

THE DARK WALKER

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(based on an idea by Tony Elwood)

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FADE IN:

As the main titles are ending, we hear the SOUNDS OF DIGGING. YOUNG BOY'S VOICES are heard:

VOICE 1 (v.o.)
Come on, for cryin' out loud!

VOICE 2 (v.o.)
Goin' as fast as I can. You could help.

VOICE 3
Stop bitching' guys, we gotta get moving'
here!

MORE DIGGING SOUNDS. Then, a DULL THUD. A shovel has hit a hard surface.

EXT. BURIAL GROUND-NIGHT

It's a small, grassy clearing in the deep woods. No headstones or grave markers, nothing to distinguish this a scared place. FOUR YOUNG BOYS have been digging here, half finished holes are everywhere, and now they're clustered around one hole, they're excited. The boys (who we will meet again as adults) are:

JIM WILLIAMS, the only one with a clear head right now;

BOB KINER, soft, chubby, out of breath - he's Jim's best pal;

VIC SIDOTTI, thin, wiry, a weasel of a kid, and

SAM ARNOLD, a good-looking kid, but the most nervous of all.

The boys drop their digging tools and carefully dig by hand now, Jim off to the side with the flashlight.

SAM
Hey, shine that thing over here.

VIC
Yeah Jimbo, make yourself useful for a change.

JIM
We need to hurry, guys.

BOB
It's gettin' late, we need to get home or we're gonna get in trouble! Gimme a hand here!

VIC
I ain't the one hadda stop to eat!

BOB
Shut up!

JIM
I'm not kidding. This is a graveyard.

BOB
So, who's gonna complain? Besides, they ain't buried nobody here in a hundred years.

VIC
Probably ain't no graves here anyway. Just a bunch of crap.

SAM
No, my grandpa said-

VIC
Ain't no Indians buried here. He's full of it.

BOB
I'm gonna find something. We ain't leaving until we do.

They dig in silence for a moment. Jim looks around, not wanting to be here.

SAM
There's something here. Almost got it.

Sam's hand reaches into the dirt, and he pulls up a BONE. A human bone. A femur.

BOB
(impressed)
Sheeeiiittt.

All are quiet now, the stakes have been raised.

SAM
Whaddya think?

VIC
Dog bone.

SAM
Ain't no dog bone. Too big.

BOB

Damn. Damn. What else is down here?

Bob and Sam reach in, digging furiously with their hands, after a few moments, they grab something, and they stop as their eyes lock.

SAM

It's big.

BOB

Yeah.

They carefully pull out their find, and both boys SHOUT and jump back, dropping their new prize:

They've pulled a SKELETAL TORSO from the dirt. Just the skull, still attached to the neck and rib cage. Blackened with age. A SMALL POUCH is tied to the neck. *

SAM

Holy cow.

They all stare at the torso. Then they look at each other. Who's going to go first?

Bob steels his nerve, climbs back into the hole, and examines the torso. Jim hands down the flashlight. Bob settles down in the hole right beside the torso. He licks his lips, gulps, all bravado gone.

Hey. You guys notice that?

SAM (cont'd)

What?

JIM

The wind has stopped.

SAM

So?

JIM

The crickets are quiet too.

He's right, it deathly quiet and still now. The boys exchange nervous looks.

SAM

(to Bob)

Hurry up down there.

Bob is gingerly holding the pouch, untying the string around the spine of the skeleton. He hefts the pouch in his hand. Something inside CLINKS.

BOB
It's heavy.

He scrambles out of the hole, and the boys form a tight circle as Bob opens the pouch, spilling the contents on the ground. FOUR GOLD COINS spill out. Large, thick coins. Obviously gold, though it takes some of Bob's spit polish to rub the dirt off and see the real shine of the gold.

VIC
We're rich, Jimbo.

The coins are ornate, intricate images on each side, inscriptions in a foreign language, etc.

BOB
It's gold. It's real gold. Man.

JIM
Let's go. Come on.

A NOISE IN THE WOODS. MOVEMENT. Something is coming.

JIM (cont'd)
Come on!

Bob scoops up the coins, and the boys are ready to move. Then, from behind them:

OLD MAN (o.s.)
Hello boys.

They all JUMP and SHOUT in surprise. An OLD MAN stands behind them. His age is hard to say, so we'll settle for ancient. His hair is long and grey, falling neatly over his shoulders.

The boys are too scared to move.

OLD MAN (cont'd)
You young men shouldn't be here. Past your bedtime.

JIM
Listen, mister-

OLD MAN
(indicating the pouch)
Found something?

BOB
We're leaving, okay?

OLD MAN
No.

BOB

What?

OLD MAN

Not yet. You have something there. It doesn't belong to you.

BOB

We found it.

The old man looks around at the holes the boys have dug in the dirt.

OLD MAN

This is not your place. This is not your home. A place of rest, this is.

VIC

Look, we're gonna go now.

Jim is studying the Old Man. The old man looks directly at Jim. As he does:

THE OLD MAN'S EYES:

*

change, it's brief, but it's there. They seem to roll over, the whites of the eyes go black, the pupils are narrow, catlike, glowing red. Then the eyes are normal again.

*

Jim sees this. Terrified now.

OLD MAN

Do you know what this place is? We come here before we move to the Outside. When the Great Spirit calls.

The boys are scared. Even Bob. The Old Man moves to the largest hole and sees the bones there.

OLD MAN (cont'd)

A place of rest. Some things should not be disturbed. Ko'lok sleeps. He who is one with the shadows.

The boys start to inch away.

OLD MAN (cont'd)

Return what you have taken. Then go.

Bob considers the pouch he's carrying.

BOB

Screw you.

OLD MAN
 (turning to Jim)
 Come here, Jimbo.

Bob takes off in a run, the other boys right behind him.

EXT. THE WOODS-VARIOUS SHOTS-NIGHT

Following the boys as they RUN through the night, through the dense woods. They JUMP over deadfall, knock branches out of their way, a frantic flight.

Jim is alone, behind the others. He TRIPS AND FALLS in the dirt. Out of breath, he lays there a second, then slowly gets up.

JIM
 (hissing a whisper)
 Guys! Bob! Hey!

No answer. Just the sounds of the night. And something else. Jim looks around, trying to determine this new sound.

Something is moving through the forest-coming on fast. We hear it A FREIGHT-TRAIN RUMBLE, DEEP AND FULL AND BONE-SHAKING. And other sounds, too, loud and angry and fierce, like a thousand mad dogs, howling and shrieking all at once.

Jim is glued to the spot, whispering a prayer.

OLD MAN
 (his voice loud, thundering,
 and not human at all)
 THE SLEEPER AWAKENS!!!

A QUICK, NIGHTMARISH SHOT OF THE OLD MAN AS HE RUSHES AT THE CAMERA; HIS FACE IS THAT OF A DEMON, A MONSTER FROM HELL, ALL FANGS AND HORNS AND HAIR AND HIS HORRIBLE FACE IS STEAMING, BLOOD SPEWS FROM HIS MOUTH AS IT OPENS WIDE, THE FANGS IMPOSSIBLY LONG, AND JIM SCREAMS AND

CUT TO:

INT. JIM'S APARTMENT-EARLY MORNING

As the ADULT JIM is in bed. He eyes blink open. Wide open. He's flat on his back, drenched in sweat, sopping wet. His wife ANNE is beside him, fast asleep. Jim looks over at the edge of the bed.

His fingers are gripping the edge of the mattress, the knuckles white, the hand shaking.

He takes a few deep breaths to calm down. Anne stirs beside him.

ANNE
(sleepy)
Honey?

JIM
Go back to sleep.

He rolls over to kiss her cheek, and she's out like a light.

INT. JIM'S APARTMENT-BATHROOM-DAY

At the sink, he runs cold water, then splashes his face. He rubs his face and looks at his reflection in the mirror.

INT. JIM'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM-EARLY MORNING

Anne is at the mirror, trying to brush her hair into place. She is quite pregnant. She stops brushing, puts her hand to her stomach. Smiles.

ANNE
(whispers)
Little man.

*

INT. JIM'S APARTMENT-KITCHEN-DAY

Jim and Anne sit at the kitchen table, eating breakfast. She watches him as he reads the morning papers.

ANNE
Eat your eggs, they'll get cold.

He absently does as told.

ANNE (cont'd)
We need to be there by eleven.

JIM
I know.

ANNE
Just reminding you.

JIM
I haven't forgotten.

A beat.

ANNE

Jim...it's okay, you know. It's a gift.
Look at it that way. Grandma doesn't have
anybody else.

Tension now.

JIM

I haven't done a good job taking care of
you, have I?

ANNE

You've done a wonderful job. But the
market is sky-high right now. Even if I
was working, we couldn't afford to move.
Grandma wants to give us the house.

JIM

I'm trying. It's hard.

ANNE

You and your God-damn pride.

Another awkward pause.

ANNE (cont'd)

(hands to her stomach)

Ooh! He's been kicking all morning. Wanna
feel?

(no response)

He's gonna be early. And he's gonna be
big. Like his daddy.

JIM

Like his daddy.

ANNE

I love his daddy. So very much.

Finally a smile from Jim. He lights a smoke. She eyes the
cigarette.

ANNE (cont'd)

Gimme a puff.

JIM

Nope.

ANNE

Come on, just one.

JIM

No, Anne. Not even after the baby. You're
quits, remember?

ANNE
What about you?

JIM
I'm trying, it's hard.

ANNE
Didn't I just hear that somewhere? Come
one, just one drag.

He offers the smoke to her, but as she reaches out he snaps it back, teasing her. Offers again. She reaches out, tentative. Smiles. He snatches it back.

Jim moves around to stand beside Anne.

JIM
(holding the cigarette out)
Okay. You want? You wanna suck on it?

ANNE
Jim-

He drags deep and exhales. Put the cigarette close to her lips. He makes a point of rubbing his groin against her shoulder.

JIM
Come one baby. Just one. Put it in your
mouth.

His free hand reaches down and cups her breast.

ANNE
(as he squeezes her breast)
Jimmy.

JIM
Come on baby.

ANNE
Honey I just woke up, okay?

He sighs, composes himself and moves away, leans against the sink, watching her as he smokes. Anne smiles, trying to break the tension.

A slight smile from Jim. He douses the smoke in the sink.

JIM
Gotta take a leak.

He marches from the room.

EXT. JIM'S APARTMENT-DAY

The car is jacked up, Jim on his back underneath, changing the oil.

INT. JIM'S APARTMENT-BATHROOM-DAY

Anne is bent over the bathtub, scrubbing and scouring grout, deep in her work. She focuses on the task at hand and then:

WHISPER

(soft and slithery, the voice
seems to echo as it draws her
name out in a sigh)

Anne-

She jerks and turns at the voice. Nothing there.

ANNE

Hello?

She's all alone. She looks around, warily.

A SOFT RUSTLE of movement in the bedroom. She steps into the room to follow the sound.

The room is empty. No one else there.

Her eyes dart around. Nothing. Satisfied she's alone, she turns back and all the curtains in the room BILLOW out as if blown by A STRONG BREEZE.

Anne JUMPS and YELPS in surprise. She moves to the windows. They're all closed. Locked down tight.

She stands beside a mirror as she looks at the window. In the mirror, a TALL, DARK FIGURE stands behind her. It's hand reaches out, almost touching her arm - then the figure fades away. Anne never knew it was there.

INT. JIM'S CAR-TRAVELLING-DAY

Jim drives as Anne watches the scenery go by. She eats a huge cheeseburger and drinks a one liter cola. Jim watches as she devours the food. She just pounds it down. Finally she feels his eyes on her.

ANNE

(with a mouthful)
Wanna bite?

JIM

No, you're doing fine.

Happy, she takes another huge bite.

EXT. GAS STATION-DAY

Jim is pumping the gas as Anne waits in the car. He looks around at her. She got a candy bar now. She smiles up at him. He smiles back. Then he turns back to the pump, and the smile fades away. He expression darkens.

EXT. HAMBLY - MAIN STREET-DAY

Jim's car cruises down the main drag.

INT. JIM'S CAR-TRAVELLING-DAY

They take in the familiar old sights as they drive.

ANNE

Home again.

JIM

I can't believe it. It's hardly changed a bit. It's kinda sad.

*

ANNE

I think it's quaint. Like Mayberry.

JIM

Yeah, it's quaint. It's timeless. Like Mayberry in a poverty-stricken, manic-depressive kinda way.

She shoots him a look.

ANNE

I still miss some of this stuff. Some of these people.

JIM

Not all of them. Sam.

ANNE

Oh God, Sam. I forgot about Sam. He won't be coming over with "the guys" every weekend will he?

JIM

More than likely.

ANNE

Is he still hot for me?

JIM

Probably.

ANNE
Think he found a woman?

JIM
You mean the non-inflatable kind?

ANNE
Yeah.

JIM
No.

They pass a full service garage, mechanics huddled around the cars.

ANNE
Look, there it is. How does it feel to be the owner of the Jim's Import Service & Repair?

JIM
The jury's still out on that one.

ANNE
You'll do fine.

She leans over to kiss him on the cheek. They ride in silence.

ANNE (cont'd)
Oh. Oh no.

JIM
What?

ANNE
I just thought-if this is Mayberry, I'm married to Goober.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Grandma's house. Jim and Anne are outside, talking with MRS. KOBRITZ, the neighbor and up until now, Grandma's caretaker. Older, with flowing gray hair, she's still exotic and alluring. Her eyes wander to Jim every so often.

