

WEEK 11 LOTR: ROAD TRIP  
Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, St. Cloud  
Confession and Absolution

VEGAS: I thought we were going to St. Cloud...where is Cold Spring?

REBECCA: Oh it's right by it. Like a suburb.

ISAAC: And what're we doing again? Picking up sticks? That sounds pretty exciting.

SAUL: Oooo... I found another stick. Look at how pretty it is. Hey Ty! What's brown and sticky?

TY: The Ho-Ho you left on the seat yesterday?

SAUL: No, silly – a stick! Get it...brown and sticky – a stick. Ohhhhhh I kill myself.

ALICE: Are we seriously going to pick up sticks all day? That does sound a little...boring. I'm sorry Ty.

TY: Oh that's okay. But Grasshopper Chapel is a pretty cool place.

JEFF: It sounds like where Bruce Lee and Chuck Norris go to meditate.

MOOSE: I think that would be a temple, not a chapel.

JEFF: Chuck Norris can meditate wherever he wants to. Chuck Norris can set ants on fire with a magnifying glass...at night.

SAUL: Chuck Norris can blow bubbles with beef jerky.

TY: Chuck Norris destroyed the periodic table because he only recognizes the element of surprise.

VEGAS: I don't get all the Chuck Norris stuff. It's so stupid!

JEFF: How much wood could a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could Chuck Norris? All of it...

ALICE: Well it would be great if Chuck Norris could pick up all the sticks for us. I don't know why, I just feel lazy today.

REBECCA: You're just tired Alice. We've been going non-stop for 11 days now.

TY: I'm telling you...you're gonna love this place. It's so cool!

ISAAC: So why is it called Grasshopper Chapel? That's kind of a weird name.

VEGAS: Yeah...it's not like full of grasshoppers is it? That would be totally creepy.

SAUL: What...is it like a church or something?

TY: Well now it's more of a sight-seeing place. But the St. Boniface Catholic church still holds some special services in it during the spring. But it started off as a chapel built by the area farmers back in the late 1870s.

REBECCA: But why call it Grasshopper Chapel? Is this place full of them or what?

TY: Back then there was. Actually the farmers were fighting an annual plague of grasshoppers. Each spring for about four years, the locusts would come in swarms like a huge black cloud and descend on the fields.

JEFF: Chuck Norris could stop a locust swarm.

TY: Well he wasn't around then. The farmers tried everything they could think of, including covering their fields with blankets. The grasshoppers ate the blankets too. They consumed all the grain and the seed that would have been used for the following years planting. It was utterly devastating.

MOOSE: That would be crazy to see them coming and knowing you couldn't do anything about it.

TY: Desperate people they were. So they turned to the only hope they had left. They prayed. In April 1877, the governor instituted a Day of Prayer. The people prayed and the following day, a huge sleet storm killed all the locusts and their eggs. The crops were saved.

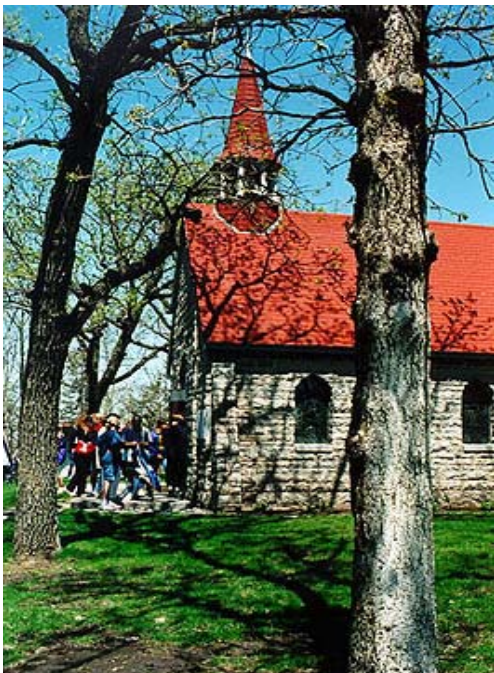
REBECCA: And the chapel?

