

SIMULATE

Written by

Ethan Marek

Based on the series concept, Project T.

Address
Phone Number

EXT. CAMPGROUND - NIGHT

ARCHIE, 16, and THEO, 12, sit together next to the campfire. The flames light an orange light upon the trees and their chosen camper for settlement.

Orange particles fly with the smoke to the tree branches.

Archie squints his eyes with a rock in hand.

An empty waterbottle rests on a wooden stump.

Archie throws the rock.

The rock flies over the water bottle.

ARCHIE

Dang it.

THEO

Gotta work on your aim, bud.

ARCHIE

You're the young one here. Bud.

Theo smirks.

THEO

When can we get out of here?

ARCHIE

I'm not sure, but I'll keep us alive.

THEO

You promise?

ARCHIE

With all my spirit. I can't believe the territories can't get along.

THEO

I can't believe I'm twelve.

Archie smiles in the nice orange light.

Theo pokes a broken branch at the campfire's ashes.

ARCHIE

I have a gift for you.

Theo's eyes twinkle at Archie in the glowing orange hue.

THEO

You do?

ARCHIE

Will you be alright if I head
inside for a second?

Theo takes his tip-burning branch and presents it to Archie.

THEO

No one's stopping me.

Archie smiles. He stands, scanning the dark woods.

The darkness sucks into the trees. The fire CRACKLES, and crickets rub their wings, but the trees are perfectly still.

Archie looks back at Theo while he chews on his fingertips.

Theo sees him stuck in place. He waves him away.

THEO (CONT'D)

Don't worry about me. Go on.

Archie smirks. He walks to the screen door and opens it.

INT. CAMPER - NIGHT

Archie hops inside. He moves to the kitchen countertop, pulling out two plates and cups.

As he does, he watches Theo outside the small kitchen window as he lights his stick on fire.

Archie smiles.

He ducks down, pulling out a pan from the warm oven.

He sets the circular cake on the stovetop.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - NIGHT

Theo plays with his stick in the singing crickets and the crackles from the burning wood. He glances to the camper.

Archie preps something with his hands. He finds Theo studying him from the fire.

ARCHIE

No peeking.

Theo smirks, then focuses on the fire again.

INT. CAMPER - NIGHT

Archie pulls the vanilla frosting out from the small fridge.

He pops the top off, glides a knife through the sweetness,
then spreads the cake with it.

Archie licks the frosting off the knife.

He grabs a new one from the drawyer.

The knife slides into the cake, processing the cuts.

A nice cake spatula slides under a slice.

It places the cake on a plate.

Archie places a fork on it.

He fills the cups up with cinnemilk.

Archie takes the stuff off the countertop with a handfull.

EXT. CAMPER - NIGHT

Archie walks down the steps, watching his feet.

ARCHIE
Happy birthday, Theo.

Archie's face pulls up as he fades into the light.

The campfire burns alone.

ARCHIE (CONT'D)
Theo?

Archie looks around the perimeter.

His eyes catch something.

Theo's stick slowly burns its tip while it lies in the grass
by the dark forest.

ARCHIE (CONT'D)
Theo!

The cake and cinnemilk drop to the grass, spilling all over
the ground. Archie runs past the campfire and into the woods.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Archie runs through the sharp, declining woods, as his silhouette wraps a hold around a tree.

No one's in the woods. No other movements.

ARCHIE

Theo!

Archie slams his back into a tree. He wimpers in a soft cry.

He knocks his head against the tree. As his tears roll out, the moon casts off the lake water at the bottom of the hill. The soft waves ripple the light, catching Archie's attention.

Archie spots the lake.

And on the water is a canoe, roped up to shore.

Archie hustles down to the canoe, slipping along his way.

Getting up, he grasps his hands on the canoe.

Inside, there's fishing gear, bagged snacks, and two paddles.

Archie studies the woods behind him. No one's in sight.

When he looks back at the canoe, his eyes stick to them.

The fishing poles.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - NIGHT

Archie pops out from the woods as the campfire still burns.

He runs to the side of the camper.

His head peeks around the corner of the camper's front hitch.

He notices shadows in the fish cleaning hut across the gravel roads and grass patches.

Archie keeps his eyes locked on the shadows as his hand reaches for something. He slides out a loaded M9 handgun.

Sneaking in the dark, Archie moves around the front of the camper and sneaks across the first gravel road.

He hides behind a tree in the dividing grass patch.

While he spots the shadows, the lightpost in the front entrance casts a yellow upon the hut.

Archie studies the hut.

Inside, Theo's hands are bounded up with rope, and he's biting upon a filthy rag.

INT. FISHING HUT - NIGHT

Two twenty-year-olds, FISHERMAN ONE and FISHERMAN TWO, prepare for Theo's fun.

FISHERMAN ONE
You like fish, boy?

Theo muffles out a whine.

