SOMETHING IN RETURN

© 2010
INT. DRUG STORE - NIGHT

REBECCA, cute, 20s, skims through an aisle of pregnancy testers. She gets the attention of the pharmacy technician man, 40s.

    REBECCA
    Excuse me, sir.

    TECH
    Hi, how can I help you?

    REBECCA
    I don’t suppose you got any of these in generic form? These ones are kinda salty.

    TECH
    As a matter of fact, we do. Let me just pick one up behind the counter.

She waits. Her teeth bite down nervously on her bottom lip. A grin of humility shows itself.

The tech. returns with a box.

    TECH
    Even though these are unbranded, they’re just as reliable as the more expensive pregnancy tests, perhaps even more sensitive.

She takes the box and reads.

    REBECCA
    Wow, ninety-nine percent accurate.

    TECH
    Yes, ma’am.

    REBECCA
    I’ll take ’em.

    TECH
    Will there be anything else I can assist you with?

    REBECCA
    No, thanks.
TECH
Alright, just follow me to the counter, and I’ll get ya fixed right up.

She follows him to the register.

REBECCA
Oh, I don’t suppose yer takin’ applications?

TECH
Yes.

He hands her a sheet of paper.

INT. SALLEE HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT
Rebecca sits on the toilet and urinates on the device.

INT. HALLWAY
She waits outside the bathroom. Cracks her knuckles anxiously.

INT. BATHROOM
She shoots back in and examines the test. Eyes swell with sorrow.

INT. DRUG STORE - INTERVIEW ROOM
Two hands shake, a man and woman’s. Rebecca sits opposite her interviewer, 60s, glasses. He scans her application.

MR. CRONENBERG
Thank you for coming - and well on time.

REBECCA
I can’t thank you enough fer givin’ me this interview. I been lookin’ so hard fer work I got blisters.

He laughs.

MR. CRONENBERG
Work, that’s somethin’ hard to come by, isn’t it?

REBECCA
Yes, sir.
MR. CRONENBERG
Well, I see you’re very keen on
getting this job, and I appreciate
your diligence.

REBECCA
Yer probly gettin’ tired of my
persistence.

MR. CRONENBERG
No, no, not at all. I’m aware that
you’re a single-mother.

REBECCA
Yep, I got a daughter, Layla. She’s
two.

MR. CRONENBERG
Wow, congratulations.

REBECCA
Thank you.

MR. CRONENBERG
I’ve been told she has an
abnormality.

REBECCA
They call it a congenital brain
defect, that’s caused her to go
deaf. I’m doin’ this fer her. She’s
my angel, my everything.
   (cries; head between her legs)
She deserves everything good in
this world, you know.

MR. CRONENBERG
(apathetic)
I understand. I understand. But I’m
sorry to tell you that I can’t hire
you. You haven’t got so much as a
high school diploma, which is what
the pharmacy tech. position
requires. I’m terribly sorry.

REBECCA
You can’t? I need this.

MR. CRONENBERG
I said I can’t hire you... unless
you’re willing to go the extra
mile.
REBECCA
The extra mile?

MR. CRONENBERG
(serious)
You’re in debt to suck on my cock.

She cries harder.

REBECCA
Yer sick!

MR. CRONENBERG
But doesn’t the importance of
Layla’s upbringing override this...
perversion?

Her head falls between her legs for awhile. She stands, walks behind the desk, and proceeds to unzip his pants.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPER:

Black Holes

"A black hole can result when a massive star dies out. The dying star collapses into itself, becoming smaller and smaller, denser and denser, until it compresses into a single point with no radius and infinite density. The point, called a singularity, is so dense that nearby light cannot escape its gravitational pull. Everything close to the star gets sucked into blackness."

- The Intellectual Devotional

FADE IN:

EXT. WOOLGROVE HOME - TWILIGHT

A ramshackle, one-story house writhes flimsily in a quietly atrophying neighborhood in Louisiana; behind which, a vast woods bleeds ominous whispers of an undying apprehension.

AT THE BACK PATIO

of this house, a couple relaxes under the vestige of a dying summer, guarded by a pair of glowing tiki torches.

REX, the sleaze-ball at the grill, 54, is hosting a barbecue for Rebecca, who’s seated at the table.

The smoke from the tiki torches withdraws from Rebecca’s fanning hand.
REX
(drunk; playful)
I asked you over the phone if you wanted any hamburger. You said, "No. It’s to do with my vegan constraints." Well, I figured yer eatin’ enough meat the way it is that the term "constraint" is warranted slightly unjustified. Besides, a cookout ain’t a cookout less ya got hamburger.

He drops a couple handfuls of meat on the grill. Drops of blood from the pack of burger dribble on the patio.

REBECCA
Oh, shut up. I can order you around like a puppy.

Done, Rex struts to the table with a plate over his head.

REBECCA
(giggles)
Cute, very cute.

He sports a laid back button-down shirt, with the sleeves folded, and a torn pair of denim jeans. A gelled back hairdo, tucked behind his ears, meddles to his collarbone in fluffy curls.

REBECCA
My appetite ain’t the only thing that’s starvin’ fer meat.

REX
Yer little pussy can wait fer desert.

Rebecca laughs. She tastes the food with her sexy eyes, which match the radiance of both candle flames enriching the zesty romance between them.

REBECCA
Oh, my god, that looks so fuckin’ good!

The host places his servings on the table, a sweaty beer in his grip. He kisses Rebecca gently on the cheek, then takes a seat. Not eating.

REX
There ya go, baby doll.
REBECCA
This the first time you been this good to a woman?

REX
Sweety, I’m happy to inform yer the very first. But hopefully you ain’t the last!

A laughing snort shoots through his nostrils.

REBECCA
You know you still pack a lot of balls in you, ol’ man.

REX
Like Mike Jackson’s cornhole, God rest his soul.

REBECCA
Huh?

REX
(sardonic)
Huh? Cornhole, a euphemism fer butt fuck. If Jackson butt fucked all them burgers at Neverland, which’s sorta a euphemism in itself, that’s the same as sayin’ they was cornholed, pea-brain.

She samples an ear of corn.

REBECCA
Okay, professor of everything gross and disgusting. I think you’ve had about all the boos you can manage fer one night.

REX
So, how’s the food resonatin’ with my little princess?

REBECCA
The corn’s good — which sadly happened to be the last topic of yer lecture. Ain’t had time to try the BBQ since you been bombardin’ me with insults, so let me see...

(sinks her teeth inside)
Mmm! That’s real good! Where in Sam hell’d you learn how to cook?
REX
Rebecca, I ain’t never learnt to cook. Just the last cunt I’s married to gave me the recipe!

Rex belches out a howl.

REBECCA
Now the next time you’ll be wearin’ yer fuckin’ chicken. Seriously! Ain’t no reason you should feel so goddamn self-righteous pickin’ on my side of the sperm bank.

REX
Easy now, cunt! I’s just kiddin’.

She pretends to stab Rex with a steak knife.

REBECCA
I’m onna getchu, you damn, fuckin’ bastard!

The laughter settles with quiet, flirtatious gazes of exchange. Eating the meat faster with every bite, Rebecca notices Rex gazing weirdly at the STARRY SKY with fixated eyes, causing her to chuckle under the soft breeze.

REX
Goddamn, it’s a beautiful evenin’, ain’t it?

REBECCA
That’s fer sure. This time of the year sure does bring with it many a pretty sunset.

A stalker of deep thought claims Rex its prey.

REX
(with conviction)
You ever notice how the stars are perfectly arranged in the sky, almost systematically, as if they meant somethin’?

REBECCA
No. Why?
REX
Well, I mean even the sun, fer instance. That big, hot, boilin’ fuckin’ ball of gas considered by everyone to be this — benevolent entity. Yet without it, how the fuck do ya think the moon would receive such a light fer it to shine on, remunerate, and revitalize the reignin’ Darkness?

REBECCA  
(turned on)
Yer intellectual talk’s gettin’ me all worked up, baby.

A glare of risky obsession looks Rebecca between the eyes.

REX
Reminds of a sayin’ someone once said. Somethin’ like... I am he who bonds with outside forces, who compels Light’s retreat. I am he who enables that destiny and commands Darkness’ fate.

REBECCA
Now where’d you ever hear a sayin’ like that?

REX
Don’t know. Probly some spic wearin’ his shit-hole fer a sombrero.
   (at the sky; doubly captive)
But the one thing I do know is, the stars have aligned fer a specific purpose tonight, darlin’.

REBECCA
What sorta purpose you talkin’ ’bout?

REX
Now the answer to that’s gonna hafta wait, sweety pie.
(winks)
There’s a long dagger ’thin these denim jeans that’ll sure as fire penetrate the answer soon enough.
REBECCA
Long! Well...
(clears her throat
sarcastically)
I think they was arranged
particularly fer us tonight; to
shine a tad bit of normalcy on such
a queer conversation.

REX
That a fact?

REBECCA
Yes indeedy do.

A beat passes. Rebecca’s sweet talk turns sourly solemn.

REBECCA
Rex, I don’t mean to spoil the
evenin’ and all. There’s just
somethin’ I been meanin’ to tell
you, somethin’ I think you should
know.

REX
’Course, what’s the trouble?

REBECCA
Please don’t be mad at me. I don’t
want you to be mad at me. My
parents was.

REX
Shit, yer parents ’ould get upset
over two pussy munchin’ lesbians.

REBECCA
Rex, please! This’s somethin’
that’s been eaten me away on the
inside fer days that seem like
lifetimes!

REX
Oh, I’m sorry, honey. Go ahead,
spill it out. What’s the trouble?

REBECCA
Rex, baby... I’m pregnant.

He swallows a gulp of beer, like it’s shit, then quickly
changes his tune.
REBECCA
I been meanin’ to tell you. It’s just that I was afraid how you’d react.

REX
Rebecca, that’s great news! I can’t believe it! Yer plum pregnant?

REBECCA
Uh-hum. Three months. It’s a boy.

REX
A boy, huh? Baby, you mean the world to me! I’d never be mad, angry, or upset - especially of all people - with you! I love you more than you could ever imagine! Ya hear?

A palliated smile dances across her face.

REX
Tonight you’ve given me somethin’ special! Somethin’ that will alter the course of my life - my destiny! Ever since we met, my heart’s felt like a kid again! I feel like a kid wrapped around this fifty-four year ol’ body!
(living for the moment)
Come ’re you!

They kiss long and hard.

REBECCA
I’m so happy fer us!

REX
I couldn’t be any more happier fer us. You just wait till I tell Thomas. He won’t believe it!
(lights a cigarette)
You know he’s been beggin’ me fer a sibling?

REBECCA
Really?

REX
Bet yer ass. I’ll tell him come mornin’.
REBECCA
Then after the baby, we get married - regardless what my parents think?

REX
We get married!
(sardonic)
You certainly have our future planned out, doncha?

REBECCA
I been givin’ it more than adequate thought.

REX
It sure as hell sounds like it!
(finishes beer)
Yeah, baby! You know, I’s thinkin’ our baby’ll love it out here. The backyard so he can practice his curve ball; the woods so he can sneak off with his girlfriend and get fucked just like you and me.

Rebecca laughs.

REX
The little bastard will almost be as spoiled as me, too. I sure wouldn’t want it any other way. Got a lotta things fer a prick like me.

REBECCA
Aren’t you fergettin’ yer main dish?

REX
(remembers)
And I got you.
(winks)
Hey, speakin’ of thinkin’ about you, that reminds me. I found somethin’ in the trash...

He pulls out a jewelry box from his side pocket.

REBECCA
(in disbelief)
Yer jokin’?

REX
It’s just a little somethin’ I thought you might like. I don’t
REX
know, maybe a fat chance in that.
But I knew in my heart, the moment
I saw it, that it deserved to be
with someone special.
(bestows the gift)
It deserved to be with someone who
meant the world to me.

REBECCA
Baby, you shouldn’t have!

REX
(joking)
Okay, I’ll take it back then. I
could use the money.

REBECCA
Not a chance in hell! I’m afraid to
open it.

She opens the box. Eyes ever-glow at a Blood and Ritual
pendant.

