

<The Emissary>

by

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EXT. WINDING ROAD THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS - MORNING

Birds eye view:

A car is sputtering uphill on a lone paved road. The morning mist hangs heavy over the forest as the sun begins to rise, giving off a diffused clear light.

The two lanes are narrow and paved but the markings have long faded and are cracked in places. It has no sign posts or markers to know where the car is coming from or how far it is to the nearest town.

Zoom in on the car:

It is a Romanian, communist era produced Dacia. Blue with rust patches, the paint is worn and the car has seen better days.

Zoom in on the car's occupants:

The driver is a middle-aged man who is scowling at the road with a serious and formal demeanor. He is dressed in gray canvas pants with a black flannel shirt wearing a herringbone paperboy hat. His clothes have started to fray, which contrasts with his attitude. The radio is off.

Zoom in and focus:

The lone passenger in the backseat is DARIA, a 17-year-old girl, sitting in quiet resignation and is staring into the distance. Wearing tattered hiking boots, acid wash blue jeans and an over-sized, but faded mid '80s band t-shirt with her hair in a scrunchie. On the seat next to DARIA is a threadbare, dirty, red Jansport backpack.

DARIA is fiddling with the tattered strap ends, lost in thought. She looks up and out the car's window.

DARIA'S POV:

A pack of LUMBERJACKS are felling large trees by hand with axes.

One in particular stands out. THE MAN, in his 40s, has reddish blonde hair with streaks of silver. Shirtless, he has a rugged handsomeness and is tall, muscular with a hairy chest.

Back to:

DARIA seeing THE MAN, scowls and looks away. Just then, the car sputters to a halt at a gravel embankment. DARIA looks down to unzip her floppy backpack, leans forward and hands the driver a roll of US Currency.

POV: The car's passenger side bumper.

A car door opens and closes, then crunching on gravel as DARIA steps out.

POV stays in place as the car pulls away and leaves.

DARIA walks down a path to join a group of teenagers that have gathered at a crossroads.

EXT. TRAIL CROSSROADS - MORNING

DARIA joins a group of 22 teenagers between the ages of 12 to 18-years-old who have gathered at a crossroads for small foot trails.

One trail goes off to the right around a bend with another trail to the left. Ahead is a large grassy clearing that is flat and at the far end of the clearing is a large rock bluff.

The group is mostly dressed in hiking clothes but DARIA passes ULF, a 14-year-old German boy, who is wearing a late '80s European pop star t-shirt, stylish blue jeans and Puma sneakers. Instead of a frame backpack, ULF is sitting on top of an excessive amount of trunk luggage, all in the same matching pattern.

A group of campers are socializing with HIKARI, a 16 year-old Japanese-American girl, who stands out by wearing a floor length patchwork skirt, a tank top, a hand-me-down cardigan tied to her waist and hiking boots. She is wearing so many bangle bracelets that she clinks as she moves. Her hair is long, swinging freely as she walks.

Cut to:

AFONSO and GUSTAVO, Brazilian and both about 17-years-old are dressed mimicking '80s Miami Vice with blue jeans, white tank tops, short sleeve button down pastel shirts with geometric prints and hiking boots.

AFONSO and GUSTAVO are wrestling on the grass. This has attracted a crowd of younger kids and girls including LUCE, a

16-year-old British girl, who is wearing baggy, straight fit men's pants with a belt, white t-shirt that has been tied with a knot into a crop top, black bra underneath and Reebok high top sneakers with a pump.

AFONSO grabs GUSTAVO, throws him on the ground and locks him in a Guillotine choke. The crowd cheers. AFONSO and GUSTAVO both get up, brush themselves off and LUCE approaches.

LUCE:

(To AFONSO, London street accent)
That's amazin'! Why are you, like,
so strong?

The two boys chuckle and start chatting with LUCE.

AFONSO:

(Brazilian accent) Cuz I'm going
to the '92 Barcelona games.

GUSTAVO:

(Brazilian accent) Dude, you don't
even know if you're going yet, we
haven't had the trials!

AFONSO:

Well I'm the best! That's why your
daddy handpicked me to be team
captain!

GUSTAVO:

Sheah, whatever Afonso.

AFONSO:

Why else do you think he had me
babysit you on this trip?

Cut to:

LADO, a tall Ukrainian boy about 18-years-old and SORINA, a tall, athletic Romanian girl about 17-years-old. They both regard DARIA with varying degrees of recognition.

SORINA gives a small shrug and LADO gives her a reserved nod.

As DARIA approaches the group, some teens are looking at her in curiosity, while others don't pay any attention to her at all.

MIKAYLA, an Indian-Australian girl about 16 years-old, dressed in beige hiking gear, is carrying a rucksack and eagerly approaches DARIA.

MIKAYLA talks excitedly but DARIA distractedly watches CHAD, a tall, athletic Black African boy about 18-years-old who is dressed in the highest quality hiking gear. His posture exudes strength and confidence.

CHAD is helping a younger boy, VIK, put on his backpack by adjusting the frame. VIK is a gangly 13-year old Canadian boy who is wearing cut off jean shorts with a canvas shirt and hiking boots.

MIKAYLA:
(Australian accent) I'm so excited! My first time here. You been before?

DARIA speaks to MIKAYLA without looking away from CHAD.

DARIA:
(American accent) Do you do a lot of camping?

MIKAYLA:
Oh yeah. My family loves goin bush, but nothing like this! I've never been overseas before.

DARIA:
Trust me, this isn't the Swiss Alps.

MIKAYLA:
I can't wait for the Festival!

DARIA turns away from CHAD and looks MIKAYLA up and down to appraise her. There is an awkward silence.

MIKAYLA:
Um, sorry, my name's Mikayla by the way!

DARIA:
Mikayla, I'm Daria.

When CHAD hears DARIA's voice, he looks over. CHAD and DARIA exchange a long knowing glance and DARIA gives him a half smile. CHAD smirks, moving on to help the last camper with their gear.

CHAD:
(African accent) Alright, time to head up to the **Kaga Kurta**. We need to get there before dark.

CHAD puts on his frame backpack and begins to hike uphill. The campers who are socializing scramble to get their gear and follow and 19 campers follow him to the trail.

Cut to:

ULF suddenly realizes that no one is coming to help him carry his trunks, so he opens one and frantically rummages through the contents. MIKAYLA tries to help but DARIA interrupts.

DARIA:
Come on, we gotta go!

MIKAYLA:
(To ULF) What can I help you carry?-

DARIA:
-No, we gotta go! No one helps anyone here.

MIKAYLA:
You're helping me!

DARIA:
Well, he should've brought less stuff.

MIKAYLA:
(To ULF, randomly picking something up) I can stuff this in my sack-

DARIA:
-No, you don't wanna get left behind.

ULF is too flustered to say anything, so MIKAYLA stops and runs after DARIA, who has already walked away. ULF continues anxiously opening various trunks, hurriedly searching through the contents.

EXT. TRAIL IN THE WOODS - MORNING

The trail is not a beginners trail. Steep and rugged, it requires people to pay close attention to their footing. Some campers can be heard struggling to keep up while others hike easily. Campers talk amongst themselves, cracking jokes as they hike.

On the trail, three teenagers can easily fit side by side. The forest is heavily wooded and if it wasn't for the well-

traveled trail, it would look as if no humans have ever been here before.

The trees are incredibly tall and form a canopy to shelter from the bright sunlight. While still mid-morning, the light is dappled and it is considerably darker on the trail than at the crossroads.

Cut to:

DARIA is lagging behind the 20 campers ahead until MIKAYLA finally catches up to her, out of breath. DARIA vigilantly watches the edge of the forest without slowing her pace, trying to catch up with the main group. Occasionally, bushes at the edge of the trail move and at one point a tail can be seen as a large animal darts away. MIKAYLA does not notice and starts nervously chatting.

MIKAYLA:
American right? Have you been to
Hollywood?

DARIA:
No, I'm from the East Coast.

MIKAYLA:
Cool! Ever been to New York?

DARIA:
(Shrugs) School trips mostly.

MIKAYLA:
I've been on school trips to the
Taronga Zoo! Baby pygmy hippos are
so cute! Apparently they-

DARIA:
-Hey, we gotta catch up with the
group.

MIKAYLA:
No problem! We'll have plenty of
time to-!

DARIA walks faster, which forces MIKAYLA to stop talking and hike. The girls finally catch up to the group.

Cut to:

LADO, who seems to be about as tall and as old as CHAD, is muttering prayers to himself in a foreign language. The rest of the group is speaking in various accents of English.

VIK:

(Canadian accent) What kind of camp is this eh?

CRINA:

(Romanian accent) I don't know, my parents sent me here because I got caught stealing bonbons.

TERRY:

(American accent) It's like a giant sleepover with all your best friends, but there're no adults!

MIKAYLA:

My granddad told me this is a *tabăra* that keeps Romanian traditions alive.

Cut to:

An unnaturally large wolf with reddish gold, gray and white fur, crouches, stalking the 22 campers from the underbrush. The sunlight glints off gold that seem to be bracelets at each front paw. The wolf seems like it is about to lunge, but then changes its mind and crosses the trail behind the campers.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - NOON

A grove of trees have grown into a canopy over a clearing in the forest, dappling the light and making it hard to tell the exact time of day.

Disused remnants remain in the clearing with a circle of stones in the center with scorched earth, marking where fires had been made. There is a large cast iron cauldron and tea kettle along with wooden buckets that look like small wine barrels, wooden bowls and cups.

Around the stone circle, large logs and stumps remain that had been used as seating. CHAD and LADO take off their backpacks and place them by the fire circle and as the rest of the group arrives, they do the same.

CHAD:

Everyone, get your tents up.

The other campers stand around awkwardly and CHAD is met by blank stares.

TERRY:

I thought we were sleeping in
cabins.

CHAD puts his hands on his hips and sighs in exasperation,
shaking his head. He looks to DARIA who smirks at him but
CHAD frowns.

CHAD:

(Mutters) Never mind.

CHAD takes a moment to look over the group, assessing
everyone before deciding his next steps.

CHAD:

We'll need a fire to stay warm
tonight, so any volunteers to
gather firewood?

A few campers raise their hands.

CHAD:

Thank you. Sorina, take some help
and make sure we have enough to
make it through the night.

SORINA leads those campers into the woods.

CHAD kneels down to unzip his pack and takes out his tent.

Cut to:

DARIA taking off her boots and socks. She puts them in her
red backpack. CHAD and DARIA lock eyes and he looks at her
knowingly but she just shrugs. CHAD smiles sympathetically.

EXT. WOODS AWAY FROM CAMP, LATRINE AREA - AFTERNOON

POV:

Blood dripping on leaves.

DARIA:

Exactly what I needed!

DARIA is squatting under a tree and MIKAYLA is squatting
behind another tree pointing away.

MIKAYLA:

You alright there?

DARIA:

Ugh! It stalks me every month, but somehow always catches me unprepared.

MIKAYLA:

Surfing the crimson wave, eh? Don't worry, I always keep one handy. Here.

MIKAYLA's hand goes around the tree and hands DARIA a pad.

DARIA:

Thanks.

MIKAYLA:

You didn't bring swag. So, ah, are you a survivalist?

DARIA:

It's just that I don't get much from my parents, so I'm a bit of a Spartan.

MIKAYLA:

Don't worry, it gets better when you pick up friends along the way!

DARIA smiles a little until she looks up and makes eye contact with a wolf. The wolf has been watching them.

DARIA:

We should head back to camp now.

MIKAYLA:

You go on ahead, I'll catch up!

DARIA:

No. It's safer if we stay together.

DARIA breaks eye contact with the wolf as she and MIKAYLA walk away.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - DUSK

There are only 22 campers and the fire has been lit. There is a lot of smoke because inexperienced campers chose a lot of green wood. All the shelters are being built to surround the fire pit.

CHAD stands by the canvas shelter, securing it while DARIA helps put together one of the other A-frames. Other campers are using sticks and brush to make more shelters.

TERRY:

I'm hungry! When's dinner?

Other campers start to grumble, unsure.

AFONSO:

Didn't one of you bring lots of luggage or something?

The others stare back blankly, with shrugs and various mutters of "not me".

AFONSO:

Well, looks like rich boy went home.

Some campers snicker but GUSTAVO looks uncomfortable. CHAD finishes securing his shelter and walks over to the fire.

CHAD sits next to LADO and leans in, saying something that the rest of the campers can't hear and LADO nods. AFONSO notices MIKAYLA watching him.

AFONSO:

I'm gonna dominate at the games.

GUSTAVO looks at HIKARI and smiles.

GUSTAVO:

Dude, you don't even know what the events will be!

VIK interrupts but AFONSO, GUSTAVO and LUCE ignore him.

VIK:

I'm a really fast runner.

LUCE:

Whatever! I don't care about sport, as long as that Festival ain't a bust.

VIK:

What Festival?

MIKAYLA:

On our last day, there's a Festival and people from all over the world come for it!

LUCE:
Yeah but before that there'll be
this, like, Pentathlon. That's
what these wankers keep goin' off
on.

AFONSO is offended so he and LUCE bicker in the background.

CHAD:
For anyone who wants to figure out
sleeping arrangements, all the
shelters are ready now. You can
find your own groups.

Some younger campers ask CHAD if they can stay in his tent.
CHAD nods and points to the canvas shelter.

VIK:
(Nervously) Hi! Uh, I'm Vik. From
Calgary, that's in Canada.

CHAD:
I'm Chad.

VIK:
You in charge, ey?

CHAD:
(Chuckles, shaking his head) No,
nobody's in charge. We just try to
help each other out.

VIK nods, gathers up his things and goes off with the other
younger campers, while the older campers stay by the fire.

Zoom in:

HIKARI notices DARIA's bare feet.

HIKARI:
(To everyone) As we now find
ourselves in Mother Earth's womb,
we should all free ourselves from
the constraints of boots, so we
can better commune with the sacred
Earth.

CHAD guffaws but catches DARIA's annoyed glance.

LUCE:
(Scoffs) Naw, it'll mess up me
pedicure.

AFONSO and some other campers laugh but CHAD remains silent. HIKARI pointedly ignores them and pulls up her skirt to make a big show of untying her boots as GUSTAVO watches in awe.

LADO takes off his boots and once his feet are bare, he kneels in prayer with his chin to his chest, eyes closed and hands lying flat on the ground in front of him, muttering his chants.

CHAD and DARIA get up to leave. CHAD heads towards the canvas shelter while DARIA heads towards the forest carrying her backpack.

HIKARI:
Blessings, I welcome you to join
our shelter.

HIKARI gestures to a stick shelter.

DARIA:
(Chuckles) No thanks.

MIKAYLA, HIKARI, SORINA and JENNIFER walk towards their shelter. LUCE, AFONSO and GUSTAVO stay behind by the fire with a few others.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - MORNING

A rain storm has blown through overnight and all the stick shelters have collapsed but the canvas shelter is still standing. Many campers are noticeably wet and look miserable.

DARIA exits the underbrush dry but barefoot.

VIK:
How are you dry?!

DARIA:
(Deadpan) Cuz I built a tree
house.

CRINA:
A tree house?! Why?

DARIA:
I don't wanna get eaten by wolves.

AFONSO:
(Scoffs) Oh, so the rest of us are
just bait?

GUSTAVO, LUCE and AFONSO laugh along with some other campers. The rest are muttering complaints about being hungry, wet and sore to each other until THE MAN arrives.