Fisherman One grabs the bucket.

He pours globs of slimy fish guts all over him.

FISHERMAN TWO
Taste it, boy.

Fisherman Two rubs the fish guts near Theo's locked lips.

FISHERMAN ONE
Let's see if your friend's strong
enough to save you.

Fisherman One takes his shotgun out from the dark corner. He cocks the pulley back, locked and loaded.

Theo screams through the rag.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - NIGHT

Archie hides behind a bush. A BUZZING attracts his focus.

The light above him BUZZES as misquitos fly around it.

Archie focuses back on the task at hand.

He finds Fisherman One in the shed with his shotgun. Both of the guys are patrolling the outside with their eyes.

FISHERMAN ONE
There's no point in hiding anymore!

Archie studies the side of the fishing hut.

The screens cover three of the walls that would expose him.

FISHERMAN ONE (CONT'D)
We just want to know why you
support the side you do.

Archie spots a pickup truck parked near another camper.

FISHERMAN ONE (CONT'D)
North isn't as humble as they say.

INT. FISHING HUT - NIGHT

Fisherman One spins around to face Theo.

Theo breathes frantically through the rag and fish slime. The
shotgun barrell rises to his small chest.

FISHERMAN ONE
Your people killed my kid.

Theo squeezes his eyes shut, screaming in his muffled mouth.

FISHERMAN ONE (CONT'D)
And now, it's time for my people to
kill yours.

The light above Archie blinks three times.

He aims his pistol at the light.

With three rapid gunshots, the light bursts, darkening the
area into shadows.

INT. FISHING HUT - NIGHT

Fisherman One and Two scout the area through the screens.

Theo is silent.

FISHERMAN ONE
You're a sneaky one, that's for
sure.

Fisherman Two walks out the screen door.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - NIGHT

Fisherman Two aims his gun at the bush out in front.

FISHERMAN ONE
But it's time to come out.

Fisherman Two approaches the bush.

INT. FISHING HUT - NIGHT

Fisherman One watches Fisherman Two reach the bush.

FISHERMAN ONE
If you have the guts that is.

A tree branch CRACKS. Fisherman One watches Fisherman Two jolt around. A bullet flies through his head.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - NIGHT

Archie is beside the fishing hut, walking out from behind it.

He hurries to the side of the screened-in hut.

Fisherman Two raises his shotgun.

Archie shoots two bullets into him.

INT. FISHING HUT - NIGHT

Fisherman One drops with his gun as his reflex instantly pulls the trigger.

The shotgun shell impales Theo's foot.

Theo screams through the rag in immense pain.

Archie slams inside, undoing the ropes for Theo's escape.

ARCHIE
Are you alright?

He discovers Theo's bleeding foot.

ARCHIE (CONT'D)
It's okay. You're okay.

Theo cries and cries.

ARCHIE (CONT'D)
Don't worry, Theo. Imma gettchu out of here.

INT. CAMPER - NIGHT

Archie crashes inside while holding Theo in his arms.

He rests Theo on the masterbed in the front of the camper.

Archie digs for a medical kit.

He grabs one from under the kitchen sink.

Pulling out the supplies, he finds a wrap.

Archie steals a meat pincher from the kitchen.

Quickly and firmly, Archie pinches the bullet and pulls it out. Theo whines.

ARCHIE

I know, Theo. I know it hurts,
buddy. Just keep fighting it.

Archie wraps the wound.

He uses all of the wrap.

Archie ties the blanket sheet tightly around his ankle,
blocking the blood flow.

ARCHIE (CONT'D)

Nice job, Theo.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - NIGHT

Archie slams the camper door open, sprinting out with Theo in his arms.

Archie's backpack bounces as he runs to the woods, passing the littered cake and cinnemilk.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Archie books it down the inclined hill, soaring through the obstructed moonlight.

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

Archie splish splashes into the lake water.

He lies Theo down on the back bench of the canoe.

Archie unties the rope from the canoe and pushes off.

He hops into the wobbly canoe.

Archie paddles away from the shoreline and into the moonlit water, shimmering in a crystal black.

Archie pauses in the middle of the circular lake.

ARCHIE

I wish there was a way out of here.

Theo groans as he droops to the side.

ARCHIE (CONT'D)

Theo.

He holds Theo on the seat from falling.

THEO

Am I alright? What happened?

ARCHIE

Theo, everything's okay.

THEO

My foot hurts.

ARCHIE

I know it does. You're a tough player.

THEO

The toughest?

Archie chuckles.

ARCHIE

Yes. The strongest.

Theo turns his eyes to the star-speckled sky.

THEO

The stars.

Archie faces the sky.

ARCHIE

They're more vibrant than the real world, aren't they?

Theo's head drops to the side. He falls asleep.

ARCHIE (CONT'D)

It's okay. You're okay. I'll get you out of here.

Archive grabs the paddles and rows in the night.