

Bone Cold
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FLARE TO WHITE
BLUE:

EXT. SNOW FALLING - DAY

Slowly the white becomes white blue halos around snowflakes,
against black sky.

Dead trees surrounding the deep snow-covered clearing.

Title fade in:

BONE COLD

Tree branches high in the sky, snow falling against black
sky, silent.

A little closer.

Midpoint of snow falling in front of dead trees.

A little lower, snow falling in front of trees.

Dead bushes in deep snow, just barely visible, snow falling,
silent

Snow falling on stream, WHISPERS of water. Frozen bushes.

EXT. SNOW COVERED CLEARING - DAY

Lower still, snow falling in front of trees.

CU trunk of tree in snow, roots disappearing into ground,
snow falling, silence.

CU snow falling on rocks.

A little closer.

Deep untouched snow on ground, snow falling, tree trunks
disappearing into snow in the distance, silent.

A little bit closer.

CU WOMAN'S DEAD LEFT HAND IN SNOW

Wedding band on cold gray flesh.

Lifeless, motionless.

Snowflakes fall gently against cold flesh.

Closer...

...then...

...fingers twitch...

...then...

...no motion...

...until...

...hand suddenly vanishes beneath the snow, leaving only a hole.

Where did it go?

The snowdrift EXPLODES and ALICE, early 20s, naked, rises up from beneath the white, as if breaking water and coming up for desperate air.

But she is not yet breathing!

Her eyes are closed during this entire event.

She grunt/coughs in guttural subvocal.

She rears up further, her arms almost leaving the ground, heaving up toward the sky.

But then she falls back down, catching herself by her hands.

Head hanging down, hair indistinguishable from bark, branch, leaves, or moss, Alice's body convulses as it learns again how to breathe.

She figures breathing out and sucks in great lungfuls of air.

Exhales in a cloud of breath.

Gasps in and out, her body trying to make up for the past several minutes of no air.

She pushes with her other arm, rises a few inches and collapses back into the snow.

Rocks onto her side.

Curled into a fetal ball, hugs her knees close.

Panting, catches her breath.

With crusty inexperienced difficulty, her EYES OPEN.

A hand that does not respond well, yet tries to shade her eyes against the glare. It helps somewhat.

She shakes her head in frustration.

Claws at the snow, tries to find purchase, traction.

She shoves herself into a semi-sitting position.

Finally manages to roll onto her knees, exhausted, starved, deprived.

Rocks back, balancing on bent knees and cold ankles.

Panting from effort.

She holds up one hand.

Stares at it like it's an alien thing.

Fingers curled, frozen in place.

She claws at it with her other hand.

Tries to unbend her fingers and get them to work.

She manages to get her fingers to bend but they are still twisted and unresponsive.

She convulses as if she's about to vomit.

Hurled forward, she catches herself.

Three strong convulsions, but they are dry heaves. Nothing but pain and tears.

The heaving stops.

Out of breath, she stares at the snow beneath her.

She grabs a handful of snow, shoveling it into her mouth.

She grabs more and more, both hands working feverishly to shovel more snow - anything to fill her stomach.

The shoveling slows. Mouth and chin covered with snow.

Finally, she stops and leans back.

Closes her eyes, face still upward.

Snow falls on her face.

She feels it in silence.

Breathing calms down.

She brings her hands up, arm muscles finally responding.

Hands against her chest, above her breasts.

Hands slide up her neck.

Fingers across collarbone.

Fingers up chin...

...cheeks...

...past her nose...

...covering her eyes.

She rests this way, hands over eyes. Won't look.

Then her hands fall away.

Her eyes are open. Clear.

She looks around, now with purpose.

Painfully raises a knee, dragging herself up to a standing position.

Clumsy. Swaying. Not entirely balanced.

Almost falls, but recovers.

Straightens up.

Hesitancy turns to confidence.

She is standing unassisted.

Takes a step.

Trips over her own feet.

Falls into the snow.

Wrestles to her feet again.

Snow decorates half her body, but she doesn't care.

Must stand.

Must walk.

With more care, she takes a step. A smaller step.

She doesn't fall this time.

Takes another step.

Good, good. She nods.

This should be easy.

Takes a third step.

Goes down again into the snow with a SQUAWK.

Springs back up, hair crazy sideways. Ferociously not going to fall this time.

Takes a deliberate, exaggerated step.

Takes another.

Takes a third.

Nailed it.

She looks up, squares her shoulders, confident enough to walk without watching each foot.

She steps away.

Just out of her vision line, something small SHIMMERS golden in the distance.

Her LEFT FOOT comes down, slow and unsure.

Her RIGHT FOOT lifts up, slow and unsure.

She puts her RIGHT FOOT down in front of her LEFT FOOT.

She steps again, slowly lifting her LEFT FOOT, coming down in front of her RIGHT and then her Right FOOT lifts and drops down in front,

Her LEFT FOOT lifts and comes down, more sure this time.

Her RIGHT FOOT rises...

FLASH CUT:

...RIGHT FOOT steps down into a tree root sticking up. Tangled in.

BACK TO:

...RIGHT FOOT steps onto the root in a slightly different way. Entangles her.

She crashes down, falling into the snow.

She rolls back and up.

Scotches away from the root.

Examines her foot. Massages her ankle.

Unharmed.

Over her head, again, there is the distant SHIMMERING object on the ground. Closer than before.

She stands up, brushes the snow off her face, her body.

She tries stepping with her right foot.

It doesn't hurt.

She continues on.

EXT. TREE - DAY

Alice steps, holds onto tree, looks out, looks down.

Will her feet continue betraying her?

She steps away from the tree as her foot comes down, then she pulls her whole body back.

She turns her face into tree, leaning, whole body curling into it, head tucking down.

She tries again, this time slightly throwing her body forward into her first step.

She takes another unsure step.

Steps away from the tree.

EXT. SNOW COVERED CLEARING - LATER

She walks on, slow, weak, wobbly steps. Hugs herself.

She passes by something SHIMMERING in the snow. Closer still, past her shoulder.

Again, she doesn't notice.

Alice walks, each step surer than the last one, picking up pace as she grows into the rhythm of the movement.

She walks by trees and fallen branches.

Hesitates.

Gingerly, she tries to pull some of the branches free, maybe to act as warmth.

But the branches don't come free that easily.

After a short struggle, she lets go of the branches. They swish back and forth in the cold air.

Except one branch, which she half-heartedly drags with her. But she's almost not conscious of the branch, as if the only reason she still holds it is that she has forgotten to drop it.

To her side, in the distance, again there is a SHIMMERING OBJECT.

She walks by a short bush that has a few bright red berries on it. These berries stand out for being bright red in an area that is so silver/grey/monotone.

Alice ignores the berries as she walks by.

She trudges on, the branch she drags wagging in her wake.

She clears some trees, and ends up in a more open space.

She hesitates in this open space.

Looks down.

Only now seems to notice she is still dragging a branch.

Lifts it to inspect it.

Just then...

CRACK

In the relative silence of the forest around her, this single CRACK is like a gunshot.

She looks around.

CRACK

The tree branch falls from her hand.

Silence...

...then a DRAWN-OUT CRACK...

...punctuated by an even louder CRACK.

But where is it coming from?

Alice looks around.

The ground beneath her feet drops and tilts. Only half an inch, but that's enough.

Windmills her arms to regain balance.

Looks down.

CRACKING and SHIFTING of ICE under her.

The ground tilts again in a different direction.

She drops to all fours.

Dark water spreads over her fingers and knees.

Her shoulders roll forward as both forearms sink through the cracked ice.

Water rushes over her hands, her knees, her feet.

There is a final CRACK as the ice gives way.

Alice drops BENEATH the surface of the ice, so suddenly, she has no time to do anything to help herself.

The surface settles.

She is gone.

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

Alice sinks, bubbles rising as she descends.

The water is black and she sinks away.

She looks upward.

The surface seems impossibly far away, covered in white ice, and having no texture other than white.

She moves her arms.

Kicks her feet.

Now she understands how to swim.

Air still bubbling from her, Alice frog-swims back up through the dark water.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Quiet section of frozen river.

The woods are silent and deep above it.

Deep beneath the ice, there is a MUFFLED THUMP.

Another THUMP.

A section of ice BREAKS UPWARD and Alice's hand bursts out from the water.

