. It's sturdy and strong, so she uses it as a staff. It makes her ascent manageable, as her pace quickens.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Moose drops bushels of leaves right below Remi.

MOOSE

Okay, done!

Remi looks down to see the pile of leaves.

REMI

Did you test it out?

MOOSE

Test it- what do you mean?

REMI

Jump in it so I know it isn't thin and fluffy enough to break my fall.

MOOSE

Remi.

REMI

Moose, seriously. I'm the up in a tree not you. It's the least you can do.

MOOSE

Ugh, fine.

Moose moves back, then runs and leaps stomach first into the pile of leaves. He grunts in agony.

MOOSE (CONT'D)

Ow, my stomach.

REMI

See? Told you.

MOOSE

Yeah, yeah, yeah, shut up.

Moose grabs more leaves then gathers them together to form a bed. He shouts to his brother:

MOOSE (CONT'D)

Okay I think this is good enough.

Remi puts one foot on the limb and tries to climb to the next one.

REMI

It's too far up.

Instead, Remi tests his weight on the trunk. Seeing that it's strong enough, he stands on it. He grabs the tree with one hand, and cups his mouth on the other.

REMI (CONT'D)

(shouts)

KIA!

His voice echoes.

REMI (CONT'D)

KIA! WHERE ARE YOU!

Remi looks at the expanse before him. Birds fly from trees, shaking the tree leaves. Everything settles after a moment. He looks down at his younger brother.

Moose shrugs. Remi shrugs back.

REMI (CONT'D)
Let's grab the wood and head back
to Dad.

Remi carefully climbs down the tree.

INT. TRAIL WELCOME CENTER - CONTINUOUS

The park ranger neatly rearranges all the papers on the desk. She picks up the clipboard and inspects the sign-in sheet. She notices one family hasn't signed out, so she questions her other two co-workers.

PARK RANGER HARRIS
Did you guys see this family come
back from the trail? The Gideon
family? A dad, two sons, and a
daughter?

Her co-workers shake their head "no".

PARK RANGER HARRIS (CONT'D)
Huh, that's weird. Okay well, I'm
off to do my rounds, maybe they're
finishing up.

She grabs her supplies then leaves.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Kia finally makes it to a levelled area. Ahead, stands the park ranger tower.

KIA
Help! Hello? I need help!

Kia doesn't hear anything. Up close, the tower doesn't stand too high but the actual building is wide.

KIA (CONT'D)
My family needs help! Hello?

She circles around the tower until she finds the stairs.

Before taking the first step she lightly places her foot on the stair and hand on the railing, making sure it's stable. Although creaky, the wood stays in place. She climbs to the top, opens the door, and enters.

INT. FIRE LOOKOUT TOWER - CONTINUOUS

The area has windows on all sides, overlooking the forest. It almost looks like a small house.

There's a small wooden sink with chips on it and a broken heater. On the opposite end is a couch with blankets and pillows on it. They're all munched up, and covered in holes.

The room has propane lamps, a hoist (pulley and rope), broom and dustpan, a historic fire finder and telescope smack dab in the middle.

Kia walks to the table to check the things out. Everything is completely dusty, dirty, and the floors creak.

KIA

Hello?

Kia looks around her again. She sighs and walks out.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

On the other end of the forest, the park ranger walks up the mountain with a clipboard in hand, a walkie talkie in one pocket, and a flashlight in the other.

From an aerial view, it looks as if Kia and the park ranger are crossing paths, but the ranger just missed her. They continue walking, completely unaware of the other's presence.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Remi and Moose walk back to the cave holding stacks of wood on with their shirts. When they get there, they find Isiah still asleep.

They grin and dab each other up.

REMI

See, I told you.

They set the wood down and start lighting a fire. It catches on and the cave illuminates with light and warmth. The brothers fuel the fire with twigs and branches as they sit near it and place their hands over it.

Isiah shuffles. He slowly wakes up and sees the fire.

ISIAH

Mmm, what's this?

REMI

It was getting dark and cold, so we collected some sticks for a fire.

ISIAH

You went out? Again?

REMI

You were sleeping and Moose and I were cold.

ISIAH

You could've woken me up, what's wrong with you?

REMI

You would've told us we couldn't go!

ISIAH

It's better I know where my sons are than not know at all!

REMI

Dad, please. We came back with some wood. We figured we'll be waiting for help for a while since no one came.

ISIAH

I'm the one that makes the decisions here. Not you. Not Kia. Not Moose.

