The Legend Of Whispering Willows

by Delno Ebie

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FADE IN

EXT. WHISPERING WILLOWS - EVENING -1880

An EAGLE feather moves swiftly through a WOODED area, floating freely on the light evening breeze. Great trees are seen in every direction until it reaches....

A NATIVE AMERICAN VILLAGE

where a large group of OSAGE INDIANS are gathered for a CELEBRATION.

Dressed in BUCKSKIN and TRIBAL REGALIA the WARRIORS keep in step to the rhythmic SOUNDS of the DRUM as they dance--YELPING as they sweep past a ceremonial fire.

VOICES echo through the air as people gather around, young and old to enjoy Indian fry bread and corn.

The eagle feather floats softly to the ground-- morphing into a lone COYOTE. The coyote quickly wanders past everyone, past the drum and dancers, and into the WOODS where it stops at the entrance of....

WILLOWS CEMETERY

where a large group of people are gathered around TWO WOODEN COFFINS. The REV. WILLIAM JONES- mid fifties, presides over the service.

REV. JONES

Brothers and sisters. We gather here today to pay our final respects to Hadius Wilson and his daughter Olivia. Let us pray for the Lords mercy, so they might enter his Kingdom upon judgement. In Jesus name, Amen.

The coffins are lowered into the ground. Several people try to comfort SOPHIA WILSON and her young son SANFORD. She only half acknowledges them.

SOPHIA

Come Sanford. Let your father and sister rest in peace.

As the crowd disperses a clear view of the HEADSTONES are seen.

HADIUS AUGUSTUS WILSON - 1825-1880

OLIVIA MARIE WILSON - 1862-1880

The coyote continues its journey through the woods and is soon upon a dirt road leading to the foot of a....

RICKETY IRON GATE

which CREEKS as it blows in the wind. As the coyote looks up it is revealed through his eyes the ominous presence of

WILLOWS MANOR

sitting quietly, foreboding. The coyote continues up a STONE pathway to the beautifully ornate FRONT DOOR which opens up into the....

INT. WILLOWS MANOR -NIGHT

PARLOR

where a MAN in his late twenties-dressed in black, stares out a window. The room is dark and gloomy except for a single beam of MOONLIGHT. His heart beats rapidly-with a deep sigh he whispers....

MAN

Come back to me!!

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN -NIGHT -PRESENT DAY

SAMANTHA WILSON- twenties, petite, with long brown hair and light blue eyes, stands next to a KITCHEN COUNTER. She pours herself a glass of wine and quickly downs it- then proceeds to pour herself another. Her best friend....

RACHEL REDCLOUD- also in her twenties, is NATIVE AMERICAN, with long flowing black hair and dark eyes.

Rachel stares at Samantha, concerned.

SAMANTHA

What?

Samantha downs her glass of wine.

RACHEL

Look, I know you're hurting, but if you keep on like that...I'll be burying you next to your mother. I really don't want to do that.

SAMANTHA

Are you my preacher or my friend?

Samantha starts to pour yet another glass, but Rachel stops her.

RACHEL

Both...if necessary.

SAMANTHA

Just don't!!

Samantha pulls away from her and walks into the LIVING ROOM.

RACHEL

Don't what?

SAMANTHA

Care! Give a shit! Pick one.

She plops herself down onto a SOFA. Rachel joins her.

RACHEL

I know you're hurting, Sami. But you can't....

Rachel no more than finishes her sentence when Samantha breaks down.

SAMANTHA

Why? Why her? Why now?

Rachel comforts Samantha as best as she can.

RACHEL

She's in a better place now. No more pain. No more suffering...for either of you.

Samantha wipes the tears from her eyes and attempts to recover.

SAMANTHA

I'm sorry. I don't mean to be a cry baby.

RACHEL

Hey, remember when my dad died? You said it was all part of the process.

SAMANTHA

Since when did you start listening to what I say?

(MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(then)

I just want to go to bed.

RACHEL

You want me to stay?

SAMANTHA

No. It'll start a rumor around town about the two lesbians.

RACHEL

We could have our own reality show.

A slight smile spreads across Samantha's face.

SAMANTHA

God, that's a scary thought.

RACHEL

See, I knew I could get you to smile.

SAMANTHA

Yeah.

RACHEL

You want company tomorrow at that lawyers office?

SAMANTHA

If you don't mind? I think it's at ten.

Rachel gets up.

RACHEL

I'll be here at nine thirty. Now get some sleep.

SAMANTHA

Yeah. Sleep! I'll try!

RACHEL

If you need me, call me.

SAMANTHA

I will. Now go.

CUT TO:

INT. SANDRA'S BEDROOM -NIGHT

Samantha sits on her mother's bed. A portable OXYGEN MACHINE rests nearby. She grabs a PHOTO ALBUM from underneath a NIGHT STAND with pictures of herself and her mother.

There's a fun picture of when they went to DISNEYLAND. Another is of them at VENICE BEACH-walking along the BOARDWALK. There's a photo of her father, mother and herself as a baby.

Tears well up in her eyes as the emotion and grief become too much. She closes the photo album, lies on her back, picks up her mother's pillow and hugs it tight.

CUT TO:

INT. ATTIC -NIGHT

Unopened boxes are spread about as Samantha looks through an ANTIQUE TRUNK. Inside she finds a beautiful white and blue VICTORIAN DRESS wrapped in protective paper.

On top is an old black and white photograph of a menacing looking MAN in his mid fifties, his brow furled in a displeasing way. Next to him is a YOUNG BOY of about ten, a mischievous grin spread across his youthful face.

Samantha's attention is captured by the OLDER GIRL standing nearby. A beautiful girl of around eighteen wearing the Victorian dress, a look of great sadness washed across her delicate features.

INSERT: PICTURE

On the back of the picture are three names....

INSERT: HADIUS WILSON, SANFORD WILSON AND OLIVIA WILSON

Samantha lays the picture aside and unwraps the dress. She takes it out of the trunk and puts it up next to her body, looking at herself in a nearby MIRROR. She notices under the dress lay an old LEATHER BOUND DIARY with the initials O.M.W.

She sits down and opens it.

INSERT: OLIVIA MARIE WILSON - 1879

She begins reading; each page grows more interesting then the previous.

OLIVIA (V.O.)

Father grows more suspicious with each passing day. If he ever were to find out about him...my beloved Dakota, I do not know what he would do.

As Samantha reads- her eyelids grow heavier with every passing page....

OLIVIA (V.O.)

Dakota's father came by here tonight. He says my beloved is dying. Tis a cruel joke and not truth, I pray. I must go to him. I can only hope my father does not find out.

It is not long before Olivia's words soon take over Samantha's thoughts.

CUT TO:

INT. WILLOWS FOYER -NIGHT -1880

HADIUS WILSON- a powerful business man in his mid-fifties, along with the town SHERIFF and DEPUTY, surround Hadius' daughter OLIVIA and the man she loves- DAKOTA, who has been placed in IRON handcuffs.

Dakota's father, JEREDIAH, stands nearby, restrained by the deputy, but not cuffed.

ELIZABETH- Dakota's mother also stands nearby.

Dakota breaks away and lunges at Hadius.

DAKOTA

You will not take her!

Hadius backhands him- sending him crashing to the floor.

Olivia struggles to free herself from her Father's grasp.

OLIVIA

STOP IT!! I hate you!

HADIUS

You will get over it.

ELIZABETH

You bastard!!

JEREDIAH

How dare you strike my son.

Jerediah quickly moves toward Hadius and is stopped by the cold steel of the deputy's DOUBLE BARREL SHOTGUN across his chest.

ELIZABETH

You cannot do this. Please, Hadius.

HADIUS

I can and I will.

Elizabeth rushes past the sheriff and deputy and grabs Hadius' arm.

ELIZABETH

Why?! Why are you persecuting them? Do you not remember what it was like to be in love?

HADIUS

Love has nothing to do with this. I will not have my daughter marrying a filthy half-breed Indian.

Hadius pulls away from Elizabeth's grasp.

ELIZABETH

(angrily)

Know this, Hadius Augustus Wilson. If anything happens to my son because of you, there will never pass a day or night that I will let you rest in peace.

HADIUS

Save your idle threats. You have no power to back them up.

DAKOTA

But I do.

HADIUS

I am tired of this foolishness.

The sheriff grabs Dakota's arm, when a guttural GROWL stops him where he stands.

HADIUS

He is nothing more than an animal. Bring him.

Hadius coldly grabs Olivia by the hair, almost ripping it from her scalp.

OLIVIA

YOU ARE HURTING ME!!!

DAKOTA

DO NOT TOUCH HER!

The room erupts in total chaos.

A gun is pulled. Several GUNSHOTS ring out!!!

DAKOTA

collapses to the floor.

ELIZABETH (O.S.)

NO!!

BACK TO:

INT. ATTIC -NIGHT

Samantha is jarred awake by the SOUND of a SLAMMING DOOR. She jumps up, sending the dress and diary crashing to the floor.

SAMANTHA

Who's here?!

Nothing. On the floor next to the diary is an old black and white TIN TYPE photo, she picks it up and turns it over.

INSERT: DAKOTA WILLOWS 1879

Just beyond is an ANTIQUE DRESS MIRROR. Samantha bends down to pick up the diary, when inside the mirror....

THE BLURRED IMAGE OF A MAN APPEARS

MAN

Come back to me!!!

He reaches through the mirror and grabs Samantha's arm when....

CUT TO:

INT. ATTIC -DAY

SAMANTHA

is startled awake by the SOUND of a SLAMMING DOOR. She springs up and in doing so, sends the dress and diary crashing to the floor.

SAMANTHA

Who's here?!

As she hurriedly picks it up; a small TIN TYPE photo falls out. She picks it up and turns it over:

INSERT: DAKOTA WILLOWS, 1879.

She feels the hair on the back of her neck stand up.

A VOICE from downstairs breaks Samantha's train of thought.

RACHEL (O.C.)

Hey Sami, you ready?

Relieved, she quickly puts the photo back into the diary.

INT. LIVING ROOM -DAY

Samantha comes downstairs a little dishevelled.

RACHEL

Drink to much last night?

SAMANTHA

What? No...I...what time is it?

RACHEL

Nine forty five.

SAMANTHA

Shit!! Give me five minutes.

Samantha rushes off to change clothes.

RACHEL

What were you doing?

SAMANTHA (O.C.)

Going through some of mom's stuff.

RACHEL

You find anything interesting?

SAMANTHA (O.C.)

Just an old picture and a dress.

A KNOCK on the door brings Samantha out of her bedroom to find....

MATT JAMES, mid-twenties, tall and handsome, stands just inside the door frame holding a bouquet of ROSES.

SAMANTHA

You think those will do any good?

MATT

I was hoping so.

SAMANTHA

Where were you yesterday? I really needed you.

MATT

I told you, I had community service.

SAMANTHA

Which was obviously more important then my mother's funeral.

MATT

I can't just call in sick, Samantha.

Rachel stands by watching, wanting to say something, but doesn't.

SAMANTHA

You always have something else to do, don't you?

MATT

That's not fair.

SAMANTHA

It doesn't matter what I need....

MATT

If you'd stop being so difficult....

SAMANTHA

You only come around when you want something or feel guilty. And when I finally say something you think I'm being difficult?

She storms back into the bedroom.

TTAM

Samantha, I didn't mean....

RACHEL

That's the problem, Matt. You never mean to do anything...but you always do.

Matt hands the roses to Rachel and leaves- flinging open the screen door and cursing to himself.

Samantha reappears ready to go.

RACHEL

You okay?

SAMANTHA

Peachy keen. Now will you quit asking?

Samantha takes the roses, walks over to a trash can and dumps them.

RACHEL

Why do you stay with him?

SAMANTHA

Maybe because I'm in love, or stupid, or stupidly in love with the idea of being in love.

RACHEL

I'll go with stupid.

EXT. WALKING TO RACHEL'S CAR.

SAMANTHA

You should talk. He's your ex-boyfriend.

RACHEL

There's a reason he's my ex, Sami!! (then)

You know, it really hurt when you two started dating.

SAMANTHA

God, Rachel. How many times do I have to keep apologizing? I talked to you about it first. You said you had no problem. Obviously you do.

RACHEL

I just needed more time.

SAMANTHA

There's no such thing as more time. Just the here and now. Haven't you learned that!

