

**"JOHNSTOWN"**

**A Screenplay Based on Historical Events.**

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**This is a work of fiction based on historical figures and facts about the May 1889 Flood of Johnstown.**

**For more information on the Johnstown Flood including a pitch deck, please visit:**

**[www.JohnstownTheMovie.com](http://www.JohnstownTheMovie.com).**

**MAIN TITLE:                   JOHNSTOWN**

**SUPER:                   PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA**

**JULY, 1888**

**NOTE: A scene heading marked with an asterisk \* indicates the scene is based on historical fact.**

**EXT. THE STREET OUTSIDE OF THE DUQUESNE CLUB - DAY**

Pittsburgh's congested downtown in 1888 features grey, buildings and warehouses. Long hulking steel mills surround three dirty rivers. Black smoke pours from tall rusted smokestacks. Steamboats traverse the rivers under the many bridges. On the steep hillsides around the city, over a dozen inclines run cars up and down the hills.

Since the Civil War, Pittsburgh's factories have become the largest manufacturer of steel and glass in the nation.

Pittsburgh's young business owners are the newest millionaires and part of the Gilded Age in America.

A four story tan brick building sits within the city.

A large red awning covers its wide marble steps at the entrance. Fancy horse-drawn carriages pull up to the building. Well-dressed gentlemen move up and down the steps.

A smartly dressed doorman opens tall doors into a marbled lobby. This is the exclusive and prestigious Duquesne Club.

**INT. DUQUESNE CLUB - BILLIARDS ROOM**

Men in finery shooting pool. Cherry wood paneling frame the room filled with elegant red leather couches and chairs.

Sullen 34 yo ANDREW MELLON, stares out a window. A short man, gray hair, large nose, deep set eyes, bushy mustache. He's President of the T. Mellon Bank, a major bank in Pittsburgh.

HENRY CLAY FRICK, calls out to him. Frick is a bearded 40 yo, large piercing eyes. He owns the H.C. Frick Company, a large coke manufacturer. Coke is critical for steel production.

FRICK  
Mister Mellon?

MELLON  
Apologies, Mister Frick.

Mellon leans over the elegant billiard table. He eyes up a shot. He shoots, but misses badly. He lays down the stick.

FRICK

(smiling)

Something on your mind Andrew?

MELLON

More headaches. Problems with one of our contractors on the Sixth Street Bridge. These guys are wasting my time on these ridiculous...

FRICK

Stop. Tomorrow is Friday. We must direct your mind off of that. Think about this instead. Lake Conemaugh. Are you going tomorrow?

MELLON

Taking the afternoon train.

FRICK

Good. I heard the weather's going to be nice. We can get some fishing in on Saturday.

A portly, balding PHILANDER KNOX walks towards them with an older gentleman, "COLONEL" ELIAS UNGER, both holding drinks.

Knox, in his 30s, is the lawyer to some Club members. He's known as "Sleepy Phil" due to his baby face and tired eyes.

Unger is a tall, stern-looking, balding 58 yo with deep-seated eyes, a prominent nose, large ears, and white mustache and whiskers. He's the President of the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club which oversees their Lake Conemaugh resort.

KNOX

Look who I found in the lobby.

UNGER

Mr. Mellon, Mr. Frick...

MELLON

Colonel Unger! What brings you here?

UNGER

In town for some interviews. We're hiring a new engineer for the Club.

MELLON

What for?

UNGER

You'll be happy. He's going to work on a new septic system there, for the Clubhouse and the cottages.

FRICK

Great news! Finally! I look forward to some day NOT using the two story outhouse next to the Clubhouse.

MELLON

I don't think anyone ever used the first floor. I know I didn't.

Everyone laughs.

MELLON (CONT'D)

Found anyone so far?

UNGER

I like this man John Parke I met today. Graduated from Penn. Going to extend him an offer tomorrow.

MELLON

Excellent. Penn is a fine school.

FRICK

I was saying the fishing has been great this summer. And the lake, seems so much bigger this year.

UNGER

Yes. The lake's larger than ever. Lots of snow melt and a rainy spring. Almost three miles wide now.

MELLON

I'm looking forward to the fishing tournament in a few weeks. Just got some new casting reels from H. L. Leonard. I'll be taking the egg at the tourney this year gentlemen.

KNOX

Nope! I'm taking the egg. I'm ready for you all this year. Have a new kind of lure. Mark my words.

FRICK

Mr. Knox, the last thing you caught at the lake, was a cold.

Everyone laughs. Mellon turns to the Colonel.

MELLON

You said the lake is the largest ever. Any impact on the dam?

UNGER

Not really. That dam's been around 50 years, should be around fifty more. Some earthen dams have lasted hundreds of years. The Egyptians, the Greeks used them.

FRICK

Same people in the valley still raising a stink about it?

UNGER

Yes. Fulton at Cambria. Moxham at Johnson Steel, a few others. I'm used to it. We play nice with them. Tell them we'll review their issues. Put them off.

(a beat)

Are you gentlemen heading up to the lake this weekend?

MELLON

Mr. Frick and I are going tomorrow.

UNGER

Excellent. Gentlemen, I must now excuse myself. A meeting at the Monongahela House beckons. I look forward to seeing you this weekend.

FRICK

Before you go. Let's have a toast. Everyone raise their glasses.

(all raise glasses)

Gentlemen. Here's to black-bass fishing, and the best bourbon and cigars, and the finest food...

(the others join him)

All at our beautiful Lake Conemaugh.

(they all toast)

Unger exits. As he does, JOHN "JAY" PHIPPS, a very handsome 25 yo with chiseled looks, blonde hair, blue eyes enters with his friend PHILO FRENCH. After hellos, Mellon addresses Jay.

MELLON

Your father's here. He wants to talk to you.

JAY  
He in the boardroom?

MELLON  
Yes. Some men from Steubenville.  
They should be almost done.

JAY  
Thanks Mister Mellon.

Jay turns to talk to Philo, who's holding two drinks.

PHILO  
I figure you might need one of  
these. Your Dad's here, right?

JAY  
In the boardroom. This could be  
bad.

PHILO  
Good luck. I'll wait here.

Jay walks down the hall to a closed door. Takes a breath.  
Knocks. Pokes his head in.

HENRY PHIPPS is seated with THREE OTHER MEN at a table  
Phipps is a 50 yo with a deep, broad brow, grey eyes and  
brown hair and beard. He's an owner of Union Iron Mills  
Company (later Carnegie Steel) along with Andrew Carnegie.

PHIPPS SR.  
You're here. Come in.  
Gentlemen, this is my son Jay  
Phipps. He works with me at Union  
Iron. And I must speak with him.

So. I think we're finished here for  
today gentlemen. I'll be in touch  
in a few weeks. Thank you for  
coming. Safe travels back to Ohio.

The gentlemen nod goodbye and exit, greeting Jay. Once gone,  
his father sits back down. Looks at Jay sternly.

PHIPPS SR. (CONT'D)  
Close the door, and sit down.

JAY  
You wanted to see me.

PHIPPS SR.  
Do you know why?

JAY

I think so.

PHIPPS SR.

You think so.

(a beat)

Again, I'm in the position of handling another one of your messes at work. My son, again is accused of....I can't even say it.

JAY

I know. What you mean.

PHIPPS SR.

Do you? Because this woman said she would go to the papers about it. And I believe her.

JAY

I don't know what to say.

PHIPPS SR.

(slams the table, yells)

GOD DAMN IT. You're my son! You work for me! And yet you continue this, this, terrible behavior. The women in our offices are not some harem for you to... Ah.... I can't even...

JAY

I'm sorry.

PHIPPS SR.

You're sorry. Well, guess what. I paid this woman quite a bit of money. And moved her to another office. To keep her quiet.

JAY

I understand.

PHIPPS SR.

This is the last time Jay. One more time, and you're out of a job. And out of the house. I was already a millionaire at your age. Twice over. And, you, you...

JAY

I'm sorry to have disappointed you.

PHIPPS SR.

Don't try your cute sarcastic  
bullshit with me.  
And another thing, we're going up  
to the lake this weekend.  
You haven't been there in ages, and  
your mother wants you to go.  
Do you understand?

JAY

I had some plans this weekend  
with...

PHIPPS SR.

Do you understand?

JAY

Yes. Yes sir.

PHIPPS SR.

We leave on the 10 AM train  
tomorrow. Don't be late.  
And now, you can go.

Jay walks back down to the billiard room. He spots PHILO  
near the window. Philo hands him a drink. Jay takes a swig.

PHILO

So?

JAY

It's what I thought.  
She complained.  
Threatened to make a stink.

PHILO

What happens now?

JAY

What happens now, fine sir.  
Is I am going to be,  
a very, very good boy.

PHILO

At least at work.  
Aren't you going to that party in  
Sewickley on Saturday?

JAY

Nope. I'm going to the lake.  
My Dad said I have to go.



PHILO

Really! I'm going to the lake too.  
This is great. And I know Lloyd's  
going. All of us together again.  
And oh, there's someone I want you  
to meet. To see. A beautiful girl.

JAY

Are you kidding? Did you just hear  
me?

PHILO

This one's different Jay. She's a  
singer. She sings on Saturday  
nights at the Clubhouse.  
And she's gorgeous. And what a  
voice! I know you love music.

JAY

I don't care.

PHILO

Well, wait until you see her...

Jay shakes his head and looks out the window. Takes a drink.

**SUPER:                   FOUR MONTHS EARLIER**

**JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA**

**EXT. JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

A smoky, busy, bustling town situated in a steep valley,  
built at the confluence of two rivers. Horse-drawn trolleys  
and lorries move through the dusty brick and dirt streets.  
Black fumes pour from smokestacks at the immense CAMBRIA IRON  
WORKS. Tall steep hills surround the city in all directions.

Amongst the busy chaos, a PETITE PRETTY GIRL crosses a dusty  
brick street. She enters Heiser's Dry Goods store.

**INT. HEISER DRY GOODS STORE - FRONT ROOM - DAY**

EMMA HART (23 yo, petite, radiant looks, curly blonde hair,  
brown eyes) enters and greets the 52 yo owner GEORGE HEISER  
and wife 48 yo MATHILDE known as "MATTIE". They light up  
seeing her. Emma seems especially excited, smiling.

EMMA HART

Is Victor here?

GEORGE HEISER  
I'll get him.  
(walks to the back)

MATTIE HEISER  
You look excited dear.

EMMA  
Yes. Got some good news this morning.

**INT. HEISER DRY GOODS STORE - BACKROOM - DAY**

VICTOR HEISER (23 yo handsome, stocky, brownish hair, blue eyes) lifts a heavy barrel off a shelf, sets it down. Sighs. Another day of grunt work at the family dry goods store. This is his life. This is his future.

His DAD pokes his head in the room, tells him Emma is out front. Suddenly, he perks up, like an electric shock hit him.

VICTOR HEISER  
Oh OK. Tell her, tell her, I'll be out in a minute.

His Dad smiles. His son is smitten with Emma. And that is understandable--what young man wouldn't be?

**INT. HEISER DRY GOODS STORE - NEAR COUNTER - DAY**

32 yo ladies ANNA FENN and BELLE WATERS, with several young children, walk up to the counter. EMMA turns, sees them, greets them warmly. A young pretty girl, 4 yo VIRGINIA "GINNY" FENN, runs up to Emma. Hugs her. Emma so happy to see her.

EMMA  
Miss Ginny I love your hair.

GINNY  
Miss Emma. You comin' over soon?  
To sing us some songs?

EMMA  
I sure hope so sweetie pie.  
(turns to Anna)  
She's getting so tall.

ANNA  
I know. Anything new with you?

EMMA

I do have some news.  
This morning, I found out I'm going  
to be singing at the clubhouse this  
summer. Up at the lake.

ANNA

Really! The boss's club!

BELLE

Bully for you! Working there will  
be your ticket out of here.

EMMA

One can hope right?

BELLE

Oh Emma. Once those bosses hear you  
sing, you'll be packing your bags  
for Pittsburgh in no time.

Emma smiles. That dream of being discovered has been the  
center of her life for the past month since she auditioned at  
the Clubhouse for Colonel Unger with her brother Charlie. She  
daydreams about it. Pittsburgh!

Emma turns to see an excited VICTOR coming around the  
counter. Smiling, staring at her. But CRASH, he trips over a  
crate and goes down in a heap. APPLES SPRAY across the floor.  
Everyone stares. His Dad shakes his head, laughs. Anna  
speaks up in a sarcastic tone.

ANNA

Have any apples Victor? I'm  
thinking about making a pie.

VICTOR

(looks up at Anna)  
Let me check Mrs Fenn.

EMMA

(starts to help him up)  
Are you OK?

VICTOR

(stands up, in pain)  
No. Damn that hurt actually.  
So, I'm guessing,  
did you hear something?

EMMA

Yes! We got the job!

VICTOR

You did!

Victor leans in and hugs her.

EMMA

The Colonel called me at work this morning.

VICTOR

I knew he'd like you. And Charlie.

EMMA

Thanks for setting it up.  
Getting the audition for us.  
I wanted to tell you in person.

VICTOR

I'm so excited for you both.

EMMA

(leans in for a hug)  
You're such a wonderful friend for  
doing this. Thank you.

Victor's face falls at the word "friend". He pulls away, a half smile. He wants to be more than a friend to Emma. Looks around, down at the floor, at the apples strewn about.

VICTOR

I better pick these up.

#### **INT. PULLMAN CAR PASSING JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

Families and excited children seated in an elegant private Pennsylvania Railroad Pullman car furnished in dark woods, crown moldings and plush red leather seats. All headed to their beautiful resort at the lake for a summer weekend.

Among the passengers, JAY PHIPPS. Sitting back, stares out a window. He sees smoky Johnstown as the train passes by. Another ugly dirty steel town. So many around here.

#### **EXT. SOUTH FORK TRAIN DEPOT - DAY**

Super:       **South Fork, Pennsylvania**

**July, 1888**

The locomotive and Pullman car pulls into the South Fork station and halts. A whistle. A cloud of white smoke.

The train doors open. African American porters in crisp uniforms jump down and pull out stairs. Passengers gingerly step down onto the platform. Porters pull luggage out of side compartments and move it towards waiting carriages.

A family walks towards a carriage. HENRY PHIPPS, his 49 yo wife ANNE, and three excited YOUNG CHILDREN. The porters load up the luggage and help them into the carriage.

JAY PHIPPS climbs aboard last. Puts on sunglasses. Sits back, a bored look. The driver snaps a whip and the horses jump. The carriage jolts, pulls out. Everyone knocked back.

PHIPPS SR.

Is everyone ready for the lake?

The younger three kids clap, scream YAY! Jay nods, smirks. Anne turns to her husband.

ANNE PHIPPS

I forget. Are the Mellon's coming this weekend?

PHIPPS SR.

They're coming up later today.

ANNE PHIPPS

I was thinking about Mr. Carnegie the other day. When's the last time he was here? Or Pittsburgh?

PHIPPS SR.

Awhile. Years. When he's not in New York, I hear he's looking at castles in Scotland to buy.

They both laugh. The carriage rumbles through the small town of South Fork onto a country road heading slightly uphill.

#### **EXT. CARRIAGE ON A COUNTRY ROAD TO THE LAKE - DAY**

The carriage moves on the rutted dirt road which slices through a lush forest filled with colorful wildflowers.

Soon the carriage approaches the 900 foot long earthen dam.

The dam: A rugged steep dark hillside. Like a battered wall from an ancient lost temple. Dark crevices, scattered rocks, wild grasses. Strangely odd in this beautiful setting.

The carriage crosses a bridge over a bubbling creek that pours down to the valley stream. The carriage turns right onto the dam road and heads towards the resort.

The carriage stops near the center of the dam for all to admire the beautiful pristine shimmering lake framed by steep green hillsides. A young Phipps speaks up.

HOWARD PHIPPS

Daddy, does this hold in all the fish?

PHIPPS SR.

You mean the dam Howard? Yes this holds in the fish. They're all so happy, swimming in our big lake.

**EXT. SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE - DUSK**

The placid lake lit by warm orange light. Near the clubhouse, men talk around a bonfire. Cigars and bourbons in hand.

**INT. SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE - DINING ROOM**

EMMA and brother CHARLIE HART on stage. Charlie is a tall, very handsome 17 yo with brown hair and blue eyes. Charlie holds an acoustic guitar. They nod to COLONEL UNGER.

UNGER

Good evening. Well, it's another beautiful Saturday night at our South Fork Clubhouse. And to entertain you, please welcome back one of our favorites here. Miss Emma Hart and Mister Charlie Hart, the Harts. From down the valley in Johnstown.

EMMA

(to strong applause)  
Thank you Colonel. Good evening.

Charlie begins a song on his guitar. The gorgeous Emma starts singing in a sultry style.

JAY PHIPPS with handsome friends PHILO FRENCH and LLOYD HUFF sit near the stage. Drinking. Talking a bit too loud. But hearing Emma's first notes, they turn and stop chatting. Jay is captivated by her. Philo sees this, smiles. He knew he would love her.

**EXT. OUTSIDE THE SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE - EVENING**

The edge of the sun disappears below the darkened hills.

**INT. SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE - DINING ROOM**

EMMA ends the song "My Darling Clementine". Vibrant APPLAUSE.

EMMA

Thank you. We hope you enjoyed the music. Have a pleasant evening.

JAY and his friends clap loudly. All a bit drunk.

PHILO

Isn't she something? What a voice. And what a doll. I told you Jay.

LLOYD

Jay's already eyeing her up. You going to go talk to her? Turn on that famous Phipps charm.

JAY

Yes boys, I do have that charm in spades. But what really gets the lasses? Maybe it's my charm, my dashing looks? My pithy humor? Hard to decide.

LLOYD

I don't know. I was thinking, it might be,  
(A beat)  
your last name?

Philo ROARS in laughter. Jay stabs himself in jest.

JAY

That hurt Lloyd. But I do fancy her. I like her, her singing.

PHILO

Oh please, her singing. I told you. She's gorgeous.

JAY

You may have been right about this one Philo. Did not expect to see someone like her, up here. Anyway, watch closely.

Jay stands. Takes a slug of beer. Winks. Heads towards Emma.

LLOYD

Off to stalk his prey. Always in for the jammiest bits of jam.

PHILO

He's run through all the girls in Pittsburgh. He must look to the east!

