

HANDMAID'S TALE SPEC

"WAKE ME"

Written by

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. GILEAD, THE WALL - DAY

HANNAH (10) stares up at the wall in the pink cap and formless dress that marks her as a female child of Gilead.

JUNE (V.O.)  
Video games. Television. The news.  
That's what we used to blame for  
our violence.

On the wall HANGS A WOMAN in the red dress of a handmaid with a BAG over her head.

The WIND causes the corpse to sway as Hannah watches.

JUNE (V.O.)  
But in Gilead, there are no video  
games. There is no television. And  
half of the population is forbidden  
to read the news. And yet, there is  
violence.

The wind WHIPS THE BAG OFF of the corpse's head revealing...

JUNE.

JUNE (V.O.)  
What's our excuse now?

I/C. INT. HANNAH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Hannah wakes up SCREAMING.

The door to her room flies open and her MARTHA (40s),  
COMMANDER MACKENZIE (40s), and MRS. MACKENZIE (40s) rush in  
to comfort her.

JUNE (V.O.)  
Does it come from our family? Our  
upbringing? Our environment?

I/C. INT. ALMA'S ROOM - NIGHT

ALMA (late 20s, handmaid to Robert Ellis) wakes up SCREAMING.

Her door flies open to reveal an ANGRY MARTHA (30s).

ANGRY MARTHA

That's the third time this week,  
Ofrobert. If it keeps up, the  
mistress will send you back to The  
Red Center.

ALMA

I'm sorry -

The Martha SLAMS the door on Alma's apology.

Alma tries to slow her breathing.

JUNE (V.O.)

Or maybe it's something inside all  
of us.

Alma lies back down, staring at the ceiling. Alone.

I/C. INT. HANNAH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Hannah lies back down, staring at the ceiling as her family  
tucks her in and kisses her goodnight.

JUNE (V.O.)

Just waiting to get out.

END TEASER.

ACT ONE

EXT. MACKENZIE HOUSE - DAY

Hannah and her Martha hurry down the front steps of the MacKenzie's house and join Hannah's walking partner WILLA (12) and Willa's STOIC MARTHA (60s).

WILLA  
Blessed day, Agnes.

HANNAH  
(groggily)  
Hi.

STOIC MARTHA  
Do we want to try that greeting again, Miss Agnes?

HANNAH  
Blessed day, Willa.

MARTHA  
We had a difficult night. Some bad dreams.

She hugs Hannah to her side.

STOIC MARTHA  
Don't be foolish. It's a young girl's trick. Willa tried to get out of school by saying she had a stomach ache. Children don't want to work anymore.  
(to the girls)  
God favors those who take joy in their work.

Both girls stare ahead as they continue down the street, passing a STOP SIGN WITH NO WORDS. It is a red octagon with a white border.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET IN GILEAD - DAY

Alma waits at a corner, staring at a similar red octagon.

A SILVER BALL CHAIN, like those found on military dog tags, slips out of the sleeve of her dress and she quickly tucks it back in.

JUNE joins her.

JUNE  
Blessed be the fruit.

ALMA  
May the store open. And have  
coffee.

June takes a step off the curb then looks up at Alma.

JUNE  
Coming?

ALMA  
I'm waiting for my walking partner.

JUNE  
That's me.

ALMA  
Since when?

JUNE  
Since I explained to Ofchristian  
that I needed to talk to you.

Alma begins to turn away from June, but sees a PAIR OF  
GUARDIANS watching her. She grudgingly joins June and they  
cross the street.

ALMA  
So you're the Don of the handmaid  
family now? About to make me an  
offer I can't refuse?

JUNE  
Actually, it's about what you have  
to offer. I did some research.  
You've got a military background.

ALMA  
So?

JUNE  
So, I could use your skills. You  
know how these guys think.

June jerks her head towards the guardians. Alma stares at  
them.

ALMA  
I'm retired. Or maybe you hadn't  
noticed the change of uniform.

JUNE

I have an idea -

ALMA

No. I don't want to help with whatever idea you're cooking up. Not in that way at least. Just... ask me for something else. I'll do something else for you.

JUNE

But this is what I need.

June and Alma have arrived at...

EXT. THE GROCERY STORE, FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

June and Alma join a line of handmaids waiting to get in.

ALMA

Well, you're not getting that from me.

Alma walks past June to the entrance of the store, leaving her frustrated.

INT./EXT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL, FRONT DOOR - DAY

Hannah and Willa follow the line of OTHER LITTLE GIRLS (6-14) as they walk one by one through the door and a set of METAL DETECTORS.

Willa STOPS short, causing Hannah to BUMP into her.

Following Willa's eye line, Hannah sees the guardians walking through their own metal detector at another door.

As they approach the metal detector, the guardians strip their WEAPONS and place them on a table.

Hannah looks anxiously ahead.

HANNAH

Willa, it's your turn.

WILLA

I don't feel good.

HANNAH

Your stomach?

Willa doesn't answer.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Do you need to go home?

Willa stares at the guardians. One checks his gun before holstering it.

WILLA

I'm fine.

Willa walks forward. A confused Hannah follows.

INT./EXT. THE GROCERY STORE, FRONT DOOR - DAY

Alma watches the HANDMAIDS and MARTHAS in front of her file into the grocery store through the METAL DETECTORS.

She pulls the chain that had poked out of her sleeve off of her wrist and SLIDES it into a HOLE in the brick wall as she passes.

I/C. INT. THE GROCERY STORE, FRONT DOOR/HANNAH'S SCHOOL,  
FRONT DOOR - DAY

Alma and Hannah hold their breath as they each approach their metal detectors.

They both step through without incident... then breath out.

INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - DAY

GIRLS (10-12) in pink SING A HYMN at their desks.

The classroom is in stark contrast to most of Gilead. The walls are covered with COLORFUL ART PROJECTS, a GREEN CHALKBOARD takes up the front of the room, a CARPET with brightly colored squares takes up the back of the room.

What is conspicuously missing is the alphabet lining the walls. There are NO WORDS anywhere.

Instead, there are drawn instructions for knitting, changing a baby, and gardening.

Drawings of mother, father, child, Martha, and HANDMAID are prominently posted.

Hannah stares at the Handmaid in a drawing.

EXT. THE WALL - FLASHBACK TO DREAM

June swings on the wall.

INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - BACK TO PRESENT

MS. MERIWEATHER (50s) raps on Hannah's desk, making her jump.

INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - DAY

The younger girls draw and older girls paint.

Hannah has drawn a capital "H." She traces it over several times.

Willa looks over Hannah's shoulder then looks around. While Ms. Meriweather's back is turned...

