

THE CULLING

By

Stephen Herman

Lionsgate

November 20, 2019

FADE IN:

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - MORNING

It's dark in here.

All the windows have been boarded up with thick slats of wood. They're crooked. Overlapping. This was done in haste.

Wind chimes. Softly CLANKING in a breeze. This sound will continue for the entire scene.

There's a large jagged HOLE in the lower part of the FRONT DOOR. That hole is our only source of light in here. It's daytime outside.

Snow flurries blow in through it. An inch of snow already covers most of the ash and pine floors.

Speaking of which, some of the floorboards are missing. Broken off and splintered.

Sheets of PAPER flutter on the floor in the breeze.

CLOSE ON one of them. It's a page from the BIBLE...

INT. THE CABIN / KITCHEN - MORNING

Windows are boarded up in here too. This room's even darker.

But there's a small glow in here. Could be from a cellphone. We can't see the source just yet...

There's an old stove and fridge.

A dead cellphone on a counter.

All the cabinets are open. The drawers have been pulled out all the way. They're all empty. The silverware is missing.

There's a small table in a corner...

SOMEONE sits at this table in the darkness of the room. Their back to us. They wear a heavy coat and winter hat.

A small HANDY-CAM sits in the center of the table. The display screen is open. A video plays on it. That's where that glow is coming from.

A small MAHOGANY BOX sits next to the camera.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The box is open and empty. Red velvet compartments. Whatever was in here was valuable.

HANDY CAM DISPLAY SCREEN: We're in the same kitchen looking at the same chair that the "Watcher" sits in now. Except on the tape, someone else is sitting in this very chair.

A man (35). Wears a black long sleeved shirt. Disheveled. Unshaven. A pair of HANDCUFFS are locked onto his left wrist. The other side of the cuffs are still open.

This is DARYL COLLINS. And he looks like he's been through hell. Still going through it in fact.

Yet... there's resolve in his face - like a prisoner on death row who's come to terms with his fate.

The closed MAHOGANY BOX is on the table in front of him.

We can't tell if it's day or night but the lights appear to be working. When he talks we can see his breath. It's cold in here. He takes a while to speak. This is not easy to say.

DARYL (VIDEO)

If you've found this tape, it means I'm already dead. For the record, let it be clear that I did not take my own life. It may look that way, but there are reasons for my actions - reasons that I will try to explain now.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - SAME

The HEAD OF A DEER in the dark. It's mounted on the upper wall. Massive antlers rise above its head like a regal crown. It stares at us with black accusing eyes.

DARYL (V.O.) (VIDEO)

What you're about to hear may be hard to believe but every word of it is true. This is my story...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY (DARYL'S MEMORY)

RIFLE SCOPE POV: We're aiming at a SMALL DEER in the snow as it nibbles on some branches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A WOMAN'S VOICE whispers close to our ear.

ERIN (O.S.)

The deer has tunnel vision. All it sees is a meal. It's not paying attention to what's happening around it. Makes it an easy kill.

Reveal DARYL (12), holding the hunting rifle. One eye in the scope. Heavy concentration on his face. He lays on his stomach in the snowy grass in his hunting gear.

Lying next to him is ERIN (40s), his mother. In hunting gear as well. She's tough. A woman of the woods. Intense eyes, and right now they're locked on Daryl.

ERIN

What are you, Daryl? The hunter or the deer?

YOUNG DARYL

The hunter.

ERIN

Really? Then tell me what you see.

YOUNG DARYL

The deer.

ERIN

And what else?

He stays quiet. Not sure sure where she's going with this.

ERIN (cont'd)

You have tunnel vision too. All you see is the deer - your meal.

RIFLE SCOPE POV: She's right. The deer is all we see in the scope. Nothing else beyond the circle of the cross-hairs.

ERIN (cont'd)

Pay attention to what's going on around you.

He lowers the rifle and sees Erin is staring behind him now. He turns to see what she's looking at...

ANOTHER DEER

This one is much, MUCH bigger. A good 30-feet away. Its head peeking out of the bushes, watching them with SOLID BLACK EYES. They shimmer through the THICK FOG of the woods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The deer stands eerily still. ANTLERS rising high over its head like gnarled fingers. Its presence is threatening.

Daryl stares back, uneasy. Erin slowly takes the rifle from his hands.

*ERIN (cont'd)
(whispering)
The world is much bigger than what
you see in the scope.*

The BIG DEER remains as still as taxidermy. Erin carefully raises the rifle to her eye... readies the trigger --

CUT TO:

--BAM-- Birds take off from the TREE TOPS at the sound of the gunshot. It echoes through the dense foggy woods.

*CUT TO: **LATER***

Erin and Daryl move stealthily through the woods, their eyes on the ground. They're following CLOVEN-HOOVED PRINTS - the tracks the BIG DEER left in the snow.

*ERIN (cont'd)
I know I hit the damn thing. No way I
missed from that close.*

*YOUNG DARYL
But where's the blood?*

*He's right. There's no blood in the snow. Just those hooved prints. They follow the prints into a small **CLEARING**... all the way to the base of a tall tree.*

Erin, confused. Circles the tree. There are no prints anywhere else around it.

*DARYL
Where did it go, Mom?*

Erin doesn't have an answer. They both look up the tall tree to the dark branches above. Swaying in the cold wind.

*CUT TO: **LATER***

They walk home through the WOODS. Daryl leads the way, rifle on his shoulder. Erin lags behind, watching her son.

*DARYL (cont'd)
I didn't know they could grow that
big.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Now we're FOLLOWING DARYL from behind as he walks ahead. We creep closer. 12-feet away. Our steps CRUNCHING in the snow.

DARYL (O.S.)
What about you?

6-feet away from him now... CRUNCHING closer...

DARYL (O.S.) (cont'd)
Have you ever seen one that size?

3-feet away from his back now. A branch SNAPS on the ground behind Daryl. He turns at the sound...

And sees Erin is no longer there. He's alone.

DARYL
Mom?

MOMENTS LATER

Daryl walks back, searching for his mother. He reaches the same clearing from earlier and sees...

Erin at the base of that same tree. Her neck is craned all the way back. Just staring up at the branches above her. Her lips are moving. It looks like she's talking to someone.

But there's nothing in the tree. Just dark branches above.

Daryl stays quiet. Watches his mother, concern growing.

TITLE CARD:

THE CULLING

EXT. ST. ANGELA CHURCH - MORNING

Winter. A light snow on the ground.

A modest church in a low income New York neighborhood. A HEARSE is parked out front. Mourners in black enter the church.

FATHER CURTIS (PRE-LAP)
Anyone who knew Father Liam knew he had a way with words.

INT. ST. ANGELA CHURCH - MORNING

A FUNERAL SERVICE. The pews are pretty packed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A CLOSED CASKET on the pulpit. Next to it is a large framed photo of a priest. The man we've all gathered here for today. FATHER LIAM (70s). His face is stern and studious.

FATHER CURTIS (50s). A softer face, speaks from the pulpit.

FATHER CURTIS

He always had advice to give you,
whether you asked for it or not.

(polite laughter from
the pews)

I recall once he told me that there
are only three times in your life
that the Lord picks up the phone to
personally call you. The first call
is to wake you up - the day you are
given the marvelous gift of life. The
third call is the call to come home
and join Him in His kingdom...

(gestures to casket)

... A call that Father Liam has
recently received. But it is the
second call that is the most
important - the call to action. Our
vocation.

The first pew is filled with PRIESTS. Everyone wears the
signature WHITE CLERICAL COLLARS except for one man. He
wears a suit. Clean shaven, solemn. This is DARYL (35), all
grown up now.

FATHER CURTIS (O.S.)

Out of the three it's the only call
we have the choice of whether or not
to answer. Do some of you in this
room hear it ringing? Are you afraid
to pick up?

Father Curtis's words begin to trail off as WE STAY on
Daryl. His eyes on the verge of tears.

CUT TO:

EXT. ST. ANGELA CHURCH - DAY

PALLBEARERS push the casket into the back of the hearse and
close the backdoor. The hearse drives away.

A procession of cars follow. Mourners disperse.

INT. ST. ANGELA CHURCH - DAY

The church is empty and quiet now. Life-like statues of saints line the walls. They feel eerily similar to the taxidermy on the walls of the Cabin.

WE PUSH in on the CONFESSORIAL BOOTHS at the back.

INT. CONFESSORIAL BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Daryl sits in the darkness of one of the booths. His head low. The tears he was holding in are finally coming out.

Someone knocks on the DIVIDER in the next booth. He sits up quick. Stays still.

WOMAN (O.S.)
Hello? Father, is that you?

Daryl remains quiet.

WOMAN (O.S.) (cont'd)
I heard you in here. I... I just need
to talk to someone. Are you a priest?

Her voice is strained with emotion. He can clearly hear that she is going through something as well.

WOMAN (O.S.) (cont'd)
Hello?

Daryl waits. Hoping the woman will leave.

WOMAN (O.S.) (cont'd)
(emotional)
I don't hear Him anymore. His voice.
I used to hear it when I prayed but
now... nothing. It's quiet. I...

