

SCENE 1 - KENTUCKY PRESENT

Ext. Emmick Farm

Open with a wide-angle shot of dusk on the quiet farm. An early 20th century farmhouse is bathed in sounds of cicadas and soft light. Farm animals are in their pens, soybeans grow in the field, and tobacco hangs drying in the barn. All is as it should be.

Int. Studio Apartment over Detached Garage at Emmick Farm

A 17 year-old girl with short hair [FINN] moves slowly around the room, still wearing shoes and a canvas backpack. She picks up various trinkets as light catches the dust that shakes loose from the objects.

Cut to: FINN is shaking out sheets over a bare old mattress. Her shoes and backpack are now off. On second thought, she tosses the sheets aside and flips the mattress over, then on its side to give it a couple of good whacks, coughing at the dust. She lays it back down and pulls the fitted sheet over it, the flat sheet over it, and throws a handmade quilt across askew.

FINN stares at the bed blankly. She half-smiles and jumps on top, giving a couple of bounces before doing a seat drop. More dust catches in the light.

A dinner bell rings.

SCENE 2 - CALIFORNIA PAST

Ext. Spelman House

Open on a two-story house across the street from a beach. FINN and two young girls can be seen sprawled on the first story roof.

Int. Spelman House

A well-dressed, and visibly drunk, woman and handsome man in their thirties are fighting.

MOM

I wen in the garage for two seconds to get the roast from the freezer and I
just - they were gone when I got back.

DAD

(flipping through a Rolodex)
Children don't just disappear, Diane.

MOM

They were... (puzzled)

DAD

Where were they when you went to the garage? Stop playing with your eyebrows!

MOM (looks at him confused)

I don't. I don't remember. Do you?

DAD

For Pete's sake, I just walked in the door, Diane. The hell should I know where they were?!

MOM

They were playing with their doll?

Ext. Spelman House Slope of First Story Roof

FINN (now with long hair) is braiding one of the little girl's hair (TRISHA) and has an open Schlitz beer can by her side. The other girl (MAZY) is peering in the window with binoculars. They appear to be around the ages of seven and nine.

MAZY

I can't see 'em but boy can I hear 'em! Cats and dogs!

TRISHA

When I grow up and get married, my husband will never raise his voice to me.

MAZY

Are you sure we aren't gonna get beat for this? (No answer.) Finn?

FINN

Not if you don't get caught, Ishy Squishy. You know how to walk like an Indian, like I taught you. Toes first.

TRISHA

Let's wait until they settle down. Ow! That hurts!

FINN

Hold still. You got more snarls than the cat.

MAZY

(eyeing the can of Schlitz) Can I try?

FINN

Not til you're 13. Or you won't grow. You wanna be three feet tall your whole life ' and have to work at the circus?

(in a silly voice) Step right up ladies and gents! See a spectacle of wonder! Tiniest woman in all the world! Sweet little Mazy Ann Spelman here!

MAZY shrieks. FINN knocks the beer can over and it tumbles down off the edge of the roof. All three girls scramble and brace themselves for what is coming toward them from inside the window.

Both young girls get yanked into the house through the window, one at a time, by the big strong arm of DAD. Then DAD's hand reaches out and raps FINN on the head three times with a class ring. FINN scrambles away and jumps precariously down to the front yard from the roof.

DAD

(yelling after her)The hell were you thinking?!

DAD slams the window shut.

FINN is seen limpingly jogging away from the house, the waves of the Pacific ocean lapping peacably onto the beach behind her.

SCENE 3 - KENTUCKY PRESENT

Int. Emmick Farmhouse Dining Room

Dirty dinner plates, empty serving dishes, and water glasses are noisily being stacked and collected at a large table by six chatty children and teenagers and FINN.

FINN

(delivering a stack of dirty dishes to Phyllis at the kitchen sink) Thanks for dinner, Aunt Phyllis.

PHYLLIS

Oh, you're welcome, child! You eat here every meal you want.

FINN

Great, thank you.

PHYLLIS

You settled in ok up in the garage? Here, take this.

FINN begins drying dishes as PHYLLIS hands them over. The kids continue to deliver things to be washed from the dinner table.

FINN

Oh it's great, thank you. I like the figurines on the shelves.

PHYLLIS

Oh, sure, those are Annabelle's. She's my oldest. You remember her, don't you? She lived up there before she got married to Timothy. The two of them are down in Shelbyville now. Got one on the way.