Isiah sternly looks at his sons.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

It's my duty as a father to protect you but every single one of you has made that difficult for me today. I don't even know where my daughter is! I don't need my sons getting lost-

Moose tugs at his father's shoulders.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

What, Moose?

He points towards the entrance of the cave.

MOOSE

I think that's a snake.

Isiah flips his head in front of him to see, indeed a snake slithering past the cave.

ISIAH

Okay, nobody move. Moose, what kind of snake is that?

MOOSE

I think it's a black rattlesnake.

ISIAH

Okay. Good. At least we know what we're dealing with. When it mostly passes the cave we'll move back slowly, agreed?

The black rattlesnake moves past the cave, showing its full-length. The boys start to move back slowly. When they do this, however, it's tail starts to rattle.

REMI

Dad, why is it rattling?

ISIAH

I don't know.

REMI

(panicking)

Why is it rattling? This isn't good.

ISIAH

(whispers)

Don't panic! They can sense fear, relax.

Remi takes a couple deep breaths, but to no avail. The snake slithers back and into the cave. Remi's breathing intensifies.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

Everyone keep moving back slowly.

Following the snake's pacing, everyone inches further back into the cave.

The snake is all black, even its eyes. It looks menacing.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

Alright, nobody move. I bet it won't attack if we don't provoke it.

Unfortunately for Remi, his breathing quickens.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
(whispers)
Rem, get it together.

Expecting a reply, Isiah only hears Remi hyperventilating.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Remi, you good?

The oldest son places his hands on his chest, breathing more heavily.

MOOSE
Rem? Are you okay?

All he manages is a point to his throat.

ISIAH
Shoot. Where's his inhaler?

Moose points to the opening of the cave. There lies all their belongings.

The snake begins to hiss. It sticks its tongue out signaling it's about to attack.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Hold on Remi, I'll get your inhaler.

MOOSE
I'll do it.

ISIAH
What?

MOOSE
You can barely even move Dad, you won't get there fast enough. I can grab the inhaler and get the snake out.

ISIAH
Moose, you stay right there.

Isiah sizes up the snake, the distance from where they're at and where the backpack is.

Remi sits down, giving up on the kneeling position, with his face pointed upwards struggling to breathe.

Using his arms, Isiah grabs a long stick out of the bunch his sons collected. He places it in the campfire and waits for it to light.

When the tip is on fire, he crawls to the snake and tries to evade it. The snake coils back while Moose bangs the canteen on the cave wall to add more distraction.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

Moose, quick! Grab Remi's inhaler.

Moose reaches the bags and finds Remi's inhaler. He throws it to his brother and it lands near his lap.

Remi frantically grabs it, pulling off the cap finally pumping medicine into his lungs.

Isiah continues to wave the fire in front of the snake until it finally slithers away. Once gone, Isiah drops the stick letting it smokes out.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

You boys good?

MOOSE

Yeah.

ISIAH

Remi are you okay?

REMI

Yeah, I think I'm fine.

Isiah breathes a sigh of relief as do his sons.

ISIAH

Here, drink some water.

He passes the canteen to Moose, who then passes it to Remi.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

That was a close call. I'm glad you're both safe.

Isiah looks at his boys, then to the stick. He quietly smiles to himself.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Kia re-traces her steps, walking back in the direction she came from. She struggles to look at the map as its getting dark, but her eyes adjust to the low light.

Her stomach begins curling and rumbling. She slowly comes to a halt, and runs to the nearest tree. She falls to her knees as she starts to throw up.

She coughs out water, bits of blueberry skin, and beef jerky. After all the water flushes out, Kia dry heaves twice.

She spits and groans in agony. After a moment, Kia wipes her mouth, gets up, and continues to walk- this time slowly stumbling.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Park Ranger Harris still inspects the forest during her rounds. By now, the last leg of the sun settles down and night creeps up.

The ranger then walks into an abnormally large pile of leaves. She shakes her head.

PARK RANGER HARRIS

These kids man.

She kicks the bed of leaves, letting them disperse everywhere. She makes a turn and continues to walk down the trail.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

It's gotten dark, but Kia straggles along. Her stomach keeps cramping up, so she eventually slows down, and puts her hands on her knees. She pants heavily, trying to catch her breath.

She folds her map and puts it in her back pocket. She drops to the ground, and closes her eyes.

KIA

Just for a little while.

Kia keeps her eyes closed until her breathing stills. She feels her heart pounding against her chest as if it wants to jump out. She breathes through her mouth but eventually transitions to using her nose.