She sobs to herself. Daryl listens to her crying. Wipes away his own tears, then slides open the divider. Now we can see the woman but her face is obscured by the MESH.

DARYL
And not hearing His voice - has it
affected other aspects of your life?
How are those things at home?

WOMAN (O.S.)
(hesitant...)
I was in a... a real bad place
before. He helped me get through it.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN (O.S.) (cont'd)

I'm much better now. Still... I miss hearing His voice. I don't know, Father. Am I doing something wrong?

Daryl takes a moment to consider his words.

DARYL

When I first started coming to this church, I didn't know this part of the city well. I'd constantly get lost. It was so bad I ended up getting a GPS for the car. Five years later, I still have it. Not that I need it anymore, I know my way around now. Still, I keep it on whenever I drive.

(making sense of it all)

It's always nice to hear a familiar voice steering you in the right direction. But to me, it sounds like you already know your way, sister. Maybe not hearing Him means you're on the right track. I'm sure you'll hear Him if you ever get lost again.

(then)

And if not, come back and I'll give you my GPS.

She laughs a little. The weight lifted from her voice. We can hear her smile.

WOMAN (O.S.)

God bless you, father. Thank you.

She leaves her booth. Daryl listens to her go.

FEMALE GPS (PRE-LAP)

In 300 feet you will reach your destination.

EXT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE - DAY - LATER

A modest two-story house on the outskirts of the city. It's a bit secluded. The neighbors are not that close.

A black weather worn SUV parks on the grassy area in front. Daryl gets out. He's still wearing his suit.

He joins the crowd of MOURNERS entering the house.

INT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - LATER

The post-funeral gathering. Boutiques and sympathy cards on tables. Mourners talk quietly among each other.

Daryl quietly sneaks away. Heads down a hallway.

INT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE / STUDY - DAY - LATER

Daryl opens the door and steps into the room.

On one wall is a massive bookshelf filled with old books.

An old RECORD PLAYER sits on a shelf. Its cover is open.

A writing desk littered with open books and papers.

Daryl moves to the desk. There's a framed photo on the desk of Father Liam and a black and brown GERMAN SHEPARD.

He picks up a book from the desk. Turns it over to see the cover. His face darkens.

A pentagram symbol is on the cover.

He turns all the other books over. They all deal with ANGELS and DEMONOLOGY. Sketches of odd symbols. All the papers are covered with handwritten notes and post-its.

Apparently some very dark research was going on here.

Daryl's gaze moves back to the record player on the shelf. The open cover. Record on top. Just waiting to be played.

He heads to it. An un-labeled LP sits on it. We get the sense that what's on it is important. He turns it on.

The room seems to grow quieter as the LP starts to spin. The needle begins it's slow decent to the grooves...

It's just about to connect when-- A KNOCK at the door.

Startles Daryl. He stops the record. Turns to see...

Father Curtis entering. He approaches Daryl with a somber smile. They shake hands.

FATHER CURTIS
Daryl. Just the man I wanted to see.

CONTINUED:

DARYL

Father Curtis. Thank you for the lovely service today. What a touching message.

FATHER CURTIS

(re: photo of Liam)

All his words, really. All I did was hold the microphone.

(then)

And... How's the sabbatical going? Will we be seeing you back in your collar anytime soon?

This is a sore topic for Daryl.

DARYL

There's still some things I need to figure out first...

FATHER CURTIS

I hear you moved back upstate?

DARYL

Not far. Just a three hour drive. My mother's old cabin. It's where I grew up.

FATHER CURTIS

Ah, I see. Getting in touch with your roots again. The beginning is always a good place to start.

Father Curtis squeezes Daryl's shoulder.

FATHER CURTIS (cont'd)

You belong behind the pulpit, not the pew. But take as long as you need. I'll be praying for you.

Daryl looks back to the photo of Liam and the dog.

DARYL

What happened to Parker?

FATHER CURTIS

Who?

DARYL

His dog.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FATHER CURTIS

They brought him to the shelter I believe. A couple days ago.

(shakes his head)

Poor thing. A neighbor heard him barking for three days straight. When they came over to check on him they found Father Liam instead...

Father Curtis's gaze moves across the books on the desk. His face darkens as well.

FATHER CURTIS (cont'd)

When was the last time you two spoke?

DARYL

Over a year ago.

(off his surprise)

I turned my phone off for a bit. Just needed to unplug.

FATHER CURTIS

I see.

DARYL

He was trying to reach me.

FATHER CURTIS

(a little too fast)

Did he leave a message? Say anything?

DARYL

I haven't been able to listen to them yet.

FATHER CURTIS

(understands)

I imagine it must be difficult hearing his voice at this time.

(but...)

Do give me a call once you listen. I'd like to know if he said anything.

DARYL

(sensing)

Anything like what?

Father Curtis wonders if he should say anymore. Finally...

FATHER CURTIS

I want to show you something.

INT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE / BASEMENT STEPS - MOMENTS LATER

They descend a dark narrow STAIRCASE towards the basement door. Father Curtis leads the way. We can still hear the distant CHATTER of mourners upstairs.

FATHER CURTIS

The church will be launching its own investigation into this matter.
Except for the police, no one else has seen this.

They reach the bottom. Father Curtis's hand pauses on the light switch. They stand there in the dark for a moment.

FATHER CURTIS (cont'd)

I'm only showing you this because the two of you were close. Maybe you can help me to make sense of it all.

Daryl nods. Not quite sure what this is all about.

Father Curtis finally clicks the switch. A light comes on above them revealing the BASEMENT DOOR. It's blocked off with yellow police tape.

One long vertical slit has been carved straight through the wood of the door. It's jagged and uneven - done in haste. You can see right through the slit into the dark room on the other side.

FATHER CURTIS (cont'd)

Father Liam had a weak heart. He had no business doing such strenuous work by himself. They believe it's what caused the heart attack.

Daryl just stares at the slit in the wood.

DARYL

What was he trying to do?

FATHER CURTIS

Who knows. He never got to finish.
This is where they found him. He was still holding onto the saw...
(grim)

He had a crucifix in the other hand.

FLASH-CUT TO: A dead Father Liam sitting on the floor like a propped up rag doll. His back against the open door. One arm hanging limp over his head, his hand still clutching the handle of a HACKSAW lodged in the door. The other arm hangs

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

loose at his side, the hand holding a CRUCIFIX. Eyes wide. His mouth agape in a silent scream.

FATHER CURTIS (cont'd)

There's more...

Father Curtis lifts the police tape. Daryl ducks his head underneath it, pushes the door open further and enters the darkness of the room. Father Curtis follows.

INT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE / BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Father Curtis hits another light switch. A lone light bulb flickers on the ceiling. It'll keep doing that.

Now we can see the room. The ceiling's ten feet high. The entire space is empty. No shelves. No boxes. No junk.

But that's not the weird part...

The entire room is covered in BIBLE PAGES. Or rather what's left of them...

The ceiling. The floor. The back of the door. All four walls were once completely covered in scripture. But now most of it has been torn through. Shredded paper hangs off the walls like streamers. The pages are yellowing, beginning to fade. They were put up a very long time ago.

The floor is littered with ribbons of torn pages.

Daryl does a 360. Taking in the room. All those words surrounding them. Pages flickering eerily in the light.

FATHER CURTIS

We thought it might have been the dog
but...

He looks up to the ceiling. Daryl follows his gaze.

Long SCRATCH MARKS run across the ceiling in jagged patterns. They're eerily shaped like antlers.

FATHER CURTIS (cont'd)

...no dog could have done that.

Both men stare up at the ceiling.

FATHER CURTIS (cont'd)

Any idea what Father Liam could have been doing in here?

CONTINUED:

Daryl is quiet. But his face says he might have a clue.

AUTOMATED VOICEMAIL (PRE-LAP)
Your voicemail box is full. You have
thirty new messages. < BEEP >

INT. SUV - DAY - LATER

It's still parked in front of Father Liam's house. Daryl's behind the wheel. He's got his phone on speaker.

Father Liam's voice is troubled.

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL)
< BEEP >
Daryl, where are you? We need to speak. It's urgent.
< BEEP >
I keep thinking about that day I found you in the woods. I just... I had this-this feeling. That's why I came back to the cabin.
(beat)
I feel that feeling now. Like-like you need help... Call me.

Daryl listens. His jaw clinches slightly. The phone shakes in his hand. A low RUMBLING SOUND rises in his ears.

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL) (cont'd)
(a dog BARKS in B.G.)
-- Something's wrong. I can feel it.
Where are you? We need to speak.
There's something I need to tell--

Daryl quickly hangs up. The RUMBLING stops. The car quiets.

Daryl looks back to Father Liam's house outside the window. His face guilt ridden.

INT. SUV / MOVING - DUSK

The SUV parks in the PARKING LOT of a HIGH SCHOOL. Daryl turns the engine off. Sits behind the wheel, watching people enter the school doors.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL / GYMNASIUM - MOMENTS LATER

An ALCOHOLISM SUPPORT GROUP. About twenty people sit in a circle of folding chairs in the center of a basketball court. An EMOTIONAL MAN bears his soul to the group.

