

RED FLAG

written by

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FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dark. Silhouettes of sofas, chairs. A TV flickers.

"TAKE COVER" flashes across the screen. BEEP.

TV ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Attention. This is an important  
message from the National Weather  
Service. A tornado warning --

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Looks like a tornado already hit it -- unmade bed, clothes strewn about, text books and papers across the floor.

On the wall: Photos of off-road quads leaping sand dunes. NASCAR calendar. Framed newspaper article. The headline reads "CHASE MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER SAVES CLASS FROM GUNMAN."

A PHOTO of the teacher below the headline: a woman in her thirties -- sweet face, wide eyes, schoolgirl grin.

Across the room, KEITH WALLACE, 13, all legs and arms and hormones, stares, mesmerized, at a computer screen.

ON KEITH'S COMPUTER a headmaster spans a sweet, young coed.

A KNOCK on the door. Keith slams the computer shut.

SARAH WALLACE, 36, the woman in the newspaper article, blows in. Toned. Beautiful. Dangerous.

SARAH  
Tornado. We're going to the  
Kaufman's. Get your homework.

KEITH  
It's done.

SARAH  
Please don't give me shit today.

She spins out. Keith sighs. Scoops a cell phone off a desk.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ART WALLACE, 50, a gorilla in Bermuda shorts, no shirt, raises a recliner. Rifles around on a coffee table.

SPORTS ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Broncos have the ball at the  
twenty.

Sarah and Keith bound in. Sarah hands Art a shirt.

SARAH  
Tornado. We're going to the  
Kaufman's.

Art tosses the shirt on the coffee table.

ART  
Where's the clicker that's supposed  
to stay in here? Keith.

Keith shrugs. Art shakes his head. Jumps up. Finds the  
remote in the chair where he was sitting. Switches channels.

SARAH  
They're saying on channel five this  
could be an F4.

Art grabs what's left of a six-pack off the floor. Two beers  
remain. He opens one.

ART  
Sons of bitch piss in a mud puddle  
on channel five. Call it a flood.

SARAH  
Just put your damn shirt on.

Art marches to the TV.

ON THE TV: Gray blobs march across a map. Doppler radar.

He points at the screen.

ART  
See how broken up this is?

His thick finger traces a line across the screen.

ART  
It's headed northeast. Toward  
Grant. Or North Platte.

Sarah stands vigilant. Her eyes plead her case.

SARAH  
Please?

ART  
We don't get F4's in Nebraska in  
September.

SARAH  
Global. Warming.

ART  
Horse. Shit.

Art reclaims his recliner. Turns the TV back to ESPN.

Sarah shakes her head, disgusted. Herds Keith to the door.

She looks at Art contemplatively. He sips his beer. Glances at her a second, wisp of a smile. Then back at the TV.

She walks out. Shuts the door firmly behind her.

INT. STORM CELLAR - NIGHT

A single bulb glares from a fixture.

Cans of corn, green beans, potted meat stacked in neat rows.

Bottled water. Battery powered lantern. Transistor radio.

Yellowed chart on the wall: "WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF FALLOUT."

Sarah sits by Keith on a fold-up chair. Keith gazes at his cell phone. Sarah stares at the chart, creeped out.

MRS. KAUFMAN, 80, baked, snatches a box of juice out of a case. MR. KAUFMAN, 90, oxygen tube in his nose, stares at his feet.

MRS. KAUFMAN  
Care for one?

SARAH  
No thanks.

PASTOR ROY BROCKWAY, 60, Stetson hat, opens a can of cocktail wienies. Stabs one with a toothpick. RUTH BROCKWAY, 55, prim, reads a pamphlet: "WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF RAPTURE."

PASTOR BROCKWAY  
You guys ever settle on a church home?

SARAH  
We're still looking.

Ruth casts a judgemental glance Sarah's way.

RUTH  
Don't look too long.

PASTOR BROCKWAY  
How's Keith these days?

SARAH  
Great. Keith's great.

Sarah smiles at her son. He texts on his phone. Oblivious.  
A LOUD RATTLE outside. Then a BANG.

