



By

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FADE IN:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

It's a cloudy day.

The graveyard is relatively small, just a few acres. It's surrounded by an old iron gate.

SUPER: Echo Falls, Kentucky

EARL BANNISTER, 44, tall, balding and country-strong, walks through the rows of various tombstones. He carries with him a small bundle of blue orchids.

A gust of wind blows through the quiet graveyard.

Earl spots his destination, crosses over a row, approaches a particular tombstone in the shape of a crucifix.

ON THE TOMBSTONE: Here lies Ellie Bannister, beloved mother and wife. Born 1979, Died 2018

Earl stops in front of Ellie's tombstone, stares down at it. After a brief moment, he smiles.

EARL

Hey, Ellie. It's me again.

He kneels, places the bundle of orchids at the base of the tombstone, then rubs the text on the tombstone with his hand.

EARL

I still ain't got used to waking up
without ya' by my side.

A crow lands on a nearby tombstone. It pecks at the stone, then CAWS.

Earl looks over at the crow, frowns. He stands and steps towards the large black bird, waves his arms at it.

EARL

Get outta' here!

The crow CAWS again before it flies away.

After watching the bird for a moment, Earl turns back to Ellie's tombstone. The smile returns to his face.

EARL

Campbell misses ya' too. He definitely misses your cookin'. He's always askin' about ya'. Wantin' to know what kinda' music you liked... What was your favorite movie... Stuff like that... He's such a great kid. You'd be proud.

He can't help but chuckle to himself as he reaches into his pocket, pulls out a folded-up piece of paper.

EARL

He wrote ya a note. I read it, even though I promised I wouldn't.

Earl places the folded note next to the orchids, massages his chin with his fingers. His eyes light up.

EARL

Nearly forgot to tell ya'. I finally finished that treehouse in the backyard. Just put the finishin' touches on it this morning. I can't wait to see the look on Campbell's face when he gets home.

He goes silent as he stares down at Ellie's tombstone.

His smile fades. A hint of sadness appears on his face.

EARL

Love ya', girl. Always will.

Earl kisses his fingertips, touches them to Ellie's tombstone, then--

A CAW O.S. startles him.

He turns to see that the crow is back, perched up upon a nearby tombstone.

It stares at Earl, lets out another CAW.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

The winding road is surrounded on either side by vast stretches of grassy fields.

A red pick-up truck drives along the road.

INT. EARL'S TRUCK - TRAVELING

Earl sits behind the wheel, his cellphone pressed to his ear.

EARL

I'm very sorry about that, Miss
Epstein. Totally my fault. How about I
stop by tomorrow around noon and fix
that right up for ya'?

He scratches his head, annoyed.

EARL

Well... Darn. I gotta' get my boy
ready for school in the morning.
(listens)
What about around nine? Would that
work for ya?

He smiles, nods.

EARL

Sounds good. I'll see ya' in the
mornin'.
(listens)
Bye now.

Earl ends the call, tosses his cellphone onto the passenger
seat. He turns the radio on, turns the volume up.

"Sister Golden Hair" by America PLAYS through the stereo
speakers.

Using his thumbs, Earl drums on the steering wheel to the
beat of the song.

EXT. PARK - DAY - FLASHBACK

(Note: The music continues to PLAY over the scene.)

A nice, sunny day.

Earl and his family, ELLIE BANNISTER, 38, a natural blonde,
beautiful, and CAMPBELL BANNISTER, 9, spitting image of his
father, sit at a picnic table and enjoy lunch.

Everyone is as happy as can be.

Earl leans over and kisses Ellie.

END FLASHBACK

INT. EARL'S TRUCK - TRAVELING

Earl smiles from ear to ear, enjoying his happy memory.

Just then, his cellphone RINGS.

He turns off the stereo, grabs his cellphone, answers it.

EARL

Hello? You've got Earl, here.

CLOSE ON Earl's face as his smile fades away.

EXT. RURAL ROAD

Earl's truck SCREECHES to a stop on the side of the road.

A long, uncomfortable moment of silence.

Then, Earl's truck does a U-turn, kicks up a cloud of dirt as it speeds off.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

(Note: The scene plays out in SLOW MOTION with distorted, almost inaudible SOUND.)

In front of the main entrance to the large concrete building, a crowd of REPORTERS gathers around a SHERIFF'S DEPUTY, 27, a scrawny man with glasses.

He's totally overwhelmed.

REPORTER

(distorted)

What caused the accident?

DEPUTY

(distorted)

The cause of the accident has yet to be determined. Rescue workers are pulling the bus from the river as we speak...

REPORTER

(distorted)

Are there any survivors?

DEPUTY
(distorted)
Only two...

Earl walks past the crowd, towards the main entrance's automatic doors.

They slide open as he approaches.

INT. HOSPITAL - MAIN LOBBY

Dozens of GRIEVING PARENTS are scattered throughout.

Earl walks through the lobby, glances around at the various families. It's a horribly depressing, surreal sight.

He blankly looks around the room, in a state of shock.

A pair of double doors are pushed open and a WOMAN and her two CHILDREN enter the lobby.

This is JUDY HAMILTON, 35, a stern and cold-looking brunette, GRIFFIN HAMILTON, 12, a skinny pale kid with the darkest eyes, and CAROLINE HAMILTON, 9, petite brunette, cute as a button, with elbow-length black gloves on both hands.

As they step through the lobby, Judy notices that everyone in the room is staring at them. She puts her arms around her children, hurries them towards the exit.

Griffin glances back over his shoulder, at the dozens of grieving parents. His lips curl into a sinister grin.

CLOSE ON Earl's face as he watches the trio hurry away.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. EARL'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

(Note: The SLOW MOTION has ended and the sound has returned to normal.)

CLOSE ON Earl's face as he stands facing away from his small farmhouse. An orange, flickering light is cast over Earl's face, his eyes red from crying.

Flames CRACKLE O.S.

Earl takes a deep breath, exhales.

ANGLE ON a large, oak tree with an impressive treehouse built

into it. The entire tree is completely engulfed in flames.

Earl just stands and watches as it all burns.

TITLE CARD - WITCH HUNT

EXT. EARL'S HOUSE - MORNING

Thick, black smoke billows up from behind the house, into the gloomy morning sky.

A blue sedan pulls into the driveway, parks behind Earl's truck. TED "TEDDY" LUCAS, 39, a chunky guy, exits the sedan.

He walks to the front door, knocks on it.

TEDDY

Earl? It's Teddy.

No response. He knocks again.

TEDDY

Earl?

Still nothing.

Frustrated, Teddy walks around to the back of the house.

EXT. EARL'S HOUSE - BACKYARD

Earl sits in the grass, a few feet from the smoldering remains of the treehouse and the tree it was once in.

TEDDY (O.S.)

Earl?

Earl turns, sees Teddy approaching.

Teddy looks over the burnt remains of the treehouse, then turns back to Earl.

TEDDY

Jesus, Earl. What have you done?

Earl stands, glares at Teddy.

EARL

I destroyed it.

Teddy shrugs.

TEDDY

Well yeah, I see that... Listen, uh, they're putting together a vigil in the park. Debbie and I... We want you to come with us.

EARL

Not interested.

Earl heads for the back door of the house, walks past Teddy as if he weren't there.

TEDDY

C'mon, Earl. We're all hurting. I miss my son--

Teddy swallows a lump in his throat, fights back tears.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

You shouldn't be alone right now, Earl. Please. Come with us.

Earl stops at the back door, looks down at his feet, sighs.

EARL

(unenthused)

Fine.

EXT. JOHN'S TRAILER - MORNING

A rundown shithole, surrounded by an overgrown lawn.

SUPERIMPOSE: CINCINNATI, OHIO

A black muscle car, with crude skull artwork painted on it, roars onto the gravel driveway as it parks beside a rusty station wagon.

The engine shuts off and SAMANTHA "SAM" ELWOOD, 26, an athletic redhead with a stylisha haircut and an attitude to match, steps out.

SAM

John!? Why don't you ever answer your fuckin' phone!?

Without missing a beat, she runs towards the trailer's front door. She opens the door.

INT. JOHN'S TRAILER - DEN

The room is cluttered, littered with trash. A total pigsty.

Sam steps inside, looks around in disgust. She spots the tv remote, grabs it, switches on a small old box tv and desperately flips through the channels.

SAM

John! Get your ass out here. You gotta' see this.

MAN (O.S.)

Goddamnit! Ya' know, I've got a wicked hangover and--

SAM

Pull your tampon out and get in here!

Her eyes light up as she finds the right channel. She turns the VOLUME up.

Sam watches the tv intently, absorbing every detail.

NEWS REPORTER (V.O.)

The exact cause of the accident is still unknown, but we can now confirm that twenty-two children died in the accident. The bus driver also lost his life...

A loud THUD O.S., followed quickly by JOHN PLEASENCE, 55, thin and haggard, who hurries into the room, eager to hear more about the news report.

He steps beside Sam, both of them focused on the tv.

ON THE TV

A female NEWS REPORTER, 27, a pretty brunette wearing way too much make-up, stands off to the side of a busy road. Behind her, a tubular bridge crosses over a small river.

NEWS REPORTER (V.O.)

There were only two survivors. A pair of siblings, who made it out with not only their lives, but without a single scratch or bruise on their bodies...

A photograph is cast over the TV screen. It's a picture of Judy hurrying Griffin and Caroline out of the Hospital.

BACK TO SCENE

Sam turns to John, whose eyes go wide at the sight of the photograph. He recognizes them.

SAM

It's them, isn't it?

John nods. "It's them."

He turns, notices that Sam is staring at him.

JOHN

Go home, Sam. This isn't your fight.

Sam smirks, shakes her head.

SAM

Hell no. We're a team, remember?
Besides... I owe you.

John sighs.

EXT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - DAY

The massive, two-story colonial sits in the middle of a substantial clearing in the woods.

Even in the broad daylight, it's a creepy fucking house.

A crow lands on the roof, then CAWS.

INT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Judy sits in a decorative armchair, a stern look on her face.

Across from her, Griffin and Caroline sit on a sofa. Neither one of them can bring themselves to make eye contact with their mother.

Caroline still wears her elbow-length black gloves.

There is an uncomfortable silence in the air.

Finally, Judy scoffs. She shakes her head, thinks carefully about her words.

