

SOMETHING IN RETURN

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INT. DRUG STORE - NIGHT

REBECCA, cute, 20s, skims through an aisle of pregnancy testers. She gets the attention of the pharmacy technician man, 40s.

REBECCA
Excuse me, sir.

TECH
Hi, how can I help you?

REBECCA
I don't suppose you got any of these in generic form? These ones are kinda salty.

TECH
As a matter of fact, we do. Let me just pick one up behind the counter.

She waits. Her teeth bite down nervously on her bottom lip. A grin of humility shows itself.

The tech. returns with a box.

TECH
Even though these are unbranded, they're just as reliable as the more expensive pregnancy tests, perhaps even more sensitive.

She takes the box and reads.

REBECCA
Wow, ninety-nine percent accurate.

TECH
Yes, ma'am.

REBECCA
I'll take 'em.

TECH
Will there be anything else I can assist you with?

REBECCA
No, thanks.

TECH
 Alright, just follow me to the
 counter, and I'll get ya fixed
 right up.

She follows him to the register.

REBECCA
 Oh, I don't suppose yer takin'
 applications?

TECH
 Yes.

He hands her a sheet of paper.

INT. SALLEE HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Rebecca sits on the toilet and urinates on the device.

INT. HALLWAY

She waits outside the bathroom. Cracks her knuckles
 anxiously.

INT. BATHROOM

She shoots back in and examines the test. Eyes swell with
 sorrow.

INT. DRUG STORE - INTERVIEW ROOM

Two hands shake, a man and woman's. Rebecca sits opposite
 her interviewer, 60s, glasses. He scans her application.

MR. CRONENBERG
 Thank you for coming - and well on
 time.

REBECCA
 I can't thank you enough fer givin'
 me this interview. I been lookin'
 so hard fer work I got blisters.

He laughs.

MR. CRONENBERG
 Work, that's somethin' hard to come
 by, isn't it?

REBECCA
 Yes, sir.

MR. CRONENBERG

Well, I see you're very keen on getting this job, and I appreciate your diligence.

REBECCA

Yer probly gettin' tired of my persistence.

MR. CRONENBERG

No, no, not at all. I'm aware that you're a single-mother.

REBECCA

Yep, I got a daughter, Layla. She's four.

MR. CRONENBERG

Wow, congratulations.

REBECCA

Thank you.

MR. CRONENBERG

I've been told she has an abnormality.

REBECCA

They call it a congenital brain defect, that's caused her to go deaf. I'm doin' this fer her. She's my angel, my everything.

(cries; head between her legs)
She deserves everything good in this world, you know.

MR. CRONENBERG

(apathetic)

I understand. I understand. But I'm sorry to tell you that I can't hire you. You haven't got so much as a high school diploma, which is what the pharmacy tech. position requires. I'm terribly sorry.

REBECCA

You can't? I need this.

MR. CRONENBERG

I said I can't hire you... unless you're willing to go the extra mile.

REBECCA
The extra mile?

MR. CRONENBERG
(serious)
You're in debt to suck on my cock.

She cries harder.

REBECCA
Yer sick!

MR. CRONENBERG
But doesn't the importance of
Layla's upbringing override this...
perversion?

Her head falls between her legs for awhile. She stands, walks behind the desk, and proceeds to unzip his pants.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPER:

Black Holes

"A black hole can result when a massive star dies out. The dying star collapses into itself, becoming smaller and smaller, denser and denser, until it compresses into a single point with no radius and infinite density. The point, called a singularity, is so dense that nearby light cannot escape its gravitational pull. Everything close to the star gets sucked into blackness."

- The Intellectual Devotional

FADE IN:

EXT. WOOLGROVE HOME - TWILIGHT

A ramshackle, one-story house writhes flimsily in a quietly atrophying neighborhood in Louisiana; behind which, a vast woods bleeds ominous whispers of an undying apprehension.

AT THE BACK PATIO

of this house, a couple relaxes under the vestige of a dying summer, guarded by a pair of glowing tiki torches.

REX, the sleaze-ball at the grill, 54, is hosting a barbecue for Rebecca, who's seated at the table.

The smoke from the tiki torches withdraws from Rebecca's fanning hand.

REX

(drunk; playful)

I asked you over the phone if you wanted any hamburger. You said, "No. It's to do with my vegan constraints." Well, I figured yer eatin' enough meat the way it is that the term "constraint" is warranted slightly unjustified. Besides, a cookout ain't a cookout less ya got hamburger.

He drops a couple handfuls of meat on the grill. Drops of blood from the pack of burger dribble on the patio.

REBECCA

Oh, shut up. I can order you around like a puppy.

Done, Rex struts to the table with a plate over his head.

REBECCA

(giggles)

Cute, very cute.

He sports a laid back button-down shirt, with the sleeves folded, and a torn pair of denim jeans. A gelled back hairdo, tucked behind his ears, meddles to his collarbone in fluffy curls.

REBECCA

My appetite ain't the only thing that's starvin' fer meat.

REX

Yer little pussy can wait fer desert.

Rebecca laughs. She tastes the food with her sexy eyes, which match the radiance of both candle flames enriching the zesty romance between them.

REBECCA

Oh, my god, that looks so fuckin' good!

The host places his servings on the table, a sweaty beer in his grip. He kisses Rebecca gently on the cheek, then takes a seat. Not eating.

REX

There ya go, baby doll.

REBECCA

This the first time you been this good to a woman?

REX

Sweety, I'm happy to inform yer the very first. But hopefully you ain't the last!

A laughing snort shoots through his nostrils.

REBECCA

You know you still pack a lot of balls in you, ol' man.

REX

Like Mike Jackson's cornhole, God rest his soul.

REBECCA

Huh?

REX

(sardonic)

Huh? Cornhole, a euphemism fer butt fuck. If Jackson butt fucked all them burgers at Neverland, which's sorta a euphemism in itself, that's the same as sayin' they was cornholed, pea-brain.

She samples an ear of corn.

REBECCA

Okay, professor of everything gross and disgusting. I think you've had about all the boos you can manage fer one night.

REX

So, how's the food resonatin' with my little princess?

REBECCA

The corn's good - which sadly happened to be the last topic of yer lecture. Ain't had time to try the BBQ since you been bombardin' me with insults, so let me see...

(sinks her teeth inside)

Mmm! That's real good! Where in Sam hell'd you learn how to cook?

REX

Rebecca, I ain't never learnt to cook. Just the last cunt I's married to gave me the recipe!

Rex belches out a howl.

REBECCA

Now the next time you'll be wearin' yer fuckin' chicken. Seriously! Ain't no reason you should feel so goddamn self-righteous pickin' on my side of the sperm bank.

REX

Easy now, cunt! I's just kiddin'.

She pretends to stab Rex with a steak knife.

REBECCA

I'm onna getchu, you damn, fuckin' bastard!

The laughter settles with quiet, flirtatious gazes of exchange. Eating the meat faster with every bite, Rebecca notices Rex gazing weirdly at the

STARRY SKY

with fixated eyes, causing her to chuckle under the soft breeze.

REX

Goddamn, it's a beautiful evenin', ain't it?

REBECCA

That's fer sure. This time of the year sure does bring with it many a pretty sunset.

A stalker of deep thought claims Rex its prey.

REX

(with conviction)

You ever notice how the stars are perfectly arranged in the sky, almost systematically, as if they meant somethin'?

REBECCA

No. Why?

REX

Well, I mean even the sun, fer instance. That big, hot, boilin' fuckin' ball of gas considered by everyone to be this - benevolent entity. Yet without it, how the fuck do ya think the moon would receive such a light fer it to shine on, remunerate, and revitalize the reignin' Darkness?

REBECCA

(turned on)

Yer intellectual talk's gettin' me all worked up, baby.

A glare of risky obsession looks Rebecca between the eyes.

REX

Reminds of a sayin' someone once said. Somethin' like... I am he who bonds with outside forces, who compels Light's retreat. I am he who enables that destiny and commands Darkness' fate.

REBECCA

Now where'd you ever hear a sayin' like that?

REX

Don't know. Probly some spic wearin' his shit-hole fer a sombrero.

(at the sky; doubly captive)

But the one thing I do know is, the stars have aligned fer a specific purpose tonight, darlin'.

REBECCA

What sorta purpose you talkin' 'bout?

REX

Now the answer to that's gonna hafta wait, sweetie pie.

(winks)

There's a long dagger 'thin these denim jeans that'll sure as fire penetrate the answer soon enough.

REBECCA

Long! Well...

(clears her throat
sarcastically)

I think they was arranged
particularly fer us tonight; to
shine a tad bit of normalcy on such
a queer conversation.

REX

That a fact?

REBECCA

Yes indeedy do.

A beat passes. Rebecca's sweet talk turns sourly solemn.

REBECCA

Rex, I don't mean to spoil the
evenin' and all. There's just
somethin' I been meanin' to tell
you, somethin' I think you should
know.

REX

'Course, what's the trouble?

REBECCA

Please don't be mad at me. I don't
want you to be mad at me. My
parents was.

REX

Shit, yer parents 'ould get upset
over two pussy munchin' lesbos.

REBECCA

Rex, please! This's somethin'
that's been eaten me away on the
inside fer days that seem like
lifetimes!

REX

Oh, I'm sorry, honey. Go ahead,
spill it out. What's the trouble?

REBECCA

Rex, baby... I'm pregnant.

He swallows a gulp of beer, like it's shit, then quickly
changes his tune.

REBECCA

I been meanin' to tell you. It's just that I was afraid how you'd react.

REX

Rebecca, that's great news! I can't believe it! Yer plum pregnant?

REBECCA

Uh-hum. Three months. It's a boy.

REX

A boy, huh? Baby, you mean the world to me! I'd never be mad, angry, or upset - especially of all people - with you! I love you more than you could ever imagine! Ya hear?

A palliated smile dances across her face.

REX

Tonight you've given me somethin' special! Somethin' that will alter the course of my life - my destiny! Ever since we met, my heart's felt like a kid again! I feel like a kid wrapped around this fifty-four year ol' body!

(living for the moment)

Come 're you!

They kiss long and hard.

REBECCA

I'm so happy fer us!

REX

I couldn't be any more happier fer us. You just wait till I tell Thomas. He won't believe it!

(lights a cigarette)

You know he's been beggin' me fer a sibling?

REBECCA

Really?

REX

Bet yer ass. I'll tell him come mornin'.

REBECCA

Then after the baby, we get married
- regardless what my parents think?

REX

We get married!
(sardonic)
You certainly have our future
planned out, doncha?

REBECCA

I been givin' it more than adequate
thought.

REX

It sure as hell sounds like it!
(finishes beer)
Yeah, baby! You know, I's thinkin'
our baby'll love it out here. The
backyard so he can practice his
curve ball; the woods so he can
sneak off with his girlfriend and
get fucked just like you and me.

Rebecca laughs.

REX

The little bastard will almost be
as spoiled as me, too. I sure
wouldn't want it any other way. Got
a lotta things fer a prick like me.

REBECCA

Aren't you fergettin' yer main
dish?

REX

(remembers)
And I got you.
(winks)
Hey, speakin' of thinkin' about
you, that reminds me. I found
somethin' in the trash...

He pulls out a jewelry box from his side pocket.

REBECCA

(in disbelief)
Yer jokin'?

REX

It's just a little somethin' I
thought you might like. I don't

REX
 know, maybe a fat chance in that.
 But I knew in my heart, the moment
 I saw it, that it deserved to be
 with someone special.
 (bestows the gift)
 It deserved to be with someone who
 meant the world to me.

REBECCA
 Baby, you shouldn't have!

REX
 (joking)
 Okay, I'll take it back then. I
 could use the money.

REBECCA
 Not a chance in hell! I'm afraid to
 open it.

She opens the box. Eyes ever-glow at a Blood and Ritual
 pendant.

REBECCA
 Oh, my god! Haven't got a clue what
 it is, but it's awful cute, honey!