WILLA  
(whispering)  
Agnes... that house needs a roof on  
it.

Hannah looks up at her, and Willa's eyes dart to the teacher. Hannah is unsure of what to do.

Willa gently takes the crayon and draws a peak on top of the "H," making it look like a house.

Seeing Ms. Meriweather approach, Willa returns to her painting.

The teacher leans over Hannah's desk.

MS. MERIWEATHER  
Lovely house, Agnes. What belongs  
in that house? A husband?

Hannah draws a stick figure with a tie.

MS. MERIWEATHER (CONT'D)  
And?

HANNAH  
A wife?

Ms. Meriweather nods. Hannah draws a stick figure with a skirt.

MS. MERIWEATHER  
What are the qualities of the wife?



HANNAH  
Obedience, piousness, meekness.

Ms. Meriweather smiles. Willa's hand shoots up.

MS. MERIWEATHER  
Yes, Willa?

WILLA  
May I use the rest room?

MS. MERIWEATHER  
(sighing)  
Yes, but that's the last time.  
You've gone twice already.

Willa hurries from the classroom.

HANNAH  
May I go to the rest room?

MS. MERIWEATHER  
After Willa comes back.

Hannah looks down at her drawing. She picks up a RED crayon and colors in the skirt on the wife. Or was it a handmaid?

INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Ms. Meriweather walks through the classroom, quizzing students.

MS. MERIWEATHER  
Wives, submit to your own  
husbands...

ALL STUDENTS  
As to the lord.

MS. MERIWEATHER  
For the husband is the head of the  
wife...

ALL STUDENTS  
Even as God is the head of the  
church.

MS. MERIWEATHER  
Now as the church submits to God.

ALL STUDENTS  
So also wives should submit in  
everything to their husbands.

A bell sounds.

MS. MERIWEATHER  
Please join with your walking  
partner to go downstairs for  
recess. Blessed be.

ALL STUDENTS  
Blessed be.

As the rest of the girls file out of the classroom, Hannah looks for Willa.

Her desk is empty.

EXT. THE GROCERY STORE, FRONT DOOR - DAY

As Alma leaves the grocery store, she reaches into the hole in the brick and retrieves the chain, keeping it in her closed hand.

JUNE  
Hey!

June hurries out of the store to catch up with Alma.

ALMA  
What?

JUNE  
You forgot me. A single handmaid is  
vulnerable to all sorts of  
corruption.

ALMA  
Corruption is exactly what you deal  
in.

JUNE  
Sure, but my corruption is fun and  
constructive.

Alma speeds up. June struggles to keep pace.

EXT. GILEAD STREET - LATER

June is a few paces behind Alma. Alma opens her palm and winds the chain back around her wrist.

JUNE  
Hey. Hey! Will you slow down? Hey,  
STOP!

Suddenly, Alma stops walking. June skids to a stop next to her.

JUNE (CONT'D)

Thank you. I just want to ask you a few questions. Your file said you specialized in negotiation -

Alma nods towards the house she's stopped in front of: The Lawrence house.

ALMA

I think this is your stop.

JUNE

I'm happy to keep you company to your own home.

ALMA

I'm happy to leave you here.

June and Alma square off.

ALMA (CONT'D)

If you think I'm going to blink first -

An ALARM SOUNDS.

GUARDIANS rush at the women. June and Alma throw up their hands, protecting against an attack, but the guardians PUSH them through the gate at the end of the Lawrence driveway.

GUARDIAN

Get inside!

ALMA

This isn't my house -

GUARDIAN

NOW! That's an order!

The guardian gives Alma another push. Her GROCERIES fall to the ground and an ORANGE tumbles across her feet.

EXT. AFGHANISTAN VILLAGE, 8 YEARS AGO - DAY

An orange sits next to a bag of fruit, candy, and toys that has spilled over. Someone picks up the orange and pockets it.

It's Alma, in her early 20s and clad in an American soldier's full uniform and gear.

She picks up a lumpy bag and joins a huddle with several other soldiers.

SERGEANT WYATT (30's, male) has their undivided attention.

SERGEANT WYATT

Stay vigilant. I know these families look harmless, but terrorist groups have been reported in the village. They don't have to look like Dastardly Dan to be a threat. Move out!

The soldiers step out of the huddle and towards a tattered desert village. The homes are the same color as the dirt paths between them, made of mud packed around stone. Huge chunks of walls are missing. This place has clearly seen its share of violence and despair.

VILLAGERS stand in the doorways of the homes, watching the soldiers with wary eyes.

The soldiers pick up BAGS OF CANDY AND TOYS. They cautiously approach the villagers, trying to convey friendship and peace.

Alma rolls her eyes at another soldier.

ALMA

Dastardly Dan? How old is Sarge?

SERGEANT WYATT

(calling from behind her)  
You have a better reference, Cortez?

ALMA

Sir, no, sir!

SERGEANT WYATT

It's a goodwill mission, not a stand up set.

ALMA

Yes, sir.

Alma turns away and smirks, the picture of a kid caught with her hand in the cookie jar.

Behind her back, Wyatt smiles, too.

She approaches a FATHER (30's) holding his daughter, SHARJEELA (12). Alma holds up the bag and the father spits at her feet.

He walks inside, carrying Sharjeela.

Alma looks around for another chance, but all the villagers are either engaged with another soldier or have retreated into their homes.

Out of the corner of her eye, Alma sees a small hand reaching into the bag she holds. She loosens her grip and lets Sharjeela dig into the bag, pulling out a Milky Way.

ALMA (CONT'D)

You look more like a Kit-Kat kind  
of girl.

Sharjeela starts to back away.

Alma digs into the bag and pulls out a Kit-Kat bar. She holds it out to the little girl who slowly approaches and takes it.

SHARJEELA

Thank you.

ALMA

Do you speak English?

Sharjeela stares blankly at Alma.

SHARJEELA

Thank you. You're welcome.

Alma smiles.

ALMA

You're welcome.

Alma points to herself.

ALMA (CONT'D)

Alma.

Sharjeela points to herself.

SHARJEELA

Sharjeela.

Alma digs back into the bag.

ALMA

Let's see what else we have in here  
for Sharjeela.

EXT. AFGHANISTAN VILLAGE, 8 YEARS AGO - DAY

Alma plays tag with the village kids. She TAGS Sharjeela who laughs gleefully then doubles back to tag Alma.

When she gets near, Alma scoops her up and SWINGS her around as the little girl squeals with glee.

Sergeant Wyatt looks on with concern.

EXT. AFGHANISTAN VILLAGE, 8 YEARS AGO - DAY

Alma sits with Sharjeela. They eat from a CRACKER JACK BOX as Alma shows the little girl a MAGAZINE.

