

PILOT: JOLT SURVIVAL SERIES

Written by

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Based on novels by Roberta M Roy

JOLT: A RURAL NOIR

TWO CLOSE: A STORY OF SURVIVAL

HOME AGAIN 2020

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TEASE

EXT. LOCHLEE - THAW'S CABIN - DAY

SUPER: "LOCHLEE VILLAGE, LATE 2019"

LEM (50s), a retired veteran in worn camo fatigues, towers over two Boys bearing backpacks. Tall, fair skinned, darker haired JASON MATTERS (14), and blond brother, MARTY (12).

The Boy's faces, grimy. Their clothes filthy and tattered.

LEM

So yer' tellin' me that since the
meltdown you've been on the road?
No contact with your family? Two
years?

JASON

Well, we did stay in a shelter in
Bain.

MARTY

And for a while in an abandoned
cabin in the woods.

LEM

And you came here from Bain by
train?

MARTY

Yeah. Pretty cool.

Marty pushes his hands out, thumbs up, and moves them with the rhythm of a train on the rails.

CLICKITY-CLACK. The sound of a train speeding down tracks.

FULL SCREEN TITLE: "Jolt Survival"

ACT 1

FULL SCREEN TITLE: "Just Going Along"

EXT. NEW YORK - LOWER MANHATTAN - DAY

September 11, 2001.

Black, angry dust and debris blossoms from the collapse of the World Trade Center North Tower.

EXT. RIVER - MAGDUM HEIGHTS NUCLEAR POWER PLANT - DAY

SUPER: "Early 2017"

Sun glints on the plant's twin cooling towers on the opposite bank of a mighty waterway.

EXT. ARIANA - EAST CORDABAN - DAY

A sleepy, one-stoplight village of pretty yet modest homes.

SUPER: "Ariana, East Cordoban"

SUPER: "35 miles north of the Magdum Heights plant"

EXT. MATTERS' HOME - DAY

An Ariana School District school bus SQUEAKS to a stop.

MARY MATTERS (30s) rakes around the front bushes.

The bus deposits Jason (12), brown hair, and RICKY SOLER (11), black hair. Both heft backpacks.

JASON

Hey, Mom.

Jason kisses his mom and scoots up stairs to the home. En route, he waves back to his friend.

JASON

See ya, Ricky.

RICKY

See ya, Jason. Tell Marty I said hi.

EXT. BAIN - DAY

A small town with a main drag lined by expensive shops.

SUPER: "Bain"

SUPER: "100 miles north of the Magdum Heights plant"

EXT. BAIN - MAIN STREET - DAY

THEODORE HORATIO ALEXANDER WAMP (30s), prefers THAW, is a tall and fair skinned man with long dark hair.

Thaw wears a heavy duty Army field jacket with WAMP name tag.

He window shops with girlfriend NATALIE BIRNBAUM (late 20s). Auburn haired, highly educated. More city than country.

She pulls on Thaw's arm in front of Bain City Art Supplies.

NATALIE

Don't you need new brushes?

THAW

Yeah. I'm low on oils, too. Ochre, black, and white.

INT. BAIN CITY ART SUPPLIES - CONTINUOUS

Natalie gravitates to a display of water colors while Thaw inspects brushes.

NATALIE

Hey, Thaw. Water colors.

Thaw, intent on the brushes.

Natalie holds up a tray and tubes of water colors.

NATALIE

Which is better? Pans or tubes?

THAW

We always used pans. Either.

NATALIE

Maybe we could get some? And water color paper?

THAW

Taking up painting?

NATALIE
Beats oils. Water doesn't give off
V-O-Cs.

THAW
Natalie the environmentalist. Not
for me. I prefer the Volatile
Organic Compounds.

NATALIE
And the smell?

Natalie shrugs, returns the water colors to their place.

EXT. LOCHLEE - PARALLEL ROADS - DAY

WEATHER BEATEN, ARROWED ROAD SIGN: "Lochlee Village, Canada
121 Miles, Bain 111 Miles

SUPER: "200 miles north of the Magdum Heights plant"

EXT. LOCHLEE - THAW'S CABIN - DAY

Thaw's stern father, DODY (70s), wears painters overalls. He
peruses the cabin and surrounding area.

INT. THAW'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

A large, rustic yet comfortable one room.

An easel cradles an in-progress landscape oil painting that
shines in light from a skylight. Thaw adds finishing touches.

Shelves hold finished, vertically stacked paintings. A Baggie
of Pot and rolling papers evident on a shelf.

TUFTY, a black and white mixed breed English Setter, snoozes
on a dog bed.

A KNOCK.

Thaw and Tufty welcome Dody. Faking relaxed, Thaw's brow
furrows with a bit of dread.

THAW
Hey, Dad. C'mon in.

Tufty licks Dody's hand. He yanks it away.

THAW
(pulls Tufty away)
Okay, Tufty. Lie down. Dad doesn't like that.

Tufty returns to her bed.

DODY
How's civilian life? Like the cabin? You've done a lotta work.

THAW
New wallboard and paint. Sealed around the skylight.

Dody pulls the corners of his mouth down. He points his chin at Thaw's work.

DODY
Still dabbling with color, huh.
Haven't found anything reliable?

Thaw's nod: grin 'n' bear it.

THAW
Sorry to disappoint you, Dad.

Dody points to the rolling papers and Pot.

DODY
What's this here?

THAW
In the Middle East, we smoked hash.
But here I smoke weed.

DODY
(scoffs)
Pothead, eh? Thought the military would make a man of you.

THAW
C'mon, Dad. It's no big deal.

DODY
It is to me!

THAW
It's occasional...

DODY
Yeah. Get your life in order.

Dody heads for the door. As he leaves, over his shoulder,

DODY
Get a real job. And get your life
in order! Come see me then.