MRS. KOBRITZ
The caretaker says the house is in good shape. Patched the roof last fall. It's old, but sound.

JIM
Old. Yeah. Any problem with vermin?

MRS. KOBRITZ
Vermin?

JIM
You know, rats.

MRS. KOBRITZ
Oh, no, no.

JIM
There are rats in the basement. Looks like a lot of rats. I mean, we had rats in the city, but it looks infested down there.

MRS. KOBRITZ
No, I wouldn't think so. Mr. Matheson has taken good care of the place. I know the exterminator was here in the fall.

JIM
Mmm. Still, I'll put some poison out.

MRS. KOBRITZ
You know your way around, Jimbo.
(Jim starts at the use of the familiar "Jimbo")
You ever built a house?

JIM
I know my way around a wood shop. House like this, it'll last. Just needs some care. More hands-on, I guess. But actually I'm a mechanic by trade.

MRS. KOBRITZ
Auto mechanic?

JIM
Yeah. Imports a specialty. I bought out Bloch's garage. Try to jump start it a bit.

MRS. KOBRITZ
Seems like most of the mechanic work has gone over to the garage at the Value Mart. And not much call for import cars around here-
(realizing her foot is in her mouth)
What I mean is-

ANNE
It's okay. He can fix pick-up trucks too.

They begin walking around the side of the house, towards the back yard.

ANNE (cont'd)
Mrs. Kobritz, I can't tell you how much I appreciate you looking after Grandma-

MRS. KOBRITZ
Don't say anything else, it's my pleasure. Your Grandma's such a dear lady. She's been so looking forward to the two of you coming up.

ANNE
How is she?

MRS. KOBRITZ
Has her days. Some better than others.

ANNE
Today?

MRS. KOBRITZ
Not so good.

ANNE
I think she'll feel better, being in her home, when-

She stops. Unable to continue.

ANNE (cont'd)
She raised me, you know. After my parents died.

MRS. KOBRITZ
She showed me pictures of you.

ANNE
Not baby pictures!

The women share a laugh. As they hit the corner of the house, Jim stops and turns to survey the front yard. The women continue on, lost in conversation. Jim watches after them. They turn the corner, gone.

JIM
Nobody's called me Jimbo in twenty years. *

Looking around the house, Jim sees something a few hundred feet down the road.

Two hundred feet away, a solitary figure stands by the side of the road, watching the house.

Too far away to really be distinct. But the feeling is this figure is watching. And waiting.

JIM (cont'd)
(neighborly)
Hey there!

Jim studies the lone figure. Moves closer to the road. He squints for a better look. He tentatively waves his hand. The figure doesn't respond.

Taking a few step, closer now, Jim can see better. He stops in his tracks. The figure down the road looks like the old man from the burial grounds. From years ago. The figure just stands still, watching. Not moving an inch.

Now Jim takes a few steps backwards. He shivers. Keeps looking at the figure down the road.

The person doesn't move. Just watches.

ANNE (o.s.)
Jim! Where are you, baby?

He turns to the sound of her voice.

JIM
I'm coming, hon!

He turns back and the figure is gone. Vanished. Not a hiding place in sight, but the person disappeared in an instant.

Jim looks all around, 360 degrees. The person is nowhere in sight. He backs up, facing the road all the way, then turns and quickly walks around the back of the house.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Later. Jim and Anne are in the living room. Grandma, elderly, frail, is laid back in the easy chair. A metal walker by the recliner. Anne kneels by Grandma's side.

ANNE
Grandma? Can I get you anything?

No verbal response from Grandma. She will smile, or slightly nod, but that's it.

ANNE (cont'd)
Grandma, this is Jim. He's my husband.
We're both gonna take care of you.

Grandma looks Jim over. Looks back at Anne.

ANNE (cont'd)
 We're so glad you wanted us to come.
 We're happy to be here. We'll take good
 care of you.
 (she strokes Grandma's hand)
 You'll be okay.

JIM
 You'll be fine. Don't you fret.

She smiles at Jim.

ANNE
 We have to go back to the city, and
 finish moving our stuff. But we'll be
 back on Tuesday.

*

Now Grandma falters. Her eyes waver - she's agitated.

ANNE (cont'd)
 But Mrs. Kobritz will stay here and watch
 over you.

Grandma takes Anne's hand, squeezing it. Hard.

ANNE (cont'd)
 Grandma?

Grandma shakes her head slightly. Squeezes Anne's hand again.
 Harder.

ANNE (cont'd)
 What, what is it?

Exhausted by the effort, Grandma sinks back in her recliner.
 Anne and Jim are confused, concerned.

INT. AUTO SERVICE CENTER-DAY

Jim and MAC THE MECHANIC stand in the back of the busy super-
 service center.

MAC
 Hate to lose ya.

JIM
 Yeah, I know. But, we're trying to do
 some stuff, and maybe-

He trails off. Awkward pause.

MAC
 Things are okay at home?

JIM

Yeah. Yeah. We need a change of pace, and Anne, her Grandma, she's old.

Business as usual all around. Jim looks around.

JIM (cont'd)

Things gonna be okay here?

MAC

We'll be fine. Shift the load, I guess move Burt up, he'll be senior now. We got more than enough work to go around.

Jim grabs a box of personal stuff and looks around the busy garage. He slowly moves towards the open service bay doors. He gives a small wave, then walks away.

INT. JIM'S APARTMENT-DAY

PACKING AND MOVING MONTAGE: VARIOUS CUTS

Jim and Anne pack their stuff in boxes, dishes, electronics, etc.; the apartment empties out bit by bit. Shots of small, tender moments inserted: they share a quick kiss or play with her stuffed toys as they pack them up. They load it all into the car Both look tired, moody and tempered by a bit of trepidation, unsure of the big move and what lies ahead.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX-DAY

Jim and Anne are by the car.

ANNE

We packed everything?

JIM

That's the beauty of being poor. Not as much crap to lug around.

EXT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY-DAY

The car passes by.

INT. JIM'S CAR-TRAVELLING-DAY

On the road, Jim drives as Anne watches the world go by. He takes her hand and kisses it for comfort.

EXT. JIM'S GARAGE-DAY

Jim is working at his new place of business, under the hood of a car. Hanging around is BOB, the adult Bob.

He looks like the junior version we saw earlier, soft and round, just less hair.

BOB
Prognosis?

JIM
Hmm. Too early to tell. Needs a tune up though. Oil change.

BOB
Okay.

JIM
You change it every three thousand, right?

BOB
More or less.

JIM
Bob.

BOB
Okay. Sometime last year.

JIM
Man, you gotta take care of it. You're gonna throw a rod, lock it up. Damn.

BOB
Well, look at it this way, your first customer will pretty much pay back your bank loan.

JIM
First and only customer so far. Hand me that socket wrench.

BOB
(like Jim is speaking Greek)
What?

JIM
Socket wrench. The wrench with the socket on it.

He hands Jim the wrench. Jim works in peace for a moment.

BOB
Aren't we testy today?

JIM

It's everything, man. I don't know if this was a good idea.

BOB

Of course it is. You grew up the other side of the woods, this was our hang-out, man. You're coming home. Anne is with her granny, she oughta be happy.

JIM

Overjoyed.

BOB

So you're getting a house out of the deal.

JIM

We had a nice apartment. In the city.

BOB

SO what're so bad about coming back? I'm here, Sam, Vic. Like old times.

JIM

It's like I'm trapped. She got me back home. In her family house. Her money is keepin' us afloat, you know. Has been for the past year. Her Grandma worked for the Wilmarth Foundation for years, she coulda afforded a freakin' mansion.

BOB

It's not forever.

JIM

I keep telling myself that. But I can barely make the rent here. The baby's due, ah, damn!

He tosses his tools away, frustrated he backs away from the car.

JIM (cont'd)

I didn't think I'd be here. Counting every penny. About to get worse. Bob, if Anne wasn't expecting...

He stares into space.

BOB

What?

JIM

Maybe after the baby. If things don't pick up, once Anne's back on her feet, then, maybe...I can...

He can't finish. His eyes mist over. Bob puts a hand on his pal's shoulder.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Anne lounges on the couch, talking on the phone.

ANNE

I hate it -
 (she looks around, lowers her voice to a whisper)
 okay, maybe not hate, but it's a bigger adjustment than I thought - no, Grandma's fine, she's okay-

Anne gets up and tip-toes down the hallway to Grandma's room.

ANNE (cont'd)

-she's worse off than I remember, but the doctor said that's to be expected- Jim? He's at work all day. Dawn to dusk. Then he's trying to fix the fuckin' fallin' apart house -

Grandma rests in bed. Anne watches her for a minute. Moves back to the living room.

ANNE (cont'd)

- no, no, I'm not worried about that, I'm sure he hasn't seen her in a while. That's one good thing about us moving here - he'd better not. I'll rip his balls off.

EXT. SHOPPING CENTER-DAY

Anne is walking towards the car, arms full of shopping bags. She struggles to get the keys from her purse, wrestling with the bags, etc; dropping stuff in the process.

CLOSE on Anne's back and shoulder as she stoops down to pick up the goods. She curses softly as she rearranges stuff, and A WRINKLED HAND edges into frame, resting on her shoulder and gripping it.

With a squeal she jumps up, turning around to see:

No one is there. She's all alone by the car. A bit spooked, she looks all around, then goes back to unlocking the car, keeping one eye out for anything else.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE-DAY

Anne's care pulls up outside, she hops out and marches into the store. Without any hesitation she picks up a giant fudge brownie, soda, then grabs a pack of smokes from the counter, rips into it and lights up as the amused CLERK watches. She tosses a couple of dollars on the counter, eats, drinks and smokes all at the same time.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Jim and Anne are in bed, wrapped around each other. Jim's eyes flutter open at a noise. Rustle. Soft. Rats?

Jim slowly sits up. Listens to see where it's coming from.

The noise again - rustle - in the corner? His eyes follow it. The ceiling?

No noise now. He relaxes. Snuggles back beside Anne again.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

The moon in the sky seems to glow over the old house.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Anne is unpacking, putting clothes in the closet.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Jim is crouched in the tub, working on the water faucet, Anne watching him.

ANNE

Maybe we should call a plumber.

JIM

They charge too much. These pipes are sixty years old, that's all, they all need to be replaced. And this drywall isn't dry anymore, look at this.

He puts a finger to the wall above the tub faucet, pushes in: the wall is mushy, his fingers pokes right in.

ANNE

Oh Jim, don't do that.

JIM
I'm gonna have to tear all this stuff
out.

ANNE
Maybe Vic can come over and help?

JIM
I can do it, Anne. OK?

She looks at him, not convinced at all.

JIM (cont'd)
Thanks for the support, honey.

He goes back to the faucet, and with the twist of the wrench,
the faucet springs from the wall, WATER GUSHING OUT.

JIM (cont'd)
Shit!

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-BASEMENT

Jim is laying out fresh rat traps. He looks at the traps that
have been sprung. No rats, though. He frowns. Re-sets the old
traps.

VOICE
(so soft, less than a whisper)
Jimbo?

He turns. Looks around. The basement is empty. A sound, like
rats in the walls again. He looks to the source of the sound.
Then he hears it again. From a different wall. It's all
around. He moves to the stairs. Backing away.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Jim shoves open the basement door and storms out into the
light, cursing and jumpy.

JIM
Fucking damn haunted house! Damn!

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Anne is sitting on the bed, talking on the phone.

ANNE
When do you think you'll be home, baby?

INT. BOB'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Jim is in the kitchen, on the cordless phone. In the background the guys are raucous, laughing, having a blast.

JIM

Soon, hon. No later than midnight. You gonna be okay?

ANNE (v.o.)

Yeah, fine. Grandma's asleep. Just you be careful. You know those guys are still just a bunch 'a overgrown kids. You, too.

JIM

We're just shooting the breeze, babe. Couple of beers, I'll be home soon.

ANNE (v.o.)

Don't drink too much.

JIM

You know me. I'll nurse one.

ANNE (v.o.)

Be careful coming home. I love you.

JIM

Love you too.

The guys in the background hear this and break out in all kinds of mocking shouts and cat-calls. Jim grimaces.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Anne has hung up the phone. She sits on the bed. Alone. Lonely. She gets up and heads for the hall.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-HALLWAY-NIGHT

She moves down the hallway, and stops at Grandma's door. She opens it slowly, quietly, peeks in.

Grandma is fast asleep.

Anne watches her for a moment. Real love in her eyes.

ANNE

(under her breath)
Sleep tight.

INT. BOB'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Gathered around the living room card table, the remains of hoagies, chips, and beer are piled high. Poker chips and cards are buried there somewhere. Loud music in the background.

SAM and VIC are here as well, we should recognize them as the adult versions of their younger counterparts.

SAM

So the guy says, "Take the monkey? I thought you were taking the monkey!"

Insane laughter. They choke on their food, etc.

Ad-libbed dialogue follows for a minute or two, as the guys reminisce about the old days, old friends, bawdy adventures, etc. Then:

VIC

Man, oh, man. What times. Jim, it's good to have you back.

SAM

Does honey want you home?

JIM

Guys-

BOB

Hey, hey, leave him alone. He's having a boys' night out. For once.

VIC

When you're whipped, you're whipped.

SAM

Bet you hate leaving' Anne home all alone.

JIM

She's okay. She likes to stay at home because of the baby.

SAM

Ah, the baby. Bet you two had fun cookin' that one up!

Lascivious comments from the boys.

JIM

Tryin' was the fun part.

SAM
I'll bet, havin' that fine piece ridin'
you to hell and back, those juicy jugs of
hers bouncin'...

