

A TOPIARY
by
Shane Carruth

NOTE: For a couple reasons this screenplay does not adhere to the one-page/ minute convention. 1. Although most scenes are incredibly brief, there are more than twice as many of them here than an average script resulting in more description and scene headings. 2. Many objects in this story don't have a real-world analogue, again resulting in more description.

The first act, involving the adults in the early 1980s, is paced somewhere between a traditional narrative and the "previously on" section of a TV show (assume there is a "CUT TO" between every action). It will run at about 30 seconds a page, taking 30 minutes of screen time. The kids' story runs at 40 seconds a page for another 2 hours of screen time.

1 INT. 1979 VOLKSWAGEN VANAGON - DAY

A family is traveling on a busy six-lane highway. The camera is locked down in the back facing forward for the duration of the scene. We can see the top of the heads of three KIDS seated in the back seat.

Beyond them MOM is turned toward the kids and struggling with putting a straw in a JUICE BOX. DAD drives.

MOM

...I would take the bus down, um, after school- the city bus- and I would go by myself-

KID ON THE RIGHT

Which one is it?

Mom has to duck down to see the far off skyline to the van's left. She points out a specific building as she talks.

MOM

See the one with the red trim all the way down? The one right next to it. Granddad's office was about halfway up. See all the floors?

Mom passes the juice box to the KID IN THE MIDDLE and begins filling a small TUPPERWARE DISH with Cheetohs.

MOM

And that's where I would go and look out while I did homework or you know...and there is a glass elevator that your Aunt Willa and I-

KID ON THE LEFT
(impatient)
Mom...

Without a look Mom instantly realizes his meaning and adjusts an air conditioning vent to point slightly more in his direction, testing it with her fingers.

MOM
Feel that?

KID ON THE LEFT
Not really...

MOM
Well, I don't know what to do, Justin. I think you'll be okay.

A white PICKUP TRUCK quickly changes lanes in front of the van. The IMPACT is deafening and forces everything in the van forward immediately. Cheetohs and luggage and toys are airborne, but it's not over.

The van is now perpendicular to the road so we appear to be moving sideways. Dad is standing on the brake and fighting the steering wheel as we spin out of control.

DAD
No! No! No!

Mom has her right hand on the roof to steady herself and the other arm flails behind her in an impossible attempt to shield the kids.

After two seconds there is a final impact and this one bends the cabin in, decreasing the interior by half. The passengers are slammed left. Bits of glass fly everywhere.

When things settle, Dad is the only one still remotely in the same spot. They are all completely limp.

Seconds pass. Through the shattered windshield we can see cars pulling over. A few people run towards the van.

2 EXT. HIGHWAY - DUSK

Miles of HEADLIGHTS are backed up on the road behind the accident scene in the foreground. The flashing lights of several EMERGENCY VEHICLES swirl quietly. No one scrambles.

The van is bent around a pylon of an overpass.

3

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Acre Stowe (30), wearing an orange vest over a Department of Transportation uniform, lays down a SURVEY TUBE (the kind used to tally up how many cars drive over it) across the road.

He sets up a COUNTING MACHINE on the roadside, placing a CIRCULAR PIECE OF PAPER under a needle that marks, like a seismograph, how heavy or light traffic is. He spins a dial and the paper begins to rotate.

He waits for a car to drive over the survey tube, making sure it is registering on the paper. It is. He replaces the machine's cover.

4

INT. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY

SEVERAL COUNCIL MEMBERS and their AIDES sit behind a LARGE ARCHED ROSTRUM. It's business as usual. Rapid-fire:

ASSEMBLYMAN

...coming up on...1pm. Looks like we'll pass the deadline in a couple hours and I don't foresee any new bids coming in...so I move we settle this up with the parties concerned. D.H. Fowler constructs the new First Response facility so how do we uh, go about assessing, uh...

LOBBYIST

We've proposed a list of building sites-

ASSEMBLYMAN

Sure, but certainly the contractor doesn't dictate where to place...uh...the- I mean Bob help me out...

Acre is laying out papers in front of his boss, ROBERT (50s), at a side table.

ROBERT

No, sir. We'll take the available fatality and injury indexes from DMV and from those make a recommendation, submit it-

ASSEMBLYMAN

Okay, so city makes the choice on the location- that's amenable. I thought I was losing my grip here.

5 INT. CIVIC CENTER/ MAP AND SURVEY ROOM - DAY

Acre works a calculator like a trained pianist.
He calibrates a COMPASS (not magnetic, the other kind).
The compass PENCIL draws a large arc across a MAP.

ACRE (OFF SCREEN)
...pretty lucky really, usually it's in
the middle of a field or on top...

6 INT. CIVIC CENTER/ LARGE COMMON OFFICE - DAY

A THICK REPORT: pages flip open to a XEROXED MAP. A finger
points to a circled area just north of the intersection of two
streets.

ACRE (CONT'D)
...of a sewage plant, someplace you-

The Lobbyist stands in front of Acre's desk, which is right
next to the hallway entrance. Acre drops another 10 copies of
the report in front of the Lobbyist who is still craning his
neck at the original.

LOBBYIST
Lamar and...?

ACRE
Cheek-Sparger.

LOBBYIST
It's not one of the proposed building
sites.

ACRE
No, that's between you guys and the
Assemblyman. This is the actual center.
The ideal spot, you know, according to
survey-

LOBBYIST
Okay, and we pick the closest from our
list.

ACRE
You got it.

7 INT. CIVIC CENTER/ HALLWAY - DAY

Acre walks down the large hall. Lobbyist and his associate, LOBBYIST #2, wait for him on a bench just outside the office.

Acre peruses a folder they have just handed him.

LOBBYIST

Absolute latest motor vehicle fatalities for end of quarter. Just published yesterday. Much more curr-

ACRE

There's only five incidents here. I did seven years of records.

LOBBYIST

Should be easier on you, right?

ACRE

Why would it be easi- are saying only use this? Okay, um....

Acre leads them through a mini-lecture at a wall-mounted map of the city:

ACRE

Deaths on suburban streets, up here on the turnpike, downtown. Seven years of records, hundreds of incidents-

LOBBYIST

And you find the center.

ACRE

Yeah, well a weighted average. More accidents on the highway here, it tends to pull the center in that direction. It gets compli-

LOBBYIST

Really interesting.

LOBBYIST #2

And now to be even more current...

Acre's frustration grows.

8 INT. CIVIC CENTER/ LARGE COMMON OFFICE - NEXT

Defeated now, Acre stares down at his desk across from the lobbyists.

LOBBYIST #3
...we take one high traffic month and one
month for winter and work from those.
That way we get a true representation-

ACRE
You need to hire an outside firm.
(beat)
Let them submit it to city. This is
biased.

LOBBYIST #2
Or why not use the survey team already on
payroll-

ACRE
You can't cherry pick records and expect-
it's not our mandate.

LOBBYIST #2
-and save the taxpayers some money? How
is that biased?

ACRE
It's not our mandate!

12 INT. CIVIC CENTER/ MAP AND SURVEY ROOM - DAY

Acre works a calculator like an angry pianist.

He draws arcs on a wall map, just like before.

Slumped in a chair in front of the map, he holds his head in
his hands. He suddenly grabs the folder and heads to...

13 INT. CIVIC CENTER/ SMALL CRAMPED OFFICE - NEXT

Acre enters, addresses INTERN #1 and INTERN #2:

ACRE
You guys can do a weighted average on
landscape, right?

14 INT. CIVIC CENTER/ MAP AND SURVERY ROOM - NEXT

The interns' work is all over the table. Acre sits across
from them.

ACRE
What'd you get?

INTERN #1
Near Commerce and Farm Road 112.

INTERN #2
Lamar and Cheek-Sparger.

ACRE
(to Intern #2)
See, that's what I got.
(to Intern #1)
How'd you get yours?

INTERN #1
What do you mean? You want to see my
work?

ACRE
Please, yes.

INTERN #1
(sheepish)
My original answer was Lamar and what you
guys got.

Acre instantly loses faith in him.

ACRE
Do you know how to do this?

15 INT. CIVIC CENTER/ HALLWAY - DAY

Acre walks towards the office again, lost in thought.
Lobbyist waits for him on the bench, alone this time.

Acre gives up. He scans a pen over the city map that Lobbyist
is holding against a wall.

ACRE
How about here. You guys like this area,
yeah?

LOBBYIST
You'll write it up?

16 EXT. THE INTERSECTION - DAY

The corner of Lamar and Cheek-Sparger is urban and well
trafficked, probably hit its peak 30 years ago.

Acre steps off a CITY BUS looking for something along the
ground. He finds it:

He crouches near a WATER MAIN VALVE jutting up from the sidewalk. By the time the bus pulls away, he's comparing the lookup number on the valve to his map/ paperwork:

ACRE
326FR7....326FR7.

Rolling a MEASURE WHEEL along the ground to count out feet he starts at the valve and walks north.

He comes to a stop and turns 90 degrees, facing the street. He counts out 5 feet, putting him in the middle of the road. He marks the spot with a QUARTER and studies the asphalt for a brief second. It looks normal. He's forced out of the street by an oncoming car.

He waits to get back to the spot but another car comes. Then another. Growing upset:

ACRE
Come on...come on. Come on!

17 INT. CIVIC CENTER/ SUPPLY CLOSET - DAY

A TRIPLICATE FORM is being filled out on a TYPEWRITER. The words "Utilities and General Repair Requisition" scroll past.

Carriage return down to the words "ASPHALT OVERLAY". An "X" goes in the box.

Acre stands at what we now see is a discarded typewriter on a cluttered shelf. He rips out the form, tears off the top WHITE and YELLOW copies and throws them in the trash.

The remaining PINK copy goes under the wheel of a chair, getting creased into the carpet as he rolls it back and forth.

WOMAN (OFF SCREEN)
Oh my goodness.

18 INT. CIVIC CENTER/ STREETS MAINTENANCE DIVISION - NEXT

A woman, JOHNNY (40s), stands behind the counter studying the pink copy.

ACRE
I know, it was crammed under my desk.
When they cleaned out all the asbestos a
while back-

JOHNNY
Did you see the date?

ACRE
What?

She shows him.

ACRE
Jesus. Johnny, you got to help me.

19 EXT. THE INTERSECTION - DAY

Lamar is completely closed off northbound. A ROAD CREW is repaving a 20 by 20 foot piece of road that has been dug up. An orange DETOUR SIGN directs cars away.

A hand grabs a CAN OF SPRAY PAINT out of a nearby toolbox.

Acre shakes the can as he walks up the street.

Crouching at the spot he found earlier, he sprays a circle on the street all the way around himself.

He stands, satisfied with this accomplishment. It takes a few seconds for that to turn into "what now?"

From one of the cafe chairs on the sidewalk he stares at his painted circle, waiting for inspiration. It strikes and he jumps out of his chair.

Using a PAINTING WAND (for spraying straight lines) he begins drawing lines radiating from the circle.

5 lines are complete. He holds his arm parallel to each of the last 3 lines as he references his notes:

ACRE
...two passenger coupe versus Ford Pinto,
single driver...79 Volkswagen Vanagon,
family of five...three passengers
in...Chevy...Chevy Caprice. Okay.

He lowers his arm, again uncertain about what to do next.

He stares at the circle from the chair on the sidewalk.

20 INT. SANDWICH SHOP - NEXT

He reads the order from a slip of paper:

ACRE
Three tuna salad, two turkey and swiss,
two reubens, six bags of chips.

SHOPKEEPER (50s) moves off to fill the order. Acre watches,
hesitant and feeling stupid. He finally gets the nerve:

ACRE
How long you been- had the shop?

Shopkeeper's response is off camera and out of our earshot,
but Acre's face shows it's not unusual.

ACRE
No, no onions. How'd you settle on the
location?

WIDE: We see the whole shop from behind the counter. Through
the windows we see we are facing the exact center of the
intersection of Lamar and Cheek-Sparger.

MATCH CUT TO:

21 INT. PAINT STORE - NEXT

Exact same framing. We now face the intersection from a
different corner. It's quieter. Acre stands across...

SHOPKEEPER 2
...the facade came down in 74 with the
fire and they put up red brick instead of
the stone and I've never gotten used-

MATCH CUT TO:

22 INT. CLOTHING STORE - NEXT

Same framing. Another corner.

SHOPKEEPER 3
...the first branch, the main store
really, started with textiles. You
couldn't buy a full garment, you'd have
to-

MATCH CUT TO:

23 INT. TIRE STORE - NEXT

Last corner.

SHOPKEEPER 4

...doesn't come in till three or four most days.

(beat)

Like I say, he'd know more than me.

24 EXT. THE INTERSECTION - NEXT

Acre collects the work crew's lunch trash. Scanning around, his eyes land on a pole-mounted power TRANSFORMER on the corner. He turns to the opposite corner and sees another TRANSFORMER.

ACRE

(to the Foreman)

Anyone call power and light before you broke ground?

FOREMAN (OFF SCREEN)

We're not that deep. Just an overlay.

Acre forms another question in his head but doesn't get it out before we cut to...

25 INT. CIVIC CENTER/ STREETS MAINTENANCE DIVISION - DAY

Johnny hands the PINK FORM back to Acre's waiting hands. He searches and takes a pen to it:

ACRE

...a gravel base reconstruction they're saying now, not an overlay.

JOHNNY

Have the foreman call power and light then.

He hands the form back to her.

ACRE

Of course.

26 EXT. THE INTERSECTION - DAY

Acre speaks to a city ELECTRICIAN at the man's truck. Another man is up in the bucket at the end of the truck's boom with his hands in the transformer's control box.

ACRE
(referencing transformers)
Are these new maybe? They look new. No?
Are they the same as-? Yeah. You guys
have to come down here a lot?

27 EXT. THE INTERSECTION/ ROOFTOP - DAY

Acre, having a brown bag lunch, looks down four stories at the intersection, now repaired and free of the work crew.

Studying the spray painted circle from this height, he places his hands over it and then splays them outward to trace imagined bits of energy shooting from it. "fwoosh".

Something catches his attention on one corner. Then another. Then another and another.

28 EXT. THE INTERSECTION - DAY

He crowbars the lid off a manhole. Then another. Then another and another.

Filthy and exhausted, he climbs out of the last manhole with a flashlight and sits on the ledge, despondent. He has cordoned off the immediate area with ORANGE CONES and ROPE.

29 INT. CIVIC CENTER/ ACRE'S OFFICE - DAY

People are heading out, passing Acre's desk. He keeps his head down in paperwork.

COWORKER
Going to lunch?

ACRE
Uh...meet you guys there.

After leaving, Coworker ducks his head back in:

COWORKER
You know where we're going?

Acre looks up, feigning stupidity:

ACRE
Where you going?

30 EXT. THE INTERSECTION - NEXT

In a stairwell of one of the corner buildings he eats Chinese noodles and watches the intersection through the third floor window.

ANOTHER DAY. Has pizza leaning against a newspaper dispenser.

ANOTHER DAY. Gyro sandwich. POURING RAIN keeps him in the restaurant staring out the window.

ANOTHER DAY. Coffee under the awning at a fruit stand. More rain.

ANOTHER DAY. Clear skies. CAR TIRES drive over a SURVEY TUBE in the street. We hear the CLICK of the counting machine.

PAN OVER to the street perpendicular where tires run over another SURVEY TUBE. CLICK.

ACRE studies the circular paper TRAFFIC GRAPH he has just retrieved from one of the counting machines. He shuts the machine's lid.

He pulls out a TRAFFIC GRAPH from the second machine. He compares the two graphs. Nothing. He jams them in his back pocket.

31 INT. SANDWICH SHOP - NEXT

Acre stares at the menu, eyes glazed.

SHOPKEEPER
Pork tenderloin.

Acre waves it off.

SHOPKEEPER
Turkey with cream cheese.

ACRE
Had that.

He turns to the intersection while Shopkeeper continues naming sandwiches.

32 EXT. THE INTERSECTION - NEXT

He stands at the curb with a bag of chips, looking down at the painted circle, listless.

The noise of a HELICOPTOR pulls his attention to the sky for a moment. Then, looking up the street, he sees his BUS coming.

He takes another glance upwards, following the progress of the helicopter as it nears a GLASS HIGH-RISE a mile away. A brief INTERPLAY OF SUNLIGHT reflects a STARBURST PATTERN off the building, blinding Acre for a moment.

ACRE

Jesus.

He winces, throws his trash in a bin, and boards the bus.

33 INT. CITY BUS - NEXT

He drops into his seat as the bus pulls away. Still recovering, he takes a few long blinks and presses his eyelids.

He slowly takes his hand away but keeps his eyes shut. He turns his head subtly like he's following something on the back of his eyelids.

His eyes open and shift back and forth, trying to contain the afterimage drifting against the SEATBACK in front of him. His hands reach out to it.

His fingers push into the BEIGE VINYL tracing a quickly fading impression of the STARBURST.

CUT TO: For 4 seconds the screen is BLACK except for one SHORT VERTICAL BLUE LINE on the far left. It emits a SLOW FLARE. This break is called a SPECTRUM. We'll see others.

34 EXT. THE INTERSECTION - DAY

A CAFE TABLE is dragged to the curb.

Acre sits at the table staring up at the far off Glass High-Rise, determined. He's got a NOTEBOOK and LUNCH BAG.

A WINDOW WASHING PLATFORM hangs near the top of the building.

Acre checks the skies around him, but no helicopter today. Eyes back on the building:

The platform slides across to the next window. Midway, it reflects a STARBURST for an instant.

Acre squints and immediately begins drawing distinct lines on his notebook, pressing his eyelids once to refresh the image.

Standing now, he holds his SKETCH of the Starburst in his hands, rotating it until he's satisfied. He brings the sketch

out of frame, revealing two things: he is at the Painted Circle now and the sketch is a perfect match for it. Almost.

Comparing the two, he sees that the Sketch has an extra spike that the painted one doesn't.

He SPRAY PAINTS the SIXTH SPIKE on the street and looks to where it points: the GLASS HIGH-RISE. We now see that he's cordoned off the area with orange cones, forcing traffic around him.

He stands, trying to piece all this together. Suddenly his face shows disappointment at not noticing before...

He pulls the two TRAFFIC GRAPHS from his back pocket. After rotating them, he sees they have the same pattern of spikes jutting out from a common center. He isolates one of the traffic graphs and does a comparison by counting spikes:

ACRE
(on the street painting)
One, two, three, four, five, six.
(on the traffic graph)
One, two, three, four, five, six...seven.

Of the graph's 7 spikes, 5 are short (the ones that match the original spray painted lines). 2 are LONGER and DARKER with one pointing at the High Rise and one pointing back over Acre's shoulder. He turns in that direction: *what are you pointing at?*

Acre speaks excitedly on a payphone. Meanwhile, he uses his fingers to compare the length of the two dark lines on the traffic graph. The High Rise line is about twice as long as the other.

ACRE
No, I only need the distance, line of sight. Campanile Tower. From the corner of Lamar and Cheek-Sparger. I don't know. I don't know- there's a water main, can I read you the lookup? I have the lookup. The six digit- the lookup!

Growing impatient, he notices a nearby TAXI stopped at a light. He yells at the driver:

ACRE
Hey! Are you free?

With Acre in the back seat the taxi comes to stop at the base of the High Rise. He reads the meter, "1.12 MILES", and writes this on the traffic graph next to the High Rise line. Next to the shorter dark line he writes ".55 miles?".

ACRE

Great. Let's go back.

36 EXT. THE INTERSECTION - NEXT

At the painted circle he orients himself with the short line on traffic graph. He sets out walking in that direction with the measure wheel as the cab pulls away behind him.

37 EXT. STADIUM PARKING LOT - NEXT

Counting to himself, Acre brings the wheel to a stop at an unremarkable spot in the huge vacant lot that seemingly extends to the horizon.

He stares forward scanning the horizon.

Crouching, he inspects the ground and the surrounding area.

He sits staring forward, flicking pebbles that he's lined up in a row beside him. Before him in the distance is a busy highway overpass. Near that a construction CRANE slowly rotates to deliver its payload. Acre's RADIO suddenly squawks:

RADIO

Acre, you got an ETA on return, over?

ACRE

Yeah, I got two more junctions. There's traffic down here so give me twenty minutes, over.

He flicks another pebble. A STARBURST glints off the windowed cabin of the crane. It's identical to the traffic graph.

Acre jumps to his feet. He smacks his hands together. I knew it!

ACRE

(whispering)
I have that one!

He picks up the traffic graph off the ground and turns back to the crane as if he might present it as proof.

There is ANOTHER DIFFERENT STARBURST from the crane.

Acre is puzzled. After a moment he breaks the trance:

ACRE

Oh.

He scavenges the area for a suitable rock and begins marking the ground with the starburst pattern. At one point he closes his eyes briefly to remember the shape.

He stands in the center of the marking. It has two spikes. One points back in the direction that he came from, the other about 90 degrees off that. Acre aligns himself with the second one and starts walking with the measure wheel.

38 EXT. FIELD - NEXT

He brings the wheel to a stop.

He paces back and forth, anticipating, continually scans the cityscape on the horizon.

RADIO

Acre, how far off are you on-

In one swift move Acre reaches to his belt and switches off the radio, never taking his eyes off the horizon.

Far off in front of him a TRAIN crosses his view. From it a starburst flashes.

ACRE

I have that one...and...

A second later another different glint flashes from the same spot.

ACRE

...okay.

He carves the new starburst into the grass and dirt with his boot.

39 EXT. RURAL COUNTY ROAD - DAY

Acre waits, leaning against a telephone pole. He grimaces as a flash briefly lights his face.

ACRE

One one thousand, two one thousand, three one-

Another bright flash. He starts the timer on his watch.

40 EXT. WATER TREATMENT PLANT - DAY

Another flash hits his face. He stops the watch timer.

He opens a map and marks it with the new starburst. We can see 10 other penciled shapes on the map each connected to the next with a line. He connects the latest to the series. His path has been almost a COMPLETE CIRCLE, although warped.

He shakes a spray paint can and finishes spraying the starburst on the ground. He looks in the direction the line is pointing, disappointed.

41 EXT. THE INTERSECTION - DAY

We follow Acre as he pushes the measure wheel towards the original painted circle where it comes to a stop.

ACRE

No, no, no, no, no...what?

He stares up at the Glass High Rise, holding the traffic graph in front of him, mind racing. Then he remembers something:

He pulls the other traffic graph from his back pocket, and jams the first one in his front pocket.

Using the new traffic graph, he aligns himself, and walks off in the opposite direction with renewed energy. He exits frame on the left.

DUSK

Acre pushes the measure wheel into frame from the right and slows to a stop near the original spot having come full circle again.

He throws the wheel across the road in frustration.

ACRE

Why?!

42 INT. ACRE'S APARTMENT/ LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Acre sits on the floor surrounded by STACKS of MANILA ENVELOPES and RESUMES. He seals one envelope and has to raise it over his head to lay it on a desk.

MATCH CUT TO:

43 INT. OFFICE BUILDING ENTRANCEWAY - DAY

Acre has his arm raised in the same way, only now he is sliding the envelopes into MAIL SLOTS.

With a stack under his arm he sprints off across the street.

44 EXT. ANOTHER BUILDING ENTRANCEWAY - NEXT

Through a glass-paneled door we see Acre finish the sprint. He knocks on the door and shows the stack of envelopes to someone inside who BUZZES him in.

MATCH CUT TO:

45 INT. FOURTH FLOOR OFFICE - DAY

What was a glass-paneled entranceway door is now an interior glass-paneled office door. Acre, in a suit and tie, shakes hands with INTERVIEWER (40s) as they exit the private office into a large common area filled with desks.

An ASSISTANT leads Acre to an empty desk near a wall of WINDOWS looking out over the street.

ASSISTANT

...and we're glad to have someone who knows the in and outs with city of course. I'm anxious to hear your thoughts once you've seen it from this side.

As they move close to the window Acre tries to look down at the intersection but is disappointed to see the view blocked by an AWNING that extends from the building.

He looks to Assistant for a moment.

46 INT. STAIRWELL - NEXT

Acre races up a flight of stairs.

47 INT. FIFTH FLOOR OFFICE - NEXT

This floor is laid out the same as the fourth. A sign on the wall reads "Brighter Decade Advocacy Group". Luckily the SECRETARY is busy with someone so Acre is able to move past her desk and towards the windows overlooking the street.

This time he can see the intersection.

At Secretary's desk:

ACRE

Hi. I...I'm checking to see if you received the resume I sent.

DAYS LATER

Settled in at his new desk overlooking the intersection, Acre works the phone. As he speaks his eyes dart from the intersection to a small draining HOURGLASS.

ACRE

...can you do me a favor? We have a client that did some construction on South Rory. Now, I've...

The hourglass sand completely drains. Effortlessly, he flips it over and opens a nearby NOTEBOOK to two pages, each with an INCOMPLETE TRAFFIC GRAPH DRAWN BY HAND. One is entitled "PEDESTRIANS NORTH/SOUTH" and the other "PEDESTRIANS WEST/EAST".

He sees 5 people waiting to cross to the north side of the intersection. He writes "5" at the edge of the appropriate traffic graph and then using a RULER adds a line that radiates from a common center with the other lines.

He sees 3 people crossing to the west side, marks the other graph and closes the notebook, never missing a beat on the phone:

ACRE (CONT'D)

...talked to Sarah and she's talked to filing but for whatever reason they're permits are coming up lapsed. I did. By courier, but it hasn't been included on-

48 INT. ACRE'S NEW APARTMENT - NIGHT

His things are still in moving boxes. He hurries with a pot of macaroni to a makeshift desk at the window where the hourglass and notebook lie. He flips the hourglass, moves to write in the notebook and looks out the window to the intersection below:

People loiter on the corner, cross the street, laugh, part ways after a show.

49 EXT. THE INTERSECTION - DAY

Standing again at the painted circle, he orients himself with the new hand drawn traffic graph on which we see TWO SPIKES have emerged.

He sets out with the measure wheel.

50 EXT. COASTAL SAND DUNE - DAY

He spray paints a starburst among the beach grass.

Using a sheet of TRACING PAPER placed over a map, he marks his progress: warped circles like before.

51 INT. BRIGHTER DECADE/ ACRE'S DESK - DAY

He works the phone while putting the tracing paper into his notebook over the map that shows his original path around the city. The warped circles are identical to the ones on the map except that they are rotated at the center a few degrees. With each pair, one circle has an indentation and the other a protruding bump.

ACRE

Sarah, did someone from County Clerk's office call you? Okay, well they say they still haven't recei...right, I talked to Chase. He's the one that...right. Okay. Who's John Billings?

He flips the hourglass and turns to a page marked "BLACK BIRDS" in the notebook.

Using his finger he counts birds perched on the telephone wire on the north side and then on the west side of the intersection.

He marks the traffic graphs with "7" and "19", and then flips to the next page entitled "BICYCLES (parked)". He turns to a half full BIKE RACK down at street level and across the street to another where a man is unlocking and removing his bicycle.

52 INT. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY

A meeting is in session just like the last time we were in this room. Only now Acre sits with a BUSINESSMAN at a table facing the COUNCIL MEMBERS.

BUSINESSSMAN
...only the provision is identical to what
was used in Scottsdale and Tampa where
they...

Businessman looks to Acre for support.

ACRE
Hadn't zoned-

BUSINESSSMAN
-had not zoned in advance.

They have clearly developed a natural rapport. Businessman
leaves it to Acre and turns to an AIDE sitting behind them for
some papers.

ACRE
The city deregulates the reclaimed land
and Westram doles out home starts and
commercial space until the 10 year
expiration- or 15- depending on-

This is just another day at work.

53 INT. BRIGHTER DECADE/ ACRE'S DESK - DAY

Acre puts the latest warped-circles-on-tracing-paper into his
notebook and flips through 10 others. They all have the same
warped circles, each rotated slightly. Always on the phone:

ACRE
Sarah, it's Acre. Okay. I spoke to John
Billings and Bridgette McMurtry and
according to them it hasn't come across
their desk. I just spent an hour with
filing and they have no record of it.
Now...is there any possible way that-

CUT TO: The phone is in its cradle. He holds the closed
notebook upright on his desk with both hands, thinking.

Abruptly, he swivels his chair around and begins a slow pan of
the office. He focuses on each person for a moment before
moving to the next.

One COWORKER looks up and notices.

COWORKER
What?

Acre waves him off with a shake of his head. Nothing.

When Acre has come full circle, he carefully places the notebook back on the desk and looks down at it.

MATCH CUT TO:

54 INT. TRAIN STATION TICKET COUNTER - NIGHT

Acre stands with his head down across from ATTENDANT behind the counter. He carries a SACHEL.

ATTENDANT
...departs at...5:50 and 6:40.

Acre looks up.

ACRE
The 5:50.

ATTENDANT
Roundtrip?

ACRE
Yeah. No. One-way.

55 INT. TRAIN - NIGHT

He stands, staring at the landscape speeding past.

He leans his hand against the frame of the window.

MATCH CUT TO:

56 INT. APARTMENT BUILDING/ PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

Acre now leans his hand against the doorframe of an apartment. Amanda (20s) answers, wearing an untucked EMT uniform. We hear conversation (men, women) and laughing inside. She watches him for a second, apprehensive:

AMANDA
Hey.

ACRE
Is she here?

Again she just watches him, considering her answer. She turns her head inside:

AMANDA
Jessica!

Acre and JESSICA (20s) pull back from a long embrace. She's happy to see him but clearly cautious.

ACRE

There is something...happening, um...you know, now that I'm here I feel pretty stupid, but...I need...I was going to see if you wou- who are those guys?

She turns back to the apartment for a moment:

JESSICA

Just...work friends.

ACRE

(suspicious)
Uh huh.

Any kindness leaves her face.

JESSICA

Are you kidding?

Acre shakes his head: no, why?

FURTHUR DOWN THE PASSAGEWAY

Full volume mid-argument:

ACRE

...just promise me! Promise me you won't let me finish a goddamn sentence, all right?! I wouldn't know what the hell was happening-

JESSICA

(mimicking)
I don't know, Jess, it's so far, it's five hours away...I don't want to limit your options!

ACRE

And I was right wasn't I?! You proved that!

...

She tries to smack his face, but it's too awkward to land right.

57 INT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT/ BOOTH- LATER

Jessica is slouched over with her head in her hands. Acre rests against the wall. They are talked out. Paper coffee cups litter the table. Sleepily:

ACRE
I need you to come back with me. I need
you to see something.

58 INT. HIGHWAY/ AMANDA'S CAR - LATER

Acre rides passenger, falling asleep. Amanda (right, not Jessica) drives.

59 EXT. GAS STATION/ AMANDA'S CAR - LATER

Acre pumps gas. Amanda is now in the passenger seat looking at the maps and tracing papers in his satchel.

ACRE
There's just no other way to get to
that...spot...that's safe. You know?

He ducks his head down to see her through the back windows. He's awkward. Her attention stays on the papers.

ACRE (CONT'D)
...but I'm going to slow down right before
the bridge so you- as much as I can
anyways...so you can uh...

Again he ducks down to see her response.

60 INT. HIGHWAY/ AMANDA'S CAR - NIGHT

Acre drives.

His FOOT eases up on the ACCELERATOR.

The SECOND HAND on his wristwatch ticks down.

The MPH GAUGE slows from 60 mph.

Amanda carefully leans forward searching the skyline through the windshield. Guided by Acre's outstretched arm, she sees CITY LIGHTS refracted through the CHAIN LINK FENCE that lines an approaching OVERPASS. Then a STARBURST.

MATCH CUT TO:

61 EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Amanda picks one STARBURST DRAWING from several that Acre has laid out in front of where she sits on the trunk. They speak excitedly between bites of hot dogs:

AMANDA
It was this one...and then a bunch-

ACRE
You did? You saw it.

AMANDA
Yeah, there was a lot going on, but I definitely saw it. I mean I either saw it or I made myself see it.

...

ACRE
Because you wanted to see it.

AMANDA
Yeah.

...

ACRE
So do you think you saw it or you made yourself see it?

By now she is looking off, thinking.

AMANDA
(resolute)
I saw it.

62 EXT. THE INTERSECTION/ CORNER SIDEWALK - DAY

Amanda sweeps LEAVES into a pile and puts the pile into a trash bag. A couple leaves fall from the tree above her.

Acre, in his suit and tie, picks up a few strays and tosses them in the trash bag that Amanda is now labeling "12:15-12:30pm NE".

63 INT. ACRE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

On the floor Acre finishes counting a pile of leaves and then shoves them back in the bag.

ACRE

One nineteen.

He reaches for the next bag in the line of several. Amanda sketches the starburst.

64 EXT. THE INTERSECTION - DAY

It's pouring rain. Amanda, soaked, reaches into a rain gutter and replaces a GLASS JAR partially filled with water with an empty jar.

65 INT. ACRE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

They measure and notate the water level of 30 JARS which sit in orderly rows on the floor.

Amanda makes cardboard CUT OUTS of the warped circles on the maps, compares them.

66 EXT. BEHIND SHOPPING STRIP - DAY

Lying on the hood of the car, they wait for a starburst flash. Amanda scans her watch and then the horizon, ready with a POLAROID CAMERA. Acre rubs his eyes and yawns.

AMANDA

You're gonna miss it.

A flash of light hits them.

Acre is done rubbing his face in time for the second flash. Amanda takes a picture of it, sets the camera aside, and starts sketching.

ACRE

That's not going to work.

AMANDA

I know.

ACRE

The lens isn't-

AMANDA

I know.

67 EXT. FIELD - DAY

Amanda stands alone holding an upright STADIA (a long pole marked with measured lines) and a WALKIE TALKIE. AN ABANDONED BUILDING is far behind her. Waking from her boredom, she realizes she's pressing the talk button and releases it:

RADIO

-the-button-let-go-of-the-button-let-go-of-the-button-

68 EXT. CITY STREET/ HILLTOP - CONTINUOUS

Acre looks through and adjusts a theodolite.

ACRE

-let-go-of-button-let-go-of-the-button.

AMANDA (RADIO)

Say again.

ACRE

You're off about 100 feet. You're gonna have to go back a ways, over.

69 EXT. FIELD - CONTINUOUS

AMANDA (TO HERSELF)

That's gonna be in that build-

ACRE (RADIO)

Probably put you in that building, over.

70 EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Amanda sits on steps in front of an open door.

Acre drives up in the car. Amanda approaches and puts the stadia in the backseat as he gets out.

AMANDA

You've already been here.

ACRE

...

AMANDA

You've already been here.

ACRE

I don't know what you're saying.

71 INT. ABANDONED BUILDING/ WINDOWED HALLWAY - NEXT

They inspect a STARBURST MARKING MADE WITH CHALK on the concrete floor. It looks like the others we've seen.

Nearby is a wide opening into a DARK ROOM. Acre stands and steps toward it. Amanda is still on the marking:

AMANDA

Is it one of the first ones? Car traffic?

ACRE

I never used chalk.

Amanda takes this in.

AMANDA

Flashlight's in the trunk.

She heads for the car.

He steps into the dark room.

72 INT. WAREHOUSE/ ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Several steps in he stops, listening.

Suddenly, the HOLLOW WOODEN SOUND of a 2x4 dropped to the floor jolts his attention to one side of the room.

A moment later the room fills with the sound of PEOPLE SCURRYING around and different objects SCRAPING the concrete floor: metal, wood, plastic.

This is enough to send him towards the exit, backing out.

The LIGHTS crack on, flooding the room in white. Acre stops, squinting and shielding his eyes. The room goes quiet except for the hum of the overhead lights warming up.

ACRE sees something across the room. Then another something. And another and another until he has scanned the entire room:

10 ORDINARY PEOPLE are scattered throughout the space facing him. They each hold an item or two that they must have picked up off the floor: PAINT CAN, WOODEN DOWEL, SODA CAN, PLASTIC BUCKET, PIECE OF SHEETROCK, ETC.

One man stands next to a WHEELBARROW full of collected items. He places a busted THERMOS in it.

Acre moves into the room inspecting the items in each person's hands.

Amanda arrives to see this and stands at the entrance.

Acre stops in front of a bearded man, CAROLL (40s), who holds a large DENTED METAL PAIL. Something about the pail interests Acre. He looks up from it to Carroll.

Acre slowly places his hands on the pail and tries to draw it in, but Carroll tenses up and pulls it back. Acre responds with more force and an awkward struggle occurs before Acre tears it away.

Acre studies his prize. Carroll stretches his hand out, making a half-hearted play for the pail.

CUT TO

In the center of the room, Acre kneels over the pail and his maps. Amanda has brought the satchel in. The others stand around them, watching silently. Almost embarrassed, he speaks to Amanda in a hushed voice:

ACRE

Smaller one.

AMANDA

Which?

ACRE

Just...smaller.

She hands him another map from the satchel.

He places the bottom of the dented pail on it and it lines up perfectly with the warped circle drawn on the map.

He grabs one of Amanda's CUT OUTS, placing it right in the top (the opening) of the pail. Again it fits, dent and all.

CUT TO: SPECTRUM. The short vertical blue line is joined by a YELLOW one near the center of the screen.

73

INT. AUTO BODY SHOP - NIGHT

The dented metal pail is doused with TALCUM POWDER...

...then dipped in WHITE CASTING LIQUID.

The now solidified CAST is cut open with an ELECTRIC SAW. The pail is removed...

...and tagged and stored in a LARGE LOCKER containing TENS OF OTHER TAGGED OBJECTS. It closes and TWO PADLOCKS secure it.

PLASTER is poured into the cast.

A solid PLASTER COPY OF THE PAIL is pulled from the cast and trimmed with scissors.

Amanda and Acre stand off to the side of the large open workspace observing the OTHERS using a system of ROPES and PULLEYS to bring the LEFT HALF of a refrigerator-sized CONSTRUCTION of lumber and assorted metal closer to the RIGHT HALF. It's all abstract angles and seems to be more of a scaffold or skeleton than a finished functional thing. It is called the APOLOGUE.

In hushed tones, mid-conversation:

ACRE

I don't know. I'm just trying-

AMANDA

And how- they're all picking up junk off the floor- how did they not know what they were looking for? Ask him.

