

The Wingwoman

written by

Austin Shinn

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austinshinn@hotmail.com

BLACK

The sound of shots firing.

Screams.

Sirens.

INT. GROCERY STORE (WEST MEMPHIS) - DAY

IAN COTTINGLEY, 29, a bit on the heavier side, professionally dressed, is frozen in place. Around him are others, equally horrified. There are bodies. All is still for a long painful moment before--

Police storm into the store and grab survivors. Ian is violently yanked and pushed through the store. Simply holding on his face, the chaos is clear. He continues to be stonefaced through it.

Ian is pushed out the door to--

EXT. GROCERY STORE (WEST MEMPHIS) - DAY

The sunlight bathes everything in an intense glare. Ian squints, the first expression from him. He stares out at a platoon of police cars and news photographers.

Ian looks in the direction of a bank. He reaches in his pocket and pulls out an employee badge. He stares at it.

CUT TO BLACK.

Music plays. Soft, slow music.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - MORNING

There is nothing of any note beyond mountains and trees as far as the eye can see. It's idyllic, beautiful.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RIDGE - MORNING

A quaint small town. A grocery store. A Sonic. A town square. A library. A few banks. Some gas stations. Craft stores.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

A house on the utter edge of town. All around it lie vast expanses of woods. A road leads down the hill into town.

It's not a shack, in fact it's fairly nice if small, but it's isolated.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

A nearly empty house. A few books sit on shelves. There's a decently stocked kitchen. A bedroom, but little else. The sound of a police scanner permeates the scene.

Ian sits at a desk in his office, processing invoices from online. He looks different from when we saw him before. He's much thinner. He's extremely neatly dressed. There isn't one speck of hair out of place.

Ian types, focused. He's in his element.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - LATER

Ian drinks a cup of coffee in his dining area. He studies an old Smithsonian magazine.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian continues to process invoices. His phone buzzes. He ignores it. He's at work.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ian fixes a small dinner for one. He's obviously quite skilled.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The dead of night. There is no noise but the police scanner still buzzing. A lone streetlight can be seen outside. Otherwise no light.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The stars are crystal clear in the night sky. All is still.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ian works at his desk again. He's fully focused. There is a knock on the door. Ian ignores it. The knocking grows louder. Ian ignores it again. Finally the door opens.

Ian bolts up, startled. He nervously stands up to see--

CHARLIE COTTINGLEY, 31, tall and pleasant looking, dressed in a police uniform, standing in the doorway.

IAN

Please don't do that.

CHARLIE

Sorry, that was a bit thoughtless I guess.

Charlie walks into the office.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I just wanted to run by on my break. See how the setup was going.

IAN

It's fine. Everything is fine. I really can't talk though, I'm on the clock.

CHARLIE

Do they care when you work from home?

IAN

Yes! My activity is monitored in fact so I'm going to get back to it.

Charlie studies the room. He's impressed.

CHARLIE

You're doing a great job with this place. Granddad would be so damn happy to know someone's here.

IAN

Keeping it up keeps me busy when I'm not working.

CHARLIE

You go into town yet?

IAN

I have no business in town. Pretty much everything I need, I can get online or have you go get.

CHARLIE

What about therapy?

Ian looks up.

IAN

I skype with the therapist. Now do you have enough of a report for mom and dad?

CHARLIE

Pretty much, yeah. Though I don't have an invite for Kevin and I to dinner.

IAN

You and your boyfriend are always welcome here. You know that. Just let me know in advance. And never show up at a trauma victim's house unannounced ever again!

Charlie steps back.

CHARLIE

My bad.

Ian sighs.

IAN

This is all so damned new.

CHARLIE

I'm here for you, you know.

IAN

I suppose I'd be locked up if you weren't.

Charlie leaves.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian signs out of his computer and walks out of the office, through the living room, and to the back porch.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian stands on the back porch, looking out at the woods. He blinks.

A series of violent flashes. Shots of an event we can't fully grasp yet. Fast but so intense they knock us out of the moment.

Ian falls against a rail, struggling for breath. He closes his eyes, focuses on the sound around him.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian lies in bed, asleep. Suddenly, there is a crackling noise heard outside. Ian bolts up and turns on the light.

The noise continues. Ian searches his room for a flashlight. He takes it and races out of the room..

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian storms out. There's nothing around him. His heart pounds. His eyes dart. The noise continues. Ian swings the light to see

A family of deer grazing in his yard.

Ian flashes the light at them. They depart. He shines the light around. Nothing else.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian turns the volume up on the police scanner, just static squealing, and sits in his living room in the dark. After a long moment, he starts crying. He's broken.

IAN (V.O.)
I'm not happy.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ian sits in front of his monitor talking to DR. BRIAN RUSCH, 63, a powerhouse of a man.

DR. RUSCH (V.O.)
Why not?

Ian gestures around.

IAN

I think it's clear why. I'm here because being in Memphis makes me vomit. Being in a city in Arkansas makes me vomit. The only thing that doesn't and hasn't in the last 18 months? Being here in this house.

DR. RUSCH (V.O.)

You miss society?

IAN

I miss being free to leave. The outside world though? I don't care if I ever rejoin it. It's rotten at its core.

DR. RUSCH (V.O.)

So you're not lonely?

IAN

I see my brother. Look, I miss places. I don't miss people. Do you understand. But at least here I'm safe.

DR. RUSCH (V.O.)

You know you've said all of this before. It worries me you're this stuck in place.

A long beat.

IAN

Last week in Florida, 5 dead, 12 injured. In Texas, 3 dead, 6 injured. In Baltimore, 4 dead, 7 injured. Do I need to keep going? I'm stuck in place because the world is stuck in place!

DR. RUSCH (V.O.)

I could argue the birth rate. New lives enter every day.

IAN

I've never been in the room when a baby was born.

DR. RUSCH (V.O.)

Ian... You're practicing avoidance. You cannot move forward living in seclusion.

IAN

I know. But for now, at least I'm safe. And I like that.

(beat)

But it would be nice to go to a movie.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - LATER

Ian sits, reading another old magazine. There is a knock on the door.

IAN

Come on in, Charlie.

The door opens slightly and an unfamiliar face pokes her head in. This is MIRANDA SPENSER, 29. There's an off quality to her, just not quite right.

MIRANDA

(with a faint Irish accent)

I beg your pardon?

Ian walks over to the door where Miranda stands. Seen in full, she's a plainly dressed presence with a simple scarf covering any trace of hair. She carries a giant basket of goods.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

I am Miranda Spenser with the External community. I received word of a new resident and sought to bring a welcoming gift.

IAN

Ian Cottingley. I'm not really new, about three months here but--

He takes the basket.

IAN (CONT'D)

I don't turn down good food.

MIRANDA

May I enter?

It's an intense moment for Ian. He studies her.

IAN

Not today.

MIRANDA

Perhaps another day. A pleasure to encounter you, Mr. Cottingley.

IAN

You too.

He watches her walk away. There's a palpable sense of regret.

He takes the basket into the living room and opens it, withdrawing a piece of fudge. He takes a bite. His face says it all. It's great.

Ian walks to the window. He looks out, lost in thought.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ian sits at a dinner table with his brother and his boyfriend KEVIN HAMILTON, 31, tough. They eat a meal.

KEVIN

Seriously, you never considered this as a career?

IAN

Most restaurants fail inside of a year. I'm not failing.

CHARLIE

That's a logical fallacy.

IAN

Well so is starting a job you expect to fail. I chose the safe one.

He raises a glass of water.

KEVIN

Still, being happy. Isn't failing worth it?

IAN

No, it's not. It's really not. I'm rational. Joy adds nothing to the ultimate ledger. You can't put joy on a resume.

CHARLIE

Something like a restaurant? Sure you can.

IAN
It doesn't look good.

CHARLIE
And that's why you're in banking.
You're fixated on order.

IAN
This from a cop.

He smiles.

KEVIN
So...do you have plans on leaving
this place?

IAN
Nope. I'm just planning on building
it up as much as I can. Add more
art. Who knows, maybe a sauna?

KEVIN
I just couldn't.

IAN
It's really underrated.

KEVIN
You're high.

IAN
I haven't had any weed in six
years, any alcohol in two. Try
again.

KEVIN
You're cr--

He stops. The aborted word hangs in the air.

IAN
Yes, yes I am. I know that. I'm not
blind to any of this.

Ian laughs.

IAN (CONT'D)
Everybody thinks the mentally ill
don't know. We always know. We know
better than any of you.

They eat in silence.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

On the back deck, the three eat cookies. It's a funny sight.

CHARLIE
Where'd you get these?

IAN
Welcome wagon came over.

CHARLIE
An External?

IAN
That's what she said.

Kevin laughs.

IAN (CONT'D)
What?

KEVIN
Heard some weird shit about them.

IAN
Tell me.

KEVIN
They're an enclave on the edge of town. They're completely secretive. You can't go near their compound. I mean they work all over town and seem fine with tech so they're not Amish but hell if I know what they are.

CHARLIE
Don't knock them. They're good folk.

KEVIN
Please, you think that because you get free coffee at their shop.

CHARLIE
As I said... Which one was it?

IAN
Miranda Spenser I think?

Charlie sparks to awareness.

CHARLIE
The librarian! She's a sweetheart.
You talk for long?

IAN
I wasn't interested in doing so,
no.

KEVIN
Man, you might've made a friend.

CHARLIE
Or more. They date guys in town and
the rumors...

Ian shrugs.

IAN
Probably my mistake.

CHARLIE
You talk to any of your exes?

The question blindsides Ian.