FINN

Oh yeah? That's great. Congratulations.

PHYLLIS

I think Timothy didn't like the figurines. But I kept them for Annabelle for when she has a daughter.

A little boy, around the age of six, [LOGAN] tugs on FINN's oversized T-Shirt.

LOGAN

Come dig for arrowheads with me, FINN?

PHYLLIS

Too dark for that, Logan.

FINN

Sorry, buddy.

LOGAN

It's ok. I can show you my train collection.

PHYLLIS

Logan love trains.

LOGAN

I'm gonna be a train conductor when I grow up.

FINN

Is that right?

PHYLLIS

Go ahead. TAMARA, come take over drying for FINN.

FINN sets the drying towel on the counter and kisses PHYLLIS on the cheek.

FINN

Thanks again, Aunt PHYLLIS.

PHYLLIS

(visibly pleased by the display of affection) You're family, FINN. This is your home for now.
Make yourself welcome.

FINN smiles and takes LOGAN's hand as he leads her to the staircase. They walk upstairs and enter a room with two sets of bunkbeds. Scattered around the floor are toy train tracks, trains, and landscape pieces. LOGAN and FINN find spots to sit on the floor and LOGAN begins picking up and describing pieces one at a time.

LOGAN

This blue one is a Blue Comet Tempel Observation Car. It carries people.
This is the Santa Fe Deisel and it's a cargo train. Look, this is a coal car. Pick one.

FINN

Pick one?

LOGAN

Pick anything and I'll tell you what it is.

FINN

Okey dokey. How about this one? What's this?

LOGAN

That one is... a Woodside Reefer Car. It actually carries chocolate. See, you can see on the side it says Hershey's. That is a delicious train car. I'd like to ride on that one. But, unfortunately, that is just a cargo car. No people allowed.

FINN

Maybe we could sneak on... and eat ALL THE CHOCOLATE!

LOGAN

(nervously laughing) No, I don't think so. (picking up another car) This is also a Woodside Reefer but it's Atlantic Pacific. This one's a Susquehanna Boxcar.

FINN

How many trains do you have?

LOGAN

Ninety-six. (picking up another car) This - here, look at this - this is a Southern Stock Car. Bet you can't guess what goes in here?

FINN

(teasingly) Hmm... Beans?

LOGAN

(laughing) NO! They would all fall out, FINN! That's crazy! It's for livestock! That way they can breathe and see the, see out the windows.

FINN

Oh, of course. That makes much more sense. Wanna put some together.

LOGAN

Yeah, sure, ok. Here, you take this one.

The two begin linking some trains together. A couple of older brothers bound upstairs and look in the room, but they run along when they see the two hard at work.

SCENE 4 - CALIFORNIA PAST

Ext. Large House with a Nicely Manicured Lawn

FINN and several other teenagers are huddled outside the backdoor of the house as one of them picks the lock.

NERD GUY

(fiddling with lock to no avail) Dagnabit!

COOL GUY

My turn. (takes over lock picking)

FINN (casually dressed in a hoodie and pants) is looking around curiously at the house, as if for clues, while three guys are focused on the lock and two scantily clad girls are huddling together to keep warm. Her eyes lock on a window cracked on the side of the house.

FINN jimmies the screen off, easily pushes up the window, and slithers into the first floor of the house before the others notice her activities.

NERD GUY

Yeah!

COOL GUY

Nice.

PRETTY GIRL

See, girls are smarter than boys.

COOL GUY

Oh yeah? Then why didn't you think of it, brains?

The back door swings open and FINN takes a deep bow. NERD GUY scoots past her and up the stairs of the house. The rest follow him. FINN shuts the door and locks it, following the group.

SCENE 5 - KENTUCKY PRESENT

Int. Studio Apartment over Detached Garage at Emmick Farm

FINN pulls a stack of records out of her suitcase and places them on the desk. She slides one record out, sets it on the tuner, and cranks up the volume. With the music playing, she bends over at the waist and grabs her ankles, clearly stretching. Athletically, she places her hands on the floor and dips down into push-up position. After 15 pushups, she stands up and looks around the room for something else to do.

Ext. Emmick Farm

(music continues) It's dark outside, and the cicadas are humming. FINN is running down a gravel road. She works her way up to a sprint, then stops and bends over breathing heavily. When she stands, she sees a dog staring at her from the porch of a farmhouse.