Thaw waits quiet at the door as he watches his father drive off.

EXT. ARIANA, EAST CORDABAN - CREEKSIDE - DAY

Mary and hubby LOU (30s) picnic with Jason and Marty -- here 13 and 10.

Lunch finished, Lou and Mary remain at the table while the Boys quest for frogs.

CREEKSIDE

MARTY
How about this one?

Jason wields a frog net on a long pole. He scoops it into the water but the quick frog leaps away.

MARTY
Too fast for you.

Marty lies on his stomach, hands in the water. Moving with deliberation, he clamps his fingers around the back legs of a swimming frog and scoops it from the water.

MARTY
Good one?

Jason drops the frog in a fishing creel. Marty rinses hands.

JASON
Let's find it a cricket, a worm or something.

The boys search. Marty spots a fly but it eludes him.

PICNIC TABLE

Mary and Lou cuddle.

MARY
Nice day, huh, Lou.

Lou smiles and kisses Mary on the cheek.

LOU
Boys are having fun.

MARY

You worry about terrorism?

LOU

You have to let it go. 9-11
happened. It's done now. That's it.

MARY

I hear you. But I can't help it.

LOU

I don't think about terrorism.

MARY

I do. I worry.

LOU

You worry about Magdum Heights.
About a meltdown. My job is to
maintain its safe operation. And
like I said. We're safe here.

MARY

Yeah. Tell me about it. With 90
plants in the U-S. And eight
meltdowns.

LOU

Mary, we're more than 30 miles from
Magdum. We would survive.

MARY

And the boys?

LOU

We would either shelter for 72
hours or leave the area until the
fallout dies down. They know the
drill.

MARY

Suppose it happens while you're at
work?

Lou comforts Mary with an arm around her shoulder.

EXT. LOCHLEE - LEM'S HOME - DAY

LEM stands with Thaw on a road that rises past his home and
Thaw's nearby cabin.

At Thaw's side, Tufty's tail wags.

LEM

What do you think? Light beige
siding with dark brown trim?

THAW

That'd work. Good contrast.

Lem pets Tufty's head and face.

LEM

Do I need measurements so they can
figure out how much paint we need?

THAW

My dad would know.

Lem shoots Thaw a skeptical look.

LEM

I'll ask in Bain.

THAW

(laughs)

Didn't need him for the inside so
why would we need him for the
outside?

LEM

Seems to me Natalie is itching for
you to fix up your place, too. No?

Lem chuck's a stick for Tufty to chase.

THAW

Carpentry cuts into painting time.
And keeping ahead of both, leaves
little time to refinish.

LEM

Suppose when we're done with my
house, I give you a hand with
yours. Maybe for a week or two you
let the art work slip?

THAW

Sculpting I can let go. But oil
painting? Oh . . . let's do it. If
not for me, then for Natalie.

(laughs)

The inside is pretty much done.
Like with yours, the outside is
rough.

INT. MATTERS' HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Marty and Jason complete homework on the kitchen table.

Mary enters, leaves her briefcase in the living room. She joins her sons in the kitchen and washes her hands.

MARY

Hi, guys.

Mary hugs the Boys.

MARTY

Mom, can you help with my science project?

MARY

After dinner.

(to Marty)

How's your day been?

MARTY

Okay.

Mary waits for more.

MARTY

Kara got a new pup.

Marty opens a notebook.

MARTY

She calls it Felicia. It's a French poodle. Black.

MARY

How old is it?

MARTY

Six weeks. I'll do math first.

Marty picks up a pencil and tackles long division.

MARTY

Still needs a bottle.

MARY

(turns to Jason)

How about you?

JASON

Scored a goal at soccer practice.

MARTY

Yay, Jay!

JASON

And you, Mom.

MARY

Got something in the mail.

JASON

What?

MARY

Potassium Iodide. KI. Just in case.

MARTY

In case of what?

MARY

In case of a meltdown. KI prevents absorbing radioactive iodine. Stops thyroid cancer.

JASON

Where'd you put'em?

MARY

Cellar. With the dosimeter. In the go-bag. In case of a meltdown.

EXT. LOCHLEE - MARTHA'S HOME - DAY

Dody and MARTHA (60s), a retired school librarian, wander around a drab and rundown Thirties Victorian.

MARTHA

My idea is to paint the siding gray and the trim two shades of maroon.

MARLENA, Martha's impetuous Airedale, licks Dody's hand. He jerks it away.

DODY

Dang blast it!

Martha pulls the dog's collar,

MARTHA

Marlena. Come here.

She leads Marlena into the house, closes the door.

MARTHA

Sorry, Dody. Where were we?

DODY

Gray siding with trim two different shades of maroon.

MARTHA

What do you think?

DODY

It'd make that fine Victorian trim pop. You can pick out the colors at Bixby Paint.

MARTHA

I'll run into Bixby tomorrow. Want to pick up the paint chips here or should I drop them by your house?

DODY

Around four tomorrow. That work?

She nods: that works.

They walk to the back of the house. Dody inspects split and rotted wood on the back porch.

DODY

See this?

MARTHA

I was going to ask about that.

DODY

Looks like you need the porch decking and stair treads replaced. Maybe some of these spindles.

MARTHA

Could you do that?

DODY

Not me. My son Thaw can. He's a really fine carpenter. But only to support himself so he can paint pictures.

MARTHA

So your son's an artist?

DODY

Yeah. But he'll never make a living doing it.

(MORE)

DODY (CONT'D)
Never going to be able to support a
family with it. Pig-headed.

MARTHA
Well, I'd like to meet him. Maybe
he would fix the porch. Who knows?
Maybe I could buy some of his art.
Lots of wall space to fill.

The chimney catches Dody's attention. He gets a closer look.