REBECCA
Oh, my god! Haven’t got a clue what
it is, but it’s awful cute, honey!

REX
Just a little somethin’ to
celebrate our eight months we been
together. The best eight months of
my life.

They clash together in the heat of the moment. The candles
fall to the cement.

REBECCA
Oh, my god, I love you so much!

REX
I love you too, baby-girl!

They suck each other’s faces like wild animals.

INT. REX’S BEDROOM – NIGHT
A lonely Rex lies in bed. His eyes open fearfully wide.

REX
Fuck...

He gets out of bed, exits.
INT. BATHROOM

He splashes water on his face. Stares at himself in the mirror. Self-hating.

INT. KITCHEN

Rex stands with a bottle of whiskey, angst-ridden. Gawks out at the moonlit patio.

INT. REX’S BEDROOM

His face shrivels with the last drop of whiskey. Falls back, watches the ceiling. Eyes close.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM – NIGHT – REX’S NIGHTMARE

A rumble of thunder splits the heavens. The sleep of 13-year-old Thomas (Rex’s son) is ended.

His eyes open, tired, reluctant. Pupils swell, then return to their normal size. He thrashes around in bed. Turns to look out at the storm.

THOMAS’ POV

A hazy, motionless black ball (the size of a human head) lurks just outside his window.

END POV

He reaches for his glasses on the nightstand. Eyes relocate, then draw.

A STALKING HEAD

launches him from the room like a canon.

INT. HALLWAY (MORE LIKE A CORRIDOR)

A tunnel of shadowy lightning claws surround Thomas as he runs to, then stops at the entrance of the

LIVING ROOM

He sees his father nestled in an armchair. Rex watches the storm through a panoramic window. Boos drips from his lips.

THOMAS

Daddy, someone’s after me.
REX
It’s just a nightmare, Thomas.
Ain’t nobody after you.

He hurries into Rex’s arms. Snuggles up against him.

REX
It’s okay... just a nightmare.

EXT. FRONT YARD

The storm shakes trees. Catapults light debris.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Rex gazes out the window as the storm barrels down on the house. His mouth opens worriedly to release an icy chill. He thought he saw something outside - something baneful. He dismisses the object as fictitious and leans his head back sluggishly.

A pervasive anxiety tightens around his nerves in his wakeful compulsion to look back.

REX
I think I made a mistake, Thomas! I think I made a mistake! You know I’d never do nothin’ to hurt you, don’t you?

Thomas nods.

REX
I love ya to death, son, you know that?

THOMAS
I love you too, Daddy.

REX
(weeping)
I love you so fuckin’ much!

Panic-laden solace passes as they embrace each other in fear. Rex’s eyes gravitate back outside with Thomas pressed against him.

EXT. FRONT YARD - REX’S POV

Lightning strikes.

A NEBULOUS, BLACK ROBE drifts closer from a street perpendicular to the house.
Lightning strikes again.

THE THING

floats low across the street, then stops to gaze upon the Woolgrove domicile.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Rex jumps to his feet.

    REX
    Thomas, get up!

EXT. FRONT YARD

The wraith advances into the yard.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Rex peers through the front door window. Thomas stands edgy by the wall.

    THOMAS
    What is it?

    REX
    I don’t know! Somebody’s out there!

Rex returns to look through the panoramic window, but the figure is nowhere in sight. He turns back to Thomas, petrified.

    REX
    I swear I saw -

The boy is gone.

INT. HALLWAY

Rex peeks inside every room; arrives at the last.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

    REX
    Thomas, where are you?

INT. LIVING ROOM

Thomas emerges from the shadow of a ceiling-tall bookcase. Toenails screech across the wooden floor – controlled by invisible forces. He stops at the panoramic window. Paralyzed.
The window slides open...

INT. HALLWAY

Rex enters - vigilant to a nexus of low, belching whispers - bleeding out from the

LIVING ROOM

Thomas is robotized. His eyes the size of melons because of something outside.

A DARK, GATOR-PELTED DEMON

rises from below the window. Its red eyes and black, reptilian pupils glisten in the night.

Rex shudders inside to find Thomas’ head hanged outside the window as the demon feeds throaty whispers into the boy’s ear.

    REX
    Hey! Who the fuck are you?

    SATAN
    You know who I am. Who are you?

DEMONIC EYES

cast contempt into Rex’s being.

A layer of putrid, female-facial flesh flies on to Rex’s face. He can’t breathe, unable to get it off.

INT. KITCHEN

Rex feels his way around. He pulls out a fillet knife from the drawer and lacerates tiny slits for his mouth and eyes.

    THOMAS(O.S.)
    Daddy, help me!

INT. LIVING ROOM

Rex returns. Face masked in hideousness.

    SATAN
    (venomously to Thomas)
    So this world is rife with thorns - thorns which stab the very heart of what it means to believe! I stand in great stead knowing what the impending future will bring down at the wrath of thy sword!
The demon turns to Rex - glaringly iterating - then vanishes into the storm.

INT. BATHROOM

Rex is peeling off the mold of meat with the fillet knife. Thomas cringes behind. He tugs painfully; strings of blood cling to his face.

It lands in the sink.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

Rex consoles Thomas in bed. His trembling fingers run through the boy’s hair.

THOMAS
He said he wants me to go away with him.

REX
(mournful)
Shhh, it’ll be alright.

THOMAS
Will you sleep with me tonight?

REX
That’s enough, Thomas. I said everything’s gonna be alright.

THOMAS
Don’t you know he wants me?

REX
All you gotta do is cooperate, and it’ll all be okay.

THOMAS
But, Daddy!

REX
Baby, once this’s all over with, everything’ll be just like it used to be. No more pain, no worries.

Thomas’ look of hopelessness begs Rex to give in.

REX
Okay, goddamn it. I’ll getcha some sleepin’ pills.

INT. KITCHEN
Hand shaking, Rex reaches in the cabinet and pulls out a rattling pill bottle. He hands a couple of pills to Thomas. Fills a glass up with water.

Thomas swallows the pills, hands back the glass.

**REX**
Give yer ol’ man a kiss. I think I need it.

Thomas kisses him on the cheek.

**REX**
(haunted)
You know I’d never let nothin’ bad happen to ya?

Thomas nods. Rex squeezes him tightly, lovingly for as long as he can.

**THOMAS**
Goodnight, Daddy.

**REX**
Goodnight, baby.

A goodnight kiss sends Thomas back to bed.

Rex watches on; his mien inundated in cold presage. He walks to the bar and downs a shot of whiskey.

INT. HALLWAY

Rex motions to Thomas’ door and opens it ajar. The boy has fallen peacefully asleep; Rex’s semblance of parental fear unchanged.

Bang! Bang! A thunderous pounding sounds from the front room. Rex closes the door. He stands in paralysis, then moves to the

LIVING ROOM

The knocking ends abruptly while the howling wind beats the windows to madness. He walks up to the door with feverish trembles.

EXT. PORCH

The door opens. The robed demon stands with a massive volume in hand – a demon conjuring text – known as a grimoire. The book gives Rex a shiver as the demon hands it over.
SATAN
The key to the constituents of thy
solicitous legion: the accelerators
of thy waking Black Sphere.

Rex marvels at the ancient volume. Then looks up.
The demon is gone.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Rex opens the text. An immediate rush of fear triggers panic
as he flips through the pages. He scans through the book
faster, faster.

Boom! Boom! Blares the door.
The book hits the floor.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

Thomas stirs to consciousness as Rex bursts inside.

THOMAS
What is it? Daddy, I’m scared!

Rex kneels at Thomas’ bedside.

REX
Baby, I need ya to say you believe!
Can you do that fer me?

Thomas nods in repudiation.

REX
I need ya to say you believe! You
got to -

The front door implodes.

REX
It’s are only chance! Look me in
the eye and tell me you believe!
Thomas, please!

Tears stream down Rex’s face at Thomas’ refusal.

INT. HALLWAY

Shadowy footsteps on the wall threaten closer.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM
Rex grabs a baseball bat at the nightstand. Thomas with the gravest of looks.

Rex rushes to the door, waiting to strike.

THOMAS
Don’t let him get me! Please, Daddy, don’t let ‘em come!

REX
Shhh!

His ear pressed against the door, Rex searches for a sound.

THOMAS
He’s comin’ fer me! Daddy, he’s comin’ to get me!

Smoke begins to seep in through the cracks. The door explodes into Rex and buries him into the wall; an ugly gash splits open his face.

THE DEMONIC SILHOUETTE
stands stolidly as ashes engulf the room, then advances through the doorway; its robe flutters like sheets in a summer storm as the hallway incinerates before our eyes.

Rex can do nothing - propped against the wall, immobilized. Only not as a result of his physical injury, but because the demon’s fingernails are converting into a mass of golden-burning snakes.

Before he knows it, his ears, eyes, and mouth are being ripped into by the swarm. He combusts from the inside out.

REX
Help me!

THOMAS
Daddy!

Thomas’ face melts like wax in the boiling furnace.

The demon’s flame-spewing hand garners the boy in its sight.

THOMAS’ POV
Fire blasts into our eyes... Flames ravage the screen...

END POV

As the fire dwindles
FADE TO:
BLACK SCREEN
...a scorched, smoldering title:

"SOMETHING IN RETURN"

WOMAN’S VOICE (O.S.)
(screaming for her life)
Rex!

END NIGHTMARE

FADE IN:

INT. REX’S BEDROOM – DAWN

Rex wakes in shock; his dank face stares fear into the ceiling. He tosses the sheets aside, staggers toward the shades; their shadows cast horizontal prison bars on the wall, which yield the blinding sun.

Empty beer cans rattle across the floor to the drunken rhythm of his feet.

The blinds jerk shut.

He turns around to the closet and trips over a can. His feet hurl into the air, his head into the floor.

REX
Fuckin’ bitch!

He flaps around like a fish out of water, then settles. His nostrils expand and contract to a remedial scent coming from under the bed. He pulls out a box of incense, puts it up to his face, and inhales deeply.

REX
Thank you...

He slides the box back under, picks himself up to dress. Clothed in black denim jeans and a long-sleeve button-down shirt, he slips on a red bola tie and looks at himself in the mirror.

The tie closes around his neck. A familiar sight...

EXT. PATIO – TWILIGHT – FLASHBACK

Rex steps behind Rebecca to snap her pendant together as she sits at the table.
REBECCA
How do I look, baby?

REX
I think my dick’s gonna drop -
that’s how hot you look, you sexy momma.

Slyly, with his tongue twirling around in Rebecca’s ear and a hand caressing her crotch, Rex reaches behind his back and produces an EVIL-LOOKING DAGGER used in Black Magick.

REBECCA
(mewling)
Oh, Rex! Make me wet...

Rebecca raises her head orgasmically skyward. Her throat opens. A cloud of red hovers in mid-air, then falls to varnish the table.

Rex throws her out of the chair. Her skull snaps open on the cement.

END FLASHBACK

A fever of guilt overcomes him.

REX
Oh, shit! Oh, shit -

Beeeep! The alarm clock bitches like a tea kettle.

He storms over to the nightstand - pausing in disarray, pulling his hair - then repeatedly smashes the machine into the wall.

A familiar sight...

FLASHBACK CONT’D

He takes a handful of Rebecca’s hair and proceeds to bash her skull mercilessly, indulgently into the cement.

Her imploring, youthful voice swims latherly through a tide of gushing blood.

REBECCA
Please stop!
REX
Sorry, sweet-heart! Just that she’s trickier manifestin’ if she ain’t gotta body!

The beating continues, ever-violent. Brains dangle out of Rebecca’s head; her face a bloated repugnance.

REBECCA
Why you doin’ this?

REX
Cuz yers, my dear, will be a perfect fit!

Her grating screams recede to moans, whimpers, dead silence. The head has moldered to a thick, festering pulp of brain matter, lying motionless on the patio.

Streaks smear across the cement as the lifeless body’s dragged away.

END CONT’D FLASHBACK

REX
(hyperventilating)
Fuck! Oh, fuck! Oh, fuck!