JUDY

There was once a wolf, who had access
to hundreds of sheep. Now, if the wolf
were clever, and resolute, he'd be
(MORE)

JUDY (CONT'D)
able to live off the sheep for a long,
long time. But the wolf wasn't clever.
No, not clever at all. In fact, he was
an imbecile.

Judy stands, her face turns to a scowl.

Griffin gives a slight twitch, afraid.

JUDY
(irate)
The wolf ate too many sheep, too fast!
And the sheep caught on! They banded
together! They captured that stupid
wolf! And then...

Judy leans down closer to her children. Both Griffin and
Caroline finally look up, meet their mother's stare.

JUDY
The sheep burned the wolf alive.

CLOSE ON Griffin and Caroline's uneasy faces. They don't like
this story.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND - DAY

Beside an empty jungle gym, a CROWD OF PEOPLE have gathered
for a vigil.

Pictures of the victims are surrounded by lit candles.

FATHER DAVIS, 34, weirdly handsome for a priest, walks
amongst the crowd, offers console.

VIOLA CLARK, 30, a short black woman, buzzed head, kneels
before a picture of her son, JAMAL, 11, a happy boy with a
big smile.

She reaches out, caresses the picture with her fingers. Her
lip quivers as she fights the urge to cry.

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND - PARKING LOT

Teddy's sedan pulls into the crowded lot, finds a parking
space. The engine shuts off.

The back passenger door opens, Earl steps out. He looks

across the lot, at the crowd of people surrounding the vigil.

Teddy and DEBBIE LUCAS, 38, a homely housewife, exit the front of the sedan. He wraps his arm around her shoulder as they start to make their way towards the vigil.

Earl takes a deep breath, follows close behind.

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND - MOMENTS LATER

As Teddy and Debbie weave their way through the crowd, Earl hangs back.

He looks around at the crowd of people.

Lots of sad faces.

Father Davis approaches Earl, puts a comforting hand down on his shoulder.

FATHER DAVIS

How are you holding up, Earl?

The look Earl gives him says it all. "Are you serious?"

Father Davis takes the hint, nods.

FATHER DAVIS

Just know that your boy is with his mother in Heaven right now. They are both looking down on--

Earl puts a hand up, silences him.

EARL

My family is dead.

Father Davis sighs, searches for the right words to say.

FATHER DAVIS

Listen, Earl... I know this is tough. But you're not alone here. We're all here for each other.

A quiet anger burns behind Earl's eyes.

EARL

Look, Father. I know you're only trying to help. But stop. Got me?

Father Davis bites his lip, nods. He pats Earl on the back,

then rejoins the crowd.

Earl scoffs, shakes his head.

IN THE CROWD

STEVE O'NEIL, 19, tall and athletic build, stands beside his distraught mother, KATHRINE O'NEIL, 42, slender brunette. They look down at the pictures of the victims.

Tears flow down Kathrine's cheeks.

KATHRINE
(distraught)
This isn't fair.

Misty-eyed, Steve swallows a lump in his throat, hugs his mother tight as she sobs.

Earl watches from a distance. The ROAR of an engine draws his attention back towards the-

PARKING LOT

Where a large, rusted-out diesel truck speeds into the lot. It SCREECHES to a halt, shuts off.

MARTIN GREEN, 33, big and mean-looking, exits the driver's side. He glares at the crowd, angry as Hell.

RONNIE GREEN, 42, skinny weasel of a man, gets out of the passenger side, steps beside his brother. He cocks his head to the side, spits a nasty glob of dip-spit on the pavement.

They walk towards the crowd.

MARTIN
(enraged)
Where the Hell are they!? Huh?

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND

The crowd turns to face Martin as he stops before them. He turn his head back and forth, scans the crowd.

With a scowl on his face, Ronnie paces back and forth, behind his much larger brother.

MARTIN
Well!? They here? Huh?

Father Davis strides out of the crowd with his hands held out, a peaceful gesture. He steps towards Martin.

FATHER DAVIS

(calmly)

We're all here to mourn, my sons.
Please. Mourn with us.

Ronnie scoffs.

MARTIN

(enraged)

Are they here or not!?

FATHER DAVIS

Who?

MARTIN

Don't you fuckin' play dumb with me.
You know who.

RONNIE

Those bastard Hamilton kids!

The crowd watches in silence as Father Davis pleads with the brothers. Amongst the crowd, Earl, Viola, Steve, and Teddy, all seem to be interested in what the brothers have to say.

FATHER DAVIS

Please, Martin... It was a horrible
accident. No one is to blame--

Martin spits with rage. Gets right up in Father Davis's face.

MARTIN

Bullshit! Did you see my daughter!?
Because I did! And you know what!? I
didn't even fuckin' recognize her! My
own little girl... Looked like she'd
been put through a fuckin' grinder!

A few GASPS from the crowd.

RONNIE

But not those Hamilton freaks. Not a
scratch on them.

MARTIN

Not a single scratch. Everyone else on
that bus will be having a closed
casket funeral. Doesn't anyone else

(MORE)

MARTIN (CONT'D)
want to know why?

Viola pushes her way through the crowd, closer to Martin. She nods in silent agreement.

RONNIE
Ever since that family came to town,
bad luck seems to of followed them.
Can you remember the last time we had
a sunny day!?

Father Davis shakes his head, tries to reason with them.

FATHER DAVIS
This is madness. Surely you can see
that?

MARTIN
Madness? How many crops have failed
this year? What about all the
livestock that's gotten sick? Not to
mention the things my daughter would
tell me about those kids...

RONNIE
They're a couple of fuckin' freaks!

Father Davis motions for them to relax.

FATHER DAVIS
Please, Martin. This isn't the time or
the place for this.

EARL (O.S.)
Martin's right.

Everyone look to Earl, who turns, looks over the crowd.

EARL
There's something not right about that
family. Maybe it's just that we didn't
want to see it... But I'll be damned
if I don't see it now. Yesterday,
while they were leaving the hospital,
that little boy looked at me... And he
smiled.

There is an eerie silence amongst everyone. Even Father Davis has nothing to say, just looks down at his feet.

Teddy steps forward, looks to Earl.

TEDDY

I saw it too. When he smiled... It
made my blood run cold.

Various concerned MURMURS come from the crowd.

Martin looks from Earl, back towards the crowd.

MARTIN

I want to know exactly what happened
yesterday. That family has answers.

Steve shares a glance with Viola. They both agree with him.

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND - PARKING LOT

A police cruiser pulls into the lot, parks.

SHERIFF BRYAN GUERRA, age 36, rugged Honduran-man with a
goatee, steps out of the cruiser, adjusts his cowboy hat.

He starts towards the crowd.

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND

Ronnie sees Sheriff Guerra, steps beside Martin.

RONNIE

(to Martin)

Law's here. Let's get.

Martin nods, gives the crowd one last glance.

MARTIN

We'll be at Teddy's Tavern at six. If
you want to know why your children
aren't here anymore, meet us there.

With that, they turn and head back towards the parking lot.
They walk right by Sheriff Guerra, who greets them with a
quick nod as they pass.

Most of the crowd turn back towards the vigil, but a select
few, Earl, Teddy, Viola, and Steve, watch as the brothers
walk to their truck.

Teddy steps beside Earl.

TEDDY

Guess I'm opening the Tavern tonight.

Earl nods.

"Ring of Fire" by Johnny Cash STARTS UP V.O., OVERLAPS INTO THE NEXT SCENE.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The three-lane highway cuts through the countryside, stretches off as far as the eye can see.

John's station wagon passes other vehicles as it speeds along the road.

INT. JOHN'S STATION WAGON - TRAVELING

The MUSIC comes through the stereo speakers.

In the driver's seat, John white knuckles the steering wheel as he stares at the road ahead.

A look of pure determination is spread across his face.

Sitting in the passenger seat beside him is Sam, who leans back in her seat with her feet up on the dashboard. She smirks at John.

SAM

You need to relax. You're gonna die of a stroke before we even get there.

JOHN

(eyes glued to the road)
I've been waiting for them to show their faces for nearly thirty years, Sam. A stroke wouldn't stop me now.

Sam shakes her head, chuckles to herself.

John glances over his shoulder, at a large, partially-open duffle bag in the back seat.

Inside the bag: multiple handguns.

CLOSE ON John's cold eyes.

INSERT SHOT

Judy stands with her arms outstretched, completely engulfed

in flames. As her skin bubbles, she grins. Creepy.

BACK TO SCENE

John shakes his head, pushes the thought out of his head. He reaches up, flips down the visor on the ceiling.

Sam notices, but minds her own business and watches as grassy fields pass by in a blur.

Clipped to the visor is an old polaroid. In the picture: A much younger JOHN, 27, stands with his attractive WIFE, 24, and pretty DAUGHTER, 4. All smiles, a happy family.

John looks at the picture for a moment, sadness in his eyes.

Then, the sadness turns to anger. He scowls as he shuts the visor, stomps on the gas.

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND - DAY

Earl stands by himself, off away from the crowded vigil.

As he stares into the crowd, at all the various GRIEVING PARENTS, he grits his teeth.

IN THE CROWD

Viola steps beside Teddy and Debbie. She greets them with a sad smile.

Teddy wraps an arm around Debbie's shoulder, hugs her tight. Tears well up in his eyes as he forces a smile.

TEDDY

Who did you lose?

Viola's bottom lip quivers, but she stays strong, doesn't shed a tear.

VIOLA

My son.

DEBBIE

What's his name?

VIOLA

Jamal.

Teddy swallows the lump in his throat, nods.

TEDDY

We'll pray for Jamal tonight.

Viola forces another smile, nods back. She looks past Teddy and Debbie, sees Earl standing by himself.

BY THE VIGIL

Katherine sits beside the photos of the victims, cries her eyes out.

Steve stands behind her, glances around to make sure no one is starring. They are.

STEVE

C'mon, Mom. Let's go home.

Katherine doesn't respond, continues to sob.

Frustrated, Steve sighs. Out of the corner of his eye, he spots Viola as she approaches Earl.

Viola steps up to Earl. He greets her with a cold nod.

She does her best to put on a friendly face.

VIOLA

You're Earl Bannister, right? You probably don't remember me. You did some work for--

EARL

Re-tiled your bathroom last year. You're Miss Clark. I remember you.

VIOLA

Call me Viola. Look... I'm not stupid. I recognize that look in your eyes.

This catches Earl off guard. He looks at her, confused.

