

## Thornland

CAYA - 17-year-old, blonde long hair, blue eyes, shy and insecure, no self-confidence

JOSEPHINE - stepmother 35-year-old, works as a civil engineer, friendly but determined

TOM - 37-year-old, an officer in the navy, dark blond short hair. Father of Caya, Factual, loves his daughter and would do anything.

NICOLE - platinum blonde woman with designer clothes and perfect makeup, always tanned, long fingernails. Superficial, very intent on her appearance mother of Caya

GRANDMA MIMI: blind woman, old

LOLA - stayed in the same hospital room with Caya, red hair, talks a lot and is self-confident

Friend LOLA 1- male 17-years-old

Friend LOLA 2- male

Friend LOLA 3- female 17-years old

Children at school - 15 to 18 years old

MONA - black hair, stylish, Fashionista

Helena - long blonde straight hair, the same grade as Caya

Dr. AIR - a middle-aged man, friendly,

JACOB - 18-year-old brown wavy hair, tall

JAMES - 17-year-old, lean-built, sporty, freckles

TILL - 17-year-old, big and strong

LUCAS - A 16-year-old boy with braces and a big head, shoulder-length hair

LEAH - 17-year-old girl, boots, dark hair, dark makeup

ANNA - 18-year-old, blond hair, big blue eyes

IVO - 35-year-old man, short but trained, self-centered

STEPHAN - 36-year-old man, big and blond stylish hair

## **Intro**

*You can see roses in a nursery and a little girl standing there looking at the rose bushes. In the bloom of the ROSES you see different people (of all races) that treat others badly and the voice of CAYA says:*

Thorns! There are thorns everywhere. They are spreading across your body. Silent, invisible and powerful. Nobody escapes them. Nobody is safe. Sometimes you get a glimpse of their size and strength, but you shake it off because you don't want to see them. Nobody want to see them! But they are there. We are surrounded by them. They will stick you. Because they can do it - they desire to.

They make you sweat, cry and sometimes bleed. And it pains. Oh yeah! They always desire it to hurt. They want you to live and suffer. You do it again and again. You suffer.

Your wounds bleed and shed blood, but no one sees them, because they are hiding their puncture wounds so that no one else sees that they have stung you.

They do it again and again until you believe you're about to die. And you want it to stop. But they don't tolerate that. They only sting you more. You want to conceal . You want to escape it all ...

but no one escapes the THORNLAND.

### **Bus - early morning**

*Caya is sitting along the bus crying. She has unkempt hair, her clothes are soiled and her sneakers are too small ( a toe comes out of the fabric), she clasps her hands around a plastic bag with an expensive brand label on the front. She gets off the bus, wipes the tears from her face and takes a deep breather.*

### **Street - early morning**

*Then Caya walks through the streets with beautiful mansion. She breaks off in front of a house. Miller - is written in big letters on a nameplate. Rain is coming down from above and Caya waits.*

### **Road**

*A car comes. Josephine and Caya's father, in an officer's uniform, pass away the car and laugh happily, then they kiss.*

JOSEPHINE: I'm so glad you're finally back. It's been such a long time.

*Caya's dad nods - he wants to say something, but stops as he sees Caya.*

TOM: Can I aid you, miss?

CAYA: I ...

JOSEPHINE: Oh my god, Caya is that you?

*Caya nods and shakes.*

*Tom's eyes get heavy, as he looks at his daughter, his features become angry as he looks her up and down then they become sad. Eventually, he walks up to Caya with quick steps and takes her in his arms. Caya hangs lifeless in his arms without any emotion.*

TOM: Caya, what the hell went on?

Caya shakes her head and keeps still.

JOSEPHINE: Tom, let's go into the house, she'll freeze to death in this cold rain.

TOM **(sighs)**: After 9 month in the desert, I'm actually happy about every bead of cold water. But I can likewise look at the rain from the inside.

Caya smiles tentatively and lets her father lead her to the front doorway. He does not let her move until she's inside.

### **Tom and Josephine's house**

JOSEPHINE: I'm preparing breakfast!

TOM: That's a good thought.

