

LOST APOCRYPHA

by

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FADE IN

EXT. ROANOKE COLONY - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

Super: Roanoke 1589

Nestled in an old growth forest of the New World is a small British colony surrounded by a twenty-foot tall timber wall.

High along the inside perimeter of the wall, six sentries keep watch in the light of the full moon.

The colony is dark except for one building. Light escapes through gaps in the walls of a small church located in the center of the community.

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Forty very somber men, women and children sit on pews in front of a vacant pulpit. The children cry and clutch their mothers. Their clothing is in tatters.

A GUARD tends the double-door entry. He keeps close watch by viewing out a narrow slot in the door.

A door behind the pulpit creaks open and FATHER STRYKER (50) enters. In contrast to the congregation, his black suit is impeccable.

When he steps up to the pulpit, his tall and lanky stature towers over the congregation.

STRYKER

Brothers and sisters, let us pray.

(beat)

Hear us, oh Lord, as we ask for your salvation. For this humble clan of followers is, once again, being persecuted for our faith...

Affirming 'Amens' are murmured in the congregation.

STRYKER

...We travelled to this New World to freely praise and practice your forgotten scriptures. Considered apocrypha by both Catholics and Protestants, we know it to be the true doctrine. Jesus told his disciples to eat of his flesh and drink his blood; for which we are eternally devoted. But, alas, the heathens threaten our existence once more.

Louder and more enthusiastic 'Amens'.

STRYKER

We ask that you watch over your faithful and protect them from the savages at the gate. In your name, Amen.

CONGREGATION

Amen!

The congregation sits patient, yet pensive, longing for the much needed words of confidence and encouragement from their chosen leader.

STRYKER

Brothers and sisters, we carved out this nest in the wilderness, braved the harsh winters and blistering summers, and befriended the natives, yet, I fear that we near our end of days.

A collective gasp emanates from the pews. The women and children whimper once again.

Near the back of the church, BROTHER DIMETRIUS (30), gaunt and filthy, stands and beckons.

DIMETRIUS

Father, why hath he forsaken us?
What brought this evil to our humble nest?

Father Stryker leans over the pulpit and points an overly long bony finger straight at Brother Dimetrius. The Father's eyes pierce into his soul.

STRYKER

You, Brother Dimetrius, could not control your yearnings!

The admonished Brother Dimetrius cowers and sits back down. The congregation turns and stare in silence.

STRYKER

We have only ourselves to blame. We agreed to be self-sufficient with our harvest and that we would not burden the natives with any of our short-comings.

(beat)

But some of you had to visit the Croatoans. You took advantage of the friendship we worked so hard to build and took what was not necessary.

ELDER WIECLAW (40) stands and points at Brother Dimetrius.

WIECLAW

It was he that angered the savages.
We should give them Brother
Dimetrius!

CONGREGATION

Aye! Give them Brother Dimetrius!
It's all his fault!

STRYKER

No! We are so few these days and I
will not use one of our own as a
bartering chip.

WIECLAW

What of a sacrifice?

The congregation perks up. SISTER LILLITH (20) stands. Even in her conservative colonial clothing, she is vivacious.

LILLITH

Pick me Father! Let me partake in
the sacrifice!

STRYKER

Sister Lillith, please---

Elder Wieclaw stands again and holds up the hand of his daughter REBECCA (12).

WIECLAW

No, take my daughter, Rebecca. Our
participant must be a virgin and
pure!

Lillith glares with beady bloodshot eyes at Elder Wieclaw yet sits down speechless while Rebecca stands excitedly.

Father Stryker holds up both hands to settle down his enthusiastic followers.

STRYKER

Silence! Silence! Please sit down.

(beat)

Elder Wieclaw, I'm sorry to say
that it may be too late for a
sacrifice.

WIECLAW

Please, Father, it's worth a try.

LILLITH

If not a sacrifice, what if we try to convert them? I'm sure I could convince a brave or two to convert.

STRYKER

Sister Lillith, we are not missionaries. BROTHER TYNDALE converted one of the Croatoans with disastrous results. The tribe would not accept him and they burned him at the stake.

BROTHER TYNDALE (30) raises his hand to the pulpit and lowers his head.

TYNDALE

I am truly sorry, Father. I thought they would be open to our doctrine.

A commotion and screams are heard from outside the church. The Guard looks through the view port and jumps backs.

GUARD

Quickly! Someone help me with the door!

Elder Wieclaw runs to help the Guard lift the bar from the door. The door opens just enough to allow a COLONIST into the church. He's exhausted and out of breath.

COLONIST

They've breached the gate! They're inside the compound! It's Chief Powhatan with scores of braves!

The women scream and the children cry. The men stand but know not what to do.

STRYKER

It appears we have no choice. Rebecca...please come forth.

Elder Wieclaw brings Rebecca to Father Stryker. She kneels before him and he places his hand on her head.

STRYKER

Rebecca, do you understand what we are asking you to do?

REBECCA

I do, Father.