DODY
I'll ask Thaw to stop by.

They continue their inspection tour.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FULL SCREEN TITLE: "Where Are We?"

EXT. COUNTY ROAD - MAGDUM HEIGHTS NUCLEAR POWER PLANT - DAY
ROAD SIGN WITH TWO ARROWS: Ariana 36 Miles, the other points
the opposite direction to Aesopolis Center 22 Miles

INT. MAGDUM HEIGHTS POWER PLANT - CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS
Vertical panels and boards for monitoring plant operation.
Lou records readings from an alarm panel -- all green.

INT. SCHOOL - MARY'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

DOOR SIGN
"Mary Matters
Speech Language Pathologist"

Mary meets with autistic ELIZABETH (14) who wears an
exaggerated tam bonnet so big it throws off her posture.

Fluent Elizabeth leads the conversation.

ELIZABETH
Did you know this tam was hand
knitted in Scotland. I think it
looks good on me. I like its style.

Elizabeth scans students' writing and drawings on the wall.

ELIZABETH
The students who wrote these papers
lack intellectual capacity. The
writing is poor. There are
misspellings. This one cannot even
write in full sentences.

MARY
How about you? Have you made any
friends in school yet?

ELIZABETH
Sofie is the only one I talk to.

MARY
How about other students?

ELIZABETH

Most of them have learning
disabilities. I prefer associating
with adults.

INT. MATTERS' HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

Mary, busy on a laptop. Jason and Marty buried in notebooks.
Lou enters, waves and heads to the bathroom.

LATER

Newly showered, Lou hugs and kisses Mary, gives Jason a pat
on the shoulder and Marty a hug.

MARTY

What do you think, Mom?
(to Lou)
Cleanest guy in town.
(laughs)

MARY

Well we all wash up when we come
home from school.

MARTY

Yeah. We do.
(pauses)
But we don't all take a shower
before hugging hello.

LOU

And since when can you see
radioactivity?

INT. LEM'S HOME - DAY

Lem hosts a spaghetti and meatball dinner party.

Martha sets the table when Thaw and Natalie arrive.

THAW

Martha, I'd like you to meet my
partner in crime, Natalie. So, Nat,
I told you I was working on an old
Victorian? It's Martha's.

LEM

Like me, Martha's also a newcomer.

NATALIE

Nice to meet you, Martha. Thaw
speaks highly of you. Likes your
dog.

MARTHA

And Marlena likes him.

LEM

(addresses Martha)

How's the job going?

MARTHA

Beautifully. His dad's moving ahead
with the painting and Thaw is a
whiz with a hammer and saw.

NATALIE

Thaw'd do well in construction. He
and Lem restored this place. You
should've seen it before.

MARTHA

So you in cahoots with his dad?

NATALIE

Hardly ever see him. Why?

MARTHA

He suggested the same thing.

THAW

I'm just keeping food on the table.
'Til I'm more established in my
art.

Natalie raises an eyebrow,

NATALIE

And when is that?

LEM

(interrupting)

Okay, guys. Let's sit. Glass of
wine, Natalie?

EXT. LOCHLEE - MARTHA'S HOME - BACK PORCH - DAY

Thaw drives the final nails of the rebuild. He steps back to
Martha and they both admire the like-new porch.

HONK. Dody pulls up, eyes the work. Through the open window,

DODY

Looks good. Told you he'd make a
great house builder.

Martha rolls her eyes.

MARTHA

C'mon, Dody. He's an artist.
Carpentry is a second calling.

DODY

(suddenly distracted)

Dang! Reminds me I have to pick up
some things at the lumber yard.

Without another word, Dody backs away and takes off just as Lem pulls in and parks. Lem lifts a cooler from the bed, carries it to the back porch.

MARTHA

Nice to see you, Lem.

LEM

Same here. Brought you some
largemouths. Up to cooking them?

MARTHA

Sure thing. You two want to stay
for dinner?

Enthusiastic and hungry nods yes from Lem and Thaw.

Lem ignores the renovated porch.

THAW

(re: cooler)

Here. I've got it.

LEM

Did Thaw tell you he's looking into
a show at a gallery in Bain?

MARTHA

No, he didn't. Sounds like a great
idea, though.

LEM

I'm thinking of putting together
pictures of his paintings for a
portfolio?

MARTHA

Oh, he has pictures?

LEM
No. I have to take them.

MARTHA
You're a photographer?

LEM
Play at it. Even do my own
developing.

MARTHA
Sounds good to me!

INT. THAW'S CABIN - NIGHT

Budding leaves SCRAPE the window.

Relaxed, Thaw admires Natalie's back as she washes dishes.
Her long auburn hair desheveled, Natalie faces away from him.

NATALIE
We've got chemistry, Thaw.
Chemistry.

THAW
It's more than chemistry.

NATALIE
Like what?

THAW
You like talkin' to me.

NATALIE
I do.

THAW
And walkin' with me?

NATALIE
Yeah, so?

THAW
Then it's than mere chemistry.

Natalie scrubs a stubborn spot on a pan. Her speech flattens.

NATALIE
There could be. Except it's tough
to be serious about a man who
supports himself house painting and
only occasionally sells a canvas.

THAW

C'mon, we enjoy being together.
Whaddayathink, Nat?

NATALIE

Don't get intense.

THAW

Never could talk sense to you...
for all your college degrees and
city ways.

Natalie scrubs the pan with more vigor.

Thaw crosses the room and snatches Natalie's wrist. He tosses the scouring pad in the water.

When he pulls her around to face him, Natalie's eyes drop to the floor. Thaw's voice softens.

THAW

Nat, listen. Look at me. Please.

Thaw takes her other soapy hand and holds them both in his.

THAW

Damn it, woman...

