"JOHNSTOWN"

A Historical Drama

Written by R. Carl Leech

A screenplay based on the 1889 Flood of Johnstown, Pennsylvania

Date: October, 2026

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

SUPER:

"The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall."
(Matthew 7:27)

MAIN TITLE: JOHNSTOWN

SUPER: JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

APRIL, 1888

EXT. JOHNSTOWN - DAY

A smoky, bustling town situated in a steep valley built at the confluence of two rivers. Horse-drawn trolleys and carriages move through the dusty brick and dirt streets.

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

INT. HEISER DRY GOODS STORE - FRONT ROOM - DAY

EMMA HART (24 yo, petite, radiant good looks, curly blonde hair, brown eyes) enters and greets the 52 yo owner GEORGE HEISER and wife 48 yo MATHILDE known as "MATTIE" at the counter.

EMMA HART
Is Victor here?

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

MATTIE HEISER
You seem excited dear.

EMMA
I got some good news this morning.

INT. HEISER DRY GOODS STORE - BACKROOM - DAY

VICTOR HEISER (24 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 hits him.

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

His Dad smiles. His son has been smitten with Emma for years.

INT. HEISER DRY GOODS STORE - NEAR COUNTER - DAY

32 yo ladies ANNA FENN and BELLE WATERS with several young children walk to the counter. EMMA turns, greets them warmly. 4 yo VIRGINIA "GINNY" FENN, runs up to Emma.

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. I'm going to be singing at the clubhouse this summer at the lake.

ANNA
Really! The boss's club!

BELLE
Bully for you! That could be your ticket out of here.

EMMA
One can hope right?

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

Emma smiles. Being discovered has been her dream since the audition at the clubhouse with her brother Charlie last month. And, maybe moving to 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 all over the floor. His dad 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
Are you OK?

VICTOR
No. Damn that hurt actually. Did you hear something?

EMMA
Yes! We got the job!

VICTOR
Oh my God. That is great!

EMMA
I wanted to tell you in person.

VICTOR
I'm so excited for you and Charlie.

EMMA
(leans in for a hug)
Thank you so much for setting up the audition. You're such a wonderful friend.

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 down at the apples on the floor.

VICTOR
I better pick these up.

SUPER: PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

JULY, 1888

EXT. THE STREET OUTSIDE OF THE DUQUESNE CLUB - DAY

Pittsburgh's congested downtown in 1888 features hulking grey buildings and warehouses. Massive steel mills belch dark clouds out of tall smokestacks. Boats traverse three dirty rivers under dozens of bridges.

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

Pittsburgh's young business owners have become the newest millionaires, part of the Gilded Age in America.

A four story tan brick building sits within the city. A red awning covers its wide marble steps at the entrance.

Fancy horse-drawn carriages arrive at the building. Well-dressed gentlemen traverse the steps. A smartly dressed doorman opens tall doors into a marbled lobby.

The exclusive and prestigious Duquesne Club.

INT. DUQUESNE CLUB - BILLIARDS ROOM - DAY

Cherry wood paneling frame the room filled with elegant red leather couches and chairs. Two men shooting pool.

Sullen 34 yo ANDREW MELLON stares out a window. He is 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, He is Bearded 40 yo, with large piercing eyes. He owns the H.C. Frick Company, a coke manufacturer. Coke is critical for steel production.

FRICK
Mister Mellon? Your shot.

MELLON
Apologies Mister Frick.

Mellon shoots but misses badly. He lays down the stick.

FRICK
Something on your mind Andrew?

MELLON
More problems with the city on the Sixth Street Bridge project. They want another round of inspections that will delay us another...

FRICK
Stop. We must direct your mind off all that. How about this? Lake Conemaugh. Are you going on Friday?

MELLON
Taking the afternoon train.

FRICK
Good. I heard the weather's going to be fantastic.

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

35 yo Philander Knox is the lawyer to many 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, white whiskers.

Unger is the President of their summer resort, the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club at Lake Conemaugh near Johnstown.

KNOX
Look who I found in the lobby.

UNGER
Mr. Mellon, Mr. Frick...

MELLON
The Colonel! What brings you here?

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

MELLON
Really? What for?

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

FRICK
Finally! I won't have to ever use that two story outhouse again.

MELLON
How's the search going?

UNGER
I like this man John Parke I met today. Graduated from Penn. Civil engineering. Very good grades.

MELLON
Excellent. Penn is a fine school.

FRICK
I was saying the fishing has been especially good this summer. And the lake seems much larger this year.

UNGER
Right. The lake is the largest it has ever been. Lots of snow melt and a rainy spring. Three miles long.

MELLON
I'm looking forward to the fishing tourney in August. I'll be taking the egg this year gentlemen.

KNOX
No sir! I'm ready for you all this year. Have a new kind of lure. A secret weapon! Mark my words. I'm taking the egg!

FRICK
Mr. Knox, the last thing you caught at the lake, was a cold.
(The men laugh.)

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

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

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. I put them off.
(a beat)
Anyone heading to the lake this weekend?

MELLON
Mr. Frick and I are going Friday.

UNGER
Excellent.
Gentlemen. I must now excuse myself. A meeting at the Monongahela House beckons.

FRICK
Before you go. Let's have a toast. Everyone raise their glasses.
(all raise glasses)
Gentlemen. Here's to black-bass fishing, the finest gourmet dinners, and the best bourbon and cigars. All at our beautiful South Fork club.

JOHN "JAY" PHIPPS, a handsome 25 yo, blonde hair, blue eyes, enters with his friend PHILO FRENCH. Mellon steps up to him.

MELLON
Your father's here. Wants to talk with you. He's in the main boardroom with some people from Steubenville.

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 takes a long drink. 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.
Gentlemen, this is my son Jay Phipps. And I must speak with him. I believe we're finished here for today. I'll be in touch next week. Thank you all for coming in. A good meeting.

The gentlemen stand, nod goodbye and exit.

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

JAY
You wanted to see me.

PHIPPS SR.
Again, I'm in the position of handling another one of your messes at work.

JAY
I know. What you mean.

PHIPPS SR.
Do you? Because this woman said she would go to the papers.
(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...

JAY
I'm sorry.

PHIPPS SR.
You're sorry. Well guess what. I paid this woman quite a bit of money. To keep her quiet.

This is it 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.

JAY
I'm sorry to have disappointed you.

PHIPPS SR.
Don't try your cute sarcastic bullshit with me.
And another thing, the family is going to the lake this weekend.
And you're coming. You haven't been there in ages. Do you understand?

JAY
I have plans this weekend with...

PHIPPS SR.
Do you understand?

JAY
Yes. Yes sir.

PHIPPS SR.
We leave on the 10 AM train on Friday. Don't be late.

Jay nods, heads out of the room. Back to the billiards room.

PHILO
So?

JAY
It's what I thought.
She 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. You still going to that party on Saturday in Fox Chapel?

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

PHILO
Really! I'm going to the lake. And so is Lloyd. This is great. All of us together. And there's someone I want you to meet up there. A real doll.

JAY
Did you just hear me?

PHILO
This one's different. She's a singer. She sings on Saturdays at the Clubhouse. And she's gorgeous.

JAY
I don't care.

PHILO
Well wait until you see her.

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

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

EXT. SOUTH FORK TRAIN DEPOT - DAY

Super: **South Fork, Pennsylvania**

July, 1888

The train with the 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 off and pull out stairs. Passengers exit.

HENRY PHIPPS, his 49 yo wife ANNE, and three excited YOUNG CHILDREN walk towards their carriage. The porters load up their luggage and help them into the two horse carriage.

JAY PHIPPS climbs aboard last. Once everyone is seated, the driver snaps a whip and the horses jump forward.

PHIPPS SR.
Is everyone ready for the lake?

The younger three kids clap, scream YAY!

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

PHIPPS SR.
They're coming later today.

ANNE PHIPPS
I was thinking about Mr. Carnegie the other day. When's the last time he was here? Or even in 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 onto a country road.

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

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. Scattered grasses and shrubs dot the long slope. The dam, so odd in this beautiful setting.

The carriage crosses a bridge over a bubbling creek, the dam spillway, turns onto the dam road and stops near the center so everyone can get a view of the beautiful pristine lake.

HOWARD PHIPPS
Daddy does this hold in the fish?

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

EXT. SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE - EVENING

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 - EVENING

EMMA and brother CHARLIE HART on stage, ready to start. Charlie is a tall, handsome 17 yo, brown hair, blue eyes.

UNGER
Good evening everyone. Well it's another beautiful Saturday evening at our South Fork Clubhouse.

UNGER (CONT'D)
And to entertain you, please welcome one of our favorites. 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 on his guitar. Emma starts a song.

JAY with handsome friends PHILO FRENCH and LLOYD HUFF sit near the stage, talking. But hearing Emma's first notes, they turn, stop chatting. Jay is immediately captivated by her.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE - EVENING

The edge of the sun disappears below the darkened hills.

INT. SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE DINING ROOM - EVENING

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

EMMA
Thank you. Have a pleasant night.

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.

JAY
Yes Philo. You might have been right about this one.

LLOYD
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 my dashing looks? My pithy humor? Hard to decide.

LLOYD
I don't know. I was thinking, it might be,
(a beat)

LLOYD (CONT'D)
your last name?
(Philo laughs loudly.)

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

PHILO
And I told you, she's gorgeous.

JAY
Yes. I did not expect to see someone like her, up here. Anyway, watch closely.

Jay stands. Winks. Heads towards Emma.

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

PHILO
No more girls in Pittsburgh left. He must look to the east!

Emma alone at a table near the stage. Jay approaches.

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
Well I've been missing out. Guess I should visit.

EMMA
You sure? Johnstown? Really?

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

EMMA
We do. Give me a moment.
(finds a card in her purse, hands it to Jay)

JAY
The Harts of Union Street. Well I might have to...

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)
Thank you for your kind words.

JAY
(stands)
A pleasure to meet you Miss Hart. And you Charlie.
You were both wonderful tonight. And Miss Hart. Maybe, see you again?

EMMA
Don't lose that card.

A flirtatious wink and smile from Emma as they leave. Jay rejoins 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, she gave me her card. The Harts of Union Street.

LLOYD
Like you'd ever set foot in Johnstown.

JAY
How about this? I'm thinking about going there tomorrow. Find this little songbird.

LLOYD
Jay let this one go. Summer's over in a month. And you're never here.

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

EXT. CARRIAGE HEADED TO SOUTH FORK - EVENING

CHARLIE and EMMA in a carriage. Emma senses Charlie is upset.

EMMA
Are you mad about something?

