

WILL THE REAL DEMON PLEASE RISE

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FADE IN:

INT. FRONT OFFICE - RAMSHACKLED MOTEL - NIGHT

Hurricane winds rattle the two-story motel.

The only light is from a kerosene lantern on the floor. Debris is heard smashing into the building. Wind howls.

The motel roof rumbles as if bearing a great weight.

MR. OWENS, late 60s, a short, bald man stands facing a pantry door. Wipes his brow. Licks his quivering lips.

He cradles a shotgun in his arms, nurses a bottle of Jack.

The office is a converted dining room, with an antiquated table and guest book. Flowery wallpaper, framed pictures.

BAM – the front door slams open. In steps a female cop, OFFICER MUNRO, 30s, a windblown blonde with a pretty face.

Simultaneously – Owens and Munro – draw on each other. Munro's Glock vs. Owens' shotgun.

OFFICER MUNRO

Put the weapon down.

MR. OWENS

Don't shoot, I'm the one who called nine-one-one.

OFFICER MUNRO

Put your gun on the floor, now. I won't say it again.

Mr. Owens relaxes and eases his weapon to the floor. Picks up his spilled bottle of whiskey.

OFFICER MUNRO

Who are you?

MR. OWENS

Lloyd Owens the third. The guy who called. The owner.

Officer Munro lowers her gun. Struggles to close the door.

OFFICER MUNRO

Dispatch said you reported a stranger on the premises.

MR. OWENS

I reported a murder. Got the
murderer locked in the pantry.

Mr. Owens nods at the pantry. The door is padlocked. The
officer eases over and taps her gun on the door.

OFFICER MUNRO

This is Officer Kate Munro,
Sonoma County Police. Is
somebody in there?

She listens. No sound. Repeats the tapping.

OFFICER MUNRO

Hello? Is somebody inside?
(to Owens)
Is there another way out?

Owens shakes his head, drinks his whiskey. Munro notices.

OFFICER MUNRO

This some kind of joke? Sir, I
think you're intoxicated.

BAM, front door whips open and the wind carries in an obese
woman: BERTHA, 40s, and a wheelchair-bound man, BILL, 50s.

BERTHA

Whew. You'd think we brought
the hurricane with us.

Munro's Glock is trained on her. She raises her arms.

BERTHA

Hell-Ohh.

MR. OWENS

Shut the front door, woman!

Munro relaxes and lowers her gun. Bertha moves cautiously.
Pushes the front door closed.

BERTHA

I'm Bertha Ann Bubb. And my
husband, Bill Zed. Are we
under arrest?

Munro holsters her gun. Mumbles into her shoulder radio.

OFFICER MUNRO

Appears to be a false call.

A BANG on the pantry door. Everybody jumps. Munro goes for her gun and steps toward the door. She shouts out.

OFFICER MUNRO
Who's in there? Speak up.

Officer Munro pulls out a flashlight.

MR. OWENS
See. What'd I tell you.
(to Bertha)
I'm Mr. Owens. Owner of the
Tiki Inn Motel. Welcome.

OFFICER MUNRO
Escort them to the other room.
And I need the key.

Bertha pushes Bill Zed and his wheelchair. He makes slurping sounds. They follow Owens, and his lantern.

MR. OWENS
This used to be a bed and
breakfast. Way back when. Got
converted after the trouble.

BERTHA
We're on our way to a seance.

LIVING ROOM

Spacious with old furniture. A chandelier hangs above.

MR. OWENS
A seance? Sounds scary. Say,
does he have special needs?

BERTHA
Nothing you can help with.

MR. OWENS
We take all kinds. Mongoloids,
cretins, cripples, Indians.

BERTHA
Excuse me?

MR. OWENS
Just put in a new elevator,
too. For tired folks.

HEAVY FOOTSTEPS from upstairs.

BERTHA
Is that the wind?

MR. OWENS
Satisfied customers.

Officer Munro charges into the room and up to Owens. The wind outside sounds roars.

OFFICER MUNRO
I thought you said your had a person in there. Sounds like an animal.

MR. OWENS
I trapped a demon, that's what I did. It's up to you to get it out of my motel.

OFFICER MUNRO
I'm taking you in for drunk and disorderly conduct.

BERTHA
I'll leave you two alone. Bill's waking up anyway.

Bertha wheels Bill out of the living room. Lights flicker on for a moment, then off again.

BERTHA
Don't fret. We'll get to that seance lickity split.

She passes FERLIN OWENS coming in. He's a younger version of dad, 30s, short and fat. Unkempt. Eating a sandwich.