Acre walks across to Carroll who is overseeing things and holding the plaster pail between the two Apologue halves as a spacer. Others begin to measure the space and try out different lengths of METAL STRUTS to connect the halves.

CAROLL

Now we know how long to make the struts.

ACRE

I walked around for- I walked all over the place for 8 months.

CAROLL

Can you tell me something? How is it that you knew the shape of the pail if you didn't even know you were looking for it?

Acre returns to Amanda:

ACRE

We're going to a meeting.

74

INT. CAROLL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

CAROLL (OFF SCREEN)

A bifurcation. That's a branching or a fork, it is when these glints of light stop being noise and become information...

KITCHEN: families deposit casserole dishes of assorted meals. Others fill their plates, preparing to eat. The place is packed, a church body without the church.

LIVING ROOM: Carroll speaks in front of a corkboard with illustrations on it and the text "Glint -> Bifurcation -> Poem -> Apologue". His audience reciprocates with lots of in-the-know chuckling and agreement.

CAROLL (CONT'D)

...formless it seems sometimes, but there is a pattern, something there and we have to acknowledge it. And when successful it leads to a poem...

He holds up the plaster pail:

CAROLL (CONT'D)

This...is a poem...a physical metaphor, the latest one. Okay, so bifurcation, poem, who is coming up with these words? Well we don't know, we're sort of deciding as we go. I think Jim coined bifurcation, so thank you for that. But this all leads...we think...to the apologue. Well, what is that? A grouping of poems, of course.

A PICTURE of the Apologue is being passed around the room.

CAROLL (CONT'D)

Other than that I don't know. I lie awake at night...what is it trying to be?

FRONT PORCH: an EXPERIMENTER (20s) gives a demonstration of acoustic resonance. He has a plate of LIQUID on a vibrating machine:

EXPERIMENTER

Okay, but look at this...how about 65 hertz. Ahhh, see? Now we're getting somewhere.

As the frequency of vibration changes, the ripples in the liquid suddenly form a RIGID GRID-LIKE PATTERN.

LIVING ROOM: Acre picks from a plate of food, studying the illustrations on the corkboard. He eavesdrops on those around him:

MEMBER #1

He found it within the cell? Then it's like mine, it's mitochondrial. He needs-

MEMBER #2

I know, I told him. It doesn't matter. He sent it, already. Says you can't do it without an electron microscope-

Acre turns to his other side:

MEMBER #3

Greg, Greg, quit saying meter. What's a meter? Nothing. It's man-made. You want Planck's Constant, the natural log. You want ratios.

MEMBER #4

You should try- we'll talk about this- you should try a different numbering system. Babylonians were base sixty anyway.

KITCHEN TABLE: The crowd has thinned. It's more intimate.

CAROLL

Why now. Why now. Well, was there an equal for each of us in the past? A housewife that would notice calculus in her coupon clippings, a groundskeeper with an education in color theory, a physicist, well physicists in general...

He singles out Acre:

CAROLL (CONT'D)

...or a civil servant with such blind luck and tenacity.

FRONT YARD: Amanda and Acre have a smoke break. She's excited:

AMANDA

We're running around, did I see it, did I not see it, how do I describe it, is it a normal one or one with extra spikes? Now it has a name, a glint, thank you, I can say that. "Did you see one?" "Yes, I saw a glint...let's hope it leads to a poem." The words, the words, I know what to call it! Ahhh!

SECONDS LATER IN THE CONVERSATION: Acre sulks.

AMANDA

What? It wasn't luck.

ACRE
I know.

AMANDA
It wasn't.

ACRE
I know it wasn't.

Carroll approaches with another man, Eric (30), who carries a HEADSET and TAPE RECORDER.

CAROLL
This is the man I wanted you to meet.
He's been lead to do these recordings...

Amanda wears the headset, intently listening. Eric shows Acre a map of the area with locations hand marked on it.

ERIC
All kinds of different places. One points to the next and the next and it just, it's overwhelming-

AMANDA
(to Acre)
You want to hear it?

75 EXT. SEASIDE ROCKY CRAG - DAY

With a TAPE RECORDER AND MICROPHONE Acre records sounds of OCEAN WAVES CRASHING. The sound becomes...

76 EXT. ROOFTOP ACROSS FROM STADIUM - NIGHT

...the ROAR and SWELLING CHEERS of the crowd at a baseball game. The NEEDLE on the VOLUME METER sways.

Acre sets up a METRONOME next to the recording equipment. We hear the TICK TOCK TICK TOCK through the next few scenes.

77 INT. ACRE'S APARTMENT/ KITCHEN - DAY

Acre scrubs the counter, doing chores. Amanda, on her way out for a jog, holds out her hand. He hands her a CASSETTE from his shirt pocket. She slips it into her Walkman.

78 EXT. OVERPASS - DAY

Acre records nearby as cars and trucks drive over the bridge. He looks up from his work, a DING DA DINK sound catching his attention.

AMANDA (OFF SCREEN)
What is that...ding da dink? There it is,
that.

He inspects under the bridge, noticing that it sags under the weight of the vehicles and occasionally strikes some rebar, causing a metallic sounding...

ACRE (OFF SCREEN)
Ding da dink...ding da dink...

AMANDA (OFF SCREEN)
Yeah, what is it?

79 EXT. ACRE'S APARTMENT/ LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

They sit in front of the stereo, listening to the bridge sounds.

ACRE
Whenever a real heavy truck comes over or
if two cars hit right at the same time and
it weighs enough, the whole thing dips
down...

80 EXT. LIMESTONE RIVERBED - DAY

Metronome. Acre records: As the river runs alongside a rock ledge it occasionally overflows and spills onto a piece of DEADWOOD. When the deadwood takes on too much water it tips like a seesaw, releases its water, and slams back to its original position. It makes a HOLLOW WOODEN SOUND that becomes...

81 INT. RURAL ROAD/ JEEP - NIGHT

...THUNDER and LIGHTNING. Acre and Amanda stay dry in the jeep as rain pounds the roof. The metronome is on the dashboard.

We hear the AUDIO SPEED UP.

AMANDA (OFF SCREEN)
...even faster. Faster. Speed it up.

The AUDIO RAMPS UP even more, increasing in pitch until it becomes...

82 EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

...a SCREEN DOOR SLAMMING against its frame again and again,
blown by a breeze.

83 INT. CAREFLIGHT FACILITY/ BREAK AREA - NIGHT

This is Amanda's workplace. Acre has brought REFERENCE BOOKS
that are open all over the table. They listen to the tape
player, altering the speed with a DIAL. Behind them a
HELICOPTER is being prepped.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Okay, just slow it the slightest bit.
Back it off just...

ACRE

You do it. Show me.

Excited, she hunts through a SHOEBOX of their COLLECTED TAPES.

AMANDA

It's the same. I know it. Where's
baseball game?

84 EXT. FIELD - DAY

THOUSANDS OF BIRDS pick through the grass. The sound of a
FLOCK STIRRING INTO THE AIR becomes...

85 EXT. POST OFFICE - DAY

...a HEAVY FLAG snapping in the wind. ROPE and a METAL CLASP
ding against the flagpole...

86 EXT. ACRE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

...which we hear on the stereo as the tape comes to its end
and CLICKS OFF...

...waking Acre as he and Amanda sleep on the couch in front of
a silent TV. He looks to the TV...

...which is showing a COLOR BAR test pattern.

In a sleepy stupor he reaches for the Polaroid camera with his
free hand and snaps a shot of the TV.

The picture ejects from the camera.

MATCH CUT TO

87 INT. SEWING FACTORY - DAY

A LARGE PRINTER spits out a long continuous sheet that folds up when it hits the ground. On it is an AUDIO WAVEFORM. Acre and Caroll attend to it, writing "SCREEN DOOR" on the sheet and stapling onto it a PHOTOGRAPH of the door. Around them workers operate sewing machines.

MAN (OFF SCREEN)
Is it an airstrip or airport? Right, but
is it private or...

88 INT. SEWING FACTORY/ OFFICE OVERLOOKING FACTORY FLOOR - NEXT

SALMAN (40s) is on the phone at the head of a conference table. He's running things. RAIN pours outside. Acre and Caroll join Eric in standing around Salman, listening.

SALMAN (CONT'D)
(into phone)
...what I'm trying to determine is whether
the flights are scheduled or not...

CAROLL
(to Eric)
Barstow?

ERIC
Spanish Fork, just outside Provo. It took
him to an airport it sounds like.

SALMAN
(to Caroll)
Private. Flights are not on a schedule.
(into phone)
All right, you're gonna need to get
yourself a metronome, go down there when
the series starts, record a few days worth
and then speed it up about...

Salman waits on Acre:

ACRE
40, 50 times- I'll have to talk to him.

SALMAN
When we're done I'll turn you over to Acre
who'll talk you through it.

Salman hands the phone off to Carroll and speaks in a hushed
tone to Acre:

SALMAN (CONT'D)
Don't tell them any more than they need to
know to get the recording.

Acre nods without understanding why.

CAROLL
(into phone)
We'll need some pictures of the area too.
Send some today if you can.

DAYS LATER

A LARGE HARDCOVER BOOK lays on the table entitled "EMISSION
SPECTRA and ABSORPTION LINES of the ELEMENTS".

Everyone's clothes have changed. SUNLIGHT blasts through the
window. EXTRA MEMBERS have joined them in the room.

SALMAN
I'm gonna put you on speakerphone. Go
ahead and play it.

PHOTOGRAPHS of a SMALL AIRPORT surround the SPEAKERPHONE at
the end of the table.

SPEAKERPHONE
Here we go...

Over the speakerphone we here the "play" button depressed and
TAPE HISS fills the room. Then we hear BIRDS SQUAWKING.
INSERT: One of the photographs shows birds perched on a fence
in front of small private jets.

Then we hear the sound of a JET TAKING OFF. INSERT: Another
photograph shows a jet just leaving the ground.

SPEAKERPHONE
The ramp up is coming in a moment...

From the speakerphone come THREE SHORT BEEPS and then a SPED
UP VERSION of several jets taking off.

While Eric and Acre listen, they look over several STACKS OF WAVEFORM PRINTOUTS on the table. Each stack has a PHOTOGRAPH (Ocean waves, baseball game, screen door, etc.) stapled to it as well as a SANDWICH BAG containing a TAPE. Eventually, they make a match and grab the appropriate stack:

ERIC
Lightning storm.

ACRE
Yeah.

Eric takes the tape from the sandwich bag and cues it up on a TAPE PLAYER on the other side of the room.

SALMAN
(to speakerphone)
All right, we have the first match, go ahead and start it over.

Over the speakerphone we hear the tape reverse and playback the three beeps. On the third beep Eric starts the lightning tape. The tapes sync up perfectly, each lightning crash playing in unison with a jet taking off.

Acre's finger follows the sound along the printout waveform, coming to a DISTINCT WAVE each time a jet takes off/lightning crashes.

The SPEAKERPHONE plays a JET SOUND. The TAPE PLAYER, LIGHTNING. Acre finishes tracing the last of EIGHT WAVES on the first page, tears it out for Eric, and continues on.

ACRE
Eight bars. Perfect sync.

Eric flips open the Emission Spectra book to a page bookmarked with the POLAROID Acre took of the TV. He removes a TRANSPARENCY from the book and lays it over the waveform printout. The transparency contains EIGHT COLORED BARS that line up perfectly with the waves on the waveform.

ERIC
It's lithium.

Salman and Carroll rise from their seats and move to get a better view of the work. Eric staples the sheets together. INSERT: The stapler clears the frame to show a fresh staple next to the title of the transparency: "Li - LITHIUM". He and Acre continue.

CAROLL
A different set of glints, bifurcation-
hell a different city and we get the same
recipe.

ERIC
Second one...boron, it's boron.

SALMAN
Picking out elements isn't a recipe.

CAROLL
He's got a lot more information at the
tail end. Right, Acre?

Acre allows himself a second to nod affirmative as he
continues to trace.

CAROLL (CONT'D)
It could be proportions, anything...a
process.

SALMAN
It doesn't mean we can make it though- how
much at the tail?

The answer is delivered in the form of a THICK STACK OF GREEN
PRINTOUT dropped at the edge of the table. It unravels and
fans to the ground like a slinky.

89 INT. CAROLL'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The house is full of people. There is much chatter and
excitement. CAROLL moves to the front of the room holding a
drink. He looks at the floor, partly searching for words and
partly waiting for everyone's attention.

When the room goes quiet he milks it a few seconds before
delivering with a smile:

CAROLL
Well...we need a chemist.

There is knowing laughter from some.

90 INT. BRIGHTER DECADE/ ACRE'S DESK - DAY

Acre and Amanda eat lunch out of Tupperware. The place is
almost vacant at this hour. Amanda unwraps from a paper towel
a USED BAR OF SOAP, curved from use, and holds it up.

AMANDA
What would you say this curve is?

ACRE
That your soap?

AMANDA
I doubt it's anything- our soap- anything
on its own...

ACRE
You use my soap?

AMANDA
...but if we measure it every week then
maybe-

ACRE
Why a week, though? What's special about-

AMANDA
Then everyday. But over time-

CUT TO: Done with lunch, they're quiet for a second, close.

ACRE
I was thinking about Sacramento. We've
been really lucky so far with things being
local- what?

She's already shaking her head. Adamant:

AMANDA
I can't, can't...can not do that. Not
even for a day much less...I know
somebody's got to go but I get written up
again and-

ACRE puts her hand in his.

ACRE
Not us.

She just stares, what do you mean?

91 EXT. THE INTERSECTION/ SIDEWALK - NEXT

Acre holds her, kissing her forehead. She carries the empty
Tupperware.

ACRE
...rent for another year. Two maybe, at
most-

AMANDA
Just don't say the apartment's fine. I
can do it...

ACRE
It's not fine. It's shit.

AMANDA
...if we're honest about- it is shit.

ACRE
We'll never leave that shithole. We'll
die there. Suffering.

AMANDA
Wallowing in it.

92 INT. HOLTON APARTMENT/ ENTRANCE WAY - NIGHT

Acre and Amanda are welcomed into the tiny place by JOYCE (25) and LEO HOLTON (25). They remove winter coats, hand off a 6-pack of beer.

ACRE (OFF SCREEN)
If...if we're being asked to travel
outside our comfort zone to understand all
this and...and what it's, you know,
"trying to be" then so be it...

LIVING ROOM: Acre and Amanda sit next to each other on a sofa across from Joyce and Leo. Amanda retrieves an ENVELOPE from her purse and places it on the coffee table for Leo.

ACRE (CONT'D)
...and trust me, if we weren't
sure...we're sure. This isn't charity, I
want to say that. You guys are going to
need a place to stay for who knows how
long and equipment and...anyway we want
this- we hope this helps.

Leo finds a CHECK inside the envelope.

93 INT. FAST FOOD DRIVE THRU/ JEEP - LATER

Amanda, lost in thought, stares at Acre's HAND resting on the gearshift. We can see it reflected in the VANITY MIRROR.

ACRE

They're out of chocolate. Strawberry?

She nods, still staring at his hand.

ACRE

(to CASHIER)

Strawberry's good.

CASHIER

Two soft serves is one oh seven.

Acre's hand disappears from the mirror to pay the cashier. Amanda follows it until it eventually returns to rest on the gearshift where she quickly grabs it with her hand.

94

INT. LABORATORY - NIGHT

Acre stands at a counter facing us, not too happy.

ACRE

Do you know who I am? You know my name?
Did anyone tell you people who found this-
hey! Excuse me! Hey!

Ignoring him, a RUSSIAN MAN walks away carrying a GREEN CRATE OF THERMOSES, joining a RUSSIAN WOMAN in the back. The two share words before moving through a large black REVOLVING DOOR that connects to a LIGHT-TIGHT ROOM. Over the door a RED LIGHT comes on.

The lab is full of HUNDREDS OF THERMOSES, each with a RED, BLUE, or YELLOW LID. Carroll comes through the front door, joining Acre who stares after the Russians, fuming.

CAROLL

How's it going?

Acre singles out a set of three thermoses labeled in handwritten Cyrillic (Russian):

ACRE

This is batch eighty-seven.

CAROLL

Are they getting better?

ACRE

It took me an hour to figure out that
much. They got a newer set but he took-

Suddenly, the revolving door unspools and the Russian Man exits. He and Carroll make eye contact, nod awkwardly:

CAROLL

Hello.

CUT TO: Caroll stands at the back of the room with the Russians at a wall-mounted PAYPHONE.

CAROLL

(into the phone)

...yes...no, not that I'm aware...only that it's difficult to discern their progress when...yes please, anything you can do...I'm putting him on now...

Meanwhile, Acre, carrying a SHOULDER BAG, slowly moves toward a table in the middle of the room where the Green Crate sits. It contains THREE THERMOSES (Red, Yellow, Blue). He casually places his hand near them.

DOLLY LEFT to Caroll and the Russians: Caroll hands the phone to the Russian Man who converses in Russian.

DOLLY RIGHT to Acre: One of the three thermoses is gone, presumably placed in the bag at Acre's feet.

DOLLY LEFT: The Russian Man hands the phone back to Caroll.

CAROLL

Okay?

RUSSIAN MAN

Okay.

CAROLL

(into the phone)

All right, ask him...um, ask him...is it ready yet?

The Russian Man takes the phone, listens to the translation.

DOLLY RIGHT to Acre: The second of the three thermoses is gone.

DOLLY LEFT: Caroll, takes the phone, listens, but ends up cutting the translator off when he gets the gist of it.

CAROLL

(into the phone)

Okay, well just give us some idea...when will it be ready?

The phone goes back to the Russian Man who again listens. The Russian Woman carries a box of supplies into the light-tight room.

DOLLY RIGHT: Acre, his bag, and the last thermos are gone.

95

INT. ACRE AND AMANDA'S HOUSE - NEXT

KITCHEN: Amanda, PREGNANT NOW, feverishly scavenges the cabinets and dishwasher, collecting different PANS and DISHES. She wears a PARTY DRESS and a PLASTIC TIARA that says "Happy New Year".

ENTRANCEWAY: Acre rushes in to find Amanda kneeling next to FIVE DIFFERENT PANS laid out neatly on the floor side by side. He picks a BROWNIE DISH:

ACRE

That one.

BATHROOM: They unpack the three thermoses from his bag. Acre flips the lights off for a second, notices light coming from under the door, and jams a TOWEL in the gap to block it.

Amanda pours AMBER LIQUID from the red thermos into the brownie dish while Acre pours from the blue one.

ACRE

Say when...

AMANDA

And...now.

They stop pouring in unison.

ACRE

You sure?

AMANDA

I want to save some.

CUT TO: Amanda holds the tiara over the brownie dish. Acre, poised to pour the yellow thermos in, helps her position the tiara directly under the overhead light.

He reaches for the light switch.

ACRE

Ready?

She nods. He flips the lights off. We hear LIQUID POURING and the thermos recapped.

ACRE

Stay still. Here we go.

The lights come on. The DISH JOSTLES a little as if startled by the light. Amanda jumps back and laughs with embarrassment. The liquid has immediately SOLIDIFIED. Acre turns the dish over and bangs it against the counter until a RIGID PLATE pops out covered in an ASHY WHITE CRUST.

They scrape away the crust until AMBER COLORED GLASS is revealed wherever the shadow of the tiara had fallen, a backwards reproduction of the words "Happy New Year". Amanda holds it up to the light.

AMANDA
How'd they solve it?

ACRE
I don't know.

AMANDA (OFF SCREEN)
What do we do with it?

96 INT. ERIC'S APARTMENT - LATER

The New Year's Eve party is crowded. Acre and Amanda have found an intimate spot to sit. He happily wolfs down a plate of food while she continues to ask questions that he can only shake his head to:

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Does it go with the Apologue? How does it
fit with everything else? Is it a Poem?
If we turn the lights off will it melt
back?

Acre is surprised to realize he has an answer to that one:

ACRE
Wait, no. No. It won't melt.

AMANDA
How much will we need?

And he's back to head shaking:

ACRE
I don't know.

CUT TO: SPECTRUM. The blue and yellow lines are joined by two more on the right that are ORANGE. They all emit SLOW FLARES that interact.

97 EXT. GRASSLAND - DAY

On a plateau surrounded by MOUNTAINS a large portion of land has been cordoned off with WOODEN STICKS, TWINE, and COLORED RIBBONS. CARS and CAMPING TENTS line the edges.

Within the border a LINE OF A HUNDRED SEARCHERS slowly moves across the grass, heads down, scanning. One man near the center, SEARCHER, suddenly stops:

SEARCHER

Marker!

The line stops and down the row two or three others relay the message "Marker!". Carroll and Salman come running.

At Searcher's feet is a SMOOTH YELLOW ROCK. Searcher plants a SMALL RED FLAG next to it and hands the rock to Carroll.

He and Salman inspect it. The line of searchers looks on.

CAROLL

There's some scoring...could be-

SALMAN

No negative curvature.

Acre, with a FULL BEARD now, is part of the line at the far end, about 50 yards away. Next to him, Eric puts down a PAIL OF ROCKS, apparently responsible for them. We see the rest of the scene play out from their perspective as they fill in what they imagine Carroll and Salman are saying:

ERIC

What do you think of the curve on this?
Curvy enough you think? Too curvy?

ACRE

It's perfect. It's the perfect rock.
Let's go home. I've proved my worth here.

ERIC

That's enough talking amongst ourselves.
Better get the woman out here.

Carroll brings a RADIO to his mouth. Out of the radio on Eric's belt comes:

CAROLL (RADIO)

Jennifer, come to the line.

Eric and Acre turn to a CANOPY TENT command station a hundred yards to the left where JENNIFER (30s) grabs her radio:

JENNIFER (RADIO)

On my way.

SEARCH LINE: Jennifer scrubs the rock, flips it over in her hand, inspects it.

ERIC

I don't know, I don't know...maybe we should, should we? Cut it open maybe? Is that possible?

ACRE

I can't tell anything till we cut it open.

ERIC

That's the one. Watch my pail.

Eric heads towards the huddle right before Carroll holds the rock up and summons him:

CAROLL

Eric!

98 EXT. GRASSLAND/ ROCK COLLECTION AREA - NEXT

A ROCK is split in two with a POWER SAW.

BILL (30s) operates the saw, surrounded by other geological equipment on a card table next to a beat up van. He looks up to see Eric and Acre delivering another pail of rocks.

Eric places the pail upside down on the table and then quickly raises it, revealing a tower of rocks...that topples all around.

99 EXT. GRASSLAND/ COOKING AREA - NIGHT

People are preparing meals at a makeshift kitchen comprised of a truck's tailgate and nearby campfire.

Acre and Carroll light up some pipes. Beyond we see the Canopy Tent where Jennifer and others are working under lanterns.

ACRE

We could be on the wrong plateau- could be in the wrong state.

CAROLL

Did you check her work against the maps.

Yeah. ACRE

You did? CAROLL

Yes. Did you? ACRE

Yes. I did. CAROLL

BEAT

I wasn't thorough. CAROLL (CONT'D)

Me neither. ACRE

100 EXT. GRASSLAND/ THE SEARCH LINE - DAY

Caroll, Acre, and Amanda are on the line quietly stepping through the field with their eyes on the ground. Amanda carries their 6-month-old baby, ELIJAH.

A SHADOW quietly passes over Acre and Amanda. Then Caroll.

Far in the distance and behind the search line a CESSNA CRASHES into the ground, pushing soil into the air. The faint sound comes a couple seconds later.

Here and there individuals in the line turn to see, provoking others to turn. No one moves to help immediately.

101 EXT. GRASSLAND/ CESSNA - MOMENTS LATER

Everyone races toward the plane wreckage. Some are already pulling the BLOODIED BODIES of two men, a woman, and a child from the cabin.

Still a ways off, Salman catches his breath.

Caroll! SALMAN

Caroll stops 10 yards ahead of him and looks back.

Transponder! SALMAN (CONT'D)

Caroll understands and looks around for someone:

CAROLL

Leslie!

MOMENTS LATER

INSIDE THE CESSNA: LESLIE (45) and his ASSISTANT rip the TRANSPONDER from under the front panel.

OUTSIDE: The transponder is laid out on a white sheet. Leslie crouches over it like it's a puzzle to solve.

ASSISTANT

We'll smash it. I'll get a rock.

LESLIE

Quit- quit saying that. Its only purpose is to keep working if it is smashed.

He fishes through a toolbox, pulls out a SCREWDRIVER.

Acre and the others finish pulling a BLACK TARP over the wreckage.

Caroll consults with Acre who looks at the tarp and shrugs:

ACRE

I don't think it's going to fool anybody flying low but...

For a few seconds their attention turns to something on the horizon: The last of the three dead bodies, all of which are now wrapped in sheets, is being laid next to the other two.

CAROLL

Maybe we cover it with sod. A little on the wings. Just enough, you know?

102 INT. GRASSLAND/ CAMPING TENT - NIGHT

Amanda breastfeeds, studies a map. Acre looks asleep.

AMANDA

Are you awake? Acre.

He opens his eyes.

AMANDA

We're being stupid.

CUT TO: Sitting, he chugs a water jug, looks at her map.

AMANDA

There isn't a real city within three hundred miles. I haven't seen a single plane since we got here so we're not under any kind of flight path. They drop right on top of us...

Acre lowers the jug, realizing.

103 EXT. GRASSLAND/ CESSNA - PRE-DAWN

The tarp has been pulled back some. Amanda crawls around inside while outside Acre, carrying Elijah, works at opening the luggage compartment underneath the tail section. He can't get the latch open.

Amanda excitedly knocks on one of the windows and he quickly turns to the cabin. She places a PIECE OF PAPER flat against the glass. It is a sketch of a GLINT (starburst).

CUT TO: Amanda holds Elijah. Acre kicks the latch open. SUITCASES spill out onto the ground.

DAWN

Carroll approaches, taking in this sight: Acre studies the contents of the suitcases (NOTEBOOKS, DRAWINGS), spread out around them. Amanda sleeps.

ACRE

They have an elevation.

CAROLL

How?

Acre stands and approaches him.

ACRE

There's a whole notebook on it, whole new bifurcation. They have it tagged to sea level- even account for tides-

CAROLL

They know where the rock is?

ACRE

We need more readers. Where we stand the elevation is off by two hundred feet. We're close I think but-

CAROLL

We gotta dig two hundred feet?

ACRE

No. It's above us.

Caroll just stares at him.

ACRE (CONT'D)

We redo the math, we have to, but if it's within half a mile and two hundred feet higher it can only be in one of three places.

Acre points him towards a HILL RANGE jutting out from the flat ground:

ACRE

There...

Then he swings around to the opposite side and points out TWO OTHER HILLS:

ACRE

...there or there.

Caroll begins to make his way back to camp.

CAROLL

We'll get everyone reading.

ACRE

Caroll.

Caroll turns.

ACRE (CONT'D)

What about the bodies?
(gesturing to the papers)
This is a contribution.

He thinks on it:

CAROLL

We'll do a burial. A service.

104 EXT. GRASSLAND/ HILLSIDE - DUSK

We're inside a DEEP TUNNEL a couple feet in diameter. We follow a SACK pulled by rope towards DAYLIGHT.

OUTSIDE: Men pull on the rope until the sack appears. They rummage through it finding mostly dirt and roots. Holding a WHITE PAIL, Eric waits for them to find something of value.

Behind them a TUNNEL CRAWLER emerges covered with filth and carrying a small shovel. He almost collapses to the ground where a woman attends to him with water and towels.

Eric sends a RUNNER off with the pail.

ERIC (INTO RADIO)
Jen, we got the last piece coming down.

105 EXT. GRASSLAND/ BASE OF HILL - MOMENTS LATER

The white pail is placed on the ground next to Jennifer. She retrieves from it a 14-INCH FOSSILIZED RIB BONE and places it among other RIBS on a WHITE SHEET...

...on which an ANIMAL SKELETON has been reassembled. Eight feet from head to toe, it could be a saber-toothed tiger or the largest meanest dog ever seen. A PHOTOGRAPHER takes pictures from different angles.

The leaders stand around the sheet. The mass of members looks on from further back, quiet and reverent. Among them a BOY sits on his FATHER'S shoulders. MOTHER is next to them:

FATHER
...I'm not sure. We'd have to see the teeth- the shape of them to know.

BOY
But it's old, right.

FATHER
I think it's very old.

MOTHER
Someone would like to study that.

BACK AT THE SHEET: Carroll compares sketches in a NOTEBOOK to the ribs, his hand hovering from bone to bone. An EXPERT calls out the anatomical names:

EXPERT
Ninth vertebrosteral. Tenth vertebrochondral.

JENNIFER
Dimensions are right. Probably the ninth, but might be tenth.

CAROLL
Take both...and the two around them to be sure. Let's get the left side as well.

EIGHT RIBS are packaged in ZIP LOC BAGS and carefully placed in a SMALL COOLER cushioned with wadded-up newspaper.

Eric unceremoniously pulls up the four corners of the sheet to collect the remaining bones and swings this makeshift bag over his shoulder.

106 EXT. GRASSLAND/ PLATEAU - MOMENTS LATER

Acre carries the cooler at the end of the procession making its way back to the camp area. The mood is solemn.

A few children slowly approach Acre. They gently touch the cooler and move away. A moment later a woman repeats the action.

We follow the cooler as different hands begin to touch it. Eventually, Acre brings it up to under his arm to deal with the jostling. While no one is grabbing the cooler, at least once Acre is forced to break it from the friction of someone's hand.

A MAN'S HAND glides from the side of the cooler to the top, sliding under the handle. With a sudden jolt the hand tries to tear the cooler from Acre, but he reacts in time. There is an awkward scuffle.

PROCESSION FRONT: Walking with Amanda, Carroll carries Elijah.

CAROLL

(to Elijah)

So handsome. Yes.

(to Amanda)

All mine were so so ugly. Not now, you've seen them. Beautiful now. But as babies, I never imagined such ugly faces-

A GUN SHOT breaks everything and echoes back from the hillsides. We circle around with them and watch the rest of the scene from their vantage.

The crowd clears, leaving Acre and Bill alone, standing a couple meters apart. Bill holds a PISTOL. Acre holds the cooler tight to his chest. Another GUN SHOT tears up the ground between them.

Amanda grabs Elijah from Carroll which is a struggle because of Carroll's shock.

Acre seems disconnected from this moment. We hear a faint:

ACRE

No.

Bill raises the pistol towards Acre. With more force:

ACRE

No.

Bill approaches Acre, who flinches but stands his ground. Bill pries one of Acre's hands away, puts the gun in it, and yanks on the cooler again.

BILL

Trade!

He steps away unsuccessful, frustrated. Acre holds the gun in his lifeless hand, stunned. Bill turns back:

BILL

I'll give it back! Trade!

CLOSE ON: Acre tries to make sense of this.

CUT TO: SPECTRUM. The colored lines and flares are too many to count now extending all along the middle strip of the screen.

107 INT. SIZZLER/ PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

Eric and Jennifer are having the cheapest wedding reception on record. They're getting tired of kissing for the cameras.

Down the long string of tables Amanda cuts up a burger for 2-year old Elijah while Acre looks on, unsettled. He scans the room, finds Carroll, Leslie, and a few others standing around the drink station.

LESLIE

...and all these dates come pouring out. We thought they were arbitrary, but each event occurs at night no matter the location and under a new moon. Measured from the day we found the numbers.

LESLIE'S ASSISTANT

What's amazing is...how could it know when we found them?

CAROLL

(knowingly)
How could what know?

LESLIE

Hmm.

Acre has walked up behind them, agitated:

ACRE

What was that?

They turn, not understanding the question.

ACRE

He said, "how could what know" and you went, "hmm". What was that?

LESLIE

Just that it's true. We tend to think of this as relics being found without considering the source.

ACRE

Uh huh, so what is it? You said "hmm". "Hmm" what? You said "how could what know". That's clever. What is what? All this information...how'd it get here? Was it put here? Who did it, who put it here? Does it know we're looking? We say "what is it trying to be?". What is what trying to be? I think you've had time...with all these markers, this language, poetry, all this shit we're digging up. Does it know what we're finding? You said, "how could what know", you said, "hmm".

CAROLL

Acre, this is what we are hoping to learn. Whatever this is...is being revealed.

ACRE

Uh huh.

Acre abruptly picks Elijah up out of his seat mid-meal, hands Amanda her purse, and storms out. She follows close.

He pushes through HEAVY DOUBLE DOORS at the exit.

MATCH CUT TO:

108 INT. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY

An AIDE walks into the chamber through DOUBLE DOORS.

An older, clean-shaven Acre sits behind the rostrum, an assemblyman now, in the middle of a spirited debate with

someone at the lectern. While he speaks, his SECRETARY places a NOTE in front of him.

ACRE

I, I, I understand that uh, Mr. Jacobs. I have sat in that exact seat so I think I have a sense of...okay. I know you come down here to push and push and on some level I appreciate that, but what we're not going to have is this endless discourse...

ASSEMBLYWOMAN

I move for a vote.

ACRE

Second. Whole-heartedly. Thank you.

He sees the note, goes serious. To Secretary:

ACRE

Is this a call or a visit?

SECRETARY

He called to arrange an appointment.

109 INT. ASSEMBLYMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

ZOE (2) draws with crayons in the corner. "ACRE STOWE" CAMPAIGN SIGNS litter the place. Acre waits, arms crossed, in the middle of his office. When he sees someone appear outside the door he waves them in.

Carroll enters. They greet clumsily. It's been a while. Carroll sees Zoe:

CAROLL

Is that?

ACRE

Who?

Carroll realizes his error and recovers even more awkwardly:

CAROLL

No. He's...

ACRE

Yeah, Elijah's seven...

CAROLL

And a boy.

ACRE

...and a boy.

Uncomfortable pause.

CUT TO: They sit across from each other at the desk.

CAROLL

It's a camera. A pinhole camera. Camera
Obscura.

Acre leans back, taking this in.

CAROLL (CONT'D)

You'll see it?

110 INT. MALL/ PLAY AREA - LATER

Acre hands Zoe and her bag off to Amanda, wearing a pant suit.
Things are not going well between them.

AMANDA

Not Thursday. My mom's coming in. She
wants to take her shop-

ACRE

Tell Becky to come on Friday then. I need
Thursday.

AMANDA

And why, Acre? What do I tell her? You
tell me that and I'll do it.

As she's about to leave, he catches her off guard:

ACRE

Caroll came by today.

She takes a second, stunned.

AMANDA

Zoe, you want to play a little? Yeah?

CUT TO: They sit on a bench, alone now.

AMANDA

What do you think he- are you getting back
in?

ACRE

I'm going to see it.

111 EXT. ARCTIC ICE BREAKER - DAY

Acre stands on the bow, as the ship carves through the ice.

112 INT. ARCTIC ICE BREAKER/ GALLEY - DAY

He and Carroll have coffee.

CARROLL

Have you kept up with any of them...Leo?

ACRE

Holton? Wow. Leo, no. We looked at pre-schools together, him and Joyce, back...

Acre realizes why Carroll is asking, smiles:

ACRE (CONT'D)

What did he take?

Carroll looks away, found out.

CARROLL

Oh...what they always take...these souvenirs...from God's living room.

113 INT. ARCTIC ICE BREAKER/ CARGO HOLD - NEXT

At a table, Acre looks on as Carroll tightens a SHEET OF PLEXIGLAS against a 3-foot CURVED BACKING. He uses a STEEL REPLICA of the rib bone from years ago as a spacer between the two.

CARROLL

I'm finding it harder to blame anybody anymore. It's joyless, hunting them down...it's half my job. They hide them in safe deposit boxes in Wisconsin...crawl space of some step-mother's time-share in Phoenix...

He sets the replica aside. Acre's eyes follow it, dwell. Carroll pours AMBER LIQUID from a BLUE-LABELLED THERMOS into the one-inch gap between the Plexiglas and the backing.

ACRE

How about Leo? He buried it?

CAROLL
Beneath a river bed in Laos.
(motioning to a RED THERMOS)
You want to pour that into the reservoir?

Acre thinks on it but doesn't even uncross his arms:

ACRE
You go ahead.

114 EXT. ARCTIC ICE SHELF - DAY

10 MEMBERS, assisted by 2 SNOWMOBILES, push CARGO BOXES on sleds from the ship to some unknown destination.

CUT TO: They unpack and assemble the APOLOGUE, attaching it to a LARGE SWIVELING BASE so that it can be rotated and pointed. It looks like an UNWIELDY TELESCOPE.

The Apologue points straight up. Into the bottom they slide the Curved Backing that sloshes with Amber Liquid. They screw on the YELLOW THERMOS and use a manual pump to mix the contents into the backing.

They point the Apologue at a precise spot in the sky.

NIGHT: Leslie addresses the group:

LESLIE
I'll say it out loud. Everyone, all electronics off, no flash photography, heh. Find a comfortable spot because you'll be standing there for thirty-five minutes tonight. No movement during the capture so if you need to now's the time to go relieve yourself and we'll get these lights off in about five minutes.

LIGHTS OFF: Caroll stares at his watch. When the time comes, he nods to...

...a man on a LADDER who quickly removes a CAP from the top of the Apologue.

We see what the Apologue sees: DARKNESS, then a field of STARS as the cap is removed.

The pins of starlight sear HOLES in the Amber as it undergoes a photochemical process.

The STAR FIELD slowly arcs across the screen.

BENEATH THE AMBER: the stars are etching ARCS in it as the sky rotates.

115 EXT. ALASKAN PIER - DAY

Acre stands at a payphone outside a bait store.

ACRE

...half the captures look like they're in the southern hemisphere. They have all these locations- they're gonna be doing this for ten years. Anyway, I can't catch a flight for a couple days so-

AMANDA (PHONE)

And where are you coming?

ACRE

In two days. That's the soonest anybody can get out-

AMANDA (PHONE)

I said where. Are you coming to the house or the hotel?

He doesn't have an answer.

116 EXT. ALASKAN WILDERNESS/ RIVERSIDE - NIGHT

The Apologue is set up for another capture. Leslie is panicked, screaming orders at two members, SENTRY #1 and SENTRY #2 who are rushing to meet a CANOE crossing the wide river, threatening to land.