She continues to lay down until she feels something wet sniff around her face then tug at her backpack. The hairs on the back of her neck stand up. Kia slowly opens her eyes to see a large, dark figure hover over her. She tries to make the figure out under the moonlight. It's tall, large, and grunts. She looks at the body, then the feet, and sees no shoes but...claws.

Kia immediately shuts her eyes, not wanting to believe she's come across a bear.

KIA (CONT'D)
 (whispers)
 Maybe if I stay quiet, and act dead
 it'll go away.

She tests her theory, but the bear circles around her, sniffing and playing with her backpack. Kia closes her eyes and grips her canteen tighter. She shakes in fear as she recalls the day's events:

FLASHBACK:

On the car ride to the trail.

KIA (CONT'D)
 Can I go?

ISIAH
 Absolutely not. Kia I said no,
 you're too young.

At the tree stump.

KIA
 How about I go? I'm the fastest, I
 don't have asthma, I can do it.

ISIAH
 No to you especially. Are you
 crazy? You're just a little girl.
 I'm the Dad and I know what's best.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The bear continues toying with Kia's backpack, as she lays as still as possible. Her face starts to quiver as if she's about to cry. But the bear grunts, taking her out of her trance.

FLASHBACK - CAMP GROUNDS - EARLIER

Kia walks around the camp ground office looking at the poster board and infographics, while her father talks to the park ranger. She stops at a poster that says "BEAR FACTS", under that reads, "WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER A BEAR". She briefly reads it, then moves on to the owl facts.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Kia takes a deep slow breath, holding her canteen- making sure she has a firm grasp of it. With a surge of energy, she quickly moves from under the bear and runs to a tree.

Kia bangs at it with her canteen.

KIA
(yelling)
Get out of here! Leave! Leave!

She raises her arms and tries to appear bigger than what she is. She continues banging at the tree.

KIA (CONT'D)
Grrr! Leave! Leave me alone! Get
out of here!

She takes off her backpack and holds it in her hands, hoping it'll add to her width.

KIA (CONT'D)
Go! Go! Leave!

The bear stands startled. It hesitates between going on all fours and fully standing to show its full length.

Kia kicks some leaves, banging harder at the tree.

KIA (CONT'D)
I said leave! You can't listen,
huh? Go! Shoo!

The bear gets on all fours, turns around, and finally walks away.

Kia continues to hit the tree for good measure until the bear is out of sight. She turns and runs like her life depends on it, not knowing where she's headed. She doesn't look back until she's sure she's far from the bear.

Ahead of her, she sees a building that sort of looks like a shack. She runs to it, heading straight for the door.

Kia tries to open it, but the hinges are dirty and rusty. She tugs at it harder and it opens.

INT. SHACK - CONTINUOUS

She quickly goes in, closing the door behind her and locking it. She sits down on the floor, with hands on her knees and cries.

KIA
(whispers)
I want Daddy. I want Mommy.

Kia continues to sob.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Isiah and his sons keep the fire going for light and warmth.
It's awfully quiet besides the cackle of the fire.

ISIAH
Did you boys hear that?

Remi and Moose look at each other then shake their head.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
You sure?

REMI
Its probably the fire Dad if
anything.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

What the boys don't know is that the park ranger had just
passed them, kicking through the bed of leaves Moose
collected.

EXT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

The boys sit around the fire.

ISIAH
You're probably right. Kia better
be okay.

MOOSE
(mumbles)
We'd probably know if we went back.

ISIAH
What was that?

MOOSE
I'm just saying, if we went back to
the stump maybe we'd be home right
now.

ISIAH

Moose. How many times do I have to tell you it wasn't safe out there?

REMI

It wasn't safe in here either.

ISIAH

Remi, you had better watch your mouth.

Remi drops whatever stick he was using to play with the fire.

REMI

You're not being fair Dad.

ISIAH

Fair? You want to talk to me about fair when I just saved you boys from snake?

REMI

You're not fair to ME. Moose talked back to you and you didn't tell him to watch his mouth. It's like when it comes to me or Kia you're overbearing.

ISIAH

I'm protecting you.

REMI

No, you're controlling us. And you don't even take me seriously.

ISIAH

Remi please. Stop being dramatic.

REMI

You shut down every suggestion I made today. It's like what we say or what we want to do doesn't even matter. That's probably why Kia ran away.

ISIAH

Watch it.

REMI

You always say, "You're the oldest, you're the oldest" but you don't treat me like it.