EMOTIONAL MAN

...she finally allowed me to see my kids again. I mean, it's only once a week, but it's a start. That's all I can really ask for.

He sits. The circle applauds him.

OWEN (40s), a kind face and beard claps hardest. He's leading this thing.

OWEN

Thank you for that, Calvin.

(to the group)

Would any one else like to share with us tonight?

His eyes move around the circle and land on Daryl. He's still in his suit. Daryl averts Owen's gaze.

A WOMAN (30s) slowly stands. She looks very troubled.

WOMAN

Hi, My name is Susan and I'm an alcoholic.

EVERYONE

Hi, Susan.

SUSAN

This is my first time here --

Actually no it isn't. I...

(looks to Owen)

Can I start over?

OWEN

Take your time, Susan.

She takes a deep breath. Re-calibrates herself.

SUSAN

What I'm trying to say is I've been here before. I've reached this point.

It's just a different room with

different people. Same stories. The

meetings help... until they don't.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN (cont'd)
 (tearing up)
 And then I don't come back...

She tries to go on but can't. Owen is about to speak when--

DARYL
 But you're here now.

Everyone turns to Daryl. He's looking at Susan.

DARYL (cont'd)
 (calm, reassuring)
 There's something inside you that
 keeps bringing you back. It's that
 voice, that noise. Whatever it is,
 trust me, it won't go away. But every
 time you're here, it gets a little
 more quiet. The life you want out
 there, starts in here. But it all
 depends on this moment. On what you
 do now. On what you want.
 (then)
 What do you want, Susan?

You could hear a pin drop.

SUSAN
 I want to come back.

Everyone claps. Susan sits, wiping tears away. Daryl's words
 have really resonated with her. She looks lighter. Her
 burden a little less heavy.

One woman, JANET (35), studies Daryl. Impressed.

CUT TO: **LATER**

The meeting's over. The chairs are empty. Everyone mingles
 by the snack table. The cups of coffee are going fast.

Daryl reaches for the last cup at the same time Janet does.
 Their fingers touch. They both pull their hands back.

DARYL
 I'm sorry.

JANET
 No, go for it. That's all you.

DARYL
 Please, I insist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JANET
OK. Here's how we settle this...

She slides the cup in between the two of them.

JANET (cont'd)
Whichever one of us had the worst day
today, gets the cup. You first.

Daryl is awkward. Not sure what to say.

JANET (cont'd)
That bad, huh?

She puts a lid on the cup and hands it to him.

JANET (cont'd)
Wanna talk about?

He looks uneasy. Janet jumps in and saves him.

JANET (cont'd)
It's OK. I get it, you're the strong
silent type. I like those.
(extends a hand)
We haven't formally met. Janet.

DARYL
(shakes her hand)
Daryl.

He glances toward the exit.

DARYL (cont'd)
It was nice to meet you.

JANET
I was just heading out myself. I'll
walk with you.

She grabs her coat from a nearby chair.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL / PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

They exit the doors. Janet wears her coat now. Daryl's still
got the coffee.

JANET
So what do you do, Daryl?

DARYL
For work?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANET
For work. For fun. In general.

DARYL
I don't do much now.
(beat)
I used to teach.

JANET
Yeah? Why'd you stop?

DARYL
(long beat)
It didn't feel right, being up there
in front of my students, knowing I
had a problem. I felt like a fraud,
like I was hiding a secret. It got
harder to believe in what I was
teaching. Couldn't do it anymore.

It's the first time he's ever admitted that out loud. He
sees the way she's studying him. He throws it back to her.

DARYL (cont'd)
What about you? What do you do?

JANET
I'm going through a bit of a
transition myself. Kind of in between
jobs. I just got out of a long
relationship.

DARYL
I'm sorry to hear that.

JANET
Don't be. It's a good thing. He was
more the strong violent type - the
reason I ended up in these meetings.
But that part of my life is over.

(gestures to the
school)
Now I'm just dealing with this part.

They reach the trunk of Janet's Volvo. This is good night.
Janet gets a little more serious now.

JANET (cont'd)
Daryl. You've been coming here for
over a year and never said so much as
a hello to anyone. And then the one
time you open your mouth, you say
something like that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Daryl senses something. His gaze moves to THE TREES at the edge of the parking lot. Their dark twisted branches sway in the brisk wind. Something about them... gnawing at him.

JANET (cont'd)

What you said tonight really connected with Susan. Some of the others too, I can tell. You're good at this. Maybe next meeting, if you tell your story, it might help--

DARYL

(looks back to her)

--Susan was right. Different rooms. Different people. But we all have the same story.

JANET

I highly doubt that.

DARYL

(smiles)

Good night, Janet.

JANET

(smiles back)

Good night, Daryl.

He walks to his SUV. Janet looks over to THOSE TREES Daryl was just staring at. She sees nothing strange about them.

When she turns back to her car she sees Daryl has left the cup of coffee on her trunk for her. She smiles.

CUT TO:

SOMETHING watching from THOSE TREES...

A STRANGE POV: There is NO color, although the "darks" are slightly darker. We're not looking through human eyes.

We watch Daryl get into the SUV and drive away...

FEMALE GPS (PRE-LAP)

Turn left to merge onto highway.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DUSK

MONTAGE of the SUV driving... down a highway of city traffic... On a more desolate highway in a more RURAL UPSTATE NEW YORK area... On to narrow winding roads that go through overgrown trees...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We're a good ways from the city. It's snowing more up here.

INT. SUV / MOVING - NIGHT

Daryl drives, pensive.

FEMALE GPS

In 300 feet, you will reach your destination.

The SUV lurches up the narrow path. Tall trees on either side of us. It's like we're driving through the legs of giants. We slow to a stop in a small clearing.

FEMALE GPS (cont'd)

You have reached your destination.

Outside the windshield, an old LOG CABIN looms ominously before us. It's big. Rustic. In need of some repairs.

Daryl puts his coat and hat on before he gets out.

EXT. BACK OF THE CABIN - NIGHT

He unlocks a WOODEN SHED connected to the back of the Cabin. There's an ancient GENERATOR inside it.

He grabs an oil can and pours some into the generator. He gives the ripcord a few tugs to get it going. It hums to life. And a few lights pop on in the windows of The Cabin.

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Daryl enters. Locks the door behind him.

The room is large. Taxidermy hangs on the upper walls - deer, foxes, raccoons, and rabbits.

A NAVAJO RUG covers most of the floor.

An old COUCH by the FIREPLACE with a CHIMNEY.

A HUNTING RIFLE hangs above the fireplace.

A filled bookshelf. The small MAHOGANY BOX on top of it.

There are more rooms going towards the back of the Cabin down a long HALLWAY.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daryl hangs his coat on a rack by the door. Moves to an old cast iron WOOD BURNING STOVE in the corner. He opens it and feeds some logs inside. Lights the fire.

INT. CABIN / BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daryl lies in bed in the dark room. He stares up at a lone CROSS that hangs on the wall above him. It's slightly crooked. Looks mighty small up on that wall all by itself.

He gets up and straightens it. Lies back in bed. Pulls the covers over his head. Tries to get some much needed sleep.

The room is eerily quiet now. After the longest beat...

A loud *C-R-E-A-K* of bed springs. Like an added weight is slowly pressing down on the mattress.

Daryl stirs. Slowly pulls the covers down from his face...

INT. THE CABIN / BEDROOM - NIGHT (DARYL'S MEMORY / DREAM)

...revealing that he is 12-years-old now. Young Daryl sits up in the dark. He's dressed in pajamas.

SOMEONE is sitting statue-still on the foot of his bed.

It's Erin. In her nightgown. Silhouetted by the dim light coming from the crack of the door. We can't see her face.

YOUNG DARYL

Mom?

ERIN

Shhh... Go back to bed.

YOUNG DARYL

What are you doing?

ERIN

I'm just watching you...

It's hard to tell in the dark but something seems off about her face. It looks longer, swollen even...

She rises from the bed. There's something off about her walk too. It feels forced. Unnatural. She slips through the crack of the door and she's gone.

Young Daryl sits frozen on his bed. Alone in the dark now. Listening to Erin's footsteps move down the hall. They stop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daryl strains his ears. Hears WHISPERING coming from further down the hall. Erin is talking to someone...

Daryl gets out of the bed. Creeps to the door. He peeps through the crack... expecting to see Erin further down the hallway. But instead sees--

-- A HAND. On the floor.

Someone's on all fours right outside of the door.

Daryl gasps. Looks up to see A FACE IN THE CRACK OF THE DOOR... It's Erin's face... On top of ANOTHER FACE.

Like someone's wearing a mask of his mother. SOLID BLACK EYES peer through the holes where Erin's eyes used to be.

Daryl FREAKS OUT. Screaming, backing away...

As Erin pushes the door open and CRAWLS into his room on all fours... And rises to her feet... Staggering forward...

Growing as she comes... TALLER... EVEN TALLER... ANTLERS RIPPING THROUGH THE FLESH OF HER TEMPLES... SPROUTING UP FROM HER HEAD... GROWING TO THE CEILING LIKE WILD VINES...