Cut to:

THE MAN is the same handsome LUMBERJACK that DARIA saw on the incoming drive. Now wearing a blue canvas work shirt with a plain brown leather vest on top, canvas pants and hiking boots.

On each wrist THE MAN wears Dacian gold spiral bracelets with wolf heads at each end and his arm hair is gray and silver.

THE MAN puts down the stacked baskets he is carrying and takes out a giant book with a clasp and lock. This book is handmade and bound in leather, which is embossed and gilded. He opens it and the pages are yellowed with dog-eared corners.

THE MAN sets up the open book on a stump along with an inkwell and quill. He stands with his arms crossed and speaks with a thick Romanian accent as he gestures to the book.

THE MAN:

(Commanding) All must sign.

CHAD is the first to sign, so the rest of the campers follow his example and sign in the exact format. DARIA is standing last in line.

While in line, LUCE is adjusting her breasts under her shirt, in hopes that when it's her turn, THE MAN will look at her cleavage as she bends over.

Cut to:

Her name is spelled "Lusy".

LUCE:

But you can call me Luce.

LUCE winks at THE MAN but he is unimpressed. DARIA sighs and looks at the sky in exasperation. Strange music and rustling comes from the woods.

GUSTAVO:

(Jumps) What the hell is that?!

GUSTAVO and AFONSO, along with other campers nervously look around.

Suddenly, ULF, the boy who was sitting on the trunks at the crossroads, stumbles into the clearing.

ULF:
 (German accent) Hallo!

Everyone screams except four campers: DARIA who is mildly surprised, CHAD who is annoyed, SORINA who is relieved and LADO, who stops muttering his chants.

ULF is now wearing a hand knit hat made from home-spun wool and a flannel shirt over his t-shirt. He has cut the legs off of his jeans but they are hilariously uneven. He is still wearing the Pumas but now they are trashed. He is carrying a smaller backpack that seems to be stuffed with things.

ULF:
 You wouldn't believe it! But when
 I was unpacking my luggage, I
 found *meine pan-flöte*-

ULF turns to THE MAN.

ULF:
 -Do you know what it is? Is it
 like a *zauber-flöte*?

THE MAN smiles.

ULF:
 It must be! How else would I have
 found you, if it was not for this
pan-flöte! See, it is *pan* because
 it has five! Here, let me show it
 to you!

ULF starts playing it badly to THE MAN. Suddenly, ULF notices campers are signing the book, so he skips ahead in line.

ULF:
 Oh! A registry! Let me sign!

POV:

ULF talks while signing his name.

ULF:
Ja, my name is Ulf which means
 wolf and last *nacht* I heard some
 howling in the woods.
 But!

Thank *Gott* I had *meine pan-flöte*!
 It was blowing such magical music
 that the wolves saw me as one of
 their own and began dancing in the

(MORE)

ULF: (CONT'D)
rain! It was a real *pan-flöte-*
rain-tanzen!

THE MAN laughs and the campers turn to stare at him in stunned silence. ULF continues.

ULF:
BUT! Then the rain got too heavy,
so the wolves ran away and I was
all alone. It was dark and I fell
into a hole where I slept in a mud
puddle. As you can see, I have a
crust all over *meine* clothing.

Campers say "aww" in sympathy.

ULF:
It is fine! A little mud is good
for your health *ja?* The soil at
meine oma's farm smells so good
that as *ein kind* I used to eat it.

(Sigh) *Ach!* The olden days of
youth when life was simpler.

ULF finishes signing and wistfully gazes into the mid distance but gets back on track.

ULF:
This morn, I woke up from my
relaxful slumber and slid through
the mud and heard some chattering,
so I followed and this *zauber-pan-*
flöte led me to all of you!

ULF gestures to the group, some campers are laughing, some are transfixed by the story, while others just think he is dumb.

LUCE:
(Laughing) Can I have whatever
he's on?

AFONSO and GUSTAVO are next in line behind her and both guffaw.

Finally, DARIA signs the book. Her script has flourish but is easily legible. Her signature is the last of 23 on the page. THE MAN gives the only nod of approval and LUCE is jealous.

LUCE:
Didn't realize I was at nerd camp!

LUCE glowers at DARIA, AFONSO laughs along with a few other campers, while some smirk at DARIA and THE MAN. THE MAN snaps the book shut, takes a pouch off his belt and sets it on the stump and then goes down the trail, leaving behind four large handmade baskets that are 2 feet in diameter.

PAUL:
When's breakfast!

TERRY:
Yeah! This place sucks!

DARIA:
(Mutters) Yes. It does.

AFONSO:
All these girls and no kitchen?

DARIA stomps over to the pile of sticks left over from the night before and scoops them up. She throws the bundle at AFONSO's feet. CHAD bites his lip and tries not to laugh.

DARIA:
(To AFONSO) Don't just stand there. If you want breakfast, gather firewood.

AFONSO:
Mala! Just asking!

GUSTAVO and some younger boys guffaw, LUCE shrieks with laughter and AFONSO smirks. DARIA glares back menacingly and some boys gulp in fear, grudgingly going to gather firewood. CHAD steps forward and picks up the pouch from the stump.

CHAD:
Lado and Vik, grab the buckets, get some help and go the *Nara* to get water. The *Zetraía* needs tea.

CHAD gestures to the large cast iron pots. LADO and VIK take the wooden buckets and leave with two others. CHAD opens his thoughtfully prepared backpack and takes out some thin rope.

CHAD:
Does anyone have any experience with snares?

AFONSO:
I do.

CHAD tosses the rope to AFONSO.

CHAD:
 OK, take a few of the others.
 Whatever gets caught is our
 dinner.

AFONSO leads LUCE and some other campers to set snares.

SORINA:
 We need to forage. Who go with me?

ULF:
Ach yes, foraging! I will make
 sure we avoid the galerina
 mushrooms!

GUSTAVO:
 Dude, I'll come too.
 (To everyone) We'll get fresh
 berries for dessert!

CHAD:
 (Sarcastically) Great idea!

DARIA snorts but CHAD quickly regains his composure.

CHAD:
 (To the remaining campers)
 Everyone else, I'll show you how
 to rebuild the shelters so they
 don't collapse again tonight.

SORINA, GUSTAVO and ULF take a basket to go foraging while
 CHAD shows the remaining campers how to rebuild the shelters.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - AFTERNOON

MIKAYLA is cooking as the entire group is sitting around the
 campfire.

CHAD pours the contents of the pouch left behind by THE MAN
 into the tea kettle, then serves a bowl of stew and cup of
 tea to DARIA before serving himself and sitting next to
 DARIA.

SORINA, ULF and VIK also serve themselves but everyone else
 waits as MIKAYLA runs around serving them. LUCE is spraying
 hairspray on her hair.

CHAD:
 (To DARIA) Maybe she doesn't
 realize it's just a tiny
 flamethrower.

DARIA shakes her head in response to CHAD and he smiles broadly at DARIA.

DARIA:
(To LUCE) Careful, or you'll light
yourself on fire.

LUCE scowls and mutters to herself in annoyance. She throws the hairspray back into her pack.

CHAD leans into DARIA and says something only she can hear. DARIA smiles broadly at CHAD.

LUCE:
(To everyone) Whatever! I guess
that's why me pop sent me here.
Cuz it's a crime to be as hot as
me. And he should know!
(Looks down at DARIA's feet)
Oh, dear, mummy couldn't afford
shoes for ya?

Campers snicker but DARIA ignores LUCE.

ULF:
Nein! My shoes were new but Pumas
are not good for this wilderness,
so now I am barefoot.

ULF sticks out his foot and wiggles his toes. Everyone laughs.

ULF:
But *ach*, it is more healthier this
way! Now my feet can get stronger
as my toes connect with nature.

AFONSO:
What do communists know about
health? This place is just some
stupid gulag for kids.

CHAD bristles and is a little offended, DARIA raises her eyebrows and slightly nods, SORINA shares a look with DARIA and in response also nods.

HIKARI:
Actually, this *tabăra* is to
preserve our Romanian roots, which
were denied to us for a
generation! It is up to each
individual to explore the many
mysteries contained within this
forest.

LADO gives HIKARI a nod of approval. GUSTAVO shrugs.

TERRY:

I don't care as long as we get
s'mores.

Some campers laugh but DARIA notices that MIKAYLA is still serving and hasn't eaten yet.

DARIA:

(To MIKAYLA) Mikayla, you haven't
eaten yet.
(Pats a log) Come and sit with me.

MIKAYLA:

Oh, well I still have to-

DARIA:

-Relax, people need to get their
own food!

MIKAYLA anxiously settles down next to DARIA and as soon as she starts eating, LUCE leans into AFONSO.

LUCE:

(Whispers to AFONSO) Haha, watch
this.
(To MIKAYLA) Hey Mikayla! Gimme
more!

GUSTAVO:

(Absentmindedly) Dude, me too.

MIKAYLA begins to get up again but HIKARI stands and interrupts.

HIKARI:

(Loudly) Now is the time when we
must all receive Mother Earth's
blessings and Mikayla has yet to
received her nourishment!

GUSTAVO feels guilty, so he gets up to refill his own bowl.

LUCE:

You'd know a thing about squirrel
stew! Isn't that just regular
Chinese?

HIKARI glares and pointedly ignores LUCE.

HIKARI:

(Aggressively) Let us not waste
the gifts that the forest has

(MORE)

HIKARI: (CONT'D)
 given us. These squirrels were
 offered up to nourish our souls.
 So we too can be as wily and agile
 as the creatures that jump from
 tree to tree.

LADO nods solemnly in agreement while the others either try not to laugh, are bored, or are whispering to each other.

LUCE:
 (Mockingly) Sorry, I didn't
 realize they were an endangered
 species.

AFONSO turns to DARIA who is silently eating.

AFONSO:
 (To DARIA) Take a second helping.
Minas Americanas are too bony for
 real men.
 (To everyone) I like my women
 muito boazuda.

AFONSO gestures an exaggerated hourglass with his hands and winks at MIKAYLA. MIKAYLA is flattered and blushes. MIKAYLA eagerly looks to DARIA, who rolls her eyes.

A few campers laugh at AFONSO's joke but LUCE forces a laugh. GUSTAVO doesn't laugh and covers his eyes in embarrassment before continuing to eat.

LUCE notices that MIKAYLA took HIKARI's squirrel benediction and AFONSO's joking as an opportunity to eat.

LUCE:
 (Loudly) But don't you think,
 like, she
 (Gestures to MIKAYLA) could stand
 skipping a few meals?

LUCE and the few campers who look up to her, laugh.

DARIA:
 Just leave her alone.

LUCE:
 Why do you care? Mikayla's just
 some *tiganca!*

AFONSO balls up his fists but before he can do anything, LADO stands up, takes a step forward and glares menacingly at LUCE.

LADO:
(Ukrainian accent) The Lord of Men
says that we are all equal!

LUCE shrinks, looks away and mutters to herself.

LUCE:
(Scoffs) Sorry.

LADO sits back down and begins loudly muttering his chants while pointedly staring at LUCE and the other campers who laughed.

Some campers look at him like he's crazy and some with fear but MIKAYLA looks thankful. ULF starts to play his flute, but badly.

PAUL:
What even is that thing?!

CHAD:
That? (Points to the flute)
Oh, it's a naï. One of the
classical folk instruments.
Romanian sheep herders used to
play it.

VIK:
How do you know so much? You're
not Romanian.

CHAD:
Well, my father is. He left
Romania when the Russians invaded.
Traveled around a bit before
ending up in Sudan where he met my
mother.

AFONSO:
Wait, so everyone else here is
Romanian?

DARIA:
(To AFONSO) You're not?

AFONSO:
No. Gustavo's mommy didn't want to
send him alone, so they paid for
my trip too.

DARIA thinks this is the stupidest thing anyone would agree to do and shakes her head in disbelief.

GUSTAVO looks sheepish and ULF switches his song.

AFONSO:
 (Mockingly to ULF) Sounds great!
 Do you take any requests?

AFONSO, GUSTAVO and LUCE guffaw.

ULF:
*Ja! Now I will present to you, "99
 Luftballons"!*

ULF plays a new tune that sounds nothing like "99
 Luftbaloons".

AFONSO:
 Aww yeah! I love this song!

Some campers laugh while others groan but HIKARI gets up,
 barefoot, to do an interpretive dance to ULF's music.

HIKARI:
 This really inspires my soul!

ULF begins swaying while playing. AFONSO and LUCE snicker.
 GUSTAVO watches HIKARI dance.

MIKAYLA and DARIA put away the dishes but this time there are
 more campers helping.

Because there is no other entertainment, campers are content
 to sit and listen to ULF while they chat or join HIKARI in
 the dance, which only encourages ULF more.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - EVENING

Campers are hanging out feeding wood into the campfire. LUCE
 and SORINA are off to one side. GUSTAVO is sitting next to
 AFONSO along with various campers that look up to him.

AFONSO:
 (To LUCE) Ah, finally stopped
 showing off now that you've found
 the *bichinha*-

LUCE:
 -You're just jealous she's more
 athletic than you!

AFONSO:
 Her?! Ha! I'd take her any day-

LUCE:
 -An' prove yourself all piss and
 wind? Y'think ya cool but, like,
 (MORE)

LUCE: (CONT'D)
 you're just some waster. Putting
 down girls cuz we better than you,
 lil knob-

AFONSO:
 -It's not! No one thinks you're
 hot,
 (Points to SORINA) not even her!

LUCE:
 Wanker!
 (To SORINA) Boys are such melts.
 We should kill 'em all! Always
 bragging and measuring peckers.
 Can't believe they're the ones in
 charge. No wonder everything's,
 like, messed up. We should be the
 ones ruling the world!

SORINA:
 Da, unfortunate world like this.

LUCE:
 Like, men should just shut up, or
 kneel and eat- Well, I suppose you
 don't need a man for that.

SORINA snorts and LUCE laughs.

LUCE:
 B'seriously, I'm so done with 'em.
 These boys are wankers. Me
 brothers are the same and me
 pop's, like, the biggest wanker of
 'em all!
 (Pauses) How about you?

SORINA:
 (Chuckles) Da, my father also big
 wanker. He say "Stay home, make
 babies," but *partid* come. Convince
 him to let me train.

LUCE:
 Training? For what?

SORINA:
 Olympic pentathlon, but I am best
 on pole vault.

LUCE:
 Cool! D'ya like it?

SORINA pauses for a moment and thinks.

SORINA:

I want escape from this life. To do nothing is to obey. I choose, so training is fun.

LUCE:

Like, all me pop expects is for me to be a good lil daughter. Never mind that I've got more brains than me three brothers combined!

SORINA:

(To LUCE) So what is your plan?

LUCE:

For what?

SORINA:

For freedom. You need make plan, or never happen.

LUCE:

Yeah it's just so hard when me life's so boring! I could never be driven like you.
(Thinks) Suppose I just have to find the right angle.

DARIA is sitting alone staring into the campfire with a distant look. MIKAYLA sits down next to her.

MIKAYLA:

Watching bush telly?

DARIA:

(Sighs) I just can't believe I'm here again.

MIKAYLA:

Well, I can't wait for the Festival.

DARIA:

There's a whole lot that can go wrong before then.

MIKAYLA:

(Teases) It's over in a week, so your torture won't be too long.

DARIA:

Yeah.

DARIA and MIKAYLA lock eyes and smile.

DARIA:
You sure do go out of your way to
make friends with everyone.