LESLIE

Head them off! Not within a hundred yards! Stop them where they are!

Carroll is preparing for the capture:

CAROLL

Five seconds. Everyone stand still.

Acre, trying to get a look at the 3 OUTSIDERS in the canoe, goes still like everyone else around the Apologue. He looks over his shoulder to see Carroll nod to the man on the ladder. The cap is removed.

Once again, we see the starlight cut grooves in the Amber, adding arcs to those from the last capture.

Caroll and Acre watch the Sentries question the Outsiders far away at the shore. They listen to the conversation on the radio at Leslie's belt:

SENTRY #1

How long?

Sentry #2 looks through Outsider's BAG.

OUTSIDER

Five months. What are we looking for? Do you know?

SENTRY #2

Everything you have is flat? On paper?

SENTRY #1

Have you been to Vera Cruz?

Outsider looks to his friends, not understanding.

SENTRY #1

I'm sorry.

OUTSIDER

What are we collecting?

The Sentries push the canoe back into the water with the outsiders aboard.

SENTRY #1

It's not for you. I'm sorry.

OUTSIDER

What is it that we've solved?!

Acre watches the canoe drift away, caught in the current.

117 INT. ACRE AND AMANDA'S HOUSE - DAY

STAIRWAY: Acre, half-dressed for work, argues with Elijah:

ACRE

I don't care if you think your teacher's stupid, Eli! I don't care if she is stupid. It's laziness! Just do the work and move on.

Acre heads toward the kitchen.

ELIJAH

I'm not lazy.

ACRE

No, you're just too much like your mom,
you gotta argue every goddamn thing!

KITCHEN: Unpacking groceries, Amanda stares at Acre as he stomps through to the laundry room. He searches the dryer, feels her staring, turns to her:

ACRE

What!

CUT TO: She follows him to the front door:

AMANDA

Then get it all out! Take all your shit
with you instead of a little here and
there. I'll take you serious when you do
that.

ACRE

Done. Done. Done.

AMANDA

Oh, I believe it. You're so much talk.

ACRE

Really, what's that like, Amanda? I don't
know what it could be like dealing with
empty threats all the time! Tell me.

AMANDA

You don't know anything about me. You
don't know anything.

He leaves, slamming the door, but it bounces off the frame.

Amanda heads back. Acre re-enters. She turns.

ACRE

You blocked me in.

118 INT. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER - NIGHT

At the front, Leslie holds up a CURVED AMBER PLATE for the 40 Members (Caroll, Salman, etc.) in seats to see. It has a LATTICEWORK OF ARCS cut out by the Apologue.

LESLIE

Plate 16: All captures taken within a
hundred miles of Mobile over the course of
seven months. And as we compare it to
plate 15...

PLATE 15 is suspended upright in a METAL FRAMEWORK so that the audience can see its arcs. Leslie and his assistant slide Plate 16 in front of it.

LESLIE

...we see that they are similar but with some subtle differences, some evolution. Which is even more pronounced when added to the first 14 plates...

The first metal framework is rolled over to another framework where 14 PLATES are held. It's like a stack of 16 Pringles laid on its side. An ANGULAR ABSTRACT SHAPE (a hexagon cone with a shaft that tapers to the unfinished end) can be seen within the amber stack, made up of thousands of arcs.

LESLIE

...we really start to see the shape of something emerge...defining itself by what it removes and hollows out.

MEANWHILE AT THE BACK OF THE ROOM: With his briefcase open on one chair and piles of papers on another two, Acre is getting some city council work done. He signs his name in the same spot on five consecutive pages, never looking up at the demonstration.

LESLIE (OFF SCREEN)

Now the question is, since we can predict to a degree of accuracy what our sky will look like on a given night...can we somehow skip all this running around. I don't believe so, and I don't believe we can risk giving the camera anything less than authentic information: the true night sky.

CUT TO: Acre turns off the lights and locks up as the last few members leave the now-empty room.

119 INT. ACRE AND AMANDA'S HOUSE - LATER

BATHROOM: Acre showers, in a daze until his attention is snapped. He stares at something in his hand.

His palm hovers over the soap dish. He picks one of the two wafer-thin halves of just-broken SOAP and places it in the dish.

HALLWAY: He opens the bathroom door in a t-shirt, towel-drying his hair. He sees something down the hall, watches for a few seconds, and moves to the stairs.

Amanda is revealed sitting on the floor next to an open closet. She watches Acre pass and then returns to leafing through a BOX OF POLAROIDs.

KITCHEN: Acre pours himself a GLASS of ice water from the fridge.

When he turns around, Amanda is standing at the island counter with the box of pictures. She places a few Polaroids down for him to see and looks to him. The pictures are of GLINTS taken years ago at several different locations. In a couple of them we can see the back of Acre's head and baby Elijah.

He moves past her and into the next room.

STUDY: Acre sinks into a leather chair with his drink. We hear Amanda follow him, but he continues to fill our view.

A Polaroid rises into the right part of the frame. Amanda is showing it to Acre, so we only see the back. She speaks quietly and methodically:

AMANDA

These streaks...I know they aren't real.
I know it's the crummy lens- the long
streaks. But if you take...

Acre looks directly at us. We are Amanda. Another Polaroid rises on the right and overlaps the first a little. She holds them both there with one hand.

AMANDA

...if you take them and line up the
longest spikes- they have to be turned
around...

Acre slowly turns away from the pictures, breaking down. His eyes water. He shakes his head slightly. Another Polaroid comes up, this time on the left.

AMANDA

...but if we don't do it randomly, we only
turn by a certain amount...

The Polaroid on the left dips down for a second so Amanda can pick up a fourth picture before the two return to the frame.

Acre watches her guardedly, allowing himself for the first time to consider what she is suggesting.

AMANDA

...the golden ratio. Like science.

CUT TO: We follow the NOW-EMPTY GLASS Acre holds at his side as he walks from the study back to the kitchen.

He leans against a door post and watches Amanda at the island counter, adding to a MOSAIC of about 15 assembled Polaroids.

CUT TO: Acre cuts a sandwich in half and gives a part to Amanda, still working.

CUT TO: Amanda holds Zoe, asleep on her shoulder, while Acre cuts up pictures. They are deep in discussion about nothing to do with Polaroids or angles. There is even a smile.

ACRE

...cause all day I'm thinking if I take little bites from each bag evenly, you know, no one's- who's gonna suspect-

AMANDA

No one will ever know.

ACRE

Yeah, so I get home from school and start taking them around houses and...I mean they know, everybody knows. I'm knocking on doors and handing them these bags that have maybe that much peanut brittle and the rest is air...because I retied the-

AMANDA

And they paid you for them?

ACRE

They had already. So what were they gonna do...idiot kid. I never told you that?

LIVING ROOM: Zoe sleeps on the couch. Acre and Amanda quietly carry a POSTER BOARD containing their work so far to the wall and prop it up.

CUT TO: The mosaic has extended far past the poster board. They struggle with one picture, turning it this way and that. Acre remembers something, hurriedly fishes through the box with no luck, and eventually finds a picture in another pile. They replace the original and it works.

CUT TO: Amanda attends to a piece. She notices Acre standing in the middle of the room staring at the wall, almost angry.

She moves to his side.

When she turns to the near-complete mosaic, her curiosity is replaced with disappointment.

ACRE

It's a dead end.

THE MOSAIC is revealed beyond them. It is almost a mirror reflection of the room and themselves. Where they stand, the rough shape and colors of their clothing, and even the furniture are all reproduced. Superimposed over it is what looks like a WALL OF ABSTRACT VERTICAL LINES. The end result: TWO FIGURES FACING A THICK FOREST.

CUT TO: SPECTRUM. We see the entire visible light spectrum, the number of colored lines so dense that the entire strip is BLINDINGLY WHITE.

120 EXT. TREELINE - DAY

Framed identically to the mosaic, two boys, ALBERT (11) and CARTER (12), stand in a clearing facing a THICK FOREST, waiting for...

...EUCLID steps out from the trees carrying something the size of a large car muffler wrapped in a DIRTY GREEN BLANKET.

He lays it on the ground and they crowd around.

He peels back the corners of the blanket to reveal a RUGGED BLACK MACHINE. This is the MAKER.

NOTE: The rest of the story involves 10 BOYS. Here are their names and ages, grouped with their friends:
(Euclid-10, Carter-12, Graham-7, Samuel-7)
(Albert-11, Marcus-10, Javier-11)
(Vaughn-11, George-11, Hector-9)

121 INT. EUCLID'S HOUSE - NIGHT

BEDROOM: Toothbrush in his mouth, Euclid pushes and prods different parts of the Maker which sits on his dresser.

CUT TO: With some effort he manages to pull out a spring-loaded TRAY that slides in and out of the machine. It ejects with a JOLT.

The tray is empty. He starts to push it back in, fighting the spring's resistance.

CUT TO: He pulls and pushes on a ROD that juts out from the machine. The Rod has a YELLOW BUTTON on its end. He tries to push it, but it won't go in. He inspects some more.

LIGHTS OUT

We see the outline of the window frame and Euclid sleeping in his bed. We hear the distinct sound of the TRAY EJECTING.

DAWN

The Maker's tray is out. Euclid peers into it, seeing...

...a WHITE CIRCULAR OBJECT about 10 inches in diameter and 3 inches high with a hole in the middle. This is a FUNNEL.

He holds it up to the orange sunlight. It's slightly translucent so he is able to see the silhouette of his fingers moving behind it.

He places the Funnel next to the Maker, and tries to peer deeper into the tray opening.

KITCHEN: He fills a huge WATER COOLER at the sink, dumping in ice.

He hears something, shuts off the water, and listens for a second before sprinting off.

BEDROOM: The tray has ejected. We hear him running up the stairs. He enters, heads straight to the Maker.

This time he pulls out a FLAT DISC a few millimeters thick. It's 7 inches wide and like the Funnel has a center hole.

Placing it next to the Funnel, he compares the two, picking at a LOOSE TRANSLUCENT FLAKE that clings to the Funnel.

He pushes the tray in on the Maker and resets it, having mastered the rod and button by now.

122 EXT. RURAL HOUSE - LATER

The house sits just off a long country road with the nearest neighbor a few hundred yards off. 5 KIDS are mowing the yard, pruning bushes, and edging.

Parked on the street is a FLAT BACK TRAILER hitched to a SMALL WEATHERED TRACTOR. The trailer is full of rakes, push brooms, and lawn supplies. Euclid's water cooler sits near the back. He ties a bag of grass closed and pours a cup of water.

Vaughn leads George and Marcus to the tractor. He gestures to a rusted gate on the trailer's side:

VAUGHN

One of you drive, but the other one needs to watch this side gate. It already uh...came loose on me, so you might as

well walk alongside and watch all
the...shit.

He pats his pockets having misplaced something, walks off.

Carter arrives at the cooler, tries to find a cup. Euclid hands him his before heading off. While Carter pours a drink, Graham sidles next to him. Aggravated:

CARTER
What are you doing here?

Graham wants something but won't say what. He looks around. Carter is forced to continue a previous conversation:

CARTER
Graham, look at all this stuff. You see
all this equipment?

At the tractor, George moves to climb into the driver's seat. Marcus subtly blocks him by grabbing the gearshift.

GEORGE
How old are you?

MARCUS
Ten. How old are you?

GEORGE
Eleven.

Marcus moves aside.

MARCUS
Okay.

123 INT. EUCLID'S HOUSE - LATER

STAIRCASE: EUCLID'S SHOES are kicked off at the bottom stair.

BEDROOM: He enters, checks the Maker. The tray is closed. He puts his ear to it for a second before heading to the bathroom.

He gets the bathroom door open when we hear the tray eject. He races back.

He removes a new Disc from the tray and moves to place it with the first two pieces on the dresser but sees something there that causes him to pause:

What used to be a Flat Disc has now grown to the same height as the original Funnel next to it.

124 INT. CARTER'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carter is going through some math on paper with Graham.

CARTER
Gasoline, trimmer cord, trash bags, all of
it. We split all that...and get...okay.
But if you join we all end up with
less...minus two-sevenths dollars is...I
don't know, five dollars. We each lose
five dollars. So-

GRAHAM
But everyone will have to do less work,
right?

CARTER
You're seven. We won't notice.

GRAHAM
Eight.

CARTER
Not yet you're not.

And then it occurs to him:

GRAHAM
I'm your brother.

BEAT

CARTER
Get two more houses. Go door to door.

GRAHAM
Two?

CARTER
You know what? I don't like- no, get
three. I don't like that attitude,
Graham.

125 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD/ TRAILER - DUSK

The kids play with assorted Funnels, reclining in the trailer
after a day of work. Vaughn drives the tractor that tows them
home at 5 mph.

George sits in back, spinning his Funnel on its edge like a
top. Hector can only watch, twirling a still-flat Disc around

his finger absentmindedly. It has a BROWNISH STRIPE around the ring, like a coffee stain on white linen.

Albert, Carter, and Marcus are peeling the skin off of theirs. Marcus is able to get a large sheet off. It looks like cellophane. He holds it up to the light for everyone to see.

Javier, walking alongside, reaches into Euclid's BACKPACK and retrieves a Funnel. Euclid watches but doesn't stop him.

126 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - NIGHT

This is a partially constructed building about the size of a house. The walls are concrete with WHITE PLASTIC SHEETS where windows should be. The lumber and tools left by a construction crew make up the crude furniture.

At a desk Albert finishes some payroll accounting and lays out stacks of cash from a METAL CASHBOX. Vaughn oversees.

ALBERT

Check it?

After a quick glance at the payroll:

VAUGHN

Okay.

WIDE: We now see that the kids are lined up single file in front of the desk. Albert begins distributing the cash to each after they sign the sheet.

Vaughn closes the Cashbox and locks it.

CUT TO: The kids sit casually in the chairs. Some count their cash. Carter stands at the front with Graham.

CARTER

My brother wants to mow with us.

They all look up.

Silence. Javier starts counting heads. Hector is using his fingers to do math.

MARCUS

We have to split again?

CARTER
He went door to door.

ALBERT
How many did he get?

Graham reads from a NOTEPAD:

GRAHAM
Mrs. Weist' house is on Plackard Street
and...the Reynolds have two colts down the
road from there.

ALBERT
Out on farm road?

CARTER
We can tractor it, takes five minutes.

They all think about it, looking down or off.

GRAHAM
...and the Miller house is on Regent
Avenue.

They all look up.

GRAHAM
It crosses Plackard.

They look down to think again.

GRAHAM
...and the house next door to them.

They all look up again.

GRAHAM
...and the one across the street from that
one, it's the Clark house. They have
three stalls.

They continue to stare at him. He closes the notepad.

127 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME - DAY

We see kids spinning Funnels on sticks and throwing them like
horrible Frisbees. In the distance, we can see a CRANE and an
EARTH MOVER on an abandoned CONSTRUCTION YARD.

Marcus runs inside...

128 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - CONTINUOUS

...and across the room to the Maker where he waits on it.

Albert and Carter look on as Euclid contends with a STACK of Funnels he has constructed on the floor. They fit on top of each other perfectly, but a half-inch gap separates each Funnel as if there is some hidden blockage. He's trying to jam them down with his hands.

EUCLID

They just won't...lay flat.

ALBERT

They don't fit then.

Euclid stands on the Stack, balancing himself with a desk.

EUCLID

No, they fit...they just won't go.

The Maker ejects and Marcus takes the new Disc outside. The others are too consumed to notice, peeking under and into the gaps between Funnels.

129 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME - CONTINUOUS

Marcus joins Javier on the back step, handing him the Disc.

Javier compares it to a full grown Funnel in his other hand. He holds them both out in front, trying to judge their weight.

MARCUS

That's how they start and then just...what are you doing?

JAVIER

Nothing.

130 INT. JAVIER'S HOUSE/ BEDROOM - DAY

Javier is practicing tying a knot, learning from a SAILING MANUAL. He holds his place with his left hand and reaches to operate a VIDEO CAMERA with his right. The camera is pointed at a Funnel in mid-growth, placed directly under a desk light.

His finger hovers over the RED RECORD BUTTON until...

He quickly taps it twice and turns to a SMALL TV to see the SCREEN go from paused to live for a fraction of second and then return to its frozen state.

131 EXT. WOODS - DAY

Hands slide a Disc into a slim nook in a TREE.

132 EXT. JUPITER ROCK - DAY

Jupiter Rock is a boulder the size of an oven. It has a splotch of red discoloration on it.

The kids wedge a Disc into a tight crevasse near the top.

133 EXT. FARM ROAD - DAY

At a row of THREE MAILBOXES, Albert and Marcus slide a Disc between one mailbox and the post it sits on.

134 EXT. CONSTRUCTION YARD - DAY

Climbing on a LARGE EARTHMOVER, they place a Disc between the joints of one of the vehicle's lifting arms.

135 INT. ALBERT'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - DAY

The kids are crowded around a TV, captivated by it.

Some of them begin humming. This escalates in volume and pitch until the moment they are anticipating arrives and they accompany it with sound effects: "foooshhhh", etc.

ALBERT

One more time.

Javier works the REMOTE CONTROL.

TELEVISION: We see the time-lapse video he shot. A Disc does nothing for a few seconds and then begins to rise slowly. A moment later it speeds up exponentially and shoots into the Funnel shape like a biscuit rising.

136 EXT. WOODS - DAY

The nook in the tree is SPLIT now around the growing funnel. A hand runs over the area as another spurt of SPLINTERING and CRACKLING comes from the mounting pressure.

A few kids look on. Vaughn grimaces, bracing for something to come flying at them.

137 EXT. JUPITER ROCK - DAY

The crevasse in the rock is FRACTURED and much wider now to accommodate the Funnel's growth.

A large portion of SPLIT-OFF ROCK unceremoniously falls to the ground.

138 EXT. FARM ROAD - DAY

One mailbox has been blown off its post and hangs loosely.

The other POPS OFF as the kids watch.

139 EXT. CONSTRUCTION YARD - DAY

The kids hide behind assorted stacks of bricks and vehicles like they're playing war with an invisible enemy. Albert and Carter peek out at the earthmover and then duck back. Euclid sits nearby, thinking.

Albert checks his watch, impatiently.

ALBERT

Slipped out.

CARTER

Nuh-uh. It's in there good. Unless somebody messed with-

Euclid realizes:

EUCLID

There's no light.

CARTER

What?

Euclid stands up, heading toward the earthmover.

EUCLID

It's packed way in there. It can't get any sunlight.

CARTER

It needs that?

EUCLID

It's not going to work.

Halfway to the earthmover, the SOUND OF CREAKING METAL stops him. He braces, not turning around. Suddenly, the earthmover's lifting arm BUCKLES and EXPLODES OFF like a grasshopper's leg attached to a firecracker. This sends Euclid running back to safety, feeling stupid:

EUCLID
Was that clever?

CARTER
I almost followed you.

CLOSE-UP: Hector eyes something far off with anticipation.

140 EXT. EUCLID'S HOUSE/ BACK PORCH - DAY

We now see Hector is watching Euclid from behind the corner of the house. Euclid is on the steps packing Funnels into his backpack. The Maker sits next to him.

When it EJECTS, Hector comes running. He places his BROWN-STRIPED DISC on the step next to Euclid.

HECTOR
Can I trade? This one didn't go.

EUCLID
What are you gonna do with it?

HECTOR
Nothing.

He nervously licks his bottom lip, looking at the new Disc in the tray.

EUCLID
Hector, what are you gonna do?

Euclid looks away, signaling his resignation. Hector takes the new Disc. Euclid sweeps the Brown Striped one and everything else into his bag.

141 EXT. BRIDGE - NEXT

We follow in front as Euclid walks along the road toward a bridge that crosses over a small CREEK. 30 feet behind him OLIVIA (11), CARMEN (6), and DAPHNE (11) lazily bicycle toward the bridge.

As Euclid makes a turn and descends below the bridge to walk along the creek bed he passes the rest of the boys huddled

together against the embankment quietly waiting to ambush the girls. Graham is picking out the perfect EGG from a CARTON.

Euclid continues on his way. Behind him the girls appear and the boys unleash a torrent of eggs. They all scream and it's mostly fun until Daphne's bike topples over and she ends up in a ditch.

Euclid looks back over his shoulder.

The boys stop throwing and just stand there. We can hear Daphne whimpering. Carter looks for someone to blame:

CARTER

Shit, Marcus! What are you doing!?

142 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

Euclid fishes a Funnel out of his backpack and adds it to the stack of 4 that already sits on the desk. It fits, but there is still a gap between all the Funnels.

He takes a seat and places the backpack on the desk, rifling through it. Suddenly he notices the stack of 5 Funnels COLLAPSING. One after another, they each drop, erasing the gaps between them.

When they are completely compact the texture of the Funnels changes slightly for a fraction of a second, like a THOUSAND TINY HOLES silently flitting open and closed.

Then the Stack goes neutral and the GAPS between the Funnels return.

Euclid stares wide-eyed and shocked. He suddenly SNEEZES.

A delayed reaction, he jumps back out of his seat. He tears his eyes off the Stack to check the door behind him, about to speak. Did anyone see that?

When he slowly takes his seat we follow him down and see that Samuel has been sitting to his left, staring at the Funnel Stack.

SAMUEL

I saw it.

Euclid notices him for the first time.

He reaches out to carefully lift the top Funnel, but when he does the entire Stack comes with it, connected somehow.

143 EXT. WOODS - NEXT

Marcus stands on a stack of 3 Funnels. By steadying himself against a tree he's able to spin back and forth while he talks to Javier, sitting nearby.

Euclid and Samuel are 100 feet off, walking this way. Euclid wears his backpack and carries the 5-Funnel stack by the top Funnel like a suitcase. Marcus steps off and faces them.

144 EXT. FIELD - NEXT

Hector and George are playing horseshoes with Funnels. 5 are scattered around.

Euclid approaches, carrying the Stack that now has 8 Funnels. Samuel, Marcus, and Javier follow him.

They all look on as Euclid places the 8-Funnel stack on top of one of the scattered Funnels which then retracts into it, and goes neutral, now a part of the Stack.

Euclid studies the other Funnels, until he finds one he thinks will fit.

One by one he picks them all up and then walks off with his followers.

145 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

The Stack sits on the desk, 20 Funnels high now. George and Samuel count the gaps. The others look on as Euclid works, removing his backpack and emptying it on the desk. Out come pens, papers, the Brown-Striped Disc and a 7-inch Funnel.

MARCUS (OFF SCREEN)

No, he did it himself. He figured it out.

CARTER (OFF SCREEN)

How?

MARCUS (OFF SCREEN)

He knew exactly what he was doing. He got the right pieces and just kept going.

Euclid takes the 7-inch Funnel and steps up on a chair to reach the top of the Stack. When he places it there, the entire Stack starts to collapse. One by one each Funnel begins to drop down.

SAMUEL and GEORGE stop counting and just watch.

GEORGE

They're all doing it.

Carter steps forward to stand next to Euclid who takes his eyes off the collapsing Stack just long enough to acknowledge him before turning back.

CARTER

Hey. How did...uh...

Euclid turns to him again.

EUCLID

What?

The last Funnel contracts and in an instant the entire Stack SLAMS against the desk with a DEAFENING BANG and disappears. Papers and everything on the desk are sent into the air. The kids all recoil.

When they compose themselves they look up to the ceiling.

CUT TO: The Stack has embedded itself halfway through the exposed plywood of the first floor ceiling. Euclid and Carter are cutting into the wood with a HAND SAW to free it.

Beyond them, outside, Marcus is explaining to Vaughn and Albert who have just arrived. We can't hear him over the sawing, but what he's saying becomes clear when he smacks his hands together hard and points at the ceiling.

CUT TO:

IN THE BACKGROUND: Back on the desk Euclid and a few others remove the last remaining splinters of wood from the Stack. Javier tries to pry the top Funnel off with his hands. Vaughn and Hector jam STICKS into the gaps to get some leverage to pull them apart.

GEORGE

He's gotta get it off first, Albert.

ALBERT

How did you get it to work before?

GEORGE

Cause they weren't stuck. Why are you telling us what to do if you didn't see it?

JAVIER

(still straining)

I need a screwdriver to get under there.

HECTOR
Be careful. Don't stand over it.

Javier gives up and shakes the pain from his cramped fingers.

JAVIER
I need a screwdriver.

MEANWHILE IN THE FOREGROUND: Graham and Samuel are scavenging the floor and picking up bits that fell off the desk. Carter stands quietly watching the group.

Graham finds the Brown-Striped Disc and offers it to him.

CARTER
Nuh-uh, it's a runt. It doesn't go.

Graham places it on the desk next to the Stack...

...which begins to collapse again, immediately trapping Javier's shirt between two Funnels.

Everyone backs away leaving Javier panicking, pulling on his shirt.

The sticks VIOLENTLY SNAP in two as each Funnel drops down.

The kids anxiously watch as Javier struggles.

DOLLY BACK: with Albert as he steps forward to help Javier.

DOLLY BACK: with Euclid as he steps forward.

DOLLY BACK: with Vaughn as he steps forward, opening a POCKETKNIFE.

DOLLY FORWARD: following Carter as he goes to the desk.

Albert and Vaughn try to cut the shirt free. Euclid holds the Stack steady. Javier gets free just as the last two Funnels are about to collapse.

But they don't collapse, surprising everyone. One by one, the gaps return and the Stack starts to go neutral.

Carter stares at the Stack, relieved, breathing heavily. He turns to the others.

They are all staring just past him at...

...THE BROWN-STRIPED DISC (now called the Controller) held high in the air in Carter's hand as far away from the Stack as he can get it.

Carter turns to it as well.

146 EXT. FIELD - NEXT

With much apprehension a hand slowly brings the Controller closer to the Stack which now stands on a small ALTAR of random lumber. When it is within a couple feet, the Stack starts to go compact and as it gets closer, the collapsing speeds up...

EUCLID

Everybody clear, and...watch out!

...until the Controller is within inches and the Stack suddenly EXPANDS HARD and launches up. The recoil jolts the pile of 2X4s like a whack from a sledgehammer.

WIDE: The kids are arranged in a rough semi-circle around Euclid and the altar. Their heads quickly turn to the sky to follow the Stack, fast as a bottle rocket.

Shielding their eyes from the sun, they follow the arc for a few seconds. A couple of them step forward like they're about to chase down a pop fly. Their pace quickens and soon the entire group follows at a sprint.

Vaughn comes to Euclid's side at the back of the pack.

VAUGHN

Euclid, what are you going to do with the rest of them?

Euclid's attention is still on the Stack's arc. He's surprised that Vaughn's isn't.

EUCLID

What?

VAUGHN

When it makes more are you going to use them or...?

CUT TO: Albert and Vaughn stand facing Euclid. 20 meters beyond them the others hang over a HIGH CONCRETE WALL looking into another section of the abandoned construction.

ALBERT

(to Euclid)
What do you think?

VAUGHN

Now that we know what it does-

Vaughn goes quiet as Albert places a hand on his shoulder.

ALBERT

Maybe we should all get one...now that we know what it does.

The three turn to the wall as Carter retrieves the Stack, pushing it back over to the other kids.

147 INT. CONCRETE FRAME/ BACK STEP - DUSK

Euclid is teaching Vaughn and Albert, pad and pencil ready, how to use the Maker. In the distance, Carter and the others are setting up another launch.

EUCLID

Push the button in and pull it.

Vaughn pushes the button on top of the rod and tries to pull it, but it won't budge. Euclid mimics the motion. He can barely stop himself from reaching in and doing it himself.

EUCLID

The button on the thing, the rod, push it first. You gotta pull hard.

VAUGHN

I'm pulling.

CARTER

(far off)
Three! Two! One!

They all turn to see the launch, necks craning to follow the high arc.

Turning back, Euclid notices that the ejector tray is out. He pushes it back in:

EUCLID

Oh, here. Now try.

The other two turn back to the Maker and this time, Vaughn is able to get the rod pulled out.

148 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - MORNING

Euclid and Albert lean against the workbench, waiting. Euclid checks his wristwatch and puts his arm down. When Albert twists his head to see the watch, Euclid brings it back up for him.

Vaughn arrives. He unpacks the Maker and a WADDED-UP T-SHIRT from his backpack.

Euclid takes the Maker and places it in front of Albert who in turn puts it in his bag. Something catches their eye...

Vaughn pulls back the four corners of the Wadded-up T-shirt to reveal EIGHT NEWLY-MADE FUNNELS and ONE DISC.

149 INT. ALBERT'S HOUSE/ BEDROOM - NIGHT

Albert is sound asleep in his bed. The Maker is on the floor next to the bed. The tray ejects, hitting the ON/OFF BUTTON on a radio that has been set up in front of it. The synthetic voice of the National Weather Service Hourly Summary blares from the speaker.

In one sleepy but practiced move he rolls over, turns the radio off, removes the new Disc, drops it on the floor next to a few Funnels, pushes the tray in, resets the rod on the Maker, and goes back to sleep.

150 EXT. FIELD/ LAUNCHING AREA - DAY

With the others looking on, Euclid and Albert each launch Stacks seconds apart by bringing their Controllers near to them.

EUCLID
Everybody clear, and...watch out!

ALBERT
One, two...three!

DUSK

On another part of the field, George, Carter, Graham, and Javier are spread out watching the sky.

A Stack drops in, landing roughly. Then another. Then one more.

The kids rush in to pick them up. In the distance, others come racing over a hill to meet them.

151 EXT. HOUSE/ FRONT LAWN - DAY

While the other kids are landscaping behind him, Hector sits under a tree completing a stack of 6 Funnels. Lunch remnants surround him. He brings the Controller to the Stack and it begins collapsing.

Carter arrives, drops a WEED EATER next to him and starts picking up the trash.

CARTER
One, lunch is over. Everybody else noticed but you.

Hector sneezes and quickly gets up. Carter gestures to the weed eater:

CARTER
Two, you jammed this and I'm not spending an hour untangling it.

HECTOR
I didn't know how to open it.

CARTER
Why are you even here? Where's Allie?

HECTOR
I'm here instead.

CARTER
Did he pay you?

Hector picks up his Stack and points at the top two Funnels:

HECTOR
These two here.

CUT TO: Euclid and Carter stand on the trailer collecting rakes and bags of grass as the others bring them in.

CARTER
You didn't charge Allie to use the maker did you?

EUCLID
Nuh-uh.

CARTER
And he turns around...

They step away to pile the bags and then return to camera.

EUCLID
That's not fair.

CARTER
Nuh-uh.

Graham and Samuel pack a TOY PARATROOPER on the top of a Stack and back away, waiting for Euclid to launch it. He's finishing a conversation with Albert:

ALBERT
I just figured as long as Carter and Graham get theirs, right? And Sammy. Then you know...

EUCLID
Well, I'm not gonna charge anyone so...if the other guys ask me they can have them for free.

ALBERT
Okay, yeah. But I get the Maker Sunday?

EUCLID
It's your turn, yeah. Do whatever you want.

He turns to launch the Stack:

EUCLID (CONT'D)
All right, everybody clear, and...

The Stack starts to collapse even though he is a good 10 feet away. Euclid, not noticing, turns back to Albert.

EUCLID
But doesn't it seem...I don't know the word. Disrespectful maybe or...

Euclid stops talking as he realizes...

He turns to the Stack to see it has completely collapsed.

Puzzled, he steps back a few steps and waits.

ALBERT
Disrespectful to who? It's a lot of work running the thing every-

Albert keys off Euclid and also turns to the Stack...

...which eventually goes neutral.

Euclid, standing still, speaks in a monotone, testing:

EUCLID
All-right-everybody-clear-and.

The Stack collapses from 15 feet away.

He checks Albert and then the Controller in his own hand.

ALBERT
Don't you have to be closer?

Euclid pushes the test further:

EUCLID
All-right-everybody-clear-and-watch-out.

The Stack launches even though the Controller is nowhere near it. It has less power this time, only jumping 40 feet high.

ANOTHER DAY

ALBERT seems amused. He leans forward and WHISPERS:

ALBERT
One, two...three.

WIDE: Albert holds the Controller loosely at his side and is several feet away from the Stack. It launches just a few feet in the air and falls on its side.

He laughs. The kids watching love it.

100 FEET AWAY: A CIRCLE on the ground 20 feet in diameter and made of branches and rocks is almost complete. Javier and Carter put the final rocks in place.

BACK AT THE LAUNCHING AREA: Albert, Vaughn, and Euclid fasten a few RED BRICKS to the top of each of three Stacks as...

...Hector tries to launch his from a distance without success:

HECTOR
Four, three, two, go.

He gives up and goes to the Stack, holding out his Controller.

HECTOR
How many times do I have to do this?

SAMUEL
It'll learn.

CUT TO: Concentrating, Vaughn speaks at a normal volume and tries to accurately enunciate the last word:

VAUGHN
Ready, get set to...FLY.

AT THE TARGET CIRCLE: Two Stacks have landed inside. A third drops next to them nose-first, weighed down by the bricks.

CUT TO: Javier measures the distance from the center of the circle to one Stack with a length of string. He compares it to the next Stack's distance.

JAVIER

Vaughn got it.

The kids all laugh and boo and comment about who won. Vaughn gloats:

VAUGHN

I don't know...I can't teach you that.

153 EXT. DIRT ROAD - DUSK

Hector and George pull a SMALL WAGON carrying SOMETHING covered in a sheet. The sheet falls off from too much jostling, revealing an OVERHEAD PROJECTOR like one used in school.

George quickly hides it back under the sheet and checks to make sure no one saw.

154 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - NIGHT

Javier peels a sheet of Skin off a Funnel and carefully places it on the overhead projector.

The kids are spaced throughout the room in little nests of SLEEPING BAGS and SNACKS. One by one they each look up with interest at the projected image on the wall:

It contains a series of ABSTRACT SHAPES connected by a network of tunnels.

CUT TO: Javier, Marcus, and Graham trace the network on the wall with MARKERS.

Albert and George trade ideas in full problem solving mode, gesturing to one of the Shapes.

IN THE BACK: Euclid and Carter sit in their sleeping bags, studying a single Funnel. Unlike the others, this one is CRACKED, BROWN, and a bit TRANSLUCENT.

CARTER

...is it used up?

EUCLID
I don't know, it has all these um...

CARTER
How'd you get it off?

Vaughn crawls over, seeing the Funnel.

EUCLID
See, that's the thing, it just-

VAUGHN
What happened to it?

They are interrupted by some commotion at the front wall:

HECTOR
Oh my god, that works! He's right!

JAVIER
Show me again.

HECTOR
I just did it by myself and it works!
Marcus, you gotta show everybody.

MARCUS
You just take the number of-

JAVIER
Wait for everyone, just a sec.

Carter and Euclid approach the front as everyone crowds around Marcus, ready to learn the secret. He gestures to the projected image, his excitement contagious:

MARCUS
Okay, all these shapes have sides right,
and if you count them, uh, you have...

JAVIER
Do the one you just showed us.

MARCUS
Okay, yeah, this one...has four sides so
A, B, C, D...D is the fourth letter so
this is D.

He draws a "D" on the wall and points to the next shape.

MARCUS
And this one has one, two...nine sides.
So, Sammy...do it.

SAMUEL (COUNTING HIS FINGERS)
It's a I.

MARCUS
Right, and this is seven letters so...

HECTOR
G.

MARCUS
Yeah, so this is "Dig". And don't ask me
what it means yet...

Euclid is let down. He studies the shapes on the wall.

JAVIER
What are some other ones?

MARCUS
I don't know yet, we have to do the rest
of them.

Everyone starts counting letters. Euclid's suspicious:

EUCLID
None of these shapes has more than...13
sides.

Marcus looks to the wall, verifying.

MARCUS
Uh-huh.

EUCLID
Don't you need some to have 26 sides if
they were letters?

MARCUS
Yeah, but only if there's a Z in the word.
Barely any words have Z's.

George whispers to Hector:

GEORGE
That's true...or X's or W's...

Euclid quietly checks everyone to see if they are going for
this. They are all studying the wall and writing their own
decryptions.

EUCLID
How do you know the words aren't Spanish
then?

Hector tries to help by whispering to Marcus:

HECTOR
"Dig" is English.

Marcus acknowledges but doesn't repeat it. Instead:

MARCUS
You don't have to agree, Euclid...

Albert interrupts. He's enthusiastic:

ALBERT
What order do the shapes go? Left to
right or can it be up and down?

Euclid can't believe Albert is buying this.

155 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME/ BACK STEP - LATER

Euclid sits, working on a Funnel Stack. Everyone else can be seen still inside. Carter sits down next to him.

CARTER
It didn't really work.

EUCLID
(sarcastic)
What?

Euclid looks back across the room as others are leaving Marcus alone at the projector. He looks back at Euclid with some embarrassment/ contempt before getting back to his work.

156 EXT. FIELD/ LAUNCHING AREA - DAY

Hector looks on as George triggers what should be an uneventful launch, but as the Stack leaves the ground it splits in half, one part flying into the trees and the other spinning across the ground.

CUT TO: At the edge of the woods, they inspect one half. The bottom Funnel shows some cracking and is brown and translucent.

HECTOR
It just looks...old.

George feels the texture of it, worried.

We follow Vaughn as he arrives, wearing a STRING OF FUNNELS around his torso like a bandolier.

HECTOR
We can play with mine...you want to try mine?

GEORGE
No.

Vaughn pulls out PLIERS and goes to work on the Stack.

HECTOR
What are you doing? You're not gonna be able to...

With some effort Vaughn slides out the Aged Funnel. He compares it to the Funnels on the string until he finds one that matches and tosses the old one to the side.

VAUGHN
You got three dollars?

George, stunned, shakes his head, no.

Vaughn jams a new Funnel into the Stack and brings the Controller in George's hand close to it.

VAUGHN
Can you work Saturday?

George nods, watching the Funnel retract.

157 EXT. FIELD/ LANDING AREA - DAY

Euclid carries a Stack in each hand, returning them to the launching area far uphill. Behind him, Samuel and Graham are chasing down a descending Toy Paratrooper.