Emma alone at a table near the stage. Jay approaches. Emma looks up, smiles. Who's this handsome fellow?

JAY

What a wonderful performance.  
You're Emma?

EMMA

Yes. Emma Hart. And thank you.  
And you are?

JAY

Jay Phipps.

EMMA

From Pittsburgh I assume?

JAY

Yes. I'm from "hell with the lid off". May I sit down?

EMMA

(She nods OK)

Well I'm from Johnstown, and we might fight you for that title.  
Been there?

JAY

No, just seen it passing by on the train. But after meeting you, I'm sure it must have its own, charms.

EMMA

Maybe.

JAY

Then I've been missing out haven't I? Guess I need to visit.

EMMA

Really?

JAY

I love to explore new places.  
Maybe you could show me around.  
You have a card or something.



EMMA

Not much to see, but, here's our card.

(hands Jay a card)

JAY

The Harts of Union Street. Well, I might...

CHARLIE

(walks over, interrupts)

We need to go. It's getting late.

EMMA

(a little irritated)

Mr. Phipps, this is my brother Charlie. And he's right, we do have to head back. Before it gets dark.

(stands up)

Thank you for your kind words.

JAY

(stands as well)

A pleasure to meet you Miss Hart. And you Charlie. And Miss Hart. Maybe, see you again?

EMMA

Don't lose that card.

A flirtatious wink and smile from Emma. They turn to leave. After they're gone, Jay does a twirl, smiles, and joins his friends. They clap in a mock ovation.

PHILO

Well good man. You made it without a drink in your face. I'm shocked.

JAY

Not only that, I got her card.

(holds it up)

The Harts of Union Street in Johnstown.

LLOYD

Like you'd ever set foot in Johnstown.

JAY

How about this? I'm thinking about going there tomorrow. Find this little songbird. I'll catch the late train home from there.

LLOYD

Jay, let this one go. Summer's over in a month. Hell, you're never up here anyway.

JAY

Suddenly, I love this lake. And a lot can happen in a month.

**EXT. CARRIAGE HEADED TO SOUTH FORK - DUSK**

The DRIVER snaps the whip on the buggy and the horse moves forward. Charlie is quiet. Emma knows something's wrong.

EMMA

Are you upset about something?

CHARLIE

Why do you have to flirt with this rich kid?

EMMA

He was nice. He came over and said how well we did. What is...

CHARLIE

You gave him our card. What if he looks you up?

EMMA

And what if he does?

CHARLIE

I don't understand you. You have at least three guys pining for you in town. Why are you kicking up dust up here?

EMMA

Kicking up dust...

(laughing)

Where do you get these expressions?

CHARLIE

You know what I mean.

EMMA

Fine. I'll try to control my, dust-kicking going forward.

CHARLIE

I know what you're doing.

EMMA

What do you think you know?

CHARLIE

You're thinking you're going to find someone in the boss's club. Someone to...

EMMA

And what if I do? What's wrong with that?

CHARLIE

Do you think one of these rich toffs is going to want to...what marry you? They'll want you for one thing, and that's...

EMMA

Just shut up Charlie. Don't tell me what to think. Or what to do.

CHARLIE

Fine.

**EXT. HART HOME JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

A two-story white wood row house with a front porch sits in a neighborhood full of similar houses. A garden in front with a Blessed Mary statue. Rocking chairs on the porch.

**INT. HART HOME - KITCHEN - DAY**

EMMA walks down the stairs and enters the kitchen. Her Mother RUTH HART putting some dishes away. Her Mom is 50 years old, brunette, with a friendly face. Still attractive.

RUTH

Morning. How did it go last night?

EMMA

Good. Some people talked to us after the show, said we did well.

RUTH

I'm sure you did. You sing so beautifully.

EMMA

Just like you used to.

RUTH

Listen. I have to run over to Belle's. She has some fresh tomatoes and peppers. Might make a salad tonight.

EMMA

Sounds good. See you later.

Ruth waves goodbye and exits out the kitchen back door.

**INT. HART HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

CHARLIE strums his guitar as EMMA comes into the room. They exchange greetings. She sits down across from him.

EMMA

Let's run through "Shenandoah".  
I messed up the lyrics last night.

Charlie starts strumming. About a half minute in, he stops. Looks out a window, a shocked expression.

CHARLIE

Oh my God. I can't believe it.  
That guy from last night. Phipps.  
He's outside.

Emma rushes to the window. A fancy carriage outside. JAY PHIPPS looks down at the card. Walks towards the front door.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

He's here. Holy...

EMMA

Hush. Answer the door. I need to straighten up.

Emma rushes up the stairs. A loud KNOCK at the door. Charlie opens it. Jay stands before him in a tan suit.

JAY

Charlie, right? Remember me? I'm Jay Phipps. From last night.

CHARLIE

I do. Can I help you?

JAY

Your sister gave me your card. If she's around. I know this is a Sunday, and unannounced...

CHARLIE

She's here. She'll be down in a few minutes. Come in, have a seat.

JAY

(sits down, looks around)  
You were both excellent last night.  
And you're very good at the guitar.  
Have you been playing long?

CHARLIE

About seven or eight years.

JAY

I play some myself. I have a Martin six string. Heard of the Martin?

CHARLIE

(surprised)  
Of course. They're the best guitars. I'd love to have one. They make them in Nazareth, since the 30s I think.

JAY

Yep. Visited the shop there a few years back. Had to have one.

EMMA

(enters the room)  
I have a visitor it seems.

Jay and Charlie stand. A smiling Emma wearing a colorful sundress. Looks GORGEOUS.

CHARLIE

You remember Mr. Phipps.

EMMA

I do remember Mr. Phipps.

JAY

You look just, beautiful.  
I apologize for the unannounced visit but...

EMMA

No. It's a pleasant surprise.

JAY

I wondered if you were free this afternoon. Maybe you could show me the sights? Like we talked about?

EMMA

Of course.

**EXT. OUTSIDE HART HOUSE - DAY**

EMMA and JAY outside on the porch. Suddenly, VICTOR arrives on a bicycle. She was not expecting him. He pulls to a stop and is stunned--who is this guy? And, so awkward for Emma.

EMMA

I didn't know you were stopping by.

VICTOR

I wanted to surprise you with a visit. But. I'm the one surprised.

EMMA

(a beat)

Jay, this is my friend Victor Heiser. And he's the reason I'm singing up at the Clubhouse. He works at the boathouse and got us the audition with the Colonel. And Victor, this is Jay Phipps, who I met, last night.

JAY

Greetings Mr. Heiser.

VICTOR

Wait, did you say Jay Phipps? From the Phipps family? In Pittsburgh?

JAY

That's correct. And I'm so glad you introduced Emma to the Colonel. She's such a wonderful singer.

Victor still can't believe he's talking to Jay Phipps. Jay Phipps--an A-List celebrity of the day, in the papers all the time, attending social events and balls. And he's from one of the richest families in Pittsburgh, hell the country. And, damn he's a tall, handsome guy. Shit! Emma speaks up.

EMMA

Jay stopped and talked to me after the show and said he wanted to visit Johnstown. See the sights. We're going to take a walk around.

VICTOR  
Really? The sights? In Johnstown?  
(a beat)  
That should be a pretty short walk.

JAY  
(nods as they turn to go)  
Nice meeting you Vincent.

VICTOR  
It's Victor, not...

But Jay's already talking to Emma. He watches them walk towards town. His arm around her shoulders a bit. Victor mutters to himself "Never mind..."

**INT. HART HOME - DOWNSTAIRS - DAY**

A forlorn and stunned VICTOR knocks and enters the house. CHARLIE on the couch, looks up, stops playing his guitar.

CHARLIE  
Well hello there Mister Heiser. I didn't know you were stopping by.

VICTOR  
(plops down on a chair)  
I can't believe that I just met Jay Phipps. Jay Phipps. What the...

CHARLIE  
Yep. Down here to see Emma. They talked last night after the show.

VICTOR  
He sees her one time, last night, and he's down here the next day. The next day? Really?

CHARLIE  
I am going to say, yes. That's exactly what happened. That's our Emma. Always the charmer.

VICTOR  
That's for sure.

CHARLIE  
Something bothering you?

VICTOR  
Come on Charlie.

CHARLIE

I know. It's the worst kept secret in Johnstown. Your long-time crush on Emma.

VICTOR

Actually smart ass, I wanted to come over to talk with her, about, you know, maybe...

CHARLIE

But you arrive and a millionaire dandy in a tan suit and fancy carriage gets here first. Curses!

VICTOR

How funny would it be?  
I get you guys the job up there.  
Feather in my cap right?  
But because of that, she meets some rich dandy from Pittsburgh.

CHARLIE

Not funny.  
Actually. Very sad for you.  
So sad in fact, I might have to write a song about it.

Charlie strums his guitar, starts a mocking song. "Emma and handsome Jay, strolling our town today...". Victor fumes.

**EXT. STREETS OF JOHNSTOWN - CENTRAL PARK - DAY**

JAY and EMMA walk past rowhouses and storefronts, talking, pointing. They reach the Central Park and find a bench.

EMMA

(pointing)

That's my Church, St. John's. And I work over there, at Cambria Iron. Like most people around here.

JAY

I know about Cambria Iron. They were once the biggest steel mill in the country. Before the war. Bigger than anything in Pittsburgh. What do you do there?

EMMA

I'm a secretary.



JAY

Do you like that?

EMMA

Not really. But it's a paycheck.  
Charlie's still in school.  
I have to take care of things.

JAY

What about your father?

EMMA

(a beat)

He passed away, a few months ago.

JAY

Oh my God. What happened?

EMMA

A mill accident. At Cambria.

JAY

Good Lord. I'm so sorry.

EMMA

Thank you. It's not uncommon. Over  
200 men died in the mill last year.  
Hot metal explosions, crane  
accidents, falls.

JAY

The same with the mills in  
Pittsburgh. It's such dangerous  
work. How are you doing?

EMMA

It was tough at first. A lot of  
tears. So hard on my Mom.  
They'd been together for years.  
But time passes.  
You just, have to carry on.

JAY

I understand.

(a beat)

I wondered, regarding work. You're  
such a great singer, what about  
doing that?

EMMA

It's hard to make a living around  
here as a singer.

JAY

Ever thought of moving?

EMMA

Oh yeah. But I'm here for now.  
With my Mom, and Charlie, so...

JAY

Can I ask, that guy, Vincent, he  
didn't seem too happy to see me.  
Are you two...

EMMA

We're just friends.  
His name is Victor actually.  
Anyway,  
    (pokes him playfully)  
Enough of my sad stories.  
What about you?  
What do you do for fun?

JAY

I enjoy music. I told Charlie I  
play the guitar a little bit. I  
like tennis, horses. Going out with  
my friends. Parties.

EMMA

Do you work?

JAY

For my father. At Union Iron.

EMMA

How's that going?

JAY

    (a beat, smiles)  
I think he regrets that I enjoy my  
life of leisure a little, too much.  
And wishes I was more like him, and  
wanted to work 10 hours a day, six  
days a week.

EMMA

Wow. So much honesty on our first,  
whatever this is.

JAY

    (puts his hands on hers)  
Lots to cover there. Believe me.  
But let's save that for next time.  
When I see you in two weeks.

EMMA

What's happening in two weeks?

JAY

I'm back up here. Please take that Friday afternoon off. And I'll pick you up. Take you to the lake.

EMMA

Sounds like a date.

JAY

More than a date. How about a grand tour of Lake Conemaugh. A great dinner. A night to always remember. And, you can stay over in our cottage, for your show on Saturday.

EMMA

A night to always remember?  
I'm intrigued. Who will be there?  
Maybe President Cleveland?

JAY

(Takes her hands)  
You mean old Grover? You never know. You'll have to see.

#### **INT. VICTOR HEISER'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

VICTOR lays in his bed, tossing and turning. He's dreaming.

He sees peaceful placid Lake Conemaugh, but a growing darkness falls over it. Black storm clouds. Lightning. Thunder. Winds rise. Torrents of rains start to come down.

The waters slam against the dam and start to pour over the top. A widening waterfall forms. The dam crumbles in a huge explosion and the water bursts through into the valley.

VICTOR gasps, wakes up, sits up in bed. Eyes wide open. Breathing hard. What the hell was that?

#### **INT. ANNA FENN'S HOME - PARLOR - LATE AFTERNOON**

ANNA FENN and husband JOHN with BELLE WATERS and husband GEORGE chatting. A KNOCK at the door. Anna opens it. EMMA and CHARLIE, holding a guitar case, stand outside.

ANNA

Emma. And a special guest, Charlie!

EMMA

With all the kids and the babies, I  
asked Charlie to help me out.

ANNA

That's fine. Come on in.

As they enter, greetings all around. Several kids run up to hug them. The men turn to talk to the tall, lanky Charlie who sets down his guitar case. They smile at him.

JOHN FENN

Lord Charlie, you're growing like a weed.

CHARLIE

Bit of a growth spurt I guess.

JOHN FENN

You still playing baseball at  
Johnstown High?

CHARLIE

Yep. Starting at first base.

GEORGE WATERS

(holding a cigar)

Damn. You keep growing, and you'll  
be playing baseball for our  
Quicksteps one of these days.

EMMA

(to the wives)

Where are you going tonight?

ANNA

The new Hulbert House hotel.

EMMA

I've been there. The restaurant is  
wonderful. And, they have one of  
those new Otis elevators.

ANNA

We must go, running late again.

The Fenns and Waters say goodbye. Wish Emma and Charlie good luck, to some LAUGHTER. Emma and Charlie sit on the couch and the excited kids gather around them, in chairs, on the floor.

EMMA

This is my brother Charlie.

One girl: "HE'S CUTE". Other young girls giggle.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
Who wants to have a singalong?

Claps and CHEERS. Charlie lifts his guitar out of the case.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
Before we start, tell Charlie your  
name, and how old you are.

The six Fenn children and two Waters daughters introduce themselves and give their ages.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
What song do we want to sing first?

Different songs yelled out. Emma listens. Nods.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
I heard "My Bonnie Lies Over The  
Ocean". How about that one first?

Kids scream YAY! Emma smiles. Charlie begins the song on his guitar and Emma starts to sing. In a few minutes, everyone is singing. Ginny Fenn cuddles next to Emma on the couch.

#### **INT. CAMBRIA IRON WORKS - SECRETARIAL OFFICES - DAY**

Emma at her desk in her work clothes. Her best friend MARGARET "PEG" LEECH (pretty, 24 yo brunette) walks over.

PEG  
Thought he was getting here around  
two. You better change.

EMMA  
Oh shoot! Lost track of the time.  
Be back in a few minutes.

#### **EXT. ELEGANT CARRIAGE MOVING THROUGH JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

JAY PHIPPS steers an elegant carriage pulled by a fine horse through Johnstown. People stop and point. This is no ordinary carriage. It has an elevated sleek design, bright red paint, silver plated hardware and large rimmed wheels.

#### **INT. CAMBRIA IRON WORKS - SECRETARIAL OFFICES - DAY**

PEG and others gather at the office windows, pointing at the impressive carriage. 52 yo Manager JOHN MILLER approaches.

MR. MILLER

What are you looking at?

(sees the carriage)

Holy shit!

That's a, that's a Chariot D'Orsay.

PEG

A what?

MR. MILLER

A Chariot D'Orsay. It's one of the most expensive carriages in the world. The English Royal family, the Vanderbilts use them. I've never seen one before.

PEG

Well that's Emma's ride today.

MR. MILLER

Really? Our Emma?

EMMA approaches, changed from her work clothes into a cute dress. Her hair and makeup done up. Looks GORGEOUS.

PEG

Look at you Cinderella. And your Prince Charming has arrived.

Emma looks outside and suddenly excited seeing the elegant carriage waiting for her. Wow!

EMMA

I better go. Thanks for the time off Mr. Miller.

MR. MILLER

(a bit shaken, like wow!)

Oh, OK Emma. You, you have fun.

#### **EXT. OUTSIDE CAMBRIA WORKS - DAY**

As EMMA walks towards the carriage with her bag, everyone cheers her from the windows-- "GO EMMA" "BULLY FOR YOU EMMA".

JAY sees this, bows at her like she's a princess. He greets her, helps her up. Gets her bag. She waves to the CHEERING group. She sits down in the coach and they pull away.

The carriage moves through town, passes near the Heiser store. VICTOR sweeping out front. Sees the fancy carriage. Spots EMMA. With JAY PHIPPS! She's smiling, laughing.

VICTOR SO ANGRY. He SLAMS HIS BROOM against a metal rail. It breaks in half. He curses loudly. Damn it!

**EXT. LAKE CONEMAUGH, NEAR THE DAM - DAY**

The carriage moves through the lush forest towards the lake. EMMA looks around at the fancy elegant carriage.

EMMA

This little buggy made quite the impression today.

JAY

It's a bit much I know. Razzmatazz. My dad bought it a few years ago, for special occasions up here.

EMMA

Like what?

JAY

Weddings. Anniversaries. In June, we have a Launching Of The Fleet party. Then in August, the Feast of Lanterns. That's in a few weeks.

EMMA

What's that?

JAY

Sailboats are tied to a steam yacht and are pulled around the lake, like a parade. All have five lit lanterns on them.

EMMA

That must be something to see.

JAY

After that, there's fireworks. It's a big party. You'll see.

The carriage stops on the bridge over the scenic spillway. The waters lit by the sun, bubble over the rocks down to the valley creek. A relaxing soothing sound.

JAY (CONT'D)

Isn't this butter upon bacon?

Jay steers the carriage to a stop near the spillway. They find a picnic table. Others are around at other tables. He sets down a lunch basket. He waves to a few people he knows.

JAY (CONT'D)  
Such a fine afternoon right? Sunny.  
A nice warm breeze.

EMMA  
We're lucky. After all the rain we  
had this week.

JAY  
I feel lucky.  
Just spending an evening with you.

EMMA  
(kind of rolls her eyes)  
Uh huh. So the fancy carriage, the  
spillway, the picnic. I bet this  
works well with the ladies?

JAY  
Oh yes. Every time!  
But wine is a key element.

Jay pulls a bottle of red wine out of the basket. Emma  
smiles. He opens it and pours two glasses.

EMMA  
Do you want to have a toast?

JAY  
I do. To the most beautiful day  
I've enjoyed, in a very long time.

