

FADE AWAY

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FADE IN:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Dense forest. Somewhere in the Pacific North West. British Columbia in Canada, to be exact. Trees so tall. Ancient. Everywhere.

The night sky illuminates the forest. The bright stars twinkle overhead.

EXT. FOREST FIELD - DAY

The tall trees form a ring around a meadow of tall grass and short shrubs. A rabbit nibbles on foliage. It lifts its head, sniffing. Examining the air.

It bounces along to a new shrub. Bounce. Bounce. Softly. Agile. WHIP SNAP! Ensnared. A make-shift trap snares the rabbit's leg.

A disturbance from the nearby trees. It's a small boy, 12 or so. Skinny. He comes running to the trap. The rabbit struggles. Kicking.

The small boy lowers down to the rabbit. He swiftly pulls out a hunting knife from its sheath. And plunges it into the rabbit's throat. Vibrant crimson. Blood spurts onto the small features of his face. Red specks matching his freckles. Unflinching.

BOY

Sorry, rabbit... And thank you.

The boy looks up, to the sky. A silent prayer.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The boy walks through the trees, stepping over fresh fall. He holds the rabbit strapped to a stick over his shoulder. He walks and sings as goes.

BOY (singing)

"Heh, man, take a look at my
life... I'm a lot like yooooou..."

EXT. FOREST CAMP SITE - DAY

The boy's camp has a small pup tent arranged loosely over a branch. A small fire ready to go. Bundles of timber already prepared. A log bench rests near the firepit.

The boy sets his rabbit-stick down at the bench. He removes his gear: a saddlebag with a dangling rabbit foot charm, and his sheathed knife. He pulls out a bottle of water and drinks.

A curious chipmunk prances over. Boy notices.

BOY

Heh, Flashy... Don't worry. I brought you food too.

Boy reaches into his bag and pulls out some sesame seeds. He gives some to the chipmunk, placing a small pyramid of seeds on the log bench.

Chipmunk smells. Anxious. Curious. It darts over.

BOY

There ya go, buddy.

Boy watches the chipmunk eat. Nibbling. Rotating the shell and cracking it open.

BOY

That's it... It's worth work...
Like my dad used to say...

Boy walks to his tent. He grabs a large pawn leaf, previously set aside. He places the leaf out by the bench and firepit. Boy grabs the rabbit-stick. Knife. And places the rabbit carcass on top of the resting leaf.

BOY

Now how should I... Let's see...
(looks to sky, thinking)
Thank you, rabbit. Thank you
for providing... Bless your
spirit for the next world. May
you return again and be blessed...

BOY (cont'd)

I do this not just for... myself...
I do it for memory... I hope I
honour you.

Boy opens his eyes. He slips the knife into the rabbit. Bloody. He calmly prepares the rabbit.

The chipmunk remains. Eating.

EXT. FOREST STREAM - DAY

Bloody hands. Small hands. Water splashes over them. Clean.

The boy is at a stream. He's bent down, washing his hands in the stream. He pauses, looking at his reflection on the rippling surface. Shimmering face.

BOY

I miss you dad. Sometimes
I think I see you still... in my
face... I miss you.

Boy looks around. Nature. Sunlight pierces the canopy. Insects dance. Birds sing. The forest. Alive.

EXT. FOREST CAMP - LATE AFTERNOON

Flint struck. Sparks. Timber lit. Ignition.

The boy starts his fire. It comes to life with a few soft, long blows of air. Breath causing life. The boy grabs his prepared rabbit. Skinned. Bare muscles showing. Shining. There's a stick through the torso. Legs bound.

BOY

Thank you, rabbit.

The boy places the rabbit on the spit, prepared at the firepit. He sits at the bench. Watching. After a moment, the chipmunk returns.

BOY

Flashy... Hungry again? Lil
bugger.

Boy smiles. Chipmunk looks. Tilts its head. Examining. Boy fishes some seeds from his pocket. He gives some to the chipmunk. It eats them, right away.

BOY

Me and you, buddy. We're all
alone... Together...

(poking fire with a stick)

My mom is gonna be mad... I hope
she doesn't call the cops to
find me er sumthin... I left her
that note. But... This is
important. To me.

The boy watches the flames lick the cooking rabbit.
Roasting the meat. Crackling. The boy stares at the flames.
Wondering. Imagining. The flames stare back.

The boy sees images in the flames. Misshapen.
Hallucinatory.

The flames flicker, showing his father. His bearded face. His crooked smile.

Boy looks at Father.

BOY

One year ago. Today... July 1st...
Canada Day...

The flames show his father breaking down a house door
with a hard kick.

Three children cower in a corner.

A woman, their mother, screams, crying out. She is held tightly by a masked man. Balaclava. He is tall and thin. He has a long sharp knife to her throat. The woman's clothes are ripped from an earlier struggle. One of her breasts exposed. A savage moment.

BOY

That blaze... they woulda died.
All of em...

The fire remembers. It reflects in the flames. The flickering images of his father pleading with the thin man. Hands out, pleading with the air.

Father says something to the cowering children. Muffled voices, hollow, indistinguishable. They hold each other tight. Father looks to woman at knife point. He grits his teeth.

FATHER

(hollow, otherworldly)
Take me instead. Let them go.

The thin man does nothing. Says nothing. Father reaches out to the woman.

The woman eyes the thin man, above and behind her. Nothing.

Father holds his open hand out. Reaching. The thin man doesn't react.

The children cry, audible. Hopeless.