Claws at the surface of the ice.

More ice breaks.

Inch by agonizing inch, Alice drags herself out of the frozen water.

She rolls on the ice, soaked and steaming. Lies on her back, face upward. She can't believe she's still alive.

Her breath fires in and out of her. White exhalation in the icy air.

On all fours, she drags herself away from the broken ice.

Stops to catch her breath.

Beneath her, she hears another CRACK.

Alice scrambles like mad to reach the river bank.

EXT. RIVER BANK - DAY

She reaches the bank, the snow on ground, the solid surface.

She collapses.

Fingers claw at the solidness beneath her.

She kneels, forehead against the ground. Eyes closed.

Alone in this space, Alice shudders to herself on the bank of the ice-covered snowy river.

Calms her breathing.

Calmer, calmer.

Opens her eyes.

On top of the clean snow in front of her lies a SHINY SKELETON KEY.

She stares at this strange artifact.

She looks around. Did someone leave it here?

No one is in sight.

She looks down at the key.

Innocently, it shines in the snow.

She reaches out, a slow and deliberate hand.

The tip of a finger j-u-s-t touches the key, then draws back.

Alice examines her fingertip.

Nothing bad.

Reaches out again.

Touches the key.

It's real.

Once more, she glances around, looking for whatever person must have left this key.

But there is no one.

Her fingers curl around the key.

She snatches it from the ground.

Holds it close to her chest.

Feels it in her hands. It is real. Solid, metal, and real.

Alice uses her free hand to stand up.

She is still wet and cold and shivering from the cold, but she has a key.

She glances at the river.

That is not the right way.

Turns toward the trees.

Stumbles into the forest.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

One step at a time, she moves through the trees.

There is no path, but at least the ground is clear enough she can walk relatively unhindered.

Both hands in cold fists.

She shivers and shakes as she walks, but she covers ground.

She slows.

Up ahead, something catches her eye.

She breaks into a run.

Trees flash by as she runs.

EXT. CAR - DAY

Alice bursts through the trees.

She stands on a packed-gravel snow-covered road.

But that's not what draws her attention. Not at all.

What draws her attention is the car.

Ten feet away, a silver sedan rests on the side of the road, pulled tidily over.

Chains cover the tires.

She can't believe it at first.

Then she breaks into a run for the car.

She staggers the last few steps, collapses onto the hood.

Real, real, very real.

Still touching the car she staggers around it.

Numbly she scrabbles at the door handles. Her fingers won't work right.

She pauses. Focuses on her fingers. Wills them to start working right.

One by one, her fingers begin to obey. Each one wiggles as she focuses on it.

Finally, she has fine motor control over her hand again.

She wedges her fingers back against the door handle.

This time they seem to work better, but she has to help one hand with the other.

Her fingers curl around the door handle. Her thumb around the latch.

She presses.

It's locked.

Tries again.

Locked? Really?

She yanks on the handle, but it won't open.

Goddammit, this is exasperating.

She checks the next door.

It too is locked.

She walks around to the other side of the car. Door locked.

Door locked.

She can't fucking believe it -- after all this and the doors are locked!

In frustration, she beats on the roof of the car with her fists.

A METALLIC RING as the skeleton key slips out of her closed fist, and bounces off the roof off the car.

It lands in the snow at her feet.

She looks down. What the--

In the snow at her feet, the key is no longer a skeleton key, but a CAR KEY.

She slips down to her knees and grabs the CAR KEY.

She holds it, staring at it in confusion.

Remembers the car.

Struggles to her feet.

Shaking, she tries to insert the KEY, but can't get it into the keyhole. Bounces it a few times.

Her other hand comes in to help steady the shakes.

Closes her eyes. Takes a deep breath. Calming breath.

Opens her eyes.

Tries again. The key slides in.

She tries to turn it, nothing.

She pulls her hands away and breathes on them, rubs them together to warm them.

She tries again.

Now the key turns.

With a CLICK the lock pops up on the inside.

She sighs. Yes!

Pulls the key out of the lock.

Curles her fingers around the handle. This time it works.

The door is still stuck, so she tugs on it.

With a THIN WHINE, the ice seal cracks.

She pulls the door open.

Just before she steps into the car, she stands up straight.

Looks around for someone -- anyone -- nearby. The road is empty in both directions.

She creeps into the car.

Slams the door closed behind her.

She curls into the front seat, panting from the cold.

Looks around at the great white outside from the safety of inside the car.

Finally, it's all just too much.

Silently, behind the glass, Alice SCREAMS.

Fists on the dashboard, she SCREAMS and SCREAMS, but outside the car, there is no sound.

Finally, her head drops to the dashboard.

Alice cries.

INT. CAR - DAY

Her hands in tight fists on the dashboard, Alice cries.

Every few seconds, her cries shift to a scream, but the energy is gone, and these are only remnants.

In a moment, even the crying dries up.

Finally, after a few hitches of breath, Alice stops crying.

She takes a deep breath.

Suddenly aware that there may be useful things in this car.

She turns, tearing through the front seats...

...floorboards...

...under the seats...

...opens the glove box, digs through maps, napkins, a car book. Drops everything to the floor -- this is no good to use.

Remembers that there is a back seat.

Hops up on the seat to check out the back.

A BOMBER JACKET rests in the back seat, chucked carelessly into a corner.

Alice's eyes light up.

Like a snake, her hand reaches out and snags the jacket, yanking it into the front seat with her.

Wriggling clumsily, she pulls it on, and wraps it around herself.

Curled up into a ball, trying to get as much under the coat as possible.

Sinks down into the jacket.

Her breathing slows as finally she relaxes a little.

She breathes in the smell off the jacket leather. This is the real deal.

Her eyelids grow heavy. Her breathing deeper.

Alice falls asleep.

EXT. ROAD - DAY - FLASHBACK

Sun shines on a long straight road. The road cuts through a wide field. Snow on ground, but road clear.

A SILVER SEDAN drives down the road.

INT. SILVER SEDAN - DAY

BEN mid 40's, editor for a magazine in the city, a little scruffy, and very good looking, wearing the BOMBER JACKET, drives.

Left hand on the steering wheel, GOLD WEDDING BAND.

ALICE sits next to him. Dinner dress.

Hands in lap, GOLD WEDDING BAND.

She brings her hands up, blows in them to warm them. Rubs them together. Grins at Ben.

Ben smiles back at her, and she leans into his shoulder, resting her head there for warmth.

Slides her hand under his jacket.

He turns the heat up.

Kisses the top of her forehead.

INT. CAR - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

Alice opens her eyes.

EXHALES, breath visible in the dead car.

She pulls the coat closer. It's not warmth, it's security.

Safety.

She looks down at the coat, then at the GOLD BAND.

She touches the ring gently, rolling it around her finger.

It's marvelous, strange, alien, but familiar.

Big sigh.

She stares at the snow outside...

...the dead trees off to the side...

...the snow covered road...

...the snow coming down.

She closes her eyes for a moment.

As cold as she may be, as alone as she may be, this is nevertheless a peaceful moment.

Her eyelids pop open.

Looks at her clenched fist.

Opens her hand.

The key is now an IGNITION KEY.

She looks up -- yes, this is perfect!

Scoots over to the driver's side.

Slides the key into the ignition.

Takes a deep breath.

Turns the key.

It GRINDS, but does not turn over.

She stops, tries again.

The engine GRINDS again, but still doesn't turn over. She stops.

Nods her head, silently counting...

...three, two, one.

Tries a third time.

EXT. CAR - DAY

The headlights flicker as the car tries to start. The starter GRINDS.

She holds it a little longer than necessary.

The GRINDING shifts down in pitch, and the headlights dim.

She keeps holding it there.

Eventually, the GRINDING alllllmost stops.

She releases the starter.

INT. CAR - DAY

Alice stares out of the window, tears rolling down her cheeks.

She tries again.

This time there is nothing. Not even a solenoid click. The key turns without any effect at all.

She stares at the key in the ignition.

Stares at the heater dial. Turns the knobs. No effect.

Bangs on the heater controls.

Moves the air vents, she wants them to work.

Tries the IGNITION KEY, again.

All in vain. Nothing.

The car is dead.

She chews on this thought a moment.

In a frenzy, she re-searches the front seats...

...between the cushions...

...under the seats...

