

# **D A E M O N**

Written by  
Robert Skotte

Story by  
Zack Akers & Robert Skotte

FADE IN:

**EXT. WOODS - NIGHT**

Harsh moonlight trickles through the heavy foliage. Jagged shadows fall across the uneven terrain of leafy undergrowth and bushes.

Silence.

**SNEAKERS**

cautiously tip-toe their way across the ground until a twig goes SNAP.

The sneakers freeze immediately.

**ZANE** (20s), covered in blood and bruises, looks down at a broken twig underneath his shoe, curses himself silently.

He looks back up, his chest rises and falls rapidly, moves ahead.

He reaches a tree, takes cover behind the trunk, catches his breath. He leans around the tree, scans the surroundings.

Nothing.

He sucks in a deep breath, composes himself. His fingers close around the OLD MEDALLION that hangs from his neck.

**ZANE**

You can do this.

Zane springs to his feet, dashes across a clearing with his eyes peeled over his shoulder and --

-- TRIPS.

He hits the ground with a hollow THUD. He GROANS out in pain, reels around and spots:

**A MUTILATED BODY**

partly obscured by leaves and soil. A YELP escapes Zane's lips. He slaps a hand across his mouth to contain another scream.

His eyes mist up as he stares at the bloody corpse, sees a dirty hand sticking out of tangled mess, spots the nail polish.

ZANE  
Kathy. No.

A DRAWN-OUT SIGH reverberates in the night.

Zane stiffens, a breath caught in his throat. His eyes dart back and forth.

Through a veil of leaves, SOMETHING watches him as he pushes himself onto wobbly feet.

It glides past a bush with the stealth of a seasoned predator, its movements fluid and calculated.

The unseen PHANTOM enters the clearing, its gaze ZOOMS on the medallion around Zane's neck - pauses - then ZINGS toward him.

Zane spins around and -- sees nothing.

ANOTHER DRAWN-OUT SIGH, this time much closer.

Zane loses his cool. He jerks around, takes off. His feet pound the surface as he rips through the thick vegetation, oblivious to the branches and thorns that grab at his clothes.

The unseen PHANTOM takes up pursuit, speeds after him, quickly closing the distance between them.

Zane shoots a terrified glance over his shoulder. There's nothing to see but he still can feel its presence.

ZANE  
(without slowing down)  
I'll put it back! I swear! I'll  
put it all back!

Zane SLIPS on a soggy pile of leaves, careens across the ground.

ZANE  
Fuck!

He looks up as the sound of HOARSE BREATHING reaches him. He rolls onto his back, raises his arms to brace himself.

ZANE  
Please! No!

Nothing happens. Nothing is there, just a few swaying branches.

Zane slowly lowers his arms. A look of confusion dons his face. Without taking his eyes off the swaying branches, he gets to his feet.

Eyeing him from behind, the PHANTOM rounds a tree, picks up speed -- darts toward him.

The young man twirls around just as the PHANTOM hits him. A horrified SCREAM spurts from his mouth and everything turns:

WHITE

**EXT. CAMP GROUNDS - PARKING LOT - DAY**

The sun bakes down on an empty parking lot cut out in front of a sea of lush forest.

The sound of BLARING ROCK MUSIC approaches and obliterates the picturesque serenity.

A VAN

pulls into the empty lot and parks. The music dies.

**JASON** (20s), impeccably groomed - in an anal kind of way, exits from the driver's side. He grabs the handle to the sliding door, yanks it open.

**KEITH** (20s), typical jock type - in excellent shape physically, if not mentally - hops out. He stretches his back.

KEITH

Thanks for the detour, man.

JASON

We're here aren't we?

Keith fakes a few boxing punches at Jason.

KEITH

Guess so, Mr. G-P-S.

**AMY** (20s), tomboyish but cute as hell - not that she cares, exits after Keith, pats him on the back.

AMY

Not there yet. We still gotta hike to the camp site.

KEITH  
 Woah. Back up. Hike? You're kidding, babe.

AMY  
 That's not even the worst part.

KEITH  
 What could be worse than hiking?

JASON  
 Getting dumped.

His words hits the group like a bucket of cold water, the mood all of a sudden uncomfortably awkward.

Amy caresses Jason's arm.

AMY  
 It'll pass, Jason.

JASON  
 Yeah, I guess.

Keith locks an arm around Jason's neck.

KEITH  
 Don't sweat it, bro, plenty more where she came from.

LUKE (O.S.)  
 Yeah, ugly girls need love to.

They turn around just as **LUKE** (20s) climbs out of the van with a smirky smile on his face - the kind of smirk that gets tiresome really fast.

Keith and Jason exchange glances - not seeing the humor of the comment.

LUKE  
 Come on, guys, lighten up, all right?

He helps **MADISON** (20s), a down-to-earth piece of eye-candy, out of the van. She locks eyes with Keith and Jason - sends them a pleading stare.

Keith nods.

JASON  
 Amy, you sure we're allowed to park here?

AMY

Relax, spaz. You're precious van  
will be fine.

(to Keith)

You, pack mule, gimme a hand.

She leads Keith around to the back of the van where she swings the doors open.

Madison reaches inside the cabin, grabs a small BOOM BOX off the seat, SQUEALS as Luke grabs her ass.

MADISON

You dog.

LUKE

Come here, baby.

He slides a hand around her waist, pulls her close, lays a big kiss on her which she gladly returns.

Keith peeks around the back of the van.

KEITH

Yo, lover boy, these tents aren't  
carrying themselves.

Luke kisses his girlfriend a final time, heads over to help out Keith and Amy.

Madison picks up the boom box, turns to Jason who stares at her. Again, an awkward moment ensues.

MADISON

Look, I'm sorry about Luke. He's --

JASON

It's okay, Maddie.

MADISON

You sure?

He pops open a RED BULL, gulps down a mouthful.

JASON

Yeah, no biggie.

MADISON

What happened, Jason?

JASON

What happened with what?

MADISON  
You and Michelle.

He avoids the question with a shrug, grabs a BACKPACK from the van, straps it on then pulls the sliding door shut.

JASON  
Guess she wanted to explore her options.  
(shrugs)  
What the hell. As long as she's happy, right?

MADISON  
If that's how you feel.

Jason takes another sip from the can, passes it to Madison.

JASON  
(smiles)  
It's not.

Behind the van, Keith reaches inside, grabs a TENT BAG, turns to Luke who's already got a bag in his arms.

LUKE  
Hey, I can only carry one.

KEITH  
Girly man.

LUKE  
They're fucking heavy, dude.

KEITH  
Jeez. Yo, Jason, give me a hand here.

Amy pulls a red COOLER from the cabin, grabs one end, Madison grabs the other and together they hoist it out.

Keith passes a tent bag to Jason, picks the last from the trunk.

KEITH  
All set.

AMY  
Lets get moving then.

Jason points his car key at the van, presses the lock button and the car goes BEEP BEEP.

The group heads off into the woods, leaving the van behind in the lot.

**EXT. WOODS - TRAIL - LATER**

Thick vegetation surrounds the dirt trail on both sides, the light dim and murky.

Amy and Madison lead the way while Keith and Jason bring up the rear.

Luke, right behind the ladies, already looks sweaty, tired and worn out.

LUKE

How much further? My backs killing me.

Amy laughs.

AMY

Is that little tent too heavy for ya?

LUKE

Give me a break, all right? I've got a bad back.

KEITH

You're not, like, gonna cry, are you?

Luke flips Keith the middle finger over his shoulder. Keith and Jason share a chuckle.

LUKE

Whose brilliant idea was this anyway?

MADISON

(over her shoulder)  
Mine.

LUKE

Oh. Like I said, brilliant idea.

They press on, follow the trail as it snakes back and forth.

MADISON

I gotta go to the little girl's room. Can we stop for a second?

LUKE  
Hell, yeah.

The five of them make stop. Luke stretches his back, catches his breath.

AMY  
Want me to go with you?

MADISON  
Sure.

LUKE  
Y'all need a cup?

Amy shakes her head.

AMY  
Freak.

Amy and Madison walk off the trail, head into the woods.

Keith flips the lid off the cooler, digs out a beer, tosses it to Jason, holds another one up for Luke.

KEITH  
Want one?

LUKE  
You got any Everclear?

KEITH  
Nope, just beer.

LUKE  
Pass.

JASON  
I brought some Smirnoff, you want some of that?

LUKE  
Smirnoff? Do I look like a pussy to you?

Keith shakes his head.

KEITH  
I'm not even touching that one.

**EXT. WOODS - CLEARING - CONTINUOUS**

Amy leans against a tree while Madison does her business in a nearby bush.

AMY  
So...you actually like this guy?

MADISON  
Yeah. He's really sweet.

AMY  
No offense but he kinda seems like a douche.

Madison laughs.

MADISON  
He's just showing off for the guys. Give him a chance, Amy. He's a nice guy and he really likes me.

Amy shrugs.

AMY  
Well, the last part's a plus.

Amy leans forward, squints. She sees something.

AMY  
Woah. Look at that.

**EXT. WOODS - TRAIL - CONTINUOUS**

Keith sits on the cooler, chewing on a beer, while Jason paces back and forth a bit away with a CELLPHONE against his ear.

Luke is on the ground, his head resting on his tent bag. He brings a JOINT to his lips, takes a hit.

JASON  
(into the phone)  
No, I understand, Michelle, but --  
(pause)  
Look, I just thought --  
(pause)  
Of course I do.

LUKE  
Dude, you need to put your foot down. Let her know you're *tha man* and shit.

Jason pulls the phone from his ear, turns to Luke.

JASON  
I appreciate the advice, Luke, but  
zip it, all right?

He puts the phone back to his ear, turns away.

LUKE  
Whatever.

He takes another hit.

LUKE  
(to Keith)  
So how long you and Amy been  
together.

KEITH  
We go back a while. We all do.

LUKE  
Yeah? Outstanding.

JASON  
(into the phone)  
Can't we meet? Just the two of us?  
(pause)  
Why not?

He runs a hand through his hair, sighs.

JASON  
(into the phone)  
Look, you owe me that much.  
(pause)  
What do you mean 'don't be like  
that'? Michelle --

He pulls the phone from his ear, stares at it.

KEITH  
She hang up on you?

Jason tries to play it Bogart.

JASON  
Probably just got disconnected.

LUKE  
Access denied!

JASON  
 (pissed off)  
 I thought I told you to shut up.

Luke gets to his feet, takes a step toward Jason.

LUKE  
 What's your problem, man?

Jason opens his mouth to speak when:

AMY (O.S.)  
 Hey, guys! Come check this out.

Luke and Jason stare each other down, the animosity as thick as they come.

Keith chuckles, grabs Jason by the arm, drags him away.

KEITH  
 Let's go, tough guy.

The two of them head into the bushes.

Luke shakes his head.

LUKE  
 (to himself)  
 I guess I'll just stay here and watch the stuff then.

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - CONTINUOUS**

Amy spots Keith and Jason approaching, waves them over.

AMY  
 Over here.

The two men walk up next to Amy and Madison who stare at something.

KEITH  
 What?

Amy points.

Keith and Jason follow her line of sight.

An old BLACK TREE, shaped like a deformed claw growing out of the ground, stands a bit away, a big red "X" painted on it.

JASON  
 Creepy.

Keith shrugs.

KEITH  
It's...a tree. I thought you found  
something cool.

Amy leans closer to Keith, slips a hand into his.

AMY  
I don't know about you but I've  
never seen a tree like that.

KEITH  
How many trees have you seen  
exactly?

She slaps him playfully.