REX
 Just a little somethin' to
 celebrate our eight months we been
 together. The best eight months of
 my life.

They clash together in the heat of the moment. The candles
 fall to the cement.

REBECCA
 Oh, my god, I love you so much!

REX
 I love you too, baby-girl!

They suck each other's faces like wild animals.

INT. REX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A lonely Rex lies in bed. His eyes open fearfully wide.

REX
 Fuck...

He gets out of bed, exits.

INT. BATHROOM

He splashes water on his face. Stares at himself in the mirror. Self-hating.

INT. KITCHEN

Rex stands with a bottle of whiskey, angst-ridden. Gawks out at the moonlit patio.

INT. REX'S BEDROOM

His face shrivels with the last drop of whiskey. Falls back, watches the ceiling. Eyes close.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM - NIGHT - REX'S NIGHTMARE

A rumble of thunder splits the heavens. The sleep of 13-year-old Thomas (Rex's son) is ended.

His eyes open, tired, reluctant. Pupils swell, then return to their normal size. He thrashes around in bed. Turns to look out at the storm.

THOMAS' POV

A hazy, motionless black ball (the size of a human head) lurks just outside his window.

END POV

He reaches for his glasses on the nightstand. Eyes relocate, then draw.

A STALKING HEAD

launches him from the room like a canon.

INT. HALLWAY (MORE LIKE A CORRIDOR)

A tunnel of shadowy lightning claws surround Thomas as he runs to, then stops at the entrance of the

LIVING ROOM

He sees his father nestled in an armchair. Rex watches the storm through a panoramic window. Boos drips from his lips.

THOMAS

Daddy, someone's after me.

REX
 It's just a nightmare, Thomas.
 Ain't nobody after you.

He hurries into Rex's arms. Snuggles up against him.

REX
 It's okay... just a nightmare.

EXT. FRONT YARD

The storm shakes trees. Catapults light debris.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Rex gazes out the window as the storm barrels down on the house. His mouth opens worriedly to release an icy chill. He thought he saw something outside - something baneful. He dismisses the object as fictitious and leans his head back sluggishly.

A pervasive anxiety tightens around his nerves in his wakeful compulsion to look back.

REX
 I think I made a mistake, Thomas! I
 think I made a mistake! You know
 I'd never do nothin' to hurt you,
 don't you?

Thomas nods.

REX
 I love ya to death, son, you know
 that?

THOMAS
 I love you too, Daddy.

REX
 (weeping)
 I love you so fuckin' much!

Panic-laden solace passes as they embrace each other in fear. Rex's eyes gravitate back outside with Thomas pressed against him.

EXT. FRONT YARD - REX'S POV

Lightning strikes.

A NEBULOUS, BLACK ROBE

drifts closer from a street perpendicular to the house.

Lightning strikes again.

THE THING

floats low across the street, then stops to gaze upon the Woolgrove domicile.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Rex jumps to his feet.

REX
Thomas, get up!

EXT. FRONT YARD

The wraith advances into the yard.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Rex peers through the front door window. Thomas stands edgy by the wall.

THOMAS
What is it?

REX
I don't know! Somebody's out there!

Rex returns to look through the panoramic window, but the figure is nowhere in sight. He turns back to Thomas, petrified.

REX
I swear I saw -

The boy is gone.

INT. HALLWAY

Rex peeks inside every room; arrives at the last.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

REX
Thomas, where are you?

INT. LIVING ROOM

Thomas emerges from the shadow of a ceiling-tall bookcase. Toenails screech across the wooden floor - controlled by invisible forces. He stops at the panoramic window. Paralyzed.

The window slides open...

INT. HALLWAY

Rex enters - vigilant to a nexus of low, belching whispers - bleeding out from the

LIVING ROOM

Thomas is robotized. His eyes the size of melons because of something outside.

A DARK, GATOR-PELTED DEMON

rises from below the window. Its red eyes and black, reptilian pupils glisten in the night.

Rex shudders inside to find Thomas' head hanged outside the window as the demon feeds throaty whispers into the boy's ear.

REX

Hey! Who the fuck are you?

SATAN

You know who I am. Who are you?

DEMONIC EYES

cast contempt into Rex's being.

A layer of putrid, female-facial flesh flies on to Rex's face. He can't breathe, unable to get it off.

INT. KITCHEN

Rex feels his way around. He pulls out a fillet knife from the drawer and lacerates tiny slits for his mouth and eyes.

THOMAS(O.S.)

Daddy, help me!

INT. LIVING ROOM

Rex returns. Face masked in hideousness.

SATAN

(venomously to Thomas)

So this world is rife with thorns - thorns which stab the very heart of what it means to believe! I stand in great stead knowing what the impending future will bring down at the wrath of thy sword!

The demon turns to Rex - glaringly iterating - then vanishes into the storm.

INT. BATHROOM

Rex is peeling off the mold of meat with the fillet knife. Thomas cringes behind. He tugs painfully; strings of blood cling to his face.

It lands in the sink.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

Rex consoles Thomas in bed. His trembling fingers run through the boy's hair.

THOMAS

He said he wants me to go away with him.

REX

(mournful)

Shhh, it'll be alright.

THOMAS

Will you sleep with me tonight?

REX

That's enough, Thomas. I said everything's gonna be alright.

THOMAS

Don't you know he wants me?

REX

All you gotta do is cooperate, and it'll all be okay.

THOMAS

But, Daddy!

REX

Baby, once this's all over with, everything'll be just like it used to be. No more pain, no worries.

Thomas' look of hopelessness begs Rex to give in.

REX

Okay, goddamn it. I'll getcha some sleepin' pills.

INT. KITCHEN

Hand shaking, Rex reaches in the cabinet and pulls out a rattling pill bottle. He hands a couple of pills to Thomas. Fills a glass up with water.

Thomas swallows the pills, hands back the glass.

REX
Give yer ol' man a kiss. I think I
need it.

Thomas kisses him on the cheek.

REX
(haunted)
You know I'd never let nothin' bad
happen to ya?

Thomas nods. Rex squeezes him tightly, lovingly for as long as he can.

THOMAS
Goodnight, Daddy.

REX
Goodnight, baby.

A goodnight kiss sends Thomas back to bed.

Rex watches on; his mien inundated in cold presage. He walks to the bar and downs a shot of whiskey.

INT. HALLWAY

Rex motions to Thomas' door and opens it ajar. The boy has fallen peacefully asleep; Rex's semblance of parental fear unchanged.

Bang! Bang! A thunderous pounding sounds from the front room. Rex closes the door. He stands in paralysis, then moves to the

LIVING ROOM

The knocking ends abruptly while the howling wind beats the windows to madness. He walks up to the door with feverish trembles.

EXT. PORCH

The door opens. The robed demon stands with a massive volume in hand - a demon conjuring text - known as a grimoire. The book gives Rex a shiver as the demon hands it over.

SATAN

The key to the constituents of thy
solicitous legion: the accelerators
of thy waking Black Sphere.

Rex marvels at the ancient volume. Then looks up.

The demon is gone.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Rex opens the text. An immediate rush of fear triggers panic
as he flips through the pages. He scans through the book
faster, faster.

Boom! Boom! Blares the door.

The book hits the floor.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

Thomas stirs to consciousness as Rex bursts inside.

THOMAS

What is it? Daddy, I'm scared!

Rex kneels at Thomas' bedside.

REX

Baby, I need ya to say you believe!
Can you do that fer me?

Thomas nods in repudiation.

REX

I need ya to say you believe! You
got to -

The front door implodes.

REX

It's are only chance! Look me in
the eye and tell me you believe!
Thomas, please!

Tears stream down Rex's face at Thomas' refusal.

INT. HALLWAY

Shadowy footsteps on the wall threaten closer.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

Rex grabs a baseball bat at the nightstand. Thomas with the gravest of looks.

Rex rushes to the door, waiting to strike.

THOMAS
Don't let him get me! Please,
Daddy, don't let 'em come!

REX
Shhh!

His ear pressed against the door, Rex searches for a sound.

THOMAS
He's comin' fer me! Daddy, he's
comin' to get me!

Smoke begins to seep in through the cracks. The door explodes into Rex and buries him into the wall; an ugly gash splits open his face.

THE DEMONIC SILHOUETTE

stands stolidly as ashes engulf the room, then advances through the doorway; its robe flutters like sheets in a summer storm as the hallway incinerates before our eyes.

Rex can do nothing - propped against the wall, immobilized. Only not as a result of his physical injury, but because the demon's fingernails are converting into a mass of golden-burning snakes.

Before he knows it, his ears, eyes, and mouth are being ripped into by the swarm. He combusts from the inside out.

REX
Help me!

THOMAS
Daddy!

Thomas' face melts like wax in the boiling furnace.

The demon's flame-spewing hand garners the boy in its sight.

THOMAS' POV

Fire blasts into our eyes... Flames ravage the screen...

END POV

As the fire dwindles

FADE TO:

BLACK SCREEN

...a scorched, smoldering title:

"SOMETHING IN RETURN"

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
(screaming for her life)

Rex!

END NIGHTMARE

FADE IN:

INT. REX'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Rex wakes in shock; his dank face stares fear into the ceiling. He tosses the sheets aside, staggers toward the shades; their shadows cast horizontal prison bars on the wall, which yield the blinding sun.

Empty beer cans rattle across the floor to the drunken rhythm of his feet.

The blinds jerk shut.

He turns around to the closet and trips over a can. His feet hurl into the air, his head into the floor.

REX
Fuckin' bitch!

He flaps around like a fish out of water, then settles. His nostrils expand and contract to a remedial scent coming from under the bed. He pulls out a box of incense, puts it up to his face, and inhales deeply.

REX
Thank you...

He slides the box back under, picks himself up to dress. Clothed in black denim jeans and a long-sleeve button-down shirt, he slips on a red bola tie and looks at himself in the mirror.

The tie closes around his neck. A familiar sight...

EXT. PATIO - TWILIGHT - FLASHBACK

Rex steps behind Rebecca to snap her pendant together as she sits at the table.

REBECCA
How do I look, baby?

REX
I think my dick's gonna drop -
that's how hot you look, you sexy
momma.

Slyly, with his tongue twirling around in Rebecca's ear and a hand caressing her crotch, Rex reaches behind his back and produces an

EVIL-LOOKING DAGGER

used in Black Magick.

REBECCA
(mewling)
Oh, Rex! Make me wet...

Rebecca raises her head orgasmically skyward. Her throat opens. A cloud of red hovers in mid-air, then falls to varnish the table.

Rex throws her out of the chair. Her skull snaps open on the cement.

END FLASHBACK

A fever of guilt overcomes him.

REX
Oh, shit! Oh, shit -

Beeeeep! The alarm clock bitches like a tea kettle.

He storms over to the nightstand - pausing in disarray, pulling his hair - then repeatedly smashes the machine into the wall.

A familiar sight...

FLASHBACK CONT'D

He takes a handful of Rebecca's hair and proceeds to bash her skull mercilessly, indulgently into the cement.

Her imploring, youthful voice swims latherly through a tide of gushing blood.

REBECCA
Please stop!

REX

Sorry, sweet-heart! Just that she's
trickier manifestin' if she ain't
gotta body!

The beating continues, ever-violent. Brains dangle out of
Rebecca's head; her face a bloated repugnance.

REBECCA

Why you doin' this?

REX

Cuz yers, my dear, will be a
perfect fit!

Her grating screams recede to moans, whimpers, dead silence.
The head has moldered to a thick, festering pulp of brain
matter, lying motionless on the patio.

Streaks smear across the cement as the lifeless body's
dragged away.

END CONT'D FLASHBACK

REX

(hyperventilating)
Fuck! Oh, fuck! Oh, fuck!

RED FLASHES fill the screen to signify his madness as he
walks out of the bedroom and enters, across the hallway, a

MAGICK ROOM

...brewed with a plethora of satanic embellishments.

He drapes a robe over his work clothes and lights a set of
ritualistic candles. The candles are bounded by a pointed
metal fence surmounted on a sinister-looking altar; behind
which, on the wall, hangs a large inverted Pentagram of
metallic composition.