Remi throws a stick in the fire. It ignites then settles down. Moose looks back and forth between his father and older brother.

Isiah looks at Remi with wide eyes and a flared nose, then looks at Moose who has his head turned down.

REMI (CONT'D)

You don't let me do anything.

ISIAH

I let you go read your book. Then what did you do? Broke the rules.

REMI

You don't let us do anything without rules. And the rules don't even make sense it's just another way to control us more. How can you trust us if you don't give us the chance to prove ourselves?

Isiah gets quiet.

REMI (CONT'D)

And how can you trust you did a good job raising us if you always dictate what we do?

ISIAH

The world is scary place, I'm doing my job as a father.

REMI

But if you always control, or what you call "protect" and shelter us then how are we going to be ready for the real world?

A beat.

REMI (CONT'D)

I don't mean to be disrespectful, but I didn't like how we were treated today.

Silence fills the cave for a moment. Finally, Isiah speaks.

ISIAH

I- look, today was a difficult and stressful day. Kia left and I guess I was being so hard because I didn't want you boys leaving either.

Moose and Remi look up at his father. But Isiah speaks with his head down.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

Everyone is always telling me what to do, it feels like I have no control. So, I guess I try to control you guys. I guess I'm not doing it in the best way.

Isiah picks up a stick and twirls it around.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

I could work on it.

He looks Moose and Remi in their eyes. They exchange reassuring nods.

INT. TRAIL WELCOME CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Park Ranger Harris makes it back the trail center. Her co-workers immediately bombard her.

PARK RANGER #2

Yo Blaire, did you ever find the family?

PARK RANGER HARRIS

Woah, relax, I didn't. I was actually gonna call the Dad's number.

PARK RANGER #2

Well the mother's on the phone and she's worried.

The head park ranger picks up the phone.

PARK RANGER HARRIS

Highland Trails, this is Park Ranger Harris speaking. How can I help you?

NONI

Hi, hi, I've been trying to get in contact with you for a while now. My name is Noni, my husband and my kids went hiking today at your trail. His name is Isiah, and-

PARK RANGER HARRIS
Yeah, I actually just came back
from looking for them and didn't
see any trace of them.

NONI
Excuse me?

PARK RANGER HARRIS
I figured they forgot to sign-out.
They aren't home?

NONI
Of course not! Why do you think I'm
calling? They were supposed to come
home a couple hours ago but they
haven't showed up yet. I tried
calling my husband but he hasn't
picked up.

PARK RANGER HARRIS
Maybe his phone died and they're on
their way home, I'm not-

NONI
Please, it's unlike him to not
double-check with me. Can you look
for them again?

PARK RANGER HARRIS
Uh, give me a second please.

The park ranger presses a few buttons on the phone and turns
to her co-workers.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (CONT'D)
Guys, we might have to pull a
search.

PARK RANGER #2
You sure?

PARK RANGER HARRIS
She's saying he didn't pick up when
she called and that's not like him.

PARK RANGER #2
Could just be on their way home.

PARK RANGER HARRIS
I don't know...I have a bad feeling
about this.

PARK RANGER #3
Finally! Some action going on
around here!

Park Ranger Harris rolls her eyes.

PARK RANGER HARRIS
This is serious.

PARK RANGER #2
It's your call. If you think we
should pull a search then we'll
support it.

The park ranger nods. She picks up the phone.

PARK RANGER HARRIS
Hello?

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Noni sits alone at the kitchen island, jittery. When she
hears her phone ring she rushes to pick it up.

NONI
Hello? Yes, I'm here.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (V.O.)
I'm going to make an executive
desicion and call a search party.

NONI
Ok I'm driving down there.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (V.O.)
We have protocol for these kinds of
things. I'll call a team and we'll
go back up the trail to look for
your family. It's best you stay
home.

NONI
No, I'm going there to help look
for my family. My babies out there,
they could be hurt! We don't know
what's out there.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (V.O.)
I'd rather you stay at home where
you're safe than you come with us
and potentially risk harm. We don't
want any more casualties.

NONI
What's your name?

PARK RANGER HARRIS (V.O.)
Blaire.

NONI
How old are you Blaire?

PARK RANGER HARRIS (V.O.)
Eighteen.

NONI
Well put yourself in my shoes
Blaire.

INT. TRAIL WELCOME CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Park Ranger Harris looks around with a guilty look on her face, then deeply sighs.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Noni grips the phone in anticipation.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (V.O.)
Okay try to get here as fast as you
can.