...sifting again through the papers and junk that spilled out of the glovebox.

Nothing.

She jumps into the back seat.

Desperately searches there.

Especially checking under the seats -- front and back...

...between the cushions...

...running her hands between the cushions and the back rest.

Nothing.

She sits back and stares out at the cold world.

EXT. SNOW COVERED ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Driver's door opens.

Bare foot touches the snowy road.

Her second foot touches down.

Alice, wearing the bomber jacket, now stands, facing the cold.

Squares up her shoulders.

Looks down the road in one direction.

Looks in the other.

Not sure which way to go, but...

...picks a direction and walks.

Behind the car...

...in the opposite direction...

...a low bush bears bright red berries.

EXT. SNOW COVERED ROAD - DAY

Alice's eyes are clear.

She squeezes the coat around her as she walks.

Looks down at her feet.

Bare feet pushing through thin snow on the gravel road.

She taps one foot with the other.

Satisfied, she nods.

Looks up and around her.

Trees as far as she can see.

Looks back along her path.

The car is long lost in the distance.

Shrugs.

This is her path, now.

Continues walking.

EXT. DEADFALL - DAY

Alice's feet slow, slow, come to a halt on the snow covered road.

Alice in shock. She can't believe what she sees.

She stands in front of a huge DEADFALL OF TREES, completely blocking the road.

Branches tightly entangled. A solid mass.

She paces back and forth in front of it, checking out its limits.

It is too wide to go around.

She contemplates it, hands on her hips.

Something catches her eye inside the deadfall.

She steps closer, squinting into the depths of the tangle.

Gets down on her hands and knees.

Reaches in with both hands, prying apart the branches.

The brush parts.

She pushes in more.

Pushes her head deeper in, out of view.

EXT. A HUGE GRASSY PARK - DAY - FLASHBACK

A bright spring day, flowers and trees and grass all around, a pedestrian bridge and lake in the distance, benches scattered around.

On the grass is a lovely picnic blanket. Half-eaten food, half-drunk wine.

Alice kneels on the blanket. Smiling. Playful jade sundress.

Her hands are over her eyes. Wedding band.

Ben's hands cover her hands. Wedding band on his hand, too.

He leans in, kisses her on the cheek.

She giggles silently.

Ben stands. Open-necked shirt, pants.

Runs off.

Her hands still against her eyes, Alice counts down -- not out loud, but silently to herself.

Finishes.

Her hands drop from her face. Her eyes are filled with mischief.

She looks around.

Ben is nowhere to be seen.

She stands. Takes a few hesitant steps. Still looking.

No Ben. Trees, open park, people playing in the distance.

She looks at a nearby copse of trees. At their feet range a group of shrubs large enough to hide a man.

Walks to it.

Circles it.

Ben's not there.

For a moment, her face clouds. But then she shakes it off.

Looks across the park.

The pedestrian bridge catches her attention. There's a section of it behind which a person could hide.

She smiles broadly. Of course that's where he would hide.

Steps over closer.

A group of children run across the bridge.

Alice is momentarily distracted.

They move on.

She resumes her stalk.

Closer to the bridge.

She is certain he is there. Confident.

Behind the side of the bridge crouches Ben.

Alice steps around and spots him.

He raises his hands -- ya got me!

She reaches a hand down.

He takes it. Rises up to her.

Strokes the hair back from her forehead and kisses her.

They both won that one.

She reaches up and leans him back against the bridge wall.

Pulls his hands up over his eyes.

She kisses him on the cheek, then runs off.

Smiling, he starts to count.

Back at the copse of trees, Alice kneels and creeps into the brush.

She edges deeper, deeper.

Closes her eyes, smiling.

Nothing happens. No Ben, nothing.

She stays that way for several seconds.

Finally, her expression changes from fun to consternation.

She opens her eyes.

EXT. DEADFALL - DAY

She is back in the deadfall.

Backs away, confused.

What did she just see?

Out on the road, she slumps into a sitting position.

Her hands shake.

She brings them up to her face. Covers her face.

Tries counting backward, silently, just like in the vision.

Drops her hands from her face.

She's still in the snowy wasteland.

Tries again, hands over her face.

Counts.

Peeks out.

Still here. Still cold. Still alone.

She closes her eyes. Covers her head with her arms, and bows her head against the weight of the world.

FADE TO WHITE:

EXT. SNOW COVERED ROAD - DAY

Alice walks, coat pulled tightly around her. Having to backtrack has cracked her.

Head down.

Cheeks lined where tears had run.

EXT. CAR - DAY

The car sits alone beside the snow covered road. Only the sound of a thin lonely wind. The road stretches away behind it.

In the distance, a figure appears on the road. It's Alice, staggering back to the car.

It's a long hike.

She stops in front of the car, stares at it.

INT. CAR - DAY

She collapses in the driver's seat, closing the door.

She shakes her head slightly as she looks out the windshield, then she leans over and lays her head down on the lifeless cold steering wheel.

She doesn't know what to do, she wants to be anywhere but where she came from.

Drifts slowly to sleep, eyes close.

EXT. CAR - DAY

Snow falling softly on car.

FADE TO:

INT. CAR - DAY

Alice wakes up with a start. Remembers key.

She pulls out the IGNITION KEY from bomber jacket pocket,

She looks down at it, her fingers curl tightly around it.

She closes her eyes tighter, maybe something will change.

Opens them.

No change.

She stares at the key. Yes, it's the same key.

Alice sighs.

Tucks the key back in the jacket pocket.

Looks outside and takes a deep breath.

Time to try the other direction.

EXT. SNOW-COVERED ROAD - DAY

The car door stuck by ice.

She pushes harder.

It pops open.

A bare foot steps out and just touches the ground.

Alice winces, closes her eyes.

Deep breath.
Steels herself.
Steps out, barefoot onto the snowy gravel road.
Shuts the door behind her.
Walks the other direction.
She passes a low shrub, sporting FROZEN RED BERRIES.
Going the other way now.
Walks the long path until lost in the distance.
Snow falling from sky. Silent and alone.
Alice's head thrown back, eyes closed.
Snow drifts onto Alice's face.
Melts on her cheek.
She sways a little.
Regains her balance.
Opens her eyes.
Continues walking.

EXT. FORK - DAY

The fork is not obvious because of the angle and bushes that partially obscure it.

Alice walks right by the fork without seeing it.

Down the untrodden fork, a small bush on the edge of the path.

On the bush are bright red berries.

Alice sees none of this and walks onward.

EXT. CRINKLY PATH - DAY

The path curves and winds around. Visibility is short because of this.

As Alice walks she peers ahead and around obstructions.

Anticipation and curiosity drive her.

EXT. SNOW-COVERED CLIFF - DAY

She abruptly stops. The road ends at the lip of a cliff.

No bridge. No warning. Nothing.

It drops away to a deadly depth.

She stands, staring at the dead end. Dumbfounded.

Alice closes her eyes.

EXT. SUNNY CLIFF - DAY - FLASHBACK

Alice and Ben stand on the edge of a cliff overlooking the gray Pacific.

Her head leans against his chest, her arms around his waist.

Ben pets her hair.

They watch gray whales in the water, out in the distance.

Their faces glow with awe. A wondrous and magical sight.

Alice hugs Ben more tightly. She is happy in his arms.

She closes her eyes.

EXT. SNOW-COVERED CLIFF - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

Alice opens her eyes.

Still here. Still cold.

She shivers.

She closes her eyes again, but nothing happens.

No vision.

She tries a third time. Nothing.

Sighs.

Peers over the edge of the cliff, but no option.

Pulls the coat around her tightly.

Takes a step closer to the edge of the cliff.

Takes a deep breath.

Is this the end for her? Is this what she's going to decide is most important?

Her foot shuffles forward. Only an inch, but closer.

She nibbles on her lip. Not sure, thinking about it.

The other foot slips a little closer to the edge.

A few scraps of dirt slip over the edge.

They fall away into the depths.

Suddenly, Alice decides. Nope, this is not for her.

She steps back, steps clear of the lip off the cliff.

Big sigh.

Last glance over the edge.

Alice wraps that coat around her, turns, and leaves.

EXT.FORK - DAY

Alice trudges out from the entrance to the crinkly path.

Notices the fork in the road she missed the first time.

She looks up and down the road.

Who the hell put this here?