RED FLASHES fill the screen to signify his madness as he walks out of the bedroom and enters, across the hallway, a MAGICK ROOM

...brewed with a plethora of satanic embellishments.

He drapes a robe over his work clothes and lights a set of ritualistic candles. The candles are bounded by a pointed metal fence surmounted on a sinister-looking altar; behind which, on the wall, hangs a large inverted Pentagram of metallic composition.

Too on the altar, a demon skull with a single horn protruding from its forehead; a set of normal human skulls, collectively five-feet wide, rest at the base; a voodoo skull cross, three-feet high, stands behind the fenced in candles.

He notices a tall hourglass on the altar, the sand half-fallen. He kneels down before it, closes his eyes, and prays.

THE SCREEN DARKENS............................................
REX (O.S.)
(whispered wailing)
It wasn’t me! It wasn’t me! It
wasn’t me! It wasn’t me!

..................................EYES OPEN................

He blows out the candles, throws the robe to the floor, and
shoots out the room. The nerves are unbearable.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM – DAY

Rex enters frantically and kneels down at Thomas’ bedside.

Thomas wakes tired-eyed.

REX
Hey, buddy, can I ask you somethin’
real quick?

THOMAS
What is it, Daddy?

REX
There’s somethin’ I gotta know.
It’s been botherin’ me.

THOMAS
What’s botherin’ you?

REX
Do you think...
(crying)
...think I’m doin’ the right thing
and all?

THOMAS
What do you mean?

REX
I mean, am I doin’ the right thing?
Am I – do you think I’m goin’ down
the right path?

Thomas nods.

REX
Do you think we’ll ever see momma
again, goin’ down this path?

Thomas starts to cry along with Rex.
THOMAS
I hope, Daddy.

REX
(emotions festering)
You hope so? What’s that supposed to mean?

Thomas shrugs.

REX
Sounds to me like you ain’t quite made up yer mind. Sounds to me like what yer sayin’ is: you hope to find yer momma, my wife, down this path, but there’s a bird shit of skepticism on yer glasses that’s none to convincin’ in tellin’ whether or not that ain’t yer momma’s hitchikin’ thumb on the freeway. That’s what yer tellin’ me? That hurts, Thomas. That hurts. I thought you was with me on this.

THOMAS
Daddy, please.

REX
Now I want you to put yer two cents worth of contemplation in this and inform me that I’m doin’ the right thing. So tell me, Mr. I-don’t-believe-my-daddy’s-royal flush-ain’t-all-of-the-same-fuckin’-suite! I’d like to be the proud recipient of yer masterful philosophical input on this delicate subject matter that is the afterlife! Huh! Give it to me, Thomas! Give it to me now, before I waste another three gullible fuckin’ years believin’ in Gandolf the imaginary! Would you be so kind as to relieve me of my cutie childish play toys and smack me upside the head, back into yer precious fuckin’ prudence, composed of such vastly superior intellectual virtuosos as yerself! Huh! What do you have to say! Cat got yer tongue, you little prick!

Rex follows the path of Thomas’ fearful gaze. His eyes maniacally revile a comic-book on the floor.
REX
(turns back to Thomas)
So, yer gawk of guilt leads
straight to a goddamn comic-book,
huh. And I thought I was the only
drool slobberin’ devotee of all
things delusional.

Rex walks over to pick it up.

REX
Unfuckinbelievable! You mean to
tell me that you actually believe
in this bullshit - over yo momma?

Thomas gets out of bed and starts toward Rex.

THOMAS
Daddy, don’t.

REX
Thomas, real soon this world’s
comin’ to an end - cuz my world’s
comin’! And it ain’t gonna look
pretty if you keep this shit up!

THOMAS
Please, Daddy.

REX
(mocking)
Please, Daddy. Sit the fuck down!

Rex slaps him to the floor. His glasses fly across the room.

REX
You wanna be alive come time of the
Apocalypse?

THOMAS
(weeping)
Yes.

REX
Then you better start believin’!
(pacing around the room in
nervous fidgets)
I can’t help it! Yer lack of
faith’s got me all paranoid and
shit! There’s just somethin’ wrong
with the fact I can’t getchu to go
to church! I tell you what, boy,
I’ve had it with you! I’ve had it
with you, goddammit!
Thomas retrieves his glasses. Rex gets back in his face.

REX
Listen, boy, if you ain’t backin’ me a hundred and ten percent, then we got ourselves a real, serious fuckin’ problem!
   (threatening to slap Thomas)
So, are you with me or not?

No answer.

REX
No more beatin’ around the fuckin’ bush, Thomas! Are you with me or not, yes or no? Don’t make me hafta slap the shit outta you!

Thomas forces a nod.

REX
Ah! I knew all along you’d see it my way. Listen, buddy, tonight’s gonna be special. Tonight, by the veins that bind me, I’m onna do everything in my power to get yo momma back. And us, not even the slightest fuckin’ notion of death. Okay?

Rex kisses him hard on the face.

REX
I love you, son.

Rex exits.

INT. KITCHEN

Rex stuffs the comic in the trash, starts to panic. He pops some pills, thinks, then throws them at the wall. He walks over to the sink and cools himself down.

REX
Fuck me!

His face undried, he swipes his briefcase off the table and puts on his crocodile boots by the refrigerator.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

Thomas cries his heart out on the floor.
THOMAS
I want you to see the picture I
drew, Daddy! It’ll make you happy,
because it looks just like her!

INT. LIVING ROOM
Rex cries by the door.

REX
Tracts are on the table!

Exits.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM
On the floor, Thomas pries his hand between his mattress and
box spring and pulls out a hardcover notebook.

INSERT – INSIDE THE TEXT
Thomas’ face wrinkles upon opening the book to an ink
drawing of a female demon (Lamia) sacrificing (decapitating)
three children with a sword; the subsequent page shows her
feeding on the headless bodies.

WE ZOOM IN
on a particular excerpt which reads: "Their heads are their
souls. With every soul offered is another grade attained."

Further pages reveal Rex’s bleak obsession in long-winded
passages of his writing.

END INSERT
Thomas puts the book back. He moves into the

HALLWAY
into the

LIVING ROOM
Thomas spies Rex outside with his school bus driver. A
gentle African American lady, 60s.

EXT. SIDEWALK
Rex walks on the sidewalk towards his truck. The bus driver
sits in her driver’s seat.
BUS DRIVER
How are ya today, Mr. Woolgrove? It’s a mighty gorgeous day we havin’.

REX
Listen, Thomas is a bit under the weather. I don’t think he’ll be feelin’ much like school.

BUS DRIVER
Well, you tell him I hope he gets to feelin’ lots better soon. Tan sure would do ‘em good. You look like you could use a tan yoself –

REX
(muttering)
Yeah, well, you look like you could use a nigger hangin’.

Rex gets in his rusty truck and takes off.

INT. LIVING ROOM
Thomas yields a perplexed frown as the bus drives away.

INT. KITCHEN
Thomas finds his comic in the trash.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM/LIVING ROOM
He tucks the comic inside his backpack, stuffs a few tracts in his pocket, and surges out the front door.

Side note: The front cover of each cult tract depicts a happy family rising to Heaven on the rays of the sun.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK
Thomas races down the next block on the opposite side of the street.

RON, 13, and pretty ALEX KLEIN, 13, leap on to the bus. Seconds later, Ron bullets back to his house armed with a knife. He has a hideous scar (slash) on the right side of his face.

EXT. OUTSIDE BUS DOOR
Thomas arrives, bent over, gasping.
RON (returns)
What’s wrong, Thomas?

THOMAS
Almost missed the bus. You?

RON
Dumbass bus driver won’t let us bring protection, but she lets my sister bring her lotions and shit.

BUS DRIVER (O.S.)
C’mon kids! I hear the school bell ringin’!

THOMAS
Hey, Ron, my daddy wanted me to hand out some of these tracts from his church. You want one?

RON
Some weird, old guy with a beard came by the other day and gave my momma some. But I’ll take it anyway.

INT. BUS
The boys enter.

BUS DRIVER
Let’s go, kids! We gonna be late!

The driver gives Ron an appreciative pat on the back.

BUS DRIVER
That’s a good boy, Ron. Now go have a seat.

She turns baffled at Thomas.

BUS DRIVER
Thought you was sick, boy? You didn’t come up here to give me the puke bug, didga?

THOMAS
No, I ain’t sick.

BUS DRIVER
Well, that’s good, babe. Glad you ain’t sick.
Her arm gently wraps around him.

BUS DRIVER
So, how’s home?

Thomas nods, unconvincingly.

BUS DRIVER
Cuz you know you can tell me, right, and I’ll resolve whatever problems you got?

THOMAS
Everything’s fine.

BUS DRIVER
(brushes his cheek; her doubts persist)
Good. That’s real good. Just makin’ sure. Now go take yo seat, sweet heart, or else we gonna be late.

He finds a lonely seat in back. Teary eyes gaze through their window.

INT. ART CLASS

An old lady returns drawings to her rowdy students. She stops at Thomas’ lonely table (with its capacity of four occupants). Every other table is full.

She gives Thomas his paper.

MRS. ROMERO
Thomas, this is absolutely beautiful! She would’ve been so proud!

The longer he looks at the picture the closer he is to crying. An index finger caresses the drawing as if it were real.

The teacher heads to the front of the room.

MRS. ROMERO
Alright, class. I’d like your attention, please.
(waits for silence)
I’d like to say that I found each and every paper to be very unique and very special. Now it’s time for everyone to give their presentation, explaining to the
MRS. ROMERO
class the motivation behind your work.

Thomas regains himself.

MRS. ROMERO
Alright, now who would like to go first?

No hands.

MRS. ROMERO
Very well, looks like I’ll hafta do the dirty work.

She refers to a list of names on the desk.

MRS. ROMERO
Let’s see. Just to be different, how about we start with the last person on the list. (pointing at Thomas’ name) Thomas, would you come up here, please.

He takes his paper and heads to the front of the room.

Alex Klein watches.

THOMAS
(timid)
I guess I oughta start by tellin’ you this drawin’s of my momma. My daddy promises that we’ll be with her soon. Daddy says we’ll never have to worry again about dyin’ or gettin’ sick and diseased. As soon as the Apocalypse comes, we’ll... (bursting tears) ...we’ll all be together again.

The teacher rushes over to Thomas, holds him in her arms.

MRS. ROMERO
Oh, Thomas, I’m so sorry. Listen, angel, would you like to step outside for a little-while?

She hands him some Kleenex.
MRS. ROMERO
Take your time, hun.

Alex raises her hand as Thomas exits.

ALEX
Mrs. Romero, may I use the restroom?

MRS. ROMERO
Sure, hun. And while you’re at it, could you make sure he’s okay for me, please?

ALEX
Yes, Mrs. Romero.

INT. HALLWAY
Thomas is crouched in a fetal position on the floor.

Alex enters. She looks down upon him with pity, then squats to his level of torment.

ALEX
Thomas, I snuck out here not so I could use the restroom, like I told Mrs. Romero. I snuck out here so I could be with you. I wanna be yer friend.

Thomas is too swept away in his emotions to respond.

ALEX
Listen, I know it must be tough fer you, that’s why I wanna help you. That’s why I was hopin’ you’d like to be my friend.

THOMAS
(life depending on it)
Would you be okay if, if I held you?

Alex falls into his arms, without restraint.

EXT. TRAILER
which resides next to a wooded bayou. Rex pulls up in the driveway and walks through unmowed grass to the front door.
He knocks. A codger answers, with only his lips passing through the doorway to receive the beams of showering daylight. He wears a black robe with the hood down and an inverted Pentagram branded on his forehead.

HIGH PRIEST
(foresknowingly answers)
Ah, I see the magician wants his magick book.

INT. TRAILER

Rex steps inside, disconcerted. He kneels down and kisses the high priest’s hand.

HIGH PRIEST
Funny thing I noticed last night. Like the subtlety of a whisper it passed through me.

Rex stands.

HIGH PRIEST
I looked up at the sky and, in remembering the favorable placement of the zodiac, I saw your name.

Rex swallows nervously.