*He takes a towel and gives it to Caya and looks at the plastic bag (with the expensive brand-name) that Caya is still clutching in her fist. He frowns, looks Caya up and down, halts to look at*

*her broken sneakers and sighs loudly and really annoyed.*

TOM: Some people never switch!

*Caya takes the towel and dries herself up.*

TOM: Go to the bathroom and put on Josephine's bathrobe, then we have breakfast, what do you reckon?

CAYA: I never want to go back to her! I want to be with you and Josephine.

*Tom looks shocked at Caya. He just wants an explanation. Nothing.*

TOM **(swallows hard and looks desperate)**: Okay. You can stay here as long as you want! You could always just ask.

CAYA **(lowers her head)**: I know.

TOM: I told you last time that you can decide for yourself where you desire to live, they have to listen to you. And I say it again: Our house will forever be your home.

CAYA: I recognize that now. **(softly)** Thank you!

TOM **(sighs sadly)**: Go and strive off the wet clothes!

*Caya disappears into the bathroom, undresses. Looks in the mirror and frowns.*

NICOLE **(appears, with a disgusted face, in the mirror)**: You're so ugly and ruined!

CAYA (**nods and whispers to her own reflection**):

Yes! So ugly...

*And so she strips quickly out of her wet clothes, dries herself up some more and puts on the bathrobe. She places her wet clothes over the bathtub. Ultimately, she wraps a big towel over her head like a turban and leaves the bathroom. She hears the voice of her father and stops and listen.*

TOM (**is angrily talking on the telephone**): ...

Yeah, she's here, Nicole ... What do you mean by that? ... No, I don't believe so... She just turned up looking like she starved the whole time I was away, Nicole... That's bullshit, she always ate with us totally normal, without any problems... She's upstairs now ... No, damn, she's not going back to you ... You do that, we'll visualize if you win this time again... Because this time she's old enough to decide for herself and she does not want to go back ... Was that a threat?... You are not serious, are you? ... No, because I did not believe her before and I won't now ... You know exactly why. You are the manipulation in person... No... Because she is still a child and children are easy to influence, you know that very well, do you? ... Nicole? Hello? Incredible , she hung up.

*He twists around to Josephine.*

JOSEPHINE (**shakes her head**): Well, I guess she had no arguments left, did she?

TOM: As usual ... She wanted to make me believe that Caya was following a fashion trend and wanted to be skinny all of a sudden. She allegedly stayed with one of her friends for weeks, because Nicole didn't want her to starve herself so she did it

somewhere else. That doesn't explain why she came to me instead of getting back to her mother. I have no idea what to make of all this.

JOSEPHINE: Caya knows she's welcome anytime.

TOM: I'm cognizant of that.

JOSEPHINE: Nicole forbade me to see Caya the whole time you were gone. It was really hard. Thither is a reason she came to us...

*(Short pause)*

TOM: Have you realized how broken her shoes are? The toe comes out in the battlefront. I have never watched her so miserable and dirty... I didn't even recognize her at first. **(desperate voice)** I didn't see her for 9 months and then my own daughter stands there and all I think is: What is this homeless person doing in front of my house? It got me a while to understand who was standing there in front of me ... Why didn't she tell me on the phone, that there are problems at home? I don't understand why...

JOSEPHINE **(sighs sadly)**: What do you guess how I felt? She didn't let me see Caya and I wasn't permitted to talk to her on the phone. And Caya didn't try to reach out...

TOM**(bitter voice)**: Nicole has taught her well. She is simply happy when she destroys something. I'd like to tell Caya all the things that occurred during my time with her mom...

JOSEPHINE: No! She will not understand that. Not now. Caya has been lying for Nicole for years nowadays. You saw what happened at the courtroom. They do not realize what we see ... and Caya will

always lie for her mother, she never learned it a different way.

TOM: I know ... and I've come to the conclusion that I'm not going to push her this time, also I want to go to the bottom of this so badly. It accomplishes absolutely nothing. We just have to give her time. Perhaps she will see for herself, that I can't do anything to help her if she continues to lie for her mother.

JOSEPHINE: That will be the best.

TOM **(quietly)**: But what if Nicole convinces her again? I am so afraid that Caya will let herself be drawn back again.