MIKAYLA:
I've always felt alone, maybe
that's why I'm always so clucky.

DARIA:
How come?

MIKAYLA:
Even though I have a big family,
it always feels like I've been
kept apart from my brothers and
sister. It's probably just my
granddad trying to protect me
since I'm the youngest. Sometimes
it almost seems like he's got a
plan for me and doesn't wanna tell
on.
(Optimistic) I reckon he doesn't
wanna spoil the surprise!

DARIA can't meet MIKAYLA's eyes and uncomfortably stares into
the fire.

MIKAYLA:
Oh, can I get you more tea? I'm
getting some too.

DARIA:
(Strangled) Sure, thanks.

MIKAYLA gets up to get more tea. LUCE and SORINA look over.
LUCE looks annoyed but SORINA catches DARIA's expression and
gets sad.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - MIDNIGHT

POV:

Lower to the ground.

Cut to:

Faint light of campfire embers in the distance.

POV:

Shaky and runs a bit. Panting is heard but the running stops suddenly, before running again to enter the camp.

Pan up:

Moonlight dappling through the canopy of leaves overhead.

POV:

Jerks down and sees that the fire has been reduced to dying embers. By the campfire, LADO is sleeping on his side facing the fire but with his back to the forest.

Cut to:

LADO is the only one by the fire, with everyone else in one of the shelters, except for DARIA who is sleeping elsewhere.

POV:

After inspecting LADO, runs to one of the four shelters.

Cut to:

One shelter is made with canvas while three are A-frames made out of branches and thatched with tree limbs and leaves. The camp is still and everyone is asleep. Snuffling sounds can be heard.

POV:

Pokes into a shelter and sees SORINA, HIKARI and MIKAYLA sleeping. Inspecting each person but once it reaches HIKARI, retreats and runs towards another shelter.

Cut to:

The canvas shelter with CHAD, ULF and the younger kids.

POV:

Inspecting each person and after inspecting ULF, again runs off. Running towards a third shelter, but a twig snaps and freezes.

Cut to:

HIKARI poking her head out of her shelter, cocking her head and looking towards the rustling in the bushes. When she doesn't see anything, she goes back inside.

When HIKARI is back inside her shelter, a distant howl is heard that soon turns into a chorus of wolves.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS, MONTAGE - EARLY MORNING

MIKAYLA is already up, boiling water for tea. CHAD is in the middle of his exercise routine which includes push-ups, sit-ups and pull-ups on a nearby tree.

MIKAYLA pours tea into cups. Campers begin to stir and she serves them tea. MIKAYLA leaves one cup on a stump that has the empty pouch on it. This cup of tea is for CHAD.

LADO has been by the fire all night and is now kneeling in prayer and muttering chants. When MIKAYLA approaches, he stops chanting, slowly comes up to a sitting position and receives the cup of tea with two hands, nodding a solemn thanks. He then takes a sip with great reverence.

HIKARI is outside a shelter sitting crossed legged, meditating. MIKAYLA approaches, leaves the tea on a nearby rock and returns to the fire as the rest of the group is gathering as some are already serving themselves tea.

AFONSO nudges GUSTAVO.

AFONSO:

I think there's **corumba** in this.

GUSTAVO:

Dude, really? So cool.

AFONSO and GUSTAVO chug the tea.

AFONSO:

Mala! So hot!

LUCE:

Just like me! (Winks)

LUCE blows and takes a sip of the tea.

LUCE:

Ughh! This cuppa' tastes like dishwater.

ULF:

You drink dishwater in England?!

ULF takes a gulp and immediately spits it out.

Sweating and out of breath, CHAD completes his workout routine and drinks his tea all in one go. Seeing that CHAD drank his tea, ULF shrugs and decides to drink the rest of the tea but first blows on it.

TERRY:

This stuff is gross! I am NOT drinking this!

TERRY dumps his cup of the tea on the ground. LADO glares at him.

HIKARI:

This tea is such a blessing! Such a delicious umami taste.

DARIA comes out of the bushes, looking bedraggled and goes up to get tea.

MIKAYLA:

'Morning! How'd you sleep up in your tree?

DARIA:

You ever see those nature documentaries where a leopard is just hanging from a tree?

MIKAYLA:

(Laughs) That bad 'eh? Why don't you sleep in the shelter with us? You'd be more comfortable!

DARIA:

Cuz I don't wanna get eaten by wolves. They can smell blood!

DARIA and MIKAYLA both laugh along with some girls. CHAD gives DARIA a warning look and stands up.

There are only 22 campers and one bowl is left empty by the fire.

CHAD:

(To the group) Today we're taking foraged mushrooms to the **Dava**, so finish your tea. It'll be a long hike down from this **Kapas**.

Some campers groan while others are excited.

MIKAYLA:

I'm so excited to see the village!

LUCE:

Of course you are.

Some younger girls giggle along with LUCE.

ULF:

I will play you all a tune that I
came up with last night!

AFONSO:

You do that, *camarada!*

GUSTAVO and LUCE snicker.

VIK:

I hope we got the right kind of
mushrooms.

SORINA:

Not to worry. We have right ones.

Pan down:

The baskets are large enough that they need to be carried by two campers and there are four baskets to carry. Inside, the mushrooms are covered by a cloth to protect them and prevent any from being spilled.

LADO and VIK carry a basket while GUSTAVO and HIKARI carry another. The other two are carried by other campers. CHAD leads them away and ULF starts playing his flute while DARIA brings up the rear.

EXT. VILLAGE, SERIES OF SCENES - MORNING

The 22 campers approach a long, 12 foot high, earthen wall surrounding a village.

From the group's vantage point, only thatched roofs can be seen beyond the wall. What was a barren dirt path becomes cobblestones that lead to a large gate.

The fields outside the wall are lush meadows with ploughs drawn by heavy Romanian Draft horses that are broad, tall and muscular. Some meadows are wheat fields, others for vegetable and others wildflower meadows with grazing cows and sheep.

The gated entrance in the wall has an arched top that is 15 feet at its peak. The gate itself is elaborately carved wood with geometric designs and a Dacian Wolf-Dragon at the top.

Campers "oohh" and "ahhh" at the ornate gate.

MIKAYLA:

Wow, the designs are so intricate!
It must've taken ages for them to
carve all this!

Cut to:

Carvings of wolves in the gate. One door has various scenes of wolves and one bear.

ULF:

Look! I think that one is a bear!

The gate has been left wide open and DARIA steps through first, she now leads the group with CHAD bringing up the rear.

The village is made up of squared earthen huts with reed thatched roofs. The houses are painted various colors, from whitewashed to indigo to bright yellow. Instead of glass, the windows have carved wooden shutters that sit open to catch the breeze. The backyards have small gardens, pens for small animals and clotheslines with laundry blowing in the wind.

In the front of one house, a teen VILLAGE GIRL in a folk dress with an apron is sitting weaving on a loom.

POV:

VILLAGE GIRL's hand as she weaves threads into an intricate tapestry of rosettes, tulips and geometric designs. The main image features a bear standing on a cliff with a group of 4 human figures kneeling below and one human figure flying towards the sky.

The VILLAGE GIRL looks up to watch the group pass by and her eyes linger on SORINA. She shyly waves at SORINA, who waves back. The VILLAGE GIRL giggles, hiding her mouth.

Cut to:

AFONSO wolf whistles at the VILLAGE GIRL, who scowls at him and instead gazes directly at SORINA. AFONSO scoffs at being rejected but the boys notice the interaction between the girls and stare at SORINA, who turns red and looks at her feet.

GUSTAVO looks away but AFONSO gives SORINA a judgmental look, whispers something into GUSTAVO's ear and laughs but GUSTAVO looks uncomfortable, politely pretending he didn't hear. However, DARIA does hear and glares daggers at AFONSO over her shoulder.

The group walks down the village lane, which has houses on both the left and right. Finally, they arrive at the most ornate house.

DARIA knocks on the front door and an OLD WOMAN opens it, wearing a folk dress and apron with a colorful scarf tied

around her head. They talk amongst themselves before DARIA walks back.

DARIA:
 (To the group) Okay, she needs six
 people to help. Who here speaks
 Romanian?

SORINA, LADO, CHAD, LUCE and some other campers raise their hands.

DARIA:
 Luce, Mikayla and you three
 (Gestures to 3 campers) will go
 with me.

Daria points to SORINA, ULF, VIK, JENNIFER and 4 campers to assign a task, then points to GUSTAVO, HIKARI and 3 campers to assign another task. Finally, she turns to CHAD, AFONSO and LADO and gestures down a path in the village.

CHAD:
 When everyone is done with their
 work, wait for the rest of us
 outside the gate.

The rest of the campers break off into their groups. DARIA, LUCE, MIKAYLA and three other campers take the baskets of mushrooms around to the back of this house.

SORINA, ULF, VIK, JENNIFER and 4 other campers pass a yard set up as a wood shop.

Cut to:

A hand hacking away at a long stick of wood with a chisel and mallet, carving a point onto it.

Zoom out:

A pack of other LUMBERJACKS making more javelins. An old man is grinding the edge of a large, flattened stone. Despite his old age, he smooths the edges with force.

Lots of crunching and some screeching is heard.

Around him are other old men, some grinding stones into discus shapes while others are using chisels and mallets on large stones.

Behind them are younger teen boys sanding large poles of wood. The poles are long enough that each one needs three boys to sit and work. Despite being unsupervised, these boys remain serious and silent while they work.

The pack of LUMBERJACKS are shirtless while the old men and younger teen boys are wearing some modern clothing with their folk outfits. ULF, recognizing some clothes, calls out to them.

ULF:
 Good choice! I have one just like
 it!

The LUMBERJACKS, old men and teen boys stop in unison, turn their heads and scowl at the passing campers.

ULF:
 (To SORINA) Oh! Will we get to
 help with woodworking?

SORINA:
 (Hushed tone) Shush, don't bother.
 Important work.

EXT. CHICKEN COOP AND YARD - NOON

GUSTAVO, HIKARI and 3 other campers are harvesting eggs or chasing chickens.

The small chicken coop is handmade out of wood, with handles where one person in the front and another in the back can pick it up to move it. The chickens are free-range in the yard, which has a three-foot wooden fence. On the ground is a large basket with eggs that have already been gathered.

GUSTAVO leans into the coop but is afraid to reach under a chicken that is still sitting in a nesting box. HIKARI laughs and reaches under it to get eggs.

HIKARI:
 Gustavo! It's just a chicken!
 Here. Just wait until it squats
 with its wings out and then pick
 it up!

HIKARI demonstrates on another chicken that is standing outside and walks up to GUSTAVO with the chicken.

HIKARI:
 You can pet her, she won't peck.

GUSTAVO hesitantly pets the chicken.

GUSTAVO:
 Thanks Hikari. They're tamer than
 I thought.

HIKARI and GUSTAVO lock eyes, he gets nervous and looks away while she blushes. HIKARI puts down the chicken.

GUSTAVO:

Dude, how do you know all of this?

HIKARI:

I live in a co-housing community in Ukiah, California. Everyone helps with all the chores.

GUSTAVO:

Co-housing?

HIKARI:

It's like a commune but on a smaller scale -no cults!
(Laughs)
It's like an apartment block but with a large outdoor courtyard in the middle. Everyone comes out after working and we cook evening meals while children play. Sort of like
(Waves) here, but more cooperative!

GUSTAVO:

This is all just so strange for me. Afonso and I live at the training facility in São Paulo.

HIKARI:

He seems very
(Pause) coarse. How did you two become friends?

GUSTAVO:

(Embarrassed) Well, a former Olympian runs the wrestling program in Afonso's *barrô* and he happened to be the most talented kids at the gym.

HIKARI:

Oh yes! I saw you both wrestling when we arrived.

GUSTAVO:

Yeah, that's our thing. My father is on the Brazilian Olympic Committee, so the coach brought Afonso to his attention. Dude, he

(MORE)

GUSTAVO: (CONT'D)
even thinks that Afonso could win
gold at the '92 games!

HIKARI:
Did you know that the ancient
Olympic games were designed to
settle wars before they happened?

GUSTAVO:
Dude, most people don't know but
wrestling was one of the original
events!

HIKARI:
If only leaders could do the same
today.

GUSTAVO and HIKARI lock eyes again, this time he reaches up
and tucks a lock of her hair behind her ear. Then he realizes
the 3 other campers are watching.

GUSTAVO:
(Clears his throat) Ahem. Come on,
we have to collect more at the
next house.

GUSTAVO takes the basket and walks away so HIKARI and the two
other campers follow.

EXT. WASHING AND DIPPING WELL, MONTAGE - AFTERNOON

ULF, SORINA, VIK, JENNIFER and 4 other campers are at a
dipping well with a traditional laundry station.

They each take buckets of water and empty them into a large
cauldron over a fire. VIK takes a long wooden pole to stir
the laundry with another camper helping him. VIK fishes out a
large white sheet and plops it on the stone.

ULF:
Ach no! What to do! Is it dirty
again?

SORINA:
(Laughing) No, stone is clean.
Take this. You go back and I go
back to make curly.

SORINA and ULF step back and twist the sheet to wring it out.
They hang it on a clothesline and sprinkle lye powder on any
stains they find.

ULF:

This village reminds me of *meine Oma's* farm in Baden-Württemberg!

SORINA:

(Smirks) Where you eat dirt?

ULF:

(Mock offense) *Ja*, it's very healthy, like a vaccine! Maybe you should try sometime to be less, judgy-judgy!

They laugh.

SORINA:

She live in Black Forest?

ULF:

Ja! That's why I love camping! As *ein kind*, I would always try to get lost and find my way back, like Hansel and Gretel.

SORINA:

Maybe, that why you found us.

ULF:

Ja, with the help of *meine zauberpan-flöte!*

SORINA:

You play music?

ULF:

Nein, before I only play the Nintendo. *Ach!* I wish there was a job where someone would pay you to play the Nintendo.
(Wistfully) Maybe one day.

SORINA:

Am sure will happen. What is like for you in Germany?

ULF:

Well, *meine großeltern* live in the Black Forest, but I am from Dusseldorf. We have art, music and movies too. We are the cultural center of Germany! It is like Hollywood, but better, because it is German engineering!

SORINA, VIK, JENNIFER and ULF laugh.

ULF:
 (To Everyone)
 After this, you should all come
 visit.

SORINA:
 (Wistful) I want to travel. See
 world. Very tired of life held by
 walls. Not exciting to me.
 (Determinedly) I love to visit
 you.

ULF:
 Yahoo! I have a tree house in the
 backyard where you could stay.

SORINA and ULF both smile as they finish that sheet and walk
 to get another.

Cut to:

The VILLAGE GIRL approaches SORINA at the clothesline. She is
 carrying a basket full of dirty linen. They make eye contact.

The VILLAGE GIRL flicks her braid over her shoulder and
 SORINA blushes. They drop off the dirty linen at the dipping
 well before walking away.

SORINA:
 (In Romanian) *I love your blouse,
 the embroidery is very beautiful.*

VILLAGE GIRL:
 (In Romanian, Giggles) *Thank you,
 I did it myself. If you'd like to
 help me carry more laundry, I'll
 show you more.*

SORINA and the VILLAGE GIRL walk together, chatting as they
 go, leaving ULF, VIK and the other 2 behind. The girls are
 walking close to each other and their pace is slow. When one
 leans in to say something, the other giggles.

Cut to:

JENNIFER and another camper plops down another sheet with ULF
 and VIK coming to fetch it.