PASTOR BROCKWAY  
By thy holy name Jesus, deliver us.

SARAH  
Oh my God. Art.

Sarah runs to a steep staircase. Scrambles up the steps.

MR. KAUFMAN  
Don't open that door!

RUTH  
We'll be sucked out!

Ruth drops her pamphlet. Dashes after Sarah. But she's  
already got the storm door open. It CREAKS.

EXT. PRAIRIE - NIGHT

Sarah pops through the hole like a gopher. Climbs to her  
feet. Gazes around.

Lightning flashes, low and mean, on the horizon. A WIND  
CHIME TINGLES teasingly. Straight up, stars peek between  
clouds.

A two-story farmhouse with wrap-around porch rests perfectly  
intact beneath towering Ash trees. The glow of a TV flashes  
in a downstairs window.

She does a 360, trying to figure out where the noise came  
from. Shakes her head. Walks back towards the cellar.

SARAH  
It missed us.

A muffled MOAN at her back. She spins.

ACROSS A DIRT ROAD

Rows of late summer corn recede into the ink black night.

VOICE FROM FIELD

(weak)

Help.

EXT. PRAIRIE - NIGHT

Sarah jogs across the road. Stops at the edge of the field.

SARAH

Hello? Is someone there?

Dead silence. Not even the rustle of the wind. Then

KA-BOOM!

An EXPLOSION lights up the night.

Sarah sucks dirt. Flames kiss the sky.

The WING OF A SINGLE ENGINE PLANE becomes visible above the stalks.

EXT. VICTORIAN FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Art explodes onto the front porch. Runs across the yard to Sarah. Stares, shocked, at the spectacle.

ART

Holy shit.

SARAH

Someone's in there.

ART

Alive? They couldn't have survived.

SARAH

I heard them.

Sarah sprints into the cornfield.

ART

Where the hell? Sarah!

She disappears into the stalks. The FIRE CRACKLES after her.

EXT. CORNFIELD - NIGHT

Art plows into the field, thrashing leaves and husks.

ART  
Sarah! Goddammit!

He stops. Looks around. The light from the fire seems to be coming from all directions.

ART  
Whole fucking field could go up.

FOOTSTEPS. He wheels.

Keith bangs into him.

BOOM. A SECOND EXPLOSION shakes the ground. Art slowly turns. A finger of fire leaps in front of them.

KEITH  
Mom!

Sheer terror on their faces.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CORNFIELD - NIGHT

A HUM of VOICES. Lights flash in a smoky haze. Figures emerge, lugging two body bags. WHIR of HELICOPTER BLADES.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

A Medi-vac helicopter straddles the road. Dozens of farmers and townsfolk kibitz on the Wallace's front lawn. Sheriff's Deputies keep them back from the chopper and a Coroner's van.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

Art leans over Sarah. Kisses her on the forehead.

ART  
I love you, pumpkin.

The left side of Sarah's face is charred like burned brisket. A PARAMEDIC plunges a needle into her arm.

Art turns away, fighting tears. Keith squeezes her hand.

She gazes up at him, clearly in shock.

The CHOPPER PILOT pokes his head in the door.

CHOPPER PILOT  
Okay folks. Need you to step out.

ART  
Where you taking her?

CHOPPER PILOT  
Denver.

Art nods. Turns to Sarah. The pilot slides into the cockpit.

Keith's hand remains glued to his mother's. Art takes it.

They sidestep around a SECOND VICTIM, a teenage boy, late teens. He's on oxygen. Unconscious.

ART  
He going to make it?

PARAMEDIC  
Hard to say.

Keith picks up the boy's left hand. A purple mark the size of a silver dollar on it. Faint. Beneath the skin.

Keith stares at the odd mark a beat, puzzled. Finally lets the boy's hand go. While his clothes are singed, there are no visible burns on his body or face.

PARAMEDIC  
Poor kid. Probably lost both parents.

Art steps out of the chopper. Keith lingers at the door, staring bitterly at the unconscious boy.