AMY  
You know what I mean.

Jason takes a step closer.

JASON  
What's with the X?

KEITH  
Maybe it's got one of those tree  
deceases.

AMY  
Why not just cut it down then?

KEITH  
What am I, a forest ranger?

None of them notice Madison or her vacant eyes. She just stands there, staring at the tree, almost mesmerized.

HOARSE BREATHING snaps her out of it.

She squints, looks at the others. None of them seem to have heard anything.

AMY  
What?

MADISON  
Did you...?

JASON  
What's wrong?

She shakes her head, confused. Keith looks at Jason.

KEITH  
Houston, we have a problem.

Amy grabs Madison's hand.

AMY  
Are you okay?

Madison wriggles loose.

MADISON  
Yeah. Yeah. It's nothing. Come  
on, lets get moving. We still  
gotta set up camp.

Madison heads toward the trail.

Jason gives Amy a questioning look, gets a shrugs in  
response. They follow Madison, past a tree when --

LUKE  
BWUHA-HA-HA-HA-HA!

-- Luke jumps out in front of them and spooks the shit out of  
everyone.

KEITH  
Fuck. I nearly shit my pants.

JASON  
You dick.

Luke grins, puts his arm around Madison and together they  
trot off for the trail.

The three remaining friends exchange glances.

AMY  
This is gonna be a long weekend.

KEITH  
Yeah.

They follow Luke and Madison.

Behind them, the twisted tree just sits there. Its myriad of  
black branches zigzag across each other like a giant spider  
web.

A whisper of a MUFFLED SCREAM seeps out of the tree.

**EXT. CAMPSITE - LATER**

A cleared out area in the middle of the woods make up the camp site.

The Boom Box stands next to the cooler. Low, almost inaudible, music oozes from the speakers.

Keith cranks up the volume, nods along to the blaring Rock tune.

KEITH  
Now you're talking.

He returns to his unassembled tent that lies on the ground in about half a dozen pieces. He picks up a pole, shoots it a questioning look.

KEITH  
Er...

Amy, who is preparing the fire pit with Madison, turns to Keith.

AMY  
You're doing great.

Keith looks over at Jason, who's already got his tent up and running across from the fire pit.

Next to Jason's tent is Madison and Luke's tent, also completed.

Luke, again sprawled out on the ground, has his trusted joint between his lips, zoned out with heavy eyelids.

KEITH  
(to Jason)  
Gimme' a hand over here. I think mine's broken.

Jason chuckles as he walks over to assist Keith.

JASON  
It's not broken, buddy, you just suck at this.

Amy and Madison laugh.

Jason puts the various parts together while Keith gets another beer from the cooler.

AMY  
Get me one too, baby.

KEITH  
What about you, Maddie?

MADISON  
Yeah, sure.

He brings the girls their brew, sits down next to Amy, caresses her thigh.

She leans back, lets the sun warm her face, purrs like a kitten, as Keith kisses her neck.

AMY  
Nice.

Keith raises his beer.

KEITH  
Cheers, ladies.

Their cans CLANK together.

JASON (O.S.)  
Hang on.

They look over as Jason jogs toward them with his own beer raised in a salute.

Keith stares in disbelief at completed tent behind Jason.

KEITH  
Goddamn, bro, how the hell d'you do that?

JASON  
What? It's, like, six pieces you put together. It even comes with an instruction manual.

KEITH  
Yeah, but, you know, still.

Jason slides down next to Madison.

JASON  
Bottoms up.

They do - Keith and Jason immediately follow up with a reverberating BURP each.

Amy pats Keith on the back.

AMY  
That's my baby.

Jason nods back at Luke, who's fallen asleep.

JASON  
Should we wake him up?

KEITH  
Why?

Amy slaps his shoulder.

AMY  
Behave.

MADISON  
Come on, guys, at least get to know  
him first, okay? Please?

KEITH  
It's not like we haven't been  
trying.

MADISON  
Well, you're not exactly Mr. Open  
Doors, Keith.

JASON  
True.

KEITH  
Blow me.

MADISON  
Look, the four of us been tight  
since kindergarten. He's just  
trying to get a foot through the  
door. That's not easy and you're  
not exactly making it any easier.  
So please...

She looks around at each of them.

MADISON  
...give him break, okay? For me?

Keith and Jason look at each other. Nod. Jason lifts his  
beer.

JASON  
You've got it.

The four of them gulp down on the beers.

AMY

At least he not as bad as what's  
his name? Nick.

KEITH

Nick The Brick?

Jason nearly chokes on his beer.

JASON

Man, that dude was just...off.

Madison can't help but laugh.

MADISON

Yeah, not my finest hour.

Amy turns serious.

AMY

I heard he killed himself.

KEITH

That's right. Took a nosedive in  
front of a train.

The three of them stare at Madison.

MADISON

Hey, that was years after we broke  
up.

JASON

I guess he had his reasons.

Amy frowns, looking a bit miffed by his response.

AMY

Suicide? That's a coward's way  
out.

JASON

Sometimes there's just not enough  
light at the end of that tunnel,  
you know?

AMY

There's always an alternative.

MADISON

He obviously didn't see it that  
way.

AMY

Well, you sure know how pick 'em,  
girlfriend.

KEITH

Hey, Maddie, what about Jason here?  
He's available. And he's cool.  
You know, in a gay kinda way.

Jason blows him a kiss.

AMY

Of course. You two should  
definitely hook up.

Madison and Jason look at each other for a beat, then:

MADISON/JASON

Naaaahhh.

The four of them laugh.

LUKE (O.S.)

What's so funny?

Faces stiffen. They turn around to face a bleary-eyed Luke.

KEITH

Nothing.

LUKE

Yeah?

JASON

Yeah.

Madison taps the ground next to her.

MADISON

Sit with me, sweetie.

Jason scoots over, makes room for Luke, hands him a beer.

LUKE

I don't know. I'm not crazy about  
beer.

JASON

Come on, dude, join the party.

Luke takes the can, shrugs.

LUKE

Yeah, what the hell.

He pops it open, sucks it down.

JASON

There you go.

Madison sends him a grateful smile. He smiles back - don't mention it.

**EXT. CAMPSITE - OUTSKIRTS - CONTINUOUS**

Through the bushes SOMETHING watches them as more beers pop open and the good times start to roll.

**EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT**

CRACKLING FLAMES fill the fire pit at the camp's center. Cosy light sways back and forth across Amy who wiggles seductively to the music, running her hands up and down her ripe body.

Keith stands next to her, beer in hand, shuffling his feet around in a failed attempt at dancing.

Amy locks a pair of smiling eyes on him, folds her hands around his neck. Their lips meet in a wet and passionate kiss.

She turns around, grabs her hips, slowly rubs her butt against his crotch.

It's definitely getting hot in here.

Madison pours a shot of VODKA into a paper cup, raises in a salute to the dancing couple.

MADISON

You go, girl.

She bottoms the cup, nearly loses her balance. Jason steadies her.

JASON

Woah, easy there.

She slumps back to the ground, giggling, pours herself some more Vodka.

Luke goes through a back pack, pulls out bottle after bottle. He holds one of them up, squints at the label, seeing double.

He shows it to Jason.

LUKE  
What does this say?

JASON  
That would be Mr. Daniels.

Luke kisses the bottle.

LUKE  
Come to papa.

He unscrews the cap, gulps down three big mouthfuls of the bronze gold. Jason winces at the sight.

JASON  
Damn.

Luke lowers the bottle, sucks in a deep breath.

LUKE  
Shee-it.

JASON  
So what's your major?

LUKE  
Other than my hard-on?

JASON  
Cute.

LUKE  
It's music actually.

JASON  
Music? You any good?

Luke takes another swig from the bottle.

LUKE  
I get by. You?

JASON  
Applied mathematics.

LUKE  
You can apply math?

Madison drops down between them, spills her drink.

MADISON  
Whoops.

She grabs a hold of Luke, pulls him to his feet.

MADISON

Dance with me.

They stagger out next to Keith and Amy. Madison shakes her hips to the beat, Luke falls in behind her - and he can dance.

Jason watches as the two couples dance around, laughing and drinking.

He slides a hand to his pocket, pulls out his cellphone, scrolls through the contacts, stops at the name: "MICHELLE".

His thumb pauses over the CALL-BUTTON, hesitates. He closes his eyes, shakes his head, puts away the phone.

He gets up, heads off to the bushes, unzips his fly and lets nature run its course.

As he stands there, watering the plants, something catches his attention. He tilts his head, stares into the bushes, squints in the darkness.

It's as if someone or something is there with him. He zips his pants back up.

JASON

Someone there?

Leaves move in front of him. He takes a step back.

JASON

Hello?

And then:

The music stops. Disappointed voices fill the night.

Jason gives the bushes a final glance before heading back to the camp.

Keith shakes the Boom Box.

KEITH

Come on. Play, you cocksucker.

JASON

What happened?

Keith slaps it on the side.

KEITH

The shit just stopped.

AMY  
(sarcastic)  
Gee, I wonder. Could it be, I  
don't know, like batteries.

Keith puts the Boom Box down.

KEITH  
Not entirely out of the realm of  
possibilities.

AMY  
Where did you put the extra?

KEITH  
Extra?

Madison MOANS with disappointment.

MADISON  
I wanna dance.

KEITH  
Sorry.

AMY  
Did you at least brings condoms?

KEITH  
Of course.

Amy raises an eyebrow. She grabs his hand, turns to the  
others.

AMY  
We're gonna call it a night, guys.  
Sleep tight.

A big smile crosses Keith's face as Amy hauls him off toward  
their tent.

MADISON  
I don't wanna go to sleep yet. I  
wanna dance.

JASON  
There might be some batteries in  
the car.

LUKE  
Yikes, that's a long walk.

MADISON  
You wouldn't do that for me?

She does a pleading puppy-dog-eyes-routine.

LUKE

Only if you go with me.

Madison frowns. Luke leans in, whispers something in her ear, kisses her neck.

She giggles, pulls back.

MADISON

Oh, you're such a bad boy.

LUKE

Is that a yes?

She extends her hand.

MADISON

Lead the way.

Luke snatches a flashlight from a backpack, turns to Jason.

LUKE

Don't wait up for us.

Jason watches as they head off and disappear into the bushes, leaving him all by his lonesome.

He slumps down next to the fire, looks over as muffled MOANS reaches him from Keith and Amy's tent, grabs a fresh beer.

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - CONTINUOUS**

The beam from a flashlight cuts through the dark woods. It bops up down, swings from side to side.

Luke parts some branches, ducks under a low hanging limb. He helps Madison through. A thorn cuts her hand.

MADISON

Ouch.

(sucks the wound)

This is stupid. Let's take the trail.

LUKE

The trail snakes back and forth, this is faster.

He guides her further into the bushes, holds up the light above his head, illuminates a path.

As they move ahead, the darkness closes like a curtain behind them.

Something watches them.

It glides low across the ground, following their footsteps, then zings up among the tree crowns, continues its stalking.

**EXT. CAMPSITE - CONTINUOUS**

Jason leans his head against a backpack, stares up at the canopy of stars above him.

The light from the crackling fireplace reflects in his moist eyes.

A tear rolls down the side of his face. He wipes it away, annoyed with himself.

SNAP

Spooked, he jerks upright, quickly scans the campsite left and right, lets his eyes glide across the outskirts.

Not seeing anything, he lays his head back down when:

SNAP

This time he shoots to his feet, fully alert now. Grabbing a flashlight, he spins around, shines the beam at the place where the sound came from.