Everybody knows Sam has gone one step too far. Awkward
silence.

JIM
Pardon me?

SAM
Ah, well, I mean, Anne was always a
looker. When she was growin' up. We all
wanted her.

JIM
Oh really? Guys?

VIC
She was hot, Jim. We all thought so.

JIM
But none of you guys ever told me you
wanted my girl? You wanted to screw my
girl and nobody said nothing.

BOB
Hey, we ain't pigs.

JIM
Except for good old Sam here.

SAM
You know. Are you gonna punch me?

Silence. Jim studies Sam. Then he puts his finger over the
top of his beer bottle, shakes it and sprays Sam with the
suds. Uproarious laughter from everybody, even Jim and SAM.

BOB
I'll drink to that.

SAM
Don't mind if I do!

They all drink. After a moment, all the partying calms down.

BOB
You know, guys...

They wait for his next words.

BOB (cont'd)
I've been thinking. Jim reminded me of something today. We're all in the same boat, pretty much.

SAM
Huh?

BOB
Who's game?

VIC
For what?

He looks around the table at each man.

BOB
Road trip.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD-NIGHT

Bob's car moves down a two lane country road.

INT. BOB' CAR-TRAVELLING-NIGHT

The guys are all in the car. Cruising slow.

BOB
Almost there.

SAM
You mind telling us where we're going?

VIC
I got an idea. Jesus.

Jim is just staring out the window. He knows what's ahead. They ride in silence.

EXT. SIDE ROAD-NIGHT

Bob's car pulls onto the shoulder of the road, the engine dies, the lights go dark. The guys get out of the car. Most of them still have a beer in hand. Jim zips up his windbreaker, shivering.

SAM
I haven't been out here in years.

JIM
This may not be a good idea.

Bob goes to the trunk, takes out a few small shovels and a duffel bag. The guys watch him.

BOB
Why not?

JIM
Wasn't a great idea the first time.

Bob just grunts disagreement as he slams the trunk lid.

EXT. WOODS-VARIOUS SHOTS-NIGHT

Tracking with the guys as they pick their way through the forest. Various cuts show their progress through the woods.

JIM
Let's go back.

BOB
You gave me a great idea, pal. We got those gold coins years ago. Remember?

SAM
I do. I remember. Like it was yesterday.

BOB
Do you guys still have those coins?

VIC
Hell, no. That's been twenty-five years ago.

BOB
I held onto mine all those years. Until last September. Then I took it to one of those rare coin dealers over in Rainserpoint. Remember the carvings on the coins?

VIC
Yeah, wasn't in English.

BOB
Spanish. Those coins dated back four hundred years. The guy sent the coin to the university, had some dude look it over. His best guess was early explorers traded those coins with the natives. Maybe tokens of good faith, whatever. The lady on the coin was Queen Isabella.

SAM
Cut to the chase, Bob.

BOB
I cleared over two-hundred thousand.

*

This stops them.

SAM
You're shittin' us.

BOB
No way. After taxes. Two hundred
thousand.

VIC
God damn.

BOB
Wish you'd held onto the coin now, huh?

EXT. BURIAL GROUND-NIGHT

Back in the graveyard now. Looking the same as it did
earlier. Dark, secluded, creepy. The guys stand in the
clearing.

JIM
(softly)
The sleeper awakens.

VIC
What?

JIM
Nothing. Something from a dream.

BOB
Let's get going, then.

JIM
What do you propose we do?

BOB
Find more of those coins.

JIM
This is grave robbing.

BOB
No. Not at all. No grave markers. No
tombstones. This is treasure hunting.
That's all it is.

VIC
Yeah, that's all. If we find something,
we find something. More gold. Get rich.
End of story.

JIM
It's not right. This is not right.

SAM
What's wrong with you? Bob's right, we're all hurting here. You with the shop, the baby on the way. Me, I'm tryin' to pay two alimonies-

JIM
Not my problem-

VIC
I got a mortgage. I got credit card bills.

BOB
We could all use it. Even after Uncle Sam takes his cut. We'd have a nice cushion to fall back on. How much easier could it be?

A sound in the woods. A howl. Like a wolf, but different, distorted. All the guys hear it.

VIC
Damn.

BOB
Hound dog. Don't worry.

SAM
Don't sound like no dog.

BOB
I said forget about it.

JIM
Let's just go.

BOB
Look, you don't have to take any gold-

JIM
If you find any.

BOB
-if we find any, right, okay. But if you don't want any, don't mess it up for the rest of us. Just be quiet, or go back to the car.

JIM
What if we find more bones-

BOB
(intense)
Then it's a waste of time! But I'm going
to find out!

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP ON A SHOVEL BLADE STRIKING THE GROUND, TURNING THE
EARTH OVER.

Later now, more holes have been excavated. A LOW FOG is
creeping through the clearing.

The guys are dirty, covered in grime, and dead tired. Jim is
still to the side, watching it all. Bob stops digging and
leans on his shovel.

BOB (cont'd)
Damn. Nothing.

JIM
Told you.

VIC
We been here hours, and for what?

Nobody answers for a beat.

BOB
It was worth a try.

SAM
I got an idea. Maybe we could all share
in Bob's good fortune here.

BOB
What?

SAM
We was all together when we found those
coins. You got more than enough money
outta yours.

BOB
If you couldn't hold on to the coin,
that's not my problem.

VIC
How were we to know what they were worth?
We were kids. Maybe you could loan us
some.

BOB
I ain't loaning nobody squat.

SAM

We were all together. Share and share alike.

Sides are drawn now. Tension.

VIC

Don't seem right, Bob. You came out ahead on all this.

VOICE (o.s.)

Fool's games. Fool's faces.

They all start at the sound of the voice, and turn to see:

THE OLD MAN. Same old man they saw years ago. Still just as ancient. He stands at the edge of the clearing, a wooden walking stick in his hand. Walks slowly towards the men.

The guys look at the old man. Recognition dawns on them. They can't believe their eyes. Jim is especially struck by the sight.

VIC

Who are you?

OLD MAN

You know me. You all do.

He finally reaches them, regards each man in turn.

VIC

Ain't this past your bedtime, old timer?

He smiles at Vic.

OLD MAN

I am old. But my time has yet to come. When the most vital of you has drawn his last breath, I will still walk the earth. But this vessel is tired, brittle.

They don't understand what the old man is saying. They exchange looks.

BOB

This is none of your business. Just turn around and go away.

OLD MAN

It's good you came back. I had hoped you would. This is easier. You will return what doesn't belong to you.

JIM
 (afraid, more than the others)
 Guys-

BOB
 Shut up.
 (to the Old Man)
 I told you once. Now go.

During this, Jim notices something on the old man: starting at the wrinkled neck, and going down the chest and past his unbuttoned flannel shirt is an ugly scar, the skin knotted and pale.

OLD MAN
 You can't ignore or turn your back on what is written, what is fated. Eyes have been upon you. Marked, you all are.

JIM
 What do you want?

OLD MAN
 The coins. You took them so long ago. They are not yours. They are needed here.

BOB
 I don't know what you're talking about.

OLD MAN
 Lies. The way of the whites.

Bob reaches out to grab the old man's shoulder, but the old man reaches out first, lightning-fast, and in the blink of an eye has shoved Bob, hard, the burly man flies back ten feet or more before crunching to the ground.

Now the other guys are scared.

OLD MAN (cont'd)
 The sleeper will awaken. His journey to the Other Side is interrupted. You have what he will need.

Bob picks himself up and limps back to the group, shovel in hand.

BOB
 You old bastard-

He starts to wield the shovel, but the old man turns on him, the ancient eyes lighting up, the face now looking still human, but also feral, savage.

OLD MAN

Treacherous are the ways of the white man, evil his deed! You presume to know all, but you know so little. Puny in the eyes of the Great Spirit. Just a mite, to be swept away.

He advances on Vic, who backs away.

OLD MAN (cont'd)

He Who Is One With The Shadow will not be mocked. He will not be cheated as his brethren were cheated! Return what you have taken and Ko'lok will show mercy. If you value life more than you do the gold, return what is not yours! The Dark Walker needs a stronger vessel, I could claim any of you now!

He swirls the walking stick as he speaks, the stick radiates glowing energy, sparks fly from it, leaving a trail in the air.

VIC

You're crazy. Get out of here, now!

OLD MAN

You were divided amongst yourselves a moment ago, the lure of the gold has such power. Give it back. Return the coins, never come back, and Ko'lok will follow the spirit path to the Great Hunting Grounds. Do it now and take this as the only warning!

Bob has crept up behind the old man, and he winds up and smashes the shovel against the old man's skull. The old man drops to his knees, dropping his stick. Bob stands over him, the others are too stunned to move.

BOB

I warned you.

OLD MAN

(coughing up blood)
Your words mean nothing. Your actions seal your fate. The Dark Walker is hungry. Vengeful.

Bob brings the shovel down again. The old man goes face down in the dirt.

SAM

Jesus!

BOB
Let's get the hell out of here.

VIC
Bob-

BOB
Shut up and let's move!

The start to shuffle away, Vic and Jim watching the old man as they back away.

The old man struggles to move, finally flopping over onto his back.

OLD MAN
(softly moaning)
It's only begun-

He coughs up more blood.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD-NIGHT

Bob's car zooms into the night.

INT. BOB' CAR-TRAVELLING-NIGHT

None of the men are saying anything. They stare at their shoes, out the window, do anything but talk to each other.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX-NIGHT

Sam climbs out of Bob's car and watches it pull away. As the taillights disappear, Sam notices he's all alone in the dark here.

A sound from the dark end of the complex, a bottle breaking. Sam looks down there, sees nothing. He hightails it to one of the units.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT-NIGHT

Later, Sam sits in a chair by the TV. He bolts down a beer.

On the TV, soft-core cable stuff. Naked babes.

Sam isn't paying attention. He runs his hands through his hair, drains the beer. At last he breaks down, sobbing, scared, confused.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Tired, shell-shocked, Jim climbs from the car and turns to look at Bob.

Bob and Vic look back at Jim. No one speaks. Bob finally backs the car up and rolls down the driveway. Jim watches the car until the tail lights disappear.

Quiet as the car goes around the bend. Jim stands alone in the dark.

CRICKETS. An OWL HOOTS. Jim looks around, guarded. Spooked.

EXT. BURIAL GROUND-NIGHT

The body of the old man lies in the dirt. A fine mist covers the ground.

Clouds roll over the moon.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-BEDROOM-NIGHT

Anne is asleep. Jim walks in, kneels down beside her. He watches her as she sleeps.

She's beautiful. Jim looks at her. His emotions unreadable. He places a gentle hand on her forehead. She stirs, and he removes his hand. She turns back over, still sleeping soundly.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

As the SUN RISES over the hills.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-KITCHEN-DAY

Anne helps Grandma eat breakfast. A quiet, loving scene. She spoon feeds oatmeal to Grandma, gently wipes her mouth with a napkin.

IN THE BEDROOM

Jim sits up in bed. Pensive. Looks out the window.

EXT. BAR-DAY

A large SEMI RIG hauling beer pulls up to the small roadside bar & grill. The engine sputters out and Bob climbs out of the truck.

INT. BAR-DAY

Bob enters, pushing a hand dolly stacked with cases of beer. The BARKEEP cleans glasses, getting ready for the day.

BARKEEP

Bobby boy.

BOB

Hey man.

BARKEEP

How's life treatin' ya?

BOB

Not often enough, man.

BARKEEP

Damn straight there.

Bob stands the dolly up, mops his brow, puts his invoice clipboard on the bar.

BARKEEP (cont'd)

Hot enough out there?

BOB

Damn furnace out there.

A glossy picture of a nude girl is tacked to a bulletin board behind the bar. Bob kisses his finger, plants it between the girl's legs.

BOB (cont'd)

How ya doing, doll?

IN THE BACK ROOM

Bob wheels the dolly in, starts unloading the beer. Quick and efficient, he unloads the dolly, re-stocking the beer cooler from the rear, ripping open cases and stocking six and twelve packs.

The Barkeep moves into the cooler, leans against the wall.

Bob keeps on stocking.

BARKEEP

Hey, Bob.

Bob doesn't hear, too busy. The Barkeep moves over, taps Bob on the shoulder and Bob EXPLODES, jumping and shouting and dropping a case of long necks which SHATTER on the floor.

BOB

JESUS MARY MOTHER-

The Barkeep shrinks back as Bob collapses on the floor, scared shitless. Hand to his chest, Bob tries to calm down.

BOB (cont'd)
Stupid bastard sneakin' up on somebody,
man. Gonna give me a freaking heart
attack.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-BASEMENT-DAY

Anne is setting up a panty, arranging dry goods on shelves, etc.

A RUSTLE in a dark corner. Anne freezes, turns to look.

More RUSTLING. SQUEAKING.

Anne grabs a broom, takes a step forward. A small pile of empty cardboard boxes are in the corner. They shift slightly, movement underneath.

SNAP! A trap has sprung. Anne whirls around to see the sprung trap, but no rat.

FLASHES of movement all around now, more SQUEAKS. Anne is on guard, broom at the ready. She moves towards the small pile of cardboard...waits...listens...the gently prods at the pile with the brooms and

She SHRIEKS as FAMILY OF RATS scurries everywhere, at least seven or eight big rats, they swarm past the screaming Anne as she swings the broom at them.

Spooked and breathing hard now - Anne looks around for other signs of rats.

No sign of them, but SOFT RUSTLING and WHISPERED SQUEAKS are all around now.

