

The Visitor
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FADE IN:

EXT. MOUNTAINS - EARLY MORNING

A blanket of bright white snow, as far as the eye can see. Miles and miles of it. Undisturbed by man and nature.

Off in the distance, a majestic mountain range looms, keeping watch over this winter wonderland. And further still, the brilliant blue sky gives way to dark gray clouds as a storm brews. A very ominous sight.

After soaring past the seemingly endless snow covering, a brown spec appears.

We ZOOM on it to reveal--
A RUSTIC LOG CABIN.

The word rustic doesn't begin to do this place justice. With its asymmetrical design and raw, uneven wood façade, it looks to have been built by someone with absolutely no architectural training.

A massive pile of firewood stands stately off to one side, easily more impressive in structure and size than the cabin itself.

INT. RUSTIC CABIN - DAY

Even more unimpressive than the outside.

Barely habitable. Floor and walls littered with holes that have been patched and re-patched. A crooked wooden pole in the center of the room holds up the sagging rafters.

A 2x4x6 hole in one wall, used as a fireplace and cooking spot. Above it, a tiny loft, barely big enough for an adult to lie.

CLOSE ON:

LEVI (30s), sound asleep in the loft, wrapped in a filthy, tattered quilt. He sports a full beard and long, greasy, unkempt hair. His eyes flutter wildly behind their closed lids.

FLASH TO:

We're outside again, in the middle of nowhere. Snow everywhere, even on the trees, nearly camouflaging them. The WIND WHIPS and HOWLS as a blizzard unleashes its fury.

BACK TO SCENE

We hear the sound of SNOW CRUNCHING.

Levi jerks in his sleep, but doesn't awaken.

FLASH TO:

A long, perfectly straight track of footprints in the snow. Human, but small. No sign of the feet that made them.

BACK TO SCENE

Levi's face wrinkles with fear, but still, he remains asleep.

LEVI (V.O.)
(whisper)
It's coming. It's coming. It's
coming.

His eyes burst open, pale blue and clouded with fear. They wildly search the surrounding area. Everything is as it should be.

Levi cautiously peels the quilt away. He is dressed in well-worn wool coat and corduroy jeans, several sizes too small. Frayed work gloves cover his hands. His eyes dart from one end of the cabin to the other as he mechanically slides on a pair of hiking boots. He sticks his hand under the rolled up sleeping bag he uses as a pillow. When it emerges, a rusted pocket knife is clenched tightly in his fist.

LEVI (V.O.)
(whisper)
Don't open the door. Don't open the
door. Don't open the door.

Levi lowers a rickety, hand-made wooden ladder. The 3rd rung from the top is split down the center. He stealthily descends the ladder, carefully navigating past the broken rung.

As he heads toward the door, we hear the voice again, this time louder than before and more imploring.

LEVI (V.O.)
It's coming. Don't open the door.
It's coming. Don't open the door.
It's coming. Don't open the door.

He puts a hand to the doorknob, slowly turns, pushes. It takes a great deal of strength to push back the barricade of snow that has fallen overnight.

Levi searches the premises for any sign of danger, but none exists.

It's a beautiful, clear day out. The blizzard still hovers in the distance, though somewhat closer now. The snow surrounding the cabin is untouched.

He pockets the knife, then puts up the hood on his coat and exits the security of his cabin.

EXT. RUSTIC CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Levi hurries to the log pile, meticulously selects three of the largest pieces of firewood. After one more look around, he returns to the cabin.

He stares out into the crisp morning until the door is completely closed.

INT. RUSTIC CABIN - LATE MORNING

A FIRE roars in the fireplace. We focus, perhaps too long, on the flickering flames as they engulf the pieces of wood.

Then we see an open hatch on the floor in the center of the room.

We go down into the--

HATCH

--into complete darkness. We hear a match strike and a tiny glow emerge in the distance.

We are in some sort of storage room. A walk-in pantry. But all the shelves are empty.

We locate Levi on his hands and knees, desperately searching under the bottom shelf as the match in his hand burns dangerously close to his gloved fingers.

After what seems like an exercise in futility, he finally emerges successful with an unlabeled, smashed can good.

He heads back to the rickety ladder that leads up out of the hatch. Makes it up 3 rungs before being distracted by--

A SCRATCHING SOUND.

It seems to be coming from behind one of the shelves.

The match burns down to nothing as Levi climbs back down the ladder.

LEVI (V.O.)
 (whisper)
 Don't open the door. Don't open the
 door. Don't open the door.