He suddenly turns towards the woods, like someone has called his name. But no one is there. He gives up, turning again up the hill and sees:

Carter is talking to Olivia and Daphne who are sitting on their bikes. Olivia is removing her necklace (a thin strip of leather with some charms on it). Carter hands a small Funnel to her, pulling it back at the last second. Flirting.

Eventually, he lets her loop the necklace through the Funnel and she puts it back around her neck.

CUT TO: We follow Euclid as he approaches Carter. Olivia and Daphne are gone.

Euclid stands up one Stack in front of Carter and moves to a MILK CRATE full of Funnels assorted by size.

CARTER
Thanks.

EUCLID
They're all here?

CARTER
Yeah.

EUCLID
How do you know, did you count them?

CARTER
No. How many should we have?

Again, SOMETHING from the woods snags Euclid's attention. Carter turns too.

EUCLID
I don't know. Maybe we should mark them.

They head into the trees to investigate.

158 EXT. WOODS - NEXT

We hear BANGING. Euclid and Carter come upon some kids huddled around...

...Marcus hacking away at a White Funnel with a HAMMER.

EUCLID
Marcus, let's not do that, all right?

Vaughn picks the Funnel up off the ground.

VAUGHN
Look at that, it's not doing anything.
Carter, you should try.

Carter takes the Funnel and studies it.

CARTER
Only if Euclid wants me to.

VAUGHN
Don't you want to see what's in there?

MARCUS
I do.

ALBERT
Me too.

VAUGHN
Yeah, that's three already.

Carter and Euclid just stare at them for a few seconds before turning to each other in low tones:

CARTER
It doesn't matter. These are all yours.
I'll beat down whoever says they're not,
especially Vaughn. And it doesn't count
anyway cause not everybody's here so-

EUCLID
No. It's a vote.

Carter takes a second to be sure, announces to the others:

CARTER
I'll get my dad's hammer...and I want a
fresh one right out of the Maker.

159 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - DAY

The Maker ejects a Disc. Samuel grabs it, runs out,...

160 EXT. JUPITER ROCK - DAY

...and sets it up on the large rock.

Carter raises a SLEDGEHAMMER and brings it down as hard as he can.

The Disc ricochets into the trees.

CARTER
I bent it!

The boys fan out to look for it.

EUCLID
You bent the rock.

CARTER
No, I bent it. I felt it.

From deep in the brush:

JAVIER
Here it is!

CUT TO: Euclid holds it up in the sunlight for inspection.

EUCLID
I don't know. I don't see any-

CARTER
I felt something move.

Euclid hands the disc to Carter.

EUCLID
It's already rising.

161 EXT. CONSTRUCTION YARD - DAY

We hear an ENGINE running. Carter holds a LARGE METAL HOOK that hangs from above. He waits on...

...the Maker, attended by Samuel. It ejects and he quickly hands over the Disc to Carter who hurriedly loops a length of STEEL CHAIN through it and hangs the Disc on the metal hook.

CARTER
All right, go!

WIDE: Vaughn's TRACTOR, connected to the steel chain, idles on top of a 5-foot-tall PALLET OF BRICKS where we now see Carter, Samuel, and the Maker are as well. On the side a RAMP of several stiff boards was used to get the tractor up there. Vaughn sends the tractor off the edge of the brick pile.

It in turn strains the Disc hung on what we now see is the end of a LARGE CRANE'S steel cable. The cable and chain go taut as the tractor swings a few feet off the ground.

Everyone waits. The tractor's engine makes the only noise.

Carter stares at the Disc with anticipation. Then decides...

He jumps down off the bricks, grabs a bit of the tractor's chain, and starts pulling down.

CARTER

Hurry up!

The others join him, each grabbing some chain, except for Euclid who watches from the side, taking a few steps back.

CARTER

Come on, pull!

Euclid looks from the kids to the Disc above them. He smiles just a bit, admiring its strength.

Suddenly, something in the line SNAPS. The engine noise immediately goes QUIET.

The tractor CRASHES to the ground IN SILENCE. The kids all fall to the ground like they won a tug-of-war, again with no sound.

We hear the sound of PARTICLES HITTING A WALL and nothing else.

As Carter and the others get up they instinctively edge away from the tractor, afraid.

Albert hits the side of his ear, mouthing something.

Samuel nervously checks everyone's face, turning from person to person. He can't hear.

Vaughn shapes his hands around his head making a pathway to scream in his own ear.

Euclid looks from kid to kid, assessing damage.

MATCH CUT TO:

162 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - DAY

He sits against a wall still scanning the others, landing on:

Hector, sitting next to George, screams as loud as he can into his ear. Nothing. George laughs, motions for Hector to turn his own ear, and returns the favor. They couldn't be more amused.

Euclid isn't. He turns to:

Carter and Albert have just finished writing on a board in big letters "Don't tell" with a list of the boys' names underneath and a checkbox next to each.

Euclid checks the box next to his name and walks off. Carter watches him go.

163 INT. SAMUEL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

KITCHEN: More particles and silence. Samuel sits at a small table picking at a piece of bread. He keeps his head down but out of the corner of his eye watches his FATHER preparing something at the counter with his back to us.

Suddenly, Father half turns to Samuel, waiting for an answer.

Samuel looks around his father for clues. Hesitantly, he nods and mouths:

SAMUEL

Yessir.

Father walks over with a PAN and places a small slice of LASAGNA onto Samuel's plate.

DEN: On the couch Samuel leans against his Father's arm, watching TV. He checks his Father's expression and then pretends to laugh at the show at the right places.

164 INT. HECTOR AND GEORGE'S HOUSE/ BASEMENT - NIGHT

Carrying GLASSES of milk and BOWLS of macaroni and cheese, Hector and George take seats on the carpet in front of the TV. Cartoons are on.

Hector pushes a combination of buttons on the remote but when he looks to the TV, doesn't seem to be getting the effect he wants. He puts the remote in George's outstretched hand.

With a couple presses George turns on closed captioning.

165 INT. EUCLID'S HOUSE - NIGHT

KITCHEN: Euclid puts a dirty dish and glass in the sink and grabs a POPSICLE from the freezer. His mother sits at the table going through a pile of papers (bank statements, etc).

As Euclid makes his way to the hall his mother says something without looking up. He stops, studying her. After a moment he slowly resumes walking.

STAIRWAY: At the bottom of the stairs, Euclid, in socks, walks past his SHOES lying on the floor. Beyond him, in the kitchen, his mom looks up from her work and watches him go upstairs. Agitated, she gets up.

EUCLID'S ROOM: Euclid closes the door and locks it. He steadies himself with his hand against the bed and begins the balancing act of removing his pants while eating the popsicle.

Behind him, the door knob is being turned violently from the other side. This is followed by the door itself vibrating from being pounded on.

He lays on the bed, finds his place in a SAILING PHOTOBOOK.

Suddenly, the door swings open. His mom enters, still holding the METAL CLOTHES HANGER used to unlock it. Enraged and a little scared, she yells something while motioning to the door with the clothes hanger. She waits for an answer.

His eyes flit around, panicked. He cautiously moves past her with an idea.

STAIRWAY: EUCLID'S HANDS pick the shoes up off the floor at the bottom of the stairs.

He passes his Mother on the way back upstairs and watches her over his shoulder to make sure he got it right.

LATER

BLACK

Euclid flips on the lamp next to his bed. He has kicked off the covers and has been lying there sweating.

He wipes a face full of sweat into his pillow, and gets out of bed. Rain is hitting the window.

BATHROOM: Euclid gulps downs a paper cup of water and immediately refills it.

EUCLID'S ROOM: Carefully balancing his cup of water, Euclid moves down the hall to his bedroom doorway where he suddenly halts, seeing:

Carter is in his room closing the window. Next to him is Albert, removing a backpack. They are soaked in rain. Albert looks to Euclid.

CUT TO: The three sit on the floor. Albert produces a THERMOMETER from the backpack, puts a DISPOSABLE PLASTIC COVER on it, and hands it to Euclid.

Euclid puts it under his tongue. Carter shows him his notepad. On it is listed:

carter - 101.2
graham - 101.8
albert - 102
hector - 102.7
vaughn - 102.8
sammy - 101.5

166 EXT. CONSTRUCTION YARD - DAY

Back at the tractor accident scene:

CLOSE-UP: RAINDROPS hit the pile of BRICKS, instantly BOIL, and evaporate with a hiss.

CLOSE-UP: The same happens when rain hits the metal of the TRACTOR.

CLOSE-UP: A small area of the ground is divided into one side that is completely dry and another that is covered in POOLED WATER from rainfall. Any water that encroaches on the dry side BOILS. A kid's shoe can be seen in the background.

WIDE: The kids stand in RAINCOATS on the outside of the DRY CIRCLE which is 30 feet in diameter and centered at the tractor and collapsed chain.

CLOSE-UP: The BROKEN FRAGMENTS of the Disc lie next to the chain.

CUT TO: The kids tie LONG LENGTHS OF ROPE to the four corners of a 4H CLUB FLAG.

CUT TO: Carter swings a ROCK at the end of some TWINE. When he releases it, the rock arcs over the Dry Circle and takes the twine with it.

CUT TO: On the other side of the Dry Circle, Euclid pulls the twine which is tied to two pieces of rope. This drags the rope (and the flag behind it) through assorted construction yard obstacles to the center of the circle

CUT TO: Carter and Vaughn each pull a length of rope tied to the flag, carefully scooping up the Disc Fragments with it.

Albert and Euclid pull the other two ropes, folding the other end of the flag over the Disc Fragments, wrapping them up.

167 EXT. FIELD - NEXT

The kids drag the flag across the wet ground 30 feet behind them leaving behind dry grass and a trail of STEAM.

168 EXT. HUGE CONCRETE HOLE - NEXT

FROM FAR ABOVE: We follow them as they approach the man-made seemingly BOTTOMLESS HOLE about 30 feet in diameter. Whatever this was, it was never completed, another abandoned part of some large scale project.

CUT TO: The flag is suspended over the hole. The appropriate ropes are pulled to empty the contents.

The fragments fall into the dark void.

169 INT. VAUGHN'S HOUSE/ BASEMENT - DAY

Vaughn sleeps on the couch in what looks like the least comfortable position imaginable. We hear GOLF ANNOUNCERS on the television. For a while the sound is relatively quiet, someone teeing up. Suddenly, the crowd CHEERS LOUDLY.

Eyes still closed, Vaughn grabs the nearby REMOTE and holds down the "VOLUME -" button until the sound disappears.

Seconds pass.

He opens his eyes intently. He turns the volume up.

TV: The on-screen announcers go on about what an incredible drive it was, narrowly missing a sand trap.

THE COUCH: is now empty except for the remote, the CUSHIONS slowly inflating back to their normal shape.

170 EXT. VAUGHN'S HOUSE - NEXT

The SCREEN DOOR bangs open and Vaughn comes running out, shoving his shoes on as he goes. A DOG in the next yard over barks at him repeatedly. He barks back excitedly:

VAUGHN
Rark, rark!

171 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

He races toward the building.

VAUGHN
Hector! Allie!

INT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

He enters the room and seeing his friends announces:

VAUGHN

It's gone!

His enthusiasm dies as he scans the room from face to face.

REVERSE ANGLE: The others look on as Carter and Albert argue silently, pointing at diagrams on the board. They seem unaware of Vaughn's presence.

Javier mouths something from across the room and they all turn to him. Then Euclid interjects, using his fingers to list 3 things. This all happens in total silence.

VAUGHN

Hello. Hello?

He gets no response, but eventually the others stop arguing and notice him. Carter says something directly to him, but there is no sound.

VAUGHN

I don't...

They look at him, puzzled. Vaughn looks down, searching for a reason.

VAUGHN

Why...I was...we were all together...

From one side of the room, Albert accidentally knocks a MARKER off a table. It makes a loud SMACK as it hits the floor, jolting Vaughn's attention. He watches it roll across the floor with the appropriate sound and then looks to Albert...

...who avoids his gaze and tries to hide a smile. Carter punches Albert in the shoulder.

A quiet moment passes. Vaughn is even more puzzled. A stifled laugh comes from the other side of the room. Vaughn turns to see where it came from when Marcus jumps on him, puts him in a headlock, and screams:

MARCUS

Goddamnit, Albert! That was gonna be so good!

Others pile on Vaughn, laughing.

VAUGHN

Hello!?

173 EXT. FIELD/ LAUNCHING AREA - DAY

CLOSE-UP on Albert.

ALBERT

One. Two...just say it? It's gonna-

JAVIER (OFF SCREEN)

Yeah, just like you're talking now.

ALBERT

But it's still gonna be loud if you don't-

WIDE: Albert is about to launch a Stack. Javier holds a MICROPHONE to Albert's mouth and operates a TAPE RECORDER.

JAVIER

Yeah, but I can fix...shoot, I don't care.
Soft is good. Do that.

Javier hits the record button.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

Okay, go.

CUT TO: Now, Javier is recording George launching a Stack.

GEORGE

Ready. Set. Jump up.

The Stack hops a few feet up. Javier stops the recording.

JAVIER

Got it.

174 EXT. TOOL SHED - DAY

Euclid puts away a mower, looks over to:

20 feet away, Albert sits on the ground replacing a Funnel on a Stack divided into two sections. Marcus stands in front of him pointing at something on the ground. Albert picks up the Aged Funnel and holds it up: this?

Marcus reaches for it. Albert playfully throws it over Marcus' head and it lands behind him. He finds it in the tall grass and cleans it off.

Meanwhile, behind him this conversation is taking place as Vaughn and Graham clean RAKES with a hose:

VAUGHN
Everything needs electricity.

GRAHAM
Not everything.

VAUGHN
Like what then?

GRAHAM
Lawn mower.

VAUGHN
It needs gas, doesn't it?

GRAHAM
Right. (that's his point)

VAUGHN
What do you think electricity is?

GRAHAM
I know what it is.

VAUGHN
They're the same thing, Graham.

GRAHAM
I'll ask someone.

VAUGHN
Graham, you don't have to ask anybody, I'm telling you.

GRAHAM
...

VAUGHN
(exasperated)
Just go get shovels. Jesus.

175 EXT. FIELD/ LAUNCHING AREA - DAY

Marcus is again searching the grass for something. Euclid, setting up a launch, watches him.

Marcus approaches Samuel who is changing out a Funnel.

MARCUS
Can I have the used one?

SAMUEL
Why? It doesn't work.

MARCUS
I know, I just want-

Out of nowhere Euclid holds out a fresh Funnel to Samuel. It has EUCLID'S INITIALS on it. All of them from now on have initials.

EUCLID
I'll give you this if you let me have it.

SAMUEL
A new one?

EUCLID
Yep.

They trade.

Marcus moves on to Javier, who is also attending to a Stack nearby. Euclid follows and intercepts.

MARCUS
Do you need that used one?

EUCLID
Javi, I'll trade you.

Euclid hands Javier a fresh Funnel. Javier takes it with some suspicion.

JAVIER
Why?

Euclid looks directly to Marcus.

EUCLID
I collect them.

JAVIER
Okay, sure.

Javier grabs his used Funnel off the ground and is about to hand it over when...

Marcus holds out a new Funnel, offering it to him.

MARCUS
Here, I'll give you one.

Javier hesitates.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
I asked first.

Javier considers this.

EUCLID
Two.

JAVIER
What?

EUCLID
I'll give you two new ones.

Javier checks Marcus for a counter offer. Marcus scans the horizon, never turning towards Euclid. He abruptly walks off.

JAVIER
I mean, I don't care...

Euclid watches Marcus leave and then studies the Aged Funnel he has just bought.

A few SHAVINGS of detritus come off when he rubs it with his thumb.

176 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME/ BACK STEP - DAY

A WOODWORKING FILE is used to whittle down the remains of an Aged Funnel.

A large CHUNK of detritus breaks off in Euclid's hand exposing an OBJECT embedded inside. He wipes it clean.

It is a tightly packed grouping of IDENTICAL WHITE ARCS. These will be called PETALS. They come apart with some effort like the ribs of a small rodent.

CUT TO: Four semi-clean packs of Petals are laid on the step in between Carter and Euclid. Some of the Petals have come free and are placed on top of their respective packs.

EUCLID (OFF SCREEN)
Mine had four.

Carter is cleaning off another pack with his fingers. He blows into it and bits of debris fly out.

CARTER

Me too.

He puts it in Euclid's outstretched hand. Euclid compares the pack to a Petal in his other hand.

CARTER

Do they go?

Euclid shakes the question off, still experimenting with them.

Carter looks towards the other kids scattered around on the grass attending to their Stacks.

He nudges Euclid to see what he sees thirty feet off:

Marcus is trying to get an Aged Funnel from George.

George stands, shakes his head, mouths something, and points to Carter and Euclid. He walks in their direction, leaving Marcus behind.

After a moment, Marcus races to intercept George and offers him two new Funnels.

They trade and Marcus moves off to find another one.

Carter looks to Euclid and sees that he is making some progress: He is able to get two Petals to join by touching them together end to end. He strains to pull them apart but can't.

Carter quickly scans the area, finally finding Marcus talking to Hector.

CARTER

Hector!

Hector and Marcus turn.

CARTER

I'll trade you four new ones for it!

Marcus immediately walks off.

Carter races after him, walks at his side, antagonizing him:

CARTER

What are you doing?

Marcus glances at him but has no answer. They keep walking.

CARTER

How many do you have? How many new ones?

No response. Euclid catches up with them.

CARTER

Marcus, how many new ones do you have to trade?

MARCUS

(muttering)

Nobody can do anything...

CARTER

What? How many?

MARCUS

Seven.

CARTER

Seven. You want to know how many we have?

No response.

CARTER

Euclid, how many do we have?

EUCLID

I don't know. It just keeps-

CARTER

Yeah, we don't even know because we have a box that just keeps making them.

Marcus stops. He looks back towards the Concrete Frame averting their eyes.

MARCUS

Nobody can figure out anything, right? Except you guys, right?

Beat.

MARCUS

There's pieces leftover. Okay? Inside the old ones. That's it. I probably could have got it myself but now-

CARTER

We're not idiots, Marcus. We already know-

MARCUS
I know, Carter, you're the clever ones.

CARTER
Yeah we are. And we already know about-

Carter raises his arm to point back at the Concrete Frame causing Marcus to flinch and duck his head.

Seeing this, Carter loses his train of thought:

CARTER
What are you doing?

Marcus, embarrassed, tries to show some bravery and faces Carter.

MARCUS
Nothing.

An awkward beat.

EUCLID
(to Marcus)
What'd you figure out?

Carter looks to Euclid, puzzled. Marcus looks to him too, suspicious. Euclid takes on the manner of a curious friend:

EUCLID
What is it? Is it...cool or...what is it?

The anger eventually leaves Marcus' face.

MARCUS
Um...I can show you. Let me- I'll show you.

177 INT. STORM DRAIN - DAY

This is Marcus' hideout, complete with WOODEN CRATES as furniture and PINUPS of sailing yachts. The place is pretty roomy for kids.

Carter and Euclid study SEVERAL ROUGH ASSEMBLIES OF PETALS that Marcus has put together. Some are simple stacks; others are ornate designs that have been fastened together with duct tape. None look functional.

Carter traces the edges of one with his finger. We can see his Controller dangling from his neck on some string.

CARTER
Is this right?

EUCLID
I can't tell.

CARTER
You'll get it. You don't think this
is...he's not smart is he, you think?

EUCLID
I don't know.

CARTER
You'll get it.

Marcus brings out a CLOSED CARDBOARD BOX from deep in the storm drain. He sets it on a crate on the other side of the area. He begins to pull at the tattered edges of the box flaps, thinking.

EUCLID
This is really great, Marcus...

Euclid leaves Carter and moves to the cardboard box. Marcus sidesteps to subtly block Euclid's access.

Euclid faces Marcus directly:

EUCLID
...I think it's a big deal.

Marcus has a change of heart and opens the box for him. It contains about 10 Aged Funnels and 10 Petal packs that need cleaning.

EUCLID
You traded for all these?

MARCUS
Yeah.

Carter looks over his shoulder:

CARTER
What is wrong with you? No, you didn't.
You got three of mine and I know we never
traded.

MARCUS
Most I did. I found a lot of them on the
ground. What do you care if I pick em'
up?

CARTER
I don't care, Marcus. You can pick up dog
shit if you want. I just don't like
people sneaking around and being secr-

EUCLID
(to Carter)
What'd you do with them? Carter.

Carter turns to Euclid who is now staring into the cardboard
box.

EUCLID (CONT'D)
Your dead ones.

CARTER
What? Chucked 'em...in the woods.

Beat. Carter hasn't looked in the cardboard box so how...

EUCLID
Then how do you know he's got them?

CARTER
What are you talking about? There's one
here and two in that box.

Euclid pulls two Funnels from the box to show Marcus. The
Funnels are inscribed with Carter's initials.

They both look to Carter, puzzled.

178 EXT. JUPITER ROCK - DAY

Marcus is standing on the boulder, the kids all facing him.
He digs into his cardboard box, brings out a Petal pack, and
raises it above his head.

A CONTROLLER is brought out of Samuel's pants' pocket. His
thumb rubs it.

ANOTHER CONTROLLER hanging from a string necklace is taken out
from under Albert's shirt.

VAUGHN lowers his head and closes his eyes.

Marcus scans the group slowly until a RAISED HAND comes into
frame.

It is George's. He opens his eyes and almost seems surprised
to see his hand up. He checks the Controller clutched tight
in his other hand.

CUT TO: At the front Marcus places the Petal pack in George's hand. George walks off, picking away at the detritus still on it.

DOLLY IN over the scattered group as Marcus brings an Aged Funnel above his head. Javier raises his hand and walks down to claim it. Marcus lays the Funnel down for him and begins with the next. This time it belongs to Albert. The process continues.

179 INT. ALBERT'S HOUSE - DUSK

SAMUEL stands in the middle of the foyer with his head down and eyes closed tight. Graham stands at his side, watching him.

Samuel opens his eyes, excited. He whispers:

SAMUEL
Catamaran. Blue.

GRAHAM
You sure?

INSERT: On a shelf in Albert's room, we see a line up of DIECAST TOY BOATS (tugboat, navy destroyer, sailboat, etc).

SAMUEL
Two hulls. It's a catamaran.

Graham screams towards the back of the house:

GRAHAM
Blue catamaran!

SAMUEL
No, wait.

GRAHAM
Wait!

ALBERT stands against the back door in the kitchen staring straight ahead. He holds his hands behind his back. One grasps a Funnel, the other something hidden.

Samuel rubs the Controller in his hand.

SAMUEL
Just a sec. It's got another...mast, two masts! It's the schooner!

Albert jogs to Samuel.

ALBERT
What'd you say?

SAMUEL
(excited)
Red schooner.

Albert slaps a TINY DIECAST BATTLESHIP into Samuel's hand and heads to the front door.

ALBERT
Doesn't work.

He opens the door revealing TWO COPS and an OLD MAN arriving on the porch. The Old Man holds a dented MAILBOX.

180 INT. ALBERT'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - NIGHT

Albert sits at the table across from one of the Cops and the Old Man. His PARENTS and the other Cop lean against the kitchen counter and Samuel and Graham stand at the wall behind him. The Cashbox sits on the table next to him.

ALBERT
That mailbox did not cost seventy-five dollars.

No one responds. Albert makes a motion like: there, that's my stance.

Another moment of silence. He finally caves, angry. He produces a KEY from the string necklace under his shirt and opens the Cashbox.

ALBERT
Be sure to get the best one they- get a gold one, yeah. With lights and a big...

He begins dealing out a stack of bills on the table, flustered.

ALBERT (CONT'D)
I hope it rusts.

181 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - DAY

Javier, wearing headphones, sits at a bench operating his tape recorder and a JAM BOX. He presses down on their buttons at the same time, doing a tape-to-tape edit. We hear a 1-second clip of George speaking his launch command "jump up". He continues editing and we hear Albert and then Javier himself say their launch commands. This repeats over and over.

The PLASTIC SHEETS have been pulled up so we can see outside where the other kids are spread out on the grass each working on their Petals, using crates and piles of bricks as tables.

As we continue to hear Javier's editing...

182 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME/ BACK STEP - CONTINUOUS

Samuel looks on as Hector tests two Petals: he touches them together just for an instance before separating them. He does it again. It's a game like playing with magnets. He tries one last time but the Petals touch for too long and are now connected. He smiles at Samuel as he tries to pry them apart.

EAVESDROP: Marcus, George, and Albert work together using duct tape to crudely fashion together groups of Petals into the shape of Funnels. They stack these like the Funnel Stacks. George holds his Controller out in the hope of making it jump, but it doesn't work.

EUCLID half-heartedly works with a few Petals, but mainly watches everyone else from the corner of his eye. He sees:

Carter and Hector have arranged Petals in the shape of taco shells and are attempting to stack them. In order to get the top "shell" on they have to clumsily spread it apart.

Euclid puts the Petals down and reaches into his bag to retrieve a COFFEE CAN. He places it on the crate in front of him and considers opening it.

Next to him GRAHAM is assembling Petals on his own, rearranging a few of them over and over systematically. He gets frustrated when a piece doesn't fit like he wants and tries another.

Euclid takes this in.

THE COFFEE CAN is lowered to the ground out of sight.

183 INT. VAUGHN'S HOUSE - DAY

BEDROOM: Vaughn speaks quietly, launching a Stack a few feet in the air and then catching it like an expert:

VAUGHN

Ready get set to fly.

CUT TO: He counts loose Funnels and places them in a box. He puts his ear against the Maker that sits on his dresser, listens to it purr, checks his wristwatch.

The DOORBELL rings.

DOWNSTAIRS: Hector and George stand outside the screen door next to their wagon which contains GAS CANS.

Vaughn is at a table unlocking the Cashbox.

VAUGHN

How much was it?

GEORGE

Sixteen dollars.

Vaughn gets the Cashbox open. He's troubled by what he sees.

VAUGHN

Guys, we're...a little light. We might have to uh...work something out.

He turns to them, but they are gone and so is the wagon.

FRONT PORCH: Vaughn is on the phone.

VAUGHN

That money's not yours, Albert. Then you should have told them it's not yours.

He checks his watch, unaware that Hector and George are stashing the Gas Cans in a hole under the house. They cover the hole with LEAVES.

VAUGHN

Okay, and a mailbox costs what, 20 dollars? Where's the other 60?

His watch ALARM goes off.

VAUGHN

What did you- how much? Bullshit it does.

BEDROOM: He races in and gets to the Maker just as it ejects.

He is surprised by what he sees in the tray...then worried.

He slowly takes a few steps back, thinking.

With a decision, he quickly grabs the Maker and heads out.

FRONT PORCH: He hurries outside, passing Hector and George at the front door. They're picking leaves off themselves.

VAUGHN
Let's go get your money.

184 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - DUSK

6 DOLLARS are laid down on the table in front of Hector and George.

ALBERT
That's it. That's all I have right now.

Albert, agitated, makes the same motion from earlier: there, that's my stance. It doesn't work any better here.

HECTOR
The gas cost us sixteen dollars.

Albert snaps.

ALBERT
Okay, good. Yeah, just keep saying it, over and over...here's where you're both retarded: I can't pay-

VAUGHN
Albert, don't call them that.

Albert struggles to rein himself in.

ALBERT
Yep, sorry. Sorry. Here's where- here's the thing. I can't pay you until we mow the lawns, okay? And we can't mow lawns without...

He waits on them, hoping they'll fill in the blank but...

ALBERT
...gas. Without gas is what...jesus.

VAUGHN
I'll float the rest.

Albert turns to him. Vaughn pulls a bill from his pocket.

VAUGHN
I've got ten dollars. But I want some collateral.

HECTOR
There wasn't any change.

Vaughn and Albert turn to Hector, wondering what that means.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

It was sixteen even.

Vaughn and Albert turn back to each other, still puzzled.
Albert solves it:

ALBERT

Oh, collateral. You said collateral...

VAUGHN

Right.

Vaughn turns to Hector:

VAUGHN

That's not what collateral-

He gives up and turns back to Albert.

VAUGHN

I want funnels.

Albert is a little surprised but...

ALBERT

Okay. That's easy, yeah. 10 dollars,
five funnels? Marcus, get five of the-

VAUGHN

I want all of them. With the sparkers.

Albert takes this in.

185 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME - NIGHT

Albert and Marcus fill a box with Funnels from two sacks.
They whisper:

MARCUS

Can't we just make more? Maybe he doesn't
know how to work it.

ALBERT

Shhh...

Through the doorway, we can see Vaughn sitting inside. He
gets up and walks towards Marcus and Albert.

MARCUS

We can fill this back up in three days.

ALBERT

Shhh...

VAUGHN

The Maker's right here. It's your weekend, yeah?

ALBERT

Uh-huh.

186 INT. ALBERT'S HOUSE/ BEDROOM - NIGHT

Albert sleeps. In the foreground the Maker ejects.
The tray is EMPTY.

VAUGHN (OFF SCREEN)

I didn't...break it!

187 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - DAY

Vaughn stands, facing us.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

Did you think it was just going to keep spitting those things out?

He paces around before moving to the chair behind him.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

It's got to make them out of something.

He drops into the chair.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

I mean it's not magic.

REVERSE ANGLE: Euclid, Carter, and Albert stare at Vaughn. They stand behind the table where the Maker sits.

Euclid looks down to the Maker, thinking.

Albert fumes. He suddenly grabs the Maker and heads out.

ALBERT

I still got another day.

Euclid and Carter watch him go.

188 EXT. ALBERT'S HOUSE/ GARDEN - NIGHT

Albert and Marcus lay under a row of leafy vegetables. Albert sifts SOIL into a GRATING built into the top of the Maker.

They both press their ears to the Maker.

CUT TO: Albert dumps out the soil by turning the Maker over and shaking it.

189 INT. ALBERT'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN PANTRY - NEXT

They sit on the floor. OPEN BOXES of cereal, rice, flour, etc are everywhere.

Marcus is studying the side of the Maker. Albert uses a WOODEN SPOON to pour something nondescript into the Grating.

MARCUS

Hey, wait. That did something I think.

ALBERT

What? Where?

MARCUS

I don't know. Maybe not. Sorry.

190 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME/ BACK STEP - DAY

Vaughn sits at a table selling New Funnels from his box. Graham peers over the table, watching.

GRAHAM

Why are they so much now?

Javier puts an Aged Funnel and some money on the table. Vaughn handles the Aged Funnel.

VAUGHN

You sure you want to trade this.

JAVIER

Why not? They don't jump. I'm short...fifty cents.

VAUGHN

That's all right. Let me write it down.

Vaughn writes in a notebook.

GRAHAM

But why are they so much now?

VAUGHN

There's not anymore left after this.

This answer occupies Graham just long enough for Vaughn to pull a New Funnel from the box and give it to Javier.

GRAHAM

So what?

191 EXT. FIELD/ LAUNCHING AREA - DAY

George has a Stack ready to launch. He is resting against his BACKPACK, staring into the sky. He looks to the far away target and then makes a slight adjustment to the Stack. He's in no hurry.

Some kid off screen yells something at him from far away. He responds:

GEORGE

No!

He takes his time, brushing some dirt off one of the Funnels before sitting back again. The off screen kids yells again.

GEORGE

When I'm ready!

...

GEORGE

Yeah and then they wear out and it's wasted! What do you care.

...

GEORGE

Are you going to buy me- do you have five dollars?! What?!

...

GEORGE

Do you have fi- then shut up!

192 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - DAY

Hector is removing some Petals that are part of the fake duct-taped funnel stack. George doesn't want him to:

GEORGE

Why?

HECTOR

I need to get my pieces out.

GEORGE

What about this, though? We're not done yet.

HECTOR

I like his plan better now. He knows how to do it, I think.

George looks worriedly to Vaughn who is across the room assembling an elaborate TUBE made of Petals.

HECTOR

Besides, his doesn't use tape.

CUT TO: Hector now helps Vaughn attach Petals. They tie ROPES through the bigger pieces to make them stay together. Samuel investigates:

SAMUEL

How far will it shoot?

HECTOR

Maybe a thousand feet.

Samuel points to end of the tube:

SAMUEL

Comes out of here?

HECTOR

Yep, anything you can fit in there, probably.

(to Vaughn)

You think it'll shoot anything? Not just funnels, right?

Vaughn nods.

Euclid watches this from a table at the back of the room, despondent. He leans over to Graham who is stilling trying to construct something without success:

EUCLID
Why not put that next to that one...

GRAHAM
Like this?

EUCLID
Yeah, but backwards and then this one
would go...yeah.

Euclid smiles with some hope.

GRAHAM
I'll see if they need it.

He heads off to the others with it. Euclid opens his mouth to stop him, but it's too late.

Disappointed, he looks at the Petals jumbled before him. He takes another look at the others working and makes a decision:

He grabs a few Petals and begins connecting them. He knows exactly what he's doing. The speed increases.

WIDE: We see the entire room with everyone scattered around talking. No one notices Euclid at the back working.

SLOW DOLLY IN to Euclid. He is quickly and purposefully assembling SOMETHING, connecting tens of Petals. We pass everyone until he is the only one in frame. The chatter in the room slowly disappears.

SLOW DOLLY OUT from Euclid, revealing that the other kids are now turned towards Euclid, silent. He continues working.

THE PETAL ASSEMBLY is cylinder-shaped and from above looks like it has spokes like a bicycle wheel. When Euclid connects the last Petal, the "spokes" turn in with a jolt directly towards the center. This is a FLOWER.

Euclid empties the contents of his coffee can on the table: two more fully-assembled Flowers.

He connects these Flowers to the new one by sliding them inside each other. This is a Flower Limb. He sets it down and watches as everyone gathers at the table, putting their hands on the Flowers, trying them out.

With some force they can be slid in and out like a telescope and when they are extended, one Flower can spin on top of another.

Something catches Euclid's attention at the door:

Albert stands at the entrance. We follow him to the table as the others make a path.

Euclid watches him lean down and rotate the top Flower. He speaks in a low tone to no one in particular:

ALBERT
I know what it eats.

193 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

Marcus and Albert stand next to the Maker. The others are crowded around. Marcus speaks formally like he's delivering a speech:

MARCUS
We know what to feed it. So here's how this'll work: every week-

CARTER
What is it?

MARCUS
We're not gonna tell.

Euclid puts his ear to the Maker and listens.

GEORGE
They don't know.

HECTOR
There's no way.

Euclid circles around. He and Albert share a look while the others talk:

MARCUS
Every week, you give us the Maker. We'll make our own funnels, and we return it all gassed up and ready for you.

GRAHAM
It's gas I bet, it runs on gas. He said it already.

Albert's watch alarm goes off.

VAUGHN
It's not gasoline is it?

Albert turns to Vaughn.

ALBERT
I'm not telling you anything.

HECTOR
'Cause he doesn't know.

The Maker ejects. A Funnel is in the tray.

194 INT. EUCLID'S HOUSE/ BEDROOM - NIGHT

Samuel and Graham play with a couple Flower Limbs. With all their might they collapse and stretch them apart like accordions. A desk lamp on the floor next to them is their only light.

Euclid and Carter lay on the floor, studying the Maker with a FLASHLIGHT. Euclid wipes the Grating with his finger.

EUCLID
Whatever he feeds it has to fit through
this thing.

Euclid studies his finger, but doesn't see anything.

CARTER
Like a liquid.

EUCLID
It's not gasoline.

CARTER
It would smell.

EUCLID
Yeah.

Carter sees something above them.

CARTER
Turn off the flashlight. Graham, turn off
that light.

They do. Carter and Euclid study the ceiling where a SPLASH OF LIGHT is dancing around. Their eyes turn to the window.

CUT TO: Carter and Euclid stand at the open window. Beyond them on the ground Olivia looks up at them, waiting. She holds a FLASHLIGHT.

EUCLID
You tell her you were here?

CARTER
I guess she guessed.

OLIVIA
(whisper yelling)
I'm thirsty!

EUCLID / CARTER
We heard you! / We know!

CARTER
I'm going down. You coming?

Euclid hesitates. They look down to Olivia and see that Graham is walking out to her balancing a TALL GLASS of water. TWO GIRLS jump out from the bushes and obliterate him with WATER BALLOONS.

Euclid and Carter's legs race past Samuel, still playing with his Flower Limb. He puts it down and follows them.

The Limb continues to flex, expanding and contracting on its own.

195 EXT. EUCLID'S HOUSE/ YARD - NEXT

Carter, Graham, Samuel chase Carmen around with a water balloon. They finally get a hold of her. She tenses up and closes her eyes as Carter is about to slam her in the face with the balloon. Instead, he squeezes it over her head until it pops, drenching her.

Euclid watches this from near the porch.

DAPHNE
To borrow?

He looks to Olivia and Daphne, nearby. Olivia is untying her LEATHER NECKLACE.

OLIVIA
No, to have. I didn't really want it anyway.

She gets it off, pulling the Funnel out from under her shirt.

DAPHNE
Will you tie it on?

Euclid watches as the Funnel goes to Daphne's neck and Olivia ties it on.

DAPHNE

I'm addicted now I think. I'd give you a thousand bucks for a cigarette if you had one.

Olivia mouths something to Euclid. He pulls his attention from the Funnel and struggles to get what she's saying. She clears it up when Daphne leaves:

OLIVIA

She doesn't smoke.

Euclid doesn't want to talk:

EUCLID

I don't know her...so...

OLIVIA

She tried last week just once and gagged...but she wishes-

The PORCH LIGHT comes on. Euclid turns to go inside.

OLIVIA

Where you going? Are they too loud?

EUCLID

Yeah.

Euclid takes a few steps and turns back.

EUCLID

No, cause...I meant cause you're a goddamn menace is why.

He heads inside.

196 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - DAY

ASSORTED CHAIRS (lawn chairs, a stool, a bench, etc.) are being lined up in rows.

CUT TO: Off to the side, Javier confers with George and Albert while the others file into their seats. George and Albert have their Controllers.

JAVIER

Yeah, just hold them. And sit near the front.

George moves to put his Controller necklace on.