Time passes.

In the distance SORINA and the VILLAGE GIRL are carrying baskets full of dirty linen. This time the girls are outwardly laughing, as if they are old friends.

ULF gets something in his eye.

ULF:

Owaa!! I think I got lye in *mein*
eye!

SORINA:

Oof!

SORINA's broad smile drops and she runs to ULF, carrying her basket with her. Feeling guilty, the VILLAGE GIRL quietly lays her basket at the laundry station and walks away without saying goodbye.

As SORINA is dabbing ULF's eye with a wet cloth, she looks over but the VILLAGE GIRL has gone. SORINA looks sad and continues helping ULF.

EXT. BACKYARD BREAD BAKING, MONTAGE - AFTERNOON

DARIA, MIKAYLA, LUCE and 3 other campers are standing under a covered porch with a wood-fired stone oven perpendicular to the house.

The OLD WOMAN is sitting, supervising the group and gets up to correct someone. She throws logs into the oven fire to keep the temperature stable.

DARIA and LUCE are kneading dough in a large, wide wooden bowl that looks like a trough. Next to them MIKAYLA is folding and rolling dough with a pin that looks like a fat dowel on the table.

The OLD WOMAN cracks 40 eggs into a large wooden bowl then takes a long handled wooden fork hanging from the wall to beat them. She adds pre-chopped mushrooms into the bowl and pours it on top of a sheet of dough that has been rolled out on a table.

LUCE:

(Muttering) Of course me pop sends
me here! Punishing me cuz I
haven't been the obedient lil
Romanian daughter.

Daria chuckles and shakes her head. Mikayla notices.

MIKAYLA:

I love making pastry, ya reckon Daria? Have you made this before?

DARIA:

Oh yeah, I hang out with old ladies in shacks all the time.

LUCE:

You'd get along great with me mum.

LUCE and DARIA laugh while MIKAYLA seems a bit offended.

From the rafters, the OLD WOMAN takes a bundle of feathers and uses it like a paintbrush to evenly spread the mushroom and egg mixture onto the sheet of dough. She takes a small, spiked wheel and cuts the dough to make even portions.

LUCE:

I have to wait on me three useless brothers hand and foot! Like, it'd be better if it was just me mum at home.

MIKAYLA:

I mean, taking care of people is nice. What about you Daria?

DARIA:

My parents are just lucky I haven't figured out a way to poison them without getting caught.

MIKAYLA looks at Daria in shock but politely keeps quiet.

LUCE:

When you, like, figure that out, let me know! Cuz all me brothers do is loaf about on the street, getting up to no good! But I'm to stay home and keep their supper warm? They can make their own sodding tea!

MIKAYLA:

Well, if your brothers work hard all day with your dad, isn't it nice for them to come home and feel appreciated?

To the side is a smaller table covered with newspapers that have been ripped into A4 sized pieces.

Zoom in on headlines:

(In Romanian, translated) 24 December 1989:

"The Fall of Ceaușescu" and photos of the captured dictator, wife and sons.

Photos of protesters in Bucharest's University Square holding up placards: *"Our Children Will Be Free"* other protesters hold "First line: *EU-RO-PA* ('RO' falling out) Second line: *EUROPA* ('RO' in line)".

(In Romanian, translated) 14 June 1990:

*"Death to the Intellectuals, FSN Brings in the **Mineriada**"* with photos of miners beating student protesters in Bucharest's University Square and looting university classrooms.

Cut to:

The OLD WOMAN gestures for one of the campers to come over and put a piece of newspaper onto a wooden peal. She places a dough pocket on the newspaper, takes the peal and puts the newspaper along with the pastry pocket into the oven.

The rest of the campers fold and fill pastry pockets with chopped mushrooms. The whole process repeats as an assembly line.

MIKAYLA:

This reminds me of the pastries we make for the weekly tasting at our vineyard!

DARIA:

What kind of grapes do you grow?

MIKAYLA:

Mustoasa de Maderat, a white varietal from Transylvania. It's got a pale lemon color with dry, fresh, fruity flavors and above average acidity, so it preserves really well.

(Excitedly) My granddad fled the Russian occupation and he brought root cuttings from his family's vineyard. Now we have a thriving business, because Romanian wine is the best in the Balkans!

LUCE:

Do you get drunk, like, all the time?

MIKAYLA:

(Awkwardly) Oh, haha, no. There's too much work!

(Pauses)

You see, my brothers are busy supervising wine-making and my sister helps my granddad on the business side.

LUCE:

I don't know why any woman would ever want to have more than one kid.

MIKAYLA:

Oh, well my dad's first wife died young and I'm my mum's one and only.

DARIA:

Will you join the family business?

MIKAYLA:

No, it's not really my thing. I like taking care of people, not grapes. So that's what my mum and I do.

LUCE:

(Scoffs) Well I don't! I mean why are we, like, even makin' these things?

DARIA:

They need a lot for the Festival. So expect to come back and make even more.

LUCE:

Like, these mushrooms better be the fun ones, or I'm wasting me time!

DARIA:

(Ignores LUCE, to MIKAYLA) How did your parents meet?

MIKAYLA:

After her dad died, my mum came to Australia working farm jobs. But

(MORE)

MIKAYLA: (CONT'D)
 then she met my dad and it was a whirlwind romance! They got married, she immediately moved onto the vineyard and that's where I grew up!

LUCE:
 How about you Daria, any useless brothers?

DARIA:
 No, just useless parents.

MIKAYLA:
 Oh, how come?

DARIA:
 Even before they left Romania, they were obsessed with keeping up appearances. Going to America just made them worse.

LUCE:
 How can they be obsessed with appearances if you're dressed like-
 (looks Daria up and down) -that.

DARIA:
 (Snorts) They're completely obsessed with their own appearance. I'm just a sacrifice to be hidden away.

MIKAYLA frowns while rolling dough.

LUCE:
 (To DARIA) Like, where do you even live?

DARIA:
 Phoenixville, it's a western suburb of Philadelphia.

LUCE:
 Must be nicer than Hackney.

DARIA:
 It's fine, just don't be out after dark.

LUCE:
 (Musing) I wish I was an only child. Can't believe me pop wants
 (MORE)

LUCE: (CONT'D)
to turn over the family business
to me moron brothers!

MIKAYLA:
What's the family business?

LUCE:
Oh, protection rackets, some petty
crimes. Theft, loan sharking,
scamming. Ya know, the like.

MIKAYLA seems surprised but DARIA chuckles and nods.

MIKAYLA:
(Scandalized) Well, at least you
do it as a family.

LUCE scoffs and continues aggressively kneading dough with
DARIA while MIKAYLA rolls out her dough to be as large as the
square table, gives it to the cutters and gets a new slab of
dough.

EXT. GATE OF THE VILLAGE - AFTERNOON

There are only 21 campers gathered by the gate.

ULF is playing his flute for the village children who are
dancing and singing a nursery rhyme.

VILLAGE CHILDREN:
(In Romanian) "*Ilteu, Ilteu,*
Every five years,
Before five tasks,
True believers need help,
It is not a big ask,
Bring us mushrooms,
So we can drink our tea,
In the Bor,
You cleanse your souls,
From the Lord of Men,
Whom gives us more.

Ilteu, Ilteu,
Every five years,
After five tasks,
Make prayers to the Lord,
Jump high into the sky,
Bring our message to him,
So he accepts your life,
And forget your strife,
To unlock the gate,
Of his great estate.

(MORE)

VILLAGE CHILDREN: (CONT'D)
Where you accept his embrace."

SORINA is unnerved by their song and tries to shoo them away.

SORINA:
 (In Romanian) *"He will come back
 to play with you later, but now we
 have to go."*

VILLAGE CHILDREN:
 (Disappointed) Awww!

The VILLAGE CHILDREN whine in protest until some adults come to the gate and gather them. Then the gate immediately closes behind the 21 campers.

ULF:
 It is such a nice nursery song!
 What does it mean?

SORINA:
 (Evasively) It is old camp song.

As the group hikes back to camp, CHAD, DARIA, LADO and SORINA repeatedly inspect the forest edge. Something is stalking and watching from the underbrush as the campers hike and chat amongst themselves.

LUCE:
 They're working me to death! Like,
 I don't wanna die as some skivvy.
 I wanna live fast, die young
 (Flips her hair) and leave a
 beautiful corpse!

Some campers laugh.

AFONSO:
 Listening to you, I wanna die now!

AFONSO, GUSTAVO and others laugh.

MIKAYLA:
 I wanna die under a bower of
 grapes surround by my great-
 grandchildren.

HIKARI:
 That sounds peaceful, Mikayla.
 When I pass, I hope to transcend
 into the astral realm.

MIKAYLA:
 What about you Daria?

DARIA:
 (Deadpan) I want to jump off a cliff onto a field of pikes.

SORINA makes direct eye contact with DARIA and smirks before turning away, biting her lip and trying to hide her laugh. MIKAYLA looks skeptical, other campers laugh but CHAD glares at DARIA and changes the subject.

CHAD:
 When we get back to camp, we still have to make dinner. Who wants to check the snares?

Some campers raise their hands.

CHAD:
 Okay, we also need people to gather firewood and prepare the fire. Who will do that?

ULF and SORINA raise their hands.

CHAD:
 Good. And Lado, you go with Daria to get water. The rest should check the shelters and see if they need any reinforcements.

Cut to:

CHAD's belt, which has a pouch that looks similar to THE MAN's, but with a different embroidery pattern. In the distance something continues stalking the campers from the forest.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - DUSK

AFONSO is helping MIKAYLA to make dinner. In the background CHAD is doing his evening workout routine, which is the same as the morning.

AFONSO:
 So what do you need?

MIKAYLA:
 Oh, well if you can debone the meat, that would be a real help.

AFONSO:
 (Valiantly) Of course *querida!*

MIKAYLA is surprised at AFONSO's cooking skills.

MIKAYLA:

You're really good at that, bush tucker is hard to do.

AFONSO:

As the man of the house, I'm in charge of trapping game so my little brothers and sisters can have fresh meat.

MIKAYLA:

You're amazing! I love taking care of people too.

AFONSO:

Yeah, I give half of my Olympic salary to my mom so she can feed them when I'm not home.

MIKAYLA:

That's so generous!

AFONSO puffs up in pride. MIKAYLA smiles at him.

MIKAYLA:

What's it like in Brazil?

AFONSO:

We have great street festivals, music, dance and delicious food. The best one of all is *Carnaval*. This year I was part of the Samba line.

AFONSO sees that MIKAYLA is confused.

AFONSO:

Carnaval is this big party that starts the Friday before Lent starts on Ash Wednesday.

MIKAYLA:

I'd love to see that! Never been to any street festivals.

AFONSO:

Here, I'll show you how to dance.

AFONSO puts down his knife and starts demonstrating samba moves. MIKAYLA clumsily tries to copy him.

AFONSO:

No, like this.

AFONSO comes up in front of her and places his hands on her hips. She shyly moves and AFONSO beat boxes a samba rhythm and MIKAYLA loosens up. She starts dancing while AFONSO steps back and claps the beat and MIKAYLA starts to smile.

AFONSO:
Now you're getting it!

MIKAYLA suddenly gets self-conscious and stops.

MIKAYLA:
We should finish cooking or no
one's eating tonight.

AFONSO:
No problem *querida*, I'll take you
to *Carnaval* next year.

AFONSO winks and MIKAYLA giggles as they continue cooking. CHAD comes over to pour the contents of his pouch into the stew.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - NIGHT

There are now 20 campers sitting around the campfire with 3 empty bowls by the fire.

The campers are relaxing and talking and some campers giddy but others are tired and dozing off.

JENNIFER:
(To Vik) Where's Terry? I didn't
see him after we got back.

VIK:
Don't know but his stuff was still
in the tent, so he's around.

ULF is playing his flute but this time it strangely sounds good.

MIKAYLA:
Ulf, your playing sounds
wonderful!

ULF:
Danke! Is very fun, I'm readying
myself for the Festival!

HIKARI:
Such a wonderful idea! We should
all make individual contributions.

HIKARI finishes her tea and sees LUCE is sitting next to the kettle.

HIKARI:
Luce, would you be so kind as to
get me some tea?

As LUCE passes CHAD, she gives him a saucy look but he ignores her and instead sheepishly smiles at DARIA, who smiles back. LUCE pours tea for HIKARI and as she walks back, notices CHAD and DARIA's glances.

LUCE:
(To DARIA) So that's where you go
off to every night!

AFONSO and other campers laugh while GUSTAVO is absentmindedly smiling at HIKARI so AFONSO punches his arm to get his attention.

GUSTAVO:
Huh?

AFONSO:
(Mocking) "Huh?"! You never pay
attention to anything.

AFONSO turns to a group of kids that look up to him.

AFONSO:
Yeah, back home, by the time he
has his opening, his opponent
already has him in a double leg
take down.
(Points thumb at himself) That's
why I'm team captain.
(To GUSTAVO) But it's okay! I
still love you!

AFONSO grabs GUSTAVO into a headlock and ruffles his hair while GUSTAVO tries to break the hold. The group of kids laugh.

GUSTAVO:
(Mutters in Portuguese, not
translated) **Deixa eu ir seu bicha!**

AFONSO:
(In Portuguese, translated) You're
seriously calling me gay?!

GUSTAVO:
(In Portuguese, not translated)
Você é muito sem-noção.

AFONSO:

(In Portuguese, translated) *Crazy, huh? You think you can call me that?*

GUSTAVO:

(In English) Sure dude. You can dish it out but you can't take it.

AFONSO:

(In English) I'm not gay! Look at *senhor pan flute*, prancing around. He's the gay one!

AFONSO points at ULF.

PAUL:

I need to poo!

The others laugh and AFONSO cools off slightly.

AFONSO:

News flash! Sissy boy needs to poo!

CHAD:

(To PAUL, pointing) Go over to that tree and take the small shovel.

PAUL:

(Confused) What do I do with it?

CHAD:

This time, walk away far enough so nobody will smell it and dig yourself a hole. When you're done, cover it up so nobody steps in it. (Pauses) And make sure you wipe it off on the grass and bring it back!

PAUL:

Okay.

PAUL walks away and the others continue their conversations.

EXT. WOODS AWAY FROM THE CAMP - DAY

A section of the woods that is more wet with a small rocky stream running through. ULF and MIKAYLA are gathering water with wood buckets. The rocks form a small waterfall where a bucket is now filling.

ULF:
I wonder where this stream comes
from?

MIKAYLA:
Maybe we can trace it back to the
source!

ULF:
Ja!

They walk along the stream and stop at a clearing with a pond and waterfall. The pond is glistening, bright blue and deep, with a waterfall about 20 feet tall. There are large rocks to the side where ULF stands with his mouth agape.

MIKAYLA:
It's beautiful! We should get back
and tell everyone.

ULF:
It will be so nice to swim in some
cool, clear water!

ULF and MIKAYLA turn around and continue chatting as they walk back to camp.

POV:

Stays in place looking at the waterfall as ULF and MIKAYLA walk away.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - DAY

There are 19 campers left doing various campground tasks.

ULF and VIK are struggling to light the fire next to a pile of kindling. ULF is rubbing sticks together meanwhile VIK is striking flint at a large log, but none of this is working. LUCE and SORINA bring firewood.

ULF:
Ach! Why is it not lighting?! I am
rubbing the sticks,
(Points to VIK) you are striking
the flint, but still nothing!