Daryl SCREAMS. Backing into a wall. The CROSS above his head falls--

MATCH-CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / BEDROOM - NIGHT

--BAM-- the cross hits the floor.

Our Daryl jumps up in his bed, continuing the same scream. Breathing hard. Bed sheets soaked. Eyes searching the dark.

Landing on the cross on the floor.

That RUMBLING sound again. Low in his ears.

KITCHEN

He opens the freezer. Pulls out an empty bottle of VODKA. Rubs the cold bottle on his forehead and on the back of his neck. Trying to cool down.

The RUMBLING gets lower and stops. The Cabin is quiet.

FEMALE GPS (PRE-LAP)
Continue on this road for 400 feet.

INT. SUV / MOVING - DAY

Daryl drives through a busy city street.

FEMALE GPS
You have reached your destination.

He parks outside of an ANIMAL SHELTER.

PRE-LAP the sound of dogs BARKING.

INT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

A FEMALE EMPLOYEE leads Daryl through a room of barking DOGS in cages. It's noisy. They have to talk loud at each other.

DARYL
German Shepard. About two years old.
Brown. Black nose.

FEMALE EMPLOYEE
Yeah, we got him three days ago.

They reach a cage with the same dog we saw in the photo on Father Liam's desk. This is PARKER (2). He barks excitedly when he sees Daryl. Starts doing circles in his cage.

FEMALE EMPLOYEE (cont'd)
Good thing you came when you did.
They were gonna put him to sleep this afternoon.

The employee opens the cage and Parker flies out into Daryl's arms. Daryl playfully wrestles with him.

DARYL
Hey, Parker. How you doing, huh? Long time. You miss me? Huh?

INT. SUV MOVING - DUSK

Daryl drives. Parker is in the passenger seat wearing his seat belt. He's missing his dog collar.

DARYL
Lost your collar, too? Welcome to the club.

EXT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The SUV parks in front. Daryl gets out. Opens Parker's door. The dog jumps out. Runs to the house, happy to be home.

Daryl finds the KEY hidden underneath a garden gnome. He unlocks the door and follows Parker inside.

INT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE / THE STUDY - NIGHT

Daryl keeps the lights off. Don't want the neighbors to catch him snooping. Parker sniffs around the room.

Daryl's at the desk, shining his phone over all the books and papers. He grabs some. Folds them up and puts them in his coat pocket.

ROSARY BEADS are sticking out of one of the books. He picks it up. Opens it to the page marked by the beads. Sees...

Old illustrations of doors with crosses cut through them.
Some depict rays of light shining through the cross. Hmmmm.

Daryl rips out the pages. Folds and pockets them too.

And now the record player on the shelf.

Daryl moves to it. Turns it on. The unmarked LP starts to spin. The needle slowly falls onto the groove and--

--The voice of a PREACHER **BLARES LOUDLY** from the speakers. The volume is WAY UP. The voice, authoritative. Commanding.

PREACHER (RECORD PLAYER)
 --AND PUT ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD,
 SO THAT YOU TAKE YOUR STAND AGAINST
 THE DEVIL'S SCHEMES--

Parker bolts out the room. Daryl almost has a heart attack.

-ERRRR. He stops the record. The room quiets.

Just Daryl trying to slow his heartbeat.

INT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE / BASEMENT STEPS - MOMENTS LATER

Daryl and Parker head down the dark steps. Daryl shines his phone ahead of them. Parker stops halfway. Doesn't want to go any further.

CONTINUED:

DARYL
Come on, boy. What's wrong?

But Parker won't go. He starts to whimper.

Daryl shines the light down at the bottom of the steps. Realizes this is the spot Parker found Liam. Daryl frowns.

DARYL (cont'd)
It's OK, boy. Just stay here.

Parker stays. Daryl continues down to the basement door. Shines the phone through the jagged slit, into the room behind it. He moves the police tape up and goes under...

INT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE / BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

He enters. Pockets his phone. Turns on the flickering light. He moves along the walls, pouring over the torn Bible pages.

Behind the door has the most damage. The scratches here seem more violent. *Like something was clawing to get out...*

He moves to another wall. Very slowly he reaches a hand out to it. His fingertips connect with a yellowing page--

MATCH-CUT TO:

INT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE / BASEMENT (DARYL'S MEMORY)

--Daryl's hand touching the very same page. Except it's a new page, not fading. And Daryl's hand is much younger now.

REVEAL a 12-year-old Daryl smoothing out the page on the wall. The wall is empty. This is the very first page being glued on to it.

A stack of BIBLES, a bucket of glue and a brush are close by his feet. A ladder is set up in the middle of the room.

A priest stands near by. We recognize him from the picture at his funeral. This is a younger FATHER LIAM (50s). He wears his collar.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
Good. Now, the next one.

Young Daryl looks up to the rest of the wall, at all that empty space.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YOUNG DARYL
This will take forever.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
*I'm sorry, Daryl. I can't help you.
 You must do this on your own.*

Daryl tears out another page from a Bible and glues it next to the first page on the wall. Liam watches him closely.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
Remember, it is your faith in these words that will protect you.

....CREEEEEAK....

BACK TO SCENE

The CREAKING of floorboards above snaps Daryl out of his memory. He pulls his hand back from the wall.

Parker starts BARKING from somewhere upstairs.

Daryl looks up at the ceiling. Stands there in the flickering light of the room. Listening. Realizing...

Someone else is in the house.

INT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE / BASEMENT STEPS - MOMENTS LATER

Daryl comes out of the basement door. Parker is still barking upstairs.

Daryl starts up the dark steps when suddenly the barks STOP.

Daryl listens. Waits... The house is silent.

He continues up the steps. Cautious now. He reaches the door at the top. Slowly opens it...

INT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE / DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

He moves out into the dark hall. No Parker. No sounds. He crosses into the...

LIVING ROOM

Finds a lamp on the table. Turns on the light. The room is empty. But now he notices...

The front door is wide open. *Did he leave it open?*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARYL
(worried / whispers)
Parker?

He starts for the door when he hears something that makes him STOP. The WHISTLE of a tea kettle. Slowly rising.

There's something about that sound. It's bringing him back to a dark place.

He slowly turns to the KITCHEN. It's dark in there. The blue flame on the stove causes shadows to flicker on the walls.

That stove didn't turn itself on. *So who's in the kitchen?*

DARYL
Hello?

Only the kettle answers him back. The whistle rising. Daryl moves for the

KITCHEN

Turns on the light. There's no one in here. He goes straight to the stove. Turns the flame off. The kettle quiets.

He turns from the stove, now noticing an ADJACENT ROOM. BEAD CURTAINS hang in its doorway.

They sway softly, like someone has passed through them just moments ago. There's nothing but pitch blackness on the other side of the beads.

DARYL (cont'd)
Is someone there?

No response from the darkness. The beads are still now.

He s-l-o-w-l-y moves towards the adjacent room. Passing the kitchen table. And that's when he sees it...

Something has been carved into the top of the table.
A single long jagged letter. The letter... "**R**"

Daryl, freezes. He's seen this before.

The WHISTLE of the kettle starts up again. But there's no flame under it. The sound is not coming from the stove...

It's coming from the other side of the beads. From the dark... Slowly rising...

CONTINUED: (2)

Daryl, shaking now. HE KNOWS what's in that room.

He takes a step back and--

--The whistle abruptly STOPS. Quiet.

Daryl keeps backing way, eyes on the beads...

When... CREAK... CREAK... The sound of something HEAVY. Moving on the floorboards. Coming from the darkness of that room. Getting closer... louder...

THAT STRANGE POV AGAIN: *We're in the dark room, Moving towards the kitchen. Watching Daryl through the beads...*

KITCHEN

THE BEADS SLOWLY START TO PART... WIDER... AND **LIFT FORWARD, UPWARDS...** as *SOMETHING UNSEEN* comes through them...

We glimpse the OUTLINE OF A VERY TALL SHAPE coming into the room. The beads at the top of the doorway start to clip off and CLATTER to the floor. Scattering in all directions.

Daryl, shaking now. Backs away into the

LIVING ROOM

Keeps moving backwards. His eyes on the kitchen and--

CREAK... CREAK... COMING OUT OF THE KITCHEN -- **FOLLOWING HIM**

Daryl panics -- spins -- Goes for the first door he sees -- pulls it open -- runs inside the --

INT. THE STUDY - CONTINUOUS

The room is dark. Daryl slams the door shut just as -- WHAM -- *SOMETHING SLAMS* on the other side of it.

Daryl runs for the massive bookshelf. Crouches down on the side of it. Hiding. Holding his breath.

The door slowly opens... *SOMETHING* steps inside the darkness with him. Floorboards CREAK... CREAK... CREAK...

Daryl, crouched on the side of the shelf. Eyes darting around. No way out of here except for the way he came in.

CREAK... CREAK... It stops in the middle of the room.

CONTINUED:

Daryl doesn't move. Neither does the thing. They both wait in the horrible silence of the dark room.

Daryl shaking. Grips the side of the shelf. Slowly tries to crane his neck around the shelf for a look...