JOSEPHINE: Nicole is a mean and selfish woman, Tom. I guess she will never change. She sees no faults in herself. And she gets off with everything. Over and over and over and over again. We have to trust Caya to make the right decision this time.

TOM: I hope Caya stays and Nicole can't convince her to go back to her...

CAYA **(whispers on the stairs)**: Never ...

**Kitchen (Minutes later)**

Caya gets up and runs down the stairs loudly and into the kitchen.

TOM: Come, honey, Josephine made scrambled eggs.

CAYA: That smells delicious.

JOSEPHINE **(grins and sets the plate in front of Caya)**: Bon appetite, sweetie.



Caya dives in her dish hungrily and Josephine and Tom look at each other meaningfully.

**TOM(clears his throat):** Um, next week the school takes up again. Should I register you here in this district or do you choose to go to your old school?

**CAYA(hastily):** No! ... I think a new beginning is the best.

**TOM (relieved voice):** That's exactly what I imagine .

**JOSEPHINE:** Should we bring a moving van to your mom, for your furniture and private belongings?

**CAYA(lowers her head):** I have everything with me.

Tom and Josephine look at each other in shock.

**TOM:** We'll go shopping tomorrow and get you what you require.

**One and a half weeks later. Room Caya (Saturday morning)**

**CAYA(screaming in a panic):** Josephine.

*Thousands of fruit flies come out from under her bed and Caya tries to chase them away.*

**CAYA:** Josefine, come quickly ...

JOSEPHINE (**breathless voice**): Caya, what's the ma ... oh my god, where did they all come from?

*She looks around in a daze.*

CAYA (**lips trembling**): look!

*She points a trembling finger under her bottom. Josefina bends down to get a closer look.*

JOSEPHINE: What the ... Caya, are these apples and other fruits? What are they doing under your bottom? They are already bad..."

CAYA (**stutters**): I ... I know ... I thought... It was only a precaution, if ... but then I forgot them altogether because there were always fruits and vegetables in the kitchen and I ate them there... You bought so many things ...I didn't need anything ...

*Josefina sighs sadly and stands up .*

JOSEPHINE: Caya, the fruit flies are attracted to ripened or fermenting **fruits** and veggies.

CAYA (**shocked expression**): I did not know that. Does that happen with other food as well?

JOSEPHINE: Other groceries can become worse as well. Caya, why are you making this food nests? There is plenty in the kitchen for you. You don't have to drag anything into your fresh room.

CAYA: I know ... I'm so sorry!

JOSEPHINE: It's alright. Come along, we get rid of it now... and then no more fruits under your bed, understood?

*Caya nods.*

**Another month later. Caya's room.**

JOSEPHINE (**scolding, has a laundry basket with fresh laundry in her hand**): Why do I find dirty socks in your drawer, Caya? You hold a basket in the room. You place your laundry in the basket and bring it to the laundry room. I do not require you to use the washing machine, but I think it's not too much to ask that you bring your laundry in the laundry room, is it? You already live here for two months you know by now how everything operates.

*Caya stands rooted to the spot and stares while Josephine opens her closet.*

JOSEPHINE (**horrified expression**): Caya, are you serious? Why do you throw your complete laundry, dirty or not, at the backside of the closet?

*Caya just stares at Josephine.*

JOSEPHINE (voice rises): Here are enough shelves. You have to put everything in there and the smelly clothes in the basket. It is really easy.

She looks at Caya, who continues to stare.

JOSEPHINE: Throw everything in the laundry basket, I'll instruct you how to use the washing machine. I will definitely not wash it all solo.

*Caya lowers her head and Josephine sighs sadly and hugs her.*

JOSEPHINE (**timid voice**): We both can execute it, right? I know that your lifetime. is different

here. Only we both can do it. Tom is away next weekend and we'll both be able to take charge of the laundry, okay?

Caya nods. Josephine leaves the room and Caya looks in the mirror of her bedroom wardrobe. The face of her mother comes out.

NICOLE: You have constantly been a failure. You can't even clean up after you.

CAYA: But I've never owned a closet, only a low chest of drawers. And you never thought me enough clothes only for yourself...

