

FOR THE FUTURE

The end is the beginning.

Written by

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EXT. RIVERBANK IN THE WILDERNESS - DAY

The sun's rays reflect on the surface of the water, causing purple and reddish colors between the waves of the water against the body stuck still in the riverbank. HELEN (36) looks at it, expressionless.

HELEN

It all started last summer, we don't know who did it first, but we all remember the rumble of missiles and explosions. We all remember the fire that consumed everything we knew.

Helen fixes her gaze on the purple and reddish sparkles in the water.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WARTIME MONTAGE

A wall of fire rushes forward, buildings collapse and crumble, leafy trees catch fire, turn to ashes. Silhouettes of people melt amidst the fire. From the rubble, three children make their way to the surface and look up, where explosions pierce the sky. The explosions are reflected in the eyes of the children. A loud buzzing sound descends from the sky, thousands of planes fall in flames towards the ground, towards the children.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVERBANK IN THE WILDERNESS - DAY

Helen closes her eyes, PIERCE (42) reaches and awakens her.

PIERCE

Helen...

HELEN

Where were you?

PIERCE

I'm fine. We have to keep moving.

Helen looks down, avoiding Pierce's gaze, walks away. Maggie (12) comes to Helen dancing happily and with a smile on her face.

MAGGIE

Mom!

HELEN  
(timid smile)  
Maggie.

Maggie reaches Helen, who bends down to greet her, they hug.

MAGGIE  
Mom, look what dad gave me.

Maggie has a flare gun in her hand.

HELEN  
Yes, if you ever get lost, don't  
hesitate to use it.

Maggie nods.

HELEN  
Now keep it safe, don't lose it.

MAGGIE  
Yes, mom.

Unexpectedly, CARTER (45) runs to the riverbank, his expression of fear.

CARTER  
The hunters are coming!

Helen immediately turns to Pierce.

HELEN  
Pierce!

Carter takes his son TRAVIS (10) in his arms and with his wife CLAUDIA (39) they run away, following the line of the river bank. Pierce runs up to Helen and takes Maggie's hand.

PIERCE  
We have to go, now!

Helen looks at the bags and the tent on the ground.

PIERCE  
C'mon!

Pierce runs in the same direction that Carter did. Helen runs after Pierce, she looks back and sees the heads of three people over the line of weeds, at a distance of 15 meters.

HELEN  
Pierce!

Pierce turns to Helen as she opens her eyes wide and freezes after seeing another head in the weeds in front of Pierce. Pierce returns to Helen, they crouch down, putting Maggie between them. Helen lowers her head and stares at Maggie, Pierce covers them both with his arms, everyone is silent.

MAGGIE

Mom...

HELEN

(whispering)

Quiet, Maggie. Close your eyes.

Helen looks up, into the weeds, the three men who came from behind have joined the man who appeared in front.

MAN I

What did you find?

MAN II

Some crap we don't need, they didn't have any food.

MAN III

There were women in the group.

MAN I

Always thinking with your dick, huh? Find them.

The four men scatter into the underbrush, moving away from Helen's position.

PIERCE

I think we're ok.

Helen looks to the right side of the river bank, in the middle of an opening between the plants she can see Carter, on the other side of the river, waving to her. Helen, Pierce and Maggie move through the weeds to the shore, meet Carter and his family across the river. Carter points to the right with his arms, toward a log across the river not far from Helen's position. Pierce nods to Carter and takes Helen and Maggie by the hands, they all advance silently to the log.

PIERCE

You and Maggie go first.

HELEN

But, Pierce...

PIERCE

(inflexible)

Go, Helen.

Maggie is the first to climb the log, she crawls forward a couple of steps, the log swings.

MAGGIE

Mom...

HELEN

Keep going Maggie, I'm right behind you.

Helen turns to Pierce, who nods with a smile, holding the end of the log tightly, Carter does the same from the other side. Helen climbs to the log and advances step by step behind Maggie, crawling carefully. The log swings again, Helen clings on with her arms and immediately looks ahead, Maggie keeps moving forward. Helen sighs in relief and continues, making it to the other side. As she does so, she immediately looks back smiling. But her smile fades as she sees Pierce collapse to the ground.

PIERCE

Cof, cof, cof...

Pierce coughs loudly, writhing on the floor.

MAN I

They're there!

The bushes behind Pierce move.

HELEN

Honey, get up! Get up, now!

CARTER

Shit! I'm sorry, Helen.