Rachel takes a deep breath.

RACHEL

Why are we even discussing this?

SAMANTHA

I don't know.

(looking at her watch)
Great!! We're really late now.

INT. LAW OFFICE -DAY

INSERT SIGN: WILLIAM TATE AND SONS, LLC.

LAWRENCE TATE - sixty-five, sits impatiently as Samantha and Rachel finally walk into his office.

MR. TATE

You're late.

Sitting down.

SAMANTHA

Sorry. Asshole problems.

Mr. Tate looks at her oddly.

RACHEL

She had an argument with her boyfriend.

Samantha pulls out a PACK OF CIGARETTES, takes one out and starts to light it.

MR. TATE

This is a non-smoking office, Ms. Wilson.

She puts the pack back into her purse.

SAMANTHA

I was quitting anyway.

MR. TATE

Let me start off by saying how sorry I am about your mother.

Samantha intercedes abruptly.

SAMANTHA

Mr. Tate, I'm a big girl- let's just cut to the chase.

Mr. Tate is a bit surprised.

MR. TATE

Very well. Your mother had a substantial sum saved up. Unfortunately, after her hospital bills are paid her funds will be depleted.

SAMANTHA

I thought insurance would....

MR. TATE

Insurance can pick and choose what they will pay. Be glad your mother put enough away to pay for what they didn't.

SAMANTHA

I quit my job so I could take care of her. What am I supposed to do?

MR. TATE

She left you the house you live in, and the house and property outside of town.

(slight beat)

Willows Manor.

SAMANTHA

I remember her mentioning it when I was a kid. She never really talked much about it.

Mr. Tate grabs a nearby MANILA FOLDER and takes out another document.

MR. TATE

I found this in some old files. Apparently, your great-great Uncle Sanford bought the Manor in the late 1800's. For some reason he immediately boarded the place up. It sat empty until around 1930 when his son Ira decided to move into it with his family.

SAMANTHA

Okay! So!!

MR. TATE

When the stock market crashed in 1929, your family lost almost everything, save the house you live in and Willows Manor. Ira moved in because he had no where else to go. He only lived there for about a year when he suddenly took ill and died of mysterious causes.

Rachel grabs a mint from a bowl on Mr. Tate's desk. Tate gives her a disconcerting look.

RACHEL

You don't mind, do you?

A bit irritated.

MR. TATE

No, feel free.

Rachel pops the mint in her mouth and grabs another one.

SAMANTHA

So what's this mean to me?

Mr. Tate slides some paperwork across his desk in front of Samantha.

MR. TATE

It means the place is now yours to do with what you will. I just need you to sign these papers to make things nice and legal.

Samantha takes the papers and signs.

MR. TATE

I wouldn't stress about it, Ms. Wilson. You can always sell it, or turn it into a Bed and Breakfast.

SAMANTHA

Just what I wanted to do with my life.

SAMANTHA AND RACHEL

gather their things and slowly amble out of Mr. Tate's office-- still trying to process what they've just been told.

MR. TATE

walks over to his window, pours himself a BRANDY and watches as the girls leave.

MR. TATE

Good luck, ladies!!

He downs the drink and pours himself another.

MR. TATE

You're going to need it.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILLOWS MANOR -DAY

RACHEL'S 1969 PONTIAC GTO

pulls up to a stop at the GATED entrance of Willows Manor. The place is peaceful and quiet-- almost too quiet.

Rachel and Samantha get out and walk up the stone pathway toward the house.

RACHEL

I still can't believe this is yours.

SAMANTHA

Me neither.

RACHEL

I wonder if the legends are true?

SAMANTHA

You don't believe in things like that do you?

RACHEL

I think every legend has a little truth to it.

SAMANTHA

Let's hope this one doesn't.

Tree leaves can be HEARD CRACKLING in the WOODS next to the Manor.

SAMANTHA

What was that?

They hear it again.

RACHEL

(pointing)

It came from over there.

A grey and white COYOTE has been curiously watching them from behind a tree.

SAMANTHA

(relieved)

It's only a dog.

RACHEL

It's a Coyote.

It quickly darts back into the shadows.

Rachel senses Samantha's uneasiness.

RACHEL

Don't worry, they're more afraid of us then we are of them.

SAMANTHA

Let's not test that theory.

INT. WILLOWS MANOR -DAY

Although weatherbeaten and tattered, the house has withstood the ravages of time remarkably well.

Samantha and Rachel cautiously enter through the huge OAK DOOR. As it swings open they find before them the most beautifully crafted STAIRCASE they've ever seen.

Layered with rich CHERRY WOOD, it rises to the second floor and branches off in each direction, to the North and South ends of the house.

RACHEL

Why can't I get this lucky?

SAMANTHA

I wouldn't call the way I got this lucky!!

Rachel realizes her misstep.

RACHEL

I didn't mean for it to sound that way.

Looking around.

SAMANTHA

This place kinda would make a hell a cool Bed and Breakfast.

RACHEL

Can you imagine the parties they must have held here once?

SAMANTHA

Life was so uncomplicated back then. No cell phones. No television. Just life.

RACHEL

Let's check the upstairs.

SAMANTHA

You do it. I'm gonna wander around down here. I'll meet you up there in a few minutes.

Rachel retreats to the upstairs. A little bit of SUNLIGHT trickles in through the torn and tattered CURTAINS and illuminates the room just enough for Samantha to see. She wanders into the....

PARLOR

where an old ROCKING CHAIR and TABLE sit next to a finely crafted fireplace.

Next to the fireplace is an elegant mirror. However, the reflection that would normally be seen is replaced by another image.

The frame of a MAN stands before it.

The man's attention is immediately drawn to it as Samantha walks into view...like an actor walking across a television screen.

MAN

Olivia!!

INTERCUT SAMANTHA AND MAN

Samantha can feel herself being pulled to the mirror. As she walks closer toward it she notices another image staring back at her. As she peers deeper she can see the reflection of the room in the background, only it isn't old and decaying, but alive and vibrant.

MAN

Come to me.

Seemingly in a trance like state, Samantha reaches out toward the image.

Suddenly....

Rachel jumps up behind her.

RACHEL

BOO!!!

Samantha is startled so bad she almost pees her pants. Rachel doubles over laughing.

SAMANTHA

Damn it, Rachel. That wasn't funny.

RACHEL

You should have seen your face. It was priceless.

SAMANTHA

I almost pissed myself thanks to you.

RACHEL

(looking around)

No, you're safe. No puddle.

SAMANTHA

Didn't you see it?

RACHEL

What?

SAMANTHA

In the mirror!

RACHEL

I only see your reflection.

Samantha turns around to indeed see that her own reflection is staring back at her.

SAMANTHA

No, it was someone...I think it was a man. The whole room looked different.

RACHEL

Maybe you're hearing and seeing things.

SAMANTHA

Yeah, and maybe I'm not. Besides, I thought you were upstairs.

RACHEL

Sorry, couldn't resist.

SAMANTHA

Let's go.

INTERCUT MAN

as he watches the girls leave.

MAN

Olivia, don't go. Olivia!!

He runs toward the Foyer. Trying to blindly follow them.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER -DAY

As Samantha and Rachel walk toward the front door, Samantha stops abruptly.

SAMANTHA

Did you feel that?

RACHEL

Feel what?

SAMANTHA

It felt like fingers brushing across my shoulder.

RACHEL

Sami, you're starting to creep me out.

SAMANTHA

(sarcastically)

I thought you said this stuff doesn't bother you.

RACHEL

I never said it didn't bother me. I said I believed in its existence.

SAMANTHA

I believe...my mind's playing tricks on me.

INT. SAMANTHA'S HOUSE -NIGHT

ATTIC

Rachel helps Samantha go through some of her mother's stuff. They find old CLOTHES, BOOKS, and some JEWELRY as they sift through different boxes.

RACHEL

What are you going to do with all this?

SAMANTHA

Give it to charity.

Rachel discovers the dress Samantha had uncovered the night before. She holds it up to her body.

RACHEL

Cool dress.

A loud KNOCK on Samantha's front door startles both of them.

SAMANTHA

If it's Matt, I don't want to talk to him.

RACHEL

Ease up will ya!

INT. FRONT DOOR -NIGHT

Rachel opens the door to find Matt waiting patiently.

MATT

Hey!

RACHEL

Yeah?

MATT

Can I come in?

Samantha comes bounding down the stairs.

SAMANTHA

What do you want?

TTAM

I just got off work, thought I'd stop by. Wanted to see how you were doing.

SAMANTHA

I'm doing fine.

MATT

Can I come in for a minute?

Samantha looks at Rachel and then back at Matt.

SAMANTHA

I guess.

MATT

When are you going to quit being mad at me.

SAMANTHA

When I feel like it.

MATT

I didn't come here to argue.

(then)

I need to talk to Rachel.

RACHEL

Me?! About what?

Matt pulls out a COMPUTER PHOTO of an INDIAN ARTIFACT and hands it to Rachel.

MATT

We got one of these into the Museum today. You know anything about it?

INSERT: PHOTO OF MEDALLION

RACHEL

I think it's from around this area. It looks like a Shaman's medallion. It could be Cherokee, maybe Osage.

MATT

Shaman's medallion?

RACHEL

A Medicine man. He's like a Doctor and Priest all rolled into one. They would use things like this to cast out evil spirits.

Rachel hands the picture back to Matt.

SAMANTHA

We need to get back to work...so if you're done with the chit chat....

MATT

Can I help?

Samantha starts back upstairs.

SAMANTHA

No thanks. We got it.

Matt looks at Rachel, wounded.

RACHEL

Give her time.

INT. ATTIC -NIGHT

Samantha continues to sort through all the boxes as Rachel and Matt come up the stairs.

SAMANTHA

Rachel, can you help me move...

Samantha turns around to find Matt. He walks over and picks up the box she had been looking through.

MATT

Where do you want it?

Resigning herself to the fact. She points to a TABLE sitting in the corner.

SAMANTHA

Over there!

Samantha gives Matt a dirty look.

Rachel stands nearby -- looking through Olivia's diary.

RACHEL

Sami, did you see this?

SAMANTHA

It was with the dress. It's my great-great Aunt's diary.

Samantha opens it up and shows them the old Tin Type photograph of Dakota.

SAMANTHA

That was inside.

Rachel takes the photo. Turning it over.

RACHEL

Dakota Willows?

SAMANTHA

One and the same.

Rachel hands the photo back to Samantha.

RACHEL

He's kinda cute...in a rampaging killer sorta way.

MATT

Who is he?

RACHEL

Legend has it that one night crazy Dakota went on a rampage, setting his girlfriend, and then himself, on fire. Every year, on the eve that the killing took place, his spirit is said to come back to re-live that fateful night.

MATT

You don't believe that stuff do you?

RACHEL

I think every legend....

SAMANTHA

--has some truth to it. We're not going over this again, are we?

RACHEL

Why is it that no matter who's moved in there over the years, they always move out around the middle of August, huh?

SAMANTHA

The place is old. Maybe it leaks, has a mildew problem. Who knows.

Samantha grabs the photograph of Hadius, Sanford and Olivia.

SAMANTHA

I also found this.

Rachel looks at the picture, then at Samantha, and back at the picture.

SAMANTHA

The girl is my Aunt.

RACHEL

She looks just like you!

Matt also takes a closer look.

SAMANTHA

(to Rachel)

This morning before you got here, I dreamt about her...and Dakota. How her father confronted them....

MATT

When did you say this supposedly took place?

RACHEL

August 15, 1880

A short beat.

TTAM

That's tonight.

RACHEL

Forget it. We know what you're thinking.

MATT

Aren't you a little curious to see for yourself?

SAMANTHA

No!!

Matt starts to take off downstairs.

MATT

Suit yourselves. I'm going.

RACHEL

You said you don't believe in all this!

MATT

I don't. But you've peaked my curiosity.

Samantha and Rachel look at one another, both knowing their curiosity will get the better of them.

MATT

Are you coming?

RACHEL

(to Matt)

You're evil.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILLOWS MANOR - NIGHT

A HOWLING WIND swings the GATE back and forth. Clouds move across the moon in a slow motion dance as Rachel, Samantha and Matt drive up.

INT. RACHEL'S CAR - NIGHT

TTAM

Looks very Amityville.

SAMANTHA

Shut up!!