VIOLA

I'm angry too... And I can't shake this horrible feeling in my bones... This feeling that those two children are somehow responsible for this. I just... I know they are.

A moment of silence.

Earl exhales and nods. He understands.

Viola clears her throat, composes herself.

VIOLA

You know those two men that were here earlier. You trust them?

EARL

They are a couple of assholes. Spend every other weekend in the drunk tank. But they aren't bad people. Yeah. I trust em'.

IN THE CROWD

Sheriff Guerra offers Teddy and Debbie his condolences.

GUERRA

I'm so sorry for your loss.

DEBBIE

Sheriff, them Green brothers are-

Teddy motions for Debbie to keep quiet.

TEDDY

(to Guerra)

Any new information about the accident?

Sheriff Guerra sighs, shakes his head.

TEDDY

(frustrated)

Nothing at all!?

GUERRA

I can honestly say it's the strangest thing I've ever come across. What happened on that bus is a total mystery. The lab experts can't give me an explanation for any of it. Hell, they can't even give me a theory.

Teddy and Debbie exchange uneasy glances.

FADE TO:

EXT. WOODS - OLD GAZEBO - DAY

Tucked away in the shadows of the cramped woods is an abandoned gazebo, completely overgrown with brush and vines.

Just visible through the trees is the Hamilton house.

Crouched in the grass beside the shed is Griffin. He smirks as he pokes a dead rabbit with a stick.

GRIFFIN

Looks like your luck ran out, Bugs.

CAROLINE (O.S.)

Griffin, you big jerk!

Griffin turns as Caroline runs out from behind the gazebo.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

You didn't even try to look for me!

He shrugs her off, goes back to poking the dead rabbit.

GRIFFIN

Found something more interesting.

Caroline's brow furrows, she clinches a gloved fist.

JUDY

(assertive)

Children! Here! Now!

Both Griffin and Caroline stop what they are doing, rush over to Judy, who approaches from the direction of the house.

GRIFFIN

Yes, Mother?

Judy stops as she reaches the children, holds out two small leather bags.

Griffin and Caroline both take one.

JUDY

The sheep have caught on.

GRIFFIN

Are you sure?

Judy glares at him.

Frightened, Griffin looks down at his feet.

JUDY

Of course I'm sure. They'll be here tonight.

CAROLINE
Are we leaving?

JUDY
We'll leave after we deal with the
sheep.

Griffin opens his leather bag, peers inside.

JUDY (CONT'D)
You know the drill. Set a parameter
around the property.

CAROLINE
Yes, Mother.

GRIFFIN
Yes, Mother.

Both children run off in opposite directions around the house, pouring out a stream of red sand behind them.

Judy watches her children. The slightest hint of a grin.

EXT. EARL'S HOUSE - DAY

Black smoke still rises from behind the house, though considerably less than earlier.

Teddy's sedan pulls into the driveway, parks behind Earl's truck. The back door opens and Earl steps out.

He steps up to the driver's side window, where Teddy sits behind the wheel.

Debbie sits beside him in the passenger seat. She leans forward to see Earl better.

DEBBIE
You sure you won't reconsider our
offer and stay with us tonight? You
really shouldn't be alone.

EARL
I'm fine, Debbie.

Debbie gives up, leans back in her seat.

DEBBIE
(under her breath)
If you say so...

Teddy slightly leans closer to Earl.

TEDDY
You coming tonight?

 EARL
See ya' at six.

Teddy nods.

 TEDDY
Six it is.

Debbie shakes her head, disappointed.

Earl watches as Teddy's sedan backs out of the driveway, then drives off.

EXT. BACKROAD - DAY

Teddy's sedan cruises along the quiet road.

INT. TEDDY'S SEDAN - TRAVELING

As he drives, Teddy glances over at Debbie, who stares out her window.

 TEDDY
I know you're worried about tonight.
But you don't have to be worried, Deb.
I promise you.

 DEBBIE
How do you know? You have no idea what
those loser Green brothers are gonna
do.

 TEDDY
That's why we're meetin' at the
Tavern. To hear what their plan is.

Debbie crosses her arms, frustrated.

 DEBBIE
You all should just leave that family
be. Those poor children... What they
must have witnessed.

 TEDDY
Exactly. What *they* witnessed. I wanna
know what happened to our boy. If
anyone has answers, it's those
Hamilton kids.

Debbie sighs, defeated.

INT. EARL'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Earl sits at the dining room table, rigorously cleans his shotgun. A bottle of whisky sits on the table beside him.

He stops cleaning the shotgun just long enough to grab the whisky bottle and take a swig.

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A bright, sterile room.

A DIENER, 30, carefully pulls a sheet back, reveals the MANGLED CORPSE OF A SMALL CHILD lying on a metal table.

Earl stands beside the table, opposite the Diener. He looks down at the gory mess before him, starts to cry.

END FLASHBACK

INT. EARL'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM

Enraged, Earl downs the rest of the bottle, then throws it across the room.

The glass bottle shatters across the far wall.

Earl slumps back in his chair, breaks down into tears.

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND - PARKING LOT - DAY

John's station wagon pulls into the lot, which is less crowded than before.

The engine shuts off, then John and Sam exit the vehicle.

Sam leans against the station wagon. She pulls a piece of bubblegum from her pocket, throws it in her mouth.

SAM

I'll hang back. Let you deliver the bad news.

John grunts, gazes out over the crowd, spots Sheriff Guerra.

With a sense of urgency, John hurries across the lot, towards the crowd.

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND - MOMENTS LATER

John weaves his way through the crowd as he approaches Sheriff Guerra.

JOHN
Pardon me, Sheriff?

Sheriff Guerra greets John with a firm handshake.

GUERRA
Sheriff Guerra. What can I do for you?

John glances around at the crowd, then looks back to Sheriff Guerra. He leans in closer.

JOHN
Could I have a word with you? It's about...
(a whisper)
... The Hamiltons.

Sheriff Guerra scoffs.

GUERRA
The Green brothers put you up to this? Jesus Christ.

John shakes his head.

JOHN
Please, Sheriff. You have to listen to me! This...
(points at the vigil)
This has happened before! They've been at this for--

Sheriff Guerra puts up a hand, motions for John to shut up.

GUERRA
Listen. Our community is dealing with a horrible tragedy right now. Now I suggest you get in your car and drive back to where ever you came from, or I'll find you a nice cell back at the station. You read me?

He reaches for his handcuffs.

John notices, bites his lip and nods.

JOHN

Yeah. Yeah, I read you.

Frustrated, he turns, walks back towards the parking lot.

Sheriff Guerra watches as he walks away, turns just as Father Davis approaches.

FATHER DAVIS

Forgive me, Sheriff. But I'm afraid I've got some bad news as well. Martin and Ronnie Green. I fear they may seek some sort of vengeance. They might--

GUERRA

Them Green boys are harmless, Father. Don't you worry about them.

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND - PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

John stomps across the lot, is just about to his station wagon and Sam when--

STEVE (O.S.)

Excuse me! Sir!

John turns, sees Steve jogging towards him.

Sam stays by the station wagon, watches as Steve approaches. She blows a big pink bubble with her gum.

STEVE

Sorry. But I couldn't help but overhear you back there. Do you really think that family is responsible for all this?

JOHN

I know they're responsible.

Steve looks down at his feet, thinks for a moment, then look back up to John.

STEVE

Well, you're not alone. Some others around here have come to the same conclusion. There's going to be a meeting at the Tavern, just a couple of miles down the road. Six o'clock.

John nods.

JOHN
Six. I'll be there.

Steve glances over at Sam, who smirks.

As Steven heads back toward the vigil, John turns to Sam.

SAM
Looks like we'll have some back up
this time.

INT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - JUDY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Judy stares into a decorative mirror hanging on the wall. She whispers to her reflection.

JUDY
Schlobach navanagah tempus. Snelmano
melmesta centis.

The mirror cracks.

Judy's reflection grins wide.

Griffin and Caroline step out of the shadows behind Judy. They smile at their mother through the cracked window.

JUDY
You two know what's expected of you,
correct?

Excited, they both nod their heads.

Judy smiles as she moves to a large dresser, opens a drawer, retrieves a ritualistic dagger.

Griffin's eyes light up at the sight of the blade.

JUDY
Griffin. You are in charge of the
husks. Just like the last time. Do you
got it?

Griffin grins, holds his hand out, proudly snaps his fingers.

GRIFFIN
I've been practicing.

Caroline giggles, excitedly claps her gloved hands together.

Judy hands Griffin the dagger, who stares down at the blade

in total awe.

JUDY

It's sharp, so be careful! Don't wanna lose a finger again. Remember how long it took to grow back last time?

Griffin chuckles and nods.

GRIFFIN

I'll be careful. I promise, Mother.

Judy looks over to Caroline, tilts her head to the side.

JUDY

Caroline. You may remove your gloves now, Dear.

Practically giddy, Caroline pulls her black gloves off, lets them drop to the floor.

JUDY

I love you two so very, very much.

Griffin and Caroline reply with genuine smiles.

CAROLINE

Love you too, Mother.

GRIFFIN

Love you too, Mother.

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Steve stands in the dark hallway, peeks through an open bedroom door.

He sees that Katherine has fallen asleep in her bed.

Quietly, Steve slinks away, out of the hallway.

EXT. STEVE'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

A nice, ranch-style home with a well-kept front yard.

The front door opens and Steve sneaks out, carefully closes the door behind him.

He hurries over towards a grey minivan parked in the driveway, gets in the driver's seat.

The minivan starts up, pulls out onto the road, drives away.

EXT. TEDDY'S TAVERN - DAY

The small, worn down old building sits in a gravel lot, just off the main road.

A sign hangs above the entrance. It reads: Teddy's Tavern
Steve's minivan is parked beside Earl's truck.

A yellow car pulls into the lot, parks on the other side of Steve's minivan.

Viola exits the yellow car, peers over as Steve gets out of the minivan. They greet each other with silent nods.

As they approach the main entrance to the Tavern, MUSIC grows louder O.S.

Steve holds the door open for Viola.

INT. TEDDY'S TAVERN - BAR

The cramped area is dimly lit.

"Burnin' For You" by Blue Oyster Cult plays through a beat-up old jukebox in the corner.

Teddy stands behind the bar, opposite Earl, who sits on a stool. They both have empty shot glasses before them.

Viola and Steve step inside.

Teddy waves them over.

TEDDY
C'mon over. Have a seat.