CHARLIE
Why did you flirt with that guy?

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 several guys pining for you in town. Why are you kicking up dust 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.

EMMA
And what if I do?

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 - MORNING

A two-story white wood rowhouse with a front porch.

INT. HART HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING

EMMA walks down the stairs and enters the kitchen. Her Mother RUTH HART (50 yo brunette) putting some dishes away.

RUTH
Morning. How did it go last night?

EMMA
Good. Some people talked to us after the show. Said we did well.

RUTH
Of course. You always do. Listen. I have to run over to Belle's. I need some sugar. I'll be back soon.

Ruth waves goodbye and exits out the kitchen back door.

INT. HART HOME - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

CHARLIE strums his guitar. EMMA enters, sits across from him.

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

Charlie starts strumming. Suddenly he stops.

CHARLIE
I can't believe it. That guy from last night. Phipps.

Emma rushes to the window. JAY PHIPPS is walking to the door.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
He's here. Holy...

EMMA
Hush. Answer the door for him. I need to straighten up.

Emma rushes upstairs. A KNOCK at the door. Charlie opens it.

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

CHARLIE
I do. Can I help you?

JAY
Emma gave me your card. If she's around, I'd like to see if she...

CHARLIE
She's here. Come in, have a seat.

JAY
(sits down, looks around)
You were both excellent last night. Have you been playing the guitar for awhile?

CHARLIE
Seven or eight years.

JAY
I play some. Not as well as you of course. I have a Martin six string. Heard of the Martin?

CHARLIE
(surprised)
Of course. They make them in Nazareth. I'd love to have one.

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

EMMA
I have a visitor it seems.

Emma and Charlie stand. A smiling Emma wearing a colorful sundress enters the room. Looks GORGEOUS.

CHARLIE
You remember Mr. Phipps.

EMMA
I do remember Mr. Phipps.

JAY
You look, just beautiful. Sorry for the unannounced visit.

EMMA
No. It's a pleasant surprise.

JAY
Are you free this afternoon? To maybe show me the sights?

EMMA
(Smiling)
I think I am free.

EXT. OUTSIDE HART HOUSE - MORNING

EMMA and JAY outside on the porch talking. Suddenly VICTOR arrives on a bicycle, stops. She was not expecting him.

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 at the Clubhouse. He works at the boathouse and arranged 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 glad you introduced Emma to the Colonel.

Victor still can't believe he's talking to Jay Phipps. Jay Phipps is a top celebrity of the day, in papers all the time. He's from one of the richest families in Pittsburgh, hell the country. And damn, he's a tall, very handsome guy.

EMMA
Jay said he wanted to visit Johnstown. See the sights. We're going to take a walk around.

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

JAY
Nice meeting you Vincent.

VICTOR
It's Victor, not…

He watches them walk towards town. Jay's arm on her shoulder.

INT. HART HOME FAMILY ROOM - MORNING

A forlorn and stunned VICTOR knocks and enters the house.

CHARLIE
Well hello there Mister Heiser.

VICTOR
I can't believe that I just met Jay Phipps. Jay Phipps. What the...

CHARLIE
Yep. They talked last night after the show.

VICTOR
So he sees her one time, and is here the next day. Really?

CHARLIE
Yep. That's our Emma. Always the charmer.

VICTOR
She sure is.

CHARLIE
(smiling)
Something bothering you?

VICTOR
Actually smart ass, I wanted to come over to talk with her about...

CHARLIE
But a rich dandy in a tan suit is here first! Drats!

VICTOR
How funny would it be?
I get you the job at the lake.
But because of that, she meets some millionaire toff 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 reach busy Central Park. Find a bench.

EMMA
That's my Church St. John's. And I work over there at Cambria Iron.

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

EMMA
I'm a secretary.

JAY
Do you like that?

EMMA
Not really. But 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 pretty common actually. Over a hundred men died in the mill last year.

JAY
Just like in Pittsburgh. It's such dangerous work. How are you doing?

EMMA
It was tough at first, especially for my Mom. They'd been together for years. But time passes. You just have to carry on.

JAY
I understand.
(a beat)
So, if you don't like your job at Cambria, how about being a singer?

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

JAY
Ever thought of moving?

EMMA
Maybe, some day. But I'm here now.

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. I like tennis, horses. Traveling. Parties.

EMMA
Do you work?

JAY
For my father. At Union Iron.

EMMA
How's that going?

JAY
(smiles)
How's that going. Well, he regrets that I enjoy my life of leisure, a little too much.
And wishes I was more like him, working ten hour days, six days a week. So not going that well.

EMMA
Well. So much honesty on our first, whatever this is.

JAY
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 here. Take that Friday off work. And I'll pick you up and take you to the lake.

EMMA
Sounds like a date.

JAY
More than a date. How about a grand tour of Lake Conemaugh. Some time on the water. A great dinner. A night to always remember.

EMMA
I'm intrigued. Who will be there? Maybe President Cleveland?

JAY
You mean old Grover? You never know. You'll have to see.

INT. ANNA FENN'S HOME PARLOR - 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!

As they enter, greetings all around. Several kids run up to hug Emma. The men turn to talk to the tall, lanky Charlie.

JOHN FENN
Lord you're growing like a weed.

CHARLIE
Bit of a growth spurt I guess.

JOHN FENN
You still playing ball at Johnstown High?

CHARLIE
Yep. Starting at first base.

GEORGE WATERS
(holding a cigar)
Damn. You keep growing and you'll be playing 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 steam elevators.

ANNA
I heard about that. Well we must go, running late as usual.

The Fenns and Waters say goodbye. Emma and Charlie sit on the couch and the excited kids gather around them.

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 age.

The six Fenn children and two Waters daughters introduce themselves and how old they are.

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?

Kids scream YAY! Charlie begins the song on his guitar.

INT. CAMBRIA IRON WORKS SECRETARIAL OFFICES - DAY

Emma at her desk. 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! Be back in a few minutes.

EXT. ELEGANT CARRIAGE MOVING THROUGH JOHNSTOWN - DAY

JAY PHIPPS steers an elegant carriage 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 cow!
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 British Royal family, the Rockefellers use them.

PEG
Well that's Emma's ride today.

MR. MILLER
Really? Our Emma?

EMMA approaches. Her hair and makeup done up. Looks GORGEOUS.

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

Emma sees the elegant carriage waiting for her. Wow!

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

MR. MILLER
(a bit shaken, wow!)
Oh, OK Emma. You, you have fun.

EXT. OUTSIDE CAMBRIA WORKS - DAY

As EMMA walks towards the carriage, people cheer her on from the office windows: "GO EMMA" "BULLY FOR YOU". JAY smiles, bows at her like she's a queen, takes her bag, helps her onto the carriage. She waves goodbye to those cheering her on.

The carriage passes near the Heiser store. VICTOR sweeping out front. Sees the fancy carriage. Spots EMMA laughing, smiling with JAY. DAMN IT! DAMN IT!

He drops his broom on the ground. Picks it up by the broom end. SLAMS IT against a metal streetlamp pole. The broom splits in two, with the handle half flying across the street.

The TOWN CRAZY MAN stands across the street. He is a haggard man in his 50s, wild blue eyes, long white hair.

He catches the broom handle as it flies through the air. Walks across the street towards Victor, holding it.

TOWN CRAZY MAN
Listen to me boy. I had a vision I would receive a Sign today.
And here it is!
This is the Staff of Christ!

VICTOR
That's a broom handle you nut.

TOWN CRAZY MAN
This is a Sign. Of what is to come. For you boy. You're going to start having the visions. Visions about the dam breaking. About the flood. The start of the End Times.

VICTOR
What?

TOWN CRAZY MAN
I'm having the visions too. Do you read the Bible? The Book of Revelation? Know about The Seven Seals? One of those seals will be broken in this very valley, by a flood. Starting the End Times.

VICTOR
Look you kook. Get the hell away from my store.

TOWN CRAZY MAN
You'll see boy. You'll be haunted by terrible visions. Just like me. Soon enough. You'll see.

Victor enters his store. The Crazy Man walks down the street holding the broom handle. Mumbling to himself.

EXT. LAKE CONEMAUGH, NEAR THE DAM - DAY

The carriage moves through the lush forest towards the lake.

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 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
All the 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 a fireworks show. It's a big party. You'll see.

The carriage stops on the bridge over the spillway. A beautiful setting, the water bubbling down, lit by the sun.

JAY (CONT'D)
Isn't this butter upon bacon?

Jay steers the carriage to a stop near the spillway. They find a picnic table and Jay sets down a picnic basket.

JAY (CONT'D)
Such a fine day right? Sunny. A nice 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. But wine is a key element.

Jay takes a bottle from the basket. 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. VICTOR HEISER'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

VICTOR in bed, tossing and turning, 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. Loud rumbling. The dam crumbles and water explodes into the valley. Like a tidal wave.

VICTOR sits up in bed. Eyes wide open. That crazy man said I would start having visions like this. Is it happening?

INT. CAMBRIA IRON WORKS - SECRETARIAL OFFICES - MORNING

EMMA sits down at her desk. Peg rolls her chair over to talk.

PEG
Welcome back Cinderella.

EMMA
Oh please.

PEG
So how did it go? Do tell.

EMMA
(Leans in to talk to her)
Alright. He took me to the lake for a nice picnic by the spillway. Then off to their so-called "cottage" which is three times bigger than our house!

PEG
I've heard about those cottages.

EMMA
Spent some time on a sailboat. We had dinner at the Clubhouse. Later a bonfire outside. Some drinks. I even smoked a cigar for a bit! 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, we went out on the lake in a fancy steam yacht. Never been on one of those before.

Just spent time together. Later I got dressed at the cottage for my singing. Then after the show, Charlie and I headed 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 over.

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

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. ON SAILBOAT DURING THE FEAST OF LANTERNS - EVENING

JAY and EMMA mingle among others on a fancy sailboat. Five lit lanterns hang on the sailboat. Jay pours Emma some wine. A beautiful summer evening turning to dusk.

JAY
Miss Hart, are you enjoying the Feast of Lanterns.

EMMA
I am 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 spillway.

EMMA
I have a question about the spillway. I know the members love to fish the lake. Don't the game fish swim out through the spillway?

JAY
No. There's a screen of iron rods under the bridge. 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.
(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. Night setting in. The lanterns shine brighter.

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 fifty years old, and I used to get scared.

JAY
You don't worry anymore?

EMMA
Some of the smartest people in the country have fine summer places here. Like your Dad. And I believe that those very smart people are taking good care of that dam.