Hesitant step down the fork.

Sees the berries.

She looks back the way she came.

Decides to take this path.

Walks in.

EXT. CABIN ACCESS ROAD - DAY

Alice walks down the smaller road, looking left and right.

Hugs the coat tightly around herself.

Passes another bush with RED BERRIES, frozen.

She stops and stares at the bushes.

Kneels down.

Touches the berries, briefly.

Stands up.

Continues to walk.

Stops dead in her tracks, seeing something unbelievable,
something amazing.

Breaks into a run.

EXT. FRONT CABIN DOOR - DAY

A CABIN stands alone in a clearing. The front has a wide
wooden porch and windows on either side of the front door.
There is a porch light, but it is not lit.

Alice's body slams against the CABIN DOOR.

She glances at the porch light. Off.

She suddenly realizes that talking is an option. She tries to
talk. Opens her mouth. No sound comes out.

Rasping, gasping, trying to speak. Almost a voice.

Finally croaks out her first words.

ALICE

Help. . . Help! Help! Somebody!

Bangs on the door.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Is anybody there? Please.

Holds coat closed with one hand, RINGS the doorbell.

Waits.

RINGS it again.

She looks towards the left window,

Waits.

Rings it a third time.

Waits, but still no response.

Alice BANGS on the DOOR.

She BANGS again, over and over.

She listens.

Silence.

Takes a deep breath. Listens again.

Still nothing.

Alice steps back a step, still on the porch.

Critically eyes the door.

Looks at the window on the left. It is HEAVILY CURTAINED.

She takes another step back, eyes still on the cabin.

Steps up to the left window.

Raises her left hand.

FLASH CUT:

Rests her left hand on the windowsill.

Startled, pulls it back.

Catches it on an exposed nail, scratching the back of her hand.

BACK TO:

Rests her left hand on the windowsill.

Startled, pulls it back, but this time, hesitates just before the nail.

Pulls her hand free without scratching it.

Alice holds her left hand.

Examines the back of it.

Her finger traces where the scratch had been, but there's no scratch.

She glances down at the nail.

Back at her hand.

Shakes her head.

One last glance at the front door.

Sighs.

Alice turns and steps off the porch.

Steps away from the cabin.

Watches it for signs of life.

Nothing.

Alice turns and walks around to the left of the cabin.

As she walks, she lightly trails her right fingertips along the wall of the cabin.

It's wooden walls are rough, but not splintery.

She turns the corner of the cabin. Fingers still trailing.

EXT. WEST SIDE OF CABIN - DAY

Alice pauses as she turns to this side of the cabin.

There are a couple windows on the cabin wall to her right.

To the left, there is a space of maybe twenty/thirty feet, then dense woods.

She pauses.

Listens.

Hears nothing.

Presses her ear against the cabin wall.

Listens. Intent.

Still nothing.

She continues her walk along the edge of the cabin.

Fingers brushing along the wood.

She pauses again.

Looks back -- did she hear something behind her?

Eyes scanning, but ultimately, find nothing.

Shakes her head.

Continues following the wall.

Reaches the corner.

Turns.

EXT. BACK OF CABIN - DAY

Alice turns the corner. Her hand still on the wall.

She stops.

Protruding slightly from the back wall of the cabin is a door on a shortie porch.

She glances around.

No one.

Runs to the door.

Pulls on the handle. Back and forth. No luck. It's locked.

Bangs on the door.

ALICE

Please!

BANG, BANG, BANG.

Nothing. No response.

Tries the knob again, but the door won't open.

Alice starts kicking the door and slapping it with her palms, growing more and more desperate.

ALICE

Come on, please!

She kicks the siding next to the door.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Please be home.

(a beat, then)

Please.

Leans her head against the door.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Please.

Takes a deep breath.

Pushes off from the door.

Takes a few steps back to survey the area.

Tries to will the door open.

Suddenly remembers the key.

Reaches into her pocket.

Fishes out the key, but it's back to being an ordinary skeleton type key. Useless.

She doesn't care. She steps up to the lock and taps the skeleton key against the lock. Not hard enough to break it -- just trying to convince it to change.

No luck.

She stares at the key.

It will not change for her.

In disgust, she drops it back into the jacket pocket.

Another idea suddenly hits.

Alice turns and runs back the way she came, retracing her steps.

EXT. FRONT CABIN DOOR - DAY

Alice runs to the FRONT DOOR, SKELETON KEY in hand.

She presses KEY to lock.

Watches the key, expectant.

Nothing happens.

Taps the key against the lock. Still nothing.

Big sigh.

Closes her eyes.

Mentally counts down from five.

Opens her eyes.

Key still unchanged.

Taps the key against the lock three times, deliberate.

Nope.

Holds the key up.

Stares at it. Angry at its betrayal.

She shoves key back in pocket.

Steps off the porch.

Heads left, around cabin. Retracing her footsteps again.

EXT. BACK OF CABIN - DAY

Next to the back door is a window.

Alice approaches the window.

Tries to peek in.

Sees nothing.

Rubs her hand against the glass.

Cups her face against the glass.

Still nothing.

Steps back.

Hands on hips in disgust.

Looks to the left, to the other corner of the cabin.

Fine!

Reaches out with her right hand to trail it along the wall of the cabin.

Reaches the corner.

EXT. EAST SIDE OF CABIN - DAY

This is a parking area, but there are no cars here. A THIN LAYER OF UNBROKEN SNOW evenly covers the ground -- this is not the lee side.

A couple of windows on the cabin wall.

Alice pauses at one of the windows.

Hears nothing.

Tries to see inside.

Sees nothing.

Continues around the cabin.

Bare footprints in the snow.

Turns the corner.

EXT. CABIN FRONT - DAY

Alice returns to the front of the cabin.

Steps out far enough that she can see the whole front.

Looks up.

Sees a high small window. Probably an attic window.

She shades her eyes to look at it.

Raises an eyebrow.

Compares the attic window to the main windows next to the door.

Tries to see if the side of the house has attic windows.

Can't see around the corner.

Alice walks to the right around the cabin, her eyes on the top of the cabin.

EXT. EAST SIDE OF CABIN - DAY

She nearly collides with a LAND ROVER.

Jumps back with a SQUAWK, startled.

The SUV is parked nose-in next to the cabin.

Alice stares at it. She couldn't have been away more than a minute or two.

Steps up to the side window.

Looks inside.

There is nothing in the car of note.

She tries the door.

Locked.

Remembers the key.

Pulls it from a pocket.

It is still a skeleton key. Still useless.

She drops it back into a pocket.

Halfheartedly, she bangs on the side glass of the car.

Both hands on it, she rests her head against the glass.

Stops moving.

Stares.

On the ground, her previous footsteps trail out from under the car, leading to the front of the cabin. Yes, yes, these are her footprints.

She leans away from the Land Rover.

Looks behind it.

Slowly walks to the back of the vehicle.

Looks down at the tires.

There are no tracks.

Alice drops to all fours and looks under the car.

No tire tracks at all.

Only her own bare footprints. Going under the vehicle.

But wait -- she does see something.

As she looks the length of the ground under the SUV, she sees a GLOW from the front of the vehicle. Pale yellow light.

She scoots away from the SUV.

Stands up, brushing snow off her arms and legs.

Looks at the cabin.

The windows are now softly lit from inside. Light filters pale through yellow curtains.

Quietly, she steps toward the windows.

Touches them with only fingertips.

They seem real.

She turns her head.

Listens.

From inside the cabin, through the window, she can hear indistinct VOICES.

Startled, she jumps back from the glass.

She catches her breath, then raises a hand.

Taps the glass.

ALICE

Hello?

Taps louder on the glass.

No response.

She hears an INDISTINCT VOICE from inside the cabin. She pushes her body up against the wall and window to listen,

She hears the INDISTINCT VOICE again.

She bangs on the window. No response.

Fine.

She turns left and runs toward the front of the cabin.

EXT. FRONT DOOR - DAY

She runs up to the front door and bangs on it,

ALICE

Hello? Can you hear me? Please,
open the door

(a beat, then)

Can anybody hear me?

BEN (V.O.)

Yes.

(a beat, then)

...and I'm sorry.

Alice recognizes BEN's VOICE.

Shakes the fuzz out of her memory.

Remembers his name.

ALICE

Ben? Please.