The SCRATCHING becomes increasingly louder the closer he gets to the shelf.

LEVI (V.O.)
 (more urgent)
 Don't open the door. Don't open the
 door. Don't open the door.

He KNOCKS on the shelf three times. At the last knock, the scratching instantly stops. Cautiously, he puts an ear against the back of the shelving unit.

After several moments of absolute silence, the SCRATCHING returns. Louder. Frenzied.

Startled, Levi stumbles back, landing with a thud at the base of the ladder.

LEVI (V.O.)
 (yelling)
 It's coming! It's coming! It's
 coming!

Levi clambers up the ladder as quickly as his trembling arms and legs will allow. Up and out into the--

MAIN ROOM

--where he swiftly pulls up the ladder before swinging the hatch down and dragging a heavy tree stump across the top to conceal it.

The VOICE continues on an endless loop, like a record player with the needle stuck in a scratch.

LEVI (V.O.)
 It's coming. It's coming. It's
 coming. Don't open the door. Don't
 open the door. Don't open the door.
 It's coming. It's coming. It's
 coming. Don't open the door. Don't
 open the door. Don't open the door.
 It's coming. It's coming. It's
 (MORE)

LEVI (V.O.) (cont'd)
coming. Don't open the door. Don't
open the door. Don't open the door.

Levi paces back and forth, hands over his ears. But it doesn't stop the Voice. If anything, it causes it to grow louder and more adamant.

He collapses to his knees beside the fire, hands still to his ears. His face is curled in agony, as if he's in the worst pain imaginable.

He rips off his left glove, exposing a hand that is badly burned. He thrusts it into the fire.

A WAIL escapes his lips, echoing thunderously throughout the confined space. It isn't until silence returns that we realize the Voice is gone.

Levi pulls his arm from the fire and gingerly cradles it to his chest, like a dog with a wounded paw.

EXT. RUSTIC CABIN - AFTERNOON

Dark gray clouds invade from the west. Winds are starting to increase.

Levi is slumped over, not far from the door of his cabin, with his injured hand buried in the snow.

A particularly strong gust of wind swirls past Levi, bringing with it the CRUNCH of a FOOTSTEP IN THE SNOW.

Levi's eyes dart up alertly. He surveys the surrounding area, but there are no signs of life.

He shrugs it off and focuses back on his injury. He lifts his hand out of the snow and immediately slides on his glove without taking even a passing glance at it.

CRUNCH! CRUNCH! Another set of footsteps.

Again, Levi inspects the property. Absolutely nothing.

Just as he's about to look away, he sees--

A WHITE HARE peering out from behind a snow-covered tree. It is nearly camouflaged by its surroundings except for its onyx-colored eyes.

Levi deftly slips a hand into his coat pocket, pulls out the rusty knife. In one stealth movement, he launches the knife at the hare.

It's impossible from this distance to tell if the knife reached its mark.

Levi scurries to his feet and trudges across through the thick covering of snow. He kneels down to pick up what we assume is the hare, then heads back into the cabin.

As his silhouette fades into the background, we see a BLOOD STAIN in the snow.

INT. RUSTIC CABIN - LATE AFTERNOON

The hare, now skinned and gutted, cooks over the fire. Levi is crouched nearby with an ancient-looking hand crank radio. He gives it three good cranks, then pauses, then three more, then pauses, then three more.

A voice comes through, but there's too much static to make it out.

He adjusts the tuner, to no avail. Cranks the radio again, in another 3-3-3 sequence. Adjusts the tuner once more. It clears up a bit.

MALE VOICE (OVER RADIO)
 ...blizzard moving in... too late
 now... hunker down as... up to 12
 feet in the... generators and
 non-perishable...

Levi gives up, puts the radio aside. Focuses his attention on a little leather pouch. He unties it, dumps the contents out into his gloved hand. 13 wooden cubes, a different letter of the alphabet carved into each side.

He cups his hands together, gives it a series of three shakes, then releases the cubes onto the tree stump.

T, C, O, F, E, M, H, C, J, O, A, D, L.

He picks them up and repeats the process.

M, H, D, X, M, Q, T, Q, O, E, C, J, A.

For the third time, he does it again.

A, W, H, P, X, Q, B, L, Y, T, D, Z, E.

He picks up most of the letters, leaving behind the D, H, A, T and E. Places them back in the pouch and replaces the pouch where he got it from.

