

Captive

by
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FADE IN:

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT

LARK (20) runs through the trees as fast as her little bare feet can carry her. Long, matted hair hides her face.

EXT. ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

A RED CAR cuts through the green of the mountains, speeds along a dark, isolated dirt road.

INT. WALDEN'S CAR - NIGHT

WALDEN GARRITY (mid 30's) drives, listens to talk radio. The reception wavers in and out. Walden switches the station.

Lark runs in front the car. Walden swerves, barely misses...

Walden hyperventilates. He takes a matchbook from his pocket, STRIKES, blows, breathes the scent. It calms him.

Walden rolls down the window. No sign of the girl.

WALDEN

Hello? Hey! You okay?!

Movement in the mirror, Walden stares out the back window.

An imposing figure in a WELDER's mask, moves across the brake lights' RED GLOW, chases Lark into the trees.

EXT. ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE - CONTINUOUS

Walden gets out, slowly walks to the side of the road. A DEAD DEER lies in a ditch, its stomach has been eaten.

A young girl's SCREAM startles Walden, he backs away.

INT. WALDEN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Walden dials his cell phone...

WALDEN

Hello?! I just witnessed... I don't know! Something! There was a girl being chased by a guy... I don't know where the fuck I am! Some road! Can't you trace...

(MORE)

WALDEN (CONT'D)

No, this is not a prank! She needs help, she could be... Shit!

Walden throws the phone to the floor. He breathes faster and faster, takes out his matchbook, completes his ritual. Calm.

HEADLIGHTS. A blinding light fills Walden's mirror, he shields his eyes, watches a GRAY VAN pass...

A BLOODY HAND smacks the inside of the van's back window.

WALDEN

Oh, shit! Oh, shit! What...?!

Walden thinks a moment, starts the car, pursues.

WALDEN

What the hell are you doing, you idiot?

EXT. ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Walden follows the van, keeps a safe distance. The vehicles pass FARM HOUSES, travel deeper into the middle of nowhere.

EXT. SMALL COTTAGE - NIGHT

The gray van pulls around the side of a rustic house.

INT. WALDEN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Walden drives by, watches The Welder get out of the van.

EXT. SMALL COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

The red car's HEADLIGHTS turn off, Walden makes a u-turn, drives back to the cottage, rolls slowly behind the hedges.

INT. WALDEN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Walden watches the van, sees The Welder...

Boots, overalls, plastic apron, thick leather gloves. The visor of his mask is blacked out, only his eyes show through.

The Welder opens the back door, flings a burlap sack over his shoulder, the sack squirms. The Welder enters the cottage.

EXT. SMALL COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Walden holds his palm up to the much smaller handprint on the van's window. HAMMERING from the cottage gets his attention.

Walden walks to the cottage window, peers inside. Plastic sheets over the window cloud his view.

INT. SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

The Welder nails the legs of a wooden chair to the floor. Thick, plastic sheeting covers the floor, walls and ceiling.

The sack squirms in the corner.

The Welder stops hammering, lifts his eyes, turns slowly...

EXT. SMALL COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

...Walden quickly ducks out of view. The Welder walks to the window, draws back the plastic gazes out.

Walden holds his breath... The Welder leaves the window. Walden performs the match ritual.

INT. WALDEN'S CAR - NIGHT

The door opens, Walden gets in, picks up his phone... He dials, looks back, the cottage door is wide open.

Walden freezes, hangs up the phone, gets out of the car.

EXT. SMALL COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Walden cautiously circles to the trunk, pops open the lid. He shifts junk and jumper cables aside, finds a pool cue.

Walden closes the lid. The Welder stands directly behind him, raises the hammer, brings it down HARD on Walden's head.

INT. WALDEN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

SUNLIGHT pours in, illuminates JESSICA GARRITY's pretty face. Her eyes flutter open, adjust to the light. She smiles.

JESSICA

Morning.

Walden sits beside the bed smiling back at her.

WALDEN
Morning. Sleep well?

JESSICA
Mhm.

Jessica stretches her body, yawns, moans. Walden chuckles.

JESSICA
What?

WALDEN
Nothing.

JESSICA
Wipe that silly grin off your face.

WALDEN
Never. The silly grin stays.

Jessica touches Walden's cheek, he kisses her wrist.

INT. SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Walden wakes slowly, blood drips down his face from a head wound. He sees the plastic sheets, splattered with blood.

WALDEN
Help...

He coughs, voice raspy and weak. Walden tries to move; arms tied behind his back to the chair, ankles tied to chair legs.