He passes the fireplace, picks up a good heavy stick of unused timber, heads toward the outskirts.

JASON

Luke? Maddie? That you?

He reaches the outskirts, lifts his stick like a baton, ready to strike.

Leaves rustle to his left. Jason takes a cautious step closer.

JASON

Luke, that better not be you  
messing around back there.

He reaches out with his flashlight, slowly parts the branches, his knuckles white around the stick, holds his breath, coils up like a spring when --

DADU-DIDADA-DIDUDU-DAAHHH

-- his cellphone cuts through the silence.

Jason JOLTS, drops both the light and the stick.

JASON

Fuck.

He digs out the phone, checks the display. It says:  
"MADISON".

JASON

(into phone)

What's up, Maddie?

MADISON (V.O.)

Hey, sweetie. Did you, maybe,  
forget to give us something?

JASON

(into phone)

Like what?

MADISON (V.O.)

Like the car keys?

He pulls the keys out of his pocket.

JASON

Aw, shit.

**EXT. WOODS - CLEARING - CONTINUOUS**

Madison and Luke stand in a clearing. She holds her cellphone closer to her ear, playfully waves away Luke's hands as he tries to fondle her.

JASON (V.O.)

Where you at? You want me to bring  
them.

Luke shakes his head.

MADISON

(into phone)

No, that's all right. We'll head  
back.

She hangs up.

LUKE

But not right away.

The flashlight glides out of his palm. He grabs her hips, presses her up against a tree, fondles her breast with one hand while the other slides down between her legs.

Madison closes her eyes, tilts her head back, sucks air through her teeth and MOANS with pleasure as he kisses her exposed neck from jaw to collar.

MADISON

Ah, that's nice, baby.

She snaps her lips at his ear, runs a hand through his hair.

Luke slips a hand underneath her shirt, strokes her breasts while kissing her hard.

Madison's breathing quickens as her hands fumble with his belt.

A DRAWN-OUT SIGH

Madison's eyes snap open.

MADISON

You hear that?

Luke, his face buried in her hair, mumbles off something inaudible.

The SIGH comes again. Madison swallows, scared now.

MADISON

Stop. Stop.

She pushes Luke off of her, fixes her clothes. He looks at her, all confused.

LUKE

What?

MADISON

Didn't you hear that?

LUKE

Hear what?

Madison's eyes goes wide as she spots something behind him.

MADISON

Oh, my God.

Luke turns.

Lit by the flashlight on the ground, the BLACK TREE stands a bit away, its ominous arms stretched out in a choking embrace.

LUKE

That's the tree you told me about?

She nods, unable to take her eyes off the it.

Luke picks up the flashlight, shines it at the tree, moves up for a closer look.

MADISON

Luke, don't.

LUKE

It's just a tree.

He reaches the tree, shines his light up and down the rotted trunk.

LUKE

(to himself)

Just a tree.

The unseen PHANTOM sneaks across the undergrowth, slips back and forth between bushes, focuses on Madison's back.

Luke leans around the thick trunk, notices a shovel on the ground behind the tree.

MADISON (O.S.)

Come on. Let's go back.

He steps around the tree, lets the beam from his light glide across the ground. It comes to a stop at a freshly dug up hole.

LUKE

There's something here.

He squats next to the hole. It measures approximately four feet by two feet, relatively shallow.

He shines his light into the hole. Nothing. Just a hole in the ground.

LUKE

Guess they found whatever they were looking for.

He shrugs, about to get to his feet as he notices something on the tree. He leans closer, spots four vertical lines carved into the bark near its base - CLAW MARKS.

His brow creases with concern.

He glides his hand across the marks, retracts it, glares down at the thick red liquid that covers his fingers.

LUKE  
What the hell?

Madison SCREAMS (O.S.)

Luke shoots to his feet, swings the flashlight around, shines it at the empty spot where he left Madison.

LUKE  
Maddie?

No reply.

He swallows, not so tough anymore. His eyes glide from one side to the other, too scared to actually move.

LUKE  
Come on, Maddie, this shit ain't  
funny.

Nothing but silence greets him - no crickets, no nothing.

Luke mans up, moves toward the spot were Madison was standing, constantly checking over his shoulder.

His beam lands on a small shiny object among the leaves. He bends down, picks it up. It's Madison's cellphone

There's blood on it.

LUKE  
Jesus.

He drops the phone like it's a white-hot piece of metal, stumbles backward, drops to his ass - right into a large puddle of blood.

LUKE  
Fuck! Fuck!

He back paddles, shoves himself back to his feet. He looks down at his blood-dripping clothes.

LUKE  
MADDIE!

**INT. KEITH AND AMY'S TENT - CONTINUOUS**

Amy buries her mouth in Keith's, sucks on his lips aggressively - horny as hell.

They're in a sleeping bag, tangled together.

She climbs on top, straddles him. Her exposed breasts dangle in front of his face, the nipples hard and erect.

AMY  
(hissing)  
Take me.

Keith grimaces, squirms.

AMY  
What?

KEITH  
It doesn't feel right.

She kisses his neck --

AMY  
What are you talking about?

-- nibbles at his earlobe.

AMY  
It feels great.

KEITH  
Not that. It's just...

The sleeping bag ripples as Amy arcs her back, lowers her pelvis. She MOANS with pleasure, smiles seductively.

AMY  
I know you want me.

KEITH  
Baby, I want you so bad I'm about to burst but...my best friend's sitting right outside with a broken heart. It just doesn't feel right doing it here and now.

Amy stops, slides down next to him, panting. She runs a hand across his chest, kisses him on the cheek.

AMY  
Do you have any idea how annoyingly sweet you are right now?

He nudges her away playfully.

KEITH  
Get outta here with that shit.

She pulls him tight, plants a kiss on his lips, rolls onto her back again, stares up at the nylon ceiling.

AMY  
So...? We, like, just go to sleep?

KEITH  
I guess.

AMY  
Weird.

A SCREAM PIERCES THE SILENCE, followed by:

LUKE (O.S.)  
WAKE UP! WAKE UP!

The two of them jolt.

**EXT. CAMPSITE - CONTINUOUS**

Jason's eyes pop open at the sound of Luke's screaming. He gets up, woozy, sees Luke running toward him, spots his blood covered clothes.

JASON  
Holy shit, what the hell?

Luke screeches to a halt, out of breath.

LUKE  
It's Madison.

JASON  
Maddie? What --

Keith barges out of his tent, shirt on, pants around his ankles.

KEITH  
The fuck is going on here?  
(spots the blood)  
Jesus Christ.

Amy, dressed again, stumbles up behind them, SCREAMS as she sees the blood.

LUKE  
Something happened.

AMY  
Where's Maddie?

LUKE  
That's what I'm trying to tell you,  
something happened to her.

JASON  
What?

LUKE  
I-I think she's...dead.

That landed.

Amy brings a hand to her mouth, staggers back. Jason shakes his head in disbelief. Keith's face curls into an angry scowl.

He grabs Luke by the collar, yanks him close.

KEITH  
What the fuck did you do to her?!

LUKE  
(on the verge of tears)  
I didn't do anything. She just  
disappeared. I swear

KEITH  
You fucking lying little weasel.

LUKE  
Please.

Amy steps in between them, forces them apart, places a calm on Keith's chest.

AMY  
Cool it.

Luke sags to his knees, puts his face in his hands and sobs.

LUKE  
Oh, God. Oh, God.

AMY  
There's gotta be some kind of  
logical explanation to all this. I  
mean, of course she's not dead.

(MORE)

AMY (CONT'D)  
(looks around for support)  
Right?

Keith shakes his head in disgust at Luke.

KEITH  
If this is some sick joke of yours,  
I will fucking bury you out here.

LUKE  
Please. I don't know what  
happened. One second she was  
there, the next she was gone.

KEITH  
Bullshit!

Amy notices Jason standing with a contemplative look on his face.

AMY  
You're awfully quiet.

JASON  
Earlier tonight, I could have sworn  
someone was watching us.

AMY  
What? Why didn't you say anything?

JASON  
Cos' I wasn't sure.

AMY  
That's it.

She whips out her cellphone.

AMY  
I'm calling her.

LUKE  
You can't. I found her cellphone.

KEITH  
Where is it then?

LUKE  
I dropped it.  
(as Keith reaches out for  
him)  
Hey, there was blood on it, all  
right?

(MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)

There was fucking blood everywhere.  
Look at me! I'm fucking drenched  
in her blood!

KEITH

Exactly! Her blood! On you!

Amy puts her cellphone away.

AMY

We have to go look for her.

KEITH

You Goddamn right we do.

He yanks Luke up on his feet.

KEITH

And you're gonna take us.

LUKE

No. I'm not going back out there,  
no way.

KEITH

You big-mouthed pussy, get your ass  
un-scared right now, cos' we're outta  
here.

Jason picks up a stick, tosses it to Keith, then grabs one  
for himself.

KEITH

Let's do this.

He shoves Luke toward the bushes.

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - LATER**

Luke reluctantly guides them through the woods with Keith  
breathing him in the back of his neck. Amy and Jason, right  
behind him, provide the light.

Keith pokes Luke in the back with his stick.

KEITH

Quit stalling.

LUKE

We're almost there.

He slows down, stops behind a fence of shrubs, kneels, nods  
up ahead.

LUKE

This is it.

Amy brings out her cellphone again, makes a call. Somewhere nearby, another cellphone goes "RIIIIIING" in the night.

Keith nods, waves Jason forward, scoots Amy in behind him.

KEITH

Stay behind me.

(to Jason)

Ready?

Jason swallows, nods. They bring up their sticks.

KEITH

On three. Two. One.

They charge through the shrubs with raised weapons --

**EXT. WOODS - CLEARING - CONTINUOUS**

-- and come to a screeching stop at Madison's ringing cellphone on the ground.

Jason picks it up, shows the others the lit up display that says: "AMY".

Amy disconnects the call, takes the phone from Jason, turns it over in her hand, spots the blood.

AMY

MADDIE?!

KEITH

MADISON?!

Keith slowly circles the clearing while Luke cautiously steps closer and points to the blood on the ground.

Jason kneels next to the puddle, dips his stick into it, samples it with his fingers.

JASON

It's still pretty warm.

AMY

(to Luke)

Where were you when she disappeared?

LUKE

Over by the tree.

AMY  
The tree?

Flashlights come about and light up the tree.

KEITH  
Hey, wasn't that the one --

AMY  
Yeah.

Luke leads them over to the tree, shows them the hole.

LUKE  
It's weird...

He takes Jason's flashlight, points it at the claw marks.

LUKE  
...but is that what I think it is?

Keith squats, inspects the marks, looks over his shoulder at Jason.

KEITH  
Are there bears in these woods?

JASON  
I don't know. Don't think so.

KEITH  
Luke, did you hear anything?

He shakes his head.

LUKE  
She just...screamed.

Amy moves away from the tree, bites her lower lip, the concern visible on her face. She funnels her hands in front of her mouth.

AMY  
MADDIE?!

She cocks her ear against the night. No response.

AMY  
MADDIE?!

A SIGH rolls through the woods seemingly from EVERYWHERE.

Amy stops dead in her tracks as if hit by lightning.

The others heard it too. They warily get to their feet, cautious not to make any noise, exchanging edgy glances.

KEITH

What the fuck was that?

Amy shines her light at the surrounding trees.

AMY

(almost a whisper)  
Madison?

Luke backs away, his breathing irregular.

LUKE

Let's get out of here.

AMY

We're not leaving without Maddie.

LUKE

What if she's dead, Amy? What if she's fucking dead?