MATT

I'm just kidding. Lighten up.

INT. WILLOWS FOYER -NIGHT

With flashlights in hand they push the oak door open and enter the house. An OWL hoots in the distance causing Samantha to flinch.

Matt shines his flashlight toward the staircase.

MATT

Impressive.

RACHEL

I'll check upstairs.

SAMANTHA

Like earlier today when you scared the crap out of me?

RACHEL

I believe I scared the piss out of you. And yes, I'm really going upstairs for real this time.

SAMANTHA

Just be careful.

RACHEL

What could happen? We're the only ones here. Except for crazy Dakota!

SAMANTHA

Not funny!

INT. PARLOR - NIGHT

Matt looks around at the dusty, tattered furnishings.

MATT

Some of this stuff looks pretty old.

SAMANTHA

Yeah, why would people just leave it here?

TTAM

You decided what you're gonna do with this place?

SAMANTHA

Not a clue.

Matt grabs her by the hand.

MATT

I know what we could do in the mean time.

Matt starts kissing her- running his hands all over her. They get hot and heavy. Samantha can feel herself giving in. Then....

SAMANTHA

Stop!

MATT

We're just getting to the good part.

Matt continues.

SAMANTHA

No, I mean it! Stop!

Matt ignores her.

SAMANTHA

I SAID STOP!!!

She yanks herself away, leaving Matt angered and confused.

MATT

What Samantha? What'd I do?

SAMANTHA

I just can't right now!

МАТТ

Right now?! We haven't done anything in months.

SAMANTHA

Yeah, and you know why.

MATT

Do I? I'm not so sure anymore.

SAMANTHA

What's that supposed to mean?

MATT

It means that every time I try to get close, you push me away.

SAMANTHA

That's not fair.

TTAM

Look...I know that your mom's illness....

SAMANTHA

Bullshit!! You don't know what it's like to bury your Mother. You don't know what it's like to take care of someone seven days a week and not have them get better.

MATT

Samantha....

Matt tries to approach her- she backs away.

SAMANTHA

You don't know what it's like to watch someone you love slowly rot away. So don't tell me you know my mother's illness. You don't!!

(then)

You know, maybe you should just go. Give me some time to figure things out.

MATT

Figure what out?

SAMANTHA

All of it! You...me...this!!

She backs away, fading into the darkness.

SAMANTHA

Just go, Matt. Please!

INT. UPSTAIRS -NIGHT

RACHEL

wanders down one of several winding CORRIDORS. One of the bedroom doors slowly swings open-drawing Rachel's curiosity.

Peeking her head inside.

RACHEL

Hello?

The room is empty except for a large FOUR POSTER BED, a well crafted clothes DRESSER, and a small VANITY. Old BOXES and TRUNKS covered in dust and spider webs are spread throughout the room.

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM -NIGHT

Rachel begins sifting through all the clutter. She looks through several trunks, finding them all full.

She opens the last one, struggling some to get the heavy lid up. It's empty.

RACHEL

What's this thing made out of-- lead?

Suddenly, she feels something grab her, and with great force shove her inside the trunk— the lid comes crashing down on her head, knocking her out and LOCKING her in.

THE DOOR

to the room mysteriously closes and LOCKS.

INT. WILLOWS MANOR -NIGHT

SAMANTHA

wanders through the house- mixed emotions and thoughts dart around in her head.

She stumbles into a LONG NARROW HALLWAY with a door at the other end.

The same eerie VOICE from earlier beckons her.

VOICE (V.O.)

Come to me.

She feels herself being drawn to the room- almost as if a rope were attached to her with someone pulling from the other end.

The door opens.

INT. GRAND BALLROOM -NIGHT

Samantha is awe struck by the rooms grandeur. CHANDELIERS hang from the ceiling- covered in the dust of times gone by.

TABLES and CHAIRS are scattered here and there. A musky odor fills the room.

SAMANTHA

HELLO? Rachel?

Her voice ECHOES. A COLD CHILL fills the air- making Samantha very uncomfortable.

MOONLIGHT fills the room, reflecting off a HUGE FULL LENGTH ANTIQUE MIRROR hanging on the wall. A SMALL TABLE sits next to it- upon which is an old MUSIC BOX.

Intrigued, she opens the small silver and gold box. Two small BALLROOM DANCERS pop up and a hypnotically beautiful song begins to play.

Out of nowhere, the mysterious VOICE calls to her again.

VOICE (V.O.)

COME TO ME.

She turns around- trying to locate where it may have come from.

SAMANTHA

Hello? Who's there?

Samantha can feel her heart racing- her breathing keeps time with the music. She feels as if she could faint-- when the icy touch of BONY FINGERS grab her wrist.

She turns around and is horrified to see a BONY FOREARM and HAND protruding out of the mirror....

She SCREAMS- struggling to get away, but its grip is too strong. It pulls her closer to the mirror. She thrashes aboutbut to no end.

The WIND inside the room stirs- the door to the entrance SLAMS shut.

She disappears inside the mirror. The wind stops. Silence.

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM -NIGHT

INSIDE TRUNK

Rachel slowly wakes up. She looks around and can see nothing but DARKNESS.

Her head throbs from the knock on the head she received.

She starts to feel around and quickly realizes she's trappedtrying to stay calm- but growing more scared and desperate.

OUTSIDE TRUNK

Rachel beats on the inside of the lid. She lets out a blood-curdling scream.

RACHEL

HELP ME. SOMEONE HELP ME!!!!

INT. GRAND BALLROOM -DAY

Samantha finds herself in the middle of the same ballroom she had been in moments before, but now it appears in all its grand glory, no longer covered in DUST and the ROT of years of abuse.

The chandeliers SPARKLE. All the chairs and tables are in there respective places.

The FLOOR is POLISHED and SMOOTH.

Samantha is in a state of confusion and borderline terrornot understanding what has happened to her, that she, in fact, has been pulled through to an alternate reality. Then suddenly out of nowhere....

DAKOTA WILLOWS appears out of the shadows. In his midtwenties, he is a handsome man of average size, with dark hair and eyes that are hypnotic.

He is dressed in late nineteenth century elegance.

Samantha's eyes widen with shock and disbelief.

SAMANTHA

You!!

DAKOTA

Welcome home, Olivia!!

As Dakota walks toward her, Samantha slowly moves back.

SAMANTHA

This can't be possible.

DAKOTA

All things are possible if you believe in them hard enough.

SAMANTHA

But...you're dead!

Dakota grabs a chair from a nearby table.

Samantha sits before her knees do it for her.

DAKOTA

Dead, am I?

SAMANTHA

Yeah, D.E.A.D, dead!!!

DAKOTA

I guess it all depends on one's perception.

SAMANTHA

I always thought dead meant...dead.

Dakota takes her hand. Samantha flinches at his touch.

DAKOTA

Does this feel like the touch of death?

Samantha takes a deep breath. Her hands tremble. She feels like her heart is going to pound out of her chest.

SAMANTHA

I don't know what you are.

DAKOTA

Why do you tremble, Olivia?

SAMANTHA

I'm not Olivia....

DAKOTA

If not Olivia...then who?

SAMANTHA

My name's Samantha. Olivia, was my...Aunt.

Dakota just stares at her. Taking in every angle and contour of her face.

SAMANTHA

Why do you look at me that way?

DAKOTA

It is just...you remind me of her.

Samantha slowly rises and walks away from him- unsure of what to say.

SAMANTHA

Are you a ghost?

DAKOTA

I am as real as you.

SAMANTHA

But how did I get here...with you?

DAKOTA

You should not ask questions- unless you are prepared for the answers.

INT. PARLOR -NIGHT

Matt paces the floor impatiently. The more he thinks about the previous conversation with Samantha- the angrier he gets.

He walks into the ...

FOYER

TTAM

SAMANTHA? Come on, this is stupid. SAMANTHA?? Damn it!!

Matt looks around several places and then starts up the stairs.

MATT

Look, I'm sorry. Let's just find Rachel and go.

He reaches the top of the stairs and shines his flashlight down one side of the hallway- then down the other.

He proceeds toward the north end-- looking into several other rooms.

As he gets closer to one of the bedrooms, he catches a glimpse of movement in the corner of his eye.

He shines his flashlight in its direction and is shocked to see a COYOTE sitting in front of a partly opened door-- staring at him.

Although afraid, he slowly approaches it.

MATT

How'd you get in here?

It watches Matt for a moment and then ducks inside the doorway.

INT. PARLOR -DAY

Rich colors of RED and GOLD dominate the room. Samantha is still in shock. She sees the mirror hanging next to the fireplace.

SAMANTHA

I saw you in this room. In this mirror.

Dakota waves his hand and the images in the mirror turn dark and grey. Samantha looks closer and realizes it is the same room she was in with Matt moments before.

DAKOTA

Mirrors are my only connection to your world. I have waited a millennia for you.

Dakota's attention is drawn away. His head and eyes dart back and forth.

SAMANTHA

What's wrong?

He struggles to keep his composer.

DAKOTA

Please excuse me.

He rushes out of the room, like a bloodhound tracking an animal's scent.

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM -NIGHT

Matt peeks his head inside, only to find no sign of the animal.

MATT

Samantha?

As he looks around he hears a faint tap coming from one the trunks.

In the far right of the room lies a large black trunk. Again, he hears it -- TAP - TAP - TAP. He approaches it slowly.

MATT

Hello? Who's in there?

Matt looks around and finds a METAL PIPE laying on the floor and picks it up.

TTAM

Who's ever in there better quit messin'.

He hears a faint voice coming from inside. He bends down closer-- putting his ear to the top of the lid.

With her last bit of strength, Rachel starts pounding on the inside of the trunk- scaring Matt half out of his skin.

RACHEL

HELP ME!!! PLEASE!!!

MATT

Rachel?

Matt tries to open it, but can't. It's as if an unseen force is weighing it down.

Rachel continues to frantically SCREAM and pound the lid.

Matt begins beating on the trunk latch, trying to knock it loose.

A wind suddenly sweeps through the room- stirring everything around, as if it were in a tornado.

Matt continues to pound at the latch. After several more swings he finally knocks it loose and opens the lid to find....

RACHEL

gasping for air. An expression of terror is evident on her face. Her nails and knuckles are bloody from trying to claw and pound her way out. Claw marks are visible on the inside of the lid.

Matt quickly lifts her out of the trunk. She starts flailing herself around, frantic. Matt tries to calm her.

MATT

Rachel?!

RACHEL

Get away from me!! Get away!!

TTAM

It's me.

She won't stop thrashing about. He grabs her by the shoulders and shakes her.

MATT

You're okay. It's me. You're okay.

She stops. Frozen.

TTAM

I've got you. You're all right.

Matt wraps his arms around her as she breaks down. Holding on for dear life.

The wind suddenly stops.

BACK TO:

INT. PARLOR -DAY

Dakota soon returns carrying a VASE filled with roses. He sets them down on a nearby table.

DAKOTA

Forgive me. I meant to have these out before you arrived.

(then)

They were your...they were her favorite.

Samantha feels her heart race. She is fearful, but wants to know more.

SAMANTHA

Tell me what really happened!

DAKOTA

No more questions.

SAMANTHA

Do you have something to hide?

DAKOTA

There are some things you do not need to know.

SAMANTHA

I think there are a lot of things I need to know. Why have you brought me here?

DAKOTA

(grabbing Samantha's hand)

You are here...because I love you. And I cannot bare to spend another day without you.

Samantha is afraid and surprised at Dakota's sudden outburst, but stands her ground.

SAMANTHA

Love me?! You don't even know me!

DAKOTA

This is your home.

Samantha quickly jerks her hand away, accidently knocking over the vase Dakota had just brought in.

She attempts to catch it, but it shatters on the floor-cutting her finger slightly.

A trickle of blood runs over the tip of her finger.

SAMANTHA

Shit!!

Seeing the blood, Dakota's heart begins to race, his eyes glaze over- yellow and inhuman. He can hear the sound of Samantha's heart pulsate through his head.

His appearance slowly begins to change. Two canine fangs grow where human teeth use to be. Samantha wants to scream, but can't utter a sound.

DAKOTA

Olivia, don't do this.

Samantha backs away quickly.

SAMANTHA

Stay away from me. What the hell are you?

DAKOTA

I have waited patiently for you, day upon day, night upon night.

