EXT - SKI RESORT - MORNING

Her back resting on the parked coach, RUTH is smoking a cigarette. She looks at a very outdated sign of the region's notorious pilgrimage (which she is about to undertake).

Meanwhile, BRIDGET is unloading her luggage from the boot of the bus. Hearing the commotion, Ruth takes a last drag and quickly discards her bud - not quite before facing Bridget.

RUTH
(embarrassed, chuckles)
Trying to quit.

Bridget doesn't mind Ruth's comment. She is busy closing her bag which is overflows with crucifixes, bottles of holy water, and copies of the Bible.

BRIDGET
(in a rush)
Sorry, can you hold this?

Bridget shoves a bottle of holy water in Ruth's hands.

RUTH
Oh--

Ruth clears her throat, overlooking the awkward moment.

RUTH (CONT'D)
(upbeat)
I hope I have everything. I read the whole guidebook but, you know, I couldn't find a lot of information about what to--

BRIDGET (O.S.)
Thaank... you!

Bridget takes the bottle back from Ruth, zips up her bag, and puts it on her shoulders.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
(giddy)
Ah, you must be so excited. I remember my first trip with the Church like it was yesterday.

Bridget smiles and quietly chuckles.

The camera suddenly pans to GERTRUDE who snuck next to

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Bridget, unnoticed.

GERTRUDE
(in a whispered-like, indescriptible tone)
Have you seen my bag?

RUTH
Woh!

BRIDGET
Yes, that is true: no one beats Gertie. She has done the most trips from us. Maybe ever! Hahaha!

GERTRUDE
(grinning, still in her strange tone)
Enough to lose these.

Raising her robe, Gertrude proudly exhibits her missing toes.

RUTH
(slightly repulsed)
Mmmh, nice...

Everyone stands still, smiling.

Gertrude goes to poke Ruth, but stops her bu putting her arm around her, and gently leading her back towards the bus.

BRIDGET (O.S.)
Come on, Mother Superior is waiting.

BRIDGET (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Also...

Bridget points at a strand of hair that escaped Ruth’s veil.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
(whispers close to Ruth's face)
You might want to put that away before she sees it.

RUTH
(embarrassed)
Oh. Thanks.

Ruth quickly tucks it away.

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BRIDGET (O.S.)
See you up there!

In the distance, Bridget and Gertrude walk up the steps of the parking.

Ruth glances back at the sign. Fresh bird dropping slowly trickles down the worn-down wood, defacing the once gleeful hiker pictured on it. Surprised, she frowns slightly, but quickly grabs her bag and hurries after the other sisters.

RUTH
Wait for me!

EXT - HIGHER IN THE SKI RESORT - MORNING

SISTER MARTIN addresses the nuns with the mountain looming in the background.

SISTER MARTIN
Alright ladies, as we stand before Mount Saint-Claude, I commend you to remember the sanctity of our annual journey. Let us commemorate the generations which have passed before us on this holy trail. Today, we celebrate our roots and honour our traditions.

Closing their eyes and with their hands on their heart, the nuns take in Sister Martin’s inspiring words. Sneaking a peek, Ruth smiles and quickly does the name.

SISTER MARTIN (CONT'D)
(breathy)
Let’s make Him proud.

Sister Martin’s final words are met with vigorous claps from her audience which echo faintly in the valley.

EXT - IN THE MOUNTAIN - MID-MORNING

The groups sets off on their journey, tied together by a red rope. Traversing a variety of landscapes, Sister Martin, Gertrude, and Bridget move perfectly in synch meanwhile Ruth -slightly offbeat- does her best to follow their lead.

EXT - SOMEWHERE ELSE IN THE MOUNTAIN - NOON

BRIDGET (O.S.)
Oh look!

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Pressing themselves like sardines against Ruth, Bridget and Gertrude are fighting to look through the binoculars Ruth has brought with her. Through them, they witness a lone hawk soars high in the dimmed sky.

BRIDGET (O.S.) (CONT'D)
What is it doing?

RUTH (O.S.)
It's watching over the valley.
(pause)
It must be beautiful from up there.

Ruth hands the binoculars to Bridget.

GERTRUDE
(softly)
May I have a turn?

BRIDGET
(admirative)
This is really cool, Ruth. I also wish to have such *fresh* technology.

RUTH (O.S.)
Oh you're kind. They go everywhere with me; bit of a family keepsake, I guess.
"You can't shoot what you can't see," always said my father. A good man. He sure tried his best. But you can borrow them anytime--

The two lenses suddenly fill with black, then an enormous eye. Sister Martin. The mighty woman towers above the three nuns, looking highly displeased.