WALDEN
Help me! Help!

Walden jerks his arms and legs, thrashes violently.

LARK (O.S.)
Shhh!

Walden stops struggling, silenced.

LARK (O.S.)
Shut the hell up! He'll hear you!

WALDEN
Who's there?

LARK (O.S.)
You're not supposed to be here.
You got in his way.

WALDEN
 What's going on? Who are you?
 Where are you?

LARK (O.S.)
 I'm Lark.

Small, bloody finger tips graze Walden's hand. He shivers.

LARK (O.S.)
 I'm right behind you.

Lark sits back to back with Walden, bound in the same fashion to a second chair. Her long hair obscures her dirty face.

WALDEN
 I'm here to rescue you.

LARK
 Oh... Well, thanks I suppose.

WALDEN
 Don't mention it.

A shrill CLAMOR of grinding metal grabs their attention...

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

SPARKS fly... The Welder sharpens a DAGGER with a black blade and demonic symbols carved into the handle.

INT. SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Walden shouts over the continued GRINDING...

WALDEN
 Help! Help us!

LARK
 Walden stop! He'll hear!

WALDEN
 We're in here! Help!

The Welder RIPS open the plastic flap, dagger in hand.

LARK (O.S.)
 No! No, don't!

WALDEN
 What's going on?!

Walden tries to crane his neck to see, can't turn far enough.

WALDEN
What's he doing?!

The Welder stabs Lark in the thigh. She SCREAMS.

WALDEN
Get the fuck away from her!

The Welder twists the dagger, blood pours from the wound. He sops up the blood with a yellow sponge. Lark faints.

The Welder yanks out the dagger, wipes it on Lark's shirt.

WALDEN
Do you hear me asshole?!

The Welder looks up, annoyed.

WALDEN
Why don't you try that on someone
closer to your own size?

The Welder circles around to face him. Walden stares into the Welder's dead eyes.

WALDEN
Shit...

The Welder stabs Walden's thigh, twists. Walden grits his teeth, groans, fights a scream. His eyes tear up...

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

Walden and Jessica lie on a blanket in the grass, happy.

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

Jessica playfully runs from Walden, through the woods. She leaps across a small brook, Walden follows, they laugh.

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

Walden emerges from the trees, alone. Looks around.

WALDEN
Jessica? Where are you?

A RED OBJECT catches Walden's eye from the tall grass in the distance. The smile drops from his face.

WALDEN

Jessica?!

A small, unidentifiable CREATURE scuttles away, Walden runs.

JESSICA

(distant, echoing)

Walden... Walden...

INT. SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Walden opens his eyes, stares at the gaping hole in his leg.

LARK

Still with me over there, Walden?

Walden lifts his head, groggy as hell, winces in pain.

WALDEN

I think so...

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

The Welder stirs a BUBBLING pot filled with GREEN liquid. He wrings out the blood soaked sponge into the pot. On a shelf overhead, several empty jars and a satanic looking book.

Steam fogs his visor. The Welder removes his mask. Pink pus and bits of flesh drip from the mask.

INT. SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Lark's nostrils flare, she sniffs at the air. Walden slowly scrapes the rope against the chair.

LARK

Don't bother. You'd need a knife.

WALDEN

Or fire... I have matches.

LARK

Fantastic! Can you reach them?

Walden tries, the angle does not work.

WALDEN

You try, they're in my back pocket.

LARK

Slide back some...

Walden scoots back in his chair, Lark reaches, her finger tips barely reach the pocket. She finds the matchbook.

LARK
Got it!

WALDEN
Hand it to me.

The matchbook falls to the floor between the two chairs.

LARK
Shit, I dropped them!

Walden closes his eyes, hangs his head, frustrated.

WALDEN
It's okay. It's not your fault.

LARK
When he comes back and sees the matches he'll know we're up to something. We'll never get out!

WALDEN
Fucking hell...

Walden rubs the rope, frantic. Lark tugs at her ropes.

LARK
Walden... Walden!
(he stops)
My thumb.

WALDEN
What?

LARK
Break my thumb.

WALDEN
What are you...?

LARK
I can squeeze out if...

WALDEN
No. I can't.

LARK
You have to!

Lark grabs for Walden's hand, he pulls away, makes a fist.

LARK

It's our last chance!

Walden takes a few deep breaths. Lark grips her shirt collar with her teeth, balls the fabric in her mouth, bites down.

Walden relaxes his arm. Lark puts her thumb in his hand.

WALDEN

Don't scream.