SAMANTHA

Once and for all...I am not Olivia!!

Samantha grabs a LOG PICK sitting near the fireplace.

SAMANTHA

Stay away!

Dakota walks toward her. Samantha backs up, moving faster toward the foyer.

DAKOTA

I will not hurt you.

SAMANTHA

I swear I'll lay this thing across your head if you don't back off.

Dakota ignores her ranting and reaches to grab her. Samantha swings the log pick, hitting him in the face-- leaving a long, bloody gash from his temple to his chin which closes instantaneously before Samantha's eyes.

Samantha makes a dash to the front door and quickly runs out of the house with Dakota not far behind.

EXT. IRON GATE -DAY

Dakota follows her to the foot of the gate. His appearance changing back to normal.

DAKOTA

You have no idea what it is like to spend eternity alone.

SAMANTHA

Get away from me. I don't know who or what the hell you are.

He steps toward her. She steps back.

DAKOTA

I never meant for you to see that. Sometimes I can control it, other times, it controls me.

SAMANTHA

Just like you didn't mean to murder my Aunt?

With her back nearly against the gate, she quickly opens it and runs out.

DAKOTA

I did not murder her.

SAMANTHA

Like I should believe you.

DAKOTA

Do not go out there.

SAMANTHA

Why?

DAKOTA

Just do not.

SAMANTHA

It's a hell of a lot safer out here, than with you.

DAKOTA

I could not murder her.

(reaching out)

Take my hand!

SAMANTHA

This is all just one big nightmare that I'm going to wake up from anytime now.

DAKOTA

Please believe me!!

He reaches for her outside the gate.

SAMANTHA

Stay away from me!!!

She runs off, terrified.

DAKOTA

Samantha!!!

CUT TO:

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM -NIGHT

MATT

What happened?

RACHEL

Something or someone threw me in there.

TTAM

What?

RACHEL

I mean I think I was physically picked up and shoved inside.

MATT

That's crazy, Rachel.

RACHEL

Do you have a better explanation?

MATT

Not at the moment.

Looking around.

RACHEL

Oh my God, where's Sami?

MATT

I don't know.

RACHEL

I thought she was with you?

MATT

She was. After you left we sort of got into an argument. She ran up here. I thought she was going off to find you. I came up here looking for her, looked in a couple of rooms, nothing. I looked down the hall and there was this...coyote staring at me.

RACHEL

Coyote?

MATT

Yeah. It came inside this room, but when I got here, it disappeared.

RACHEL

I don't think you know what you saw.

MATT

I knew you wouldn't believe me.

RACHEL

No! I mean...what you saw was a spirit.

Matt nervously laughs.

MATT

You sure you're okay?

RACHEL

My people believe that spirits take on the forms of animals to warn us.

MATT

Your people believe in a lot of weird things.

RACHEL

Excuse me!! I think it was your people who came up with Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy.

MATT

Good point.

RACHEL

Sami and I saw a coyote outside when we were here earlier today- but I don't get the connection yet. We've got to find her, Matt.

Rachel and Matt start searching room to room calling out for Samantha. With each passing minute they grow more desperate and frustrated.

TTAM

Maybe she went home.

RACHEL

She wouldn't just leave like that.

MATT

The way she's been acting lately, I wouldn't be surprised.

RACHEL

Don't even go there. You brought a lot of that on yourself.

INDIAN DRUMS echo in the distance- only Rachel can hear them. They grow LOUDER. Closer.

МАТТ

Why are you constantly....

RACHEL

Shut up.

TTAM

Excuse me.

RACHEL

Quiet. Don't you hear that?!

MATT

Hear what?

RACHEL

The drums!!

The drums grow LOUDER in Rachel's ears. A realization sets in.

TTAM

Now you're hearing things.

RACHEL

I tried to warn you guys about the legend, but neither one of you would listen to me.

TTAM

Not that again!

Rachel stops. She listens, as if the DRUMS are speaking to her, trying to guide her.

RACHEL

I know you think it's crazy, but if this is what I think it is, we're going to need someone who knows a lot more about all of this then me.

MATT

Who?

RACHEL

Let's go. We're wasting time.

INT. GRAND BALLROOM -DAY

Dakota sits drinking a BLOOD RED concoction. He is anxious, which is obvious from his body language.

A CLOUD of smoke swirls around him and soon takes the form of what appears to be a man. However, upon closer examination it is anything but.

The SOUL TAKER

stands before Dakota. It's eyes burn CRIMSON RED on a pure WHITE FACE, which is marked with Native American WAR PAINT. It wears the HEADDRESS of a WOLF.

SOUL TAKER

Where are the girls?

DAKOTA

One is outside.

SOUL TAKER

And the other?

DAKOTA

I...I could not get her!

SOUL TAKER

Do not play games with me, human.

DAKOTA

I am not human anymore, thanks to you.

The Taker grabs him by the throat, lifting him out of his chair. Dakota struggles but to no avail.

SOUL TAKER

What were you before I made you?

DAKOTA

In love.

The Taker releases him.

Dakota massages his neck as he glowers at the Taker with disdain. He grasps in his hand a

GOLDEN MEDALLION

which hangs on a piece of leather around his neck. Only HALF of the medallion remains.

SOUL TAKER

And look what it got you. Bring me the girl that I seek and I will give you your precious...love. Fail me and I will take all that you hold dear.

DAKOTA

You already have.

The Taker glares at Dakota.

SOUL TAKER

You have until midnight.

The Soul Taker disappears just as he entered. His evil still permeating the room.

Dakota collapses to the floor, tears fall like rain drops from his eyes. He releases a gut wrenching YELL that resonates throughout the house.

EXT. WHISPERING WILLOWS -DAY

SAMANTHA

wanders around town- it is hardly the Whispering Willows she knows.

The roads are unpaved. The buildings are old and rustic. Samantha is particularly struck by the fact that there seems to be no people— anywhere. It's almost like a ghost town. As she walks down the middle of Main Street she sees an old

SALOON

which draws her curiosity. Although apprehensive, she decides to look inside.

INT. SALOON -DAY

Samantha is surprised to see that it looks no different then what she has seen in movies and read about in books.

She makes her way through the tables and up to the BAR.

Exhausted, she lays her head down. Suddenly, she is startled upright by the SOUND of a

BABY GRAND PIANO

that she hadn't noticed when she first walked in. The IVORY KEYS move about -- played by invisible fingers.

Then, before Samantha's eyes materializes a ghostly PIANO PLAYER. More and more patrons begin to appear out of nowhere. Several MEN sit around one of the tables playing POKER. Another sits eating. SALOON GIRLS dance around YELPING.

The BARTENDER pours several COWBOYS some shots of WHISKEY and glasses of BEER. All seem to be unaware of Samantha's presence.

OUTSIDE

Samantha sees the hustle and bustle of the town.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILLOWS MAIN STREET -DAY

She approaches a YOUNG MAN and WOMAN as they gingerly walk down the street.

SAMANTHA

Excuse me?!

They pass by her like she's not even there.

She approaches an OLDER COUPLE.

SAMANTHA

Can you help me? Please?!

This time, they pass through her. Samantha soon comes to realize that this isn't like a GHOST TOWN. It is one.

WALKING

to the end of Main Street, there sits a large, well built, two story VICTORIAN HOME, surrounded by perfectly trimmed BUSHES that line a HUGE FRONT PORCH.

Samantha recognizes the house as the one she saw in the photo of Hadius, Sanford and Olivia.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - WICHITA, KANSAS -NIGHT

Matt and Rachel drive up to a modest TWO STORY home that sits on a tree lined street in one of the older sections of Wichita; half an hour north of Whispering Willows.

Matt is a little confused.

MATT

What are we doing?!

RACHEL

She's the only one that can help us.

MATT

(irritated)

I can't believe we just left Samantha at that house...alone.

RACHEL

She's not alone. That's the problem.

TTAM

She could be knocked out, bleeding, who knows what, and you....

Rachel bristles up.

RACHEL

Get this straight. I've known her since we were kids, you haven't. I was there with her everyday helping take care of her Mom, you weren't. So don't stand there acting all concerned like you give a shit.

MATT

Believe it or not I do care.

RACHEL

If you care about her, like you say, then trust me.

Rachel RINGS the doorbell. After a few moments a light turns on and a little old lady slowly opens the door.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -NIGHT

GRANDMA RED CLOUD-- is in her nineties, small in stature, with long white hair. It is evident that she was a very beautiful woman in her youth. She walks with a cane.

Her house is decorated in NATIVE AMERICAN furnishings and memories of her years line the walls.

GRANDMA

Rachel?!

Rachel hugs her Grandmother.

RACHEL

Hi, Grandma!

Grandma lets them in.

GRANDMA

What's wrong, dear? It's three thirty in the morning.

RACHEL

I know! I'm sorry! You remember Matt?

GRANDMA

(trying to be nice)

Of course! How are you, Matthew?

MATT

Been better!

RACHEL

Samantha's in trouble.

GRANDMA

Have you called the Police?

RACHEL

Not that kind of trouble. You know her Mom died a few days ago, right?

GRANDMA

Yes, of cancer!

RACHEL

Samantha found out something unexpected at the reading of the Will.

GRANDMA

Nothing out of the ordinary, I presume?

RACHEL

Oh, I'd say it's way out of the ordinary. (then)

She inherited Willows Manor!

Grandma becomes uncomfortably silent.

GRANDMA

That place had been empty for years.

TTAM

Oh, this gets better.

RACHEL

Her mom never mentioned a thing about it. Isn't that a little strange?

GRANDMA

I'm sure she had her reasons.

MATT

How do you just not tell someone "Oh, and by the way, we own a creepy old Mansion."

RACHEL

We went to take a look at the place tonight. I went one way, she and Matt another.

TTAM

The point is, we can't find her...anywhere.

RACHEL

I think she's still there...but...not there. I know I sound completely nuts.

MATT

Up until an hour ago, I would have agreed with you.

GRANDMA

You both sound a little nuts.

RACHEL

I heard the drums, Grandma.

GRANDMA

Are you sure?

MATT

What is up with these drums?

Grandma ambles over to her Lazy Boy, sits down and takes a deep breath.

GRANDMA

We are descendents of Chief Dakotan; he was a great Osage leader and he owned the land that Whispering Willows is built upon.

Matt doesn't follow.

GRANDMA

Chief Dakotan had his Medicine man cast the Drum spell to protect him and all his ancestors that came after him. It was to warn them of impending peril.

МАТТ

Doesn't seem like it works very well.

GRANDMA

Depends on if you're listening.

RACHEL

But I'm not the one in danger.

GRANDMA

The drums are never wrong, my dear. This somehow involves you.

Rachel sits down on the LOVE SEAT next to Grandma.

RACHEL

I have nothing to do with Willows Manor!

Grandma points her cane toward a PICTURE hanging on the wall.

INSERT: PHOTO OF CHIEF DAKOTAN

GRANDMA

But, your great-great Grandfather did.

CUT TO:

EXT. HADIUS WILSON'S HOUSE - DAY

Samantha curiously watches as TWO MEN come out of the house and onto the PORCH. They are followed by Hadius Wilson. After a brief exchange he shakes their hands and they leave. He goes back inside.

It is starting to grow darker when Samantha sees OLIVIA bound out of the house. She takes off down the street toward the direction of Willows Manor.

Samantha follows her. Although scared and confused, she can't help herself.

OLIVIA

quickly makes her way down the busy street, dodging one person after another.

Samantha continues to follow; her mind telling her this can't be real, her eyes telling her a different story.

Olivia finally reaches the edge of the woods that joins with the property of Jerediah Willows.

Olivia stops and turns around, looking in Samantha's direction...startling Samantha to a stop. Olivia walks toward Samantha — looking toward the direction from which she came. Samantha freezes, afraid to move. After a moment, Olivia runs into the....

WOODS

where Samantha finds her pace difficult to keep up with. Deeper into the forest, Olivia sweeps left and then right, until she is not far from the Manor.

Samantha follows Olivia to one of the many GARDENS that surround the Manor. She soon sees the reason for Olivia's hurried rush.

Dakota waits patiently by a FOUNTAIN where Olivia runs into his waiting arms, kissing him passionately. Dakota softly caresses Olivia's face. It is obvious they are in love.

OLIVIA

There is something I must tell you.