Anne backs up the stairs, eyes darting everywhere, broom still her best friend. She hits the top of the stairs, nudges the door open, backs out, and SLAMS the door shut.

INT. JIM'S GARAGE-DAY

Jim and Vic at the garage, kicked back, no business.

JIM
I think we ought to go back and check on that old dude.

VIC
Nope, bad idea. Look, we all had a bit to drink, okay? I'm not so sure what happened out there. I couldn't even untie my shoes when I got home.

JIM

You saw what he did. He clanged that old man with the shovel. He probably killed him.

VIC

No, no, the old man was moving. When we was running away, I turned back to look. He was moving, he's okay. Geezer probably had a snoot-full, too. Makes you limber.

JIM

Well then if he's okay, then maybe he'll see us around town and finger us. Vic, I don't like this.

VIC

You listen to me. No one says nothing, got it? No matter what, no one says a word. We're all in this together.

JIM

In what together? I thought you said the old man was okay.

VIC

This place, this town - Jim, you don't understand. They're old fashioned. Real old fashioned. In the basement of the courthouse they still have some of those old stocks, ya know, you put your head and hands in the holes and they lock you down? Must be over a hundred years old man. Old fashioned justice, that's what they believe in here. You just keep quiet, and keep away from those woods.

JIM

They wouldn't use those on anybody.

VIC

Wouldn't shock me none. But that's not all. Just stay away from the woods and don't check on that old man. He's one of them.

JIM

One of who?

Vic looks around, uneasy.

VIC

You heard all that shit he was going on about?

(MORE)

VIC (cont'd)

These rural farm people have their own ways, their own beliefs. You ever been to Pennsylvania?

JIM

No.

VIC

You can drive through all that Dutch farm country, still see hex signs on the barns and farmhouses up there. To keep away evil spirits and protect the crops. And you can see some of that shit here, too.

JIM

See what? I'm not following you.

VIC

Some of the oldest families around here, they go back, and they all know each other. And sometimes you can see 'em when they come into town. They all have this - look - on them. Don't know how to describe it. But they spook me. They spook me good. In their eyes, like nobody's home -or like there's -something else, something bad - behind their eyes. I never drive down the old Concord highway after sunset. Those farms out there, not too far from you, there's something not right about them.

JIM

You're full of it.

VIC

Don't have to believe me, man. It's cool. But just watch out. That old dude, he was one of them. Like I said, old fashioned justice.

All the service bays empty. A PHONE RINGS. Jim comes in from outside, grabs the phone.

JIM

Hello? Oh, hey there. No, I didn't expect, no, I'm surprised. Yeah. Yeah. How are ya? Well-
 (looks around at Vic)
 -no, I'm not too busy right now.

INT. MOTEL ROOM-DAY

Jim and MARTA RICE are in bed, SCREWING like wild animals, really crazed sex as they shake the bed springs, wrestle off the bed and onto the floor and she climbs back onto his lap and pounds on his back as she grunts:

MARTA
(low, throaty and angry)
Fuck-me-you-son-of-a-bitch!

SAME MOTEL ROOM-LATER

Jim is getting dressed now. Marta lies back in bed, just covering her naked body with a rumpled sheet. She is sex incarnate, a wildly sensuous woman. Every move is suggestive. Just watching her getting a glass of juice would give a guy a hard-on.

MARTA (cont'd)
I have missed you. Sooooo much.

JIM
Really?

MARTA
Really? I guess that's the same as "gee, honey, I really missed you too".

JIM
Now, Marta-

MARTA
Oh, don't "Now, Marta" me. I know better, Jimbo. We both know better. This is just what it is. This is this, right? But it was so good. God, you could always do one thing right, you could always fuck me blind.

JIM
Marta, you know, it's been hard-

MARTA
You tell me, tiger.

JIM
-it's been hard the past year or so with Anne.

MARTA
Oh shit. You said her name. And how is the ice queen?

JIM

Maybe this wasn't a good idea.

MARTA

Bull. This was a great idea. I've known you for twenty years, boy. I know what's going on here. Dick doubt. Finally had a chance to use it, now you're guilty, wondering if you should have. Well, you should have. Anne was always a controlling little twit. Now with a bun in the oven-

JIM

That's my son you're talking about.

She takes a drink from the nightstand. Sips. Softer now:

MARTA

You're right. Sorry. Look. You are chained and bound, Jim. And when you have that boy, they will throw away the keys.

JIM

I don't necessarily think-

MARTA

What we've had has always been great. Once or twice a year, a good time, then we go our merry ways. Now, you be good and faithful until she pops that kid and then you just wait until she is just too busy with the baby to suck your cock. Then call on Marta. You know you will.

EXT. COUNTY HIGHWAY-DAY

Jim's car drives down the two lane blacktop.

INT. JIM'S CAR-TRAVELLING-DAY

Passing a farm, Jim suddenly slows, he pulls to the side of the road.

EXT. COUNTY HIGHWAY-DAY

Jim gets out of his car, no one else in sight.

Across the road, a farm is situated behind a cornfield. The stalks wave in the breeze.

Jim looks at the distant barn.

Faint markings on the barn in faded red paint. Strange symbols and letters, sloppily painted from years ago.

Jim crosses the road, stands at the edge of the corn.

The farmhouse has some similar markings on it's side. Faded, but there if you're looking for them.

A RUSTLE in the corn scares the shit out of Jim, he jumps, yelps in surprise.

A SCARECROW in the field. Didn't notice that before...

Jim studies the scarecrow. A BLACK CROW perched on one arm of the figure. The CROW CAWS.

WIND STRONGER now. The corn waves. Chilled, Jim shivers. Slowly pulls out a cigarette, never taking his eyes from the scarecrow.

Moving to the scarecrow, Jim keeps an eye on the crow.

At the scarecrow now. The figure has an old pumpkin for a head. The natural erosion and rot has misshapen the pumpkin, into a crude face - it looks like it's screaming.

The crow sits right there. Eyeing Jim. Jim studies the scarecrow and it's eerie face.

The SCARECROW SWINGS IN THE WIND, ARMS STRIKING JIM, ALMOST ATTACKING, and JIM FALLS, SHOUTING, JUMPS BACK UP AND RUNS to the edge of the road.

On the road now, looking back at the scarecrow.

The SCARECROW TURNS IT'S HEAD AND LOOKS RIGHT AT JIM. Maybe it was just the wind.

Jim SPRINTS back to his car, gets in, GUNS THE ENGINE and PEELS OUT.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

A few boxes are in the corner, still unpacked. Jim turns on a table lamp and plops down beside the boxes. He reaches into the first box, sorting through it. Books. His novels, her cookbooks. He moves to the second box.

He digs into the box and pulls out toys; action figures, race cars, etc. He reacts to one or two with fondness, but still distracted he keeps on digging.

He pulls out a large photo-type album, and scoots over to the light for a better view.

He opens the album, and it contains his coin collection. He leafs through the laminated pages until he finds:

The gold coin. The one he took years back. The one the old man wanted. He lifts the laminate, and holds the coin. Still gold and shiny. He contemplates it.

EXT. BURIAL GROUND-NIGHT

The body of the old man moves slightly, and arm spasms, just enough to notice. Then nothing. A beat. The body moves again.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

Jim runs his fingers over the coin, feeling the markings, he's deep in thought.

Grandma (o.s.)
The boy is coming.

Jim jumps at the voice, and he turns to see:

Grandma. In the doorway. Standing upright. Looking strong. Her eyes shine in the dim light.

Jim is speechless. Grandma looks him dead in the eyes.

GRANDMA (cont'd)
She'll have the boy soon. He'll be a fine child. He'll grow up strong.

Jim stands and moves towards her.

JIM
Grandma Harris?

GRANDMA
He'll see so many things.

She moves into the dark kitchen, towards the back door.

GRANDMA (cont'd)
He'll be a good boy.
(she opens the back door, then
turns to Jim again)
And his name will be Ko'lok.

Jim acts as if struck. He looks at Grandma with dread. But she just turns and walks out the back door, into the night. Jim stares after her. From down the hall, we hear:

ANNE
(soft, timid)
Jim?
(MORE)

ANNE (cont'd)
 (he doesn't move, so louder:)
 Jimmy?
 (he still stands there, looking
 through the open kitchen door-
 now it's a scream)
 JIM!!

He is back to reality now, and he turns and runs to the scream.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-GRANDMA'S ROOM-NIGHT

Anne is still in the doorway, sobbing. Jim rushes in.

JIM
 Honey, what-

Anne is inconsolable, weeping, weak. She looks over at Grandma's bed, Jim follows her eyes:

Grandma is in bed, eyes wide, mouth agape. Dead.

Anne dissolves in Jim's arms as he holds her tight.

EXT. BURIAL GROUND-NIGHT

MIST surrounds the old man's body. The old man's head rises, the eyes open. The mouth moves, forming soundless words. The scar on the old man's chest begins to pulsate, pus oozing from the old wound. Soon the scar is throbbing, and finally the scar splits open.

As the body splits open, THE DEMON, KO'LOK emerges. Snake-like, it slithers from the gaping wound, a nightmare, all scales and whipping tendrils and teeth. The eyes, though demonic, shine with dark brilliance. At length Ko'lok breaks free from the body of the old man and slinks away into the night.

The old man's body slowly begins to mend back together, as more mist rolls in. His arms and legs twitch, moving again.

INT. VIC'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Vic sits in his living room, asleep in the recliner. Hold on this as he snores loudly. Vic's cat is on his lap.

A NOISE somewhere in the house spooks the cat. With a LOUD MEOW, the cat takes off like a shot, it's CLAWS DIGGING into Vic as it leaps away. Vic is awake now, surprised and disoriented.

VIC
 What-

The cat YOWLS from down the hall. Vic rubs his arm where the cat scratched him.

VIC (cont'd)
Little bastard.

The cat meows again. Not a happy kitty. Vic senses this.

VIC (cont'd)
Hey, Buddy?

He sits on the edge of the recliner. Eyes glued to the end of the hall. Another NOISE. Like something in the pipes, a deep bass gurgling. Vic waits. No more noise.

He stands, spooked.

VIC (cont'd)
Buddy?

No reply. He takes a step down the hall, and now a noise behind him, something TAPS the window in the main room. Vic freezes. Another TAP. Vic stays there.

The window is covered by the plastic venetian blinds, so nothing is visible. Vic is frozen in place, unsure of which way to move.

Down the hall, the CAT CRIES softly. Vic whips his head towards the sound. Then from the window, a sound like *razor sharp fingernails on a blackboard*.

A step towards the window, Vic is trembling, but must see what's out there. Another step, the window is closer, almost there.

At the window now, no more sounds, but Vic is still shaking. He reaches out and fingers the plastic rod on the blinds. One twist and he could see outside.

Down the hall, the cat SHRIEKS! Vic turns that way, then back to the window, and with a deep breath he twists the rod and the blinds open and seen through the slatted blinds are two YELLOW GLOWING EYES.

Vic SHOUTS in shock and takes off down the hall. Now there's a BANGING on the walls. Loud, insistent.

INT. VIC'S HOUSE-BEDROOM-NIGHT

Vic bursts into the room, rips open the closet door and drops to his knees, digging through the rubble there. The BANGING continues, now it seems to be inside the walls.

Vic finds it: his pistol. He pulls it from a shoebox, grabs a clip and jams in it. Then he's on his feet and back into the hall.

TRACKING WITH VIC

as he leaves the bedroom, he's in the hall and he hears a tremendous CRASH, GLASS BREAKING in the main room. He skids to a stop, then behind him, the cat SCREECHES again, in pain, and now there's a DEEP ANIMAL GROWL, like something is attacking the cat, which way to go, he can't decide, then he turns and goes back down the hall to the bathroom and he clicks on the light and:

The cat is on the bathroom floor. Ripped to pieces. Blood everywhere. Vic stops. His face sags. His cat is gone. Fear replaced by sadness. *

He looks down at the floor, shaking all over now, and then the horrible animal roar is right above him and he looks up and:

The DEMON K'OLOK is directly above him, hanging from the ceiling and it UNCOILS WITH LIGHTNING SPEED, it's arms and talons reaching down digging into Vic and he SCREAMS as he is dragged from his feet towards the creature's dripping maw and:

CUT TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Two paramedics carry Grandma's sheet-covered body out of the house on a stretcher. Anne is crying as Jim holds her.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT-DAY

Sam sits in a chair by the window, just staring out into space. It's obvious he's been sitting there for a while. His eyes are red. He rubs his face. Takes a drink.

INT. BOB'S HOUSE-DAY

Bob is in bed still fast asleep.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Anne and Mrs. Kobritz sit at the kitchen table, drinking coffee. Anne is disconsolate, Mrs. Kobritz comforts her.

ANNE

I wasn't really ready.

MRS. KOBRITZ
None of us ever are.

ANNE
I mean, she was old, but-
She chokes up. Wipes her nose, takes a drink of water.

MRS. KOBRITZ
It's okay.

ANNE
She loved this house. Loved it.
(a beat)
She's much happier now.

Mrs. Kobritz says nothing. She pats her friend's hand, gives it a squeeze.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Jim and Mrs. Kobritz walk around the yard.

JIM
It's just the stress. The move, trying to get my garage up and running. Now this.

ANNE
And that's all?

JIM
Yeah, sure. Anne was close to her Grandma.

MRS. KOBRITZ
She'll pull through. Your wife is a strong woman. Very strong.

JIM
She's held us together through some tough times.

MRS. KOBRITZ
Now she'll depend on you. The baby is on the way.