ALMA

That's Leonardo DiCaprio. He kind of peaked in 1997 with Titanic, but he's still cute. That's Daniel Radcliff. He may be more your speed. He's probably 16 or so.

Sharjeela points at another photo and smiles up at Alma.

ALMA (CONT'D)

Vince Vaughn? Really? Well, to each her own.

Sharjeela pulls a SMALL PLASTIC BAG out of the Cracker Jack box.

ALMA (CONT'D)

You got the prize!

Sharjeela looks confused. Alma opens the bag and pulls out a small metal ring.

ALMA (CONT'D)

Crap. Sometimes it's a mini yoyo or something fun.

SERGEANT WYATT (O.S.)

Cortez!

Alma JUMPS to attention and holds the ring behind her back.

ALMA

Sir?

Sergeant Wyatt jerks his head, calling Alma over.

SERGEANT

What is this?

ALMA

Goodwill?

SERGEANT

Right. It's not an afternoon at the nail salon. You give them some candy and you move on.

Sergeant Wyatt turns to walk away.

ALMA

You think that's really enough?

The sergeant stops, but doesn't turn around.

ALMA (CONT'D)

You think chocolate and a toy will help them choose us over the people they grew up with? The people that speak their language and know their history?

Sergeant Wyatt spins around and points to the magazine in Sharjeela's hand.

SERGEANT WYATT

You think this will?

Alma keeps her eyes down, trying to maintain her composure.

SERGEANT WYATT (CONT'D)

Don't cozy up to them, Cortez. You don't know what they're capable of. Time to head back to base camp.

ALMA

Yes, sir.

Sergeant Wyatt walks off.

Alma stays at attention, but behind her back, she waves the ring from the Cracker Jack box at Sharjeela. The girl cautiously creeps up and takes it.

Alma marches away, but looks back over her shoulder and WINKS at Sharjeela, who is happily sliding the ring onto her finger.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. LAWRENCE HOUSE, FRONT DOOR - BACK TO PRESENT

June and Alma tumble into the house and SLAM the front door closed. June rushes to the living room, leaving Alma standing at the door.

JUNE  
Lawrence! Lawrence!!

Lawrence appears at the top of the stairs and peers down at Alma.

LAWRENCE  
Did they finally send me a new one?  
Well, praise be.

June swings back into the foyer.

JUNE  
There's something going on.

LAWRENCE  
Isn't there always with you?

JUNE  
Guardians just pushed everyone off  
the street. There's an alarm  
sounding. No one knows -

LAWRENCE  
I know.

JUNE  
Are you going to share?

LAWRENCE  
With the help?

Lawrence turns to head back to his room.

ALMA  
You're scared.

Lawrence stops. He turns back to look down at Alma.

ALMA (CONT'D)  
This is something you've been  
scared would happen.

Lawrence removes his glasses and rubs his eyes.

LAWRENCE  
You're right. That is a very  
particular alarm.



Off his feet, hitting the steps down...

INT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL, HALLWAY - DAY

Hannah's feet walk out of the bathroom into the hallway.

The sounds of children playing outside drift into the building. Hannah's footsteps echo.

LAWRENCE (V.O.)  
That is a specially selected alarm  
for a very special emergency.

A BANG, muffled by distance and walls, stops her. Hannah follows the sound down the hall.

LAWRENCE (V.O.)  
Only to be used in this most  
dire...

Hannah hears RUNNING FOOTSTEPS. She sees her class and Ms. Meriweather dash from the hallway ahead of her and run for the door to the outside.

LAWRENCE (V.O.)  
... this most unthinkable of  
circumstances.

She turns down the hallway then came from.

INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM, DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Hannah slowly opens the door to her classroom. She creeps in, looking around. She notices someone lying on the floor and walks towards them.

She sees a BOOT. A LEG. A MAN. It's a GUARDIAN.

As Hannah gets closer, she sees the BLOOD surrounding him.

LAWRENCE (V.O.)  
That alarm means Gilead has had its  
first school shooting.

The door to the classroom closes behind Hannah. She looks up to find a gun pointing straight at her. Hannah's eyes go wide.

LAWRENCE (V.O.)  
It's a historic day.

END ACT ONE.

ACT TWO

EXT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL - DAY

Guardians swarm around the school, awaiting orders and looking at the building anxiously.

INT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL, HALLWAY - DAY

Ms. Meriweather stands in front of the classroom door whispering with a knot of guardians.

LEAD GUARDIAN

We need to get into that room.

MS. MERIWEATHER

I have a duty to protect these children. I need to know that you are going keep your men restrained.

LEAD GUARDIAN

This is an active shooter situation.

MS. MERIWEATHER

If you go in there guns blazing, you could kill them both!

INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Hannah is huddled under the board with the drawings of mother, father, child, Martha, and handmaid.

Her eyes dart to the dead guardian.

WILLA (O.S.)

It was an accident.

Hannah looks up at Willa. She sits on the floor, her back against the door.

She clutches a GUN in her small hands.

HANNAH

Why don't you tell them that?

Hearing the commotion outside in the school yard, Willa looks up at the window.

WILLA

Will you see what's happening?

Hannah gets up and peeks out the window and down to the front of the school.

HANNAH

There are guardians. A lot of them.

WILLA

Do you think they're mad? Because of their friend?

Willa looks at the dead guardian.

HANNAH

I don't know.

WILLA

I didn't mean to. He scared me. You know when someone scares you and you jump?

Hannah glances at the gun.

HANNAH

Where did you get that?

Willa looks at the gun in her hand as if it's some alien creature.

WILLA

They take them off when they go through the metal detectors. It jumped right out of my hand when it fired. I didn't know guns did that.

Willa giggles despite herself then sobers again.

WILLA (CONT'D)

Do you think killing is still a sin if it's an accident?

HANNAH

When I broke a plate it was an accident. I still got punished.

WILLA

But God... God is merciful.

Hannah nods.

HANNAH

God is merciful.

MS. MERIWEATHER (O.S.)

Willa?

The girls jump.

MS. MERIWEATHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Please come out so we can talk.

WILLA  
No.

MS. MERIWEATHER (O.S.)  
Or you can let Agnes come out here  
and I'll come in to talk.

WILLA  
Don't come in!

MS. MERIWEATHER (O.S.)  
This is your last chance. You must  
practice obedience and open the  
door or the guardians will break it  
down.

Willa whips around to face the door.

WILLA  
Do it and I'll shoot... I'll shoot  
us both!

Willa turns to face Hannah who meets her stare.