Noting her concern.

DAKOTA

What?

Olivia is hesitant.

OLIVIA

My father wants to send me away to a school in New York.

Dakota immediately jumps on the defensive.

DAKOTA

He cannot do that!

OLIVIA

It has already been arranged.

DAKOTA

He does so to spite me!

OLIVIA

He does not know about you.

DAKOTA

Your father has spies everywhere.

Olivia takes Dakota's hand.

OLIVIA

I do not want to go, you know this, but my father's influence....

DAKOTA

--Your father's influence. I am sick of hearing about your father's influence! We cannot allow him to control us!

OLIVIA

What should I do? Stand up and defy him?

DAKOTA

Yes, that is exactly what you should do.

OLIVIA

You do not have to live with him, or suffer the consequences for disobeying his wishes.

DAKOTA

Then marry me. Be my wife.

Olivia takes in a deep breath. She wants to say YES, but fear stops her. She responds by turning away.

DAKOTA

Turning away will not make things disappear.

OLIVIA

I am afraid....

He turns her head back to him.

DAKOTA

You know I would never do anything to hurt you. I love you.

OLIVIA

And I love you. But I am afraid my father's hatred will destroy us both. You know he will never let me marry you.

Dakota's mother, Elizabeth, walks out of the house and starts toward the direction of Dakota and Olivia.

ELIZABETH

Dakota?!

DAKOTA

(surprised)

Hello, mother.

ELIZABETH

Olivia, how nice to see you.

OLIVIA

Mrs. Willows.

DAKOTA

What are you doing out here, mother?

ELIZABETH

I thought I would gather some flowers.

(then)

What are you doing out here?

OLIVIA

Talking.

DAKOTA

I was asking for Miss Wilson's hand in marriage.

Both Olivia and Elizabeth are stunned by Dakota's directness.

ELIZABETH

(to Olivia)

Well, how do Mr and Mrs. Wilson feel about this?

DAKOTA

I plan to ask them tonight. I was hoping you would invite them to dinner.

OLIVIA

Maybe that is not such a good idea.

DAKOTA

What better way for our fathers to settle their differences then upon the marriage of their children.

ELIZABETH

Olivia is right. You must slowly work into this.

Dakota angrily rejects the notion.

DAKOTA

I am tired of this foolishness. If any of you care about us, you will let this be. Either way, this feud will end tonight!

A slight pause.

ELIZABETH

I will talk with your father.

OLIVIA

(to Dakota)

It will be getting dark soon. I should be going.

ELIZABETH

Do not worry. Everything will be as it should.

Olivia tries to smile as Elizabeth goes back up toward the house.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - EVENING

WALKING

Olivia hears some leaves CRACKLE, which startles her a little.

Dakota finds himself slightly amused.

DAKOTA

There is no reason to be afraid!

A short pause.

OLIVIA

I wish we could just run away together. Not worrying about what our families think. I just want to be with you.

DAKOTA

We will be. If it is the last thing I do. (then)

You never did say if you would marry me.

OLIVIA

You know I want to- more than anything.

They kiss.

DAKOTA

Then promise you will stay with me...forever.

A slight beat.

OLIVIA

Forever is a long time.

DAKOTA

Everyday I spend without you makes it longer.

The moment is broken by a commotion in the trees.

Samantha hears it too.

OLIVIA

What is that noise?

Seemingly unaffected. With a coy chuckle.

DAKOTA

Probably your father following us.

Olivia looks about the woods-uneasy.

OLIVIA

Stop it.

WALKING

Limbs CRACK- Leaves shake. As if something is jumping from one tree to another.

Olivia is visibly shaken.

Dakota is concerned, but keeps it to himself.

As they walk faster. It keeps pace. They begin running.

Samantha follows.

Finally, Dakota and Olivia reach the town limits. They look around, but see nothing.

Olivia is relieved to be home.

DAKOTA

Here you are, my lady, safe and unharmed!

Dakota gently kisses her hand and begins to leave when Olivia pulls him back to her.

OLIVIA

Whatever is out there, it is not safe. Maybe you should wait.

DAKOTA

I will be fine. I know these woods better than most.

Olivia kisses him. They are lost in each other for a moment.

DAKOTA

I will see you tonight.

Dakota watches as she goes inside, takes a deep breath and starts on his journey home.

Samantha follows him.

A brisk night air stirs. It's growing ever more dark. Soon it will be nightfall.

A CREATURE

like a shadow moving through the night air, follows him. It moves swiftly from limb to limb- much too quickly to be human.

Dakota grows increasingly uneasy. He stops.

DAKOTA

Who is there? Show yourself.

Nothing. He walks faster and then starts to run.

Samantha tries to keep up.

The creature follows. Dakota can hear its footsteps gaining on him, but he can't seem to shake it.

Dakota stops and quickly turns around to confront whomever has been following him.

Nothing.

Then....

A shadowy figure glides through the air directly toward him.

Before he can react, it descends upon him, knocking him down.

He fights with the creature with all his might, but all Dakota can see is what looks like the head of a WOLF as the creature bears down on him. He feels a sharp pain rip through his neck and spiral down.

Dakota sees a cluster of arrows rain down from the darkened sky-- striking the creature in the chest. It rears up in pain letting out an ungodly SHRIEK that echo's through the night-it leaps off of Dakota and into the trees where it disappears.

Dakota staggers to his feet- walking forward and collapsing.

Samantha is mortified. She wants to run but her legs won't move.

The entire scene disappears before her, leaving

SAMANTHA

alone and even more bewildered.

BACK TO:

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE -NIGHT

Grandma continues to explain some of the history surrounding Willows Manor and the town of Whispering Willows.

MATT

Jerediah bought this land from the Osage?

GRANDMA

Yes. Dakotan sold him several hundred acres.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. KANSAS/OKLAHOMA BORDER- DAY- 1860'S

JEREDIAH WILLOWS

in his mid-forties wears a bear skin coat, a well kept beard graces a worn face. He carries with him several bags of gold. He is accompanied by his young bride, ELIZABETH, who is part Delaware Indian, and their newborn child DAKOTA.

MATT (V.O.)

How could he afford that back then?

GRANDMA (V.O.)

The California gold rush made rich men of many, and poor men of even more.

CHIEF DAKOTAN

welcomes Jerediah and Elizabeth into his TEEPEE.

Jerediah hands him several bags of gold.

They sit around the fire and smoke the peace pipe.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE -NIGHT

BACK TO SCENE

RACHEL

I thought the Osage were removed to reservations?

GRANDMA

They were, many years later. But Chief Dakotan and his band chose to remain.

MATT

Why did the chief sell so much land?

GRANDMA

To feed and clothe his people. And to pay off any past debts incurred from fighting the government and other tribes.

Grandma walks back over to her chair and sits.

GRANDMA

About five years later, not long after the Civil War, the Monroe Logging Company came to town along with other white settlers.

EXT. WHISPERING WILLOWS - DAY - 1870'S

GRANDMA (V.O.)

Thomas Monroe saw the prospect of money being made and offered to buy most of the land. Jerediah agreed to sell everything north of his property.

SERIES OF SHOTS

- A.) THOMAS MONROE, head of MONROE LOGGING COMPANY hands Jerediah a handsome check.
- B.) Jerediah hands over a Deed to most of the land.

C.) HADIUS WILSON stands closely by, hovering like a vulture.

GRANDMA (V.O.)

Monroe died soon after and his first officer, Hadius Wilson took control. He started destroying the land, tree by tree, until hardly any stood.

INTERCUT:

EXT. FOREST- DAY - 1870'S

Trees being mercilessly cut down-acres destroyed. Hadius watches lustfully as lumberjacks move from tree to tree.

GRANDMA (V.O.)

Dakotan felt betrayed by the white man's lies. He pleaded with them to stop, that they would suffer a terrible misfortune if they continued this destruction.

(then)

It was around this time that strange things began to occur. Some of the locals began disappearing, only to be found dead a few days later.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Townspeople start disappearing.

- A.) COUPLE out for a moonlit stroll are attacked, and dragged away.
- B.) A family is attacked in their home while eating dinner.

GRANDMA (V.O.)

All the blood had been drained from their bodies, and, they had been skinned.

RACHEL (V.O.)

And the townspeople blamed the Indians.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET

A large MOB traverses through town- only to be stopped at the edge of it.

GRANDMA (V.O.)

Hadius formed a mob to hunt them down.

MEN of all ages make their way down MAIN STREET.

Many carry GUNS, PITCHFORKS, SHOVELS, etc.

They are met head on by Jerediah, Chief Dakotan and many braves.

HADIUS

Out of our way, Willows. You will not be able to protect your savage friends.

JEREDIAH

It is not them that I try to protect.

HADIUS

They are murdering the good people of this town.

CHIEF DAKOTAN

We kill no one.

JEREDIAH

These are peaceful people, Hadius.

Rumblings of laughter resonate through the crowd.

HADIUS

(turning to the mob)

I have never known an Injun' yet that is peaceful.

Many in the crowd shout out slurs like INDIAN LOVER. TRAITOR. COWARD.

TOWNSPERSON

COME ON, MEN!!!

The mob advances toward Jerediah.

Dakotan's WARRIORS draw their bows- moving the crowd back.

JEREDIAH

There are over a hundred more warriors spread throughout these woods. You have no chance of surviving, none of you, if you continue on this course.

The crowd waits for a signal from Hadius, who reluctantly backs off.

HADIUS

You are a fool if you think this is over.

Getting in Hadius' face.

JEREDIAH

But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without cause shall be in danger of the judgement: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

With a defiant smirk aimed directly at Jerediah.

HADIUS

Then I will see you in hell.

The crowd parts and slowly disperses as Hadius smugly walks away.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE

BACK TO SCENE

RACHEL

Grandma, I need you to come back with us...to Willows Manor!

GRANDMA

Honey, I'm old. I don't move so well.

RACHEL

You have the power.

GRANDMA

I haven't used that in years.

Matt looks at both of them like they're crazy.

RACHEL

Please, Grandma. Sami needs your help.

(then)

I need your help.

GRANDMA

(pensively)

I haven't been to that house since I was a child.

Rachel can see her Grandmother struggling with the notion.

RACHEL

What is it that you're not telling us?

CUT TO:

INT. WILLOWS MANOR -PARLOR

Samantha walks in to find Dakota sitting at the table near the fireplace. His face buried in his hands.

DAKOTA

I tried to warn you.

He looks up to see tears streaming down her face.

SAMANTHA

I know what happened!

DAKOTA

Do you?

SAMANTHA

(pointing)

I saw it...out there.

DAKOTA

You saw nothing more then a memory. This place is filled with them.

SAMANTHA

It must be painful.

DAKOTA

To the contrary, it is the only reminder of my humanity I have left.

Hesitantly.

SAMANTHA

What was that thing that attacked you?

Dakota rises and walks toward Samantha, making her very nervous.

DAKOTA

The Osage and Cherokee call it a Shapeshifter or Soul taker. White men call it a vampire, a witch, even werewolf.

SAMANTHA

All fictitious monsters.

DAKOTA

Fiction is often based in reality.

Dakota can see the mask of fear engulf Samantha's face.

SAMANTHA

Which are you?

DAKOTA

All...and...none of them.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR -NIGHT

Rachel's '69 GTO speeds down the Interstate. Grandma reluctantly continues.

GRANDMA

What's inside that house isn't human. Not anymore.

TTAM

This isn't making me feel better.

GRANDMA

I remember my grandfather telling me the story of Dakota Willows.

CUT TO:

INT. WILLOWS FOYER -NIGHT

A loud POUNDING on his door brings Jerediah quickly to answer it.

GRANDMA (V.O.)

One night some braves found him bloodied; barely holding on to life.

Two of Chief Dakotan's braves stand holding Dakota uprighthis shirt and coat stained with blood.

JEREDIAH

My God!!!

ELIZABETH

(screaming)

Dakota!! What happened?

The braves bring him in and lay him down on a resting chair in the sitting room.

JEREDIAH

That son of a bitch!!!

Jerediah opens a small closet door underneath the stairwell, and pulls out a Winchester rifle.

ELIZABETH

Jerediah, what are you doing?

JEREDIAH

I know Hadius Wilson had his hand in this, and I will be damned if he gets away with it.

The braves stop him before he can leave.

GRANDMA (V.O.)