FERLIN
Why is there a lady in the pantry, crying?

MR. OWENS
A what?

Officer Munro makes a bee-line out to the
FRONT OFFICE

She strides to the pantry door. Rattles the knob.

OFFICER MUNRO
Who's in this thing?

No reaction. Munro gestures to Mr. Owens.

OFFICER MUNRO
Open the goddamn padlock or
I'll blast it off.

Owens grumbles. He rifles through his pockets. Finds the key and inserts it into the lock. Jiggles it, then, CLICK –

MR. OWENS
Bingo.

A SCREAM from upstairs. Owens drops the padlock to the floor. Munro charges up the stairs. Ferlin and dad follow.

INT. UPSTAIRS, HONEYMOON SUITE - MOTEL - NIGHT

Officer Munro bursts into a room, her gun poised to kill. Behind her is Ferlin.

Munro looks around. Her eyes go wide in horror.

On the floor are bodies. And a spread of body parts, entrails, with blood everywhere. In the corner, Bertha is hysterical. She passes out and crumples to the floor.

Behind Officer Munro, curious guests try to get a peek.

CHATTER among the guests.

Lights flicker on and stay on. Ferlin and another man carry out Bertha out of the room.

OFFICER MUNRO
Nice time for the lights.

Munro turns to the guests, pushes them back.

OFFICER MUNRO
Everybody, into the hallway.

A guest, DR. NOTAMEN, breaks past Munro. He is in his early 40s, dark features, neatly trimmed beard.

DR NOTAMEN
I'm a doctor. I can help.

Officer Munro nods, then steps into the hallway with the guests. Closes the door behind her. Her expression sullen.

HALLWAY

A group of five people huddle around the officer. Munro looks at each person, connecting quickly with their eyes.

OFFICER MUNRO
Did anybody here see or hear anything? Any commotion at all? Fighting, arguing maybe?

Guests trade glances and shrug. Munro shakes her head.

OFFICER MUNRO
Please wait downstairs. Nobody leaves the premises, please.

The officer walks the hallway cautiously, Glock in hand. She performs a room-to-room check.

OFFICER MUNRO
This is Munro at the Tiki Motel. Got multiple homicides. Suspects unknown. Need back up and an ambulance.

HONEYMOON SUITE - LATER

Two bodies, each covered with a bedspread. Blood stains in one bedspread. Notamen covers the last body. Munro lifts the sheet from victim one and examines the face.

The room is ransacked. Dr. Notamen looks around perplexed.

DR. NOTAMEN
She was a teenager. Died of blunt force trauma to her reproductive system. It's called sexual disembowelment. Entry through the vaginal opening, her uterus ruptured -

OFFICER MUNRO
Stop.

The officer looks queasy.

DR. NOTAMEN
I'm sorry.

OFFICER MUNRO
The little girl, too?

Dr. Notamen nods. Officer Munro forces a swallow.

OFFICER MUNRO

How?

DR. NOTAMEN

A two-by-four maybe...

(exhales)

By the grace of God, I hope
death was instantaneous.

Munro wipes sweat from her brow. She looks around.

OFFICER MUNRO

And the male victim?

DR. NOTAMEN

Head was twisted around with
violent force, neck snapped.

Munro checks under the bed.

DR. NOTAMEN

Are you a religious woman?

OFFICER MUNRO

Spiritual.

DR. NOTAMEN

Do you believe in God?

OFFICER MUNRO

Used to.

DR. NOTAMEN

Then you believe in Satan?

OFFICER MUNRO

Cut to the chase.

DR. NOTAMEN

What if I said I don't think
we're dealing with a human
entity here?

Officer Munro glares at Notamen.

OFFICER MUNRO

What are you talking about?

DR. NOTAMEN

I offer up the possibility of
a sexual demon. An incubus.

INT. LIVING ROOM, DOWNSTAIRS - RAMSHACKLED MOTEL

Guests gather, some sitting at a table, others lounging on the couch. GEORGE, 30s, geeky, draps his arm around his equally geeky wife, HANNA, 30s. She shivers at the creaking building and the barking wind.

GEORGE

You think the murderer is...
in this very room?

HANNA

Or still upstairs.

FERLIN

This land was part of the
Calhoun family ranch. They
were well known for devil
worshipping. And sacrifices.

HANNA

A satanic cult.

GEORGE

I remember hearing about that.

FERLIN

They got driven out by the
law. Some committed suicide
rather than go to jail.

HANNA

I didn't know it was here
here. I thought it was over
there. Down the road.

