The Bunny Man Untold
FADE IN:

EXT. SHACK - DAY

A white bearded man, RUSTY(65), sits in a battered camp chair. His home is a tiny old shack at the end of the street. Its neat, with a flower bed on one side.

Rusty is intent on an IPad on his lap. He frowns, mouths a curse, reaches for his beer can which rests beside him on an weathered ice box.

SUPER - CLIFTON VIRGINIA USA

SUPER - OCTOBER 31 2015

A Ford Explorer makes it way down the street, past well-kept homes, rolls to a stop in front of Rusty's place.

The driver, LUCAS(25) peers out before checking the address. He nods, gets out of the vehicle. He's dressed in casual but neat gear.

LUCAS
Ah...Mr Borland? I'm Lucas Stevens. Reporter from Washington. I wonder if I can talk to you about the__

RUSTY
Bunny Man?

The words spit out from his lips. Lucas stays near his car.

LUCAS
I...yes, the...the Bunny Man urban legend.

Rusty looks down at the Ipad, swipes the screen. Shakes his head.

RUSTY
Ain't no ur-bane legend. The son of a bitch is real.
LUCAS
I see. So is it ok to ask you a few questions? I won't take up too much of your time. I guess you're busy.

He nods at the Ipad.

LUCAS
You doing research on the...you know...Bunny Man?

RUSTY
Mmm? Oh, fuck no. I'm playing Candy Crush! Love this game. Pity its so damn addictive. Come, boy, sit down here.

He indicates a small wooden stool near the front door. Lucas smiles, grabs a briefcase from the car and takes a seat. He gets out a new voice recorder.

LUCAS
Yeah, my mom plays it. She's on, like level four hundred!

RUSTY
The fuck you say! Four hundred? I been stuck on two forty five for nearly a year!

LUCAS
A year? Wow, thats__

RUSTY
Fucking crazy is what it is. Game should be called Crazy Crush. Drives folks madder than a cut snake. Wouldn't surprise me if the fuckin' Bunny Man plays it.

He takes a long swig of beer, tosses the can to one side, grabs a freshie.

RUSTY
Want one, son?

LUCAS
No, thank you sir. Zero alcohol when I'm on the job and driving. Newspaper policy.

RUSTY
That a fact? Well, good for you. I'd offer you a joint but I'm out at the moment.

He LAUGHS, an infectious sound and Lucas CHUCKLES with him.
RUSTY
Yep...ran out of the green stuff back in the late nineties. Had my own crop out the back here for years. Had to let it die when the water bills got too high.

He LAUGHS again, louder.

RUSTY
Too high! Ha, yeah man I was flyin' like a kite there for decades. I guess that's what the spectre of the Bunny Man hanging over your head can do to a person...

LUCAS
Can I record our conversation? I'll edit it later if...

RUSTY
It might be best if you just take notes. This is deeply personal for me and not a pleasant subject, no sir.

He puts the Ipad aside, stares at the young reporter. Lucas blinks, puts the recorder down, opens a small notepad. He flicks through it.

LUCAS
I understand. I've done a lot of background work on this and it's a pretty horrific story. Ok, according to my research, the basis of the Bunny Man began in nineteen oh-five at the Lorton Valley asylum just outside of Clifton.

He flips a page, CLEARS his throat.

LUCAS
A couple of inmates escaped and the local farmers began to find half eaten rabbit carcasses tied to their fences. The authorities organized a__

RUSTY
Son, put that away.

LUCAS
Huh?
RUSTY
All the 'official' stories? They ain't worth a tinker's tossbag. Complete shit of the highest bull.

LUCAS
And 'your' version is the right one?

He stares down the old man. Rusty's lips form a hard line before a wry grin appears. He nods.

RUSTY
You got spunk for a young modern fella. I like that. Reminds me of myself at the same age. Before the Bunny Man caused it all to go to crap.

He HAWKS up a loogie, pings it out over the flower bed. Lucas waits in silence, pen poised above the notepad.

RUSTY
I only encountered the Bunny Man once. But that was enough. Thirty nine years ago.

Lucas checks his notes excitedly.