NICOLE (**disgusted voice**): Go wash yourself, you reek.

CAYA (**sad voice and face**): apparently it is not enough to clean yourself when the clothes still smell ...

**Six month later. Bathroom. Afternoon.**

JOSEPHINE: Caya, come here, please.

*Caya comes and sees Josephine in her hand with six packages of sanitary towels.*

JOSEPHINE (**surprised voice and face**): Caya, didn't you had your period in the last few months?

CAYA (**embarrassed voice and face**): of course...

JOSEPHINE (**frowning expression**): But why are there so many packages left? Please explain that logic to me?

CAYA (**hastily and nervous voice**): I only need one a day.

JOSEPHINE: Excuse me?

CAYA: Mom always bought only one package.

JOSEPHINE: In a month?

CAYA : In three or four months...

JOSEPHINE: Are you serious?

*Caya lowers her head.*

JOSEPHINE (**sighs**): So one package? How?

CAYA: I put a pile of toilet paper on the pad, so I usually need only one or two in a day, it depends on the blood flow...

JOSEPHINE (**whispering**): Unbelievable.

*Josephine takes a deep breath, tears glisten in her optics.*

JOSEPHINE: Okay, from now on you change your pads every time you use the loo, do you see me? I know it is a lot for you to discover, but it's really necessary. You brush your teeth twice a day, use the floss. I bought you enough hygiene products and when something is empty you tell me and we buy more. Look, there is also deodorant, toothpaste and everything you need to shower in the big closet in the hallway. Please, do not hesitate to use it. Hygiene is important, Caya. It's not normal to lose teeth at your age. Even if your mother thinks so. Do you remember what the dentist said to me?

CAYA: She was furious, and said that I have scurvy and that she wants to lock you up for being such a horrible mom.

JOSEPHINE: She did not know that you only barely moved to us. That's why I tell you again: It's necessary to think about yourself and your health. Everything is here.

If I forgot something you need, buy it yourself. Your dad has set up an additional pocket money account for you.

CAYA (**disbelief voice**): Is the money really mine?

JOSEPHINE (**sad voice**): Of course it's yours, Caya.

*Then she hugs Caya tightly.*

### **Half a year later. Kitchen in the morning**

JOSEPHINE (**sighs**) : I'm sorry, Caya. It is uncommon that we are both traveling at the same time, only sometimes it can't be prevented.

TOM: Josefine has bought everything you require. We put enough food in the freezer for the following few days. You know how to use the microwave and you know how to fix yourself a meal. So it's simple, really. On Saturday Josefine comes back and then you are no longer alone. It will be only 5 days. OK. You can do it! I love you so much darling!

JOSEPHINE (**encouraged voice**) : Of course she can manage it.

*Caya nods.*

## **Next day Caya's room (morning)**

*Caya lies in her bed and takes heed. Something squeaks outside and she hops out of her bed, sprints to the windowpane. She sees a waste collection vehicle, the break squeaks as the vehicle slows down the road.*

*Caya looks relieved and goes backwards to bed. The relieve does not endure . She looks around and hears the clock ticking.*

**CAYA (mumbles):** everything is fine...only 5 days alone, then Josephine will be back..

*We pick up her heartbeat loud and thunderous. And she rests on in her bed, her eyes huge. Then you see dark shadowy hands who look like this ranks that come from everyplace. They reach her and then they close around her neck and squeeze. Caya gasps and closes her eyes, you can hear her heart beating faster and firmer. Then everything is still again. Caya opens her eyes, the phantom ranks are gone. She leaps out of bed and goes up and down in her room. Her eyes stray to the mirror over the vanity.*

**NICOLE (disgusted voice and face):** You look crappy.

**CAYA:** I'm not feeling good.

**NICOLE:** You miss me!

**CAYA:** Certainly not. I'm hating you.

NICOLE (**laughs heartlessly**): Why didn't you tell them why you truly left? Bad conscience? What is Josephine saying when you diminish out of your bed every night? Is she bothered?

CAYA: No, she's not.

NICOLE: Of course she is...

*Caya is silent.*

Nicole: I'll tell you what she considers every night she finds your body laying outside your bed. She thinks that you are not normal. Grandma Mimi thought so likewise, she just did not want to tell you herself. Luckily she is dead now, so she does not have to see how pathetic you are.