IAN
A bit after the shooting. But it
wasn't reconnection. It was
sympathy.

KEVIN
You've got to want a girlfriend.

IAN
Seriously, you're trying to get me
to hook up with the weird librarian
in a cult?

He laughs.

IAN (CONT'D)
Thanks guys. I needed this.

He smiles, a big genuine grin.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

All is quiet. All is calm. Then suddenly there is a noise. A
rustling. On the ground, a shadow shoots past. It's too fast
to see.

All is quiet.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ian sits at his desk, working. The monotony of it is agony. His eyes don't even move.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - LATER

Ian finishes his day's work. He stares at the screen, completely blank faced.

He stands up and walks around the house. He manages to walk through every single room in just a few moments. He looks around, noticing just how small everything is.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian walks out, carrying his phone. He snaps a few shots as he goes. He stops in front of a tree where a branch balances perilously on another. He takes a photo of it with his phone.

He walks behind the house, observing the vast expanse of woods. It seems alien, the edge of the world.

Ian walks into the woods a distance. The deeper he goes, the calmer he gets. He walks until he reaches

A clearing on the edge of a cliff. A vast valley spans before him. It's epic. Ian looks out over it. He starts to laugh, throwing his arms out.

He takes a few pictures, clearly riding the wave.

Emboldened, he hits a contact in his phone.

IAN
I want to try something.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Ian sits beside his brother, who drives. Ian looks excited.

CHARLIE
You're sure?

IAN
I really think it's time to try.

EXT. OUTPOST - NIGHT

As they drive, they pass a compound with a gas station on one side and a neighborhood across the street. There are houses but no roads.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Ian stares at the odd sight.

CHARLIE

Yeah, that's the External compound.
No man has ever set foot in it
supposedly.

IAN

It's kind of nice looking.

CHARLIE

Hell if I know.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RIDGE - NIGHT

The car drives through town. It's completely quiet. They pass a mural of a strange creature with insect eyes, gargoyle wings, and claws.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Ian laughs pretty hard.

IAN

What the hell is that?

CHARLIE

The Wingwoman of Mountain Ridge!
Come on, you don't remember the
stories?

IAN

Vaguely.

CHARLIE

Ok, supposedly she comes in the
night and smashes things. She
screams. Eats your garden. She's
pure destruction.

IAN

Any pictures?

CHARLIE

Library has a whole exhibit. You don't have to look hard to find supposed sightings. But no actual pictures. Just blurry shots.

IAN

Ah, local myths.

CHARLIE

Don't mock em. They give purpose.

IAN

It's just so ludicrous.

CHARLIE

That's the fun. A sense of magic to enliven an unmagical world.

He stops the car.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Are you sure?

IAN

I have to try.

They get out of the car.

EXT. SHOPPING CENTER - NIGHT

Ian and Charlie stare at a giant megamart. It looms large.

IAN

I can do this. I can do this.

They walk in. It's a slow walk. But it begins.

INT. GROCERY STORE (MOUNTAIN RIDGE) - NIGHT

Blinding light. Loud music. Chaotic displays. It's an instant overload of imagery for Ian.

He closes his eyes. Deep breaths. He can do this.

He reopens them and with Charlie begins walking.

CHARLIE

You know we can leave.

IAN

I have to do this.

They walk. The sound slowly drops out, the deeper Ian gets into the store. With each step, it becomes clearer he's trapped in the store. The front seems harder to see.

Ian's breathing intensifies. He's visibly sweating. His heart audibly pounds.

The lights get brighter and brighter. Ian keeps moving.

Suddenly all is as it was. Ian looks around. Charlie is nowhere to be found. He's isolated.

He fights for composure but struggles. This is not the Ian we've seen so far. He's wild eyed and unsettled.

Ian begins walking through the store rapidly. His eyes dart, searching for the exit. He's not making progress. He marches in a circle.

Finally there's a hand on his shoulder.

IAN (CONT'D)

I'll kill you!!!

He turns to see his brother. Their eyes meet.

EXT. SHOPPING CENTER - NIGHT

Ian and Charlie walk, not talking. After a long moment:

CHARLIE

This was diving into the pool, not wading in.

IAN

Don't. Don't tell me what "this" was. I know. It was a mistake!

CHARLIE

It--

IAN

I'm in hell. I'm in absolute hell. You know that? I can't leave my house but I can't stay in it any longer or I'll suffocate! I'm in jail and I'll be here until I die. And why? One bad day. One decision that I just had to get one more errand in while I could. If I'd gone one aisle over 20 seconds later I might be dead right now!

He laughs.

IAN (CONT'D)
I might as well be dead.

Charlie embraces him. Ian sobs, great heaving sobs.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE (BATHROOM) - NIGHT

Ian takes a shower. He looks barely functional.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian drinks a cup of tea and listens to the scanner. He fights back a tear.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Ian crawls into bed and turns out the light. His eyes close.

CUT TO BLACK.

No sound. Not even the police scanners.

Then a faint sound, almost like a babbling brook at first. The sound intensifies, sounding more and more like a song in an alien language. It sounds nothing like an actual human voice. It's too beautiful.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Ian's eyes open. He's startled by the sound. His breathing is intense. He gets out of bed and races to the hall where the police scanner sits. He turns it off.

The song continues. Ian reaches the living room where he sees outside the picture window in the front--

A shadow of a giant winged creature hovering in front of the front facing window. It's the obvious source of the song.

Ian races out the back door.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian runs into the woods as fast as he can. He stops after a moment and catches his breath.

IAN
(to himself)
It was a dream. You're just
confusing a dream with reality.

He smiles. The absurdity of it hitting him.

He walks back towards his house. Upon reaching the front yard he looks around. Nothing. The street light casts everything in a nice blue white glow.

Relaxed, Ian looks up at the tree where the branch balanced. He looks up to see

The creature. It's almost impossible for Ian to see it as he turns away.

Faster than he can move, the creature jumps in front of him. In the glow of the light, Ian can finally fully see it.

The creature has the body of a stunningly beautiful woman Ian's age with scarlet hair in a pixie cut. Leaves and vines cover her suggestively. She radiates beauty.

But what makes her most notable are her wings. Massive, full body wings that resemble a butterfly with a stained glass pattern. They make her awe inspiring.

This is The Wingwoman of Mountain Ridge.

For a beat Ian can't speak, stunned by the sight. Their eyes lock, both feeling each other out.

The Wingwoman places her hand on his face.

WINGWOMAN
(in the voice of the song)
Fear nothing.

She shoots up into the sky, vanishing from sight.

Ian exhales. He looks up, seeing the imbalanced branch has fallen. He walks inside.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian walks, unsettlingly still. He turns the scanner back on.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Ian lays back down, falling fast asleep.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - MORNING

It's early but oddly bright. Ian's eyes fling open. He looks stunned. He sits up, looking around.

He puts a foot on the floor then lifts it up. It's covered in dirt. He squints, confused.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ian sits, working. He's very distracted. He pauses. Flashes of the night before hit him. They seem surreal, dreamlike.

He shakes his head, uncertain. He tries to focus.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian sits, drinking a cup of tea listening to the scanner.

SCANNER (V.O.)
We've got a 10-13, surprising
amount of debris off Coger.

Ian looks out the picture window. He looks in the center. There is something surprising: a handprint on the outside. He places his hand over it. His hand is far bigger.

Ian steps back, startled.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian walks outside with his phone. He looks down at the balancing branch photo then out at the yard. The branch has fallen.

Ian walks around the back of the house where he sees
Footprints in mud. He puts his foot in one. It's his.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
So you think what?

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian and charlie stand in the living room looking at the print.

IAN

Logically? I was sleepwalking, a trance brought on by the stress of the panic attack. Pretty much everything else can be explained that way aside from the handprint. The noise? Who hasn't heard music in a dream. The branch? Wind knocked it. The Wingwoman? Seeing the mural. As to why she looked beautiful rather than horrific? My brain is trying not to kill me And the handprint? Always there just unnoticed.

Charlie laughs.

CHARLIE

Sounds like there was no reason to call me.

IAN

The thing is, it all felt so damned real. Like all of this could plausibly be true.

CHARLIE

So what if it is?

Ian shakes his head.

IAN

It's not.

CHARLIE

There's been a ton of sightings. Maybe you had one.

IAN

This was an encounter. She spoke English to me. We made eye contact. I mean... look the myths say she's a monster. That wasn't a monster!

Charlie shrugs.

CHARLIE

Not all of them. That's just the tourist one.

IAN
It's impossible. The only logical
answer--

CHARLIE
The only logical answer is what the
evidence supports. I'd say there's
a healthy amount.

Ian studies the handprint.

IAN
You're supposed to be the guy who
reminds me I'm mentally ill.

CHARLIE
I'm the guy who gets excited when
his brother is excited about
something.

Ian looks back at him.

IAN
It does feel nice.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian lies in bed, unable to sleep. All is too quiet. He sighs.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian sits at his computer. He clicks on a podcast episode
entitled The Wingwoman Debunked. It starts up. He prepares a
cup of tea as it plays.

PODCASTER (V.O.)
Welcome to the Skeptical Mind.
Today we're studying the legend of
the Mountain Ridge, AR Wingwoman.
She's been seen for decades in this
small town. My hope is to clearly
explain how all of these sightings
can be attributed to barred owls.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - LATER

Ian drinks his tea while the podcast continues to play.

PODCASTER (V.O.)

True, there's a thrill to the legend, but if you examine a barred owl, with its massive wings and giant eyes, it's the only rational explanation.