DARIA comes over to ULF and VIK to help them light the fire.

SORINA:
Good, Luce. You find many!

LUCE:

I'm not missing me chance to work on me tan in the new bikini I brought. How else will anyone see it!

SORINA:

You should tan because you like. Not because boy like.

DARIA:

(To ULF) You just don't have enough small shavings, that big log won't catch on fire.

DARIA moves the log, takes some dry leaves and ULF searches in his backpack.

LUCE:

Easy for you to say. Did you bring one?

SORINA:

Why wear bikini?

LUCE:

(Surprised) Is that not what they do here?

ULF:

Ach! (Reaches into his backpack)
I have a knife!

SORINA shakes her head at LUCE while ULF shaves some wood and sprinkles it on top of DARIA's pile of dry leaves. VIK strikes the flint again and this time it catches fire. LUCE walks away, so ULF, VIK, SORINA and DARIA continue building the fire.

CHAD hands the pouch to LADO, who accepts with great reverence.

ULF:

(To LADO) Will you be joining us at the lagoon?

LADO:

No. I make tea.

EXT. MOUNTAIN LAGOON, SERIES OF SCENES - NOON

LADO has stayed behind at the camp and 18 campers are around the lagoon, preparing to swim.

MIKAYLA is hiding in a bush, half undressed. DARIA and HIKARI are in their underwear, SORINA is in a frumpy one-piece bathing suit, LUCE is in her bikini, the boys are shirtless in their boxers but ULF is completely naked.

ULF:

Ach!! I still only have peachin'
fuzzin' on my pubic area.
(To everyone) Do you see any? Do
you? Is there any growing?

Everyone either shakes their head or laughs at ULF, since campers are already splashing and having fun. AFONSO grimaces and calls over.

AFONSO:

Put it away, Ulf!

AFONSO and GUSTAVO guffaw while ULF turns to jump in the water.

ULF:

Ach, it will come.

ULF jumps into the pond, screaming with joy.

ULF:

Yahoo!

LUCE is lying out on a rock trying to tan but she's annoyed at getting splashed.

LUCE:

(To everyone) So, what do you
think of me bikini?

AFONSO:

(Sarcastically) *Tãu quente, minha
paixão.*

LUCE:

(To AFONSO) Watch it! Or you might
get burnt! (Winks)

AFONSO runs up to her, scoops her in his arms, runs to the pond and throws her in.

LUCE:

(Shrieks) Wanker!

LUCE laughs until she realizes AFONSO doesn't follow. Grumbling, she joins the others.

CHAD is acting as a lifeguard. Someone has brought an inflatable ball that they throw around in the pond, playing water games.

HIKARI and GUSTAVO are flirtatiously splashing each other and laughing.

GUSTAVO:

(Mock annoyance) Oww! You got it in my eye!

HIKARI:

(Laughing) Awww! Do you want me to come over and kiss it?

GUSTAVO:

(Surprised) Uh, sure.

HIKARI swims up closer to GUSTAVO and smiles as he awkwardly smiles back. She slowly wraps her arms around his neck, pressing against his chest and leans up to kiss his eye.

GUSTAVO awkwardly places his hands on HIKARI's waist, pulling her closer. They gaze into each other's eyes. He leans in and kisses her on the lips. Suddenly they get splashed, GUSTAVO and HIKARI laugh awkwardly.

Time passes and most campers are done swimming. They lay on rocks and grass, drying themselves in the sun, chatting.

Cut to:

DARIA gets out of the water and sits on the rock next to CHAD. They give each other sideways glances but don't say anything. DARIA sits back on her elbows and watches CHAD as he's talking with some other campers.

From time to time, CHAD turns to look at DARIA and when she's not looking, his eyes linger on her body but occasionally they lock eyes.

When only a few campers remain in the water, CHAD also leans back on his elbows with his hand is next to hers. He extends his pinky, she extends her pinky and they touch.

CHAD:

I've missed you.

DARIA gives CHAD a longing look but doesn't say anything. Instead, she draws her hand away from his and looks away. CHAD's eyes linger and he wistfully gazes at her face.

Cut to:

AFONSO is sitting on a rock next to GUSTAVO.

AFONSO:
So was that your first kiss?

GUSTAVO:
Yeah dude.

AFONSO high fives GUSTAVO.

AFONSO:
Hey, when everyone's gone, stay
behind, I wanna show you
something.

GUSTAVO:
What?

AFONSO:
You'll see!

As the group of 16 is leaving, HIKARI beckons for GUSTAVO to follow but AFONSO and GUSTAVO stay behind.

GUSTAVO:
(To HIKARI) Don't worry, we're
gonna stay a little longer!

Disappointed, HIKARI leaves with the group. AFONSO and GUSTAVO jump back into the lagoon.

EXT. MOUNTAIN LAGOON - AFTERNOON

AFONSO:
Hey man, watch this!

AFONSO swims through the waterfall and GUSTAVO expects him to pull himself up on a cliff and dive back in.

Instead, a moment passes and GUSTAVO gets worried, until AFONSO swims back out.

AFONSO:
Follow me.

GUSTAVO excitedly follows AFONSO through the waterfall.

Zoom through:

They enter a cave furnished with sheepskins, woven rugs, hand hewn tables and stools. Tapestries are hanging on the wall and wooden bookshelves hold old books, including the ledger.

Books, vellum maps and scrolls dating back to the time of Pythagoras are spread out on tables. These items span from antiquity to present day.

GUSTAVO picks up some a scroll.

GUSTAVO:

Woah, dude! This is awesome! I wonder if we should tell anyone this is back here?

AFONSO and GUSTAVO share a look.

AFONSO:

Nah, let's keep it to ourselves.

The boys haphazardly pick up items and examine tapestries. Some are Romanian geometric folk patterns, others are scenes from ancient Greece depicting sport and others are of various mystical rituals.

POV:

A hole in a tapestry, watching AFONSO and GUSTAVO examining the artifacts.

GUSTAVO:

Look at these old maps dude, but they're so wrong!

Cut to:

Ancient maps show the location of as Atlantis in the Pacific and an obscure settlement in what is now the center of the Black Sea.

While GUSTAVO examines the scrolls, AFONSO sees a bearskin.

AFONSO:

Haha, check this out!

AFONSO puts it on and does a mocking tribal dance until he sees a wooden mortar and pestle containing a white powder. He haphazardly drops the bearskin in a pile on the floor.

AFONSO:

I think I found some cocaine.

GUSTAVO drops the scroll he was holding.

GUSTAVO:
Dude, really?!

AFONSO:
Yeah, try it!

GUSTAVO licks his pinkie, sticks it into the powder and rubs it across his gums.

AFONSO:
Is it good?

GUSTAVO:
Nah dude, just lithium.

AFONSO:
How do you know?

GUSTAVO:
I'm allergic. That's why I take the other medicine.

AFONSO:
And that's why I have to babysit you.

GUSTAVO:
Let's head back dude, I think a **saci-saçurá** is trapped here.

AFONSO:
(Mocking) Aww, do you want to tie some knots?
(Portuguese, translated) *Such a scared little baby!*

GUSTAVO rolls his eyes but AFONSO laughs and claps him on the shoulder.

AFONSO:
We'll come back later and see if there's anything cool we can sell. I need to buy a Versace fanny pack.

GUSTAVO:
Dude, why Versace?

AFONSO:
Yeah, see, I'm gonna wear it in the front so the medallion is over *mi galo*. Like it won Olympic gold!

AFONSO and GUSTAVO laugh and leave the way they came.

Pan to:

The hole in the tapestry, revealing a blinking eye.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - DUSK

Tight shot:

The stew pot boiling. LADO pours the contents of CHAD's pouch into the tea kettle while muttering his prayers.

This is the same prayer he has been repeating since the crossroads, when the campers originally met.

LADO:

*(In Ukrainian, translated) "The Lord of men tells us to honor his word of duty, life, salvation, mercy and health. Help me leave behind my fears. I beckon thee o Seer of **Sarmizegetusa Regia**, give me the strength to serve you in caring for your sacred places and to be worthy of your mysteries."*

The rest of the group returns, stomping and laughing, while LADO repeats his prayer.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - MIDNIGHT

A heavy mist hangs over the trees, diffusing the moonlight and illuminating the sky with a hazy, but bright blue glow.

There are so many wolves howling that it sounds like several packs have joined the chorus.

Unseen strange music played from a small harp makes it seem as if the wolves are singing along to it.

Without waking anyone, HIKARI gets out of her shelter and decides to investigate the music's source and takes the path towards the lagoon.

When she arrives, the giant wolf with reddish gold, gray and white fur is sitting on the rocks where the campers had been sunbathing.

The wolf is howling to the rest of the pack, which are sitting by the top of the waterfall.

The giant wolf stops howling and the other wolves also stop. It turns to look at HIKARI but doesn't growl or act aggressively towards her. The strange music continues.

HIKARI sees light glowing from behind the waterfall. She wades into the lagoon and swims towards it.

She gets to the waterfall and reaches her hand into the rushing water.

The scene abruptly ends.

EXT. CROSSROADS - MORNING

Now there are only 17 campers left, since HIKARI and another camper went missing the previous night.

The group has hiked down the mountain but instead of walking straight ahead towards the village, CHAD turns right.

CHAD leads the campers into the large, flat plane. On the far side is a rock bluff overlooking the clearing.

The pack of LUMBERJACKS have already brought timbers and some are using axes to chop points onto one of the ends.

Other LUMBERJACKS are installing the finished pikes into holes that have been dug into the ground.

These pikes are installed with the pointed side up and leaning towards the rock bluff.

JENNIFER:

Aren't you supposed to point the pikes away from the wall?

VIK:

Why's that?

Cut to:

GUSTAVO's nose is bleeding.

GUSTAVO:

Dude, where's Hik-

AFONSO:

-Hey man, your nose is bleeding.

GUSTAVO wipes his nose on the back of his hand.

GUSTAVO:
(To the group) Has anyone seen
Hikari this morning?

Campers shrug and shake their heads.

AFONSO:
Why do you care?

GUSTAVO glares at ALFONSO but CHAD points to him before he can respond. He sends GUSTAVO along with AFONSO and LADO to dig holes with the LUMBERJACKS.

CHAD sends SORINA, ULF and other campers to set up the long jump.

Then CHAD sends DARIA, MIKAYLA and other campers to set up the pole vault.

Finally, CHAD points LUCE and the rest to set up discuses and javelin before joining the LUMBERJACKS.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS, MONTAGE - MIDDAY

Chad is shirtless and swinging an axe on a large timber. Around him, the pack of LUMBERJACKS are doing the same.

CHAD is forcefully chopping as wood chips fly in the air. His skin is glistening with sweat under the brutal sun and the wood chips stick to his skin.

In the background campers are busy setting up the Pentathlon as the LUMBERJACKS are chopping points onto timbers and digging holes.

Once CHAD is finished chopping a sharp point, he stops and picks up his shirt to wipe his face and then throws it over his shoulder.

CHAD calls for AFONSO and GUSTAVO.

Cut to:

AFONSO and GUSTAVO, shirtless, are digging holes for the pikes. AFONSO stops digging and picks up a bucket of water to drink from it. He gestures for GUSTAVO to stop digging and AFONSO pours water from the bucket into GUSTAVO's mouth.

After AFONSO and GUSTAVO have drunk, they see CHAD calling to them and walk over.

Back to:

CHAD stands by the sharpened point as AFONSO and GUSTAVO stand by the sides of the pike.

After taking a long look at the pike, LADO slicks his hair back from his eyes and stands by the blunt end of the pike opposite from CHAD.

Together, the four boys lift up the log in unison and put it over their shoulders and carry it to the holes.

Various LUMBERJACKS in the background are doing the same.

Once they arrive, LADO kneels as he calls to the others to start lifting.

LADO guides the bottom while AFONSO and GUSTAVO walk their hands up as CHAD lifts his end up.

Once LADO secures the pike into the hole, he also walks his hands up the pike until he and the others get it into the correct position.

LADO, AFONSO and GUSTAVO take their shovels and start filling in dirt around the sides while CHAD goes to chop a point onto another timber.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS, MONTAGE - AFTERNOON

The day's work is done and the group is finished except for the diggers.

While they're waiting for the pack of LUMBERJACKS to set the last pikes, VIK and NATALYA try the pole vault.

NATALYA:

Watch this!

NATALYA does the pole vault perfectly. The group cheers.

VIK:

Can I try?

VIK takes the pole and makes an attempt but stumbles and misses the hole.

VIK:

Ugh! Let me try that again.

NATALYA and SORINA offer VIK some pointers, so VIK tries again. This time the pole makes it into the hole and sticks.

VIK grabs onto the end and the pole bends, but just as he thinks it will propel him upward ...

... the pole snaps.

Campers audibly gasp and calls of "Oh no!", "Please be alright!" in various languages can be heard.

The pole has lifted VIK off the ground just enough so that his body's motion makes him fall on top of the broken shard.

... it impales VIK through the chest and blood spurts into the sky as the last beats of his heart pump.

There is a moment of total silence where the campers are in shock until someone screams and more campers join in, screaming and crying.

... calls of "Oh God, help him!" can be heard in various languages. MIKAYLA and LUCE are crying with the others.

ULF is slack jawed and can't believe what he just witnessed. DARIA is stony faced and SORINA watches, exhausted.

LUCE:

(Screaming) Do somethin'! Why aren't you wankers helpin' him?! Don't just stand there like morons!

MIKAYLA takes a step to help VIK but DARIA grabs her by the wrist and looks her in the eye.

DARIA:

(Whispers) Stop. Don't.

Confused, MIKAYLA bursts into tears and DARIA lets go of her wrist. LUCE continues cursing at people and JENNIFER wails at the top of her lungs.

JENNIFER:

I wanna go home! Mama! Mama!
MAMA!!!

JENNIFER becomes hysterical, which attracts the attention of the pack of LUMBERJACKS, who all walk over.

LADO:

Ilteu. He has been chosen.

The pack of LUMBERJACKS nod in agreement.

AFONSO is visibly shaken and GUSTAVO vomits. CHAD looks disappointed but is desperately holding everything in.

The pack of LUMBERJACKS along with CHAD, SORINA, DARIA and LADO become formal and take a moment of silence to reflect while the other campers are crying, or otherwise affected.

LADO offers a prayer.

LADO:

(In Ukrainian, translated) "O **Baba Metsa**, wrap your bearskin over his soul. Fear not of death, **kenthas**, for you have been chosen, your soul will ascend where you will enjoy the pleasures of paradise. Mortal life is pain, but your soul lives on. Serve the Seer of **Sarmizegetusa Regia** to avoid repeating this pain of living, for now you are worthy of the Lord of Men."

CHAD steps forward in front of the group.

CHAD:

(Somberly) We need to leave now so they can properly take care of Vik.

JENNIFER:

(Hysterical) NOO! I WANNA GO HOME!

Distraught, JENNIFER stays behind as 15 campers turn to leave.

In the background, THE MAN and some LUMBERJACKS take VIK off of the pole. As the campers continue to walk away, the pack of LUMBERJACKS sing mournfully. JENNIFER can no longer be heard.

LUMBERJACKS:

(Singing, in Romanian, translated)
 "Iene, Iene
 Caloiene,
 In those open woods,
 Heart filled with wounds,
 Your mother looks for you.

Iene, Iene,
 Caloiene.
 In that thicket grove,
 Her heart burns like a stove,
 And as she weeps for you,
 Her bloody tears fall free.