#### **INT. CAMBRIA IRON WORKS - SECRETARIAL OFFICES**

PEG at her desk, typing. EMMA walks by and sits down at the  
desk next to her. Peg stops typing. She's so excited to see  
her, find out about the weekend. Leans in to talk to her.

PEG  
Welcome back Cinderella.

EMMA  
Oh please.

PEG  
So how did it go? Do tell.

EMMA  
Alright. He took me up to the lake  
for a nice picnic by the spillway.  
Then off to their so-called  
"cottage", which is actually three  
times bigger than our house!

(MORE)



EMMA (CONT'D)

Then dinner at the Clubhouse.  
Later, a bonfire outside. Some  
drinks. And I stayed at the  
cottage.

PEG

Really? A sleep over? Ohhh...

EMMA

Stop it. His whole family was  
there. I slept in a guest room.

PEG

Oh OK.

EMMA

The next day, lunch at the  
Clubhouse, then out on the lake in  
a steam yacht. And just spent time  
together. Later, I got ready for  
my singing at the Clubhouse.  
Charlie took me home.

PEG

What do you think?

EMMA

Well. He's. He's, very handsome.  
(they both giggle)  
And he's very...

PEG

Rich! Very rich!

EMMA

I was going to say he is very much  
the gentleman. We kissed a little.  
Held hands. But he was not...

PEG

What happens next?

EMMA

He invited me to this thing called  
the Feast of Lanterns. In two  
weeks. Then I guess we'll see.

The manager MR. MILLER walks by.

MR. MILLER

Good morning Miss Hart. So. Did  
you ride the fancy chariot to work  
today?

EMMA

No Mr. Miller, just walked today.

MR. MILLER

That's too bad. Now. Enough chit  
chat. Get to work ladies.

They both smile, turn to their typewriters, start working.

**EXT. LAKE CONEMAUGH - ON SAILBOAT IN FEAST OF LANTERNS - DUSK**

JAY and EMMA mingle among other on a fancy sailboat. All wearing summer finery, expensive jewelry. Five lit lanterns hang on the sailboat. Jay pours Emma some wine. A beautiful summer evening turning to dusk. The lanterns shine brighter.

JAY

Miss Hart, I can see you're  
enjoying the Feast of Lanterns.

EMMA

Thank you Mister Phipps. This is  
really something.

JAY

And wait til the fireworks. I bet  
they're the best you've ever seen.

Their sail boat approaches the dam and its spillway.

EMMA

That's the spillway right?  
I have a question. I know the  
members love to fish the lake.  
Don't a lot of game fish swim out  
through the spillway?

JAY

No. There's a screen of iron rods  
under the bridges. Keeps them in.  
(Emma nods, got it)  
Get this. When they stocked this  
lake awhile back, the Club shipped  
a thousand black bass on a special  
train, all the way from Lake Erie.

EMMA

How about that.  
(a beat, then speaks in  
an affected voice)  
Oh to be so rich,  
to have a special train,  
just for fish.

Jay smiles. Pokes her playfully. The boat parade passes by the dam. It's getting darker.

EMMA (CONT'D)

And there's the dam.  
Or what I call it, the boogey dam.

JAY

Why?

EMMA

A few times a year after some bad rains, the rumors start that it's going to go. It's over 50 years old, so I used to get scared.

JAY

You don't worry about it anymore?

EMMA

Some of the smartest people in the country have fine summer places here. Right? Like your Dad.

JAY

I guess. Yes.

EMMA

And I believe that those very smart people are taking care of that dam.

JAY

(points up at a cottage)  
See the cottage on that hill?  
Colonel Unger lives there.  
He keeps a close eye on the dam.  
The lake. Everyone says he's a good man. Someone to trust.

EMMA

I hope so.

JAY

(a beat)  
Have you thought about, about us?  
What we talked about?

EMMA

(turns, looks up at him)  
Yes. I have. I know the Club closes tomorrow for the summer. And, I guess, how can we...

Jay leans in with a kiss. Surprises her, but she kisses him back. He pulls back, holds her firmly, stares into her eyes.

JAY

I want you in my life Emma.  
I want to see you after the summer.  
I want you to come to Pittsburgh.  
This fall, at Christmas...

EMMA

Really? But...

JAY

I'll be blunt.  
And I'm sorry if this is rude.  
But. You're too good for your town.  
Too talented.  
You should be singing for crowds in  
opera houses, theaters, at garden  
parties.  
In Pittsburgh, New York, Chicago.  
Hell, London and Paris.

EMMA

That's what, what I want to do.  
That's my dream.

JAY

(slowly, intensely)  
So. Make your dream. Come. True.

He leans in and they passionately kiss. Suddenly huge FIREWORKS explode over the boats and the lake. Lighting up the kissing couple. The others on the boat CHEER and TOAST.

**EXT COLONEL UNGER'S COTTAGE DAY**

**SUPER: Colonel Unger's Cottage**

**March 1889**

A buggy makes a turn onto dirt road, heading up to the Unger Cottage, which sits on a hill overlooking the lake.

In the buggy sits JOHN FULTON. Fulton is an imposing, tall 56 yo, with an iron-grey beard and dark brow.

Fulton exits the carriage and approaches the front door. Knocks. Colonel UNGER answers. With him is 23 yo old sandy-haired slender JOHN PARKE in an ill-fitting suit. They move to Unger's office overlooking the lake and sit down.

**INT. COLONEL UNGER'S COTTAGE OFFICE - DAY\***

JOHN FULTON

Colonel. Thank you for meeting me.

UNGER

Of course, Mr. Fulton.  
But first, this is Mr. John Parke,  
an engineer we hired to help here  
with special projects.  
What can we do for you today?

FULTON

I represent a number of city and  
business leaders from Johnstown who  
are concerned about the dam.

This lake has grown to its largest  
size ever, to the point where we  
believe the dam's stability and  
safety are in question.

UNGER

Regarding the lake, we monitor the  
water level closely. And we have a  
spillway to control it as needed.

FULTON

The problem with the spillway is  
that it's only five feet below the  
dam crest. If the lake got too  
high, it would be useless.

The lake, by our estimates, holds  
over 20 million tons of water.  
If that amount of water ever  
breached the dam, it would cause a  
terrible cataclysm in the valley.

UNGER

I disagree about that.  
And it's not just me saying that.  
Your own newspaper in Johnstown,  
the *Tribune*, posted an article on  
this topic about a year or so ago.

FULTON

I know about that article.

UNGER

They said a break would not impact  
Johnstown too much.

(MORE)

UNGER (CONT'D)

The lake waters would cause some flooding, but most of the water would disperse through the fifteen miles of the valley, in creeks and tributaries, before reaching Johnstown and...

FULTON

I believe that article was wrong. A lot of people in Johnstown agree.

Besides the 20 Million tons of water, you know this lake sits 500 feet higher than the valley. So there would be downward force of all that water as well.

If a breach happened, there would be little time to warn the valley. What if it happened at night? There could be a vast loss of life.

Fulton looks over at Parke, back to the Colonel.

FULTON (CONT'D)

Mr. Parke, your new engineer. Is he working on the dam?

UNGER

Mr. Fulton.

(a bit frustrated)

Mr. Parke is here to set up a new septic system, for the Club.

FULTON

I see. A sceptic system.

UNGER

Can we get to the point. What is it you want me to do?

FULTON

Our recommendations are here.

(He hands him a report)

Please review this when you can, but in summary, we recommend to have another spillway installed. You need to work on overhauling the dam, especially the upper slopes. Third...

UNGER

(interrupting)

Fine.

(MORE)

UNGER (CONT'D)

I'll review your recommendations  
with the Club leadership. Once they  
arrive in early June.

FULTON

Early June. In three months.

(a beat, a sigh)

Alright. I guess I'm done here for  
today.

(standing)

But, before I go, I want to add  
something else.

UNGER

Of course.

FULTON

Please let the Club leadership know  
that Cambria Iron is willing to  
help with the costs of making these  
changes to the dam. We know they  
could be expensive.

Please advise them of this. We feel  
that strongly about this situation.

UNGER

Thank you Mr. Fulton. Duly noted.

FULTON

Thank you Colonel.  
Nice to meet you Mr. Parke.  
Good luck in your new role.  
I can find my way out.

Fulton exits. Parke waits for him to exit the cottage.

PARKE

Colonel, what do you think?

UNGER

It's nothing new.

PARKE

If you want, I can take a look at  
that report, review some options...

UNGER

(Sternly, stares at him)

Mr. Parke.

I want to be clear about this.

I hired you for one thing.

Setting up a new septic system.

That's what the members want.

(MORE)

UNGER (CONT'D)

They are tired of using that two story outhouse and having no indoor plumbing in the cottages. And I'm goddamn tired of them bitching about it to me.

You work only on the septic system. That's your number one priority. Do you understand?

Parke stands and nods yes. He exits out of the office.

**EXT. JOHNSTOWN TRAIN STATION - DAY**

Super: **April, 1889**

CHARLIE helps EMMA off their carriage. Gets her bag. They step onto the train platform.

EMMA

Remember if Mom forgets, I'm staying with Dottie Kinevey in Shadyside. OK?

CHARLIE

You're sure about this trip?

EMMA

Yeah. Why?

CHARLIE

I don't know. How well do you know this guy? You only saw him a few times last summer.

VICTOR approaches them on the platform.

EMMA

What are you doing here?

VICTOR

Charlie told me you were going to Pittsburgh. To see Jay.

EMMA

(To Charlie)

Why did you...

VICTOR

(To Emma)

He's playing you. Don't you know that? He's a playboy. A rogue. Can't you see...



EMMA

Stop it. I know what you think.  
And you too Charlie.  
But I think you're both wrong.

He's been writing me letters.  
For months. Lovely letters. Wanting  
me to come visit since last summer.  
But I could never get away.

I want to find out for myself.  
With eyes wide open. If there's  
something there. Between us.

An announcement: "Final Boarding please, Final Boarding"

EMMA (CONT'D)

I have to go. Charlie, I'll see you  
here on Sunday, around six.

She kisses Charlie on the cheek. Gives Victor some side eye.  
She picks up her bag, and boards the train.

#### **INT. PITTSBURGH UNION STATION - DAY**

EMMA sees JAY waiting for her on the platform. She steps off  
with a wide smile. They share a warm hug and embrace.

JAY

Welcome to Pittsburgh Miss Hart.

EMMA

Thank you. And thanks for the first  
class ticket. I felt like a queen.

JAY

It's so good to see you.

EMMA

I'm sorry I couldn't get here  
sooner, but...

JAY

No worries. You're here now.

EMMA

Should we get my bag?

JAY

No, I have someone for that.

She sees an African American porter, getting her bag.

EMMA

Are we off to the Phipps castle?

JAY

The castle?

(smiles)

Actually I wanted to stop off at the Duquesne Club first.

Have a few drinks.

You can powder your hair a bit.

Before you visit the castle.

EMMA

I didn't think women were allowed at the Duquesne Club?

JAY

On Friday evenings, we are open for the fairer sex to join us.

EMMA

As long as I don't drink too much.

I don't want to fall into the moat at the castle.

Get eaten by an alligator.

JAY

There's a wide drawbridge at the castle. And the alligators are very friendly.

EMMA

But do you think I'm dressed smart enough for the Duquesne Club?

JAY

Don't worry. You look beautiful.

#### **EXT. DUQUESNE CLUB ENTRANCE - EVENING**

EMMA and JAY exit the carriage and walk under the red awning. A doorman greets them, opens the tall wood doors, and nods hello. Emma so thrilled and nervous. The Duquesne Club!

#### **INT. DUQUESNE CLUB - LOBBY, BAR ROOM - EVENING**

The elegant marble lobby lit by beautiful chandeliers. They enter the bar room, ringed with rich dark woods, elegant furniture, vaulted cathedral ceilings, and beautiful moldings. Piano and violin music plays. She's here!

JAY greets well-dressed members as they move through the room and arrive at an elegant long ornate oak bar.

JAY  
What can I get you?

EMMA  
A Tom Collins. Thank you.

JAY  
(calls for the bartender)  
Raymond! Good man! A Tom Collins  
and a Manhattan, two cherries.  
(Then to Emma)  
What do you think so far?

EMMA  
(looks around)  
This is something.  
I have to say, I'm a bit...

JAY  
A bit?

EMMA  
Nervous. This is, a lot different.  
Not like the lake.

JAY  
Maybe you feel like a fish out of  
water here. But a lot of the  
members here grew up in towns like  
Johnstown, even smaller.  
Mr. Knox, our club attorney, is  
from a tiny burg called  
Brownsville.  
Mr. Horne's family grew up on a  
farm.

EMMA  
Maybe so, but...

JAY  
Even the famous Mr. Carnegie was a  
penniless 13 year-old Scottish  
immigrant when he arrived in  
Pittsburgh. True story.

Drinks arrive. Jay raises his glass in a toast.

JAY (CONT.) (CONT'D)  
Please, relax. But just in case,  
a few of these should help.

Emma smiles. They clink glasses. Elegantly dressed and beautiful 24 yo MILDRED CHAMBERS and 24 yo LORETTA MUELLER walk over. Jay greets them.

JAY (CONT'D)

Emma, please meet Miss Mildred Chambers and Miss Loretta Mueller, both from Pittsburgh. And ladies, this is Miss Emma Hart, from Johnstown.

EMMA

A pleasure to meet you both.

MILDRED

Charmed. You're from Johnstown? I've heard it's a delightful town.

EMMA

It has its own, charms, I guess.

LORETTA

I'm sure it does. Mildred we must visit sometime.

EMMA

I'd be happy to show you around.

MILDRED

We'll plan on it.  
Well, we must mingle.  
It was a pleasure meeting you.  
Please enjoy your stay. I'm sure  
Jay will take good care of you.

The women walk away, talking to themselves, giggling. Emma thinks them odd, their condescending tone.

Club members ANDREW MELLON, DURBIN HORNE and JAMES CHAMBERS approach. Jay greets them warmly. Emma is a bit star struck.

JAY

Emma, this is Mr. Andrew Mellon, Mr. James Chambers, and Mr. Durbin Horne.  
Gentlemen, please meet my friend, Miss Emma Hart from Johnstown. Last summer, she was a singer at the Club...

MELLON

Of course we remember Miss Hart.  
You have a memorable voice.

EMMA

Thank you. I appreciate that.

CHAMBERS

Welcome to our Club here Miss Hart.

EMMA

Thank you. It's so beautiful.

MELLON

Thank you. Can I ask, Miss Hart. Being from Johnstown, I've often wondered, how do the folks there feel about our South Fork club at the lake? Are there any, strong opinions?

EMMA

I think people are kind of proud that the, the financial titans of Pittsburgh, choose to summer in our lovely Cambria County.

CHAMBERS

Financial titans? I like that. I heard we're called the big bosses. Or worse.

HORNE

I'm glad to hear that too. That lake is so peaceful. So beautiful.

EMMA

But people do talk about one thing.

CHAMBERS

What's that Miss Hart?

EMMA

Every year after some heavy rains, rumors start that the dam's going to break. People knows it's an old dam. That does worry some people.

CHAMBERS

I assure you, we'll work to make sure that the dam is safe and secure. Our man up there, Colonel Unger, keeps a close eye on things.

EMMA

I know the Colonel very well. I'm glad to hear that.

HORNE

(after a beat)

Well I'll just come out and ask.  
Miss Hart. Would you mind, singing  
a song? Just one song.

This surprises Emma but she smiles. Jay smiles, nods as well.

EMMA

Not at all. It'd be my pleasure.

The men smile. Mr. Mellon escorts Emma to the piano. After a conversation there, he RINGS A BELL sitting on the piano.

MELLON

Ladies and Gentlemen.  
Can I have your attention please.  
We have a very special guest.  
Miss Emma Hart from Johnstown.  
She sang at the lake clubhouse last  
summer and was so wonderful.  
And, she has graciously agreed to  
sing a song this evening.  
Miss Hart.

After some light applause, Emma begins the moving Civil War ballad "Aura Lee". The crowd quiets even more as she continues. Her voice so captivating. A wonderful performance. When she finishes, CLAPPING and CHEERS.

HORNE

My goodness, that was wonderful.

CHAMBERS

"Aura Lee" is a favorite from the  
war years. Thank you dear.

EMMA

It's such an honor to sing here.

JAY

I think everyone wants to get you a  
drink. What do you want?

EMMA

Another Tom Collins. But I need to  
use the ladies' room first.

Jay provides her with directions. Emma exits the room.

**INT. DUQUESNE CLUB - LADIES BATHROOM - EVENING**

EMMA sits in a stall, starts to stand, ready to leave. The bathroom door swings opens, MILDRED CHAMBERS and LORETTA MUELLER enter, talking loudly. They're both a bit drunk.

MILDRED

Jay's new girl is quite the singer.  
I remember her from last summer.

Emma quietly sits back down, pulls her legs up off the floor.

Loretta hushes Mildred. She looks under the stall doors. No one with them in the bathroom (she thinks). Both turn to the mirror, begin to apply makeup.

LORETTA (CONT.)

Yes she is quite the singer. Lloyd told me Jay saw her one night and fell so hard he visited her the very next day. In Johnstown.

MILDRED

In Johnstown? Really? Well you do need a good reason to visit that dump of a town. What's even there?

LORETTA

(stops, thinking, a beat)  
I think that big horseshoe railroad curve is near there.  
I don't know. And I don't care.  
I'm never going there.

MILDRED

Speaking of curves, Jay's got the kind of curves he likes tonight.

As she listens, Emma becomes more and more angry.

LORETTA

Get this. I was talking to Philo. Jay told him about her visiting this weekend.

MILDRED

What'd he say? Do tell.

LORETTA

He told Philo,  
Got to close the book on this girl.  
Worked on her last summer.  
But didn't get too far.  
Finally got her to visit.

(MORE)

LORETTA (CONT'D)  
 I need to get her notch on my belt.  
 And this one, this small town  
 bumpkin, she'll be so easy.

MILDRED  
 He's such a scoundrel!

Both laughing. Emma comes out of the stall.

EMMA  
 Actually ladies...

They jump. Both have "OH SHIT" looks on their faces.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
 The railroad horseshoe curve is  
 near Altoona. Not Johnstown.

Emma calmly steps to the mirror, washes her hands. Turns to leave. Both still speechless. Until Loretta speaks up.