ART  
Got a long ride ahead of us.

Keith finally jumps out. Follows Art to the house.

EXT. DENVER HEALTH MEDICAL - DAY

A bustling metropolitan hospital in downtown Denver.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Art paces by the door. Keith stares blankly at a TV mounted overhead.



DOCTOR GABAL, 60, turban, manicured beard, strolls in.

DR. GABAL  
Mr. Wallace?

Art spins towards him. Keith trots over.

ART  
Can we see her?

DR. GABAL  
She is unconscious. We have her on  
a ventilator. I am sorry the news  
is not better.

ART  
Her facial burns? How severe?

DR. GABAL  
They are bad. But the threat now  
is infection. We have to get her  
over that hurdle.

KEITH  
(under his breath)  
Going to die anyway.

ART  
What did you say?

KEITH  
She's going to die.

ART  
Only God can determine that, Keith.

KEITH  
God doesn't give a fuck.

Keith blows out. Art gazes after him, shocked.

INT. ICU ROOM - DAY

A narrow ICU room. Sarah lies in bed, unconscious, IV's,  
tubes, running out of her. A bloody, sticky mesh covers half  
her face. A hose drapes from her mouth to a ventilator.

Art and Keith step in, wearing cloth respiration masks.

Art walks to the bed. Strokes Sarah's hand. Keith keeps his  
distance.

ART  
We're here, pumpkin.

Art glances back at Keith. He's barely in the door. Art motions for him to come over.

Keith won't budge. Art walks back to him. Grabs him up.

ART  
Quit being an ass. Talk to your mother.

Art marches Keith to the bed. Keith takes one look at his mother. Bolts out.

INT. HALL - DAY

Keith runs to a water fountain. Dry heaves. Raises up. Sees

Dr. Gabal dictating into a digital recorder down the hall. Keith runs over.

DR. GABAL  
(into recorder)  
Noted incidence of hypertrophic scarring affecting upper dermis --

KEITH  
Doctor?

Dr. Gabal glares at Keith, annoyed. Turns off the recorder.

KEITH  
The boy who was brought in. With my mom?

DR. GABAL  
What boy?

KEITH  
Mom rescued him from the plane. Is he going to live?

DR. GABAL  
I can not discuss his case.

KEITH  
What's his name?

DR. GABAL  
He did not have an ID on him.

INT. NURSES STATION - DAY

A nurse jots a name on a big white board with a thick black pen. Keith ambles up. Looks at the board.

CLOSE ON BOARD

Patient names and room numbers. Halfway down the board: JOHN DOE #1. Room 301C.

INT. HALL - DAY

Keith walks down a long corridor, checking rooms as he goes. Spots ROOM 301C.

He looks around. Hall's deserted. Steals into the room.

INT. ROOM 301C - DAY

A regular (not ICU) semi-private room with two beds. The injured boy from the plane crash lies unconscious in one bed. The other bed is unoccupied.

Keith shadows the door. Slowly approaches the injured boy.

An IV drapes to the boy's arm from a pole beside him. A second tube drops from his nose to a box under the bed.

A tag on the IV pole reads "JOHN DOE #1."

Keith stares at John Doe curiously.

No burns or scars on his face or neck.

Keith unbuttons his gown. No burns on his chest either. Not even a singed hair.

Curious, Keith examines the silver dollar-sized birthmark on his left hand. Lets his hand drop limply.

John lies there like a dead fish.

KEITH

Bitch.

Keith turns. A HAND grabs his arm. Hard. Cutting off circulation.

Keith whips around, seriously spooked. Sees

JOHN SITTING STRAIGHT UP IN BED, WIDE AWAKE.

John stares at Keith, zombie-like.

Keith claws at John's hand, trying to bust his death-grip.  
It's no use.

John's eyes roll. He releases his grip. Falls back into the pillow, again unconscious.

Keith staggers away, unnerved.

EXT. DENVER HEALTH MEDICAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Art and Keith walk out the main entrance. Only a few people around.

They march across a busy street at a crosswalk. Disappear into a parking deck.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Art and Keith trot into Denver Health Hospital at daybreak.