He draws her near then slips a hand around Natalie's waist. Thaw turns Natalie's chin to align her parted lips with his.

Natalie looses a giggle of surprise and, without losing a beat, responds with a passionate kiss.

EXT. BAIN - LA PETITE GALLERIE - DAY

Thaw surveys paintings in the window then enters.

INT. LA PETITE GALLERIE - CONTINUOUS

RORY (30s), the gallery owner, medium height, auburn hair, wears informal jeans, tie, jacket and work boots.

He lifts on his toes and extends a hand to greet Thaw.

RORY

Hi. I'm Rory. Welcome to La Petite
Gallerie.

Thaw returns Rory's handshake.

THAW

Nice to meet you, Rory. I'm Thaw.

RORY

How can I help you?

THAW

Well, I'm an artist.

RORY

We love artists. Need some framing?

THAW

Yes. But maybe more than framing.

RORY

Like a show?

THAW

Yeah. Exactly.

RORY

So, depends. First, I have to see your work and decide whether it would appeal to my clientele. Then we can talk about the framing.

THAW

How do you set prices.

RORY

One piece, it's standard pricing. If you bring in several pieces, we negotiate a price. If you bring in 15 or 20 pieces, we negotiate further.

Thaw offers Rory his hand.

THAW

Guess we'll be negotiating.

INT. MATTERS' HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mary smiles and lays an affectionate hand on Lou's arm.

MARY

Listen.

LOU

To what? I think the boys left for a movie.

MARY

No ruckus. The house to ourselves.

Lou places his hand over Mary's but she pulls it away, clasps both hands together.

MARY

I had an awful dream last night.

LOU

A meltdown. At the plant?

MARY

A green sticky goo spread from the plant like lava and flowed to our front door. It oozed under, across the vestibule, and down the stairs. I woke up drenched in sweat.

LOU

Sounds terrible.

MARY

Suppose you're at work? Or I have to pass by on my way home?

LOU

The longer I work at Magdum, the more you worry.

MARY

The plant is over 15 years old. Given 9-11 and Three Mile Island, can you blame me?

INT. MARTHA'S HOME - KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Thaw, Lem, and Martha enjoy coffee.

LEM

Did you hear from Larry what's on the agenda for this month's town meeting?

MARTHA

I think we should ask the town to purchase some saplings for the garden club to plant along main street.

THAW

They would add warmth to it.

LEM

And they should replace the village
and town signs as they are in
severe disrepair. They should be
replaced.

THAW

And this winter when the snow melts
and refreezes, instead of sand, we
should get some salt to spread.

MARTHA

Well, let's bring those things up
to board tonight.

INT. THAW'S CABIN - DAY

Thaw paints bold horizontal strokes with a broad brush.

In the loft, Natalie raises on one elbow to better observe
him create a vivid landscape in greens, blues and purples.

NATALIE

Morning.

Thaw's below shoulder length, wavy hair hangs freshly washed
and combed. He continues to paint.

THAW

Morning, Nat. Sleep well?

Natalie smiles at the back of Thaw's head.

NATALIE

Couldn't have slept better. How
long have you been up?

THAW

Didn't check my watch.

The rhythm of Thaw's strokes remain constant.

NATALIE

You could turn and look at me when
you talk to me.

THAW

Why? Chemistry?

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FULL SCREEN TITLE: "Future Portents"

INT. MARTHA'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Marlena BARKS in the backyard. It draws Martha's attention. She opens the back door to find Dody.

MARTHA
Come in, Dody.

Dody enters without a word. Martha follows close on his heels as he beelines for the --

LIVING ROOM

MARTHA
Dody, I thought you were sick.

DODY
(exaggerates)
Am. Feel awful. Got this dang cold sore.

MARTHA
Anbesol.

DODY
Bet you're a worrier.

MARTHA
No. I prefer researching the answers. To know as much common sense stuff as I can.

DODY
Anbesol. I guess I could get some.
(sudden wellness)
Now what is it we're doing?

INT. BAIN - CITY HALL - PLANNING DEPARTMENT - DAY

Natalie at a desk with a Bixby area map on the wall behind her. Piled in front of her, plans and building proposals.

She CLACKS her computer keyboard but quits to dial a number.

NATALIE

Thaw. Glad I caught you. Hard to
get bars up there. Glad I tried
your landline.

(nods)

Glad it's Friday.

(smiles)

Should I pick up anything on my
way?

The TINK of an e-mail notification. She types, listens.

NATALIE

I'll drive straight through. Be
there around 6:30. Looking forward
to the weekend together.

A Messenger arrives with an architect's plan tube under his arm. She motions for him to lay it on the desk.

NATALIE

Sure. Love to go fishing with you.

Natalie signs the receipt the Messenger produces and rotates the tube to read the sender's name.

NATALIE

See you later. And, yes. Dinner
with Lem and Martha tomorrow at her
place is fine. Love you.

INT. MARTHA'S HOME - GUEST ROOM - DAY

NEVILLE (30s), a lanky, dark-haired, fair-skinned man works with Dody to pull up old shag carpet.

NEVILLE

Saw your son the other day.

Dody YELLS. He shoves his left ring-finger into his mouth and talks around it.

DODY

Dang it all. Nicked my finger.

Dody pulls the bloody finger from his mouth and inspects it.

DODY

Blasted blade is dull.

Neville remains on task.

NEVILLE

All suited up. Like for a date. Getting gas up on 22. No sign of Tufty with him. In kind of a hurry. Probably headed to Bain. No place around here to get that dressed up for. 'Specially that early in the morning. Sure wasn't going fishing in those clothes.

DODY

Yeah fine, Neville. Where'd I leave those blades? Could've sworn I put them on the windowsill there.

Dody searches.

INT. LEM'S HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

Thaw, Natalie, Martha and Lem share a meal.