INT. LAWRENCE HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

The Lawrence living room has become a crisis room. Commanders fill the space, arguing about what is happening, what should be done, and who should do it.

Alma weaves through the room with a tray of coffee, overhearing snippets.

COMMANDER 1  
It's a little girl. Just bust in  
and take the gun...

COMMANDER 2  
If she's fertile, she'll need to be  
saved...

COMMANDER 3  
... in my experience. Throw in a  
smoke bomb.

COMMANDER 4

... told my wife. I've got a daughter her age. I don't know what...

COMMANDER 5

God will show us the way.

Alma makes it to the end of the room and leans against the wall.

COMMANDER ROBERT ELLIS enters and Alma rushes to his side.

ALMA

Sir -

COMMANDER ELLIS

Ofrobert. We were worried.

ALMA

The guardians pushed me in here when the alarm went off. Could I go home now?

COMMANDER ELLIS

I'm afraid no one is allowed on the street.

ALMA

Maybe your driver could take me -

Commander Ellis looks at the tray.

COMMANDER ELLIS

It looks like you've been made useful here.

ALMA

Sir, I want to go home -

Commander Ellis strides to Lawrence lounging in a chair in the middle of the room.

COMMANDER ELLIS

Lawrence, what's the plan?

LAWRENCE

The plan was actually carefully laid out by me several years ago. But because the wise gentlemen in this room thought school shootings were impossible in our peaceful Gilead, it was never put into practice.

(MORE)

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

It was instead reduced to a special alarm. Which has just done wonders.

COMMANDER ELLIS

So, what do you suggest now?

LAWRENCE

I don't know. Bomb the place.

COMMANDER ELLIS

There are two children in there.

LAWRENCE

Two girls you mean. Two future wives. Future mothers maybe.

Lawrence raises his eyebrows at Commander Ellis who meets his gaze.

COMMANDER ELLIS

Yes. But we need to keep them alive to find out.

Lawrence grabs a cup from Alma's tray and sips.

LAWRENCE

That's cold. Get a new pot of coffee.

With the commanders' eyes on her, Alma retreats from the room.

INT. LAWRENCE HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

June sits at the prep table arranging MUFFINS from several baskets onto a tray.

ALMA

Coffee's cold.

JUNE

There's a fresh pot coming. What are they saying?

ALMA

Nothing. They're just biting off each other's heads.

JUNE

Good. Let them.

June takes the boiled water off the stove and pours instant coffee into it.

ALMA  
(bristling)  
Why? You like the idea of someone  
shooting up a school?

JUNE  
Whatever solution the men in there  
come up with, it's going to end  
with someone's death. So the longer  
they fight about who, the more time  
I have to actually do something.

Alma storms around the kitchen island to face June.

ALMA  
You're who's going to get somebody  
killed, dummy.

JUNE  
Excuse me?

ALMA  
You're reckless. You charge into  
things. What the hell do you know  
about hostages or shootings?

JUNE  
I'd know more if you'd join me.  
Offer up your skills, your  
expertise.

ALMA  
You want my expertise? Stop  
cowboying it up and laying waste to  
anyone that gets in your way.

Alma and June are toe to toe.

JUNE  
I'd prefer your help on this. But  
if you're not going to help, I'll  
accept your fucking silence. Don't  
say anything to them.

June breaks away from Alma and takes a seat at the kitchen  
island.

ALMA  
What? You think they'd use a  
handmaid as an Eye? They barely let  
us wipe our own...

Lawrence enters.

ALMA (CONT'D)

Noses.

Lawrence takes in the two women with a frown.

LAWRENCE

What is this?

JUNE

Just having a snack.

June takes a BITE of a muffin.

LAWRENCE

Whatever you're thinking, stop.  
This isn't hiding some Martha in  
the basement. This is an active  
shooter with a hostage. You ladies  
are out of your depth.

Lawrence pushes past Alma to the cupboard and pulls a WHISKEY  
BOTTLE out.

He takes a long drink then wipes his mouth roughly.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

Bake some bread if you want  
something to do. I'm tired of  
muffins.

Lawrence walks out. Alma stares after him thoughtfully.

JUNE

If you can believe it, he's being  
more of an ass than usual.

ALMA

He feels cornered.

JUNE

Just like the rest of us.

ALMA

This whole thing is his experiment  
so they all look at him to solve  
the problem. If he doesn't they'll  
hang him for it. If he does solve  
it, he's just waiting for the next  
noose.

June pulls out a stool next to her.

JUNE

So what do you think we should do?



Alma considers the stool, then picks up the tray of freshly poured cups.

ALMA

I think we serve the damn coffee.

She walks out of the kitchen and down the hall.

June tears the muffin in her hand to pieces.

INT. LAWRENCE HOUSE, HALL OUTSIDE OF THE LIVING ROOM -  
CONTINUOUS

Outside the door to the living room, Alma puts the tray down on a hall table. She leans against the wall.

Alma picks up a cup of coffee and breathes in the smell. She closes her eyes and takes a sip. Then spits it back into the cup.

ALMA

Damnit.

SERGEANT WYATT (V.O.)

What's wrong?

EXT. AFGHANISTAN, U.S. MILITARY BASE CAMP, 8 YEARS AGO -  
NIGHT

Alma and Sergeant Wyatt squat on some crates in front of a tent used for the mess hall. Alma is grimacing at a thermos in her hand.

ALMA

It's instant. I hate instant.

SERGEANT WYATT

Well, I'll pop down to Starbucks in the morning. Get you a frap.

ALMA

Americano. Black.

Sergeant Wyatt grins despite himself.

SERGEANT WYATT

Sure.

He takes a sip from his thermos and stares into its contents.

ALMA

Tomorrow I wanted to talk to -

SERGEANT WYATT  
You're staying on base tomorrow.

Alma's head whips around to face him.

ALMA  
Like hell I am.

SERGEANT WYATT  
Don't fight me on this, Cortez.  
You're forgetting what you're here  
for.

ALMA  
I know what I'm here -

SERGEANT WYATT  
You are getting too close to the  
enemy.

Alma stares at him in confusion.

ALMA  
The people in that village? I  
thought we were here to gain their  
trust.

SERGEANT WYATT  
We're here to carry out orders.  
Give them some knickknacks and show  
our faces and our fire power.  
Nothing more or less.

Alma turns her head away, but Sergeant Wyatt grips her arm  
until she looks at him.

SERGEANT WYATT (CONT'D)  
You're part of a team. You start  
thinking you're smarter than  
everyone else, you'll get yourself  
killed. Or worse, you'll get  
someone else killed just because  
they know you. Stay here tomorrow.  
We move to the next village the day  
after that.