CAYA (**angry voice and face**): Leave me solely!

NICOLE (**calmly voice and smug face**): I already am, aren't I? I got no interest in you. Nobody has...

*Caya ruffles her hair and goes again back and forth.*

*Then she holds her stomach and bends forward, face in pain.*

NICOLE (**laughing**): Maybe you have a gastritis?

CAYA (**makes big eyes**): Or a tumor?

*She bends over again with pain.*

Nicole (**grinning**): You are going to die...alone...

*Caya's eyes widen and she speeds up to get dressed. Then she sprints to the next bus stop and drives to the infirmary.*



## ***Hospital outside/ inside***

*On the steps in front of the hospital she finally breaks down. Nurses and doctors take her inside and exam her.*

NURSE: Who should we call, sweetie?

CAYA: My stepmom! Her cell phone number is stored in my cell phone.

*Josephine arrives after she'd been send for.*

JOSEPHINE: Caya, oh my god. Everything will be fine! I'm here...

*Caya sobs and sinks into Josephines arms.*

## **Sign: Two years later**

*Hospital - DAY Room 404*

*CAYA talking in her head, lying in a two-bed hospital room. She gazes around the room and looks at the white colors of the rampart and the white bedsheet.*

CAYA **(thinks)**: Today I will be discharged . I have been resting here in room 404 for 2 weeks. The room is painted white. Like me!

**(Holds a flashlight under her hand)**

The illumination in my room is brighter than the flashlight, but I stay white. White, like the paint of the room I'm lying in. Room 404.

White is not considered a color. That's what my art instructor told me once. So I am nothing, not even a color.

A nobody, in a nothing, on a nothing.

**(sighs sadly)**

*CAYA sees in the mirror in her hand, her mother comes out in it.*

NICOLE: You're a creep! Completely! I've never pictured anyone as creepy as you! Why is someone as vile as you my daughter?

CAYA **(whispers)**: Don't say that...

NICOLE **(laughs nastily)**: But it's the truth. No one is uglier than you. You should be ashamed to walk around in that body of yours.

*Caya flinches and shoves the mirror under her bed spread.*

*CAYA looks now at the other bed opposite from her. A girl lies there. LOLA. She sleeps*

*Caya watches Lola cautiously sleeping.*

*Lolas breathing is constant. On. Out. On. Out. On. Again and again.*

CAYA **(thinking)**: For the past two weeks, I've often questioned how she managed to be so calm. At

first, I believed she was dead but she only slept peacefully, like everyone else...except me

***Flashback bedroom - any other day***

*CAYA sleeps in her bed, breathes heavily turns and moves around and shots upward in bed... and falls out*

CAYA (**continues thinking**): Normal people sleep peacefully, like Lola.

***Hospital room - the same day***

*Caya continues to think.*

CAYA - Lola has got a lot of visitors in the last two weeks. She is quite popular. One of her friends still wanted me to go to the cafeteria. I simply shook my head and hid behind my long blond hair.

*Flashback hospital room - 12 days ago*

Two guys and a girl enter the hospital room chattering easily to Lola. One of them shows interest in Caya.

FRIEND LOLA 1 - Hi there!

CAYA - (**doesn't answer, tries to shrink into herself**)

FRIEND LOLA 1 - (**annoyed voice and face**) Can't she talk?

LOLA (**laughs**) - Of course, she can. Perhaps she does not want to talk to you.

FRIEND LOLA 2 and 3 - (**laughing**)

FRIEND LOLA 1 - Hey, what's your name?

*CAYA continues to ignore him*

FRIEND LOLA 1 - Is she always this arrogant?

CAYA blinks a few times, shock in her expression.

### ***Hospital room - the same day***

*Caya sits on her bed and sighs loudly, and looks again at the sleeping body from Lola and thinks.*

CAYA - Being arrogant means that I think I'm better than anyone else. Of course, a "nothing" cannot be more respectable. It is a weird feeling to be seen as arrogant. And I wish I' were only arrogant.