They explained to Jerediah that his son was attacked by something that moved too quick to be human; a Soul Taker.

INT. RACHEL'S CAR -NIGHT

RACHEL

A Soul Taker?

GRANDMA

A being who feeds on the psychic energy found in all living things, through eye contact, touch, dreams, and even the exchange of blood. It can also change its shape at will.

RACHEL

Like the Navajo Skinwalker?

GRANDMA

Except more cunning and much more dangerous.

TTAM

This is sounding more and more like a Stephen King novel.

RACHEL

You think that's what's inside the house?

GRANDMA

I know it is. I encountered it there when I was a little girl.

RACHEL

You never said anything about this before.

GRANDMA

You never asked.

RACHEL

What is it about this place? First it's Sami's mom not saying anything, now it's you.

GRANDMA

It was long ago. There was no reason to say anything until now.

RACHEL

Did it try to harm you?

GRANDMA

No!! I was an innocent, untouched by the ills of this world. It would have gained nothing from claiming my soul.

MATT

Then what could it want from Samantha? She's never hurt anybody.

GRANDMA

But she grieves the loss of her mother, knows little about her father. Her relationship with you doesn't seem stable. Her heart is torn, and that is her weakness.

Matt slumps back into his seat.

RACHEL

The picture? Maybe it has something to do with all this.

GRANDMA

What picture?

RACHEL

Samantha was going through some of her mother's stuff when she found an old photo of her Aunt Olivia.

MATT

Yeah, and she looks just like her.

GRANDMA

That might explain...

MATT

What?

GRANDMA

After Jerediah found out what had really happened to his son, he went to talk with Hadius---

CUT TO:

INT. HADIUS'S HOUSE- NIGHT -1880

GRANDMA (V.O.)

--- and ask him to allow Olivia to be with his son.

Jerediah pleads with Hadius.

JEREDIAH

He is dying- all he speaks is your daughter's name.

HADIUS

Nonsense!!

JEREDIAH

For God sake Hadius, can you not set aside your hatred of me for one moment?

Hadius does not answer. He ponders the question for a moment.

HADIUS

OLIVIA, come down here!!

Olivia comes running downstairs from her bedroom. Her descent slowing when she sees Jerediah.

HADIUS

You have been seeing his son, true?

OLIVIA

I do not know what you are talking about, father!

HADIUS

Do not lie to me!! You deliberately went behind my back to see Dakota Willows?!

Pleading with her father.

OLIVIA

Daddy, I...

JEREDIAH

He is dying.

OLIVIA

That cannot be true. I saw him earlier.

HADIUS

So- you have been with him!!

OLIVIA

Yes!! And why is that so terrible?

HADIUS

Because he is a Willows!!! And you deliberately defied my wishes.

JEREDIAH

He was attacked on his way home, by something.

(to Hadius)

Or someone!

HADIUS

I can assure you I had nothing to do with this.

Olivia's heart races, her mind reliving the journey home. Her face turns pale as a ghost.

JEREDIAH

Come girl, what is wrong?

OLIVIA

I told him to be careful!

JEREDIAH

Why would you tell him such a thing?

OLIVIA

Something was following us. I told him he should stay but he said not to worry, that he would be fine. This is all my fault.

JEREDIAH

Dear child, do not blame yourself. Will you see my son?

HADIUS

No, she most certainly will not.

OLIVIA

Daddy, please!!!

JEREDIAH

It is her decision.

HADIUS

As long as she lives with me, nothing is her decision. Go to your room, Olivia. I will deal with you later.

Olivia starts to leave the room but turns back. It takes everything she has to hold back her emotions.

OLIVIA

Mr. Willows, I am sorry about your son. Tell him...tell him that my answer...is yes.

A small smile forms on Olivia's face as she wipes away a tear. She runs upstairs.

Hadius purposefully ignores their exchange.

HADIUS

Now, if you will excuse me. I have things to do.

Hadius' wife SOPHIA, comes in from the garden. She is of ITALIAN descent with long, dark hair that is rolled into a bun. Her features are sharp, yet feminine. She sees Jerediah and greets him apprehensively.

SOPHIA

Hello, Jerediah. What brings you here?

JEREDIAH

My son!

HADIUS

This does not concern you, Sophia.

Sophia casually ignores her husband.

SOPHIA

Is he well?

HADIUS

Jerediah is under the mistaken impression that our daughter is involved with his son.

SOPHIA

(to Hadius)

You are now just finding this out?

HADIUS

I see there is more treachery going on under my roof.

SOPHIA

No treachery. Just a daughter that feels she can talk to her mother easier than she can talk with her father.

HADIUS

Go upstairs with...your daughter. I will be there momentarily.

Sophia lets out a heavy sigh, for she knows the verbal beating she is about to receive.

SOPHIA

(to Jerediah)

Tell Elizabeth we must get together sometime.

With that said, Sophia joins her daughter upstairs.

JEREDIAH

All I ask is for her to be by his side. He is dying, Hadius.

HADIUS

Unfortunate. You can show yourself out.

Hadius turns and walks out of the room.

JEREDIAH

You are an evil man, Hadius Wilson. May God have mercy on your soul.

HADIUS

Mercy is for the weak. You think I am where I am today from being merciful? If you set foot on this property again, I will have you shot for trespassing. Good night, Willows!!!

CUT TO:

INT. RACHEL'S CAR -NIGHT

TTAM

So what's the plan?

GRANDMA

No plan. Just some tools. I hope they're enough.

Grandma searches through a LEATHER BAG. She grows more and more frantic.

RACHEL

What's wrong?

An expression of panic forms across Grandma's usually confident face.

GRANDMA

I can't find it. I'm sure I put it in here.

RACHEL

What?!

GRANDMA

The medallion!

RACHEL

A Shaman's medallion?

GRANDMA

Yes!! I always keep it in here. If we don't have that, we don't stand a chance of getting Samantha back.

RACHEL

(to Matt)

Didn't you say you got one in at the Museum?

TTAM

Yeah!

GRANDMA

What good is it! The museum's closed.

Matt dangles a set of keys.

TTAM

Not necessarily.

CUT TO:

INT. PARLOR -NIGHT

SAMANTHA

Are you going to tell me what really happened?

DAKOTA

You and she are so much alike. Always asking questions. Never satisfied with the answers.

SAMANTHA

Look, you brought me here. I think I have a right to know the truth, if there is such a thing in this world.

DAKOTA

Remember what I said; do not ask questions-

SAMANTHA

-- unless I'm prepared for the answers. I want to know.

Dakota waves his arm. Day turns into night. Samantha watches as her surroundings change, yet stay the same.

A KNOCK

on the huge oak doors resonates throughout the house.

Elizabeth appears and opens the door.

OLIVIA

stands shivering in the rain, her clothing soaked through.

OLIVIA

Mrs. Willows....

ELIZABETH

Olivia! Come inside before you catch your death of cold.

Jerediah bounds down the stairs, shocked to see Olivia standing in the doorway.

JEREDIAH

Olivia, you came. I was convinced Hadius would not allow it.

OLIVIA

He does not know!

JEREDIAH

Come- stand near the fire.

OLIVIA

How is he?

Elizabeth wipes away tears.

ELIZABETH

My son is dying!

OLIVIA

Mrs. Willows, I would gladly take his place, if I could.

DAKOTA

leaves Samantha's side and walks into the scene, becoming a part of it.

Olivia rushes to Dakota's eagerly awaiting arms.

OLIVIA

DAKOTA!!!

DAKOTA

Who said anything about me dying?

JEREDIAH

God have mercy!!

ELIZABETH

(overwhelmed)

My son!! You are alive!!

DAKOTA

Of course I am alive, mother.

(taking her hand)

Does this feel like dead flesh to you?

JEREDIAH

It was no less than two hours ago that you lay on your deathbed.

ELIZABETH

How?

DAKOTA

Everything is blurred. I remember being in the woods, running, then darkness.

OLIVIA

No matter!! I am just glad you are here...with me.

DAKOTA

I will be with you, forever.

Olivia smiles at him.

JEREDIAH

That is for the Lord God to decide.

In stark contrast.

DAKOTA

(under his breath)

Your God knows nothing.

Dakota's outburst startles everyone in the room.

JEREDIAH

What did you say?

Realizing his misstep.

DAKOTA

Nothing, Father.

(then)

Mother- do you not have some dry clothes for Olivia?

ELIZABETH

Of course!

Olivia and Elizabeth retreat upstairs.

Dakota begins to sweat profusely- every sound is amplifiedthe RAIN pelting the roof, the HEARTBEATS of everyone in the house.

He sits down- covering his ears.

DAKOTA

(to himself)

Be quiet!!! Be quiet!!!

JEREDIAH

What is wrong?

DAKOTA

BE QUIET!!!

JEREDIAH

What is it?

Jerediah tries to comfort him.

DAKOTA

springs up like a cat- grabbing Jerediah and lunging him backward into the fireplace.

An almost demonic expression forms upon his face.

JEREDIAH

is stunned by his sons sudden outburst.

JEREDIAH

What in God's name are you?

Dakota regains control and backs away, confused.

DAKOTA

Father...

He takes a step closer to his father.

JEREDIAH

Stay where you are!

DAKOTA

Forgive me, I...do not know...what came over me.

A beat.

JEREDIAH

You have the devil in you.

A loud KNOCK on the entrance door breaks the silence.

Jerediah answers it to find....

HADIUS

standing with the SHERIFF and DEPUTY. They barge inside.

INT. FOYER -NIGHT

HADIUS

Where is she? Where is my daughter?

SHERIFF

Sorry, Jerediah. Hadius here seems to think you might know where his daughter is.

HADIUS

She is here Sheriff. I know it.

SHERIFF

Is this true?

Jerediah hesitates before answering.

JEREDIAH

It is. My wife is helping her change into some dry clothing.

Dakota walks in from the Parlor.

DAKOTA

Hello, Mr. Wilson! Where is your lovely wife, Sophia?

A short beat.

HADIUS

I thought you were supposed to be on your deathbed?!

JEREDIAH

He was. Only by a miracle is he well.

HADIUS

If you ask me, this was nothing more than a trick to lure my daughter here.

JEREDIAH

Do you honestly believe that?!

Hadius turns his attention to Dakota.

HADIUS

How long have you been sneaking behind my back?

DAKOTA

We have an acceptable reason.

HADIUS

Nothing is acceptable if it involves you.

Elizabeth and Olivia return from upstairs. Olivia feels her heart drop when she sees her Father and the Sheriff.

HADIUS

OLIVIA...come here!!!

Olivia slowly approaches, scared to death.

OLIVIA

Daddy...I was going to tell you.

HADIUS

Your mother has already informed me!

Dakota walks over to Olivia and wraps his arms around her.

DAKOTA

I plan to marry your daughter. I was going to ask for your blessing tonight.

HADIUS

No child of mine will ever marry a Willows.

JEREDIAH

Can we not put our petty differences aside for the sake of our children?

OLIVIA

Daddy, please listen!!

HADIUS

Sheriff, arrest these men.

SHERIFF

On what charge?

HADIUS

Kidnapping!!

ELIZABETH

That is ridiculous.

SHERIFF

Hadius, this all seems like a simple misunderstanding.

HADIUS

Sheriff- need I remind you of whose payroll you are on?

The Sheriff, realizing the situation he's in, has no other choice but to comply and places cuffs around Dakota's wrists.

The deputy begins to do the same with Jerediah, but is stopped by the sheriff.

SHERIFF

There will be no need for that.

DEPUTY

But sheriff....

SHERIFF

(to Hadius)

He is an upstanding citizen of this community. I said there will be no need.

OLIVIA

They have done nothing wrong!!

(then)

Sheriff, you cannot do this!

The sheriff answers back by shamefully down-casting his eyes.

SHERIFF

Let's go, deputy.

ELIZABETH

(to Hadius)

Have you no mercy?

HADIUS

God is merciful. I however, am not. Perhaps if you would have done a better job at raising your son he would not be in this position.

(to Olivia)

Come along, girl!

OLIVIA

No, Daddy!! I want to be with him.

Dakota struggles with the sheriff.

DAKOTA

Let go of me!! I love her. Can you not see that?

HADIUS

Then that is your mistake.

(then)

Olivia, you are coming with me. One way or another.

Hadius grabs his daughter away from Elizabeth.

