

THE RECORD

Written by

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A yellow glow.

Draw back to reveal the earth's black crust--

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Encasing an underground mine fire.

The Allegheny Mountains in Pennsylvania. Late winter. Dense pine and barren oak.

A woman places an orange peel into a cage trap. This is BETA, late 30s. A featherweight blonde with guarded ambition.

She sets the trap and presses a stick inside. It triggers, SNAPS shut.

Beta carries a bag of oranges and a few empty traps on a wire hoop. She walks through the forest, alone.

BETA

Mrs. Weisz. Weisz. Weisz.

Each attempt sounds more German. A contagious smile. She nails it--

BETA (CONT'D)

Mrs. Weisz.

Beta stops. She stands at the edge of a circular clearing. Ninety feet across, dirt around the perimeter. A cluster of forest debris in the center.

She clears away leaves and sticks. A brown tarp lay under the pile.

Beta looks down on a concrete foundation. The beginning of a one bedroom house.

She makes a fist. Bites down on her thumb and muffles a scream.

EXT. TWO LANE ROAD - DUSK

IRIS' POV

IRIS, 70, TAPS her walking stick along the pock-marked asphalt. She stops to inspect road kill.

A pheasant breathes quick and shallow. The walking stick pinches down on it's neck--

ON IRIS

Calm, in control before a flash of rage tightens her face. She prods her stick down.

EXT. WOODS - DUSK

Iris carries the dead bird over the crest of a hill. A dump of a trailer home sits off in a burn scar.

She exudes disgust.

EXT. TRAILER - NIGHT

The pheasant, spread out on a piece of plywood. A boot on top of each wing. Beta grips the legs and pulls upward, peeling off a shell of feathers. Guts trail.

The plywood and bird, waist-high, on a makeshift table.

The bird's dead eye stares at her.

BETA (O.S.)
How did you get a permit.

Beta pulls the head off, breaks the wings, trims the breast.

BETA (CONT'D)
Remember the big block of cement
you poured in the ground.

INT. TRAILER - NIGHT

KITCHEN

Used and abused at some point. Gouges in the counter. Blocks of missing laminate. Sparse and tidy now, barely lived in.

A gas stove. All of the knobs are gone, but a single pot sits over a low flame.

Iris sits at the table, hands in her lap. Beta joins her.

IRIS
A beauty isn't it. Nature is the
cruellest mother.

She spoon-feeds Iris.

IRIS (CONT'D)
It's a little chewy.

BETA
Was it stressed?

IRIS
You always leave the pot to boil.
You've got to catch it before it
gets away from you. Otherwise it
becomes--

Tough.	IRIS (CONT'D)	Tough. (sotto)	BETA
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Beta moves the soup around in the bowl.

BETA
How did you get a permit?

IRIS
For what?

BETA
The house.

Iris chews her soup. Beyond thoroughly.

IRIS
What are you talking about?

Beta stares into the bowl.

BATHROOM

Iris is naked. She sits on a plastic chair set inside a stall shower, blindfolded. Her arms are limp. Her face, a twist of anger.

IRIS (CONT'D)
I'm freezing.

Beta in mid-undress, also blindfolded. She reaches in and pops the shower knob.

Iris lurches away from the water.

IRIS (CONT'D)
You're trying to kill me.

Steam rises above them in the shower.

Beta stands over Iris and bathes her. Short and harsh strokes.