Ian pulls up a picture of the barred owl. It looks nothing like the Wingwoman.

He types in Wingwoman explanations. Quickly, he sees a series of ideas including the owl, moon through trees, and mass delusion.

In a montage of shots, he researches all of these. They all seem plausible enough. Even side by side shots of the owl and monstrous drawings of the Wingwoman start to look plausible.

Ian is so consumed by his studies he's startled to look up and realize it's now evening.

Ian smiles.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

And a happy Saturday morning to you. We've got quote a show for you.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ian turns the TV off. He once more pours a cup of tea and walks to his computer. He types Wingwoman, Mountain Ridge, and books into a search engine. Almost all of his results are books from the Mountain Ridge Library.

He pauses, then clicks on the Mountain Ridge Library website. It's open until 2 on Saturdays.

Ian pulls up his phone and puts the directions in his GPS. Not far. 2 miles.

He stares at his phone, his heart pounding.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ian locks every door on his house then walks to the garage. He hits a button to reveal his car, a beautiful vintage Cadillac. Ian opens the door of the car and sits inside it.

INT. IAN'S CAR - MORNING

Ian sits in his car. He inhales, smelling the leather. He turns the ignition. The car starts up. Ian reverses and backs out of the garage. He closes the door and backs out onto the road.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RIDGE - MORNING

Ian's car drives through town. It's a slow, steady drive sticking to a route, but Ian makes it.

EXT. LIBRARY - MORNING

Ian gets out of his car, locks it, and lets out a deep breath. He looks at the small building. He can do this.

INT. LIBRARY - MORNING

Ian walks in hesitantly. This is a typical small town library. It's all but empty. There's a few computers, dvds, and rows upon rows of books. Ian reaches in his pocket and pulls out a few notes.

He walks down the aisles until he reaches a section with "weird" books. UFOs, ghosts, and indeed a few books on the Mountain Ridge Wingwoman.

Ian pulls the books off the shelf. They're rather ridiculous looking and all but one look self published. Ian takes the books and walks to a table.

He's about to sit down when Miranda walks up to him. She smiles a bright smile.

MIRANDA

I never expected to witness this!

IAN

Miranda, right?

MIRANDA

Correct. Your brother informed me you kept to the house.

IAN

I do normally, but--

Miranda looks at the books.

MIRANDA

What an unlikely topic to draw you out.

For a long moment Ian wracks his brain visibly, then

IAN

I heard the story of her. Can't resist a good myth.

There's a skeptical look on her face.

MIRANDA

Not a personal glimpse?

IAN

Absolutely not! I can't see what doesn't exist.

MIRANDA

But you can see what does, Mr.--

IAN

Ian, please. It's weird for me to hear people use that. Too formal.

MIRANDA

Perhaps, but names possess a unique power just like the things we witness.

IAN

True, I still didn't see her.

MIRANDA

Yet you break your isolation simply to research a myth. Makes little sense to me.

IAN

Maybe I'm looking for a bit of magic.

Miranda takes the books from him, her hand slightly brushing his.

MIRANDA

Then bask in it. Take them home.

IAN

I don't have a card and I'd have to bring them back.

MIRANDA
I can establish a card and
returning them might not pain you.

Ian looks at the books.

IAN
Why not?

EXT. LIBRARY - MORNING

Ian walks out, books in tow. He looks up, clearly recharged.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RIDGE - MORNING

Ian drives through town. He spies a fast food restaurant. He pulls in.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ian pulls up to his house and parks his car in the garage. He gets out with the food and the books. The garage door closes behind him. Ian looks back in awe.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

The remnants of Ian's meal sit on the table. Ian lays back on the couch, almost childlike. He opens the book.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The first sighting of the Mountain
Ridge Wingwoman occurred in 1885 on
the outskirts of town.

EXT. WOODS (1885) - MORNING

A hunter, ANDY LANG, 45, carries a period authentic shotgun. He's clearly out a bit lost.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
By all accounts, Andy Lang was a
sensible man not prone to
exaggeration or the drink. Which
made the events of October 14 all
the stranger.

Andy stumbles and lands in a pile of branches. He grasps his gun. He's safe. He stands up and regains his composure.

Off in the distance he hears--

A song. It's not the same voice Ian heard but very similar.

Andy moves towards the song. He reaches the clearing Ian would discover. The song stops. Andy looks around.

At once, he's grabbed from behind. Andy turns to see

A Wingwoman, but not one that looks like the one Ian saw. It has the compound eyes and fangs from the mural. The wings are scarier too. Jagged, bony.

Andy screams and runs.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Andy Lang didn't wait long to tell
this story.

INT. GENERAL STORE - MORNING

Andy has a large group gathered around him.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
His reputation as one of the
original founders of Mountain Ridge
ensured nobody would ignore him.
Andy Lang cemented the Mountain
Ridge Wingwoman as just as integral
a part of the town as he was. Not
that everybody could conclude what
she looked like.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RIDGE (1903) - DAY

People stand, reading stories about the Wingwoman in the paper. A drawing gives her a more apelike appearance with bird wings.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
A sighting in 1903 suggested an ape
with birdlike wings.

EXT. WOODS (1974) - NIGHT

A couple of teens walk through the woods shining a light. They're stopped in their tracks by what looks like a dinosaur woman.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
In the 70s, she was even a
dinosaur.

INT. SODA FOUNTAIN (1956) - NIGHT

A handsome teen sketches a variant not dissimilar to the one
Ian saw. He shows it to some of the people in the shop
including a gawky young External girl.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
But she was always a woman. Always.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ian sits at his table, making a sketch of his own. It's
clumsy but it clearly conveys what he saw. There's a knock on
the door.

IAN
Come in.

Charlie walks in.

CHARLIE
So, anything you want to tell me?

IAN
I've been a bit busy so nothing I
can think of.

CHARLIE
You have been busy. Someone told me
they saw you out in public today.

Ian turns to him.

IAN
It was the library and I went
through a drive through window. Not
a big deal.

Charlie walks up to him and hugs him.

CHARLIE
Jesus Christ I've waited so damn
long to hear that.

Ian pulls away.

IAN

Seriously, I drove three miles and only went in one place. Hell I might've had an episode if I hadn't had a great chat with the librarian.

CHARLIE

Please don't downplay this. This is big.

IAN

I'm going to downplay it because of why I did it.

He shows him the sketch.

IAN (CONT'D)

I'm investigating my delusion.

Charlie examines the sketch.

IAN (CONT'D)

Look, I know something happened that night and it makes so sense to me why I'm so fixated on it but I am. So I'm throwing myself into research to try to figure it out because just a dream isn't doing it for me. I want to know why I dreamed it.

CHARLIE

Will it get you out of the house?

IAN

At least to the library.

CHARLIE

Then cheers! But if you're going to do research, head to the historical society. De Lint'll hook you up.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian stays up late into the night reading. He takes copious notes.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

A table full of notes sits beside open books as Ian finishes up his day's work. He walks over to his notes.

IAN (V.O.)
Three key sightings.

EXT. WOODS (1885) - NIGHT

A flash of the first sighting.

IAN (V.O.)
Andy Lang. The origin.

EXT. WOODS (1956) - NIGHT

The teen from the Soda Fountain kisses the beautiful Wingwoman from his sketch.

IAN (V.O.)
1956. Phillip Edwards. The case like mine.

INT. MOTEL ROOM (1993) - NIGHT

A man stares at a Wingwoman with features not dissimilar to a "gray" alien.

IAN (V.O.)
1993. Only one outside a home or in the woods. Ted de Lint.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RIDGE - AFTERNOON

Ian drives through town to the town square, a lovely small town staple. He parks his car and walks up to a storefront.

INT. HISTORICAL SOCIETY - AFTERNOON

Ian walks in, hesitant. TED DE LINT, 53, gangly, sits at a desk. He's surrounded by file cabinets upon file cabinets.

DE LINT
Can I help you?

IAN
I...I really don't know. I feel kind of silly honestly. Like being here is making me realize how ridiculous this all is.

De Lint stands up.

DE LINT
 Wingwoman research, I'm guessing.
 (a beat)
 Come on, you're not the first
 person to get in here and feel like
 a fool. If you stay, then you'll be
 the first.

Ian shrugs.

IAN
 I don't have anything else to do.

De Lint walks over.

DE LINT
 Oliver De Lint, town historian.

IAN
 Ian Cottingley.

DE LINT
 Kin to Charlie?

IAN
 Yes, why?

DE LINT
 Kevin's my cousin! Your brother's a
 good man.

De Lint walks with Ian.

DE LINT (CONT'D)
 Seriously, I'm genuinely excited to
 meet another enthusiast.

IAN
 I'm not an enthusiast. I'm trying
 to come up with a definitive
 explanation I can live with.

DE LINT
 For?

His jaw drops.

DE LINT (CONT'D)
 You saw her!

IAN
 I...look I didn't admit it to the
 librarian and I'm not admitting it
 here. Forget I said anything.

DE LINT

Well come on man! You kinda dropped
a huge bombshell here.

Ian looks out the window.

IAN

I had a vivid dream about her that
I'm not sure was a dream but it has
to be a dream because of logic. So
now I'm trying to do research.

DE LINT

Well, maybe the research will
change your mind.

There is an awkward pause.

IAN

Did you--

DE LINT

I don't wish to discuss it.

He opens a drawer.

DE LINT (CONT'D)

These are the files I've got. Feel
free to make copies.

Ian inhales.

IAN

And so it begins.