THAW

Remains to be seen whether Rory likes my work, and if we can agree on price.

MARTHA

That's wonderful, Thaw. I'm sure Rory will love your work. What do you think, Natalie.

NATALIE

It is a nice gallery.

Lem raises a glass to toast Thaw. Glasses CLINK.

INT. BAIN - CITY HALL - PLANNING DEPARTMENT - DAY

At her desk, Natalie looks off. Distracted.

NATALIE (V.O.)

Meetings, dinners, presentations, but not much significant movement forward. City Planning is less idealistic than I envisioned. I want to cover wetlands and open spaces. Hopefully the Inter-County Planning Department will have an opening for me.

Natalie dials the phone.

NATALIE

Thaw? It's me. Nat.

THAW (V.O.)

Natalie. Glad to hear your voice.
How are you?

NATALIE

I've been thinking.

THAW (V.O.)

Aren't you always?

NATALIE

This time it's different.

THAW (V.O.)

I'm listening.

NATALIE

I think we need to stop seeing each
other for a while.

A tick of silence.

THAW (V.O.)

You do?

NATALIE

I need to sort things out. Decide
where I'm headed with my life. My
friends may be right. Maybe I need
a change.

THAW (V.O.)

Is there someone else?

NATALIE

No. No. There's no one. I need a
change. Do you understand?

THAW (V.O.)

Yes. And no.

NATALIE

I don't really understand it
myself. That's why I need time.
I'll call when I've thought it
through.

THAW (V.O.)

How about I call you?

NATALIE

Please don't. I'll call you. It might be a while. But I'll be in touch.

THAW (V.O.)

Okay, Nat. Love you. But okay.

When Natalie hangs up, she dabs tissue on tears that stream down her cheeks.

MONTAGE - NATALIE'S CAREER/SOCIAL LIFE

INT. BAIN - CITY HALL - PLANNING DEPARTMENT - DAY

Planners cram Natalie's office to confer with her.

NATALIE (V.O.)

All I can see is a crossroad. What am I going to do now?

INT. NATALIE'S HOME - NIGHT

Natalie hosts a lively gathering of friends over for drinks.

NATALIE (V.O.)

I'm a mature city woman involved with a drop dead handsome, financially strapped and probable commitment phobe, woodsman slash artist. What's next?

END MONTAGE

INT. NATALIE'S HOME - NIGHT

Natalie wipes her eyes, blows her nose.

She thumbs through a stack of mail.

NATALIE

Amnesty International. Electric bill. NARAL Environmental Defense Fund. Office of the Governor...
Office of the Governor!?

Natalie tears open the letter.

INT. SCHOOL - MARY'S OFFICE - DAY

SUPER: "Thursday, April 12, 2018"

Autistic FINN (11) faces Mary. He does not engage her.

MARY
Good morning, Finn.

Finn mumbles a good morning but does not look up.

MARY
How was the ride to school?

FINN
We had to stop for a train. It was
going south.

MARY
Oh, really.

Finn, unresponsive. He looks straight ahead.

MARY
Trains are interesting. Where do
you think that one was going?

FINN
Aesopolis.

Finn aims a pointed look at Mary.

FINN
Can I go now?

MARY
Yes. Let me take you to make sure
you go directly to class.

Mary helps Finn gather his things then leads him out.

INT. MATTERS' HOME - KITCHEN- DAY

Jason places the empty creel on the counter. He motions to
Marty and they descend to --

THE BASEMENT

In the center, shelves of survival supplies: sleeping bags,
water jugs, canned food, tin box with LABEL: "For Emergencies
Only" and a plastic box with LABEL: "Potassium Iodide".

Marty scrutinizes items and opens the TIN BOX. Inside, a wad
of hundred dollar bills. He fans the cash like a Vegas high
roller then replaces it.

MARTY

This place is creepy. Never liked
the thought of having to hunker
down here . . . from tornadoes . .
. or fallout. With no windows.

JASON

It's good to be ready for
emergencies.

Marty opens the Potassium Iodide plastic box.

JASON

That's the K-I. In case the plant
goes down. It protects the thyroid.

Marty nods, clueless. What's a thyroid?

INT./EXT. COUNTY ROAD - MARY'S CAR, TRAVELING - DAY

ROAD SIGN: "Magdum Heights Power Plant 12 miles"

Mary rolls down the driver side window, dials Lou.

MARY

Hi, Hun. How are you? I'm on my way
to our lunch date. Meet you outside
the gate. About 20 minutes. Love
ya! See ya soon.

She lays her phone down next to a container of wet wipes and
continues to the rendezvous with left arm out the window.

POPULATION CENTER

Mary tools past K through 12 schools, dozens of commuter
apartment buildings and major rail hub.

Ahead, a massive regional hospital.

A van SQUEALS over double yellow to pass then cuts Mary off.

MARY

Lunatic!

The van SCREECHES to a halt past the hospital driveway. It
turns to drive across the front lawn. To the main entrance.

A quarter mile away, Mary gapes in disbelief. She slows.

The van picks up speed. In a split second, the van vaporizes
in a massive explosion.

Bits of concrete and steel pelt Mary's car. An airborne side view mirror from the van shatters the windshield.

A dusky soup of smoke and dust swirls around the car.

MARY (V.O.)
Dirty bomb?

Her view obscured, she manages to pull over a half mile on. Mary swabs her left arm with wet wipes.

Smaller pieces of debris rain down.

Mary leaps from the vehicle and disrobes. She tosses the clothes to the side of the road.

She pops the trunk, dons a sweat suit and flip flops. Mary mounts the car, rolls up the window. She peels a U-turn.

MARY (V.O.)
Lou. Jason. Marty.

SCREAMS rise in the black smoke.