Sergeant Wyatt stands up and takes another swig of instant  
coffee from his thermos.

SERGEANT WYATT (CONT'D)  
No goodbyes. Understand?

ALMA  
Fine.

SERGEANT WYATT  
What was that, Private?

Alma stands at attention.

ALMA  
Sir, yes, sir.

Alma watches her sergeant walk away. She gulps down her coffee and leaves the thermos on a crate.

She strides down the line of tents and around the corner.

EXT. AFGHANISTAN VILLAGE, 8 YEARS AGO - DAY

Alma cautiously rounds the corner of Sharjeela's home. She approaches the front door and calls inside.

ALMA  
Sharjeela?  
(in Pashto)  
Hello?

Alma peeks inside the home then steps back looking around the village. She peeks into another home. She listens to the quiet.

ALMA (CONT'D)  
Where the hell did everyone go?

Alma wanders down the road, looking left and right for signs of any villagers.

Nervously, she pulls her DOG TAGS out and clutches them tightly. They are strung on the same chain she has been carrying in present day.

Alma wanders onto the main road of the village. It's like a ghost town. Her boots CRUNCH over the dirt and stones. She's right in the center of the village. She can look down the road both ways to see the desert beyond.

She looks down the road one way. Nothing.

She turns and 50 FEET FROM HER STANDS SHARJEELA.

The young girl is standing in the middle of the road. She is wearing A VEST LADEN WITH PLASTIC EXPLOSIVES. They sit like bricks, pulling at her small torso.

In her shaking hand is the DETONATOR.

END ACT TWO.

ACT THREE

INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Willa is pacing. She keeps looking at the dead guardian. The GUN sits on a desk in the middle of the classroom.

Hannah, sitting on the floor, stares at the gun. Her lip starts to quiver, her eyes fill with tears.

HANNAH

I want my mom.

Willa looks at her angrily, but the anger melts away when she sees Hannah's tears.

WILLA

Agnes, I'm not going to hurt you. I promise. I just told them that so they wouldn't come in.

HANNAH

I want to go home.

WILLA

(yelling)  
No you don't!

Willa's outburst scares Hannah enough to stop her crying.

WILLA (CONT'D)

It's not home! That woman isn't your mom.

Hannah's eyes dart to the gun again. Willa marches over and picks it up.

She THRUSTS it at Hannah.

WILLA (CONT'D)

Here.

She puts the gun in Hannah's hand.

WILLA (CONT'D)

See? I'm not going to hurt you.

Hannah holds the gun with her hands completely flat, her fingers extended. She's trying to touch it as little as possible.

Willa joins her on the floor.

WILLA (CONT'D)

My home is in Seattle. I have a brother and two sisters. My mom is a high school principal. My name is Katie.

Hannah looks at the picture of the handmaid next to the family.

WILLA (CONT'D)

What is your name? Your real name?

HANNAH

I'm Agnes. I am a child of Gilead.

Willa sits next to her and stares at the picture, too.

WILLA

You are today. Then you'll be a wife.

HANNAH

As we are bid to be.

WILLA

I want to be a veterinarian.

Looking down, Hannah sees a TRAIL OF BLOOD running down the inside of Willa's leg.

The blood touches her white sock, pooling into a spot of stark red.

HANNAH

Willa. Are you hurt?

Willa looks down at her leg and sees the blood. She jumps up and runs to the back of the classroom, grabbing a SWEATER. She wipes her leg.

WILLA

It's his. It splashed.

Willa balls the sweater up and puts it in the trash can.

WILLA (CONT'D)

Don't say anything.

Hannah looks away from Willa. Her eyes land on the guardian.

HANNAH

Can we cover him up?

INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Hannah and Willa lay the classroom's colorful CARPET over the guardian.

They stand over the body.

Hannah looks down and sees blood now smeared on her dress.

WILLA  
We should pray.

Hannah nods. Willa takes her hand.

HANNAH  
I don't know what prayer to use.

WILLA  
Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray  
the lord my soul to keep. If I  
should die before I wake...

Willa stares at the dead guardian.

HANNAH  
I pray the lord my soul to take...  
Hannah. My name is Hannah.

INT. LAWRENCE HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

The commanders crowd around Lawrence. Alma watches from the corner.

COMMANDER ELLIS  
We're wasting time. We can either  
lose one girl now or wait to see if  
we lose two.

LAWRENCE  
I didn't think we gambled in  
Gilead.

He takes a sip of his coffee and turns to Alma.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)  
I thought I asked you for a fresh  
cup.

Lawrence storms out, leaving the commanders in exasperation.

Alma slips out after him.

INT. LAWRENCE HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Alma follows Lawrence into the kitchen.

June looks up at them and is alarmed to see Alma looking scared.

Lawrence reaches into the cupboard and pulls the WHISKEY back out. He takes a swig and wipes his mouth.

He RIPS the top button open on his shirt and glares at them.

ALMA  
(to Lawrence)  
Are they going to kill her?

June jumps up.

JUNE  
What are you -

LAWRENCE  
Go upstairs.

JUNE  
You need to do something. Now.

LAWRENCE  
They'll figure it out.

JUNE  
They're going to kill that little girl.

LAWRENCE  
No they won't. She's too valuable.  
They'll figure that out.

ALMA  
Then they're going to make her a  
handmaid.

Lawrence POINTS to Alma.

LAWRENCE  
Bingo.

JUNE  
So stop them!

LAWRENCE  
HEY!

Lawrence SLAMS the bottle down on the table.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

This is my home. This my work.

JUNE

This is your mess!

LAWRENCE

And you would just love the chance  
to clean it up, right? Too bad  
you're the one in the red dress.

ALMA

What if I talk her down?

Lawrence and June turn to Alma. June, hopeful. Lawrence,  
perplexed.

JUNE

She's got training. Military. With  
anti-terrorism experience.

LAWRENCE

We have plenty of guardians with  
military experience.

ALMA

You can't send a man in to talk to  
her. She's already shown you what  
she'll do to him.

Lawrence leans on the counter and crosses his arms.

JUNE

We can send her in to talk the girl  
down. No more casualties.

ALMA

But I want something.

Lawrence WAVES between June and Alma.

LAWRENCE

I'm starting to see a resemblance  
between you two.

ALMA

If I can talk her down, she doesn't  
become a handmaid. You make her a  
Martha.

LAWRENCE

It depends on if she's fertile.



ALMA  
No. It doesn't.

Alma approaches Lawrence.

ALMA (CONT'D)  
I know you've already suffered a loss. Probably many losses. I've watched a lot of people I care about die right in front of me. I wonder if I had done something differently, maybe it could have gone another way. Maybe they'd still be here.