(a beat, then)

Let me in, please. Ben?

BEN

I can't, I can't tell you how sorry
I am, but I love that you're here.

ALICE

I don't know how I got out here,
but please. I...

BEN

I love you.

SOFT LIGHT switches on. Front porch lit up more.

Alice stares into the window, but she can't see past the
curtains.

Turns halfway away.

Light slices her in half -- one side lit, one side dark.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Sun shining through the curtains onto Alice's face as she is
laying in bed with Ben. They are flushed and sweaty, tangled
up in sheets.

Touching each others' faces with fingertips.

ALICE

I love you.

She blinks, remembers.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Oh, I can't believe I forgot until
now!

BEN
What?

She rolls over to the nightstand.

Underneath a carelessly-tossed camisole lies a leather-bound
book.

She briefly scans the cover, then hands it to Ben.

ALICE
Happy birthday.

Hands him the book.

He rolls it in his hands. It's an old book.

Flips it over to the cover. The title: "A Winter's Tale".

BEN
Ah. Your mom finally found your
Shakespeare stash?

ALICE
In the attic.

Ben inspects it.

BEN
A Winter's Tale.

Alice smiles.

ALICE
A masterpiece of bad designs.

BEN
A cascade of bad decisions.

ALICE
None better on Earth.

BEN
What are you telling me, love?

Alice pauses a second, looking at him.

ALICE
That I'm grateful.

BEN
(cocks his head)
Grateful?

ALICE
None of these are things you would
do.

BEN
Wouldn't dream of it.

ALICE
Exactly.
(a beat, then)
So, grateful.

Ben smiles at her.

BEN
I love you, too.

He kisses her lightly on the cheek.

BEN (CONT'D)
Thank you, hon.

BACK TO:

EXT. FRONT OF CABIN - DAY

Front porch. She slumps, hand against cheek, remembering.

Turns back to the door.

Places her cheek against it, lying against the door,
listening for more voices and holding on as if dizzy.

There are no more voices.

She almost speaks, but then stops.

Pushes away from the door.

Heads back to the east side of the cabin.

EXT. EAST SIDE OF CABIN - DAY

Dejected, Alice walks around the corner, jacket pulled
tightly around her.

She stops and stares.

Now there are TWO vehicles parked, the Land Rover and now a GOLD SEDAN.

Alice can't believe her eyes.

She steps closer to investigate the sedan.

Still no tire tracks, but parked over her old footsteps.

She fishes the key from her pocket.

Still an old-fashioned skeleton key.

She steps to the driver's door.

Pushes the key into the lock.

The key does not change.

Big sigh. Of course it doesn't.

Alice drops the key back in her pocket.

She cups her hands around her face and peers into the Sedan through the glass.

The seats and dashboard and floors are empty.

Pulls back from the car.

FLASH CUT:

Alice slams herself against the car. GROWLS in frustration.

BACK TO:

She still stands where she was.

Looks around for anyone near.

No one. Silence.

She steps to the front of the car.

Hands slide over the hood, feeling for warmth.

There is no heat.

Alice sinks to the ground in front of the car.

Reaches up and touches the grill.

CUT TO:

EXT. COFFEE SHOP PARKING LOT - DAY - FLASHBACK

GRILL of GOLD SEDAN parked in front of coffee shop.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Gold Sedan visible, parked in front of the coffee shop.

SARAH, early 40's, behind the counter, wearing a barista's apron over frumpy clothes, and an UPSIDE-DOWN name tag.

Alice walks up to the counter. She wears a well-tailored white professional suit. Carries a large shoulder bag.

ALICE

I'd like a medium coffee.

SARAH

One medium drip. Anything else?

ALICE

That's it, thank you.

Alice reaches into her bag for her wallet.

While sifting through, pulls out

A Winter's Tale. Sets it on the counter with her keys. Continues fishing.

Sarah notices it.

SARAH

Looks like a well-loved copy.

ALICE

It's my husband's. A present.

SARAH

You want it wrapped or something? A friend of mine has a place down the street...

Alice tenses.

ALICE

I've already given it to him.

SARAH

Oh.

(a beat, then)

He has good taste.

ALICE
Yes he does.

Alice watches Sarah intently.

Sarah pours the coffee.

Slides it toward Alice. Alice picks it up and turns away.

SARAH
Thank you!

Turned away from Sarah, Alice closes her eyes briefly.

Recomposes.

Opens her eyes.

Does not turn to Sarah as she speaks.

ALICE
Have a great day.

Alice leaves.

INT. CAR - DAY

Alice sits in the gold sedan, clenching the steering wheel and staring at Sarah through the window of the coffee shop.

ALICE
Her? Really?

She sips her coffee. It's not bad.

But still... she glances back up at Sarah, through layers of glass.

Shakes her head.

Starts the car.

EXT. EAST SIDE OF CABIN - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

Alice crouches at sedan grill, headlights come on suddenly and she jumps, surprised and scared.

Then they're out again.

She stands, freaked out.

Backs away from the car.

Heads toward the back off the cabin.

EXT. BACK OF CABIN - DAY

Alice paces by the back door, but the windows there are still dark.

She passes by.

Eyes the door suspiciously as she passes.

Crosses around to the west side of the cabin.

EXT. WEST SIDE OF CABIN - DAY

The big windows on this side of the cabin are lit.

Alice steps up to them.

Presses her hands against them.

Feels nothing.

Presses an ear.

Hears nothing.

She steps back a yard from the windows.

Suddenly notices that she is CASTING A SHADOW on the wall.

Turns.

Behind her, snugged up next to the tree-line, is a STORAGE SHED.

The shed is about twenty feet from the cabin. Wood walls. Swing door. Grimy window. Light shines through the grimy window.

Alice steps closer to the shed.

EXT. SHED DOOR - DAY

Alice wonders at the door and grimy windows.

Filtered light bathes her face.

The door has no lock. No knob.

She pushes at the door.

It sticks.

She pushes harder.

The door shifts, but sticks again.

Third push is hard.

The door cranks part of the way open.

Light from inside spills on her face.

Feels like a pile of junk on the other side.

Scraped dust on the ground tells a story of long disuse.

She steps in.

INT. SHED - DAY

Moving boxes stacked floor to ceiling.

Above her head hangs a single bare light bulb on a long cord
The bulb flickers and blinks -- a bad connection.

She reaches up to the bulb, but hesitates, an inch away.

The bulb flickers.

FLASH CUT:

Alice's hand touches the bulb and it explodes.

BACK TO:

She still hesitates, adjusting to a slower-touch approach.
She touches it to turn and tighten it.

The bulb explodes at her touch.

She flinches.

Tiny bits of shattered glass fall all around her like snow.

When the sound dies down, she opens her eyes.

The broken socket sparks once -- a deadly warning.

She looks down.

Her feet are black with exposure.

Fragments of broken glass litter the floor.

Carefully she steps out of the glass zone.

At the grimy window.

She tries to wipe it clean with her hand.

Just pushes grime around. No real help. The light coming in is the most she'll get.

She sighs.

Turns to the inside of the shed.

Opens the nearest box.

Papers, papers, coverless books, just junk.

Drops the box to the floor.

Opens another one.

An old white PHOTO ALBUM, bound with a shiny DIARY LOCK.

Some more papers.

She is about to dump this one on the floor, but stops.

Sets this box down with care. Photographs.

Poking from the corner of one box is a bit of fabric.

Desperately, Alice pulls that box over and rips it open.

Just a sample of cloth. Too small to be warming.

She drops it in disgust.

With increasing desperation, she rifles through another box.

And another.

Finally, she gives up. She found no items of clothing.

She leans against the wall.

Slides down the wall into a loose cross-legged position.

Tilts her head back.

Takes a deep breath. Blows it out.

The skeleton key falls out of her pocket onto the floor, with a metallic DING.

She glances down, curious, because that sounded weird.
Picks the key up, closer to her face.
It's only an inch long, and shiny brass.
She cocks an eyebrow, rolls the key around in a palm.
Does not recognize it anymore.
She moves to slip it back into her pocket, but stops.
Her eyes are locked on the floor across the room.
The photo album sits on the floor. Its shiny lock beckons.
She scrambles over the the photo album.
Sits down next to it.
Picks it up.
Looks over the photo album more carefully. There are no markings on it anywhere. Looks at the diary lock.
Brings the key up to the lock.
Looks like it'll fit.
Slides the key into the lock.
Turns the key.
The diary lock springs open, startling Alice.
She pulls the key from the book.
Drops the key back into her pocket.
Glances around, guiltily.
Slowly, she opens the photo album.
It is a WEDDING ALBUM, and the first page features an invitation.
She strokes her fingertips against the invitation.
Turns the page.
The pictures begin.
Pictures of a bride getting ready. Alice is the bride.