JAY
(points at a cottage)
Colonel Unger lives in that cottage. 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
So. Have you thought about, about us? What we discussed this morning?

EMMA
(looks up at him)
I have. I know the Club here closes tomorrow. And so, how can we...

Jay leans in with a kiss. Holds her. Gazes into her eyes.

JAY
I want you in my life Emma.
I want you to come to Pittsburgh.
This fall, at Christmas...

EMMA
Really? But...

JAY
I'll be blunt. 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 FIREWORKS explode over the boats and the lake.

EXT COLONEL UNGER'S COTTAGE - MORNING

SUPER: Colonel Unger's Cottage

March 1889

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

In the carriage sits JOHN FULTON, the President of Cambria Iron. Fulton, a tall 56 yo, iron-grey beard, dark brow.

Fulton approaches the front door. Knocks. Colonel UNGER answers. With him stands 23 yo old slender baby-faced JOHN PARKE in an ill-fitting suit. They move into Unger's office.

INT. COLONEL UNGER's OFFICE - MORNING*

JOHN FULTON
Colonel. Thank you for meeting me.

UNGER
Of course Mr. Fulton. Before we begin, this is Mr. John Parke, an engineer we hired to help here with special projects.
(Fulton nods hello)
What can we do for you today?

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

This lake has grown to its largest size ever. Three miles long, a mile wide. We believe issues with the stability of the dam must be addressed.

UNGER
Alright first, we monitor the lake level closely. And have a spillway to use as needed.

FULTON
That spillway is only seven or eight feet below the dam crest. If the lake level rose too high, it becomes useless.

The lake holds over twenty million tons of water, at least. If that amount of water breached the dam, it would be a disaster for the valley.

UNGER
I disagree. Your own newspaper in Johnstown, the *Tribune*, had an article on this topic a year or so ago.

FULTON
I know about that article.

UNGER
It said a break would not impact Johnstown too much. There would be some bad flooding, but most of the water would disperse through the fifteen miles of valley to Johnstown. Into streams, creeks.

FULTON
I believe that article was wrong. A lot of people do.

And it's not just the amount of the water. This lake is five hundred feet higher than the valley. If it broke, all that water would head downhill. For miles.

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. Parke was hired to install a new septic system.

FULTON
I see. A septic system.

UNGER
Can we get to the point? What do you want to discuss today?

FULTON
Our recommendations are here.
(He hands him a report)
Please review this when you can, but in summary, we recommend another spillway be installed. You need to work on overhauling the dam, especially the upper slopes. You should also...

UNGER
(interrupting)
Fine. I'll review your report with the Club leadership. When they arrive in early June.

FULTON
Early June. So in three months.
(sighs)
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 will help pay for these changes to the dam. We feel that strongly about this situation.

UNGER
Thank you Mr. Fulton. Duly noted.

FULTON
Thank you both. I can find my way out.

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

PARKE
Colonel, what do you think?

UNGER
It's nothing new. Believe me.

PARKE
If you want, I can review that report. Maybe there are some actions we can take to...

UNGER
(Sternly, stares at him)
Mr. Parke. Listen to me.
(a beat)
I hired you for one thing.
A new septic system.
That's what the members want.
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: **November, 1889**

CHARLIE with EMMA on the platform. Dressed in winter coats. She is ready to board. Some snow falling.

EMMA
Remember I told Mom I'm staying with Dottie Kinevey in Shadyside.

CHARLIE
You sure about this trip?

EMMA
Yeah. Why?

CHARLIE
How well do you know this guy? You only saw him a few times, right?

VICTOR approaches them on the platform.

EMMA
What are you doing here?

VICTOR
Charlie told me you were going to Pittsburgh. To see Phipps.

EMMA
(To Charlie)
Why did you...

VICTOR
(To Emma)
I can't believe you're really going to see this guy. Don't you know what kind of person he is? He's a rogue. A scamp. He'll just...

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

Jay has been writing me letters. Lovely letters. Wanting me to come visit him since the summer.

VICTOR
Alright. He is writing you nice letters. But do you really think you have a future with him. Other than this summer fling. Seriously.

EMMA
(a beat)
I don't know. And I know his reputation. But I want to find out for myself. With eyes wide open. If there's something between us. Something long lasting.

An announcement: "Final Boarding for Pennsylvania Railroad Train 909 to Pittsburgh and points west. Final boarding."

EMMA (CONT'D)
Charlie I'll see you here on Sunday, around six.

She gives Victor some side eye as she leaves. After she boards the train, Victor turns to Charlie.

VICTOR
You know Charlie. I wonder. Maybe Jay is playing her. But, she might be playing him too. To get what she wants. She always seems to get what she wants.

INT. PITTSBURGH UNION STATION - DAY

After exiting the train, an excited EMMA spots JAY waiting for her. Jay walks up to her and gives her a big hug.

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
Let me get my bag. And...

JAY
No I have someone for that.

An African American porter steps up and takes her bag. They start walking.

EMMA
Are we off to the Phipps castle?

JAY
(smiles)
The castle? That will come later. Actually I wanted to stop off at the Duquesne Club first. Have a few drinks. You can powder your hair a bit.

EMMA
I didn't know women could visit the Duquesne Club?

JAY
On Friday evenings, we welcome the fairer sex to join us.

EMMA
As long as I don't drink too much. I might fall into the moat at the castle. Get eaten by an alligator.

JAY
Don't worry. The drawbridge is very wide and the alligators are friendly.

EMMA
But am I dressed smart enough for the Duquesne Club?

JAY
Don't worry. You look beautiful.

EXT. DUQUESNE CLUB ENTRANCE - DAY

EMMA and JAY walk under the red awning. Some snow in the air. Emma so thrilled and nervous. The Duquesne Club!

INT. DUQUESNE CLUB LOBBY, BAR ROOM - DAY

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.

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.

JAY
(calls for the bartender)
Raymond! Good man! A Tom Collins and a Manhattan, two cherries.
(Turns to Emma)
Well, thoughts 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 much smaller towns than Johnstown.

JAY (CONT'D)
Mr. Knox, our club attorney, is from a tiny burg called Brownsville. Mr. Horne 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. Elegantly dressed and beautiful 24 yo MILDRED CHAMBERS and 24 yo LORETTA MUELLER walk over.

JAY (CONT'D)
Emma, please meet Miss Mildred Chambers and Miss Loretta Mueller, 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 Miss Hart. Please enjoy your stay. Jay will take very good care of you.

The women walk away, talking to themselves, giggling. Emma thinks that is odd. Club members ANDREW MELLON, DURBIN HORNE and JAMES CHAMBERS approach. Jay greets them warmly.

JAY
Emma, please meet Mr. Andrew Mellon, Mr. James Chambers, and Mr. Durbin Horne.
Gentlemen, please meet my friend, Miss Emma Hart from Johnstown. This past summer, she was a singer at the Clubhouse at the lake and...

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

CHAMBERS
You were so wonderful last summer.

EMMA
Thank you. It's such an honor to be here.

HORNE
You are so welcome. So, being from Johnstown, I've often wondered, how do the folks there feel about our club at the lake? Are there any, strong opinions?

EMMA
Mr. Horne. I believe people are kind of proud that the financial titans of Pittsburgh 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 just so peaceful. So beautiful. And so far away from the awful smoke and noise here.

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 know it's an old dam. That does worry some people.

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

EMMA
I know the Colonel very well.

MELLON
(a beat)
Well I'll just come out and ask. Miss Hart. Would you mind, singing something? Maybe one song.

EMMA
(Surprised, smiles)
No. Not at all. It'd be my pleasure.

Mellon escorts Emma to the piano. She has a brief chat with the musicians. Mellon rings a bell.

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

After some light applause, Emma begins the Civil War ballad "Aura Lee" accompanied by the piano and violin. Her voice captivating. A moving performance. Loud clapping at the end. She steps back over to Jay and the other men.

HORNE
My goodness, that was wonderful.

CHAMBERS
"Aura Lee" is my favorite song from the war years. Thank you dear.

JAY
So beautiful. Let me get you a drink.

EMMA
Thank you all for the kind words. And Jay, another Tom Collins please. But I need to use the ladies' room first.

Jay provides her with directions. Emma exits the room.

INT. DUQUESNE CLUB, LADIES BATHROOM

EMMA sits in a stall, starts to stand, ready to leave. The door to the bathroom swings opens. MILDRED CHAMBERS and LORETTA MUELLER enter, talking loudly. Both a bit drunk. Emma quietly sits back down, pulls her legs up off the floor.

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

Loretta hushes Mildred. She looks under the stall doors. No one with them in the bathroom (she thinks).

LORETTA
Yes she is quite the singer. Apparently Jay saw her sing and fell so hard for her he visited her the next day. In Johnstown.

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

LORETTA
(stops, thinking)
Isn't that big horseshoe railroad curve near there? I don't know.

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

LORETTA
I was talking to Philo. Jay told him about her visit.

MILDRED
What'd he say? Do tell.

LORETTA
Jay told Philo. I need to close the book on this girl. Worked on her last summer, but didn't get too far. I need to get her notch on my belt. And this small town bumpkin will be so easy to bed.

MILDRED
He's such a scoundrel!

Both laughing. Emma comes out of the stall.

EMMA
Actually ladies...

They jump. Both with "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. A nasty, icy stare at Loretta.

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

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

INT. DUQUESNE CLUB BAR ROOM

EMMA walks up to JAY as he chats with others.

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. Jay follows her out.

INT. DUQUESNE CLUB LOBBY

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
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. No I didn't mean that! I might've been kidding around. Being a clown. It means nothing.

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

JAY
Please, please believe me.

EMMA
All that time at the lake, the letters. The gushing over me. How talented I was, how beautiful. All lies, to get me here. To your royal court, to get me into bed...

JAY
I meant what I said. Everything.

EMMA
You're nothing but a liar.
And I'm nothing but a fool.
Now get me out of here. I want to
be on the next train to Johnstown.

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

INT. ON TRAIN HEADED BACK TO JOHNSTOWN - MORNING

EMMA'S head's pressed against the train window, some tears. An OLDER GENTLEMAN seated next to her, sees this. Gently pokes her. Passes her a handkerchief. The gentleman is distinguished, handsome, with grey hair and blue eyes.

OLDER GENTLEMEN
Don't worry, it's clean.
(Smiles)
I don't mean to pry. But is
everything alright?

EMMA
Not really.

OLDER GENTLEMEN
We have some time on this train.
And I can be a sympathetic ear.
Do you want to talk about it?

EMMA
Alright. I was in Pittsburgh to
visit what I thought was a friend.
I thought he cared for me. I
thought we had a future together.
Turns out, it was all a big lie. I
was just someone to toy with.