HIGH PRIEST
I’ll be fetching the book.

The priest exits to the hallway; his home a labyrinth of satanic implements.

UNKNOWN MAN (O.S.)
(to Rex from an adjacent room)
Don’t forget to offer yoself when it’s been done. It won’t work less ya do.

Rex trembles.

The high priest returns with the grimoire.

HIGH PRIEST
It has been a pleasure watching you grow.

Rex takes the book, with the priest’s arms coiling around him.
HIGH PRIEST
Don’t worry, my son. I trust your intent.

His nerves overridden, Rex takes off through the door.

INT. TRUCK
Rex enters, shaking to pieces. His eyes tangle with the old man’s.

INT. TRAILER
The priest watches through the window Rex skid out of the drive.

HIGH PRIEST
A man of admiration till priesthood, then something just up and broke, like the link of a chain.

UNKNOWN MAN (O.S.)
A weak link that boy. A link that could break our chain of secrecy.

HIGH PRIEST
(dire)
How far will The Lie take him, you think?

UNKNOWN MAN (O.S.)
(just as dire)
Far from here. God, I hope.

EXT. WOOLGROVE HOME
A sheriff’s truck parks along the Woolgrove sidewalk. Crater-faced SHERIFF VINTON, 60s, gets out. He wears aviator sunglasses and a cowboy hat like honorable decorations.

He tries the front door. No luck.

EXT. PATIO
He snoops through the patio window. Nothing unusual. He turns around and sees what Rex never bothered to fuck with.

He squats down and takes off his shades to discern the color of the streaks. He knows.

INT. CLASSROOM - THOMAS’ VISION
Thomas lies asleep at his desk.
A dry, otherworldly teacher, 60s, stands at the chalkboard; tented glasses; hatchet-face; long, black hair. Evil.

MRS. BAKER
A disease of thought innate in the blood of man. Defiled, seditious chemicals pumped into truth-concupiscent veins. The shit-soaked fabric of lordly tarnished minds, with no greater lust than to subvert his creator. If this excretion, this mass lot of filth from the nescient canals of our world should we refuse to inhale, lest we be branded their sane. If our heads stay turned to relent them - them rats - to gnaw on us till our flesh has been stripped from us - and our bones carried away into darkly stranded caves, as slaves to the decay of everlasting ignorance unto dust. "Then," you ask, "what will be our method of escape? How will we ever get loose those shackles of oppression that have deprived our lives of the fecundity, the sheer meaning of existence?"

(starts to write on the board)
The answer lies in chalk.

Her breathing becomes heavy and guttural as she writes: "DEA-"

The chalk breaks before the "T". She crushes her glasses, angrily takes them off, and turns to Thomas. Glaring.

MRS. BAKER
(demonic)
Thomas! The answer, if you please!

His head shoots skyward, like a jack in the box.

The teacher lunges toward him. Foam drips from her mouth; snarls, like a rabid animal.

MRS. BAKER
Gimme the fuckin’ answer!

THOMAS
Please stop! I don’t know!
Her skin suddenly mutates into black, alligator-like flesh. A human-reptile. She rips off her dress. Her boney rib cage exposes disgusting emaciation.

A serpentine tongue grows out of her salivating mouth as she screams in spasmodic misery. (The metamorphosis is harrowing.)

Thomas turns to his classmates for patronage. Their bodies have been decapitated, partially eaten away.

A fiery gaze penetrates through the boy; his face shrivels like foil wrap. She wads up his comic and tosses it in the air.

A low, blistering growl reaches its monstrous peak before he can scream.

    LAMIA
    If the mortal beggar wants a price,
    tell ‘em - I’m lookin’ at it!

He propels from his chair, gasping. A scaly claw tightens like a vice around his neck.

    LAMIA
    (spitting)
    Understand, boy?

The hand releases, dropping him to his knees. A grinding voice from above calls his attention.

    LAMIA
    (points at the trash can)
    Have a look, Thomas!

His eyes follow the trajectory of her finger.

    LAMIA
    Have a look!

Thomas picks up his feet and moves closer to the can. He peers over the rim.

    THE HEADS
    of his classmates; looks of agony on their faces before the kill.

His hands react to save the eyes from madness. Boom! Tick! Boom! Tick! A tromping of monstrous feet.

He turns around. A pencil slashes him across the face.
A beastly claw heaves toward the ceiling, burying the pointed lead in his scalp.

END VISION

INT. CLASSROOM

The bell rings! Thomas jerks back to reality while the other students race out of class.

MRS. BAKER
You alright, Thomas?

THOMAS
Yeah. I’m fine.

The teacher smiles, stacking a mound of paperwork at her desk.

MRS. BAKER
Are you going to be ready for next week’s big exam?

THOMAS
Yeah.

MRS. BAKER
I sure hope you’re right this time.

Thomas gathers his books, exits.

INT. HALLWAY

Thomas battles through the crowd toward his chubby friend, SAM, who stands pissed off at his locker.

THOMAS
Hey, Sam. Ready fer tonight?

Sam holds up a paper covered in red ink.

SAM
Ain’t lookin’ too good.

THOMAS
That’s probly better than what I got.

SAM
It’s just my parents. They expect a hundred percent outta me every fuckin’ day. You know how it is. I told ’em I couldn’t go to my
SAM sister’s dancin’ recital cuz I had to study. But, no, that wadn’t good enough. Listen, Thomas, life’s all about pickin’ yer poisin’, and that’s it. Out of the fertilizer things rise and back down they go... leavin’ seeds fer their offspring to die the same fate.

Suddenly, Alex passes by.

AN ENVELOPE intently falls from her hand, weaving Thomas into a trance.

SAM (O.S.)
If you want, my momma could give you a ride, since you probly already missed the bus?
(tries to get his attention)
Hey, wake up!

THOMAS
Huh?

SAM
I said my momma could give you a lift.

THOMAS
Nah, that’s okay. It’s only a few miles.

SAM
A few miles! I’d shit if I had to walk that far!

THOMAS
That’s okay. Ain’t nothin’ I can’t handle.

SAM
Just let my momma drop you off and save yerself the trouble.

THOMAS
Okay, just so long she don’t mind.

INT. EXIT

Thomas picks up the envelope.
SAM
What is it? Let me see.

Thomas ignores Sam and puts it in his backpack.

EXT. PARKING LOT

The boys race toward the Carpenter’s parked car.

SAM
I’m gonna pancake yer nuts if you
don’t show it to me!

INT. WORK

Rex pins a handful of tracts to a noticeboard in a long and
lonely hallway. Vinton casually walks up behind, removes his
shades.

VINTON
Excuse me, may I see one of those?

Rex is dubious of Vinton’s interest but hands one over
anyway.

VINTON
(inquisitively studies the tract)
Ain’t that somethin’. Say, you
wouldn’t know anything about a Ms.
Rebecca Sallee, wouldga?

Rex tempts an escape.

Vinton grabs him by the collar and pins him against the wall
— just like the tracts.

REX
Hey, fuck off!

Vinton pulls out a picture of Rebecca in her adolescence.

VINTON
(intense)
Her folks say their little lady was
with you last night. I take it you
know who she is?

REX
That’s my girl.

Vinton plunges a vicious hook through Rex’s face.
VINTON
You brainwashed her, dincha -
dincha you sick son of a bitch?!
(another hook)
I heard about you! You strung her
like a puppet, and then you hacked
her to pieces! Why?!

REX
Yer a goddamn mountebank, you know
that. A goddamn mountebank! You
ain’t got one thread of evidence
against me, not one goddamn iota,
you fuckin’ bastard.

VINTON
Evidence? There somethin’ you’d
like to tell me? There some Intel
you’d like to bleed?

REX
Let me tell ya somethin’. I love
that girl. Love her so much, I’d
give up the whole world so she
could... so she could be with me.

VINTON
I took a peek around yer
establishment, boy. You must be in
the habit of butcherin’ livestock
in yer backyard, huh? I got some
samples.

REX
You know what, fuck you!

Vinton shoves the picture back in Rex’s face.

VINTON
You call this livestock?!

Another merciless blow. Rex spits teeth in his face. Vinton
jams his pistol in Rex’s rib cage.

VINTON
Once they find out it’s that
bitch’s blood that’s been spilled,
I’m onna break down yer door and
put this bullet where it belongs! I
ain’t even gonna axe you to
surrender, you punk-ass bitch!

A crazed look swells in Rex’s eyes.
REX
You know, you and me live on two
different planets, Sheriff Vinton.
On yers, they got subservients like
you. That’s people that get hard
when other people tell ’em what to
do. Sorta like a
two-dollar-cum-gullpin’-whore,
feeds on whatever gets fucked out
the dick-pipes. Now me, on my
planet, in the much more habitable
realm of existence, people ain’t
got no masters. On my planet, we
are own flock, ain’t got no peckers
waitin’ to get hard just cuz we
enjoy jerkin’-off some shepherd’s
gamy staff.

Vinton headbutts Rex in the face, sending him to the floor
with a mouthful of blood. He squats down, presses the gun
against his forehead.

VINTON
(gritting teeth)
Boy, you best be lookin’ fer some
pretty hefty fuckin’ locks before
this day’s done fuckin’ over with!

REX
Fuck you!

Vinton’s boot crashes into Rex’s stomach. He exits down the
hallway like nothing ever happened.

REX
(wincing)
Kiss my ass! You ain’t got nothin’,
not nothin’ against me, ya hear,
you fuckin’ bastard!

Rex collapses face-down on the floor, leaks blood.

INT. RESTROOM

While Rex bathes his bloodied face in the sink,

TWO FIERY RED EYES

peek through the cracks of a large vent centered on the end
wall. A bass voice slithers down Rex’s spine.
SATAN
Are you ready, my son?

REX
(jerks)
Who is it?

SATAN
The path has led to uncertainty, has it not?

REX
How do you -

SATAN
Those who surmise their preparedness are often met with difficulty.

REX
(starts toward the vent)
What the fuck do you care about difficulty?

SATAN
I wouldn’t disturb, my pious fellow.

REX
What the fuck do you want?

SATAN
Hunger I for blood whilst the pig squeals. Your importunate digression from my command has me leery of your judgment.

REX
(humbled)
Oh, fuck me! Oh, fuck me! Please forgive me. My mind, I - I’ve been kinda fucked up lately.

SATAN
For the knowledge of the avatar’s obtainment, you ought to have heeded this morning’s salvational prayer.

REX
Please accept my apology, Father. It’s just, just I can’t do it by myself.
SATAN
Enough, my son. The bones of time for your salvation have all but withered to the marrow. I advise you to discard your uncertainty, and trust in me.

REX
(caressing the vent)
Yes, Father. I trust you with all my heart.

SATAN
You will pluck the serpent from the nigh forest. The implement with which you will extricate your wings of destiny. By necessity, to swallow the fly, you must first cast the silk.

REX
(longingly)
Our destiny.

SATAN
My force will soon have its shackles fastened to every germ of your repugnant strain. Once discerned, their will shall be broken, and their souls shall be liable to it. As a catalyst, you have executed immensely.

Seething in an ecstasy of tears, Rex hears a sluuuurp! coming from behind.

A WOMAN’S HEAD
balloons from out of the sink drain. Her mouth offers an oral enticement with her dripping, snake-like tongue, which slithers between her fangs.

Her eyes red globes of fire with pupils of splintered charcoal; skin scorched to a cinder.

HEAD
(hissing)
Come to me.

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

In front of a forest, a darkly lit foundation bathes under a torrential storm.
INT. ABANDONED CHURCH

Candles juxtaposed on an altar near the back wall light the scene. In front of these candles kneels the robed high priest.

A ROBED GROUP OF INITIATES

comprised of three men (including Rex) and one woman, face the high priest, armed with monstrous infantry saber swords.

A ROBED GROUP OF SUBORDINATE PRIESTS

stand like stone statues along the extremity of the church.

Between the high priest and four initiates are

EIGHT COVERED OBJECTS

of human height. Friction sounds from them.

The four initiates bow in suit with the high priest as he makes his way to the podium.