AMY

SHE'S NOT DEAD! ALL RIGHT?!

Amy wipes tears from her cheeks, presses ahead toward the bushes, her stride determined.

Keith rushes after her, grabs her arm.

KEITH

Woah, woah, were you going?

She rips free.

AMY

I'm gonna find my friend.

She barges into the bushes, her light disappears behind the shrubs.

AMY (O.S.)

Maddie?!

LUKE

Your girlfriend's certifiable.

KEITH

But she's got bigger balls than you do, that's for damn sure.

He waves them on.

KEITH

Let's go.

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - CONTINUOUS**

Amy moves through the pitch black maze of trees, shrubs and bushes, her arm stretched out in front of her, shining her light around.

AMY

Maddie?!

Twigs snap underneath her shoes with each determined step.

KEITH (O.S.)

Amy, hold up.

She passes a sprawling shrub. Stops. Goes back to it. Her beam comes to a rest on its blood-spattered leaves.

The sight sends a shiver through her body. She backs away on wobbly knees, her hands clinging to the flashlight.

The cone bounces around, slices across trees, bushes and:

A BLOODY SHIRT ON THE GROUND

Amy gasps at the sight, retreats at first but her curiosity gets the best of her.

She picks up the shirt, holds it up to her face, shines the light at it. It's the same kind Madison was wearing - but blood soaked.

She drops it in disgust and stares right into:

MADISON'S FACE.

Amy recoils with a SHRIEK.

Blood pours through Madison's hairline, covers her face, her eyes as dead as a shark's.

Frozen to the ground, Amy's breaths stutter in her throat.

Madison opens her mouth as if to say something. Instead blood pours through her teeth and splashes against her shoes.

A HISS

Madison slumps to the ground - dead.

Amy SCREAMS, bolts aimlessly through the woods, crashes through a thorny bush, rounds a tree and --

WHAM

-- smacks headfirst into Keith.

KEITH

Jesus. Amy, you all right?

She points off to the bushes, gulps down air, on the verge of hysteria.

AMY

It's Maddie.

Keith pushes past her with Jason in tow. They sprint through the bushes, slow down as they spot Madison's corpse.

Jason's shoulder's sag.

JASON

Oh, no.

Keith grimaces at the sight, stops a few feet from the bloody corpse, runs a hand across his mouth.

KEITH

Man.

Amy slowly moves up next to him, Luke keeps his distance behind them but still unable to take his eyes off Madison.

Jason squats next to the body, rolls it onto its back.

Madison's blood smeared face glistens in the light from the flashlights.

AMY

Aw, Maddie.

Tears stream down her face. She grabs a hold of Keith and hugs him tight. He wraps an arm around her, comforts her.

Jason looks down at Madison. Her dead eyes stare back up at him.

Emotions shiver his body. He suppresses the urge to cry, swallows a lump in his throat and gracefully closes her eyes.

LUKE

What happened to her?

JASON

I don't see any wounds.

He gets his cellphone out, taps in "9-1-1", holds the phone to his ear, waits.

LUKE

We're getting out of here now, right? I mean, there's no point in staying around here anymore.

KEITH

Shut the hell up.

Creases form on Jason's forehead. He lowers the cellphone, looks at it.

JASON

I'm not getting a signal.

KEITH

What?

Amy gives it a go on her phone, pauses, looks up.

AMY

I'm not getting one either.

LUKE

What are you talking about? You just used it a moment ago.

AMY

Maybe we'll get a signal back at the camp.

LUKE

Are you forgetting something?  
(points at Madison)  
Does that look like natural causes to you? We need to get in the van and leave. Someone killed her.

KEITH

For all we know that someone was you.

LUKE

And for all I know you're just another dumb-ass jock.

TWACK

Keith belts him with a right to the jaw. Luke's legs disappear underneath him, he crashes to the ground.

He barely manages to bring his arms up before Keith is over him again.

Amy and Jason throw themselves between the two men.

AMY  
Keith, stop it!

LUKE  
Get your fucking Neanderthal  
boyfriend off me!

KEITH  
Shut your fucking mouth you piece  
of shit. We should've never --

DADU-DIDADA-DIDUDU-DAAHHH

Jason's phone startles everyone. He looks at the display.

JASON  
Woah.

AMY  
What is it?

He turns the display over for them to see.

JASON  
It's Maddie.

KEITH  
Put the speaker on.

He does. A familiar voice cackles through the tiny speaker.

MADISON (V.O.)  
Hey, sweetie. Did you, maybe,  
forget to give us something?

JASON  
What the hell?

AMY  
Maddie?

MADISON (V.O.)  
Like the car keys?

JASON  
I just had this conversation with  
her. What the fuck?

MADISON (V.O.)  
No, that's all right. We'll head  
back.

The line disconnects. The woods go silent. Jason looks to  
Amy then Keith, his mouth agape in disbelief.

RIIIIIING

Amy jumps. Madison's cellphone rings in her hand. She looks  
up at Jason.

AMY  
It's you.

She puts the phone on speaker.

JASON (V.O.)  
What's up, Maddie?  
(beat)  
Like what?

Jason backs away, shakes his head.

JASON (V.O.)  
Where you at? You want me to bring  
them.

The line dies.

Luke staggers to his feet.

LUKE  
Can we get the fuck out of here  
now, please?

The three friends stare at each other.

AMY  
Yeah.

JASON  
Hang on.

He gets Madison's blood soaked shirt from the ground, places  
it over her face, gives her a last look.

The SIGH rolls through the forest again.

LUKE  
Come on, let's go!

The four of them turn and run through the bushes, their rapid breaths accompanied by the sound of their shoes slamming against the ground.

But they are not alone. Something follows behind them, its gaze locked on Amy's running shoes as it speeds after her.

Keith leaps over a fallen tree trunk. Amy tries to imitate him but her foot catches on the slippery bark.

She crashes to the ground, slides through leaves. Keith and Jason helps her to her feet as Luke sprints past them.

He looks over his shoulder, picks up the pace, barrels right into a low hanging branch. It catches him in the face, knocks him down, opens up a cut on his forehead.

Jason grabs him, pulls him back up, pushes him ahead.

Amy limbs across the ground. Clutching her knee, she falls behind. Keith sees it. He slows down, wiggles her arm around his neck and helps her along.

The unseen PHANTOM zings along the ground, quickly gaining on Keith and Amy, almost within reach.

KEITH  
Come on, baby, we're gonna --

He HOWLS out in pain, goes stiff, rams the ground hard.

AMY  
Keith!

Jason screeches to a halt, doubles back. As he reaches Amy, Keith is on the ground, trembling, his eyes rolled back in their sockets.

KEITH  
He--lp--me.

Amy and Jason pull him up from the ground. He keels over, grabs his gut, GROANS, spews blood out of his mouth.

The blood sprays Amy's shock-stricken face. She blinks it away from her eyes as Keith drops to his knees, puking up a thick stream of blood when --

-- something YANKS him backwards. The sudden motion knocks Jason on his back.

Amy reacts instinctively, hooks a hand around Keith's ankle, pulls it back.

No effect.

Keith slides across the ground, Amy's hand slips along his sock, drags her with him. She digs in her heels to stop it but whatever is pulling on the other, it's way stronger than her.

Jason reaches out, manages to get a hold on Amy's legs as she slides past him.

Keith coughs up more blood, throws his arms around wildly just as a hard tug jerks him out of Amy's hands.

He shoots along the ground and disappears in the night.

AMY  
NOOOOOO!

The something nauseatingly WET happens (O.S.).

AMY  
KEEEEEIIIIITH!

Jason pulls Amy back up.

JASON  
Amy, let's go.

She tries to wrestle out of his grasp as she claws herself through the air toward Keith.

JASON  
Amy, we have to move!

AMY  
No! No!

He spins her around hard, shakes her out of it.

JASON  
We have to go! Now!

He pushes her back on track, grabs her hand, nearly dragging her as they sprint through shrubs.

They catch up with Luke who waves them left.

LUKE  
The trail is right over here.

The three of them cut left, barge through the bushes and --

**EXT. WOODS - TRAIL - CONTINUOUS**

-- bolt along the dirt trail. Their feet kick up dust as they hightail it up a steep incline.

LUKE  
We're almost there.

Jason, without slowing down, burrows into his pocket, gets out the car key.

They reach the summit...

LUKE  
No. No. No.

**EXT. CAMPSITE - CONTINUOUS**

...and stumble to a stop. The camp is just as they left, the fire still burns in its pit.

LUKE  
(gasping for air)  
What the hell?

AMY  
Did we go the wrong way?

JASON  
(uncertain)  
No. I mean -- we couldn't have.

Amy looks back down the trail, her tear-streaked face frozen in sorrow and fear as she catches her breath.

AMY  
Only one way to find out.

She disappears down the trail again.

AMY  
Come on.

Jason sucks down huge gulps of air, nods, heads after her with Luke on his heels.

The sound of their FOOTSTEPS fade in the night, quickly replaced by the CRACKLING of the fireplace.

The campsite lies deserted.

Seconds tick by.

Then FOOTSTEPS approach.

LUKE (O.S.)  
WHAT THE FUCK?!

AMY (O.S.)  
Oh, God.

The three of them tumble to the ground just inside the camp grounds, physically exhausted.

Luke buries his face in his hands.

LUKE  
This is not happening.

DADU-DIDADA-DIDUDU-DAAHHH

LUKE  
No. No. Not again.

Jason struggles the phone out of his pocket, puts in on speaker.

MADISON (V.O.)  
Hey, sweetie. Did you, maybe,  
forget to give us something?

Luke throws his hand over his ears.

LUKE  
Make it stop! Make it stop!

Jason switches the phone off, sags back to the ground.

RIIIIIING

Amy clutches Madison's phone against her chest, her knuckles white.

AMY  
Stop.

RIIIIIING

AMY  
Stop. Please.

RIIIIIING

AMY  
STOP IT!

And it does.

She climbs to her feet, staggers to the fireplace, slumps down in front of it.

Her body shivers. She folds her trembling hands in front of her mouth, blows warmth into them, barely able to control her quivering breaths.

Jason slides down next to her.

JASON

You okay?

AMY

No.

Her takes her hands, warms them in his.

AMY

Jason, what's happening?

JASON

I wish I could say something really smart right now but I don't see that happening any time soon.

Amy chuckles halfheartedly

AMY

That's funny.

JASON

Not Keith-funny. I'm sure he would have known what to say right now.

AMY

(imitates Keith)

Houston, we have a problem.

Amy laughs. Jason doesn't. Her laughter turns into a sob then into full blown tears.

Jason puts an arm around her, hug her tight while forcing back tears himself.

Luke paces back and forth on the other side of the fire pit.

LUKE

(to himself)

Why the hell did you even go on this trip? You didn't even like her.

(slaps his head)

Stupid. All this for a piece of ass.

(MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)  
(slaps himself again)  
You should've just stayed in bed  
this morning. That's right. You  
should've...

He looks up.

LUKE  
Wait a minute.

He runs over to Amy and Jason, kneels in front of them.

LUKE  
Hey. This is a dream. It's gotta  
be. It's just a really fucked up  
nightmare and any second now we're  
gonna wake up in our beds and --

SLAP

Amy open-hands him across the face. Luke, stunned and with a  
reddening cheek, stares at her.

AMY  
Did you wake up?

Luke swallows.

AMY  
No? Then shut up.

Luke retreats to the other side of the pit with a bruised  
cheek and a bruised ego.

Jason puts some more tree on the fire, warms his hands at the  
blaze.

AMY  
What are we gonna do?