OLDER GENTLEMEN
How did you meet him?

EMMA
This past summer, I met him while
singing...

OLDER GENTLEMEN
You're a singer?

EMMA
Yes. I sing at a club at a lake
near where I live in Johnstown.

EMMA (CONT'D)
The richest people in Pittsburgh belong. The South Fork club.

OLDER GENTLEMEN
I've heard of that club. This young man, is wealthy?

EMMA
Yes. Very.

OLDER GENTLEMEN
And you were hoping that maybe, this young man and yourself...

EMMA
(some tears)
Yes. I daydreamed about this visit for months. Of how it could go. Maybe change my life.
But I don't know why I really believed anything would happen with him and me.
Some nobody from a small town.

OLDER GENTLEMEN
But I could see how a young man could fall for you.

EMMA
Well, it's over. Over with him. And now my hopes and my dreams are gone. What I wanted. My future, everything, looks so dark.

OLDER GENTLEMEN
But dear, it can't all be dark. Your hopes and dreams shouldn't grow dark.
They're what moves us forward. 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.
You're so young.
Just starting your life.

OLDER GENTLEMEN (CONT'D)
Keep your dreams alive.
It is what will move you forward.

Emma, teary eyed, smiles a bit, leans on his shoulder. He puts his arm around her.

EXT. JOHNSTOWN TRAIN STATION PLATFORM - AFTERNOON

Emma on the platform, holds her bag. Looking for Charlie. VICTOR approaches. She was not expecting him. A bit peeved.

EMMA
Where's Charlie?

VICTOR
He told me you were coming back a day early.
Asked if I could meet you.
Did your plans change?

Victor takes her bag. Emma irritated, walks with 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)
What?

VICTOR
I told you, he was no good.

Emma turns away and starts walking.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Wait. Please.

Emma stops again. With a "what now?" look.

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

EMMA
Alright. Well it's over.

VICTOR
I should have told you this before. In firm words. Directly.
I. I adore you.
I have since we were little kids. You know that.
And I know you want to get away from here. Start somewhere new. With your singing. And you hoped that would be possible with Jay.

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

VICTOR
I'm not 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 right now. I don't want to talk about this. Or you. Or anything. I want to go home.

Emma storms away. He says nothing more to her.

INT. HART HOME - FAMILY ROOM- AFTERNOON

EMMA enters the front room. Her mom on the couch.

RUTH
Hello. I thought you were coming back tomorrow.

EMMA
I needed to come back early. Didn't Charlie tell you?

RUTH
Everything OK with Dottie?

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

RUTH
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
He wanted me to visit. I thought he had feelings for me. I thought there could be something with him. A future.

RUTH
And?

EMMA
And. It's over. I don't want to talk about it.

RUTH
That's fine.

Emma starts to tear up.

RUTH (CONT'D)
Honey what's wrong?

Emma moves in to hug her Mom. They embrace.

EMMA
I did really like him. And if something could have happened with him, maybe I could start in Pittsburgh, with a singing career.

RUTH
I know you want that dear.

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

RUTH
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.
We fell in love. Started a family.
You and Charlie.
And I wouldn't change one thing about what happened to me.

EMMA
But you put your dreams aside. I'm not ready to do that. Not yet.

RUTH
One thing I've learned dear.
Life is not how we plan it.
Unexpected events happen, something you never 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 BEDROOM - NIGHT

VICTOR in bed, tossing, turning. Dreaming of the flood again.

A powerful wave of water fifty feet high. People running, but they are doomed. A train car is crushed by the waters. People in the windows screaming.

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

Victor sits up, wide awake. The visions are getting worse.

SUPER: MARCH, 1889

EXT. SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE PORCH - DAY

VICTOR walks toward the Clubhouse. As he approaches, he spots someone on the porch. JOHN PARKE, smoking a cigarette.

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. Working for the Colonel. I started here about a month ago.

VICTOR
Congratulations. 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 to set up a new septic system. Install indoor plumbing. Getting rid of that monstrosity for one thing.
(points at the outhouse)
You've been here for awhile?

VICTOR
A few years. I work for the Colonel getting the boats ready for the members. I'm on the lake a lot.

PARKE
Alright Mr. Heiser, give me your thoughts on the dam. Everyone else seems to want to share their thoughts.

VICTOR
OK. First it leaks, and they have to patch it every spring. They need to build up the dam face. Strengthen it. There's only one spillway for this huge lake. Just one. They need another one. Maybe some piping under the dam too.

PARKE
I know. I agree with you. I've brought up the dam with the Colonel a few times. And the last time I did, he got really angry. Said not to ever bring it up again.

VICTOR
Really?

PARKE
From my estimates, it would be so expensive to make changes to the dam. And these bosses are richer than God, but they don't like spending money. And, Unger believes an article he read in the Johnstown newspaper about the dam. From a few years ago.

VICTOR
What did it say?

PARKE
That if the dam failed, the lake waters would disperse through the valley, into the creeks and streams. A bad day of flooding, but not a huge disaster.

VICTOR
People do believe that. It's fifteen miles to Johnstown. Quite a ways.

PARKE
Yeah. True. But.
This lake sits higher than the valley and Johnstown. And there's twenty million tons of water in there. At least.
If the dam broke, all that water would burst out. Heading downhill. For fifteen miles. In a steep valley. That would be some immense power.
(a beat)
I believe it would be far worse than another bad day of flooding.

VICTOR
Christ. I haven't told anyone about this, but I'm having dreams about the dam breaking, flooding the valley, killing people.

PARKE
Really.

VICTOR
And here's the weird thing. There's an old man in town who's always screaming about the end of the world. And one day last year, he told me I would start having these dreams. Or visions he called them. About the dam breaking. And the flood. And the destruction.

PARKE
He told you that.

VICTOR
Yeah. He said the flood was the start the End Times or something. Said he was having the same dreams. I thought he was crazy, but I'm having the dreams too. Just like he said I would. It's just so strange.

Parke nods. Looks at the lake. Takes a long drag on his cigarette.

Super: **Thursday, May 30, 1889**

The Day Before The Flood

Decoration Day Parade

Sandy Vale Cemetery, Johnstown

EXT. SANDY VALE CEMETERY - MORNING*

Union Army Veterans wearing their dress-blue Civil War uniforms lead a parade into the Sandy Vale Cemetery. The town's Revolutionary and Civil War veterans are buried here.

In the parade, EMMA and CHARLIE march, along with VICTOR.

When the Union Army veterans reach a veteran's tombstone, they salute, bow for a moment, and lay a wreath on a stand.

Above the parade, 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 greets them as they view a tombstone. It reads:

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

VICTOR
Who's this?

EMMA
Our father's brother, Billy Hart.
He served in the 54th Pennsylvania.
Fell at New Market in Virginia.
Just nineteen years old.

VICTOR
Right. I remember you talking about
him.

EMMA
My dad missed him so much.
The baby of the family.
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 a prayer, they get under a tree out of the rain, now falling harder. Victor turns to her, nervously.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Emma. I'm so sorry about the whole
Jay Phipps thing. How I reacted.
I know he really hurt you.

I understand what you hoped would
happen with him. He was your chance
to get away from here. I can't
blame you for wanting that.

Emma smiles. CHARLIE runs over to them. Rain pouring down.

CHARLIE
We should go. This storm is
getting worse.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Someone said we could get record rains. Even tornadoes.

EMMA
(Turns to Victor, smiles)
My Mom's making some apple pies this weekend. Why not stop by on Sunday afternoon? We can talk about those other things. You know, the other things you wanted to talk about.

VICTOR
Yes. Alright. Sunday. See you on Sunday.

Emma leans in and hugs Victor. Gives him a kiss on the cheek. And then Emma and Charlie head out of the cemetery, running, along with everyone else as the rains and winds pick up.

Victor walks slowly in the rain. A big smile. He's getting drenched. He doesn't care. His heart is full. He can't wait until Sunday.

INT. VICTOR HEISER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

VICTOR in bed, the rain pouring down hard. He hears something odd, like a voice. Gets up, walks to the window.

Standing in the rain in the street below him, the TOWN CRAZY MAN. Staring right at him. He is holding the broom handle, and the handle is glowing brightly. 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, slowly.

TOWN CRAZY 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 turns and walks into the rain. Vanishes.

Victor wakes up. That dream was so vivid. 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 - MORNING

Super: **Friday, May 31, 1889**

The Day Of The Flood

8:30 A.M.

EMMA sips her tea. CHARLIE enters. Groggy, sleepy.

EMMA
Good morning. Schools are 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. I've been having dreams. For months. Horrible dreams about the dam breaking. So real, so vivid. It started right after I talked to the crazy man downtown. You know, the guy with the crazy long white hair. He said I would have these dreams.

EMMA
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.

CHARLIE
The end of the world?

VICTOR
Anyway last night I saw him in a dream talking to me. And he said today is the day. Today is the day of the flood!

CHARLIE
Come on. It's just another rainy day.

VICTOR
This is different. I'm telling you. Please stay home Emma. Don't go to work. And get your Mom. Get to higher ground. Maybe Green Hill.

EMMA
(Matter of factly)
Mister Heiser. I am going to Cambria and getting my paycheck. And like I told you. Come back here on Sunday. For some apple pie. But wear some dry clothes.

Emma leans in and hugs Charlie. 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. You should get to higher ground. Green Hill!

CHARLIE
Come on. Is this some scheme 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. Dry off. I'll see you on Sunday.

VICTOR
I hope so. God I hope so.

EXT. SOUTH FORK DAM - MORNING*

Super: 10:00 AM

TORRENTS OF RAIN pour down. Water now only a few feet from the dam crest. Men dump tree stumps, dirt, large stones off wagons onto the road, hoping 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 his men working on the spillway screen using long poles, picks, axes. But there's no water getting to the spillway. Rides over, gets off his horse. Angry.

UNGER
Why isn't the spillway working?

PARKE
We can't get the screen cleared. The lake keeps pushing logs, stumps, underbrush, all kind of debris into it. Faster than we can clear it.

UNGER
Get that screen cleared. You hear me. Get more men on it!

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.

BUCANNON
I'm John Bucannon from South Fork. There's no water getting to the spillway. It's because of the screen attached to the bridge.

UNGER
I don't have time for this.

BUCANNON
The screen is clogged with too much shit. Too much debris. If you can't clear the screen, tear down the bridge!

UNGER
Get the hell out of here.

Unger steps away from him. Bucannon follows him.

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

Bucannon finally leaves. Parke approaches the Colonel.