Noni moves from her seat and puts on her coat. She picks up the car keys and rushes out the door.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Noni walks to the second car in the driveway.

NONI
I should be there in about forty-
no thirty minutes. Please, don't
start the search without me.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (V.O.)
I can't-

She stops.

NONI
Please, do not start the search
without me.

PARK RANGER HARRIS
I- I'll try my best to stall.

NONI

Thank you. Thank you, thank you,
thank you! I'll be there as soon as
I can.

Noni gets in the car and pulls out.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Isiah and his sons sit in the cave.

ISIAH

You know it kills me I don't know
where Kia is.

MOOSE

She is taking a long time. I'm
worried too.

Remi fuels the small campfire.

REMI

C'mon I can't be the only one that
has faith in her.

ISIAH

It isn't the fact I don't have
faith. There could be all sorts of
things out there.

Remi shrugs and nods.

ISIAH (CONT'D)

We're in a forest you know. And we
saw a coyote. Imagine what other
animals are out there.

REMI

Dad don't try to think like that.

ISIAH

Oh, and your mother! Oh my god what
is your mother going to say.

MOOSE

You think Mom will be mad?

ISIAH

Not mad, she's probably worried the
hell out of her mind.

REMI

When isn't Mom worried?

The boys chuckle.

ISIAH
That's true.

A beat.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
You know, when you guys were born my biggest worry was being a good Dad, and proving to Noni that I'm a man. A leader. Now I'm kind of worried I messed that up a little bit today.

REMI
But that isn't your fault Dad.

ISIAH
Yeah, but things could've been better. Kia didn't have to run away, you didn't have to feel the way you do about me.

His sons look at him

ISIAH (CONT'D)
I could've been a better leader. And maybe we wouldn't be in this mess.

REMI
You do what you can.

MOOSE
Yeah, and we still love you.

ISIAH
I hope I can say the same for Kia.

REMI
Kia? Please. She's like Daddy's little girl. She'll always love you Dad.

Moose and Remi give their father a hug.

REMI (CONT'D)
Unless you control every aspect of her life and do something really really stupid.

ISIAH
(playful)
Alright get off me.

The boys laugh as they get back to their spaces in the cave.

INT. SHACK - CONTINUOUS

Tears and snot flood out like a waterfall. Kia keeps her head down and knees close to her chest as she tries to control her breathing. She waits for stillness.

KIA
(to herself)
It's gonna be okay. It's gonna be
okay.

She tries to reassure yourself, but doesn't budge.

KIA (CONT'D)
Okay.

Kia takes a few more deep breaths before gathering herself up and lifting her head. She opens her backpack, feeling around for a tissue. She finds it, she pulls it out and wipes her face.

After blowing her nose a couple times, and scratching her eyes out, she pulls out the map, struggling to get a clear look at it in the dark.

INT. TRAIL WELCOME CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Noni finally arrives at the trail welcome center. She parks terribly, getting out the car and rushing to the office. Noni opens the door, frantically looking around. She sees all these people with all this equipment, but looks for the park ranger.

NONI
Blaire? Blaire! Hi, I'm looking for
Blaire, does anyone know where she
is.

Just then, Park Ranger Harris appears from the crowd.

PARK RANGER HARRIS
Noni?

NONI
Yes, that's me.

They shake hands.

NONI (CONT'D)

Did they come while I was on my way? Did you hear anything from them?

PARK RANGER HARRIS

Still no sign. But I have the search team here ready to look for your family.

NONI

Okay, I'm coming with.

PARK RANGER HARRIS

It's best you wait here at the office. These people are trained and have all the gear-

NONI

I don't care! I'm going up there and I'm looking for my babies and my husband.

PARK RANGER HARRIS

Noni, it's protocol. Let the search party do their job.

NONI

But my family-

PARK RANGER HARRIS

I'm sure they're okay. Let the professionals handle the search. They've done this before, and they're equipped with all the tools necessary to keep them safe.

NONI

(calming down)

I guess you have a point.

PARK RANGER HARRIS

While you wait one of my co-workers will be here with you.

The park ranger points to park ranger #2.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (CONT'D)

They have walkie talkies as do I. We'll be in contact with them the whole entire time.

NONI

So if- when they find them, could I speak to them?

PARK RANGER HARRIS

A hundred percent.

NONI

Okay, I'll stay. But I want my own walkie talkie.

Park Ranger Harris looks at the team.

PARK RANGER HARRIS

Do we have another walkie?

The group looks among them, unsure.

A beat.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (CONT'D)

(begging)

Please guys, c'mon.