Outside, the wind HOWLS against the ramshackle structure. The DOOR BLOWS OPEN, nearly ripping off its worn hinges.

LEVI (V.O.)
It's coming. It's coming. It's
coming.

Levi charges for the door. Before he swings it shut, he takes a peak outside.

The sky is nearly inundated with dark gray clouds. Falling snow swirls in the air, making visibility close to zero.

He shuts and latches the door, but as he attempts to return to the warmth of the fire--

The DOOR FLIES OPEN AGAIN. This time the top hinge gives out, causing the door to hang haphazardly.

LEVI (V.O.)
Don't let it in. Don't let it in.
Don't let it in.

A FLURRY OF SNOWFLAKES drift into the cabin before Levi can make his way back over. This time, as he attempts to shut the door, he sees something he didn't on his previous attempt.

A PAIR OF BARE FEET sticking out of the snow.

He steps out of the doorway to investigate further.

EXT. RUSTIC CABIN - CONTINUOUS

The feet are pale, but not blue. *Could the person beneath the snow be alive?*

Levi falls to his knees and begins frantically digging with his gloved hands. It doesn't take long before he uncovers the rest of the body.

It's FEMALE (20s), slender, with long dark hair wearing a flowing black chiffon dress that comes up only to her knees. Eyes are closed. Lips are blue. No sign of life.

LEVI (V.O.)
It will destroy you. It will
destroy you. It will destroy you.

He feels for a pulse. Puts his ear beside her mouth.

FEMALE (V.O.)

Help me.

Levi tumbles back, away from her. The eyes are still closed. The body hasn't moved even a fraction of an inch.

He scrambles to his feet, then scoops the Female into his arms and carries her into the cabin.

INT. RUSTIC CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Levi rests the body on the floor beside the fire. Lingers beside her for far longer than necessary. Looks over every inch of her. Notices a bracelet around her right wrist. Slips it off for a closer look.

It is painstakingly chiseled out of wood with a word carved into it: "THADE". This displays a level of craftsmanship the other homemade items in the cabin do not.

He stares at it long and hard before slipping it back in place. With her hand in his, he notices that the tips of her fingers are cut up, nails broken and ragged.

He sets her hand back down, then brushes her damp hair off of her face. Strokes her cheek. All very gentle and loving.

LEVI (V.O.)

Don't let it in. It will destroy you. Don't let it in. It will destroy you. Don't let it in. It will destroy you.

Levi gets to his feet and slowly backs away from her, as if the Female had been the one that delivered the grim warning. Once he's reached a safe distance, he turns his attention toward the door where snow continues to accumulate inside.

He forces the door shut, despite the broken hinge and strength of the wind. He pulls over the heavy stump to help secure the door in place.

A small amount of snow and wind sneaks in from a three inch gap above the door but it is the best possible fix.

He crouches beside the fire to warm his hands. Notices that the meat is cooked. Removes it from the flames and takes it to the tree stump table to let it cool.

Only now does he realize that in the process of moving the stump, the wooden cubes were thrown to the floor. They lie side by side, spelling out a word.

DEATH

He vehemently shakes his head as he falls to his knees beside the cubes. Rearranges them until a new word is formed.

THADE

Having calmed himself, Levi begins feasting on the cooked rabbit meat. He takes a few modest bites before hungrily shoveling the food into his mouth with his gloved hands.

INT. RUSTIC CABIN - EVENING

It is dark now. The room is lit only by the warm glow cast from the fire. Flickering shadows dance off the walls, casting eerie shapes.

The WIND HOWLS outside, causing the dilapidated cabin to sway unnervingly. The ROOF CREAKS and MOANS almost constantly. The wooden pole holding up the rafters buckles ever so slightly.

There is a huge pile of snow in front of the door.

Levi and THADE (Female) lie beside the fire, spooning. They are wrapped together in the tattered quilt. Her head rests on the rolled up sleeping bag.

Her lips are no longer blue. Both of their eyes are closed.

LEVI (V.O.)

She will destroy you. She will
destroy you. She will destroy you.

THADE (O.S.)

It's not true, you know.

Levi's eyes bolt open as he scoots away from Thade suspiciously. He waits and watches, wild-eyed, but she makes no move. He reaches out, but before he can make contact with her--

Thade rolls over to face him. She has the same pale, crystal blue eyes.

THADE

You shouldn't listen.

It takes Levi more than a few moments to find his voice.

LEVI
L-L-L-Lis-Lis-Listen to wh-what?

THADE
The voices.