PARKE
The spillway working fully is the only way to prevent the dam breaking. Since we can't get the screen cleared, we have to tear down the bridge.

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

PARKE
But Colonel...

UNGER
Enough! No more excuses! Get that screen cleared. Get this spillway working!

INT. HART HOME - FAMILY ROOM - MORNING

Super: **10:30 A.M.**

CHARLIE plays his guitar. The front door opens. EMMA enters.

CHARLIE
Home already?

EMMA
They let us out early. How long did Victor stay?

CHARLIE
He left right after you. Still upset about his dreams. Wanted me to take Mom to Green Hill.

EMMA
Well anyway. I got my check.
(Holds up her check.)
Guess the crazy man was wrong about the flood today. So far at least.

EXT. SOUTH FORK DAM - MORNING*

Super: **11:15 A.M.**

The rain continues to pour down. The workmen still trying to dump tree stumps, logs, rocks and dirt onto the dam road.

But the lake waters are pouring across the road and down the front of the dam. Small waterfalls are forming.

Unger still on his horse, yelling at the men to do more. But even he sees these efforts are not going to stop the waters.

He rides over to Parke, still working on the spillway. Off his horse, he steps up to Parke. Unger is solemn. Like a broken man. He knows what's going to happen.

UNGER
Parke. We need to get a message out to the valley. Ride down to South Fork. Go to the telegraph tower. Let them know that the dam is going to give way. They need to alert the valley towns and Johnstown.

Parke nods and immediately runs to get his horse.

EXT. PORCH OF ANNA FENN HOME - MORNING

Super: **11:30 A.M.**

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

BELLE
Is John around? We could use some help moving some furniture upstairs.

ANNA
He's actually heading over to his Mom's place. He'll be back later.

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. STINEMAN'S STORE, SOUTH FORK - MORNING*

Super: **11:45 A.M.**

Parke rides his horse on a treacherous country road through the pouring rain. Arrives in South Fork. Spots a group of men standing on the porch of Stineman's Store. Rides up to them.

PARKE
(Drenched, out of breath)
Listen to me. Listen. The waters are pouring over the top of the dam. It's going to give way. You need to alert people.

The men look at him. Just shake their heads.

STINEMAN MAN ONE
Listen son. Someone already rode down here this morning and told us about the dam. Guy named Bidwell. Said there was nothing to worry about. The Colonel has a plan.

PARKE
No. No. Listen, things have gotten much worse. The Colonel sent me. Told me to warn you all!

The man waves him off. Parke, frustrated, rides to the South Fork telegraph tower to get messages down the valley.

EXT. SOUTH FORK DAM - AFTERNOON*

Super: **1:30 P.M.**

A fifty foot waterfall pours over the dam. Workmen stand around. Their axes, tools, lay on the ground, useless.

UNGER looks sick. Terrified. PEOPLE from South Fork have gathered at the dam all morning. Staring, watching, waiting.

EXT. TELEGRAPH MESSAGES*

On screen, telegraph messages typed out and displayed.

1:52 PM RP OD VIA MP & AO
THE WATER IS RUNNING OVER THE BREAST OF LAKE DAM, IN CENTER AND WEST SIDE, AND IS BECOMING DANGEROUS.

2:25 PM RP OD VIA MP & AO
THE DAM IS BECOMING DANGEROUS AND MAY POSSIBLY GO.

EXT. SOUTH FORK DAM - AFTERNOON

Super: **3:00 P.M.**

As the rain pounds down, the WATERFALL pouring over the dam is one hundred feet wide. PARKE and UNGER stare at this spectacle, along with a large crowd. Parke looks around.

PARKE
All these people. I guess you don't see something like this every day.
(a beat)
What do you really think is going to happen, when the dam breaks?

UNGER
(trembling voice)
The waters will spread out in the valley.

UNGER (CONT'D)
Into the streams and creeks. Like
that newspaper article said.
Why, what do you think?

PARKE
(Solemnly)
I disagree Colonel.
I believe.
When this dam fails.
And twenty million tons of water
pours into this valley.
Headed downhill.
I fear, 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 steady.

EXT. THE VALLEY, THE STONE RAILROAD BRIDGE - AFTERNOON*

LOUD THUNDEROUS ROAR as twenty million tons of water devours and crushes the valley landscape. The wave is 40 feet high.

Tears up railroad tracks on the valley edges. Shreds huge trees and telegraph poles like twigs. Crushes farmhouses, barns, any structure in its path. Like paper blocks.

HOWLING WINDS ahead of the wave. 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.

A rumbling noise. The bridge EXPLODES in a heap as the flood wave punches through it with even more force.

At Mineral Point, people on hillsides watch as a 40 foot wave flattens their creek side town. Over 30 structures. Gone.

EXT. - EAST CONEMAUGH RAIL YARD - AFTERNOON*

Super: **East Conemaugh**

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

The wall of water smashes into a huge train roundhouse. Nearly 30 locomotives, some weighing up to eighty tons, are lifted, flipped and crushed like toys. Locomotives and train cars scattered up to a mile from the flattened roundhouse.

EXT. - EAST CONEMAUGH RAIL YARD - AFTERNOON*

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

A Pullman passenger car among the cars on the higher tracks.

The other train with passenger cars on the lower tracks is closer to the oncoming flood. Which is coming fast.

The flood wave SMASHES the train on the lower tracks. People inside the passenger cars screaming in HORROR. Swamped.

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

But the waters are somewhat blocked by a train tower. The Pullman is partially flooded and pushed down the tracks. But the passengers survive. Weeping, thanking the Lord.

EXT. TOWN OF WOODVALE - AFTERNOON*

Super: **Woodvale**

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

The flood wave travels a straight two mile stretch to the town through the valley, no twists or turns. The wave hits like a SLEDGE HAMMER. 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.

Next the waters slam into the massive Gautier Barb Wire factory west of town. The boilers EXPLODE in a thunderous ROAR. HUGE SPRAYS of water. Barb wire now in the waters.

EXT. SHANTY ON CREEK NEAR JOHNSTOWN - AFTERNOON

The TOWN CRAZY MAN steps outside his shanty. Holding the broom handle. Turns to see a 40 foot high WALL of DARK WATER APPROACHING FAST.

At first he shakes in fear. Wide-eyed, terrified. But he pauses, takes a deep breath. Smiles. Makes the Sign Of The Cross. Closes his eyes. Looks up. Extends his arms. Holding the broom handle. Screams "I'M COMING HOME LORD!"

Super: **Johnstown**

4:05 P.M.

INT. HEISER HOME - SECOND FLOOR - AFTERNOON

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

MATTIE
Maybe the worst's over.

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 - SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

CHARLIE strums his guitar. His mom RUTH sitting in a chair enjoying it, smiling. He stops. Gazes out a window.

CHARLIE
Looks like the rain's slowing down.

RUTH
Finally. I might head downstairs.
Want to get dinner started and...

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)
See it? It's a flood wave. The dam must have broke. We've got to go.

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

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

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

A LOUD WAVE of water BLASTS through the windows. The house CRUSHED, FLOODED. All three tossed into the powerful WATERS.

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 rushing waters push them out into a crowded debris field.

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. She gazes out. 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.

EXT. STREETS OF JOHNSTOWN - AFTERNOON

The wall of water SLAMS the eastern end of town. Shattered buildings, carriages, railroad cars slammed together.

INT. HEISER HOME - SECOND FLOOR - AFTERNOON

GEORGE HEISER looking for Victor. MATTIE says he's in the backyard. George runs to a window. Spots VICTOR by the barn in their backyard. His Dad motions GET ON THE ROOF! NOW!

EXT. HEISER BARN - AFTERNOON*

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

The black wave approaches as high as the building and PUMMELS it. His parents disappear. He closes his eyes. Waits to die.

The waters SLAM Victor's barn. Knocks it off its foundation. It starts SPINNING in the water. He hangs on barely.

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 packs 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 HOME - SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM - AFTERNOON*

ANNA FENN and her CHILDREN play on the second floor. 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. Kids SCREAMING, THRASHING ABOUT. Water in the room rises fast. Anna tries to save her kids. All struggling in the waters. Grabbing at her. The water keeps 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 - AFTERNOON*

VICTOR hangs onto a roof in the rushing flood waters. He dodges flying timbers and debris blasting 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. The train car SPLASHES in the rushing waters, barely missing him.

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 - AFTERNOON*

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 roof 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. Pulls them onto the rafters with him and his wife. Both COUGHING, CRYING. They all hug each other. Alive.

EXT. RIDING THE FLOOD WAVE - AFTERNOON

EMMA's roof drifts in the debris field. She spots THREE CHILDREN on a portion of a roof. CRYING OUT, scared. Their roof sinking fast. They float closer. 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 this!

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

Using all her strength, Emma pulls them closer, almost falls in. They're close enough that she can help them onto her more sturdy floating roof.

The older sister helps her brother onto the roof. He's CRYING in pain. His leg twisted at an odd angle. Finally all are safely on Emma's roof.

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

EMMA (CONT'D)
You're OK sweetie. You're OK.
(sees the dog)
What's your doggie's name?

YOUNG GIRL
Hazel. She barked when the flood was coming. And we got 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. Hugs her dog.

EXT. CAMBRIA IRON, SCENES OF JOHNSTOWN - AFTERNOON

Powerful waters SLAM into the Cambria Iron plant. CRUSHES 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.

The scene: 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 structures, corpses, dead horses. Smoke as fires burn.

Stunned crowds of people walk down from hillsides around the town. They try to help the survivors as much as possible.

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

EXT. RIDING THE FLOOD WATERS - AFTERNOON

VICTOR's roof comes to a rest in shallow waters. He stumbles out to a muddy street. Soaked, out of breath. Hands, bare feet bleeding, bruised. His clothes--torn, covered in dirt and mud.

EXT. JOHNSTOWN, STONE BRIDGE DEBRIS FIELD - AFTERNOON*

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

Within the debris field, people trapped in battered structures. 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 locomotive. The winds catch the flames. The fires spread quickly among the debris and the battered wooden structures with people trapped inside. An inferno erupts.

People try to help the people trapped in the debris, but there's not much anyone can do. Most are too far out of reach. People SCREAM for help. Horrible BLOOD CURDLING SCREAMS of those dying in the fire.

EXT. NEAR STONE BRIDGE - AFTERNOON*

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.

The flames approach fast due to the high winds and are suddenly all around them. It's too much heat. They have to quit the effort. The woman's horrible SCREAMS fill the air. Victor falls to his knees, holding his ears.