--And accidentally knocks a book off. A big old heavy one--

--and SMACK-- It hits the floor. *Shit!*

CREAK...CREAK... Now it knows where he is. It's coming...

And Daryl does the only thing he can do.

He turns around and pushes the bookshelf forward...

It tips over and CRASH. But the shelf doesn't hit the floor.

It stops, tilted sideways in mid air. Its fall stopped by something unseen underneath it.

Daryl makes a run for it... around the shelf... to the door.

WE SEE BEHIND HIM, THE ENTIRE SHELF STARTS TO RISE UP OFF THE FLOOR, LIFTED BY INVISIBLE ARMS. BOOKS FALLING.

But Daryl's out the door before it comes down--

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- He pulls the door shut. And we hear the THUNDEROUS CRASH of the shelf from inside.

Parker starts BARKING from upstairs.

Daryl, in full adrenaline mode. Pulls a large COUCH across the floor and slides it up against the door of the STUDY.

He darts for the front door -- and he's out -- running for the SUV -- throws himself inside --

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

-- He's frantic -- finds the keys -- starts the car -- hits the gas -- Speeds off -- Shaking behind the wheel.

He zooms down the road. Further away from the house.

Keeps driving. And driving... Then slows to a stop.

CONTINUED:

He looks up at the rear view mirror. At Father Liam's house in the distance. His face, scared. Conflicted.

Because he can still hear Parker barking in the distance.

DARYL
Just go. Go now.

But he doesn't.

DARYL (cont'd)
Don't be stupid, Daryl. Leave.

But he can't do it. He steels himself. Makes his decision.

DARYL (cont'd)
Damn it!

And reverses the SUV all the way back up the road. All the way back to the house. The front door is still wide open.

He can hear Parker BARKING from upstairs.

Daryl stares up at the bedroom window. Mind racing...

CUT TO:

INT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE / FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Daryl cautiously enters the front door. He holds the door frame tight with one hand. Afraid to let go. Afraid to step further into the house...

He eyes the STAIRCASE. A good 15-feet away.

He looks down the HALLWAY. The couch is no longer blocking the door to the STUDY. It's been turned on its side.

The door is wide open. Cracked and hanging off the hinges.

IT'S OUT...

Daryl's eyes scan the house.

Where is it? Is it still here? It can be anywhere...

But the house is still. Quiet. Only Parker barking upstairs.

Daryl has to make his move. He pries his fingers from the door frame and steps into the house. Moves for the STAIRS...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He takes slow quiet steps... Careful not to make noise... Straining his ears for any other sounds... His eyes dart around like pin-balls.

Every step to the STAIRCASE feels like eternity. Finally he reaches the bottom step...

Slowly raises his leg to step up--

--when the COFFEE TABLE in the **LIVING ROOM** SUDDENLY FLIPS UP INTO THE AIR by itself. CRASHES up to the ceiling. SHATTERS.

IT'S STILL HERE!

Daryl shoots up the STAIRCASE. Taking them by twos...

And *IT* *FOLLOWS HIM!*

THE STEPS CRACK AND SPLINTER IN RAPID SUCCESSION AS IT STOMPS UP AFTER HIM. IT'S RIGHT ON DARYL'S HEELS --

-- He makes it to the **UPSTAIRS HALLWAY** -- Scrambles up the hall in the direction of Parker's barks.

AND STOMP-STOMP-STOMP-STOMP -- *Coming up behind him* -- **IT'S RUNNING** after him! Behind Daryl --

-- The CEILING BULBS SHATTER -- The hall darkens -- PICTURE FRAMES are knocked off the walls, breaking on the floor --

-- Daryl just makes it into --

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- And slams the door shut. Locks it as --

--*WHAM* -- SOMETHING SLAMS AGAINST THE CLOSED BEDROOM DOOR.

Parker's under the bed. Scared. Barking like mad.

Daryl gets on his knees, reaches under the bed for the dog.

DARYL
Parker! Come on!

--*WHAM* --*WHAM* --*WHAM* from the bedroom door...

Daryl grabs Parker by the paws -- Pulls him out -- picks the barking dog up and carries him to the window --

--*WHAM* --*WHAM* -- CRACK! The door starts to splinter...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daryl slides the window open with his free hand and...

Wait... Is he really about to drop the dog out the window?

Yup. That's exactly what he does...

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE OF FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

...But Parker lands safely onto the roof of the SUV.

We now see Daryl has parked the car right under the bedroom window. Only a 5-foot drop to the roof of the car.

Daryl climbs out the window next -- when CRASH! We hear the bedroom door come down inside...

Daryl lands on the car roof next to Parker. Picks him up and slides down the windshield with the dog in his arms... Onto the hood... and onto the ground.

He shoves Parker in the car and gets in behind the wheel. The SUV zooms out from the side of the house... onto the road and disappears in the distance.

That RUMBLING SOUND starts up again. Low. Building...

INT. SUV - NIGHT

The SUV is parked across the street from a **LIQUOR STORE**.

Parker sits quietly in the passenger seat watching Daryl.

Daryl's at the wheel. Staring at the entrance of the store through the window. Its neon lights beckoning him to enter.

His hands grip the wheel. Shaking. Sweating. Jaws clinching.

The RUMBLING growing. It's so loud now it seems to be shaking the car.

He grabs the door handle...

Parker whimpers. But the sound is lost in the rumbling.

DARYL

...don't.

But his hand isn't listening to him. It opens the door.

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - DAY (DARYL'S MEMORY)

Light snow on the ground. We're in a wide CLEARING.

A 12-year old Daryl is digging a DEEP HOLE into the snowy ground with a shovel. The hole's about 5-feet deep and 3-feet wide. He's up to his head in it, covered in dirt.

Erin stands at the edge of the hole watching her son dig.

ERIN

That's deep enough. You did good.

She helps pull him up out of the hole.

ERIN (cont'd)

Get some of those sticks and branches over there. Cover it up good.

Daryl obeys. Starts covering the hole with big branches, hiding it from sight. Erin watches him as he does this.

YOUNG DARYL

What's it for?

ERIN

It's a trapping pit. The deer falls in and gets stuck. Can't climb out. You can kill it right here from the top of the hole.

(points)

Mark that tree over there so we can remember where it is. Don't want any accidents now.

Daryl uses a SWISS ARMY KNIFE to carve a LONG CROSS into the trunk of the tree closest to the pit.

CUT TO: LATER

EXT. THE CABIN - DUSK (DARYL'S MEMORY)

CHOP -- An AX comes down on a log, splitting it in half.

Young Daryl chops wood in the dying light of the day. He's right at the edge of the woods where the trees start.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He gathers the split logs and piles them into a WHEELBARROW along with the ax. Starts pushing the barrow back toward the Cabin. It's 100-feet away. The lights are on in its windows.

A log falls from the barrow. Daryl stops to pick it up...

...and hears a CRUNCH behind him.

He whirls around. There's nothing there but the dark trees. Their swaying branches beckoning him to come back.

Daryl puts the log back in the barrow. Continues on. His boots crunching underneath him.

And from behind him, a much louder, heavier CRUNCHING mimics his. It's like SOMETHING is trying to match his footsteps.

Daryl stops. So does the crunching. He turns again... but sees nothing there.

He turns back around, eyes the Cabin. He's halfway there now. He continues on. Picking up the pace this time...

And so does the CRUNCHING behind him...

Daryl pushes the barrow even faster. Logs falling off as he goes. Behind him the CRUNCHING picks up speed too.

Daryl panics. Throws the barrow over. Breaks into a full on run. Behind him, CRUNCH-CRUNCH-CRUNCH - It's RUNNING too...

Daryl doesn't dare look back. He darts up the porch... Swings the door open and --

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS (DARYL'S MEMORY)

-- WHAM -- runs right into Erin, who's standing near the door. Almost knocks her over. She drops the bottle of WHISKEY she was holding. It tumbles on the floor, spilling.

ERIN

The-hell's the matter with you! Look what you made me do!

She's clearly already drunk. Picks the bottle back up.

ERIN (cont'd)

Where's the wood?

Daryl, out of breath. Can't even begin to explain...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERIN (cont'd)

Quit messing around out there and get that wood! You want us to freeze to death?!

She stumbles into the kitchen with the bottle, mumbling under her breath. Daryl turns back to the open door...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CABIN - MOMENTS LATER - DUSK (DARYL'S MEMORY)

Young Daryl cautiously approaches the overturned wheelbarrow. It's quiet. Only his boots crunching now.

He reaches the barrow. Gets it upright. Quickly gathers the logs and throws them back in. His eyes dart around, watching the trees. He finishes packing up the logs...

But he can't find the ax. It should be right here...

He searches for it in the snow. Where the heck did it go?

And then he spots it... At the edge of the woods. Right by the trees. Just laying there in the snow.

How the hell did it get all the way over there??

Daryl starts for it. Slow and cautious. He's almost at the ax when he stops. He's noticed something in the snow...

The wheel marks from the barrow... the trail of boot prints he left... There are other tracks in the snow beside them.

LARGE CLOVEN-HOOVED PRINTS...

There WAS something out here with him. Following him...