Someone from the search team hands a walkie to Noni. She nods her head in appreciation.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (CONT'D)

Here, let me see it.

She takes the walkie and arranges it before handing it back to Noni.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (CONT'D)

You click this button right here to speak. Here, let me show you.

The ranger speaks into her personal walkie. Noni hears their static filled voice from her own. She responds, pressing the button Park Ranger Harris had instructed her to, and she hears her voice from the other walkies.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (CONT'D)

(smiles)

All good to go.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (CONT'D)

(to the search party)

Alright guys, are we ready?

Everyone nods in unison. Park Ranger Harris stands before everyone with a clipboard and flashlight.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (CONT'D)
We're looking for a father named
Isiah, two boys one named Remi, the
other Moose, and a girl named Kia.
Got it?

Everyone nods again. The HEAD OF THE SEARCH PARTY walks out
and the rest follow.

PARK RANGER HARRIS (CONT'D)
These people have done this before.
They'll find your family in to
time. I promise.

Noni gives a tight smile. Park Ranger #2 leads Noni behind
the desk where she can sit and wait.

INT. SHACK - CONTINUOUS

Kia's eyes heavily traces the map when she notices something
poke at her backside. She pulls it out and sees it's the
compass. She throws it.

KIA
This stupid, little thing.

She sighs and rests her head back against the door.

A beat.

Feeling guilty, she slightly looks to the side and opens one
eye. The compass gleams under the moonlight- a slither
peeking through the shack's broken wooden wall. Kia crawls to
it and opens it. She seems the emblem.

KIA (CONT'D)
This arrow means north, this one is
south, west, then east.

She thinks for a moment, then rushes back to grab her map.

Kia goes back to the moonlit area and opens the map.

She looks at the corner of the map, ripped up and battered.
She pieces it together to see a compass label with N, W, S,
and E written on it. She tries tracing her location from the
fire tower. She remembers taking a left, and ran straight
from that direction. She doesn't know how far, but makes an
estimate.

She then looks to see a symbol on the map, possibly
representing the shack she's currently in. She opens her
compass once more and places it in front of the map.

She repeatedly goes back and forth, from map to compass. Kia then places her fingers on the map and traces her location to where she might have possibly left her father and brothers.

Kia packs her bag, and begins walking: a compass in one hand, and the map in the other.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The search party trek up the mountain trail with their flashlights trying to look for Isiah and his kids.

SEARCH PARTY
Isiah! Remi! Moose! Kia!

One of the members of the search party stops everyone else. They shine their flashlight on the ground and low and behold: a book.

The person grabs it and they continue on. They alternate between saying the family's names, hoping they get a response. When they don't hear a thing, they continue searching.

INT. TRAIL WELCOME CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Noni fidgets in her seat while park ranger #2 uncomfortably watches.

PARK RANGER #2
You're family's fine-

NONI
Can you stop saying that? As if they're not? Of course they're fine.

PARK RANGER #2
(stuttering)
Yeah, yes, of course they are. I just wanted to reassure-

NONI
(blunt)
Thanks.

A beat.

PARK RANGER #2
I'm sure the search party has it all under control.

NONI

Then what's taking them so long?

PARK RANGER #2

You know with these kinds of things it'll take some time to find them depending on where they are. And it's dark, it's late, it's freezing. But I know this team, and they're the best I've worked with.

Noni nods, still unconvinced but saves face.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Kia trudges on with the map and compass in her hand. She makes it to a clearing, and looks around her.

KIA

Hm, this doesn't seem right.

She keeps on walking. The leaves crunch under her march and the bitter wind whips at her fingers, but she continues using the map and compass. At night, the forest looks more menacing than it might actually be. She catches glowing eyes that quickly dart away, and instead of seeing birds and squirrels, she sees branches swaying in the wind- as if trying to shoo her away.

As Kia walks, she hears a train whistle that startles her. Realizing what the train signifies, she looks at the map, making sure her assumption is correct. Sure enough, she sees a train rail on the map.

KIA (CONT'D)

I have to get down there.

Kia looks around her, trying to find the train tracks. She doesn't see anything, so she uses the map and continues walking on the side closest to where she heard the train.

KIA (CONT'D)

This mountain has got to come down at some point.

She marches on, determined to get out the forest.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Meanwhile, the search party is unsuccessful. They call out names but the results are still the same.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

On Kia's end, her leg start shaking, clearly fatigued.