LORETTA  
 Hey Johnstown.

Emma stops. Turns. Gives Loretta an icy, nasty stare.

LORETTA (CONT.) (CONT'D)  
 I'm sorry you heard that.  
 You seem like a nice girl.

EMMA  
 Yeah. Maybe so. I'm just mad I  
 found out about this,  
 from you two drunk ass bitches.

# **INT. DUQUESNE CLUB - BAR ROOM - EVENING**

EMMA walks back into the bar room. Walks up to JAY as he chats with others. She's flustered, angry.

EMMA  
 I need to go. I'm not feeling well.

JAY  
 What? Really? What's wrong?

EMMA  
 I'm leaving.

JAY  
 Did something happen? What?



Emma turns to walk away from him. An embarrassed Jay excuses himself. Follows her out of the lounge.

**INT. DUQUESNE CLUB - LOBBY - EVENING**

EMMA in the lobby, not sure where to go. JAY reaches her.

JAY

What happened? Are you OK?

EMMA

(some tears, angry)

You're a fucking ass. A liar!

JAY

(shocked)

What?

EMMA

I heard your friends in the bathroom talking about me.

JAY

Who? What? What did you hear?

EMMA

Those two twits we met. They said they heard you talking to one of your friends. About my visit this weekend. And how I was going to be easy. Another notch on your belt.

JAY

Oh Christ. They said that! No, I didn't mean that! I might've been kidding, bragging to my friends. Being a clown. It means nothing. It's bullshit with the guys...

EMMA

Bragging about how you're going to bed me this weekend?  
The dumb small town bumpkin?

JAY

You have to believe me.

EMMA

Why should I believe you? All that time at the lake, the letters. The gushing over me. How talented I was, how beautiful.

(MORE)

EMMA (CONT'D)

All lies, to get me here. To your royal court, then get me into bed...

JAY

I'm serious. I don't know any other way to say it. I meant everything I said about you in those letters.

EMMA

You're nothing but a liar.  
And I'm nothing but a fool.  
An idiot. Now, get me out of here.  
I want to be on the next train to Johnstown. Got it?

Emma pushes past him, exits out the front door of the Club.

**INT. ON THE PULLMAN CAR HEADED BACK TO JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

EMMA'S head's pressed against the train window. She wipes her eyes. Tears start to flow.

An OLDER GENTLEMAN sits next to her, sees this. Gently pokes her. Passes her a handkerchief. He is distinguished, handsome, with grey hair and blue eyes. He smiles.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

Don't worry, it's clean.

Emma smiles at him. Wipes her tears away.

OLDER GENTLEMEN (CONT'D)

I don't mean to pry. But is everything alright?

EMMA

Not really.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

We have a few hours on this train.  
And I can be a sympathetic ear.  
Where are you headed?

EMMA

Johnstown. You?

OLDER GENTLEMEN

A little further. Philadelphia.  
Can I ask, why such a beautiful young lady like yourself is so sad.

EMMA

I. I don't know where to start.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

What were you doing in Pittsburgh?

EMMA

To visit a friend. Or what I thought was a friend.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

Things didn't turn out well?

EMMA

They didn't. It's that, I was hoping. He maybe, cared for me.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

Now that's over?

EMMA

Yes. It's over. Now its back to where I'm from.  
My dead end life as a secretary in a dirty mill town. Taking care of my Mom and brother.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

Does your father work?

EMMA

My dad died last year, in an accident at the mill.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

I'm so sorry to hear that. And you're the only one making a living?

EMMA

My Mom does some sewing at home, but it's not a lot. And my brother's still in school.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

Can I ask. What happened in Pittsburgh?

EMMA

Last year, I met this, this gentleman, while singing...

OLDER GENTLEMEN

You're a singer?

EMMA

Yes. Last summer I sang at a club  
on a lake near where I live. The  
richest people of Pittsburgh are in  
the club. The South Fork Club.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

I've heard of that club.

EMMA

We saw each other a few times.  
But he lives in Pittsburgh.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

And he wanted you to visit.

EMMA

He kept in touch, wrote me sweet  
letters, wanting me to visit. But I  
could never seem to get away, until  
this past weekend.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

This man, is wealthy?

EMMA

Yes. Very.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

And you were hoping that maybe,  
this young man and yourself...  
But something happened.

EMMA

Turns out he made it up. His love  
for me, whatever. I was just  
someone to toy with.

(more emotionally)

How stupid for me to think that  
anything would happen? With me?  
Some small town nobody.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

I could see why a young man might  
fall for you.

EMMA

He wrote me these letters.  
It seemed like he wanted me in his  
life. I was so excited to see him.  
And finally, I could make it.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

And...

EMMA

(more tears)

You have to understand.  
I daydreamed about this visit.  
For months.  
Of how it would go. Of how it  
might, change my life.  
But. But that, that hope, those  
dreams, are gone.  
My future. My dreams. I'm just.  
Sick. Crushed. I'm...my life, is  
suddenly, so dark.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

But dear, it can't all be dark?

EMMA

My dreams. What I hoped would  
happen. That's gone dark.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

Your dreams shouldn't grow dark.  
They're what moves us forward.  
Why we live and press on.  
In the worst times.  
What do you want?  
What is your dream? Right now.

EMMA

I want to be a singer.  
Make a living as a singer.  
And sing on stages in big cities.

OLDER GENTLEMEN

(slowly, intently)

If you truly want that,  
then don't give up dear.  
You're so young.  
Just starting your life.  
Keep that dream,  
Keep that light alive. Always.  
It will keep moving you forward.

EMMA

I don't see how it can happen. I  
just don't anymore...

Emma, teary eyed, leans in. He puts his arm around her.

#### **EXT. JOHNSTOWN TRAIN STATION - DAY**

EMMA gets her bag out of the side compartment. The train  
pulls away. VICTOR approaches. She was not expecting him.

VICTOR  
Charlie told me you were coming  
back a day early.  
Asked if I could meet you.  
Was there a change in plans?

Victor picks up her bag, and they start walking. Emma  
irritated, not looking at him.

EMMA  
Things didn't work out.

VICTOR  
Can I ask...

EMMA  
I don't want to talk about it.

VICTOR  
Can you stop for a minute.

Emma stops, sternly turns to him. Victor sighs. Looks around.

EMMA  
(a beat)  
Do you have something to say?

VICTOR  
I knew he was no good for you.

Emma turns away and starts walking.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
Wait. Please.

Emma stops again. With a "what now?" look on her face.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
This. This is hard for me to say.  
But. I. I adore you.  
And have for years. I think you  
know that.

Emma stares at him.

VICTOR (CONT'D)  
And I was so angry, and so upset  
that you wanted to see that guy.  
I couldn't eat, couldn't sleep.  
I was heartbroken.

EMMA  
Alright.

VICTOR

Look. I know you want to get away from here. Start somewhere else, with your singing...

EMMA

(sternly)

And I know your future is here, with your parents, and the store...

VICTOR

I'm not so sure about that anymore. I wanted to talk to you about that, and some other things.

EMMA

(a loud sigh, angry)

Christ. You know what. My life is so messed up. Living in this god damn... No way out. I don't want to talk about this. Or anything. I want to go home.

Emma storms away. Victor, shocked at her outburst, follows behind, carrying her bag. He says nothing more to her.

**INT. HART HOME JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

EMMA enters the front room with her bag. She takes a deep breath, and drops the bag on the floor. RUTH walks in.

RUTH

You're home? I thought you were coming back tomorrow.

EMMA

I thought Charlie would tell you. I needed to come back early.

RUTH

Everything OK with Dottie?

EMMA

Mom. I didn't tell you the truth, about my trip. I didn't visit her.

RUTH

Really? What did you do?

EMMA

I visited that gentleman I met at the lake last summer, Jay Phipps.

RUTH  
Why didn't you tell me.

EMMA  
I don't know. I wasn't sure about  
the whole thing.

RUTH  
What happened?

EMMA  
I thought he liked me. Wanted me  
to visit. I thought, there might be  
something there. With him. A  
future. I believed it.

RUTH  
And?

EMMA  
I don't want to talk about it right  
now. Alright?

RUTH  
That's fine. I understand.

Emma starts to tear up.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
Honey, what's wrong.

Emma moves in to hug her Mom. They embrace.

EMMA  
I thought this my chance. If  
Something would happen with him.  
Maybe. And maybe, I could start  
there, with a singing career.

RUTH  
I know you want to sing. I do.

EMMA  
People tell me I'm good. Really  
good. But, I don't feel like  
there's any way I can, I can do  
that...

RUTH  
Remember, I was like you in a way.  
At your age. Very good at art in  
school. Oil painting. Won awards.  
I thought that was my future.



EMMA

I know.

RUTH

Then I met your father.  
And he worked here.  
At the mill.  
And we fell in love.  
And we started a family.  
You and Charlie.  
And I wouldn't change anything  
about what happened.

EMMA

But you put your dreams aside. To  
be an artist. I'm not ready to do  
that yet. Not yet.

RUTH

One thing I've learned.  
Life is not how we plan it.  
Unexpected events happen, something  
you never ever even thought about.  
Out of the blue.  
Just keep an open mind.  
You never know what the next day  
might bring.

Emma leans in and hugs her Mom. Tears in her eyes.

**INT. VICTOR HEISER'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

VICTOR lays in his bed, again, tossing and turning. Again.  
He is dreaming. About the dam, again.

A powerful wave of water 50 feet high approaches a town. The  
people run but the waters destroy the town and swamp the  
people. He sees a train car crushed by the waters. People in  
the windows screaming.

The waters coming at him, rising over his head. He hears  
Emma's voice crying out. The water about to crash down.

Victor, sits up in bed, wide awake. He pounds the bed. So  
angry! Why does he keep having these dreams!

**EXT. JOHNSTOWN STREETS - DAY**

A tired VICTOR walks downtown. A grey day. Rain's in the  
forecast. A chill in the air.

The TOWN CRAZY MAN, a haggard man in his 50s, blue eyes, long white hair, YELLING about something nuts, usually the end of the world. Victor tries to walk by him. Everyone does. But the guy GRABS HIM by the shirt. Stares at him hard.

VICTOR  
Hey! Let go of me!

TOWN CRAZY MAN  
You havin' nightmares boy?

VICTOR  
What? No? Let go of me.

TOWN CRAZY MAN  
Yeah. About the dam at the lake.

VICTOR  
What?

TOWN CRAZY MAN  
(leans in, spookily)  
I can see it in your eyes boy.  
You know what's comin. And it's  
comin' soon. Part of the End Times.  
Read this.  
(hands him a flyer)

VICTOR  
The End Times?

TOWN CRAZY MAN  
Do you know about the Seven Seals  
in the Book of Revelation?  
One of the Seals is about plagues  
and floods.  
And I know that Seal is to be  
broken here. In this valley.  
With a powerful flood.

VICTOR  
What do you mean, broken?

TOWN CRAZY MAN  
(suddenly agitated)  
By the flood coming!  
And I'm having the visions too boy.  
In my dreams.  
Same as you. Wild, wild! Right?  
Read the flyer boy. Read the flyer!  
It's coming soon! Soon!

The TOWN CRAZY MAN suddenly walks away. Victor looks at the flyer: The dam breaks. Opening the Seven Seals. The start of the End Times. The flyer ends with Scripture: Matthew 7:27.

*"The rain fell, and the floods  
came, and the winds blew and  
slammed against that house; and it  
fell, and great was it's fall."*

**EXT. SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE PORCH - DAY**

VICTOR walks toward the Clubhouse. As he gets closer, he spots someone on the porch, JOHN PARKE. He is smoking.

VICTOR

Strange to see a new face up here.  
My name's Victor Heiser, I work at  
the boathouse.

PARKE

(shakes his hand)  
John Parke, I'm an engineer,  
started a few months ago.

VICTOR

Are you working on the dam?

PARKE

(smiles, takes a puff on  
his cigarette)  
You're about the tenth person to  
ask me that. No. I'm working on  
the septic system up here.  
Getting rid of that monstrosity for  
one thing.  
(he points at the two-  
story outhouse)  
You've been here for awhile?

VICTOR

A few years. I work in the spring  
and summer for the Colonel, getting  
the boats ready for the club  
members. I'm on the lake a lot.

PARKE

So, what do you think about the  
dam?

VICTOR

Since you asked. First, it leaks,  
and they patch it every spring.

(MORE)

VICTOR (CONT'D)

They need to build it up more.  
There's only one spillway for this  
huge lake. They need another one.

PARKE

I've heard some of the same things.  
I brought up the dam a few times  
with the Colonel. He told me not  
to worry about it. And the last  
time I did, he got so angry. So,  
I stopped asking.

VICTOR

Really?

PARKE

Unger and others believe an article  
they read in the Johnstown paper  
about the dam. And what would  
happen if it broke.

VICTOR

What did it say?

PARKE

That if the dam failed, the lake  
waters would disperse through the  
valley, into the creeks and  
streams. Not a huge disaster.

VICTOR

People believe that. It's fifteen  
miles from here to Johnstown. Quite  
a ways.

PARKE

Yeah. True. But.  
This lake sits higher than the  
valley. And Johnstown.  
And, there's at least twenty  
million tons of water in there.  
If the dam broke, all that water  
would burst out into the valley.  
Heading downhill. For miles.  
That would be some immense power.

(a beat)

I think it would be far worse,  
than one bad day of flooding.

VICTOR

Damn. Never thought of it that way.

Parke nods, smiles. Takes a long puff on his cigarette.

Super:

Thursday May 30

**The Day Before The Flood**

**INT. SMALL SHANTY ON LITTLE CONEMAUGH RIVER - NIGHT**

The TOWN CRAZY MAN having bad dreams. Suddenly he CRIES OUT in terror. Stumbles out of his bed. Heads outside, looks at the creek waters. Some darkening clouds, winds picking up, some thunder, but nothing's wrong. Goes back inside.

**EXT. SANDYVALE CEMETERY - MORNING**

Union Army Veterans wearing their dress blue Civil War uniforms march towards Sandyvale Cemetery. The town's fallen Revolutionary War and Civil War veterans are buried in this cemetery. Many people of the town marching as well.

Today is Decoration Day, to honor fallen veterans. Later this day would be renamed Memorial Day.

EMMA and CHARLIE marching. Further back, is VICTOR. The parade enters the cemetery led by the Union Army veterans.

When the Union Army soldiers reach a veteran's tombstone, they salute, bow for a moment, then lay a wreath on a stand by the tombstone. Then move to the next tombstone.

Above them, the SKY DARKENS. Dark black clouds have been coming from the west all day. LIGHTNING FLASHES, THUNDER RUMBLES in the distance. The WIND picks up. Rain starts.

Victor walks up to Emma and Charlie as they view a new wreath placed at a tombstone. The tombstone reads:

*William Henry Hart  
54th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment  
Company E  
August 23, 1844 - May 15, 1864*

Victor greets them and they turn and greet him. Rain comes down a bit harder.

VICTOR

Who's this?

EMMA

Our father's brother, Billy Hart.  
He served in the 54th.  
Fell at the Battle of New Market in  
Virginia. Just 19 years old.

VICTOR

Right. I remember you telling me  
about him. Damn. So young.

EMMA

My dad missed him so much.  
The baby of the family.  
Called him My Little Billy.  
It broke his heart.

VICTOR

I'm so sorry.  
Hopefully they're together now.  
(a beat)  
Can we talk for a moment?

After Emma finishes her prayer, they find a tree to get  
under, as the rain comes down harder. Victor turns to her,  
nervously.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry about the whole Jay  
Phipps thing. How I reacted about  
it all.  
I know he really hurt you. Badly.

And, I know what you were hoping  
for with him. What might happen.  
Maybe your chance to get away from  
here, start a new life.

I can't blame you, for wanting  
that. I can't.

Emma smiles at him. CHARLIE runs over to them.

CHARLIE

We should go. This storm, it's  
getting worse. Someone said we  
could get record rains. Tornadoes.

EMMA

(Turns to Victor)

My Mom's making some apple pies  
this weekend. Why not stop by on  
Sunday. We can talk some more.  
Alright?

VICTOR

Alright. OK. Sunday. See you on  
Sunday. Sounds good.

EMMA  
(Smiling)  
See you on Sunday.

Emma leans in and hugs Victor. And then they exit the cemetery quickly, along with the rest of the people.

Victor has a big smile. As he walks slowly, he's getting drenched. He doesn't care. He can't wait til Sunday!

**INT. VICTOR HEISER'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

VICTOR in bed, the rain pouring down so hard. He hears something odd, like a voice, walks to the window. Standing in the rain in the street below him, the TOWN CRAZY MAN. Staring right at him. Victor is horrified.

The Man's eyes roll up into his head and he starts moving his mouth in a creepy way. Victor spookily hears him talking.

CRAZY OLD MAN  
Listen boy.  
Today is the Day.  
Today is the Day of the Flood.  
The Beginning Of The End Times.  
Like I told you.  
The Lord's Will be done.

The Man then turns and walks into the rain. Vanishes.

Victor wakes up. That dream so real. He goes to the window. Nothing outside but the flooded streets and pounding rain. Am I going crazy? What's happening? Today is the Day?

**INT. HART HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Super: **The Day Of The Flood**

**8:30 A.M.**

EMMA puts on her raincoat. Sips her tea. CHARLIE enters. Groggy, sleepy, stares out a window. They exchange greetings.

EMMA  
School's closed. I heard the bells.

CHARLIE  
This stupid town's flooded. Again.  
You going to work?

EMMA

Yep. One reason Charlie. It's pay day. I'm used to walking in the rain.

Suddenly, the front door bursts open. VICTOR tumbles in, drenched. Soaked. Out of breath.

EMMA (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

VICTOR

(Excited, talking fast)

Listen to me. Both of you. I've been having dreams. Horrible dreams about the dam breaking. So real, so vivid. And then I ran into the crazy guy downtown. And he said, I know you're having the dreams boy...

EMMA

Just slow down. What are you talking about?

VICTOR

The crazy man tells me he's having the dreams too. About the dam breaking. Says it means the end of the world. Anyway, last night, I saw him in a dream, talking to me. And he said, today was the day. Today is the day of the flood!

CHARLIE

The flood? C'mon. It's another rainy day.

VICTOR

No. This is different. I'm telling you. Please stay home Emma. Don't go to work. And both of you and your Mom. Get to higher ground. Maybe up to Green Hill or...