Iene, Iene,

(MORE)

LUMBERJACKS: (CONT'D)

*Caloiene.
We will plant you in the ground,
So you can return to green.
Iene, Iene,
Caloiene."*

EXT. TRAIL IN THE WOODS - AFTERNOON

The group of 15 campers are in somber spirits, hiking at a slower pace on the trail.

This time CHAD, DARIA, SORINA and LADO do not bother looking to the forest edge. MIKAYLA and some others are still crying.

MIKAYLA:

Isn't someone going to call Vik's parents?-

DARIA:

Shh!!

They stop, DARIA grabs MIKAYLA by the wrist and she freezes, shooting DARIA a teary, terrified look.

DARIA:

(Mutters) After everyone goes to sleep, meet me in the woods with the shovel.

MIKAYLA nods and they continue to hike up the mountain with the group.

EXT. WOODS AWAY FROM THE CAMP - NIGHT

MIKAYLA is waiting alone in the woods nervously holding the shovel. She hears a twig snap, jumps and turns to see DARIA illuminated by the moonlight.

MIKAYLA:

What's going on here?!

DARIA approaches and takes a long, deep breath.

DARIA:

Mikayla, what do you think?

MIKAYLA:

After today? I don't know!

DARIA:

Look, this isn't some *tabăra* to teach you about Romanian

(MORE)

DARIA: (CONT'D)
 traditions. It's older than you
 think, going all the way back to
 Thrace.

MIKAYLA:
 (Confused) Thrace?

DARIA:
 You know, barbaric tribe. Went to
 war against the ancient Greeks.
 (Expectantly)
 Late to the Trojan's side, so they
 got sacked. Like it says in the
 Iliad?
 (Exasperated) Doesn't everyone
 learn this in high school?

MIKAYLA:
 Some of us have better things to
 do than bury our nose in a book.

DARIA:
 Well, the Greeks thought they were
 savages for practicing human
 sacrifice.

MIKAYLA:
 (Skeptical) This is the 20th
 century! You're crazy if you want
 me to believe they had anything to
 do with what happened today.

DARIA:
 Mikayla, how many people did we
 have when we first got here?

MIKAYLA:
 I don't know, 18?

DARIA gives MIKAYLA a stern look.

DARIA:
 Including you and me? 23. Today,
 15 of us hiked back to camp.

MIKAYLA takes a step back in shock and drops her shovel.

MIKAYLA:
 They probably just went home!

DARIA:
 No. They didn't. Look, this is my
 third time here. Chad and Lado
 too. Sorina, it's her second.

MIKAYLA:

Then why didn't you say anything sooner?!

DARIA:

The last time we were here, someone told a few people and the whole lot of them went missing. All at once but their stuff was (Mockingly makes air quoted with fingers) left behind. Sound familiar?

MIKAYLA:

What? Why?

DARIA:

This is all a test to see if each family has sent a pure offering.

MIKAYLA:

What do you mean, offering?

DARIA:

Look, my parents have been dropping me off here every chance they got. First time I was seven and way too young, but nobody enforces THOSE rules.

MIKAYLA:

You're just making it up!

DARIA:

The second time I was twelve and it totally caught me by surprise but since I didn't die, here I am again! But this time I was expecting it.

MIKAYLA:

So who's Lado praying to?

DARIA:

(Gestures around) This is the cult of Zalmoxis. They hold a Pentathlon every five years to choose the sacrifice.

MIKAYLA:

Is that what happened to Vik?

DARIA:
 (Casually) Oh no! He'll probably
 just become the *Caloian* to bring
 rain. Probably that girl-

MIKAYLA:
 -Jennifer!

DARIA:
 Probably Jennifer too, so it
 doesn't flood.

MIKAYLA stares at DARIA in terror.

MIKAYLA:
 That's heartless, who'd do
 something like that!?

DARIA:
 A cult.

MIKAYLA is horrified.

DARIA:
 There's a whole ritual where the
 winner of the Pentathlon willingly
 jumps off a cliff onto pikes. This
 cult believes that soul can carry
 a message directly to Zalmoxis.
 (Pauses)
 People consider it a great honor.

MIKAYLA:
 Do you?

DARIA:
 I just want to escape. So if it
 means I have to jump off a cliff,
 then so be it.

MIKAYLA:
 But that's just throwing your life
 away.

DARIA:
 What life? I'm just a slave in my
 own family.
 (Emphatically)
 Right now, my parents are off at
 some mountain spa living like
 kings. Spending money they don't
 have, just to pretend they matter.
 (Pauses)
 Tell me Mikayla, why are you here?

MIKAYLA:

(Indignant) No way! If you're suggesting that my granddad... No, he wouldn't ever do that! He just wouldn't.

DARIA:

Shh! Keep your voice down or we'll attract the wolves.

MIKAYLA:

Wolves?!

MIKAYLA takes a step back but trips over something, looks down and sees a human leg still wearing a sneaker.

MIKAYLA screams and DARIA puts her hand over her mouth but it's too late, a wolf is already pulling on the other side of the severed leg.

MIKAYLA lets go and backs away.

... instead of running away with the leg, the wolf growls as if it's going to attack MIKAYLA.

Just as the wolf is about to lunge, DARIA takes the shovel and smacks the wolf across the head.

... the wolf collapses mid jump and runs away, yelping.

MIKAYLA grabs the shovel and leaves in a huff. DARIA calls after her.

DARIA:

Do you know your way back?

MIKAYLA:

(Angrily) You didn't care before, so why start now?

MIKAYLA storms off and DARIA remains behind. She looks up through the canopy of leaves, searching for the moon with a pained expression on her face.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - MORNING

There are only 14 campers left, with a large pile of empty bowls by the campfire.

The group is drinking their morning tea and eating breakfast, in a subdued mood.

ULF is playing his flute in the background but instead of his usual upbeat dance music, this time it's a slow, mournful tune.

AFONSO comes to breakfast but this time without GUSTAVO by his side. ULF stops playing.

ULF:
Where is Gustavo?

AFONSO:
I don't know, probably got up early since he had to go.

He hooks his hip to one side and makes a fart noise but no one laughs.

ULF:
Ach! I'm sure he will turn up.

AFONSO:
Whatever.

AFONSO walks away and gets some tea. CHAD finishes and stands up to speak with the empty pouch tied to his belt.

CHAD:
Today everyone needs to forage for mushrooms. They need to be delivered to the *Dava* this afternoon so everything can be ready for tomorrow's Festival.

ULF:
(Mournfully) It would have been nice if Vik could be here for the Festival. I even prepared *meine pan-flöte* for him!

The campers solemnly nod. AFONSO awkwardly sits down next to LUCE.

AFONSO:
(To LUCE) I wonder if these mushrooms are the same kind we have in Brazil.

LUCE:
Hope so! We've been, like, putting them in the pastries. It'd make this Festival a real rager.

They both laugh. Campers finish their breakfasts and tea, gather baskets and all head into the forest to forage mushrooms.

ULF:

(To WILLIAM) The correct mushrooms are found under die birken. The galerina have red caps, like little gnomes.

ULF gestures with his hands a pointed hat on top of his head and WILLIAM laughs.

ULF:

In all seriousness! If you eat the red caps, you will die!

EXT. WOODS AWAY FROM THE CAMP - NOON

The campers are all picking mushrooms but AFONSO wanders off alone to search.

POV:

Something is stalking AFONSO. When he finds mushrooms, he picks one and tastes it.

AFONSO:

Oh yeah.

AFONSO continues shoving mushrooms in his mouth.

Cut to:

AFONSO hears rustling leaves behind him and quickly turns around and sees GUSTAVO.

AFONSO:

Uh, hey dude!

GUSTAVO says nothing and just stares.

AFONSO:

You good?

GUSTAVO:

(Creepy voice) Never. Better.

AFONSO holds out a mushroom for GUSTAVO to taste.

GUSTAVO has a wild look in his eyes and puts out his hand for AFONSO to place a mushroom in it.

GUSTAVO just stands there, staring at AFONSO wide-eyed.

AFONSO:

What are you, a retard? Just eat it.

GUSTAVO eats it but as AFONSO keeps talking, he gets more and more agitated.

AFONSO:

Don't just stand there, help me look for more!

As AFONSO goes back to searching, GUSTAVO stands still and only turns his head to look around the area. Finally, he slowly raises an arm to point.

GUSTAVO:

There.

AFONSO glances at GUSTAVO, then sees the spot and immediately picks the mushrooms.

GUSTAVO starts to foam at the mouth, weirdly licks his lips and gets even more agitated.

AFONSO:

Thank god these Romanian *matutos* don't even know the street value of this *corumba*! We can come back after the Festival and pick the rest. Then we'll tell your dad we want to come back every year and I'll be rich!

GUSTAVO lets out a guttural sound.

... AFONSO turns his head and GUSTAVO lunges.

The scene ends abruptly.

EXT. GATE OF THE VILLAGE - AFTERNOON

Wolves have already started howling. SORINA, LUCE, CRINA and WILLIAM arrive at the village gates with two baskets of mushrooms. The village gates have already been closed and locked.

LUCE:

What else do these wankers have to do in this stupid, backwards shit-hole? It's not like they're watchin' MTV!

SORINA reaches for a rope and rings the bell. The sound of bolts being undone as the latch is finally raised.

The large wooden gate creaks open but only far enough for the campers to hand off their two baskets of mushrooms to someone out of view. In return, they are handed two baskets of white linen.

SORINA:
(Sternly) Do not get dirty. Now,
need to go back before night.

The howling intensifies as the group runs across the cobblestones leading to the crossroads.

Cut to:

A basket is dropped and lands wobbly, as if it's going to tip over and spill the white linen but LUCE catches it in time. She looks behind her and sees THE MAN staring at her in the bushes. There is a wolf next to him.

LUCE:
(To the group) Bloody hell! Do you
see-

LUCE gestures for the rest of the group to look but they have already run off. She looks behind her again but THE MAN is gone and in his place is the giant wolf with reddish gold, gray and white fur standing there, still with the other wolf.

Both wolves snarl and slowly walk out of the bushes.

The scene ends abruptly.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - DUSK

SORINA, LUCE, CRINA and WILLIAM arrive out of breath and frightened. They are carrying the baskets of white linen.

RODDY:
Are you okay?

LUCE:
(Out of breath) Does it look like
it? We've just been chased by
wolves!

RODDY:
Wolves?!

CRINA:

It was crazy! Like, the villagers
wouldn't even open the gate for
us!

LUCE:

Barely opened it far enough to let
those blasted mushrooms through.
So rude!
(Pauses)
We were getting attacked by wolves
and still had to, like, carry this
laundry!

The campers look at LUCE in disbelief except for CHAD, LADO,
and DARIA, who look unsurprised.

LUCE:

I'm not taking the mickey!
Whatever. Here's the stupid
laundry. Like, what's it even for?

CHAD:

We'll need that for tomorrow
morning before we run down to the
Kaga Genukla.

LUCE:

Finally! It's not like I haven't
been slaving away this entire
time!

CHAD:

Bring the baskets over here and
don't get them dirty.

LUCE huffs and along with the others, brings the baskets over
to CHAD.

EXT. CAMP HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS - MORNING

THE MAN is sitting by the campfire and has already made tea
for the campers. He has a far away, solemn expression and is
absentmindedly tracing the wolf heads on his Dacian bracelet.

As they wake up, some are surprised to see him.

THE MAN:

I make tea. Sit. Drink.

The group approaches in awe and lines up to get their cups of
tea from him. They sit down expectantly.

THE MAN:
(Gesturing) Drink.

Pan around the circle:

13 campers remain: CHAD, LADO, DARIA, SORINA, ULF, MIKAYLA, LUCE, PAUL, CRINA, RODDY, WILLIAM, NATALYA and one young girl who is about 12-years-old.

The campers obey except for CRINA, who makes a face of disgust and only pretends to drink. Everyone else reacts differently to drinking their tea.

LADO drinks ceremoniously. SORINA drinks with dread. CHAD and DARIA drink with indifference. LUCE drinks with annoyance. ULF drinks with confusion. MIKAYLA drinks expectantly.

Once the group is finished, THE MAN gestures for them to get more tea.

THE MAN:
(Commanding) Come. More.

The campers go for a second time and drink more tea. CRINA dumps her first cup of tea on the ground before pouring herself a second helping. She pretends to drink this second cup but ends up dumping it too.

Once the group is finished, THE MAN brings over the baskets of white linen.

THE MAN:
Ready yourself for first event.

While the campers are getting ready, THE MAN picks up the tea kettle and pours more tea for everyone. The girls go off on their own to change but the boys stay and strip off their clothes.

ULF:
Ach! Finally, I'm starting to grow
hair on my pubic area, instead of
just *peachin fuzzin!*

THE MAN cracks a small smile. ULF picks up a loincloth.

ULF:
How to wear one of these?

CHAD and LADO help ULF to show the other boys how to wrap the loincloths.

Cut to:

The group of girls as they are helping each other get dressed. DARIA is helping MIKAYLA and SORINA is helping LUCE.

SORINA:
(To LUCE) Hands above head.

LUCE raises her arms above her head.

DARIA:
(Mutters to MIKAYLA) Look, I know you're mad, but whatever happens, don't look back. Just keep running.

MIKAYLA looks daggers at DARIA in response but LUCE overhears. Before LUCE can ask questions, SORINA tightens the strip of white cloth around LUCE's chest as a bandeau.

LUCE:
Ow! You're squashin' me tits!

Once all the girls are dressed, they join the boys by the fire.

LUCE:
Wait! Me shoes.

DARIA:
Leave them.

LUCE groans and makes a show of hobbling barefoot. All the campers are barefoot now, wearing only loincloths with the girls wearing strips of cloth wrapped tightly around their chests.

Now all 13 campers are standing by the fire but everyone's vision is blurry. The cups filled by THE MAN are sitting at each person's stump.

CHAD:
One more cup before we go.

Everyone except CRINA reaches down to take their cup and drink silently. The campers are starting to become affected, swaying and staring at random things.

It seems as if THE MAN has shape shifted right before their eyes into a giant wolf with reddish gold, gray and white fur but the golden Dacian bracelets shrink to fit the wolf. Some campers gasp in fear.

Someone hears rustling in the underbrush and a camper turns to see the giant wolf stepping forward.

More wolves emerge from the underbrush, leaving only one path open for the campers to escape.

Some campers freak out, screaming, crying, yelling "RUN!" and the group turns to run down the only open path.

EXT. TRAIL IN THE WOODS, SERIES OF SHOTS

CRINA is too busy freaking out about the pack of wolves and stays behind, frozen in fear.

... a growl, she screams and then silence.

POV:

These perspective shots repeat throughout the scene. Jittery, constantly cutting back and forth from the runners to the wolves.

... the rest of the campers are running down the trail to get away from the wolves.

Cut to:

People's faces, which run the gamut of determined to terrified.

...then to legs and people running for their lives.

Back to:

Wolves running.

Cut to:

PAUL can't run very fast. A wolf jumps on top of him and a second wolf comes to tackle him to the ground.

... PAUL screams as wolves rip his flesh apart.

Cut to:

LUCE elbows WILLIAM and pushes him behind her so the wolves attack him instead of her. She continues running.

... WILLIAM rolls on his back, screaming and tries to crab walk backwards. There are three wolves surrounding him, who slowly approach.

One wolf lunges and WILLIAM screams.