Art reads a "Get Well" card to Sarah. She's unconscious.

Keith buys a hot rod magazine in the hospital gift shop.

Art and Keith slog to their crummy motel after a hard day.

A man bums Art as he walks to the door. Art shakes his head.

INT. WALLACE MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Art and Keith snore in their twin beds.

SUPER: "ONE WEEK LATER."

A CELL PHONE on a night stand lights up. BUZZES.

They remain in dreamland.

The phone BUZZES AGAIN, 'walking' slowly across the table.  
Falls onto the floor.

Art opens one eye. Grabs frantically for the phone.

A THIRD BUZZ alerts him to its location. He scoops it off the floor. Answers.

INT. SARAH'S ICU ROOM - NIGHT

A RESIDENT, male, 30, leans over Sarah. He removes her ventilator tube.

Art walks to the bed. Peers down at her, morose.

She opens her eyes.

SARAH  
What time is it?

RESIDENT  
4:02 A.M.

Shitless surprise on Art's face.

Sarah sits up. The resident places a meter against her lips.

RESIDENT  
Breathe out.

She exhales. He reads the meter.

Keith slugs in. Glances up at Sarah sitting in bed. His face can't contain his joy. He runs to her.

RESIDENT  
(to Sarah)  
Six on a scale of ten. Remarkable.

She nods.

SARAH  
I look pretty bad, huh?

ART  
You look beautiful to me.

He kisses her hand.

SARAH  
The kid on the plane?

Art shrugs his shoulders. Keith looks at her bitterly.

KEITH  
Heard he died.

INT. HALL - DAY

Sarah walks down a corridor. Art rolls her IV pole beside her.

Goey layers of pink skin cover the left side of her face. Some of the original mesh is visible beneath the graft.

Her face looks like a Halloween mask. She stops.

SARAH  
I'm going back.

ART  
Dr. Gabal says twice around the --

SARAH  
Dr. Gabal can go fuck himself.

Sarah shuffles on. Visitors walk by. Stare.

SARAH  
(to visitors)  
Freak show's over, folks.

ART  
Whoa. Somebody didn't get their morphine patch today.

SARAH  
The freak needs a break.

She stops. Catches her breath.

ART  
Who gives a rat's ass what they think? You've got nothing to be ashamed of. You're a hero.

SARAH  
I swear if anybody calls me that again...  
(beat)  
Besides. Doesn't count if the person you saved died.

ART  
He didn't die.

She raises up. Looks at him, perplexed.

INT. JOHN'S ROOM - DAY

John lies in bed, asleep. His nose tube has been removed, but he still has an IV in his arm.

The room is cold. Lonely. Blinds pulled. Door's open a hair.

Someone pushes the door open all the way. Sarah stands in the jamb, holding her IV pole beside her. She stares in at John.

She finally walks all the way in the room. Sits by the bed.

She reads the tag on John's IV pole: "JOHN DOE #1". Looks at him, a sad expression on her face. Touches his left hand. He lies there, motionless. Unresponsive.

She notices the purple birthmark on the back of his hand. Strokes it, intrigued.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah is now in a regular semi-private room. She eats jello. Keith taps at a notebook computer.

SARAH  
Finish your algebra?

KEITH  
Yes, Mom.

SARAH  
Spanish?

KEITH  
Usted no me cree?

SARAH  
Smart ass.

ON KEITH'S COMPUTER SCREEN: "Girls Gone Wild, Panama City."

SARAH  
I went to see John today.

KEITH  
Who's John?

SARAH  
The boy from the plane. At least that's the name he's going by. I don't guess they know his real name.

Keith glares up from his computer.

KEITH  
Why'd you see him?

SARAH

I wanted to see how he was doing.

KEITH

He grabbed my arm.

SARAH

That's odd. Especially since you told me he was dead.

KEITH

Then he was staring at me. Like some freak.

SARAH

People in comas sometimes do strange things. Things they don't remember.

KEITH

He wasn't in a coma, Mom.

She glares at him, skeptical.