Victor shakily rises. Listens for other cries for help. He hears a VOICE. He runs towards it. He recognizes the voice. It's EMMA! He cries out "EMMA" as he runs toward the voice.

EXT. EMMA'S STRUCTURE IN THE DEBRIS FIELD - AFTERNOON

VICTOR climbs onto some battered buildings. Spots EMMA with the three CHILDREN. Trapped by crushed structures.

Victor yells for help. TWO MEN run over. One has an AXE. They start to bust through the wrecked buildings and finally reach them. Victor makes his way onto the roof, helps Emma off the structure. The other men pick up the children and Hazel.

EXT. MUDDY STREET NEAR STONE BRIDGE - AFTERNOON

The GROUP stumbles into a muddy street. Victor and the men first tend to the kids. Put them on an OX CART with some other injured people, a makeshift ambulance.

Victor approaches Emma. She looks at him, amazed, and hugs him. Whispers "Thank you". Hugs him tighter. She sees the ox cart leaving.

EMMA
Where are they taking them?

VICTOR
They set up a hospital on Adams Street, at the school house. What happened to you?

EMMA
Our house was crushed. My mom's lost. I don't know what happened to Charlie. He was floating away the last I saw him.

VICTOR
How did you end up with the kids?

EMMA
Their roof was sinking. And I was able to get them on my roof. What about you? What happened?

VICTOR
I was on our barn roof. The flood waters crushed our store. My Mom and Dad were swamped. Then my barn was picked up, carried away. Jumped on some other roofs. Rode it out.

EMMA
This is so, unbelievable. And good lord, you tried to warn us this morning.
(a beat)
Let's go to that hospital. Maybe Charlie's there.

EXT. DEVASTATED STREETS OF JOHNSTOWN - EVENING

EMMA and VICTOR walk through the shattered town. Huge piles of twisted wreckage and muck in muddy pools of water.

All around: 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 with a blanket.

A stunned, wide-eyed WOMAN approaches them. Asks if they'd seen a six year old blonde haired boy in brown pants, white shirt, "about so high". They both nod no, sorry.

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

INT. DUQUESNE CLUB BAR

JAY, PHILO and LLOYD at a table. Drinking. LAUGHING LOUDLY. Across the club, Philo spots MR. PHIPPS slowly walking into the bar room. He has a stunned look on his face.

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

Mr. Phipps walks over. His sad expression shakes them.

JAY
Dad. What's wrong? You OK?

PHIPPS SR.
(Slowly, solemnly)
We just finished a meeting.
The South Fork board.
We found out.
(a beat)
The dam broke on Lake Conemaugh,
this afternoon.
Flooded the valley down to
Johnstown.

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

JAY
What's the word? Is it bad?

PHIPPS SR.
From what we know, it's very bad.

They pulled a man out of the
Conemaugh River west of town. That
river was moving like white water
rapids. He said the flood hit
around 4:00. Devastated the town.

In the river, there were people
floating on wreckage, alive. But
also, dead bodies in the waters.
Corpses. Lots of them.

PHILO
Oh my God. Did you talk to Unger?

PHIPPS SR.
We can't reach him. The circuits are down to the lake.

Jay and his friends silent. Wide-eyed.

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

PHIPPS SR.
I know you did.
Pray for her son. And her family.
I'll pray for them too.
Pray for the whole town.
(a beat)
This will be in all the papers in the morning. Good night.

Mr. Phipps leaves the table. The bar, suddenly so quiet.

EXT. ADAMS STREET SCHOOLHOUSE - EVENING

A large crowd outside the makeshift hospital. People laid out on stretchers, some bodies covered by blankets.

EMMA and VICTOR enter the schoolhouse. A noisy chaotic scene. People on stretchers, on the floor. MOANS of pain. Doctors and nurses trying their best to help them.

Emma spots the THREE CHILDREN. Walks over and sees the brother in bed. His two sisters greet her warmly with hugs.

EMMA
What happened to your brother?

OLDER SISTER
They took off his one leg below the knee. It was mangled, twisted. It started to turn colors.

EMMA
Oh my. How are you doing?

OLDER SISTER
We're OK.

EMMA
Have you heard anything about your parents?

OLDER SISTER
No one has seen them. They were on the roof with us and were knocked off.

EMMA
Alright. They may still show up. I'll pray for them.

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

OLDER SISTER
Thank you. For everything.

Emma smiles, hugs her tight. Hugs her younger sister.

Emma and Victor walk the hospital. But do not find Charlie.

EXT. OUTSIDE ADAMS STREET SCHOOL HOUSE - EVENING

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

EMMA
We need to find a place to stay.

Victor sees people setting up tents. They head there.

INT. TENT NEAR THE ADAMS STREET SCHOOL HOUSE - MORNING

Morning light shines in the tent. VICTOR rolls over, sees EMMA. She looks so peaceful. He thinks: Holy hell. What now?

EXT. OUTSIDE ADAMS STREET SCHOOL HOUSE - MORNING*

On the top step, a group of older men stand. JOHN FULTON begins speaking to the crowd. EMMA and VICTOR in the crowd. Everyone presses in to hear him. And begin to quiet.

JOHN FULTON
Ladies and gentlemen, can I have your attention please.

I'm John Fulton, the President of the Cambria Iron company.
This morning I met with some of our city leaders. They asked me to lead our recovery efforts.

JOHN FULTON (CONT'D)
And I told them, I would be honored to act in that role. Now, I want to inform you of some of our first plans and who is responsible.

First Reverend Beale and Reverend Chapman will set up and manage morgues to handle the deceased.

Mr. Zimmerman and Mr. Johnson will work on incinerating dead horses and other animals.

Doctors Lowman and Matthews will set up hospitals.

Captain Miller will act as our chief of police and deputize a force to prevent looting.

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

MAN IN THE CROWD
What have you heard about relief? When should it arrive?

JOHN FULTON
At least a few days. Supplies from Pittsburgh can only reach Bolivar. And then moved on hand cars. I'm not sure about other relief.

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

MAN IN THE CROWD
We know why this happened. The big bosses' dam broke at the lake. That was their dam, their lake. They need to pay for this!

ANOTHER MAN IN THE CROWD
They are murderers! Anyone still 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.

The crowd finally quiets and calms.

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

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

We must carry on. The people still with us this morning are counting on our efforts. God bless us all on this mission.

EXT. PITTSBURGH UNION STATION - AFTERNOON*

A sign outside the station: "Pittsburgh Relief Committee." A large crowd there to donate suitcases and bags full of canned goods, coats, clothes, shoes and more. Uniformed railroad personnel load train cars with the supplies.

EXT. BOLIVAR TRAIN STATION - AFTERNOON*

Trains rumble through the green countryside. A sign "Johnstown Relief" hung on many of the cars.

At the Bolivar station west of Johnstown, men unload boxes and crates off a train. The supplies are loaded onto smaller HANDCARS that can still travel the damaged 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 - EVENING

Super: **Tuesday, June 4**

UNGER at his desk, looks ill, haggard. His hair and beard unruly, face gaunt. He has barely eaten or slept in days.

Stares out a window at the former lake--an alien expanse of mud and puddles lit by the fading sunlight.

Unger perks up. He hears something. Angry voices outside.

In the waning light, he spots a mob of men moving towards his cottage. As they get closer, they start throwing stones. One rock CRASHES through a window. Other rocks hit the door.

Unger heads into the next room. Opens a 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. Busting up furniture.

UNGER terrified. The voices right next to his closet. He hears "Look in there". CRACK! The closet door yanked open. They spot him, cowering in a corner.

MAN ONE
Colonel Unger. Hiding like a rat.
Get him out of there.

Two masked men pull out Unger. He tries to stand but is pushed down. A man ties his hands behind his back as he lies on the floor.

MAN THREE
What do you want to do with him?

MAN TWO
What do you do with a murderer.
Hang him? Shoot him?

UNGER
I'm not a murderer! I'm innocent!

MAN TWO
Get him up.

Two men help Unger shakily get to his feet. Stands before the group of ten men around him. All wearing masks.

MAN TWO (CONT'D)
Make your case Colonel.
If you claim you're innocent.

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

MAN ONE
Did you know about problems with the dam before this happened? That might have caused this?

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 crest a few years ago. Right?

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

MAN THREE
Why was a screen attached to the bridge over the spillway? It got clogged with debris. The spillway was useless.

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

MAN THREE
How many died for your fucking fish.

UNGER
(Sobbing)
You have to understand.

MAN TWO
I know you're guilty as hell. You knew about problems with that dam. But you didn't do anything. In fact you made things worse.

If I decided your fate, you would hang by the neck tonight. But, I will not make that decision. Someone else is here 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 dagger. Unger starts to shake. He falls to his knees.

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

ANNA
On the day of the flood, my husband died helping his mother.
His mother died alongside him.

And I lost, seven children. Seven.
One was a baby. They all drowned.
In the same room I was in.

Unger 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.

As she says each name, she slams the dagger hard on a table.

ANNA
There was John who was 12, Daisy 10, Gen 9, George 8, Ginny 5, Bismarck 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.

Anna kneels down. She is face to face with him. SLAMS the dagger on the floor. He is sobbing, "Please, please"..."

She HOLDS THE DAGGER TO HIS THROAT. She takes out a picture of her family. Holds it up to Unger's face.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Look at this picture Colonel.
This is my husband John and my seven children.
I want to take this dagger,
and slowly stab you to death.
Cause you so much pain.

Unger cries out, weeping. Begging.

But. I am a Christian woman.

She stands, turns to look at the men.

There has been enough pain.
Enough death.
Leave him here.
Let his soul rot with the memories
of what he has done.
Let the Lord render his final
punishment.
For Eternity.

Anna, with tears and a quiet sob, sets the picture down on his desk. She walks out of the room with the dagger. The men follow her. Unger lays on the floor, weeping, shaking.

INT. PEG'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Super: **Thursday, June 6**

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 that one part of the
mill started up yesterday.
This town needed some good news.

Emma starts to leave. Peg hugs her tight.

PEG
God bless you 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 CAMP - AFTERNOON

EMMA walks among hospital tents, looks into some. People on hospital beds. Nurses mill about. Emma spots an OLDER DOCTOR with a clipboard. She greets him.

EMMA
Doctor is there anyone I could talk to about a patient list?

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
No. You would have to check with the morgues. So this is your...

EMMA
My brother.

DOCTOR
I see. Well keep looking for him. But many people will probably never be found. I'm sorry.

EMMA
I know. I keep hoping. Doctor, how many are gone?

DOCTOR
At least 2,000. Maybe more.
(a beat)

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
God bless you dear.
I hope you find your brother.