Just then, she hears shouting in the distance. Some faint voices that get louder and louder as she walks. Kia hears shuffling, from what sounds like multiple footsteps. She ducks behind a tree and hides there until she sees who these people are.

SEARCH PARTY

Isiah! Moose! Remi! Kia! Can you hear us? Are you there?

Kia pokes her head out from behind the tree to see a group of people carrying flashlights, rope, and other tools with them. They even have a dog sniffing around.

NONI (V.O.)

Do you guys have any luck yet? Did you find them?

Kia recognizes her mother's voice through the static of the walkie talkie.

SEARCH PARTY

(into the walkie)

No, we haven't found anything yet. Still looking, we did find a book though if that means anything.

Before the person could finish, Kia's shouting:

KIA

Help! Help! I'm here!

Kia runs out from the tree and heads to the search party.

KIA (CONT'D)

I'm Kia! I got lost and my family is lost.

The search party gathers around her.

SEARCH PARTY

Kia, are you okay? Are you injured?

KIA

I just have this bear scratch on my leg. But it stopped bleeding.

SEARCH PARTY

Where's the medic? Get the medic over here.

The medic heads to the front of the group.

SEARCH PARTY (CONT'D)
She said she got scratched by a bear.

As the medic attends to Kia's injury, the leader of the search party continues to ask some questions.

SEARCH PARTY (CONT'D)
Where your father and brothers? Are they okay?

KIA
I don't know. We separated but I know where they last were. My dad's leg is badly hurt, it kept bleeding and it looked like he lost a lot of blood.

SEARCH PARTY
Do you know where they're at?

KIA
They were supposed to be somewhere over here.

She points at a spot on the map.

KIA (CONT'D)
That's where I last left them but they aren't there. I think I might have an idea.

SEARCH PARTY
Are you sure to walk?

KIA
Yeah.

The search party hands her a flashlight.

SEARCH PARTY
Lead the way.

When the medic finishes bandaging her up, Kia stands up and walks ahead of the group.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The search party closely follows behind Kia. They use their flashlight to look for any clues. The dog sniffs around tugging at the leash. The DOG WALKER follows them.

It keeps pulling, nearing some kind of tree. At the base of the tree, are ripped pieces of fabric covered in blood.

The search party use their flashlight to inspect further.

DOG WALKER

I think we found something.

SEARCH PARTY

She did say her father's leg was injured. This could be his blood.

The head of the search party examines the forest floor with their flashlight until he sees a trail of blood.

KIA

I think I know where it leads. We should follow it.

The dog walker follows the trail of blood, and the dog soon catches on. Everyone else follows closely behind.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Isiah, Remi, and Moose all sit in the cave bored.

MOOSE

Look, I made this stick man.

Moose lifts up his invention for everyone to see.

REMI

How'd you do that without breaking it?

MOOSE

Lots of spit.

REMI

Ew.

MOOSE

Water, duh.

ISIAH

Moose you did not waste our drinking water making that.

MOOSE

The extra canteen was still full!

Isiah and Remi roll their eyes. Just then, Remi's stomach growls.

ISIAH
You're hungry too huh?

REMI
Yeah, too bad you threw all the
snacks out.

ISIAH
I already told you already we
couldn't risk it.

MOOSE
Yeah, whatever.

A beat.

MOOSE (CONT'D)
I bet Kia still has some snacks.

ISIAH
Wait, did you guys hear that?

REMI
The last time you asked us that,
there was nothing there.

ISIAH
No, shh. Listen.

The boys quiet down. Amongst the cackling of the campfire,
they hear voices yelling in the distance.

MOOSE
It sounds like people.

REMI
Shh!

Remi and Moose crawl to the entrance of the cave and place
their ears out. They hear a faint:

SEARCH PARTY
Isiah! Moose! Remi! Can you hear
us?

REMI
Dad, it sounds like someone's
looking for us.

ISIAH
Really? Do you see them?

The boys wait a while until they see footsteps protrude from
the clearing.

They see a dog walking with a group of people and the dog looks like it's headed straight to the cave. Next to the dog, is Kia.

MOOSE
Dad! It's Kia!

ISIAH
What? Let me see.

The father struggles to reposition himself to crawl to the entrance, but he eventually makes it.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
Oh my God. Finally. Boys, hurry, help me up.

Remi and Moose do as they're told and aid their father.

ISIAH (CONT'D)
C'mon. Let's go.

Remi and Moose trip over their father's weight, clearly exhausted, not having as much strength as they had a couple hours ago. But they manage to prop him up and walk to the search party.

REMI
KIA! Over here!