Too on the altar, a demon skull with a single horn
protruding from its forehead; a set of normal human skulls,
collectively five-feet wide, rest at the base; a voodoo
skull cross, three-feet high, stands behind the fenced in
candles.

He notices a tall hourglass on the altar, the sand
half-fallen. He kneels down before it, closes his eyes, and
prays.

THE SCREEN DARKENS.....

REX (O.S.)
 (whispered wailing)
 It wasn't me! It wasn't me! It
 wasn't me! It wasn't me!

.....EYES OPEN.....

He blows out the candles, throws the robe to the floor, and shoots out the room. The nerves are unbearable.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM - DAY

Rex enters frantically and kneels down at Thomas' bedside.

Thomas wakes tired-eyed.

REX
 Hey, buddy, can I ask you somethin'
 real quick?

THOMAS
 What is it, Daddy?

REX
 There's somethin' I gotta know.
 It's been botherin' me.

THOMAS
 What's botherin' you?

REX
 Do you think...
 (crying)
 ...think I'm doin' the right thing
 and all?

THOMAS
 What do you mean?

REX
 I mean, am I doin' the right thing?
 Am I - do you think I'm goin' down
 the right path?

Thomas nods.

REX
 Do you think we'll ever see momma
 again, goin' down this path?

Thomas starts to cry along with Rex.

THOMAS

I hope, Daddy.

REX

(emotions festering)

You hope so? What's that supposed to mean?

Thomas shrugs.

REX

Sounds to me like you ain't quite made up yer mind. Sounds to me like what yer sayin' is: you hope to find yer momma, my wife, down this path, but there's a bird shit of skepticism on yer glasses that's none to convincin' in tellin' whether or not that ain't yer momma's hitchikin' thumb on the freeway. That's what yer tellin' me? That hurts, Thomas. That hurts. I thought you was with me on this.

THOMAS

Daddy, please.

REX

Now I want you to put yer two cents worth of contemplation in this and inform me that I'm doin' the right thing. So tell me, Mr. I-don't-believe-my-daddy's-royal flush-ain't-all-of-the-same-fuckin'-suite! I'd like to be the proud recipient of yer masterful philosophical input on this delicate subject matter that is the afterlife! Huh! Give it to me, Thomas! Give it to me now, before I waste another three gullible fuckin' years believin' in Gandolf the imaginary! Would you be so kind as to relieve me of my cutie childish play toys and smack me upside the head, back into yer precious fuckin' prudence, composed of such vastly superior intellectual virtuosos as yerself! Huh! What do you have to say! Cat got yer tongue, you little prick!

Rex follows the path of Thomas' fearful gaze. His eyes maniacally revile a comic-book on the floor.

REX

(turns back to Thomas)
So, yer gawk of guilt leads
straight to a goddamn comic-book,
huh. And I thought I was the only
drool slobberin' devotee of all
things delusional.

Rex walks over to pick it up.

REX

Unfuckinbelievable! You mean to
tell me that you actually believe
in this bullshit - over yo mamma?

Thomas gets out of bed and starts toward Rex.

THOMAS

Daddy, don't.

REX

Thomas, real soon this world's
comin' to an end - cuz my world's
comin'! And it ain't gonna look
pretty if you keep this shit up!

THOMAS

Please, Daddy.

REX

(mocking)
Please, Daddy. Sit the fuck down!

Rex slaps him to the floor. His glasses fly across the room.

REX

You wanna be alive come time of the
Apocalypse?

THOMAS

(weeping)
Yes.

REX

Then you better start believin'!
(pacing around the room in
nervous fidgets)
I can't help it! Yer lack of
faith's got me all paranoid and
shit! There's just somethin' wrong
with the fact I can't getchu to go
to church! I tell you what, boy,
I've had it with you! I've had it
with you, goddammit!

Thomas retrieves his glasses. Rex gets back in his face.

REX

Listen, boy, if you ain't backin'
me a hundred and ten percent, then
we got ourselves a real, serious
fuckin' problem!

(threatening to slap Thomas)

So, are you with me or not?

No answer.

REX

No more beatin' around the fuckin'
bush, Thomas! Are you with me or
not, yes or no? Don't make me hafta
slap the shit outta you!

Thomas forces a nod.

REX

Ah! I knew all along you'd see it
my way. Listen, buddy, tonight's
gonna be special. Tonight, by the
veins that bind me, I'm onna do
everything in my power to get yo
momma back. And us, not even the
slightest fuckin' notion of death.
Okay?

Rex kisses him hard on the face.

REX

I love you, son.

Rex exits.

INT. KITCHEN

Rex stuffs the comic in the trash, starts to panic. He pops
some pills, thinks, then throws them at the wall. He walks
over to the sink and cools himself down.

REX

Fuck me!

His face undried, he swipes his briefcase off the table and
puts on his crocodile boots by the refrigerator.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

Thomas cries his heart out on the floor.

THOMAS

I want you to see the picture I
drew, Daddy! It'll make you happy,
because it looks just like her!

INT. LIVING ROOM

Rex cries by the door.

REX

Tracts are on the table!

Exits.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

On the floor, Thomas pries his hand between his mattress and
box spring and pulls out a hardcover notebook.

INSERT - INSIDE THE TEXT

Thomas' face wrinkles upon opening the book to an ink
drawing of a female demon (Lamia) sacrificing (decapitating)
three children with a sword; the subsequent page shows her
feeding on the headless bodies.

WE ZOOM IN

on a particular excerpt which reads: "Their heads are their
souls. With every soul offered is another grade attained."

Further pages reveal Rex's bleak obsession in long-winded
passages of his writing.

END INSERT

Thomas puts the book back. He moves into the

HALLWAY

into the

LIVING ROOM

Thomas spies Rex outside with his school bus driver. A
gentle African American lady, 60s.

EXT. SIDEWALK

Rex walks on the sidewalk towards his truck. The bus driver
sits in her driver's seat.

BUS DRIVER

How are ya today, Mr. Woolgrove?
It's a mighty gorgeous day we
havin'.

REX

Listen, Thomas is a bit under the
weather. I don't think he'll be
feelin' much like school.

BUS DRIVER

Well, you tell him I hope he gets
to feelin' lots better soon. Tan
sure would do 'em good. You look
like you could use a tan yoself -

REX

(muttering)

Yeah, well, you look like you could
use a nigger hangin'.

Rex gets in his rusty truck and takes off.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Thomas yields a perplexed frown as the bus drives away.

INT. KITCHEN

Thomas finds his comic in the trash.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM/LIVING ROOM

He tucks the comic inside his backpack, stuffs a few tracts
in his pocket, and surges out the front door.

Side note: The front cover of each cult tract depicts a
happy family rising to Heaven on the rays of the sun.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK

Thomas races down the next block on the opposite side of the
street.

RON, 13, and pretty ALEX KLEIN, 13, leap on to the bus.
Seconds later, Ron bullets back to his house armed with a
knife. He has a hideous scar (slash) on the right side of
his face.

EXT. OUTSIDE BUS DOOR

Thomas arrives, bent over, gasping.

RON
 (returns)
 What's wrong, Thomas?

THOMAS
 Almost missed the bus. You?

RON
 Dumbass bus driver won't let us
 bring protection, but she lets my
 sister bring her lotions and shit.

BUS DRIVER (O.S.)
 C'mon kids! I hear the school bell
 ringin'!

THOMAS
 Hey, Ron, my daddy wanted me to
 hand out some of these tracts from
 his church. You want one?

RON
 Some weird, old guy with a beard
 came by the other day and gave my
 momma some. But I'll take it
 anyway.

INT. BUS

The boys enter.

BUS DRIVER
 Let's go, kids! We gonna be late!

The driver gives Ron an appreciative pat on the back.

BUS DRIVER
 That's a good boy, Ron. Now go have
 a seat.

She turns baffled at Thomas.

BUS DRIVER
 Thought you was sick, boy? You
 didn't come up here to give me the
 puke bug, didga?

THOMAS
 No, I ain't sick.

BUS DRIVER
 Well, that's good, babe. Glad you
 ain't sick.

Her arm gently wraps around him.

BUS DRIVER
So, how's home?

Thomas nods, unconvincingly.

BUS DRIVER
Cuz you know you can tell me,
right, and I'll resolve whatever
problems you got?

THOMAS
Everything's fine.

BUS DRIVER
(brushes his cheek; her doubts
persist)
Good. That's real good. Just makin'
sure. Now go take yo seat, sweet
heart, or else we gonna be late.

He finds a lonely seat in back. Teary eyes gaze through their window.

INT. ART CLASS

An old lady returns drawings to her rowdy students. She stops at Thomas' lonely table (with its capacity of four occupants). Every other table is full.

She gives Thomas his paper.

MRS. ROMERO
Thomas, this is absolutely
beautiful! She would've been so
proud!

The longer he looks at the picture the closer he is to crying. An index finger caresses the drawing as if it were real.

The teacher heads to the front of the room.

MRS. ROMERO
Alright, class. I'd like your
attention, please.
(waits for silence)
I'd like to say that I found each
and every paper to be very unique
and very special. Now it's time for
everyone to give their
presentation, explaining to the

MRS. ROMERO
class the motivation behind your
work.

Thomas regains himself.

MRS. ROMERO
Alright, now who would like to go
first?

No hands.

MRS. ROMERO
Very well, looks like I'll hafta do
the dirty work.

She refers to a list of names on the desk.

MRS. ROMERO
Let's see. Just to be different,
how about we start with the last
person on the list.
(pointing at Thomas' name)
Thomas, would you come up here,
please.

He takes his paper and heads to the front of the room.

Alex Klein watches.

THOMAS
(timid)
I guess I oughta start by tellin'
you this drawin's of my momma. My
daddy promises that we'll be with
her soon. Daddy says we'll never
have to worry again about dyin' or
gettin' sick and diseased. As soon
as the Apocalypse comes, we'll...
(bursting tears)
...we'll all be together again.

The teacher rushes over to Thomas, holds him in her arms.

MRS. ROMERO
Oh, Thomas, I'm so sorry. Listen,
angel, would you like to step
outside for a little-while?

She hands him some Kleenex.

MRS. ROMERO
Take your time, hun.

Alex raises her hand as Thomas exits.

ALEX
Mrs. Romero, may I use the
restroom?

MRS. ROMERO
Sure, hun. And while you're at it,
could you make sure he's okay for
me, please?

ALEX
Yes, Mrs. Romero.

INT. HALLWAY

Thomas is crouched in a fetal position on the floor.

Alex enters. She looks down upon him with pity, then squats
to his level of torment.

ALEX
Thomas, I snuck out here not so I
could use the restroom, like I told
Mrs. Romero. I snuck out here so I
could be with you. I wanna be yer
friend.

Thomas is too swept away in his emotions to respond.

ALEX
Listen, I know it must be tough fer
you, that's why I wanna help you.
That's why I was hopin' you'd like
to be my friend.

THOMAS
(life depending on it)
Would you be okay if, if I held
you?

Alex falls into his arms, without restraint.

EXT. TRAILER

which resides next to a wooded bayou. Rex pulls up in the
driveway and walks through unmowed grass to the front door.

He knocks. A codger answers, with only his lips passing through the doorway to receive the beams of showering daylight. He wears a black robe with the hood down and an inverted Pentagram branded on his forehead.

HIGH PRIEST
 (foreknowingly answers)
 Ah, I see the magician wants his
 magick book.

INT. TRAILER

Rex steps inside, disconcerted. He kneels down and kisses the high priest's hand.

HIGH PRIEST
 Funny thing I noticed last night.
 Like the subtlety of a whisper it
 passed through me.

Rex stands.

HIGH PRIEST
 I looked up at the sky and, in
 remembering the favorable placement
 of the zodiac, I saw your name.

Rex swallows nervously.

HIGH PRIEST
 I'll be fetching the book.

The priest exits to the hallway; his home a labyrinth of satanic implements.