They stop. Jim looks off, down to the spot where he saw the dark figure earlier. He stares at the spot. As she speaks, she reaches out, putting a soothing hand on his arm.

MRS. KOBRITZ (cont'd)
She'll want you to be the strong one now. She needs you more than even, needs you to be around.
(MORE)

MRS. KOBRITZ (cont'd)
 If another tragedy were to befall the family-
 (now Jim turns his attention to her)
 -if something were to happen to you, for instance-
 (now Jim is looking right at her, full attention)
 -well, she needs you, the boy will need you.

JIM
 What are you saying?

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Anne is at the window, watching them, seeing Mrs. Kobritz step in close as she touches his arm.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Back on Jim and Mrs. Kobritz.

MRS. KOBRITZ
 Maybe I'd better go. You and Anne need to go finish making arrangements. If you need anything, just call.

JIM
 (wary of her)
 Sure.

MRS. KOBRITZ
 Nights can be the worst. For so many reasons. Things walk in the dark-
 (Jim zeros in on these words)
 -so many memories, regrets, bad deeds. The sleeper always wakes at last, but sometimes the dreams don't go away.

With that she turns to go. Jim just stares at her. Her manner so innocent but her words strike a cord in Jim. He turns and goes back to the house.

Mrs. Kobritz turns and looks at Jim as he goes inside. Just for the briefest of seconds, her eyes FLASH over, a bright but definite change. Then she turns to go.

INT. FUNERAL HOME-DAY

A small service for Grandma. Jim consoles Anne.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME-DAY

Jim and Anne leave the funeral home and get in the car.

INT. JIM'S CAR-TRAVELLING-DAY

Jim lights a smoke. After a couple of drags, Anne grabs it from him and takes a puff or two. He doesn't say a word about it. Both their minds are occupied, distracted.

EXT. CITY PARK-DAY

Jim and Anne sit by a shade tree, wrapped around each other. She's still disarrayed, he comforts her with pats, hugs, etc. Remains of a takeout lunch are beside them. Jim is on the verge of nap time, so Anne rolls him over so he can sleep. *

CUT TO:

Anne, walking alone in the park.

She takes a slow stroll. Looking down. She stops, senses something. She looks around and sees:

The Old Man. Standing not too far away. He looks alive and well. He looks at her.

She meets his gaze. He beckons to her. A deliberate "come here" gesture.

She won't move. She puts a hand to her big tummy, rubbing it.

The old man beckons again. Now she takes a step to him. Slow, as if entranced. Closer now. The old man smiles as she approaches.

She reaches the old man. He almost looks harmless.

ANNE

Hi.

OLD MAN

Hello Anne. Do you have something for me?

She gives him a quizzical look. Then, she puts both hands to her stomach, doubling over, in pain. She sinks to her knees. BLOOD runs down one leg, a steady stream. She looks at the blood in horror. She looks up at the old man.

The old man smiles. All his teeth are at least three inches long, razor sharp. He drools as he looks at her.

CUT TO:

ANNE, Sitting up with a start, waking from her nightmare. Still in the park, Jim still asleep beside her.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-GRANDMA'S ROOM-DAY

*

Mrs. Kobritz is helping Jim and Anne sort through Grandma's stuff, packing it away. It's hard for Anne. Mrs. Kobritz keeps an eye on Jim as he helps out.

Anne lovingly takes Grandma's eye glasses and puts them in their leather case, tucking them away one last time. She cries silently.

Mrs. Kobritz watches her. She takes Jim's hand. He doesn't like it, but can't pull away.

Anne gets up to leave. She sees Mrs. Kobritz holding Jim's hand.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Joining them in the midst of an argument:

JIM

She gives me the creeps is what I mean.

ANNE

You didn't mind touching her, that's for sure.

JIM

Ah, shit, she touched me, that's all. She's old enough to be my mother-

ANNE

She's not that old, she sure as shit rubs those big tits of her against you every chance she gets-

JIM

Damn it Anne, stop this! You're freaking out under the stress, now just calm down. I'll tell ya one thing, she's weird, and I don't know if I want her around you and the baby.

The phone begins ringing.

ANNE

Somebody has to be here to take care of me.

JIM

What does that mean?

ANNE

Where were you last night?

JIM

You know where I was, I called you from Bob's house.

ANNE

You were gonna be home by midnight.

JIM

We went out to see some friends.

ANNE

Friends. I needed you here, God-dammit.

(the phone is still ringing,
she grabs the receiver,
frustrated)

Hello?

(she holds the phone to Jim)

One of your "friends"

JIM

(into phone)

Hello...hey...no, Bob, I-I can't talk
right now...I haven't talked to him, let
me call you back.

He hangs up. She glares at him.

ANNE

Can we not have a moment alone?

JIM

Baby, last night I was here when it
mattered. I'm always here for you.

ANNE

Your body is here at least. Your mind is
a million miles away. It's been like that
for months now, Jim. I need all of you,
not just your body, I need you here with
me.

JIM

I'm here, I'm here, dammit!

ANNE

No, you're not. You're either at the
garage, or with your friends, or God
knows where, banging God knows who-

JIM

Oh, that's good, that's fine. Go ahead
and bring her up again. Again! Throw her
in my face -

ANNE

Better than her sitting on your face.

JIM

Marta. Always Marta. Why does it always
come back to her?

ANNE

Why do you always go back her?

JIM

Give it a rest! You don't have me under
your thumb for half a minute you go
absolutely nuts! I'm trying to keep the
fucking bank off our backs. I'm trying to
make some money-

ANNE

Money isn't a problem, I've got the money-

JIM

Oh, don't let me forget that for a
minute.

A beat. Now she's icy cold.

ANNE

Is that a problem for you? That my family
has money?

JIM

I don't need this, I don't need this
crap, you know?

The phone rings again, she snatches it up on the first ring,
and almost shouts into it:

ANNE

Hello!

She tosses the phone at him, pissed.

JIM

(into phone)
Hello? Bob, I can't do this right-
(a pause as he listens, now
he's interested in what Bob
has to say)
(MORE)

JIM (cont'd)

Okay, okay, don't sweat it. I'll see you
in a while, we'll go over there.

He hangs up. She's glaring at him.

ANNE

You're going where?

JIM

I need to check on Vic. Bob thinks
something might be wrong with him.

ANNE

Don't you fucking leave this house! My
grandmother just died!

Jim is truly torn here, what to do, what to say.

JIM

Honey, it'll take half an hour-

ANNE

(exploding, she hurls a glass
in his direction)
Fine! Fine, go! Get out! Go on!

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Jim's CAR PEELS OUT out of the driveway, throwing grass and
gravel in it's wake.

INT. JIM'S CAR-TRAVELLING-DAY

He grips the wheel as he speeds along. Staring straight
ahead. Finally his anger gets out, he pounds the wheel and
shouts:

JIM

God damn motherfuckin' son of a bitch!

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Anne has collapsed in a chair, sobbing.

EXT. VIC'S HOUSE-DAY

Jim's car sits in front of the house. Bob and Jim are by the
car, watching the house.

BOB

I called about a dozen times, no answer.
When I got over here, I started to go in,
but the smell...I just couldn't.

JIM
Smell?

BOB
Gagged me. Jesus.

They study the house.

JIM
What do you think?

BOB
Hell, I don't know. I'm about ready to believe anything.

JIM
I knew it, I knew this was going to be trouble, damn it, Bob.

INT. VIC'S HOUSE-DAY

The front door slowly swings open, Jim and Bob are on the threshold. They stand there, not stepping in yet.

JIM
Hello?

BOB
Vic? Hey, Vic?

They wait, but no answer. Jim wrinkles his nose, starts to choke and gag.

BOB (cont'd)
See?

Jim coughs, almost retching. Then he gulps, trying to get used to the stench. They steep inside. All the window blinds are drawn, so it's very dark in here. Unusually dark for mid-morning.

The house is dead quiet. The guys take one more step inside. Bob moves to one of the picture windows. The blinds are still drawn, but on the floor are shards of glass, the glass Vic heard breaking last night. Both men examine the glass. A bad sign.

BOB (cont'd)
Vic?

Nothing. A BOARD CREAKS somewhere. They listen, but no more noise. Bob flicks the light switch. The overhead light flickers on, but the bulbs instantly FLARES OUT and POP!, SHATTERING and sending glass across the room.

After taking a moment to get their composure, Jim leads the way deeper into the house.

They enter the kitchen. Again, quiet and empty. A noise off in the house: a BUMP, rustling. Both guys stop to listen.

JIM

Rats.

They're not sure that's what's making the noise.

BOB

I don't like this. What is going on here?

JIM

I don't know. We're in a lot of trouble, you know.

Bob has nothing else to say. Jim opens a few cabinets, and under the sink he finds a FLASHLIGHT. Turns it on to check it out. Satisfied, he plays the light on the floor as he moves down the hall.

They reach the bathroom. Jim creeps around the edge of the door, and the flashlight beam finds the dead cat.

BOB

Shit!

They look away from the mangled carcass. They back out of the bathroom. As they do, more rustling and shuffling from down the hall. They stop in their tracks.

Something is moving in the bedroom, entering the hallway. It walks into the flashlight beam, and it's Vic. *What is left of Vic.* Bloody, his skin ripped and torn. Something has taken big bites of meat from his neck, arms, etc.

Bob and Jim are horrified, glued to their spot. Vic eyes them, but his eyes are foggy, unfocused. He moves in a halting, jerky manner. He moves towards them and they take a few steps back.

VIC

Welcome.

His voice is awful, it seems to come not only from his mouth, but from everywhere. Spooky as hell.

BOB

Vic?

VIC

Vic is gone. No more. Soon you will be no more.

JIM

Vic, it's me, it's Jim.

VIC

Your face I know. Your soul I know. All will belong to Ko'lok.

BOB

Ko'lok? That's what the old man said-

VIC

The Mewok know him as Ko'lok. Consumer of the flesh. Eater of the soul. To the Great Spirit, he is known as He Who Is One With The Shadow. The Dark Walker. Many names and faces.

BOB

What do you want? You want those gold coins, right?

VIC

(seeming to smile)

Ko'lok wants what is his due. Whatever that may be. Whatever is yours to give.

JIM

Ko'lok, we just want to go. We'll go and leave you alone.

They take steps back to the main room, but Vic raises a hand and BOLTS OF LIGHTNING fly from his fingers, STRIKING THE WALL and knocking Jim and Bob to the floor. Vic moves so that now he is between the guys and the hallway to the main room.

VIC

The Dark Walker has yet to show himself to the likes of you two. Your compatriot was not as lucky.

(as if quoting from an ancient text)

"And the Great Spirit came upon a wanderer, a figure lost in the wood, a hunter away from his lodge. And the wanderer was covered in the darkness, he was one with the night, drawing his life's blood from it. He feasted upon those who he believed had wronged him, he ate their hearts and wore their skins as a coat.

(MORE)

VIC (cont'd)

And the Great Spirit knew the Dark Walker for what he was, a wondrous and terrible being, sometimes in flight like the eagle, sometimes slithering like the snake, sometimes walking, hidden inside the brave, always hiding from the light, always dwelling in the nether regions of the night, the pitch. The Old Ones keep those like him as a pet, but even the Old Ones are mindful of his treachery and vileness."

No one moves. Vic smiles. Bile drips from his mouth. Now Vic begins to twitch harder, to jerk and shudder.

VIC (cont'd)

"The spawn of the oldest and masters of all things, he walks time and space and those places in-between He knows no boundaries nor limits."

BOB

Vic, listen-

He moves to gently push Vic out of the way, but the corpse grabs Bob's arm, we can hear the bones creak as Vic applies pressure.

VIC

"He is one with the all. Primal, he is the harbinger of the returning, the opener of the Gate. Those ancient and foul will follow in his lead."

Jim and Bob crawl back a bit as Vic is having violent spasms now, and then VIC'S BODY EXPLODES IN A SHOWER OF BLOOD AND SPARKS, and then in front of the guys is Ko'lok, draped in the shadows, the glowing eyes, the slashing tendrils, the snapping claws and pincers.

Stunned, Bob and Jim back up as the snake-like demon moves towards them, growling low, it's BARBED TONGUE LASHING out.

Jim grabs Bob by the and they hightail it into the bedroom, slamming the door behind them.

INT. VIC'S HOUSE-BEDROOM-DAY

They struggle to pull a large chest of drawers in front of the door.

BOB

What the hell is that thing?

JIM
Help me move this!

BOB
What is it? What have I done, Jim? It's gonna kill us, it's already got Vic, it's gonna-

JIM
(grabbing Bob's shoulders)
Listen! We've gotta get out of this place! Calm down and think!

Bob goes over to the bedroom window. The blinds are still drawn.

BOB
Here!

CRASH! The DOOR IS YANKED FROM THE FRAME as the demon appears. It HACKS AND SLASHES at the chest of drawers with it's pincers, shredding it to pieces.

Bob turns and slips, falling to the floor. He spies Vic's shotgun poking out from under the bed. He grabs it.

Ko'lok is taking the chest to pieces, moving closer to squeezing through the door frame.

Bob stands and shoulders the shotgun, and BOOM! FIRES a round. It strikes the creature-it HOWLS in pain and doubles it efforts to get in the room.

Jim runs to the window as Bob FIRES the shotgun again, but now the demon is in the room, the door frame and the WALL CRACKING as it enters.

Bob SHOOTS again, no good, the DEMON WHIPS IT'S RAZOR TENDRILS around and SLICES OPEN Bob's arm, he screams and drops the shotgun.