EMMA

Mister Heiser. I am going to work and getting my paycheck. Then I'll be back here. And like I told you. Come back over here on Sunday. Maybe in some dryer clothes.

Emma leans in and hugs Charlie. And then hugs Victor.



EMMA (CONT'D)  
 If I see the crazy man, I'll tell  
 him you said hello. Although, I'm  
 not sure who's more crazy anymore.

She smiles, and exits out the door. Victor turns to Charlie.

VICTOR  
 I'm telling you. This is real.

CHARLIE  
 Come on. Is this some ploy, or  
 something about Emma. If it is...

VICTOR  
 No, it's not!

CHARLIE  
 Are you going to higher ground  
 today? What about your parents?

VICTOR  
 They. They told me not to worry.  
 They hear about the dam breaking  
 all the time. And nothing happens.

CHARLIE  
 OK. They're staying. Are you?

VICTOR  
 Christ. I don't know.

CHARLIE  
 Go home. I'll see you on Sunday.

Victor hugs him. Heads out the door.

**EXT. SOUTH FORK DAM - MORNING\***

**Super: 10:00 AM**

TORRENTS OF RAIN pour down. Water starts to flood onto the  
 dam road. Men working to dump tree stumps, dirt, anything  
 off wagons onto the road, trying to halt the waters.

UNGER on horseback, crisscrosses the dam road, back and  
 forth, screaming at the men to do more.

Unger sees PARKE and men working on the spillway using long  
 rods, picks, axes. But there's no water getting to the  
 spillway. He gets off his horse. Walks up to Parke.

UNGER

What's going on? Why isn't the spillway working?

PARKE

We can't get the screens cleared Colonel. The lake just pushes stumps, logs, brush, anything floating into them. Faster than we can clear it.

UNGER

Get those cleared. You hear me. Get more men on it if you have to.

A stout bearded man, 32 yo JOHN BUCANNON, approaches. Walks up to Unger. Gets in his face. Parke steps back, watches.

BUCANNON

You're the Colonel right?

UNGER

What do you want.

SHOWERS

I'm John Buchanan from South Fork. There's no water getting to the spillway. The fish screens you have under the bridges are clogged with too much shit. You need to...

UNGER

I don't have time for this.

BUCANNON

The fish screens are attached to the bridges. If you can't clear the screens, then you have to tear down the bridges...

UNGER

Get the hell out of here.

Unger steps away from him. Bucannon follows him briefly. Yelling at him. Pointing.

BUCANNON

People may die if this dam breaks. To save a bunch of fucking fish. FISH! GODDAMN IT! TEAR DOWN the bridges! You'll have blood on your hands.

Bucannon finally relents and leaves. Parke approaches the Colonel.

PARKE

We have to get the spillway  
working. It's our only chance.  
We can't get the screens cleared.  
It's too much debris.  
It makes the most sense to remove  
the bridges and...

UNGER

Parke! I have no intention of  
tearing down two bridges that the  
Club just built a few years ago.

PARKE

But Colonel...

UNGER

Enough! No more excuses!  
Get those screens cleared.  
Get this spillway working!

With that, Unger exits. Parke shakes his head, he's crazy.

**INT. HART HOME - DAY**

Super:

**12:15 P.M.**

CHARLIE plays his guitar. The front door opens. EMMA enters.  
Shakes off the rain. Hangs her coat on the coat rack.

CHARLIE

Home already?

EMMA

They let us out early. What  
happened with Victor?

CHARLIE

He left right after you. Still  
upset.

EMMA

I guess those dreams got to him.  
But anyway.

(Holds up her check.)

I got my check, so I guess the  
crazy man got it wrong about today.  
So far, at least.

**EXT. SOUTH FORK DAM - DAY**

Super: 1:30 P.M.

A fifty foot waterfall pours over the dam. The workmen stand by, staring. Their axes, tools, sit on the ground, useless.

UNGER stares at this scene. Terrified.

PEOPLE from South Fork have gathered by the dam. Staring. Stunned. Watching, waiting. It's just a matter of time.

**EXT. PORCH OF ANNA FENN HOME IN JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

Super: 2:00 P.M.

ANNA FENN holds her BABY DAUGHTER. Her next door neighbor BELLE WATERS comes out on her porch. They exchange hellos. The flood waters up to their porches.

BELLE

When John gets back, can you have him stop by? We could use his help moving some furniture upstairs.

ANNA

Sure, I'll let him know. He's helping out at his mom's place.

Five year old GINNY FENN comes out on the porch.

GINNY

You comin' in soon Mom?

ANNA

Yes Ginny. Go back inside.  
(turns to Belle)  
I better get back in.  
Lord it's been collie shangles all day. Six bored kids and this baby, stuck together upstairs.

BELLE

I don't know how you do it.  
God bless. See you soon.

**EXT. SOUTH FORK DAM - DAY**

Super: 3:00 P.M.

The WATERFALL pouring over the dam is one hundred feet wide and growing. PARKE and UNGER stare, helplessly.

PARKE

A lot of people here.  
I guess you don't see something  
like this every day.

(a beat)

What do you think Colonel?  
What's goin' to happen?  
After the dam breaks.

UNGER

(trembling voice)

I think, I think the water'll  
spread out, disperse in the valley.  
That's what the paper said would  
happen. Why, what do you think?

PARKE

(A beat)

I disagree Colonel.  
I think when this dam fails.  
And twenty million tons of water  
pours into this valley of towns.  
Headed downhill.  
It's going to be.

(a beat)

The most Awful Force  
Of The Creator.

Screen goes BLACK and SILENT.

Super: **Friday May 31, 1889**

**Lake Conemaugh, Pennsylvania**

**3:10 P.M.**

A THUNDEROUS EXPLOSION OF NOISE.

The bloated lake BLASTS through the dam. The crowd erupts in SCREAMS. Water GUSHING OUT AT TREE-TOP LEVEL, plunging, pouring into the valley. Tons and tons of water.

UNGER founders, holds his chest, falls to his knees moaning "OH GOD, OH GOD". PARKE tries to hold him up.

**EXT. LITTLE CONEMAUGH RIVER AND RAILROAD BRIDGE - DAY\***

LOUD THUNDEROUS ROAR as twenty million tons of water devours and crushes the landscape in the valley. A RAGING, POUNDING wall of water.

Tears up railroad tracks. Shreds huge trees like dead twigs. Crushes any structure in its path.

HOWLING WINDS. Fast moving flood waters reach 70 FOOT HIGH in steep areas of the valley.

The flood wave smashes into an 80-FOOT HIGH STONE RAILROAD BRIDGE. Debris jams the huge arch of the bridge stopping the water. A new dam forms a new lake. Briefly.

But the water's strength builds in force and power. The huge stone bridge creaks as it strains to hold back the mounting weight of the water. Huge cracks begin to appear. Then the bridge EXPLODES in a heap as the flood wave punches through it with even more force.

**EXT. - EAST CONEMAUGH RAIL YARD - DAY\***

Super: **East Conemaugh Rail Yard**

A locomotive moves in reverse. TRAIN WHISTLE blowing nonstop. The train stops. Men jump off, run. The dark wall approaches.

**EXT. - EAST CONEMAUGH RAIL YARD - DAY\***

TWO PASSENGER TRAINS sit on parallel tracks. Both have been sitting here for hours due to the flooding.

A Pullman passenger car on the higher tracks.

Another train with a passenger car on the lower tracks is closer to the oncoming flood. Which is coming fast.

The flood wave SMASHES the train and passenger car on the lower tracks, people trapped inside the car screaming in HORROR. They're killed instantly. Swamped.

The people in the Pullman on the higher tracks, see this awful sight. Begin sobbing, praying. They are NEXT TO DIE.

But, they are saved. The Pullman is partially flooded and pushed down the tracks. But they survive. The passengers weeping, thanking the Lord.

**EXT. WOODVALE - DAY\***

Super: **Woodvale**

A ROAR grows in the distance. A BLACK MISTY ALIEN WALL approaches the town fast People see it and panic.

The wave hits like a SLEDGE HAMMER. A straight shot to the town through the valley, no valley twists and turns. Block after block flattened instantly.

So much HORROR. A group of people trying to run, crushed under a rail car. Over 90 horses drown in a downtown stable. People trying to outrun it, swamped. Drowned.

After the flood devastates Woodvale, the waters slam into the massive Gautier Barb Wire factory west of town. Huge geysers of steam. The boilers EXPLODE in a thunderous ROAR. Huge spouts of water shoot HUNDREDS OF FEET INTO THE AIR. Barb wire which will shred victims is now part of the flood waters.

**EXT. AREA ON CREEK RIGHT BEFORE SOUTH FORK - DAY**

The CRAZY MAN steps outside his shanty. Turns to see a 40 foot high wall of DARK WATER APPROACHING FAST.

At first he shakes in fear. Cries Out. "Oh My God!". Then he takes a deep breath. He smiles. Makes the Sign Of The Cross.

Closes his eyes. Looks up. Screams "I AM COMING HOME LORD!"

**EXT. JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

Super:                               **Johnstown, Pennsylvania**

**4:05 P.M.**

**INT. HEISER HOME (OVER THEIR DRY GOODS STORE) - DAY**

GEORGE HEISER and his wife MATTIE look out a window. The pounding rains have slowed. The sky's brightening some.

MATTIE

Maybe the worst's over. The sun's even coming out.

GEORGE HEISER

Shhhh, do you hear that? Look.

He points to an alien misty dark mass approaching from the east in the distance. A rumbling ROAR grows. Getting louder.

**INT. HART HOME RUTH'S SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM - DAY**

CHARLIE strums his guitar. His mom RUTH laying in bed enjoying it, smiling. He stops.

CHARLIE

Looks like the rain's slowing down. And the sun's coming out.

RUTH  
Finally. And you know...

Suddenly EMMA bursts into the room. Runs to the window.

EMMA  
Look out here. In the distance.

Charlie and Ruth head to the window. Emma points to a black wall of mist coming closer. Below them in the street, chaos, people running about. Shouting. Bells start ringing. Sirens.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
It's a flood wave. The dam must  
have broke. We've got to go.

They scramble downstairs out to the front porch. But the flood wave coming too fast. Emma sees others on their roofs.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
Get back inside! Get on the roof!

They head back into the house, rush up stairs. Her Mom trips, stumbles. Emma turns and goes back down to help her. HOWLING WINDS. The ROAR of waters grows LOUDER. SMASHING SOUNDS.

They're on the second floor as a LOUD WAVE of water BLASTS through the windows. The house CRUSHED, FLOODED. All three tossed into the powerful WATERS. Struggling. Flailing.

Moments later, CHARLIE surfaces on a telegraph pole, spitting up water. His head bleeding. EMMA hanging onto a roof timber. Their mom RUTH barely hanging on to a piece of wall frame.

The waters push them out into a crowded debris field. Buildings JAM into each other.

Emma tries to get to her Mom. Suddenly, a large section of a building near her collides with another.

The building CRASHES DOWN on her Mom. Emma barely survives. But her Mom is swamped under the structure, gone.

Emma screams "MAMA" "MAMA"... Emma swims to a more sturdy roof. Climbs on. She keeps crying out for her Mom. Then, she looks for Charlie. She sees him briefly.

Charlie hangs onto a telegraph pole that is quickly floating away. Emma watches as he disappears heading to the west in the roaring waters. At least he's alive. She hopes.

Emma safe on a sturdy roof floating in the rushing waters.



**EXT. STREETS OF JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

The wall of water SLAMS into the eastern end of town. Shattered buildings, houses, carriages, street cars pushed and crammed together.

**INT. HEISER HOME OVER HEISER DRY GOODS STORE - DAY**

GEORGE HEISER looking for Victor. MATTIE says he saw him out in the barn in the back yard. George runs to the back window. Spots VICTOR by the barn. His Dad motions GET ON THE ROOF! NOW! Victor races into the barn to get to the roof.

**EXT. HEISER BARN - DAY\***

VICTOR reaches the roof of the barn. Turns to see his PARENTS on their roof, frightened, holding each other.

The black misty wave approaches, as high as the building and PUMMELS it. CRUSHES it instantly. His parents disappear as the building collapses into the waters. He closes his eyes. Waiting to die.

The waters SLAM Victor's barn. Knocks it off its foundation. It starts SPINNING in the water. Victor almost knocked off but grabs onto a chimney pipe. He struggles to stay on.

His barn spinning, quickly sinking. He leaps onto another roof, barely making it.

He sees a family across from him in a building floating in the waters. The father tries to pack a trunk. The wife and children cling to rafters. Suddenly, the building collapses and pitches forward. All fall into the waters. SCREAMING.

**INT. ANNA FENN HOUSE, SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM - DAY\***

ANNA FENN and her CHILDREN play on the second floor. Laughing. Outside she hears, SIRENS, BELLS, YELLING. A LOUD RUMBLING. What's that racket? She goes to the window.

She sees the FLOOD WAVE CLOSING FAST. She's terrified. But she remains calm. Tells her six kids to stand with her across from the windows and hold hands. Anna hugs her baby ESTHER.

The water BLASTS through the windows. The baby ripped out of her arms. Everyone knocked about. Kids SCREAMING, THRASHING ABOUT. Water level in the room rises fast. Anna tries to save her kids. All struggling in the waters. Grabbing at her. THRASHING about. She tries to help them. The water rising.

Anna's head barely above water. Near the ceiling. She waits to drown. Then the water stops rising. She has survived. But her SEVEN CHILDREN float around her, ALL HAVE DROWNED.

**EXT. RIDING THE FLOOD WAVE - DAY\***

VICTOR hangs onto a roof in the surging flood waters. Total chaos all around. He dodges flying timbers and debris blasting out of the water like missiles.

A FREIGHT TRAIN CAR heads towards him fast. Hits a building, launches into the air. Falling towards him. He waits to die.

His roof suddenly shoots forward in the rushing waters. The train car CRASHES into the waters, just missing him. A huge spray. He opens his eyes. Alive. How?

His roof floats into open calmer water. He sees a man on a roof, half naked. PRAYING LOUDLY to GOD to save his Soul.

**INT. WATERS HOUSE ATTIC - DAY\***

GEORGE and BELLE WATERS stand with their two daughters on wide roof rafters in the attic. Belle holds their baby EVA.

The roar grows louder. The flood wave BLASTS through the windows. The house ROCKS VIOLENTLY and floods to the rafters. The two daughters knocked into the waters.

George moves towards them, holding onto a rafter. Reaches into the dark water. He can't find them. CRIES out for them. His hands thrash around. Where are they?

After a few moments, he finds two feet in the waters. With all his strength, pulls at both of the feet. And, amazingly he has grabbed BOTH daughters, one foot each. Both COUGHING, CRYING. They hold each other. Alive.

**EXT. RIDING THE FLOOD WAVE - DAY**

EMMA's roof drifts in the debris field. Jammed up buildings, smoke, people screaming for help. Dead horses in the waters.

Emma spots THREE CHILDREN on a portion of a roof. CRYING OUT, scared. Their roof sinking fast. They float closer. She needs to help them. Not much time.

Emma finds a LONG TIMBER in the waters. Emma CRIES out to them. They see her. Wave at her.

EMMA

Hey! Hey kids! Grab onto this!

As they get closer, Emma holds out the long timber. An older girl grabs for it, once, twice. Almost falls in. The third time she grabs it, holds on.

Two sisters grab the timber. Emma pulls them closer to her, using all her strength. Almost falls in herself.

They're close enough that she can help them onto her more sturdy floating roof. An older girl holds her brother. He's CRYING in pain. His leg twisted at an odd angle. Badly injured. Finally all safely on Emma's roof.

The youngest girl holds a SMALL DOG. She shivers, CRYING. Emma sits next to her. Tries to calm her down.

EMMA (CONT'D)

You're OK sweetie. You're OK.  
Do you know what happened to your  
Mom and Dad?

YOUNG GIRL

I don't know. I don't know.

EMMA

OK. We'll look for them.  
(a beat)  
What's your doggie's name?

YOUNG GIRL

Hazel. She barked at us when the  
waters were coming. And we were  
able to get on the roof.

EMMA

Well. Hazel's a little hero dog  
isn't she? And I bet she's glad  
you're here. To keep her warm.

The girl stops crying. Smiles at Emma. She hugs her little dog. Emma hugs her tight.

#### **EXT. CAMBRIA IRON, SCENES OF JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

Powerful waters SLAM into the Cambria Iron plant. CRUSHES its smaller outer buildings. Tall smokestacks SHAKE, some tumble into the waters. Metal roofs bend and CRASH down.

The wave slams into the hillside to the west of town. The waters pushed back, forms a powerful swirling eddy.

All over: people on roof tops, in trees, some naked, on floating train cars. Some in their battered homes, floating on beds. Many crying out for help, in pain.

The waters calming. Mud, muck, debris, wrecked twisted busted up structures, corpses, dead horses. Smoke as fires burn.

Stunned crowds of people slowly walk down from hillsides around the town. They try to help the survivors as much as possible. Assisting them off roofs, or upper floors.

At the Stone Bridge, west of Johnstown, a massive debris field fed by the flood waters grows. Tons of wreckage clogs the arches, including wrecked houses with people trapped inside.

#### **EXT. RIDING THE FLOOD WATERS - DAY**

VICTOR's roof comes to a rest in the debris field near the Stone Bridge. He finds a LARGE BOARD and rafts himself to more solid but muddy ground. Gets off the board.

He stumbles and falls into the mud. Soaked, out of breath. Hands, bare feet bleeding, bruised. His clothes--torn, covered in dirt and mud. But he has amazingly survived.

#### **EXT. JOHNSTOWN, STONE BRIDGE DEBRIS FIELD - DUSK\***

Crushed structures, debris, locomotives, dead horses, barb wire jammed together in a huge debris field in front of the Stone Bridge. Over a hundred yards long.

Within the debris field, people trapped in their battered homes. Some pinned by beams. Some too injured to escape.

A MAN near the Stone Bridge looking at the wreckage, lights a CIGARETTE, tosses the match.

Immediately a HUGE FLAME catches on a pool of oil from a wrecked locomotive. The winds catch the flames. They spread quickly in the wreckage near the bridge, including crushed wood houses with people trapped inside.

People try to help the people trapped, but there's not much anyone can do. Most of those trapped are too far out of reach from those trying to help.