EXT. MAGDUM HEIGHTS NUCLEAR POWER PLANT - SAME TIME

Lou strolls past the security shack. A friendly wave to the Guard and who waves back. Lou checks his watch.

As he waits, a LOW RUMBLE from the plant. Lou spins around to see water vapor rise from the cooling towers.

Lou hustles to the building when a nearby explosive force throws Lou head first into a light pole.

EXT. BIG BOX STORE - DAY

Customers gape at the red glow of the distant fire and black smoke that coils in the air.

The BLARE of a volunteer fire department siren.

People trip over each other in a race to their cars. Others abandon their cars to run, eyes wide on the glow.

INT. MATTERS' HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A volunteer fire department siren BLASTS nearby.

Marty and Jason run upstairs from the cellar. They see the distant red glare and smoke through the living room window.

INT./EXT. COUNTY ROAD - LENORE'S CAR, TRAVELING - DAY

LENORE (40s), Ricky's mother, drives south. She tilts her head, perplexed by the unusual, heavy northbound traffic.

EXT. SANDRA'S HOME - DAY

Baby sitter SANDRA (28) meets Lenore at the door. Ricky and brother STEVEN (8) ready; jackets on, backpacks in hand.

LENORE

Hi, Sandra. Boys, ready?

They both nod yes.

SANDRA

It's terrorism, Lenore.

LENORE

What are you talking about?

Sandra pushes Ricky forward with her left and grasps Lenore's left hand tightly in her right. She holds Lenore's eyes.

Ricky has a tight grip on Steven's hand.

SANDRA

Terrorism!

LENORE

Sandra, calm down. Where? What?

SANDRA

Call Carlos. The plant is down.

LENORE

What!?

SANDRA

A lot of power lines are down. The area around the plant for 5 to 15 miles is likely affected.

LENORE

The electricity is out?

She nods an emphatic yes.

SANDRA

Try your cell phone. I think it's gone. But Carlos's is in Bain, no? Maybe you can reach him.

As Lenore reaches for her cell phone, it rings.

LENORE

Carlos. Yes. I'm picking them up now.

(nods)

Yes. We'll go directly to the downstairs bathroom. I'll take a cooler, can opener, canned food, bread, bottled water, milk.

(listens)

Pillows and sleeping bags. I'm sure the boys will help.

(listens)

We'll stay away from the windows and where the walls are thickest.

Hurry home.

Her Sons fidget, a little frightened.

LENORE

Carlos says radioactivity from a meltdown can spread ten to 30 miles.

SANDRA

We're almost 40 here.

LENORE

Falling ash can make an area radioactive for 72 hours.

SANDRA

Best stay here.

LENORE

It's a half hour to our house, and too soon for fallout.

INT. MATTERS' HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A serious expression on his face, Jason cradles the landline.

JASON

No answer on Mom or Dad's cells or work numbers.

MARTY

Are they okay?

Uncertain, Jason lies.

JASON
Of course. They'll be home soon.

MARTY
What do we do?

He takes his Brother by the shoulders.

JASON
What Mom and Dad taught us.
Remember the story?

Marty nods: I do.

For a moment, they glance the distant glow and smoke.

BASEMENT

Ready to go, the Boys stuff items in their backpacks. Jason pockets the cash from the 'For Emergencies Only' tin box.

EXT. LOCHLEE - LEM'S HOME - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Thaw knocks, Lem answers -- a bit breathless.

THAW
You've heard?

LEM
Yeah. Listening on the radio.

THAW
We need to make plans. For the
whole village.

LEM
Martha is expecting us for lunch.
Think she'd mind if we invited the
mayor to join us.

THAW
Don't think so. He's ex-military,
and can facilitate setting up a
POD.

LEM
We can use Martha's people skills.

THAW
I dropped the fish we caught at
Martha's last night. So let's just
head over.

LEM

Lots of rumors and chaos, but in addition to the meltdown there may have been dirty bombs. They're calling it arson, but the area is being cleared. They're not saying why. I heard six between Aesopolis and Ariana.

THAW

So, definitely terrorism.

EXT. INTERSECTION - SECONDARY ROAD AND INTERSTATE - DAY

Jason and Marty pedal to the intersection. Jason signals a stop. They ditch bikes behind the trees.

JASON

(points)

There. Across the interstate. We hitch north.

INTERSTATE SHOULDER - NORTHBOUND

The Boys walk backwards with thumbs out.

JASON

Mom said to get out of the area as fast as possible. It's 20 minutes since we saw the red glow. If we catch a ride in the next five or so, we're safe.

MARTY

In an hour we could be 75 miles north of the plant. Right?

Proud of his brother's keenness, Jason smiles and nods yes.

HANK (60s) pulls his battered pickup over. Jason and Marty run to it. Hank calls out through the open passenger window.

HANK

What are you up to, boys? Why ain't you in school?

JASON

Parent-teacher conference day. We need to get to Waxton.

Marty opens the passenger door, speaks through the opening.

MARTY

We're meeting our grandparents.

HANK

They tell you to hitchhike?

MARTY

Yeah. My dad's truck broke down
near them.

Jason shows Hank his backpack.

JASON

I have spark plugs and jumpers.

MARTY

Yeah.

HANK

Hop in. I don't usually pick up
hitchhikers, but I don't like to
see kids on the interstate. It's
dangerous. Got grandkids of my own.

Jason pushes past Marty and climbs in first. Marty follows.
They lay the backpacks at their feet.

Marty closes the SQUEAKY door. It doesn't shut. Jason reaches
over Marty, reopens and slams the door.

Gears GRIND as Hank forces the truck into first then goes.

Wires snake from a hole in the dash where a radio should be.

EXT. BIXBY - LOCAL ROAD - GAS STATION - DAY

ROAD SIGN: "BIXBY"

Hank turns in.