HIGH PRIEST

(vehement)
Before your exaltation into superiority, I’d like you to take a moment to reflect upon how ignorant and detestable you once were. How you once walked this polluted earth not with meaning - but with exuding depravity. Flowing side by side with reason like death and decay. Well, if I was to swear on one thing, I’d swear that that’s all about to change, rapidly. For today, my children, we will seek retribution. Today we will seek the dawning of a new breed who will annihilate those who have hindered are Master’s word. You, the near alumnus, are going to prove that you are not of this perverted flock. And in so doing, thus become who we all were born to be! Now I know the challenges of faith we’ve assigned to you thus far have been relatively mild in nature. What you encounter today, and how you respond, will determine the final outcome of your grade. Likely, not all of the remaining four will
HIGH PRIEST
pass. But for those who do, I will
only be left to marvel at your
astonishing will and resemblance of
impeccable faith.
(to the subordinate priests)
Remove the covers.

The subordinates move to the veiled unknowns and do as
requested. They reveal the initiates’ assignment of two
people each to sacrifice to their God: seven women, 30 to
50-years-old, and one man, 25, locked to a pillory – their
feet and hands in shackles – bodies stripped of flesh with a
torture device known as a cat’s paw. This implement resides
in each victim’s hide.

HIGH PRIEST
Now they can be seen for what they
really are.

The priests remove the duct tape while the victims scream
for their lives in throaty supplications.

The high priest walks to the front of the podium, raises his
hands to the sky.

HIGH PRIEST
(thunderous)
Initiates, the time has come!
Procure your priesthood!

Two initiates, male and female, clamor in terror, unable to
proceed with the act. Rex walks over, raises his sword, and
bleeds reluctance. Another, more eager male initiate
follows.

LADY VICTIM
(to Rex)
You can’t do this! Stop, please,
and think about what you’re doing!

The sword falls to Rex’s side, untroubling the woman’s sigh
of relief. He succumbs to madness at the sight of her
shredded breasts – mistaken for pom poms.

LADY VICTIM
Thank you...

Rex takes a deep breath and looks her in the eye, like a
doctor with bad news.
REX
I’m doin’ this fer me and my son...

Sweat drips from his fingertips, along the handle of the sword. A retina-burning light shines from the tip of the blade as it raises.

Her head hits the floor. Rex vomits.

The other male initiate taunts his second victim, with the pillory beside her already holding a severed neck, spouting blood.

MAN INITIATE
Yer next, bitch!

LADY VICTIM
This is all a delusion, don’t you fucking get it? What they’re promising you people in return for killing us! Don’t believe them!

He spits on the lady’s face in disgust.

MAN INITIATE
Sorry, bitch. It’s a shame yer faction can’t reason with faith.

Her head forms a pair with the other victim’s.

Rex is now at his second.

LADY VICTIM
Fuck you and this fairy tale-laden cesspool!

REX
(crying)
My son. I’m sorry.

Sting of the blade. Rex turns to the angered high priest.

MAN INITIATE
(to high priest)
I can’t do it! I can’t even look at what you’ve done!

FEMALE INITIATE
Why did you?!

The priest leaps off stage and walks closer to the cowardly initiates - asks for their swords with his hands and eyes.
They fulfill his request, enfeebled. He walks behind the man and decapitates him with both swords. A tide of blood surges across the floor. He moves to the woman as she turns around, crying:

FEMALE INITIATE
Yer all crazy!

Both swords drive through the woman’s breast, out her back. The priest turns to Rex and his fellowman.

HIGH PRIEST
Welcome to the Brotherhood.

END FLASHBACK

INT. RESTROOM

The head tempts Rex. Lips smack wildly.

SATAN
Come, my son. You deserve it.

Rex drops his johns and accepts oral pleasure, from the severed head of the female initiate.

SATAN
That’s my boy.

EXT. ROADSIDE

A tire kisses the curb.

INT. MRS. CARPENTER’S CAR

Thomas and Sam sit in the back seat. Mrs. Carpenter, plumpy, 40s, looks through the rear view mirror to converse.

THOMAS
Thanks a lot fer takin’ me home, Mrs. Carpenter.

MRS. CARPENTER
Yer more than welcome, hun.

SAM
Maybe after I’m done grounded I can come over.

THOMAS
Yeah! Can’t wait to see yer new comics.
MRS. CARPENTER
Once you accelerate those grades into high gear.

Sam rolls his eyes.

SAM
I know, Mom.

THOMAS
Well, I better hit the road.

MRS. CARPENTER
It was very nice seein’ you again, Thomas.

THOMAS
You too, Mrs. Carpenter.

Sam jokingly flips his mom off. Thomas giggles, exits.

EXT. WOOLGROVE HOME

The driver’s window rolls down.

MRS. CARPENTER
Oh, and, Thomas...

THOMAS
Yeah.

MRS. CARPENTER
I just wanted you to thank yer father for me. It brought us all so much comfort when he asked us to be a part of his religion. And tell him he can expect to see us at the initiation real soon.

THOMAS
I’ll thank him.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

He lounges out on his bed. He takes the letter out of the envelope. Tears of hope stream.

INT. TRUCK

Rex drives on a gloomy road in the woods. Eyes watchful. A dense fog flows through the environment.

A NAKED WOMAN
emerges from a section of underbrush.

The break pedal depresses.

She entices Rex with her beauty, then sprints back into the darkness. Rex obliges in greedy succession.

EXT. (DARK) BACKWOODS – DAY

She leads him far inside, leaping like an animal over logs and other scattered debris. Exhausted, Rex collapses on his belly. The woman vanishes.

Rex scopes in all directions, then stirs excitedly. Faint orgasms, not far away, cast sex-fumes into the air. He picks himself up. Hypnotized. Lured. He spots movement in a line of vegetation.

Perspiring legs, twisting, beckoning, protrude from a family of thorn bushes. He moves closer to uncover the throbbing body of the woman – who’s being pleasured yet by another.

They’re the women Rex sacrificed at the initiation; only now part human, part demon. (This fusion of man and beast imparts to us their implementation by the Power of Darkness...)

Prickly thorns slice through Rex’s skin as he indulges sight of the wet orgy.

The demons caress one another on the ground, licking, sucking, and nibbling on nipples and necks. Their tongues slither gradually below the naval. Rex rips off his clothes and gives them what they want.

He collapses, winded, greased in perspiration. The women crawl over and lick him with their undulating tongues, from his feet to his mouth.

One of them presents to him a giant SNAKE (THE AVATAR)

wrapped around her shoulders, then places it on the ground. They whisper into his ears.

HYBRID ONE
She awaits the two.

HYBRID TWO
Feed her your progeny.
HYBRID ONE
Her scion replete.

They close his eyes with a gentle touch and disappear.

Rex opens his eyes. He inches toward the snake, stares lustfully into its prodigious, black eyes.

REX
(to the sky)
It’s time... It’s our time...

He falls forward, shrouding the snake with his naked body in silent prayer.

Whooo! A sudden burst of tempestuous wind blows a heap of debris. The storm approaches.

INT. TRUCK

An aquarium on the floor harbors the otherworldly behemoth, fissuring glass.

Clothed, Rex opens the glove compartment, pulls out a bottle of whiskey, and heads for home.

INT. LIVING ROOM

A patterned rapping renders Thomas to the front door. The sun reveals a glowing Alex and her innocent smile.

Thomas, shy, can’t move.

ALEX
Hi, Thomas.

THOMAS
Hi.

They embrace.

ALEX
(into Thomas’ ear)
You don’t never be sad. My momma said that if you keep yer head down, that’s called self-defeat. I told my mommy as long as I live and breathe, I’m gonna see to it that there ain’t nobody who takes that fate.

Thomas tears up on her shoulder.
ALEX
You can cry on me as long as you want to.

THOMAS
(weeping)
Yer the only thing in my life I love! I think I could die fer you!

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

Thomas and Alex lie in bed, hand in hand.

INT. KITCHEN

With Alex gone, Thomas takes the rest of the tracts on the table and leaves home.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK

Thomas walks from mailbox to mailbox to deliver his father’s tracts.

INT. MRS. CARPENTER’S CAR

Mrs. Carpenter smacks her son on the butt as he exits.

SAM
Thanks again, Mom!

MRS. CARPENTER
Yer welcome, ya little shit. Have fun!

She stays till he enters, waves him goodbye.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Sam plops his overnight bag on the floor.

SAM
Guess who’s here!

No answer. He notices

A PAINTING

on the wall of a man, presumably Rex, engulfed in an inferno of green flames.

The door knob begins to rattle... Sam shivers...
SAM
Oh, fuck!

THOMAS
Holy crap, you scared me!

SAM
Bet yer wonderin’ why I’m here. I started cryin’ fer sympathy, and mom finally gave in.

THOMAS
She must be gullible.

SAM
Thankfully. Damn, this place is wicked!

Sam points at two swords above the doorway – the same Rex and his colleague used to slay their adversaries.

SAM
What the hell kinda swords are they?

THOMAS
Those are saber swords. Daddy said he got ’em from his work-place.

SAM
Ever held one of ’em?

THOMAS
It would kinda be hard to pull-off seein’ how they’s twice as big as me.

SAM
Well, I got somethin’ you can hold. Let’s go to yer room. Got somethin’ I wanna show ya.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

The boys sit Indian style on the floor. Sam takes several comics out of his overnight bag.

THOMAS
Toss one over.

SAM
Just be careful. They cost me the better part of my allowance.
THOMAS
Man, where’d ya get ’em?

SAM
The Dime Store. It’s at the mall. We oughta go there sometime.

THOMAS
Yeah, fer me I average a comic-book once in a lifetime. Not that I’m slow at readin’, but cuz my daddy ain’t got no likin’ fer my readin’ any.

SAM
Why not?

THOMAS
(enervated)
Cuz he’d rather me read those tracts.

SAM
What if you don’t?

Thomas looks despairingly at the floor.

THOMAS
I don’t wanna talk about it.

Sam’s eyes of concern pry Thomas open.

THOMAS
Sometimes he hits me, yells things at me, things in another language, tryin’ to get me to believe what he does.

SAM
Just read ’em with an open mind, that’s what my parents said. We’ll soon be converted, thanks to yer crack-head daddy.

Thomas remains lugubrious despite Sam’s failed attempt at humor.

THOMAS
(crying)
It’s just that, just that I ain’t got no place to go. I look at other people, and they’re happy.
(half-smiling, yet deeply serious)
I’m doomed.

Thomas catches Sam’s stare of empathy.

SAM
Well, listen, bud. I ain’t gonna let him hurt ya. At least not while I’m here. I’ll protect ya. I’ll kick his ass.

The force of humor shines a glimpse of light into Thomas’ soul.

SAM
I could be yer bodyguard, you know?

THOMAS
(crying less)
You’d make a good one.

SAM
At least that’d provide me an alibi fer goin’ to dancin’ recitals.

Thomas laughs.

THOMAS
You know, I’s thinkin’ the mall sounds like a good place to go. Forget about life fer awhile. I was thinkin’ maybe Ron could loan you one of his bikes and come along with us.

SAM
Would yer daddy mind?

THOMAS
No, he won’t give a shit. We can stay away as long as we want. I got some money from allowance, and I was thinkin’ I could get a few of those comics. You wanna go?

EXT. BACKYARD

They run out the back door with anticipation burning in their brains. Thomas takes a padlock off the door and plunges inside the darkened GARAGE

with Sam always at his side.
SAM
Bad ass bike! That Spider-Man?

THOMAS
Uh-hum. By far the best gift I’ve ever gotten from my daddy.

Thomas finds a tire inflator propped against the wall and starts pumping.

SAM
That’s what I want fer my birthday.

After admiring the bike, Sam’s eyes drift toward a suspicious-looking something stored in a bag in the far corner of the garage. The lack of illumination gives rise to a split second of speculation. He dismisses the object as soon as Thomas finishes.

THOMAS
All set.

EXT. KLEIN SIDEWALK

Ron waits in the grass with his bike and Alex’s (basket, handlebar tassels).

Sam rolls his eyes, justifiably.

SAM
Are you fuckin’ kiddin’ me? Do I have to ride that piece of shit?