A series of shots of Ian making copies follows. It's as
intense and exciting as it is dull.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RIDGE - AFTERNOON

As Ian leaves the historical society, his eye catches a sign
that reads WINGWOMAN TOUR TONIGHT 7 PM. MEET AT 1597 BRENT
ROAD.

EXT. TOUR SITE - NIGHT

Ian stands with a few others on the side of the road. A few
lights illuminate them. VIOLETTE, a goth type in her early
30s walks over to Ian.

VIOLETTE

You got the time?

Ian checks his phone.

IAN

6:59.

VIOLETTE

Good to know. My phone's broken.
Gotta love Mercury in retrograde.

IAN

What does that mean?

VIOLETTE

When Mercury's in retrograde
technology breaks all the time.

IAN

You're talking astrology?

VIOLETTE

Yeah, why?

IAN

Well it's bullshit.

Violette glares at him.

VIOLETTE

So why are you even here?

IAN

Trying to figure out what kind of
bullshit it is.

VIOLETTE

Ah, so you're trying to look for
evidence!

IAN

Yes.

She looks up at the sky.

VIOLETTE

I do that a lot, asshole. I've
observed patterns--

Ian starts to speak.

VIOLETTE (CONT'D)

And I have a master's in psychology
so don't start. I've observed these
patterns. Is it star energy? Is it
cosmic energy?

(MORE)

VIOLETTE (CONT'D)

Collective consciousness? No clue.
But I buy it. Maybe try an open
mind.

She storms off. A truck pulls up and two guys get out. A tall Latino in his late 30's, TIMMY TORRES and a shorter man in his late 30s, L.K. HAMILTON.

L.K.

So? We all here? Anyway I'm L.K.
Hamilton and this quiet guy is
Timmy Torres. Call my man T2 or
Infiltrator but never his name!
Anyway welcome to the Kiss of
Shadows tour of Wingwoman
sightings. Y'all got the \$5 fee?

People hand him money. They start walking into the woods.

INT. WOODS - NIGHT

As the tourists walk, L.K. Talks. Or more accurately drones.

L.K.

She's supposed to haunt these
woods, they say. My friend Dash
says he got clawed by her once.
Dash always has been prone to BS.
He claims he tapped Merry Gentry
after all. I know she's too good
for his ass.

Ian groans as he walks. It's obvious what this us.

EXT. TOUR SITE - NIGHT

Nobody looks happy as they leave. Ian stays and walks up to
L.K.

L.K.

What can I do you for?

IAN

I'm doing research into the
Wingwoman story and I have all
kinds of questions.

L.K.

Hope I helped.

A beat.

IAN
You made all that up, didn't you?

L.K. Nods.

L.K.
You know you're the first to call me on it. Look I know the story is bullshit. But it's nice to get out on a spring evening, take a hike, do a little performance art. You don't believe, do you?

IAN
No, but I'm still looking for an answer.

L.K.
A great story lives without living. Nuff said.

He walks off.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian sorts his copies into piles. His phone rings. Ian answers it.

IAN
Hello?

XAVIER (V.O.)
Ian! Been a long time.

IAN
Well, you know.

XAVIER (V.O.)
Yeah... Look, I'm calling because I need my taxes done and I don't trust anybody in town.

IAN
You shouldn't.

XAVIER (V.O.)
So, you interested?

IAN
Absolutely. Send me your files.

XAVIER (V.O.)
Sounds good. What're you doing now?

Ian studies a photo he copied.

IAN
I'm actually doing your work,
studying documents right now.

XAVIER (V.O.)
Hey, if you need any help on it, I
get clients from around the world.
I can sure as hell help you.

Ian smiles.

IAN
Miss grabbing a beer with you.

XAVIER (V.O.)
Same. I gotta go but I'll get them
to you tomorrow.

IAN
Thanks.

Ian puts his phone down and stares out the window.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian lays in bed, fast asleep. Outside his window, the sound of the song can faintly be heard. Ian's eyes flicker as if he might hear it but swiftly close.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian sits at the table, his afternoon tea at his side. He has the papers from pile one laid out. A drawing holds his eye, that of the first sighting.

Ian takes a long sip of tea then walks outside.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian walks outside and stands where he was when his sighting took place. He closes his eyes.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian is once more standing in front of the tree looking up. Everything has a slightly dreamlike quality except Ian. Everything plays out as it did before except this time he sees

The monstrous Wingwoman. It screams at him.

All at once the scene pauses and Ian studies her. Her features shift back to what he saw. It takes almost no effort for Ian to mentally recreate the beautiful woman he saw.

Ian studies her. All at once an array of famous faces flash past his eyes. None of them look like her. He then filters in women from town. No resemblance.

Finally he steps back and Miranda Spenser appears next to the Wingwoman. There is a slight resemblance but hardly enough to confuse the two. Miranda fades away.

Ian continues to stare, confused and fascinated.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian stands once more, looking around.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian sits at his computer, reading up on Andrew Lang. He takes copious notes. Key words pop out. Industrialist. Land robber. Timber magnate. Abusive.

A date pops out: 10/12/1885. The sentence reads in full "Lang finalized the purchase of his hunting lands through a contract many felt was shady, destroying an estate which stood for 30 years."

Ian races to his files. Notes. The date of the sighting: 10/13/85.

Ian shuffles through his files, searching for the Phillip Edwards file. He takes note of the date: 3/22/1956.

He jots down the date of the 1974 sighting: 2/7/1974.

INT. LIBRARY - AFTERNOON

Ian walks to the microfilm section, a fevered look in his eyes. He pulls out the several months from the cabinet. He reaches the machine. It's a monstrosity.

He sighs. Miranda walks over.

MIRANDA

They terrify all who see them.

IAN
I can see why.

Miranda takes one of the reels.

MIRANDA
Fortunately, in my desire to learn Mountain Ridge's history, I made myself an expert at them, which helped bring me to my job.

She loads it into the machine.

IAN
Thank you.

MIRANDA
I confess I know precisely why you seek this material.

Ian sits at the machine.

IAN
I'm not hiding why.

He turns the dial.

IAN (CONT'D)
I have a thesis. I'm trying to prove it now.

MIRANDA
Explain further.

Ian looks at her.

IAN
Andrew Lang had an emotionally charged moment the day before. I had an emotionally charged moment that night. What if that's what brings on the delusion?

MIRANDA
What happened to you?

IAN
I don't wish to discuss.

He turns back to the research.

IAN (CONT'D)
It's a thesis though. A solid, workable one.

A montage of newspaper pages shooting past. Lang's name shows up repeatedly. Initially the words linked to it consist of the words seen before. Then the sighting. The words change. Donation, grant of land, hospital.

Ian looks up, deep in thought.

INT. LIBRARY - LATER

Ian studies the prints at a table. Miranda walks over.

MIRANDA
We close within 15 minutes.

IAN
Ok, I'll head on.

Miranda points at a clipping.

MIRANDA
You notice the pattern in Lang's behavior?

IAN
Yeah. Kinda shocking. It reinforces my thesis. This was a man in an emotional crisis who changed.

MIRANDA
Like you?

Ian stands up.

IAN
I feel like you really want to hear my story.

MIRANDA
I concede I already know much of it. The news of Charlie Cottingley's brother at one of the great recent tragedies reached us as you might expect.

Ian goes pale.

IAN
I suppose it had to.

Miranda gently places a hand on Ian's shoulder.

MIRANDA

I understand. I truly understand.
Know I stand at the willing to aid.

Ian smiles.

IAN

Thank you.

They stand for a long moment, soaking in the connection.
Miranda breaks it.

MIRANDA

You should post a notice in the
local social media groups. Speak to
a recent witness like yourself.

IAN

I...I will.

He steps to the door.

MIRANDA

It brings me joy to encounter you,
Ian. You wrestle with questions you
understand not. It amuses me.

IAN

It's nice to have someone to talk
to. Not to be weird but do you have
a boyfriend?

Miranda shakes her head.

MIRANDA

My community forbids dating, I
fear.

Ian shrugs.

IAN

Shame.

He walks out.

EXT. LIBRARY - EVENING

Ian walks out. Twilight casts a sickly glow over the town.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Ian gets out of his car. He stares at the giant gas station. A deep breath. He walks up to it.

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Ian walks in. It's a far less explosive environment than the megastore but still intense. Ian takes a deep breath and marches through the store.

His eyes dart until he reaches the soda case. He grabs a bottle of root beer. The noise around him seems to intensify as he does. Ian races to the counter.

He sets two dollars on the counter and races out.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Ian walks to his car and breathes deeply. He opens the drink and takes a nice, long sip. He looks back at the station.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian types a message up. It reads "My name is Ian Cottingley and I'm collecting stories of the Mountain Ridge Wingwoman. Any sightings, first hand to fifth hand would be appreciated."

He posts it and walks outside.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian walks out onto his front porch and stares up. Without thinking, he starts humming the song.

Very, very faintly the song can be heard. Possibly just in his mind, possibly her.

There is a strong breeze around Ian. He hums even louder.

INT. HISTORICAL SOCIETY - AFTERNOON

Ian continues to work, browsing the tomes in the society. De Lint walks over.

DE LINT
These are like 80 percent lies, you
know.

IAN
They feel off.

DE LINT
So many people wanted her to be the
Boggy Creek monster. She's not.

IAN
What is she then?

DE LINT
An avenging angel.

He slaps Ian on the shoulder and walks to a minifridge. He
pulls out a beer and hands it to Ian.

IAN
I really don't want one right now.

DE LINT
Come on, man. This is a relaxed
place. Besides, I'm in the mood to
tell you my story.

Ian looks up.