JASON  
I guess there's only two options  
really. We either stay here or we  
don't.

LUKE  
I say we stay. Why chance it out  
there?

He nods towards the bushes.

Amy gets up. Hands on her hips, she does a three-sixty of  
the outskirts.

AMY

This forest is huge. We can't be the only ones here.

Jason nods.

JASON

I've been thinking the same thing.

LUKE

Ah-ah, no way guys. No, we stay here in the open where we can defend ourselves.

AMY

We don't even know what we're up against.

She gets her flashlight, hands Jason his wooden stick.

AMY

I just wanna get out of here.

LUKE

Hey, I don't like this place any more than you do but what's wrong with a little sunlight?

JASON

Listen. Earlier tonight, someone was here. I swear, I felt someone. I don't wanna wait around for them to come back.

(looks at Amy)

Let's go.

LUKE

You're fucking crazy.

Amy and Jason head off for the bushes. Luke shakes his head, jogs after them.

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - LATER**

They sneak through the bushes, constantly alert, eyes darting, silent steps.

Jason holds a wall of leaves to the side. Amy shines her light into the darkness. Nods.

They slide through.

Luke watches their backs as they head further into the dark thicket.

JASON

Hello?

Luke cringes.

LUKE

Yes, by all means, paint a fucking bulls eye on us, dude. I mean, the light's bad enough, no need to --

Amy holds up a hand, crouches.

LUKE

What?

Jason pulls him to the ground, places a finger on his lips.

Amy glides the beam across the ground. It crawls over the dark soil, loose leaves - comes to a stop on a pair of legs.

She moves to the side, keeps the light on the legs. The beam reveals:

ZANE

sprawled out on the ground, eyes closed, bloody and bruised, not moving.

Amy waves the two men forward, points to Zane. Jason moves up next to Amy, readies his stick.

Luke peeks over Jason's shoulder.

LUKE

He looks dead.

Jason sneaks closer to Zane, holds up the stick, ready to pounce.

He notices Zane's chest that slowly rises and falls.

JASON

He's alive.

ZANE'S EYES POP OPEN, SITS UP

Jason YELPS, falls back. Zane SCREAMS. Amy SHRIEKS. Luke SQUEALS.

Jason grabs his stick from the ground, holds it up in a threatening manner.

Zane covers his face with his arms.

ZANE

Don't!

Amy grabs Jason's arm, lowers it.

AMY

Who are you?

Zane's frightened eyes dart from one to the next.

ZANE

Who the hell are you?

Jason holds the stick close to Zane's face.

JASON

She asked you a question.

ZANE

(swallows)

My name is Zane.

AMY

What happened to you.

Zane looks down at himself, then at his surroundings.

ZANE

I don't -- I'm not -- I can't remember. I keep blacking out.

LUKE

Bullshit.

Zane looks at Amy, confused.

ZANE

What day is it?

AMY

What day? It's Saturday.

ZANE

Saturday?

He gets to his feet. Jason keeps him checked with the stick.

ZANE

Saturday?

LUKE

Yeah, the day before Sunday. Ring a bell?

(to Amy and Jason)

Not all there, is he?

AMY

(ignores him)

How long have you been here?

ZANE

What? Oh...a while. I think.

JASON

Then why don't you tell us what's going on?

ZANE

How 'bout I show you instead?

**LATER**

Zane guides them along a narrow path paved by trotted down tall grass. Amy and Jason follow behind him while Luke keeps vigil at the rear.

ZANE

You guys local?

AMY

No, we were just...

JASON

Camping.

Zane takes them through a cluster of tall pine trees.

ZANE

I guess the Abizi Massacre doesn't mean anything to you then?

JASON

What's that?

ZANE

Well, the Abizis were a family of travelers, Gypsies, that came up through Central America a little over two hundred years ago. Watch your heads.

He holds a branch to the side so they can pass through, takes the lead again.

ZANE

One winter, Papa Abizi got caught stealing a fawn at a local ranch. It was only because it was freezing and his children hadn't eaten in a long time. Anyway, things got ugly, a rancher was killed. The next day, a posse tracked down the Abizis hiding right here in these woods and, um, well, let's just say they took their time with them.

(points ahead)

It's just up here.

They scale a mossy rise. The outline of a makeshift camp takes shape in front of them.

**EXT. MAKESHIFT CAMP - CONTINUOUS**

Dirty clothes litter the grounds, a backpack here and there, a homemade fireplace, a bed constructed of branches and broad leaves. All of it encircled by boulders and logs.

Jason spots a small pile of tiny bones not far from the fireplace. He covertly points it out to Amy.

JASON

How long did you say you have been here?

ZANE

A week, maybe two. I'm not sure. It's always night around here.

(motions for the log)

Please.

Amy looks around, apprehensive.

AMY

We're safe here?

ZANE

For now.

AMY

How do you know?

ZANE

We're alive.

Luke and Jason take a seat. Amy hesitates for a moment then reluctantly follows suit.

AMY

So what happened to them? The Abizis?

ZANE

They made the father watch as they butchered his wife and their two children. And then they buried him. Alive. Or so the legend goes.

AMY

Jesus.

Jason looks up.

JASON

We found a...a hole, by the tree. You dug him up, didn't you?

ZANE

Him? No, I doubt there are any remains left. No...

He gets up, walks to the other end of the camp, tosses some branches aside and picks up an small iron chest off the ground.

ZANE

...we found this.

He lifts the lid, it creaks open on rusted hinges. The three of them lean forward.

In it are small metal object, hand forged jewelry of sorts, figures carved out of stone. Nothing fancy.

ZANE

The way I figure, the ranchers burned what they could, buried what they couldn't. Erasing all evidence of their existence.

He closes the lid again.

ZANE

Me and some friends had to write a paper for class on local history and decided to...

His eyes go distant.

AMY

What happened?

Zane clears his nose, shakes his head.

LUKE

Wow. Great story, dude. So at what point exactly did this place turn into the fucking Twilight Zone?

Zane locks an intense gaze on Luke.

ZANE

Right after we opened the chest.

He throws a fresh log on the fire.

ZANE

That's when the killings started.

AMY

So how come you're alive?

Instinctively, Zane's hand moves to the medallion around his neck, shrugs.

ZANE

Lucky, I guess.

AMY

Lucky?

He rubs the medallion between his fingers, unaware that Amy is watching him, pokes the fire with a stick, turns around just in time to catch her prodding eyes.

He let's go of the medallion, holds her gaze.

### **LATER**

The four of them lie on the ground in a semi circle around the camp fire, dozing off.

The unseen PHANTOM watches them from above, slowly glides toward the ground.

It lets its distorted focus shift from person to person, pausing inches from the tip of Amy's nose.

It moves around, sees Zane on the ground. It hovers above him for a moment, then --

-- SHOOTS toward him.

A WHITE FLASH

Zane's eyes snap open. His body trembles, goes rigid as he clenches his teeth, GROANS.

His fingers dig into the dirt, squeeze it hard with closed eyes. The dirt runs through his fingers like sand through an hour glass.

Zane exhales deeply. His body relaxes. His eyes glide open again - something has changed behind them.

He gently gets to his feet without making any noise, steps over the surrounding logs and heads into the bushes.

Behind him, on the ground, Amy observes him. She lifts her head, turns to Jason and Luke. Both are asleep.

She crawls to a knee, squints at the bushes that Zane disappeared into, gets up, sneaks after him.

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - MOMENTS LATER**

Amy sidesteps a few branches on the ground, crouches behind a shrub, creeps forward.

She hears footsteps ahead of her. She pauses. The footsteps move away from her. She proceeds forward, cautiously.

She reaches a large tree, freezes when she hears:

ZANE (O.S.)  
He's fighting me, my love. But  
he's weak. And he's stupid.

Amy holds her breath, presses herself against the tree.

ZANE (O.S.)  
He led the *diabolus* right to me.

Puzzled, Amy leans around the tree, sees Zane standing in a clearing with his back to her, his face turned to the starlit sky above him.

ZANE  
He thinks they can help him. But I  
shall send them to you.

Amy crawls a bit closer.

ZANE  
One by one.

SNAP

A twig breaks underneath her hand.

Zane twirls around. Amy jerks back behind the tree.

**EXT. MAKESHIFT CAMP - CONTINUOUS**

Jason opens his eyes, looks around, notices that Amy is missing. He slaps Luke's shoulder.

LUKE  
(barely awake)  
What the fuck, man?

JASON  
Where's Amy?

Luke's eyelids glide shut, a snore RUMBLES in his nose. Jason gives him a shake.

JASON  
Hey. Where did she go?

LUKE  
How the fuck should I know.

He rolls onto his other side.

LUKE  
Probably went for a piss.

Jason grabs his stick, gets up as Luke goes back to sleep.

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - MOMENTS LATER**

Jason parts the branches, steps through the thorny vegetation. He looks around, cocks his ears.

JASON  
Amy?

Nothing but silence greets him.

He reaches a tree, rests his stick against it, zips down his fly and relieves himself.

Anxious to finish, he keeps a vigil eye on the surroundings.

Finished, he quickly zips up, spins around and faces:

AMY  
We need to talk.

Jason grabs his chest.

JASON  
Jesus Christ, Amy, don't do that.

She hushes him, pulls him back around the tree where they take cover behind a shrub.

JASON  
What?

She point between the leaves. Jason squints, spots Zane roaming about at the makeshift camp.

AMY  
Something's not right with him.

JASON  
Amy, he's been out here a long time. His mind's not --

AMY  
He's not who he says he is.

**EXT. MAKESHIFT CAMP - CONTINUOUS**

Luke, still on the ground, still asleep doesn't even react when Zane sits down on a log across from him.

JASON (V.O.)  
What are you talking about?

Zane observes him through the campfire's flames. Satisfied that he's asleep, he goes into the backpack in front of him, takes out a HUNTING KNIFE.

AMY  
Something's changed.

He gently retracts the knife about halfway out of its sheath, sees his own reflection in the shiny blade.

AMY (V.O.)  
He found something in that chest.

Zane slaps the blade back in its holster.

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - CONTINUOUS**

Still crouched behind the shrub, they observe Zane who sits with his back to them.

JASON  
What do you wanna do?

Amy takes a deep breath.

AMY  
I think we need to --

RIIIIIING

Zane jerks around at the sound, stares right at their hiding place.

JASON  
Turn it off. Turn it off.

Amy fumbles with the phone, it slides out of her hand, hits the ground. Jason gets it, presses every visibly button at once.

Silence.

They look up. Zane is gone.

JASON  
Sssshhit.

They scamper across the ground, their heads low as they circle around to a nearby tree, take cover behind it.

ZANE (O.S.)  
What are you doing?

Zane stands right across from of them.

JASON  
Uh, just, um...

They get to their feet, dust themselves off.

ZANE  
Yeah?

AMY  
What did you find in that box?

ZANE I already showed you. ZANE (V.O.) Run.

Amy blinks, shakes her head.

AMY  
What?

Zane tilts his head.

ZANE

Do you have something you wanna say  
to me?

Amy motions to speak but Jason holds up a hand.

JASON

Look, we've been through some  
terrible shit today. We're both  
tired, hung-over.

(looks at Amy)

Right?

Amy looks up at him, fuming at first but then she sees the  
pleading look on his face, turns back to Zane.

AMY

Yeah. He's right. I'm sorry, I  
didn't mean...I'm just a little  
high strung that's all.

Zane's piercing stare glides from Amy to Jason then back to  
Amy, relaxes.

ZANE

Sure.

ZANE (V.O.)

Run.