LUCAS
Yes! Halloween, nineteen seventy six. The kids waiting under the bridge, and he ki__

RUSTY
Now hold there! I'm telling this tale. Your notes are useless now, understand? Disregard practically all you think you know about it. It'll be easier to take in.

He SIGHS, a mournful sound. A cloud momentarily shuts off the sunlight and Lucas shivers. Rusty's face is like a pained sculpture. Lucas waits.

RUSTY
Yes, it was Halloween, 'seventy six. I'd only been married for two months. My wife, Cynthia, was young, only eighteen. Absolutely beautiful.

(beat)
She laughed about the Bunny Man legend, wanted him to appear under that bridge.

LUCAS
The Clifton rail bridge? Fairfax line?
RUSTY
Yeah, that's it. The haunt of the Bunny Man.

LUCAS
But he hadn't been seen for what...

He consults his pad.

LUCAS
Thirty three years. Halloween ninety forty three

RUSTY
Oh yes. Always on Halloween. But not every year.

He shudders. A moistness forms in his eyes.

LUCAS
Are you alright Mr Borland? I could come back tomorrow?

Rusty takes a beer from the icebox, cracks it and gulps deep.

RUSTY
That's better. No, no, I'm fine. Its helping to finally get it outta my system. Its...

He snaps his fingers, frowns.

LUCAS
Therapeutic?

RUSTY
You got it in one. Like I said, you're the first person I've told. So bear with me.

LUCAS
I will, sir, I will. You were saying?

RUSTY
Ok, where was I? Right...

(beat)
It had been a wonderful night for Cyn and me. Dinner at a friend's house. But she drank maybe a little too much. Whole bottle of wine. And as we were walking home, she suggested a detour via the rail bridge.

LUCAS
And it was nearly midnight?
RUSTY
Oh yes. Look, I never paid no heed to the Bunny Man legend at the time. Hogwash of the highest order. But I gotta tell you, son, I felt uneasy. Somethin' wasn't right.

Lucas writes slowly, taking it in. He pauses, waits. Rusty SIGHS again.

RUSTY
Cyn started hugging and kissing me like there was no tomorrow. She dragged me under the bridge, tearing at my clothes. And despite my fears, I...well, you know how it is when a pretty gal is indicating she's wants you.

(beat)
Pretty soon we were going hard at it, right on the road under the bridge.

LUCAS
Going at it? Oh, you mean you were...

He clears his throat, blushes.

LUCAS
...making love?

RUSTY
That's puttin' it mildly, boy. We were going hammer and tongs like...sweet jesus, like a couple of rabbits!

He LAUGHS but there's no mirth in it.

RUSTY
That's some fuckin' irony there, ain't it?

LUCAS
I...yes, I guess so.

RUSTY
Anyway, right when we was fixin' to finish, it happened.

LUCAS
The Bunny Man?
RUSTY
Oh yes. A blinding light appeared above us, coming from within the bridge itself. I could feel a presence before I saw anything. God, it was like...pure evil. He just stood there, looking at us.

His breaths shorten. Lucas watches anxiously.

RUSTY
I'm ok. So Cyn starts to scream. Full blown terror. She pulled her clothes on and runs right past him.

LUCAS
She escaped then? Wasn't harmed?

RUSTY
No. She got away. Saw nothin' of what was to follow.

He wipes a trembling hand across his face.

RUSTY
I managed to get my clothes on too. I wasn't facing this madman with my nuts out, no way in the wide. But I couldn't get up to run. I was welded to the very ground, the bitumen of the road. By the aura of the Bunny Man.

LUCAS
Was he...did he have a weapon of any sort? The legend says he used a huge knife to slice gashes on the victim then...

He stops as Rusty turns to gaze at him. The old man's face is a mask of pain.

RUSTY
No. He simply stood over me. I saw his bunny ears, whiskers, even his little fluffy bob of a tail. All real. Then he knelt down and...

LUCAS
(whispers)
I'm listening.

RUSTY
The Bunny Man started tickling me.

Dead silence. Rusty looks away quickly, fumbles for his beer. Lucas sits, stunned, pen hovering over the page.
RUSTY
You can laugh if you want. I know it sounds...funny.

More silence. The old man risks a peek at Lucas.