DE LINT (CONT'D)
Look, I know you're interested. I
saw your post. If you're desperate,
I'll give you everything.

Ian pulls out his phone.

DE LINT (CONT'D)
You going to record me?

IAN
Standard research practice, yeah.
Haven't had any in person accounts.

DE LINT
Sounds good. I'm a talker.

Ian starts recording.

IAN
You say she's an avenging angel.
How do you know?

Ted leans forward.

DE LINT
I'll be blunt, I was a bastard in
my early 20s.
(MORE)

DE LINT (CONT'D)

I was traveling around the country, kinda aimless. I wound up here. Was only going to grab a soda when I stopped in at this store. It was like this Amish shit store. Only took cash. Did great business too. I could tell it was the kind of place without security. Kind of place that kept cash on site.

He closes his eyes.

DE LINT (CONT'D)

So I robbed it. I took em for 700 bucks at least. Hell of a score in 93. Hell of a score today.

De Lint opens them again.

DE LINT (CONT'D)

I grabbed a motel room, 6 pack of beer. Figured I was safe. Had a couple beers early on, went to bed watching Cinemax. Nothing major.

(pause)

Then about 3:30 AM I saw her. She stood over the foot of my bed. Had one of those creepy ass gray alien heads. Giant black bulbous eyes. Literal slit mouth. No nose. She stood, waiting for me to wake up. No idea how long she was in there.

He shakes his head.

DE LINT (CONT'D)

I bolt up. Try to get the hell out. She grabs me. Tells me she knows what I did. Tells me I have to come clean.

IAN

And you did. No charges were pressed as long as you repaid within a year. You stayed in Mountain Ridge while you repaid the debt then decided to stay for good. I know all this.

DE LINT

You don't know what else I saw in that room though.

Ian stiffens, shocked.

DE LINT (CONT'D)

I know you know what she really looks like. She's not a monster. Not really.

IAN

What makes you think I know this?

DE LINT

Because you're desperate to find out the truth about her. Only a man who's seen the truth would be this obsessed.

Ian turns the recording off.

IAN

What's the truth?

INT. MOTEL ROOM (1993) - NIGHT

A young Ted stares in horror at the blank eyed alien. All at once her appearance shifts to that of a sharp featured young woman with a blonde pixie cut and piercing eyes. The wings shift to ones similar but not exactly like the ones on Ian's visitor.

DE LINT (V.O.)

She told me she pitied me. She told me there was good in me. She told me I could reform.

The Wingwoman slides Ted into bed. Ted blinks.

DE LINT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I closed my eyes for a second and-

Ted looks up. She's gone.

INT. HISTORICAL SOCIETY - MORNING

Ian is spellbound.

DE LINT

I've spent 24 years trying and hoping to find her. Maybe to tell her I made good. Maybe to get rid of the feeling I met the most beautiful creature I'll ever see. But I'll never quit looking.

IAN

Your story amazes me. Some flaws though. She looked a bit different and she had a different motive. She didn't do the monster thing and she told me not to be afraid.

De Lint laughs. A hard belly laugh.

DE LINT

You think there's just one, don't you.

Ian is thrown.

DE LINT (CONT'D)

Think about it. She could be immortal but unlikely. She looks different to everybody. She acts different, ask Phil Edwards. She can't just be one person. She's a race.

IAN

So where are they hiding?

De Lint laughs.

DE LINT

We have a cult on the edge of town. A cult that acts strange, talks strange. Come on man, you don't realize it?

He leans in.

DE LINT (CONT'D)

The Externals are fairies.

Ian goes still.

DE LINT (CONT'D)

Surely you've figured that out at least. All the classic tropes after all.

IAN

I hadn't.

DE LINT

Well I guess you needed my help then.

IAN
If you're so certain of this then
why haven't you proven it yourself?

DE LINT
They don't trust me. Good reason
too. You, they might. You know any?

Ian pauses.

IAN
One.

DE LINT
Worth looking her over.

He stands up.

DE LINT (CONT'D)
Watch the skies, man. Oh and look
up Phil Edwards.

He leaves. Ian sits, lost in thought.

INT. LIBRARY - AFTERNOON

Ian, dejected, walks into the society. De Lint sits at his desk. He lights up when Ian enters. The news blares in the background.

MIRANDA
Good day
So you've returned!

Ian points at the TV.

IAN
Can you turn that off?

MIRANDA
What troubles you about the news?

IAN
I avoid it like the plague. It sets
off my PTSD. So, just, off.

Miranda turns it off.

MIRANDA
Not a healthy way to live.

IAN

It has to be for me. Anyway I'm in here because I have questions about the Externals, your people.

Miranda shrugs.

MIRANDA

The collective formed in 1916 in the goal of a safe haven for women. Beyond that, we lack much of a story.

IAN

Really?

MIRANDA

Rather simple idea, really. Look, we integrate well into the community but they keep their compound a secret and we respect that.

IAN

Ted--

Miranda shakes her head.

MIRANDA

You spoke to Ted De Lint! Jesus, Ted de Lint came to see you?

IAN

Yes. He gave me some vital information--

MIRANDA

No, he shared lies. He wants vengeance upon us because we called the police on him. No, he shared lies. He's a drunk who has five different theories to get back at the Externals.

Ian looks crestfallen.

IAN

It sounded good.

MIRANDA

I lie not, I love the idea of belonging to a society of warrior goddesses! But he tells myths. He called us a cult.

(MORE)

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

He calls us a militia. He thinks we engage in human trafficking. I could continue.

Ian sighs.

IAN

He called the Wingwoman a fairy though. Like what if that's the case? What if he's not wrong?

MIRANDA

Ok, so he calls a woman with wings a fairy? Not a hard leap. A very cool idea.

Ian walks towards the books.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

Surely something else brings you in?

IAN

I wanted to look up Phil Edwards. Maybe try to contact him.

Miranda goes still.

DE LINT

Phil Edwards disappeared in 1957. He almost certainly died.

Ian stops.

IAN

What happened?

MIRANDA

Nobody knows. It happened shortly after graduation. He just vanished. Left everything behind. At least that story circulates in town.

INT. LIBRARY - AFTERNOON

Ian studies a chapter on Phil Edwards. It's filled with photos of a photogenic young man.

He pauses at a news clipping. The headline reads "Local teen saves girl from fall." It depicts Phil with the external girl from the soda fountain. The caption calls her Rionach Ifreann.

IAN
Hey, I have a question.

Miranda walks over.

IAN (CONT'D)
This is new information. Who's
Rionach Ifreann?

MIRANDA
Rionach leads the Externals. She
possessed a mad crush on Phil.

IAN
After he saved her from the fall?

MIRANDA
Some say he stopped her from
suicide while others reverse the
order. It was before that she had
the crush anyway. Well, he didn't
save her from a fall. That's the
cover. He stopped her from suicide.
It was before that she had the
crush anyway.

IAN
And the sighting happened after?

Miranda nods. Ian smiles.

IAN (CONT'D)
Thank you.

EXT. OUTPOST - AFTERNOON

Ian drives past the outpost. He stares at the community,
pondering Miranda's and De Lint's words. He pulls up to the
gas station and gets out.

Ian looks at the station, tempted to go in. He starts to but
stops when his eyes meet those of an OLD WOMAN inside. She
stares him down, sending him back to his car.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ian works in the kitchen on his dinner. There is a knock on
his door. Ian groans and opens it. Miranda stands in the
doorway.

IAN
What brings you here?

MIRANDA
I wished to inquire about reports
you visited my community today.

Ian inhales.

IAN
Curiosity.

He steps back.

IAN (CONT'D)
You want to come in?

Miranda enters.

IAN (CONT'D)
I hope I didn't overstep my bounds.
I know men are forbidden and all
but I wanted to see it.

MIRANDA
You created discomfort by not
entering our store. It made you
appear suspicious.

This throws Ian.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
My people keep strong rules about
access but our store, we welcome
you to. Not entering suggested a
voyeur.

IAN
I'm sorry.

Miranda inhales.

MIRANDA
I assume I arrive at supper?

IAN
Yeah, I'm making a potato-leek
soup.

MIRANDA
It smells fragrant.

IAN
I'm making a ton. There's no small
recipe. It'll go to waste I'm sure.

A long pause.

MIRANDA

Not if you shared with a guest.

Ian laughs.

IAN

I have no idea how to be around people anymore. I'm sorry. Yes, by all means stay. It'll be a bit though.

MIRANDA

I lack plans.

She walks into the living room and takes a seat. Ian walks to his fridge.

IAN

Do you want something to drink? I've got tea, a few bottles of root beer, a few real beers.

MIRANDA

A beer appeals to my palate.

Ian takes the drink to her. She takes a long sip.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

My this reflects uncommonly strong taste.

IAN

I got it from Ted--

He stops. Miranda stares him directly in the eye.

MIRANDA

I know he visited.

IAN

I don't believe a word he said.

MIRANDA

But it stoked your curiosity in us?

Ian nods. Miranda stands.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

I judge you not for exploring every avenue, Ian. But forget his slander against us. And speak truth to me.

They walk to the kitchen where Ian returns to work.

IAN
I feel like I can tell everybody
but you. You intimidate me so much!

MIRANDA
Thank you.

IAN
OK, you really want the truth?
Obviously I saw her.

Miranda shakes her head.

MIRANDA
I care little for that story. I
want the truth of why you sit
before me tonight instead of in the
life you once lived.

Ian inhales deeply.

IAN
I don't want to talk about that.

MIRANDA
I wish to.