Alma looks at Lawrence and gently puts her hand on his arm.  
June watches, astounded.

ALMA (CONT'D)  
We can try to settle our debts a little.

Lawrence looks into Alma's steady eyes.

LAWRENCE  
What do you need?

ALMA  
Get me her file. I need to know everything about her.

INT. CAR - DAY

Alma sits between June and Lawrence.

Alma is hunched over Willa's FILE, reading.

The DRIVER (20s) looks in his review mirror.

Lawrence catches him looking. He hits a button, bringing up the privacy divider.

The car comes to a STOP and the door on Lawrence's side opens. He slides out.

EXT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Alma climbs out of the car, clutching Willa's file.

She squints up at harsh exterior of the school.

INT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL, HALLWAY - DAY

June helps Alma to put a BULLETPROOF VEST on under her dress while the guardians and Lawrence wait down the hall with their backs turned.

JUNE

Thank you.

ALMA

I haven't done anything yet.

JUNE

You got us here. Now we can get in that room and -

ALMA

You aren't going with me.

June's fingers falter as she fastens the top of Alma's dress, covering the vest.

JUNE

Yes, I am.

ALMA

You can't. This isn't like dealing with the Marthas or the handmaids or those asshole commanders.

June ties alma's CAPE around her shoulders.

Alma's voice continues as we watch her and June walk down the hall towards the guardians.

ALMA (V.O.)

There are a million ways you can scare a cornered person into snapping.

Alma approaches the door, flanked by guardians.

ALMA (V.O.)

It's not just your life on the line when you go in there.

Alma pulls the chain out of her sleeve. We see it has her dog tags and Sharjeela's RING from the Cracker Jack Box. She clutches it.

ALMA (V.O.)

Make the wrong move and you could lose everything...

Alma stands in front of the classroom door. She closes her eyes, takes a deep breath. She reaches her hand out.

EXT. AFGHANISTAN VILLAGE, 8 YEARS AGO - DAY

Alma's hand reaches out as if she can cover the 50 feet between her and Sharjeela.

The small girl is sagging under the weight of the bomb laden VEST.

The ring from the Cracker Jack box is still on her finger. The one poised over the detonator's button.

Alma takes a STEP forward and Sharjeela's finger TWITCHES over the detonator.

Alma STOPS.

ALMA

Hey. It's okay. It's okay.

Sharjeela's eyes dart left and right.

ALMA (CONT'D)

It's just me.

Alma gestures to get her point across.

Sharjeela sways on the spot, the sun beating down on her. SWEAT trickles down her face.

ALMA (CONT'D)

It's just you and me. Can you...

Alma gestures for Sharjeela to put the detonator down.

Sharjeela moves her finger away from the detonator's button, but keeps it clutched in her hand.

ALMA (CONT'D)

That's great, Sharjeela. That's so great.

Alma sees MOVEMENT behind the girl.

Her PLATOON has arrived and is maneuvering into position behind Sharjeela.

Alma tries to signal to them to stay back, but they either do not see or won't obey.

Alma KNEELS and opens her arms.

ALMA (CONT'D)  
Sharjeela, can you come here,  
please?

Sharjeela takes a step back. Her finger moves back over the detonator button.

Alma looks up to find SNIPERS have taken places on the rooftops.

The soldiers on the ground are within 20 feet of the girl.

ALMA (CONT'D)  
(to both Sharjeela and the  
soldiers)  
It's okay. We're all okay. Let's  
just keep calm and take things  
slowly.

Alma sees Sergeant Wyatt. Her eyes plead with him.

ALMA (CONT'D)  
Please.

Wyatt pauses to consider her plea.

A soldier SLIPS, knocking over some CRATES and Sharjeela wheels around to see the soldiers behind her.

Before anyone can blink, her finger JAMS DOWN on the button.

Alma is THROWN backwards by the blast.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. AFGHANISTAN VILLAGE, 8 YEARS AGO - DAY

A RINGING sound fills the air.

DUST and SMOKE makes it hard to see at first.

Alma is lying on her back in the dirt, knocked out.

Suddenly, she jerks awake much like she did when waking up from her nightmare in the present.

She chokes on dust and smoke.

She drags herself up to sitting and looks around at the aftermath of the blast.

The shadowy figures of her platoon are all over: some lying on the ground, some helping the wounded, some running around giving orders.

Alma looks a few feet ahead of her and sees something. She CRAWLS toward it.

Her fingers shake as she pulls SHARJEELA'S RING from the dirt.

Tears stream down her face as she opens her mouth to scream...

END OF FLASHBACK.

I/C. INT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL, HALLWAY OUTSIDE CLASSROOM - BACK TO PRESENT

Alma takes a deep breath. Her hand touches the door.

ALMA  
Hello? Willa?

I/C. INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Hannah and Willa swing around to stare at the door.

WILLA  
Stay out!

I/C. INT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL, HALLWAY OUTSIDE CLASSROOM - DAY

ALMA  
Hi, I'm Alma. I won't come in until you invite me.

I/C. INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Hannah and Willa exchange a glance.

WILLA  
Who are you?

I/C. INT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL, HALLWAY OUTSIDE CLASSROOM - DAY

ALMA  
Well, right now I'm a handmaid...  
but before that I was in the army.

I/C. INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - DAY

WILLA  
So you shot people?

I/C. INT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL, HALLWAY OUTSIDE CLASSROOM - DAY

ALMA  
Actually, my job was to protect  
people. That's why I'm here. I want  
to make sure everyone is safe.

I/C. INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - DAY

WILLA  
We're fine.

I/C. INT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL, HALLWAY OUTSIDE CLASSROOM - DAY

ALMA  
I know. You've taken very good care  
of your friend. Is there anything  
else I can help you with?

I/C. INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Hannah and Willa look at each other.

WILLA  
Have you got any snacks?

INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

A KNOCK on the door.

ALMA (O.S.)  
Is it okay if I come in?

WILLA  
Just you.

ALMA (O.S.)  
Just me. And just when you say it's  
okay.

WILLA  
Okay.

The door opens.

Hannah, seated on the floor, sees the HEM of a red handmaid's dress. She follows the dress up to look into what appears to be JUNE'S FACE.

But it's not.

Hannah BLINKS and sees it's ALMA.

Alma kneels to their eye level.

ALMA

It's okay. It's just us.

She holds up an orange.

ALMA (CONT'D)

Sorry it's not candy.

INT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL, HALLWAY - DAY

June stands with Lawrence. She watches him from the corner of her eye.

JUNE

So... how's it going?

Lawrence raises an eyebrow.

LAWRENCE

Small talk doesn't suit you.