The FLAMES move quickly fed by winds along with the wood houses and flammable oils and debris. An inferno erupts.

People SCREAM for help. Some hurt, some trapped, pinned in their wrecked homes. The flames quickly consume structures.

Horrible BLOOD CURDLING SCREAMS of those dying.

**EXT. NEAR STONE BRIDGE - DAY\***

Hearing the cries and screams, VICTOR rushes into the debris field. Sees a YOUNG WOMAN pinned by timbers. CRYING out.

ANOTHER MAN joins Victor. Desperately, they try to pull her out. The timbers too heavy. Too jammed. They cannot free her. Flames approaching fast.

The flames and heat finally too much. Both have to abandon the effort. The woman's horrible dying SCREAMS fill the air. Victor falls to his knees, holding his ears.

Victor shakily gets to his feet. He listens for other cries for help. He hears a VOICE. Barely. He runs towards it. He recognizes the voice. It's EMMA! OH MY GOD! EMMA!

He cries out "EMMA", "EMMA" as he runs toward the voice.

**EXT. EMMA'S STRUCTURE IN THE DEBRIS FIELD - DAY**

VICTOR climbs up on some battered structures, following the voice. Spots EMMA with the three CHILDREN. Trapped by crushed structures. FIRES approaching fast.

Victor yells for help. TWO MEN run over. One has an AXE. Immediately, they start to bust through the wrecked buildings.

Tongues of fire, cinders, smoke fill the air.

The men bash a path through the structures to reach them. Victor makes his way onto the roof, hugs Emma, helps her up. The other men join him and pick up the children, and Hazel.

**EXT. MUDDY STREET NEAR STONE BRIDGE - DAY**

The GROUP stumbles out into a muddy street. Out of breath. COUGHING from the smoke.

Victor and the men tend to the kids. Putting them on a LARGE OX CART, a makeshift ambulance.

Emma waves goodbye to the children on the cart. The youngest sister jumps off the cart. Runs up, hugs Emma tightly. Thanks her. Emma hugs and kisses her.

Victor approaches Emma. She looks at him, amazed, and hugs him tightly. She whispers intensely "THANK YOU". She looks at the ox cart leaving with the children.

EMMA

Where are they taking them?

VICTOR

They set up a hospital on Adams Street. They're taking them there. What happened to you? Your Mom?

EMMA

Our house was crushed. We ended up in the water. My mom's lost. I don't know what happened to Charlie. He was floating towards the Stone Bridge the last I saw him.

VICTOR

Oh my God. I'm so sorry. How did you end up with the kids?

EMMA

They were in the waters near me. Their roof was sinking. I got get them up on my roof.

What about you? What happened? I thought you were leaving town.

VICTOR

My Mom and Dad wouldn't leave. And I couldn't go without them.

I got on our barn roof. The flood waters crushed our home, and my Mom and Dad got swamped. They are gone. Then my barn got picked up, carried away. I hung onto the roof. Got on some other roofs. Just rode it out.

EMMA

My God. I'm so sorry about your Mom and Dad.

Emma pulls him close to hug. She talks in his ear.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Let's go to that hospital. Maybe Charlie's there.

**EXT. DEVASTATED STREETS OF JOHNSTOWN - EVENING**

EMMA and VICTOR walk through the shattered town, both stunned, expressionless. Everything so unreal. Huge piles of twisted wreckage and muck in muddy pools of water. Fires burn. Mist and smoke envelops the town.

Structures crammed together, crushed, split in half. Houses on their sides, with wood beams exposed like ribs.

Dead horses. Trees stripped of bark. Chunks of twisted machinery. Train cars on their sides. Odd sights too, like an upright piano sitting in the street. Ready to play.

They see corpses, some bloated, bent into ugly shapes. A WOMAN HOLDING A BABY is covered up with a blanket.

People helping others off rooftops. Others search wreckage.

A WOMAN with a stunned wide-eyed look approaches Emma and Victor. Asks if they had seen a six year old blonde haired boy in brown pants, white shirt, "about so high". They both nod no, sorry. Deflated, she moves on to ask others.

The FLAMES at the Stone Bridge fire light the evening sky.

**INT. DUQUESNE CLUB BAR - EVENING**

JAY, PHILO, LLOYD and others at a table. Drinking. LAUGHING LOUDLY. Across the club, Philo spots MR. PHIPPS walking into the bar room. So sullen, a stunned, sad look.

PHILO

Jay. Your Dad just came in.  
Looks like he's seen a ghost.

They turn to see him. Mr. Phipps sees them. Walks over. Greeted warmly. But his sad expression shakes them.

JAY

Dad. What's wrong? You OK?

PHIPPS SR.

(stunned, monotone voice)  
We just finished a meeting.  
The South Fork board.  
We found out.  
We found out.  
The dam broke on Lake Conemaugh  
this afternoon.  
Flooded the valley down to  
Johnstown.

Jay and his friends so shocked. "Oh My God". "Christ".

JAY

What's the word? Is it bad?

PHIPPS SR.

From what we know, it's very bad.  
A group pulled a man out of the  
Conemaugh River west of town.  
That river was twice its size, and  
moving like white rapids.

The man said Johnstown was wiped  
out. The flood hit about 4:00 and  
destroyed almost the whole town.

They also saw people floating on  
wreckage, alive. But they also  
saw, many dead bodies in the  
waters. Corpses. Floating.

PHILO

Has anyone talked to Unger?

PHIPPS SR.

We can't reach him. The circuits  
are down.

Jay and his friends silent. Wide-eyed. The bar quiets. The  
word of the disaster is spreading among the members.

JAY

Dad, I knew that girl, her family,  
in Johnstown. The singer. Emma.

PHIPPS SR.

I know you did.  
Beautiful girl.  
Lovely singer.  
Pray for her son.  
And her family.  
I'll pray for them too.  
Pray for the whole town.  
(looks around the table)  
This will be in the papers in the  
morning. I have to go. Good night.

Mr. Phipps, leaves the table, walks away. Jay and his friends  
speechless. Stunned.



**EXT. ADAMS STREET SCHOOLHOUSE - EVENING**

A large crowd around the schoolhouse, now a makeshift hospital. Many people outside laid out on stretchers, many bodies covered by blankets. People WEEPING. Holding each other.

EMMA and VICTOR enter the schoolhouse. A busy chaotic scene. People lie on stretchers, on the floor. People tend to them. Loud talking. Yelling. MOANS of pain.

Emma spots the THREE CHILDREN. Walks over to the young boy, laying on a bed, sleeping. His sisters see Emma and rush up to greet and hug her. She hugs them back.

EMMA

Is your brother going to be OK?

OLDER SISTER

They had to. Had to take off his one leg, below the knee. It was mangled, twisted. It started to turn colors.

EMMA

Oh Lord. How are you doing?

OLDER SISTER

We're OK.

The younger sister brings a bag to her. Inside the bag, the LITTLE DOG HAZEL. Emma smiles.

EMMA

(to the older sister)

Any news about your parents?

OLDER SISTER

No, not yet. We let the people here know about them. They said that people are still showing up.

EMMA

OK. I'll pray for you all.

OLDER SISTER

Thank you. For everything.

Emma smiles and hugs her tight. Then hugs her younger sister. They walk around the school house, but do not find Charlie.

**EXT. PITTSBURGH UNION STATION - AFTERNOON**

A hand painted sign outside the station: "Pittsburgh Relief Committee." A large crowd lined up to donate suitcases and bags full of canned goods, tins, clothes, shoes for the relief effort. Uniformed railroad personnel load train cars with the supplies. Busy, loud, chaotic scene.

**EXT. OUTSIDE ADAMS STREET SCHOOL HOUSE - EVENING**

EMMA and VICTOR stand outside the schoolhouse. Disheveled people with stunned looks wander around. A woman CRIES out, faints, when seeing a child's body under a blanket. This shakes Emma. She turns to Victor.

EMMA

We need somewhere to stay tonight.

Victor sees people setting up large tents. They head there.

**INT. TENT NEAR THE ADAMS STREET SCHOOL HOUSE - MORNING**

Morning light shines in the tent. Inside, people starting to rise. VICTOR rolls over, sees EMMA sleeping. She looks so peaceful, so beautiful. He thinks. Holy hell. What now?

**EXT. OUTSIDE ADAMS STREET SCHOOL HOUSE - MORNING\***

EMMA and VICTOR in a large crowd outside the school house. On the top step, a group of older men stand. JOHN FULTON begins speaking. Everyone presses in to listen.

JOHN FULTON

Ladies and gentlemen, can I have your attention please. Thank you.

First, many of you know me. I'm John Fulton, the President of the Cambria Iron company. This morning, I met with many of the city's leaders. They have asked me to lead our recovery efforts. I want to inform you of our plans.

As he speaks, camera pans to the various men mentioned, and scenes of the role they play in the recovery.

First, we need to handle the deceased. Reverend Beale and Reverend Chapman will set up and manage temporary morgues.

(MORE)

## JOHN FULTON (CONT'D)

Next, Mr. Zimmerman and Mr. Johnson will work on removing dead horses and other animals. They must be incinerated, to prevent disease.

Third, Doctors Lowman and Matthews will set up temporary hospitals.

Fourth, Captain Miller will become our chief of police and deputize a force to prevent looting.

Finally, Cyrus Elder will store any monies or valuables found in the debris for safekeeping.

## MAN IN THE CROWD

What have you heard about supplies, relief? When should it arrive?

## JOHN FULTON

At least a few days. We understand relief from Pittsburgh can only reach Bolivar so far. I'm not sure of the east.

Some murmuring in the crowd. Some angry words. Rising voices.

## MAN IN THE CROWD

We know why this happened. That dam broke at the lake. That was their dam. The big bosses! They didn't take care of it. It's their fault!

## ANOTHER MAN IN THE CROWD

Anyone still up there should hang by the neck. Especially that Colonel Unger.

People start clapping and yelling in agreement. Angry voices rising. Fulton tries to calm the crowd, interrupts.

## JOHN FULTON

Please everyone, please.  
This is not helping.  
Please everyone.

The crowd finally quiets and calms.

Good people, we have been dealt a terrible blow. A horrible tragedy.

(MORE)

## JOHN FULTON (CONT'D)

But for now, we must take the reins here. For those who have lost loved ones or friends, may God's Grace be with you and may He give you strength.

But, we must carry on. The people still with us this morning are counting on us.  
God bless us on this mission.

**EXT. BOLIVAR TRAIN STATION - DAY\***

Trains rumble through the green countryside. One has a sign, "Johnstown Relief" hung on the side of many cars.

At the Bolivar station west of Johnstown, men unload boxes and crates off a train. Normal trains cannot go further due to the flood damage. The supplies are loaded onto smaller HANDCARS that can still travel the tracks.

**EXT. RAILROAD SCENES - DAY\***

American flags fly from a locomotive as it moves through the countryside. "Pittsburgh Relief Committee" signage on some cars. Another train approaches on opposite tracks. As they get closer, the train crews WAVE, CHEER each other on.

**EXT. OUTSIDE A SMALL TOWN CHURCH IN PENNSYLVANIA - DAY**

Near a church, people walk to a horse-drawn wagon, carrying bags and boxes of supplies. CHURCH BELLS RING.

**INT. COLONEL UNGER'S COTTAGE - DUSK**

Super: **June 3**

UNGER, at his desk, looks ill, haggard. His hair and beard unruly, face gaunt. He has not slept in days.

Stares out a window at the former lake--an alien expanse of mud lit by the fading sunlight. Unger perks up. He hears something. Something outside. Voices. Angry voices.

LOUD ANGRY VOICES outside getting LOUDER.

In the waning light, he spots a mob of men coming up the hill towards his cottage. Several hold TORCHES. Several with STONES. As they get closer, they start throwing the stones. A stone CRASHES through a window. Other rocks hit the door.

Unger, terrified, runs into the next room. Opens a small door to a small closet under the stairs. Pulls the door shut.

The mob SMASHES through the front door. They move into the cottage. Blood chilling voices. "MURDERER! MURDERER!" "WHERE ARE YOU COLONEL?" "YOU'RE GOING TO DIE TONIGHT".

The mob ransacks his cottage. BREAKING glass. Busting up furniture. Several go upstairs looking for him.

UNGER terrified, shaking, cowers in the dark cramped closet. Holding his breath. The voices right next to his closet. He hears, "Look in there". CRACK! The closet door yanked open. Unger closes his eyes. "There he is!"

MAN ONE

Colonel Unger. Hiding like a rat.  
Just like we expected.

Unger tries to stand, but one of the men pushes him back down. A man ties up his hands as he lies on the floor.

MAN ONE (CONT'D)

What do you want to do with him?

MAN TWO

I don't know. What do you do with  
a murderer. Hang him? Shoot him?

UNGER

I'm not a murderer! I didn't want  
this to happen. I'm innocent!

MAN ONE

Get him up.

Two men help Unger shakily get to his feet. Stands before the group of ten or twelve men around him. Visibly shaken.

MAN ONE (CONT'D)

Make your case Colonel.  
If you claim you're innocent.

UNGER

We worked for hours on that dam,  
trying to fix it that day, trying  
to stop the flood. We sent riders  
down the valley to warn people.

MAN TWO

Were you warned that this could  
happen? That the dam could fail?  
Be honest.

UNGER

I. I was. I was aware of issues.

MAN TWO

What issues?

UNGER

(stammering)

I, I, ah...

MAN ONE

What issues? What issues?

MAN TWO

You lowered the dam a few years ago. Right?

UNGER

The members wanted a wider dam road. For their carriages.

MAN ONE

Why were there screens attached to the bridges over the spillway? Those screens got clogged with debris blocking the spillway.

UNGER

The members. They wanted to keep the game fish in the lake.

MAN THREE

How many died for fucking fish.

UNGER

(Sobbing)

You have to understand.

MAN ONE

I think you're guilty as hell. You knew that there were serious dangers. With that dam. But you didn't do anything. In fact, you made things worse. If it were up to me, you would hang by the neck tonight. But, I will not make that decision. We brought someone else to do that.

UNGER

No please. Don't do this.

From a dark corner, ANNA FENN steps forward. Not wearing a mask. Holding a military sword. Unger starts to shake.

MAN ONE

This is Mrs. Anna Fenn. She has a story to tell you Colonel.

ANNA

(Sternly, seething)

On the day of the flood, my husband died helping his mother. She died as well. And I lost, seven children. Seven. One was a baby. They all drowned. In the same room I was in.

Unger gasps, cries a bit, whimpers.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Do you want to know their names?

UNGER

(sobbing)

Mam. Mam I'm so sorry for your horrible loss. You have to believe me, I never...

As she says each name, she slams the sword hard on the floor. And moves closer to Unger with each name.

ANNA

There was John who was 12, Daisy who was 10, Gen who was 9, George who was 8, Ginny who was 5, Bismarck who was 3, and my baby Esther, who was almost 2. They drowned Colonel. Crying out for their mother. But I couldn't help any of them. Not one. Not one.

Now face to face with him. Unger weeping. He falls to his knees. Anna SLAMS the sword close to him.

Anna kneels down next to him. A stern gaze. He is sobbing, "Please, please"..." She HOLDS THE SWORD TO HIS THROAT.

Anna slowly stands up. Pulls the sword away. Looks around the room at the masked men, silent, staring, not knowing what she plans to do. Will she strike him with that sword, cut his throat? They would not blame her. She takes out a picture of her children. She holds it up to Unger's face.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Look at this picture. The vengeance in my soul is frightful. Powerful.

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

I should take this sword, and  
slowly stab you to death. Cause you  
so much pain. So much agony.

(slams the sword hard)

But. I am a Christian woman.

(she turns to the men)

There has been enough death.  
Enough pain. Leave him here.  
Let his soul rot with the memories  
of the pain and death he has  
caused.

Anna sets the picture down on his desk. Some tears in her eyes, a quiet sob. She drops the sword and walks out of the room. The other men slowly follow her out. One man remains. He picks up the sword, walks up to him. Unger sobs.

MAN ONE

You know in your soul what you did.  
And what you failed to do.  
So many died, horrible deaths.  
Drowned, crushed, sliced to death  
by barb wire, burned alive.  
I hope you rot in hell Colonel.

The man exits with the sword. Unger, still bound by his hands, begins to SHAKE. WEEPING, sprawled out on the floor.

# **INT. PEG'S APARTMENT KITCHEN - MORNING**

Super:

**June 5**

PEG sips tea as EMMA enters. Emma has been staying with Peg since the flood. Exchange good mornings. Emma pours some tea.

PEG

You going to that hospital camp at  
Sang Hollow today?

EMMA

That's my plan. What about you?

PEG

Goin' down to Cambria. See if  
there's any news on our jobs coming  
back. I'm so bored.

EMMA

I bet not for awhile. Not our jobs.  
But at least they got that one part  
of the mill working yesterday.  
This town needed some good news.



Emma starts to get up to leave. Peg gets up, hugs her tight.

PEG  
Good luck chuckaboo. I hope you  
find out something about Charlie.  
Praying for you.

Emma smiles. Whispers "thank you". She exits the apartment.

**EXT. SANG HOLLOW HOSPITAL TENTS - DAY**

EMMA walks among hospital tents, looks into some. Some people on stretchers, bandaged, some up walking. A busy scene. Nurses, assistants mill around. She spots an OLDER DOCTOR with a clipboard. She greets him.

EMMA  
Doctor, is there anyone I could  
talk to about a patient list?  
About who's been treated here?

DOCTOR  
Who are you looking for?

EMMA  
A Charles or Charlie Hart. 18 years  
old, tall, brown hair, blue eyes.

The doctor looks over the clipboard. Checks again.

DOCTOR  
I don't see him. I'm sorry.

EMMA  
What happens if someone comes here,  
and, passes away. What do you do?

DOCTOR  
We notify the coroner and they take  
him or her to one of the morgues.

EMMA  
Do you have a list of people from  
here, that were sent to a morgue?

DOCTOR  
I'm sorry, I don't have that list.  
You would have to check with the  
morgues. So this is your...

EMMA  
My brother.

DOCTOR

I see. Well, keep looking for him.  
But you know, many people won't be  
found. I'm sorry to tell you that.

EMMA

I know. I keep hoping.  
Doctor, what's the toll,  
how many are gone?

DOCTOR

At least 2,000. Probably a lot  
more. So many missing.