She takes a very long drink as punctuation.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
I want to understand. I sense your
pain. I sense your desire to speak
on it. Tell me.

Ian shakes his head.

IAN
I just wanted an energy drink and
Kroger was cheaper than the gas
station. But let me start at the
beginning.

INT. APARTMENT - MORNING

A year earlier. Ian, heavier, gets dressed in a nice
apartment. It's filled with more things than he has now.

EXT. APARTMENT - MORNING

A blue, bright morning. Ian walks to his car. He nods at a
fellow resident.

EXT. MEMPHIS - MORNING

The city looms large. It's big, exciting.

EXT. DOWNTOWN MEMPHIS - MORNING

Ian walks through town. He shows no signs of the person he'll become.

INT. BANK BUILDING - MORNING

Ian stands in the lobby, working as a teller. He counts money quickly for a customer.

IAN
920, 940, 960, 980, 1000. It's all
there.

He hands the money to the customer.

BANK CUSTOMER
Thank you.

The customer walks away. Ian's manager walks over.

BANK MANAGER
Hey, what are you doing at lunch?

IAN
Eating, why?

BANK MANAGER
Look, I feel awful. It's a personal
favor.

IAN
I'll do it.

BANK MANAGER
You don't even know what it is.

IAN
I don't care. I kinda want to get
out.

BANK MANAGER
It's stupid. I've been searching
for this game and the game store in
West Memphis has it but I can't get
to it and there's a limit on the
hold and--

IAN
Not a problem. I've been on a quest
before.

BANK MANAGER
You're a life saver!

Ian beams.

IAN
Happy to help.

EXT. RIVER CROSSING - AFTERNOON

Ian drives over the Mississippi River.

EXT. GAME STORE - AFTERNOON

Ian walks out of the store with a bag, talking on the phone.

IAN
I've got it.

BANK MANAGER (V.O.)
You're amazing.

IAN
Look, if I'm off I've gotta get a
few things from the store.

He looks across the street. The Kroger sign looms large.

INT. GROCERY STORE (WEST MEMPHIS) - AFTERNOON

The day of the shooting. Ian walks through the entrance,
passing a clean cut man carrying a large bag. He walks
through the store, completely at ease as he reaches the
energy drink aisle.

He takes a drink.

All turns to chaos. The sound of gunshots. The clean cut man
races by, firing a shot in Ian's direction. It very narrowly
misses him.

Ian stands still for a long moment. Suddenly the police race
up.

IAN (V.O.)
For the first few days, I was fine.

INT. BANK BUILDING - MORNING

Ian returns to applause and hugs.

IAN (V.O.)
The world celebrates survivors for
a time and that helps us go on.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ian lays in bed, twitching.

IAN (V.O.)
But the dreams began.

INT. BANK BUILDING - AFTERNOON

Ian stares at people as they pass through the doors.

IAN (V.O.)
So did the paranoia.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ian watches the news. It's a horror show. He has a list of
shootings compiled.

IAN (V.O.)
You start to realize the world is
rotten.

INT. WAL-MART - NIGHT

Ian walks through the store. The noise grows and grows as he
walks. Even worse than his visit in Mountain Ridge. Ian
suddenly collapses.

CUT TO BLACK.

IAN (V.O.)
And you break.

INT. HOSPITAL - MORNING

A mental hospital. Ian sits in a room with Dr. Rusch.

IAN (V.O.)
 So I broke. I was in the hospital
 for a month getting intensive
 treatment. But I knew the treatment
 I really needed.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ian parks his car in the garage and closes the door.

IAN (V.O.)
 I made myself safe.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ian looks off as he finishes his story.

IAN
 And that's that.

Miranda wipes a tear, clearly quite moved.

MIRANDA
 I feel such pain for you, Ian.

She inhales deeply.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
 But I despise your decision to
 retreat. At age 12, in my homeland,
 two violent factions warred
 throughout the region. Bombings
 occurred regularly. One of those
 happened before my eyes. It claimed
 the lives of my mother and sister,
 my only living family. I fled to
 Mountain Ridge too, in my case to
 live with distant kin, but I never
 withdrew.

IAN
 You're criticizing a mental health
 patient, you know.

MIRANDA
 I know. But I speak only what I
 believe. The world contains horror,
 yes, but it contains such joy. It
 contains hope, life. As a
 librarian, I encounter children
 daily and see seeds of life!
 (MORE)

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
I meet people every day who
surprise and enliven me.

Ian raises a hand.

IAN
Is this an intervention?

Miranda nods.

MIRANDA
I know your brother. I knew every
detail you just told me long before
our initial encounter. I pondered
long when to approach you and
perhaps I misjudged the moment, but
as a kindred soul though a relative
stranger I care.

Ian is floored. He can't respond.

IAN
I'm calling Charlie and Kevin.

MIRANDA
Why?

IAN
Because I think I want this to be a
true party.

MIRANDA
Shall I leave?

IAN
I'm begging you to stay.

He smiles at her.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - EVENING

A series of shots of Ian, Miranda, Charlie and Kevin as they
eat, drink, and talk. A wonderful dinner.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian sleeps, a fitful sleep.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ian sits in front of his computer, talking to Dr. Rusch.

IAN
So I know it's silly but I'm really
enjoying this project.

DR. RUSCH (V.O.)
It's not silly. Pretty common
honestly.

IAN
I am starting to think I'm onto
something. It's not plausible but
it's there.

DR. RUSCH (V.O.)
Have you gone out in public?

IAN
A bit.

DR. RUSCH (V.O.)
Have you gone home?

Ian shakes his head.

IAN
I can't and I won't.

DR. RUSCH (V.O.)
I understand. But you know at some
point you have to.

IAN
I know...

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

It's late afternoon. Ian paces, unsettled. He stares out the
window.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian backs out of the driveway.

EXT. OUTPOST - AFTERNOON

Ian drives up to the gas station. He gets out of his car and
looks around once more. His eyes scan the outpost with new
interest.

Ian walks into the gas station, boldly.

INT. OUTPOST STATION - AFTERNOON

Ian walks into a scene from an unsettling dream. Nothing about this store can possibly be any more recent than 1999. There is a wall of VHS tapes. None of the items for sale are name brand. The lighting is sickly.

Ian looks around, nervous. An old woman walks out from the back, the same one who stared him down earlier. This is RIONACH.

RIONACH
So you return!

IAN
I just wanted a soda.

He takes a cola from the case.

RIONACH
You came before.

IAN
I'm just looking around. This is a public business.

Ian approaches the counter. He puts the can down.

IAN (CONT'D)
It's my right.

RIONACH
Dollar 10.

Ian sets the money on the counter.

IAN
You have a lovely store.

RIONACH
Serves the purpose.

Ian takes the soda and walks out.

EXT. OUTPOST - AFTERNOON

Ian walks out to a number of women from the community staring at him. It's extremely unnerving. He hesitates. Suddenly Miranda races up.

MIRANDA
So sorry.

She turns to the women.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
Ciallaíonn sé seo an fear aon
dochar! Caitheamh dó le cuibheas!

Rionach walks out.

RIONACH
Bagairt ar sé dúinn!

MIRANDA
Tá a fhios agam a chroí.
Riachtanais sé chun siúl inár
measc. Riachtanais sé a leigheas.

Rionach stares at Ian.

RIONACH
Ní bheidh sé ag foghlaim an
fhírinne maidir linn.

Miranda shakes her head.

MIRANDA
Ní anois. Ach beidh sé in am!

Rionach puts her hand on Miranda's shoulder.

RIONACH
Ní féidir liom a cháineadh tú ró-
deacair. Cead agam tar éis an
tsaoil fear i mé féin.

Rionach turns to the crowd.

RIONACH (CONT'D)
Thiocfaidh sé! Lig dó nach féach ar
ár fírinne.

Rionach turns to Ian.

RIONACH (CONT'D)
Welcome to the Outpost.

IAN
Thank you.

EXT. OUTPOST - MOMENTS LATER

Ian and Miranda walk through the neighborhood. Ian stares, fascinated.

MIRANDA
 Forgive Rionach, she fears
 outsiders even though most of us
 work among you.

IAN
 I can't comment on someone having a
 social phobia.

They reach a small cottage.

MIRANDA
 Shall we?

INT. MIRANDA'S COTTAGE - EVENING

Ian walks around a small, lovely cottage. It's nicely quaint
 in a welcoming way. Miranda walks out, redressed in a far
 more colorful dress.

MIRANDA
 What appeals to your eye about my
 domicile?

IAN
 It's very homey. Makes me see my
 own deficiencies.

MIRANDA
 You live in a cage, not a home.

Ian laughs. He doesn't argue.

EXT. OUTPOST (CENTER) - EVENING

Ian and Miranda sit at an outside dining area, eating with
 the group. Conversation is lively. It's peaceful.

EXT. OUTPOST - NIGHT

Ian watches as the women sing in gaelic. He stands,
 fascinated. He stares at Miranda.

PHIL (O.S.)
 It never gets old.

Ian turns to see PHIL EDWARDS, 78, a marvelously preserved
 figure.

IAN
 I thought there were no men here.

PHIL
No true Externals. I'm just a
permanent guest.

He extends his hand.

PHIL (CONT'D)
Phil Edwards.

Ian takes the hand, shocked.

IAN
Repeat that!

Phil laughs.

PHIL
I know. You've heard I was dead. I
ain't. Been here for a long time.

IAN
Seriously, you're a legend in town.
And you've been here--

PHIL
Since 56.

Phil points to Rionach.

PHIL (CONT'D)
Decided to follow my true love
here.

IAN
After you saved her from suicide?