HANK

This is as far as I go. My house is
down the next street. You can use
my phone to reach your dad. Or
there's a pay phone here.

JASON

Thanks, Hank. We'll use this one.
C'mon, Marty. Open the door.

Marty swings the door open.

MARTY
Thanks a lot for the lift, Hank.

HANK
You're welcome, Marty.

Jason offers his hand to Hank.

JASON
Yeah. Thanks so much, Hank.

HANK
If you need me, number ten. Down
that street.

JASON AND MARTY
Thanks, Hank.

Jason slams the door with force. It SQUEAKS and BANGS.

Hank GRINDS gears and drives off. He calls to the boys
through the open window.

HANK
See ya.

JASON AND MARTY
(both wave)
See ya!

The Brothers survey the area and trade 'what now?' looks.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FULL SCREEN TITLE: "Ready, Get Set..."

INT. MARTHA'S HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The remains of a fish dinner before Martha, Thaw, Lem and LARRY (30s), the very dapper and young village mayor.

MARTHA

When can we expect refugees?

LEM

Some on the six o'clock train.
Those coming by car, tomorrow. The day after.

LARRY

The traffic downstate is bumper to bumper for miles. That'll slow things a little.

LEM

Few have military emergency response training. That puts them at heightened risk.

LARRY

Those with training will figure Bain or Bixby are about 100 miles from the plant. I think they'd head there. But if they're informed, they'll prefer a 200 mile buffer. That means us -- Lochlee.

LEM

And the train from Bain stops here.

MARTHA

People either want to get away or get home. Radio said there are road blocks preventing people from approaching the plant, and for those 35 or more miles away to lay low for 72 hours. There's a warning not to drink or eat anything not bottled or canned due to possible contamination.

LEM

The electric grid is down around
the plant. They're having
difficulty getting messages out.

INT. LEM'S HOME - DAY

SUPER: "Two days after the Magdum Heights meltdown"

As Thaw feeds and waters Tufty, Lem rifles through cabinets.

THAW

How's your family doing, Lem?

Lem sorts canned goods into groups on the countertop.

LEM

My sister and her two kids are
coming from Waxton.

(realizes)

Probably for the duration.

THAW

Natalie and her sister Judith with
Hannah are also coming.

LEM

How are you going to put them up?

THAW

Air mattresses. Then I thought
maybe until we get something
better, I could borrow yours.

LEM

Sure. Except maybe Natalie's sister
and daughter should stay here
instead. They could have one
bedroom. My sister and her two
daughters could take the one with
the double bed and bunk beds. I get
the couch.

THAW

Lem. It's too much.

LEM

Four of you in one room wouldn't
be? How old is the daughter?

THAW

Around 12.

LEM

Come on now. Who's sleeping where?
You taking the air mattress? Is
Natalie?

THAW

Well, no...

LEM

Tell them they can sleep here. Let
Natalie's sister decide which she
thinks is better. Hell, I've slept
on that couch many a night. And it
wasn't even open.

THAW

(laughs)

I can guess which Natalie will
choose.

Lem smiles at Thaw.

THAW

We better call Martha about
tonight.

LEM

Already did. She's coming over.
Said she'd meet the 6:10 train and
agreed we need a game plan. This is
growing much too fast.

EXT. LOCHLEE - TRAIN STATION - DAY

JOSETTE (20s), Mediterranean heritage, nestles a TODDLER (2).
She and Martha wait a short distance from the platform.

The train arrives.

Passengers peer from car windows. Curious. Frightened.

PLATFORM

A number of Women in yellow neck scarves. Three Men in yellow
hats and scarves carry pistols on their waists.

Over twenty People of various ages descend from open doors;
some in Family Groups.

The Women in yellow greet them, usher the People to vehicles.

FROM THEIR VANTAGE

JOSETTE

When is it going to stop? Do we just wait and see? Will we really be able to limit the number to be accepted?

Josette considers the People climbing in vehicles.

JOSETTE

Those with children are very worried.

MARTHA

It's hard to figure what's going to work, Josette. I'm worried, too. The times are difficult.

INT. BAIN - TOWN HALL - COUNCIL ROOM - NIGHT

Larry, Natalie, Lem, Martha and Thaw at the head table. They face an anxious audience of Townies and Newbies.

LARRY

Natalie serves on the Bain Planning Board. I've asked her to address the need for the orderly assignment of temporary housing for Newbies.

NATALIE

I'm impressed by the number of villagers who have already taken in Newbies.

(applauds)

Many are living in their cars or ice-fishing shanties. Some brought tents and travel trailers. A few built lean tos.

LARRY

The lumber yard is running out of materials.

Dody rises from the crowd.

DODY

I been working among the Newcomers, and a bunch have carpentry skills. I think we should pull them all together to help with a plan to build shelters.

LARRY

Dody, would you take on that job?

DODY

I can do that. There are a couple here right now who might be willing to help.

LARRY

Thank you. Please arrange for them to meet with us tomorrow evening.

Dody sits and trades nods with a few Men in the audience.

NATALIE

The board drew up a zoning map. The plan is placing temporary dwellings in rows to form streets that we'll name. Then we'll number dwellings so each resident has an actual address.

LARRY

Cars will be parked in orderly fashion at the lakeside near the boathouse, in the church parking lot, and, if needed, on one side of the secondary roads.

Larry finds Dody in the Crowd.

LARRY

Dody? Could a team of carpenters move poorly placed temporary housing lakeside?

DODY

We'll look into it, Lar.

LARRY

It's late, so let's call it a night. Anyone who hasn't been deputized and would like to serve as a Peacekeeper, please see me before you leave. Not all Peacekeepers will be expected to carry a weapon.