GEORGE
Around my neck?

JAVIER
However you do it normally.

197 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME/ FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

As all the boys file into the house, Vaughn heads off Carter and Euclid. He offers them sticks of GUM.

VAUGHN
You have the Maker?

EUCLID
What?

198 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME/ BACK STEP - MOMENTS LATER

Carter and Euclid chew gum. They stand next to each other facing Vaughn. They are having some trouble digesting what Vaughn has asked. Eventually:

EUCLID
Probably...no.

CARTER
Yeah, that's ridiculous. Not after what you did to Allie.

EUCLID
Why would you even want- I used to let you have it for free...

VAUGHN
Then let me have it for free.

EUCLID
No...cause then you'll...

Euclid turns to confer with Carter:

EUCLID
...he'll just sell the funnels and make cash off it...

CARTER
Maybe.

They both look to Vaughn. Vaughn answers with a nod, unashamed. Euclid and Carter turn back to each other.

EUCLID
And Albert feeds it which is sorta...

CARTER
Yeah, that's like a payment.

EUCLID
Yeah, so that's not fair to him if I
just...give it to one person and-

CARTER
Not fair to Allie.

EUCLID
Right.

Carter turns to Vaughn.

CARTER
We can't give it to you for free...

EUCLID
No way.

CARTER
...but if you don't- if he doesn't get it
from us...

Carter looks off. He takes his gum out, picking a speck of
dirt out of it before putting it back in his mouth.

EUCLID
Albert's gonna sell him funnels anyway so
he gets cash...

Euclid looks off.

CARTER
Allie does.

EUCLID
Yeah.

They think too hard.

CARTER
This is...amazing.

Beat. The conversation ends suddenly with:

EUCLID
Yeah, okay, how much?

VAUGHN
Twenty for the weekend.

EUCLID
Hey, we just made twenty dollars.

Vaughn splits. They are left spaced, still thinking about it.
Euclid spits out his gum.

199 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - DAY

WIDE: Everyone but Javier sits in their chairs quietly,
facing us.

At the front, Javier sets SOMETHING the size of a chair down
just off screen. Everyone turns to the left to look at it.

When Javier moves to the opposite side of the "stage", half
the heads follow him, while the rest still stare at the
object.

After estimating the right distance from the object, Javier
kneels down and draws a 2-foot-wide CIRCLE with CHALK.

CUT TO: Javier presses the PLAY button on his TAPE PLAYER and
adjusts the volume until we hear the HISS of silence through
the speakers.

DOLLY BACK from the chalk circle to reveal the object Javier
had placed on the ground: a STOOL with THREE FUNNEL STACKS
affixed to it in place of wooden legs.

GEORGE (ON TAPE)
Ready, set, jump up.

One of the Stacks on the Stool flexes slightly, causing the
Stool to teeter to one side before settling.

ALBERT (ON TAPE)
One, two, three.

Another Stack flexes, same result.

JAVIER (ON TAPE)
Mark, get set, go.

The last Stack flexes, same result.

After a moment we hear ALL THREE COMMANDS ("Jump Up", "Three",
and "Go") at the same time from the Tape Player. The Stool
LEAPS straight up about a foot. It lands and eventually
settles.

The Tape Player continues with an edited sequence of repeated commands. The Stool begins to hop around from Stack to Stack, managing to spin and move a few inches towards the circle. Louder commands for higher hops.

It's clearly an inefficient way to travel, but as the command sequence speeds up faster and faster, so does the spinning and eventually the Stool is making its way across the stage.

DOLLY ALONG as the Stool moves across to...

OVERHEAD: The Stool stops almost perfectly inside the chalk circle as the command sequence ends.

Javier hits the STOP button and the hiss dies.

WIDE: Everyone sits silently with varying levels of shock. Chairs creak.

Euclid turns his head to the ceiling with his hand over his mouth, thinking. Carter leans forward and stares at the ground. When he looks back up to the Stool it is with determination. He prepares to stand and on his way up...

MATCH CUT TO:

200 EXT. FIELD - DAY

...Vaughn's head rises into frame, looking into the distance. He wears a NECKLACE of SEVERAL CONTROLLERS.

VAUGHN

Bring it up.

He glances behind him.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

Up! Bring it up! It's coming!

Behind him a wall of RED rises and fills the background.

WIDE: SNOW covers the ground. Everyone wears PARKAS. Behind Vaughn, Hector and George are draping a RED BED SHEET between them. They pull it taut until it hangs like a curtain.

SOMETHING comes racing toward them. It moves and looks like a dog except the legs are Flower Limbs and its torso is nothing but a PLYWOOD BOX. This creature is a CHORUS.

The Chorus crashes into the bed sheet and gets tangled up, still kicking its legs wildly.

VAUGHN
...still pulling left.

CUT TO: George stands on a BAIL OF HAY and leads a LARGE DOG to trot around him on a leash, luring it ahead with a bit of hotdog on the end of a stick.

On one side of the dog two Flower Limbs have been fastened with rope to his front and back leg so that they mimic the leg motion as he walks.

Vaughn speaks to George:

VAUGHN
I don't care. Take him down to the fence and back a few times I guess, just no more walking in circles.

The Chorus comes racing into frame and crashes into the ground, spraying snow into the air. Vaughn and George look over.

Hector, who has been chasing it, puts his hands on his knees and gasps for breath as the Chorus continues kicking its legs in the air.

HECTOR
He's still...pulling left.

He takes the Necklace of Controllers off his neck and tosses it into the snow.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
And that...is crap is what.

201 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - CONTINUOUS

Carter sits at a table, watching Vaughn and them through the window.

He turns to see Graham come through the door and approach Euclid who is standing at a workbench on the other side of the room.

Beside the workbench is another Chorus. Carter turns his attention to it, contemplating.

CLOSE ON CHORUS: Like Vaughn's Chorus this one has 4 Flower Limbs, but has a simple WOODEN PLANK instead of a box for a torso and the Limbs are completely straight making it look more like a table. A Funnel Stack is secured to the bottom of the wooden plank. The Stack launches up a few inches lifting

the Chorus and stretching the Flower Limbs. Then it slowly descends.

CLOSE ON FUNNEL STACK: We see now that as the Stack descends it comes closer to a Controller placed far below it. The close proximity eventually causes the Stack to lightly launch again, lifting the Chorus with it.

CLOSE ON LIMB: It compresses smoothly like it's hydraulic. Carter seems mesmerized by it. His attention is jarred by:

EUCLID

Then go play with them, Graham! You can help them pick it up every ten feet! Have fun cleaning the mud off it.

GRAHAM

We don't even have knees yet!

EUCLID

It's learning! And they're not making anything, it's a dog!

GRAHAM

Better than this thing.

Euclid looks to Carter for help. Carter eventually understands what Euclid expects from him and responds half-heartedly:

CARTER

...oh. Graham, shut up. It's balancing. It's important.

Graham looks harshly at Euclid before producing SOMETHING from his jacket and setting it on the workbench. It is an assemblage of Petals, like two Flowers joined together but altered so that they can bend relative to each other like a knee joint. This is a KNEE PIECE.

Euclid turns to it.

EUCLID

Put it back.

Graham stares him down. Euclid turns back to Graham:

EUCLID

Put it back.

CUT TO: Euclid is copying the Knee Piece, connecting the final Petals of an identical one. He uses Petals fresh out of a decayed Funnel. Graham looks on.

Euclid finishes. Without looking, he places the original Knee Piece in front of Graham and sweeps the mess of leftover Detritus with his hand into an ORANGE BUCKET, stashing a CHUNK of it in his own COAT POCKET.

EUCLID

Put it back.

Graham leaves with the original as Carter plays with the copied Knee, trying out the bending motion.

202 INT. ALBERT'S BARN - NEXT

In one of the stalls, Albert, Marcus, and Javier crouch beneath a HORSE. Albert manipulates the horse's ankle with his hands, demonstrating to the other two.

ALBERT

...see, it doesn't just slam to the ground the way we- it's like a wrist sort of, see?

MARCUS

Why is it like a wrist though if it's on his leg?

Albert brings the hoof down on the ground and then back up, simulating the horse taking a step.

ALBERT

I don't know, it kinda...

JAVIER

...kinda helps him land...

ALBERT

...yeah and gets him ready to take the next step maybe.

They don't notice Graham silently walk across behind them.

He sneakily returns the Knee Piece to a box of Flowers.

On his way out he passes a Flower Limb hanging from a tall shelf. It is recreating the leg motion of a horse trotting.

203 EXT. FIELD - DUSK

CASH travels from one MITTENED HAND to another.

WIDE: Euclid, standing next to Vaughn, stashes the cash in a jacket pocket as Albert approaches.

Euclid receives the Maker from Vaughn and hands it to Albert.

VAUGHN

It's empty.

The three split, leaving three distinct sets of footprints in the snow.

CUT TO: Euclid, having walked 50 yards, slows to a stop. He turns back.

CUT TO: Back at where the three footprints split, he turns to follow Albert's.

204 EXT. WOODWORKING SHOP - NEXT

He creeps toward the building. The sound of a POWER SAW inside the shop is winding down.

He freezes when he sees Albert, Marcus, and Javier, all in backpacks, leaving off to his left. They don't see him.

205 INT. WOODWORKING SHOP - NEXT

Euclid finds BUCKETS of SAWDUST on a table near different kinds of power saws. He sifts through one of the buckets with his hand.

CUT TO: He finds the Maker under a sheet. He listens to it purr.

He checks the grating with his finger and wipes away sawdust.

He has to smile...and then after a thought the smile disappears.

206 EXT. FIELD - DUSK

Albert, carrying the Maker, approaches Euclid and Carter. He hands it to Carter.

ALBERT

It's full.

Euclid opens his mouth but the words don't come for a second. He settles on a sincere...

EUCLID

Thank you.

ALBERT

Should last until next time...if Vaughn
doesn't run it too hard.

EUCLID

I'll talk to him.

Euclid and Carter go one way. Albert goes the other.

207 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME - DAY

Euclid's Chorus, now with knee joints and a PLYWOOD TORSO,
stands in the snow. The Limbs slowly compress and expand
slightly, making hundreds of small adjustments to stay up.

Euclid and Carter shovel snow away from its feet.

CUT TO: The other kids are here now. They surround the
Chorus, running their hands along its wooden plank, studying
it. They press down on it gently to see if it pushes back.
Some hover their hands above it to see the subtle movement as
it rises and falls.

Euclid looks on.

One by one they back away from it as Euclid waves them to each
side. When they are clear, he SHOVES the Chorus hard with the
bottom of his foot with enough force to push it over.

Except it doesn't fall over. It braces itself with its Limbs
and recovers its balance like a fawn.

The kids stare in awe.

208 EXT. FIELD - NEXT

Albert angrily trudges through the snow, flanked by Marcus and
Javier.

He abruptly stops, smacks his fist, and turns back for a
second, before continuing, frustrated.

ALBERT

We don't have anything!

209 INT. ALBERT'S BARN - NEXT

We're on the floor focused on some nearby floorboards. Far out of focus we see Albert and them come through the entrance. He knocks the box of Flowers off the workbench and they scatter everywhere.

We hear him do more damage and the Flower Limb comes skidding across the floor into focus. It weakly flexes, bending back and forth.

210 EXT. FIELD - DAY

Euclid (wearing a Necklace of Controllers), Graham, and Samuel pull on ropes attached to the front of the Chorus while Carter pushes it from behind. They are trying with all their strength to get the Chorus to move forward. It finally does but just a step before it braces again, allowing no forward momentum.

They take a quick break, winded. Euclid looks around to see if they are being watched before...

EUCLID
Okay, come on.

CARTER
What?

EUCLID
Let's go.

Carter is frustrated and reluctant but stays quiet.

EUCLID (CONT'D)
What?

They continue pulling/pushing.

211 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - DAY

Albert stands holding out a GREEN MARKER in his left hand and a RED MARKER in his right. He is focused on a spot on the floor, waiting for this conversation to end:

CARTER (OFF SCREEN)
What don't you like about it?

WIDE: Everybody's there. Carter and Euclid stand near Albert at the front.

CARTER

We have one that won't budge without four
of us dragging it and the other one runs
into the ground every-

From the back where Vaughn, Hector and George sit:

VAUGHN

He's getting better. He just needs-

Carter stays on Euclid, not even looking to Vaughn:

CARTER

No, he isn't. What don't you like about
it?

EUCLID

It's a trick. There's a right way to go-
to do things and there's a- this is a
trick.

CARTER

But if it works, then it's the right way
to go. I mean, right?

Vaughn entertains Hector and George, his eyes going wide in
disbelief and boredom with the conversation. He holds out his
hand waiting for Euclid's answer and then mouths it himself,
"right." He rolls his eyes when instead...

EUCLID (OFF SCREEN)

I don't know.

Albert continues to wait.

EUCLID (OFF SCREEN)

So you think it's smart?

CARTER (OFF SCREEN)

I think it's the best idea he's ever had.

Albert tries to hide his beaming.

212 INT. VAUGHN'S HOUSE/ BASEMENT - DAY

THE GREEN MARKER is brought down the length of a Flower Limb
leaving a GREEN STREAK on every single Flower.

WIDE: We now see that it is Vaughn's Chorus. George holds
the Marker. Vaughn and Hector look on.

GEORGE
Take them off now?

VAUGHN
No, mark the front legs first.

George moves the marker to the front legs.

213 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

THE RED MARKER is brought down the length of a Flower Limb leaving a RED STREAK on every single Flower.

WIDE: We now see that it is Euclid's Chorus. Graham holds the Marker. The others look on.

Vaughn comes through the front door followed by Hector and George. They all hold BOXES of Flowers with green marks.

When Vaughn sees everyone gathered around Euclid's Chorus:

VAUGHN
Come on, what's the hold up?

CUT TO: HANDS connect a Flower with a Green Mark to a Flower with a Red Mark. Then, another Red one is added and so on.

CUT TO: Two Green-marked Flowers in a row are added to a PARTIALLY ASSEMBLED FLOWER LIMB.

ALBERT (OFF SCREEN)
No, do every other one.

HECTOR (OFF SCREEN)
They don't all fit right.

ALBERT (OFF SCREEN)
Try your best.

CUT TO: HANDS string a length of thin leather with RED AND GREEN MARKED CONTROLLERS to make new Necklace.

CUT TO: We PAN DOWN the length of a COMPLETED FLOWER LIMB. The Flowers' marks alternate RED, GREEN, RED, GREEN, etc.

214 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

WIDE: Albert, wearing the Necklace, walks to a point 100 feet away from the kids who are gathered just outside the building. He is on the extreme right and they are on the left.

He turns and faces them.

He concentrates.

He grips the Necklace in one hand.

The new hybrid Chorus steps forward from where it was hidden among the building and kids.

It moves like a newborn foal, stumbling a few times.

As it makes progress towards Albert it becomes more surefooted. By the time it gets to him, it is moving at a regular trot.

Albert puts up his hand to stop it. The Chorus comes to a halt under his hand like a lifelong pet.

215 EXT. CONSTRUCTION YARD - LATER

The kids are leaning WOODEN PALETTES up against random PILES of BRICKS and LUMBER to create a fenced-in area about 50 feet in diameter. Carter directs them to fill in empty spaces with CRATES and ROCKS.

Vaughn, wearing the Controller Necklace, leads the Chorus like a horse around the interior of the barrier. He gets it to gallop and LEAP in the air a couple times.

Albert and others watch with excitement.

ALBERT

Higher! Higher!

DUSK

Hector and Marcus hang on the outside of one of the palettes, staring into the makeshift corral at the Chorus. Alone now, it continues to circle the barrier before slowing to a walk, almost looking like it's found something interesting in the dirt.

Euclid and Carter close a palette that functions as the gate to the corral and tie it shut with some extension cords. Then, keying off Hector and Marcus, they also watch the Chorus.

It nudges something on the ground, but then seems to lose interest and trots off in a random direction, adding a small leap after a moment. It acts just like any animal that finds itself in new surroundings.

The kids stare, captivated, not knowing what to make of it.

NIGHT

The Chorus is left alone in its pen. It paces around the circumference.

DAWN

As Euclid approaches the corral he cranes his neck to try to find the Chorus, but doesn't see it.

The gate is open. He enters, revealing:

Albert, Vaughn, and Marcus crouch on the ground with boxes of Flowers around them. Loose pieces litter the area. They work on short Flower Limbs, securing them to a MAHOGANY CHEST.

EUCLID

Why'd you take him apart?!

Albert answers without looking up from his work:

ALBERT

We didn't. These are the leftovers.

Euclid tries to digest this and takes a scan around the corral looking for the Chorus. It's not there.

EUCLID

Then where is he?

The three won't look at Euclid. Marcus glances around nervously.

EUCLID

Allie, where is he?

216 EXT. TREELINE - NEXT

The ten kids spread out into the woods, searching intently.

George breaks the silence, calling out into the trees:

GEORGE

Hey!...Hey!

After a moment, he mumbles to Hector:

GEORGE (CONT'D)

We should have named it.

217 EXT. WOODS - NEXT

Taking a break, Javier pulls out a THERMOS from the backpack Marcus is wearing. Marcus waits patiently.

JAVIER
...but you can't teach it- you want this?
[offers a drink] You can't teach it to
jump and then get upset...

We hear the squealing of a vehicle's brakes far off.

MARCUS
Is that the bus?

JAVIER
...when it goes over the fence.
No...garbage truck.

MARCUS
What time is it?

JAVIER
We got time.

CUT TO: Euclid searches through the trees, bringing up the rear.

He finds something in his coat pocket: the Detritus chunk he had stashed earlier. He studies it for a second, rubbing off some flakes before absentmindedly smelling it.

The grains of Detritus on his fingers look like brown sugar. Something about it intrigues him. He tastes it.

After a few more steps he suddenly STOPS. He turns back and to the left on a hunch, motionless. Carter notices:

CARTER
You see him?

EUCLID
Back maybe.

CARTER
Where?

EUCLID
Let's go back.

218 EXT. LONE TREE - NEXT

AN IMPRINT OF THE CHORUS' FOOT is a few inches deep in the dark earth under the snow.

We hear a POUNDING every two seconds like clockwork.

ANOTHER IMPRINT. Within it a FAINT WHITE SHAPE is coming up from just under the soil like a budding sprout. Another POUNDING.

A CHORUS' LIMB goes compact before PUNCHING into the ground like a hydraulic. It leaves a new IMPRINT and then moves over a bit to make another one.

SEVERAL IMPRINTS have been made in a TREE'S BARK. Growing out of the imprints are what look like WHITE CORAL SHOOTS a few inches long. The Chorus is farming.

WIDE: The kids stare on silently as the Chorus works under a SINGLE LARGE TREE in the middle of a huge field.

Javier takes a rock and begins scraping on a nearby coral growth. After a second of testing it, he gives up and tosses the rock into the coral patch:

JAVIER

It's hard.

The Chorus halts what it's doing and comes over to sweep the rock out of its patch, kicking it clear. The kids ponder this.

CUT TO: The kids throw TENS OF ROCKS into the patch and watch. The Chorus tends to them, knocking them this way and that to keep the patch clear.

In the distance, a SCHOOL BUS appears on the road.

HECTOR

Bus.

All of them take off towards the bus except George, who continues to watch the Chorus work.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

George, bus.

GEORGE

I'm not going.

CUT TO: A few meters from the tree George has gathered the remaining boxes of Flowers (marked red and green) and has pieces spread out around him. He is continuing to assemble the second Chorus using the mahogany chest from earlier. It's about half complete now.

The original Chorus (PLYWOOD) continues to work and some of the coral shoots are up to a foot long, making the area under the tree look like a small garden.

CUT TO: George runs with the newly completed (MAHOGANY) Chorus, playing chase while the original continues its work.

George drops to a knee to tie his shoe. When he looks up the Mahogany Chorus is moving towards the tree. He places a hand on his Necklace and calls out:

GEORGE
Wait, come on back. Come on.

The Chorus returns to him.

CUT TO: GEORGE has made a small SNOW FORT using the Flower Boxes to make bricks of snow. He is using the Mahogany Chorus to haul two boxes full of snow on its back to the fort.

George unloads one box of snow, but when he goes for the second...

DOLLY AWAY from George as he realizes the Chorus is moving away again. He grabs the Necklace.

GEORGE
Hold up. Come on back. Back.

DOLLY FORWARD as the Mahogany Chorus enters frame, returning to him.

CUT TO: They play some more, sort of wrestling. George pushes the Chorus off balance. It recovers and, just like a dog, puts its front legs on George, gently knocking him to the ground.

DOLLY AWAY from George as he gets up off the ground. He places his hand on the Necklace and calls toward us as we move further away from him:

GEORGE
Come on. Come back. Back. Stop, boy.

CAMERA STOP. The Chorus steps into frame, ready to return to George.

But he gives up, deciding to let the Chorus go. He removes the Necklace and shoves it into his jacket.

WIDE: The Mahogany Chorus joins the Plywood Chorus in its work at the tree. George goes back to working on the snow fort, alone.

219 EXT. RURAL ROAD - LATER

Determined, the kids walk towards us from the bus that has just dropped them off.

220 EXT. LONE TREE - NEXT

George sits on one of the Flower boxes with his head in his hands. He stares forward, bored and sulking.

We see the other kids surround him, looking at whatever he is seeing.

VAUGHN

What is that? George, what is that?

GEORGE

Don't know.

VAUGHN

Did you try to...

George holds out the two Necklaces to the others:

GEORGE

Go ahead.

OPPOSITE ANGLE: The garden of Coral Shoots has grown larger. Some shoots are several feet long and whether they come from the ground or the tree bark they all converge at a spot a few feet in the air and just off the tree.

The two Choruses are pecking and scraping at this CONVERGENCE with their Limbs and torsos to shave away the thick Detritus that covers it.

CUT TO: A HAND DRILL bores a hole in one of the Chorus' wooden torso.

CUT TO: A METAL LATCH is screwed into the other Chorus' torso.

CUT TO: Albert and Carter use the Necklaces to back the Choruses away some.

When TWO LEASHES are attached to the latches on the Choruses, Albert and Carter let go of the Necklaces, relieved. The Choruses are now tethered to a nearby TREE STUMP.

CUT TO: At the Convergence the kids clear away HANDFULS of Detritus, revealing the outer edges of a SOLID WHITE OBJECT

about the size of a muffler. It is wedged inside the TRANSLUCENT MATRIX of converging Coral Shoots.

The kids begin to slide the object out. The object is a FROND. It resembles the HEXAGONAL CONE SHAPE hollowed out in the amber plates from the adult story.

CUT TO: Carter carries the Frond to the kids' wagon and places it carefully inside. Others are already trying to connect Controllers and Petals to it, experimenting.

CUT TO: Carter leaves the others to it, taking a seat 20 feet away, thinking.

Everyone is removing the leftover Detritus on the Frond, turning it over, trying to find its purpose. Carter notices that the Choruses are facing the Frond, waiting patiently. He gets an idea:

CARTER

Graham, bring the wagon over here.

Graham is trying to jam a Flower into a FLOWER-SHAPED PORT built into the Frond. He doesn't want to quit his probing so he orders Samuel:

GRAHAM

Pull it over to him and I'll keep it steady-

CARTER

Go!

Graham panics and starts pulling the wagon towards Carter, running. Samuel helps.

Carter and the others look on as...

The Choruses TURN TOWARDS THE WAGON as it moves.

By the time the wagon gets to Carter he's sure:

CARTER

Let's give it back.

CUT TO: Carter carefully places the Frond in the snow.

THE LEASHES are removed from the Choruses.

They immediately charge over and each locks one of their shoulders into two Flower-Shaped PORTS on the Frond. In this way they are able to carry the Frond between them as they move.

They head off with it.

CUT TO: As the group follows the Choruses, Euclid notices that the Frond DRAGS a bit in the snow.

EUCLID
They should have been taller.

George and Hector walk together:

GEORGE
You know where we're going don't you?

Hector looks forward without an answer. George teases:

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Do you know?

221 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

The Choruses deposit the Frond on the floor near the Maker which is roughly the same size and shape.

One Chorus nudges it toward the Maker while the other pushes the Maker toward the Frond until the two touch, but nothing happens. The Choruses keep trying.

CARTER
All right, get 'em back.

CUT TO: From a distance the kids compare the Frond with the Maker, contemplating, looking from one to the other:

THE FROND is white and beautiful in its symmetry. They turn to:

THE MAKER is black, filthy, worn out, and on closer scrutiny we see...

EUCLID
Bolts.

CUT TO: Vaughn has his arm inside the Maker's ejector tray, probing. He pulls his arm out with no success. Euclid and Albert study the Maker as close as they can.

GEORGE
How inside? Where's the hole? Why doesn't it open then?

EUCLID
Bad design.

CUT TO: Carter strains to pry the Maker open with a CROWBAR. Others brace Carter to give him leverage. Euclid and the rest try to hold the Maker still on the table.

After a second Carter stops, breathless.

CARTER

Wait...wait.

He sort of laughs, realizing something. Euclid misunderstands:

EUCLID

We're holding it. We're trying.

CARTER

No, I know.

He laughs some more and shakes his head, amazed that they've been this stupid.

EUCLID

What's going on?

CARTER

Here, get this out.

They pull the crowbar out and put it aside.

CUT TO: Fingers trace a GROOVE in the side of the Maker. A flat NEW DISC is slid into the groove. A HAMMER taps the Disc until it is halfway in.

CUT TO: The Maker has a GAPING HOLE in one side where the Disc has grown into a Funnel. We can hear METAL BENDING and CREAKING as the Funnel continues to grow until the outer shell of the Maker POPS open like the cover of a book, causing everyone to start.

CUT TO: From above we see the Frond sitting next to the Maker. With the lid open we can now see what lies inside the Maker: something identical in shape and color to the Frond. The only difference is that the Frond has EIGHT SLITS in its top and the enclosed one has a LARGE CIRCLE SLOT instead (the same size as the original discs). So now we have a CIRCLE FROND and an EIGHT-SLIT FROND.

The kids study the insides of the man-made container for the Circle Frond. It's called the GOVERNOR. Euclid operates the Rod and Button which everyone now sees are linked to SIX MAN-MADE METAL SPIKES that pierce the six leafs of the Circle Frond.

The Spikes come out of the Circle Frond. The quiet sound of the Frond CHURNING starts up.

EUCLID

That's on...

Another operation of the Rod and Button and the Spikes go back in. The Churning stops.

EUCLID

That's off...

Again he makes the Spikes come out and then back in.

EUCLID

That's on...that's off...

CARTER

I thought it worked like-

EUCLID

Yeah, it's backwards...

ALBERT

Then just get rid of the spikes...

EUCLID

Yeah.

ALBERT

...and we don't have to worry about doing all that to turn it on anymore.

VAUGHN

It'll just stay-

ALBERT

That's so stupid- why would anybody make it like that?

VAUGHN

It's bad design.

CUT TO: Carter carefully lifts the Circle Frond out of the Governor.

CUT TO: The kids slide the Circle Frond and the Eight-Slit Frond together so that they line up the way the Choruses had earlier intended.

CLOSE UP ON THE "SEAMS" AS THEY LINE UP

CUT TO: The two connected Fronds sit alone at night. We hear them CHURNING.

222 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME - DAWN

The SUN is just peeking over the horizon. Albert trudges through the snow towards the building, yawning.

223 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

Euclid reclines against the wall near the doorway, sleeping under his coat.

Albert steps inside, sees Euclid on the floor, and then notices something across the room:

CUT TO: Albert crouches, studying:

The Eight-Slit Frond has grown SOMETHING in its slits.

With both hands he carefully pulls it out: an EIGHT POINT STARBURST. It is flat like the original discs.

He walks over and sits next to Euclid, captivated by the find.

ALBERT

Uke, look at this.

Euclid doesn't even stir. Albert then sees ANOTHER STARBURST in Euclid's hand. This one however has grown to an INCH THICK.

Albert settles against the wall, resting next to Euclid. He makes a pillow with his backpack.

CUT TO: The two are now asleep against the wall.

Carter walks in and sees them. Curious, he crouches and studies the Starbursts in their hands, both now an inch thick. This prompts him to check the Frond.

CUT TO: Carter finds ANOTHER STARBURST waiting in the Frond. He attempts to pry it out.

CUT TO: At a table, Albert drops his Starburst into a Flower where it fits perfectly and slides down.

Euclid drops his in next, right on top of the first one.

When Carter adds his, the three Starbursts act as one and LOUDLY SNAP APART where the eight points meet. This leaves EIGHT SEPARATE FINGERS that slowly "wake up".

The kids first concern is that they have lost their hearing again:

EUCLID
Hello, hello, hello.

ALBERT
I hear you. Hello.

No response from the others.

ALBERT
HELLO?!

EUCLID AND CARTER
Yeah.

That's solved. Hearing intact.

OVERHEAD: The Fingers quietly BLOOM, stretching out to their full length.

MATCH CUT TO:

224 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME - DAY

A FLOWER slowly spins. George has his five fingers in it, rotating it unconsciously. He's on his tiptoes on the outside of a circle of kids, trying to get a glimpse of what they are doing at the center.

EUCLID (OFF SCREEN)
...are you concentrating?

ALBERT (OFF SCREEN)
...Jesus...

EUCLID (OFF SCREEN)
...are you thinking about it...really thinking...

ALBERT (OFF SCREEN)
Shouldn't have to...

Our attention is still on George, but in the foreground and out of focus a Chorus is awkwardly using its HAND to grip a SNOW SHOVEL. It's trying to lift the shovel but the snow keeps sliding out. Then the wooden handle SPLINTERS from being squeezed too hard.

CUT TO: George fiddles with his Flower. He plays with filling its 8 holes with 5 fingers from his left hand and 3 from his right. He looks back up to the action in the circle.

CARTER (OFF SCREEN)
Open up your palm...

VAUGHN (OFF SCREEN)
I'm trying. Fingers won't get out of the way.

In the foreground, they're trying to get the Chorus hand to pick up a metal pail by the handle, but it's too unwieldy.

VAUGHN (OFF SCREEN)
...take it, I'm getting a headache...

CUT TO: George's head is moving back and forth like he's watching a game of tennis.

Again in the foreground, Albert is gently tossing out STICKS and BRANCHES for the Hand to catch. Some bounce off the extra Fingers that get in the way and with others the grip response is too slow.

EUCLID (OFF SCREEN)
-no, he's right. It's awkward. Try it.

ALBERT (OFF SCREEN)
Your hands cramp?

EUCLID (OFF SCREEN)
Yeah.

George studies his own hand, pretending to catch his fist.

225 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

George wears a SOCK on his hand. It's got 5 holes for his fingers to fit through and 3 POPSICLE STICKS glued on between the holes so that he can mimic the action of the 8-Fingered Hand.

Through the WINDOW we can see and hear the other kids still experimenting with the Hand.

He tries to pick of various items (wad of paper, small branch, etc.) and drop them in a small campfire on the cement floor. The sock is too clumsy so he ends up dropping the items too soon or using both of his hands.

CUT TO: He tries to wrap his augmented hand around the door handle. The popsicle sticks get in the way.

He stops, pulling on them gently.

226 INT. WOODWORKING SHOP - DAY

A POWERED BAND SAW SWITCH is flipped on. The machine roars to life.

GEORGE stands in front of the saw. He's repeatedly miming a motion with his hands, like he's preparing to do something important.

When he's ready he moves over to a nearby table where Vaughn and Hector stand with the Two Fronds from which a NEW STARBURST is extruding.

VAUGHN

It's almost ready.

George acknowledges, in a state of high concentration. Vaughn and Hector look at each other, worried.

VAUGHN

(to George)

Are you sure?

George answers by not answering. He moves to retrieve the Starburst. Vaughn and Hector quickly run out.

George ties a quick knot through the Starburst with some FISHING LINE and moves to the band saw where he sets up the Starburst on the platform and prepares to slice off one of its Fingers.

227 EXT. WOODWORKING SHOP - NEXT

50 feet away Vaughn and Hector drop to the ground, trying to shield themselves behind a small hill. Vaughn raises a pair of BINOCULARS toward the shop.

Suddenly a CLAP OF THUNDER comes from the shop. The kids flinch and cower. They recover just in time for another CLAP and a moment later a third.

We hear the band saw wind down and George comes running to them from the shop, uncoiling FISHING LINE along the way.

Once there, he has to deal with a knot on the SPOOL. Vaughn and Hector approach him cautiously, worried about him.

HECTOR

You all right?

No response. George continues untangling the knot, facing the other direction. Vaughn tests George's hearing:

VAUGHN

Hey! Let's get away from here!

George turns around, frustrated with the knot. He clearly hasn't heard anything:

GEORGE

Let's get out of here! I'll do this later!

228 EXT. SMALL CLIFF - LATER

The three kids lie at the edge of the cliff using a BAND OF SEVERAL FISHING POLES to lower something to the bottom. They are trying to be as precise as they can.

A FLOWER lies at the cliff bottom next to a COFFEE CAN OF BOILING WATER.

The Flower already has TWO FIVE-FINGERED STARBURSTS in it. ANOTHER is being lowered on the fishing line. It slowly slides in on top of the first two, snaps, and blooms. It looks more like a human hand now. There are still nubs where the three fingers were cut, but they don't get in the way as they move.

The water in the coffee can suddenly stops boiling.

GEORGE

Told you.

229 EXT. HUGE CONCRETE HOLE - LATER

Using the same trick with the flag (where the kids dumped the Disc fragments last summer), the three LEFTOVER FINGERS are dropped into the deep hole.

230 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME - DAY

Vaughn ties a rope knot with his left hand and using the Chorus' Hand as his right. The process is completely organic with the Chorus' Hand showing all the dexterity of Vaughn's. Across from him Javier guides him through the steps by tying his own knot.

Vaughn's face shows how serene and even joyful it is to control the Hand now. When he's done he holds the knot up:

VAUGHN

Bowline.

231 INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

AN ILLUSTRATED SIGN LANGUAGE BOOK. A page is turned.

George, wearing EARMUFFS, sits in his seat on the bus studying the book and practicing with his hands. Hector sits next to him, picking up what he can.

We follow Javier down the aisle where he stops at George's seat and waits for his attention.

When George looks up, Javier signs, "thank you". George nods, accepting the gratitude.

Javier continues down the aisle, only to be replaced by Samuel who also waits and then signs, "thank you".

Next is Albert.

232 INT. WOODWORKING SHOP - DAY

George is preparing to retrieve another Starburst from the Fronds, finding the edges of it with his fingers.

Hector slides a piece of paper on the table into George's view.

On the paper is handwritten, "\$10 + Buzz kite + Striped gloves" with a few lines scratched out above it: "\$5 + Aquafrankie II (with bowl and flakes and clean rocks)", "\$10", and "\$10 + Striped gloves".

George checks it, shakes his head "No", and starts signing fast with one hand. Hector tries to keep up:

HECTOR

C-L-M, is that M? Wait, go slow.

Hector signs to slow down. George signs slower:

HECTOR

C-L-A-Y-M, okay got it.

Hector relays to Marcus and Albert who are waiting nearby.

HECTOR

Claymore kite.

MARCUS

What?

HECTOR

Ten bucks, the gloves, and your Claymore kite.

MARCUS

I haven't even opened it yet! No! I mean does he know? Does he know I haven't...what's the one for "open"?

Hector shows him the sign language for "open". Marcus moves in front of George and mouths and signs "I have not opened it."

George seems upset at the distraction and pulls the Starburst from the Fronds, deep in his work.

HECTOR

Let's get going!

They all run out, leaving George to fire up the saw.

233 EXT. WOODWORKING SHOP - NEXT

Hector, Marcus, and Albert watch the shop from 20 yards off.

They brace for the sound but still flinch when it comes:
BANG! BANG!

234 EXT. WOODS - DAY

Euclid and Carter yank hard on a LONG ROPE.

The other end of the rope is tied to a JACK supporting a RUSTED OUT STATION WAGON with no wheels. The jack topples and the car drops a few feet, coming down on a LAWNMOWER BLADE which in turn slices through a couple WOOD PLANKS beneath it.

GEORGE watches this presentation, thinking. We now see that the kids are 30 yards from the car.

EUCLID

What do you think? Pretty good, huh?

Hector relays this message to George.

CARTER

It's safer.

George signs something and walks away, carrying another Five-Fingered Starburst.

HECTOR

He says it's okay the way it is.

They follow after George in frustration.

EUCLID

What!? How is it okay!?

CARTER

(to Euclid)

He's helping. He likes to feel like he's helping.

EUCLID

(to Carter)

How is it okay? He shouldn't be doing it-
(calling after George)
You shouldn't be cutting them up anyways!

235 INT. BARN - LATER

Vaughn marks TWO FLOWERS, part of the Mahogany Chorus, with a BLACK MARKER.

VAUGHN

...take out two from each front leg, put them on the back...it'll make him lean forward, get a little faster...

Vaughn circles around the Chorus with the marker looking for design changes. Graham tries to help and notices something:

He picks at the Eight-Fingered Hand and a little Detritus comes off. He looks to the Chorus' altered Five-Fingered Hand for comparison.

CUT TO: George and Hector walk in, followed by Euclid and Carter. George tries to give his just-created Five-Fingered Hand to Vaughn but...

VAUGHN

We don't need it maybe.

Vaughn and Graham are tearing away THREE DECAYED FINGERS on the Eight-Fingered Hand. The positions of the decaying fingers are the same as the missing ones sliced off the Five-Fingered Hand. The Chorus is conforming to the kids' design.

Vaughn looks to Euclid:

VAUGHN
It was the right thing to do. We're
supposed to.

Euclid can't be convinced, shaking his head.

EUCLID
You don't...we don't know...

Just then the Chorus reaches over with its Five-Fingered Hand
and pulls off one of the decayed Fingers completely.

Euclid looks to Carter and then down, having to concede.

With the decayed Fingers gone, the now Five-Fingered Hand
stretches, going through a full degree of motion, trying to
reach the ground.

MATCH CUT TO:

236 EXT. MAKESHIFT CORRAL - NIGHT

The Hand finds the soft dirt, gripping it like a paw.