SNAP! Walden twists, Lark's thumb breaks. She WHIMPERS as quietly as possible, doubles over, writhes in pain.

Lark grimaces, pulls, her thumb dangles, drags along the rope. Lark pants, SQUEAKS, her hands come free.

LARK

I'm free...

WALDEN

Good girl! You're almost there...

Lark unties her ankle restraints, tries to stand, her legs buckle. Lark SHRIEKS, falls.

WALDEN

Lark, get up! I can carry you out of here, but you have to untie me first! Come on, sweetie! Get up!

Lark sits up on all fours, comes face to foot with The Welder's boots. He steps on her thumb. Lark SCREAMS!

WALDEN

No! Bastard! Leave her alone!

Walden thrashes at his ropes. Useless.

The Welder lifts his foot, Lark grabs her hand, cries.

The Welder chokes Walden, picks up the matchbook, holds it in front of Walden's face and shakes his head.

WALDEN

Lark! Go! Run!

Lark crawls away on one good hand and one good leg. The Welder lets go of Walden, picks up Lark, carries her out.

WALDEN

Let her go! Goddamn you...!

Walden furiously flails his body, his chair rocks a bit.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

The Welder descends the stairs, one arm around Lark, holds both her arms still as she struggles. His large, gloved hand covers her mouth and most of her face, muffles her SCREAMS.

INT. SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Walden leans forward, throws himself against the chair back with as much force as he can muster. Again... Again...

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

The Welder holds Lark down on a table, uncovers her mouth, her hair still over her face. She sees the dagger, SCREAMS.

INT. SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Walden hears Lark's CRIES, rocks even harder.

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

The Welder dips the dagger into the pot. The green liquid drips onto his boot, SIZZLES like an acid, burns. He lets go of Lark, frantically removes the boot.

The Welder quickly returns attention to the table... No Lark. The Welder's eyes widen inside the mask.

INT. SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Walden rocks back once more, the front nails pry up from the floorboard, the chair tips backward, falls... CRASH!

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

A small, unidentifiable CREATURE scuttles away. Walden runs toward the RED object in the tall grass.

WALDEN

Jessica?!

Jessica's bloody body, stomach eaten (like the DEAD DEER).

He drops to his knees, takes her hand, SOBS uncontrollably.

INT. SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Walden lies on his back in a pile of broken chair, stares.

The SCREAMS from below have been replaced by loud CRASHES.

Walden slips his legs out of the restraints, his hands still tied behind his back. He gets up, limps to the exit.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Walden slowly descends the stairs, SILENCE from below.

A dark mess; table overturned, shelves broken, lights broken. A sliver of MOONLIGHT shines through a small window on...

The Welder's body, intestines hanging out. His mask on the floor. Walden gags at his scarred, burnt, grotesque face.

Walden's eyes follow the length of the Welder's intestines until he sees Lark, hunched over in the corner, EATING.

WALDEN

What the fuck are you?

Lark lifts her bloody, disfigured, wart-covered face. She SHRIEKS, scuttles into the shadows, moves like an animal.

Walden spies the black dagger, near The Welder's outstretched hand. He backs toward the knife, his eyes follow a series of NOISES as Lark circles him.

Walden squats, feels around, finds the dagger. He touches blade to rope, the liquid BURNS through faster than he cut.

Lark jumps on Walden's back, bites his shoulder. Walden SCREAMS. The rope burns through, SNAPS.

Walden grabs Lark, throws her off. She lands on her feet, SNARLS. Lark tackles Walden into the pot... the green liquid splashes on Walden's hands and face.

Lark cackles, scurries up the steps.

Walden HOWLS, claws at his face, chunks of flesh melt off. Walden's holds his throat, his SCREAMS fade, his voice gone.

Walden crawls to The Welder's corpse, picks up the mask...

EXT. SMALL COTTAGE - NIGHT

Walden stumbles to his car in The Welder's mask and gloves.

EXT. ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

The RED car cuts through the green of the mountains.

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT

Lark runs as fast as her little bare feet will carry her.

EXT. ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Lark runs across the road, in front of a BLUE car. SCREECH, the blue car skids to a halt.

INT. WALDEN'S CAR - NIGHT

Walden stops, sees the blue car, Lark disappears into the trees. Walden takes the matches from his pocket.

The DRIVER of the blue car gets out, shouts to the trees.

DRIVER
Hello?! Are you hurt?!

Walden strikes a match, shakes it out, holds it under the mask and breathes in the scent.

Walden grabs the dagger off the passenger seat, gets out...

FADE TO BLACK.