Jim grabs a standing HALOGEN LAMP and tries to wield it as a weapon. The lamp clicks on as he fumbles with it, the halogen light white and blinding. He JABS the lamp towards the creature like a spear- the monster recoils, and Jim LUNGES again.

The LAMP IMPALES the creature and there is an immediate reaction: WHITE-HOT LIGHTNING AND BLAZING BOLTS OF BLACK/BLUE ENERGY SPARK AND CRAWL over the creature and strike the walls, bouncing and leaping everywhere.

As the WHITE FIRE AND LIGHTNING run from the lamp into the creature, the charge seems to build and it reverses, CRACKLING back up the lamp, along the electrical cord and into the wall where the WALL SOCKET EXPLODES.

The fire now smaller ARCS, K'olok backs off, out of the room, disappearing into the dark hallway. It seems to fade away, disappear into the dark, it's howls fading as well.

Now it's quiet. Jim and Bob are frozen in place, staring down the hall.

BOB (cont'd)
Don't tell me-rats.

JIM
You okay?

They examine Bob's bleeding arm. Not too bad. A cut, but not deep.

BOB
Burns.

They shakily stand, brush the nervousness off. Bob heads for the door.

JIM
(grabbing Bob's shoulder)
Not that way.

BOB
What then?

Jim goes back to the window. Tries to open it.

JIM
(straining)
Painted shut.

BOB
Here, let me.

He has no luck.

JIM
Nailed shut too.

They look into the hallway. Still empty.

BOB
What do you think?

JIM

We could run for it.

A rock and a hard place. Shotgun at the ready, Jim takes a step towards the door. Another. Bob follows.

IN THE HALLWAY

They stand just outside the doorway. Still no signs of danger.

BOB

Thought it was later than this. Three-fifteen?

JIM

Too dark in here for three-fifteen.

The main room seems miles away. They take another step. Halfway there now. Moving slow, cautiously.

IN THE MAIN ROOM

They stand at the threshold of the hallway, looking into the main room before continuing. Satisfied, they move again. The front door is close now. Just a few steps now, they're almost there, and then Jim places his hand on the doorknob. Waits. Turns it. Nothing. It won't turn. Not an inch. He yanks on it. Like solid steel. No luck.

BOB

Come on-

On those words, KO'LOK LUNGES out of the dark hallway, in just a second it's there, it's PINCERS out and GRABBING and they lock on to Bob's shoulders and Jim turns and grabs at Bob but the creature has him tight, and in a second, RIIIPPPPP, Bob's ARM IS RIPPED OFF, SHOWERING BLOOD on Jim.

Bob stands there in shock. Blood running from the wound. He looks at Jim as if to say "Ain't that a bitch", and then SWIPE! the PINCERS LASH OUT AND CUT BOB IN HALF. The pieces topple to the floor as Jim screams and DIVES across the room, behind the couch as the monster feasts on Bob. Jim chambers a round in the shotgun and Ko'lok hears it, the creature slides across the floor towards him, and then Jim is on his feet, he grabs the venetian BLINDS and RIPS them down in one move, Ko'lok HOWLS as the light hits him, and now Jim LEAPS across the couch to the front door, uses the butt of the gun to SMASH the doorknob off, he rips the door open and then Ko'lok is on him, the TENDRILS WHIP out and whack him across the back but instead of knocking him down it sends Jim FLYING out the door, he sails over the porch and he crunches into the side of his car, crumpling to the ground.

Bright sunlight all around now. Through the front door, no hint of the dark walker.

Jim lies on the ground. Unconscious.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE-DUSK

Sam enters the store, nods to the CASHIER. He heads to the cooler and grabs a six-pack. Moves to a display of microwave sandwiches, chooses a few then moves to the magazine rack.

A PRETTY COLLEGE-AGED GIRL is browsing the magazines. Sam notices her. She barely registers he's there.

Sam fingers the selection of "men's" magazines. He picks two, both about 4 rungs lower below Playboy on the trash ladder.

The girl sees his choices, judges him on the spot. He tried to smile and shrug it off. The girl turns her nose up and moves off.

The cashier chuckles at the exchange. Sam puts his goodies on the counter. Eyes the cashier, daring him to say anything.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-DUSK

Anne is walking along the side yard, admiring the lawn and flowers. She stops to admire a pretty bunch of colorful flora. She stoops, picks a flower, stands and smells it. Loves the fragrance. Her sadness is just under the surface, she fights to keep it hidden.

Something creeps in on her psyche, she suddenly feels she's not alone. She turns and looks to the corner of the yard:

THE DARK FIGURE, THE OLD MAN stands just out of the tree line.

Anne is startled. She takes a step forwards, thinks better of it, takes a step back.

The old man takes a step towards her.

She backs up and hurries to the front door. As she nears the front, she stops in her tracks: The old man is on the front porch.

Speechless, her eyes wide in fright and confusion, she's like a deer in the headlights.

The old man opens his shirt, we see the horrible scar. He reaches down, *opening the scar and sticking his hand inside his own stomach.*

Anne is about to go into orbit.

The old man extracts a *wiggling mass of tissue*, a MISSHAPEN, EVIL MUTATED FETUS. He offers it to her with a smile, he teeth long and wicked.

Anne swoons and passes out.

INT. SAM'S CAR-TRAVELLING-DUSK

Sam picks up his cell phone, dials a number.

BOB'S HOUSE

is empty and still. The PHONE RINGS.

IN SAM'S CAR

he waits for an answer. None. He hangs up.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-DUSK

Anne is on the couch, a wet rag on her forehead. Mrs. Kobritz is over her, patting her cheek lightly.

MRS. KOBRITZ

Anne?

Anne slowly comes to. She tries to sit up, falters, Mrs. Kobritz helps her sit up.

MRS. KOBRITZ (cont'd)

You've had a busy day.

ANNE

What happened?

MRS. KOBRITZ

I saw you fall. On the porch.

ANNE

(now upright, agitated)
The old man-

MRS. KOBRITZ

What?

ANNE

Is he here? I saw him-

MRS. KOBRITZ
Anne, I didn't see anyone-

ANNE
No, he was right here. On the porch. And before, I dreamt about him.

MRS. KOBRITZ
What was he doing?

ANNE
He-

She stops, remembers, shudders, tries to shake it off.

ANNE (cont'd)
No. Nothing. I must have been, I don't know, I don't understand this.

MRS. KOBRITZ
It's okay. You've been through quite a lot. Where's Jim?

Anne looks away. Mrs. Kobritz understands.

MRS. KOBRITZ (cont'd)
No matter. I'm here.

ANNE
He was here, so real. So old. He looked like a Native American. That's what he looked like.

Mrs. Kobritz sits back. Digests this.

EXT. VIC'S HOUSE-DUSK

Jim stirs. He slowly sits up, holding his head. He looks to the house, he remembers what happened.

On his feet, he frantically searches for the shotgun. He finds it, then runs for his car.

He jumps in, guns the engine and turns on the lights, giving a shout as he sees:

Bob. A BLOODY, BUTCHERED MESS OF A HUMAN. Standing there in the headlights.

Jim opens the door, steps out.

JIM
Go away. Leave us alone.

BOB
You were told. You were warned many
times.

JIM
Look, I've got it. I'll give it back.

BOB
You don't understand.

JIM
I've still got the coin. I'll give it
back. Then Ko'lok can go on to the Other
Side.

Bob just smiles. Blood seeps from the corners of his mouth.

BOB
It's no longer the coin. It never really
was. Ko'lok needs a vessel. Strong.
Fresh. Innocent. To live again. When
Ko'lok was disturbed so long ago, he knew
you would lead him to deliverance. And
you have.

JIM
I don't understand.

BOB
You will. The Dark Walker has found his
vessel. He will take what is his.

Bob opens his mouth and hisses, long and slow. Those snake-
like tendrils slither out of Bob's mouth, whipping in the
air.

Jim jumps back in the car, guns the engine. Bob just stands
there. Jim REVS it again, throws it into gear and the car
LEAPS forward, CRASHING into Bob, there's an EXPLOSION OF
COLOR AND LIGHT, and Bob is gone. Jim jams on the brakes,
looks back.

No Bob.

Jim revs it again and takes off down the road.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-DUSK

Mrs. Kobritz and Anne are at the kitchen table.

MRS. KOBRITZ
This town is old. Centuries old. Lots of
young people like you don't even know the
history of their hometown.
(MORE)

MRS. KOBRITZ (cont'd)

The Mewok had a settlement here when the Mayflower was crossing the Atlantic. They say the land is holy. Filled with magic in it's day. The hills are covered with burial grounds. All the different tribes, the Sioux, Cherokee, Pawnee, they sent their medicine men here to learn from Ko'lok.

ANNE

Ko'lok?

MRS. KOBRITZ

A wonder worker. The most powerful in this part of the country. He would speak with the Great Spirit and pass that wisdom along to the people. He could bring the rains, mothers went to him for a blessing on their young braves or maidens. He could focus the Manitou of the trees, the land, and have it do his bidding, he could clear the fields or flatten a grove of trees without raising a hand. The old legends are full of stories of his works.

ANNE

You're not suggesting that's who I saw today?

MRS. KOBRITZ

Talk to some of the old timers. They'll tell you. Ask them about how the wind talks, the earth sighs. This land is haunted. People have seen things.

ANNE

Just a lot of talk.

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP-DUSK

Jim is at a phone booth. The line just rings, no answer.

JIM

Come on, Anne.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-DUSK

Behind Mrs. Kobritz and Anne, the phone is on the table. Quiet. Not ringing.

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP-DUSK

Jim listens to the phone ring.

JIM
Honey...damn it.

He hangs up, drops more change in, dials.

JIM (CONT'D)
(into phone)
I need help.

INT. MARTA'S APARTMENT-DUSK

Jim stands at a window, peering through slatted blinds. The sun is on the horizon, almost gone.

MARTA
Hey. You want sympathy, you wanna blow
job, just ask.
(Jim gives her a look)
But don't tell me this crazy shit.

JIM
You don't believe me?

No response. She just raises her eyebrows.

JIM (cont'd)
I'll show you. Come on.

MARTA
Where?

JIM
Vic's house.

MARTA
No thanks.

JIM
Why not?

MARTA
I don't have the time for games, that's
why not.

JIM
You think I'm lying? Or crazy? How do you
think I feel? How about Vic or Bob?
They're dead.

MARTA
Jim, stop it.

JIM

This thing, this...K'olok. Wants it's money back. With interest. It wants it's pound of flesh. We were just kids, you know. Just screwing around, searching for treasure. Looking for something cool to keep in a cigar box. I didn't know we were gonna have to die for it.

MARTA

Let's call the-

JIM

Police? Right. K'olok isn't-isn't real. I mean, it's real, but I don't know how real it is in this world - how it exists by our physical laws. It was inside Vic, you know? Inside him, wearing him like a suit, then it just, shed, it's suit. Then, I stabbed it with the lamp-

MARTA

Lamp?

JIM

That really pissed it off. Like I'd hooked up jumper cables the wrong way, it was one big negative charge, didn't like all that positive current. That's when it got Bob.

Jim gets quiet, emotional. Marta keeps her distance.

MARTA

Where's Anne?

JIM

Home, I thought. Tried calling for half an hour. Must be shopping with Mrs. Kobritz.

(he looks out the window again)

It'll be dark soon. After I go, turn on all the lights. Or go to the mall.

MARTA

You're really fired up.

(she puts a hand on his shoulder)

I kinda like it.

JIM

Damn it, Marta, this is no joke!

MARTA

Then why don't you go home?!

JIM

I'm scared! Okay? I'm scared of what's happening, I'm scared of going home. What if Anne's there, and that thing is there? Oh shit, what have I done? What have I done?

A TABLE LAMP in the corner FLICKERS. Once. Twice.

Jim eyes the lamp.

MARTA

It's just the bulb.

Jim rushes over to the lamp, fiddles with it, but the lamp goes dark. Dead.

JIM

It's here.

MARTA

Oh come on.

He runs back to the window, pulls the blinds. Dark out there.

MARTA (cont'd)

There's nothing out there. Nothing. This whole story is getting pretty screwy if you ask me.

(she flips the light switch off)

See? Nothing.

(lights on)

See? Nothing.

JIM

Leave the lights on.

MARTA

Why? Scared?

She flips the switch off again. Jim rushes over, SHOVES her aside and turns the lights on.

JIM

Leave the God-damn lights on!

MARTA

Don't you ever push me like that. Prick.

She moves to hit the lights again, but Jim grabs her wrist. They eye each other, tense.

MARTA (cont'd)

Let go.

JIM

Leave the lights on.

MARTA

What a fuckin' baby.

She moves to hit the switch with her free hand, but Jim tries to grab at that one, she snatches it back and SLAPS him hard. He SLAPS her back, quick and hard. She YANKS a handful of his hair, they STRUGGLE, she CLAWS his face and as he SHOUTS in pain he PUNCHES HER and she crumples to the floor.

He stands over her. Silent. Looking down. She stirs slightly.

JIM

Marta?

The stark SHADOWS ON THE WALLS of the half-lit room start to MOVE.

Jim shakes the woman.

JIM (cont'd)

Come on.

She starts to get up, and bats his helping hands away.

MARTA

Fuck you, you crazy loon. Get your clammy hands off me.

The SHADOWS on the wall are SWIRLING, ever-changing patterns, moving around the walls with dizzying speed. Jim stands, sees the shadows moving, the liquid-like patterns re-forming every second.