LUCAS
I won't laugh at you, sir. Not ever.

His eyes close, face etched in anguish.

LUCAS
Unconsensual tickling is a heinous act.
(beat)
I should know as it happened to me.

Rusty stares, gob smacked.

LUCAS
Tell me...did the Bunny Man tickle your tummy? Or under your arms?

RUSTY
Both. I was totally helpless.

LUCAS
Oh lord. I might have one of those beers after all.

Rusty already has one in his hand, gives it to the reporter. He drains it in one long swallow and crushes the empty can.

LUCAS
My sister was a total tickling machine when I was younger. Every night she would sneak into my room and just...tickle me senseless. My parents laughed and marveled at the sibling fun. I hated them for that.

RUSTY
It's always the parents who stand by and do nothing. They don't see the mental pain that's goin' on.

LUCAS
Exactly.

He and Rusty hawk and spit in unison over the garden.

LUCAS
What happened after the Bunny Man finished tickling you?
RUSTY
He vanished. Never saw him again. But I guess no one has gone to the bridge at Halloween since then either.

He sips his beer.

RUSTY
Then the dreams began.

LUCAS
Oh yeah...the dreams. Nightmare city every bedtime. And your wife? What became of her?

RUSTY
Oh, she came back after half an hour, when her senses returned. She woulda been expecting me to be hanging from the bridge, guts exposed and bleeding out. In hindsight it mighta been better if I had been...

LUCAS
Let me guess...you told her what happened. And she ridiculed you.

RUSTY
You got it. At first it was her little joke. She never told a soul, not even her best friend, I'll give her that. But she started tickling me. Little ones to begin with. then it became a fascination for her. Tickling me on the street, in the shops, in the car. In the end I had to tell her to leave before I did something crazy to her.

LUCAS
Be-atch just don't get it! We don't want to be tickled for fucks sake!

He signals for another beer. The alcohol is making him rowdy.

LUCAS
My fiancee wants to...introduce it into our lives. Open slather tickling.

RUSTY
That's unnatural. Its obscene. God have mercy on you, son.
LUCAS
Mr. Borland, I...

RUSTY
Call me Rusty. We've bonded now. Like brothers. Tickling has made us comrades.

LUCAS
Ok, Rusty. My mother would kill me for saying this but...I have to seriously doubt the very existence of a God who allows indiscriminate tickling of males.

RUSTY
I'll drink to that.

They clink beers, sit back and contemplate. Finally...

LUCAS
I think we should go to the rail bridge tonight, Rusty. Confront the Bunny Man at midnight. Kill him.

Rusty nods, muses on this.

RUSTY
I've been waiting for years to do somethin' like that. But ain't never had the gumption. Got a plan too, had it for awhile. Now might be the time to try it, yessir.

LUCAS
I'd love to hear that plan, Rusty. And I wanna help you.
(beat)
What say I roll a joint, we get high and discuss this?

Rusty's face splits into a grin for the first time in ages.

RUSTY
You're a mighty fine young fella, Lucas. Had a good feeling about you from the start.

Lucas stands, heads to his car. He opens the trunk, rummages around before holding up a plastic bag full of mull. He comes back, sits and starts rolling a huge bomber.
LUCAS
Got an uncle in Georgia who grows his own. Has a massive hothouse hidden away in the forest. Computerized alarm systems, auto watering, high tech camouflage. Feds have got no fucking basic idea about him.

RUSTY
Sounds like a good man.

LUCAS
He is. But he is one crazy son of a bitch for sure.

He lights up, has a decent toke. Hands it to Rusty.

RUSTY
Yeah?

LUCAS
Yeah. Fucker likes the Seahawks.

Their LAUGHTER ripples O.S as day blends into night...

EXT. RAIL BRIDGE - NIGHT

Rusty and Lucas wait under the bridge, off to the side of the single lane road. Rusty's battered old pickup is nearby, the back gate open. A full moon illuminates the minutes before midnight.

LUCAS
...and when Butler intercepted Wilson, Uncle Jake kicked the shit out of the plasma tv!

He whispers in between giggles. Rusty sniggers too, while keeping an eye out.