Amy swallows, looks at Jason. He didn't hear it.

They head back toward the camp, Amy and Jason side by side  
with Zane right behind them.

AMY

(whispers)

What are you doing?

They pass the tree where Jason relieved himself, his trusted  
stick leans against it.

JASON

(out of the corner of his  
mouth)

Get ready.

He snatches up the stick and, in the same movement, swings it  
around. Amy ducks under it - Zane doesn't.

The wooden stick crashes against the side of his head, knocks  
him out cold.

JASON

Go!

They haul ass back to --

**EXT. MAKESHIFT CAMP - CONTINUOUS**

-- where Luke still lies slumped on the ground, sleeping.

Amy pulls the branches aside, finds the chest, lugs it under her arm while Jason slaps Luke awake.

LUKE

Wha-what the --

JASON

Get up.

He jerks him to his feet. Luke scans around for Zane, instead he spots Amy with the chest, looks at Jason.

JASON

We're leaving.

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - MOMENTS LATER**

They dash in and out among trees.

LUKE

The fuck is going on?

AMY

I'll tell you later.

Jason takes point, plows through branches. He reads the terrain, cuts right, finds the path Zane led them through.

He waves the others forward.

JASON

This way.

AMY

Wait!

She slides to a stop. Jason looks back, stops.

JASON

What?

AMY

We have to go back.

JASON

Why?

AMY

The medallion. He was wearing a medallion. We have to go back and get it.

LUKE

What is this? We run away then we run back? Is that how it works now?

Jason shakes his head.

JASON

Are you sure about this?

Amy hesitates.

JASON

Okay. I'll do it. You two go on ahead. I'll catch up with you.

Amy motions to speak.

JASON

Go.

Luke pulls her away.

LUKE

Come on.

Jason watches them leave, then doubles back.

**EXT. MAKESHIFT CAMP - MOMENTS LATER**

Jason ducks through the forest, reaches the outskirts of the camp, slides down behind a tree.

He peaks around the trunk, eyes the camp. No activity. No Zane. The grip around his stick tightens.

Jason slips out from behind the tree, crouches down, sneaks up on the camp on stealthy feet.

The PHANTOM watches him from above.

Jason gently steps over a boulder, enters the camp, checks his surroundings, circles around the camp fire.

The PHANTOM creeps along the ground on his heels.

Jason stops. His brow furrows as he senses something, dares a glance over his shoulder.

A SIGH.

He spins around. Nothing.

Composing himself, he backs away slowly, clutches his stick with both hands across his chest, forces himself to calm his breathing.

He moves over behind another tree, checks the spot where Zane fell earlier.

No sign of Zane, just a few drops of blood.

He bites his lower lip, checks over his shoulder, rounds the tree, tiptoes ahead.

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - CONTINUOUS**

Luke screeches to a halt, leans a hand against the nearest tree, catches his breath.

LUKE

Hold up.

Amy pulls his sleeve.

AMY

No, we have to keep going.

LUKE

Just gimme a damn second here.

He massages his side, squirms.

LUKE

What's the plan anyway.

Amy taps the case under her arm.

AMY

We gotta put this back in the ground where it belongs.

She waves him on.

AMY

Come on.

She spins around, disappears into the bushes.

LUKE  
What if doesn't work?

AMY (O.S.)  
Come on!

LUKE  
What if doesn't work, Amy?

No reply. Luke sighs, takes a deep breath, heads after her.

**EXT. MAKESHIFT CAMP - CONTINUOUS**

Jason squats next to Zane's backpack, sticks a hand inside, pulls out its contents.

A T-shirt, some dirty underwear, a half-eaten Granola bar and a clear plastic pocket containing what appears to be an old and faded sheet of paper.

Jason holds the paper up closer to his eyes.

INSERT - FADED PAPER

Lines of crudely written Latin letters cover the paper, some of the letters smudged, others covered by drops of rust colored blood.

Jason runs a finger along the lines, recognizes the word: "ABIZI".

BACK TO SCENE

He stares at the headline.

JASON  
*Permissum is exsisto meus admonitio.*

ZANE (O.S.)  
"Let this be my warning".

Jason spins around.

No one's there.

ZANE (O.S.)  
To you.

Jason raises his stick, backs away in a circling motion.

ZANE (O.S.)  
What are you looking for, Jason?

Jason reaches the boundary of the camp, bumps his heel against a boulder, nearly trips, regains his balance.

ZANE (O.S.)  
Did that stupid girl put ideas into your head?

Jason holds up the stick with both hands like a baseball bat, takes a determined step forward.

JASON  
Where are you?

ZANE (O.S.)  
Behind you.

A hand grabs Jason's shoulder, yanks him around.

Jason reacts automatically, swings his weapon and cuts a path through the air without hitting anything.

He staggers back, his eyes dart from side to side, swallows, takes in short stabbing breaths.

Zane laughs (O.S.).

JASON  
Where the fuck are you?

A fist rams Jason's lower back. He GROANS, buckles to a knee, pushes himself back up, nothing but the night around him.

Another fist spins his jaw around. He slumps to the ground, dizzy, fumbling for support.

ZANE (O.S.)  
You have no idea what you're up against.

Jason wobbles to his feet, backs toward the bushes.

ZANE (O.S.)  
Leaving already?

Jason swings the stick back and forth in front of him, keeping off an imaginary enemy.

JASON  
Show yourself!

ZANE (O.S.)

Okay.

Jason jerks around - stands face to face with Zane.

Zane SLAMS a punch into Jason's solar plexus, wrestles the stick from his hands, pelts him across the face with it.

Jason goes down bleeding. Zane jumps him. Jason manages to fend off the first two punches, but not the third and the fourth.

His head BANGS against the ground, blood SPURTS from his mouth and nose.

Zane wraps his hands around Jason's neck, squeezes as hard as he can. Jason coughs, claws at his hands, his eyes bulging in their sockets.

With the life ebbing out of him, Jason desperately fumbles across the ground, groping for anything useful.

He finds a small rock.

Jason swings his arm, WHACKS Zane across the face. Zane slides off him, giving Jason just enough time to KICK him in the stomach.

Jason scuttles to his feet, barrels for the bushes.

**EXT. CAMPSITE - CONTINUOUS**

Amy and Luke reach the site, the fire reduced to smoldering lump of ember.

Amy looks back at the woods, worried.

AMY

Come on.

She hugs the chest tight while Luke goes through their equipment, finds a can of RED BULL.

LUKE

If putting that thing back in the ground turns everything normal again, why didn't that Zane guy do it himself?

AMY

Maybe it won't let him.

LUKE

It? Do you know how ridiculous you sound right now?

AMY

With all that's been going on?

LUKE

Why help us then? Why didn't he just kill us?

AMY

I don't think he was helping us.

LUKE

Who then?

Amy turns back to the woods.

LUKE

Amy, who?

AMY

Come on, Jason.

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - CONTINUOUS**

Jason dashes along the path, looks over his shoulder, presses on at a relentless speed.

He leaps over a knocked-over tree-trunk, lands on the ground, loses his footing, slides right, rolls down a a short decline.

He comes to a stop, looks up as something goes --

SNAP

-- in the bushes above him.

He holds his breath, presses himself against the ground as he hears footsteps approach.

The footsteps stop.

Jason dares a peek up at the bushes. Branches glide back and forth. He gently pushes himself backwards toward a cluster of shrubs.

He pauses, cocks his ears - hears nothing, moves on.

He reaches the shrubs, stomachs his way through, takes cover behind a tree.

Twigs SNAP nearby. Jason cautiously shoulders himself around the trunk, checks the bushes behind him.

A FIGURE passes behind the leaves.

Jason snaps back around the tree, scuttles across the ground, gets to his feet, sprints aimlessly through the woods.

MADISON (O.S.)

Jason?

Jason slams on the brakes, looks around.

JASON

Maddie?

The murky outline of a figure takes shape behind a veil of branches and leaves.

Jason steps closer.

JASON

Maddie?

He reaches out, parts the branches and --

THUMP

-- something HEAVY lands on the ground behind him.

Jason turns around. Zane stands in front of him, his head slightly bowed, an intense pair of eyes locked on Jason.

Jason looks down on Zane's right hand, spots the shiny blade of the hunting knife.

JASON

Don't.

Zane marches towards Jason, raises the knife.

ZANE

*Sulum mos persolvo!*

JASON

Don't!

Zane charges, slashes the knife sideways through the air.

The blade slices a deep cut across Jason's chest. Jason MOANS, grabs the wound as blood spills through his fingers.

He falls back against the bushes, looks down at his bleeding chest, color drains from his face at the sight of the blood.

He peers up. Zane is gone.

Jason coughs, grimaces, pushes himself back up, staggers forward while clutching his chest.

ZANE (O.S.)  
*Instruo vestri.*

Jason spins around. The sound of Zane's voice echoes in the night, bouncing off the trees, left, right - impossible to tell where it is coming from.

ZANE (O.S.)  
*Meus uxor.*

Jason backs away, bumps against a tree, reels around it, stumbles on.

ZANE (O.S.)  
*Meus liberi.*

A BLADE

shoots through the air. Jason's eyes goes wide as the knife rams into his lower back. A weak YELP rolls off his tongue.

Zane appears behind him, his hand firmly locked around the knife handle.

He drives the knife harder into Jason, locks an arm around him, puts his mouth close to his ear - hushes him.

ZANE  
Let it go. Let it go.

A nearly silent MOAN gurgles through Jason's throat, his eyes roll back in their socket.

Zane stabs him again. Again. Again. Blood splashes against the ground.

Zane retracts the knife. Jason slumps to his knees. Zane wipes the bloody blade against Jason's shirt, crouches in front of him.

He grabs Jason by the hair, lifts his head up, stares into his dying eyes.

ZANE  
Do you see them?

Blood gushes out of Jason's mouth.

ZANE

My family? Do you see them yet?

Jason struggles to breath, life slowly slipping from his grasp. Zane yanks Jason's face close to his.

ZANE

When you do, you tell them more are coming.

He let's go of Jason who slumps to the ground into a growing pool of blood.

Zane sheathes the knife, fingers the medallion around his neck while observing Jason's dead body.

ZANE

More are coming.

**EXT. CAMPSITE - CONTINUOUS**

Amy stares off into the woods with longing eyes. Luke moves up behind her, looks off to the woods then at Amy.

LUKE

He's dead. You know that, right?

Amy swallows, blinks away tears. Luke grabs her arm, jerks her around.

LUKE

Did you hear what I said?

Amy pulls free, shoots daggers at him with her eyes. Luke backs up, shakes his head at her.

LUKE

You wanna bury that thing out there, be my guest, in fact, bury whatever the fuck you want but I'm getting outta here.

Amy blows him off with a disgusted GRUNT, goes to a backpack, gets out a flashlight.

AMY

You're a coward.

She clicks the flashlight on, shines it at the trailhead.

LUKE

At least I'm not an idiot.

Amy wipes her eyes with her sleeve, composes herself with a deep breath.

She gives the bushes a final glance then heads for the trailhead.

Luke watches her disappear down the trail, turns around, kicks the ground in anger.

LUKE  
Stupid cunt.

The darkness closes in around him.

He looks around, shivers at the sight of the swaying leaves, the sound of the RUSTLING trees.

He runs hand across his face, balls his hand up into a fist.

LUKE  
Fuck.

He turns around, jogs after Amy.

LUKE  
Amy, wait up.

**EXT. WOODS - TRAIL - LATER**

Footsteps CRUNCH through the night as Amy shines the light across the ground.

Luke staggers along behind her while keeping an eye on the surroundings.