LEVI
You can hear them?

THADE
They're lying to you. Trying to
deceive you.

Thade sits up, reaches for his face with her long, slender, pale fingers. He flinches as her flesh makes contact with his.

LEVI
You're so cold.

He cradles her hands between his. Showers them with warm air from his pursed lips.

LEVI (V.O.)
She will destroy you. She will
destroy you. She will destroy you.

Levi's face wrinkles with worry. Thade removes her hands from his grasp, takes his face between them.

THADE
I would never hurt you. You saved
me.

She draws Levi's face toward hers until their lips meet.

A LOUD CRASH startles Levi. He bolts upright, finding Thade curled up beside him. Their interaction was nothing more than a dream.

He glares into the darkness surrounding them until locating the source of the noise.

The roof has caved in on one side of the cabin, filling it with snow as more steadily drifts down. It's only a matter of time now before the entire cabin is inundated.

Levi aimlessly gazes around for a solution. That's when he notices the hatch door.

HATCH

The rickety ladder is lowered into the darkness. A moment later, Levi carefully climbs down, with Thade in his arms. Arriving at the bottom, he sets her down on the floor, then starts back up.

He has barely made it halfway when another THUNDEROUS CRASH comes from up in the cabin. Snow begins to pour down on him. He barely has time to pull the hatch door closed.

TOTAL DARKNESS

A MATCH STRIKES.

Levi's face is illuminated as we watch him climb back down the ladder. He shines the light where he left Thade, only to find the spot empty.

LEVI (V.O.)

Don't open the door. Don't open the door. Don't open the door.

He does a slow turn, match out in front of him. No sign of Thade.

LEVI (V.O.)

It will destroy you. It will destroy you. It will destroy you.

The Voice echoes hauntingly as the room spins nauseatingly fast around him.

LEVI (V.O.)

Don't open the door. It will destroy you. Don't open the door. It will destroy you. Don't open the door. It will destroy you.

THADE (O.S.)

It's a lie. Everything is a lie.

The Voice stops, along with the spinning.

Levi turns toward Thade's voice. She emerges slowly from the darkness, bringing with her an ethereal glow that illuminates the whole room.

THADE

You have to open the door. It's the way out.

Thade moves to one end of the shelf, the one that Levi previously heard the scratching from behind. She points toward the other end.

Levi doesn't move, not a single muscle. He's frozen in fear.

THADE

Help me.

His head shakes vehemently, then his entire body.

Thade pushes against the shelf with all her might, but she's not strong enough to move it.

FLASH TO:

Thade (younger and smaller, dress reaching her ankles) and Levi (younger as well, his clothes fitting more loosely) push against the shelf with all their might. It moves.

BACK TO SCENE

As if released from the trance-like fear, Levi takes his place on the other side of the shelf. Together, he and Thade slide it out of the way, revealing--

A DOOR.

LEVI (V.O.)

Don't open the door. Don't open the door. Don't open the door.

Thade stands beside him, slides her hand into his, puts her lips nearly against his ear.

THADE

Open the door.

Levi puts a trembling hand to the doorknob, slowly turns it. Pushes open the door. Together, hand in hand, they walk into--

THE ROOM

Completely empty, except for a form on the floor, covered in the tattered old quilt.

Utter confusion is written across Levi's face. He turns to glance at the back of the door. It is covered in scratches, as if someone tried to claw their way out.

He looks down at Thade, silently beckoning for answers. She nods toward the covered form. Releases his hand.

Levi walks on his own across the room. Kneels beside the form. He puts a gloved hand upon the comforter, then pulls his hand back.

THADE

Go on.

Levi removes the quilt. Much to his surprise, he finds HIMSELF lying there. He stares at himself in disbelief. Investigates every inch of the body, as he did earlier with Thade.

Finds a similar bracelet around his double's right wrist. Takes it off for a closer investigation. The word: "LEVI" is carved into the smooth wood.

As he replaces the bracelet, he discovers that the tips of the body's fingers are cut up, and the nails are broken and ragged.

He rips off the gloves from his own hands. Although both hands are burned, they have identical injuries to the fingertips and nails.

Levi lies on the floor, beside his double. Curls up into the exact same position.

Thade joins him a second later. She lies behind him, spooning against him. Puts her lips to his ear.

THADE

I told you I'd come back.

She lays her head down, closes her eyes.

As we PULL BACK, we realize that Levi's double is gone. There is just the two of them. Eyes closed. At peace.

FADE OUT