Thomas laughs as they cross the street.

THOMAS
Hi, Ron.

RON
Hey, bud, heard what happened in art class. Next time you just come to me, alright.

They exchange fist bumps.

RON
(pinches Sam’s nipple)
It’s been awhile since I talked to this fag.

SAM
It hasn’t been since I thought about porkin’ yer sister.
Ron looks over to his mom, who’s push-mowing the lawn.

    RON
    Hey, Mom!

Sam puts his hand over Ron’s mouth.

    SAM
    It was just a joke, ya cry-baby!

    RON
    I ain’t laughin’!

    SAM
    Okay, I’m sorry. Whatever. So, you ready to cheer up and scavenge the mall with us, pick up some comics?

Ron picks up the girly bike, gives it to Sam.

    RON
    Hope this destroys yer ego ridin’ my sis’s bike.

    SAM
    (laughing)
    No. If this is as close as I get to yer sister, then that kinda puts me at a loss fer complaint.

    RON
    Parents want me back by nine.

    THOMAS
    I think that’ll fly.

    SAM
    Let’s ride!

EXT. MALL

The boys lock their bikes to a row of bicycle racks and head inside.

INT. MALL

Sam spots the Dime Store.

    SAM
    Look, there it is!

INT. DIME STORE
THOMAS
These are fuckin’ awesome!
(to Sam)
How much is they?

SAM
Uh... just ten cents a piece!

THOMAS
I think I got enough to buy a whole fuckin’ rack!

Ron finds his preferred comic, shows Thomas and Sam.

RON
Look at this one!

THOMAS
Wow, they’re all so fuckin’ cool!

RON
Now I know why y’all was so siked up about comin’!

They leave with handfuls and run to the nearest CASH REGISTER where Sam and Ron pay for their comics first.

SAM
(to Thomas)
Wanna go to the sports store? I need some pads fer soccer.

THOMAS
Nah, you guys go ahead. I think I’m just gonna head to the bench and check out my comics.

SAM
Okay, we’ll see ya when we’re done.

Sam and Ron exit.

INT. MALL

Thomas enters. He takes a handful of tracts from his pocket, then places them in a stack next to a gumball machine. He walks over to a bench, starts to read.

THOMAS’ VISION
The mall lights flicker off, on, then remain off. Thomas studies the darkness. Alone.

A trembling of the earth sends the boy to his feet. He drops the comic in the bag and stands to look outside.

EXT. SKY

A Dark Sphere rises in the cosmos to engulf every particle of sunlight in its black, amorphous wormhole.

INT. MALL

Thomas moves closer to a fiery light and the roar of sprinting feet emerging from behind the bend, opposite the exit of the mall.

He looks at the GUMBALL MACHINE and fearfully registers the disappearance of the tracts.

As the pace of the thunder increases, a stampede of conflagrant people round the curve. They cry to be relieved of their suffering - with the missing tracts in hand.

Thomas dives between two pop machines in the nick of time. The burners explode through the exit of the mall behind him, into the Sphere’s non-light.

EXT. SKY

The Sphere’s opening dimension releases an outpour of winged demons that descend upon the humans. The monsters rip them apart like tissue paper with beastly fangs and claws.

INT. MALL

Thomas turns back around.

A ROBED SILHOUETTE appears from the burning crowd of humans. A reptilian face peeks inside to whisper.

    SATAN

Soon...

END VISION

INT. SPORTS STORE
Sam and Ron see Thomas lying on the floor and rush to his aid.

INT. MALL

Sam and Ron attempt to shake him back to life. Passersby gawk in perplexity.

Thomas recharges.

RON
Yer sweatin’ like hell. I think someone tried puttin’ a hex on you, man.

SAM
You okay? What the hell happened?

THOMAS
(dizzily stands)
I was just sittin’ at the bench and - I don’t know.

SAM
You gonna be able to ride home?

THOMAS
Yeah, I think so.

RON
You don’t look so good. I can have my brother pick you up and take you home.

THOMAS
Thanks, Ron. I’m okay, really.

Thomas recovers the pamphlets - urgently discards them in the trash.

EXT. MALL

A monstrous thunderhead lurks ominously in the distance as the boys get ready to leave.

SAM
(to Thomas)
Here, let me get yer bike.

Thomas is bent over with his head between his legs as Ron pats him on the back.
RON
You gonna be okay?

THOMAS
Yeah, I think so.

RON
Yer lucky we saw you. If it wadn’t fer us, you might still be layin’ there.

Sam gives Thomas his bike.

THOMAS
Thank you, Sam.

SAM
Alright, let’s get you home.

The boys hit the road, unsettled.

INT. TRUCK

His face masked in sweat, Rex smokes a cigarette, blasting heavy music on the radio. He looks anxiously at the grimoire, inhales deeply.

The snake is about to bust open the aquarium...

EXT. KLEIN SIDEWALK – DUSK

Thomas leans over his handlebars in exhaustion.

RON
Well, it was nice hangin’ out with y’all.

SAM
Yeah, we should –

THOMAS
(anxious)
You know those tracts I gave you guys?

SAM AND RON
Yeah? What about ’em?

THOMAS
Well, I’d feel a lot better if you gave ’em back. I got a strange feelin’, that’s all.
SAM AND RON
(puzzled)
Okay. Sure.

RON
Well, foods probly gettin’ cold.
I’ll see you dick heads later. Oh, and get well, Thomas.

THOMAS
Thanks.

The two stroll back home down the neighborhood sidewalk. Thomas recovers the tracts from the mailboxes.

SAM
I don’t suppose we could take turns sleepin’ in yer bed? I gotta bad back.

THOMAS
Yeah, that’s cool.

Sam notices Thomas’ unease.

SAM
So, how ya feelin’?

THOMAS
Better, I’m just really tired. We might hafta call it a day.

SAM
I can have my momma pick me up?

THOMAS
No, I want you to stay. I don’t wanna be alone.

(a beat of fear trespasses)
I wanna thank you fer helpin’ me back there.

SAM
That’ll be twenty bucks fer bodyguard services.

Thomas grins as Sam puts his arm around him.

SAM
Well, hell, that just goes to show ya there ain’t nothin’ I wouldn’t do fer my bestest bud.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM - NIGHT
The boys rest peacefully; each still wear his school clothes. For now Thomas sleeps in his bed and Sam in the sleeping bag; located on the side of the bed invisible to the door. We see through the

BEDROOM WINDOW

that the storm has arrived. Heavy rain, turbulent winds abound.

INT. TRUCK

Rex turns on to his home street with determination burning in his eyes. He stops the truck, grabs the grimoire, exits.

EXT. SIDEWALK

He walks around the truck to the passenger side and opens the door.

    REX
    No!

The snake springs out in the darkness, beyond recall.

EXT. FRONT YARD

Rex walks up to the house anxiously with the book secured in his armpit, enters.

INT. LIVING ROOM

He flicks on the light switch. The power’s out. He takes a deep, agonizing breath, and concedes down the hallway.

INT. MAGICK ROOM

He places the grimoire on the podium, exits.

INT. HALLWAY

Rex stops outside his son’s bedroom and opens the door a crack. He stands in tears, gazing upon his Thomas.

    REX
    I love you...

INT. KITCHEN

He swipes a bottle of whiskey from the counter.

INT. MAGICK ROOM
Rex falls down hard against the wall, crying. He swings the bottle upside down, guzzles everything but the bottle itself. He notices the sand in the hourglass has already fallen three-fourths of the way.

REX
Our destiny!
(throws the bottle at the wall)
Why does it have to be this way, goddammit!

EXT. BACKYARD
Rex removes the padlock to the garage, enters feverishly.

INT. HALLWAY
Sam walks out of the bathroom.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM
Sam gets cozy back in the sleeping bag.

INT. KITCHEN
Rex returns with a collection of four fluorescent bug zappers to light up the house. He lays one in the

HALLWAY
on the floor...

IN THE MAGICK ROOM
in the corner...

IN THE BEDROOM
on a dresser...

IN THE KITCHEN
on the table, which fill the rooms with enigmatic DARK BLUE and an alien buzzing noise.

As Rex exits, we stay our gaze upon the hypnotic sound/color of the bug zapper.

A moth flies into the light, only to meet a blinding death.
Rex re-enters with a large bag. He drags it down the

HALLWAY
to the

MAGICK ROOM

He props Rebecca’s unrecognizable corpse against the altar, puts on his robe, lights the candles on the altar, takes the dagger, opens the grimoire on the podium, and begins the conjuration.

REX
(hands touching the sky)
"Lord, by yer grace, grant me, I pray, the power to conceive in my mind and to execute that which I desire to do! The end which I would attain by thy help, O Mighty Father: the One True God who livest and reignest forever and ever!"

THE SUPERNATURAL FORCE

bursts through the windows (distorting the light) and mingles with the blue fluorescence emanating from the bug zapper and the smoke from the extinguished candles.

Rex looks out the window, begging for it to come back...

REX
"I entreat thee to summon LAMIA to manifest before me - that she may give me true and faithful answer - so that I may accomplish my desired end! This I respectfully and humbly ask in Yer Name, Lord. May you deem me worthy, Father!"

The atmosphere has swollen into a rampant freak show of menacing blue light, and rumbles with enough thunder to radiate through the cosmos.

As if conceived by the pandemonium,

THE SNAKE

explodes through an intact window, to Rex’s ambivalent horror/delight and slithers into the mouth of Rebecca’s corpse.

Rex falls to his knees. Torrents of hope/terror capsize his mobility.

Rebecca’s mouth splits open in slivers of flesh to make room for the giant beast. The snake is so big that it reopens her slit throat, through which we see its scaly body descend.
Rebecca starts to blink, twitch, then go completely ape-shit in violent convulsions all over the room as the snake forces its way inside.

Suddenly, the windows shatter as a jet of lightning strikes the house.

THE CORPSE

stands in the midst of thick glass spray. The demon (subsisting in Rebecca’s flesh) gnaws off Rebecca’s tongue, from whence spawns its own lurid split-flap.

Lamia inspects Rebecca’s naked body, caressing her skin and the scabrous gash on her neck. On one side, we see her hair has meshed into a glob of putrid jello, composed of bone and brain matter. Out of this hideousness spawns a croaky utterance with green, ultra-sickly glowing eyes.

LAMIA
For this provision I am pleased.
(stroks Rebecca’s body orgasmically)
So droughty and warm. A supreme fit.

Rex stays incapacitated.

LAMIA
How does it feel, Rexxx? You’ve craved me for so long, and now I’m here, straight from the fire below us.

Pieces of glass fall to the floor while Rex slowly stands. He relinquishes his robe and embraces the demon.

LAMIA
Now, do to me what you wish.

INT. REX’S BEDROOM

Holding his hand, Lamia turns to Rex with a look of concern.

LAMIA
His word?

REX
(grins viciously)
Spreadin’ like wildfire.

She smiles appreciatively and softly kisses Rex on the lips; a daub of blood smears across his mouth.
LAMIA

Rex, before you fill me,
(masses his genitals)
I want to know if you’re prepared
to give me what I want in return?

Unable to restrain his libido any longer, Rex throws her
into the wall and jams his finger inside her bush while
sucking her neck.

INT. VINTON’S HOME

A phone call wakes uniformed Vinton on the sofa. He answers
the phone on a nearby coffee table.


VINTON

Hello. Oh, thank Christ! I’ll
notify the parents.

He hangs up, then dials a number.


VINTON

Hey, Rose, this’s Patrick. The
blood work just came back. The
blood’s cow’s blood. Ain’t human.
(intense)
We gonna find yer girl if it takes
a lifetime. Yes, ma’am! Lots of
hope! Lots of hope left!

INT. REX’S BEDROOM

Lamia shoves Rex on to the bed and lands on top. Blood
dribbles out of her mouth, neck, and head injury, making Rex
seem the victim of some bad/sadistic joke.

She tears off his pants, licks the blood off his chest, and
thrusts up and down like a bull rider.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

Sam jolts out of the sleeping bag. He hears the stormy sex
next door and steps out to see.