Int. Studio Apartment over Detached Garage at Emmick Farm

(music continues) Sweaty from the run, FINN takes a shower. Dried off, she slips on pajamas and climbs into bed. From the bedside table she slips several photographs out of a diary. She looks at each of the photos fondly.

There is a knock on the door. As if caught red handed, FINN shoves the pictures under her pillow and flies down the stairs to open the door.

PHYLISS

(in a bathrobe) Could you turn down the music, hon'?

FINN

Of course! I am so sorry Aunt Phyliss! It won't happen again.

PHYLISS

No trouble. Sleep tight, hon'. Church at nine.

The music fades into police sirens as we transition to Scene 6.

SCENE 6 - CALIFORNIA PAST

Ext. Second-Story Deck of the Large Break-In House

Sirens sound as the group of four climb out of a hot tub and onto the the second story deck. COOL GUY and NERD GUY run down the stairs to escape out the back door. FINN carries PRETTY GIRL, clearly intoxicated at this point, inside the second story of the house and hides her in a dark closet. FINN grabs the rotary telephone on the nightstand, dials a number quickly, wrongly, hangs up, and dials again less quickly.

FINN

BUCKY, it's me. I need you to come pick up a girl in one hour. Shut up. Listen to me. 4435 Ocean Drive. Second floor bedroom closet. Wait an hour. Cops are here. Yeah, screw you too, BUCKY.

FINN quietly sets down the phone as police can be heard entering the front door. She creeps back out to the balcony and looks down for climbing holds. Unsatisfied, she tries the other side of the balcony. That side is better. She lowers herself down and jumps the rest of the way. Creeping out the side gate, a HEFTY OFFICER sees her and she begins sprinting barefoot toward the beach across the street, still wearing a bathing suit. She scrambles over the large rocks to the sand as HEFTY calls for backup.

Back inside a KIND LOOKING OFFICER finds PRETTY GIRL disoriented and limp in the closet.

PRETTY GIRL

(sleepily)

FINN? FINN? FINN? FINN?

KIND OFFICER speaks disheartenedly into his walkie talkie.

KIND OFFICER

Yeah, I got an ID on our runner. FINN SPELMAN. MACK SPELMAN's kid.

VOICE ON WALKIE TALKIE

I thought that looked like her. She's heading for the water. ROBBIE and BILL are trying to head her off. I'll get the station to give MACK a call. Send him down.

KIND OFFICER

Better get an ambo over here too. Got a girl upstairs in pretty bad shape. Might be alcohol poisoning.

(to PRETTY GIRL)

Ok, here we go. Let's dust you off, Miss. You take some drugs tonight? What kind of candy did your friends give you?

KIND OFFICER grabs a thin blanket from a nearby bed, wraps it around PRETTY GIRL's shivering shoulders, and carries her downstairs like a child. She nestles limply into him, hanging on peacefully. Outside the front door, neighbors are on their front lawns in bathrobes, hairnets, curlers, smoking cigarettes, pointing at the house or the beach, and whispering among themselves while watching the scene unfold.

Ext. Beach

FINN is running full speed through the sand to get to the water. She is far faster than the police officers chasing her. She stumbles to her knees and flies back up again. She runs straight into the water, dives into the waves and keeps swimming.

The officers stop at the water's edge and watch her bob into the darkness.

ROBBIE

(into the walkie talkie)

Yeah, she's in the water.

VOICE ON THE WALKIE TALKIE

It's MACK SPELMAN's girl.

ROBBIE

God help her. [to BILL] Get this, it's MACK's kid in the water.

VOICE ON THE WALKIE TALKIE

He's on his way. Stay down there. Ambo's taking a sick girl they found inside the house. Just hold tight.

ROBBIE and BILL pace along the water's edge, trying to keep FINN's in sight.

The camera zooms in on FINN. The waves crash around her face as she swims hard, stopping to look at the shore from time to time, where she can't get far ahead of her trackers. She

disappears under the water. She bobs back up. She disappears under the water. She bobs back up.

SCENE 7 - KENTUCKY PRESENT

Int. Small Country Church

FINN is standing next to UNCLE CARL, and the two are singing their parts of a choir-led hymn that is divided into a male-female harmony using an exaggeratedly high soprano and low baritone respectively. They are entertaining themselves without drawing much attention, but the younger cousins look curiously back and forth from their father, their visiting cousin, and their mother. AUNT PHYLLIS pretends not to notice, while UNCLE CARL is sucking in his gut to hit the deep notes and FINN raises up onto her tip toes theatrically to hit the high notes.