UNKNOWN MAN (O.S.)
 (to Rex from an adjacent room)
 Don't forget to offer yoself when
 it's been done. It won't work less
 ya do.

Rex trembles.

The high priest returns with the grimoire.

HIGH PRIEST
 It has been a pleasure watching you
 grow.

Rex takes the book, with the priest's arms coiling around him.

HIGH PRIEST

Don't worry, my son. I trust your intent.

His nerves overridden, Rex takes off through the door.

INT. TRUCK

Rex enters, shaking to pieces. His eyes tangle with the old man's.

INT. TRAILER

The priest watches through the window Rex skid out of the drive.

HIGH PRIEST

A man of admiration till
priesthood, then something just up
and broke, like the link of a
chain.

UNKNOWN MAN (O.S.)

A weak link that boy. A link that
could break our chain of secrecy.

HIGH PRIEST

(dire)

How far will The Lie take him, you
think?

UNKNOWN MAN (O.S.)

(just as dire)

Far from here. God, I hope.

EXT. WOOLGROVE HOME

A sheriff's truck parks along the Woolgrove sidewalk. Crater-faced SHERIFF VINTON, 60s, gets out. He wears aviator sunglasses and a cowboy hat like honorable decorations.

He tries the front door. No luck.

EXT. PATIO

He snoops through the patio window. Nothing unusual. He turns around and sees what Rex never bothered to fuck with.

He squats down and takes off his shades to discern the color of the streaks. He knows.

INT. CLASSROOM - THOMAS' VISION

Thomas lies asleep at his desk.

A dry, otherworldly teacher, 60s, stands at the chalkboard; tented glasses; hatchet-face; long, black hair. Evil.

MRS. BAKER

A disease of thought innate in the blood of man. Defiled, seditious chemicals pumped into truth-concupiscent veins. The shit-soaked fabric of lordly tarnished minds, with no greater lust than to subvert his creator. If this excretion, this mass lot of filth from the nescient canals of our world should we refuse to inhale, lest we be branded their sane. If our heads stay turned to relent them - them rats - to gnaw on us till our flesh has been stripped from us - and our bones carried away into darkly stranded caves, as slaves to the decay of everlasting ignorance unto dust. "Then," you ask, "what will be our method of escape? How will we ever get loose those shackles of oppression that have deprived our lives of the fecundity, the sheer meaning of existence?"

(starts to write on the board)

The answer lies in chalk.

Her breathing becomes heavy and guttural as she writes: "DEA-"

The chalk breaks before the "T". She crushes her glasses, angrily takes them off, and turns to Thomas. Glaring.

MRS. BAKER

(demonic)

Thomas! The answer, if you please!

His head shoots skyward, like a jack in the box.

The teacher lunges toward him. Foam drips from her mouth; snarls, like a rabid animal.

MRS. BAKER

Gimme the fuckin' answer!

THOMAS

Please stop! I don't know!

Her skin suddenly mutates into black, alligator-like flesh. A human-reptile. She rips off her dress. Her boney rib cage exposes disgusting emaciation.

A serpentine tongue grows out of her salivating mouth as she screams in spasmodic misery. (The metamorphosis is harrowing.)

Thomas turns to his classmates for patronage. Their bodies have been decapitated, partially eaten away.

A fiery gaze penetrates through the boy; his face shrivels like foil wrap. She wads up his comic and tosses it in the air.

A low, blistering growl reaches its monstrous peak before he can scream.

LAMIA

If the mortal beggar wants a price,
tell 'em - I'm lookin' at it!

He propels from his chair, gasping. A scaly claw tightens like a vice around his neck.

LAMIA

(spitting)
Understand, boy?

The hand releases, dropping him to his knees. A grinding voice from above calls his attention.

LAMIA

(points at the trash can)
Have a look, Thomas!

His eyes follow the trajectory of her finger.

LAMIA

Have a look!

Thomas picks up his feet and moves closer to the can. He peers over the rim.

THE HEADS

of his classmates; looks of agony on their faces before the kill.

His hands react to save the eyes from madness. Boom! Tick! Boom! Tick! A tromping of monstrous feet.

He turns around. A pencil slashes him across the face.

A beastly claw heaves toward the ceiling, burying the pointed lead in his scalp.

END VISION

INT. CLASSROOM

The bell rings! Thomas jerks back to reality while the other students race out of class.

MRS. BAKER
You alright, Thomas?

THOMAS
Yeah. I'm fine.

The teacher smiles, stacking a mound of paperwork at her desk.

MRS. BAKER
Are you going to be ready for next week's big exam?

THOMAS
Yeah.

MRS. BAKER
I sure hope you're right this time.

Thomas gathers his books, exits.

INT. HALLWAY

Thomas battles through the crowd toward his chubby friend, SAM, who stands pissed off at his locker.

THOMAS
Hey, Sam. Ready fer tonight?

Sam holds up a paper covered in red ink.

SAM
Ain't lookin' too good.

THOMAS
That's probly better than what I got.

SAM
It's just my parents. They expect a hundred percent outta me every fuckin' day. You know how it is. I told 'em I couldn't go to my

SAM
 sister's dancin' recital cuz I had
 to study. But, no, that wadn't good
 enough. Listen, Thomas, life's all
 about pickin' yer poisin', and
 that's it. Out of the fertilizer
 things rise and back down they
 go... leavin' seeds fer their
 offspring to die the same fate.

Suddenly, Alex passes by.

AN ENVELOPE

intently falls from her hand, weaving Thomas into a trance.

SAM (O.S.)
 If you want, my momma could give
 you a ride, since you probly
 already missed the bus?
 (tries to get his attention)
 Hey, wake up!

THOMAS
 Huh?

SAM
 I said my momma could give you a
 lift.

THOMAS
 Nah, that's okay. It's only a few
 miles.

SAM
 A few miles! I'd shit if I had to
 walk that far!

THOMAS
 That's okay. Ain't nothin' I can't
 handle.

SAM
 Just let my momma drop you off and
 save yerself the trouble.

THOMAS
 Okay, just so long she don't mind.

INT. EXIT

Thomas picks up the envelope.

SAM

What is it? Let me see.

Thomas ignores Sam and puts it in his backpack.

EXT. PARKING LOT

The boys race toward the Carpenter's parked car.

SAM

I'm gonna pancake yer nuts if you
don't show it to me!

INT. WORK

Rex pins a handful of tracts to a noticeboard in a long and lonely hallway. Vinton casually walks up behind, removes his shades.

VINTON

Excuse me, may I see one of those?

Rex is dubious of Vinton's interest but hands one over anyway.

VINTON

(inquisitively studies the
tract)

Ain't that somethin'. Say, you
wouldn't know anything about a Ms.
Rebecca Sallee, wouldga?

Rex tempts an escape.

Vinton grabs him by the collar and pins him against the wall
- just like the tracts.

REX

Hey, fuck off!

Vinton pulls out a picture of Rebecca in her adolescence.

VINTON

(intense)

Her folks say their little lady was
with you last night. I take it you
know who she is?

REX

That's my girl.

Vinton plunges a vicious hook through Rex's face.

VINTON

You brainwashed her, dincha -
dincha you sick son of a bitch?!
(another hook)
I heard about you! You strung her
like a puppet, and then you hacked
her to pieces! Why?!

REX

Yer a goddamn mountebank, you know
that. A goddamn mountebank! You
ain't got one thread of evidence
against me, not one goddamn iota,
you fuckin' bastard.

VINTON

Evidence? There somethin' you'd
like to tell me? There some Intel
you'd like to bleed?

REX

Let me tell ya somethin'. I love
that girl. Love her so much, I'd
give up the whole world so she
could... so she could be with me.

VINTON

I took a peek around yer
establishment, boy. You must be in
the habit of butcherin' livestock
in yer backyard, huh? I got some
samples.

REX

You know what, fuck you!

Vinton shoves the picture back in Rex's face.

VINTON

You call this livestock?!

Another merciless blow. Rex spits teeth in his face. Vinton
jams his pistol in Rex's rib cage.

VINTON

Once they find out it's that
bitch's blood that's been spilled,
I'm onna break down yer door and
put this bullet where it belongs! I
ain't even gonna axe you to
surrender, you punk-ass bitch!

A crazed look swells in Rex's eyes.

REX

You know, you and me live on two different planets, Sheriff Vinton. On yers, they got subservients like you. That's people that get hard when other people tell 'em what to do. Sorta like a two-dollar-cum-gullpin'-whore, feeds on whatever gets fucked out the dick-pipes. Now me, on my planet, in the much more habitable realm of existence, people ain't got no masters. On my planet, we are own flock, ain't got no peckers waitin' to get hard just cuz we enjoy jerkin'-off some shepherd's gamy staff.

Vinton headbutts Rex in the face, sending him to the floor with a mouthful of blood. He squats down, presses the gun against his forehead.

VINTON

(gritting teeth)

Boy, you best be lookin' fer some pretty hefty fuckin' locks before this day's done fuckin' over with!

REX

Fuck you!

Vinton's boot crashes into Rex's stomach. He exits down the hallway like nothing ever happened.

REX

(wincing)

Kiss my ass! You ain't got nothin', not nothin' against me, ya hear, you fuckin' bastard!

Rex collapses face-down on the floor, leaks blood.

INT. RESTROOM

While Rex bathes his bloodied face in the sink,

TWO FIERY RED EYES

peek through the cracks of a large vent centered on the end wall. A bass voice slithers down Rex's spine.

SATAN
Are you ready, my son?

REX
(jerks)
Who is it?

SATAN
The path has led to uncertainty,
has it not?

REX
How do you -

SATAN
Those who surmise their
preparedness are often met with
difficulty.

REX
(starts toward the vent)
What the fuck do you care about
difficulty?

SATAN
I wouldn't disturb, my pious
fellow.

REX
What the fuck do you want?

SATAN
Hunger I for blood whilst the pig
squeals. Your importunate
digression from my command has me
leery of your judgment.

REX
(humbled)
Oh, fuck me! Oh, fuck me! Please
fergive me. My mind, I - I've been
kinda fucked up lately.

SATAN
For the knowledge of the avatar's
obtainment, you ought to have
heeded this morning's salvational
prayer.

REX
Please accept my apology, Father.
It's just, just I can't do it by
myself.

SATAN

Enough, my son. The bones of time
for your salvation have all but
withered to the marrow. I advise
you to discard your uncertainty,
and trust in me.

REX

(caressing the vent)
Yes, Father. I trust you with all
my heart.

SATAN

You will pluck the serpent from the
nigh forest. The implement with
which you will extricate your wings
of destiny. By necessity, to
swallow the fly, you must first
cast the silk.

REX

(longingly)
Our destiny.

SATAN

My force will soon have its
shackles fastened to every germ of
your repugnant strain. Once
discerned, their will shall be
broken, and their souls shall be
liable to it. As a catalyst, you
have executed immensely.

Seething in an ecstasy of tears, Rex hears a sluuuurp!
coming from behind.

A WOMAN'S HEAD

balloons from out of the sink drain. Her mouth offers an
oral enticement with her dripping, snake-like tongue, which
slithers between her fangs.

Her eyes red globes of fire with pupils of splintered
charcoal; skin scorched to a cinder.

HEAD

(hissing)
Come to me.

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

In front of a forest, a darkly lit foundation bathes under a
torrential storm.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH

Candles juxtaposed on an altar near the back wall light the scene. In front of these candles kneels the robed high priest.

A ROBED GROUP OF INITIATES

comprised of three men (including Rex) and one woman, face the high priest, armed with monstrous infantry saber swords.

A ROBED GROUP OF SUBORDINATE PRIESTS

stand like stone statues along the extremity of the church.

Between the high priest and four initiates are

EIGHT COVERED OBJECTS

of human height. Friction sounds from them.

The four initiates bow in suit with the high priest as he makes his way to the podium.