Carter drops the log and runs to Claudia and Travis.

HELEN

Carter, what are you doing!?  
Claudia?

CLAUDIA

Helen... I...

CARTER

Let's go!

Carter takes Claudia by the hand and pushes her forward, together with Travis they run and move away from the river. Helen grabs the log and turns her eyes back to Pierce.

HELEN

Pierce, please... Don't do this to me!

MAGGIE

Dad!

Pierce stops coughing, struggles to get up from the floor, but succeeds. Just then, Gerard (46) appears out of the weeds.

GERARD

I found them!

Pierce launches himself onto the log and runs to the other side, however, halfway across he slips, but manages to brace himself with his arms before falling into the water.

HELEN

Pierce! Grab my hand!

Helen reaches out from the end of the log, tries to reach Pierce. On the other side, Gerard climbs onto the log and takes a couple of careful steps, but the log moves immediately, so he stops and tries to keep his balance. The movement makes it difficult for Pierce, who continues to hold on to the log.

PIERCE

Just go... go!

HELEN

No! Don't say that! C'mon!

MAGGIE

Dad! Move, please!

GERARD

Hey guys! C'mon, help me out!

Pierce makes one last effort and manages to move forward to take Helen's hand, with her help he manages to cross to the other side of the river.

PIERCE

Hurry!

Pierce and Helen take the end of the log and push it.

GERARD

Shit!

Gerard steps back and jumps to shore just before the log falls completely into the water and is swept away by the river current. Helen helps Pierce up, taking him on her shoulders. She looks back one last time and manages to see the other three men reaching Gerard and helping him up from the ground, before advancing into the forest.

CUT TO:

INT. CABIN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FOREST - NIGHT

The dusty wooden door bursts open and Helen enters, carrying a fainting Pierce on her shoulders, Maggie follows. With great difficulty, Helen manages to advance to the center of the cabin, leaves Pierce on the floor. She is covered in sweat, her skin filthy from the dirt. Pierce is unconscious, his shirt stained with blood.

HELEN

(nervous)

Maggie, please. Find something to cover your dad with.

Maggie nods and goes to search through the junk inside the cabin. Helen takes off her vest and uses it as a pillow, rests Pierce's head on it.

HELEN

C'mon, wake up.

Helen shakes Pierce's head until he wakes up.

PIERCE

Helen...

HELEN

Thank god!

MAGGIE

Mom, I've found this!

Maggie brings back an old rug.

HELEN

Thanks, honey.

Helen covers Pierce with the rug.

HELEN

We are going to be fine.

PIERCE  
Maggie, listen... we need dry  
sticks to make a fire. Can you find  
them?

Maggie nods and gets up, she runs to the door.

HELEN  
Stay where I can see you.

MAGGIE  
Yes, mom.

Helen sees Maggie walk out through the open door.

PIERCE  
Helen, listen... you have to take  
her to the beach, give her a  
chance... please...

HELEN  
We'll take her together.

PIERCE  
No... Helen, I'm not...

Helen hugs Pierce.

HELEN  
You don't know that!

PIERCE  
Promise me, Helen. Please...

HELEN  
I can't do it alone...

PIERCE  
Just go back to the river, follow  
it...

Pierce coughs loudly, moves to the side and covers his face  
with his hands, a mouthful of blood falls on the floor.  
Helen approaches to help Pierce, but he stops her.

PIERCE  
Take it...

Pierce reaches into his pants pocket, pulls out a pistol.  
Helen takes it carefully, Maggie returns inside the cabin,  
bringing with her a handful of sticks.

PIERCE  
 (at Helen)  
 Last resort.

Helen nods and puts the gun in her pocket.

MAGGIE  
 I've found these.

Helen rushes up and gets between Pierce and Maggie, preventing the girl from seeing her father on the floor.

HELEN  
 Maggie, thank you. Come, help me  
 make a fire.

Helen pulls Maggie away from Pierce.

CUT TO:

INT. CABIN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FOREST - NIGHT

The sparks caused by the strike of two stones fall on the tinder, igniting a little fire. Helen moves the stones away and protects the small flame with her hands. Then, she puts the sticks into the fire, managing to light the bonfire. The bonfire is kept burning until sunlight enters through the window, at which time the fire is extinguished.

INT. CABIN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FOREST - DAY

Helen awakens suddenly, rises from beside Pierce, Maggie is lying at her side. Helen observes Maggie sleeping peacefully, however, her expression changes to one of panic when she hears footsteps in the brush outside the cabin.