(A beat)

God bless you dear.  
I hope you find your brother.

Emma nods thank you. Turns to walk away.

**EXT. LOCUST STREET, JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

EMMA walks a muddy street lined with twisted piles of  
wreckage. Men throw carpet and debris into large fires.

She stops before a battered railroad car up on blocks. An  
American RED CROSS FLAG waves above it.

Nearby stands a five-foot dark-haired woman, with a prominent  
nose, dark eyes. 67 yo CLARA BARTON. She sees Emma staring at  
the Red Cross flag. She walks over to her. Greets her.

CLARA

Can I help you?

EMMA

Well, I'm looking for someone.

CLARA

I'm Clara Barton with the Red  
Cross. I might be able to help.

EMMA

Miss Barton. I've heard of you.  
I'm, I'm Emma Hart.

CLARA

Who are you looking for dear?

EMMA

My brother Charlie Hart.

CLARA

Alright. Well missing people are still showing up. Every day.

(Looks at her watch)

I'm sorry, but I'm late for a meeting. But stop by here tomorrow morning. Around 10. I'll get information about your brother. And we can post it at the hospitals in the valley.

EMMA

Thank you, so much.

CLARA

And what about you? You have a place to stay? Are you working?

EMMA

I'm staying with a friend. Still not back to work.

CLARA

Well I hope you get news about your job soon.

EMMA

Miss Barton. Can I ask?  
Is there anything I could do for you? For the Red Cross?

CLARA

We can talk about it. We do need all the help we can get.

EMMA

Thank you. I'd be so happy to help. In any way I can. And, sorry, before you go, have you ever seen anything like this? In your life?

CLARA

I've been through a lot in my life dear. A nurse during the Rebellion at Antietam and Fort Wagner, and before that, over in France, during the Prussian war. But this is so different.

EMMA

Why's that?

CLARA

This tragedy struck so suddenly. A valley of towns laid to waste in a matter of minutes. Thousands gone. Women, children, babies. No man-made weapon of war could do this.

I'm sorry but I do have to get to a meeting. Please visit here tomorrow morning. 10 AM. OK?

EMMA

I will. I'll be here. Thank you.

**EXT. STONE BRIDGE - DAY**

Several men wire dynamite boxes. They evacuate the area. Once clear, a man at a detonator yells: "FIRE IN THE HOLE."

He pushes down a plunger. A huge EXPLOSION rocks the area. Chunks of debris near the Stone Bridge BLAST into the air. Using dynamite, men work to clear the huge debris field. This effort takes many months.

**EXT. JOHNSTOWN RAILWAY STATION - DAY**

Super: **June 15**

A busy scene as a train pulls into the station. A huge group of people exits the train.

JAY PHIPPS steps off the train with a bag and a GUITAR CASE. Walks out to the busy, NOISY carriage stand. Finds an available carriage. Greets a DRIVER who takes his bags.

Jay climbs aboard. Settles in. So stunned, seeing the battered landscape around him. And the large crowds at the station. The driver gets into his seat. Jay leans forward.

JAY

So many people arriving. Is this normal?

DRIVER

Yep. Mostly flood tourists. Want to see the destruction for themselves. Use their new Kodaks for photographs. Take home some relics.

JAY

Kind of morbid.

DRIVER

Actually it's a good for the town.  
Lots of money coming in. People  
stay at the hotels, eat at the  
restaurants. So where to?

JAY

Can you take me to this address?  
(hands him Emma's card)

DRIVER

(a beat)  
I'm sorry to tell you.  
Union Street was wiped out.

JAY

Christ. Can we get close?

DRIVER

I'll take you as close as I can.

#### **EXT. STREETS OF JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

Men work in the devastated street mess. Feed a large bonfire  
with piles of bedding, clothes and carpet. A horrible stench.  
JAY wide-eyed as the carriage moves through the narrow  
streets lined with debris. Shocked by the utter destruction.

DRIVER

Ever seen anything like it?

JAY

It's like hell on earth. Anyone  
know, how many died?

DRIVER

I've heard 3,000. I've heard 5,000.  
There's other towns up the valley  
wiped off the map too. Woodvale,  
Mineral Point, East Conemaugh.

Jay shook, stunned. The horrid mess, the smell.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

We're on the cross street for  
Union. That's what's left.

Twisted debris and wrecked structures for hundreds of yards.

JAY

I knew a family that lived there.  
The Harts.

DRIVER  
Sorry to hear that.

JAY  
Is there anywhere I can get a list  
of those who died, or missing?

DRIVER  
The main Red Cross hospital on  
Locust Street. We can head there.

**EXT. RED CROSS HEADQUARTERS - DAY**

A two story building with a Red Cross flag waving out front. Nurses and others move about the busy scene. JAY steps off the carriage. Turns to the driver.

JAY  
Can you wait? I won't be long.

The driver nods OK. Jay hands him \$10, far more than the fare. He then walks up to the Red Cross building.

**INT. RED CROSS HEADQUARTERS - DAY**

After a brief wait in line, Jay talks to a nurse at the desk.

JAY  
Hello. I'm looking for someone. Is  
there a list of people injured? Or  
missing? Or, perished?

NURSE  
That board behind you. But, who are  
you looking for? I manage the list.

JAY  
Her name's Emma Hart. She used to  
live on Union Street.

NURSE  
Oh my God. I know her. She works  
here. She left about an hour ago.

JAY  
Really? Do you, do you know where  
she's staying? I'm an old friend.

NURSE  
I don't. Sorry. People are living  
all over since the flood.

(MORE)

NURSE (CONT'D)

But she'll be back tomorrow. You want to leave a note?

JAY

Of course. Thank you.

She hands him a pad and pencil. Jay nods thanks. He's so excited, he can barely write. He addresses it to Emma.

*I'M SO HAPPY THAT YOU'RE SAFE.  
I HOPE YOUR BROTHER AND MOM ARE  
SAFE TOO.  
I HAVE SOME IMPORTANT NEWS.  
SOMETHING THAT CAN HELP YOUR TOWN.  
BUT IT INVOLVES YOU.  
I'LL BE AT THE CLUBHOUSE UNTIL  
TUESDAY AFTERNOON.  
CAN YOU PLEASE COME UP THERE?  
I THINK THIS IS SO URGENT.  
I THINK YOU WOULD AGREE.*

JAY PHIPPS

Jay folds the note, writes "Emma Hart" on the outside, hands it to the nurse. Thanks her.

Walks to the bulletin board. Sees many names listed with their ages. Others are "UNKNOWN", with descriptions like:

*UNKNOWN FEMALE. Age Forty Five. Weight 100. Very long black hair. Black dress. Plain gold ring on third finger of left hand. Black stockings. Five pennies in purse. Bunch of keys.*

*UNKNOWN MALE. Age Five Years, Sandy Hair, Checkered Waist. Ribbed Knee Pants. Black stockings darned in both heels.*

*UNKNOWN FEMALE. Light hair. About fifteen years.*

Jay shudders. So many gone. So many.

#### **INT. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

EMMA sits a church pew next to VICTOR. A Christian hymn begins: "On Jordan's Stormy Banks". Emma does not sing. A little later, the OLDER PREACHER'S fiery sermon has begun.

PREACHER

Good people. I struggle with this.  
Why did a God who loves us so much,  
let this horrible event happen?

But I have some thoughts.

(MORE)

## PREACHER (CONT'D)

And I want to share them with you.  
But it's not easy to say these  
things.

Too many of the people in this  
valley had become,  
obsessed with earthly desires.  
Making the most money.  
Gaining the most possessions.  
Abusing demon alcohol.  
Partaking in unclean acts of the  
flesh.

The Good Book notes that there will  
come a time of Great Tribulation.  
A time of judgment unmatched by any  
period in human history.

This is revealed by the Seven Seals  
of The Book of Revelation.

I believe this horrible flood is  
opening one of the Seven Seals.  
And, this means that the End Times  
are upon us.

I do firmly believe that the End  
Times are coming.  
And we must be prepared.

For the Apostle Peter said, "The  
End of All things is at hand, be  
therefore sober, and watch unto  
Prayer."

**EXT. OUTSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - DAY**

EMMA walks outside the church with VICTOR amongst others.  
Talking with him, shakes her head, smiling.

## EMMA

What was that all about?  
I wanted to come to a Church for  
some uplifting music and hopeful  
prayers.  
Try to feel good for a change.  
Not hear about the End Times.

## VICTOR

I know. And to blame alcohol and  
the desires of the flesh?



EMMA

The good preacher should visit Green's Hill. Lizzie Thompson's place and the other brothels up there are doing great business.

VICTOR

The Good Lord must have bad aim.

Emma stops at the bottom of the steps. Turns to Victor.

EMMA

I wanted to tell you. I got a message from Jay Phipps. On Friday.

VICTOR

Really? Jay Phipps? Is he here?

EMMA

(hands him the note)

He's up at the Clubhouse. Until Tuesday. He left this for me.

VICTOR

What do you think?

EMMA

I don't know. I might want to go up there. See about this urgent news.

VICTOR

Alright but I'm going with you.

EMMA

You don't have to do that.

VICTOR

Of course I do! Who knows what's going on there. The Colonel and his men are probably still up there too.

EMMA

Alright. Thank you. There's a 2:00 train to South Fork. We can make that.

#### **INT. TRAIN RIDE TO SOUTH FORK - DAY**

EMMA and VICTOR view the destruction of the towns in the upper valley for the first time. Flattened expanses where buildings once stood. Both stunned. Victor speaks up.

VICTOR  
I've been meaning to tell you.  
(A beat)  
I'm headed to Philadelphia this  
Wednesday.

EMMA  
Really?

VICTOR  
I have an uncle there, and he  
invited me to come up for a visit.  
And while I'm there, I'm going to  
check out some colleges.

EMMA  
That makes sense. You have to  
consider your future. What's left  
here?

VICTOR  
Well, something's still here.

He tenderly reaches for her hand, squeezes it tight.

**EXT. IN THE CARRIAGE HEADED TO THE SOUTH FORK DAM SITE - DAY**

Their carriage approaches the dam site. Now a wide gap  
between two steep hillsides. A muddy misty stew of puddles  
and brush as far as the eye can see. Both stunned at this  
strange alien landscape. The beautiful lake. Gone. Vanished.

**EXT. IN THE CARRIAGE PASSING THE COTTAGES - DAY**

The carriage passes damaged, vandalized cottages. Shattered  
glass, battered doors, broken furniture scattered in the  
overgrown, unkempt front yards full of weeds.

**EXT. SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE - DAY**

Outside the clubhouse, tall weeds choke the front lawn. EMMA  
and VICTOR step onto the wide porch. They turn to view the  
huge muddy expanse of the former lake, the flipped over  
boats, the deserted docks.

Other than the buzzing summer bugs, so quiet.

**INT. SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE - FRONT ROOM AND HALL - DAY**

EMMA and VICTOR slowly enter the darkened lobby. Tables and chairs scattered about. Broken glass everywhere. A 12-foot-high brick ornate fireplace. A grand wooden stairway.

They turn to walk down a long hallway. Slowly push open a door to another room. They enter the dining room.

**INT. SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE DINING ROOM - DAY**

COLONEL UNGER and JOHN PARKE sit at a table in a dark corner. Parke sees them enter. Stands up, points a PISTOL at them.

PARKE

Stop! Who goes there?

VICTOR

(Pulls Emma aside)

Don't shoot! My name's Victor Heiser. I worked up here. I'm with Emma Hart. You know me Colonel!

UNGER

It's alright Parke. Put that away.

Emma and Victor walk in slowly. Approach the table. Parke sits down. Unger and Parke both so unkempt, long hair.

UNGER (CONT'D)

Miss Hart. Mr. Heiser. How are you?

EMMA

I'm looking for Jay Phipps.

UNGER

Parke. Go get Mr. Phipps.  
(turns back to her)  
How's your brother Charlie?

EMMA

He's missing. That's how he is.

UNGER

I'm sorry to hear that. Would either of you care for an Old Overholt?

They both nod, no thanks. Unger pours himself a drink.

VICTOR

We saw the cottages coming in.

UNGER

A few days after the flood. A drunken mob ransacked most of the cottages. They almost got me.

EMMA

An angry mob. I wonder why.

UNGER

Miss Hart, no one wanted this to happen. We're so heartbroken. All of us. Such a terrible accident, an Act of God.

EMMA

An Act Of God? Really?  
Is that what you said?  
Colonel, I have a question for you.  
Did God build that dam?  
Did God take care of that dam?  
(a beat)  
No, man did.  
Man did.

UNGER

We did our best, you have to believe me.

JAY PHIPPS enters. Holds a GUITAR CASE. He's excited to see Emma. But he can tell--she's not happy to see him.

JAY

Emma, I'm so glad you're alright.  
Thank you for coming up here.  
How's Charlie, and your Mom?

EMMA

My Mom went down in the flood.  
Charlie's missing. Probably gone.

JAY

Oh Christ, I'm so sorry.

Emma notices the guitar case.

EMMA

What's that for?

JAY

It's a Martin guitar. For Charlie.  
He told me how much he wanted one.

EMMA

You can keep it.

JAY

No, no. Please take it. In his memory. Or maybe he'll be found.

EMMA

So what's this urgent news?

JAY

My father and others want to help the people of the valley. Raise money. I want you to come stay with us and help out. We want to organize fundraisers, balls, and you can sing at them.

EMMA

There's plenty of singers in Pittsburgh. Why me?

JAY

You're from here. That'll mean so much more.

EMMA

Really?  
I don't think so.  
No, you need to show me off.  
Like an old dirty penny,  
shined up, like new.

JAY

That's not it. It's because I know you're a wonderful singer.  
What are you doing today? Now?

EMMA

I'm a nurse's assistant. At the Red Cross.

JAY

(exasperated)

What? You're one of the best singers I've ever heard. Wrapping bandages, mending wounds. That's not what God intended you to do.

VICTOR

(steps up)

How do you know what God intends her to do?

JAY

Have we met? Didn't you work at the boathouse?

EMMA

This is Victor Heiser. He saved my life. And three other children with me. Found us trapped near the Stone Bridge, and rescued us all.

JAY

God bless you. This whole thing. We're so heartbroken about it, this terrible accident.

VICTOR

An accident?  
Is that what you called it?  
People up here knew about the problems with that dam,  
and ignored them.  
Did nothing to fix them.

Victor stares hard at Parke. He turns away. Then at Unger.

JAY

No one wanted this to happen.

VICTOR

That help you sleep at night?

JAY

(turns to Emma, sternly)  
I know it didn't end right for us in Pittsburgh. But, if I didn't mean everything I said about you, would I be up here?

EMMA

Now I'm to believe, that I'm the one. I don't think so.  
I'm thinking your Daddy sent you to find me.  
Make him and the other members feel better about the horrible shit that happened here.

JAY

I swear to God. Look.  
I'm leaving on Tuesday.  
Come with me. Please.

VICTOR

Did you hear her? She said no.

JAY

(ignores him)

Do you remember what you told me at the lake?

How you wanted to sing on the biggest stages in the country?

It is still your dream.

I know that.

Even if you still hate me, at least follow that dream.

You can start in Pittsburgh.

Do this for yourself, but you can also help your town.

VICTOR

Maybe her dreams have changed.

Can't you take a hint?

JAY

(Angry, turns to Victor)

Alright boathouse boy.

Then she can stay here with you, in this fucking hellhole...

VICTOR

You son of a bitch.

Victor moves at Jay. The others stand up to get between them. Emma steps in front of Victor. Holds him back.

EMMA

Don't do this. Please. Don't.

Victor stops, stares intently at Jay. Victor backs off.

Emma pauses. Thinking. Looks up, stares into Victor's eyes.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Maybe he's right.

I can do more in Pittsburgh to help out here.

Raise money. Like he says.

I think I have a gift.

I should use it, right?

To help our town?

(a beat)

I know, this isn't what you wanted.

But...

Victor's face falls. Shocked. How could she do this? After what they have been through together! Go with Jay? NO!

Emma hugs him, then slowly turns. Walks up to Jay, with a slight smile. Jay smiles back, and starts to lean into hug her.

Jay then turns to Victor, a smug smile. I win again.

And Emma SLUGS HIM HARD IN THE NOSE. Jay CURSES and holds his nose, which is bleeding profusely. Everyone GASPS. Stunned.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
You didn't get my notch on your  
belt. But how about a bloody nose?

VICTOR  
(stunned, shocked)  
Emma. Holy shit.  
I think. I think.  
We should go.

EMMA  
(smiling)  
You're right Vincent.  
It's time to go.  
Don't forget the guitar.

Victor picks up the guitar case. He's so nervous. What will they do? Parke has a gun! They head out of the room. Jay holds a napkin up to his face, bleeding. Seething.

Jay SO ANGRY. HOW DARE you do that! To ME! To ME! I traveled all the way here, to find you, in this fucking wretched mess, to RESCUE you! To SAVE you! TO CHANGE YOUR FUCKING LIFE! And you HIT me! NO ONE TURNS ME DOWN! You little...

JAY  
(yelling, angry)  
Go ahead and stay here!  
With the boathouse boy.  
Enjoy singing to the rubble.  
You stupid....

#### **EXT. JOHNSTOWN CENTRAL PARK - DAY**

Super: **July, 1889**

The park alive with activity. Families with children playing. Dogs run about, barking. The noise of hammering fills the air as reconstruction on nearby buildings continues.

EMMA on a PARK BENCH in her white Red Cross uniform. VICTOR arrives. She gets up, greets him with a warm hug.



EMMA

Well, mister traveler. Welcome back. A long trip. How was Philadelphia?

VICTOR

Good. Spent a lot of time exploring it. What a fine city. Museums. So much history. And I have some news.

EMMA

Let's hear it.

VICTOR

While there, I visited Jefferson Medical College. Talked to some people. I liked it. They seemed to like me. And, I applied to their pre-med program.

EMMA

Pre-med? That's, unexpected.

VICTOR

I know. Did not expect to be so interested in medicine, but the more I talked with them, the more I grew to like the idea. I should hear something in the next few weeks.

EMMA

That's great news.

VICTOR

And my chances are pretty good. They're making special exceptions for flood victims. So we'll see what happens.

How are you? How are things with the Red Cross?

EMMA

Good. Good. It's keeping me busy. And I'm learning so much. Treating patients, using medications. It's so interesting. Who knew, I might want to become a nurse? And you, a doctor!

