

HOME CALL

By

Ghost Writer

EXT. PINE FOREST - DAY

A man struggles up a steep slope. Pine needles give way beneath his feet, and he slips and falls for the umpteenth time.

He picks himself up, panting. As he loosens his tie, we see his face is bruised and bloody.

This is DAMON MATTHEWS (35) a former corporate businessman. Now, with his pressed shirt and slacks muddy and torn, and his body exhausted, he's but a shadow of his former self.

Damon holds up his cell phone, and slowly waves it around -- still no signal.

He steels himself, and continues up the hill.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - LATER

Damon crests the slope, and stumbles onto a deserted road. He looks around, momentarily disorientated.

He holds his phone up to the left -- where the road heads off into the distance.

He holds it up to the right -- where the road disappears around a sweeping curve.

He smiles -- a signal at last. He hits the first number on speed dial, then puts the phone to his ear.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - SAME

CINDY MATTHEWS (34) washes the dishes. Suddenly a cell phone on the counter behind her buzzes and vibrates -- startling her.

She turns and looks at it. A child starts bawling (OS). Cindy looks across -- which should she attend to first?

The child bawls again (OS). She goes to the phone, wiping her hands on her apron. She picks it up and sees the caller name:

Damon

She frowns at it for a beat, then answers.

CINDY

Hello?

DAMON (VO)

Hey Darl, I think I've had a --

CINDY

Who's speaking?

DAMON (VO)
Honey, it's me. Didn't you --

CINDY
How did you get this phone?

DAMON (VO)
What?!

CINDY
The phone you're calling on. Where
did you get it?

BACK TO ROAD:

Damon walks towards the sweeping bend, phone to his ear.

DAMON
I can't remember where I bought
it, as if it matters. Listen Darl,
I'm going to be late because --

CINDY (VO)
Is this some kind of joke?!
Who the hell are you?

DAMON
What's wrong, Cindy?... You're
acting strange.

BACK TO HOUSE:

Cindy's annoyance turns to fear.

CINDY
How do you know my name?

DAMON (VO)
What the... Honey, are you sure
you're okay? I'm worrying about
you...

Realization crosses Cindy's face. She slumps back in shock. The
child cries again (OS).

CINDY
Damon?... Is that you?

DAMON (VO)
Of course, it's me. Who on earth
did you think --

CINDY
I don't understand... Where are
you?

BACK TO ROAD:

Damon stands beside the sweeping bend.

DAMON
At that big bend near the pine
plantation. I must've had a --

CINDY (VO)
(shaky)
That's where you had your accident.

DAMON
So you've heard about it already?
That's why I'm calling --

CINDY (VO)
What?!

DAMON
To let you know I'll be late home.

CINDY (VO)
(beat)
Damon... you've been gone almost a
year.

DAMON
No, that can't be --

CINDY (VO)
You were driving home from work...
you missed the corner. The coroner
said you'd been drinking --

DAMON
Coroner?

Damon takes the phone from his ear in disbelief, and wheels
around --

CINDY (VO)
You left us Damon...

-- to face a small roadside shrine, with wilted flowers.

CINDY (VO)
It's just me and Lucy now.

He stares at the photo of himself, and the inscription:

DAMON
1984 - 2020