INT. HALLWAY

He stands aghast outside Rex’s door as the demon’s orgasmic
howls complement the severity of the storm.

He moves down farther, sees the broken glass originating
from Lamia’s conception. He peeks inside the

MAGICK ROOM
then steps the rest of the way in and notices the grimoire on the podium. He thieves it, runs back to
THOMAS’ ROOM
Sam flips through the book. He soon grows bored and plops it on the nightstand.

INT. REX’S BEDROOM
Rebecca’s bleeding wounds have tucked Rex under blankets of blood, but he’s too damn drunk to give a fuck.
Defused, Lamia collapses on top of him, sucks for air.

LAMIA
You were extraordinary. So long I have waited for this moment. Oh, so long.

REX
(still drunk)
This is the best payoff of my life.
God, yer so beautiful.

She laughs.

REX
Is there any way you could stay with me? Like, maybe ferever...?

LAMIA
You’re so handsome, I shall think it over.

They trade tongues.

REX
Fuck, it’s hot in here. I’ll open the windows, get a nice breeze flowin’.

He plops lazily out of bed, briefly allows the storm inside. He sucks in a gust of wind, then slips back beneath the covers.

REX
Ready fer more?
(nibbles on her earlobe)
I wanna fuck you all the way to Hell.
LAMIA
Oh, but, Rex, I’m starving.

REX
I’m starvin’, too.

Beneath the sheets, he sticks his fingers inside her.

REX
I’m starvin’ fer some more demon pussy.

His tongue rolls around in her ear.

LAMIA
(impatient)
Please.

REX
What’s a matter? You want somethin’ from the fridge: a t.v. dinner or somethin’? I can fix that up real quick -

LAMIA
Abate, you fool!

Lamia denies his tongue, shoves him away.

LAMIA
All this exertion, it has me ravenous. Is the boy ready?

REX
(white-knuckled)
Isn’t who ready? Who you talkin’ about?

Lamia kneels over Rex in a tensely erect position.

LAMIA
The boy! I’m ready for the feast!

Rex begins to cry.

LAMIA
He should be ready! Haven’t you prepared him for me? The boy is what I want in return! He’s what will unleash everything you’ve ever wanted - your destiny - and for that you must make the ultimate sacrifice!
REX
Please don’t -

LAMIA
As we have promised: once your act of faith is instantiated, the pain and desertion you now feel will be richly recompensed with all accolades that starve in wait for you - and your boy!

REX
Please, please don’t hurt ’em!

Lamia seizes Rex’s throat explosively with one hand.

LAMIA
Enough time has already been squandered! I want him now!

REX
(struggles to breathe)
I changed my mind! I can’t go through with it!

LAMIA
(growling)
The precautions you’ve taken were insufficient, indeed! You were warned! We don’t allow filth-bathing pigs the right to our Kingdom, nor make bargains without a hand in the shares! Given your ignorance of this, I’m taking you both!

LAMIA
snarls then tears a mouthful of flesh out of Rex’s shoulder.

REX
Fuckin’ bitch!

He stabs both thumbs in her eye sockets and pops her eyeballs, like two ripe tomatoes. He knees her in the stomach, knocks her to the floor, and lunges out of bed.

LAMIA
haunches over in spastic pain as blood pours like Niagra Falls out of her eye sockets. She swings several times, misses, then grazes his throat with a fingernail.

REX
flinches, misses a jab.

LAMIA

grabs him, throws him into the wall.

REX

collapses to the floor, unconscious.

INT. HALLWAY

Lamia’s fluttering tongue secures its prey outside Thomas’ door; a wicked grin exceeds Rebecca’s face.

INT. MAGICK ROOM

Lamia ransacks the room in search of something, then exits in fury.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

Lamia explodes through the door.

COLD BLUE FLORESCENCE

and splinters of wood engulf the room.

THOMAS

rolls under the bed in the sleeping bag.

SAM

freezes under the covers.

   LAMIA
   Where the fuck is it?

Assuming, Sam points to the grimoire on the nightstand.

Lamia swipes the book and points to a passage for Sam to recite.

   LAMIA
   Read, child!

Sam’s nerves turn to mush.

   LAMIA
   (ferocious)
   I’ve come to take you to Heaven!
   Don’t you believe?
With no sign of progress, Lamia plow-drives the grimoire in Sam’s pudgy face; his nose starts to bleed.

She takes him by the throat as his legs quiver above the disheveled bed sheets.

**LAMIA**

Don’t you believe?

**SAM**

(crying)

Yes! Yes, I believe!

**LAMIA**

Then read —

(rapidly repeating the passage viciously)

"To thee I give ownership over thy mind and body - To thee I give ownership over thy mind and body!"

**SAM**

"To thee I give ownership over thy mind and body!"

The deal is done; Rebecca’s mouth clenches around Sam’s neck.

**THOMAS’ POV**

The bed shakes! Springs strain! Torrents of blood race down Rebecca’s legs, on to the floor.

**END POV**

A long, worn out gurgle...

...unabated silence...

Thump!!! Thomas cringes frantically as Sam’s decapitated body hits the floor.

Lamia drags him away by the feet, leading a pool of blood into the hallway.

**INT. MAGICK ROOM**

The demon relinquishes Sam’s body on to the floor. She walks over to the altar, waves her hand over the candles to give them new life. She skewers Sam’s head atop the metal fence while the ruptured veins dangling out of his neck glisten in candle light.
She picks up Rex’s dagger off the floor, uses it to slice Sam’s body into bite-size pieces, and begins the feed.

INT. REX’S BEDROOM

Rex regains sentience. He gathers just enough strength and wavers into the hall.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

Thomas crawls out from under the bed. He proceeds with caution, exits.

INT. HALLWAY

Thomas sees the blood trail leading to the Magick Room. The sound of rabid gorging escalates.

INT. REX’S BEDROOM

Thomas enters. He notices a naked body lying face flat on the bed, walks closer.

Flies buzz around the mangled corpse. The skin from the back of the head to the front has been peeled off; the body rendered unidentifiable.

THOMAS

Daddy?

Encroaching footsteps patter down the hallway. Thomas cowers behind the bed.

LAMIA (O.S.)

Now, my love, it is you who I hunger.

The eyeless demon enters the room, laps up remnants of Sam’s innards adorning her mouth and face. Her serpentine tongue examines an airborne residue, then slithers back inside.

LAMIA

My senses tell me I’m not alone.

She crawls softly on to the ravaged bed. The corpse gone.

THOMAS’ POV

Bloody fingers grab the edge of the bed spread...

...A SILHOUETTED HEAD RISES...
LAMIA
(joyous)
Another soul!

END POV

Thomas flies into the wall, out of its grasp, and dives out the window.

Lamia stops in her tracks, laughter morphs into ear-piercing pain. Rex has impaled her in the back with one of the saber swords. The demon roars like a mad hound.

REX
How’s it feel to get fucked in the back, you fuckin’ bitch!

REX
ejects the sword, ready to finish her off.

LAMIA
intercepts the sword, gashes her hand and arm, and buries it in Rex’s chest.

A stream of red spills from his mouth.

LAMIA
How’s it feel to bleed like a pig!

Lamia ejects the sword and sticks it back in, repeatedly back and forth.

REX
falls to the floor, squirming, trying to stop the bleeding.

EXT. YARD

Thomas writhes in the grass after the hard land.

INT. REX’S BEDROOM

Rex bleeds like a stuck pig as Lamia grabs him by the hair.

LAMIA
Hurry to our marriage in the realm of Darkness!

REX
No! Wait -

THE SWORD
threatens his jugular and...

EXT. YARD

Thomas struggles on the ground - comes to his feet. He contemplates which direction to go, then flees to Ron’s house.

EXT. REX’S BEDROOM

Rebecca’s moonlit head pokes out the window and senses Thomas; her tongue twirls in detecting his scent.

EXT. FLORIDA ROOM

Thomas bangs on the screen-door.

    THOMAS
    Help me!

INT. REX’S BEDROOM

Lamia’s tongue recoils back in Rebecca’s mouth. A set of monstrous claws shoot through her fingers; bloody and knife-like.

SHADOW ON THE WALL

shows wings pierce out of Rebecca. Painful.

EXT. FLORIDA ROOM

A raucous, demonic cry tears at Thomas’ eardrums.

    THOMAS
    Somebody help me!

Lamia, a blur behind Thomas, lands in the Kleins’ front yard, carrying the saber sword.

Thomas realizes he’s not alone. He takes a knife from his pocket, tears a hole in the screen, lets himself

IN THE FLORIDA ROOM

and locks the glass door. An artificial mango tree provides a shadowy seclusion.

He averts his gaze from the hideous sight of its veiny wings, dripping Rebecca’s blood; her busted eyeballs and slimy tongue as it pastes the glass in semen-textural mucous. Rebecca’s skin has become a hide of coal-colored scales. A mirror-image of Thomas’ daydream.
The demon tries the glass door in vain, then starts toward the back of the house.

INT. RON’S ROOM

Ron shoots up in bed, looks down at the thing creeping on the floor atop his shattered window.

The demon stands, its body dressed in fragments of glass, and gently opens the grimoire.

    LAMIA
    Don’t you believe, little boy?

The blood on Rebecca’s caressing hand smears across his face.

EXT. YARD

Thomas runs off the steps, finds Alex’s second story window at the side of the house. He grabs a handful of the neighbor’s gravel and heaves at her window.

The window cracks, then opens.

    ALEX
    Who is it?

    THOMAS
    Alex, somethin’s tryin’ to kill me!
    Please let me in...

    ALEX
    Meet me at the front door.

After Alex leaves, a cry from inside the house hastens Thomas around front.

INT. STAIRWAY

The cry freezes Alex midway down stairs; she goes back up to see.

INT. FLORIDA ROOM

    THOMAS
    (banging on the locked main-door)
    Hurry!

INT. HALLWAY
Alex tiptoes her way to Ron’s closed bedroom door and gently pushes it open... enough to peek inside to witness the demon standing over Ron, fondling his scar.

INT. RON’S ROOM

RON
What are you doing? What do you want?

LAMIA
(tender)
This has caused you great trouble, hasn’t it?

Ron begins to cry.

LAMIA
I can make it go away. I can end all those nightmares of ridicule and loneliness. All can be washed into extinction... if you just say these words.

Ron looks at the text.

LAMIA
Come with me, where happiness reigns.

RON
"To thee I give ownership over thy mind and body."

LAMIA
Now it will come.

The sword raises.

INT. HALLWAY

Ron’s demise sends Alex downstairs to her parents’ bedroom.

INT. RON’S ROOM

Lamia hears movement, pursues.

INT. HALLWAY

While at her parents’ locked door, Alex heeds footsteps coming down the stairs.

INT. CLOSET
Alex hides behind the washer and dryer.

INT./EXT. FLORIDA ROOM

Fearful of the demon’s emergence behind the main-door, Thomas exits back into the street.

INT. CLOSET

The demon creeps by in the hall. Then vanishes.

INT. HALLWAY

Alex re-enters, checks both ways. Again, she tries the door.

To Alex’s left, Lamia’s silhouette stands as still as a mannequin. It starts closer without her knowledge.

The door opens.

    MR. KLEIN
    (hands on Alex)
    Baby, what’s the matter?

The saber hacks both his arms off at the elbow.

Lamia kicks him back to bed; his arms shower the wailing wife in crimson.

EXT. FLORIDA ROOM

Alex shoots through the door. Thomas latches to her plea.

    ALEX
    Run!

EXT. BACKYARD

They seek refuge behind a house on the opposite side of the street, fall to the ground.

    ALEX
    My parents!

    THOMAS
    We gotta help them!

    ALEX
    It’s too late!

    THOMAS
    I gotta go back!

INT. KLEIN BEDROOM
Lamia stands on the bed. The sword threatens as the Kleins plea in torment.

LAMIA
Recite!

MRS. KLEIN
Okay! We believe! We believe! To thee we give ownership over thy mind and body!

Guts splatter on the wall and grimoire as the couple receives the full wrath of the demon’s sword. A split tongue drinks crimson from the blade.