They walk over, sit on the stools beside Earl.

Viola glances down at her cellphone, then to Earl.

VIOLA
It's six-o-five.

EARL
They'll be here.

Teddy looks Steve over, can't help but chuckle to himself.

TEDDY
What are you doing here, kid?

Steve frowns, offended.

STEVE
(surprisingly assertive)
I'm nineteen. And I'm here because my
mother deserves to know why her
youngest son is dead.

Teddy gives Earl a look. "Good answer."

VIOLA
(to Teddy)
Will your wife be joining us?

Teddy scoffs.

TEDDY
No. She went home to rest. This whole
thing has really taken it out of her.

VIOLA
It's taken it out of all us.

Earl and Steve nod in agreement.

An engine ROARS O.S.

TEDDY
Fashionably late.

The front door swings open as Martin and Ronnie enter. They
take seats at the bar.

Martin looks around the small area, shakes his head with
disappointment.

MARTIN
This is it? Just four of ya' showed
up? Jesus Christ.

RONNIE
Figures. This town has no fuckin'
backbone. Huh, Martin?

Martin nods.

MARTIN
Couldn't agree more-

VIOLA
Could we skip past all this witty
(MORE)

VIOLA (CONT'D)

banter and get down to it. What are we doing here?

MARTIN

Heh. Sure. We're gonna go pay Miss Hamilton and her two precious angels a friendly visit. And they are going to explain to us exactly what happened on that bus.

STEVE

Tonight?

RONNIE

You got a problem with that, boy?

Steve shoots daggers at Ronnie.

Martin leans forward, speaks calmly.

MARTIN

It has to be tonight. If we wait, they might run. And I'm not letting that happen.

STEVE

What if they really didn't have anything to do with the bus crash? What if it really was just a horrible accident?

EARL

Look... We aren't a lynch mob, alright? We're not going to go down there and just attack them. We're going to find out what exactly happened on that bus. That said, if you believe they're completely innocent, you wouldn't be here.

Steve acknowledges that with a nod.

STEVE

I'll admit it. The whole situation is really weird.

RONNIE

Weird? Try fuckin' impossible.

EARL

My boy always had a bad feelin' about those kids. Always said they weren't normal...

TEDDY

Ted Jr told me some stories. About how they would hurt other kids at school, but make it look like an accident.

Steve shakes his head, can't believe that he can actually relate to these people.

STEVE

This is crazy, but... My brother fell down some steps last month, broke his arm real bad. He swore to me that the little girl did it somehow.

VIOLA

Don't forget about their mother, Judy. Does anyone even know what she does? As far as I can tell, she rarely leaves her property.

TEDDY

Debbie heard rumors about some crazy inheritance or something like that. Apparently, Miss Hamilton is very well off.

MARTIN

Hell, anyone with a working set of eyeballs in their skull could see the dark cloud hanging over that family. Question is, what the fuck are we gonna do about it?

JOHN (O.S.)

We're gonna kill them all.

Everyone turns, sees John and Sam standing at the front door. John holds the duffle bag in his right hand, a chilling stare chiseled onto his face.

Sam stands with her arms crossed, unimpressed.

RONNIE

Who the fuck are you?

SAM

We're the ones who know what the fuck
is going on here.

EXT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - DUSK

The sun sets behind thick clouds.

A purple van pulls into the driveway, parks behind a black SUV.

Debbie exits the van, walks towards the front door, obliviously steps over the line of red sand.

She steps up to the front door, knocks on it.

SLOW ZOOM on Debbie as she stands and waits. Long beat.

Then, the door opens.

Judy pops her head out, greets Debbie with a warm smile.

JUDY

Oh, Debbie. I'm so very sorry about
your boy. Why aren't you home with
your husband?

DEBBIE

That's actually why I'm here. It's
silly, I know, but some of the parents
think--

JUDY

Please. Let's talk inside.

Debbie nods, then follows Judy inside the dark house. The door SLAMS shut behind them.

Another long, uncomfortable moment of silence before--

Debbie SCREAMS O.S.

INT. TEDDY'S TAVERN - BAR - NIGHT

"Light My Fire" by The Doors BLASTS out of the jukebox.

John sits at the bar, Ronnie and Martin standing at either side of him.

Sam sits on a stool off to the side.

MARTIN

Alright. You've got our attention.
Start talking.

Earl, Viola, and Steve, remain seated at the end of the bar.

Teddy stands behind the bar, opposite John. He slides John an open bottle of beer.

JOHN

Before we just pull up to this woman's house and kick down her door, you all need to understand what we're up against...

Everyone stares at John, anticipating his next words.

John takes a big swig from his beer, wipes his mouth with the back of his arm. He lowers his head, thinks hard..

MARTIN

Well? Don't leave us hangin'.

RONNIE

What exactly are we dealin' with here?

Finally, John lifts his head. He looks to the brothers, totally straight-faced.

JOHN

Witches.

Martin and Ronnie exchange glances, dumbfounded.

Down at the end of the bar, Viola frowns. She ain't buying what John's selling.

VIOLA

I don't believe in witches.

JOHN

They don't give a fuck if you believe in them or not.

Sam hops off her stool.

SAM

In fact, they'd probably prefer you remain ignorant to them. Makes you easier prey.

Earl looks to Teddy, who just shrugs.

Steve shakes his head, can't help but laugh a little.

STEVE

Witches? Like, on broomsticks?

(looks at the others)

This is a joke, right? I mean, c'mon!

Sam rolls her eyes, annoyed.

John can sense that he's losing the room. He bends down for the duffle bag at his feet, reaches inside, and grabs a stuffed manila folder.

He slaps the folder down on the bar, flips it open. Inside is a stack of newspaper clippings.

CLOSE ON the top article on the stack. The headline reads: Forty-eight Dead In Tragic School Fire. March 20th, 1992.

Everyone leans in to get a good look at the headline.

JOHN

My world ended that day.

John pulls an old yearbook out of the duffle bag, sets it beside the article. The front reads: Brantner Elementary 1991- 1992 Yearbook

He opens the yearbook, flips to a page marked with a folded corner. On the page are dozens of school portraits, each categorized by class. A particular portrait on the bottom has been circled in red marker.

It's Griffin. Still looking like a twelve-year-old boy.

Viola and Steven exchange worried glances.

VIOLA

Jesus Christ.

John flips to another page, this one also marked with a folded corner.

Another circled portrait. It's Caroline. Clearly still a nine-year-old girl.

TEDDY

Well, shit.

John lights a cigarette, takes a long drag, then exhales a cloud of smoke.

JOHN

It's them. They were going under the name of Daniels back then, but it's definitely them. I've been searching for them for nearly three decades now. I'm not wrong. It's them. I'm dead certain of it.

Martin glances around the group. He can tell by the looks on their faces. They are all considering it.

MARTIN

I don't know about you guys... But that was pretty damn convincing.

Teddy, Viola, and Ronnie, all nod in agreement.

Earl and Steve look unsure.

Sam steps forward.

SAM

What more evidence do you need? Wanna see their cauldron?

EARL

I'm just finding this all very hard to believe.

STEVE

Yeah. I mean, c'mon. *Witches?* Really!? That's a hard sell, Man.

JOHN

Well then, let's go pay a visit to the Hamilton's place. After all... seeing is believing.

EXT. TEDDY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Everyone exits the building, with Teddy bringing up the rear. He locks the front door while everyone splits off into two groups and head towards the vehicles.

Ronnie, Viola, and Steve all follow Martin into his truck. Martin gets behind the wheel, Ronnie rides passenger, with Viola and Steve jumping into the bed of the truck.

Teddy finishes locking up, walks over, and joins Earl, Sam, and John, next to Earl's truck.

Just as Teddy is about to get in the passenger seat, a car pulls into the lot. He recognizes the car.

TEDDY

Ah, hell. Heads up. Here comes the voice of reason.

Martin's truck kicks up a cloud of dust and gravel as it speeds off.

Father Davis gets out of the car, hurries over to Earl's truck. He tries to reason with Earl, who starts the engine.

FATHER DAVIS

You're going to the Hamilton's place, aren't you?

EARL

We are.

Father Davis looks down at his feet, sighs. Then his gaze rises, meets Earl's.

FATHER DAVIS

Then I will go with you. As a witness.

Earl shrugs, motions for him to hop in the back.

EARL

Witness away. Just know that you likely aren't gonna like what you see.

Father Davis climbs into the back of the truck. He sits down beside John, across from Sam.

John greets the priest with a nod.

JOHN

Father.

He pulls out a small handgun, offers it to Father Davis, who waves the weapon off.

FATHER DAVIS

I have no need for that.

JOHN

Your call. It's a bad one, but i's
(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

yours.

Father Davis scoffs, looks out at the dark night sky as Earl's truck drives off of the lot.

INT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Judy stands in the shadows of the dark room, waiting.

She watches through the window as a police car pulls into the driveway, parks behind Debbie's van.

Sheriff Guerra exits the police car.

Judy smirks.

JUDY

It would seem that the pigs would like to join the sheep.

EXT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

The front door opens and Judy steps out, greets the approaching Sheriff with a warm smile.

JUDY

Good evening, Sheriff. What brings you all the way out here?

GUERRA

Miss Hamilton. Just wanted to check in on you and your kids. How y' all holdin' up?

Judy gives an unconvincing sigh.

JUDY

It's tough. Griffin and Caroline... They're still really upset.

Guerra gives an understanding nod.

GUERRA

Can't say I blame em'. Have they... Remembered anything yet? Anything that could help us understand what happened on that bus?

Judy responds with a shrug.

JUDY

Nothing. I'm sorry, Sheriff. We really wish we could be more of a help, but... They don't remember what happened after the bus went over the bridge... They don't even remember being pulled from the water.

Guerra looks over at Debbie's van, rubs his chin.

GUERRA

Have you got company over?

JUDY

Debbie Lucas just stopped by. We're having tea. Won't you join us?

GUERRA

I'd love to, but I need to get--

He turns back to Judy, but she's not there. Just an open front door.

GUERRA

Miss Hamilton?

Guerra senses that something is not right. Cautiously, he steps into the house.

INT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Sheriff Guerra slowly walks into the dark room. There's no sign of Judy, Debbie, or the kids.

GUERRA

Judy?

No response. Just an unnerving silence.

A shadow moves behind Guerra, startles him. He spins around, but nothing's there.

Then, a horrible GURGLING O.S. gets his attention.