HIGH PRIEST

(vehement)

Before your exaltation into superiority, I'd like you to take a moment to reflect upon how ignorant and detestable you once were. How you once walked this polluted earth - not with meaning - but with exuding depravity. Flowing side by side with reason like death and decay. Well, if I was to swear on one thing, I'd swear that that's all about to change, rapidly. For today, my children, we will seek retribution. Today we will seek the dawning of a new breed who will annihilate those who have hindered are Master's word. You, the near alumnus, are going to prove that you are not of this perverted flock. And in so doing, thus become who we all were born to be! Now I know the challenges of faith we've assigned to you thus far have been relatively mild in nature. What you encounter today, and how you respond, will determine the final outcome of your grade. Likely, not all of the remaining four will

HIGH PRIEST
 pass. But for those who do, I will
 only be left to marvel at your
 astonishing will and resemblance of
 impeccable faith.
 (to the subordinate priests)
 Remove the covers.

The subordinates move to the veiled unknowns and do as requested. They reveal the initiates' assignment of two people each to sacrifice to their God: seven women, 30 to 50-years-old, and one man, 25, locked to a pillory - their feet and hands in shackles - bodies stripped of flesh with a torture device known as a cat's paw. This implement resides in each victim's hide.

HIGH PRIEST
 Now they can be seen for what they
 really are.

The priests remove the duct tape while the victims scream for their lives in throaty supplications.

The high priest walks to the front of the podium, raises his hands to the sky.

HIGH PRIEST
 (thunderous)
 Initiates, the time has come!
 Procure your priesthood!

Two initiates, male and female, clamor in terror, unable to proceed with the act. Rex walks over, raises his sword, and bleeds reluctance. Another, more eager male initiate follows.

LADY VICTIM
 (to Rex)
 You can't do this! Stop, please,
 and think about what you're doing!

The sword falls to Rex's side, untroubling the woman's sigh of relief. He succumbs to madness at the sight of her shredded breasts - mistakable for pom poms.

LADY VICTIM
 Thank you...

Rex takes a deep breath and looks her in the eye, like a doctor with bad news.

REX

I'm doin' this fer me and my son...

Sweat drips from his fingertips, along the handle of the sword. A retina-burning light shines from the tip of the blade as it raises.

Her head hits the floor. Rex vomits.

The other male initiate taunts his second victim, with the pillory beside her already holding a severed neck, spouting blood.

MAN INITIATE

Yer next, bitch!

LADY VICTIM

This is all a delusion, don't you fucking get it? What they're promising you people in return for killing us! Don't believe them!

He spits on the lady's face in disgust.

MAN INITIATE

Sorry, bitch. It's a shame yer faction can't reason with faith.

Her head forms a pair with the other victim's.

Rex is now at his second.

LADY VICTIM

Fuck you and this fairy tale-laden cesspool!

REX

(crying)

My son. I'm sorry.

Sting of the blade. Rex turns to the angered high priest.

MAN INITIATE

(to high priest)

I can't do it! I can't even look at what you've done!

FEMALE INITIATE

Why did you?!

The priest leaps off stage and walks closer to the cowardly initiates - asks for their swords with his hands and eyes.

They fulfill his request, enfeebled. He walks behind the man and decapitates him with both swords. A tide of blood surges across the floor. He moves to the woman as she turns around, crying:

FEMALE INITIATE
Yer all crazy!

Both swords drive through the woman's breast, out her back.

The priest turns to Rex and his fellowman.

HIGH PRIEST
Welcome to the Brotherhood.

END FLASHBACK

INT. RESTROOM

The head tempts Rex. Lips smack wildly.

SATAN
Come, my son. You deserve it.

Rex drops his johns and accepts oral pleasure, from the severed head of the female initiate.

SATAN
That's my boy.

EXT. ROADSIDE

A tire kisses the curb.

INT. MRS. CARPENTER'S CAR

Thomas and Sam sit in the back seat. Mrs. Carpenter, plumpy, 40s, looks through the rear view mirror to converse.

THOMAS
Thanks a lot fer takin' me home,
Mrs. Carpenter.

MRS. CARPENTER
Yer more than welcome, hun.

SAM
Maybe after I'm done grounded I can
come over.

THOMAS
Yeah! Can't wait to see yer new
comics.

MRS. CARPENTER
Once you accelerate those grades
into high gear.

Sam rolls his eyes.

SAM
I know, Mom.

THOMAS
Well, I better hit the road.

MRS. CARPENTER
It was very nice seein' you again,
Thomas.

THOMAS
You too, Mrs. Carpenter.

Sam jokingly flips his mom off. Thomas giggles, exits.

EXT. WOOLGROVE HOME

The driver's window rolls down.

MRS. CARPENTER
Oh, and, Thomas...

THOMAS
Yeah.

MRS. CARPENTER
I just wanted you to thank yer
father for me. It brought us all so
much comfort when he asked us to be
a part of his religion. And tell
him he can expect to see us at the
initiation real soon.

THOMAS
I'll thank him.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

He lounges out on his bed. He takes the letter out of the envelope. Tears of hope stream.

INT. TRUCK

Rex drives on a gloomy road in the woods. Eyes watchful. A dense fog flows through the environment.

A NAKED WOMAN

emerges from a section of underbrush.

The break pedal depresses.

She entices Rex with her beauty, then sprints back into the darkness. Rex obliges in greedy succession.

EXT. (DARK)BACKWOODS - DAY

She leads him far inside, leaping like an animal over logs and other scattered debris. Exhausted, Rex collapses on his belly. The woman vanishes.

Rex scopes in all directions, then stirs excitedly. Faint orgasms, not far away, cast sex-fumes into the air. He picks himself up. Hypnotized. Lured. He spots movement in a line of vegetation.

Perspiring legs, twisting, beckoning, protrude from a family of thorn bushes. He moves closer to uncover the throbbing body of the woman - who's being pleased yet by another.

They're the women Rex sacrificed at the initiation; only now part human, part demon. (This fusion of man and beast imparts to us their implementation by the Power of Darkness...)

Prickly thorns slice through Rex's skin as he indulges sight of the wet orgy.

The demons caress one another on the ground, licking, sucking, and nibbling on nipples and necks. Their tongues slither gradually below the naval. Rex rips off his clothes and gives them what they want.

He collapses, winded, greased in perspiration. The women crawl over and lick him with their undulating tongues, from his feet to his mouth.

One of them presents to him a giant

SNAKE (THE AVATAR)

wrapped around her shoulders, then places it on the ground. They whisper into his ears.

HYBRID ONE

She awaits the two.

HYBRID TWO

Feed her your progeny.

HYBRID ONE
Her scion replete.

They close his eyes with a gentle touch and disappear.

Rex opens his eyes. He inches toward the snake, stares lustfully into its prodigious, black eyes.

REX
(to the sky)
It's time... It's our time...

He falls forward, shrouding the snake with his naked body in silent prayer.

Whooo! A sudden burst of tempestuous wind blows a heap of debris. The storm approaches.

INT. TRUCK

An aquarium on the floor harbors the otherworldly behemoth, fissuring glass.

Clothed, Rex opens the glove compartment, pulls out a bottle of whiskey, and heads for home.

INT. LIVING ROOM

A patterned rapping renders Thomas to the front door. The sun reveals a glowing Alex and her innocent smile.

Thomas, shy, can't move.

ALEX
Hi, Thomas.

THOMAS
Hi.

They embrace.

ALEX
(into Thomas' ear)
You don't never be sad. My momma said that if you keep yer head down, that's called self-defeat. I told my mommy as long as I live and breathe, I'm gonna see to it that there ain't nobody who takes that fate.

Thomas tears up on her shoulder.

ALEX

You can cry on me as long as you
want to.

THOMAS

(weeping)

Yer the only thing in my life I
love! I think I could die fer you!

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

Thomas and Alex lie in bed, hand in hand.

INT. KITCHEN

With Alex gone, Thomas takes the rest of the tracts on the
table and leaves home.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK

Thomas walks from mailbox to mailbox to deliver his father's
tracts.

INT. MRS. CARPENTER'S CAR

Mrs. Carpenter smacks her son on the butt as he exits.

SAM

Thanks again, Mom!

MRS. CARPENTER

Yer welcome, ya little shit. Have
fun!

She stays till he enters, waves him goodbye.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Sam plops his overnight bag on the floor.

SAM

Guess who's here!

No answer. He notices

A PAINTING

on the wall of a man, presumably Rex, engulfed in an inferno
of green flames.

The door knob begins to rattle... Sam shivers...

SAM

Oh, fuck!

THOMAS

Holy crap, you scared me!

SAM

Bet yer wonderin' why I'm here. I started cryin' fer sympathy, and mom finally gave in.

THOMAS

She must be gullible.

SAM

Thankfully. Damn, this place is wicked!

Sam points at two swords above the doorway - the same Rex and his colleague used to slay their adversaries.

SAM

What the hell kinda swords are they?

THOMAS

Those are saber swords. Daddy said he got 'em from his work-place.

SAM

Ever held one of 'em?

THOMAS

It would kinda be hard to pull-off seein' how they's twice as big as me.

SAM

Well, I got somethin' you can hold. Let's go to yer room. Got somethin' I wanna show ya.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

The boys sit Indian style on the floor. Sam takes several comics out of his overnight bag.

THOMAS

Toss one over.

SAM

Just be careful. They cost me the better part of my allowance.

THOMAS

Man, where'd ya get 'em?

SAM

The Dime Store. It's at the mall.
We oughta go there sometime.

THOMAS

Yeah, fer me I average a comic-book
once in a lifetime. Not that I'm
slow at readin', but cuz my daddy
ain't got no likin' fer my readin'
any.

SAM

Why not?

THOMAS

(enervated)

Cuz he'd rather me read those
tracts.

SAM

What if you don't?

Thomas looks despairingly at the floor.

THOMAS

I don't wanna talk about it.

Sam's eyes of concern pry Thomas open.

THOMAS

Sometimes he hits me, yells things
at me, things in another language,
tryin' to get me to believe what he
does.

SAM

Just read 'em with an open mind,
that's what my parents said. We'll
soon be converted, thanks to yer
crack-head daddy.

Thomas remains lugubrious despite Sam's failed attempt at
humor.

THOMAS

(crying)

It's just that, just that I ain't
got no place to go. I look at other
people, and they're happy.

(half-smiling, yet deeply
serious)

I'm doomed.

Thomas catches Sam's stare of empathy.

SAM

Well, listen, bud. I ain't gonna let him hurt ya. At least not while I'm here. I'll protect ya. I'll kick his ass.

The force of humor shines a glimpse of light into Thomas' soul.

SAM

I could be yer bodyguard, you know?

THOMAS

(crying less)

You'd make a good one.

SAM

At least that'd provide me an alibi fer goin' to dancin' recitals.

Thomas laughs.

THOMAS

You know, I's thinkin' the mall sounds like a good place to go. Ferget about life fer awhile. I was thinkin' maybe Ron could loan you one of his bikes and come along with us.

SAM

Would yer daddy mind?

THOMAS

No, he won't give a shit. We can stay away as long as we want. I got some money from allowance, and I was thinkin' I could get a few of those comics. You wanna go?

EXT. BACKYARD

They run out the back door with anticipation burning in their brains. Thomas takes a padlock off the door and plunges inside the darkened

GARAGE

with Sam always at his side.

SAM
Bad ass bike! That Spider-Man?

THOMAS
Uh-hum. By far the best gift I've
ever gotten from my daddy.

Thomas finds a tire inflator propped against the wall and starts pumping.

SAM
That's what I want fer my birthday.

After admiring the bike, Sam's eyes drift toward a suspicious-looking something stored in a bag in the far corner of the garage. The lack of illumination gives rise to a split second of speculation. He dismisses the object as soon as Thomas finishes.

THOMAS
All set.

EXT. KLEIN SIDEWALK

Ron waits in the grass with his bike and Alex's (basket, handlebar tassels).

Sam rolls his eyes, justifiably.

SAM
Are you fuckin' kiddin' me? Do I
have to ride that piece of shit?

Thomas laughs as they cross the street.

THOMAS
Hi, Ron.

RON
Hey, bud, heard what happened in
art class. Next time you just come
to me, alright.

They exchange fist bumps.

RON
(pinches Sam's nipple)
It's been awhile since I talked to
this fag.

SAM
It hasn't been since I thought
about porkin' yer sister.

Ron looks over to his mom, who's push-mowing the lawn.

RON
Hey, Mom!

Sam puts his hand over Ron's mouth.

SAM
It was just a joke, ya cry-baby!

RON
I ain't laughin'!

SAM
Okay, I'm sorry. Whatever. So, you ready to cheer up and scavenge the mall with us, pick up some comics?

Ron picks up the girly bike, gives it to Sam.

RON
Hope this destroys yer ego ridin' my sis's bike.

SAM
(laughing)
No. If this is as close as I get to yer sister, then that kinda puts me at a loss fer complaint.

RON
Parents want me back by nine.

THOMAS
I think that'll fly.

SAM
Let's ride!

EXT. MALL

The boys lock their bikes to a row of bicycle racks and head inside.

INT. MALL

Sam spots the Dime Store.

SAM
Look, there it is!

INT. DIME STORE

THOMAS
 These are fuckin' awesome!
 (to Sam)
 How much is they?

SAM
 Uh... just ten cents a piece!

THOMAS
 I think I got enough to buy a whole
 fuckin' rack!

Ron finds his preferred comic, shows Thomas and Sam.

RON
 Look at this one!

THOMAS
 Wow, they're all so fuckin' cool!

RON
 Now I know why y'all was so siked
 up about comin'!

They leave with handfuls and run to the nearest

CASH REGISTER

where Sam and Ron pay for their comics first.

SAM
 (to Thomas)
 Wanna go to the sports store? I
 need some pads fer soccer.

THOMAS
 Nah, you guys go ahead. I think I'm
 just gonna head to the bench and
 check out my comics.

SAM
 Okay, we'll see ya when we're done.

Sam and Ron exit.

INT. MALL

Thomas enters. He takes a handful of tracts from his pocket,
 then places them in a stack next to a gumball machine. He
 walks over to a bench, starts to read.

THOMAS' VISION

The mall lights flicker off, on, then remain off. Thomas studies the darkness. Alone.

A trembling of the earth sends the boy to his feet. He drops the comic in the bag and stands to look outside.

EXT. SKY

A Dark Sphere rises in the cosmos to engulf every particle of sunlight in its black, amorphous wormhole.

INT. MALL

Thomas moves closer to a fiery light and the roar of sprinting feet emerging from behind the bend, opposite the exit of the mall.

He looks at the

GUMBALL MACHINE

and fearfully registers the disappearance of the tracts.

As the pace of the thunder increases, a stampede of conflagrant people round the curve. They cry to be relieved of their suffering - with the missing tracts in hand.

Thomas dives between two pop machines in the nick of time.

The burners explode through the exit of the mall behind him, into the Sphere's non-light.

EXT. SKY

The Sphere's opening dimension releases an outpour of winged demons that descend upon the humans. The monsters rip them apart like tissue paper with beastly fangs and claws.

INT. MALL

Thomas turns back around.

A ROBED SILHOUETTE

appears from the burning crowd of humans. A reptilian face peeks inside to whisper.

SATAN

Soon...

END VISION

INT. SPORTS STORE

Sam and Ron see Thomas lying on the floor and rush to his aid.

INT. MALL

Sam and Ron attempt to shake him back to life. Passersby gawk in perplexity.

Thomas recharges.

RON

Yer sweatin' like hell. I think someone tried puttin' a hex on you, man.

SAM

You okay? What the hell happened?

THOMAS

(dizzily stands)

I was just sittin' at the bench and - I don't know.

SAM

You gonna be able to ride home?

THOMAS

Yeah, I think so.

RON

You don't look so good. I can have my brother pick you up and take you home.

THOMAS

Thanks, Ron. I'm okay, really.

Thomas recovers the pamphlets - urgently discards them in the trash.

EXT. MALL

A monstrous thunderhead lurks ominously in the distance as the boys get ready to leave.

SAM

(to Thomas)

Here, let me get yer bike.

Thomas is bent over with his head between his legs as Ron pats him on the back.

RON
You gonna be okay?

THOMAS
Yeah, I think so.

RON
Yer lucky we saw you. If it wadn't
fer us, you might still be layin'
there.

Sam gives Thomas his bike.

THOMAS
Thank you, Sam.

SAM
Alright, let's get you home.

The boys hit the road, unsettled.

INT. TRUCK

His face masked in sweat, Rex smokes a cigarette, blasting heavy music on the radio. He looks anxiously at the grimoire, inhales deeply.

The snake is about to bust open the aquarium...

EXT. KLEIN SIDEWALK - DUSK

Thomas leans over his handlebars in exhaustion.

RON
Well, it was nice hangin' out with
y'all.

SAM
Yeah, we should -

THOMAS
(anxious)
You know those tracts I gave you
guys?

SAM AND RON
Yeah? What about 'em?

THOMAS
Well, I'd feel a lot better if you
gave 'em back. I got a strange
feelin', that's all.

SAM AND RON

(puzzled)

Okay. Sure.

RON

Well, foods probly gettin' cold.
I'll see you dick heads later. Oh,
and get well, Thomas.

THOMAS

Thanks.

The two stroll back home down the neighborhood sidewalk.
Thomas recovers the tracts from the mailboxes.

SAM

I don't suppose we could take turns
sleepin' in yer bed? I gotta bad
back.

THOMAS

Yeah, that's cool.

Sam notices Thomas' unease.

SAM

So, how ya feelin'?

THOMAS

Better, I'm just really tired. We
might hafta call it a day.

SAM

I can have my momma pick me up?

THOMAS

No, I want you to stay. I don't
wanna be alone.
(a beat of fear trespasses)
I wanna thank you fer helpin' me
back there.

SAM

That'll be twenty bucks fer
bodyguard services.

Thomas grins as Sam puts his arm around him.

SAM

Well, hell, that just goes to show
ya there ain't nothin' I wouldn't
do fer my bestest bud.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM - NIGHT

The boys rest peacefully; each still wear his school clothes. For now Thomas sleeps in his bed and Sam in the sleeping bag; located on the side of the bed invisible to the door. We see through the

BEDROOM WINDOW

that the storm has arrived. Heavy rain, turbulent winds abound.

INT. TRUCK

Rex turns on to his home street with determination burning in his eyes. He stops the truck, grabs the grimoire, exits.

EXT. SIDEWALK

He walks around the truck to the passenger side and opens the door.

REX

No!

The snake springs out in the darkness, beyond recall.

EXT. FRONT YARD

Rex walks up to the house anxiously with the book secured in his armpit, enters.

INT. LIVING ROOM

He flicks on the light switch. The power's out. He takes a deep, agonizing breath, and concedes down the hallway.

INT. MAGICK ROOM

He places the grimoire on the podium, exits.

INT. HALLWAY

Rex stops outside his son's bedroom and opens the door a crack. He stands in tears, gazing upon his Thomas.

REX

I love you...

INT. KITCHEN

He swipes a bottle of whiskey from the counter.

INT. MAGICK ROOM

Rex falls down hard against the wall, crying. He swings the bottle upside down, guzzles everything but the bottle itself. He notices the sand in the hourglass has already fallen three-fourths of the way.

REX
Our destiny!
(throws the bottle at the
wall)
Why does it have to be this way,
goddammit!

EXT. BACKYARD

Rex removes the padlock to the garage, enters feverishly.

INT. HALLWAY

Sam walks out of the bathroom.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

Sam gets cozy back in the sleeping bag.

INT. KITCHEN

Rex returns with a collection of four fluorescent bug zappers to light up the house. He he lays one in the

HALLWAY

on the floor...

IN THE MAGICK ROOM

in the corner...

IN THE BEDROOM

on a dresser...

IN THE KITCHEN

on the table, which fill the rooms with enigmatic DARK BLUE and an alien buzzing noise.

As Rex exits, we stay our gaze upon the hypnotic sound/color of the bug zapper.

A moth flies into the light, only to meet a blinding death.

Rex re-enters with a large bag. He drags it down the

HALLWAY

to the

MAGICK ROOM

He props Rebecca's unrecognizable corpse against the altar, puts on his robe, lights the candles on the altar, takes the dagger, opens the grimoire on the podium, and begins the conjuration.

REX

(hands touching the sky)

"Lord, by yer grace, grant me, I pray, the power to conceive in my mind and to execute that which I desire to do! The end which I would attain by thy help, O Mighty Father: the One True God who livest and reignest ferever and ever!"

THE SUPERNATURAL FORCE

bursts through the windows (distorting the light) and mingles with the blue fluorescence emanating from the bug zapper and the smoke from the extinguished candles.

Rex looks out the window, begging for it to come back...

REX

"I entreat thee to summon LAMIA to manifest before me - that she may give me true and faithful answer - so that I may accomplish my desired end! This I respectfully and humbly ask in Yer Name, Lord. May you deem me worthy, Father!"

The atmosphere has swollen into a rampant freak show of menacing blue light, and rumbles with enough thunder to radiate through the cosmos.

As if conceived by the pandemonium,

THE SNAKE

explodes through an intact window, to Rex's ambivalent horror/delight and slithers into the mouth of Rebecca's corpse.

Rex falls to his knees. Torrents of hope/terror capsize his mobility.

Rebecca's mouth splits open in slivers of flesh to make room for the giant beast. The snake is so big that it reopens her slit throat, through which we see its scaly body descend.

Rebecca starts to blink, twitch, then go completely ape-shit in violent convulses all over the room as the snake forces its way inside.

Suddenly, the windows shatter as a jet of lightning strikes the house.

THE CORPSE

stands in the midst of thick glass spray. The demon (subsisting in Rebecca's flesh) gnaws off Rebecca's tongue, from whence spawns its own lurid split-flap.

Lamia inspects Rebecca's naked body, caressing her skin and the scabrous gash on her neck. On one side, we see her hair has meshed into a glob of putrid jello, composed of bone and brain matter. Out of this hideousness spawns a croaky utterance with green, ultra-sickly glowing eyes.

LAMIA

For this provision I am pleased.
 (stroks Rebecca's body
 orgasmically)
 So droughty and warm. A supreme
 fit.

Rex stays incapacitated.

LAMIA

How does it feel, Rexxxx? You've
 craved me for so long, and now I'm
 here, straight from the fire below
 us.

Pieces of glass fall to the floor while Rex slowly stands. He relinquishes his robe and embraces the demon.

LAMIA

Now, do to me what you wish.

INT. REX'S BEDROOM

Holding his hand, Lamia turns to Rex with a look of concern.

LAMIA

His word?

REX

(grins viciously)
 Spreadin' like wildfire.

She smiles appreciatively and softly kisses Rex on the lips; a daub of blood smears across his mouth.

LAMIA

Rex, before you fill me,
 (massages his genitals)
 I want to know if you're prepared
 to give me what I want in return?

Unable to restrain his libido any longer, Rex throws her into the wall and jams his finger inside her bush while sucking her neck.

INT. VINTON'S HOME

A phone call wakes uniformed Vinton on the sofa. He answers the phone on a nearby coffee table.

VINTON

Hello. Oh, thank Christ! I'll
 notify the parents.

He hangs up, then dials a number.

VINTON

Hey, Rose, this's Patrick. The
 blood work just came back. The
 blood's cow's blood. Ain't human.
 (intense)
 We gonna find yer girl if it takes
 a lifetime. Yes, ma'am! Lots of
 hope! Lots of hope left!

INT. REX'S BEDROOM

Lamia shoves Rex on to the bed and lands on top. Blood dribbles out of her mouth, neck, and head injury, making Rex seem the victim of some bad/sadistic joke.

She tears off his pants, licks the blood off his chest, and thrusts up and down like a bull rider.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

Sam jolts out of the sleeping bag. He hears the stormy sex next door and steps out to see.

INT. HALLWAY

He stands aghast outside Rex's door as the demon's orgasmic howls complement the severity of the storm.

He moves down farther, sees the broken glass originating from Lamia's conception. He peeks inside the

MAGICK ROOM

then steps the rest of the way in and notices the grimoire on the podium. He thieves it, runs back to

THOMAS' ROOM

Sam flips through the book. He soon grows bored and plops it on the nightstand.

INT. REX'S BEDROOM

Rebecca's bleeding wounds have tucked Rex under blankets of blood, but he's too damn drunk to give a fuck.

Defused, Lamia collapses on top of him, sucks for air.

LAMIA

You were extraordinary. So long I have waited for this moment. Oh, so long.

REX

(still drunk)

This is the best payoff of my life. God, yer so beautiful.

She laughs.

REX

Is there any way you could stay with me? Like, maybe ferever...?

LAMIA

You're so handsome, I shall think it over.

They trade tongues.

REX

Fuck, it's hot in here. I'll open the windows, get a nice breeze flowin'.

He plops lazily out of bed, briefly allows the storm inside. He sucks in a gust of wind, then slips back beneath the covers.

REX

Ready fer more?

(nibbles on her earlobe)

I wanna fuck you all the way to Hell.

LAMIA
Oh, but, Rex, I'm starving.

REX
I'm starvin', too.

Beneath the sheets, he sticks his fingers inside her.

REX
I'm starvin' fer some more demon
pussy.

His tongue rolls around in her ear.

LAMIA
(impatient)
Please.

REX
What's a matter? You want somethin'
from the fridge: a t.v. dinner or
somethin'? I can fix that up real
quick -

LAMIA
Abate, you fool!

Lamia denies his tongue, shoves him away.

LAMIA
All this exertion, it has me
ravenous. Is the boy ready?

REX
(white-knuckled)
Isn't who ready? Who you talkin'
about?

Lamia kneels over Rex in a tensely erect position.

LAMIA
The boy! I'm ready for the feast!

Rex begins to cry.

LAMIA
He should be ready! Haven't you
prepared him for me? The boy is
what I want in return! He's what
will unleash everything you've ever
wanted - your destiny - and for
that you must make the ultimate
sacrifice!

REX
Please don't -

LAMIA
As we have promised: once your act of faith is instantiated, the pain and desertion you now feel will be richly recompensed with all accolades that starve in wait for you - and your boy!

REX
Please, please don't hurt 'em!

Lamia seizes Rex's throat explosively with one hand.

LAMIA
Enough time has already been squandered! I want him now!

REX
(struggles to breathe)
I changed my mind! I can't go through with it!

LAMIA
(growling)
The precautions you've taken were insufficient, indeed! You were warned! We don't allow filth-bathing pigs the right to our Kingdom, nor make bargains without a hand in the shares! Given your ignorance of this, I'm taking you both!

LAMIA
snarls then tears a mouthful of flesh out of Rex's shoulder.

REX
Fuckin' bitch!

He stabs both thumbs in her eye sockets and pops her eyeballs, like two ripe tomatoes. He knees her in the stomach, knocks her to the floor, and lunges out of bed.

LAMIA
hunches over in spastic pain as blood pours like Niagra Falls out of her eye sockets. She swings several times, misses, then grazes his throat with a fingernail.

REX

flinches, misses a jab.

LAMIA

grabs him, throws him into the wall.

REX

collapses to the floor, unconscious.

INT. HALLWAY

Lamia's fluttering tongue secures its prey outside Thomas' door; a wicked grin exceeds Rebecca's face.

INT. MAGICK ROOM

Lamia ransacks the room in search of something, then exits in fury.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

Lamia explodes through the door.

COLD BLUE FLORESCENCE

and splinters of wood engulf the room.

THOMAS

rolls under the bed in the sleeping bag.

SAM

freezes under the covers.

LAMIA

Where the fuck is it?

Assuming, Sam points to the grimoire on the nightstand.

Lamia swipes the book and points to a passage for Sam to recite.

LAMIA

Read, child!

Sam's nerves turn to mush.

LAMIA

(ferocious)

I've come to take you to Heaven!
Don't you believe?

With no sign of progress, Lamia plow-drives the grimoire in Sam's pudgy face; his nose starts to bleed.

She takes him by the throat as his legs quiver above the disheveled bed sheets.

LAMIA
Don't you believe?

SAM
(crying)
Yes! Yes, I believe!

LAMIA
Then read -
(rapidly repeating the passage
viciously)
"To thee I give ownership over thy
mind and body - To thee I give
ownership over thy mind and body!"

SAM
"To thee I give ownership over thy
mind and body!"

The deal is done; Rebecca's mouth clenches around Sam's neck.

THOMAS' POV

The bed shakes! Springs strain! Torrents of blood race down Rebecca's legs, on to the floor.

END POV

A long, worn out gurgle...

...unabated silence...

Thump!!! Thomas cringes frantically as Sam's decapitated body hits the floor.

Lamia drags him away by the feet, leading a pool of blood into the hallway.

INT. MAGICK ROOM

The demon relinquishes Sam's body on to the floor. She walks over to the altar, waves her hand over the candles to give them new life. She skewers Sam's head atop the metal fence while the ruptured veins dangling out of his neck glisten in candle light.

She picks up Rex's dagger off the floor, uses it to slice Sam's body into bite-size pieces, and begins the feed.

INT. REX'S BEDROOM

Rex regains sentience. He gathers just enough strength and wavers into the hall.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

Thomas crawls out from under the bed. He proceeds with caution, exits.

INT. HALLWAY

Thomas sees the blood trail leading to the Magick Room. The sound of rabid gorging escalates.

INT. REX'S BEDROOM

Thomas enters. He notices a naked body lying face flat on the bed, walks closer.

Flies buzz around the mangled corpse. The skin from the back of the head to the front has been peeled off; the body rendered unidentifiable.

THOMAS

Daddy?

Encroaching footsteps patter down the hallway. Thomas cowers behind the bed.

LAMIA (O.S.)

Now, my love, it is you who I
hunger.

The eyeless demon enters the room, laps up remnants of Sam's innards adorning her mouth and face. Her serpentine tongue examines an airborne residue, then slithers back inside.

LAMIA

My senses tell me I'm not alone.

She crawls softly on to the ravaged bed. The corpse gone.

THOMAS' POV

Bloody fingers grab the edge of the bed spread...

...A SILHOUETTED HEAD RISES...

LAMIA
 (joyous)
 Another soul!

END POV

Thomas flies into the wall, out of its grasp, and dives out the window.

Lamia stops in her tracks, laughter morphs into ear-piercing pain. Rex has impaled her in the back with one of the saber swords. The demon roars like a mad hound.

REX
 How's it feel to get fucked in the
 back, you fuckin' bitch!

REX

ejects the sword, ready to finish her off.

LAMIA

intercepts the sword, gashes her hand and arm, and buries it in Rex's chest.

A stream of red spills from his mouth.

LAMIA
 How's it feel to bleed like a pig!

Lamia ejects the sword and sticks it back in, repeatedly back and forth.

REX

falls to the floor, squirming, trying to stop the bleeding.

EXT. YARD

Thomas writhes in the grass after the hard land.

INT. REX'S BEDROOM

Rex bleeds like a stuck pig as Lamia grabs him by the hair.

LAMIA
 Hurry to our marriage in the realm
 of Darkness!

REX
 No! Wait -

THE SWORD

threatens his jugular and...

EXT. YARD

Thomas struggles on the ground - comes to his feet. He contemplates which direction to go, then flees to Ron's house.

EXT. REX'S BEDROOM

Rebecca's moonlit head pokes out the window and senses Thomas; her tongue twirls in detecting his scent.

EXT. FLORIDA ROOM

Thomas bangs on the screen-door.

THOMAS

Help me!

INT. REX'S BEDROOM

Lamia's tongue recoils back in Rebecca's mouth. A set of monstrous claws shoot through her fingers; bloody and knife-like.

SHADOW ON THE WALL

shows wings pierce out of Rebecca. Painful.

EXT. FLORIDA ROOM

A raucous, demonic cry tears at Thomas' eardrums.

THOMAS

Somebody help me!

Lamia, a blur behind Thomas, lands in the Kleins' front yard, carrying the saber sword.

Thomas realizes he's not alone. He takes a knife from his pocket, tears a hole in the screen, lets himself

IN THE FLORIDA ROOM

and locks the glass door. An artificial mango tree provides a shadowy seclusion.

He averts his gaze from the hideous sight of its veiny wings, dripping Rebecca's blood; her busted eyeballs and slimy tongue as it pastes the glass in semen-textural mucous. Rebecca's skin has become a hide of coal-colored scales. A mirror-image of Thomas' daydream.

The demon tries the glass door in vain, then starts toward the back of the house.

INT. RON'S ROOM

Ron shoots up in bed, looks down at the thing creeping on the floor atop his shattered window.

The demon stands, its body dressed in fragments of glass, and gently opens the grimoire.

LAMIA

Don't you believe, little boy?

The blood on Rebecca's caressing hand smears across his face.

EXT. YARD

Thomas runs off the steps, finds Alex's second story window at the side of the house. He grabs a handful of the neighbor's gravel and heaves at her window.

The window cracks, then opens.

ALEX

Who is it?

THOMAS

Alex, somethin's tryin' to kill me!
Please let me in...

ALEX

Meet me at the front door.

After Alex leaves, a cry from inside the house hastens Thomas around front.

INT. STAIRWAY

The cry freezes Alex midway down stairs; she goes back up to see.

INT. FLORIDA ROOM

THOMAS

(banging on the locked
main-door)

Hurry!

INT. HALLWAY

Alex tiptoes her way to Ron's closed bedroom door and gently pushes it open... enough to peek inside to witness the demon standing over Ron, fondling his scar.

INT. RON'S ROOM

RON

What are you doing? What do you want?

LAMIA

(tender)

This has caused you great trouble, hasn't it?

Ron begins to cry.

LAMIA

I can make it go away. I can end all those nightmares of ridicule and loneliness. All can be washed into extinction... if you just say these words.

Ron looks at the text.

LAMIA

Come with me, where happiness reigns.

RON

"To thee I give ownership over thy mind and body."

LAMIA

Now it will come.

The sword raises.

INT. HALLWAY

Ron's demise sends Alex downstairs to her parents' bedroom.

INT. RON'S ROOM

Lamia hears movement, pursues.

INT. HALLWAY

While at her parents' locked door, Alex hears footsteps coming down the stairs.

INT. CLOSET

Alex hides behind the washer and dryer.

INT./EXT. FLORIDA ROOM

Fearful of the demon's emergence behind the main-door, Thomas exits back into the street.

INT. CLOSET

The demon creeps by in the hall. Then vanishes.

INT. HALLWAY

Alex re-enters, checks both ways. Again, she tries the door.

To Alex's left, Lamia's silhouette stands as still as a mannequin. It starts closer without her knowledge.

The door opens.

MR. KLEIN
(hands on Alex)
Baby, what's the matter?

The saber hacks both his arms off at the elbow.

Lamia kicks him back to bed; his arms shower the wailing wife in crimson.

EXT. FLORIDA ROOM

Alex shoots through the door. Thomas latches to her plea.

ALEX
Run!

EXT. BACKYARD

They seek refuge behind a house on the opposite side of the street, fall to the ground.

ALEX
My parents!

THOMAS
We gotta help them!

ALEX
It's too late!

THOMAS
I gotta go back!

INT. KLEIN BEDROOM

Lamia stands on the bed. The sword threatens as the Kleins plea in torment.

LAMIA

Recite!

MRS. KLEIN

Okay! We believe! We believe! To thee we give ownership over thy mind and body!

Guts splatter on the wall and grimoire as the couple receives the full wrath of the demon's sword. A split tongue drinks crimson from the blade.

EXT. BACKYARD

The sound of wings and slaughtered flesh bring habitat to the voice of death.

ALEX

Please believe me! We can't stay here! It'll kill us!

THOMAS

But -

ALEX

Let's go!

EXT. WOODS

Alex takes off into the murky-greenness. Thomas follows not far behind. Deep into the woods, Alex discovers a dilapidated cabin.

ALEX

Thomas, I found somethin'.

INT. CABIN

They collapse on the hollow floor. Alex vomits.

THOMAS

Are you okay?

ALEX

What's goin' on? What do we do?

THOMAS

I don't know. What about Ron?

She dives into Thomas' safety, without reply.

EXT. WOODS

A sinister calm pervades.

INT. CABIN

With Alex asleep, Thomas walks to a glassless window and spots something in the distance.

Flashes of lightning illumine a foggy swamp. At its bank sits a row boat tied to a pier.

He goes back to wake her.

THOMAS

Alex.

She cries.

THOMAS

Alex, I'm here.

(hugs her tightly)

Alex, I found somethin' through the window.

ALEX

What?

THOMAS

I saw water and a boat. I was thinkin' if we need to - if it comes back - we can paddle as far away as we need to.

ALEX

Show me.

Alex feebly stands and walks with Thomas to the window.

THOMAS

(points)

Way out there.

ALEX

Do you think that whatever it was saw us running away?

THOMAS

If it did, I think the water would make us safer.

She leans her head against him.

ALEX
I'm scared, Thomas.

His hand brushes her face consolingly; thumbs her tears.

THOMAS
I am too.
(cries into her eyes)
I need you.

ALEX
I need you.

They hug passionately.

THOMAS
(into her ear)
Whatever happens, I won't let
nothin' bad happen to you.

Her eyes mirror the same affection, then look fearfully through the doorway.

THOMAS
Stay with me.

EXT. WOODS

The storm booms back to life. Lightning and thunder merge above the two racing souls. Leaves churn all of over the place.

ALEX
Are we getting closer?

THOMAS
Any time now, we should be there.

Flap! Flap! The sound of wings draws their eyes to the heavens.

The demon dives down on top of Alex and knocks her to the ground.

THOMAS
Leave her alone!

LAMIA
(to Alex)
You will believe!

ALEX
Thomas, help me!

Thomas takes a knife from his pocket and sticks it in the demon's waist. Alex frees herself.

Lamia howls, removes the knife. A hole opens up in her side. She tosses it on the ground and grabs Thomas with the saber held against his throat.

LAMIA
(to Alex)
Recite - "To thee I give ownership
over thy mind and body" - and I'll
let him go.

Alex stands, weeping.

ALEX
Please don't hurt him. Please...

LAMIA
Say it, and I'll let him go! Just
say it!

THOMAS
No, Alex, don't!

ALEX
"To thee I give ownership over thy
mind and body."

The demon throws Thomas to the ground and moves toward Alex.

THOMAS
Alex, run!

Alex sprints deeper into the woods, the demon inches away, Thomas behind.

ALEX (O.S.)
Thomas, hurry!

Prominent roots cause Thomas to stumble. He clasps on to a tree. He sees the demon with Alex in its grasp, 30 feet away, as if waiting for him.

ALEX
(weak)
Thomas, help me.

THOMAS

Let her go. Take me...

Lamia grins, then slits Alex's throat.

THOMAS

No!

Alex drops, gurgling. Thomas takes off the other way. The demon follows.

EXT. SWAMP

Thomas finds the boat through a dense grove and frees himself into the swamp of oil. The vessel is equipped with a set of oars; one of which has warped to a jagged dagger.

UNDER THE DOME OF TREES

Thomas paddles 50 feet from shore, breath visible. He studies his surroundings, trembling. Strange shadows. Odd noises. Things take on unnatural shapes and sounds. Fireflies hover in the distance. Crickets chirp crazily. Frogs croak psychotically, and thunder ways in.

A barely audible movement in the water catches Thomas' awareness. It's getting closer. Much closer. Too close.

THE DEMON

rises from the water, on to the craft.

As the boat coasts into frame, lightning unveils bleakness standing statuesque

IN THE MIST

on the near side of the boat... Blood oozes from the sword and grimoire. And oil oozes from the fiend.

Thomas turns around, flinching.

A decomposing arm shoots out, aiming the book in desirous spite.

LAMIA

Read it!

THOMAS

No!

LAMIA

Read it!

The vessel sways back and forth.

LAMIA

You want everlasting life? You
wanna be with your friends again?
Read it!

THOMAS

No, get away from me!

LAMIA

Follow their footsteps, child!
Those who've left an imprint on
faith will be allotted their place
amongst the stars! Do as I say!

Lamia walks closer, shoves the book in his face.

LAMIA

Read it, or I'll open your throat!

THOMAS

I want nothing to do with faith.

Thomas yanks the oar out of the water and merges it across
Rebecca's throat. The sword and grimoire fall.

The demon collapses on Thomas, carrying them overboard.

UNDERWATER

Lightning shines on Rebecca's lifeless body as it sinks to
rock bottom. Thomas' glasses and oar tail behind.

THE SNAKE

suddenly tears out of Rebecca's throat, her head now
seperated from her body, and swims away into the abyss.

EXT. WOODS

The snake slithers through the gutted bellies of deceased
trees, across blown off leaves covering the moistened
ground.

INT. MAGICK ROOM

The snake enters through the window, slimes its way into

THE HALLWAY

into Rex's bedroom.

EXT. WOODS

Thomas makes it back to shore. He falls to the ground, covered in oily moss.

A familiar voice echoes in the distance.

REX (O.S.)
Thomas! Hey, Thomas!

THOMAS
Daddy! Daddy, I'm here!

Rex wobbles to the sound of Thomas' decrepit voice, wearing a blood-soaked towel wrapped around his neck - soaked in oil. His wounds are those of Lamia's.

REX
Thomas! Oh, god... I'm comin'! I'm comin'!

They splash into each other's arms.

REX
(overjoyed)
Oh, god, Thomas! I thought I lost you! I thought you'd be gone! But yer not! Yer not!

THOMAS
(suspicious)
Where were you? Why you oily?

REX
I been lookin' fer ya! All this time, I been lookin' fer ya! In the swamp, in every nook, every crevice I could find!

Thomas notices Rex's neck and waist wounds.

THOMAS
Yer hurt?

REX
Don't worry, baby. It's just a nick. God, I love you so much!

Thomas leans away from Rex in sudden paranoia.

THOMAS

Daddy... how'd you know where I was?

REX

I... I heard, uh... I heard somebody screamin' yer name. Then I came runnin' fer ya. Why?

Disquiet, paranoia undiminished, Thomas wraps his arms around Rex.

THOMAS

I love you, Daddy!

REX

I love you too, baby!

INT. BATHROOM

Shaking, anticipating, Thomas watches as Rex removes the bloody towel.

Rex tosses it in the tub, the blood congealed. He tries the light switch. The power's back. He grabs a clean towel in a cabinet under the sink and begins wiping off Thomas.

His eyes gradually lock on to the boy's. Weeping.

THOMAS

Why are you crying?

Rex ignores the question and continues wiping him off. Thomas joins him in tears.

REX

Baby, I'll be fine. Just go to yer room and relax. I'll be finished real soon, then I'll finish cleanin' you up, okay?

THOMAS

Why are you -

REX

Didn't I tell you to go to yer fuckin' room?

Thomas shivers.

REX

Honey, I'm sorry. There's no need to worry. It's gone, but not

REX
 permanently. There's still a few
 things I need to do that involve
 you. So just hold on fer a minute,
 alright? Just go to yer room.

THOMAS
 But Alex -

REX
 (formidable)
 I said go to yer room.

Thomas exits in agony.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

Thomas enters without closing the door. He sees Sam's blood
 spray spattered all over the room and cries harder.

Rex enters. He flicks on the light switch and takes Thomas
 in his arms.

REX
 I'm sorry. I didn't mean fer all
 this to happen. Ya know I love ya,
 right?

Thomas nods.

REX
 Good. Now as I was sayin' - what I
 just brought into this world will
 still be a part of this world till
 I getcha to say somethin', alright?

Thomas nods, lips quivering.

REX
 Now I know it might frighten' you
 at first -
 (distressed)
 but it's the only way we got!
 (beat)
 I need ya to say...
 (another, more grueling beat)
 "...To thee I give ownership over
 thy mind and body."

Thomas shakes uncontrollably.

REX

(tender)

Now wait before ya start jumpin' to conclusions. I know that's what that thing said to yer friend before she - but this is different. What we're usin' it fer is to send that thing away, alright? So it won't come back. See, by sayin' it, yer givin' me a part of yer soul, which, together with mine, will empower me to do away with it. Two against one, you understand?

THOMAS

I don't wanna say it.

REX

But, Thomas, you gotta. You gotta say it.

THOMAS

I don't wanna.

REX

You want that thing to come back and get us? You want more innocent lives wasted?

THOMAS

No.

REX

Then say it.

THOMAS

I can't.

REX

(agitated)

Say it! Don't question!

THOMAS

Daddy, please!

REX

Listen, Thomas, you gotta believe! You know that if you believe in our God, he will protect you! That's all I asked of you then, and that's all I'm askin' of you now!

Tears flood down Thomas' face.

REX

Look around, Thomas! How can you not believe? He's here fer you, boy! You just gotta close yer eyes and give 'em yer mind, that's all!

The fire in Rex's eyes explodes into rage.

REX

Say it, or I will kick the livin' shit outta you, Thomas! I will kick the fuckin' shit outta you!

THOMAS

(no choice)

"To thee I give ownership over thy mind and body!" Now just leave me alone!

An insidious smile sprouts thorns across Rex's face.

REX

Ah, see? It wadn't that hard, now, was it?

Thomas fights his way out of Rex's arms. He falls against the wall, overcome by asphyxia.

REX

Be back in a second...

Rex exits. A look of disdain turns around to greet Thomas.

INSERT - SWORD HOLDER ABOVE DOORWAY

Both swords are gone.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

Rex returns.

THOMAS

Daddy, please!

Lamia decapitates Thomas with the sibling sword. A split tongue drinks Thomas from the blade.

Rex suddenly drops the saber and grabs painfully at a violent throb in his neck.

The snake emerges from his throat's gaping wound, then slithers into the hallway.

Rex turns to Thomas. The sudden realization drives his knees into the floor. He picks up the head, holding it tightly.

REX
(crying boisterously)
...I just want you to be happy...

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD SKY - DAWN

The Dark Sphere rises unnaturally from the horizon.

EXT. WOOLGROVE ROOF

Satan's black claw (the size of a bus) descends from dark, skuddy clouds; Woolgrove-bound.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

The claw surges through the ceiling and pries Thomas' soul from Rex's grasp. It retracts back into the sky.

Rex collapses, blares an interminable wail.

INT. MAGICK ROOM

Rex lights the candles on the altar and kneels down to pray, with Sam's head still perched on the metal fence.

REX
(momentous)
'Tis by yer command that I take
these withering souls to eat the
dead ash of our land, where
Darkness allows no passage to
Light. My duty has been fulfilled,
and soon the traces of my doing
shall vanish in the shadow of our
newborn sky. I pray my wait -
diminutive - till I shall rejoice,
yet again, as a father and husband
I once was.

His head takes a downcast dive on the altar...

After wiping away tears, he takes one of the candles and sets fire to the room.

INT. THOMAS' ROOM

Rex moans intensely over Thomas' body. He plunges the sword through his chest and falls on his back as flames tamber their way inside.

The last grain of sand falls.

CLOSE IN ON REX

Alive by a thread. He reaches out, crying, clasps Thomas' shirt. He slides nearer, head leans against the body.

Drift closer...

...a diseased smile...

...into his eyes...

The right pupil comes to match the Dark Sphere.

A DESERT WASTELAND OF SAND as we pull further back.

Lamia passes into view. She moves toward the apparition. Her hand clutches the saber, with the blade skewered through the heads of its five victims.

A shadow now rules the land. The sun, perched on the horizon, shines no more as it becomes the breakfast of the ultra-towering Sphere.

(...licking its lips to suck the Light from us all.)