The search party follows their voices, and runs to them.

KIA
Dad! Remi! Moose! Are you guys okay?

REMI
Are you okay?

They all hug.

KIA
Yeah, yeah I'm fine. Daddy, how's your leg?

ISIAH
I'm managing. I'm so glad to see you safe.

SEARCH PARTY
Alright, we'll need a stretcher.

One member of the search party quickly runs back to the medic to see if one was brought with them.

SEARCH PARTY (CONT'D)

What about you boys? Hurt anywhere.

MOOSE

No, but I'm hungry.

The leader of the search party chuckles.

SEARCH PARTY

Of course. Here's some water and snacks. That should hold you off until we're safely back down.

The leader re-directs his attention to Isiah.

SEARCH PARTY (CONT'D)

How you doing man?

ISIAH

A part from the gash in my leg, I think I'm pretty okay.

SEARCH PARTY

You were strong today, I know your kids look up to you.

ISIAH

Actually, it's me that looks up to them. They're the heroes of the day.

Isiah gives a short nod and small smile as he looks at his kids eat.

SEARCH PARTY

Let's sit you down so I could look at your leg in the meantime.

The leader gestures to the first aid kit, and its given to him. He opens it up, and begins cleaning Isiah's injury.

INT. TRAIL WELCOME CENTER - LATER

Kia, Moose, and Remi walk in to the trail center, looking beat-up and exhausted. The search party escorts them with Isiah on a stretcher.

Park Ranger #2 is the first to see them. Noni's head lays on the desk. He nudges her and she jolts up. She looks at the door and sees her family walking in.

NONI

My babies! Oh, Kia, Rem, Musa. How are you guys doing? Are you all okay?

She attacks them with hugs and kisses. She pulls away and inspects them.

NONI (CONT'D)

Huh? Are you guys alright?

REMI

Yes Mom, we're fine. Just, tired.

NONI

Where's your father?

Remi points behind them. Noni sees runs to him.

NONI (CONT'D)

Oh, Isiah! What happened?

She kisses him on the lips then all over his face.

ISIAH

Just a little bump Noni.

He gives her a small smile, but his wife's eyes are wet with tears.

NONI

Don't you ever scare me like that again, okay?

She kisses him repeatedly until she think he's had enough. She goes straight to Park Ranger Harris and gives her a hug-which catches her by surprise.

NONI (CONT'D)

Thank you for helping my family.

PARK RANGER HARRIS

Of course, it's my job.

She briefly hugs her back then pulls away. Noni walks back to her family and talks to them.

The search party leader heads to the park ranger and they discuss the next course of action to take.

Ambulance sirens are heard in the distance but it gets nearer. Eventually, everyone walks out to meet the truck.

EXT. TRAIL WELCOME CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Paramedics help load Isiah up into the back of the ambulance. Noni climbs in and motions for her children to come in as well, but a medic gestures "two".

REMI
Kia you go.

KIA
Are you sure?

REMI
We've been with Dad all day. Trust me.

Remi nudges his sister and she climbs in the back.

Park Ranger Harris steps up and tells Noni she'll accompany the other kids to the hospital.

The ambulance takes off, and the sons wave good-bye. After sharing some last few words with the head of the search party, everyone disperses. Park Ranger Harris leads the kids to her car and they all hop in.

INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

On the way to the hospital, Park Ranger Harris turns on the radio and talks with Remi and Moose about their hiking trip.

PARK RANGER HARRIS
Oh, by the way I found a book during the search.

REMI
Is it Moby Dick?

PARK RANGER HARRIS
Yup.

REMI
That's my book! Oh my god, I totally forgot about it.

The park ranger chuckles.

PARK RANGER HARRIS
It's all good. Good thing I kept it. You know I never really read that book in full? What's it about?

Remi begins recapping the entire story to her.

INT. AMBULANCE - CONTINUOUS

On the way to the hospital, Noni holds Isiah's hand while Kia lays with him on the stretcher, cradling her as if a baby.

ISIAH

I'm very proud of you today.

KIA

(barely audible)

Thank you.

ISIAH

And I was thinking...that camp you wanted to go to?

KIA

Yeah.

ISIAH

You can go.

Kia gets up to look at her father with wide eyes.

KIA

Really?

ISIAH

Yup. When we're all healed up we'll buy you a new suitcase and some new bedsheets to prepare.

Kia's smile widen.

KIA

Thank you daddy!

She leans forward to give him a hug. She looks at her mother, who smiles back at her and winks.

END.