Pictures of a groom getting ready. Ben is the groom.

Pictures of them getting married.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Bright sunny day at the lake. Perfect for a wedding.

And there's a wedding! Roughly sixty or so guests. White linens laid out on grass and tables. Flower-decorated arch under which stands a PASTOR and the happy couple.

The happy couple is Alice and Ben.

The Pastor speaks, but there is no sound.

Alice and Ben gaze into each others' eyes, not hearing anything else, not seeing anything else. Just each other.

Their hands held together -- all four.

The rings, bright winking gold.

INT. SHED - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

The ring on Alice's finger is the same ring.

She stares at it.

Her lip wobbles just a little, but then she regains control.

Not the time for crying.

She looks back down at the album.

Pictures of them kissing.

Pictures of a happy couple.

Pictures at the reception.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - DAY - LATER

Alice and Ben dancing their first dance. Spiraling around each other, madly in love, eyes only for each other.

The guests circle the dance floor.

As the song ends, Alice's FATHER steps in, and Ben's MOTHER steps in.

Alice's father takes her for the next dance as Ben's mother takes him.

Alice and her father dance together. He whispers something in her ear and she laughs, then covers her mouth.

He kisses her forehead.

She rests her head sideways against his chest as they continue dancing.

With happy eyes, she watches Ben dancing with his mother.

She closes her eyes.

INT. SHED - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

Her grimy streaked face is a strong contrast to the fresh clean face of a newlywed, but behind the closed eyes, Alice remembers joy.

Eyes open, and takes in reality.

She turns the page.

It's an especially close shot of she and Ben.

As she looks at the picture, the woman's face blurs, shifts, changes, and--

--Alice slams the album closed.

Closes her eyes tight.

Takes a couple of deep breaths.

Opens her eyes.

Sets the album on the floor.

Stands.

Pulls the coat around her.

Steps over the bits of broken glass.

Steps out the door.

EXT. SHED - DAY

Alice bears right out of the shed, heading toward the front of the cabin.

Windows still lit from within, yet curtain-blocked.

EXT. SHED - DAY

Alice stares at the front off the cabin. Critically. Trying to decide if she is willing to take the next step.

Decides. Yes, she is.

Looks around on the ground.

Doesn't find what she's looking for.

Steps back along the driveway.

Checks the brush on the side of the driveway.

Aha! She found it!

Pulls from beneath some brush a LARGE BRANCH. About baseball bat sized.

Hefts it. Yes, yes, that'll do nicely.

Turns toward the cabin.

Steps up onto the porch.

Braces herself.

Shields her face.

Swings the branch against the front window.

The branch bounces off the window, throwing off Alice's balance.

She staggers back into place.

Braces up again, but now more juice to the swing.

Two-handed grip.

Swings harder.

The branch bounces off the glass again.

She recovers.

Swings a third time -- a real good wallop.
Bounce! The branch flies out of her hands.
She winces and shakes the sting out of her hands.
Steps up close to the window.
Runs her hand over the glass while looking closely.
Not even a scratch!
Steps back to reassess this window situation.
Purses her lips. She's going to need something meatier than a branch.
Casts about and spies a rock on the ground, near the house.
Walks over, picks up the rock.
Hefts it.
Yep, this ought to do.
Walks back to the porch.
Pulls back to throw the rock, but stops.
Eyeballs the window suspiciously.
This window played her earlier.
She nods.
Steps off the porch.
Takes several steps back away from the cabin, and a couple steps to the side.
Eyeballs it.
Yep, this is a safe distance in case of trouble.
Hefts the rock again.
Braces her feet.
Cocks her throwing arm back.
Adjusts her aim, and THROWS.
It's a perfect shot, dead-center of the window -- and the rock BOUNCES OFF.

Alice ducks and covers her head, but the rock goes elsewhere.

Straightens up.

Hands on her hips.

Really?!

She walks over to the window.

Still unbroken.

Turns her back to the cabin.

Leans against the glass.

Big sigh.

An idea strikes her.

She reaches into the coat pocket and pulls out the key.

It is back to being a car key.

This confirms her idea.

She pockets the key and steps away from the cabin.

In the driveway, she turns and looks one more time, to make sure she understands her adversary.

Yep. She does.

She turns and continues walking away.

Walks back and away on the driveway.

EXT. FORK - DAY

Alice leaves the fork and turns down the original road.

A bit of WIND starts.

EXT. SNOW-COVERED ROAD - DAY

Wind has picked up. Snow drifting around in the air.

Alone, shivering, and cold, Alice trudges along the road.

Although she pulls the coat tighter around her, it does not seem to be helping at all.

The wind tousles her hair.

EXT. CAR - DAY

The sedan is still in the same place, abandoned on the road.
The car looks dead.

One of the doors had been left open, and snow has piled in
little spots just inside.

Wind has raised snow up off the ground, keeps the air always
full enough to limit visibility.

The road fades off to white.

But then, in the distance, a figure resolves.

Alice trudging toward the car.

As she reaches it, she stops and stares at the open door.

Shrugs -- who cares anymore.

Reaches in under the driver-side dashboard.

Finds a lever and pulls it.

The trunk pops open.

Alice pulls herself out of the car.

Steps over and opens the trunk fully.

Spare tire, random tools, some old shopping junk...

...and a TIRE IRON.

She extracts the tire iron.

Hefts it.

Smacks it into the palm of her hand. Very satisfying. This'll
do quite nicely.

Reaches up to close the trunk.

Stops.

Looks over at the car door still hanging open.

Snow falling around her.

Wind snapping at the edges of the coat and at her hair.

She shrugs. Why be tidy?

Turns and walks back toward the cabin.

The trunk and door remain yawning open.

Snow drifts into the car.

She walks off into the whitening distance.

Snow falls silently on the car and into the trunk.

EXT. SNOW-COVERED ROAD - DAY

Alice trudges back, but now she has a tire iron. Now she looks ready to fuck some shit up.

Wind and a little more snow.

EXT. FORK - DAY

This time, she finds the fork in the road no problem.

EXT. CABIN ACCESS ROAD - DAY

Passes by the red berries.

Fist closed on the tire iron.

Lips tight, face grim, body set to "means business."

EXT. CABIN PORCH - DAY

Alice steps up to the front door.

Raps on the door with the tire iron.

Listens.

Hears nothing.

ALICE

You still in there?

(a beat, then)

You can't keep me out.

She steps back.

Raises the tire iron, targeting the front window.

Stops.

Weighs her actions.

Pulls back a little.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Hm.

She turns and steps off the porch.

Heads to the right, toward the east side of the cabin.

EXT. EAST SIDE OF CABIN - DAY

She rounds the corner of the cabin, from front to side.

Both cars are still next to the house.

She hesitates by the cars.

Considers taking the tire iron to them.

ALICE

Something in these you don't want
me to see?

She stares at the cabin, expecting an answer.

There's no answer.

She steps over to the windows.

Raises the tire iron.

Taps GENTLY on the glass.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I'm not afraid of breaking some
glass.

(a beat, then)

Except I like this cabin.

Steps back, watching the window.

Waits.

There is no response from inside.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Fine.

She turns and continues toward the back of the cabin.

EXT. BACK OF CABIN - DAY

At the back door, Alice taps the tire iron in her hand.
Contemplating the small windows adjacent to the back door.
Experimentally, she taps the tire iron against the glass.
The glass doesn't break.
She shakes her head in disgust.
Of course it doesn't break.
She whacks the glass hard with the tire iron.
Still no break.
She steps back away from the window.
Switches her attention back to the door.
Taps on the door with the tire iron.
Listens.
There is no response.

ALICE

I'm not afraid to do this.
(a beat, then)
We can replace a door.