Guerra turns and sees a HONDURAN POLICE OFFICER stumble out of a dark hallway, half of his face blown off from what appears to be a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

His tongue hangs out a grotesque hole where his jaw should be.

Terrified, Sheriff Guerra stumbles backward, trips over an end table, falls to his back.

Debbie suddenly lunges out of the shadows, jumps onto Guerra, pins his arms to the ground.

It's dark, but Guerra quickly notices that there is something horribly wrong with Debbie.

Gaping black holes are all that remain of her eyes, and her dried skin is tight around her face. A nightmarish visage.

This is DEBBIE'S HUSK.

GUERRA
(terrified)
¡Dios mío!

He tries with all of his might to free himself, but Debbie's Husk is unnaturally strong.

GUERRA
¡Fuera de mí!

Caroline GIGGLES O.S.

Guerra looks over as Caroline, Griffin, and Judy, step out of the shadows and stand over the pinned Sheriff. All three of them grin as they stare down at him.

GUERRA
Judy! What's happening here!?
(re: Debbie's Husk)
What the Hell is this thing!?

JUDY
(casual)
Now, Sheriff. Do you really not recognize Mrs. Lucas?

Horrified and disgusted, Guerra turns back to Debbie's Husk, which blankly stares down at him as it keeps him pinned.

Caroline leans close to her mother.

CAROLINE
May I have him, Mother?

JUDY
Not this one, Darling. We need another Husk.

Judy glances over at Griffin, smiles.

Griffin grins back, then hurries over and kneels beside the pinned Sheriff.

Guerra looks to Griffin with pleading eyes. Sweat beads up on his brow, scared shitless.

GUERRA
(fights back tears)
Please... I don't understand...

GRIFFIN
Doesn't matter. You're mine now.

Griffin pulls out his dagger, nicks his own finger, then smears some blood onto the edge of the blade.

Sheriff Guerra continues to struggle, but it's useless.

GUERRA
You can't do this! I'm the Sheriff!

Griffin drags the blade across Guerra's forehead, cutting a savage wound.

Guerra screams out in pain.

GUERRA
God, help me!

As blood drips down the sides of Sheriff Guerra's head, Griffin steps back beside his mother and sister.

GRIFFIN
God is blind to us.

Griffin holds out his hand, snaps his fingers.

CLOSE ON Guerra's face as his eyes liquefy in his head! His screams turn to a pathetic squeal.

Caroline and Griffin giggle with glee as Guerra's skin dries out and tightens around his face.

Judy watches in silence, her lips curl into a sinister grin.

FADE TO:

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

The unusually bright crescent moon shines out from behind thick clouds, casting light onto the secluded area.

The road is surrounded on either side by thick, dark woods.

Earl's truck pulls up behind Martin's truck on the side of the road.

Everyone piles out of the vehicles.

Martin shoots a dirty look at Father Davis, then peers over at Earl.

MARTIN

What the Hell is he doing here?

Earl grabs his shotgun from his truck, checks it. Without looking up from his weapon, he answers Martin's question.

EARL

If we really are up against witches--

JOHN (O.S.)

We are.

Earl and Martin glance over at John and Sam, who are passing handguns out to Viola, Steve, and Teddy.

EARL

Then I'd say having a man of God with us can't hurt our odds.

Martin shrugs.

MARTIN

Whatever.

(to Father Davis)

Just stay out of our way. We're here to get answers, not to pray. Got it?

Father Davis doesn't dignify Martin with a response.

Viola checks her handgun, makes sure the chamber is clear, switches on the safety. She clearly knows what she's doing.

John, Sam, and Teddy, watch in disbelief as Viola releases the clip and checks it.

TEDDY

Damn.

Viola notices them watching. She slaps the clip back into the handgun, smirks.

VIOLA

(a hint of pride)

Isn't a girl allowed to know how to take care of herself?

STEVE (O.S.)

Shit.

Sam, John, and Teddy, all look over at Steve, who awkwardly fumbles with his handgun.

He does *not* know what he's doing.

TEDDY

(to Steve)

Would you rather have something a little less dangerous? Maybe some mace... Or a rape whistle?

Sam and John can't help but laugh.

Steve shrugs it off, but he's clearly embarrassed.

STEVE

Whatever, Man. This is stupid. I mean, shouldn't we be using some special *witch* weapons or something?

SAM

They're witches. They're not bulletproof.

With his trusty shotgun in hand, Earl steps forward and addresses the whole group.

EARL

Alright, people. This is it. If you're having second thoughts, you should just go home.

No one moves a muscle.

JOHN

(to the group)

When we get there, ask your questions.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

Just know that you will not like their answers. You need to understand here and now, they are beyond dangerous and they will fuck you up without remorse.

(holds up his handgun)

Hence the weapons. When the time comes, don't hesitate to shoot. If you hesitate, I promise that they'll make you regret it.

PAN ACROSS THE GROUP. Everyone is buying in, except of course Father Davis, who silently shakes his head, and Ronnie, who looks totally dumbfounded.

RONNIE

What the fuck kinda' pregame speech was that!?

MARTIN

We'll go in two groups. Ronnie and I will go knock on the front door. Y'all hang back in the shadows, go around the back of the house.

EARL

We want answers too. Once you've got them all restrained, flash a light towards the backyard. When we get the signal, we'll move in.

MARTIN

Until you get that signal, you all stay on high alert. Don't want any of them trying to run out the back.

STEVE

Wait... What if they call the cops? It's gonna look real bad, us all being there with weapons. Ya' know?

Sam can't help but laugh.

SAM

Really?

JOHN

They're not calling the cops. Trust me.

STEVE
(unconvinced)
If you say so.

John and Sam step up to Martin and Ronnie.

JOHN
We're going with you.

MARTIN
Fine, but I'm doing the talking.

He and Ronnie get into his truck. John sneers as he and Sam jump into the truck's bed.

Father Davis also climbs in, sits beside John.

Martin and Ronnie glance back through the rear window, shoot the Priest a look of disgust.

Father Davis notices, doesn't seem to care.

FATHER DAVIS
As I said... I'll serve as a witness.

Earl, Viola, Teddy, and Steve, all watch as Martin's truck pulls back onto the dirt road and drives away.

Steve is visibly nervous, he glances at the others.

STEVE
Won't lie, I haven't been this nervous since I lost my virginity.

Teddy chuckles, pats Steve on the back.

EARL
Alright. Stick to the shadows, and keep quiet. When we get to the house, we wait for the signal.

Everyone nods in approval of the plan.

Earl leads his group into the dark woods.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Harsh moonlight stabs down through the tree canopies, illuminating the uneven terrain below.

Crickets CHIRP. An owl HOOTS.

Earl and his group move quietly through the darkness. Steve brings up the rear, his nervous eyes darting back and forth.

STEVE

Am I the only one who thinks maybe this isn't the best idea? Walking through some dark creepy woods, on our way to a witch's house. And by the way, if they really *are* witches, then they are *definitely* going to be expecting us, am I right?

TEDDY

No one's forcing you to come. Turn back if you want. Or tag along. I don't care which. Just, please... Shut the hell up.

Steve silently mocks Teddy behind his back.

EARL

Kid's got a point, Teddy. We should keep on our toes out here.

Viola glances up through the treetops, at the oddly bright crescent moon in the sky.

VIOLA

To think, this time two days ago, I was cookin' dinner for Jamal and I.
(smiles at the memory)
Meatloaf, green beans, and of course, some baked apples. Hm. That boy loved his baked apples.

Her smile is juxtaposed with her sad eyes.

Earl notices.

EARL

Campbell's favorite was macaroni and cheese mixed with hamburger meat. Told him it was a family recipe.
(cracks a smile)
But I really just ripped off hamburger helper.

Teddy chuckles to himself. Even Steve smirks.

The group pushes on through the darkness.

EXT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A beam of jagged moonlight cuts through the thick clouds and shines down onto the sinister-looking house.

All the lights are off in the house.

Martin's truck ROARS in the driveway, parks behind the police car and Debbie's van. Everyone gets out of the truck.

Ronnie motions towards the police car.

RONNIE

What's the law doin' here?

Martin shrugs, grabs a shotgun from inside his truck.

MARTIN

Don't matter.

He cocks the shotgun, starts toward the house. Ronnie falls in behind his brother.

Father Davis shoots a nervous glance John and Sam's way.

FATHER DAVIS

It's too quiet here... Something's not right...

SAM

No shit.

John hurries and gets in front of the brothers.

JOHN

Wait. We gotta face them out in the open. No matter what, don't go in that house. Do you understand?

MARTIN

Out of my way.

Martin pushes past John, aims his shotgun toward the sky and BLASTS off a shot.

MARTIN

Hey, Miss Hamilton! We'd like to have a word with ya'!

Ronnie grins, pulls a pistol out of his waistband.

RONNIE

Hell yeah, we do! We've got some questions that need answerin'!

Frustrated, John shakes his head. Then, something in the shadows beside the house catches his eye.

JOHN

(sotto)

Can't be...

As John starts off towards the side of the house, Sam grabs his arm and pulls him to a stop.

SAM

John? Where are you going?

Without taking his eyes away from the shadows where he saw the movemant, John nods back towards the Marin, Ronnie, and the Priest.

JOHN

You stay here with them. Make sure they don't go inside. You hear me? Stay out of the house. I'll be right back.

He pulls away, rushes towards the side of the house and disappears into the shadows.

Sam calls after him.

SAM

What the fuck are you doing? John!

No response.

Annoyed, she turns to face the others as Martin FIRES off another shotgun blast into the sky.

MARTIN

Get on out here! Let's not make this any harder than it has to be!

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Earl and his group all exchange worried looks. They heard the shotgun blasts.

EARL

Dammit.

They pick up their pace, run through the shadows. Their shoes pound the ground as they dart between various tree clusters.

Teddy falls behind, struggles to catch his breath.

Steve stops to help, but Teddy waves him off.

TEDDY

I'm fine. Just need a cigarette. Heh.
Go on, I'll be right behind you.

Steve nods, then runs off after Earl and Viola.

Teddy drops his head, places his hands on his knees, and takes deep breaths.

TEDDY

(sotto)
Goddamn... I'm so out of shape...

He straightens up, starts to go after the others when--

SOMETHING moves in the shadows nearby.

Teddy squints, sees a shadow dart behind a cluster of trees.

He moves after it.