HELEN  
 Maggie, Maggie, wake up!

MAGGIE  
 Mom?

Helen quickly gets up and helps Maggie to stand up.

HELEN  
 We have to go, now.

Helen returns to Pierce.

HELEN  
 Pierce, Pierce wake up.

New footsteps are heard around the cabin. Helen grabs Pierce by the cheeks, moves him to wake him up, nothing happens.

HELEN  
Cold...

MAGGIE  
Mom? There's someone outside.

Helen puts her fingers on Pierce's neck, then leans back and puts her ear on her husband's chest. She hears no sound.

HELEN  
(crying eyes)  
Oh, Pierce...

MAGGIE  
Mom...

Quickly, Helen takes Maggie by the hand and leads her to the door.

MAGGIE  
We have to wait for dad!

HELEN  
Daddy is not coming, Maggie.

MAGGIE  
Why not? mom...

Helen looks out from the doorway, can't see anyone nearby, turns and runs off holding Maggie's hand...

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

...to the woods.

MAGGIE  
Dad!

HELEN  
Quiet, Maggie!

As Helen enters the tree line, a loud whistling sound is heard from behind her. Helen and Maggie hurry through the trees. Sharp branches scrape Their skin, causing wounds on their arms. A glance back reveals three figures moving in their direction.

EXT. RIVERBANK IN THE WILDERNESS - DAY

Helen's race ends abruptly as she reaches the river bank again, she manages to stop herself before falling into the water. However, Gerard manages to reach her and grabs Maggie tightly by one of her arms.

GERARD  
You're fast, bitch.

HELEN  
Let her go! You bastard!

Gerard pulls hard and manages to snatch Maggie from Helen's hand.

HELEN  
Let her go!

Helen throws herself on top of Gerard, she hits him again and again with both hands, manages to scratch his face. Gerard releases Maggie, who falls to the ground. Helen approaches Maggie to pick her up, but Gerard grabs Helen by the hair and pushes her backwards, Helen steps on the edge of the border before the river, slipping and falling.

MAGGIE  
Mom!

Helen falls into the water and hits hard on the rocky ground, loses consciousness.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE END OF THE RIVER, THE BEGINNING OF THE OCEAN - DAY

Helen opens her eyes slowly and sees the evening sky, the purple and reddish colors escaping from the fading sun on the horizon, she's floating in the waters.

HELEN  
(V.O.)  
Am I dead? No, not yet...

Helen flows into the sea. She swims to get back to shore, but the current is too strong. She decides to swim to the side, away from the river outlet, but closer to the beach. She manages to swim away from the strong current.

EXT. THE BEACH SHORE - DAY

Upon reaching the shore, Helen falls to the sand, coughs up the water she has swallowed.

However, her cough becomes stronger and stronger and she ends up vomiting a bunch of blood.

HELEN

Shit!

Helen starts to cry, looking at her blood-covered palms, but stops as she sees a red flare rising into the evening sky.

HELEN

(wiping away her tears)

Maggie!

Helen spits the blood into her mouth and starts walking in the direction of the flare. The sun gets lower and lower and the sky darker. The sun give way to the deep starry night.

EXT. THE BEACH SHORE - NIGHT

Helen squats down on the side of a dune, further ahead she sees people by a campfire. Peeking out and looking, Helen sees Carter, Claudia and Travis standing next to the men, next to Gerard. The men are beating Carter, who falls to the ground. Gerard laughs next to Claudia.

GERARD

Listen, if you don't get up, we'll  
kill your wife. How's that.

Carter struggles to get up, his face bloodied. The men approach and strike him again, knocking him to the sand.

TRAVIS

Dad! No!

Travis runs to Carter.

CARTER

(from the ground)

Travis, stop, don't come!

Gerard reaches Travis and grabs him by the hair, lifting him up.

CLAUDIA

Leave him alone!

Gerard turns to Claudia in anger, Claudia stops immediately.

GERARD

Or what?

Claudia doesn't respond. Carter tries to get up, but is kicked to the ground by the men.

GERARD  
Chris, come here.

One of the men, CHRIS (32), approaches Gerard.

GERARD  
Take him to the other child, we'll  
finish this guy off.

Chris grabs Travis and takes him in the direction of the barracks near the campfire.

GERARD  
I'm sorry, I just can't stand the  
screeching of children.

CARTER  
Damn you...