Daryl, spooked now. Just wants to get the heck out of there. He runs for the ax... but right as he's about to grab it--

-- STOMP - the handle of the ax SUDDENLY SNAPS in half under an invisible weight. The splintered ends of the handle lie crooked in a large CLOVEN-HOOVED PRINT now left in the snow.

SMASH TO:

INT. SUV - DAY

-- BAM - A PALM SLAPS the driver side window - waking Daryl. He jolts up in the backseat. Parker starts to bark.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A POLICE OFFICER (40s) is at his window. His muffled voice coming loud through the glass.

POLICE OFFICER
Move it! No sleeping here.

The officer continues on to another car.

Daryl, drunk and disoriented. Starts to get his bearings. Sees Parker. Sees it's daytime.

Sees the LIQUOR STORE outside the window.

Then he sees a HALF EMPTY BOTTLE OF WHISKEY on the floor by his boots. He stares at it as if it were a coiled snake.

PRE-LAP the sound of APPLAUSE.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

The ALCOHOLISM SUPPORT GROUP applauds the man who's just finished telling his story. SUSAN has kept her promise and returned. She looks better than the last time we saw her.

Daryl is here. Head down. Disheveled. Shaken up. Still a bit drunk. His face is wrapped in sweaty guilt.

OWEN
Would anyone else like to share
tonight?

His eyes fall on Daryl. The whole room's been looking at him. Especially Janet. She watches him, concerned.

OWEN (cont'd)
Daryl? Would you like to share?

A beat. Daryl slowly stands.

DARYL
My name is Daryl and I'm...
(tries again)
My name is... I'm... I'm...

The circle tries to encourage him.

RANDOM PEOPLE
Hi, Daryl... Hey, Daryl... Take your
time, buddy... Welcome, Daryl... When
you're ready... You can do this...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daryl finds Janet in the circle. They lock eyes. She gives him an encouraging nod - go on.

He opens his mouth to try again when--

--a LOUD CRASH comes from behind him.

He jumps -- spins -- knocking his chair over. Ready to run.

But it's only a JANITOR. He's noisily collapsing a folding table in the back of the gym.

Daryl turns back around. He's backed himself into the middle of the circle. MURMURS go around the circle.

OWEN

(stands)

Is everything OK? Daryl?

Daryl can't do this. Can't be here. He hurries for the door. The murmurs follow him out into the

HALLWAY

Janet comes out of the room. Hurrying after him.

JANET

Daryl, hold on!

(catches up)

Are you in some kind of trouble?

He keeps walking. Eyes darting around. Janet has to keep up.

DARYL

I have to go.

JANET

(fishing)

See you tomorrow?

DARYL

(beat)

Yeah, tomorrow.

They both know he's lying.

JANET

Give me your phone.

Daryl stops and pulls out his phone. Hands it to her. She plugs her number into it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JANET (cont'd)
Call me, day or night. Whenever
you're ready to talk.

Daryl pockets the phone and hurries out of the exit doors.

OFF JANET, concerned. Alone in the hall, holding her phone.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Daryl hurries to the SUV. Parker's in the passenger seat, waiting. Daryl gets in and speeds out of the lot.

INT. SUV / MOVING - NIGHT

Daryl drives. Parker's in the passenger seat wearing his seat belt, eating from a can of dog food in the cup holder.

FEMALE GPS
Turn left to merge onto highway.

EXT. THE CABIN - LATER - NIGHT

The SUV parks in the middle of the clearing in front of the Cabin. Daryl hurries out. Parker follows.

EXT. BACK OF THE CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Daryl and Parker, in the **SHED**. The door is ajar. Moonlight slips in through the crack, giving us some visibility.

Daryl pours oil into the generator. He's frantic. Moving fast. He yanks the rip cord a few times to get it going. The generator hums to life. He turns for the door when...

Parker arches his back. Starts to GROWL at the door.

Daryl goes still. Listens... Hears what Parker hears...

A SLOW CRUNCHING outside. *SOMETHING* is moving around out there. Shuffling closer to the shed...

Daryl quietly grabs a SHOVEL from a corner. He drops down low next to Parker, watching the door with him.

Parker growls louder. Daryl holds the dog back.

A SHADOW crosses the crack of the door, blocking off the moonlight. *IT'S RIGHT OUTSIDE NOW...*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Parker starts barking. Daryl scared, readies the shovel...

JANET (O.S.)
Daryl?

The door opens. Janet steps inside the shed. Daryl jumps up.

DARYL
What are you doing here!

JANET
I followed you. I just wanted to make
sure you were OK--

DARYL
You can't be here!

He grabs her arm and forcefully pulls her out of the SHED. Parker follows along, barking.

JANET
(alarmed)
Why? What's wrong?

He's pulling her hard, forcing her to move. Her boots slipping in the snow underneath her.

JANET (cont'd)
...Daryl, you're hurting me...

But he's not listening. He keeps looking around at the woods. At the trees. His paranoia is contagious. She's looking around too, searching for the threat.

They reach the **FRONT OF THE CABIN.**

Janet's Volvo is parked behind his SUV. Her headlights are still on. In the lights she can see the panic in Daryl's face. He looks crazed. Dangerous, even. It's bringing up bad memories... Triggering something... She's breathing hard now... holding her chest...

JANET (cont'd)
(gasping)
Let go... Daryl... stop...

DARYL
You have to go!

She pulls free from his grasp and drops in the snow in front of the headlights. On her knees, shaking. Hyperventilating.

Daryl, alarmed. Drops the shovel. Tries to help her up...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARYL (cont'd)
Hey, hey... I'm sorry--

--She puts her arm up to keep him away - *Don't touch me!*

He backs off. She kneels there in the snow, taking in slow deep breaths... Trying to steady herself. This isn't the first time this has happened. She knows what to do.

Daryl just stands there, watching helplessly. Regret in his face. Even Parker is quiet, watching the scene.

Finally she gets it under control. Climbs back on her feet.

DARYL (cont'd)
...I'm sorry.

She doesn't look at him. Just gets in her car. Slams her door. Daryl moves to her window.

DARYL (cont'd)
Janet, wait!

She reverses the car and turns. Speeds back up the path. Daryl watches the tail lights disappear into the trees.

CUT TO:

HANDY CAM DISPLAY SCREEN: The tape that the "watcher" is currently watching from the opening scene. We'll be coming back to this from time to time. Get used to it.

Daryl continues his story. He sits in the same chair in the KITCHEN. The closed box in front of him. His head in his hands. The cuffs dangle off his wrist.

DARYL (VIDEO)
There are stages to demonic possession. First, the demon will reveal itself. After that, it'll try to make physical contact.

He stares off camera, considering this. Looks back.

DARYL (VIDEO) (cont'd)
Once it touches you, it can get inside.
(then)
I had to keep it out.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Daryl pulls the NAVAJO RUG back revealing a WOODEN HATCH in the center of the floor. He pulls it open. Quickly descends the narrow steps into the...

CELLAR

Parker at his side. Daryl turns on the lights.

It's big. Cluttered. BOXES piled on the walls... SHELVES crowded with junk and OLD TOOLS... An old wooden SNOW SLED on the floor... An OLD TV. An old pair of SPEAKERS.

Parker snoops around, sniffing through all the old junk.

Daryl, frantic. Searches the shelves. Comes across the old HANDY CAM - the same one he's telling his story on now.

He regards it for a moment. Goes back to his search.

Finds a TOOL BOX and some SLATS OF WOOD.

PRE-LAP the sound of loud, fast HAMMERING.

MAIN ROOM

Daryl boards up a window. Hammering with haste. Pounding nails into the wood. Swinging hard and fast. BANG-BANG-BANG

The nails are already in but he keeps swinging. Taking his anger out on the wood. BANG-BANG-BANG-CRACK-

The plank splits in half. He stops. Turns and sees...

Parker standing behind him. Watching. He's scaring the dog.

DARYL
I'm sorry boy.

That RUMBLING starts low in Daryl's ears. He shakes his head. Tries to ignore it. Grabs another slat and starts to board up another window.

- **KITCHEN.** He boards up the window in here too.
- **BATHROOM.** Same story in here.
- **BEDROOM.** He finishes boarding up the window and leaves.

But WE LINGER on the empty spot of the wall where the cross used to hang. On the lonely nail.

CONTINUED:

HALLWAY

Daryl. Hammer in hand. Wood under his arms. Heads to the closed door at the end of the hall. This is Erin's old bedroom but we'll call it the **LAST ROOM** from here on.

His hand pauses on the knob. This door hasn't been open in a long time. Finally...

LAST ROOM

He enters the darkness. Hits the light.

Old dust covered furniture and picture frames on the walls.

Daryl wipes dust off one of the frames with his sleeve revealing a yellowing NEWSPAPER ARTICLE inside it.

The headline reads "**Officer Charles Collins, Killed In the Line of Duty.**" Under the headline is a photo of a man with an honest face wearing a POLICE UNIFORM. One hand up to his cap in salute.

Daryl moves to the next frame on the wall. Wipes the dust away, revealing a photo of Erin (30s) holding hands with the same man from the news article. This is Daryl's FATHER.