EXT. BACKYARD

The sound of wings and slaughtered flesh bring habitat to the voice of death.

ALEX
Please believe me! We can’t stay here! It’ll kill us!

THOMAS
But -

ALEX
Let’s go!

EXT. WOODS

Alex takes off into the murky-greenness. Thomas follows not far behind. Deep into the woods, Alex discovers a dilapidated cabin.

ALEX
Thomas, I found somethin’.

INT. CABIN

They collapse on the hollow floor. Alex vomits.

THOMAS
Are you okay?

ALEX
What’s goin’ on? What do we do?

THOMAS
I don’t know. What about Ron?

She dives into Thomas’ safety, without reply.
EXT. WOODS

A sinister calm pervades.

INT. CABIN

With Alex asleep, Thomas walks to a glassless window and spots something in the distance.

Flashes of lightning illumine a foggy swamp. At its bank sits a row boat tied to a pier.

He goes back to wake her.

THOMAS

Alex.

She cries.

THOMAS

Alex, I’m here.

(hugs her tightly)

Alex, I found somethin’ through the window.

ALEX

What?

THOMAS

I saw water and a boat. I was thinkin’ if we need to – if it comes back – we can paddle as far away as we need to.

ALEX

Show me.

Alex feebly stands and walks with Thomas to the window.

THOMAS

(points)

Way out there.

ALEX

Do you think that whatever it was saw us running away?

THOMAS

If it did, I think the water would make us safer.

She leans her head against him.
ALEX
I’m scared, Thomas.

His hand brushes her face consolingly; thumbs her tears.

THOMAS
I am too.
(cries into her eyes)
I need you.

ALEX
I need you.

They hug passionately.

THOMAS
(into her ear)
Whatever happens, I won’t let nothin’ bad happen to you.

Her eyes mirror the same affection, then look fearfully through the doorway.

THOMAS
Stay with me.

EXT. WOODS

The storm booms back to life. Lightning and thunder merge above the two racing souls. Leaves churn all over the place.

ALEX
Are we getting closer?

THOMAS
Any time now, we should be there.

Flap! Flap! The sound of wings draws their eyes to the heavens.

The demon dives down on top of Alex and knocks her to the ground.

THOMAS
Leave her alone!

LAMIA
(to Alex)
You will believe!
ALEX
Thomas, help me!

Thomas takes a knife from his pocket and sticks it in the
demon’s waist. Alex frees herself.

Lamia howls, removes the knife. A hole opens up in her side.
She tosses it on the ground and grabs Thomas with the saber
held against his throat.

LAMIA
(to Alex)
Recite - "To thee I give ownership
over thy mind and body" - and I’ll
let him go.

Alex stands, weeping.

ALEX
Please don’t hurt him. Please...

LAMIA
Say it, and I’ll let him go! Just
say it!

THOMAS
No, Alex, don’t!

ALEX
"To thee I give ownership over thy
mind and body."

The demon throws Thomas to the ground and moves toward Alex.

THOMAS
Alex, run!

Alex sprints deeper into the woods, the demon inches away,
Thomas behind.

ALEX (O.S.)
Thomas, hurry!

Prominent roots cause Thomas to stumble. He clasps on to a
tree. He sees the demon with Alex in its grasp, 30 feet
away, as if waiting for him.

ALEX
(weak)
Thomas, help me.
THOMAS
Let her go. Take me...

Lamia grins, then slits Alex’s throat.

THOMAS
No!

Alex drops, gurgling. Thomas takes off the other way. The demon follows.

EXT. SWAMP

Thomas finds the boat through a dense grove and frees himself into the swamp of oil. The vessel is equipped with a set of oars; one of which has warped to a jagged dagger.

UNDER THE DOME OF TREES


A barely audible movement in the water catches Thomas’ awareness. It’s getting closer. Much closer. Too close.

THE DEMON

rises from the water, on to the craft.

As the boat coasts into frame, lightning unveils bleakness standing statuesque

IN THE MIST

on the near side of the boat... Blood oozes from the sword and grimoire. And oil oozes from the fiend.

Thomas turns around, flinching.

A decomposing arm shoots out, aiming the book in desirous spite.

LAMIA
Read it!

THOMAS
No!
LAMIA
Read it!
The vessel sways back and forth.

LAMIA
You want everlasting life? You wanna be with your friends again?
Read it!

THOMAS
No, get away from me!

LAMIA
Follow their footsteps, child!
Those who’ve left an imprint on faith will be allotted their place amongst the stars! Do as I say!

Lamia walks closer, shoves the book in his face.

LAMIA
Read it, or I’ll open your throat!

THOMAS
I want nothing to do with faith.

Thomas yanks the oar out of the water and merges it across Rebecca’s throat. The sword and grimoire fall.
The demon collapses on Thomas, carrying them overboard.

UNDERWATER
Lightning shines on Rebecca’s lifeless body as it sinks to rock bottom. Thomas’ glasses and oar tail behind.

THE SNAKE
suddenly tears out of Rebecca’s throat, her head now separated from her body, and swims away into the abyss.

EXT. WOODS
The snake slithers through the gutted bellies of deceased trees, across blown off leaves covering the moistened ground.

INT. MAGICK ROOM
The snake enters through the window, slimes its way intoTHE HALLWAY
into Rex’s bedroom.

EXT. WOODS

Thomas makes it back to shore. He falls to the ground, covered in oily moss.

A familiar voice echoes in the distance.

    REX (O.S.)
    Thomas! Hey, Thomas!

    THOMAS
    Daddy! Daddy, I’m here!

Rex wobbles to the sound of Thomas’ decrepit voice, wearing a blood-soaked towel wrapped around his neck – soaked in oil. His wounds are those of Lamia’s.

    REX
    Thomas! Oh, god... I’m comin’! I’m comin’!

They splash into each other’s arms.

    REX
    (overjoyed)
    Oh, god, Thomas! I thought I lost you! I thought you’d be gone! But yer not! Yer not!

    THOMAS
    (suspicious)
    Where were you? Why you oily?

    REX
    I been lookin’ fer ya! All this time, I been lookin’ fer ya! In the swamp, in every nook, every crevice I could find!

Thomas notices Rex’s neck and waist wounds.

    THOMAS
    Yer hurt?

    REX
    Don’t worry, baby. It’s just a nick. God, I love you so much!

Thomas leans away from Rex in sudden paranoia.
THOMAS
Daddy... how’d you know where I was?

REX
I... I heard, uh... I heard somebody screamin’ yer name. Then I came runnin’ fer ya. Why?

Disquiet, paranoia undiminished, Thomas wraps his arms around Rex.

THOMAS
I love you, Daddy!

REX
I love you too, baby!

INT. BATHROOM
Shaking, anticipating, Thomas watches as Rex removes the bloody towel.

Rex tosses it in the tub, the blood congealed. He tries the light switch. The power’s back. He grabs a clean towel in a cabinet under the sink and begins wiping off Thomas.

His eyes gradually lock on to the boy’s. Weeping.

THOMAS
Why are you crying?

Rex ignores the question and continues wiping him off. Thomas joins him in tears.

REX
Baby, I’ll be fine. Just go to yer room and relax. I’ll be finished real soon, then I’ll finish cleanin’ you up, okay?

THOMAS
Why are you -

REX
Didn’t I tell you to go to yer fuckin’ room?

Thomas shivers.

REX
Honey, I’m sorry. There’s no need to worry. It’s gone, but not
REX
permanently. There’s still a few
things I need to do that involve
you. So just hold on fer a minute,
alright? Just go to yer room.

THOMAS
But Alex -

REX
(formidable)
I said go to yer room.

Thomas exits in agony.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

Thomas enters without closing the door. He sees Sam’s blood
spray spattered all over the room and cries harder.

Rex enters. He flicks on the light switch and takes Thomas
in his arms.

REX
I’m sorry. I didn’t mean fer all
this to happen. Ya know I love ya,
right?

Thomas nods.

REX
Good. Now as I was sayin’ – what I
just brought into this world will
still be a part of this world till
I getcha to say somethin’, alright?

Thomas nods, lips quivering.

REX
Now I know it might frighten’ you
at first -
(distressed)
but it’s the only way we got!
(beat)
I need ya to say...
(another, more grueling beat)
"...To thee I give ownership over
thy mind and body."

Thomas shakes uncontrollably.
REX (tender)
Now wait before ya start jumpin’ to conclusions. I know that’s what that thing said to yer friend before she – but this is different. What we’re usin’ it fer is to send that thing away, alright? So it won’t come back. See, by sayin’ it, yer givin’ me a part of yer soul, which, together with mine, will empower me to do away with it. Two against one, you understand?

THOMAS
I don’t wanna say it.

REX
But, Thomas, you gotta. You gotta say it.

THOMAS
I don’t wanna.

REX
You want that thing to come back and get us? You want more innocent lives wasted?

THOMAS
No.

REX
Then say it.

THOMAS
I can’t.

REX (agitated)
Say it! Don’t question!

THOMAS
Daddy, please!

REX
Listen, Thomas, you gotta believe! You know that if you believe in our God, he will protect you! That’s all I asked of you then, and that’s all I’m askin’ of you now!

Tears flood down Thomas’ face.
REX
Look around, Thomas! How can you not believe? He’s here fer you, boy! You just gotta close yer eyes and give ’em yer mind, that’s all!

The fire in Rex’s eyes explodes into rage.

REX
Say it, or I will kick the livin’ shit outta you, Thomas! I will kick the fuckin’ shit outta you!

THOMAS
(no choice)
"To thee I give ownership over thy mind and body!" Now just leave me alone!

An insidious smile sprouts thorns across Rex’s face.

REX
Ah, see? It wadn’t that hard, now, was it?

Thomas fights his way out of Rex’s arms. He falls against the wall, overcome by asphyxia.

REX
Be back in a second...

Rex exits. A look of disdain turns around to greet Thomas.

INSERT - SWORD HOLDER ABOVE DOORWAY
Both swords are gone.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

Rex returns.

THOMAS
Daddy, please!

Lamia decapitates Thomas with the sibling sword. A split tongue drinks Thomas from the blade.

Rex suddenly drops the saber and grabs painfully at a violent throb in his neck.

The snake emerges from his throat’s gaping wound, then slithers into the hallway.
Rex turns to Thomas. The sudden realization drives his knees into the floor. He picks up the head, holding it tightly.

    REX
    (crying boisterously)
    ...I just want you to be happy...

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD SKY - DAWN

The Dark Sphere rises unnaturally from the horizon.

EXT. WOOLGROVE ROOF

Satan’s black claw (the size of a bus) descends from dark, skuddy clouds; Woolgrove-bound.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

The claw surges through the ceiling and pries Thomas’ soul from Rex’s grasp. It retracts back into the sky.

Rex collapses, blares an interminable wail.

INT. MAGICK ROOM

Rex lights the candles on the altar and kneels down to pray, with Sam’s head still perched on the metal fence.

    REX
    (momentous)
    ’Tis by yer command that I take
these withering souls to eat the
dead ash of our land, where
Darkness allows no passage to
Light. My duty has been fulfilled,
and soon the traces of my doing
shall vanish in the shadow of our
newborn sky. I pray my wait -
diminutive - till I shall rejoice,
yet again, as a father and husband
I once was.

His head takes a downcast dive on the altar...

After wiping away tears, he takes one of the candles and sets fire to the room.

INT. THOMAS’ ROOM

Rex moans intensely over Thomas’ body. He plunges the sword through his chest and falls on his back as flames tamper their way inside.

The last grain of sand falls.
CLOSE IN ON REX

Alive by a thread. He reaches out, crying, clasps Thomas’ shirt. He slides nearer, head leans against the body.

Drift closer...

...a diseased smile...

...into his eyes...

The right pupil comes to match the Dark Sphere.

A DESERT WASTELAND OF SAND as we pull further back.

Lamia passes into view. She moves toward the apparition. Her hand clutches the saber, with the blade skewered through the heads of its five victims.

A shadow now rules the land. The sun, perched on the horizon, shines no more as it becomes the breakfast of the ultra-towering Sphere.

(...licking its lips to suck the Light from us all.)