The Chorus takes a few careful steps with its new hands/feet.

TWO LONG LEASHES are unraveling as the Choruses move further
from the post they are tied to.

They stop at the end of their leashes.

A CHORUS HAND reaches up and grabs hold of the leash latched
to its torso. It YANKS.

MORNING

The kids stand there staring at the empty corral. After a
second...

GEORGE (OFF SCREEN)
They stole them!

The kids turn towards the concrete frame.

237 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

They all crowd the entrance staring at the empty space where
the Fronds should be.

VAUGHN
Let's go get them.

238 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME- NEXT

Eight of them depart one way. Euclid and Carter loiter at the side, waiting for the others to clear out. They leave in the opposite direction, up to something.

239 INT. EUCLID'S ROOM - NEXT

On a desk, DUSTY DETRITUS PARTICLES are swept by hand into a neat pile a few millimeters tall. A ONE-INCH CHUNK of Detritus sits nearby.

Carter and Euclid look at the pile, thinking.

CARTER

Water?

Euclid slowly nods. Carter leaves.

Euclid picks up the chunk, holds it in front of his face, and takes a small bite.

CUT TO: Carter returns with a PAPER CUP of water but doesn't find Euclid standing where he left him. He swings to the left and looks down to where Euclid sits on the floor against the bedpost, staring forward.

CUT TO: We're behind Euclid. Carter takes a seat in front of him, curiously scanning his face. Euclid is feeling around for nearby objects, rolling them around in his hands and then tossing them aside: a t-shirt, a book, a shoe.

Carter, more amused than worried, decides to help. He puts down the water and begins to pick up objects, tossing them aside. Meanwhile, Euclid reaches for the paper cup.

He turns it around in his hands and after it passes some test, he tosses out the water and just holds it in his left hand. He stretches the fingers on his right hand and then makes a tight fist. Again and again he does this.

Carter, not knowing what to do, decides to stretch out his hand as well, mirroring Euclid.

Euclid then places his fingers in front of his own face.

Carter follows and again mimicking Euclid, places the pad of each fingertip gently between his front teeth, lightly pinching a quarter-inch of skin, testing it before moving to the next. After four fingers have been tested they move back to their index fingers.

Euclid jerks his hand away from his face violently. Carter goes from amused to horrified.

Euclid brings another finger to his mouth and again bites off a bit of flesh from the pad. Carter lunges forward to stop him, grabbing his arm:

CARTER

No! Stop it! Stop it!

But Euclid isn't trying to bite any more. Instead he brings his BLOODY FINGERS to the paper cup and begins rolling it around slowly and methodically, leaving blood at every touch.

Carter can only watch. As the cup turns around, he peers closer, seeing something that amazes him.

CUT TO: EUCLID'S EYES open. He wakes and walks to the desk where Carter sits studying 10 PAPER CUPS, each marked up with blood.

Carter hands Euclid a cup and points out what is sketched in blood on it:

CARTER

The hill where Vaughn built that ramp, the big oak tree, see...

Carter turns the cup over in Euclid's hand to show him the other side:

CARTER

...and the water tower.

Euclid checks the band-aids on his fingertips, flicking flakes of dried blood into the air.

CARTER

Where would you have to be?

240 EXT. HILLTOP - LATER

Euclid and Carter lead the other eight kids up the hill towards the two Choruses, which are clearing ROCKS and BRANCHES from the area. The two Fronds sit nearby.

The eight kids concentrate on getting control of Choruses, packing up the Fronds.

Euclid looks around at the horizon. He holds out one of the paper cups. He rotates his body around 360 degrees while turning the cup in his hand at the same rate, comparing the blood print to the real world; they are the same.

At the end of the turn, he notices Carter 50 feet off. He's found something behind a large boulder.

CUT TO: They both look at a CORAL SHOOT, hidden from the others. Inside it we can make out the shape of a THIRD FROND.

EUCLID

Anyone see it?

Carter shakes his head.

They glance back at the other kids, worried about how to proceed. Euclid leaves the decision with Carter:

EUCLID

You found it.

We hear the first few measures of the Christmas carol "What Sweeter Music".

241 INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

AN ISOLATED SECTION OF A PEW is being draped with people's coats as they sit down. Rabbit fur and silk linings cover the seat.

Euclid lays his coat on top of these open so that he can recline into it when he sits. He slowly collapses, resting. We hear the choir SING. The moment is gold and warm and holds the promise of protection. He sinks deeper, taking in the music.

242 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - INTERCUT

Marcus has his ear to the original Frond. It's silent.

MARCUS

Needs more sawdust.

He and Javier are there alone. Javier quits his work on their Chorus (now in a WOODEN CAGE) and retrieves a Tupperware container from his backpack, taking caution:

JAVIER

Watch the door.

He uses a SCOOPER to scrape the insides of the container but comes up with less than a tablespoon of sawdust.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

We gotta go make some.

CUT TO: They bundle up in parkas and scarves, ready to head out.

MARCUS

...sick of sawdust. I don't even know why they need it. You know?

JAVIER

Yeah.

MARCUS

They're not made of wood...why do we have to...it's stupid.

Marcus swings the door open to the BLUSTERY WIND outside. Javier immediately shuts it. He has an idea.

CUT TO: Javier fills his scooper with Detritus from the Orange Bucket. He looks to Marcus for any last words.

He sifts the Detritus over the Frond Leaves.

CUT TO: They have their ears to the Frond. It purrs at a higher frequency.

JAVIER

Sounds different. Yeah?

MARCUS

Better.

243 INT. CHURCH/ FOYER - INTERCUT

Euclid walks past tables of HOMEMADE DESSERTS, searching for something, someone. Adults crowd the place.

Then he sees what he's looking for across the room.

He turns to a nearby stack of PAPER PLATES and has to contend with other kids' grubby hands before getting one.

CUT TO: Olivia slices and serves BLACK FOREST CAKE. It's hectic, but she's managing with a smile. She fidgets with her necklace, a thin leather strip with something hanging from it hidden beneath her top. Euclid cranes his neck to see as she brings it out: a DECORATIVE STAR MADE OF POPSICLE STICKS.

He receives his cake from her and loiters awkwardly. We can barely hear with all the commotion:

OLIVIA

Good?

Euclid looks up. She's talking to him.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

It's good?

His mouth is full. He just about gets it down when out of nowhere Carter nudges him:

CARTER

Crispy Treats?

Euclid turns his head this way and that, trying to help find the treats through the crowd.

EUCLID

I saw them...

Meanwhile he puts his cake down and grabs an empty plate.

Olivia doesn't get it. She tries and fails to get Euclid's attention, but he fakes like there is too much noise.

OLIVIA

Euclid. Euclid!

He finally turns to her but pretends he can't hear her.

EUCLID

What?

Olivia gives up.

244 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - INTERCUT

A DISC grows slowly out of the Frond and...

...falls to the ground and settles.

Javier and Marcus look up from their work assembling Flowers.

MARCUS

That was too fast.

CUT TO: Marcus collects the new Disc from the ground. They're pleased.

JAVIER

We'll get twice as many.

CUT TO: They sift the entire bucket of Detritus over the Leaves of the Frond. The sound of it accumulating and crackling becomes...

245 INT. CHURCH - INTERCUT

...the sound of APPLAUSE as people rush into the sanctuary to find their seats.

Euclid makes his way down the aisle through the crowd.

We hear the faint sound of Olivia calling his name. Still moving forward he looks back over his shoulder to the left.

Then to the right, craning his neck to see past the adults.

Then to the left.

MATCH CUT TO:

246 EXT. WOODS - DAY

Euclid runs for his life through the thick trees, checking back over his shoulder occasionally.

It's SUMMER. The applause of the church has become the RUSTLING of green leaves high in the canopy.

247 EXT. WOODS/ CLEARING - NEXT

Carter and the Mahogany Chorus look like they're praying together, kneeling with their heads bowed toward each other. The Chorus has doubled in size, mainly in the girth of its Limbs.

CARTER

(whispering)
...purple, red. Green, yellow, blue,
purple, red. Green, yellow, blue, purple,
red.

Carter stands. The Chorus tears off at full speed into the woods.

248 EXT. WOODS - DAY

A GREEN RIBBON TIED AROUND A SMALL ROCK hangs from a branch.

Euclid races towards it.

The Chorus trails him but is gaining quickly.

Euclid snatches the ribbon. Immediately the Chorus turns 90 degrees carving a corner in the ground with its powerful Limbs.

Euclid turns to see it heading off.

EUCLID

Shit.

CUT TO: A YELLOW RIBBON hangs from another tree.

It's about to be snatched by the approaching Chorus.

249 EXT. RAVINE - NEXT

The Chorus races toward the ravine. The yellow ribbon whips in the wind, hanging out of the front storage section of its torso.

Euclid descends a ladder into the shallow ravine. He checks over his shoulder at the BLUE RIBBON stuck under some rocks at the bottom of the ravine.

Above him, the Chorus leaps into the ravine, never even slowing.

Euclid sees this, stops his descent, and climbs up.

CUT TO: At the top he kicks the ladder into the ravine and continues the race.

When he runs 50 feet, the Chorus leaps up and out of the ravine behind him in a single jump.

CUT TO: Euclid approaches a tree, sidestepping a LARGE TARP that seemingly covers the ground in front of it. The stretched tarp has leaves and earth and branches covering it as camouflage.

He waits before grabbing the PURPLE RIBBON out of a nook.

The Chorus comes to halt at the tarp.

Euclid threatens to grab the ribbon, provoking the Chorus to lurch forward slightly.

But it's not enough. The Chorus thinks better of it and takes its time finding the edges of the tarp trap and going around slowly. INSERT: we see the DEEP PIT beneath the translucent tarp.

As it gets closer, Euclid resigns:

EUCLID

Goddamn it.

Euclid takes purple, yanking the ribbon.

The Chorus breaks off for the next one.

250 EXT. STORM DRAIN - NEXT

Euclid's on the run again, momentarily exiting a storm drain, about to enter another. He looks for the Chorus, hears CRACKLING above him, and tries to find the source. It's in the trees.

251 EXT. JUPITER ROCK - NEXT

The RED RIBBON hangs from a crevasse in the huge boulder.

He exits the storm drain and sees the Chorus coming down the hill from another other direction. Euclid hauls for ribbon and...

...actually gets it. He ducks down, anticipating the Chorus' charge. But it doesn't come.

Excited, he circles the boulder, looking for the Chorus but finds himself alone.

252 EXT. WOODS - NEXT

The Chorus is ROOTING out something from under a tangle of mud and heavy branches.

Euclid and Carter approach.

CARTER

Was it close?

EUCLID

No, I had him. Three out of five.

He opens his hand showing his three ribbons.

Carter turns this over in his head.

CARTER

He didn't try for the red, though?

EUCLID

I had him.

The Chorus gets what it was hunting for, puts it in its storage box, and runs to meet Carter and Euclid.

CUT TO: Carter removes the yellow ribbon, the blue ribbon, and a MUDDY DECAYED FUNNEL from the Chorus' storage.

CARTER

It's from last year.

253 EXT. TOOL SHED - DAY

Javier and Marcus and the Plywood Chorus (also bigger now) unload equipment and trash bags full of grass from the trailer to the shed.

Javier unlocks and opens the shed door. When he turns around he finds Marcus alone with the bags and looking into the distance at...

The Chorus is in the woods digging something out of the ground. Whatever it is is caught up in some roots. The Chorus yanks hard, pulling up a storm of soil.

MARCUS

(whining)

Found another one. What's he doing?

The Chorus sprints off.

JAVIER

You know what he's doing. Grab the bags.

Javier goes after it.

254 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

The Plywood Chorus has put the just-dug-up Decayed Funnel on the Leaves of the Circle Frond. It is grinding it into powder with its Hands, feeding the Frond.

Javier waits on it, having just come in. The door is still open and swinging in the wind. He looks around nervously, hoping no one sees.

JAVIER

(sarcastic, upset)

You good? Sure? Oh, a little more? Ok.

The Chorus finally finishes and moves to leave.

JAVIER

(commanding)
No. Come back.

The Chorus ignores him. He follows after it, growing desperate, wringing the Controller Necklace.

JAVIER

(pleading)
Come on. God, please. Please.

It turns back for a second, like an invisible tether has pulled it. Then it breaks off at full gallop into the woods.

CUT TO: Euclid, Carter, and Graham are having trouble getting the Mahogany Chorus settled in its cage. It bucks and stirs occasionally, lurching forward a step before submitting to its masters.

Javier, standing off to the side with Marcus, sees what the Chorus wants across the room: a discarded Funnel.

Marcus, seeing it too, checks Javier.

JAVIER

Stop looking at me.

MARCUS

What?

JAVIER

Stop.

NIGHT

They're alone now. Javier removes Controllers from the necklace, handing two to Marcus. He points to his thigh:

JAVIER

Left front. Left back. Get him at the top of the leg just under the wood. I'll take the other side, but you got-

MARCUS

We can just take off the bad pieces.

JAVIER

-to be fast. What? No, get the whole leg, we'll sort it out after. Marcus, you gotta be fast though. Let's practice.

CUT TO: The Plywood Chorus BUCKS and SPINS, throwing Marcus and Javier to different sides of the room.

Javier lies on the floor, stunned and bloodied around the mouth. He slowly recovers, stands up, and takes in the chaos in the room. He sees on his left:

The Chorus continues to pick up every Funnel it can find in the room and stack it on the Frond.

On Javier's right: Marcus does the same, frantically helping the Chorus gather Funnels.

MARCUS
...just gonna...help him. It doesn't matter. Let's get...all of them on there...and then it'll be... he'll be done.

Javier licks his blood-coated teeth. He makes a decision:

He rushes toward the Frond and KNOCKS off a pile of Funnels.

He violently shoves off another pile to the floor.

And another.

MATCH CUT TO:

255 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

Javier SLAMS the door shut. He blocks the door with his body while he wrestles with straightening a METAL CHAIN and LOCK, trying to get it through the door handle.

Marcus peeks in through the window. He sees the pile of Funnels on the Frond growing again as the Chorus moves even faster. A Funnel is added, then another, then another, then nothing...

Marcus searches the room, finding something that worries him. His eyes follow it towards the door.

MARCUS
Javier. Javier!

Javier is reaching his forearm through both the door handle and a handle attached to the doorframe, trying to grab the other side of the chain to pull it through. He looks up, startled.

The Chorus CHARGES the door, CRACKING it open a couple inches, pinning Javier's arm. He gasps with shock. He tries to push back to get his arm free with no luck.

The gap between the door and the doorframe grows slowly.

JAVIER

No.

Marcus gets in front of the door and pushes with all his might.

The strain on Javier's forearm grows as the door opens wider.

Marcus' shoes lose traction on the ground, slipping back slowly until...

Javier's forearm SNAPS.

256 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - CONTINUOUS

The door swings open wide. The Chorus runs into the night.

The pile of Funnels sits on the Frond.

CUT TO: In the foreground Javier is doubled over, but quiet. Behind him Albert, Euclid, and Carter stare at Marcus who can barely breath from the crying convulsions:

MARCUS

We...fed them...wrong...I think...and I
promise...and I'm sorry...we won't do...it
anymore...I promise...

Euclid looks toward Javier.

CUT TO: Euclid sits down next to Javier and puts his hand on his shoulder. He inspects his arm before suggesting a cover story:

EUCLID

Football.

After a moment Javier nods.

257 EXT. MAKESHIFT CORRAL - NEXT

Albert sets the Circle Frond in the middle of the yard and backs away to join Euclid and Carter. They point their flashlights at it, looking around.

CUT TO: Carter and Euclid sit together, waiting. Albert sleeps next to them. Carter cautiously whispers:

CARTER

If it doesn't come back...do you want to
try-

EUCLID

Nuh-uh.

Carter accepts that. But then...

CARTER

You don't think it might-

EUCLID

You want to do it? How 'bout...

He trails off. Carter drops it.

258 INT. EUCLID'S ROOM - DAWN

Euclid lies awake, staring at the ceiling. He slowly pulls the covers aside, preparing to get up.

CUT TO: Dressed for school now, he pulls on his backpack, lost in thought. He stands there for a few seconds.

He is quietly drawn to the window. He opens the shades to see far off:

An AMBULANCE races down the country road. Its lights twirl silently.

259 EXT. UNDER THE BRIDGE - NEXT

In a panic, Euclid stomps through the trickle of water in the creek bed before sprinting up the side toward the road.

260 EXT. SUBURBS - NEXT

Euclid pushes through a CROWD OF ONLOOKERS towards the Ambulance which is now parked in front of one of the houses across the street.

Carter catches him with his arm, stopping him before he can cross the street. He speaks directly into Euclid's ear:

CARTER

It could be anything. You don't know.

Euclid looks to Carter and then to the other kids that he now sees are waiting nearby. Some are in pajamas. They all look worried.

A STRETCHER is desperately rolled towards the ambulance from the house carrying a little girl. We see her BARE FEET, then her PINK NIGHTGOWN, then BLOOD soaking the sheet that covers

her. A man's hand pumps air through the MANUAL RESCUCITATOR on her face. It is Olivia.

Carmen (Olivia's sister) is in the doorway of the house, wailing and hugging a man's leg.

AFTERNOON

Euclid drives the small tractor down the street. He slows when he reaches Olivia's house, checking it for signs. No ambulance, no onlookers, nothing.

261 EXT. SUBURBS/ CUL-DE-SAC - NEXT

Euclid brings the tractor to a stop in front of a yard where the other kids are landscaping.

While they unload tools, Euclid checks up the street towards Olivia's house where he sees a CAR approaching.

He drives off toward it.

262 EXT. SUBURBS/ OLIVIA'S HOUSE - NEXT

A POLICE CAR rolls to stop in front of Olivia's house, dropping off Carmen and her parents.

Euclid rides past. Beyond him, we can make out Carmen and her mother entering the house. Her father stays on the porch, collapsing in a heap on the front step.

Euclid wipes his tears on his sleeves as he drives further away, leaving Olivia's father in the background.

263 EXT. FIELD - DUSK

Euclid sits, waiting. The Circle Frond sits in the Governor about 10 feet in front of him.

The Plywood Chorus enters frame and walks up to the Frond where it deposits...

...SEVERAL FUNNELS. One of them still has Olivia's leather necklace through it, charms and all. A few strands of her hair are stuck in the blood that coats it.

Suddenly, the other kids appear, springing a trap. The Chorus gets caught up in a HUGE SHEET (blankets and tarps sewn together) that it had been standing on. The kids pull on ropes and gather them to a point where they attach to the tractor.

CARTER
Don't let it get any traction!

EUCLID
Don't let it get any goddamn traction!

The tractor pulls the gathered Chorus across the field.

Marcus slams the Governor shut (with the Circle Frond inside) and picks it up to take with them. Vaughn intercepts him:

VAUGHN
I got it. Let me carry it.

Marcus is reluctant. Albert instructs him:

ALBERT
Let him have it.

264 EXT. HUGE CONCRETE HOLE - NEXT

The tractor drags the Plywood Chorus towards the hole. The kids follow. The Mahogany Chorus lies dismantled in the back of the tractor.

CUT TO: First the Plywood Chorus wrapped in the sheet goes in.

Then Euclid and Carter throw the Mahogany pieces (single Limbs attached to single planks of wood) over the side as they buck and rattle violently.

The sun sets directly behind them. They look to the other side of the hole at:

Vaughn kicks the Governor over the edge.

FROM DIRECTLY ABOVE THE HOLE: We see the kids at the edges, watching everything fall into the bottomless chasm. The Governor bounces off some scaffolding before quickly falling into blackness.

FROM DIRECTLY BELOW: Same framing but now we see the darkening sky above. For the next 10 seconds we quietly watch the sunlight dim that hits the edge of the hole. The sky goes BLACK.

265 INT. TOOL SHED - DAY

The shed door opens, breaking the darkness. There's two feet of SNOW on the ground. Euclid enters wearing a heavy coat. He scrounges around and finds...

266 EXT. TOOL SHED - NEXT

A SMALL METAL BOX is laid on a bench. Euclid opens it, revealing an assortment of NUMBER STENCILS in different styles.

WIDE: He sits alone looking through the box.

CLOSE: Using a pencil he traces around the stencils on a piece of wood, putting together address numbers like "439" and "2926".

CARTER

(off screen)

Whatever it was he used to feed it, he's telling everyone...

CUT TO: Now Carter sits next to him. Out of earshot and across from them, the other kids are killing time, unloading the trailer, just back from a day of snow shoveling.

CARTER

...he's got enough to get going again. Enough to last a while he says. And Vaughn just eggs him...

Euclid walks off with his box of numbers, ending their conversation before it begins.

Some of the kids look up as he leaves.

We hear dialogue from the next scene:

CARTER

(off screen)

They're waiting. They're all just waiting.

EUCLID

(off screen)

For what?

267 EXT. WOODS - DAY

Euclid absentmindedly carves into a tree with a pocketknife while Carter talks to him.

He looks to Carter and reiterates:

EUCLID

For what?

Beat.

CARTER

For you to stop them.

Euclid turns back to his work with the knife. He takes on a sarcastic tone:

EUCLID

No one could drag it up from way down there, anyways. Everyone saw it drop to the bottom. I saw it. You saw it, right? You saw it drop?

They both know better than this. Carter matches his sarcasm:

CARTER

Yeah, I saw it.

268 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME - MORNING

Samuel holds the door open for...

In the distance Graham leads Carter, running towards the house frame.

We hear whispered dialogue:

SAMUEL

(off screen)
We saw them carting something around last night so we went and checked-

CARTER

(off screen)
When? You checked this morning?

GRAHAM

(off screen)
Yeah, early.

269 INT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

Carter is led to a WOODEN CHEST on the floor.

CARTER

(off screen)
Were they using it?

Samuel opens the chest...

SAMUEL

(off screen)
What do you mean? We open it up and the
thing's sitting there just like summer.

But the Circle Frond is not in the box.

Carter wipes some dust from inside and inspects his fingers.

CARTER

(off screen)
It was sitting there.

270 EXT. CONCRETE FRAME - NEXT

Carter questions Graham and Samuel. In the background, Euclid approaches, ready for school, but he's still out of earshot.

SAMUEL

They took it somewhere I guess. Packed it
up. But they have it.

CARTER

I know they have it Sam, but are they
using it?

Carter looks to Graham to get his take. Graham and Samuel stare back at him for a second. Graham has his own suspicion of Carter now:

GRAHAM

How do you know they have it?

Carter contemplates getting into that conversation. Something occurs to Samuel:

SAMUEL

Of course they're using it. Why would
they've gone all the way down there and
got it? It's a hundred miles. It'd take
forever.

Euclid arrives. Carter takes a step back, trying to dissolve the conversation before he overhears.

CARTER

Okay, shhhh...

Carter joins Euclid and they head off for the bus, leaving Graham and Samuel behind.

Graham speaks too loud to Samuel:

GRAHAM

But it doesn't matter, right. Not like we're gonna do anything-

Carter flashes a look back at him. Graham notices out of his peripheral vision and goes silent fast.

271 EXT. FIELD - DAY

Carter looks on as Graham and Samuel do forensics, crouching in the snow.

GRAHAM

Three stacks.

SAMUEL

Four.

From overhead we can see SCATTERED FUNNEL IMPRINTS in the snow. Graham points them out:

GRAHAM

No. One, two, three.

SAMUEL

And this one.

272 INT. EUCLID'S HOUSE/ GARAGE - NIGHT

GRAHAM

Probably four stacks.

Graham and Samuel are recounting everything to Euclid who is consumed with working on an address plaque, the end result of what he began with the number stencils. He places the last of a few layers of wood on top and wipes away the glue that gets squeezed out.

SAMUEL

Probably 20 or 30 funnels high, probably this high, each of 'em.

Behind them, Carter watches Euclid for any signs of interest. There are none.

GRAHAM
What? How do you know that?

SAMUEL
We all know they're doing-

GRAHAM
No, how tall they are.

SAMUEL
Because. I don't really know, but that's
what it was like last year...and if
they're-

Carter puts his hand on Samuel's shoulder, quieting him.

Euclid shakes a spray can of varnish, never looking up from his work.

273 EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY

EUCLID is nailing up an address plaque on the front of the house.

Taking a break from shoveling snow off the driveway, Carter is helping him align it:

CARTER
Up...up...left side up just...that's good.

Graham and Samuel run up to Carter excited. Graham carries something in his open hands like you'd carry sand.

Euclid turns to see what's going on: Carter checks out what Graham has, sends them on their way, and heads toward Euclid. Except they don't go away.

GRAHAM
How come they can do it then?!

Carter turns back, angry in an instant.

CARTER
Come here!

He grabs Graham's wrists, shakes the Detritus to the ground, covers it with snow, and pushes Graham on his way.

Carter then walks up to Euclid and comments on the plaque, breathless:

CARTER

Looks good.

274 INT. ALBERT'S BARN - NIGHT

In one of the back stalls a SHEET has been used to cover the TWO CONNECTED FRONDS on the floor. Graham and Samuel hold the sheet up, staring underneath. Euclid leans against a far wall, uninvolved.

Across the stall Carter picks up something hidden beneath some hay. It's a FINGER HUSK from one of the Chorus' hands.

Graham is fed up again:

GRAHAM

They're making hands now. And we just...

Samuel looks to him and shakes his head, cautioning him from speaking. Graham reluctantly takes the advice.

But from across the stall and with the same despondent tone...

CARTER

They're making hands now.

Graham, Samuel, and even Euclid look toward him with some surprise.

CARTER

And we're just watching them do it. Well, they don't have the third one.

Graham and Samuel look to each other wondering what he's referring to.

Carter positions himself in front of Euclid.

CARTER

That one's mine. I say who uses it or doesn't. It's not yours to give away.

He turns to the other two:

CARTER

Pack those up.

275 EXT. FIELD - DAY

Graham waits under a tree, looking like he's ready to sprint into the field from the forest.

Samuel, under a tree on the opposite side of the field, does the same.

Suddenly, in the area between them a FUNNEL STACK falls from the sky, CRASHING into the snow. The Stack has some kind of THIN ROPE attached to it.

Just as the snow settles, ANOTHER STACK drops in followed by TWO MORE.

Graham and Samuel rush in from the trees and hurriedly inspect the Stacks, pushing and prying on each Funnel looking for signs of age.

Samuel is done with his two. He yells up the field:

SAMUEL
Okay, go!

GRAHAM
Wait! I got one!

SAMUEL
Hold on!

Graham splits off the Aged Funnel from the Stack and empties some new replacement Funnels onto the snow from a sack around his neck. He works like a member of a pit crew.

CUT TO: The 4 Funnel Stacks are reeled in by their ropes to the launching area. They leave trails in the snow as they drag.

At the launching area, Carter strains to spin a LARGE WOODEN SPOOL as fast as he can, coiling up the 4 ropes.

CUT TO: The 4 Funnel Stacks are set up and ready to launch, each spaced about 3 feet from the next. Their ropes are in neat coils next to them.

Carter takes a 12-FOOT-POLE and brings it near the Stack. The Pole has 4 Controllers attached along its length, each spaced 3 feet from the next.

When the Controllers get near enough, the 4 Funnel Stacks all launch at once.

They arc high in the sky and then...

MATCH CUT TO:

276 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - DUSK

...an Aged Funnel is brought down hard onto a table, smashing its Detritus off and revealing Petals.

We're in a cave carved into the mountain a few hundred feet above the valley floor.

Carter, Graham, and Samuel sit on the floor assembling Limbs from the hundreds of Petals around them.

277 EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - DAY

Carter, Graham, and Samuel descend with their new Chorus.

Carter sees something at the base of the mountain near the woods: Euclid pulling a wagon sled.

CARTER

Euclid! Euclid!

278 EXT. BASE OF MOUNTAIN/ FIELD - NEXT

Euclid uncovers the contents of his wagon: tens of address plaques.

CARTER

(impressed)

It looks like a whole neighborhood.

In the background, Graham is leading the Chorus down the mountain.

Carter and Euclid turn to see Samuel 100 feet off just staring into the woods at something.

CUT TO: Joining him, Carter and Euclid can now see what has his attention:

50 meters off Albert, Javier, George, and Hector stand under a tree looking up, searching its branches. Javier points out something in the tree to George:

JAVIER

Right under there, where it forks...

ALBERT

Bring him around here.

Marcus brings their Chorus around. We don't see much because it's covered in cowhide.

ALBERT

Send him up.

With great dexterity the Chorus uses its hands to climb the tree. Again, we don't see much. Its Hand clings to a branch. Its dark shape moves up through the tree's limbs.

A FOOTBALL falls to the ground from high in the tree. The kids grab it and run off to resume their game.

Carter, Euclid, and Samuel are left with what they've seen. Carter speaks with determination:

CARTER

We're doing it. We are.

279 EXT. HILLTOP - NEXT

Carter tosses his shovel aside, having unearthed the Third Frond buried close to where he originally found it.

OVERHEAD: Euclid, Samuel, and Graham stand in a group, looking on. Euclid leaves, creating a 1/3 vacancy in the huddle.

MATCH CUT TO:

280 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - DAY

The Third Frond is slid into place with the other two Fronds, filling in the 1/3 vacancy.

CUT TO: The Third Frond has produced what looks like a WHITE ANGULAR BOWL (a PLATE from now on). Carter is pulling on it, trying to detach it from the Frond with no luck.

Samuel and Graham assist, trying to get their fingernails underneath.

281 EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - DAY

Euclid makes his way up towards the Cliff Dwelling carrying an AX.

282 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - NEXT

Euclid slowly rounds the corner, eavesdropping on their progress. He sees:

Graham finishes putting together a simple configuration of a few Petals and rushes it over to Carter.

Carter connects this Petal structure (a HANDLE) to the Plate which is still connected to the Frond. There are SIX specific places on the Plate where the Handles fits perfectly. Carter had already placed Handles on the other FIVE places so now there are SIX jutting out from the Plate.

When Carter tries this time the Plate slides out easily.

CUT TO: Euclid rests against the rock wall 20 feet away, still holding his ax. He cranes his neck to see what the other three are doing:

They have the Chorus lying on its back. Carter slides a Plate across the wood where it fits flush with the Chorus' Limb.

Graham connects another Plate to the first like a puzzle piece. And another as they start to cover the Chorus' belly.

The Chorus helps, using its arm to resituate one of the Plates.

EUCLID

What do they do?

Carter hands a Plate to Samuel.

CARTER

(to Samuel)

Here, take him this one.

(to Euclid)

It's getting easier.

Samuel delivers the Plate to Euclid who quickly checks it over.

EUCLID

What are they for though?

Carter looks at the Plate trying to form an answer. Something occurs to Euclid:

EUCLID (CONT'D)

Don't cover it all.

Carter understands:

CARTER

...right. No...we won't.

CLOSEUP: Another Plate is added.

MATCH CUT TO:

The Half-Plated torso of the Chorus clears the frame to reveal something the Plate has left behind: a TUBE with the same shape as the Plate.

WIDE: There are actually several Tubes, each about two feet long, bundled parallel to each other. The Chorus is creating a PLATFORM extending from the edge of the Cliff. The Platform curves up on the sides.

The four kids look on.

EUCLID

Okay, make him stop.

GRAHAM

He's fine. He's not hurting anything.

CARTER

He'll stop. He's being good.

Euclid looks to them, sees that they're not going to stop the Chorus, and almost nods: okay. He goes to the wall and retrieves his ax.

Seeing this, Carter, wearing the Necklace, immediately tries to reel in the Chorus:

CARTER

Come on back.

Euclid quickly moves to the Chorus, placing the edge of the ax on a bare patch of wood on its torso, ready to draw it back.

The Chorus doesn't budge, continuing to construct the Platform.

Carter rubs his fingers together, trying harder to exert some control over the Chorus. He speaks to it directly:

CARTER

Come on.

(to Euclid)

Uke, give him a second. Uke!

Euclid brings the ax down hard, splitting the top of the wooden torso. The Chorus moves away from its work, wandering back into the dwelling. The damage seems to be only cosmetic.

CARTER

There! Jesus!

EUCLID

Did you do it?

CARTER
Yes! I did it. I stopped him.

Beat.

EUCLID
Make him take one of those things off.

Carter looks at him incredulously.

CUT TO: Euclid's fingers hover over the shafts of the platform.

He and Carter lie on their bellies at the edge of the cliff getting a close up look at the structure.

EUCLID
There's a draft. It's cold.

Carter nods. The tension from the previous scene is gone.

CUT TO: Carter is standing on the platform. The drop off is 10 feet. His caution seems to be lessening by the second.

Euclid is ready to snatch him back to the cliff.

CARTER
Step out.

EUCLID
You get back first.

CARTER
It's solid. Look. It's solid.

EUCLID
We're idiots.

Euclid inches forward, nervous and giddy.

DOLLY BACK TO REVEAL: The SET OF 3 FRONDS quietly churns in the cave. A 6 INCH HEXAGON is growing from its center where the Leaves of each Frond meet.

Back at the ledge Carter kneels, spreading a handful of pebbles in front of some of the shafts that are pointing sideways where the platform curves up. The pebbles are pulled into the shafts, caught up in the draft of wind that constantly pours through them.

MATCH CUT TO:

283 EXT. BASE OF MOUNTAIN/ FIELD - DAY

EUCLID'S HAND spreads dirt and snow near an arc of shafts above him pointing up. It all gets sucked up.

WIDE: He and Carter stand inside a LONG CYLINDRICAL TUBE with walls made of the shafts. Called a FLUME, it is 10 feet in diameter and 20 feet long. They are in the north entrance.

CUT TO: At the south entrance, each tip of Graham's scarf is being sucked down a different shaft. Playing around, he prods the scarf and eventually it goes through one of the holes and flies out the side of the Flume.

He quickly steps out of the Flume, shivering:

GRAHAM
...can't stay in there...

Samuel throws an armful of snow and dirt into the Flume where it gets shot out in all directions, creating a cloudy mist around the cylinder.

CUT TO: At the north entrance, Euclid is clogging one of the shafts with MUD, using a JAGGED 2X4 to apply the stuff and then force it down.

Wind whistles through a small gap where the mud isn't filled in. Euclid takes care of that with a dab that he spreads out.

From the south side of the Flume, the shafts begin BLOWING OUT in sequence- just enough to kick up the snow from the ground outside it. All along the length of the Flume, shafts blow, nearing the north side where Euclid sits.

He notices and waits. When the mud-clogged shaft blows it moves the mud but doesn't seem to be powerful enough to blow it out completely.

SOUTH ENTRANCE: Samuel and Graham stand outside the Flume, watching and waiting for the snow to settle.

SAMUEL
Is that it?

The shafts again begin to blow out in sequence from south to north, this time much more powerfully. All of the snow and some of the earth beneath it get blasted into the air, stirring up a storm of brown and white all along the Flume.

We pan with Samuel and Graham as they carefully move to peer inside the Flume's south entrance, trying to see Euclid at the other end.

Euclid is still inside, but backing out cautiously. When the sequence gets to him, the shafts blow out the mud violently,

sending it inside the Flume and out while splintering the 2X4. The small explosion of dirt and wood surrounds Euclid.

CUT TO: All the snow has settled back to the ground. Euclid lies on his back outside the Flume with his head propped up on a rolled-up coat. He's got a wet sock covering his eyes. Carter kneels over him picking shrapnel (splinters and pebbles) from his face with his fingers. Euclid winces.

CARTER

...need some water to clean it out...some tweezers...

Samuel and Graham look on from the side.

CUT TO: Everyone's gone. The Flume sits alone in the field.

ANOTHER ANGLE: It's later now. The Sun is lower.

ANOTHER ANGLE: Later still. The Sun is at the horizon.

ANOTHER ANGLE: The Sun is gone. The Flume is silhouetted against the dark blue sky.

ANOTHER ANGLE: Dark night. Three kids with flashlights walk towards the Flume.

Albert walks through the Flume, studying the shafts, running his fingers along the surface. He is flanked by Javier and George.

Samuel stands under a tree at the edge of the woods watching the lights move through the Flume. He turns his attention towards the sound of...

Marcus and Hector are walking towards it.

SAMUEL

Don't clog the holes.

Surprised, they stop and turn their flashlights towards Samuel.

SAMUEL

Don't clog the holes.

CUT TO: Marcus and Javier are putting the final touches on a shaft they have clogged with mud and snow. Marcus points outside the Flume, needing something:

MARCUS

...no, get the uh, the uh...that.

Javier hands him what's left of the 2X4. Marcus uses it to pack down the mud.

284 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - DAY

The Set of 3 Fronds sits alone. The Hexagon has grown twice as wide and to a height of 10 inches.

285 EXT. BASE OF MOUNTAIN/ FIELD - DAY

Near the first Flume, the Chorus has started on another. Only it a few feet long, it looks like a ring. Carter, Graham, and Samuel pull on it with ropes. It teeters back and forth before finally falling over.

CUT TO: Inside the first Flume, Euclid (now shrapnel scabs pepper his face) and Carter look on as the Chorus continues work on the ring, building up now instead of across.

CARTER

He doesn't care...just keeps going.

Euclid takes a CRUMPLED PIECE OF NOTEBOOK PAPER that Graham and Samuel are studying and hands it to Carter.

EUCLID

Could you do this?

It is plans for a type of fort with crudely penciled cylinders representing Flumes. Euclid runs his hands across the Shafts, measuring the space between them with his fingers. Carter is overjoyed with Euclid's participation:

CARTER

Yeah. Yeah, we can do- here in the field?

EUCLID

No, we gotta go into the woods to start.
It's no good out here. It's all...

Through the shafts he sees something far off. Carter notices and keys off him to see:

TWO CHORUSES, shaped like apes, are ambling across the field towards the mountain. Unlike the previous Choruses we've seen, these have BLACK METAL torsos (like a bicycle frame) instead of wooden ones and each torso has embedded in it a BLACK METAL CYLINDER the size of a thermos. The two are identical except for their arm Limbs. One has an elongated left arm (LEFT-APE), and the other has an elongated right arm (RIGHT-APE).