RUSTY
What did your aunt say? Not happy?

LUCAS
She didn't give a rat's arse. They got TEN plasmas! And she had money on the Pats as well. Whole family is loopy.

They dissolve into more quiet laughter.

RUSTY
No wonder he rakes in the cash. His weed is the shit.
He checks his watch, peers about. A rope dangles next to him, from the shadows on the bottom of the bridge. He holds it carefully.

LUCAS
Think it'll work ok?

RUSTY
Hope so. If it doesn't, well, we could be in trouble.

LUCAS
I guess getting bent wasn't such a good idea.

Rusty shrugs, slaps Lucas lightly on the arm.

RUSTY
Stay alert, son.

He checks his watch again.

RUSTY
Its time.

They study the gloom around the bridge, tensed. Suddenly, the blinding light appears! Its dazzling. At the same time, the BUNNY MAN is there. Lucas gasps then charges at the figure.

LUCAS
Teach you to tickle, Bunny fuck!

RUSTY
Lucas! Jesus...

Lucas is almost upon the Bunny Man, directly under the bridge. Rusty is torn between helping or holding the mysterious rope.

LUCAS
Stay on it, man. I'll give you ti__ah fuck!

He trips, stumbles at the feet of the Bunny Man. He stares up in horror, instantly sober and straight. The Bunny Man stoops.

LUCAS
Oh god...he's got me. Pull it, Rusty! DO IT!

The Bunny Man starts tickling Lucas in earnest. The reporter writhes at the touch, SCREAMING and GIGGLING intermittently. Rusty hesitates, glances up at the bridge then back to the ticklefest. His eyes widen in horror.
Then...it all happens. The Bunny Man glances up from his filthy work, whiskers twitching. He stares at Rusty, follows the rope up to the bridge underside.

LUCAS
I beg you...DO IT!

He makes a supreme effort to roll away from the Bunny Man's grasp. Rusty sees his chance and yanks hard on the rope. Lucas keeps moving out of the zone. The Bunny Man takes a step forward then looks up just as...

Hundreds, maybe thousands of carrots pour from the bridge to engulf the rabbity shape. In seconds, a massive hill of orange vegetables rises halfway back up to the bridge. Above, a huge, empty net dangles. Silence.

LUCAS
Yes! Oh yes! We did it. YOU did it, Rusty. He's dead.

Rusty's mouth is a hard line as he studies the enormous mound for movement. Satisfied, he releases then spits a particularly squelchy loog on the pile.

RUSTY
Enjoy your carrots, motherfucker.

LUCAS
Man, that was some plan. Buying up the entire county supply of carrots. Woohoo!

(beat)
Now what, bro? Will we haul this sick carcass into town in triumph. Show the free world what we have stopped?

RUSTY
No. I got a more fitting end to this.

INT. RUSTY'S PICKUP - MORNING

Lucas sits in the front, sips a giant coffee. The pickup is parked near the back of some shops. He watches as Rusty hauls a big sack to the back of a store and knocks.

A man pops his head out, listens to Rusty. He looks inside the sack, nods his head, disappears inside. Rusty waits, gives the 'A ok' sign to Lucas.

LUCAS
You crafty old devil...
The man reappears, counts out a heap of bills to Rusty then drags the sack inside. Rusty counts the money before grinning at Lucas as he walks over and gets in.

He starts the engine, slips into gear. Lucas LAUGHS. Rusty joins in.

EXT. SHOP - MORNING

As the pickup moves past, the back door of the shop opens. The Bunny Man suit is thrown out to land untidily on the side of a Dumpster. The door shuts.

RUSTY(O.S.)
No one will know any difference, right?

LUCAS(O.S.)
Right. Or they wouldn't give a fuck if they did, right?

RUSTY(O.S.)
Right.
(beat)
God bless America.

More LAUGHTER as the store is revealed to be a K.F.C...

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A pitch black room. Gentle SNORES. Suddenly, a blinding light comes on!

Lucas sits up groggily. The Bunny Man is next to the bed, soft paws reaching for him. The SCREAMING begins. The light goes out.

BUNNY MAN(O.S.)
Tickly wickly, Lukey boy...

FADE OUT.

THE END