INT. HALL - DAY

Sarah walks down the hall, rolling her IV pole beside her. Stops by John's room. A NURSE, 30, carries a food tray out of his room.

Sarah smiles at the nurse. She glances at Sarah's face. Looks the other way.

Sarah walks in.

INT. JOHN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

John lies in bed, eyes closed. A TV PLAYS overhead. Football. Denver Broncos v. San Diego Chargers. The volume is turned way down.

Sarah enters. Sits by the bed.

John shifts his head to one side. Opens his eyes. Jerks away from her, a repulsed look on his face.

JOHN

Who are you?

SARAH

Sarah Wallace. I rescued you.



John looks more closely at her. His expression becomes suddenly pleasant.

JOHN  
I -- I'm sorry. I didn't --

SARAH  
It's okay. I know I must look  
frightening to you.

JOHN  
No. Not at all.

She glances at the TV.

SARAH  
Broncos fan?

She looks back at John. He nods.

SARAH  
Me too.

JOHN  
So how are you doing?

SARAH  
I'm going to make it.  
(beat)  
Is it okay if I call you John?

JOHN  
Probably better than some names  
I've been called.

SARAH  
My son. Keith.

JOHN  
You have a son?

SARAH  
Yes. He's thirteen.

JOHN  
Whoa. You don't look old enough to  
have a thirteen year-old son.

A faint smile grows on her face.

SARAH  
Thanks. You two have met? Right?

He shakes his head.

SARAH

He said he was here a couple days ago. You grabbed his arm.

JOHN

I was still in a coma.

She looks into him. Not a hint of deception in his eyes.

SARAH

Maybe you don't remember.

John shrugs his shoulders.

JOHN

Last thing I remember was the fire. Pulling you through the fire.

He looks deeply into her. She can't look away.

INT. SARAH'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah and John play Black Jack on her food tray.

SARAH

Hit me.

John throws down the ten of clubs. She flips him the finger.

JOHN

Mrs. Wallace.

She hands him her cards.

JOHN

What if your students saw you?

He shuffles the cards like a Vegas Black Jack dealer. Keith walks to the door. Sees them playing cards. Stays slightly out of sight.

SARAH

You wouldn't tell, would you?

JOHN

Me? Never.

He grins. She pulls him close. Whispers in his ear.

SARAH

Pay backs are hell.

Keith looks at them, suspicious. Retreats into the hall.

## SERIES OF SHOTS

Dr. Gabal examines Sarah's grafts, a pleased look on his face.

Sarah, John and Keith play cards in the hospital cafeteria. Keith loses.

John slides into the MRI tunnel. A technician enlarges an image of his brain.

## INT. JOHN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

John shuffles cards on his food tray. Two MEN dressed in dark suits walk in. John glances casually at them.

The men flash FBI creds in unison at John.

AGENT TURNER

FBI. I'm special agent Turner.  
This is my partner, agent Rice.

John shuffles the cards. Expertly.

AGENT TURNER

Feel like answering a few  
questions? About the crash.

JOHN

I've already talked to the FAA.

AGENT RICE

We've spoken to them too. We just  
have a couple questions.

AGENT TURNER

The plane is registered to a Jim  
Marsh. Of Greely, Colorado. Did  
you board the plane in Greely?

JOHN

I don't remember. Concussion.  
Don't even remember my name.

AGENT RICE

At what point can you remember?

JOHN

It's all kind of fuzzy. I remember  
when I was a little kid.

AGENT TURNER

Do you remember anything after the emergency landing?

JOHN

A little.

AGENT TURNER

Do you remember how the explosion occurred?

JOHN

No. It all happened so fast.

AGENT TURNER

The two victims -- Jim and Betty Marsh -- were they alive before the explosion?

JOHN

Yeah. I tried to help them. But it was too hot.

AGENT TURNER

Is anyone in your family a pilot?

JOHN

I don't remember my family.

AGENT RICE

When you were a little boy?

JOHN

No.

AGENT TURNER

Would you be willing to provide us with a DNA sample?

