

33. The Scar

In the winter of 1968, Kya, now working on a mushroom guide after her seabird book, is startled by the arrival of a man in a military uniform at her remote shack. This man is revealed to be her long-lost brother Jodie, recognizable only by a significant scar on his face. Their reunion is filled with tension and emotions as they reminisce about their traumatic past, marked by their abusive father and the desertion of their family members. Jodie's return stirs a mix of sorrow and joy for Kya, as he shares news of their mother's passing and her life after she left them. They discuss their abandonment, Kya's survival in the swamp, and Jodie's life in the military and his eventual discovery of Kya through her published book.

As they reconnect, Jodie shares stories of their siblings, contributing to Kya's fragmented memories of a family life long gone. The revelation of their mother's fate and the reasons behind her departure and silence bring a somber reality to Kya, challenging her feelings of abandonment. Jodie's stories and the paintings of their mother, showcasing the family in happier times, offer a semblance of closure and a more nuanced understanding of their past.

During Jodie's visit, discussions about love, betrayal, and the complexities of human relationships surface, bringing Tate, Kya's first love, back into focus. Jodie encourages Kya to reconsider her guarded feelings towards Tate, hinting at the possibility of reconciliation. As they hang their mother's paintings, a sense of healing and a new perspective on family and love begin to emerge in Kya's isolated world, marking the start of a tentative reopening to the connections she once shunned.