Euclid and Carter are in a mixed state of amusement and shock. They step out of the Flume, looking to the woods and all around for whoever is controlling the Apes.

EUCLID

Where are they?

CARTER

I don't even...know...what is happening...

Euclid laughs at how odd this is.

PAN TO: Carter laughs.

PAN TO: The Apes have reached the mountain and are now beginning their ascent.

PAN TO: Euclid goes serious, beginning to realize.

PAN TO: Carter gets it too.

286 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - NEXT

Left-Ape's Limb fits into one of the grooves in the Circle Frond. Right-Ape's Limb fits into the other groove.

The Circle Frond is separated from the other two Fronds and hauled away.

When the Apes get the Frond to the entrance of the dwelling Carter's Chorus POUNCES on Right-Ape from above, instantly bending its metal frame at the shoulder.

It continues to BASH away at Right-Ape's shoulder as Carter rises into frame, nearing the mouth of the cave, controlling the Chorus.

BASH, BASH, BASH, and then the metal finally snaps. Right-Ape's Limb, still connected to the Frond, is severed from its metal frame.

Left-Ape drags the Frond (and Right-Ape's severed Limb) outside.

Carter's Chorus and Right-Ape are locked in a struggle, each gripping the other's Hand.

From the grip we pan down the length of Carter's Chorus to where the Limb meets the Plates of its torso. It is solid even under the strain.

We start at the grip again but this time pan down the length of the Ape's Limb to where it meets its metal frame. The metal is BENDING under the stress.

287 INT. & EXT. FLUME - INTERCUT

We see the Flume from above. It and everything around it is entirely peaceful. In direct contrast to the previous scene this (and every time we cut back here) is calm and understated like a nature documentary.

A HAWK flies over. It snatches a FIELD MOUSE from the snow.

A SPIDER spins a WEB across the ceiling arc of the Flume.

The web is buffeted by the constant airflow through the shafts.

The hawk, now perched on the top of the Flume, stabs down with its beak into the mouse in its talons. It stabs again, tearing away flesh. And again.

MATCH CUT TO:

288 EXT. CLIFF - INTERCUT

Euclid brings his AX down with a CLANK on the metal frame of Left-Ape. It's trying to escape down the mountain but only managing a crawl due to the Frond it's dragging.

Euclid is relentless with the ax. CLANK! CLANK! CLANK!

Graham and Samuel wait behind some rocks, ready to rush in.

A BOLTED JOINT on the frame is bending, about to come apart.

Before that can happen, Left-Ape removes its Limb from the Frond and turns toward Euclid.

Euclid backs away. Left-Ape follows him, limping. It spends as much energy compensating for its wobbly frame as it does walking.

Graham and Samuel sweep in, grab the Frond, and run off with it.

EUCLID
Take it through the tunnel!

289 INT. & EXT. FLUME - INTERCUT

NATURE DOC

A SMALL BEETLE is stuck in the spider web, struggling. The spider approaches it.

In a NEST built into a crevasse between two shafts, a BIRD feeds TWO HATCHLINGS. It flies off. Then it moves from shaft to shaft, hunting for bugs.

The spider has the beetle raised in the air in its front legs, spinning it into a web cocoon.

MATCH CUT TO:

290 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - INTERCUT

Carter's Chorus has Right-Ape's metal torso in its Hands, lifting it high and squeezing the frame in on itself.

Right-Ape lashes out and CRACKS the wood near the Chorus' hind Limbs. Both of the creatures topple to the ground.

291 INT. FLUME - INTERCUT

NATURE DOC

The spider crawls along the top of the interior of a shaft. Its motion slows against the COLD WIND until it finally stops all together. It drops a few inches to the floor of the shaft and curls in on itself, dead.

The bird is stuck in a shaft. It struggles to get out, making wild motions with it wings, but it doesn't work and eventually its body submits. It goes still.

MATCH CUT TO:

292 EXT. CLIFF - INTERCUT

Euclid's face shows he's struggling, whimpering:

EUCLID

No. No. No.

Pan over to his grip on the ax handle which he is slowly losing to Left-Ape. Then it is yanked from Euclid's hands completely.

Euclid grimaces and cowers as Left-Ape swings the ax in a wide arc.

WIDE: Left-Ape launches the ax like a sling hundreds of feet up and over the mountain. Then it turns and limps down the cliff.

293 INT. & EXT. FLUME - INTERCUT

NATURE DOC

A FOX runs along the forest line. It crosses over to inspect the Flume, sniffing inside a few of the shafts.

The spider is gently blown along a shaft until it reaches the end and falls out, landing in the snow next to several other SMALL FROZEN BUGS AND RODENTS that have been expelled from the Flume.

The fox feasts on this treasure trove of food.

Nearby, TWO DEAD MICE lie just inside a shaft, facing the snow outside.

MATCH CUT TO:

NORTH ENTRANCE: Graham and Samuel sit just inside the Flume with the Frond, watching out for:

Left-Ape limps across the field towards the Flume. Euclid runs alongside it at a distance, watching it, waiting for the right moment. He yells after Graham and Samuel:

EUCLID

Take it through to the other end!

Graham and Samuel take the Frond deeper into the Flume.

Euclid checks behind him: Carter and his Chorus have just descended to the base of the mountain, chasing Right-Ape towards the Flume.

Focusing again on Left-Ape, Euclid's moment comes and he kicks down hard on its wounded metal shoulder, finally snapping a bolt in two so that the Limb hangs loose, useless.

Left-Ape compensates with its other Limbs to regain its stance. In the process, its newly exposed metal slices a gash in Euclid's leg.

SOUTH ENTRANCE: A SHAFT is being stuffed with mud, rocks, and snow by Graham and Samuel. The Frond sits nearby.

Now inside the Flume, Euclid limps toward the south entrance. Left-Ape is right behind him, still pursuing the Frond.

Euclid turns around, lifts up the edge of a plywood floorboard, slides his bent knees under it, and waits.

The first shaft blowouts begin at the south entrance and move north. Graham and Samuel step away from the Flume, now done with their work.

Left-Ape reaches the plywood board just as the shaft blowouts get there. They are harmless but stir up a lot of dirt. Euclid kicks the plywood up and turns it over, slamming Left-Ape into the Flume wall.

Right-Ape reaches the north entrance with Carter's Chorus right behind it, trying to grab it.

Carter, running, comes to a breathless stop near the Flume. He sees the blowouts coming towards him and then peers into the Flume to see:

Euclid, lying on his back, kicks against Left-Ape's frame to jam the metal further into the space between the shafts. Two of its Limbs are flailing about inside shafts, and Euclid kicks a third to get it stuck as well.

Carter raises his arms, operating the Chorus.

The Chorus grabs Right-Ape's frame and forces it to the ceiling. Right-Ape's Limbs wind up inside shafts. The first set of blowouts reach the north entrance.

Euclid gives one last kick to make sure Left-Ape is stuck in the Flume wall and then runs out the south entrance covering his face with his arms.

The second blowouts start, violently shooting out all the clogged mud and rocks, stirring up the soil outside.

Displaced air echoes like a drum, moving down the length of the Flume: BOOM, BOOM, BOOM. They approach Left-Ape:

We see one of its Limbs silhouetted against the translucent wall of the shaft around it (like bee larva inside a hive).

When the blowout comes, the Limb is pulled with great force but doesn't get expelled. This is accompanied by a high-pitched WHISTLING, almost a scream.

The Limb gets jammed even tighter. The whistling grows higher in pitch until...

From outside the Flume we see a BLACK SPHERE 6 feet in diameter pop into existence around the Limb. Like a depth charge it pushes everything around it outward for a fraction of a second before pulling everything inward, creating a sort

of implosion as it pops back out of existence. This all takes half a second.

The whole process is repeated several more times as a few Black Spheres appear wherever a Limb is stuck in a shaft.

We see the Limb silhouette again. It loses a Flower each time a Sphere appears, getting shorter and shorter.

At a safe distance, Euclid, Graham, and Samuel are drawn in by the implosions, both physically and mentally. They fall to their knees and are then gently slid forward by the unseen force.

One of the Spheres intersects with the ground, leaving behind nothing but a spherical depression.

Graham whispers involuntarily at the destruction:

GRAHAM

Yes.

Meanwhile, the blowouts continue toward Right-Ape at the north entrance.

Euclid drags Graham and Samuel away from the Flume, timing his effort so as not to fight the waves of implosions. He pulls, then waits for a wave to pass, then pulls, then waits again.

Carter backs away from the Flume as well, anticipating...

The Black Spheres appear around Right-Ape's Limbs synced with audio from the next scene: POUND, POUND, POUND.

294 EXT. VAUGHN'S HOUSE - NEXT

Carter pounds on the front door.

On the side of the house Graham peers in through the basement window. He gets up and runs around front where Vaughn now stands facing Carter and Euclid at the door.

GRAHAM

He didn't do it.

CARTER

Did you do it?!

GRAHAM

He didn't do it.

Vaughn just stares at them, indignant. How dare they even ask?

He turns and retreats into the house, pushing the door open a little wider for them to follow.

295 INT. VAUGHN'S HOUSE/ BASEMENT - NEXT

Graham comes down the last few stair steps, joining Euclid and Carter who are staring at something on the floor.

GRAHAM

He didn't do it.

On the floor, SEVERAL POORLY CONSTRUCTED ALMOST-CREATURES flail about. Mostly, they are made of manmade materials and Flowers, but there are many different Petal formations included too, none of which seem to work that well. The best any of them can do is crawl around in odd arcs like improperly inflated basketballs.

CARTER

Why didn't you just build them the way...we already did this. We already know how they fit...

Hector and George sit against the wall, tired. Hector shows that he has had the same frustrating question:

HECTOR

No, we gotta find some new way...we gotta be clever...

Vaughn sort of hangs his head, obviously not proud of their progress.

Carter turns to Euclid.

CARTER

It was Allie.

296 EXT. ALBERT'S BARN - NEXT

A Limb is wedged into a gap in the closed barn door.

Euclid and Graham duck and cover. Carter has the Controllers. He concentrates:

The Limb compresses and then suddenly RECOILS.

SPLINTERS spray everywhere. The door swings open.

INT. ALBERT'S BARN - NEXT

They rifle through incomplete Flower Limbs, tossing them into a couple boxes.

Graham enters a stall, revealing a complete Chorus locked in its cage.

GRAHAM

Here's one. It's wood.

CUT TO: Marcus, his face peppered with scabs like Euclid's, enters the barn and slowly peers around the corner to see:

Euclid brings a SLEDGEHAMMER down on the Chorus frame with a CRACK. Graham holds the cage door open for him.

Marcus sees the Controller Necklace on a nearby table. Someone moves into frame behind him.

Marcus races into the room and grabs the Necklace, causing...

...the Chorus to flex hard and jump which shakes the cage violently, throwing back Euclid and Graham.

Carter slams Marcus into the wall, pinning his neck against it. He repeatedly smashes Marcus' arm into the wall until the Necklace drops on a nearby table.

The Chorus subsides.

CARTER

(to Euclid)

All right. Go ahead.

Marcus strains to reach the Necklace, but Carter is too strong. He can only watch. We hear the Chorus' wooden frame cracking and folding off screen.

MARCUS

No.

EXT. FLUME - DUSK

Samuel scavenges through the dirt, rocks, and bits of metal, picking up pieces of the Apes' frames and tossing them in a WHITE SACK. He finds one of the metal cylinders.

Carter, Euclid, and Graham approach, setting down their boxes filled with flailing Limbs.

DUSK

They're all gone, but the BLOWOUTS are running strong and loud like being inside a factory.

Carter's Chorus, limping and missing one Hand, carries a Limb from one of the boxes and carefully places it in a shaft before returning to the box for another.

299 EXT. HIGH RIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Euclid holds a pair of BINOCULARS steady on a boulder so that Carter can peer through them without his hands, which he uses to remotely operate the Chorus.

WIDE: Samuel and Graham sit next to them. We are a quarter mile away from the Flume and can just make out the Black Spheres that surround it and hear their dull thuds.

300 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - DAY

The place is empty. The Hexagon growing out of the Frond Set is now fully formed. We now see it is yet another Frond. We can't see what kind of Frond it is because the part of it that ejects pieces is face down.

CUT TO: Graham tilts the new Frond over so that Samuel can see underneath it.

SAMUEL

Circle.

GRAHAM

Like the other circle?

SAMUEL

Circle. Just like it.

CUT TO: Deep in the cave the kids wrap the new Circle Frond in a DARK BLANKET.

CUT TO: LARGE ROCKS are placed over it to hide it.

CUT TO: Carter and Euclid assess the damage to their Chorus, planning for repairs:

CARTER

...move these over there, we still need
six...six more, seven?

On the other side of the cave, Vaughn looks over a ring of shafts leaning against the wall.

George and Graham inspect the original Circle Frond (Right-Ape's arm is still attached). Graham feels along the circle where a Disc would usually be secreted.

GEORGE
See, nothing's coming.

GRAHAM
It ran out.

They think on this for a second.

Suddenly, George sprints over to Vaughn.

Graham sprints over to Euclid and Carter.

CUT TO: Mid-conversation. Euclid motions to outside:

EUCLID
We just had a bunch of Allie's...and we...

CARTER
We didn't want to use those anyway...

Out of earshot of Euclid and Carter, Vaughn whispers to George:

VAUGHN
Run down to the basement, you and Hector
pack them all up and hide them. Put them
where we dug...

Out of earshot of Vaughn, Carter whispers:

CARTER
Then where should we get them?
(motioning to Vaughn)
He's the only one who has any...they're
too stupid to make anything good anyways.

EUCLID
You wanna buy them?

CARTER
I'm done with that. I say they're ours.
We're allowed to take what's ours.

They look over to Vaughn in time to see George bolt out.
Carter sighs, realizing he's too late.

CARTER
(sarcastic)
Where's he going, Vaughn?

301 EXT. CLIFF DWELLING - DAY

Marcus and Javier crouch behind a boulder 20 feet above the dwelling entrance. They have to yell down to Carter, Euclid, and Graham. Mid-conversation:

MARCUS
We think it's funny! We laugh about it!

GRAHAM
How about you just apologize?!

CARTER
Just come down here.

MARCUS
How about you go to hell!

CARTER
Just come down.

MARCUS
Yeah, so I can get my ass beat again.

GRAHAM
Who?! Who go to hell?!

JAVIER
We're not coming down there.

MARCUS
And you better stay away from us or
nobody's gonna fill that thing up ever!

Euclid is staring at the Flume down on the field far below them. He sees Albert walking around it, scavenging for bits and pieces leftover from his destroyed Chorus.

CARTER
(to Euclid)
Can you figure out what it eats, you
think? Just do away with these guys for
good, you think?

Euclid doesn't quite form the words, but his answer is pessimistic.

302 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - DAY

At the entrance to the cave Carter places the Circle Frond in front of Vaughn (George is always in tow). Something nags at Carter, not allowing him to think straight:

CARTER
Just...take it to Albert...and uh, he'll
fill it up, he gets two days to use it for
himself and uh...
(to Euclid)
What are we doing?
(motioning to Vaughn)
He's gonna steal it.

EUCLID
Yeah.

VAUGHN
I'm not gonna steal it.

Carter takes a moment, turns back to Vaughn, and tries again:

CARTER
And uh...okay, Allie makes his funnels,
you bring it back to us, then you can make
some if you need to.

VAUGHN
Why can't I use it first and then when I'm
done with it bring it back-

Carter, his common sense now screaming how futile this is,
turns to Euclid in exasperation.

CARTER
He's gonna steal it.

EUCLID
Yeah.

303 EXT. JAVIER'S HOUSE/ BACKSTEPS - DUSK

Samuel is finishing a slice of pizza. Javier listens to him
intently.

SAMUEL
They don't think you guys are sorry.

Javier shakes his head, stubborn.

SAMUEL
If you just said it. That's all they care
about. Everything goes back.

Samuel hands over his empty dinner plate.

304 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - DAY

This time, Carter places the Circle Frond inside a METAL TOOLBOX in front of Vaughn. He closes the lid and Euclid places a PADLOCK on its latch. After locking it Euclid pockets the KEY.

Vaughn is not happy about the added security, but scoops up the toolbox and heads out. He stops after a few feet and turns back:

VAUGHN

Wait, what? He's gonna need the key to open it.

No answer. Vaughn gives up and continues walking, shaking his head at their stupidity.

305 INT. ALBERT'S BARN - NEXT

Vaughn has just placed the toolbox on a table. Albert looks it over, handles Euclid's padlock, perplexed. Vaughn is glad to have someone agree with him:

VAUGHN

I know.

Albert turns the padlock over and sees an etched "E".

CUT TO: Albert, after fishing something out of a bag across the room, returns to the toolbox and places his own padlock on the latch next to Euclid's.

Vaughn looks on, certain that Albert is crazy.

306 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - NEXT

Vaughn drops the toolbox at the feet of Carter and Euclid.

Euclid checks Albert's padlock, turning it over. It is etched with an "A".

He removes his own padlock, leaving Albert's, and then stands up.

An awkward moment passes. Carter and Albert stand facing Vaughn as he slowly thinks it through.

Vaughn kneels to scoop up the toolbox, still not completely clear. He walks out with it.

DEEPER IN THE CAVE: Samuel empties the white sack full of the Apes' metal frame pieces. He picks through them, checking each for usefulness, until he gets to the metal cylinder which seemingly has no function. He holds it up.

307 EXT. WOODS - NEXT

Vaughn and George are trying to pry open the toolbox with a LARGE SCREWDRIVER and HAMMER. Vaughn hammers: BANG, BANG, BANG. It's not happening. He sits back, giving up.

Out of anger, he raises the hammer up one more time...

MATCH CUT TO:

308 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - NEXT

Using one of the metal frame pieces, Samuel CRACKS the cylinder open long ways and the top half swings over on a hinge, revealing what's inside.

He's puzzled by what he sees.

309 INT. ALBERT'S BARN - NEXT

Frustrated, Vaughn drops the toolbox (dented now from the prying) on the ground in front of Albert and heads out. He yells back:

VAUGHN

You got two days!

Albert unlocks his padlock and opens the toolbox. He's a bit overwhelmed at the sight of the Frond. He places his hand on it and lets it linger. Everything is right with the world.

MATCH CUT TO:

310 INT. EUCLID'S HOUSE/ PORCH - NIGHT

Euclid, kneeling in front of the cylinder, places his hand inside it. Samuel sits next to him.

Euclid can't wrap his head around what he pulls out: a Controller, dripping wet.

CLOSE UP: Inside the cylinder is a series of Controllers, each of which is contained in a metal compartment full of CLEAR LIQUID. Holes have been drilled in the Discs so that WIRES can run through the length of them. Euclid carefully removes the series with both hands and places it on the floor.

He cocks his head, seeing something else inside the now-empty cylinder:

CLOSE UP: Euclid's hand pushes a metal fitting aside to reveal a CRUDELY STAMPED LOGO: "gbpa". Each letter is made of a hexagon.

DAY

HANDS TIE A ROPE KNOT around a bit of rebar jutting up from concrete.

SAMUEL (OFF SCREEN)
I said there was a sleepover.

EUCLID (OFF SCREEN)
She'll call to check on you.

Euclid pulls on the rope to test the knot. He's got a pack with a rolled up SLEEPING BAG on his back.

SAMUEL (OFF SCREEN)
I'll call her first. I'll call at dinnertime before she can.

EUCLID
With what phone?

WIDE to reveal:

311 EXT. HUGE CONCRETE HOLE - DAWN

AT THE TOP

The two stand at the edge of the hole. Along the interior are partial RAILINGS and SCAFFOLDING, and every 20 feet or so are RINGS of concrete on which to climb down to.

SAMUEL
What did you tell your mom?

EUCLID
Nothing. I'm getting in trouble.

Euclid throws the rope down, preparing to descend.

PARTWAY DOWN: Samuel drops onto a platform from the rope joining Euclid who, with a few expert tugs and knot work, is able to pull the rope down to use again.

ANOTHER LEVEL: They eat FRIED CHICKEN from aluminum foil. Euclid gets the rope ready for the next descent.

NIGHT

ANOTHER LEVEL: A SMALL ELECTRIC LANTERN is their only source of light as they lie in sleeping bags.

DAY

AT THE BOTTOM: They walk into the center slowly, searching the ground, which is covered in discarded construction materials. Euclid holds in front of him a 6-foot length of rebar with a WATER BOTTLE tied to the far end.

The water in the bottle starts to BOIL. They both stop in their tracks and search the area around them.

SAMUEL

There.

He points it out: wedged between some broken concrete is a chopped-off Finger (from one of the Chorus Hands) dropped here the year before.

Samuel SPRAY PAINTS an arc at their feet, marking the danger zone around the Finger.

They move away from the danger zone, still searching.

CUT TO: They crouch to the ground, finding the cracked-open Governor.

Euclid checks the dirty weathered inner lining, running his hands over it. He rubs at a spot for a moment before...

EUCLID

Give me some of that water.

312 INT. ALBERT'S BARN - DAY

Vaughn stands, waiting near the toolbox. Albert sits off to the side, thinking. Behind him are several newly made Funnel Stacks.

Marcus places the Frond inside the toolbox and looks back to Albert for instructions.

VAUGHN

Is it ready to go or what?

Albert turns to Javier. They don't say a word, but it's clear they're contemplating something.

VAUGHN
Aren't you supposed to lock it? You don't
want me...you know.

313 EXT. CLIFF DWELLING - NEXT

Euclid and Samuel return with the Governor. They come upon
Vaughn and George staring at some scene inside the cave.

Moving past, they halt upon seeing Albert, Marcus, and Javier
standing in front of Carter and Graham.

Albert holds the Frond. He turns to Euclid:

ALBERT
I'm sorry. We shouldn't have made those
things and tried to steal this. We should
have just asked because you guys would
have been nice about it probably. But we
were stupid and I wish- we wish we hadn't
done it now. And we're sorry.

He checks Marcus and Javier to see if they have anything to
add, but they stay silent and keep their heads down.

Euclid is dumbfounded. Carter takes the Governor from him.

CLOSEUP: On the GREASY BLACK inside lining Euclid points out
a cleaned-up area where we see another "gbpa" LOGO.

CARTER
Same letters.

Euclid nods, still not knowing what to do with Albert's false
confession.

314 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - NEXT

Carter, holding the series of the Ape's Controllers removes a
large part of the Limb that is still attached to the Circle
Frond. He showing the others what to do:

CARTER
-and take a piece from ours and put that
in there...

JAVIER
Gotcha, and just every other one.

CARTER
Yeah.

All ten of the kids begin constructing a HYBRID of the Ape and Carter's Chorus.

Through this commotion we focus on Albert. In between exchanging a piece with another kid and answering a question, he manages to look around the room, observing it from a distance. With a half-smile his eyes water a bit.

CUT TO: The SERIES of Controllers goes back in the metal cylinder, which then SNAPS SHUT.

315 EXT. WOODS - NEXT

The Hybrid (not much more than the original Ape Limb and two shorter legs) drags the Circle Frond, awkwardly crawling forward at a foot a second.

The ten kids slowly follow behind it.

316 EXT. HILLSIDE - NEXT

Albert is holding up the other side of the Circle Frond to help the Hybrid. They are able to manage a normal walking speed this way.

Vaughn comes up to relieve him, taking hold of the Frond.

VAUGHN
Jeez, how far are we going?

317 EXT. FIELD - NEXT

The ten stand in a circle, letting the Hybrid inch along by itself for a second.

Euclid has his hand on Samuel's shoulder:

EUCLID
Me and Sammy gotta go back.

HECTOR
I do too.

GEORGE
Yeah.

MARCUS
I'm just over the hill there. I still got time.

VAUGHN

I'm still going.

CUT TO: 3 groups split off. Euclid and Samuel go one way. Hector, George, Javier, and Graham go another. Carter, Vaughn, Marcus, and Albert continue following the Hybrid.

Something occurs to Euclid. He leaves Samuel for a moment and runs after Marcus, grabbing him by the coat sleeve.

EUCLID

Your camera's at your house?

MARCUS

Yeah, what?

Euclid drags him to Carter and tells them both:

EUCLID

She's not gonna let me out for a long time...

318 INT. EUCLID'S BEDROOM - DAY

Euclid is VACUUMING. Behind him, Carter comes to the window and knocks, but we can't hear it over the noise.

CUT TO: Euclid opens the window, letting Carter in. He has let the vacuum continue to run.

Carter hands him a crumpled envelope of PHOTOS and moves to Euclid's dresser to open a drawer.

Euclid flips through the photos, which are all taken from a ridge overlooking an ENCAMPMENT:

PHOTO: We see one LARGE TENT in the middle and SEVERAL SMALLER TENTS surrounding it. CAMPERS walk to and fro.

PHOTO: CHORUS APES return from the outskirts in pairs and are directed by Campers into a PEN where ANOTHER 20 are kept.

Carter comes to Euclid's side and speaks directly into his ear but is barely heard over the vacuum:

CARTER

They kept coming out of the trees.
They're looking for it. All of them.

PHOTO: Behind the large tent stands a RADIO TOWER 50 feet high. It has a unique silhouette with a few METAL TRIANGLES above a SPHERICAL TRANSMITTER.

CARTER

Here.

Carter is holding out one of the PAPER CUPS with the dried blood on it. Beyond him, Euclid sees the other cups that have been sorted through on the dresser.

He takes the cup and holds it next to the photo of the radio tower. Rotating the cup around he sees an exact match; the dried blood sketch is the same as the large tent and radio tower's silhouette.

The VACUUM NOISE becomes...

319 EXT. FLUME FIELD - DAY

...the NOISE of TEN CHORUSES DIGGING a tunnel 10 feet in diameter and slanted into the earth. Some are dog-sized. A couple are as big as horses. Bits of earth and debris go everywhere.

It's SUMMER again. Everyone sweats.

Vaughn is controlling a few of the Choruses as well as supervising Hector, Marcus, and Javier who in turn control theirs.

Vaughn gives George and Samuel instructions, but we can't hear over the noise. The two take off down the ramp of another already-dug tunnel leading in the opposite direction.

50 feet further we see them emerge on the surface through yet another ramp. George grabs a YARDSTICK before they disappear underground again. We can now see that there are several RAMPS leading to the same tunnel that loops back on itself in a GIANT CIRCLE.

Vaughn commands everyone:

VAUGHN

Haul it out! Haul everything out! Let's
calm them down! Everything goes calm now.

The frenzy of digging comes to stop. The Choruses haul out large palettes of fresh soil at half-speed. Everything goes quiet.

The kids stare at the circular wall of earth still waiting to be dug through. Javier produces from his pocket a WAD OF STRING with a SMALL WEIGHT tied to the end.

CUT TO: George and Samuel are on the other side. They use the yardstick to measure from the tunnel floor to the center of the earth wall.

George plants a pole (the end of a shovel) in the wall at that point and they both push and twist it through what must be several feet of dirt.

CUT TO: The pole emerges on the other side. Javier quickly wraps a loop of his string around it and drops the weight. The string goes taut and the weight touches the floor.

Javier climbs up and tests the length of the string at two other points around the wall before declaring the results:

JAVIER

Nailed it. Dead center.

VAUGHN

Okay, let's get 'em up! Push through!

CUT TO: A SHORT FLUME (5 feet long) is tilted and then dragged with rope into the dug-out tunnel by a team of Choruses and kids.

CUT TO: Choruses add shafts to the Flume Tunnel, extending its length. The white symmetric shafts line the tunnel in stark contrast to the black soil.

320 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - DAY

SEVERAL SETS OF FRONDS are spaced around the room, quietly churning. Some sets have two Fronds, some three.

Albert and Graham tend to them, sifting sawdust from a large bin.

Carter checks each Frond for new pieces, gathering them like fruit into THREE BAGS that hang from his waist.

CUT TO: PLATES are being attached to a wooden torso like jigsaw puzzle pieces. A human hand and a Chorus Hand work together to complete it. The last plate is put in place.

WIDE: Carter and Marcus leave the Chorus in the middle of the room, watching it from a safe distance.

CARTER

And just drop the necklace. Let him do it on his own.

Marcus reluctantly tosses his Controller Necklace in the corner.

The Chorus expands and contracts its Limbs flexing and testing its new Plate shell.

It walks to the near wall and jostles it, like it might be trying to scratch an itch on its torso. It taps the wall again. And again, harder each time.

CARTER

Don't stop him.

The Chorus BANGS the hard rock with its torso. It backs up a few feet and launches at the wall, growing more violent. Eventually it runs back and forth between the two walls SLAMMING itself hard using its powerful Limbs. We hear LUMBER CRACKING the entire time.

The Chorus comes to rest. It leans forward and shakes a little, letting SPLINTERS, DUST, and WOODEN BITS from its old torso empty out of its new white torso.

CUT TO: Albert, Hector, and Graham harvest a new CIRCLE FROND that is growing out of the center of a set of three Fronds.

Albert and Graham set it aside. Hector crouches near the set of three, trying to solve something. When Albert and Graham notice him, he looks back with a puzzled face.

They crouch next to Hector who is subconsciously tracing the edges of the hole that ejects Plates on the third Frond.

HECTOR

They didn't have plates.

Albert and Graham are lost but willing to go along. Hector stares at the three Fronds.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

The ones you guys fought?

Albert looks to Graham, the expert.

GRAHAM

No, they didn't. We did. We had some, but they didn't.

Albert looks to the Fronds, putting something together in his head. He realizes something we won't get until later:

ALBERT

Oh.

EXT. FLUME FIELD - DAY

Marcus and George are sweaty and tired. Their shirts are filthy. They rest on their backs next to the original FLUME, still above ground.

They look at the shafts just above their heads waiting for...

...SNOWFLAKES loft gently out of the shafts and then fall on their heads. They catch the flakes with their tongues. We eavesdrop:

MARCUS

...they made them for us...cause of how hot it is.

GEORGE

But they started making them when it was cold. There was already snow on the ground.

MARCUS

Yeah, but they were born in summer so they know.

Javier arrives at the interior of the Flume to relieve Samuel who we now see has been SPRAYING WATER MIST into the shafts with a SPRAY BOTTLE.

Samuel happily takes his turn under the snow.

ENTRANCE TO UNDERGROUND TUNNEL: All ten of the kids straggle into the tunnel, stopping to don PARKAS and WOOLEN HATS collected from a LARGE BOX at the entrance.

CUT TO: The entire tunnel is now lined with Flume Shafts. As the kids descend the first ramp, we hear the collective noise of the SHAFTS gently blowing.

CUT TO: The kids walk across a horizontal stretch of tunnel. The WIND NOISE grows louder.

VAUGHN

(off screen)

Whatever happens...if it's a fight...we have to get them all!

CUT TO: They descend another steep ramp, down a story. Wind is even louder. Hair gets tussled.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)
(off screen)
If we leave any, they'll just keep
coming...

CUT TO: We're at the intersection of several Flumes. The kids have to shout over the deafening noise of the gale that blows through the place, stirring up eddies of loose dirt.

Vaughn is finishing a presentation to the other nine:

VAUGHN (CONT'D)
...it'll never stop! And this is the only
way to do it! This plan is the only way!

A scan of the room shows that everyone is hesitant to go along with whatever Vaughn is suggesting.

Hector steps into the center of the space, nervous. There's a set of THREE FRONDS on the floor. Vaughn yields the floor, stepping aside.

Hector holds up a PLATE so that everyone can see before blurting out:

HECTOR
Those adults don't have plates.
(he points to the Circle Frond)
So we give them this bit back and they'll
go away.

And that's it. He steps back into the ranks.

Everyone's dumbfounded. Shouts erupt: "What!?", "What does that mean!?", "What does that have to do with plates!?"

Albert leads Hector back to the center and explains for him:

ALBERT
(pointing to the third Frond)
If they don't have plates it's gotta be
because they don't have this one, the one
that makes them!
(point to all three Fronds)
If they never had that, then they never
had all three. They're stuck. They can't
make any more.
(points to the Circle Frond)
So they've only had one of these...

George puts it together:

GEORGE

And we have it!

ALBERT

...and we have it.

MARCUS

Well holy shit! Just give it back then!
Let's just give it back to them! We've
got plenty!

Everyone talks at once, mostly supporting the idea. Off to
the side Carter turns to Euclid:

CARTER

Is that right?

Euclid shakes his head "no", watching the others talk.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Why didn't those things have plates?

Euclid looks directly at him. He seems to have an answer, but
would rather quiz Carter:

EUCLID

Why do you think?

CARTER

What? Me?

EUCLID

Yeah.

CARTER

Uh...they didn't figure it all out. We
did.

EUCLID

But they're adults.

CARTER

It doesn't mean they're smart like
us...all the things we had to figure out.

Carter turns to the group and listens to what has become an
argument. Euclid just stares at him. Carter notices this out
of the corner of his eye and turns back to understand.

Off screen we hear: "then we give it back to them and if they
don't go away then they deserve it!"

REMOTE PART OF THE TUNNEL: Vaughn, having a cigarette, and
Javier are alone talking. It's quieter.

VAUGHN
They're not gonna just go away.

JAVIER
No. They're not.

322 EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - DAY

Euclid leads Carter up through some boulders.

CARTER
Are you really gonna do it? What Vaughn's saying?

EUCLID
What?

CARTER
I know, me too. He's raving. I just wanted to make sure-

Euclid stops them both, turning to talk.

EUCLID
Why are you asking me that? Why are you asking what I'm gonna do? I'm following you.

Carter's shocked.

CARTER
Wh- why are you doing that? I thought-

EUCLID
Are you really gonna do what he's saying?

Carter stammers a little.

EUCLID (CONT'D)
What are you gonna- what are we doing?

CARTER
If they come and try to take what's ours we'll fight them. That'd be...we have to...but no, Vaughn's raving with that...

Euclid agrees, nodding slightly.

CARTER (CONT'D)
Is that right?

EUCLID
I'm following you. What do we do?

Carter's lost. Euclid leads him through it point by point:

EUCLID (CONT'D)
Do we let him do his plan or...?

CARTER
Stop him.

EUCLID
How do we do that?

CARTER
I have to talk to him.

EUCLID
Do you think he'll listen to you?

CARTER
I'll make him listen.

EUCLID
(clarifying)
Do you think he'll do what you say?

Carter realizes:

CARTER
He thinks I'm a bully.

Euclid agrees and waits for the solution, practically coaxing each word out:

CARTER (CONT'D)
I think...that...you...should...

323 INT. CLIFF DWELLING - NEXT

Euclid and Vaughn speak.

EUCLID
We don't do it unless there's no other way. Not unless I say to do it.

VAUGHN
Where's Carter? You usually have Carter around to make me-

EUCLID
This is a promise between me and you.
That's it. Okay?

Vaughn is disarmed, flattered by the idea that they are maybe friends. He nods.

EUCLID
You promise to wait.

VAUGHN
And what are you promising?

EUCLID
To call it down. I'll call it down if we
have to.

324 EXT. ENCAMPMENT/ OUTSKIRTS - DAY

SAMUEL nervously approaches...

A CAMPER with GREEN PANTS sits on a boulder pouring coffee from a thermos. We only see his bottom half, but it's enough to get that Samuel has startled him.

Samuel holds up a single FLOWER PIECE and makes a motion with his other hand: "follow me".

Green Pants doesn't. Samuel tries again, not understanding what the hold up is.

The man crouches to the ground and draws FOUR HEXAGONS in the dirt with his finger: "o o o o".

Samuel stares at the dirt and then at Green Pants before he gets it. He kneels and adds straight lines to each of the hexagons making the lower case letters "g b p a".

Samuel stands, confident that he has passed the test. He makes the hand sign again: "follow me".

MATCH CUT TO:

325 EXT. HIGH RIDGE - NEXT

JAVIER'S RIGHT HAND makes the same motion.

His head follows a pair of APES, which are navigating the forest floor a hundred feet below on the left side of the ridge. They lead two CAMPERS.

Javier turns to the right side of the ridge where far below him a Chorus with a Circle Frond strapped to its side walks in

his direction, controlled by someone unseen. He motions:
"keep coming".

When the Chorus gets close enough, the Apes suddenly turn in the direction of the Frond even though they are separated from it by the ridge. Seeing this, Javier gives the hand sign to halt and then waves the Chorus back, sending it away from the Apes.

The Campers turn to follow the Apes. One of them relays information on a piece of equipment made up of a TYPEPAD and an ANTENNA.

Keying off this, Javier checks the horizon and notices another pair of Apes even further away that are now altering course to follow the Frond.

326 EXT. CLEARING - NEXT

Samuel leads Green Pants to a BLANKET neatly laid in the grass. The Governor lies ajar on the blanket.

Marcus watches from deep in the woods. His large Chorus sits next to him.

Samuel opens the lid of the Governor, revealing the original Circle Frond.

MATCH CUT TO:

327 EXT. CANYON - NEXT

Javier's Circle Frond sits on the ground.

FOUR APES enter the narrow canyon in pairs, approaching the Frond.

100 feet further, Javier walks towards them from the opposite direction, out in the open.

The shoulders of TWO CAMPERS enter frame, still some ways off from the Apes.

Two of the Apes try to line up on either side of the Frond when Javier's voice echoes through the canyon...

JAVIER

Set, get ready to...FLY!

Suddenly the place becomes a war zone. Tens of Funnel Stacks launch from every direction at once, hidden behind rocks and in crevasses. The air is instantly filled with these bullet-

fast 50-pound rockets, slamming the Apes into the canyon walls. Debris flies everywhere.

328 EXT. ENCAMPMENT - NEXT

Green Pants carries the Governor towards the LARGE TENT, passing other CAMPERS that make way for him. Some of them SIGN to each other. None speak.

Walking at his side, Samuel eyes dart around, taking in the camp from this new perspective.

He sees the PEN holding all the Apes. They turn in the direction of the Frond as it passes.

329 INT. LARGE TENT - NEXT

Samuel is led into the center of the space. 40 CAMPERS line the edges of the room, waiting for him in total silence.

He's understandably uneasy. Maybe because it's the only thing he can think of, he makes the sign language for "thank you".

Suddenly, two campers bolt across the room towards a back exit. Another quickly moves to a DARK ROOM on the right. More and more get up and exit the tent in a rush.