JOHN

Sure.

A grim look grows on John's face.

JOHN

Those two people on the plane -- are they my --

AGENT TURNER

We'll run the DNA.

Turner's CELL RINGS. He walks out. Rice lingers.

AGENT RICE  
 Have you ever been arrested,  
 Mister...

Turner reads the name tag on John's IV pole.

AGENT RICE  
 Doe.

JOHN  
 Me -- no. Course not.

Rice studies him a beat. Moseys out. John shuffles the cards. But this shuffle is that of a rank amateur. Cards spill all over the floor.

INT. SARAH'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Sarah sits up in bed. Keith's computer rests on her lap. John bends over her. They watch a VIDEO.

ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN

A YOUNG BOY, dressed in a Superman costume, flexes his muscles.

In the background, folks mill about, munching hot dogs. Balloons bob in a breeze. Sarah holds a birthday cake.

The caption: "SETH TURNS EIGHT."

SARAH'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Keith walks in. Sees Sarah and John looking at his computer.

KEITH  
 What you doing with my computer?

She gazes up at him. John's engrossed in the video.

SARAH  
 Excuse me?

Keith stomps over. Looks at the screen, pissed.

KEITH  
 You have no right.

Keith shuts the computer.

SARAH  
It's our computer. Remember?

JOHN  
I'm sorry about your brother. I  
know you must really miss him.

KEITH  
You don't know anything about my  
brother.

Keith glares at John. Snatches the computer away from Sarah.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

Keith ambles down the hall, lost in his cell phone. Looks  
up. Sees John's room. Walks by. Casually glances in.

INT. JOHN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Bed neatly made. Room clean. Sack of clothes by the night  
stand. Stack of forms on the stand.

Keith steals in. No sign of John. He walks to the night  
stand. Picks up a FORM.

COLORADO DEPT. OF SOCIAL SERVICES - FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

Keith reads the form.

A HAND yanks the form out of his hand. Keith jumps. Turns.

PORTIA JACKSON, 50, all-business pant suit, hovers. She  
clutches a lethal clipboard.

PORTIA  
Can I help you?

KEITH  
I was just looking for John.

PORTIA  
He isn't here now.

Her stare is unflinching. Keith beats a hasty retreat.

INT. NURSES STATION - DAY

Sarah walks briskly by the counter. A nurse 30, female,  
glances up from a monitor. Sarah stops.

SARAH  
 Could I get a couple more pillows  
 brought to my room?

The nurse nods. Sarah continues her walk, passing several patient rooms. Turns a corner.

INT. LOUNGE - DAY

Sarah enters a waiting room. Sees John sitting at a sofa. He faces away from her.

She hustles to him. Sits by him.

SARAH  
 Whip your butt in Black Jack?

He gazes at her. His eyes are red.

SARAH  
 What's wrong?

JOHN  
 Nothing.

SARAH  
 Sure?

He nods.

SARAH  
 I can't help you if I don't know  
 what's bothering you.

JOHN  
 Nothing's bothering me.

She puts her arm around him. They look like a couple sitting there.

Art walks by, sipping coffee. Sees Sarah holding John. Ducks behind a potted Ficus.

John buries his head in her chest. Cries. She strokes his hair, a distraught look on her face.

Art stares from behind the fake tree, puzzled, taken aback.

INT. HALL - DAY

Keith strolls down the hall, munching a bear claw. Hears YELLING coming from Sarah's room. He listens at the door.

ART (O.S.)  
He's just some fucking kid!

INT. SARAH'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Art waves his gorilla arms at Sarah.

ART  
We don't even know him for Christ's sake.

SARAH  
He's a good kid. He doesn't deserve this.

ART  
You can't save the world, Sarah.

SARAH  
It's not the world. It's one kid.

ART  
Twenty-one actually. And counting.

SARAH  
This is different.

ART  
How? It's another scared, lost kid. Granted, he doesn't have a gun to your head --

SARAH  
Fuck you.

She flushes with rage. Turns away from him.