JIM

Marta, come on-

MARTA

(getting to her feet)

You son of a bitch! How dare you hit me!
I'm a girl! I'll tear your dick off-

As she moves to him, fists raised, the SHADOW ON THE WALL LUNGES OUT AND GRABS MARTA, wrapping around her. She looks down, confused.

She starts to SCREAM as the SHADOWS BOIL AND WRAP AROUND HER, covering her, pulling her into the wall.

Jim backs away in horror as Marta disappears into the wall of blackness, the shadows filling her mouth, muffling her screams, and as her hand reaches out to Jim, she finally disappears into the shadow.

Jim moves back towards the door, looking at the walls, the patterns moving, moving, then the SHADOWS gather, they form A FACE, A GRIM, DEMONIC FACE GRINNING and now DEEP, GUTTURAL LAUGHTER echoes through the room, the FACE LAUGHS as the ROOM SHAKES, the WALLS VIBRATE, PLASTER CRACKING, WINDOWS BREAKING and the FACE seems to have three dimensions now and it is starting to push outwards from the wall.

The FACE is pushing out, huge and terrifying, great jaws with jagged teeth and the face LUNGES out SNAPPING at Jim,

Jim SLAMS the door open and RUNS away, towards his truck.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

With Mrs. Kobritz and Anne. Same as before.

MRS. KOBRITZ

You don't remember any of those stories?
The history of the town? Quite infamous.

ANNE

No. My mom and dad died when I was young.
Grandma-

MRS. KOBRITZ

Your grandma knew the town well. Think
back.

A beat. Then, it comes slowly:

ANNE

I remember...grandma always had me sleep
with a light on. Always. A lamp, a night
light. I never questioned it much. When I
was a teenager, I get up and turn the
light out after she'd gone to sleep. In
the morning it'd be back on.

MRS. KOBRITZ

To ward off the Dark Walker. The denizens
of the night. The light is his enemy.

Anne gives her a skeptical look.

MRS. KOBRITZ (cont'd)

The story goes that in this town the Mewok didn't need the whites to persecute them, murder them, drive them out. Ko'lok's magic was strong, and he wasn't satisfied with the respect and admiration he got from the members of the tribe. He wanted more power and more material goods, and he wanted to be worshipped. As a god. He made a pact with something he conjured up, a demon from the Other Side, a deal that gave Ko'lok all the power he could ever want. But the deal had a catch. The demon took over Ko'lok's body, living here on earth as a man. Wanting to open the way for more creatures from the Other Side. The changes came soon; he hungered for might, for riches, and for flesh.

A rustle, a bump in the house startles Anne.

ANNE

Damn rats. I thought Jim set traps in here.

MRS. KOBRITZ

They serve the master.

Anne's eyes widen. Mrs. Kobritz laughs

MRS. KOBRITZ (cont'd)

Just a joke. Sorry. These stories can get to you. As his power grew, so did his madness. Ko'lok murdered and ate those who defied him; refuse him your land, your crops, your daughters, you were marked. He slaughtered those who didn't bow to him, soon there wasn't a tribe left to worship him. Almost seventy men, women and children gone. The few elders left were able to trick and kill Ko'lok. They buried him with a sack of gold, since that was his god. Goodies he thought would appease the Great Spirit in the afterlife.

ANNE

(spooked)

But this is all just a legend, right?

MRS. KOBRITZ
 They say he still walks the nights,
 looking for an innocent soul to inhabit,
 so he may live again among men.

Unconsciously, Anne places her hands on her big belly.

ANNE
 Innocent soul.

MRS. KOBRITZ
 That's the story, anyway.

Anne winces, hands on her stomach.

ANNE
 Ow, ow!

MRS. KOBRITZ
 Honey?

ANNE
 I'm okay. Labor pains.

MRS. KOBRITZ
 You'd best lie down awhile.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Anne is dozing on the sofa, an uneasy sleep. Mrs. Kobritz sits in the recliner. Eyes closed. Mouth moving, softly speaking. The longer we hold on her, it's obvious she's chanting. Her hands open and close, clenching, opening.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT-NIGHT

He dozes in the chair. Wakes suddenly. Looks around the room. He picks up the phone, dials again. It rings and rings.

SAM
 Come on guys. Don't do this. Pick up.

Nothing. Edgy, he stands, paces, moves back to the phone and picks it up, then puts it right back down. He grabs his keys from the table and heads for the door.

INT. SAM'S CAR-TRAVELLING-NIGHT

Pulling on the beer, Sam cruises along.

EXT. BOB'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Sam's car pulls up. Sam gets out of the car and stands there a moment before heading up the walk.

INT. BOB'S HOUSE-NIGHT

The front door slowly swings open, Sam is standing on the threshold. A beat. Total silence.

SAM

Hello?

No answer. He casts an eye around, then the first step inside.

SAM (cont'd)

Bob?

No answer. Another step. Still, the house is quiet. Some of the poker game debris is still on the table. Bob grabs a pretzel and munches.

SAM (cont'd)

Bob? Jim? Hey, guys?

Still nothing.

INT. BOB'S HOUSE-BATHROOM-NIGHT

From off screen we hear Sam taking a leak and flushing. He exits the bathroom. Satisfied that he's alone, he's a bit more relaxed. He comes back into the main room, stopping at the telephone answering machine. He pushes a button on the deck.

ANSWERING MACHINE

You have NO new messages.

Sam heads for the kitchen.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Anne is asleep on the couch. Mrs. Kobritz pulls the shades, the room darkens. She sits in the recliner, closes her eyes.

INT. BOB'S HOUSE-NIGHT

In the kitchen, Sam makes the same cursory inspection, just to make sure the coast is clear. Then, a voice from the next room:

VOICE (o.s.)

Hello?

Sam whirls around. The voice is soft, feminine. Bob heads back into the main room, and reaching the entry way he stops as he sees:

ANNE. In the doorway. Long coat, puffing on a smoke.

ANNE
Sam. Hello.

SAM
Hey, Anne.

There's something different about Anne. But it's dark, hard to see, she's still in the shadows.

ANNE
I'm looking for Jimmy.

SAM
Me too. Haven't seen him or Bob.

ANNE
They're not here?

SAM
No. I talked to Bob early this morning, he was looking' for Vic. But that's it. Hadn't talked to Jim since last night.

ANNE
You fellas had a wild time out in the woods, huh?

SAM
(on guard now)
Whuddya mean?

ANNE
At the burial grounds. All that excitement.

SAM
Jim told you?

ANNE
Jim has no secrets from me.

SAM
Oh. Well.

ANNE
But I suppose they'll show up.

SAM
Yeah. I'm kinda worried, though.

ANNE
They're big boys.

She moves into the room. Sam is a bit edgier now.

ANNE (cont'd)
Hey, Sam. How you been doin'?

SAM
Me?

ANNE
Anybody else I could be talkin' to?

SAM
Well, I'm okay. You know. Same old shit.

She smiles a knowing smile. Takes a long, deep drag on that smoke. Exhales, her tongue almost caressing the smoke. Sam gulps. QUICK CUT TO:

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

On the couch, Anne is fast asleep. In the recliner, Mrs. Kobritz has her eyes closed, in deep concentration, almost a trance and CUT BACK TO:

INT. BOB'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Anne studies Sam.

ANNE
Keepin' yourself in shape.

SAM
(pulling his shirt away from
his belly)
I was gonna say the same to you.

ANNE
Do you have someone?

SAM
Someone?

She moves in closer.

ANNE
A lady.

SAM
No.

ANNE
Hard to believe. You were always so good-lookin'.

Real nervous now. As he steps back, she moves in closer.

SAM
Hey, shouldn't we call-

ANNE
I don't wanna call anybody Sam. Not a
soul. Three's a crowd, right?

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Mrs. Kobritz rocks in the recliner faster now, her hands
clenched into fists and:

INT. BOB'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Anne moves back now, leaning up against the sofa. Looks him
dead in the eyes.

ANNE
You always liked me. Didn't you?

SAM
Yeah, sure. You were always nice to me,
'cause I was Jim's buddy.

ANNE
I mean, you *liked* me.

This isn't right. SAM knows it. Still, he can't take his eyes
from her.

Anne is drinking it in. Still leaning back, she takes one
last drag from the smoke, stubs it out, and unbuttons the
overcoat. She's wearing a short black skirt and a silk
blouse. Maybe we notice it now, maybe not, but it will be
obvious in a second: *She isn't the least bit pregnant.*

She opens the silk blouse. Black WonderBra. Uh-oh. Sam's
breath catches in his throat.

ANNE (cont'd)
Like me now?

She hikes a leg up, resting her foot on the table. The short
skirt rides high. She runs her hands up and down her fishnet-
stockinged leg.

ANNE (cont'd)
Sam?

He's speechless.

ANNE (cont'd)
Don't' make me wait any longer, Sam.

He wants to move on her, but is too nervous.

ANNE (cont'd)
You've always wanted me. Be a man. Take me.

Sam can't hold back any longer, he moves to her, her arms go around his back, and they lock in a passionate embrace. They kiss deep and long, their hands moving over each other's bodies. She clutches him tight, leans back and they tumble over the back of the couch, landing on the cushions, Anne on top, straddling Sam.

ANNE (cont'd)
You want me? Tell me.

SAM
Oh, baby.

ANNE
Tell me you want me.

SAM
I want you.

She moves on him, grinding on him, he moans, he's going crazy. She bends down to kiss him, licks his lips, then pulls back up. He closes his eyes, moving against her.

SAM (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Anne, oh, Anne baby-

She wails in ecstasy, then Sam bucks again under her, he opens his eyes as he moves and he sees:

Anne has been replaced by the old man, his face feral, his fangs glistening.

Sam SCREAMS and the old man's claw-like hands LASH out, there's a SPRAY OF RED.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

The moon has passed it's zenith, on the way down now.

EXT. HAMBLY-MAIN STREET-NIGHT

The streets are quiet. The street lights are still on. No cars in sight.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Anne is awake, sitting on the couch, but doubled over. Mrs. Kobritz brings her a glass of water.

ANNE
I don't feel so good.

MRS. KOBRITZ
Here.

She takes the glass of water, drinks.

ANNE
I want Jim.

Mrs. Kobritz pats Anne's hand.

MRS. KOBRITZ
There, there.

ANNE
Oh, Jim.

EXT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY-DAY

Jim's car ROARS past.

INT. JIM'S CAR-TRAVELLING-NIGHT

On edge, he pounds the wheel impatiently as he drives.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Anne has leaned back on the couch, holding her stomach.

ANNE
Jim, where are you?

MRS. KOBRITZ
He's made his own bed, my dear.

ANNE
Huh?

MRS. KOBRITZ
What's important to Jim? Do you really know? Why isn't he here?

ANNE
What are you talking about?

MRS. KOBRITZ
 Never mind. It's okay. We're here to
 watch over you.

ANNE
 We?

Mrs. Kobritz stands over Anne. Anne looks up into her eyes.
 Mrs. Kobritz's EYES FLASH, demon-like.

Anne is frightened. Mrs. Kobritz smiles, lays a hand on
 Anne's head. Grips her skull. Anne moans softly. Then, pain
 shoots through her.

ANNE (cont'd)
 OW! OHH!!

Anne stands, Mrs. Kobritz still holding her head.

ANNE (cont'd)
 Oh no, no.

A GUSH of water, a SPLASH between Anne's legs. Her water has
 broken.

MRS. KOBRITZ
 Time. Time now for the innocent.

She pushes Anne back on the couch, Anne going into labor now,
 in pain, clutching her stomach. Mrs. Kobritz pushes an
 ottoman to the sofa, lifts Anne's legs onto it.

MRS. KOBRITZ (cont'd)
 Come now.

ANNE
 I can't-not now, oh no-

MRS. KOBRITZ
 Ko'lok will have what is his by right.

She lays hands on Anne's stomach. Rubs Anne's swollen belly.
 Chants softly in a strange tongue. The rhythmic chanting
 continues, and Anne is trying to move, but the pain is
 keeping her on the sofa. As Mrs. Kobritz keeps chanting, Anne
 seems to be in a bit of a trance.

Mrs. Kobritz pushes Anne's skirt up over her knees.

Anne tries to keep close to her wits, opens her eyes and
 looks past Mrs. Kobritz to the dark hallway.

In the hallway, Ko'lok is slithering towards the women, still in shadow, snatches of light offer Anne brief glimpses of the creature.

Mrs. Kobritz reaches in between Anne's legs, her chanting louder, the grumbles of the demon getting closer.

Anne's eyes open wide, terror sets in. She SCREAMS, loud and long.

EXT. JIM'S CAR-TRAVELLING-NIGHT

Tracking with Jim's car as it tears down the highway, hitting the off-ramp and moving on.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Anne is in the throes in childbirth now, the demon in the background, growling louder, Mrs. Kobritz's chanting continuing. The noise is at a fever pitch, INTERCUTTING from Anne to the demon in the shadows to Mrs. Kobritz. The rhythm continues until finally there is the cry of a baby, Anne screams the loudest and longest so far, then Mrs. Kobritz is holding the crying baby aloft, like an offering to the gods.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Jim's car POWER SLIDES to a stop, and Jim is out of the car like a rocket. He RACES up the steps to the front door and:

CUT TO:

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

As Mrs. Kobritz hears Jim approach, she turns her head to the door and the dead bolt on the door is thrown - it locks up tight.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

As Jim forces the door, POUNDING on it to no avail.

JIM

Anne! Anne!

The door won't budge. He moves over to the window. Tries to lift it open.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Mrs. Kobritz watches Jim as he tries to open the window. He struggles in vain.