Phil's eyebrows raise.

PHIL
That's how they spin it?

IAN
Is that untrue?

Phil closes his eyes.

PHIL
Carl Edwards was the meanest
goddamn bastard in the state. His
golden boy wasn't golden enough for
him. So yeah, I went to that cliff.
Rionach talked me off. Then she
lured me here.

A long pause.

IAN
Look, I'm Ian--

PHIL
Miranda told me. She told me all
about your project.

IAN
Well, what did you see?

Phil shakes his head.

PHIL
I saw hope. Rionach talked me down.
The Wingwoman talked me into
living.

IAN
But you escaped to this.

PHIL
I traveled the world actually. I
just made this my base.

They watch the women.

IAN
The men that see her seem to
change.

PHIL
Damn right we do. If your reality
was upended, wouldn't you change?

IAN
How couldn't you?

Phil pats him on the back.

PHIL
There's hope for you yet.

EXT. OUTPOST STATION - NIGHT

Ian and Miranda stand at his car. Ian coughs briefly.

IAN
Thank you for a lovely night.

MIRANDA
My pleasure.

There is a long pause, the kind where they should kiss, then Miranda steps back.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
I apologize. I fear this must not proceed.

IAN
Why not?

Miranda sighs.

MIRANDA
My world forbids a man from entering as a consort unless he serves the leader of the community.

Ian's heart shatters.

IAN
I...

Tears well up in Miranda's eyes.

MIRANDA
I apologize. The rule stands though.

They stare at each other, unable to speak.

IAN
Take care.

He gets in his car and leaves.

INT. IAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Ian drives off, frustrated.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Ian lies in bed, coughing again. He closes his eyes.

Black

The singing. It's louder than it's been since the Wingwoman showed up the first time.

Ian's eyes open. He gets out of bed and walks through the house, his eyes wild.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian races out the front door. She's not there. He can still hear the singing though. He races to the back to see

The Wingwoman

She hovers in above him, looking majestic in the moonlight. The singing stops. She lands in front of him.

WINGWOMAN

Hello.

Ian's pulse pounds.

IAN

What do you want with me?

WINGWOMAN

To heal you.

IAN

Like you healed Phil Edwards and Ted DeLint.

The Wingwoman smiles.

WINGWOMAN

Others achieved those feats.

IAN

Then how do you--

The Wingwoman kisses Ian. It's a shocking, bold moment of passion.

Ian pulls back.

IAN (CONT'D)

I--

WINGWOMAN

I sense your heart. I know. But allow yourself a moment of joy.

She wraps her arms around him and suddenly they arc into the sky.

Ian looks down, watching his house shrink into invisibility. The lights of Mountain Ridge shine. Everything is awe inspiring.

IAN

It's so amazing.

WINGWOMAN

Indeed!

Suddenly they shoot down, flying close over the city.

IAN

What if someone sees us!

WINGWOMAN

A glamour protects our visibility!

They fly over sites Ian has seen before. From above, the modest town acquires a majesty. Ian simply watches.

They land on the roof of a building in the town square. All is still.

IAN

You're quite strong.

WINGWOMAN

Humans possess such little strength compared to one such as I.

Ian steps back.

IAN

You could answer every question I have about you right now! You know that right?

The Wingwoman shakes her head.

WINGWOMAN

Would I speak truth? Where resides your mind in this moment?

She touches his eyes.

WINGWOMAN (CONT'D)

Vividly I appear before you.

She places her hands on his shoulders. All at once reality warps and they stand in--

INT. IAN'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Ian is shocked. The Wingwoman smirks.

WINGWOMAN

Yet I might simply stand as manifestation of your soul. Maybe I evoke something you desire?

Her hand caresses his cheek.

WINGWOMAN (CONT'D)

In all the others, they glimpsed an internal desire. What separates you from them?

She pushes him onto the bed, laying on top of him.

WINGWOMAN (CONT'D)

I might represent your carnal desires. You fear humanity. I manifest as an inhuman creature with the form of a beauty. How logical.

She places her hands on his shoulders and they lie--

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

They lie on the roof. Ian stares into her eyes.

IAN

What's the point of all of this?

WINGWOMAN

Pleasure.

They kiss again. It's profound, passionate. This time when Ian pulls back, there's something on his mind.

IAN

You're not an External, are you?

WINGWOMAN

No.

(beat)

But I lie. Or perhaps I speak truth.

They kiss again. She places her hands on Ian's shoulders and there is a

FADE TO:

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ian awakens. He checks his feet. They're clean. He looks over his clothes, even checking the bed for debris. Nothing.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Ian walks to his computer. He's about to start work when he stops, a driven look on his face. There are flashes of the night before. Hints of something he can't grasp.

He hastily types an email that reads "unable to work, sick -- Ian."

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ian walks out to his car. He looks energized, possessed. Subconsciously, frames from the night before filter in as he stares at his car. He opens his car door, coughing.

INT. IAN'S CAR - MORNING

Ian drives, listening to music. It's very high o

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

Ian's car drives to an on ramp for a 4 lane highway. He gets on.

INT. IAN'S CAR - MORNING

Ian starts to laugh. The flashes of the night before come hard and fast in this moment.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

Ian drives. A series of shots take him from Mountain Ridge to the Missouri border then the outskirts of Branson.

EXT. BRANSON - MORNING

Ian drives down the strip. It's sparsely populated, quiet. Ian passes the myriad sites. Finally Ian reaches a truck stop on the outskirts of Branson.

EXT. TRUCK STOP - MORNING

Ian gets out of his car. He's a bit nervous but ready. Ian walks in.

INT. TRUCK STOP - MORNING

Ian walks into the fairly large, pleasant truck stop. He's obviously a bit on edge but less so than the past. He walks through the aisles, simply happy to be out.

He starts to cough again. A nasty cough. He walks to the cooler and grabs a giant bottle of water. He pays for it quickly and walks out.

EXT. TRUCK STOP - MORNING

Ian walks out, content.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

Ian drives through the mountains, free, at peace.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RIDGE - AFTERNOON

Ian arrives back in town early in the afternoon.

EXT. HISTORICAL SOCIETY - AFTERNOON

Ian gets out of his car. He starts to walk toward the library then stops. He turns instead to the historical society.

INT. HISTORICAL SOCIETY - AFTERNOON

Ian walks in. De Lint sits in his usual position.

DE LINT
Afternoon!

Ian ignores him, making a bee line for the file cabinets. He pulls out the documents he's studied before. As he does, a slip falls out.

It appears to be an older piece of paper. Ian studies it. On it are coordinates: 36.087600, -93.725184, A combination is also on it: 1597.

Ian pulls out his phone and types them into his GPS. His eyes go wide.

EXT. HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

Ian drives up to a spot. He parks his car and gets out, walking through the woods.

EXT. WOODS - AFTERNOON

Ian walks through the woods, finally reaching
A shack.

It can't be much bigger than a large shed. But it looms like the ark of the covenant.

Ian walks towards it. There's a combination lock. He inputs the combination and opens it.

INT. SHACK - AFTERNOON

Ian walks in. What he sees floors him: Harnesses with wings, drawings of fairies, paint, makeup. Everything one would need to fake a wingwoman.

He spies a very old, almost falling apart journal on a shelf. He opens it. The first pages, dated 2/7/46, read "We, the women of the External community, in tradition of our Wiccan faith, conceive a plan to create a local myth."

Ian closes and carries the journal out of the shack.

EXT. WOODS - AFTERNOON

Ian locks the shed and staggers through the woods. He has the look of a man who has lost everything. He coughs again, much harder now.

EXT. HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

Ian puts the journal in his trunk. He slams the truck shut.

BLACK

A beeping sound is faintly heard.

INT. MOUNTAIN RIDGE HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Ian awakens in a hospital bed. He looks around, confused.

IAN
 (to himself)
 It's a lie, it's a lie.

He starts laughing. A DOCTOR walks in.

DOCTOR
 You're awake!

IAN
 Where am I? What's going on?

DOCTOR
 Mountain Ridge General. You've had
 a pretty nasty case of the flu.

Ian sighs.

IAN
 How long?

DOCTOR
 We can't tell but definitely a bit.

IAN
 Does it cause hallucinations?

DOCTOR
 Oh yeah, definitely.

Ian crumples.

IAN
 Of course.

He looks off.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian returns home. Everything seems colder, less appealing than ever. He walks to his folder of Wingwoman materials and throws it in the trash.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Ian lies in bed. Nothing. He hears nothing. Only the scanner buzzing breaks any silence.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ian works at his computer. The work feels as rote as it is.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ian sits, reading a magazine. Outside, the weather looks incredible. Ian sits anyway.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian puts the finishing touches on the tax work. Charlie walks in.

CHARLIE

Not answering your phone?

IAN

Not feeling like it, no.

CHARLIE

You've backslid.

The words hang in the air. Ian looks up.

IAN

I have. Of course I have!

CHARLIE

Not a good look.

Ian stands up.

IAN

I think being obsessed with a delusion is worse.

CHARLIE

It got you out of the damn house.

IAN

To look into bullshit.

CHARLIE

You met people.

IAN

I met a society of loons, a wonderful girl who can't touch me and what I'm pretty sure was a dangerous drunk who wanted to steal my identity.

CHARLIE

You left the house.

IAN
You're obsessed with that.

CHARLIE
Do you realize you hadn't left of
your own volition in six months?

Ian shakes his head.

IAN
Seven months, 2 weeks, 3 days. I
counted. I counted every goddamn
second!

CHARLIE
And you're back to this.