VICTOR

You never know what life brings.

EMMA

Meeting Miss Barton changed my  
life. Probably saved it.

VICTOR

There were stories in the papers  
there about the Red Cross here all  
the time. She's a national hero.

EMMA

She hasn't left since the flood.  
Working 12 hour days. 67 years old.  
I don't know how she does it.

VICTOR

Besides work, have you,  
tried singing again?

EMMA

Not really.  
(sighs, somberly)  
That part of me.  
It doesn't feel connected anymore.  
Like I was another person.  
In a different life.  
In a different place.  
It's so strange.

VICTOR

We all feel that way. So much has  
changed. Any news about Charlie?

EMMA

No. Nothing. But. I keep hoping.  
There're still some people showing  
up, who they thought were gone.

VICTOR

Good. You never know, right?  
(a beat)  
I did want to talk to you about one  
other thing.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

If things work out, and I get into  
school there. I want you, to come  
and join me. Once I get settled.

EMMA

Victor, I...

VICTOR

It's a big decision, I know.

EMMA

Let me think about it.  
(a beat, she smiles)  
It's so funny.  
I was so sure I was the one leaving  
this town, and you were staying.  
But, things have totally flipped.

VICTOR

Everything has flipped.  
Our whole world. Our lives.  
(a beat)  
Please think about what I said.

EMMA

Alright. And. I'm not saying no.

VICTOR

Good. Good.  
I can't believe I'm talking about  
going to medical school.  
Me!  
I feel like a clumsy store clerk  
most of the time...

EMMA

Listen!  
Remember what you did for me.  
And those children.  
Never forget that. Never!

VICTOR

I won't.

EMMA

(A beat)  
I'm so proud of you.  
After what you've been through.  
To maybe being a doctor some day?

VICTOR

A long way to go, but thank you.

EMMA

I bet you do it. I do.  
(a beat)  
And your Mom and Dad.  
They're looking down.  
They're so proud of you.  
(a beat, tears in her  
eyes)  
I just know it.

VICTOR  
 (tears in his eyes)  
 I hope so  
 I would want to make them proud.  
 (A beat)  
 I miss them so much. Every day.

Both teary-eyed, they hug warmly on the bench.

(NOTE--Victor Heiser is a historical figure and he did become a world renowned doctor that traveled the world, specializing in treating leprosy and other diseases.)

**INT. OLD OYSTER HOUSE, PITTSBURGH - DAY\***

Super:           **Original Old Oyster House**

**Pittsburgh**

**September, 1889**

Attorney PHILANDER KNOX sits in a high wood booth at the back of the nearly empty restaurant. HENRY PHIPPS enters and crosses the restaurant. Sits across from Knox. Phipps agitated, in a hurry. Speaking fast.

PHIPPS SR.  
 Alright. I need to know about this  
 Nancy Little Case.

KNOX  
 You want to order some...

PHIPPS SR.  
 No I don't have time.

KNOX  
 Alright. Nancy Little lives in  
 Sewickley. Her husband John was a  
 salesman and in Johnstown on a  
 business trip. Staying at the  
 Hulbert House hotel downtown. That  
 hotel was hit by the flood. And he  
 perished.

PHIPPS SR.  
 Christ. And I understand she has  
 six children.

KNOX

Actually, she has seven. She's suing the South Fork Club, for involuntary homicide, due to negligence maintaining the dam.

PHIPPS SR.

How do you plan to counter that?

KNOX

First, we'll say that there's no way to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that any dam, built by the best engineers in the world, could've withstood that much rain. A record, over ten inches in two days. Truly, an Act of God.

PHIPPS SR.

Good. I like that.

KNOX

And our team there worked tirelessly all day in dangerous conditions to try to stop the flood. The Colonel sent riders down the valley several hours before the flood, to warn people. And used telegraph messages as well.

PHIPPS SR.

Alright. That sounds. Promising. What if they bring up, other things? Like having only one spillway, the fish screens on the bridges, the dam road being lowered.

KNOX

I don't think any of that matters. Even if all those things were addressed, there's still no way to know that it would have prevented this flood. Beyond a reasonable doubt. That's the key. We will have many experts testify to that.

PHIPPS SR.

Knox we can't lose this case. It would lead to many more like this one. It could cost us, millions...

KNOX

I'm supremely confident that we're on the right side of the law. This was a tragedy due to an Act of God.

The Club and its members are not at fault. No one wanted this to happen. We are fully prepared to make that argument.

PHIPPS SR.

Christ I hope so.

Phipps leans back. Sighs.

**INT. RED CROSS HOSPITAL, JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

Super:                      **October, 1889**

EMMA, in a white Red Cross uniform, tends to some patients in their beds. Chats with them, holds their hands, smiles, laughs with some. You can see the patients like her.

**EXT. RED CROSS HEADQUARTERS - DAY**

EMMA walks outside. Takes a deep breath. A sunny day. She's tired. A little chill in the air, she pulls on a sweater.

She spots a figure approaching down the busy street, wearing a hat. She squints in the sun. She stares harder. It's a man. He gets closer. He's carrying a duffel bag. As he approaches, he takes his hat off.

Her eyes meets his eyes. She's SHAKEN. Oh my God!

IT'S CHARLIE! CHARLIE!

She starts to walk towards him. Then runs. He drops his bag seeing her. Puts his hands out to hug. She slows down, gets up to CHARLIE, tears in her eyes, stares up at him.

EMMA

Oh my God, are you a ghost?

CHARLIE

I hope not.

Emma leans in. They hug so tight. She pulls back.

EMMA

Where have you been? What happened?

CHARLIE

A lot. After our house was lost, I floated down the river, way past Johnstown. I was hurt, bleeding. A bad head wound they told me. Some people in Blairsville took me to the hospital there.

EMMA

Oh my God. That's 20 miles from here.

CHARLIE

I couldn't remember anything. And I didn't have any papers on me, so they couldn't find my family.

EMMA

Then what?

CHARLIE

It took time. My injuries healed. And then I started remembering . Where I was from. I remembered you. And Mom. And...

EMMA

How did you know where to find me?

CHARLIE

When I got here this morning, I started asking people. Someone knew you worked at the Red Cross.

EMMA

I still, I still can't believe it.

CHARLIE

So, is Mom...

Emma looks at him. Shakes her head--no. He's suddenly emotional. He hugs her tight.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Oh God. I prayed for her. But, I knew it. I just knew it.

EMMA

It's OK. It's OK.  
I just, I can't believe you're here.

(a beat)

Oh Charlie. Oh God.  
I missed you so much.

She leans in and holds him so tight. Both in tears.

**INT. ALLEGHENY COUNTY COURTROOM, PITTSBURGH - DAY**

Super: **Allegheny County Courthouse**

**March, 1890**

HENRY PHIPPS and JAY PHIPPS stand in the back of the courtroom. The courtroom quiet, but much anticipation as a jury verdict should come in soon. PHILANDER KNOX sees them and walks up to them. Exchange greetings.

PHIPPS SR.

What are you hearing Knox? Is the verdict coming in soon.

KNOX

I understand it should be in soon.

PHIPPS SR.

Good lord, I'm so nervous.

One of Knox's assistants approaches him and leans in to say something to him. Knox turns to the Phipps men.

KNOX

The verdict is in.

Knox heads back to the defense table. The courtroom suddenly abuzz as word spreads that the verdict is coming in.

The jury enters. The crowd chatter grows LOUDER. The JURY FOREMAN hands a paper to the BAILIFF. The bailiff nods, exits the courtroom. A few moments later, JUDGE CHARLES FLAHERTY (66 yo, white haired, distinguished) enters. The murmuring in the courtroom stops. The bailiff follows him in.

BAILIFF

All rise. The Fifth District Court of Allegheny County and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is back in session. The Honorable Charles Flaherty presiding.

JUDGE FLAHERTY

Mr. Foreman, has the jury reached a verdict?

JURY FOREMAN

Yes we have Your Honor.



JUDGE FLAHERTY

Thank you. Now, please address the Court and state your verdict. And I ask that the courtroom remain calm after the verdict is read. Please proceed Mr. Foreman.

JURY FOREMAN

Yes your honor. We have reached a verdict in the case of Negligent Homicide filed by the family of Mr. John Little of Sewickley Pennsylvania against the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club. Our verdict is that the South Fork Club is...

Not Guilty

AN EMOTIONAL ROAR rises. Reporters race out of the back of the courtroom. People SHOUT at the jury, calling them cowards. They yell at the judge. Police move into the room. The judge stands, YELLS, SLAMS GAVEL.

JUDGE FLAHERTY

Order. Order!  
We will have order!

The two Phipps men look around at the unruly courtroom. After about a minute, with the police in the room, calm returns.

JUDGE FLAHERTY (CONT.) (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen, a verdict in this case has been reached.

(Looks at jury)

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Allegheny County thank the jurors for your duty and service. I know this was difficult for you. This case is adjourned. The jury is discharged. God bless this Court and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The judge SLAMS down the gavel.

KNOX turns to see the PHIPPS men in the back of the courtroom. Smiles at them. Pumps his fist. We won!

On the plaintiff side of the room, widow NANCY LITTLE weeps with her children. Hugging them tight. She has lost.

The PHIPPS men see the Little family mourn. Henry Phipps is moved, emotional. KNOX approaches. Surprised he is upset.

KNOX  
Henry, we won. Why the...

PHIPPS SR.  
I'm going to make it right for her,  
for her family.

KNOX  
What do you mean? I would not  
recommend doing anything like that.  
Let's discuss anything that...

PHIPPS SR.  
For Chrissakes, shut up Knox.  
Just shut the fuck up.  
(eyes moist)  
Oh my God,  
(a beat)  
what have we done?

Jay sees his father getting so emotional, with tears. This is so unusual for him. His stoic, stern father never seems to have any passion or emotion. Seeing this moves Jay. He turns to his Dad. Their eyes meet. They hug each other tightly.

**EXT. GRANDVIEW CEMETERY, JOHNSTOWN - DAY**

Super:                   **Grandview Cemetery**  
  
                          **Johnstown, Pennsylvania**  
  
                          **May 31, 1892**

**Three Years to the Day After the Flood**

On a bright sunny day, a large crowd surrounds a new granite monument covered in a large cloth tarp. At a podium, Governor ROBERT PATTINSON and Johnstown Mayor HORACE ROSE stand to address the crowd. CLARA BARTON with them near the podium.

A crowd of over 10,000 people surrounds them. Including:

ANNA FENN MAXWELL and her new HUSBAND.

BELLE and GEORGE WATERS and their three children.

PEG along with MR. MILLER and others from Cambria Iron.

The THREE KIDS RESCUED BY EMMA with their PARENTS. All three years older, including their dog HAZEL, now full grown.

**INT. INSIDE TENT BEHIND THE MONUMENT - DAY**

Near the monument, in a tent, EMMA talks with CHARLIE. She's so nervous. She has not sung in front of people in a long time. And this crowd is huge.

CHARLIE

You're going to be fine. You sounded beautiful this morning.

EMMA

Practicing in front of a mirror is not the same as singing in front of a crowd. I've never seen so many people.

CHARLIE

Just relax and...

Into the tent, steps JAY PHIPPS. Emma and Charlie have not seen him in years. Both surprised, shocked.

JAY

Emma. Charlie. I hope you don't mind.

CHARLIE

What. What are you doing here?

JAY

(stumbling, nervous)

I'm here to...

I came to, to support Emma.

I heard she was singing today.

And, I wanted to talk to her.

And tell her.

(Turns to Emma)

I'm so sorry about what happened in Pittsburgh, and at the Clubhouse.

EMMA

That was a long time ago.

JAY

I hope you understand.

I was in a dark state of mind.

Just a wrecked soul.

EMMA

We were all, in some ways, wrecked.

JAY

But it's more than that. I realized how I was living my life. Being. I don't know. Like a child.

EMMA

How are you getting along with your father?

JAY

We had work to do. To heal. But he changed too. A lot. We're fine after all these years. I'm working hard for the company. Seeing a nice young lady, for awhile. Gave up the carousing, the partying.

EMMA

(Smiles)

You?

JAY

Yes. After I saw what happened here. It shook me to my bones. It changed me. And I realized. We were at fault. We did this. Our dam broke. Our dam.

EMMA

Sometimes, it takes something like this, to realize what really matters. And to make real changes.

JAY

I know. All these things weighing on me. The guilt. The shock. And so angry, all the time. And, I took it out on you.

I'm here to tell you that. It's been some time. I hope you can forgive me.

EMMA

(stands, takes his hands)

It means a lot to me that you came all the way here today. And yes, I forgive you.

JAY

Thank you Emma. Thank you.

EMMA  
 (she smiles)  
 And I'm sorry...  
 (a beat)  
 that I punched you in the nose.

JAY  
 (smiles back)  
 Oh. I deserved it.

Jay, starts to lean in, to hug her. She's tentative at first, but then hugs him back. A tight embrace.

Someone says: "Emma and Charlie, they're ready for you".

Emma pulls away, smiles at Jay. Nods. He does still miss her so much. And what might have been.

JAY (CONT'D)  
 I know you'll be wonderful.

Emma nods thank you. She walks out of the tent towards the podium. As Charlie leaves, he looks at Jay and holds up the Martin Guitar. He says "Thank You" to Jay. Jay smiles. Charlie smiles back, nods, and exits the tent.

**EXT. GRANDVIEW CEMETERY - DAY\***

Before the large crowd, the GOVERNOR begins his speech.

GOV PATTINSON  
 We, who have to do with the  
 concentrated forces of nature, the  
 powers of air, electricity, water,  
 steam, by careful forethought must  
 leave nothing undone for the  
 preservation and protection of the  
 lives of our brother men.

With this proclamation today, we  
 dedicate this monument to those who  
 perished three years ago in the  
 flood on May 31, 1889.

At this time, Miss Emma Hart, will  
 lead our choir in song. Miss Hart  
 lost her mother Ruth Hart that day.  
 But her brother Charlie, after  
 being missing for many months, did  
 finally arrive home. He will  
 accompany Miss Hart on his guitar.

(MORE)

GOV PATTINSON (CONT'D)

After the flood, Miss Hart worked for the American Red Cross for several years to help the people of the valley. We thank you for your service.

Miss Hart, the podium is yours.

EMMA walks up to a podium, CHARLIE stands behind her. There's also a church choir to support her as well.

EMMA

Thank you Governor Pattinson and Mayor Rose. Thank you for the kind words. I'm so honored to be here.

Emma clears her throat. Charlie begins to strum his guitar. She begins the song "God Moves In A Mysterious Way" But her voice is shaky. She stops. Looks down. Charlie stops playing.

An anxious silence in the air. Will she be able to sing?

She looks up. A serious look in her eyes. LET'S DO THIS.

Charlie starts the song on the guitar. Emma begins to sing.

EMMA SINGS THE SONG POWERFULLY, BEAUTIFULLY. The choir joins her as well and it is a rousing moving song.

As she sings, the Governor and the Mayor pull away the heavy tarp at the front of the monument. The inscription reads:

*In Memory Of The Unidentified Dead From The Flood  
May 31, 1889*

Many in the crowd WEEP. ANNA and BELLE hold each other close. JAY in tears, clapping. PEG in tears. People walk up to the new monument. Many crying, place photos of lost loved ones, flowers, toys, stuffed animals in front. Many kneel to pray.

As Emma continues to sing.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. WALNUT STREET THEATER, PHILADELPHIA - BALL ROOM - NIGHT**

Super: **Walnut Street Theater**

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

**One Year Later**

EMMA in a beautiful blue gown, continues the same song, but now on a lighted stage surrounded by plush red velvet curtains and accompanied by an orchestra behind her.

She finishes the song "God Moves In A Mysterious Way".

LOUD APPLAUSE FROM THE FULL HOUSE.

Emma smiles at the crowd. Nods. Acknowledges the warm reaction. Thanks them and wishes them a good night.

As Emma comes down the stage stairs, she sees an older man she recognizes. He smiles warmly at her.

Standing before Emma is the OLDER GENTLEMAN FROM THE TRAIN from when she traveled back from Pittsburgh several years ago. After the terrible episode with Jay that crushed her. The one who comforted her, encouraged her.

EMMA

It's you. From the train.  
You remembered me?

OLDER GENTLEMAN FROM THE TRAIN

I live here and saw your picture in  
the advertisements for the show.  
Can I say. You were just wonderful.  
A beautiful performance.  
(a beat)  
And, I'm so glad,  
you kept the light alive.  
It looks like your dreams did come  
true.

EMMA

Thank you.  
Thank you so much for coming.  
And for what you told me that day  
on the train.  
It did mean something to me.  
It really did.  
(staring at him, a beat)  
You know.  
Just now.  
I noticed something.  
(a beat)  
You remind me a lot,  
of my father.

OLDER GENTLEMEN FROM THE TRAIN

I know dear.

PEG suddenly grabs Emma by the arm, turning her. Peg is a bit drunk and loud.

PEG

We're waiting for you. Over there.  
Come on.

EMMA

OK. I want you to meet someone.

PEG

Who?

EMMA

This man, I talked with him on the  
train back from Pittsburgh, after  
the thing with Jay, remember..

She turns to greet him. THERE IS NO ONE THERE. Emma is  
bewildered. Where did he go? He was just here.

PEG

Who? I don't see anyone. Come on.  
I think you need a drink. Or three.

Emma is shook. Looks back at the space again. The man is  
gone. What? Where is he? Where did he go?

Peg leads Emma to the table. CHARLIE loudly claps as she  
comes over. Emma is smiling, so happy to see him. Leans in,  
hugs, kisses him.

But where is he?

Out of the shadows, VICTOR in a handsome pinstripe grey suit  
and tie, arrives with a large BOUQUET OF RED ROSES.

She sees him and smiles. Takes the flowers, hands them to  
Peg. Emma turns back to him. Looking up at him.

Victor takes her in his arms, lifts her up. Hugs and kisses  
her. She wraps her arms around his neck, hugging him hard  
too. He lowers her. Looks into her eyes. They hug again.

She smiles, then they hug and kiss again, as ROMANTIC MUSIC  
SWELLS GORGEOUSLY in the ball room. Charlie and Peg standing,  
applauding them.

Soon, the rest of the ballroom crowd is standing and  
applauding them as well.

(Fade to black.)

**THE END**

Thank you for reading.