GERARD  
You should have taught him to  
respect his elders, like that girl  
and her flare, well, she learned  
the hard way.

Helen stops looking, lies down on the dune.

HELEN  
Maggie...

She gets up and moves forward, hiding in the dunes around the campfire, approaching...

EXT. BARRACKS NEAR THE CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

...the barracks. Arriving near the entrance, she stops and watches Chris closing the brass door, he stops and starts coughing, leans against the wall of the barracks and spits blood into the sand. Helen takes the opportunity to run around the barracks, stops by a closed window. The window is dirty, but Helen manages to look inside. On the floor, next to fishing nets, she sees Maggie lying on the floor. Helen knocks gently on the window with her hand. Travis appears out of the shadows, his eyes bathed in tears.

HELEN  
(whispering)  
Travis.

Helen waves at Travis and points toward Maggie. Travis nods and approaches Maggie, moves her on the floor to wake her up. Maggie stands up, her face bears the mark of a fist blow.

HELEN

Honey... oh my god...

Seeing Helen, Maggie stands up in surprise. Helen indicates to Maggie to wait, with the palm of her hand. She then moves away from the window and pulls out the pistol, prepares to strike the window glass with the pistol grip. But then, the door bursts open, Gerard enters dragging Claudia by her arm, throwing her to the floor.

TRAVIS

Mom!

GERARD

You know, it's not fair that we are all sick, poisoned.

CLAUDIA

Stay there, Travis.

Helen desists from knocking on the window; she goes over to look inside.

GERARD

But the children... oh the children, they are the future, right?

CLAUDIA

What do you want?

Gerard smiles at Claudia, showing his teeth, Claudia crawls back.

GERARD

Don't you want to help me? to leave something for the future?

Gerard throws himself on Claudia, grabs her blouse and tries to take it off. Helen signals Maggie to move, but she's paralyzed looking at Gerard. Travis lunges at Gerard, but Gerard easily shakes him off, slamming him with his arm and knocking him to the ground, unconscious.

CLAUDIA

Travis!

Claudia tries to get up, but Gerard slaps her hard.

MAGGIE

Mom!

GERARD

Mom?

Gerard looks up at the window, where he finds Helen pointing the gun at him. Helen pulls the trigger, the bullet goes through the glass, shattering it and hitting Gerard directly in the forehead.

HELEN

Come on!

Maggie runs to the window, Helen helps her across. Claudia lifts Travis off the ground and goes to the window, Helen helps them both out.

HELEN

Let's go!

They all run off, just as the men arrive at the barracks entrance.

EXT. THE BEACH SHORE - NIGHT

Helen, Claudia and the children continue running, the screams of the men behind them are heard.

CLAUDIA

Where are we going!?

HELEN

Just follow me!

Helen runs to the shore, approaches a beached boat. In the middle of the run, Claudia stumbles and falls in the sand, but manages to protect Travis in her arms.

CLAUDIA

Helen, wait!

Helen continues to run.

HELEN

Keep moving, come on!

Helen lifts Maggie into the boat, then pushes it into the water. Helen looks back, she sees Claudia get up from the sand, holding Travis, the men's voices are heard even closer. The boat enters the sea, Helen continues to push, however, her cough returns.

She affirms herself on the edge of the boat and looks at her bloody hands, her vision blurs.

MAGGIE

Mom! Are you ok?

HELEN

Listen Maggie, do you remember how to move the oars? like we used to do with your grandfather.

MAGGIE

No mom, don't...

Helen looks back, sees Claudia moving to the boat. The three men following her have also entered the water.

HELEN

Honey, listen. I can't take you any further. Promise me you'll be all right.

MAGGIE

No, mom...

HELEN

Promise me you'll keep moving forward.

MAGGIE

Mom, no. Just come inside the boat.

Claudia reaches the boat, she lifts Travis and with Helen's help, they both manage to get him into the boat.

CHRIS

Where do you think you are going!

Chris grabs Claudia, pushing her out of the way, but Claudia clings to Chris' body, not allowing him to move forward.

HELEN

Maggie, go!

MAGGIE

No, mom...

HELEN

Go! Now!

Helen pushes the boat away one last time, turns back and faces the two men already arriving at her position. The men grab her forcefully. Helen looks to the side, where Chris is drowning Claudia, dunking her head in the water. Helen takes one last look at the boat slowly drifting away into the deep, before she is hit hard on the head and loses consciousness.

HELEN  
(V.O.)  
I did it, Pierce.

Darkness.