EXT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

While Martin and Ronnie pace back and forth in front of the house, Father Davis steps beside Sam.

FATHER DAVIS

What's your story? Why are you here?

Without looking away from the house, Sam answers.

SAM

My family was killed by a witch when I was fifteen. John saved me. I've been helping him hunt these motherfuckers ever since.

Sam shoots a quick smirk at Father Davis, then moves and approaches the house.

SAM

(calls out)
There's no more running... No more hiding... We know what you are.

No response.

SAM

You're not getting away.

Still nothing, just an eerie silence.

Martin gives Ronnie a look. "Fuck this."

The two brothers push past Sam, move toward the front door.

SAM

Wait! We need to stick together! You
have no idea what you're up against!

Martin scoffs as he and Ronnie kick the front door open.

Father Davis steps beside Sam.

FATHER DAVIS

Martin, perhaps we should listen-

MARTIN

Go sit on a crucifix and pray!

RONNIE

Heh. Good one.

MARTIN

Shut up, Ronnie.

Nervous, Sam and Father Davis watch as Martin and Ronnie disappear inside the dark house.

Father Davis makes the sign of the cross, blesses himself.

SAM

That won't help you here.

EXT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - BACKYARD

Earl, Viola, and Steve, step out of the treeline. They look across the grassy backyard, at the creepy house.

Steve audibly GULPS.

STEVE

Yep. It's pretty much as scary as I
imagined it would be.

Earl notices that the group is one short.

EARL
Where's Teddy?

Steve whips his head around, peers into the dark woods. No sign of Teddy.

STEVE
Shit. He said he was right behind me.

EARL
Dammit.

Earl hurries back into the woods. Steve and Viola follow close behind.

VIOLA
Wait for us!

EXT. WOODS - OLD GAZEBO

The neglected structure is even creepier at night.

A thick mist rolls across the ground. Sinister.

John slowly approaches the rickety old structure, stops just before it.

WOMAN (O.S.)
(distorted)
John... John, why have you abandoned me? Why haven't you saved--

JOHN
Show yourself.

A brief moment passes, then--

John's wife, MELISSA PLEASENCE, 24, steps out from underneath the gazebo. The entire left side of her body and face is badly burnt.

John stares at her with sadness and regret in his eyes.

MELISSA
John...

She holds out her charred arm, reaches a hand out for John.

MELISSA (CONT'D)
Come to me...

John reaches his hand out, his fingertips mere inches away from Melissa's.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

I miss you... So much...

Their fingertips touch ever so slightly, then--

John pulls his hand away. He sighs, disappointed in himself.

JOHN

I shouldn't be here... I know you're not real. I know you're just here to distract me...

MELISSA

Then why are you here?

JOHN

I just wanted to see you again. One last time.

With that, John turns and hurries back in the direction he came from.

As Melissa watches him leave, her body fades away and completely vanishes.

INT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Martin and Ronnie step through the dark room, both with their weapons at the ready.

RONNIE

(hushed voice)

I can't see shit.

He reaches out for a nearby wall, flips a light switch.

POP! As soon as the lights turn on, the bulbs EXPLODE!

Ronnie jumps back, startled.

MARTIN

(hushed voice, annoyed)

Dammit, Ronnie!

RONNIE

(hushed voice)

My bad, my bad.

Martin looks down a long hallway, no movement.

KITCHEN

Ronnie pokes his head in the large, dark room.

The silence is deafening.

Satisfied that the kitchen's clear, Ronnie ducks back into the living room.

SLOW ZOOM on a wooden knife block resting on the counter. Suddenly, a CHEF'S KNIFE unsheathes itself!

It methodically glides through the air, moves into the--

LIVING ROOM

Ronnie steps beside Martin. Both brothers are oblivious to the floating blade slowly approaching them from behind.

RONNIE

Well, where the fuck are they?

Then, a LITTLE GIRL calls out from upstairs.

LITTLE GIRL (O.S)

Daddy!? Daddy, please help me!

Both Martin and Ronnie's eyes go wide. They recognize the girl's voice.

RONNIE

That can't be--

Martin doesn't wait for Ronnie to finish. He dashes up the staircase, quickly moves out of view.

MARTIN (O.S.)

Heather!? Baby, where are you!?

RONNIE

Hey! Wait!

Just as Ronnie goes to follow, the floating chef's knife shoots forward, stabs into the back of his head.

Blood pours down his chin and neck as the tip of the blade protrudes out of his cheek, just under his left eye.

As his body slumps to the ground, Judy steps out of the

shadows. She looks down at Ronnie's twitching corpse, holds her hand out in front of her.

The chef's knife slides out of Ronnie's skull, gently floats up towards Judy.

JUDY

Easy as cake.

She grins, grabs hold of the blade's handle.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Martin hurries down the hallway, moves past an old record player, frantically searches each room as he passes by.

MARTIN

Heather!? Where are you!?

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)

Daddy!

Martin rushes for the far bedroom, shoves the door open.

JUDY'S BEDROOM

The entire room is shrouded in creepy shadows.

Martin hurries in, searches every corner.

MARTIN

Heather!?

No one appears to be there.

As Martin steps through the room, we PAN DOWN to reveal--

--Caroline lying underneath the bed.

As Martin walks by, Caroline quietly crawls out from under the bed, stands up behind him.

MARTIN

(desperate)

Heather!? Where are you, Baby?

Caroline's eyes roll over white as she reaches her hand out toward the unaware Martin.

CAROLINE

I sent her to the Lost Woods to play

(MORE)

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
with the Butcher.

Before Martin can react, Caroline grabs the back of his arm. He suddenly jerks upright, his whole body stiff as a board. His eyes roll over white just like Caroline's.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
He wasn't very nice to her. Not very nice at all.

Martin remains motionless. He's in some sort of trance, totally paralyzed.

A wicked smile forms on Caroline's face.

CAROLINE
Would you like to play with the Butcher too?

Martin screams, horrified by whatever it is that he sees.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Earl, Steve, and Viola, all run through the sea of trees, search the shadows as they move.

EARL
Teddy!

SHUFFLING SOUNDS O.S. catch the trio's attention.

Steve points in the direction of the sound.

STEVE
Over there!

Earl leads the way as the trio run in that direction.

EXT. WOODS - CLEARING

A grassy clearing, surrounded on all sides by thick woods.

Earl, Viola, and Steve, all run out of the woods, spot Debbie's Husk standing in the center of the clearing. She faces away from the trio.

EARL
Debbie? What are you doin' out here?

He approaches Debbie's Husk.

Steve notices something, his eyes go wide.

STEVE

Holy shit!

As Earl steps closer, he sees what Steve sees.

Debbie's Husk stands over Teddy's battered corpse. It looks as if he's been beaten to death.

EARL

Oh, God! Teddy!?

Just then, Debbie's Husk spins around, finally revealing its disturbing features to Earl and the others.

Viola slaps a hand over her mouth, both disgusted and horrified at the same time.

STEVE

What the fuck happened to her!?

Before Earl can react, Debbie's Husk lunges at him. He's able to shove her away, but she continues to shuffle toward him.

EARL

Debbie! Don't take another step!

He trains his shotgun on Debbie's Husk, who ignores his warning and continues shuffling forward.

EARL

(under his breath)

Dammit.

Debbie's Husk takes another step forward.

Earl squeezes the trigger. BOOM!

The blast takes Debbie's Husk's head clean off.

EXT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE

Sam and Father Davis still stand out front, when--

The shotgun blast ECHOES through the night air.

Father Davis looks out towards the woods, in the same direction the blast came from. He's visibly shaken.

FATHER DAVIS
What's happening out there?

SAM
Nothing good.

Just then, a blood-curdling SCREAM rings out from the house.
It's Martin.

Sam draws her handgun and starts toward the front door.

SAM
Dammit! Enough waiting. This ends now.

FATHER DAVIS
Wait! The other guy said not to-

Too late. Sam walks through the front door, out of view.

Father Davis takes a deep breath, musters up what courage he can, and follows after her.

EXT. THE LOST WOODS - NIGHT

In the sky, dual full moons glow bright, cast an eerie orange glow over the heavily wooded area.

Thick fog creeps its way through the trees. An ominous image.

Suddenly, a frantic, blood-drenched Martin stumbles into view. He's badly wounded, his left arm severed at the elbow.

He struggles to stay upright as he moves through the dark.

The fog grows thicker, makes it nearly impossible for Martin to see.

A pig SQUEALS and SNORTS O.S., followed by HEAVY FOOTSTEPS.

Something BIG is chasing him.

Glimpses of it in the fog. It's huge, at least seven feet tall, shaped like a man, but with a pig's head. It wields a large rusty meat-cleaver. This is THE BUTCHER.

A root catches Martin's foot, trips him. He falls hard on his face, grunts in pain. He rolls over on his back, weakly lifts his remaining arm to defend himself.

MARTIN
 (practically sobbing)
 God no... Have mercy!

The HEAVY FOOTSTEPS grow closer.

Martin trembles with fear.

INT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - JUDY'S BEDROOM

Judy and Caroline stand before Martin, who remains frozen in place. His severed arm lies on the floor beside him.

He pisses his pants.

Caroline points at his fresh piss stain, giggles.

CAROLINE
 Ew. Someone needs a diaper.

JUDY
 And he was so tough and brave just a few minutes ago. Tsk.

Suddenly, Martin is brutally chopped to pieces by an invisible blade!

Blood splatters all over Judy and Caroline, who wear sadistic grins while they enjoy the show.

FOOTSTEPS O.S. grab Judy's attention.

SAM (O.S.)
 I know you're here, Witch! Come out and face the music!

EXT. WOODS - CLEARING - NIGHT

Earl and Viola stand over Debbie's Husk's headless body.

Steve stands off near the tree line, vomits.

STEVE
 (freaking out)
 What the fuck, man!? Did you guys see that shit!? Her face... What the fuck is going--

VIOLA
 Dammit, Steve! Grow a pair!

Steve wipes bile from his chin, takes a deep breath, does his best to calm himself down.

Earl crouches down next to Debbie's Husk, studies it. He looks up, notices SOMEONE duck behind a nearby tree.

EARL

Hey!

With his shotgun trained on the tree, Earl takes a hesitant step forward.

EARL (CONT'D)

Get out here. Now!

Griffin walks out of the treeline, his hands raised in the air. He glares at Earl.

VIOLA

It's the boy!

Earl moves closer to Griffin. He keeps his shotgun aimed at his face.