Amy points to her right.

AMY  
It's up here.

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - CONTINUOUS**

They trot down an uneven path through the tall grass. Just as they pass a tall tree, Luke goes --

LUKE  
Woah.

-- and falls to the ground. Amy spins around with the light poised on him.

AMY  
You okay?

Luke shoves himself back up, wipes dirt off his pants.

LUKE  
Yeah.

He looks back down at the ground, spots something in the grass. He leans in for a closer inspection.

LUKE  
What the...?

AMY  
What is it?

Luke holds up a hand, digs the other into the tall grass, pulls out a BLOODSTAINED SNEAKER.

He shows it to Amy. She shines her light on then lets out a short GASP.

AMY  
It's Keith's.

LUKE  
Yeah?

Amy nods, covers her mouth as emotions overcome her.

Luke drops the sneaker with a disgusted look on his face.

DRIP

He looks up.

DRIP

So does Amy.

DRIP

LUKE  
You hear that?

DRIP

Amy backs away with her wide eyes locked on Luke.

LUKE  
What?

DRIP

A drop of BLOOD lands on his shoulder. He jumps to the side, wipes the blood off his shoulder, stares up at the tree.

BLOOD drips down through the foliage.

Luke motions Amy for the flashlight. She hands it to him. He shines the beam up at the tree's crown, squints but the foliage is too thick.

The dripping slowly turns into a thin steady stream of pouring blood.

Luke backs away, the flashlight shaking in his hand.

LUKE  
What the fuck?

AMY  
(sobbing)  
Keith.

SPLASH

A monster load of BLOOD splashes against the ground, sprinkling them with droplets.

Amy runs toward the tree but Luke grabs her, yanks her away - hard.

LUKE  
Let it go!

She fights against him, reaches out for the tree while tears run down her cheeks.

AMY  
Keith!

LUKE  
Amy, let it go!

He shoves her around, forces her toward --

**EXT. WOODS - CLEARING - CONTINUOUS**

They run to the ominous BLACK TREE. Amy slides on her knees, comes to a stop at the hole at the tree's base.

LUKE  
Do it.

Luke keeps watch as Amy places the small chest in the hole, piles soil on top of it.

She gets up, stomps the dirt into place, looks up at Luke.

LUKE  
That's it? We're cool, right?

AMY  
I don't know.

LUKE  
What d'you mean you don't know?

He grabs her by the collar, pulls her close.

LUKE  
You're supposed to be on top of  
this shit.

He shakes her.

LUKE  
If it wasn't for you and your  
stupid idea, we could've...

He shakes her again - more threatening this time.

LUKE  
What the fuck you mean you don't  
know?!

Amy KNEES him in the groin, pulls away from him.

Luke staggers back, clutches his crotch. His face morphs  
into an angry scowl.

LUKE  
You fucking bitch.

He jumps her, tackles her to the ground. Amy SCREECHES,  
pushes him off, tries to regain her footing.

Luke pulls her back down, SLAMS a fist into her face.

Amy grabs her nose. Blood flows through her fingers and down  
her cheeks.

Luke raises his right hand again, ready to pounce. He stares  
down at the bleeding girl beneath her.

The fist unclenches as his breathing slows.

AMY  
Do it.

She spits blood in his face.

AMY

Do it, you coward!

Luke releases his grip on her, gets back up, massages his knuckles.

He shakes his head at Amy, motions at her blood covered face.

LUKE

Look what you made me do.

Amy rolls onto her knees, wipes the blood from her nose.

LUKE

You brought that on by yourself.

SMACK

Amy punches him in the face. Luke's knees wobble but a nearby tree stops him from falling.

Amy charges, brow curled, her mouth a vicious snarl. Luke ducks just in time to avoid a fist aimed at his face.

LUKE

Dammit, cool it.

Amy SCREAMS out in pure rage, rushes at him, takes him to the ground.

HISSING and CRYING, Amy lets her balled up fists rain down on Luke in an uncontrollable frenzy.

Luke rolls, blocks, cowers, tries to break free but Amy is relentless.

A fist rams him on the mouth, cracks open his lips, another grazes his eye.

He GROANS, swings his arm without aiming, CRACKS Amy on the side of her head.

She keels over on her side, lands a few feet from him.

Exhausted, they lock eyes, both straining for air. Blood and grime cover their worn faces.

Seconds tick by as they lie there in the dirt, each waiting for the other to make a move.

AMY

Had enough?

Luke suspiciously scopes her face for any telltale signs of a hidden agenda.

LUKE

You?

Amy SIGHS deeply.

AMY

Pretty much.

She lets her eyes glide to the night sky above them, stares at the canopy of stars.

AMY

I don't think it worked.

Luke swallows, nods, looks to the sky as well.

LUKE

We're fucked, aren't we?

AMY

Pretty much.

His shoulders sag, defeated.

LUKE

Look...if I don't make it outta here and you do...

He takes a trembling breath.

AMY

What?

LUKE

This is gonna sound pathetic.

AMY

Come on, what?

He turns to face her.

LUKE

Could you go to my funeral? I don't have a lot of friends. The family's nothing to speak of either. Be nice if the church wasn't empty.

Amy smiles.

AMY

Sure.

LUKE

Anything you want me to do?

Amy looks to the sky again.

AMY

Just warn people about this place.

LUKE

Warn 'em? I'll fucking torch this place to a cinder. Fuck the global warming, this place is history.

Amy chuckles - for a second, goes silent again.

LUKE

Hey?

Amy doesn't respond

LUKE

Hey?

Tired, she turns her head.

LUKE

We've gotta figure something --

THUMP

JASON'S BLOODY CORPSE SMASHES TO THE GROUND BETWEEN THEM.

Both of them reel away SQUEALING, scuttle across the ground in different directions.

Luke barges through the bushes without looking back.

Amy hesitates, her heart caught in her throat. She peeks back at Jason's lifeless body, looks around at the surrounding woods.

She gathers up a bit of courage, sneaks across the clearing like if it was a mine field.

Amy reaches Jason, kneels next to him --

AMY

Jason?

-- rolls him over on his back. She grabs her mouth, recoils at the sight of his mangled face.

She staggers for a tree, barely reaches it before vomit spurts out of her mouth.

Amy coughs, gags, sucks in air.

ZANE (O.S.)  
Too much for you?

She lurches around.

No one's there.

She pushes herself away from the tree, backs up.

AMY  
Why are you doing this?

FOOTSTEPS in the bushes to her left startles her. She backs up further with uneasy steps.

AMY  
Stay away from me.

A CRACKING NOISE to her right spooks her to tears.

AMY  
(sobbing)  
Leave me alone.

Hands shove her in the back, knock her to the ground.

AMY  
LEAVE ME ALONE!

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - CONTINUOUS**

Amy's scream echoes through the woods. Luke dashes through the bushes like a mad man.

He looks back as Amy's scream reaches him.

A crooked root catches his foot, sends him thrashing across the ground.

He YELLS out in pain, clutches his right knee. He looks down at the knee. Blood seeps through his fingers.

AMY (O.S.)  
(from a distance)  
No!

He cringes at the sound of her voice, looks at the direction of the scream, then at the direction he was heading. Bites his lip.

Amy SCREAMS again (O.S.).

A shiver ripples his body. He fights back the tears, finally succumbs. A suppressed YELP forces itself past his lips.

LUKE

Oh, God.

Tears of panic roll down his cheeks. He grabs his hair, clenches his teeth.

AMY (O.S.)

(from a distance)

Stop!

Luke folds his hands across his ear in a desperate attempt to block out the sound.

**EXT. WOODS - CLEARING - CONTINUOUS**

Amy hits the ground again, face first. She CRIES out, blood drips through her teeth.

She reaches out with a trembling hand, digs her nails into the dirt, claws herself forward, inch by inch.

Something YANKS her backwards, slides her across the dirt.

She fights to kick free, manages to roll onto her back.

The sliding stops.

She looks around - all alone in the clearing.

ZANE (O.S.)

For years I prayed to God, pleading with him, begging him to put me out of my misery.

Amy slowly slides up to a sitting position.

ZANE (O.S.)

And one day...he did.

She gets to a knee, slowly rises to her feet.

ZANE (O.S.)

Then he showed me what I had to do.

Amy backs away from the center of the clearing, holds her breath as if it would help.

ZANE (O.S.)  
How to right a wrong.

AMY  
I don't think that was God.

That ominous SIGH flows toward her.

ZANE (O.S.)  
(threatening)  
He's God to me!

Amy bolts for the bushes, exerting all the strength she can muster, almost within reach when:

A HAND

grabs her throat, lifts her off the ground.

Amy gasps, her feet dangle above the ground. She claws at the strong hand that squeezes her larynx, looks down with bulging eyes at:

ZANE  
Scared?

He pulls her reddening face close to his, spits as he mouths:

ZANE  
Try dying.

He tosses Amy across the ground like a nuisance. She plows through the leaves, comes to a stop with a WHIMPER.

She turns just to see Zane marching toward her, his eyes filled with rage.

THUD

He kicks her in the abdomen, flips her around. She spews out blood, YELLS in agony.

Zane grabs her by her belt, lifts her with one hand, hurls her into a tree.

The blow knocks her out cold. Her body sags to a limp pulp at the base of the tree.

Zane wipes spit from the corner of his mouth, looks down at Amy, tilts his head left and right. Bones POP as they snap back into place.

He kneels down next to her, rolls her onto her back. He pushes hair away from her face, observes her, wipes a smear of blood off her cheek.

His features soften. He caresses her hair gently, MURMURS a soft unrecognizable tune.

ZANE  
You almost remind me of my  
daughter.

The hardness returns to his face.

ZANE  
Almost.

He slaps her face.

ZANE  
Wake up.

Amy's eyes flicker open, glides back shut.

Zane slaps her again.

ZANE  
Look at me.

He shakes her. Amy jolts back to consciousness.

ZANE  
Look. At. Me.

She lifts her eyes, looks into his.

ZANE  
I'm about to send you on a journey.

He brings up the shiny knife blade for her to see, glides it back and forth in front of her eyes.

ZANE  
You will not come back.

Amy shrinks back, tries to fight her way out of his grasp.

Zane grabs her hair hard, holds her still.

ZANE

Don't you understand how lucky you  
are?

He scrapes a teardrop away from her cheek with the knife  
blade, licks it off.

ZANE

I envy you. I really do.

He forces her head back, exposes her neck.

ZANE

Ready?

Amy clenches her eyes shut. Zane raises the knife.

A BATTLE CRY slices through the woods.

LUKE

bursts into the clearing, throws himself at Zane, knocks him  
off Amy.

The two men roll around in the dirt, bounce apart. Luke  
grabs Zane's foot, yanks him close, punches him in the thigh,  
kidney and back.

He locks an arm around Zane's neck, squeezes as tight as he  
can. Zane's arms flail about, thrashing at the ground.

Amy pulls herself up by the tree, falls back down to a knee.

Zane manages to get a foot placed on the ground. He pushes  
himself up to an upright position - Luke still hanging on  
around his neck.

With his face almost blue, Zane backs toward a nearby tree,  
slow at first, then fast.

Luke spots the tree closing in on him. He releases his grip  
on Zane.

Zane twirls around, elbows Luke on the jaw. Luke topples  
back. Zane jumps on top of him, left-rights him in the face.

Luke's head SMACKS against the ground. Zane punches him  
again, grabs his collar and --

TWACK

Amy cracks a branch against his head.

Zane slumps to the ground next to Luke, rolls over on his back - LAUGHS. A deep lively LAUGHTER from the stomach.