JIM

Open the God damn door!

He rears back and KICKS the window with his foot. Nothing. In fact, he pretty much BOUNCES back from the window. She moves to the front door, it opens before she gets there.

Jim stands at the open door, out of breath.

JIM (cont'd)

Mrs. Kobritz.

MRS. KOBRITZ

Jim. About time you showed yourself. Your wife needed you. She called your name.

JIM

Anne! Is she-

MRS. KOBRITZ

She's fine. She's just fine.

JIM

Thank you-

He starts to move past her, but Mrs. Kobritz throws an arm across the doorway, like a steel bar, it stops Jim dead. He looks into her evil eyes. He realizes the truth about her now.

MRS. KOBRITZ

She needed you and you weren't home. When a man should be with his woman, where were you?

JIM

Mrs. Kobritz-

MRS. KOBRITZ

You'd rather lie with your whore than with your wife. So typical. Ruled by the flesh.

JIM

What? What are you talking about?

MRS. KOBRITZ

Shhh! No more. Your time has passed, little man. You're no longer needed. His power is strong, his servants are drawn to this place, time is neigh. The newborn will be a fine vessel.

JIM
A son? My son?

MRS. KOBRITZ
He has a new father now. His true father.
Soon they will be one.

JIM
Get out of my way, you crazy bitch.

With that, she BACKHANDS him, the force of the blow sends him FLYING across the porch. He SMASHES onto the ground.

Mrs. Kobritz turns and walks back inside. An unseen force SLAMS the door shut behind her.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Jim gets back up and almost falls back down, SCREAMING in pain. His hands grab his leg.

With effort he gets up, hobbles to the car and gets the shotgun. Using it as a crutch, he makes his way around the side of the house. On the horizon, dawn is breaking, just a thin line of orange against the dark sky.

AROUND BACK OF THE HOUSE

Jim reaches the basement door. He reaches out, easy, tries the door - open. He swings it open and moves in.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-BASEMENT-NIGHT

Jim eases down the steep staircase into the basement. Stops two steps from the floor. Listens.

What was once the soft rustling and squeaking is now a CONSTANT FLURRY OF MOTION AND NON-STOP CHITTERING.

Jim reaches for the light switch on the wall, cuts it on and:

The floor is ALIVE WITH THOUSANDS OF RATS, a brown carpet moving back and forth, a horrible sight, unreal in the sheer number of rats here.

Jim looks at the walls: They're alive with rats. They seem to be in the wall itself, the unreal spectacle of the outlines of thousands of rats are flowing down the walls and into the cellar, like a living river streaming down.

Jim recoils in shock and disbelief and as he does:

A FAT RED-EYED RAT LEAPS from the pack and lands on Jim's arm, below the elbow and starts to scurry up his sleeve. Jim freaks, batting at the rat but it moves too quick, it reaches his ear and BITES DOWN and Jim YELLS in the shock and pain and he twists around and

He falls belly-up into the sea of rats. The rats swarm over him, Jim is SCREAMING and kicking and the rats are all over him and he's lost the shotgun and his reaches out for it as a rat SINKS IT'S TEETH into his hand and he SWINGS his hand back and forth, the rat hanging on for dear life and Jim is almost disappearing in the pool of feeding rodents but he is fighting for his life here and he's BITTEN on the leg, the cheek, and then his hand lands on the shotgun and he swings the gun around blindly and SHOOTS and a PILE OF RATS EXPLODE with the BLAST and he's up now and he crawls for the far staircase, rats clinging to his back and he SLAMS his back against the wall, SQUASHING and CRUSHING their plump bodies and finally he makes it up the staircase to temporary safety.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

In the kitchen, basement opens just an inch. Jim's hand creeps around the doorjamb. It opens wider. Jim steps in. He brings the gun up, unsteady now that his crutch is a weapon.

In the middle of the kitchen he waits. NOISES from the main room: the GRUMBLING the creature, the BABY CRYING, and a HIGH-PITCHED HOWL, like *astral winds*, and again the chanting. Jim moves down a hallway.

Jim slides to the floor. He quietly, carefully rips a long strip of cloth from his shirt, uses it as tourniquet, wrapping it tightly around his leg.

He stands, back against the wall for support. With a deep breath he moves on, then there's a horrible SHRIEK, and like a banshee Mrs. Kobritz FLIES from the dark, she RAMS him and they fall to the floor, the shotgun skittering into the kitchen. On the floor they WRESTLE, the woman baring her canine teeth and SNAPPING at Jim, blood and spittle flying.

Jim breaks away and scrambles to the hallway, but the woman is on him in a flash, she PICKS HIM AND THROWS him into the bathroom, where he SMASHES INTO THE WET DRYWALL. PIPES BURST AND WATER SPRAYS everywhere as Jim rolls back onto the floor, Mrs. Kobritz GRABBING HIS LEG AND SINKING HER CANINE TEETH INTO HIS CALF.

Jim manages to break away and crawl into the kitchen, the woman holding his legs, crawling with him. The fight is frantic, bloody. Jim PUNCHES her, but it's no good, she barely feels the blows. At last Jim grabs a KITCHEN KNIFE and PLUNGES it into Mrs. Kobritz's chest. She stops.

Stagger back. Jim backs up. She looks at the knife, dazed. She grabs the hilt and slowly pulls it out. She licks the blood from the blade.

She LEAPS at Jim, TOSSES him across the room and he BANGS into the wall again, crumpling to the floor, by the shotgun. Now Mrs. Kobritz sees the gun, she's moving at him, Jim sees the gun and reaches for it and as he brings it up she's right on top of him and he brings the muzzle up and it's point blank range, and BOOM! Mrs. Kobritz's HEAD EXPLODES in blood and gore. Her body sags and falls, twitching as it lies there, BLOOD SPRAYING like a fountain.

Jim is up now, no use to sneak, he limps down the hall, through the SPRAYING WATER, and SLIPS in the growing WATER PUDDLE seeping into the hall. In the main room he sees:

Anne on the couch, unconscious; Ko'lok in the opposite hallway, head down, apparently at rest; the baby on the floor crying; and standing over the baby: the Old Man; bloody, gruesome, in an advanced state of decay.

OLD MAN

Infidel. Trespasser.

JIM

You-you're not real. You're not real!

OLD MAN

I'm more real than you can imagine with your frail mind. There's been so much for you to see, pitiful man, but your eyes have been closed to Ko'lok and his glory!

JIM

Get out! This is my house, fucker.

OLD MAN

You own nothing! Pauper! At the end, what can you claim as your own? You're no more than a squatter, an interloper. The woman? Yours by the white man's law only. In her heart? Doubtful. She belongs to no one.

JIM

She's my wife. She loves me.

OLD MAN

She feels deserted. Estranged. You've betrayed her and her unborn as well.

JIM

That's a lie!

BLACK LIGHTNING SIZZLES and FIRES from the old man's hands, Jim is STRUCK and he curls in a ball as the SPARKLING BLACK AND BLUE LIGHTNING crawls over his body.

Jim rolls on the floor into the water puddle, and the LIGHTNING ARCS THROUGH THE WATER, BUCKING HIM INTO THE AIR, and he CRASHES back down, SMOKE wafting from his singed hair.

OLD MAN

I have no need to lie. You sought solace
in the flesh of a harlot. Weak is man.
Foolish. Pliable. I could almost
understand, the flesh is so tempting, so
sweet. But you did choose as you always
have chosen. Wrongly.

JIM

No! I love her! I came back for her, God-
dammit!

OLD MAN

Only now do you realize how lost you are.
(he strikes again, the
lightning frying Jim as he
screams)
The woman, in her heart, left you long
ago, pitiful fool. The child? The child
now belongs to He Who is One With The
Shadow. Your seed will be cleansed from his
being.

JIM

(it takes a moment, but Jim
gets the strength to speak)
I'm going to take my wife, my baby, and
leave. You won't stop me.

He moves towards the Old Man, circling him, and the Man backs
away, circling with Jim.

OLD MAN

You'll stop yourself. The child is lost,
the woman will never be yours again.
(another jolt of black energy
hits Jim)
Leave now in shame! Ko'lok needs the
innocent vessel. When his strength
returns, when the vessel matures, he will
open the way!

Ko'lok seems to wake from his slumber, and slowly edges his
way from the hallway into the main room.

OLD MAN (cont'd)

He will be the Bringer Of Eternal Night!
The Dark Stars ruled this land long ago,
they will rule again, your child will be
the bearer, you will serve him in his
terrible glory-

JIM

NOOOO!

He LUNGES at the old man, the BLACK DEMON FIRE SPARKLING and snapping. He GRABS the old man by the throat, the old man laughs and applies more ENERGY BOLTS which SIZZLE around the room.

Ko'lok has reached the baby, it lies down as it's tendrils snake up over it's back, feeling their way towards the newborn. The scaly appendages touch the child, fastening to it's skin.

Jim STRUGGLES with the old man, PUNCHING him savagely, his fingers pulling out CLUMPS OF ROTTED SKIN. He grabs the old man's jaw and TEARS AWAY the jaw bone.

A transfer is taking place: Ko'lok is losing body mass, SHRINKING inwards, as the baby seems to grow, expand, it's skin gaining slimy scales.

The old man puts both hands on Jim's skull and the DEMON LIGHTNING EXPLODES. Jim is HURLED across the room, SMASHING into a table and falling to the floor, a table lamp falling across his lap.

The baby is SCREAMING as the transformation continues.

As the old man advances, Jim grabs the broken, SPARKING LAMP, which is still plugged into the socket, and SHOVES it into the old man's heart, pushing him back until they SPLASH in the growing water puddle.

The ELECTRICITY from the lamp ARCS through the water again, reacts with the old man's ASTRAL DEMON FIRE, setting off a chain reaction. WHITE-HOT SHARDS OF LIGHTNING WRAP and INTERTWINE with the BLACK DEMON LIGHTNING, CRAWLING and SPARKING over every thing in the room.

Jim LEAPS over the couch, landing beside Anne, covering her body as the BLACK, BLUE and WHITE LIGHTNING CRAWLS OVER THEM, intensifying as Jim does his best to shield her body.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

As BLACK LIGHTNING streams from the windows, the energy flowing everywhere.

There is a sound, a hollow yet loud vaporous EXPLOSION as a huge PULSE of LIGHT BURSTS from the house, turning the night into day. The light fades, back to normal, dawn breaking behind the house.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Sunlight is coming in now. The old man and Ko'lok are gone. Jim is on the floor. Anne is stirring. The baby is on the floor, still crying.

Jim comes to. He sits up, crawls to the baby. He picks the baby up, holds it, but it won't stop crying. In tremendous pain, he moves over to the recliner, sits the baby down, and moves over to Anne.

She opens her eyes. Lost, confused. Her eyes light up as she sees Jim. He kisses her forehead. They touch, re-discovering each other, it seems. They both start to cry tears of relief, hugging tightly.

EXT. HARRIS HOUSE-DAY

Early morning sunlight bathes the house. SMOKE wafts from the roof and the blown-out windows.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HAMBLY-DAY

Various picturesque shots of the town. Clear skies, green grass, kids playing, husbands and wives holding hands, strolling through the park. Life goes on.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE WOODS-DAY

Tall trees, birds singing as they fly by. Beautiful.

EXT. THE WOODS-TIGHTER-DAY

Jim is in the woods, nestled in a tree. Camouflage gear on. Rifle in his lap. Waiting. Patiently.

MOVEMENT in the foliage. Jim eyes it. Readies the rifle.

Something there. Moving. Jim sights down, holds, holds...

Another small movement- BANG!

A SERIES OF SLOW DISSOLVES:

As Jim sits in the tree, waiting for game to come along.

The day passes. He waits.

At last, the sun is low in the sky. Favoring his good leg, he climbs down from the tree.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE WOODS-DAY

Carrying a small sack over his shoulder, his bad limp very evident, he makes his way home through the woods. He's changed. His eyes sunken in, tired, haggard.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-NIGHT

Jim enters through the back door, he sits the rifle in the broom closet. The sack, which is bloody at the bottom, he sits in the sink.

ANNE (o.s.)
Jim?

JIM
Yeah.

Anne greets him. They kiss, but it's just a quick peck. Anne has changed as well. She looks older.

Jim heads straight to the cabinet, pours a shot of whiskey, downs it. Looks at Anne, pours another one.

ANNE
How'd you do?

JIM
Couple of rabbits. A possum. Long day.

ANNE
You'll do better tomorrow.

A pause. He looks off.

JIM
Yeah.

Anne moves to the sink. Opens the sack and looks inside.

ANNE
They're small.

Jim knocks back his shot. He fishes a smoke from his pocket, but doesn't have a light. Anne opens her cigarette case, takes her lighter and fires it up for him.

Off screen, the baby cries. Loud and persistent. They try to ignore it for a moment.

JIM
He's hungry.

ANNE
All day.

JIM
Wanna feed him now?

ANNE
Might as well.

Jim gets up and moves to the sink.

INT. HARRIS HOUSE-BASEMENT STAIRS-NIGHT

Jim opens the basement door. Now the baby's SCREAMS are louder. He hefts the blood soaked sack and TOSSES it down the stairs, where it lands with a WET THUMP.

A sound of SKITTERING CLAWS. Fabric ripping. Then the baby's cries turn deeper, guttural, into sounds of something feasting, FLESH RIPPING, WET SMACKING sounds. Eating.

Jim looks down with no expression. He moves back and SLAMS the basement.

CUT TO BLACK

THE END