RUTH (CONT'D)
Oh, sorry…

SISTER MARTIN
(à la Miranda Priestly)
Mmh.
(pause)
What do we have here?

Sister Martin inspects Ruth's binoculars.

SISTER MARTIN (CONT'D)
(sarcastic)
Fascinating.

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As the nuns gather their equipment to leave, Ruth looks at a tree above. A single leaf sways softly in the wind, until abruptly blowing over in the opposite direction. A storm is picking up.

SISTER MARTIN (O.S.)
(cold)
He awaits, Sisters.

EXT - NEAR A CREVASSE - AFTERNOON

Up higher point in the mountain, the group stands in front of a large crevasse.

Peacefully whistling and on all fours, Gertrude digs out a patch of snow with her bare hands. She finally uncovers a rusty ladder.

GERTRUDE
Hello, beauty.

Gertrude sets the primitive-looking ladder across the precipice.

SISTER MARTIN (O.S.)
Behold, our bridge to salvation.

After crossing, Sister Martin, Gertrude, and Bridget await Ruth on the other side.

Sister Martin pretends to look away.

RUTH
(very unsure)
Okay...

BRIDGET
(screaming, points at the sky and winks)
Just don’t look down; He’s up there.

RUTH
(unconvinced)
Right...

The ladder worryingly squeaks under her weight, bits of snow fall down the trench, but Ruth eventually crosses the crevasse safely.

The nuns continue their ascension. Bridget walks next to Ruth.

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BRIDGET (O.S.)
You see? It wasn’t so difficult, no?

RUTH (O.S.)
(still shaken from the emotion)
I don't think that was in the guidebook.

Shortly after the nuns have left the area, the hawk attempts to land on the ladder. Without it even touching down, the ladder brutally breaks in two and falls down the frozen crevasse.

EXT - EDGE OF THE MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

Ruth notices that the few trees at this attitude are all heavily damaged. She frowns and shivers as a ice-cold breeze suddenly takes up.

Unbothered, Bridget is busy reciting prayers from her Bible.

BRIDGET
Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.

She doesn’t notice a patch of loose snow in her path and nearly slips off the edge. Ruth catches her just in time.

RUTH
(worried)
Watch out!

BRIDGET
Oh!

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
(hesitant)
It really makes you think...
(giggling)
How does He even come up with this?

Bridget trots up to the other sisters whilst Ruth stays in place, still in shock.

BRIDGET (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
(screams with echo)
You guys are really missing out!

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Ruth looks around frantically; the path is getting more narrow with every step.

RUTH
How long until we reach it?

SISTER MARTIN
(resolute)
Fear not; for we walk by faith, not by sight.

Gertrude puts a bandeau over her eyes as she whistles.

The group continues their trek.

EXT - FURTHER ON THE EDGE OF THE MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

The blizzard is now in full force: visibility is almost zero. Fighting against the heavy snowfall and fierce wind, all the women are struggling to walk. Ruth can barely see Bridget a few meters ahead of her.

RUTH
(shouting over the wind)
We can't go on like this!

SISTER MARTIN
(cold)
We continue. He *will* provide.

BRIDGET
Oh, Sister Ruth, you worry too much. A little snow never hurt anyone.
(laughing to herself)
Dangerous snow! Hahaha. So silly.

Ruth looks defeated, realising her concerns are falling on deaf ears.

A faint cracking noise is heard higher. With her frosty binoculars, Ruth scans the mountain. The noise gets louder, growing into a loud rumble. Her eyes widen in horror.

A few pieces of snow fallen from the icy tops trigger large patches to separate from the mountainside. The white mass barrels down, collecting more snow with every tumble.

RUTH
(screaming)
Get down!

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GERTRUDE
What was that?

SISTER MARTIN
Holy sh--

The avalanche hurtles down right towards them. Sister Martin and Gertrude are swept away by the snow. Ruth is desperately holding on to Bridget's arm but struggles against the harsh conditions.

BRIDGET
(screaming)
Let me go! I think I hear Him calling for me.

She can't hold on any longer; she lets Bridget's hand go.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
(into the distance)
This is not the eeeend ...
(pause)
Right?

Ruth unties herself from the safety rope. After a moment of chaos, the screen goes silent and white. Ruth, partially buried, struggles to free herself, gasping for air. As the storm settles, she emerges from beneath, dazed and disoriented. Looking around, there are no signs of the other nuns. The lone red rope sticks out of the snow. She's surrounded by an ice desert. Helpless and at a loss, she pulls out a cigarette.

One by one, three crosses falls from the sky, planting themselves upright in the snow.

In the distance flies the hawk.

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