Dakota breaks away and lunges at Hadius.

DAKOTA

You will not take her!

Hadius backhands him- sending him crashing into the floor.

Olivia struggles to free herself from her Father's grasp.

OLIVIA

STOP IT!! I hate you!!

HADIUS

You will get over it.

ELIZABETH

You bastard!!

JEREDIAH

How dare you strike my son!

Jerediah quickly moves toward Hadius and is stopped by the cold steel of the deputies DOUBLE BARREL SHOTGUN across his chest.

Dakota lies motionless. A trickle of blood runs out of his mouth onto his lips- he tastes it.

ELIZABETH

You cannot do this. Please, Hadius.

HADIUS

I can and I will.

Elizabeth rushes past the sheriff and deputy and grabs Hadius' arm.

ELIZABETH

Why?! Why are you persecuting them? Do you not remember what it was like to be in love?

HADIUS

Love has nothing to do with this. I will not have my daughter marrying a filthy half-breed Indian!

Hadius pulls away from Elizabeth's grasp.

ELIZABETH

(angrily)

Know this, Hadius Augustus Wilson. If anything happens to my son because of you, there will never pass a day or night that I will let you rest in peace!

HADIUS

Save your idle threats. You have no power to back them up.

DAKOTA

But I do.

HADIUS

I am tired of this foolishness.

The sheriff grabs Dakota's arm, when a guttural GROWL stops him where he stands.

HADIUS

He is nothing more than an animal. Bring him.

Dakota continues to GROWL, like a rabid dog, as the sheriff wrestles him to his feet.

Hadius coldly grabs Olivia by the hair, almost ripping it from her scalp.

OLIVIA

YOU ARE HURTING ME!!

DAKOTA

DO NOT TOUCH HER!

The room erupts in total chaos.

With a burst of strength Dakota breaks the cuffs as if they were nothing.

HADIUS

pulls a Colt .45 from inside his overcoat and fires several rounds, one of which strikes

DAKOTA

in the chest. He collapses to the floor.

ELIZABETH

NO!!!

Elizabeth runs to her sons side and is horrified to see....

DAKOTA'S EYES

turning yellow, then blood red, mere black slits replace pupils— his teeth grow fangs— his brow becomes thicker.

Elizabeth quickly backs away as

JEREDIAH

breaks away from the deputy and tries to wrestle the gun from Hadius.

TOTAL CHAOS ERUPTS as

DAKOTA

swiftly dispatches of the sheriff- ripping his throat out.

Blood spatters the walls as the sheriff's lifeless body slides to the floor.

The DEPUTY

scared and shaky, raises his shotgun toward Dakota.

Dakota locks eyes with him.

The deputy regains his composer and fires his shotgun, but with incredible speed, Dakota sidesteps the incoming PELLETS.

He is unaware that in doing so

OLIVIA

is directly hit by the LEAD shots in the stomach.

Dakota watches in horror as the love of his life slumps to the ground- crying out in pain, and grasping her stomach and blood stained dress.

DAKOTA

NO!!!!!

Dakota grabs the deputy around the throat, lifting him into the air, where he dangles like a puppet, squeezing his neck-SNAP!!! The deputy's body falls lifeless to the floor.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILLOWS MANOR -NIGHT

The shadows of two men in a life and death struggle dart back and forth in front of the Parlor window.

The shadow of another joins them.

Several more GUNSHOTS ring out.

BACK TO:

INT. PARLOR -NIGHT

Dakota quickly moves in to where Jerediah and Hadius struggle. Hadius has gotten the upper hand on Jerediah.

Dakota grabs Hadius' shoulder and spins him around.

DAKOTA

You are responsible for this.

HADIUS

HADIUS

NO- NO- get away from me. Stay a...

In a swift instant he plunges his hand inside Hadius' chestripping his heart from his body.

HADIUS'

eyes widen in terror as he looks down to see a gapping hole where his chest used to be.

Jerediah is paralyzed; utterly shocked at what he has just witnessed.

JEREDIAH

You are not my son.

Dakota's face returns to normal as the weight of Jerediah's words bear down on him.

Dakota's attention is drawn to the Foyer where he HEARS Elizabeth WEEPING over the mortally wounded body of Olivia.

EXT. WILLOWS MANOR -NIGHT

Dakota appears from inside the house, his shirt soaked with blood.

In his arms is Olivia who desperately clings to life.

He walks a little ways and then gently lays her down, holding her head in his hands.

Olivia's breathing becomes more labored as she feels life slowly slip away.

DAKOTA

Do not leave me! Where shall I go? What will I do without you?

OLIVIA

Love me...forever!

DAKOTA

You cannot go! I will not let you!

OLIVIA

My answer...my...

DAKOTA

Answer?

OLIVIA

Yes...I will marry...you.

Olivia body falls limp in Dakota's arms as her eyes stare blankly to the sky.

Dakota is overwhelmed with grief, his cheeks soaked with tears. He gently kisses her goodbye.

Jerediah and Elizabeth try in vain to comfort him.

DAKOTA

STAY AWAY!!

Dakota picks Olivia up and turns toward the house. SCREAMING to the heavens.

DAKOTA

Why? Answer me!!!

Suddenly- a barrage of arrows strike Dakota in his back giving him the appearance of a human pin cushion.

CHIEF DAKOTAN

and many of his WARRIORS appear out from the darkness.

Dakota falls to his knees still clinging to Olivia's lifeless body. He carefully lays her down. There is dead silence.

DAKOTA

stands. His appearance again changes. His face is virtually unrecognizable.

He turns and heads toward the Chief. Another barrage of

ARROWS

strikes him again. He unleashes an unearthly ROAR as he crashes to the ground.

JEREDIAH

In God's name, what are you doing?

CHIEF

He must be destroyed.

ELIZABETH

He is my son!!

CHIEF

No longer.

Elizabeth runs toward Chief Dakotan- pleading for him to spare her son. Several warriors restrain her.

Another GUTTURAL GROWL is heard as Dakota struggles to his feet.

A FLAMING ARROW

delivers the final blow as fire engulfs Dakota's body. He SCREAMS out his last word.

DAKOTA

OLIVIA!!!!

Jerediah and Elizabeth are frozen in disbelief as they watch their son's body turn into black ash.

CHIEF

This is the only way.

A HOLY MAN

holds up a GOLD MEDALLION, CHANTING and saying PRAYERS. He does a SPIRIT DANCE and blesses the house and property.

When he finishes he places the medallion on the ground and with a small STONE AXE slams down into it -- splitting it in half.

HOLY MAN

Un tu e et tee, Un tu e et shacaol. (Here you were born. Here you remain.)

The Holy Man picks up one of the halves and hands it to Elizabeth. He takes the other half and places it into a small pouch that hangs around his neck.

The Chief and Holy Man disappear into the woods as Jerediah holds Elizabeth- unsure whether this has all been real or a horrible nightmare. Then....

DAKOTA

rises from the black ash and walks out of the scene and back over to Samantha. The room returns back to the way it was moments before.

He wipes tears away from her cheeks.

DAKOTA

Satisfied?!

Dakota walks away leaving Samantha numb and saddened.

INT. WORLD TRESURE'S MUSEUM -NIGHT

Matt turns the LIGHTS on and goes UPSTAIRS as Samantha and Grandma wait near the entrance.

RACHEL

You think she's okay?

GRANDMA

I don't know, honey.

Matt returns with the Medallion and gives it to Grandma.

Grandma holds it up.

RACHEL

Where's the rest of it?

MATT

That's all there is.

RACHEL

You didn't say you only had one half.

MATT

It'll still work, won't it?

GRANDMA

I've never done this with just a part of one.

MATT

But can it be done?

GRANDMA

There's one way to find out.

CUT TO:

INT. GRAND BALLROOM

Samantha finds Dakota standing near a PIANO, his head bowed. Samantha quietly walks over to him.

DAKOTA

Why are you not afraid of me, now that you know the truth?

Samantha is struck by his straightforwardness.

SAMANTHA

I am.

DAKOTA

Then why....

SAMANTHA

Because I see what you were. Not what you became. You may not be able to change the past, but you can change the future.

DAKOTA

No, you cannot. Not when they are the same.

A beat.

Dakota sits and begins to play a beautiful, but haunting melody.

Samantha immediately recognizes the song as the same one that was on the music box that she had opened when she was pulled into this time.

SAMANTHA

That song!!

DAKOTA

It was going to be my wedding song. I was writing it when...things went as they did.

SAMANTHA

It's beautiful.

Dakota stands up and walks away from the piano as the music continues to play. He sweeps Samantha into his arms and kisses her passionately.

DAKOTA

I have waited lifetimes for this moment.

They begin dancing.

Around and around.

She follows as best she can. She begins to laugh, feeling herself lost in the moment.

Dakota circles around the dance floor, making Samantha dizzy.

They stop.

Samantha pulls away from him.

DAKOTA

What is wrong?

SAMANTHA

This isn't real. None of it!
I'm not her. No matter how much you want
me to be.

DAKOTA

I know that, now.

(then)

Samantha... I never meant to frighten you.

SAMANTHA

I know that, now.

Dakota takes her hand.

DAKOTA

Then stay with me. I can give you everything you desire.

SAMANTHA

I can't!! I don't belong here.

DAKOTA

You belong...with me!!

An evil voice Echoes through the Ballroom. The Soul Taker manifests out of nowhere.

SOUL TAKER

SHE BELONGS TO ME!

Samantha looks on in horror as the Taker is quickly upon her, its hideous white face inches from hers. It's eyes glow CRIMSON RED, it's breath smells of the foulest stench.

SOUL TAKER

You are the one whom he loves so dearly?

Terrified -- Samantha can say nothing.

The Taker turns his attention toward Dakota.

SOUL TAKER

Remember our...agreement.

The Taker disappears as suddenly as it had appeared.

SAMANTHA

That was....

DAKOTA

Yes!

SAMANTHA

What agreement?

Dakota ponders his reply for a moment, and in a straightforward manner....

DAKOTA

I give him her! He gives me you!

SAMANTHA

Her?!

DAKOTA

Your friend!

SAMANTHA

Rachel? What does that thing want with her?!

DAKOTA

Revenge!

SAMANTHA

You said you could manipulate this environment, the mirrors. Do it and let me go.

Dakota grabs her.

DAKOTA

You must stay!!

Samantha wants to pull away, but can't.

Hypnotizing her with his gaze, he kisses her.

DAKOTA

Sleep.

Her body falls limp in his arms. Sweeping her up- he lays her on a nearby chaise.

DAKOTA

I am...sorry.

CUT TO:

INT. WILLOWS FOYER -NIGHT

As Grandma, Rachel and Matt enter the house - a sudden wind sweeps through the house, violently.

Debris blows around. Someone or something is not happy she's here.

GRANDMA

It knows we're here.

The wind quits. An eerie silence replaces it.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -NIGHT

Grandma and Rachel HEAR the INDIAN DRUMS beating, guiding them.

Grandma begins to follow the hallway around- almost like she's being pulled.

They follow the hallway to the corridor leading to the Ballroom.

CUT TO:

INT. BALLROOM -NIGHT

Matt, Rachel and Grandma barge into the room only to find dust and clutter.

Matt HEARS a distant voice calling out.

VOICE

Help me! Please!

TTAM

SAMANTHA?

Grandma and Rachel hear it too! Samantha appears in the

MIRROR

begging and pleading.

SAMANTHA

Rachel, help me! Please!

RACHEL

Samantha, Samantha, can you hear me?

SAMANTHA

Help me, please! He has me trapped.

RACHEL

Hold on!

Samantha starts SCREAMING, like something is attacking her.

SAMANTHA

Get away from me!! Stay back!! NO!! Noooooo!!!

She disappears only to leave Grandma, Rachel and Matt staring at their reflections.

RACHEL

Grandma, do something!

Grandma reaches into her bag and pulls out a bundle of SAGE, some CANDLES and MATCHES. She places the candles in a circle surrounding them. She lights the candles and the sage.

A cloud of SMOKE makes its way upward, spiraling around the room until it descends upon the mirror.

She then pulls out a small amount of TOBACCO which she disperses onto the mirror.

Again, she says prayers- only these grow louder and louder, echoing.

The INDIAN DRUMS beat- this time they are heard by all, including Matt.

The smoke from the sage begins to circle the mirror.