Waits.
Hears nothing.
Shrugs.
She shoves the tire iron between the door and the jamb.
Every time it goes in deeper, she cranks the tire iron back
and forth.
Wood splinters away.
Chips pile up on the ground at her feet.
Alice continues chipping at the door.
Finally gets a good grip in there. The tire iron sinks in a
couple inches.
She pushes the iron sideways.

The door BULGES slightly.

She backs off a second. Are doors supposed to do this?

Shakes her head. Never-mind -- she's going in!

Pushes the bar back.

The door bulges.

Bulges more.

Finally, the back door creaks and cracks, and then SPRINGS
AJAR.

Alice drops the tire iron and grabs the door with both hands.

Pulls hard.

Although the door resists, she is able to yank it open, after
playing tug-o-war for a few seconds.

Now there is room for her to pass.

She slips inside.

INT. MUDROOM - DAY

Alice has stepped into a MUDROOM. Apparently, the area she
broke into wasn't the original wall of the house. But this
is. Red brick covers the entire wall.

This is impossible! There is no door or doorway. Only a
featureless brick wall.

She runs her hands over the surface.

Feels like brick.

Makes fists and beats on the walls.

Feels solid.

She places both hands against the bricks, as if to open them
through force of will.

Alice GROWLS.

Spins.

Reaches outside the door and picks up the tire iron.

HAMMERS at the brick with the tire iron.

Furious, desperate, relentless, Alice keeps chipping and prying and flailing at the brick.

Chips of brick fly off into the air. Puffs of brick dust fly off into the air.

Alice doesn't stop. She absolutely does not stop.

Tears squeeze out her closed eyes, red dust coats her face, her hair flies about, but still...

...she keeps HAMMERING at the wall.

Finally, her breath heaving from the effort, Alice slows her attack.

With a free hand, she brushes away the loose brick and dust from the wall, trying to push it aside, trying to see how much she got through.

She GASPS in disbelief.

The wall appears untouched.

Chunks and dust of brick coat her face and neck and arms and litter her hair, but the wall is clear of marks. No gouges, no chips, no punctures, no nothing.

She drops the tire iron and it CLANGS to the floor.

Her eyes wide in shock, she presses her face close to the bricks, running her fingertips over everything.

It might as well be a new wall for lack of damage.

She SLAPS the bricks with both hands, palms open, hair flailing, and weeping with frustration.

She tries to scream, but she is so broken by this that the best she can muster is a HOARSE RATTLING CRY.

Her head drops, drops...

...she is giving up.

She shoves herself away from the wall.

ALICE

No!

Alice stumbles out the door, barely staying upright.

EXT. BACK OF CABIN - DAY

The snow has started again. Steady even small flakes filter down.

Alice stumbles off the shortie porch and collapses onto the snowy ground.

Her body heaves with crying.

The cabin has broken her.

ALICE
I... I want in!

She sobs more.

Catches her breath.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Who is she, Ben? Who?

Her eyes search the snow desperately for answers.

ALICE (CONT'D)
How do you know her?

Her mind catches onto an idea, and she follows the thread.

ALICE (CONT'D)
We've been living here since the
wedding. Did you know her then? Did
she know you then?
(a beat, then)
Oh god, do I know her?

She pulls herself to her feet.

Head spinning around, looking wildly in all directions.

ALICE (CONT'D)
How long has this been going on?

She regathers herself and runs off to the west side of the cabin.

EXT. SHED - DAY

The shed stands. Its door is still open. Light spills out, spreading onto the snowy ground, and illuminating flakes as they fall.

Alice stumbles toward it.

She pries the door wider and looks inside.
The light bulb is intact, on, and lighting the shed.
Alice looks down at the floor.
No more shards of broken glass. The floor is clear.
She blinks at this. Who is fucking with her?!
She steps into the shed.

INT. SHED - DAY

The boxes are still set where she dropped them.
The photo album is still on the floor.
She collapses to her knees and picks up the album.
Stares at the cover.
Now there are words on it, embossed. "Wedding Memories"
across the top.
She runs her fingers along the letters.
Along the bottom off the cover are embossed the words "Ben
and Alice."
She runs her fingers across those words.

ALICE
(whispers)
Forever.

She opens the book again.
Sees pictures of herself getting ready, dressing, makeup,
hair.
But the face blurs.
Alice blinks.
Rubs her eyes.
The picture is her again.
She turns the page.
The walk to the altar. Her father escorting her.

But then her face blurs on this picture, too.

Alice squeezes her eyes shut.

Shakes her head.

Opens her eyes.

It's her again.

More pages.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I know who I am.

It doesn't help. Still the photos shift and blur.

In each picture she looks at, Alice's face distorts...

...shifting into someone else, but blurry...

Alice rubs her eyes again.

In the book, the pictures aren't even of her anymore, just a blur.

Alice flips a few pages around, but in each one, the bride's face is a blur.

She stops.

Stares.

In this picture, the bride's blurry face is shifting and changing.

It resolves into Sarah's face -- the barista from earlier.

Alice starts as if she's been stung.

Flips to the next page.

Again, the blurry face resolves ever-so-slowly into Sarah's face.

Alice shakes her head, rejecting this.

ALICE (CONT'D)

No, no, no.

(a beat, then)

I know who I am.

Alice slams the photo album shut.

Turns it to face her.

Rubs her hands across the cover inscription.

Fingertips trace out the names "Ben and Alice."

As her fingertips pass over the words, however, the lettering changes to "Ben and Sarah."

Her hand snaps back as if she'd been bit.

ALICE (CONT'D)
I'm me. This is mine.

The lettering shifts back to "Ben and Alice" but it doesn't remain static. The letterforms snake a bit as if the letters really want to say "Sarah."

Alice closes her eyes and squeezes the album against her forehead.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Mine!

Abruptly, she stands.

ALICE (CONT'D)
I know who I am!

She steps over to the door.

Looks past the door at the cabin in the distance.

Swings a foot up and KICKS THE SHED DOOR OPEN.

Steps out.

EXT. WEST SIDE OF CABIN - DAY

Fiercely, she stands as snow drifts down around her.

Faces the cabin, defiant.

ALICE
I know who I am!

She steps up to the cabin. Faces the silent window.

ALICE (CONT'D)
This is our life Ben, right here.
How could you do this to us?
(a beat, then)
You ripped us apart.
(MORE)

ALICE (CONT'D)
(a beat, then)
You hurt me!

She stares at the photo album in her hand.

Looks back at the silent house.

Her face twists in rage and frustration,

Alice SCREAMS.

ALICE (CONT'D)
I know who I am!

She hurls the photo album at the window.

The photo album shatters right through the glass and flies inside the cabin.

Alice, startled.

Then, as if in reflex, every window of the cabin EXPLODES OUTWARD.

Alice spins, covering her face and head.

Glass fragments rain all around into the snow.

Finally, the sound dies down.

The last shard bounces to a stop.

There is no sound.

With caution, Alice peeks out from under her arms.

Stands up straight.

The cabin windows are all blown out.

She looks down and around her.

The snow is peppered with holes where the glass fragments penetrated and drilled down. But her body was a lee, and behind her, there are no impact tunnels.

She turns back to the cabin. It is dark and dead.

Slowly she reaches into her pocket.

Draws out the key, but her fist is still closed over it.

She stares at her closed fist, wary and unsure.

Opens her fist and the key is now a HOUSE KEY.

EXT. FRONT CABIN - DAY

Alice steps up onto the porch. Her feet are black and crusted with wear and tear and cold.

She pauses before stepping onto the porch.

The front window is also shattered out. Glass litters the porch in sharp fragments.

She picks her way through the glass, each footstep with care.

At the front door, she stares at the knob.

Pulls the key from her pocket. Still a house key.

She slides the key into the lock.

It fits perfectly.

She is wary. Cautious.

Turns the key and the lock also turns smoothly.

With a click, the door unlocks. Opens a few centimeters.

Alice pulls the door open.

Inside the cabin is dark, but a distant light flickers.

She steps inside.

INT. CABIN FRONT ROOM - DAY

The ceiling is high in this part of the cabin. The floor bare wood and CREAKS as she walks across it.

A LAMP LIGHT flickers on a long narrow entry table.

Alice steps past the light, sparing it a brief glance.

Passes by the couch. A chair.

The architecture is open and she moves into the open kitchen.

INT. CABIN KITCHEN - DAY

The kitchen is separated from the front room by an island.

Alice steps toward the island, taking in each thing she sees:

A broken plate on the floor under the sink.