JUNE

I think I used to be good at it. Luke would make me go to this Christmas party his old fraternity brothers threw every year. The guys all knew each other, but the wives didn't. Lots of small talk there.

LAWRENCE

Sounds boring.

JUNE

It was. I miss boring. And dull. And comfortable.

LAWRENCE

I miss silence.

June smirks.

JUNE

You did something good today. You made something happen. They haven't cornered you yet.

Lawrence and June share a look, understanding one another for a moment.

LAWRENCE

Let's hope this isn't the final straw.

They both watch the closed classroom door.

INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Alma looks around the room.

ALMA

I wasn't good at school. I always got in trouble for passing notes.

Hannah and Willa look at each other.

HANNAH

We don't write.

ALMA

I bet there are other rules, right? Sometimes we follow them, sometimes we bend them a little.

Willa looks at the covered guardian.

ALMA (CONT'D)

Sometimes we make mistakes. I get scared when I make a mistake, don't you?

Hannah holds Willa's hand.

HANNAH

I get scared.

WILLA

Me, too.

ALMA

We all do. And when we're scared we do things we wish we could take back. Sometimes we can't.

(MORE)



ALMA (CONT'D)

But making a mistake, doesn't make you a bad person. Do you know what I mean, Katie?

Willa's eyes flick up at Alma in shock.

ALMA (CONT'D)

That's your real name, right? Katie?

Willa nods.

ALMA (CONT'D)

I'm Alma.

Alma kneels down near the girls.

ALMA (CONT'D)

Your mom is Nancy. You're from Seattle. You have a brother and two sisters?

WILLA

Do you know them?

ALMA

No, but I know that wherever they are, they would want you to learn from this mistake. They'd want you to give me that gun and walk out of here with me and make sure no one else gets hurt. What do you think?

Willa looks at the gun in her lap. She looks at Hannah. Hannah nods.

ALMA (CONT'D)

If you're ready, you can come over here. And we'll leave together.

Willa stands and crosses the distance between her and Alma. She puts the gun in Alma's hand. Alma removes the BULLET CARTRIDGE and tucks the gun behind her.

ALMA (CONT'D)

Good job, Katie. You did such a good job.

Alma opens her arms to Willa. As Willa steps towards Alma's open arms, a BLACK-CLAD ARM GRABS her around the waist and pulls her from Alma.

It's a GUARDIAN. He carries her out of the room.

ALMA (CONT'D)  
Stop! Hey! Hey!

Alma scrambles to follow, but another GUARDIAN cuts her off. She claws, trying to get past him as a third GUARDIAN steps in front of Hannah, blocking her from view.

ALMA (CONT'D)  
(screaming)  
Let her go! Lawrence! LAWRENCE!

INT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The guardian holding Willa swings into the hallway and marches away.

June tries to follow, but is cut off by other GUARDIANS. She struggles to get past them.

JUNE  
Bring her back here! Goddamn it!  
Goddamn you!

Lawrence confronts the Lead Guardian.

LAWRENCE  
That girl is to be brought to the  
Grey Center to be a Martha. My  
orders were specific -

LEAD GUARDIAN  
Orders from the commanders were to  
send her to the Red Center.

LAWRENCE  
I'm telling you to bring her back  
here -

LEAD GUARDIAN  
Our orders are to send that fertile  
female to the Red Center.

Lawrence takes a step back.

June fights the guardians, trying to follow Willa.

Behind her, another GUARDIAN emerges from the classroom carrying Hannah. He turns the opposite way down the hall. Behind June, away from the scuffle.

Hannah watches June struggling from behind, ONLY SEEING THE  
BACK OF HER RED DRESS AND WHITE CAP.

At the last moment, June TURNS to Lawrence.

Hannah catches sight of her mother's face. And SCREAMS:

HANNAH  
MOMMY!!!

But the guardian TURNS a corner just as she screams and when June looks up she sees only an empty hallway.

END OF ACT THREE.

ACT FOUR

EXT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL, BACK DOOR - DAY

The guardian holding Hannah bursts through the back doors of the school.

His hand is clamped over Hannah's mouth as she struggles against him.

They approach a van and the guardian transfers her to another set of hands which pull her inside.

As his hand leaves her mouth, Hannah screams again:

HANNAH  
MOMMY!

The door slams shut.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

Hannah fights as black gloved hands buckle her into a seat.

Restrained, she takes in her surroundings: the back of a black van. She can't see the driver. There are two EYES sitting across from her.

Her eyes dart back and forth, continuing to assess her situation.

JUNE (V.O.)  
Where did they take her?

INT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL, HALLWAY - DAY

June is advancing on Lawrence.

Alma leans against the wall with her head in her hands.

Lawrence's eyes dart to the guardians at the other end of the hall.

LAWRENCE  
Keep your voice down.

JUNE  
No, I won't keep my fucking voice  
down -

ALMA

June!

June and Lawrence look at Alma.

ALMA (CONT'D)

Are you trying to get yourself  
thrown back to the Red Center with  
her. Be quiet.

June grudgingly adjusts. She ducks her head as she tries to  
talk again with more composure.

JUNE

We'll get her out. Maybe we can get  
her assigned to a house where we  
have connections.

LAWRENCE

She's lost. Why don't you focus on  
one of your other projects.

JUNE

She's still alive. She can be  
saved.

Alma lets out a short, loud bark of a laugh. June and  
Lawrence look at her, worried.

ALMA

Is that your perspective on this?  
As long as someone is still  
breathing, they've still got a  
chance?

JUNE

Yes.

ALMA

Gilead has taught you nothing.  
We're all lost, June.

Alma walks away from them and through a door to the outside.

June reels back to Lawrence.

JUNE

You let her go in there knowing  
this would happen.

LAWRENCE

It wasn't my idea that she go.

Lawrence follows Alma out the door, leaving June to her anguished thoughts.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

The inside of the van is dark. Hannah watches the Eyes across from her as they adjust in their seats and check their weapons.

Hannah's hand SLIDES down to her belt buckle. She slowly PRESSES the button down, making as little noise as possible. She HOLDS the belt so it doesn't snap back.

The van pulls to a STOP.

Hannah grips the belt, adjusts her feet.

The door to the van SLIDES OPEN and Hannah LAUNCHES herself out the door...

EXT. MACKENZIE HOUSE - NIGHT

And into the arms of Commander MacKenzie and Mrs. MacKenzie.

They hold her, stroke her hair, kiss her head.

MRS. MACKENZIE

Agnes! Thank god. Thank you god.

COMMANDER MACKENZIE

We prayed that you would be safely returned to us. Praise be.