Inside the mirror appears the image of Elizabeth Willows.

MIRROR

ELIZABETH

Be forewarned- if the sun rises on this side before you return- you will suffer the same fate as he.

RACHEL

What does he want with Samantha?

ELIZABETH

He is a prisoner, just as she.

RACHEL

How?

ELIZABETH

Love has power that dispels Death; charm that conquers the enemy. Where love beganso let it return.

Elizabeth's image disappears.

RACHEL

WAIT!!!

Matt is freaking out- almost as if he's going to bolt from the room.

GRANDMA

Take my hand.

Grandma grabs Rachel's hand and begins to CHANT.

THE GLASS

in the mirror starts to LIQUEFY.

TTAM

Oh man... this isn't gonna be good.

GRANDMA AND RACHEL step into and through it, as does

TTAM

who closes his eyes as tight as he can, (like one does on a roller coaster when you don't want to see what's coming next).

CUT TO:

INT. GRAND BALLROOM -EVENING

Matt opens his eyes to find the same ballroom in its prime.

MATT

Where are we?

GRANDMA

The other side.

MATT

Of what?

GRANDMA

Life.

They see Samantha laying on the chaise on the other side of the room.

RACHEL

SAMANTHA!!!

Rachel and Matt run over to her- calling out her name- gently shaking her and trying to wake her up.

She slowly responds.

MATT

Samantha... wake up.

Blurred images are all that Samantha can make out at first, until finally they come into focus.

SAMANTHA

Rachel? Matt?

Hugging her.

RACHEL

I thought we had lost you.

SAMANTHA

I had the weirdest dream.

RACHEL

It's not a dream. We have to get you out of here.

GRANDMA

We haven't much time.

Grandma can see the daylight slowly giving way to the night.

GRANDMA

Hurry!

Matt picks her up into his arms.

LOUD CLAPPING

can be heard throughout, followed by the sound of

FOOT STEPS

walking across a hard wood floor.

DAKOTA

Bravo!! Bravo!!! Come to save the day, have we?

Dakota walks to the center of the floor.

Matt gently puts Samantha down.

MATT

Stay away from her!

DAKOTA

It does not concern you.

TTAM

Yeah, it really does.

DAKOTA

And you are?

MATT

Her boyfriend, that's who!!

DAKOTA

You look more like the village idiot.

RACHEL

What do you want with her?

DAKOTA

You must be Rachel! Just the girl I was looking for!

Dakota raises his hand and starts dragging Rachel to him.

Matt takes a running lunge at Dakota-- and is stopped by an invisible force.

Rachel fights with all she has, but it's no use. Dakota wraps his hand around her throat and slowly lifts her into the air.

Grandma takes out the one half of the Medallion and points it toward Dakota.

GRANDMA

LET HER GO, DEVIL!

Dakota quickly notices.

DAKOTA

(whispering to Rachel)

Listen to me. You have but one chance to leave here alive. The other half of that Medallion hangs around my neck. Take it. Take it and leave.

THE SOUL TAKER

enters the room, moving across thin air at great speed.

Rachel quickly yanks the medallion from Dakota's neck- hiding it in her hand.

The Taker slams Dakota, throwing both he and Rachel across the room.

SOUL TAKER

You have outlived your usefulness.

Grandma again starts reciting prayers and chanting.

BALLS OF LIGHT

form over her hands. She HURTLES them forward.

They hit the Taker square on, knocking him back. He simply laughs.

SOUL TAKER

(at grandma)

It has been a long time, old woman.

GRANDMA

Not long enough!

SOUL TAKER

Save your trickery for something in which it works upon.

SAMANTHA

Why are you doing this?

The TAKER reaches out to Samantha- his eyes lock onto hers in a hypnotic gaze.

SOUL TAKER

Come to me.

Samantha feels her legs start moving forward, ever closer to him. She fights, but it is useless.

Dakota and Rachel regain their senses. Dakota sees Samantha being dragged forward in the Takers control.

Dakota grabs Rachel around the neck.

DAKOTA

Let her go or I'll....

SOUL TAKER

You will do what?

The Taker reaches out toward Rachel. She can feel invisible fingers latch onto her, caught in a tug of war.

RACHEL

We know what you are.

SOUL TAKER

You know nothing.

Dakota fights with all he has, but the Taker is to powerful.

SOUL TAKER

Never make a deal with the devil and expect no consequence.

The TAKER throws Rachel and Dakota backward against the wall-pinning them to it.

He continues to pull Samantha to him.

GRANDMA

My grandfather's holy man obviously didn't accomplish what he set out to do. (then)

I will.

Grandma takes out a small handful of a POWDERY SUBSTANCE and throws it on the Taker, temporarily paralyzing it, and causing it to release Rachel, Dakota and Samantha.

She then pulls out a small SALT SHAKER and draws a protective circle- standing in the middle.

Grandma motions to Rachel, Matt and Samantha to move into the circle with her. They do.

The affect of the powder wears off quickly.

The TAKER walks toward them- his eyes glowing red.

GRANDMA

We stand in a sacred space. No evil spirit shall enter here.

The TAKER reaches into the circle for them but is repelled back by an unseen energy.

SOUL TAKER

You witch.

GRANDMA

I said no evil spirit shall enter here.

Dakota watches.

Samantha motions for him to get inside the circle.

SAMANTHA

Get in.

DAKOTA

I cannot.

SAMANTHA

Why?

Dakota doesn't answer.

SOUL TAKER

Did he not tell you why you are here?

SAMANTHA

I know!

SOUL TAKER

That he was going to exchange your soul for a chance to reunite with his precious Olivia!

SAMANTHA

(to Dakota)

Is this true?

Dakota shamefully looks away.

SOUL TAKER

(to Samantha)

You are mine!! I will take you as my slave!!

MATT

SHE'S NOT YOURS!!!

SOUL TAKER

And what can you give her that I cannot?

A long beat.

MATT

I... I love her.

Samantha looks at Rachel, then to Matt.

SAMANTHA

Love me?

MATT

I always have. I just didn't know how to show it.

SOUL TAKER

(sarcastically)

Love her, do you?

TTAM

I won't let you take her!

Matt turns to Grandma.

TTAM

If I divert his attention can you get these girls out of here?

GRANDMA

I don't know. I think so.

MATT

There's one way to find out.

Matt leaps from the protective circle and runs toward the TAKER.

TTAM

You want a piece of her...you have to go through me.

Again he is stopped by an icy grip around his throat.

SOUL TAKER

You are beginning to irritate me, boy.

SAMANTHA

Let him go. You have me.

RACHEL

You bastard!

Rachel jumps out of the circle and runs toward the TAKER.

GRANDMA

No, Rachel!!

It grabs her around the throat with its other hand.

Matt and Rachel dangle like little puppets.

SOUL TAKER

Two for one. You will be my slaves for eternity.

Samantha starts to run out of the circle to help her friends, but Grandma stops her.

GRANDMA

It's too late.

SAMANTHA

We have to do something.

(then)

Help us, Dakota!!

Disgusted with his own inaction.

DAKOTA

He is my master. I cannot.

SAMANTHA

If you ever loved Olivia, then help them! Help me!!

SOUL TAKER

You waste your time. He is nothing more than an animal.

The Takers voice resonates through Dakota's head like a nightmare.

His appearance begins to change into that in which he is-- an animal.

Dakota charges the Taker, tackling him, knocking Rachel and Matt free.

A battle ensues as Dakota and the Taker engage in an all out war. At moments it looks as if Dakota has the upper hand. But again, the Taker proves too strong.

It pins Dakota to the ground. Dakota's appearance changing back and forth.

The Taker plunges its hand inside Dakota's chest. Dakota feels the pain rip through his very existence as he watches his soul being torn from his body.

SOUL TAKER

What is yours will now be mine!

INDIAN DRUMS begin beating- echoing throughout the room.

LOUDER. LOUDER. Until they are deafening.

THE GHOSTS

of Dakotan's warriors materialize out of the walls. A hundred braves surround the room.

A lone coyote also materializes from the wall.

COYOTE

its eyes glowing yellow and red. Its shape changes into that of a man-Chief Dakotan.

SOUL TAKER

You!!!!

The Medicine Man steps out from behind several warriors and raises half of the gold medallion.

SOUL TAKER

Not this time, Holy man!

RACHEL

Grandma....

Rachel shows her the other half of the medallion.

GRANDMA

Throw it to him...NOW!!

Rachel throws the medallion as hard as she can toward Chief Dakotan.

GRANDMA

ACA!! ACA!!
(NOW!! NOW!!)

Chief Dakotan reaches out and catches the small gold piece. The Medicine Man hands him the other half and Dakotan joins them together.

Rays of golden LIGHT radiate forward, engulfing the Soul Taker, temporarily weakening it.

Chief Dakotan raises his hand and his braves respond by raising their ghost BOWS and ARROWS. He signals.

All the warriors release a barrage of ghostly arrows. The Taker yells out as one after the other passes through him.

It falls to the floor- squirming in pain. A thick black SMOKE spirals upward and moves throughout the room.

An evil face forms. It looks around, and with an evil CACKLE flies out a window.

The WINDOWS around the ballroom IMPLODE- spraying shards of glass everywhere.

The ghost warriors disappear through the walls and out onto the grounds- SHOUTING battle cries as they chase the Soul Taker.

Chief Dakotan nods his head at Rachel and Grandma and then he, too, joins the battle.

Dakota's body lay motionless. The room is still.

Samantha goes over and kneels next to him. She cradles his head in her hands.

DAKOTA

Olivia?

Samantha looks over to Matt, who is still recovering.

SAMANTHA

My love.

DAKOTA

I have missed you so!

SAMANTHA

And I you.

DAKOTA

I never meant....

SAMANTHA

I know.

DAKOTA

Forgive me?

SAMANTHA

There was never anything to forgive.

A slight smile forms on Dakota's face as he draws in one last breath, his eyes stare blankly forward, gone into darkness.

Suddenly....

A BALL OF LIGHT

appears from nowhere, circling them and stopping just above Dakota.

ANOTHER BALL OF LIGHT

rises from his chest, upward, joining the other. Both balls of light float toward the ceiling.

A BLINDING FLASH OF LIGHT- then DARKNESS.

CUT TO:

INT. GRAND BALLROOM -DAY

The ballroom of 1880 suddenly becomes the ballroom of present day.

The room is again dark and dank with dust and spider webs decorating the disjointed tables and chairs.

The morning sun peeks in just a little. Dakota's body is gone and there is no remnant of what just occurred.

Matt holds Samantha tightly in his arms. They are all in a state of bewilderment.

MATT

Are we done? Please tell me we are done... with whatever... we're supposed to be done with.

GRANDMA

It is over.

TTAM

How do you know? I mean this could be another hocus pocus trick. How do you know we're here? What if none of you are real?

Samantha plants a long, passionate kiss on him.

SAMANTHA

Is that real enough for you?

MATT

Ah... yeah...umm, that definitely works.

EXT. WILLOWS MANOR -DAY

A beautiful new day has begun. The sun shines down as birds happily sing.

SAMANTHA

Do you really love me?

TTAM

Yes, I really love you.

Samantha hugs him tightly.

SAMANTHA

Then don't let me go.

MATT

Not a chance.

As they walk past the gate and away from Willows Manor- they turn back and see....

EXT. GATE -DAY

DAKOTA AND OLIVIA

standing just inside the gate, finally together. They smile and then turn and walk toward Willows Manor- DISAPPEARING into eternity.

As they all get into Rachel's car and drive off...

A LONE COYOTE

is seen coming out of the brush and walking toward Willows Manor- where it disappears just past the gate.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OLD WILLOWS CEMETERY -DAY -SEVERAL WEEKS LATER

Samantha and Matt stand before her mother, SANDRA"S grave.

Samantha kneels down and places FLOWERS on her mother's headstone.

SAMANTHA

I'm sorry it's been awhile since I've been out here. I've had a lot...a lot to resolve. I had to learn how to let go. And, along the way I learned what love, true love means. It means never having to say goodbye. I still miss you, everyday. But, I want you to know that I'm okay. Matt asked me to marry him. We haven't set a date yet, but it'll be soon. I love you, mom.

(standing up)
I'll be seeing you.

INDIAN DRUMS can be heard in the distance as Matt and Samantha walk away.

FADE OUT.

THE END