

The Man in the Woods

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EXT. WOODS - DAY

We begin abruptly with a hard cut to a man's face. This is WILLIAM HOBSMIRE, 53. He's aged, with a scraggly beard and long hair. It's sometime in the late 1800s.

WILLIAM digs his shovel into the ground below him - unearthing more and more dirt with every shoveling heave.

Finally - he stops. That'll do. He drops his shovel and walks 10 paces to:

A CORPSE. This is MARY HOBSMIRE, 49, William's wife. Her head is covered by a blood soaked cloth sack. Her skin is gray.

William grabs the cold dead arms of his wife and pulls her through the leafs along the ground to his dirt hole.

He dumps her limp body into his makeshift grave.

Suddenly, a voice from far in the distance calls out through the trees -

VOICE  
(Far away)  
Hellooooo!

William darts his eyes up towards the voice, alerted.

IN THE DISTANCE - A hazy figure: A MAN. He waves his hand in the air.

MAN  
(Far away)  
Helloooooo!!

William's eyes dart back down to his dead wife. Then back to the man in the distance.

He see's the man begin to walk towards him. 100 yards away and approaching.

Without hesitation, William begins shoveling dirt atop MARY's dead body.

Pile after pile...dirt quickly fills the space around Mary's grave.

William looks up. The man is 50 yards away.

MAN  
(Walking forward, far away)  
Ahoy, there!

William doesn't react or respond. He violently keeps shoveling dirt to cover Mary's body. Her face, arms and legs slowly disappear below soil.

Faster. Faster. More dirt.

30 yards away.

Faster. More dirt.

20 yards away.

Alas, all of Mary's gray skin is covered in earth.

William drops the shovel and turns towards THE MAN approaching, just in time.

MAN  
Hello, sir! Good day to you. I seemed to have lost my way during my expedition... Can you point me due south -

The man pauses.

MAN  
...Is that a grave?

William wipes a bead of sweat from his eye.

WILLIAM  
Ah - Indeed it is. You caught me burying my dog. Due south is that way.

WILLIAM points south.

THE MAN surveys the dirt from over WILLIAM's shoulder.

MAN  
Quite a large dog you had there, sir.

WILLIAM  
Yes. He was a good boy.

THE MAN's eyes scan the forest floor.

MAN (CONTINUED)  
Your dog wore boots, sir?

WILLIAM turns his head around. A few feet from the grave lie a pair of woman's boots.

WILLIAM thinks.

WILLIAM  
Those are my wife's. She's gone to pick a bouquet of flowers for the headstone.

MAN  
Your wife went to pick a bouquet of flowers in the woods...with bare feet?

WILLIAM  
Yes. You have to tread lightly around these parts, son. Can't make too much noise or you'll attract danger.

THE MAN swallows a lump of saliva in his throat. He understands what WILLIAM is telling him.

MAN  
Well I best me heading south then.  
Good day to you, sir...

THE MAN takes a step backwards and turns to walk away. As he does, his foot steps on something in the leaves below. He looks down to: a shotgun.

Next to the shotgun is a pile of woman's jewelry. Ear rings and trinkets.

THE MAN looks to WILLIAM - neither react. After a beat, THE MAN continues to walk away briskly.

WILLIAM walks towards the gun and lifts it from the ground. THE MAN gets just a few steps when -

WILLIAM  
STOP!

THE MAN stops in his tracks.

WILLIAM (CONTINUED)  
Don't take another step, mister.

WILLIAM cocks the shotgun. THE MAN slowly turns.

WILLIAM looks around the forest, concerned about what this might look like to any one else who stumbles upon them.

WILLIAM (CONTINUED)  
Get down. Onto your knees.

THE MAN drops to his knees.

MAN  
Please don't hurt me, sir. I didn't see anything.

WILLIAM stands in the forest with a shotgun pointed at the MAN. He looks around more nervously - and then takes a few steps towards him.

WILLIAM  
I suppose you come across a man burying a body in the woods, ya think he's a monster. I am not, son. The monster is in that there grave.

MAN  
Please...

WILLIAM  
That's my wife. She was a cursed witch. Possessed by the Devil himself, she was. She sacr -

WILLIAMS voice breaks up. He's fighting back tears. One stream down his cheek.

WILLIAM (CONTINUED)  
...She sacrificed our first born child to Satan...Just yesterday.

More tears rolls down WILLIAM's cheek.

WILLIAM (CONTINUED)  
Do you have children, son?