STRYKER

And you accept this with open heart?

REBECCA

Oh, YES, Father!

STRYKER

Very well. Guard? Prepare to open the doors.

Father Stryker leads Rebecca to the front doors as the rest of the congregation follows close behind.

STRYKER

It is time, Rebecca. Reveal your true self.

Rebecca kneels once again and bows her head. Father Stryker takes a step backwards.

STRYKER

Everyone, bow your heads and begin.

The congregation follows suit and hold hands. They begin to chant a prayer in an ancient dialect.

Rebecca begins to contort and metamorphose. Her skin darkens to a leathery hide. Talons emerge from her finger tips and her feet burst from her shoes as cloven hooves.

In howling pain, her jaw extends and her canine teeth grow four times in length. Horns begin to protrude from her head.

STRYKER

(stroking her head)

Go my child, and bring back a sacrifice.

(to the guard)

Open the door.

Elder Wieclaw and the Guard lift the bar. As the doors begin to open, an arrow zings through the narrow gap. The wooden shaft buries deep into Rebecca's chest.

Before her body hits the floor, she bursts into flames and is quickly reduced to a pile of smoldering yellow brimstone.

Crouched just outside with bow in hand is the Croatoan CHIEF POWHATAN (50). Behind the Chief are dozens of braves in red war paint and adorned for battle.

WIECLAW

Rebecca!

Elder Wieclaw runs for the door. Father Stryker grabs and restrains him while the Guard closes the doors.

STRYKER

All is lost, my brethren. Follow my lead and we shall sit at the Lord's side.

He begins the transformation into the beast. He now speaks in a guttural ancient dialect.

STRYKER

(subtitled dialect)

Let us bring on the Apocalypse!

All about the room, the congregation eagerly abides. Howls of pain are intermixed with shrieks of long-awaited elation.

EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Defining howls come from inside the church.

Chief Powhatan paces back and forth before his braves to rally and stoke their aggression. He speaks in Algonquin.

POWHATAN

(subtitled)

White man has brought what the Great Spirit calls the end time.

(beat)

We know that it's own true enemy is wood. Aim true and drive your arrows deep.

(beat)

Break off the stone from your spears and thrust with all your might.

(beat)

If we fail now, our people will suffer for eternity.

As the warriors hoot and holler with war cries, the doors of the church fly open. A horde of beasts stampede into the courtyard with gnashing teeth and talons drawn.

A volley of arrows find their mark and the resulting incendiary lights up the night.

Through the smoking embers come the second wave of beasts. The heads of braves get decapitated and their bodies are torn in two.

The rear archers fling arrows while the frontal assault resort to their wooden spears and war clubs.

In the middle of the horde stands Stryker. He is the tallest and most formidable of the nest. He scans the yard, finds Powhatan and directs the assault.

STRYKER
(subtitled dialect)
Powhatan! Get Powhatan!

Adjacent beasts lunge forward and target the Chief.

The Chief raises a spear into the chest of one of the charging beasts while his warriors pounce on the other.

Stryker swats away bodies as he struts calmly towards the Chief. He is within striking distance of his taloned hand.

Suddenly, the ground begins to tremble and shake. All the combatants stop and struggle to stay upright.

The earth begins to crack and a crevice forms between Stryker and the Chief. A blinding light flares from within and they all shade their eyes.

From deep inside the earth, a massive horned beast slowly crawls to the surface. The DARK LORD emerges to dwarf all.

The Dark Lord's speech is deafening.

DARK LORD
(subtitled dialect)
ENOUGH! Come forth Stryker and
kneel before me!

Stryker cowers and crawls towards the Dark Lord. All the beasts bow in his presence while the Croatoans back away.

STRYKER
Dark Lord...Master.

DARK LORD
What makes you think that you, a
mere conversion, could bring on the
Apocalypse?

STRYKER
We...I....

DARK LORD
The Apocalypse is MINE! And I will
bring on the end of days on MY
terms!

STRYKER
But, Master---

DARK LORD

SILENCE! You of little faith. I
watch and tend my flock as I see
fit. You crave to be with me yet
fear death? You've nothing to fear
but ME!

The Dark Lord smites Stryker with a back-handed swipe. As he
dissipates to a yellow dust, his soul gets sucked into the
cracked earth.

He raises his hands and all the remaining beasts levitate.
One by one they painfully revert back to their human form
and cascade into the blinding crevice.

The Dark Lord, stands alone amongst the Croatoans. He turns
to Chief Powhatan and speaks in perfect Algonquin.

DARK LORD

(pointing at the Chief)
Remember this...It will come. When
it does, it will be on MY terms!

The Dark Lord descends and disappears into the burning
depths of hell. The earth heals as if nothing ever happened.

Chief Powhatan and his remaining warriors cautiously gather
where the earth had opened and kick at the ground.

POWHATAN

We shall not speak of this. The
white men will return to find a
deserted settlement. We know
nothing.

FADE TO BLACK