SARAH  
Maybe you'd rather I hadn't taken that gun away from Greg Joyner. Then I'd be dead and you wouldn't have a freak of a wife --

ART  
That's not true!  
(beat)  
But you don't owe this kid anything.

SARAH  
His parents might be dead. He has no home. No family.



ART  
That isn't your problem.

SARAH  
It is.

ART  
How? You saved his life. He's  
alive. That's enough.

Sarah spins. Looks into his eyes.

SARAH  
I passed out. From the heat. I  
would've been dead if he hadn't  
pulled me out of that field.

She sniffs back a tear.

SARAH  
He saved my life, Art. I can't  
turn away from that.

She looks at the door. Sees Keith standing there, a bitter  
look on his face. He bolts away.

EXT. DENVER HEALTH MEDICAL HOSPITAL - DAY

An orderly pushes Sarah to the curb in a wheelchair.

A Dodge Ram pick-up rolls to a stop in front of the hospital.  
Art jumps out. Opens the door for Sarah. She slides in the  
front seat.

Keith and John stare out their respective windows in the back  
seat.

EXT. TWO LANE HIGHWAY - DAY

Art's Dodge pickup shoots arrow straight through the  
featureless brown prairie.

INT. PICK-UP - DAY

Art drives. Sarah nods off in the seat beside him. The  
radio fades in and out.

Keith looks out the window. John stares at the back of the  
front seat, lost in his head. Art spots a sign.

ART  
Anybody need a potty break?

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Art pulls up to a pump. Steps out. Keith and John jump out.  
Art pumps gas. Keith jogs to the rest room. John strolls into the station.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Two urinals. One stall. Crusty sink.

Keith glances at his reflection in the mirror. His hair's a mess. He combs it. Walks in the stall. Shuts the door.

INT. STALL - DAY

Keith unbuckles his pants. Sits. Whips out his cell phone. Texts someone.

The REST ROOM DOOR OPENS (O.S.). FOOTSTEPS (O.S.). They stop after a moment. WATER RUNS in the sink (O.S.).

INT. MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Keith FLUSHES. Walks out of the stall to the sink. The water's still running. He washes his hands. Glances again at his reflection in the MIRROR. Sees

The word "BITCH" scratched in the corner of the mirror. It wasn't there before. He looks at the mirror, puzzled.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Keith runs across the lot. Sees John leaning against the truck, clutching a bag of potato chips. Art and Sarah are gone. The gas still pumping.

Keith checks his cell phone for a reply. Grins big. Pecks out another text. John looks over his shoulder.

JOHN  
Who's Pam?

Keith glares at him.

KEITH

A friend.

John nods. Slides a folding knife with a six-inch blade out of his jeans. Slices the potato chip bag open. Keith stares at the knife, apprehensive.

EXT. WALLACE HOME - NIGHT

WIND CHIMES on the porch CLANG, annoyingly.

HEADLIGHTS pop across the horizon. The only light on a moonless night. They grow bigger. And bigger.

INT. KEITH'S BEDROOM - DAY

An ALARM CLOCK BEEPS. Keith rustles in bed. Slams it off.

He jerks covers off him. Bolts to the dresser. Opens a drawer. Grabs a prescription bottle. Looks up. Sees

The FRAMED NEWSPAPER ARTICLE about his mother saving the school on the wall.

He stares at it, bitter. Snatches it down. Stuffs it in the drawer.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Sarah makes a sandwich. Keith slugs in, dressed for school. Checks his cell phone. Sarah snatches it away.

SARAH

I want your mind on Algebra. Not Pam Nevius.

Keith sees John sitting in the living room, surfing TV channels. His eyes are wired. Like he's been up all night.

Keith clears his throat. Feels his neck. Sarah notices.

SARAH

What's wrong?

KEITH

Got a sore throat.

Keith swallows extra hard.

KEITH

Think I need to stay home and rest today. Drink plenty of fluids.

She feels his neck. Grabs a flashlight off a window sill.

SARAH

Open.

Keith opens his mouth. She shines the light inside.

SARAH

Throat doesn't look red.

She feels his forehead.