Cut to:

NATALYA steps on a rock, slipping. She grabs her ankle in pain and tries to get up to keep running.

... but she is limping on the uneven terrain and a wolf slowly approaches, growling. The wolf lunges.

Cut away.

EXT. TRAIL CROSSROADS - NOON

The runners are almost out of the forest but just as RODDY, who is last in the line of runners, is almost out, a wolf bites him on the heel.

... RODDY falls forward, clawing the ground as he gets dragged back into the forest, screaming.

Cut to:

The crossroad where the campers originally met has been freshly disturbed with no grass, just darker dirt. It has been tamped down as if a fresh grave has been made.

Two bouquets made of Carpathian bell flowers, dandelion flowers, dwarf elder flowers, butterbur flowers and river reeds ceremoniously lay in the center of the crossroads.

POV from behind:

By the time the runners exit the forest and come to the crossroads, the group has been reduced to 8.

Back to:

Only CHAD, LADO, DARIA, SORINA, ULF, MIKAYLA, LUCE and the young girl, LKS (last kid standing) remain.

... there are no wolves behind them.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - NOON

The fairgrounds where the campers had previously set up the Pentathlon now has huge crowds sitting on both of the long sides, as if they are an arena audience.

The crowd lets out a roaring cheer as they see the runners exit the forest.

Pan across:

The spectators are a mix of villagers and out-of-town visitors. The villagers are dressed in their best Romanian folk clothes.

Some out-of-town visitors are dressed traditionally to mimic the villagers' outfits, others more modern but everyone is dressed as if they are attending a special summer event.

Cut to:

One couple stands out because the woman, in her late 30s, is wearing a long, black Astrakhan fur coat, despite the fact that it is summer and high noon.

The man sitting next to her is in his late 50s and is wearing a Romanian embroidered shirt underneath a linen suit with a straw paperboy hat. These are DARIA'S MOTHER and DARIA'S FATHER.

Pan to:

A man in his 60s with a golden tan, gray hair and is wearing an Australian outback hat with a button down shirt and the sleeves rolled up. This is MIKAYLA'S GRANDFATHER.

Cut to:

Another man in his 60s with bronzed skin, gray hair who is wearing a loose fitting linen suit, sandals and a straw fedora. This is CHAD'S FATHER.

Pan to:

A couple in their late 30s are dressed in their best Romanian folk clothes. These are SORINA'S PARENTS.

Cut to:

Another couple in their 40s, the woman with her hair in a milkmaid braid, a Romanian blouse and Birkenstock sandals. The man next to her is wearing a plaid short sleeve, button down shirt, khaki shorts, Birkenstock sandals and is carrying a leather satchel on his shoulder. These are ULF'S MOM and DAD.

Pan to:

A young man in his mid to late 20s stands out like a sore thumb. He is wearing a tight, fitted Union Jack t-shirt, jeans and Doc Martin boots along with a backwards baseball cap. This is LUCE'S BROTHER.

Cut to:

In the back, behind the Pentathlon setup, is the field of pikes, sharp side up and pointing to the rock bluff which overlooks the fairgrounds.

Pan to:

As they step onto the fairgrounds, the runners are all out of breath. Huffing and puffing, some are bent over holding their knees or sides, having just run for their lives.

LUCE:
That was crazy!

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS ROUND 1, SERIES OF SHOTS - NOON

A villager approaches the group, points at each Olympian and then to an event. CHAD and MIKAYLA are sent to long jump, DARIA and LADO to discus, then SORINA and ULF to javelin.

LUCE and LKS are pointed to pole vault. LUCE refuses to go but the villager takes a switch and whips the back of her legs. LUCE yelps and runs to the event to get away.

Cut to:

SORINA throws the javelin first.

... she is able to not only throw it far, but have it stick firmly into the ground. The crowd cheers!

ULF takes the javelin but he doesn't throw it very far.

... he barely makes the javelin stick in the ground and it falls over. The spectators are disappointed and grumble "aww!".

They repeat three times. SORINA is able to make perfect strikes each time.

... meanwhile the second time ULF throws it too far but it doesn't stick at all and the third time he makes it stick, but only because he threw it right in front of him.

Cut to:

CHAD is extremely good at long jump. His first jump is astonishingly far and he lands gracefully.

... the crowd cheers! CHAD puts his arms up to wave to the crowd and smiles.

MIKAYLA tries but doesn't jump very far.

... the spectators chuckle and some people point.

They repeat three times. CHAD is able to be impressive and graceful at all three jumps.

... meanwhile on her second attempt, MIKAYLA trips and lands flat on her face. On her third attempt, she barely jumps because she's too cautious.

Cut to:

LADO is extremely good at discus, he is able to throw it with great force and distance. He is chanting his prayers each time he throws.

... the crowd cheers!

DARIA is terrible at discus and doesn't throw it very far.

They repeat three times and LADO is impressive each time.

... DARIA only throws it a short distance, paling in comparison to LADO.

DARIA's MOTHER and FATHER are shaking their heads in disgust at her lack of skill.

Cut to:

LUCE and LKS are both terrible at pole vault.

... the crowd mostly ignoring them but still eager for an accident to entertain them.

They repeat three times but both of them keep knocking the bar down on vault attempts. VIK's accident is fresh in their minds, so no one gets hurt because they are overly cautious.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS ROUND 2, SERIES OF SHOTS - NOON

A villager at each event points the groups to their next event. CHAD and MIKAYLA move to javelin. LADO and DARIA move to long jump. SORINA and ULF move to pole vault. LUCE and LKS move to discus.

Cut to:

CHAD is extremely good at javelin. He is able to throw it with great force and distance, making it stick firmly into the ground.

... the crowd cheers! CHAD pumps his fist in pride.

They repeat three times and MIKAYLA is terrible at javelin, she isn't even able to make it stick once.

Cut to:

LADO and DARIA at the long jump.

DARIA is moderately good at long jump.

... the crowd cheers for her since she's able to jump fairly far without tripping.

Chanting his prayers, LADO is extremely good at long jump. Like CHAD, he can jump far and land gracefully.

... When CHAD is on his second javelin attempt, LADO is midair in his jump.

LADO puffs out his chest trying to catch the javelin with his body.

LADO:

(In Ukrainian, translated) *-Help
me leave behind my fears. I beckon
thee-*

... CHAD's javelin sticks firmly into LADO's chest.

LADO completes his jump, landing gracefully as he collapses in death, impaled. Spectators are sprayed with blood as LADO's heart pumps its last beats.

... the crowd goes wild, screaming, shouting praise, everyone is excited and proud.

Cut to:

CHAD'S FATHER is extremely proud as spectators lean into him, offering congratulations while pointing at CHAD.

SPECTATOR #1:

(In Romanian, translated) *Ilteu!*
He has been chosen!

MIKAYLA sees LADO killed by CHAD and screams.

... LUCE hears MIKAYLA screaming and turns to look while LKS is throwing her discus. LUCE sees LADO impaled and stares, mouth agape, in disbelief.

Once it is LUCE's turn to do the discus, LKS turns to look at the commotion and begins to cry.

...ULF turns at the commotion and sees what has happened to LADO. He is stunned and horrified at seeing LADO's impaled body.

Cut to:

SORINA is extremely good at pole vault, her form is perfect each time.

... the crowd cheers at each of SORINA's vaults and they are impressed by her skill.

They repeat three times.

... meanwhile ULF is terrible but miraculously survives without injury.

ULF breaks the pole the first time, isn't able to jump over it the second time and the third time he knocks the bar down.

... when ULF surprisingly doesn't die, the crowd is disappointed and grumbles "aww!"

Cut to:

LUCE and LKS are terrible at discus.

... the spectators have mostly stopped watching them but the ones closest to this event still keep an eye out, so not to miss an impending death.

They repeat three times. LUCE and LKS each drop the discus while they're spinning, throwing it only a few inches.

... at one point LUCE throws it backwards but she doesn't hit anyone. The crowd grumbles "aww!"

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS ROUND 3, SERIES OF SHOTS - NOON

Now that LADO has died, only 7 Olympians are left.

A villager at each event points the groups to switch. SORINA and ULF move to discus. CHAD and MIKAYLA move to pole vault. DARIA moves to javelin alone. LUCE and LKS move to long jump with LADO's corpse still impaled to the ground where he landed.

Cut to:

CHAD is extremely good at pole vault, meanwhile MIKAYLA can't even jump over the bar.

... the crowd shouts praise to CHAD but mostly ignores MIKAYLA. It is obvious CHAD is the overall fan favorite.

When he clears the bar, CHAD turns a somersault upside down and lands on his back. He immediately gets up and bows dramatically. The crowd cheers louder for him.

They repeat three times.

Cut to:

DARIA is alone and surprises everyone by how good she is at the javelin. She is able to throw it with great distance, force and accuracy, so the crowd cheers and shouts praise.

DARIA locks eyes with her FATHER and glares. He is smug as everyone congratulates him on DARIA's performance.

... the second time DARIA turns and intentionally aims the javelin at her parents.

A spectator sitting right in front of DARIA's FATHER and who was angling themselves, stands up to catch the javelin. They get impaled and die.

... blood sprays over other spectators and DARIA's MOTHER's fur coat is splattered with blood. The crowd cheers.

DARIA'S MOTHER has a look of disgust but not at the death. She is disgusted by DARIA but DARIA'S FATHER doesn't seem to mind and throws his head back to laugh a jolly belly laugh.

However, DARIA's MOTHER looks angry, complaining about her ruined coat. DARIA gives her FATHER an evil stare and scowls bitterly.

Cut to:

LUCE and LKS at the long jump, trying to avoid LADO's corpse.

... this is not hard because they do not jump very far.

They repeat three times but most spectators are not paying attention to them.

Cut to:

SORINA is extremely good at discus and the crowd shouts praise.

... on her second attempt, SORINA swings the discus hard but loses control, so she accidentally strikes a spectator who dies. The crowd cheers!

ULF is so terrible at discus that when he's spinning around to throw it, he releases too soon.

... and accidentally hits SORINA, who is standing behind him.

The discus hits SORINA in her forehead and smashes her skull open with her brain exposed.

... the crowd goes wild!

ULF is in shock. He turns white, starts uncontrollably shaking and falls to his knees with tears streaming down his face.

Cut to:

ULF's MOM and DAD look horrified, especially when they see the look on their son's face.

... SORINA's PARENTS are proud and accept the other spectators' praise for their daughter's glorious death.

Pan to:

MIKAYLA notices SORINA's death, looks to ULF and drops to her knees, wailing.

... as LKS is doing long jump, LUCE hears MIKAYLA's crying and again turns to look around, seeing that ULF has killed SORINA.

LUCE looks at ULF, back at SORINA and the horror of the situation is setting in.

Cut to:

When it is LUCE's turn to do the long jump, LKS turns to look. Once she sees that ULF has accidentally killed SORINA, LKS becomes hysterical.

LKS:
NOOOOOOOOOOOO!!

LKS weeps and LUCE tries to comfort her by patting her on the shoulder.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS ROUND 4, SERIES OF SHOTS - AFTERNOON

Now that SORINA has died, only 6 Olympians are left.

A villager at each event points the groups to switch. CHAD and MIKAYLA move to discus, where SORINA's corpse is still lying, exactly as she fell.

DARIA moves to pole vault alone. ULF moves to long jump alone, where LADO's corpse is still impaled to the ground where he landed. LUCE and LKS move to javelin.

Cut to:

CHAD is once again extremely good at discus but gets too distracted by the crowd's cheers and praise. He loses control, his discus goes rogue and strikes a spectator.

... once again, this makes the crowd go wild, hoping even more to be killed by their fan favorite.

Pan to:

MIKAYLA watches CHAD kill another person but at this point she is numb, so there are no new tears.

Once it is MIKAYLA's turn, she does not know what to do but tries to copy CHAD's form as best she can but is terrible.

Cut to:

DARIA is moderately good at pole vault.

... the spectators cheer, hoping she dies in an accident.

DARIA is unfazed and makes no mistakes, so she lives.

Cut to:

ULF is too distracted and grief stricken to even make an effort at long jump. He is terrible and jumps as little as possible. He repeats three times.

... the spectators are disappointed and grumble "aww!".

Cut to:

LUCE and LKS are once again terrible at javelin. They have no experience with throwing and did not watch the others. They repeat three times.

... the spectators mostly ignore them but hope for a death.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS, ENTER PRIEST - AFTERNOON

Once each Olympian has gone through their last event three times, an Apuceni bucium horn is blown by a villager who is standing to the side of the arena.

The horn signals the Olympians to stop and a hush falls over the crowd. The villagers at each event point them to an area in front of the pikes.

There is a moment of eerie silence until the spectators begin chanting in unison.

CROWD:

Zal-mox-is!

Zal-mox-is!

Zal-mox-is!

By the horizon on the rock bluff overlooking the fairgrounds, two figures approach. It looks like THE MAN accompanying a bear walking on its hind legs holding onto his arm.

The bear makes its way down the side of the bluff, revealing the PRIEST, a woman in her 40s, wearing the same bearskin AFONSO had tried on while in the cave.

The PRIEST wears gold Dacian spiral bracelets on each wrist that are more elaborate than THE MAN's and on her face she has red face paint to mimic tears of blood.

Under the bearskin pelt, the PRIEST wears a gossamer shift with gold geometric embroidered edges. She has a symbol tattooed under each collar bone and is barefoot.

The PRIEST leads a large pack of hairy shirtless men that are the LUMBERJACKS. The procession walks down to meet the Olympians in front of the pikes.

THE MAN gestures for the pack of LUMBERJACKS to set up stumps as tables in front of the Olympians who stand in petrified awe as the PRIEST gestures to them with one arm.

PRIEST:

Come!

The Olympians approach, led by CHAD with DARIA last. The PRIEST lowers her hand to the stump where there are various quills, ink and parchment. The crowd stops chanting.

PRIEST:

Scribe.

CHAD and DARIA kneel at a stump and each takes a piece of parchment, dipping their quills in ink. MIKAYLA takes the stump between them. At the remaining stumps ULF takes the one next to DARIA with LKS next to him and LUCE last.

Zoom out:

No one can hear what is said as the PRIEST dictates. Once CHAD and DARIA are done writing, they both stand up and the rest of the group follows.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS, THE JUDGING - AFTERNOON

CHAD, MIKAYLA, DARIA, ULF, LKS and LUCE are standing in a line. In the Olympians' right hands are the folded parchments but their hands are hiding the message.

The Olympians step back for the LUMBERJACKS to take the stumps and supplies away. The PRIEST sticks her arm out and THE MAN hands her a juniper crown with great reverence.

The crowd is hushed in anticipation as the PRIEST approaches the Olympians and slowly walks along, inspecting each of them.

Both CHAD and DARIA are sure they will be chosen.

CHAD is puffing out his chest, standing taller and trying to look as regal as possible.

MIKAYLA is standing up straight, nervous but hoping she did a good job.

DARIA is staring up at the bluff with steely determination.

ULF is numb, frozen in grief and unable to accept what has just happened to all of them. Looking defeated, his shoulders are rounded forward and he wishes for this all to end so he can go home.

LKS is in shock, terrified and hoping she gets to live.

LUCE is awkwardly standing frozen, hoping she isn't chosen for whatever is coming next, "don't pick me" is running through her mind as she shakes her head "no".

The PRIEST walks behind the line of Olympians until she stops at CHAD, DARIA and MIKAYLA. She looks over each Olympian one more time.