The woman looks to Father. He nods. Assuring. The woman reaches her hand out. Slowly. The thin man does nothing. Father takes the woman's hand.

BOY

Sometimes... I wish they did.

Chipmunk squeaks at the boy.

BOY

Not like that, Flashy... My dad saved em, I mean... A hero...

The flames reveal the truth. Father holds the woman for a brief second. Embers float by. The house burning around them.

The woman runs to her children in the corner. Father

watches them. They hug. Consoling.

Father looks to thin man. Hands out, apprehensive. The thin man bolts his hand out and pulls Father in. He holds Father, blade to throat.

 THIN MAN
Shhh... Nothing...
 (harsh whisper)
Fucking nothing...

Father watches the mother and kids. Together. The walls of their room start to burn. The fire spreading to them. Closer and closer.

Police sirens. Firetrucks.

 THIN MAN
Nothing. We all die here. The fire. It fuckin ends... That's how it happened before...
Say nothing or I'll put this blade through you.

Father looks out from the thin man's grasp. He doesn't struggle.

 COP (O.S.)
Fitzroy. We know you're in there. This is the police!...
FITZROY!

 THIN MAN
Nothing. Fuck! Say nothing.
He's lying. He doesn't know...
3 houses. On fire. This street.
Lies. Lies... Now stay hushed.
Stay alive.

Father grinds his teeth. Tight. He sees the woman and children. He has to.

 FATHER
In here! HELP! IN HERE!
HEEEELLLLL---

Father is interrupted by the blade. Silence over blood.
Gushing. With the final heart beats. Arterial spray. Arcing
out.

Father sees 2 cops enter the broken doorframe. Eyes close.
Father's face.

BOY

But a dead one... Why?
(staring into flames)
He always said to me: "Bad
things happen when good
people do nothing"... But, it
doesn't make sense...

The fire flickers one last image. The woman and children
quickly ushered outside by a policeman.

Boy pokes the fire, encouraging the flames to grow.

BOY

He died... I mean, that's a
"bad thing" that happened.

The chipmunk looks up at the boy. Examining.

BOY

I miss him.

EXT. FOREST CAMP - NIGHT

Dark now. The boy sits at the fire in his camp. He's eating
some rabbit.

BOY

Not as good as dad's, but I
still got time.

Boy looks to night sky. Starry night.

Chipmunk returns again.

BOY

Heh, Flashy. Come on over.
Fireworks. This is the best

BOY (cont'd)
spot for em. We'll watch em
together... like me and dad...

They look to the sky. And wait. The stars reflect in the little boy's eyes. They reflect wonder.

BOY
Mom doesn't get it... but the
night looks way better out
here. Where you can still SEE
the stars... Sooooo many...

Fireworks bloom in the starry sky. Brilliant colours.
Flowering.

BOY
She's prolly watchin the
fireworks with Evey right
now... her first Canada Day..

The fireworks take a few seconds between each new
colourful burst. Moments in between.

BOY
I wish she coulda met dad.
She'll never know what---

He stops. Mid-sentence. The boy looks at the sky. Amazed
by something.

Chipmunk looks up. Chirps. Runs away.

The little boy at his little fire, looking up and watching the
big big sky.

His jaw drops.

The boy sees the stars. Fading. One by one. Left sky. Right
sky. Right above. The stars fade away.

Fireworks again. The finale. Beauty juxtaposed against fear.
The stars continue to fade one by one behind the dazzle of
the celebration.

Dumbfounded. Awestruck. The boy watches the sky grow dark. Like fireworks in reverse. Each second, another star fades. Disappears. The fireworks are finished, as the sky gets darker.

Finally, the small camp site is all that lights the forest. Small. Insignificant. A speck.

The boy looks up. Watching in silence. Frozen. Fear. Curiousity. And then back to amazement.

A brilliant light streaks across the black sky. Closer. Faster. It's some sort of ship. Alien. It's shaped like a corkscrew football. It shimmers, but is otherwise near invisible against the blackness.

It approaches, burning treetops in its wake. Intense heat from the ship's body does the damage, not a jet engine. The ship slows. Hovering over the mountain edge, across from the camp site.

A flash of light. Blindness.

A humanoid shape appears before the child. A spacesuit. It reaches out with a long thin arm.

ALIEN
Child... Do not fear.

The boy holds his head in his hands.

BOY
It sounds like... inside my
head... What---

ALIEN (interrupts)
Child... Do not fear... Years
ago, you decided on my
appearance... So as not to
frighten you.

BOY (tilts head)
Yeah... you are like I would
expect... hmm...

ALIEN

As are you... I am not here
but there.

(points to ship,
then to self)

This is a mental representation.

BOY

What do you want?

ALIEN

Your stars have faded... Long
ago. Ages. Unknown to you...
Yet, now... you know... You
see.

BOY

What does---

ALIEN

Come with me... We know your
lineage. You have come from
sacrifice... An unknown quality
to us... Your new home awaits...
It will take decades to get
there... But your children will
live...

BOY

But my mom... my sister?

ALIEN

Only you... Come.

Alien extends his hand, awaiting acceptance. The boy thinks. Looks to the sky. Back to the fire. His memories. The chipmunk watches too. No longer alone, but with its family, 3 others.

The boy looks to the black sky. No stars. Eerie. He steps foward.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The ship whizzes back to space. Blinking out of vision.

11.

Leaving the night sky truly black... for a long peaceful moment. Only the moon.

And then...

A dozen or so other ships enter the atmosphere. Diverging into different directions. Looking for their own select passengers.

FADE OUT: