

# THE BOX

by

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FADE IN

EXT. WOODS - STONE BRIDGE - NIGHT

Two abominably dressed MEN stomp on the quiet bridge and carry a BIG FLYBLOWN BOX with them. Underneath, a RIVER babbles.

WREN(40s), build like an Ogre, marches towards the parapet. Behind him follows DALE(40s), punier to that of Wren. They put the box on the ledge.

WREN

Why do you look so jittered?

A vape of exhaustion excuses Dale's body.

DALE

How many times you gonna ask that?

WREN

Until you answer me.

DALE

OK. Alright. Do you think we did a charity? Or adopted an orphan?

WREN

Charity. No. Adoption. I already got two nippers, OK. They are enough.

Dale hangs his head hopelessly.

DALE

Can you please stop spilling trash from your mouth? It sounds-

WREN

Hit me straight.

DALE(PPOINTS AT THE BOX)

I regret this. This is inhumane.

WREN

More like barbaric.

DALE

Yes. More like it.

WREN

You mean we went too far.

DALE

You. You went too far.

WREN

He deserved it. I mean fuck if anyone comes near my kid. Especially, a scourge like him.

A FLY emerges out of the box and sits on Dale's chest.

DALE

Look at it.

WREN

Someone's having fun, I guess.

With a quick move, Dale zaps the fly and throws it aside.

WREN(CONT'D)

Hey hey easy.

DALE

I'm fine.

WREN

No, I meant the fly. Poor thing.  
Maybe it was having a time of its  
life in the box but wasn't aware of  
its fate.

DALE

That's it!

This startles Wren.

DALE(CONT'D)

That kinda thinking would have  
saved him. He would have been  
alive.

Dale slams on the box and a trickle of MAGGOTS along with  
some FLIES sprut out of it's cracks.

WREN

Careful! It's been two months.

DALE

Anyone can tell that. It stings  
like fuck.

Wren crunches the maggots with his foot.

WREN

Maybe I'm cruel.

Dale side steps his inutile remark.

DALE

Let's just get over with it.

WREN

As you say, sir.

With a single push, Wren topples the box and drops it into  
the river. He turns and takes a step forward.

DALE

Hey! Wait.

Dale leans over the ledge and looks down.

DALE(CONT'D)

You heard any splash?

**EXT. GHETTO - STREET - NIGHT**

Wren scratches his chest and shoulders as he teeters on his way.

**EXT. GHETTO - WREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

He settles his hand on the lychgate and rubs his long beard with the other. Unseen to him, a maggot drops from his beard.

He walks through the unkempt front and unlocks the door.

**INT. WREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

He quietly shuts the door and squishes through the compact space. He continues to scratch his body as faint creaks from the wooden floorboards arise.

He reaches a-

**BEDROOM**

A tiny space with no door and a rickety bed. On the bed lays, NIA(30s) with ANNE(6) and RICK(7), tucked close to her. All three sound asleep.

Wren watches them with an unusual mix of content and groan as the scratching gains momentum. A gasp of anguish unravels from his mouth which makes Nia stir.

He quickly covers his mouth.

**EXT. WOODS - RIVERBANK - NIGHT**

The river gushes through the rough terrain.

Dale stands on the riverbank and looks at the river leery. Almost mystified with its presence.

**INT. WREN'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Wren starts to unbutton his shirt. His phone rings. He picks it.

WREN

Yeah, Dale.

EXT. WOODS - RIVERBANK - SAME TIME

DALE  
Believe it, it is strange.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

WREN  
Dale. You're still there.

Dale kneels down and dips his fingers in the river.

DALE  
Can't you wrap your head around  
this? We fucking dropped a goddamn  
box and heard nothing.

Wren seems uninterested and unbuttons his shirt. He rubs his  
beard again.

WREN  
Look. Just turn around and go home.  
We can-

Dale winces in pain.

WREN(CONT'D)  
What happened?

Dale takes out his hand from the water, looks at his index  
finger and sees a puncture wound.

DALE  
Fuck. Something just nailed in.

Dale pricks the wound with his thumbnail.

DALE(CONT'D)  
A fucking splinter!

Wren slides his finger through his tattered sando and his  
face morphs erratically.

DALE(CONT'D)  
Splinter dug in my finger! Bloody  
hell!

WREN  
I'll call you later, OK. Bye.

Wren hangs up.

DALE  
Wren. Wren. Fuck.

CUT TO:

**INT. WREN'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

He gets rid of his sando, sees his chest in the mirror and finds it to be a manifest of RED SWOLLEN PIMPLES with YELLOWISH GAK encompassing it.

He slides backward, ghastly. Almost trips.

He rubs his hand on his chest and the pain makes him clench his teeth.

He moves closer to the mirror, pinches a pimple and almost lets out a cry but stops as he sees a MAGGOT slink off of it.

**FLASH IMAGE OF THE BOX**

Covered in a thicket of maggots, the box sits all alone in the darkness as GARBLES transpire from it.

**BACK TO SCENE**

He goes haywire on his chest, pinching and scratching.

More maggots flood down his chest, tears ooze from his eyes and he blocks his mouth with his hand to hold back a scream.

**EXT. WOODS - RIVERBANK - NIGHT**

Dale picks out the splinter and backs off from the river.

He suddenly yelps, tumbles on the ground and grabs his feet. Swaying like an ape, he extracts his shoes, whining.

UMPTTEEN SPLINTERS protrude from his feet. He screeches in horror and tries to get up but the pain makes him cave in. In sheer desperation, he begins to pluck the splinters, and with each coup, his pain worsens.

**FLASH IMAGE OF THE BOX**

Wretched cries followed by sound of scratching resonate from the box. Through a small crack, emerges a SORE FINGER needled with splinters.

**BACK TO SCENE**

Dale plucks the splinters and suddenly another twinge makes him cry.

He rolls up his jeans and sees a morbid sight of countless splinters poking out of his leg.

**INT. WREN'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Curled up on the floor, Wren lays in a PUDDLE OF MAGGOTS and BLOOD, and bellows in pain.

Deep lashes proclaim his body as more maggots continue to exit.

NIA(O.S.)  
Hon? You in there?

Wren clenches his teeth to smother his cries.

WREN  
Yeah.

NIA(O.S.)  
You OK?

WREN  
Yeah. Completely. Just the bowels aren't giving up the last night's lasagna.

His pain worsens and tears trickle down his cheeks.

He clenches his teeth further and just then the yellow gunk starts to leak from his mouth.

He jolts and then his body goes still.

**EXT. WOODS - RIVERBANK - NIGHT**

Dale lays on the ground, wails for anyone's attention, but the woods are all deaf.

His legs are now STUMPS of SPLINTERS imbrued with blood.

He starts to crawl with the help of his arms but suddenly stops and lets out another screech. He rips open his shirt and sees even more splinters dart out of his torso.

His scream fills the silence.

**EXT. WOODS - TRACKWAY - DAY**

RALPH(60s) holds a fishing rod and ambles on the way.

RALPH  
Your pop really loves trout. Let's hope we catch one.

SINDY(14) carries a creel and follows his suit.

SINDY  
Sure, grandpa. Fingers crossed.

RALPH  
And I think now is the good time that I show you how to do some knots. You know like palomar and that sort of things. But I'm sure your summer Scout camp taught you the basics?

SINDY  
They ain't taught us shit.

RALPH  
I see. Of the knots, I'm not sure.  
But profanity - it definitely found  
its way in your books.

SINDY  
Sorry.

RALPH  
Don't worry, sweetie. I know these  
things are tough. Or better, how  
you fellas see it - boring.

They reach the -

**RIVERBANK**

Ralph, ahead of Sindy, inhales.

RALPH  
What a splendid day!

Just then, Sindy winces. Ralph turns around.

RALPH(CONT'D)  
What is it?

SINDY  
A rock.

She holds her foot as she supports herself by a tree.

RALPH  
Christ, Sindy. It's a wonder how  
you got through your summer camp.  
It's the third time.

Her glance falls on the trunk of the tree. She gasps.

SINDY  
Grandpa.

RALPH  
What?

She just points at the trunk. Ralph comes where she is and  
looks at the trunk.

On the trunk formed is a HUMAN SHAPE. Sprawled on the huge  
trunk, with its distinct features of eyes and nose.

RALPH  
Sure as hell, it wasn't here the  
last time. Was it?



SINDY  
Not that I remember.

An odd smell hits her nose. She looks at the river and quietly head towards it. All the while, Ralph feels the shape on the trunk. Almost mesmerized.

SINDY(O.S.)  
Grandpa!

This breaks his attention.

RALPH  
Now what?

She stands by the edge of the river with her back towards him. This obscures the thing she looks at, to Ralph.

SINDY  
A box, grandpa.

RALPH  
A what?

SINDY  
BOX!

He gives one final look at the trunk and head towards Sindy.

On the trunk, from the distinct eyes, fall tears. Seeping its way down the cursory face.

FADE OUT