Daryl stares at his parents.

That rumbling growing in his ears. He goes back to his mission. Starts boarding up the windows in here. He hammers loudly. Trying to drown out the rumbling...

BATHROOM

The silhouette of an old claw foot tub behind the closed shower curtain.

Daryl's at the sink, trying to uncap a bottle of Aspirin. His hands shake too much. The pills spill out and clatter into the sink. He grabs a handful before they go down the drain and dry swallows them. The rumbling growing...

CUT TO:

KITCHEN - LATER

In the corner, Parker licks a plate of corned beef clean.

Daryl paces the room, cellphone in hand. Just staring at the screen. He's sweaty. Jaws clinching. Talking low to himself. The RUMBLING'S gotten louder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARYL (cont'd)
(to himself / barely)
I'm sorry, I-- You can't help me
with this... I'm sorry... sorry...

CLOSE ON PHONE: A shaky thumb hovering over Janet's number. He can't bring himself to press it...

He throws the phone on the counter. Runs his shaking hands through his hair. The rumbling follows us to....

CUT TO: **LATER**

The phone lies still on the counter.

Daryl sits at the table. Been here for some time now. He's got that old SWISS ARMY KNIFE in his hand. Slowly twisting the CORKSCREW part into the top of the table.

Parker looks up from his empty plate. WHIMPERS at Daryl.

We can HEAR the corkscrew TWISTING into the wood. The RUMBLING increasing. Parker WHIMPERING. All the sounds fusing together as one. Deafening...

God, he needs that drink...

He abruptly gets up and hurries out of the room. WE LINGER on the corkscrew, still sticking out of the table...

MAIN ROOM

Daryl hurriedly puts his hat and coat on. He takes off his BELT. Wraps it around Parker's neck - a makeshift leash.

He kneels in front of the dog. Gets close to his face.

DARYL (cont'd)
I need you to be my eyes and ears out
there, OK? You understand? You let me
know if it's out there. OK boy?

Parker just stares at him. Daryl stands. Grips the leash tight. He moves to the front door. Parker starts to whimper.

DARYL (cont'd)
We'll be quick. I promise.

EXT. THE CABIN - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

It's snowing. A couple of inches cover the ground now. The woods look ominous in the moonlight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daryl and Parker cautiously step out the front door. Daryl closes the door behind them. They stay on the porch.

Daryl scans the area. It's quiet. The SUV is about thirty feet away. Daryl looks back at Parker.

DARYL

Anything?

Parker seems to be fine. He just stares ahead at the woods.

DARYL (cont'd)

Let's go.

The two hurry off the porch toward the SUV. Daryl holding the leash tight. His boots CRUNCHING in the snow. His eyes darting around, watching. Alert.

They reach the SUV. Daryl opens the back door. Holds the leash with one hand. Searches for the HALF BOTTLE OF WHISKEY he left on the floor with the other. He can't find it.

DARYL (cont'd)

Come on. Come on.

Parker starts to GROWL. Sensing something. Daryl spins around, can't see anything. Parker starts to BARK.

Daryl panics. Jumps into the back of the SUV and pulls the dog in with him. He slams the door shut.

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

It's dark in here. All the windows are covered in snow.

Parker jumps over into the front passenger seat. He's BARKING at the WINDSHIELD - at something outside.

Daryl climbs into the front seat and turns the car on. The lights come on inside the car. He hits the wipers.

WHA-THUNK. They clear the snow off the windshield. But it's still too dark to see anything out there.

Parker keeps barking at the glass. Something's definitely out there. Daryl turns on the HIGH-BEAMS.

WINDSHIELD POV: The bright lights illuminate the dark woods up ahead. And at the edge of the WOODS, right where the trees start, stands...

A SNOWMAN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But this is NOT the cute Christmas cartoon kind with the button eyes, scarf and carrot nose.

This thing is tall. Frail and man-shaped. And it's been standing in the same spot for many hours - hence why it's covered in snow.

Snow outlines the MASSIVE TWISTED ANTLERS that stand on the top of its head making this thing stand about 9-feet tall.

DEMON POV: *Because by now you should have guessed what this thing is. We're watching Daryl and Parker in the windshield.*

The snow man looms there about 40-feet away from the car, just beyond the reach of the headlights.

Parker's BARKING louder now that he sees it.

Daryl is too scared to move. Just stares at the thing when--

--**IT MOVES!** IT SHIFTS FORWARD AND ALL THE SNOW SLIDES OFF OF IT. AND THEN... **IT'S GONE**. LEAVING TWO LARGE HOLES IN THE SNOW WHERE IT JUST STOOD.

BUT WE KNOW THE DEMON IS STILL THERE, EXCEPT WE CAN'T SEE IT NOW THAT THERE'S NO SNOW COVERING IT.

Parker goes wild. Daryl, eyes dart around. Searching for it when-- CRUNCH... CRUNCH...

TWO NEW LARGE HOLES JUST APPEAR IN THE SNOW. THE DEMON HAS JUST TAKEN TWO STEPS CLOSER TO THE CAR.

Time to go!

Daryl wills himself to move. Finds the door handle to open it but... he stops. Has a better idea.

He starts the car. Starts reversing the SUV back towards Cabin.

And in the WINDSHIELD... CRUNCH... CRUNCH... TWO NEW HOLES APPEAR IN THE SNOW. IT'S JUST STEPPED CLOSER...

Daryl keeps reversing. In the WINDSHIELD...

CRUNCH... CRUNCH... ANOTHER TWO HOLES APPEAR. CRUNCH... CRUNCH... AND ANOTHER TWO. **IT'S FOLLOWING THE CAR...**

Fuck that!

CONTINUED: (2)

Daryl SLAMS the gas. The SUV zooms backwards... Snow shooting from the spinning tires -- until -- BAM-- the bumper hits the porch. Parker's goes berserk.

And in the WINDSHIELD... CRUNCH--CRUNCH--CRUNCH--CRUNCH-- HOLES POPPING UP IN THE SNOW -- **IT'S COMING CLOSER -- FAST!**

Daryl pops the trunk and makes a mad dash for the back... crawling over the seats... pulling Parker with him.

On the way -- he spots the WHISKEY BOTTLE on the floor -- Snatches it up -- keeps going -- crawls out the back --

EXT. THE CABIN / PORCH STEPS - CONTINUOUS

-- onto the steps of the porch... scrambles up them on his hands and knees... AND BEHIND HIM--

CRUNCH--CRUNCH--CRUNCH--CRUNCH-- THE HOLES ARE COMING CLOSER, FAST... THEY REACH THE STEPS OF THE PORCH...

...Daryl gets up -- pulling Parker with him and they scramble through the front door -- inside the --

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

--Daryl KICKS the door shut behind them. Frantically locks it just as WHAM-- something SLAMS on the other side of it. Shaking the door in its frame.

Parker's barking at the door now. Daryl clutches the leash, pulling him back from it. Parker fights to get free.

Daryl lets him go. Parker doesn't go for the door. He starts moving around the room. Growling at the walls as he goes.

The demon is moving along the walls outside the Cabin now.

Parker follows it along the wall to a boarded up window. He growls at it when CRASH -- the sound of glass breaking on the other side of the wood. It's broken the window.

BANG - BANG - it slams against the wood, trying to get in.

Daryl's frozen. Eyes on the wood. Hoping it holds.

The banging stops. Parker stops barking too. The Cabin goes still. The silence is awful.

Parker moves around the room, from wall to wall, trying to find the scent again. Looks like he's lost it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARYL
Is it gone--

--THUMP. Something HEAVY lands on the roof of the Cabin. Dust sprinkles down from the high ceiling above.

Parker's BARKING up at the ceiling now.

THUMP... THUMP...THUMP... It's walking across the roof.

Daryl tracks the sound with his eyes. THUMP...THUMP...THUMP It moves to other side of the roof and WHOOSH--

--A thick cloud of SOOT AND SNOW crashes down into the fireplace and sprays into the room. Parker goes wild.

FRANTIC SCURRYING noises are coming from the fireplace now. MOVEMENT in the wall. It's coming down the chimney.

WE HEAR it crawling down the inside of the wall... Almost at the bottom of the fireplace now... Almost in the room...

Daryl can't get his legs to move.

Parker suddenly darts into the fireplace. Snarling up into the chimney. Barking at it.

DARYL (cont'd)
Parker, no!

And Parker's LEASH rises all by itself. The dog YELPS AS IT'S PULLED UP INTO THE CHIMNEY BY THE LEASH. He's gone.

DARYL (cont'd)
NO!

Daryl snaps out of his paralysis. Slides across the floor in a wild panic and crashes into the fireplace head first.

Reaches his arm up into the chimney grabbing for Parker.

DARYL (cont'd)
Parker! Parker!

Stretching his whole arm up in the wall. Soot falling all over his face. Blinding him. The cloud of dust spreading.

BARKING, SNARLING. Wild movement on the inside of the wall.

Daryl gets a hold of a paw... pulling... but the demon won't let go of the leash. Parker's YELPING. WHIMPERING. BARKING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARYL (cont'd)
LET HIM GO!!