EARL

Try anything cute, and I *will* shoot you. Understand?

GRIFFIN

You'd shoot an unarmed child?

Viola and Steve step up behind Earl.

EARL

You're gonna tell us what happened on that bus. No lies.

Griffin replies only with a malicious smirk.

Earl frowns, frustrated.

EARL (CONT'D)

You hear me, boy? We want answers! What happened on that bus!? And what the Hell did you do to Debbie!?

Griffin remains silent.

Behind Steve and Viola, Debbie's Husk silently stands up.

Earl steps closer to Griffin.

EARL
Listen here, you little--

Just then, Guerra's Husk jumps out of the woods and tackles Earl to the ground.

Debbie's Husk attacks Steve from behind, drags him to the ground, crawls on top of him.

Griffin pulls out his dagger, charges after Viola, who aims her handgun as she backsteps.

VIOLA
Drop the blade!

Griffin presses forward, raises the dagger.

GRIFFIN
Make me, bitch!

Viola's finger tightens around the trigger.

VIOLA
Stay back! I'll shoot!

She continues to step backwards. Then, she trips over Teddy's corpse, falls on her ass.

Griffin sees his opportunity, dives at Viola, knocks the handgun out of her hands.

Guerra's Husk bites down on Earl's shoulder, tears flesh. He yells out in pain.

Debbie's Husk wraps her hands around Steve's throat, squeezes until his face turns red.

Griffin slashes wildly at Viola with his dagger. She holds out her arms in a desperate attempt to protect herself.

Earl glances over, sees that Viola and Steve are in trouble. He turns back to Guerra's Husk, kicks him back.

Still on his back, Earl aims his shotgun, BLASTS Guerra's Husk directly in the chest, takes him off his feet.

Struggling to stay awake, Steve manages to press his handgun up against Debbie's Husk's gut.

STEVE
(struggling to breathe)
Get off me!

He squeezes the trigger.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Steve empties his clip, but the bullets have no effect.

Earl forces himself to his feet, watches as Guerra's corpse also rises. He looks over at Debbie's Husk on top of Steve, sees that she's not stopping.

Then, he glances over to see--

Griffin continues his assault on Viola, slicing away at her arms and body.

Blood splashes all over. Viola cries out.

EARL
Enough of this.

Earl quickly loads more shells into his shotgun as he charges towards Griffin and Viola. He knocks Griffin to the ground, shoves the barrel of the shotgun in the boy's face.

Viola curls up in a ball, sobs. Blood pours out of her multiple deep wounds.

Guerra's Husk shambles closer to Earl, who presses his shotgun against Griffin's cheek.

EARL
Call these fuckin' things off! Now!

Debbie's Husk continues to choke Steve.

GRIFFIN
Not a chance, old man.

Guerra's Husk gets closer.

CLOSE ON Earl's face as he stares down at Griffin.

EARL
Have it your way.

BOOM! Griffin's head explodes into a mess of blood, skull fragments, and brain matter.

Both Debbie's Husk and Guerra's Husk collapse to the ground, finally dead.

Steve rolls over, violently coughs as he struggles to catch his breath.

Earl rushes over and kneels beside Viola. She's lost a ton of blood and is fading fast.

The look on Earl's face says it all. She's fucked.

EARL

Viola... It's gonna be okay. You're gonna-

VIOLA

(weak)

No... I'm n-not.

Steve rubs his neck as he steps up behind Earl. He looks down at Viola with sadness in his eyes.

STEVE

Can't we do something?

Earl shakes his head.

VIOLA

It's okay... I'll b-be with my boy...
My J-Jamal... It's o-okay...

Her eyes close, she exhales one final breath, then she dies.

Earl stands, his eyes locked on Viola's body.

STEVE

Maybe we should get the Hell out of here!? I mean... This shit is fucking crazy, right!?

EARL

Run if you want. But I'm seeing this through. Someone has to stop these... these *Witches*.

INT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Father Davis stands over Ronnie's corpse. With fear in his eyes, he looks down at the dead man.

FATHER DAVIS

Lord, protect us.

Just then, a HANDSOME MAN, 25, emerges from the shadows, steps towards Father Davis, who stumbles back in fear.

The Handsome Man holds out his arms, reveals that both of his wrists have been slit wide open.

Father Davis tears up.

FATHER DAVIS

Oh... Please... I'm so sorry. Please forgive me...

SAM (O.S.)

Father?

Father Davis turns to Sam, who stands at the bottom of the staircase. He turns back, but the Handsome Man is gone.

SAM

Don't believe your eyes in here. No doubt that bitch put some sort of curse of this place.

Then, "Burning Love" by Elvis Presley STARTS O.S. The LOUD MUSIC comes from upstairs.

Without hesitation, Sam darts up the steps.

Father Davis takes a final glance at Ronnie's corpse, then follows after Sam.

EXT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Earl and Steve exit the treeline, both out of breath.

The MUSIC from the house is muted, but still audible.

STEVE

(re; the music)

The fuck is going on in there?

EARL

Let's go find out.

They start towards the house, when--

John runs out of the shadows beside the house. He spots Earl and Steve, hurries over to them.

EARL

What the Hell are you doing? Where are the others?

JOHN

I... I saw my wife in the woods... The others, I think they went inside...

The three men turn and stare at the house.

STEVE

Well, shit.

INT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

The MUSIC BLARES from the old record player.

Father Davis slowly makes his way down the hall, moves past the record player, walks into--

JUDY'S BEDROOM

Where he finds Sam standing over Martin's gory remains.

FATHER DAVIS

Oh my-

He doubles over, vomits.

Sam can't take her eyes off the bloody mess before her. She shakes her head, disgusted.

SAM

For fuck's sake.

Father Davis composes himself.

FATHER DAVIS

(re; Martin's corpse)

The bodies they pulled out of the bus wreckage... That's what they looked like. Every single one of them.

A wave of anger overtakes Sam.

SAM

(calls out)

Bitch! Come out!

Just then, Judy emerges from a dark corner in the room. She waves a hand at Father Davis.

An invisible force knocks Father Davis back into the--

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Father Davis bounces off the wall, falls to the floor. He quickly forces himself up, rushes back towards Judy's bedroom door, only for the door to SLAM SHUT in his face.

He grabs the doorknob, tries with all his might to get the door open, but it won't budge an inch.

Sam SCREAMS O.S., accompanied by brutal THUDS and sick, wet SNAPPING SOUNDS. Something awful is happening to her.

FATHER DAVIS

Stop it! Leave her alone!

Father Davis throws his shoulder against the door. No use.

EXT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - BACKYARD

As Earl, John, and Steve, run towards the back door, Sam's twisted body SMASHES through the upstairs bedroom window, crumples in a heap before them.

The muffled MUSIC becomes much more clear.

A slight yelp escapes Steve's mouth.

EARL

Jesus.

John looks down in horror at Sam's broken body. Anger and regret twists across his face.

JOHN

Oh, God. Sam... I'm so sorry.

Tears well up in his eyes, roll down his cheeks.

INT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Father Davis continues to bang on the bedroom door.

Caroline GIGGLES O.S.

He finally stops struggling with the door, turns to see Caroline standing at the other end of the hall, right beside the record player.

She hums along to the chorus of "Burning Love".

Father Davis pulls out a small crucifix and holds it out toward Caroline.

FATHER DAVIS

You will not escape judgment, Witch!

Caroline innocently holds out her hands, steps toward Father Davis. She giggles.

CAROLINE

Didn't you Priests used to burn little girls at the stake?

FATHER DAVIS

They burned *Witches*.

Small balls of fire suddenly spark to life in the palms of Caroline's hands. She smirks.

CAROLINE

Guess this will be considered ironic.

Caroline thrusts her hands forward, hurls the fireballs at Father Davis. They hit him and engulf him in flames.

The burning priest screams out in agony as he thrashes about the hallway, then collapses on the floor.

Caroline claps her hands together, cackles with glee.

Judy steps out of her bedroom, quickly waves a hand at Father Davis' burning body.

An invisible force puts the flames out, leaving behind a charred, smoking corpse.

Judy turns to Caroline, frowns.

JUDY

Caroline. What have I told you about playing with fire?

Caroline hangs her head.

Judy smiles.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Always have fun.

Caroline looks back at her mother, smiles back at her.

EXT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - BACKYARD

Earl and John glance over at Steve, who can't tear his eyes away from Sam's mangled corpse.

EARL
Last chance, Kid. You can still get
out of here.

Steve finally turns away from Sam's body, looks Earl in the eyes. He does his best to act brave.

STEVE
Shit... I've already come this far.

JOHN
Let's not keep em' waiting then.

The three men rush over to the back door, kick it open, then disappear inside the house.

INT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Weapons at the ready, Earl, John, and Steve, quietly and carefully move through the dark room.

The MUSIC upstairs shuts off.

STEVE
(whispers)
So... What's the gameplan?

EARL
(whispers)
Find them and make them talk. They
make it difficult, we kill em'.

John glances around the kitchen, spots an old gas stove against the wall. He moves for it.

STEVE
(whispers)
John? What are you doing?

John reaches the stove. He grabs hold of each side of the bulky appliance, grunts as he struggles to pull it away from the wall, exposing a yellow gas line behind it.

He leans over the stove, reaches behind it, grabs hold of the gas line, and rips it loose.

JOHN
Now we have a backup plan.

John motions towards Steve's handgun and Earl's weapons.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Only fire your guns as a last resort.
This place is gonna fill up with gas
fast. Gonna be a helluva boom.

Steve lays his gun down on the counter, spots the knife block, grabs a sharp carving knife.

STEVE
I'll let you guys handle the shooting
from this point forward. You know,
just to be safe.

Just then, a LITTLE BOY, 11, sprints out of the shadows behind Steve, runs into the living room.

STEVE
(sotto)
It can't be...

Steve recognizes the boy, runs after him.

STEVE
Todd!?

EARL
Steve, wait!

Earl and John follow after him.

LIVING ROOM

Earl and John run into the room just in time to see Steve get pummeled by a flying sofa!

Steve drops his carving knife, which skitters across the floor. He writhes in pain on the floor, struggles to breath.

STEVE
(weak)
D-din't see... That c-coming...

He passes out.

Judy steps out of the dark hallway, laughs.

John doesn't hesitate. He charges right at her, his face red with anger.

JOHN
Remember me, bitch!?