Luke gets back up, pushes Amy away.

LUKE

Go.

AMY

I'm not going anywhere.

LUKE

FUCKING GO!

He shoves her hard, almost knocks her down, turns to Zane who's still on the ground LAUGHING.

LUKE

Why are you laughing?

He KICKS Zane in the ribs - Zane just keeps laughing. Luke kicks him again.

LUKE

What the fuck are you laughing at?!

ZANE

You. You came back. As if it matters what you do.

LUKE

It matters to me.

ZANE

But --

Luke kicks him - Zane catches his foot in midair.

ZANE

-- you'll die.

He shoves Luke back, springs to his feet. Luke throws a wild roundhouse right, misses Zane completely

Zane headbutts him across the face. Luke wobbles, clutches his broken nose, spits out blood.

ZANE

How does it feel knowing you only have a few seconds left to live?

High on adrenaline, Luke waves him forward.

LUKE  
Bring it on, bitch.

The two men circles around each other.

ZANE  
Please tell me. I want to know.

LUKE  
Don't worry, you'll get there.

ZANE  
Are you scared? Is that how it starts? Can you feel your heart in your throat?

Luke holds up his clenched fist.

LUKE  
Come on!

Zane tilts his head.

ZANE  
You are scared. I see it now.

LUKE  
Fuck you.

ZANE  
Just like your girlfriend was.

Luke charges.

LUKE  
You mother --

ZNICK

He stops dead in his tracks, his eyes wide, mouth agape. He looks down, sees Zane's knife buried in his crotch.

An almost inaudible GROAN rolls out of his bleeding mouth, his breath stutters back and forth.

Zane locks a strong around the back of his neck and --

-- drives the knife from Luke's scrotum to his throat.

DRIP DRIP

Blood drips down on Luke's shoes - then his intestines splashes against the ground.

Zane yanks the knife out of him, looks off to the bushes.

**EXT. WOODS - BUSHES - CONTINUOUS**

Amy ducks down behind a shrub, steadies her trembling hands. She peaks through the leaves.

A silhouette moves past her field of vision.

Amy slides left, crawls on her knees across the ground, finds cover underneath a tree.

A TWIG SNAPS NEARBY

Amy chokes back a SHRIEK, scuttles backwards, gets to her feet, sprints to the next tree, slides down behind it.

She leans around, scans the area in front of her.

ZANE (O.S.)  
You must be tired.

She squints, sees the outline of a person leaning against a tree some twenty odd feet from her.

ZANE (O.S.)  
All this running.

Amy spots a crooked branch on the ground, picks it up, creeps through a shrub toward the person at the tree.

ZANE (O.S.)  
All this death.

Amy pauses at a knocked over tree trunk, checks over her shoulder. Nothing. She rolls over the trunk, slithers on.

ZANE (O.S.)  
I promise, I'll make it quick.

AMY  
(under her breath)  
Keep talking, asshole.

She looks up - the person's not even ten feet away from her now.

Her hand tightens around the stick as she crouches down, pushes herself along the ground.

Inch by inch she nears the person at the tree. The person still stands there, not moving.

Amy slowly rises to her feet, takes a step toward the figure, brings up the stick.

Pauses.

She leans closer.

IT'S LUKE

tied to the tree with his own intestines, bloody, massacred - dead.

Sensing the trap, Amy backtrack when:

A BLOODY KNIFE BLADE COMES TO A REST AGAINST HER THROAT

She swallows.

Zane appears behind her, reaches around, knocks the stick out of her hand.

ZANE

Pretty. But not too bright.

He shoves her to the ground, looms over her. Amy backtracks on her elbows, scared.

AMY

You don't have to do this.

Zane casually strolls alongside her.

ZANE

The circle must be completed. It's the only way.

Amy bumps against a tree - out of room - nowhere to go.

AMY

Please. It wasn't us. We never hurt your family.

ZANE

Hurt? You make it sound so trivial.

He KICKS Amy in the stomach, squats down with his knee on her chest, his free hand locked around her throat.

He brings up the knife, holds it just beneath her left eye, leans in close to her.

ZANE  
They took my son's eyes, my wife's  
womb. My daughter...

A LITTLE GIRL'S SCREAM echoes through the woods.

ZANE  
I can still hear her.

For a brief moment, his eyes seem almost human, unfocused.

AMY  
Fight him.

Zane stares down at her, dead-serious again.

ZANE  
He can't help you.

AMY  
You're in there somewhere. I know  
you are.

ZANE  
Shut up.

AMY  
I heard you.

ZANE  
Shut your mouth!

AMY  
Zane, fight him!

Zane cringes as if in pain.

ZANE (V.O.)  
Now!

Amy snatches the Medallion, yanks it off his neck. Zane  
GASPS, stiffens.

She seizes the opportunity.

With a swift move, she grabs his right wrist, twists the  
knife around and jams it into his chest.

Zane's mouth shoots open in a SILENT MOAN. Amy pushes  
herself on top of him.

They roll around, switch positions, Amy now on top. She  
jerks the blade upwards.

Zane's ribs CRACK.

A dark blood stain blossoms on his shirt, grows until the entire fabric is red.

Zane STUTTERS for air. His eyelids droop, then --

A WHITE FLASH

-- fly open.

Amy stares down at his sad face, watches as TEARS roll from the corner of his eyes.

ZANE  
(struggles)  
Thank...you.

The pitch of his voice different now. Softer. Kinder.

Amy's lips quiver as tears mixes with the dirt and blood on her bruised face.

She retracts the knife, rolls off of Zane. He turns his weary face toward her, motions to speak. Fails.

He inhales. Exhales. Inhales. Exhales. Dies.

Amy staggers to her feet, stumbles away from Zane's dead body, lurches through the bushes as if intoxicated, crying.

She stops.

Looks back over her shoulder.

Raises the knife.

From behind a veil of leaves, the unseen PHANTOM stares back at her.

Amy doesn't see it - but she still feels its presence. She backs away, slow at first but then faster, determined.

The PHANTOM shoots after her, zigzags through the bushes, barrels down on her and --

A WHITE FLASH

-- sends her CRASHING to the ground. Her body trembles, shivers - goes rigid as a seizure rolls through her.

Amy SCREAMS through clenched teeth while creamy white foam runs down her cracked lips.

AMY

No! No! Get out of me!

She forces her body over on its stomach, digs her nail into the dirt, pulls herself through the bushes.

**EXT. WOODS - CLEARING - CONTINUOUS**

She claws across the ground, tries to stand, falls back down, climbs back up, staggers aimlessly ahead.

A sharp PANG of pain shoots through her body. She GROANS out, slumps against a tree, slides down to the ground.

Her body shudders, fights against her with tense muscles. She tries to scoop up the knife with her rigid hand.

Fails.

She fumbles for the handle with uncooperative fingers, HISSES in frustration.

Amy clenches her eyes shut, takes a deep breath, glides her right hand across the ground without looking.

Finds the knife.

Her fingers lock around the handle, tighten until the knuckles go white.

She lifts it up. Open her eyes, stares at it. Her bruised face stares back at her in the reflective blade.

She raises her left arm, gazes at her exposed wrist, shifts her eyes to the blade.

The familiar SIGH rolls toward her from all sides, followed by CHILDREN CRYING, A WOMAN'S HORRIBLE SCREAM, MEN LAUGHING.

Tears roll down Amy's face. She grits her teeth, plunges the knife down.

It stops mere millimeters from her wrist.

Her grip tightens around the knife, her arm trembles as she struggles against an unseen force.

The tip of the knife dances just above the skin, vibrating as two opposing forces battle for control.

Amy pants hard through her nose, exerts all the strength she can muster.

Her HOARSE breathing turns into a GROAN, then a SCREAM.

The knife dips into her skin, cuts an opening along her wrist, severing the veins.

Blood jets out of her arm, paints the ground RED. She sags back against the tree, exhausted while the blood streams from the wound.

Her features slowly morph into a peaceful pose. The faint trace of a smile crosses her lips.

Completely relaxed, she drops the knife, closes her eyes, exhales deeply.

As a pool of blood forms around Amy, her breathing slows, short breaths, far apart.

The sound of her HEARTBEAT slowly winds down.

THUMP-THUMP THUMP-THUMP

Then stops.

With that, the night lifts. Warm sunlight replaces it, the warm rays illuminate Amy's peaceful face.

The light intensifies until a blazing brightness covers her body, a stark white light that dissolves everything to:

WHITE

AMY (V.O.)  
What did you find in that box?

ZANE (V.O.)  
Run.

AMY (V.O.)  
(faint / echoing)  
Stop it!

ZANE (V.O.)  
And then they buried him.

LUKE (V.O.)  
(faint / echoing)  
Look at me!

JASON (V.O.)  
Creepy.

A beat, then:

ZANE (V.O.)

Run.

The last word echoes as everything fades to:

BLACK

Silence. Moist. Faint light reflects in the moistness. A PUPIL. Around it, the IRIS. Around that, a white EYEBALL with its red jagged lighting-bolt lines.

The EYELID closes. All returns to:

BLACK

LOUD MUSIC. CAR ENGINE. And:

KEITH (O.S.)

The Eagle has landed.

The engine and the music stop. A car door opens (O.S.), SLAMS shut, another one GLIDES open.

KEITH (O.S.)

Thanks for the detour, man.

JASON (O.S.)

We're here aren't we?

KEITH (O.S.)

Guess so, Mr. G-P-S.

Silence, then:

MADISON (O.S.)

Amy?

The light returns.

**INT. VAN - DAY**

Amy opens her eyes, blinks at the bright sun that pours its rays through the window next to her.

She looks around, confused, sits up in her seat. Madison puts a hand on her shoulder from behind.

MADISON

We're here.

Amy looks down at the hand, then at Madison's smiling face, gazes at her with a puzzled expression.

MADISON  
Are you okay?

Amy shifts her eyes to Luke who sits next to Madison. Their eyes meet for a moment, then:

LUKE  
What?

**EXT. CAMP GROUNDS - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS**

Amy steps out of the van, takes in the surrounding woods through narrow eyes.

JASON  
Amy, you sure we're allowed to park here?

She turns to Jason, glares at him as if it's the first time in her life she lays eyes on him.

Jason and Keith look at each other.

JASON  
Earth to Amy.

Still no response, Amy just stands there in a catatonic state.

KEITH  
Houston, we have a problem.

Amy doesn't even blink. Keith takes her arm.

KEITH  
What's the matter, babe?

She looks down at his hand, then back at his face.

LUKE (O.S.)  
Probably that time of the month.

Luke squeezes himself out of the cabin, dragging Madison behind him. As Madison passes Amy, she spots --

MADISON  
God, I love that.

-- the MEDALLION that hangs from Amy's neck. She takes it between her fingers, studies it.

MADISON  
When did you get this?

Amy jerks it out of Madison's grasp, shields it in her palm.

AMY

I've always had it.

She sounds different. No perkiness to her voice anymore.

Madison notices, backs away.

MADISON

Okay.

As the others unload the equipment, Amy walks up to the trailhead, stares down the dim and snaking path.

Keith moves up behind her with a tent bag slung over his shoulder, slides a hand into hers.

KEITH

You okay? You seem...

The familiar SIGH creeps down the trail, passes right through them. Only Amy hears it.

Her lips curl into a menacing smile.

AMY

Everything's just peachy.

She slips out of his hand, heads up the trail. Keith watches her leave, then heads after her.

Seconds later, the three other friends fall in behind them as the trail closes around them and everything:

FADES TO BLACK

THE END