TY: Built by the people to thank God for saving them and to serve as a reminder to future generations.

APRIL: So do they still have grasshoppers flying around eating everything? Because that might have an influence on whether I get out of the van or not.

TY: No those days are long past.

ISAAC: So why are we picking up sticks?



TY: Sticks and branches. They had quite a storm up here last week and left a lot of tree branches and sticks on the ground. It's a beautiful place and many people visit it. So we'll be doing some good stuff. We're getting pretty close to the chapel now. You can see where there must have been quite a bit of wind. But not as bad as the time it was hit by a tornado. It actually lifted the original chapel off its foundation and on top of a couple of trees. They rebuilt the chapel – out of granite this time – and the two trees lived but are quite disfigured. Ahhh...here it is.

REBECCA: So what do we do with the sticks and branches?

TY: Sandy said one of the farmers was going to bring up a big wagon to throw them on. There it is: Grasshopper Chapel.

VEGAS: Whoa...this place seems so unreal...

MOOSE: Look! There's one of the tornado trees...

APRIL: This place seems so peaceful. It's hard to imagine it being hit by a storm.

SAUL: It wasn't a storm...it was Chuck Norris.

ISAAC: Whatever it was, it left a lot of branches. This is gonna take all day.

JEFF: Yes, grasshopper...but you must stick to it. (all groan)

TY: Okay everybody out! Gloves and rakes are in the chapel. Let's go! Move, move, move!

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#### BLINDSIDED PLAYS MUSIC INTERLUDE

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MOOSE: Hey Isaac...catch. Ty said we should take a break. Want a granola bar?

ISAAC: Yeah, thanks...April was right – this place is so peaceful. I won't mind working here all day.

MOOSE: This whole trip has been awesome. I haven't missed Facebook or tv or video games at all. Seriously, those took up a ton of my time.

ISAAC: I know what you mean. I would have spent all this time trying to ignore the stuff going on with my mom and dad. But the road trip has given me my own space to really think about it.

MOOSE: I'm sorry you have to go through it. It can't be fun.

ISAAC: Are your parents together or divorced?

MOOSE: They're together. I've only seen them fight once and that was a long time ago. I can't imagine them not being married.

ISAAC: I couldn't either. I don't want them to give up. But it feels like that locust swarm. Like it's coming and there's nothing I can do about it...if I prayed, do you think God would save my mom and dad's marriage?

MOOSE: I don't know Isaac...I guess your mom and dad would have to want that too.

ISAAC: It's really hard.

MOOSE: It's gotta be. I'm sorry Isaac. You can always talk to me about it. I may be just a football player, but am pretty decent at listening.

ISAAC: Thanks...Moose?

MOOSE: Yeah?

ISAAC: Sorry for being such a jerk to you the last few days. I guess I've just been taking it out on you.

MOOSE: You were pretty harsh. But forget about it, okay? Want another granola bar?

ISAAC: Yeah. We've got a lot of work left.

MOOSE: It's kind of amazing that it will take us all day to pick up a wagon load of sticks and branches and those grasshoppers could destroy so much so fast. Why does cleaning up stuff take so much more work?

FOCUS MOVES TO REBECCA AND ALICE

ALICE: So many sticks ugghhh! This feels like my life!

REBECCA: What do you mean?

ALICE: It's like once you think you've got things cleaned up, you see there's more. It's like a losing battle.

REBECCA: I don't get it... how's that like your life? You're just a teenager.

ALICE: Well my life's been pretty crazy. I've done some things that I wish I hadn't and well...it's left a lot of sticks to pick up. And I am the picker upper.

REBECCA: It's hard to imagine you doing anything you would regret Alice.

ALICE: Everybody has something to hide - or to pick up.

REBECCA: God can help you with it Alice.

ALICE: I know...He's actually gotten me to see myself in a much different way...I don't get so down on myself anymore. It's just consequences that I have to deal with. I wish I could be free from my mistakes.

REBECCA: Till then...I guess we keep picking up sticks, right?

ALICE: Yeah, I guess