He takes her hands gently. Emma nods thank you. Turns to walk away.

EXT. LOCUST STREET, JOHNSTOWN - AFTERNOON

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 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
I'm looking for someone.

CLARA
I'm Clara Barton with the Red Cross. Maybe I can help.

EMMA
(Surprised)
Miss Barton. I've heard of you. I'm, I'm Emma Hart.

CLARA
Who are you looking for dear?

EMMA
My brother Charlie.

CLARA
Alright. Well missing people still show up every day.
(Looks at her pocket watch)
I'm sorry dear, but I'm late for a meeting. Can you stop by here tomorrow morning. Around 10. I'll get information about your brother. Get it posted around 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
I'd be happy to help. In any way I can.

CLARA
Thank you dear.

EMMA
Miss Barton, have you ever seen anything like this, in your life?

CLARA
I've been through a lot. A nurse during the Rebellion at Antietam and Fort Wagner, and before that over in France, during the Prussian War. But this is 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.

EMMA
I know.

CLARA
I'm sorry but I must get to a meeting. Please visit here tomorrow morning. Alright?

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 for months to clear the huge debris field.

EXT. JOHNSTOWN RAILWAY STATION - AFTERNOON

Super: **Friday, June 14**

JAY PHIPPS steps off a train with a bag and a GUITAR CASE. A huge crowd exits the train. Jay is stunned at the number of people. Jay finds a carriage. Climbs aboard.

JAY
Geez. A lot of people getting off here. Is this normal?

DRIVER
Yep. 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 good for the town. Lots of money coming in. For the hotels, the restaurants, that are still standing. Where can I take you?

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. But I'll take you as close as I can.

EXT. STREETS OF JOHNSTOWN - AFTERNOON

Men work in the devastated street mess. Feed a large bonfire with piles of bedding, clothes and carpet. A horrible stench.

DRIVER
Ever seen anything like it?

JAY
It's like hell on earth. Do they have a final death toll?

DRIVER
I've heard 3,000. I've heard 5,000. There's other towns in the valley wiped off the map too. Woodvale, Mineral Point, East Conemaugh.
(Pulls carriage over)
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. Is there anywhere I can get a list of those who died or are missing?

DRIVER
The Red Cross hospital on Locust Street. We can head there.

EXT. RED CROSS HEADQUARTERS - AFTERNOON

A two story building with a Red Cross flag waving out front. 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 walks to the Red Cross building.

INT. RED CROSS HEADQUARTERS

After a wait in line, Jay greets a nurse at the desk.

JAY
I'm looking for someone. Is there a list of 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 just left an hour ago.

JAY
Really! Do you know where she's staying? I'm an old friend.

NURSE
I don't. People are living all over since the flood. But she'll be back Monday. You want to leave a note?

Jay nods yes. She hands him a pad and pencil.

EMMA:

I'M SO HAPPY THAT YOU'RE OK.
I HOPE CHARLIE AND YOUR 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 BELIEVE THIS IS SO URGENT.

JAY PHIPPS

Jay folds the note, hands it to the nurse. Thanks her.

Walks to the bulletin board. Sees names of identified people who were lost in the flood listed. But many others are marked as "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 - MORNING

EMMA sits in a pew with 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?

I have reflected on this. And I want to share my thoughts with you. But this is not easy to say.

Too many of the people in this valley became 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 says 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 the opening of the Seven Seals. And this means that the End Times are upon us. 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 - MORNING

EMMA walks outside the church with VICTOR. Smiling.

EMMA
What was that? I wanted to come to Church for some inspiring music and prayers. Not hear about the End Times.

VICTOR
And to blame the flood on alcohol and desires of the flesh?

EMMA
I know. Lizzie Thompson's and the other brothels on Frankstown Hill are still doing great business.

VICTOR
The Good Lord must have bad aim sometimes.

Emma stops at the bottom of the steps. Turns to Victor.

EMMA
I went to the Red Cross hospital on Saturday. And there was a note for me. From Jay Phipps.

VICTOR
Really? Is he here?

EMMA
(hands him the note)
He's at the Clubhouse.

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 up there. I bet the Colonel's men are still there too.

EMMA
Alright. Thank you. There's a 2:00 train to South Fork.

INT. TRAIN RIDE TO SOUTH FORK - AFTERNOON

EMMA and VICTOR view the destruction of the towns in the upper valley for the first time. They are shocked, shaken, quiet. Victor leans in to talk.

VICTOR
Listen Emma. I'm headed to Philadelphia on Tuesday.

EMMA
Really?

VICTOR
An uncle is there. He invited me to visit. And while I'm there, I plan to look at some colleges.

EMMA
That makes sense. You have to consider your future. I mean. What's left for you here?

VICTOR
Well, something's still here.

He tenderly reaches for her hand, squeezes it tight.

EXT. THE CARRIAGE HEADED TO THE DAM SITE - AFTERNOON

Their carriage approaches the former dam site. Now a wide gap between two steep hillsides. Beyond it, a muddy misty stew of puddles and brush as far as the eye can see. So alien.

EXT. IN THE CARRIAGE PASSING THE COTTAGES - AFTERNOON

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 - AFTERNOON

Outside the clubhouse, tall weeds choke the lawn. EMMA and VICTOR step onto the wide porch.

Other than the buzzing summer bugs, a strange eerie quiet.

INT. SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE LOBBY

The front door is locked so EMMA and VICTOR enter through a broken window. Stand in the darkened lobby. Tables and chairs knocked over. Broken glass all around. They turn to walk down a long hallway. Slowly push open a door to the dining room.

INT. SOUTH FORK CLUBHOUSE DINING ROOM

COLONEL UNGER and JOHN PARKE sit at a table in a dark corner. Parke sees them enter. Stands, points a PISTOL at them.

PARKE
Stop! Who goes there?

VICTOR
(Pulls Emma aside)
Don't shoot! My name's Victor Heiser. I worked 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. An unkempt, unshaven Parke sits down. Takes a long drink.

UNGER (CONT'D)
Miss Hart. Mr. Heiser. How are you?

EMMA
I'm looking for Jay Phipps.

UNGER
Parke. Go get Mr. Phipps.
(turns to Emma)
How's Charlie?

EMMA
He's missing. That's how he is.

UNGER
I'm sorry to hear that. Would either of you like 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, we're so heartbroken. Such a terrible event, an Act of God that has shook us all.

EMMA
An Act Of God? Really?
Is that what you said?
Colonel, can you tell me?
Did God build that dam?
Did God take care of that dam?
(a beat)
No. Man did.

UNGER
We did our best, please 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
I'm so glad you're alright.
Thank you for coming.
How's Charlie, and your Mom?

EMMA
My Mom is gone. Charlie's missing.
Probably gone too.

JAY
Oh Christ, I'm so sorry.

EMMA
(Looking at guitar case)
What's that?

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 wants to help the people here. Set up fundraisers and balls in Pittsburgh. I want you to stay with us. And you can sing at the different events.

EMMA
There's plenty of singers in Pittsburgh. Why me?

JAY
It'll mean so much more for you to sing since you're from here.

EMMA
Really?
I don't think so.
No, you want to show me off.
Like an old dirty penny.
All shined up like new.

JAY
That's not it. I know you're an amazing singer. What are you doing today?

EMMA
I'm a nurse's assistant at the Red Cross.

JAY
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
How the hell do you know what God intends her to do?

JAY
Who are you? 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 for what you did.
We're so heartbroken about this terrible accident.

VICTOR
An accident?
This "accident" as you called it, didn't have to happen.
People knew about the problems with that dam, and ignored them.
Did nothing to fix them.
People in this room, right now.

Victor stares hard at Parke then at Unger. They look away. Jay ignores Victor, turns to Emma.

JAY
I know it didn't end right for us in Pittsburgh. But if I didn't mean what I said at the lake and in those letters, would I be here?

EMMA
Now I'm to believe that I'm the one. I don't think so.
I bet your Daddy sent you to find me. Make him and the other club members feel better about the horrible shit that happened here.

JAY
Look. I'm leaving on Tuesday.
Come with me. Please.

VICTOR
Did you hear her? She said no.

JAY
(ignores him)
You told me you wanted to sing on the biggest stages in the country.
It's still your dream. I know it.
Even if you still hate me, at least follow that dream.
You can start in Pittsburgh.
Do it for yourself, but you can also help your town.

VICTOR
Maybe her dreams have changed. Are you stupid? 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. Parke and Unger stand and get between the two of them. Emma steps in front of Victor.

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.
I have a gift. I should use it,
right? To help our town.
(a beat)
I know, this isn't what you wanted.

Victor's face falls. Shocked. How could she do this? After what they've been through together! Go with Jay? NO!

Emma hugs Victor, slowly turns. Walks towards Jay, with a crooked smile. Jay smiles back.

Jay looks at Victor with a smug smile. I win again.

As he leans in to hug Emma, she SLUGS HIM HARD IN THE NOSE. Jay CURSES and holds his nose which starts bleeding profusely. Everyone GASPS. Stunned.

EMMA (CONT'D)
You didn't get my notch on your
belt. But how about a nice bloody
nose?

VICTOR
(stunned, shocked)
Holy shit.
I think. I think.
We should go.

EMMA
(smiling, calmly)
You're right Vincent.

EMMA (CONT'D)
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 on his nose, bleeding. Seething.

JAY
Go ahead and stay here!
With the boathouse boy.
Enjoy singing to the rubble.
You stupid...

EXT. JOHNSTOWN CENTRAL PARK - AFTERNOON

Super: **July, 1889**

The park alive with activity. Families enjoying the beautiful sunny summer day. Dogs run about barking. Hammering noise fills the air as men work on new construction.

EMMA on a PARK BENCH in her crisp white Red Cross uniform. VICTOR arrives. She greets him with a warm hug and kiss.

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.
Beautiful 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
entry program into the medical
school.

EMMA
Medical school? That's, unexpected.
Where did that come from?

VICTOR
That night in the Adams Street hospital, seeing those doctors working on patients, helping them, saving them. I was so inspired. I thought, if I ever got the chance, I want to do that. This is my chance.

EMMA
That's great news.

VICTOR
I should hear something in the next few weeks. And my chances are pretty good. They're making special exceptions for flood victims.

How are you? How are things with the Red Cross?

EMMA
Good. Good. It's keeping me busy. Learning a lot. Treating patients, taking vital signs, giving 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 all the time about the Red Cross here. 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.

EMMA (CONT'D)
It doesn't feel connected anymore.
Like I was another person.
In a different life.
In a different place.
It's so strange.