Finally, the PRIEST raises her arm and is looking back and forth between CHAD and DARIA, unsure of who she is going to pick. Finally, she places the juniper crown on MIKAYLA's head.

The crowd goes wild, chanting once again.

CROWD:

Il-te-u!
Il-te-u!
Il-te-u!

CHAD looks angry for the first time, furious that he wasn't chosen.

DARIA is left wondering, why she wasn't chosen or even CHAD. Then she is crushed, realizing that despite her best efforts in trying to prevent it, Mikayla is going to be sacrificed.

At first, DARIA feels guilt at how she left things but her guilt quickly turns to sadness that someone as sweet as Mikayla would be sacrificed. Eventually, DARIA gets angry at the cult, not just at her parents for sending her.

ULF doesn't even notice MIKAYLA has been chosen, he's too wrapped up in grief and guilt.

LKS looks at DARIA and CHAD but based on their reactions, is even more terrified.

LUCE first looks to DARIA, then CHAD and based on their reactions, is relieved.

Cut to:

At first MIKAYLA smiles in disbelief, until she remembers what DARIA had told her. She slowly begins to express dread which turns into fear at what's to come.

CHAD and DARIA step back and the others follow except for MIKAYLA, who is frozen in place by her fear.

The PRIEST gestures for the LUMBERJACKS to come forward and along with THE MAN, take MIKAYLA by each arm to lead her away.

The PRIEST leads the LUMBERJACKS, who are dragging MIKAYLA up to the rock bluff.

MIKAYLA is crying but the crowd's chants drown out MIKAYLA's cries as LUMBERJACKS continue to drag her away.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS, ROCK BLUFF OVERLOOK - AFTERNOON

CHAD and DARIA lock eyes as MIKAYLA is dragged up the side of the hill. They look at the pikes and back up at the bluff, each adopting the stoic postures they had after VIK's accident.

With tears streaming down her face, MIKAYLA finally reaches the top, now resigned to her fate.

The crowd falls silent as the PRIEST steps forward to the edge of the cliff.

PRIEST:

I stand before you when the
balance of night begins to
overtake day on the **Kaga Akmon**, as
we did five years ago and as we
will again in five years time.

Eons ago, Zalmoxis, Lord of Men,
the Breaker of Chains, chose to
free us from bonds of ignorance.

The crowd cheers.

PRIEST:

The Seer of the Palace
illuminating the World of Life
declared the soul to be immortal
and that only the most pure of
body, mind and soul are **Ilteu**, the
Zibythides, our Emissary to
Zalmoxis.

In exchange for delivering our
message, the **Zibythides** transcends
beyond death to reside in the
palace of warriors, by the right
hand of Zalmoxis himself.

The crowd jumps to its feet, clapping.

CROWD:

Zal-mox-is!
Zal-mox-is!
Zal-mox-is!

Finally, the PRIEST reaches out both her arms out for silence.

PRIEST:

On the **Kaga Genukla**, our Emissary is chosen through these acts of devotion to Zalmoxis. Exile in the **Bor** to purify the body, service to the community of true believers in the **Dava** and finally, tests of valor in the Pentathlon.

Only through heroic deeds can we find virtue in the embrace of Zalmoxis. While some are strong of body, it is vital to be a devout soul. Through these trials, Mikayla has proven herself worthy to be our Emissary.

The pack of LUMBERJACKS sing the chant that LADO had been repeating since he arrived.

LUMBERJACKS:

(In Romanian) *"The Lord of men tells us to honor his word of duty, life, salvation, mercy and health. Help us leave behind our fears. We beckon thee o Seer of **Sarmizegetusa Regia**, give us the strength to serve you in caring for your sacred places and to be worthy of your mysteries."*

As the LUMBERJACKS are singing, THE MAN and another LUMBERJACK, who are restraining MIKAYLA, drag her forward to the cliff edge.

CROWD:

Il-te-u!
Il-te-u!
Il-te-u!

MIKAYLA pleadingly looks at the Olympians below.

... but once she sees their reactions, she realizes that no one will come to her rescue.

As MIKAYLA looks back to the PRIEST to see if there is any reprieve, THE MAN and the LUMBERJACK throw her off the cliff.

MIKAYLA struggles and drags her feet.

... it is harder to throw her, but the LUMBERJACKS do so anyway.

Tears stream down her face as she is thrown off the cliff.

... MIKAYLA lands on a pike and instantly dies.

Her blood sprays the Olympians, who are standing in front of the pikes.

The crowd goes wild, drums and bucium horns play. Now, only 5 Olympians remain.

After a moment, CHAD turns to DARIA.

CHAD:

Look at us, always the bridesmaids
but never the bride, ay Daria?

DARIA slightly smiles and CHAD tenderly reaches for her hand, taking it in his. CHAD looks hopefully into DARIA'S eyes.

... DARIA optimistically returns his smile, but then the reality of what their future would be sets in and her smile fades.

ULF suddenly walks away and the spell is broken.

LKS follows ULF.

LUCE:

I swear, I will murder me brother
for this.

LUCE walks away.

... DARIA opens her mouth to speak but hesitates and instead gives CHAD one last, longing look as she drops his hand. DARIA slowly turns and walks away, leaving CHAD standing alone on the field.

EXT. THE FESTIVAL FAIRGROUNDS, SERIES OF SHOTS - LATE AFTERNOON

CHAD, DARIA, LUCE and ULF start wandering around the Festival. LKS has disappeared into the crowd and is nowhere to be seen.

The Festival is held on the Olympic fairground and the equipment is left in place along with the dead Olympians' bodies, remaining untouched.

Villagers bring out long wooden tables and chairs with women carrying traditional tablecloths. Each table has copious amounts of the mushroom pastries along with mushroom tea.

Live folk music using traditional instruments with villagers singing, along with folk dancing serve as entertainment for the crowd. In various spots, villagers set up stands to sell handmade wares.

Children are running around, playing and laughing.

... adults are socializing while eating and drinking.

Everyone is merry, the mood is jubilant, which contrasts with what has just happened.

... ULF's parents anxiously push their way through the crowd.

ULF'S MOM:

(In German, translated) *My darling! I'm so glad you are alright!*

ULF's MOM grabs him into a hug and tries to kiss him but ULF recoils from her touch. ULF'S MOM is shocked and disappointed.

ULF'S DAD:

(In German, translated) *Come love, let's get you home.*

ULF's DAD places his hand gently on his shoulder. ULF flinches but allows his parents to lead him away.

The VILLAGE CHILDREN approach ULF asking him to play.

... but he is too numb to respond.

Cut to:

LUCE is sitting at a table eating mushroom pastries and is drinking shots of homemade tuică brandy.

... she spots her brother standing near a tuică stand. LUCE downs her shot, grimaces and takes a mushroom pastry with her.

LUCE'S BROTHER:

Ey Luce! Great job out ther-!

LUCE:

-Who's fuckin' idea was it to send me to these fuckin' woods in this fuckin' country, so I could, like, fuckin' die?!!

LUCE'S BROTHER:

Pop thought this'd straighten y'out. Get you off that blow.

LUCE:

You should talk! Out with Jimmy and Ralph till all hours!

LUCE'S BROTHER:

Yeah, but that's pop sendin' us out on business!

LUCE:

Wankers! The lot of 'ya! Who else knew?

Cut to:

For the first time, CHAD has a relaxed posture as he walks around. The spectators notice CHAD and start congratulating him.

When they approach him, they each touch their left shoulder with their right hand and then with the same hand, move it in front of CHAD as if they are slicing his throat and then touch CHAD's left shoulder.

In response, CHAD continues on accepting everyone's congratulations.

SPECTATOR #2:

(In Romanian, translated) *Zalmoxis must have great things in store for you!*

CHAD'S FATHER hears that and turns around, seeing his son.

CHAD'S FATHER:

(Bitterly) Huh! I sure hope so.

Suddenly, CHAD has an uncertain look on his face. More spectators approach and do the same salute to CHAD.

Instead of being proud, now CHAD is uneasy, sensing his father's disapproval.

CHAD'S FATHER:

Today was a nice day, my boy had
it easy. Back in my day, it rained
the entire time!

SPECTATOR #3:

(Guffawing) There was so much mud,
I thought we'd need another
Caloian to get it to stop!

The group laughs.

CHAD:

(Mutters to himself) It's over.

CHAD is relieved that he will never have to suffer through
this ever again, but is unsure of what his future will bring
now that his life's purpose was denied.

Cut to:

DARIA is taking her time, eating an assortment of food laid
out on the tables. She looks at a stall run by the VILLAGE
GIRL who is somber, contrasting the other Festival goers'
mood.

...DARIA and the VILLAGE GIRL share a look before the girl
tears up and looks away.

The folk band includes a pan flute and when it reaches a
solo, DARIA is reminded of ULF and sadly walks away.

...DARIA takes the time to brace herself before approaching
her MOTHER and FATHER. They are at a table with other
Festival goers, including MIKAYLA'S GRANDFATHER.

DARIA'S MOTHER and FATHER are drunk, loudly talking and
laughing. DARIA'S MOTHER is fawning over MIKAYLA'S
GRANDFATHER.

DARIA'S MOTHER:

(Simpering) You must be so proud
to have the *Ilteu* as your
granddaughter!

MIKAYLA'S GRANDFATHER:

(Australian accent, light Romanian
inflection) First try! Truly
honored Zalmoxis chose her as The
Emissary. Kept my offering pure.

DARIA'S FATHER:

Well, this is the third time we've
sent ours.

DARIA'S MOTHER makes a face when she notices DARIA.

DARIA'S MOTHER:
There she is.

DARIA'S FATHER:
You're so lucky to have a
Zibythides! We kept sending her
(waves dismissively at DARIA)
but Zalmoxis doesn't want this
one. I wonder why? We've done
everything!

DARIA'S MOTHER gives him a warning glance and then gets up in annoyance. DARIA'S FATHER downs his tuică shot and says his goodbyes to MIKAYLA'S GRANDFATHER.

DARIA'S MOTHER nudges DARIA to follow and DARIA'S FATHER leaves the table and catches up. The sun sets as DARIA is led off by her parents, who start scolding her along the way.

DARIA'S MOTHER:
Why were you terrible with the
discus?

DARIA'S FATHER:
I thought you joined track last
year. Why were you not first?

With each step, as DARIA follows her MOTHER and FATHER, she goes from quietly confident to beaten down, until finally she slouches.

DARIA'S MOTHER:
Stand up straight. No wonder you
weren't chosen!

INT. BACKSEAT OF THE CAR - DUSK

Close up:

DARIA'S hand still clutching the message. She does not relax her hand enough for the message to be read.

In the front seat, her parents are bickering about the Festival.

DARIA'S MOTHER:
(To DARIA) Why did you get blood
all over my Astrakhan? I can't get
it cleaned!

DARIA stares at the floor in defiance. Her parents don't wait for a response.

DARIA'S FATHER:
Pastries were soggy! I can't
believe the quality went down.

Zoom out:

DARIA is still wearing her Pentathlon uniform, now stained with dirt, blood and sweat. She has no other possessions with her.

DARIA'S MOTHER:
You would think after the
communists fell, they would get
better ingredients. Even the tuică
was spoiled!

Zoom out:

DARIA's parents are now silent, her MOTHER is driving and her FATHER is smoking a cigarette with his arm hanging out the passenger window.

Zoom out through the windshield:

The car is the same communist era Dacia that dropped DARIA off, still sputtering as it is driven downhill.

Cut to:

The sun sets on the horizon as the car drives through the winding mountain road.

Once the sun goes behind a mountain peak, the sky gets darker until a fade to black.

Glossary -

Akmon (Thracian) - Rock

Bor (Dacian) - Forested mountain

Dava (Dacian) - Town

Genukla (Dacian) - Meadow

Ilteu - The chosen

Kaga (Thracian) - Sacred

Kapas (Dacian) - Hill, slope

Kenthas (Dacian) - Child, descendant

Kurta (Dacian) - Grove

Nara (Dacian) - Stream

Zetraia (Dacian) - Pot, cauldron

Zibythides (Thracian) - Emissary to the gods, proto-Hermes

Mythology -

Baba Metsa - aka Grandmother Bear. Thracian Earth Goddess predating Zalmoxis who wrapped him in a bearskin at his birth, indicating that he is of the earth. When acolytes of Zalmoxis went into the cave, it symbolized rebirth after being initiated by Baba Metsa into the mysteries of the cult. This is why the Priest wears a bearskin and lives in the cave.

Sarmizegetusa Regia - "The Palace Illuminating the World of Life". This is where the mythological Zalmoxis went to live underground in a cave for three years before emerging with his philosophy. It later became the Dacian capital, which took the Romans hundreds of years to conquer. Zalmoxis turned his most loyal male priest into the Great White Wolf to protect the city from the invading Romans and is the first mention of a man's metamorphosis into a werewolf. After succeeding in breaching the citadel, the Romans renamed a new settlement with this name.

Zalmoxis - aka the Seer of Sarmizegetusa Regia; aka the Lord of Men. He was a Thracian philosopher mentioned by Herodotus. "Zalmos" means "skin" and "Xi" means "god" in Thracian. Zalmoxis preached that life is nothing but pain, but since the soul was immortal, we are all doomed to repeat the pain of living. Every five years the cult held feats of valor to choose the Zibithydies, who got the chance to transcend death

and go directly to the palace of the god by willingly jumping off a cliff onto a field of pikes. If the Zibithydies did not instantly die, it was believed that the message was rejected and another emissary would be chosen.

Cultural note -

Nicolae Ceaușescu, communist leader of Romania, served from 1965 until his execution on December 25, 1989. He gained popularity by easing press censorship and condemning the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. Known as the most repressive Eastern Bloc regime, his totalitarian government formed a secret police, the Securitate, that relentlessly surveilled citizens and perpetrated countless human rights abuses. Ceaușescu's population growth policies led to an unprecedented numbers of back-alley abortions, abandoned babies and HIV infections. His failed oil ventures put Romania into international debt which he attempted to pay off by unsustainably exporting agricultural products, leading to severe rationing and mass starvation, while his inner circle lived in luxury.

Romania's Revolution was the only violent overthrow of communism. In December 1989, when protests broke out in Timișoara, Ceaușescu ordered the Securitate to fire on citizens, with substantial civilian deaths. Once news spread, mass protests and civil unrest erupted. Ceaușescu and his wife were tried and convicted of economic sabotage and genocide. Their execution by firing squad was broadcast on live television on Christmas day, 1989.

The deposition of Ceaușescu didn't lead to openness, as former communist official Ion Iliescu believed in anti-intellectualist populism. When student protests broke out in June 1990, through his media monopoly, he called for the miners of Jiu Valley, who were known as the "Mineriad", to violently break up protests and this series of human rights abuses against protesters lasted until September 1991.

Iliescu served as President from 1989 to 1996 and again from 2000 to 2004, then as Senator from 2004 until his retirement in 2008. After years of accusations and an investigation by the EU Court of Human Rights, the Romania General Prosecutor officially charged Iliescu with crimes against humanity but his case is not expected to conclude as he is currently undergoing treatment for late-stage lung cancer. As the previous generations who actually lived under Ceaușescu's and then Iliescu's regimes get older and die off, today's youth are inundated with viral Russian propaganda videos on Tiktok and Telegram messages, leading to a resurgence of communist idealism. Romania's Constitutional court invalidated the results of the 2024 election due to foreign interference, likely perpetrated by Russia.