IAN
I'm insulated. You know that in the
last month there's been five mass
shootings?

CHARLIE
You know I've been shot?

IAN
I remember.

CHARLIE
Christ you're a coward, Ian.

IAN
I'm safe. And why the hell would I
want to be out in the world. You
know what I see there? Darkness!
We're all trying to hurt each other
and push each other away so give me
some credit for accepting that and
choosing to pull back.

CHARLIE
You've lost your mind, you know.

Ian punches him.

IAN
Don't say that to an actual mental
patient.

Charlie decks him back.

CHARLIE

Maybe I'm just trying to help you!
I worry about you, Ian! I worry
about you every gd day.

IAN

Fair.

CHARLIE

I know you're in therapy and I'm
probably not being fair. But how
can I not worry?

IAN

Consider that I'm right.

CHARLIE

You know I know that Miranda told
you her story. I mean, you're aware
I put her up to coming around you.

Ian glares at him.

IAN

So the first woman to express
interest in me in a year was a lie?

CHARLIE

No, that was unexpected. But I told
her to reach out to you because I
knew she was hurting too. She has
panic attacks no different than
you. I mean she's a librarian. Not
exactly putting herself out there.

Charlie moves closer to his brother.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I figured there'd be a benefit to
kindred souls connecting.

IAN

There was.

CHARLIE

I'm sorry she rejected you.

IAN

Kind of a one-two-three punch
really. The rejection, the
discovery, the flu.

CHARLIE

What discovery?

IAN
I found a lot of evidence that the
Wingwoman is an External fraud.

Charlie shrugs.

CHARLIE
That's a theory I've heard.

IAN
So yeah, there's no hope. All is
hurt. All is pain. But we do die at
least!

He smiles.

CHARLIE
I'd schedule an appointment soon.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Another night of darkness and silence.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Another day of droning work.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Another afternoon of boredom. After the energy of before,
returning to this pattern is a nightmarish experience.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ian washes dishes. There is a knock on his door.

IAN
Come in.

Miranda walks in.

MIRANDA
You disappeared.

IAN
Doesn't that make it easier?

He walks over to her.

MIRANDA
What of your research?

IAN
Over.

MIRANDA
What a loss.

They stare at each other. Both have so much to say.

IAN
Why are you here?

MIRANDA
Concern.

IAN
I'm fine. Question solved.

MIRANDA
Would you care to walk with me?

Ian shakes his head.

IAN
Honestly, I'd rather you leave. In fact I'd really like it if I never saw another External as long as I live.

Miranda sighs.

MIRANDA
Ted De Lint--

IAN
Oh he put me on to all of it! I know you won't admit it but know that I know.

Miranda groans.

MIRANDA
You really believed him!

IAN
It made sense.

MIRANDA
Just because something makes sense doesn't equal truth! You must know that!

IAN
Creatures that defy all known laws
of nature can't be true! That I
know.

MIRANDA
I'm not talking about that truth.
You bought into his toxic ideas
about humanity.

IAN
Did Charlie put you up to this
again?

MIRANDA
This comes from me. Seriously ask
yourself if cynicism works as a
philosophy. It accomplishes nothing
but destruction I fear.

She glares at him, a smug superiority pervading her glare.

IAN
Thank you for your platitude. Now
leave.

MIRANDA
Ponder this: What truth do you
know?

Miranda storms out.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian lies in bed, unable to sleep.

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian walks to his car. He opens the trunk and grabs the
journal.

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian studies the journal in his kitchen. There's a look of
confusion on his face as he reads it. It's not sitting right.
Certain words are underlined

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

Ian gets out of his car and walks back through the woods. He comes to the shack.

INT. SHACK - MORNING

Ian studies the things in the shack. They're all shockingly shoddy, half assed upon further study. Ian pulls out his phone.

IAN
Xavier! Your taxes are ready. Let's
get that beer.

EXT. INTERSTATE - MORNING

Ian drives down the interstate, driven like a madman.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - NOON

Ian pulls up to an imposing office building. He marches up to it.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - NOON

Ian walks in, looking disheveled, out of place. XAVIER HAWTHORNE, 30, walks over.

XAVIER
Holy shit, I'm seriously seeing
you!

They embrace.

IAN
I'm here for two reasons. First to
give you your taxes. Then I need
you to look at something.

INT. OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Xavier examines his taxes.

XAVIER
You're a lifesaver. Now show me
what it is you need to show me.

Ian pulls out the journal.

IAN
 I thought I found proof of something. Now, like an idiot, I'm questioning it.

Xavier looks at the journal. He opens the page.

XAVIER
 Wicca wasn't used as a term until the 60s.

IAN
 Excuse me.

XAVIER
 Wicca, there's no way in hell there could've been a Wiccan community this far back. You might've met witches but not Wiccans.

IAN
 So...

Xavier studies the journal even further.

XAVIER
 I'm insulted! This thing, nothing about this is right. I can tell you that in an instant! The glue, the ink. I'd say it's real paper but nothing about this is real.

IAN
 So what is it?

XAVIER
 It's a hoax. It's like the crop circle unmasking. These two guys claimed they were behind all the crop circles in England. They weren't. Time didn't match up. They're still likely right about how but also liars.

IAN
 But it makes sense!

XAVIER
 So did that. But I'm telling you, this thing is a lie.

Ian smiles.

INT. RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Ian and Xavier eat. Ian is clearly deep in thought.

EXT. RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Ian and Xavier part. Ian catches something across the parking lot.

The grocery store.

He storms towards it.

INT. GROCERY STORE (WEST MEMPHIS) - AFTERNOON

Ian walks in for the first time since the shooting. He passes a plaque. It has the names of the victims as well as the survivors. He finds his name.

Ian walks on further to the energy drinks. He places his hand on one.

At once he's bombarded with images. They're way too fast for the viewer to understand but they hit.

Ian's jaw drops. Whatever it was clawing at his brain, it's loose now.

Ian takes the energy drink to the front, pays, then chugs it as he races out.

EXT. HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

Ian drives like a bat out of hell.

EXT. HISTORICAL SOCIETY - EVENING

De Lint is just closing up when Ian storms up to him.

IAN

You wanted me to do your dirty work, didn't you!

DE LINT

I have no--

IAN

You planted all of that. The note, the shack, the journal. All of that was you.

DE LINT

Why?

IAN

To slander the Externals. You used me as a pawn.

De Lint laughs.

DE LINT

Well, look, don't tell me they don't deserve it. They're witches. You know how they can wound.

IAN

Why?

DE LINT

I never wanted to be bound to this shithole but I am! Because of them! They called the cops on me the next day.

IAN

Did you really see her?

DE LINT

Yeah, I did. And everything you found? I'm sure it exists somewhere. I just wanted to make them confess.

Ian glares at him.

IAN

You're a bastard.

He storms off.

EXT. OUTPOST - EVENING

Ian pulls up to the gas station. He gets out of his car. There is real unease as he does so.

Rionach walks out.

RIONACH

What--

IAN

Miranda. Where is she?

RIONACH
You come to hurt her?

IAN
I come to talk.

Rionach yells something indecipherable. Miranda races up.

MIRANDA
What brings you here?

IAN
I had a revelation in West Memphis today. I realized that I hate your community's rules and that you're worth fighting for. So, no offense ma'am, but I'd rather like to defy your rule and court Miranda.

Miranda turns to her leader.

MIRANDA
I wish the same.

There is a long pause. Rionach applauds.

RIONACH
I only set the rule as a test. No man ever passes. Welcome in, Ian.

Ian and Miranda stare at each other, overjoyed. They kiss. Just a peck but a kiss.

EXT. OUTPOST (CENTER) - NIGHT

Ian and Miranda stand by the fire. Ian turns to her.

IAN
Can we walk?

MIRANDA
Certainly.

They walk into the woods. Before long, they're completely removed from everything, reaching a clearing.

IAN
I didn't realize you were worth fighting for today. I knew that. I realized something else.

MIRANDA
What?

IAN
I know who the Wingwoman is. I know
all of it now.

There is an expectant pause.

MIRANDA
Who?

IAN
You.

The words hang in the air.

IAN (CONT'D)
All the evidence points to it.
You're all fey. You're protecting a
boundary aren't you? That's what's
in the woods. That's the outpost.

A long moment. Then Miranda steps back and transforms. Her
face changes completely. Her clothes vanish. Wings unfold.

The Wingwoman--Miranda Spenser--stands before him.

MIRANDA
(In the musical voice)
Correct. At last.

They kiss. It's the passion from the roof but even more
intensified. They break apart. Miranda lets out a cry and at
once everything changes.

The world around Ian reshapes as he sees gateways in the sky.
Fairies flit about. It's pure magic. Ian stares into her
eyes, in awe.

BLACK

IAN (V.O.)
There is good in this world.

EXT. HOUSE - MORNING

Charlie helps a woman leave a violent situation.

IAN (V.O.)
If there is evil, then there must
be good. I believe this.

INT. LIBRARY - MORNING

Miranda, in human guise, reads to children.

IAN (V.O.)
There are always people who will
help. There are people who will
make life better.

INT. HISTORICAL SOCIETY - MORNING

De Lint sits, alone. He's pathetic.

IAN (V.O.)
Evil makes gains but it's not true.
It doesn't have to be. In the end
it's left alone.

INT. BANK - MORNING

Ian sits at a desk, working on a loan with a woman. She's
crying tears of joy.

IAN (V.O.)
We can always make things better.

Miranda walks over. Her glamour flickers and Ian sees her in
her true form.

IAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
We just have to see it.

CUT TO BLACK.