Knife block knocked sideways, knives strewn across the counter.

Alice moves further around the island and sees:

Drawer pulled partially out.

Dark wet handprint on the island near the open drawer.

Dark streaks of blood on the floor under the drawer.

She takes another step, revealing more.

Blood streaks lead to thicker blood streaks.

Thicker streaks lead to a puddle of blood.

Puddle of blood leads to a body lying in the puddle. A woman's body, lying on its side, faces the wall away from Alice. The body is dressed in the same WHITE PROFESSIONAL SUIT as Alice wore in the coffee shop.

The back of the head and the back of the neck is wet with blood, still wet on the floor. A deep gash oozes.

Alice reaches out.

Ever so gently...

...turns the woman over.

The body flops toward Alice, face up.

It's SARAH, freshly murdered.

FLASHCUT:

INT. CABIN KITCHEN - DAY

Shadows on the wall. Two people clinched, fighting.

Sara SCREAMING.

Shadow wields a tire iron. Swings it down.

CRUMP of metal against flesh.

Blood splashes against wall.

Lamp is smacked against the wall.

BACK TO:

INT. CABIN KITCHEN - DAY

Behind Sarah's body lies a bloodied tire iron -- identical to the one Alice has been using. Blood and bone fragments and hair cake it -- this was without a doubt the murder weapon.

Sarah's left hand slides down across her bloody chest and comes to rest against the floor.

On her finger is a wedding ring -- an identical match to Alice's.

Alice holds up her own hand to compare rings, but there is no longer a ring on her finger. No indication that there ever was a ring on her finger.

Alice gasps and backs away from Sarah's body.

Sarah's body rolls back, hiding its face from Alice.

Reflexively, Alice touches her own face, not sure what to do.

Shakes her head, shakes it off.

She stands. Closes her arms around herself.

Notices blood spatters on the floor leading away.

They spattering is smeared by the occasional shoe print.

Alice hesitates, then...

...follows the blood trail, one step at a time.

INT. CABIN FRONT ROOM - DAY

Alice steps through the darkened room with care, following the trail of bloody footprints.

The lamplight continues flickering.

She spares a glance around the room as she moves deeper into the cabin interior.

INT. CABIN HALLWAY - DAY

Alice stops and stares.

On the floor lie two bodies, one a man and the other a woman.

The woman lies FACE DOWN, crumpled into the corner. The man lies FACE UP. In his right hand is a compact 9mm pistol -- a Taurus Millennium or such. His left hand is wrapped around the stretched-out neck of the plaid shirt worn by the woman.

His chest, neck, face, and arms are all cut and slashed. Each cut has bled. Protruding from his chest is the hilt of a KITCHEN KNIFE, buried deeply into his chest, directly into his heart.

This is what killed him.

Alice kneels in front of him, her face a mask of shock.

ALICE
(whispered)
Ben...?

She follows his arm to the dead woman.

Alice shakes, terrified.

She reaches out, her hand quaking.

Fingers curl over the dead woman's shoulder.

Alice rolls her away from the wall.

She falls the rest of the way, dead eyes staring upward.

It is ALICE.

Two bullet holes close-grouped in her chest.

A third bullet hole through the throat.

Alice WHIMPERS at what she sees. Her breath comes short.

She lets go, but the dead Alice doesn't roll away like the dead Sarah did. Dead Alice remains in place.

Alice turns to Ben, but can't keep her eyes off her own dead face.

Finally, drags her eyes away, and back to Ben.

Reaches up and touches his cheek.

FLASHCUT:

INT. CABIN HALLWAY - DAY

Two shadows spin in the hall. One hanging onto the other by the collar.

Knife striking up and down.

Alice and Ben GRUNTING mid-fight.

Bouncing off the wall.

Knife finally sinks in deep.

Two rapid SHOTS

They fly apart, but Ben's grip is not broken.

Alice SCREAMS.

Third SHOT.

BACK TO:

INT. CABIN HALLWAY - DAY

Alice dressed like the corpse. Plaid shirt. Ponytail.

Bullet holes in shirt. Bullet hole in her throat.

Blood spattered across her face and chest.

She hugs herself and rocks back and forth, WHIMPERING.

She touches Ben's dead cheek.

No response.

She turns to her own corpse.

Trembling hand smooths the bangs away from dead eyes.

ALICE

I don't understand. We had...

(a beat, then)

...we had the kind of love everyone wants. We had it.

She scoots closer to Ben.

Leans in and hugs him.

His hand remains clenched around the shirt collar

Lips at his ear, she whispers.

ALICE (CONT'D)
I don't understand.
(a beat, then)
Why didn't you love me?

No response from Ben.

Alice's breath hitches, but she steadies it.

Pulls back to look into his eyes. She is settled.

Alice stands. She looks at the two bodies on the floor.

Sighs deeply -- now she understands.

She turns back toward the kitchen.

INT. CABIN KITCHEN - DAY

Alice stands above Sarah's body.

She is no longer cold, no longer afraid, no longer shaking.

Kneels down.

Rests a hand on Sarah's back.

ALICE
I'm sorry. It was... it was just
us. It was perfect.
(a beat, then)
But I didn't know about you. Not
until I met you. And then...
(a beat, then)
And then I don't know what
happened. It just happened. I came
here and it just...
(a beat, then)
I'm so sorry. I am. I don't know
what to say.

She stands.

Surveys her murderous handiwork.

Turns and backs into the front room.

INT. CABIN FRONT ROOM - DAY

The flickering light welcomes Alice back into this part of the cabin.

She steps backwards, slowly.

ALICE

I know I shouldn't have. I... I
knew it was wrong.

She shakes her head.

ALICE (CONT'D)

It's regret, isn't it? Loss and
regret?

(a beat, then)

But I understand. It was all my
fault. I did this. Me.

She is closer to the door. From where she stands, she can see Sarah's body in the kitchen, and Ben's and her body in the hall.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I don't understand how I could
have...

(a beat, then)

...how...

She hesitates.

The flickering lamp on the table, and next to the lamp lies the copy of *The Winter's Tale*.

ALICE (CONT'D)

A tale of regrets. Of mistakes.
Of...

She pauses.

Her eyes narrow.

One hand snakes out, covers the book.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I'm keeping this.

She shakes her head, battling two opposing feelings.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I... Am I...?

Her fingers grip the book tightly.

She glances at it. Then back at the bodies.

Can't decide...

...then...

Lifts the book to her chest.

ALICE (CONT'D)

This is mine.

(a beat, then)

If it's love, does it matter? Does it matter if not everyone feels the same way?

She picks up another book from the table.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I'm... I'm keeping this, too. This is mine. This should be mine.

She looks from the books in her hands to the bodies at the other end of the cabin.

Her expression changes from contrition to suspicion.

ALICE (CONT'D)

You. You did this to me.

(a beat, then)

Ben and I could have been happy. We were happy.

(a beat, then)

But no, no, you had to interfere. You had to come out here. You had to find me.

Alice has turned back to delusional Alice. Crazy Alice.

ALICE (CONT'D)

All of this...?

She slowly spins, arms wide.

ALICE (CONT'D)

All of this is your fault. Yours. Not mine.

(a beat, then)

Love is not a mistake. Not the way I do it.

(a beat, then)

Your fault.

She turns toward the front door, only a couple yards away.

EXT. CABIN PORCH - DAY

Alice steps out onto the porch, clutching her books, clutching her version of reality.

She looks off the porch into the virginal snow.

To the left, TWO SETS OF BARE FOOTPRINTS lead away from the cabin.

They continue about twenty feet, then fade away.

Alice nods.

ALICE

Me too. I deserve this. After all
this, I deserve this.

Alice steps to the edge of the porch. As if on a diving board, she holds out her arms, holding a book in each hand,

She looks to the featureless gray sky. Bits of snow begin to fall.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I deserve this, too.

She closes her eyes.

Steps off the porch.

Falls forward.

Alice slams face first in the snow. The white powder bursts up around her point of impact.

As the sparkling snow settles...

EXT. SNOW-COVERED CLEARING - DAY

Half buried in the snow is a dead gray naked hand. A woman's hand.

Wedding ring on her finger.

Beneath a layer of snow, her face is half buried, too. One eye visible amidst the cold cold snow.

But then...

...the eye opens.