330 EXT. ENCAMPMENT/ OUTSKIRTS - NEXT

Marcus is keeping an eye on the large tent with binoculars.

He sees campers move to the pen to open the gate.

He pans over to the woods to see: TWO CAMPERS receive a message on their TYPEPAD. They sign to each other, rein in their Apes, and hurriedly lead them in a specific direction.

331 INT. LARGE TENT - NEXT

Left alone except for a GUARD at the front entrance, Samuel tries to make sense of where everyone has gone.

He slowly steps towards the dark room, revealing...

...a control room where several campers are surveying MAPS and operating TYPEPADS and RADIO EQUIPMENT. In the middle of the room is a DARK BROWN BOX, 4-foot square. A couple campers move to place one of their hands on it.

Samuel focuses on the man closest, a RADIO OPERATOR. He wears a headset with an EARPIECE that fits just behind the ear rather than inside the ear canal.

CLOSE UP: The earpiece is vibrating against his skull, making a BUZZING sound.

Samuel turns to the brown box.

CLOSE UP: Near the box PEBBLES on the ground are vibrating.

He moves toward the box, and as he does we begin to hear a LOW PITCHED VOICE growing in volume:

VOICE
...we're not as smart as we thought, we
could never get them to mind...

Samuel places his hand on the box, joining the others. Through BONE INDUCTION the Voice comes in much clearer and appropriately pitched, sounding almost like a child:

VOICE
...we're not gonna win so I don't know
what's gonna happen but...

Samuel's head jerks as he recognizes the voice.

332 EXT. CANYON - CONTINUOUS

JAVIER
...I know I wish we never found that
thing.

A SMALL MICROPHONE is held against his neck.

REVERSE ANGLE: The microphone is held by a BEARDED camper whose other hand grasps Javier's shoulder. The other CAMPER holds the Frond.

JAVIER (CONT.)
I wish we could just bury it. But there's
so many of them now.

Beard types into his typepad.

333 INT. LARGE TENT/ CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Samuel sees text appear on the machine in front of Radio Operator: "converge on e5-12".

He looks over to a TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP in time to see someone's hand running down the E5 column and drawing a BIG RED CIRCLE around the appropriate square.

Samuel backs away, scared. He checks the campers and sees nothing but the backs of their heads.

So he yells at the top of his lungs:

SAMUEL
Marrrrrrcus! I want to get out of here...

334 EXT. ENCAMPMENT/ OUTSKIRTS - CONTINUOUS

Marcus looks up from his binoculars, startled by the muffled voice:

SAMUEL
(off screen)
...now! They're coming after us! I want to go...

335 INT. LARGE TENT/ CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

THE WOODEN ARMREST under Radio Operator's hand vibrates slightly with Samuel's voice which we hear even more muffled now:

SAMUEL
(off screen)
...Marcus! Help me! Now!

Radio Operator turns around in his chair to investigate, looking directly at Samuel.

Samuel looks back at him, worried and surprised that he noticed.

336 EXT. ENCAMPMENT - CONTINUOUS

Marcus' Chorus goes racing down the ridge toward the Large Tent.

Marcus runs into frame, collapsing to a seat in the tall grass, his arms in front of him to "steer" the Chorus.

337 INT. LARGE TENT - CONTINUOUS

Samuel backs out of the control room, having trouble breaking Radio Operator's gaze.

Radio Operator stands from his chair.

Samuel looks to the table where the Frond sits. Radio Operator does too.

Samuel looks in the opposite direction toward the tent's exit where a GUARD stands just inside. Radio operator looks too.

When he looks back, he sees that Samuel is looking down, considering something. Suddenly, Samuel heads to a table behind him and dives under it.

Confused, Radio Operator looks to the exit just in time to see Marcus' Chorus SLAM THROUGH the tent with its Limbs spread out, taking down everything within 10 feet including the Guard.

From under the table, Samuel sees all the men in the control room wake up to the situation and half-surround half-flee from the Chorus.

The Chorus moves through the room with its Limbs outstretched, ready to strike.

338 EXT. ENCAMPMENT - CONTINUOUS

MARCUS' EYES seem focused on something a million miles off.

HIS OPEN HANDS search the TALL BLADES of grass that surround him until he finds a TWIG and grabs it.

339 INT. LARGE TENT - CONTINUOUS

The Frond sits on the table.

Radio Operator, apparently in some pain, has put his body in front of it to protect it from...

Samuel stands in the center of the room, in command. He wants the Frond:

SAMUEL
Move! Get away from it!

PAN DOWN to Radio Operator's LEG where we see that the Chorus is gripping it tightly at the knee.

340 EXT. ENCAMPMENT - CONTINUOUS

The twig SNAPS in Marcus' hand.

341 EXT. GRASS VALLEY - NEXT

APE LIMBS and CAMPERS' BOOTS stomp through soft earth and sticks. The spot is getting crowded as the groups of adults converge.

Javier stands amid the gathering men. He scans the tree line looking for...there he is...

Vaughn hides deep in the forest, keeping watch. He sees Beard and another man, GLASSES, questioning Javier. Javier points for them:

JAVIER
Yeah, just over the ridge.

342 EXT. FLUME FIELD - NEXT

Inside the underground tunnel, Euclid stares out at the field through the shafts, stepping toward them slowly. He eyes something approaching. He speaks without emotion to Carter who has his back turned to the field, oblivious:

EUCLID
I didn't solve anything.

CARTER
What?

EUCLID
I didn't really sol- I just kept trying different things...with all the pieces. And then it worked finally.

Behind Carter we see the far off SHAPES of the adults converging on the field.

CARTER
Well...isn't that what everybody does-

EUCLID
I'm not really that smart. I didn't solve anything.

Carter, finding this absurd, tries to be understanding:

CARTER
Okay.

He finally turns to what Euclid has been staring at.

FIELD: We are in the midst of the CAMPERS with Javier as they enter as a group. The aboveground Flume lies a couple hundred feet ahead.

ANOTHER PART OF THE TUNNEL: Graham, Hector, George, and Albert peek out through exposed shafts, seeing the adults advance. Albert notices something strange off to the side of the field:

In the trees Vaughn moves parallel to the campers.

ALBERT

What's he doing?

GEORGE

Why isn't he down here with us?

Graham checks the campers and sees:

GRAHAM

Javier.

Albert turns too and sees Javier walking among the adults.

GEORGE

Why isn't he down here?

GRAHAM

They're supposed to be.

Albert shows some hesitation/fear. He sets off along the tunnel, agitated:

ALBERT

What are we doing?

FURTHER DOWN THE TUNNEL: Carter and Euclid silently watch the adults approach.

Carter inches backward, worried.

CARTER

Is that more than you thought?

Euclid carefully grabs the back of Carter's collar and subtly pushes him forward, back in place.

EUCLID

No.

They turn down the tunnel to see Albert and the rest approaching. Their Choruses follow behind them, big enough to block out most light but gracefully silent, moving like massive white octopuses.

CARTER

(whispering)

What are they doing? Go back!

Again, he is inching backwards as he speaks.

Euclid coaxes him forward. Carter looks at Euclid's hand gripping his jacket.

Albert arrives, distressed.

ALBERT

Vaughn's out there. Is it still happening or what are we doing? This whole thing is getting a little-

Carter gets in Albert's face, going from timid to a hawk in an instant.

CARTER

Stop. Stop whining. Right now. We already did this. If they're here...that means...

He stammers and tries a different direction.

CARTER

We tried to just give it to them but that's not good enough-

He tries one more direction:

CARTER

They tried to steal from us! We already decided this!

Carter puts out a finger like he's going to name number one on a list of items.

343 EXT. ENCAMPMENT/ OUTSKIRTS - NEXT

On the ridge overlooking the camp Marcus and Samuel duck behind a large boulder, breathless, regrouping. The Chorus carries the Frond.

SAMUEL

One, give back the maker. Two, if they're happy with that, job over. Three if that's not good enough for them...

Marcus is distracted, looking at the large tent. He sees: a POSSE of EIGHT CAMPERS exits hurriedly and runs in our direction.

Samuel gets his attention:

SAMUEL
Marcus. Marcus. If that's not good
enough for them bring them to the circle.

Marcus realizes worriedly:

MARCUS
They're gonna follow us back.

SAMUEL
Right.

They're not on the same page. Marcus is detached and fearful. Samuel is positive about the plan.

MARCUS
Maybe it's not us.

SAMUEL
What? What's happening?

344 EXT. FLUME FIELD - NEXT

A MAN'S HAND seeks something through the air, eventually reaching the above-ground Flume.

WIDE: The Campers are in the center of the field, circling the Flume, studying it.

A 35MM CAMERA is produced.

One man, LEADER, surveys the surface of the Flume with his hand. He turns to see:

From one of the underground tunnels, Carter rides out on his horse-sized Chorus, hanging to its side like a trolley.

He dismounts, challenging them with his stance.

Nothing happens for a moment. The adults all turn to face Carter but just stand there, waiting.

Carter sends his Chorus to attack the nearest two APES.

The Apes don't present much of a challenge and mostly try to move out of the way. The Chorus repeatedly STABS at LEFT-APE'S torso, trying to get to the Controller Cylinder.

WIDE: The adults continue to take no action, just watching the melee from the side.

Eventually, Glasses instructs another camper, TRAINER, to back the Apes off. Trainer operates a REMOTE causing...

...Right-Ape to retreat 20 feet and settle.

Left-Ape isn't so lucky. It struggles to free itself, but doesn't make it far before the Chorus finally gets its aim right and stabs right through the Ape's Cylinder. The FLUID inside sprays and the Controllers bleed out.

The Chorus releases Left-Ape, which slowly gets back on its feet.

Carter watches as Left-Ape sort of meanders, not having a clear direction. Suddenly, it sprints a few feet in a random direction, then stops and turns.

Carter looks to Trainer's remote. Frustrated, Trainer is trying to get Left-Ape to join Right-Ape, waving the remote in that direction.

Left-Ape does not obey. In fact it takes a few steps away.

After a few seconds, Glasses instructs Trainer with a hand motion, SPLAYING HIS FINGERS.

Trainer flips open a compartment on the remote, revealing TWO ORANGE BUTTONS. He pushes the left one.

A SPRING LOADED HINGE on Left-Ape's torso POPS open, releasing several BOLTS from their CLAMPS.

All of Left-Ape's Limbs fall off, detached from its metal torso. Left-Ape collapses in pieces.

With that done, Carter grips his Controller necklace and looks to Right-Ape. His Chorus gallops towards it, attacking.

In two swift blows the Chorus severs one of Right-Apes front Limbs, leaving behind a protruding metal stump.

Glasses has had enough. He marches towards Carter, waving his hand: *cut it out, give me that.*

Vaughn watches from the woods and sees that everyone is distracted. His moment comes. He sends his Chorus in, running directly at the campers.

Javier notices this, peeking out from the adults while their attention is in the opposite direction.

We follow Glasses towards Carter, 10 feet away now. Carter doesn't budge, wanting a confrontation.

Suddenly, Carter's Chorus fills the frame, VIOLENTLY DRIVING Glasses into the ground with the force of a speeding bus.

Javier takes a step away from the group, preparing for the approach of Vaughn's Chorus. We can hear GALLOPING.

Beard reaches his arm out to retrieve Javier.

Vaughn's Chorus SNAPS Beard's arm, breaking bone.

The Chorus spins around, allowing Javier to climb on to the STRAPS hanging from its torso, before riding out the way it came in.

Carter stares at Glasses. As the Chorus lifts itself off of him, we can see the damage. His chest is compressed, his limbs are twisted and broken, and a good part of him is pushed into the earth. He's in shock and beginning to understand that he is dead.

He coughs the first sounds we've heard from him as Carter cocks his head in curiosity at his first kill.

As Javier rides away on the side of Vaughn's Chorus, he looks back at Beard, writhing on the ground with campers coming to his aid.

The adults bring in all the Apes, creating a tight perimeter around them.

They start to back away as a group.

We follow a Chorus carrying Hector and George from the dark of the tunnel and up the ramp to the surface, flanking the adults.

Hector pulls a blanket off the Chorus, revealing a Circle Frond held close to it by a pair of simple Limbs.

Two of the Apes turn towards it, but maintain their position.

Then, one by one, Albert, Graham, and Euclid ride out on their Choruses, each holding another Circle Frond. They have surrounded the adults.

The Apes all turn towards the Frond closest to them.

Graham backs away, grabs his necklace, and wills his Chorus to kneel and release its Frond on the ground. The Chorus then retreats, joining him.

TWO APES immediately sprint towards Graham's released Frond.

Albert, Euclid, and Hector do exactly as Graham did; their Fronds are placed on the ground, each attracting TWO APES.

The adults are left defenseless in the center of the field. They try their remotes to bring the Apes back but with no success.

They flip open the compartments on the remotes, exposing the orange buttons. FINGERS are poised to press them.

Leader assesses the situation. He puts his hand over the orange buttons on Trainer's remote, keeping him from pressing them.

Graham waits until the two approaching Apes reach his Frond and then his Chorus attacks with a few lightning fast stabs, leaving the Apes disabled and missing a few Limbs.

Albert's Chorus uses its large Hands to squeeze parts of the Apes' metal torsos until they are mangled and unable to maneuver.

Carter sends his Chorus running away from the circle at a full gallop, seemingly to nowhere.

Euclid finishes with his two Apes, leaving them in pieces on the ground. He turns and notices Carter's Chorus in the distance:

It comes to a stop a quarter mile away at a METAL TROUGH sitting near a SMALL CREEK. The water closest to the trough BOILS.

The Chorus deftly kicks a WOODEN COVER off the trough, revealing a HUNDRED DISCARDED CHORUS FINGERS.

Euclid positions his Chorus directly in the adult's escape path, halting their exit. The Chorus paces back and forth, corralling them.

Carter's Chorus scoops up the trough, and heads back towards the circle.

Carter turns from his Chorus to the gathering of men, now trapped by Euclid's Chorus. He almost smiles at his plan.

Then he notices something coming his way.

Euclid sees it too: Right-Ape, its METAL STUMP jutting out where its Limb used to be, runs towards...

...Euclid's Frond, left on the ground.

Euclid runs toward the Frond. Carter puts himself in Right-Ape's path, taking a brave stance, like he might just tackle the Ape by himself.

Euclid kicks the Frond so that it falls into the Flume tunnel.

With his Chorus approaching quickly in the distance behind him, Carter grabs Right Ape by the torso, slowing it for a second. He squeezes the metal frame in his hands and when it doesn't bend, he looks surprised.

He realizes his mistake too late. Right-Ape turns toward the Frond indifferently and IMPALES Carter's chest with its metal stump. The Ape moves off. Carter slides off the stump, collapsing to the ground.

Carter's Chorus stumbles. Its huge mass skids 50 feet across the earth until it slows to rest with a Limb covering Carter. The Fingers fly everywhere, landing all around them both.

Carter's body takes its last breaths. Chorus Fingers lie nearby. BLOOD pools on his chest, BOILING.

Euclid sees this, petrified with shock. He tries to utter words and eventually gets out a whisper:

EUCLID

Take it.

Euclid runs to the adults, drops to his knees, and holds out his Controller Necklace, screaming the entire time:

EUCLID

TAKE IT! TAKE IT! TAKE IT! TAKE IT!

345 EXT. CLEARING - NEXT

The POSSE slows from a run to a hesitant walk to a stop as they approach...

Marcus' Chorus lies in pieces in the grass. Its Limbs are detached and scattered around the torso. The Circle Frond and Controller necklace are next to it too. A gift.

DEEP IN THE WOODS: Marcus watches the men. Samuel gazes angrily at Marcus who is oblivious to him.

SAMUEL

What are you doing!?

MARCUS

Shut up.

Samuel's anger grows. He means this:

SAMUEL

I'm going to kill you, Marcus.

The campers, wary of a trap, go around the Chorus pieces in the grass and continue to pursue the kids, surprising and disappointing Marcus:

MARCUS

They're still coming...

SAMUEL

They're supposed to!

They move off, on the run again.

MATCH CUT TO:

346 EXT. FLUME FIELD - NEXT

Vaughn runs cautiously to Euclid who is still on his knees holding out his Necklace.

VAUGHN

Uke. Uke.

Euclid doesn't notice him at his side for a moment and when he does, he only sees Vaughn's Necklace. He grabs it and without removing it from Vaughn's neck tries to offer it to the adults.

EUCLID

This one too! You can take them!

VAUGHN

Uke. I can do it now?

It takes a moment, but Euclid eventually understands and reacts like it's the best news he's ever heard. He nods excitedly.

Vaughn takes off.

EUCLID

Thank you.

He turns back to the adults and smiles, full of joy.

Vaughn runs to meet Javier and George in the underground tunnel.

JAVIER

Now?

VAUGHN

Yeah.

(to George)

Launch the warning.

The three split off in different directions, Vaughn down the tunnel to the left, Javier down the tunnel to the right, and George up the ramp to the surface.

CUT TO: Vaughn runs through the tunnel, jamming partial Limbs into Shafts. The Limbs have been placed there in advance all along the tunnel.

CUT TO: Javier runs through the tunnel in the opposite direction doing the same. He reaches a STRUCTURE made up of many Limbs spaced apart evenly. He places the structure so that each Limb falls neatly into a Shaft.

On the other side of the tunnel he does the same with another identical Limb structure. He uses a Controller to secure another Limb between the two structures, making it impossible to remove them from the Shafts.

CUT TO: Just outside the circle, George unfurls an ENORMOUS FLAG on the ground made up of blankets sewn together with their original 4H flag. The flag is tied with rope to 2 FUNNEL STACKS, ready to launch.

CUT TO: Vaughn reaches an area with a 10X10 FOOT WOODEN BOX suspended from the ceiling. A HANDLE protrudes from the bottom. Underneath that a Limb with a Hand extends from the ground.

Vaughn grabs a nearby Controller Necklace.

On the other side of the box, Javier arrives, done with his part. He gives the go ahead to Vaughn:

JAVIER

Ready.

VAUGHN

Run.

Javier takes off. Vaughn wills the Hand to pull on the handle with great force, opening up the wooden box. Several tons of a mixture of earth and Chorus Pieces pours into the tunnel.

Vaughn takes off before it fills the place.

CLOSE UP: A Shaft fills with the stuff. We see a Chorus Flower getting packed tight with dirt.

347 EXT. VALLEY - NEXT

Marcus stops running. Ahead of him Samuel notices and turns back.

Marcus speaks directly to him:

MARCUS
We never got along.

Now it's Samuel's turn to be distracted; beyond Marcus he sees the 8 men coming over the hill a few hundred feet away.

SAMUEL
What's happening?

MARCUS
We never stopped fighting and hiding things...

SAMUEL
Yeah, we did. We're better now. We've been good. Come on! They're-

MARCUS
...not until we got scared of the men.

SAMUEL
No. No.

A HUGE SHADOW flits over them for a second. Samuel turns to see the George's WARNING FLAG ascending in the sky:

SAMUEL
(whispering)
Adventure. We're going.

MARCUS
They'll follow us back and that'll be that. Vaughn will get rid of all of them. No one will be left.

SAMUEL
When we get rid of these adults we won't have any problems, Marcus.

Marcus just looks at him for a moment. He kneels, preparing for the adults' advance, surrendering.

SAMUEL

No, Marcus. We won't get to go. No.

Samuel looks to the men again. They're closing. He checks the opposite direction, weighing his options.

WIDE: He slumps to the ground, joining Marcus on his knees.

CLOSE: They grip each other's arms, steadying themselves.

The THUNDER of the men approaching grows.

The two close their eyes, anticipating. The THUNDER grows louder to a CRESCENDO. The men are upon them.

A MAN'S TORSO fills the screen for a split second before his TWO HANDS yank Marcus' shoulders.

MATCH CUT TO:

348 EXT. FLUME FIELD - NEXT

A LARGE CHORUS ARM scoops under Euclid's chest, gently carrying him into the air backwards. We go with him, riding the huge Chorus up the mountain, covering hundreds of feet in a few leaps. Albert drives, sitting up front.

Euclid is shell shocked. He stares at but doesn't participate in what's happening around him. We follow his gaze:

PAN OVER TO: The circle recedes far behind them. The adults are still corralled by Choruses. The BLACK SPHERES have begun to shake the ground and BLOW UP LARGE CHUNKS of earth all along the perimeter.

PAN BACK TO EUCLID: He sees someone off screen riding parallel. He yells to them:

EUCLID

Where's Carter!?

PAN OVER TO: Hector and George ride another Chorus. It carries a Frond strapped to its torso. TWO APES are in pursuit, grabbing at the Frond, climbing onto the Chorus.

The Chorus kicks them, trying to shake them off.

PAN BACK TO EUCLID:

EUCLID

Where's Carter!?

By now, Albert has noticed Hector's problem:

ALBERT

Drop that thing! We don't need it! Throw it back!

PAN OVER TO: Hector's Chorus stops just long enough to fling the Frond back toward the circle. It works. The Apes chase after it.

PAN OVER TO: The circle is getting more violent. A ton of dirt hangs in the air, hiding most of the action. There are many more Black Spheres and they are much larger, some 20 feet in diameter.

Vaughn and Javier approach, riding a Chorus that is speeding from the circle to join the exodus.

PAN BACK TO EUCLID: Albert's Chorus comes to a halt at the top of the mountain. Albert and Euclid dismount. The others are doing the same around them, all looking back at the circle, waiting.

PAN OVER TO THE CIRCLE: We hear the tiny dull thuds of the Black Spheres far off, like watching a firefight from a mile away.

Then the circle BLOWS COMPLETELY. In an instant, everything inside it is expelled and then brought back with the force of a small nuclear bomb.

PAN BACK TO EUCLID: He turns and races to a SACK tied to the side of Albert's Chorus. He empties the contents on the ground, scrambling to find something.

Albert watches over him.

VAUGHN

Allie.

Albert keys off Vaughn and looks to...

PAN OVER TO THE CIRCLE: A HUGE DUST WAVE radiates from the implosion, growing closer to us by the second.

PAN BACK TO ALBERT: He is positioning the Chorus in between Euclid and the approaching wave. Everyone else protects themselves, doing the same with their Choruses.

ALBERT

Get them in front!

Albert pulls a BLANKET off the Chorus.

Crouching on the ground, Euclid finds what he's after: a DECAYED FUNNEL. He crushes it into dust and small pieces and

shoves them into his mouth. He smears his hands all over his face, getting the detritus in his nose and eyes.

Albert descends on him, carrying the blanket like a cape, covering both of them and us.

BLACK

We hear the dust storm pass over, stirring up the landscape. The sound fades to absolute silence.

CLOSE ON EUCLID: He waits, listening. He's lit by ambient light, like moonlight from the horizon.

WIDER: He sits there. We shouldn't be able to see this much of him. The blanket would have to be much bigger than we know it is to darken this much space.

WIDER: He sits alone on the mountaintop in darkness. Albert and the others and the Choruses are gone. Euclid is silhouetted by a source of light coming from the valley below.

He stands and walks to the edge to see the source of light, revealing:

The light is coming from the circle far away. It is the one patch of light in the surrounding black void and so bright that it looks like daylight down there. The EXPLOSION is frozen in time, standing as tall as a skyscraper.

Euclid looks around his feet, studying the edge of the precipice.

He steadies himself with his hands and extends a leg over the edge, feeling for anything sturdy. He looks for a way down without success.

He takes one more look at the valley and then begins to back up, first a few steps and then a quick pace. He's preparing for a running start.

DOLLY ALONG as he runs full speed toward the edge of the mountain. He jumps seemingly into the void, but now there is something there to land on: the entrance to a MASSIVE FLUME 200 feet in diameter.

WIDE: The Flume extends a mile, a rigid cylinder starting in darkness at the top of the mountain and ending near the lighted circle down in the valley.

Euclid stands, rising into frame. He moves to the left side of the tunnel.

Through the shafts that make up the left wall he sees the frozen explosion in the Flume Field far below.

He looks down at his feet, supported by nothing but a grid of hollow shafts. He keeps scanning, seeing something incredibly bright to the right. He walks toward it, squinting.

As we follow him, we see only BRIGHT WHITE beyond the shafts in front of him. The source of light grows smaller as Euclid approaches the tunnel wall until...

Suddenly he gets too close and the light shrinks in size to a pinhole, easily seen through one shaft. He immediately stops.

He takes a step back and the light grows fast, filling tens of shafts. There is an inverse relationship between his distance to the light and its size; the shafts are working as lenses.

This time, Euclid slowly inches forward, subtly reducing the size of the light and bringing it into focus until we can make out what it is:

An area on the ground 200 feet in diameter has retained its daylight just like the Flume Field. At the edge of the lit circle, Samuel and Marcus walk with the campers that were pursuing them. All of them are frozen in mid-step.

Euclid looks ahead of them to see where they are heading and sees Marcus' disassembled Chorus. It is at the center of the lighted area.

Euclid moves slowly along the tunnel wall, looking at the same scene through a second shaft and then a third. He halts.

He moves back to the second shaft, comparing it with the third. The scenes are almost identical except that in the second Samuel, Marcus, and the campers have made slightly more progress towards the Chorus than in the third.

He does some more comparison with the first shaft. He's able to make the group walk forward and backward ever so slightly.

Euclid moves along the wall again a little faster. The group walks backwards until they are out of the light completely.

Excited, Euclid crosses back over to the left side of the tunnel and runs along it. The animated images in the shafts are disjointed like an old kinoscope, starting out like a crude cartoon but eventually running at a smooth 24 frames per second. He's able to see the explosion slowly shrink into the ground, reversing itself.

EXT. FLUME FIELD - NEXT

Euclid steps out of the Massive Flume onto dark ground.

He walks toward and then crosses into Flume Field which is spot lit with daylight. It's like leaving the dark side of the moon for the lit side.

We are now at the beginning of the implosion/explosion. Giant frozen up-shoots of soil and rocks surround the circle like a WALL of pillars. Euclid tries to find a way through.

CUT TO: He runs along the curved wall, not able to find a space wide enough to fit through.

Eventually the wall leads him to the tree line.

CUT TO: He moves through the trees, still scanning the wall.

He finds George's WARNING FLAG which is now caught up in some trees and hangs before Euclid like a curtain, dividing us from the interior of the circle. The flag is translucent so we are able to make out the activity on the other side.

Euclid tries to push the thin curtain aside but is surprised to see it doesn't budge at all. It is as if it were made of steel, a permanent fixture secured in this space. He tries again, leveraging his weight against it before giving up and scanning the area for a tool.

CUT TO: He pulls with all his might to lift a ROCK from the ground. It too is permanently affixed. He moves to a TOOLBOX and then a nearby piece of LUMBER but can't affect them.

CUT TO: Euclid is in a gap in the up-shoots, trying his hardest to squeeze through. He makes it.

We follow him across the circle. ROCKS, DUST, and DEBRIS hang in mid-air. The CAMPERS are motionless, forever fleeing the Choruses and Black Spheres.

Euclid's feet make their way across the center. The ground slowly rises beneath him, splitting apart. The final explosion that initially took a tenth of a second is now elapsing 10,000 times slower. His feet come to a stop but continue to be pushed higher inch by inch.

Euclid sees what he came for.

WIDE: We see the entire circle and the frozen melee within. Off to the side is the only perceivable movement: Euclid

struggles to lift the Chorus off of Carter's lifeless body, pinned beneath it.

ANOTHER ANGLE: We're a little closer to Euclid. He's still struggling.

ANOTHER ANGLE: Closer still. He pulls with all his might.

BLACK

351 EXT. SNOWY WOODS - DAY

A CARIBOU forages. A hundred feet beyond it, a HUGE DARK SHAPE, 20 feet tall, silently approaches, descending from the trees. It is a DRAGON-SIZED CHORUS, covered almost entirely with animal pelts.

The caribou gets a split-second to react before the Dragon's talons, each the size of a horse leg, bring it to the ground. The Dragon places its weight on the antelope's torso before breaking its neck.

Euclid, Albert, Graham, Vaughn, Hector, George, and Javier come forward, appearing from behind trees here and there. They're weathered, looking like they've been in the wild for months.

352 EXT. CAMP - NIGHT

The boys sit around the fire, eating their kill. Several small tents and one common tent surround them.

DAY

Euclid, Vaughn and Albert cover an exposed part of the Dragon Chorus with caribou skin, cutting it to size with a buck knife.

As they sew the skin on with thick twine, something causes them to halt. They listen for a second. The sound of a HELICOPTER grows in the distance.

Without having to speak they each step back slowly and sit beneath trees, hiding. They search the sky. This is routine.

353 EXT. RIDGE NEAR THE HIGHWAY - DAY

Standing on the ridge, George and Javier have spotted an abandoned car down on the road about a mile off.

GEORGE

By the book?

CUT TO: George settles into snow with binoculars. He sees:
Javier cautiously approaches the car, looking up and down the road.

CUT TO: He's in the glove compartment, looking for anything of value, tossing out papers.

He hits the trunk release button.

CUT TO: He loots the trunk, shoveling things into a TRASH BAG.

CUT TO: Back at the ridge they pick through the bag. Javier finds a pair of new FUR-LINED LEATHER GLOVES. He tries them on after removing his own dirty tattered mittens.

GEORGE

Can I have your old ones?

JAVIER

I need them.

GEORGE

What kind of license plate was it?

JAVIER

We are...east.

GEORGE

How far?

354 INT. COMMON TENT - DAY

A new Circle Frond is growing out of a set of three. Graham and Vaughn attend to it, pushing it back and forth to break it free.

Euclid, gathering TWO METAL PAILS, stops on his way out.

EUCLID

I'll take him out later and keep him busy.
Wait till then. You can put it with the others.

355 EXT. VALLEY - NEXT

The area is a few acres across and walled off by natural features, hills and trees. The Dragon Chorus is finishing the

latest of the many Flume Tunnels that are scattered about the valley like toys in a playpen.

In the foreground Euclid scoops NEW SNOW into his pails as he speaks with Hector:

HECTOR
I'll miss the party?

EUCLID
Yeah. Someone's gotta watch him. I think you're one of the most capable.

HECTOR
My control has gotten better.

EUCLID
I know it has. It has.

They crouch down so that Euclid can reference a rough map made of twigs on the ground:

EUCLID
Not beyond the ridge on this side. Not too far down past the tree line there.
(he looks up to the actual tree line)
In fact forget that, don't even let him near the tree line.

Euclid checks the Chorus, still building Tunnels.

EUCLID
Shouldn't be any trouble. He'll probably just keep working on those so...

HECTOR
I'll walk him away from it.

EUCLID
Nah, just let him. You're not gonna stop that. We're on the move in a few days anyway. So all right?

HECTOR
Yep.

EUCLID
I'll take him right after.

HECTOR
Yep.

356 EXT. CAMP - NEXT

Euclid pours the snow from his pails into a LARGE WATER DISPENSER at the end of a crude banquet table made of assorted boxes.

It's Albert's birthday party. He opens one of the PRESENTS that sit in front of him wrapped in shirts and blankets. It's a couple AA BATTERIES. He's happily surprised.

GRAHAM
Ask him where he got them.

ALBERT
I don't wanna know...
(looking down the table)
I don't even want to know. Thank you.

CUT TO: Albert opens another gift, the leather gloves that were found in the car. Albert looks to Javier, stunned at his generosity.

JAVIER
You like them?

ALBERT
Yeah.

JAVIER
Good.

CUT TO: Euclid stands at the end of the table, in the middle of a pulpit speech. After a few moments thought:

EUCLID
We taught them. We solved everything that was put in front of us. We weren't...uh perfect...

The kids laugh, commiserating.

EUCLID
...we didn't always get along and yeah, there were problems. We made mistakes...
(focuses on Graham)
...but we came through. Because we had a system. We were orderly. And that's why it's different for us.

Euclid scans his audience, face by face.

EUCLID

Because we're not just kids. We're not.
We figured out this much didn't we? So
anyway, today Allie's fourteen.

357 INT. EUCLID'S TENT - NEXT

Albert has a seat and watches as Euclid moves about the tent, retrieving and then placing items in front of him. The first is a COFFEE MUG full of water. Then a SOCK from his jacket pocket. The third item comes from a SMALL LOCKED CHEST: a stack of PAPER CUPS covered in BLOOD PRINTS like the ones made several seasons ago.

358 EXT. EUCLID'S TENT - NEXT

Euclid leaves the tent, walking with a purpose. He pulls FIVE COLORED RIBBONS, bunched up, from his pocket.

As he untangles them, he turns and looks up to a HIGH BLUFF about a mile off and a few hundred feet higher. We can just make out SOMETHING hanging from the bluff.

359 EXT. HIGH BLUFF - INTERCUT

Vaughn carries the new Frond on his back toward the edge of the bluff. Graham follows.

Hanging from the cliff on a length of rope is a LARGE SACK made of blankets. It's the size of a van and full.

360 EXT. SNOWY WOODS - INTERCUT

Euclid walks along some trees, looking for the right one. When he finds it, we see it has an E etched in it. He looks forward and back, guessing distance.

Far behind him the Dragon Chorus sits patiently, rubbing the ground with its huge talons. Euclid keeps it there:

EUCLID

Wait for me. Wait.

Euclid stashes the Controller Necklace in his pocket and gets ready to sprint.

And he's off, running further from the Dragon at top speed.

The Dragon begins as well, throwing up leaves and debris with each powerful step. It gains on Euclid, growing in size until it seems it might step on him.

Euclid grabs the first ribbon, GREEN. The DRAGON immediately stops, skids a bit, and then leaps high above the trees.

Euclid watches it rise before taking off in another direction.

361 INT. EUCLID'S TENT - INTERCUT

Albert carefully dumps the contents of the sock in front of him: SEVERAL CHUNKS OF DETRITUS and a MARBLE.

He compares the marble to each chunk of detritus until he finds one close to the same size.

He scrapes this chunk with a knife until it is exactly the marble's size.

After rolling it around in his hand for a few second, he gets the courage for the next step. He takes a gulp of water and places the detritus chunk directly under his tongue.

His eyes flit around, wondering: *is it working yet?*

As an after thought, he grabs the paper cups and positions them directly in front of him.

362 EXT. HIGH BLUFF - INTERCUT

Graham repels down to the large sack. Vaughn lowers the Frond in a makeshift basket that Graham wrangles toward the mouth of the sack. The maneuver takes place a few hundred feet in the air.

363 EXT. SNOWY WOODS - INTERCUT

Euclid holds the green and blue ribbons in a tight fist as he sprints toward the RED RIBBON at full speed.

But after checking over both shoulders, he notices that he is alone. He slows a bit as he reaches the ribbon.

He scans the area, checking the treetops, before finally plucking the ribbon. It's a joyless victory.

He waits.

364 EXT. HIGH BLUFF - INTERCUT

Graham loosens a rope to open the mouth of the sack wide before dumping the Frond in.

Inside the sack we see TENS OF FRONDS.

Graham, yanks on the basket's rope to signal Vaughn to raise it.

365 INT. EUCLID'S TENT - INTERCUT

Albert spins one of the paper cups in his hands. His fingers comb over the blood print like a needle on a record.

366 EXT. SNOWY WOODS - INTERCUT

Euclid walks back toward camp, searching the trees once in a while.

He stops, sensing something.

200 feet behind him the Dragon suddenly drops from the sky and runs in his direction.

He turns to face it. The thunder of the gallop grows louder.

DOLLY IN to Euclid, holding his hand up to slow the Dragon's approach.

MATCH CUT TO:

367 INT. EUCLID'S TENT - INTERCUT

DOLLY IN to Albert, staring forward in an altered state.

He finishes with one cup and starts spinning another, like he's reading Braille.

CLOSE UP: the cup spins.

MATCH CUT TO:

368 EXT. ANOTHER WORLD

We PAN ACROSS a FROZEN LANDSCAPE as Albert spins our view. FLAT BLACK ICE is all the way around. FLUMES pepper the surface to the horizon, too many to count.

For a second we see what might be a structure in the distance, maybe a city. Our view spins back in the opposite direction to investigate, but before we can make a judgment, the view changes completely...

ANOTHER WORLD

We are high in the atmosphere of a planet entirely covered in white. As we spin we see a CANOPY covering the entire planet, a shell suspended in orbit miles above the surface. It is made of Flumes.

Far below on the surface something tiny is moving. We manage to get closer to the CREATURE. It's difficult to gauge its size from this height. It moves like a bird with its wings removed, struggling to stay alive under the weight of snow on its body.

ANOTHER WORLD

This one isn't a planet at all but what looks like millions of BLACK RIBBONS that flow across a space the width of several solar systems. Nestled in its folds are pockets full of lights...cities maybe...intelligence.

On closer inspection we see FORESTS OF FLUMES covering parts of the ribbons and what look like WHITE GNATS moving slowly along them. Closer still, the gnats are actually Choruses with hundreds of Limbs. They crawl across the long-deserted structures built by this dead culture.

ANOTHER WORLD

A SHIP, miles long, drifts in deep space. It has been cracked into four large pieces, held together only by gravity. One side is covered in a HONEYCOMB of Flumes. Chorus pieces drift free in the space around it. There was a battle millennia ago.

ANOTHER WORLD

An enormous OCEAN covered in FLOATING SHEETS OF ICE surrounds the STAR that it also orbits. A CHORUS FISH surfaces and submerges. It's so big that we can't make out its Flowers or Plates until we move in much closer. Water trickles through them.

ANOTHER WORLD

A civilization that developed on a string of ASTEROIDS has been conquered by the Choruses.

And it continues...

We see many environments where cultures have risen and are now left frozen. The Choruses are always there.

We cut to new views until a rhythm develops, once every four seconds. From far off a SWEEPING SOUND rises in volume.

THE LAST ONE

A PULSAR SPINS once every four seconds like a swirling light on a police car.

It is surrounded by only dust and atmosphere. If there were ever planets here they have long been decimated.

Each rotation of the pulsar ejects radiation that BURNS OFF a portion of the atmosphere, making a brilliant colorful photochemical effect that accompanies the sweeping sound.

SWEEP. SWEEP. SWEEP.

BLACK.