Cut to REVEREND WAVERLY chatting with FINN after the church service. She is enthusiastically and unselfconsciously describing her favorite surfing spots in San Diego. He chimes in to agree with certain endorsements and to indicate which beaches he has not visited.

NICE CHURCH LADY interrupts the conversation gently.

NICE CHURCH LADY

FINN, I wanted to introduce you to CHARLIE. He'll be doing the Kentucky Citizens camp too. I thought it'd be nice to know somebody your first day.

CHARLIE

Hey.

FINN

Yes, ma'am. Nice to meet you Charlie.

REVEREND WAVERLY

Well, I'll let you two get acquainted. Wonderful to have you in Lewisport, FINN. We know your Aunt and Uncle will be real blessed to have you around for the summer.

FINN

Thanks, Reverend. See you next Sunday!

Cut to outside the church. FINN and CHARLIE are walking around casually, somewhat awkwardly.

CHARLIE

So what'd you do.

FINN
Got caught.

CHARLIE
I know, right. It's not so bad, though. I had a couple buddies work the camp couple summers ago. Both of 'em got jobs out of it. Could be worse.

FINN
Yeah.

CHARLIE
You going back to California after?

FINN
Not sure yet.

CHARLIE
Oh. Ok, well, see you tomorrow...Is it FINN?

FINN
Yeah. FINN. Like Huck.

CHARLIE
Ok, see you tomorrow. Foster mom's getting in the van. See you tomorrow.

FINN watches CHARLIE walk toward a van. Two other kids get in with CHARLIE and NICE CHURCH LADY. After a minute, UNCLE CARL comes up and puts a fatherly hand on FINN's shoulder.

UNCLE CARL
Got you a boyfriend already?

FINN
(shrugs faux-innocently)
What can I say? Southern boys can't resist a California girl. Like moths to the flame.

UNCLE CARL
I can already tell, little girl, Phyllis and I are gonna have to fight 'em off with a stick.

[beat] Alllllrighty. Let's head home for some dinner. Your aunt's got ham on the menu, and I can't wait a minute longer! I'm wasting away here! (rubbing his round belly)

FINN laughs at UNCLE CARL as he begins to act out his hunger dramatically, causing his children to eagerly wander over one at a time to catch the show.

UNCLE CARL

I beg your pardon? I'm serious here. I need some nourishment or I just might pass out. I'm bound to faint! TAMARA! Get me my fainting chair! PHYLLIS! My blood sugar has dropped dangerously low, darlin'.

PHYLLIS

What in heaven's name are we gonna do, sweet pea? Let's get on over to the van, how about, and we will rush you right home. Do you think you can make it to the van, darlin'?

PHYLISS takes his arm to "help" him to the van as all the children giggle at the father's antics.

UNCLE CARL

I think I'll make it. I think I can make it darlin'.

PHYLISS

Oh, that is such a relief.

PHYLISS winks at FINN.

SCENE 8 - CALIFORNIA PAST

Int. Police Station Jail Cell

FINN is shivering with wet hair and a towel wrapped around her shoulders. Two other women are in the cell, sitting quietly.

OFFICER

Spelman. Your brother is here.

FINN

My brother?

OFFICER

Yeah, your brother, you're free to go.

FINN

Thank you, sir. Much appreciated.

FINN hands the OFFICER her towel and walks toward the exit in her bathing suit. A young man in his mid-twenties is waiting there.

BUCKY
Hey little sis. How's life treatin' you?

FINN
I'm pretty hungry?

Int. 24-Hour Diner

Finn is enthusiastically eating a steak. She's now wearing a big button down shirt - clearly borrowed from BUCKY. He is sipping from a mug of coffee. They smile back and forth from time to time without saying much.

BUCKY
DAD doesn't want you comin' home.

FINN
Ok.

BUCKY
You can stay with me in the van for a few days, but we gotta figure something else out.

FINN
Ok, sounds good.

BUCKY looks at FINN quizzically. She appears to be non-plussed.

BUCKY
You've gotta go before a judge on Thursday. Then we'll get this figured out. You can help out in the garage until then.

FINN
Thanks, BUCKY. Whatever happened to that girl?

BUCKY
They took her away in an ambulance. I didn't hear anything.

FINN nods.

BUCKY
You know DAD's really worked up, kiddo.

FINN

I know, BUCKY.