Lola is like Switzerland. She does not say anything bad, but she does not fend for me either. Although we are not friends, I know a great deal more about Lola.

Where she lives, what kind of hobbies she has, what she likes and what she does not like and even who she slept with her first time. Lola had a blind-intestinal breakthrough. No one knows why I'm in room 404. And I do not believe anyone cares anymore.

***Hospital Bathroom - the same day***

*Caya stands up and runs to the bathroom and brushes her teeth. She sees in the mirror examining herself.*

CAYA - When you grow older, your skin becomes thinner and your teeth wear off. My skin is not yet aged, but I still feel old. Ancient! Maybe my birthdays count like that of a pawl .... I would be 119 years old by then . Yes. 17 times 7 are 119.

NICOLE: Look at you, talking to yourself and being uglier than ever. I can't believe that your father and his wife let you remain in their house for so long, but now they will leave you here to die.

CAYA: That's not true. Josephine will pick me up shortly .

NICOLE (**laughs**): You finally overplayed your hand.

Phone rings and Caya picks up.

JOSEPHINE: I'll be there in twenty minutes, wait in the entryway.

CAYA (**relieved voice**): Yes

***Hospital Bedroom - the same day***

*JOSEPHINE enters the room and is annoyed because CAYA is not ready.*

JOSEPHINE: I remembered you wanted to wait downstairs?

CAYA- I cannot check myself out. I am not of age yet!

JOSEPHINE (**huffs and mutters something to herself**):  
Be ready in five!

*CAYA nods*

### ***Corridor Hospital/ Parking area***

Josephine and Caya are walking along the hospital corridor.

JOSEPHINE: Come along. I have to get back to work right now !

They then both hurry to a car, they climb in and secure the seatbelt

Josephine: I don't know what to do anymore? You have been tested and you are healthy. They think at present, you are a hypochondriac. And they want for me that I look for a psychologist. I truly do not know why you do that, Caya. But I guess the idea with the psychologist makes sense. It`s been the fourth time you executed this. I cannot disrupt my business trips every time, just because you need attention. It does not work that way! Did you hear me???

Caya nods and tears are shining in her eyes.

CAYA: I will never do it again. I promise.

*The car drives away...*

**Home: Kitchen - evening**

*CAYA puts noodles in a pot of water. Sets the table. Swears loudly, as the sauce spills over. And waits nervously. One glance at the clock. Then the door opens and JOSEPHINE enters. She observes the dinner table and looks excited. Caya and Josephine take a place on the table and CAYA glances anxiously to Josephine.*

JOSEPHINE **(takes a bite)** - It`s delicious. Caya! And you set up the table so nicely! Did you complete all your homework as well?

CAYA - my teacher Mrs Wheeler send me a get well card and my Essay. I`ve got an A+ for it.

JOSEPHINE **(proud voice and expression)** - Great, that`s wonderful! So Monday you go back to shool?  
*Caya nods.*

JOSEPHINE **(clears her throat)**: I had a long chat with Dr. Rubus today. He mails me a list of good psychologists. I already told you that they couldn`t detect anything wrong with you again. You knew that already, right? How are the doctors going to consider you seriously in the future when you are actually sick? Do you know the tale of the boy who keeps shouting that there is a wolf and in reality there is none?

CAYA - Yes, someday a wolf comes,, only no one believes the boy and he gets eaten. **(Voice breaks at the end)**

JOSEPHINE **(looks sad)** - I know something happened two years ago at your mother's place and that is the reason behind your suddenly wanting to live at our house. I also recognize that you do not want to talk to us about it, but maybe it's good to talk to an outsider. What do you think of that? Dr. Rubus said a group therapy would be beneficial. He gave me the address. Traumatized teens tell their experiences in this group therapy. You do not feel alone with your troubles. Maybe even a few one-on-one talks with the psychologist would be good for you. It could help you, too. What do you think about that?

JOSEPHINE looks hopeful to CAYA

*CAYA nods in agreement.*

*Caya looks at the audience and says in a calm voice:*

CAYA: And thus it all began...Culprits and victims are soon to be revealed and the secrets piece by piece discovered until only the truth remains and I honestly can say, the truth hurts really bad sometimes...but see for yourself...