JUDY
(casually)
Nope.

Judy waves her hand, telekinetically blasting John off of his feet and into the far wall. He hits so hard that the wall actually cracks!

As John crumples to the floor, Judy turns to Earl, who stands his ground and glares back at her.

EARL
We're gonna have a little chat.

He flips his shotgun around and holds it by the barrel like a baseball bat.

JUDY
Not likely. I don't converse with the livestock.

As Earl steps toward Judy, Caroline emerges from the shadows beside him, her eyes totally white.

She grabs hold of Earl's wrist, places him in a trance.

Earl's body stiffens as his eyes roll over white.

EXT. THE LOST WOODS - NIGHT

Earl stumbles through the fog, confused.

EARL
Where am I? What is this?

A pig squeals and snorts O.S.

Then, THE BUTCHER CHARGES OUT OF THE FOG, SWINGS IT'S RUSTY CLEAVER AT EARL, who barely dodges the attack.

EARL
(scared)
Jesus!

Earl scrambles away, runs as fast as his feet will carry him.

HEAVY FOOTSTEPS O.S. grow closer and closer. The Butcher is gaining ground fast.

SQUEALING seems to come from every direction.

The Butcher finally catches Earl, shoves him from behind.

Earl falls on his stomach, rolls over to see the Butcher STOMP toward him.

The Butcher raises it's rusty cleaver, slashes downward, but Earl rolls out of the way.

As Earl gets to his feet, the Butcher lashes out once more, this time slashing Earl across his chest.

Blood sprays out onto the Butcher, who snorts.

Earl stumbles back, clutching his bloody wound.

INT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Steve slowly comes to, looks over to see Judy and Caroline standing before a paralyzed Earl. Blood oozes out of the slash wound on Earl's chest.

STEVE

Earl?

Judy turns to Steve.

JUDY

I'm afraid your friend is indisposed
at the moment.

She lifts her left hand. As she does, all the furniture in the room levitates off the ground.

Steve stands up, rubs his chest.

STEVE

(under his breath)
This is fuckin' ridiculous.

Over by the far wall, John struggles to sit up. Blood drips out of a gash on the side of his head.

JOHN

(weak)
Damn... I felt that...

Maniacal laughter erupts from Judy as she sends the furniture flying toward Steve, who rolls out of the way.

He runs for Earl, reaches out for him.

STEVE

Earl! Snap out of it!

Just as he's about to grab Earl, a fireplace poker shoots into Steve's back and bursts out of his chest!

Steve drops to his knees, grabs hold of the fireplace poker protruding from his chest. He coughs up blood.

STEVE

F-fuck... Me...

Judy lowers her hand, dropping the remaining furniture.

JUDY

(to Steve)

Tsk. So close...

Steve slumps forward. He struggles to keep his eyes open. With the last bit of strength that he has, Steve reaches out and grabs hold of Earl's ankle.

STEVE

(weak)

E-Earl...

Earl's eyes return to normal as he snaps out of the trance. He whips his head around, gathers his bearings, notices Steve unconscious on the floor before him.

John manages to push himself to his feet.

Enraged, Caroline grabs the carving knife off the floor, charges at Earl.

CAROLINE

(screaming)

No one escapes the Butcher!

Earl readies his shotgun like a baseball bat.

Caroline raises the carving knife, prepares to strike.

EARL

Fuck the Butcher!

Earl swings hard.

The buttstock SMASHES across Caroline's face, causing her to do a full backflip before crashing down hard on her stomach.

She spits out blood and teeth, then rolls over on her back, cries out for Judy.

CAROLINE
(hysterical)
Mother!? Kill him!

Judy gives Earl a blistering death stare. She starts for him.

Earl quickly puts his boot down on Caroline's throat, pins the little girl to the ground. He applies a little pressure.

Caroline desperately claws at Earl's boot, gasps for air as she struggles to free herself.

Judy stops in her tracks.

JUDY
Let. Her. Go.

John weakly steps up beside Earl.

Earl tilts his head as he peers down at the innocent-looking child he has under his boot. He looks up at Judy, gives her a sly leer.

EARL
Give me answers. Now. Or she dies!

JUDY
You already know the truth. I'm a witch. And that...
(motions at Caroline)
Is my... Well... She's very dear to me. You see, I'd rather not have to create a new one...

EARL
Why did you kill all those kids? They were innocent!

Judy shrugs.

JUDY
I didn't kill them. I'd never draw that kind of attention to myself. My
(MORE)

JUDY (CONT'D)

little ones, however, can be quite mischievous. You have to understand... Young, innocent souls... They taste so delicious, it's really quite hard to resist. Especially for children.

Earl's face twists with rage.

JUDY (CONT'D)

They slipped up and got carried away. What's a mother to do? Kids will be kids, after all.

EARL

You're evil.

John nods in agreement.

JOHN

That's an understatement.

Judy notices Griffin's dagger tucked away in Earl's belt.

JUDY

That dagger! Where did you get that?

Earl glances down at the dagger, turns back to Judy, grins.

EARL

I took it off your boy... After I blew off his fuckin' head!

Judy's eyes go wide.

Earl puts all his weight on Caroline's neck. CRUNCH! He crushed her throat, killing the girl.

JUDY

(enraged)

No!

Tears stream down Judy's cheeks as she thrusts her hands forward, telekinetically pushes both Earl and John off their feet and out of the living room window!

Seething with rage, Judy stomps toward the shattered window, but is suddenly pulled to a stop.

She looks down, only to see Steve holding onto her leg.

STEVE

(weak)

Now! Shoot h-her now!

Judy scowls, grabs the handle of the fireplace poker, rips it out of Steve's back, then brutally jams it down his throat!

Steve lets go of her leg, gurgles and chokes as he desperately grabs at the fireplace poker's handle.

JUDY

(frustrated)

Just die already!

She grabs the handle, buries the fireplace poker deeper down Steve's throat, finally killing him.

Judy turns back to the broken window.

EXT. HAMILTON'S HOUSE

John helps Earl to his feet, both men bloodied from the glass. They glare through the shattered window, at Judy on the other side.

Judy releases a bloodthirsty scream.

JUDY

(enraged)

You killed my babies!

Earl cocks his shotgun, aims it at Judy.

EARL

Consider us even.

He squeezes the trigger. The shotgun BLASTS into the house, which immediately EXPLODES! Judy disappears in a massive ball of flames.

The force of the explosion knocks both Earl and John back a good twenty feet. They land in a heap on the front lawn.

Debris from the house rain down all around them.

After a few moments, Earl rolls over, his shotgun still gripped tight in his hands.

John sits up beside him.

They stare at the burning house, watch as the smoke billows

up into the night sky.

JOHN
It's over... It's finally over.

EARL
Good riddance.

Then, both men rise to their feet and start walking down the long driveway.

FADE TO:

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

Earl and John walk down the secluded road.

Up ahead, Earl's truck is parked on the side of the road.

As Earl shambles along, his chest wound continuous to ooze blood. He's in rough shape, pale and sweaty.

John notices.

JOHN
I told ya' so.

Earl shoots John a questioning look.

EARL
What?

JOHN
Before, I told you that you wouldn't like the answers you got. Told ya' so.

EARL
Heh. Fuck you.

John flashes a shit-eating grin.

JUDY (O.S.)
(angry, in pain)
Where do you bastards think you're going!?

The grin quickly disappears.

Both John and Earl's eyes go wide. They spin around.

Earl readies his shotgun, but--

No one is there. All is quiet.

JOHN

Shit!

CLOSE ON Earl's confused face.

EARL

Well!? Were are ya'!?

JUDY (O.S.)

Behind you!

Earl and John spin around, come face to face with a badly injured Judy. Her skin is black and charred.

Judy lunges forward, grabs hold of Earl's shotgun, rips it from his hands. She swings the shotgun hard, CRACKS it over Earl's head.

He groans in pain as he falls to the ground.

Judy turns to John, who lunges forward and punches her square in the face. She eats the punch like a champ, swings the shotgun upward and uppercuts John.

The hit knocks John on his back. He grabs his busted jaw and moans in agony.

Judy drops the shotgun, jumps down on Earl, wraps her burnt fingers around his throat and squeezes tight.

JUDY

(enrage)

Die! Die! Die! DIE!!!

As Earl chokes and gasps for air, he reaches down for the dagger tucked in his belt, grabs the handle.

Judy brings her face close to Earl's, glares deep into his bulging eyes. She practically growls at him.

JUDY

Before you die, know that your pathetic son suffered immens-

Before Judy can finish her sentence, Earl stabs the dagger up through the bottom of her chin.

Judy stumbles backwards, the tip of the dagger sticking out of the top of her skull. Her left eye rolls back in her head,

while her right eye twitches. A wet gurgling sound escapes her mouth.

Earl gets to his feet, looks at Judy, who's fading fast.

EARL
Burn in Hell, Witch.

Then, Judy slumps forward, finally dead.

John rubs his jaw as he stands up behind Earl. He spits blood onto Judy's corpse.

JOHN
Bitch.

Earl takes a deep breath, bends down and grabs his shotgun, then the two men make their way toward his truck.

FADE TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - IRON GATES - MORNING

The sun rises in the clear sky.

A flock of birds fly over the quiet cemetery.

Earl's truck pulls up to the iron gates, parks.

The driver's door opens and Earl falls out onto the ground. He still clutches his shotgun.

EARL
(sotto, weak)
C'mon... Get up.

John gets out of the passenger side, moves around the truck, goes to help Earl.

JOHN
We really need to get you to a hospital.

Earl waves John off.

EARL
No... I need to be with my wife...

He forces himself to his feet.

With sad eyes, John leans against the truck and watches as

Earl stumbles forward and moves into the graveyard.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Earl approaches his wife's tombstone. Just as he reaches it, he collapses down onto her grave.

He exhales a deep breath of relief, closes his eyes, smiles.

EARL

Hey Ellie... It's me again. Looks like we'll be seeing each other soon... I'm ready... I'm so ready...

A brief moment of silence. Then--

A CAW O.S.

Earl's eyes pop open.

He sits up, looks over and sees a large crow perched up on a nearby tombstone.

It CAWS again.

Earl stands, aims his shotgun, squeezes the trigger. BOOM!

The crow explodes into a cloud of blood and feathers.

SMASH TO:

BLACK

"You're Lucky It's Not 1692" by Memphis May Fire PLAYS over the END CREDITS.

FADE OUT.