Mrs. MacKenzie holds Hannah at arms length and inspects her. She sees some blood on Hannah's dress.

MRS. MACKENZIE

Are you hurt?

HANNAH

It isn't mine.

Commander MacKenzie and Mrs. MacKenzie look at Hannah with a mix of concern and fear.

MRS. MACKENZIE

We know you've been through a terrible day. It's almost over.

COMMANDER MACKENZIE

There's just a few things these nice men need to know.

Hannah looks up at the "nice men." It's a set of Eyes.

INT. THE MACKENZIE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Hannah sits in a chair in the living room. The MacKenzies stand behind her, each with a hand on her shoulders.

An EYE (30s) sits opposite her. Two more stand at the door.

Hannah's Martha sets a TRAY OF TEA and SCONES on the coffee table between Hannah and the Eye. She hands him a CUP.

EYE

Thank you.

The Martha hands Hannah a CUP.

MARTHA

Hot cocoa. You were such a brave girl today!

The Eye clears his throat. The Martha hurries away.

EYE

You have had a big day, Miss Agnes. Could you tell me about it?

HANNAH

Where is Willa?

Commander MacKenzie and Mrs. MacKenzie look at one another.

EYE

She's getting the help she needs.

HANNAH

Where?

MRS. MACKENZIE

Agnes.

The Eye holds up a hand.

EYE

What are the qualities of a wife, Agnes?

Hannah stares at the Eye, considering her answer. She looks down at the blood on her dress.

HANNAH

Obedience, pioussness, meekness.

EYE  
Do you think Willa displayed those  
qualities today?

HANNAH  
No.

EYE  
And therefore? Look here, please.

Hannah looks back up at the Eye. She searches for the answer.

HANNAH  
Willa... needs help.

EYE  
Yes. She is a sick girl. Is she  
not?

HANNAH  
She is sick.

The Eye smiles.

EYE  
Excellent, Miss Agnes.

The Eye claps his hands together and looks up at the  
MacKenzies.

EYE (CONT'D)  
Could I take some of these scones  
for the road?

INT. HANNAH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Hannah lies down in bed. Mrs. MacKenzie tucks her in and  
kisses her good night.

MRS. MACKENZIE  
Agnes? Do you want to say your  
prayers?

HANNAH  
Dear lord, unto thee I pray...

I/C. INT. HANNAH'S ROOM / INT. ALMA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Hannah and Alma both lie awake, staring into the dark.

LIGHT slowly grows in their rooms.



It's morning.

They both get out of bed.

INT. ELLIS HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Alma hurries through the kitchen, picking up her BAG for shopping.

The Marthas stare at her as she sweeps in and out of the room.

EXT. GILEAD STREET - DAY

Hannah walks, holding her Martha's hand.

EXT. ANOTHER GILEAD STREET - DAY

Alma steps into the street without looking.

A car slams on its breaks and HONKS at her.

She continues forward, unflinching.

INT. HANNAH'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Hannah sits at her desk.

She glances at the spot where the colorful carpet used to lay.

MS. MERIWEATHER  
Wives, submit to your own  
husbands...

Hannah's attention snaps to the front of the room.

HANNAH AND STUDENTS  
As to the lord.

Over her shoulder, the PICTURE of the family still hangs on the board.

Some BLOOD is smeared over the handmaid, unnoticed due to her red dress.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE MARKET - DAY

Alma walks towards the market. June runs to catch up.

JUNE

Hey.

Alma ignores her.

JUNE (CONT'D)

Hey! You didn't wait for me.

ALMA

I didn't feel like talking this morning.

June GRABS Alma by the arm and spins Alma to face her.

JUNE

Alma... yesterday wasn't your fault.

ALMA

I know that.

JUNE

Oh. Okay, good.

Alma walks ahead. June follows at her heels.

ALMA

For it to be my fault, I would have to have some sort of control. My actions would have to determine an outcome. But since I don't have control here, my actions don't matter.

JUNE

They matter -

Alma swings back around to face June.

ALMA

Look at me, June! Look at yourself! You see what color we're wearing? These dresses mean that we are nothing but shells. They fill us with their hopes and desires and then empty us of them. But we don't actually do anything. We can't change anything.

Alma rips the chain with the DOG TAGS and RING from her wrist.

ALMA (CONT'D)

We can't save anyone.

Alma steps up to the doors of the market.

Instead of putting the DOG TAGS/RING into the crack in the wall...

she lets them FALL in the DIRT.

INT. THE GROCERY STORE, FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Alma walks through the front door of the store and through the metal detector.

She looks up to find every HANDMAID and MARTHA in the store looking at her.

She stops and rocks back on her heel. June arrives at her back and watches from behind Alma.

A HANDMAID (30s) approaches Alma. She puts her hand on Alma's arm.

HANDMAID

Thank you.

Alma searches this handmaid's face.

ALMA

For what?

HANDMAID

For our daughters. For helping them stay alive so that one day they might really live.

Other handmaids and Marthas approach Alma. They rest their hands on her and murmur "Thank you."

Alma looks up to see a guardian watching. He nods.

JUNE

See?

Alma looks back at June, overwhelmed with the display of gratitude.

JUNE (CONT'D)

It matters.

Alma looks at June with a rueful smile.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE MARKET - DAY

June and Alma leave the market with their groceries.

Alma pauses then kneels down.

She takes her DOG TAGS/RING from the dirt and wraps them around her wrist, tucking them safely into her sleeve.

She closes her eyes and lifts her face to the sun.

MRS. MACKENZIE (V.O.)  
 Agnes? Do you want to say your  
 prayers?

INT./EXT. HANNAH'S SCHOOL - DAY

DOOR TO PLAYGROUND

Hannah opens the door to the playground, light pours in, silhouetting her.

HANNAH (V.O.)  
 Dear Lord, unto thee I pray...

FRONT OF PLAYGROUND

Hannah steps into the playground.

HANNAH (V.O.)  
 Thou hast guarded me all day.

As she does so, the inverse of Alma's scene is enacted. Instead of the other children surrounding Hannah, they move away from her.

HANNAH (V.O.)  
 Safe I am while in your sight.  
 Safely let me sleep tonight.

Hannah walks through the playground, making her way to the back.

HANNAH (V.O.)  
 If I should live for other days,  
 I pray the Lord to guide my ways.

BACK OF PLAYGROUND

She finds a patch of dirt, kneels down and begins to SCRATCH something into it.

HANNAH (V.O.)  
First softly into sleep do lead...

After a moment, she leans back to reveal: "Hannah" written into the dirt.

She looks up, directly at us as June has done so many times.

HANNAH (V.O.)  
Then wake me to perform thy deeds.

END.