THE MAN shakes his head no.

WILLIAM  
My daughter's name...was Jane. She was 12...My Princess.  
(beat)  
SHE KILLED MY LITTLE GIRL.

WILLIAM is crying now.

MAN

Please. Don't hurt me, sir.....

Don't hurt me... William.

This catches WILLIAMS attention. He stops crying.

WILLIAM

How do you know my name?

Suddenly, THE MAN's demeanor changes completely. His face is stone cold. No longer full of fear - now almost happiness. He locks eyes with WILLIAM.

MAN

Oh, I know you, William. I've always known you.

WILLIAM

What?

MAN

...And soon you'll know the fiery depths of hell.

WILLIAM

Shut up.

MAN

Hail, Satan.

WILLIAM turns to look back over his shoulder at the grave. He scans around the woods, becoming scared.

Then back to THE MAN on his knees.

Suddenly, THE MAN's voice changes. Out of his mouth is the voice of WILLIAM's dead wife MARY.

MAN

(With Mary's voice)

William...William what have you done?  
I loved you.

WILLIAM is taken aback.

WILLIAM

Mary...

THE MAN  
(In Mary's voice)  
William, help me.

THE MAN holds out his hands to WILLIAM.

THE MAN (CONTINUED)  
(With Mary's voice, louder)  
William please! Help me, William. Take  
my hands. There's still time. You can  
still save me!

WILLIAM  
Shut up! SHUT UP!

WILLIAM begins to pray aloud.

WILLIAM  
Thou shall not tread upon my soul in  
the valley of death. For only the Lord  
shall lift me up in the light, and  
carry me to His grace. Only the Lord -

The demeanor of THE MAN again changes. His voice is now a  
demonic creature, not of this world. He begins shouting:

MAN  
HAIL SATAN! HAIL SATAN!

WILLIAM points his gun at THE MAN and begins praying louder.

WILLIAM  
LORD GIVE ME THE STRENGTH TO WALK  
THROUGH THE VALLEY OF DEATH. GIVE ME  
THE STRENGTH TO ENDURE EVIL. IN YOUR  
NAME I PRAY, OH LORD.

WILLIAM closes his eyes and pulls the trigger.

BANG!!!

The blast echos through the forest.

The screaming voice is gone.

It's quiet.

WILLIAM opens his eyes -

There, in front of him, THE MAN has been replaced with his  
daughter: JANE, 13. She's on her knees and has been shot.

She gasps for air quietly. Blood trickles from her nose.

JANE

Daddy...

WILLIAM drops his gun and runs to JANE.

WILLIAM

JANE! Oh my Lord, Jane...No  
no...honey.

JANE

Daddy why did you hurt me?

WILLIAM

Jane, my love. No, please.

WILLIAM holds Jane's head, petting her hair back with his  
dirty hands - wiping the blood from her nose.

JANE (CONTINUED)

Why did you hurt Mommy?

WILLIAM hugs JANE and prays.

WILLIAM

Be thou my vision, Oh Lord of my  
heart. Please, GOD PLEASE! Take me!  
Take me!

As he holds JANE in his arms with his back to MARY'S GRAVE -  
We begin to see movement behind him.

We hold on this somber moment with WILLIAM and his daughter -  
but in the distance we see MARY unearthing herself from the  
soil. Her corpse stands and walks out of the grave.

Her dead feet slowly take a step. Then another. Then, she  
begins to float over the leaves and floor of the forest. She  
lands behind WILLIAM, still embracing JANE and holding her  
tight - crying...praying.

JANE, or whoever she is, looks up at MARY. JANE'S eyes are  
now nothing but a vast pit of white fog.

Mary places her hand on William's back.

The camera pans away from them and we hear WILLIAM scream.

The camera continues to pan - 180 - we see the woods change  
from fall to winter, then spring and summer.



The camera comes full circle back to where we last left William. Now, in his place is a skeleton of bones.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

We hear the footsteps and voices of children approaching.

CHILD 1

(Off screen)

Look - over there. Are those bones?

Child 1 and Child 2 come into frame. They peer down at the skeleton remains of William Hobsmire.

CHILD 2

Is it an animal?

CHILD 1

I think they're human.

CHILD 2

Over there, a shovel! Jewelry. And shoes.

Child 2 takes a twig and pokes at the skull.

Suddenly, a voice from far in the distance calls out through the trees -

VOICE

(Far away)

Helloooo!

THE END.