EXT. SOLERS' HOME - FRONT DOOR - DAY

SUPER: "Three days after the Magdum Heights meltdown"

Mary, weak and tired, climbs the front stairs and rings the bell. Ricky opens the door.

RICKY

Hello, Mrs. Matters. You okay?

MARY

Hi, Ricky. Not really. Is your mother in?

Lenore at the door.

LENORE

Mary! How are you?

MARY

No one else is home. Three days ago I was near a dirty bomb that went off. And radioactive dust from it landed on my arm.

LENORE

Come in. Come in.

Lenore steers Mary into --

INT. SOLERS' HOME - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

MARY

I'm clean, but not feeling well.

LENORE

Mary, I'm so sorry.

MARY

I'll go home, but can you bring me food and water until it passes? The main thing is to keep clean and hydrated.

LENORE

You can't go home.

MARY

I'm pretty low on energy. I'm not sure the worst has hit.

LENORE

What about the boys?

MARY

If they followed our plan, they went north.

LENORE

Stay here. I can't let you go home.

MARY

My immune defenses will be low. I need to be kept clean.

LENORE

And away from people.

MARY

Yes. Radiation exposure makes one vulnerable.

LENORE

Stay in the guest room. We'll sort everything out. I didn't see Lou's car, so I figured you all took off after the meltdown. I didn't know you were home. Where's Lou?

MARY

(sobs)

I don't know.

LENORE

Oh, Mary.

Lenore holds Mary but she pushes her away.

MARY

I may be contaminated. I don't think so but best to stay away.

Carlos joins them.

CARLOS

Mary. Good to see you. I've been worried about all of you.

MARY

Hello, Carlos.

CARLOS

Is there anything I can do?

LENORE

We're okay. Mary's not feeling well. Please check Steven. He's a little freaked out.

EXT. LOCHLEE - LEM'S HOME - NIGHT

Lem lends a hand as his sister, MAY (30s), and her two daughters, DAHLIA (6) and CARRIE (8) lift totes, suitcases and backpacks from their car.

EXT. COUNTY ROADS - INTERSECTION - DAY

In a fast food restaurant parking lot, Natalie picks up sister JUDITH (30s) and her niece HANNAH (12).

They all wave goodbye to Judith's Parents and waste no time climbing into Natalie's car.

INT. HOSPITAL - SEMI-PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

A NURSE (40s) checks Lou's drip.

Bandages surround his head.

The Nurse starts when she sees Lou gaping at her.

NURSE
Hello. Are you awake?

Lou blinks in response.

NURSE
Can you talk?

He blinks again. The Nurse pats Lou's arm.

NURSE
Be right back.

Lou looks a little lost as he scans the room.

The Nurse returns with tall, dignified DR. GEORGE (50s) and CONNIE WILLIAMS (30s), a speech pathologist.

Lou looks each in the eye. He blinks twice at each after reading their badges. Dr. George offers a handshake to Lou.

DR. GEORGE
I'm Martin George, your doctor.
You've had a pretty severe injury
to your head.

Blink.

Connie holds cards with pictures, words and phrases.

CONNIE
I'm Connie Williams, a speech
language pathologist.

Lou blinks.

CONNIE
Is speaking difficult for you?

He blinks an answer.

CONNIE
Yes. Let's try yes-no questions.

A slight nod from Lou.

CONNIE
One blink for yes and two for no.
Do you understand me?

A blink.

CONNIE
Good. Can you read this card?

Yes.

CONNIE
Do you know your name?

Two blinks.

INT. BAIN - DONUT SHOP - DAY

Jason and Marty at the counter.

An ELDERLY MAN and WOMAN, both in their seventies, enjoy
breakfast at a nearby booth as the Boys order.

JASON
A coffee and an egg on a biscuit.
What are you having, Mart?

MARTY
Umm, a container of milk and an egg
sandwich. With ketchup.

The food delivered, the Boys eat in silence. The Couple takes
a place next to them.

ELDERLY MAN
Morning.

MARTY

Morning.

ELDERLY WOMAN

You boys are up and out early.

MARTY

We're meeting our dad. Our uncle
dropped us off on the way to work.

JASON

Yeah.

MARTY

We heard there are a lot of
homeless people here. You know.
Since the meltdown.

ELDERLY MAN

(rolls eyes)

Tell me about it.

MARTY

Is it bad?

ELDERLY MAN

Bad enough. They turned that old
hotel over there into a shelter.
Welcome everybody. There's a
smaller shelter around the corner.
Used to be a store.

ELDERLY WOMAN

The homeless just sign in, no
questions asked; a place to sleep
and get free meals.

MARTY

Ya don't say.

Jason nudges Marty's foot with his.

EXT. BAIN - THE BAIN HOTEL - DAY

WINDOW SIGN: "Bain Municipal Disaster Relief Center"

POV - THROUGH THE WINDOW

A Man at a registration table speaks to Jason and Marty. He
points to a door.

INT. BAIN - DISASTER RELIEF CENTER - DORMITORY - CONTINUOUS

A steady stream of People come and go.

Privacy blankets hang to divide spaces in the large room.

The Boys claim two unoccupied single beds. Jason sweeps back the blanket that separates him from Marty.

MARTY

Back to school. The social worker said she'll enroll us tomorrow.

JASON

Missed the first month. We'll have to catch up.

Marty shrugs, confident.

JASON

It's better than wandering the streets. And safer. And warmer.

MARTY

Wonder what the kids are like.

Jason shows his Brother an index card.

JASON

Took this from the supermarket.

MARTY

(reads)

Person needed to trim shrubbery and mow large lawn of older home near downtown Bain. Phone 555-8800.

JASON

Earn spending money. Whaddayathink?

MARTY

What's t'lose?

The Boys unpack their meager belongings.

END PILOT