VICTOR
I think everyone feels that way.
Any news about Charlie?

EMMA
No. Nothing. But I keep hoping.
People thought to be gone do show
up once in awhile.

VICTOR
You never know.
I did want to talk to you about one
other thing.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
If everything works out and I get
into school there. I want you to
come and join me.

EMMA
Victor, I...

VICTOR
It's a big decision I know.

EMMA
Let me think about it.
(smiles)
It's so funny.
I was so sure I was the one leaving
town,
and you were staying.

VICTOR
Everything has flipped.
Our whole world. Our lives.
(a beat)
Please consider 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 still feel like a clumsy store
clerk a lot of the time.

EMMA
Listen!
Never forget what you did for me.
And those children.
Never forget that.

VICTOR
I won't.

EMMA
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 so proud of you.
(tears in her eyes)
I just know it.

VICTOR
(tears in his eyes)
I hope so.
(a beat)
I miss them so much.
Every day.

Both in tears, they hug warmly on the bench.

INT. ORIGINAL OLD OYSTER HOUSE RESTAURANT, PITTSBURGH

Super: **Original Old Oyster House**

Pittsburgh

September, 1889

Attorney PHILANDER KNOX sits in a booth at the back of the restaurant. HENRY PHIPPS enters, looks around. Sees Knox and sits down in his booth. Phipps is in a hurry, agitated.

PHIPPS SR.
Thanks for meeting. Look, I need to
know everything about this Nancy
Little lawsuit.

KNOX
You want to order some...

PHIPPS SR.
I don't have time.

KNOX
Alright. Nancy Little lives in Sewickley. Her husband John was a woodenware salesman and in Johnstown on a business trip. He was at the Hulbert House hotel downtown. That hotel was hit by the flood. And he perished.

PHIPPS SR.
Christ. And I understand she has seven children.

KNOX
Actually she has eight. She's suing the South Fork Club for $50,000 for the loss of her husband due to our negligence maintaining the dam.

PHIPPS SR.
How do you plan to counter that?

KNOX
We plan to plead not guilty. And here is our argument. First we'll say 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 because of those riders, many telegraph messages were sent, warning the valley towns about the dam failing.

PHIPPS SR.
Alright. That sounds promising. What if they testify about other issues?

PHIPPS SR. (CONT'D)
Like having only one spillway, the fish screen on the bridge, the dam being lowered for the road. Negligence in general.

KNOX
I don't believe any of that matters. Even if all those issues were addressed, there's still no way to know if it would have prevented this flood. Beyond a reasonable doubt. That's the key.

PHIPPS SR.
Knox we can't lose this case. It would lead to more like it. It could cost us millions.

KNOX
I know. That's why another thing I plan to do is use every lever of the court to drag this case out. I will request continuances, more motions, object to evidence, dispute discovery requests. Believe me, this case could go on for years. And it will scare off others trying to sue us.

PHIPPS SR.
Knox. I can see you know your craft very well.

KNOX
We are in the right here Henry. This was an Act of God. The Club members are not at fault. We are fully prepared to make that argument. And win the case.

PHIPPS SR.
Christ. I hope so.

INT. JOHNSTOWN RED CROSS HOSPITAL

Super: **October, 1889**

EMMA, in a white Red Cross uniform, tends to some patients in their beds. Chats with them, holds their hands, smiles.

EXT. JOHNSTOWN RED CROSS HOSPITAL - AFTERNOON

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. It's a man. He steps closer. He's carrying a duffel bag. As he approaches, he takes his hat off.

Her eyes meet 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. She steps up to him.

EMMA
Oh my God, are you a ghost?

CHARLIE
I hope not.

Emma leans in. They hug tightly. She pulls back.

EMMA
Where have you been? What happened?

CHARLIE
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 from Blairsville pulled me out of the waters. 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
Really.

CHARLIE
It took time. My injuries healed. And I started to remember things. Where I was from. I remembered you. And Mom. And...

EMMA
How did you find me?

CHARLIE
When I arrived 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.

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.
Oh Charlie. Oh God.
I missed you so much.

She leans in and holds him so tight. Both in tears.

INT. ALLEGHENY COUNTY COURTROOM*

Super: **Allegheny County Courthouse**

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

March, 1892

HENRY PHIPPS and JAY PHIPPS stand in the back of the courtroom. There is much anticipation as a jury verdict should be in soon. PHILANDER KNOX sees them and walks over.

JAY
What are you hearing Mister Knox?

KNOX
The verdict should be in any minute.

PHIPPS SR.
Good lord I'm so nervous. Even after all these years.

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. Finally.

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. He returns moments later. Addresses the court.

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 CHARLES FLAHERTY (66 yo, white haired, distinguished) enters. Sits down on the bench. Addresses the jury.

JUDGE FLAHERTY
Mr. Foreman, have you reached a verdict?

JURY FOREMAN
Yes we have Your Honor.

JUDGE FLAHERTY
Please address the Court and state your verdict.
And I ask that the courtroom remain calm after the verdict is read.

JURY FOREMAN
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 observe the unruly courtroom. After a few minutes, with the police in the room, calm returns.

JUDGE FLAHERTY (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 service. You are now discharged. This case is adjourned. 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.

On the plaintiff side of the room, the widow NANCY LITTLE weeps with her children. Hugging them tight.

The PHIPPS men see the Little family mourning. Henry Phipps is moved, becomes emotional. KNOX approaches.

KNOX
It took awhile, three and half years. But we finally won.
(Sees Henry Phipps upset.)
Henry we won the case. It's over. Why the...

PHIPPS SR.
I'm going to make it right for her, for her family.

KNOX
What do you mean? No. No. I would not recommend doing anything like that. That would be... Let's discuss...

PHIPPS SR.
For Chrissakes, shut up Knox. Just shut the fuck up.
(eyes moist)
Oh my God, what have we done.

EXT. GRANDVIEW CEMETERY, JOHNSTOWN - MORNING

Super: **Grandview Cemetery**

Johnstown, Pennsylvania

May 31, 1892

Three Years to the Day After the Flood

On a sunny day, a crowd of 10,000 surrounds a new granite monument covered in a cloth tarp. At a podium, Governor ROBERT PATTINSON and Mayor HORACE ROSE. CLARA BARTON also with them near the podium. The crowd includes:

ANNA FENN MAXWELL and her new HUSBAND.
BELLE and GEORGE WATERS and their THREE CHILDREN.
PEG LEECH along with MR. MILLER and others from Cambria Iron.
The THREE KIDS RESCUED BY EMMA and their PARENTS who survived the flood. And their dog HAZEL, now fully grown.

INT. INSIDE TENT BEHIND THE MONUMENT - MORNING

Standing with Charlie. Emma is so nervous.

CHARLIE
You're going to be fine. You sounded beautiful this morning.

EMMA
Practicing in a mirror is not the same as singing in front of people. This crowd is huge!

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.

CHARLIE
What. What are you doing here?

JAY
(stumbling, nervous)
I'm here to...
I came to support Emma.
I knew she was singing today.
And I wanted to talk to her.
And tell her.

JAY (CONT'D)
(Turns to Emma)
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
I understand.
(a beat)
How are things 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
After I saw what happened here. It shook me to my bones. It changed me. And I realized. We were at fault. Our dam broke. Our dam.

EMMA
Sometimes it takes something horrible like this to realize what matters. And to make changes.

JAY
I know. All of that was weighing on me. The guilt. The shock. I was angry all the time.

JAY (CONT'D)
It's been some time.
I hope you can forgive me.

EMMA
(stands, takes his hands)
It means a lot that you're here.
And yes Jay, I forgive you.

JAY
Thank you Emma. Thank you.

EMMA
(smiles)
And I'm sorry...
(a beat)
that I punched you in the nose.

JAY
(smiles back)
Oh. I deserved it.

EMMA
One good thing did happen that day.
Charlie loves the Martin guitar you
brought for him.

Jay smiles at Charlie. Someone enters the tent, says: "Emma and Charlie, they're ready for you".

JAY
Good luck. I know you'll be
wonderful. Both of you.

He leans in and they hug tight. Jay still misses her, and what might have been. She heads out of the tent. As Charlie leaves, he looks at Jay and holds up the Martin guitar. He says "Thank You" to Jay. Jay smiles. Charlie smiles back.

EXT. GRANDVIEW CEMETERY - MORNING*

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.

GOV PATTINSON (CONT'D)
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 Hart, after being missing for many months, did finally arrive home.

Miss Hart has worked for the American Red Cross here for several years. We thank her for that service. Miss Hart, the podium is yours.

EMMA and CHARLIE walks to a podium. A church choir is behind them, near the podium.

EMMA
Thank you Governor Pattinson and Mayor Rose for the kind words.

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 determined look. She's ready. 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 in a very moving performance.

As she sings, the Governor and the Mayor pull away the 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. People walk up to the new monument. Place photos of loved ones lost in the flood, flowers, toys, stuffed animals at the foot of the monument.

As Emma continues to sing.

CUT TO:

INT. WALNUT STREET THEATER, PHILADELPHIA

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 and accompanied by an orchestra. She finishes the song to LOUD APPLAUSE FROM THE FULL HOUSE.

Emma smiles. Thanks the audience and says good night. As Emma comes off the stage, she sees an older man waiting for her.

When she reaches him, she recognizes the OLDER GENTLEMAN FROM THE TRAIN from when she traveled back from Pittsburgh.

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.
It looks like your dreams came
true.

EMMA
Thank you so much for coming.
And for what you told me that day
on the train. You did make a
difference in my life.
You helped to lift me up.
Thank you again.

OLDER GENTLEMAN FROM THE TRAIN
I'm glad to hear that dear.

EMMA
(staring at him)
You know.
Just now.
I'm noticing something.
(a beat)
You remind me a lot,
of my father.

PEG suddenly grabs Emma by the arm. Turns her.

PEG
We're waiting for you over there.

EMMA
OK. I want you to meet someone.

PEG
Who?

EMMA
This man. I talked with him on the train, after that thing with Jay...

She turns. THERE IS NO ONE THERE. Emma is shocked. What!

PEG
Who? I don't see anyone. Come on. You need a drink.

They head to their table. Emma is still looking around. Where did that old man go? What happened to him?

They reach the table. CHARLIE standing, loudly clapping.

But someone is missing.

Out of the shadows, VICTOR walks to the table in a handsome pinstripe grey suit and tie, with a large BOUQUET OF RED ROSES.

Emma has the biggest smile. And some tears in her eyes. Victor takes Emma in his arms and holds her tight, gazes lovingly into her eyes, and they kiss deeply.

THE END