SARAH

No fever. Something wrong at school?

KEITH

No.

Sarah bags the sandwich. Hands it to him.

SARAH

Have a nice day.

INT. CLASS ROOM - DAY

MR. BANNER, 60, aging hippie in a tie dye T-shirt, dips his fingers in face paint as his bored class looks on.

MR. BANNER

Today, we are the canvas.

VINCE ROSALES, 14, square jawed Neanderthal with fake gang tats, sticks his fingers in his mouth. Gags.

MR. BANNER

At the center of revolutionary endeavor is love. For a guy like Che Guevara or George Jackson or Malcolm X, love was the prime mover of their lives.

Banner slaps paint all over his face.

MR. BANNER

Feel the love.

Keith dons goggles. Dips his fingers in paint. Vince sits in the row behind Keith. Glares at the back of Keith's head.

INT. HALL - DAY

The BELL RINGS. Keith bursts out of a class room. Jogs down the hall. Slides into a men's room.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Keith washes dried finger paint off his face and hands. Grabs a paper towel. Scoots to the door. It opens. Vince blocks it.

Keith reaches into his pocket. Hands Vince the prescription bottle he took from his drawer.

Vince reads the label on the bottle: "Diazepam."

Keith tries to get by Vince. He's a wall.

KEITH

What?

Vince shoves his cell phone in Keith's face. There's a TEXT MESSAGE ON THE SCREEN.

"Yo. Chili Shit R."

KEITH

What's that?

Vince grabs Keith. Throws him into the paper towel dispenser.

VINCE

I'm Spanish. Learn your fucken geography.

KEITH

I didn't send that.

Vince smiles, flashing a shiny gold tooth.

VINCE

Which side you like better?

KEITH

What?

VINCE

Which jaw you want broken? First.

Keith stares at him, scared. Vince smells the fear. Lets him go.

VINCE

Tell you what. Give you the first swing.

Vince points to his steel jaw. Keith stands there, frozen.

VINCE

Whassa matter, bitch?

A teacher, 40, walks in. Keith scurries to the door.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - DAY

Sunset. Keith walks down a dirt road by a parked freight train. He stops. Glances furtively around.

Just empty road and blowing wheat in his wake.

He cuts between two hopper cars. Vince steps into his path.

VINCE

Going somewhere?

KEITH

I'm paid up. Leave me alone.

Keith sidesteps Vince. Vince grabs him from behind. Throws him to the ground.

VINCE

Not by a long shot, bitch.

KEITH

I didn't send that text.

VINCE

Then how come it's your number?

KEITH

I don't know.

VINCE

With that pretty face, bet you sucked a lot of dick up in Beatrice. Hate to fuck that up.

Vince raises his fist. A FIGURE grabs him from behind. Flings him to the railroad tracks.

Keith raises up. Sees the figure is John.

Before Vince can react, John punches him in the throat. Skillful. Precise.

John pins Vince's head to the tracks.

Blanching fear in Vince's eyes. John spits gum in his face.

JOHN

Want to suck my dick? Bitch.

Vince wheezes, barely breathing. TERRIFIC GROAN of METAL-TO-METAL. John looks around.

THE FUCKING TRAIN IS BACKING UP.

John smiles. Holds Vince's head to the tracks. Keith runs over. The hopper car rolls back, barreling towards them.

KEITH

John!

John shoves Vince aside in the nick of time. Vince rolls down an embankment. Bolts like a scared rabbit.

Keith gazes at John, awestruck.

John reaches into his pocket. Brandishes a pack of gum. Offers Keith a stick. Keith takes one.

INT. WALLACE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sarah sets the table. Art grabs a casserole out of the oven.

ART

(calling out)

Keith! Dinner!

Art sets the casserole on the table. Sarah pounces upstairs.

INT. KEITH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Keith and John watch a video on Keith's laptop.

ON KEITH'S COMPUTER SCREEN two naked women frolic in a pool.

KEITH

It's like I know you from somewhere.

JOHN

No. You wouldn't know me.

KEITH

How would you know? You have amnesia.