MR. OWENS

No it was right on this very
spot. Which is why I don't
tell folks about the trouble.

GEORGE

Trouble?

FERLIN

The ghosts.

HANNA

There's ghosts?

MR. OWENS

Have you ever heard of a place where people died violently and not have ghosts? Come on, it goes with the territory.

GEORGE

You think those murders upstairs have anything to do with the ghosts?

FERLIN

Nah. Ghosts scare the shit outta you. They don't kill you so you actually shit your pants. That's two different schools of philosophy.

MR. OWENS

Which brings me back to the fella in the pantry. Satan. Who - oh shit!

Mr. Owens shuffles to the

FRONT OFFICE

And stares at the pantry door, which is partially open.

MR. OWENS

Son of a flying pig. The devil's loose.

The others pad into the office area. Owens turns and swings the door wide for everybody to see.

MR. OWENS

Satan, who up until an hour ago, was locked in this pantry. Who would still be locked up if Officer Munro didn't make me free him.

Hanna raises her hand. George pulls her hand down.

GEORGE

This isn't school, Dear.

HANNA

I'm pointing to the room above us, Dear. So, If the devil was in the closet, who did the murders up there?

MR. OWENS

I reason that all the murders occurred before I locked him up. And it's not a closet. It's a pantry, because when I had this place remodeled, we replaced the worship room.

GEORGE

You getting that, Dear?
Murders before the lock up?

Hanna flips him off.

Bertha lumbers down the stairs. She sees the crowd at the pantry door, but doesn't stop. Moves on to the living room.

MR. OWENS

Hey, Bertha. How's Bill Zed?

Bertha doesn't say a word. She walks into the

LIVING ROOM

Where she stops and stares at an empty wheelchair. She turns and trudges back to the

FRONT OFFICE

She faces everybody. Stands and stares with a blank gaze.

BERTHA

Bill Zed left his wheelchair.

MR. OWENS

And Satan left the closet.

FERLIN

Hallelujah.

GEORGE

What's going on?

MR. OWENS

Kill the demon on sight. Satan can look like anyone of us.

FERLIN

Shoot first, ask questions later. Right, Pa?

Mr. Owens picks up his shotgun from the floor. The electricity fails and the motel goes dark.

Mr. Owens moseys over to the table. He shines his lantern under the table and smiles.

MR. OWENS

Why there you are, you little devil.

He waves the lantern and under the table is a

PRIEST

Bound and gagged. White hair, 60s, dark rumpled clothes, and an off-kilter white collar. His eyes wide with fear.

Mr. Owens aims his shotgun at the priest.

GEORGE

What are you doing?

MR. OWENS

The devil you say?

Owens pulls the trigger and the priest's blood splatters. Hanna SCREAMS, followed by a second shotgun blast.

GEORGE

Oh God!

MR. OWENS

No God here.

Mr. Owens reloads. Two shells. Hanna and George run. Owens takes aim and BAM-BAM. Two bodies hit the floor.

UPSTAIRS

Officer Munro tears out of the room. Hustles down the stairs. Halfway down, she pauses when she hears HEAVY WALKING on the roof. She stares up.

Dr. Notamen darts out of the room. Stops at the top of the stairs. He too looks at the ceiling.

AT THE BASE OF THE STAIRS

Mr. Owens and his shotgun, Ferlin and Bertha wait. The lantern shines on their smiling faces.

MR. OWENS

We've waited for you, Officer.

FERLIN

Your daddy led the raid of our church. Twenty-five years ago. He was an unholy demon.

BERTHA

All that changes tonight. Beel can hardly wait to start over.

Munro raises her gun, takes aims at the three.

OFFICER MUNRO

You scumbags are under arrest.

Something crashes into a window down the hall. Out of Munro's view. Wind WHISTLES through the broken window.

Notamen flies backward as if pulled by an invisible rope. His SCREAM fades.

Heavy footsteps down the hall, coming toward the stairs.

TOP OF THE STAIRS

Something large stops. Backlit: Human, but reptilian in form. Maybe eight feet high, wide shoulders. It labors with each breath.

BERTHA (O.S.)

He's here. Beelzebub.

Munro takes aim at the beast and fires – BAM. Nothing. The beast doesn't quiver. BAM, BAM... Munro empties her Glock.

The beast stands unmoved.

MR. OWENS (O.S.)

You're his type... a virgin.

BERTHA (O.S.)

It's the honeymoon you never had. He'll go easy on you.

FERLIN (O.S.)

And he don't care none for condoms.

Beelzebub begins his slow descent down the stairs.

FADE OUT.