And Daryl pulls Parker's paw down with all his might... and drags the dog out from the fireplace and back into the room.

His leash is gone, slipped off over his head in the chaos. Parker whimpering and limps into the corner.

Daryl pushes the couch against the fireplace. Blocking it.

We can still hear FRANTIC MOVEMENT inside the wall.

DARYL (cont'd)
(prayers to himself)
Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

It's still moving about inside the wall. Daryl prays louder this time.

DARYL (cont'd)
Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you--

And the noises suddenly cease in the wall. The room quiets.

It's gone.

Daryl collapses on the floor on his back. Out of breath. Trying to slow his heart. His face black with soot.

Parker limps over, covered in soot too. Daryl grabs the dog's face, emotional. Close to tears.

DARYL (cont'd)
Don't you ever do that again! You understand me?

He hugs Parker tight.

CUT TO:

MAIN ROOM - LATER

Daryl has put up a BARRICADE. The couch, the coffee table, the armchair, and a bunch of wood is now piled up against the fireplace.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

It's quiet. The room is empty. That's because Daryl's in the **KITCHEN**

Slouched at the table. Still covered in soot. Holding the almost empty WHISKEY BOTTLE.

Parker sits in the corner, watching Daryl. Soot covered too.

The Swiss army knife is still sticking out of the top of the table. The corkscrew twisted deep into the wood.

Daryl stares at it with drunken eyes. Takes the last swig of whiskey. Holds the bottle up, getting every last drop.

He puts the bottle down on the table. Slides it away from him. The glass moves across the table making a SLIDING sound. The bottle comes to a stop.

He grabs the bottle with an unsteady hand. Starts to slowly SLIDE it back and forth on the table.

That sound. It's taking him somewhere...

INT. CABIN / HALLWAY - NIGHT (DARYL'S MEMORY)

The hallway is dark. 12-year old Daryl emerges from his bedroom and stops in the hall.

A strange SLIDING SOUND is coming from somewhere in the Cabin. Like glass moving across wood.

Daryl follows the sound into the

MAIN ROOM

It's even darker in here. The ANIMAL HEADS on the walls watch Daryl as he creeps into the room.

The sound is coming from the kitchen. A flickering light glows from inside. Daryl slowly heads into the

KITCHEN

The lights are off in here too. The flickering glow is coming from the stove. No pots on the burners but all four of them are on high. Casting moving shadows on the walls.

Erin sits at the table in the dark. A nearly empty BOTTLE OF WHISKEY next to her. She's deeply concentrated on the WHISKEY GLASS in her hand. It's upside down. She's moving it across the surface of the table - the source of that sound.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She seems to be in some kind of drunken trance. The flames from the stove flicker on her face. It's eerie.

YOUNG DARYL

Mom?

Erin snaps out of it. Sees Daryl. Smiles. Speaks with a slight slur. Obviously she's had a bit too much to drink.

ERIN

*Hey, baby. What you doing up?
Come here and look at this.*

Daryl moves closer. And now he can see...

Erin has drawn LETTERS and NUMBERS onto the middle of the table with a black marker. It's a makeshift Ouija Board.

Around the inner edges of the table she's drawn odd symbols. Triangles with eyes in them. Strange arrows and stars.

Erin looks up at her son. Her gaze is intense.

ERIN (cont'd)

I went to that old bookshop in town last week. There's a woman there who knows about these things. She showed me how to communicate.

YOUNG DARYL

(confused)

With who?

She takes hold of his hand.

ERIN

Your father.

Daryl looks back to the letters on the table... looks back to the flames on the stove. Realizes... this is a seance.

ERIN (cont'd)

I didn't want to say anything. Didn't want to scare you but... that day in the woods. I saw him. Up in the tree. On the branches.

Daryl stares numbly at his mother. Not sure if she's joking.

ERIN (cont'd)

*I've been seeing him a lot more. Walking outside at night. His mouth is moving but I can't... I can't hear
(MORE)*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERIN (cont'd)
 him. He's trying to tell me something
 and this...
 (re: letters on table)
 This helps. It's a talking board.
 He's been talking back.

She lets go of his hand and grabs the glass to show Daryl.

ERIN (cont'd)
 He's been leaving messages for me.
 Letters. I see them everywhere. In
 the snow. On the trees. He's trying
 to tell me something. Look...

She starts to move and slide the glass on the table.

As she does this We see THE MAGNIFIED LETTERS through the bottom of the glass.

ERIN (cont'd)
 B...

She slides the glass to the next letter.

ERIN (cont'd)
 A...

She slides to the next letter.

ERIN (cont'd)
 L...

YOUNG DARYL
 Mom...

But she slides the glass to the next letter.

ERIN
 A...

YOUNG DARYL
 Please. Stop...

Slides the glass in a circle. Comes back to the same letter

ERIN
 A...

Slides to the last letter.

ERIN (cont'd)
 M--

CONTINUED: (3)

YOUNG DARYL
--Mom, stop!

Daryl slaps the glass off of the table and it rolls onto the floor. Erin looks up, emotional. Tears brimming.

ERIN
I know you're scared baby but I need
to know what he's trying to tell me--

--Erin tries to stand. Her legs wobbly. Almost pushes the table over. Daryl has to hold her to keep her steady.

CUT TO:

ERIN'S BEDROOM

It's dark. Daryl helps his mother into the bed. Pulls the cover over her. Straightens her pillow.

ERIN (cont'd)
(drunk / dozing off)
He said he'll come and see you too.
S, O, ... O... N....

And she's asleep. Daryl stares at his mother, concerned. His gaze moves to the photo on the wall of Erin and his father.

CUT TO:

KITCHEN

- Daryl picks up the whiskey glass from the floor and puts it in the cupboard.
- He empties the rest of the whiskey bottle into the sink.
- He cleans the table top with a wet rag. The black ink from the symbols and letters are all dripping into each other.
- He finally gets it all off. The table is completely clean.
- He's got an **OLD CASSETTE TAPE RECORDER**. He hides it inside the cabinet under the sink. Closes the cabinet doors.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / KITCHEN - UNKNOWN

Daryl passed out. His head on the table. His soot covered face in a pool of drool. The empty bottle still in his grip.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

After a long beat, he stirs. Sits up with a thick hangover.

He sees where he is... Sees boarded up windows... Sees Parker asleep in the corner.

He slowly gets his bearings. It's all coming back to him.

He wobbles over to the kitchen sink. Puts his mouth under the faucet and drinks.

He washes the soot from his face. Some stubble growing in.

He wets a dishtowel. Starts to clean the soot off of Parker.

MAIN ROOM

Daryl uses the claw of the hammer to pry one of the boards off of the window. Harsh sunlight comes in and smacks him in the face. It's day time.

He squints, trying to adjust his eyes. Sees something that alarms him.

He moves to the fireplace and pulls down the RIFLE. Goes back to a window with it.

He aims out through the space he removed the wood from. Looks through the scope.

RIFLE SCOPE POV: He can see outside the Cabin through the window. There are HOLES all over the snow - the footprints the demon left from the night before.

But we can see them much closer via the scope. The prints look like very LARGE CLOVEN HOOVES - like you'd find on a cow or deer. And there's a lot of them.

It's been circling the Cabin all night.

We track the prints with the scope. They lead away from the Cabin, back to the trees at the edge of the WOODS.

We track the prints to a tall tree. We move up its massive trunk... higher up the bark and stop on something...

Another jagged letter has been scratched into the bark of the tree. The letter "A"

Daryl lowers the rifle. His face, pale. He leans the gun against the wall. Starts to board the window back up. Fast.

KITCHEN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Daryl sits at the table with a sheet of paper. He writes the letter "A" on it.

FLASH-CUT TO: (DARYL'S MEMORY)

In Father Liam's KITCHEN. The jagged letter "B" carved into the surface of the table.

Daryl writes the letter "B" in front of the letter "A".

FLASH-CUT TO: (DARYL'S MEMORY)

Of Erin sliding the whiskey cup across the table, stopping on letters. They're magnified on the bottom of the glass.

He writes the letters from memory. All together they spell... **B A L A A M**

He crosses out the **B** and the **A**. Circles the remaining letters. His face, grave.

PRE-LAP the solemn voice of Father Liam.

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL)

< BEEP >

I lied to you. I told you it was gone. The truth is, it never left.

BEDROOM

Daryl sits on the bed. The phone in his hand is on speaker. Parker lays on the bed next to him. The dog lifts his head and whimpers at the sound of Liam's voice.

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL) (cont'd)

When it couldn't have your mother, it latched on to you instead. I had no choice but to contain it.

Daryl is visibly stunned by this news.

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL) (cont'd)

A demon cannot move past the Word of God. It was your belief in those words that kept it trapped inside all this time.

FLASH-CUT TO: Father Liam's BASEMENT. We remember this. Young Daryl gluing Bible pages to the wall.

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL) (cont'd)

But something's changed, Daryl. It's getting stronger. I can hear it,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL) (cont'd)
 scratching at the walls. Banging to
 get out...

FLASH-CUT TO: Father Liam's BASEMENT again. Entirely covered in Bible pages. The room looks empty. That is until...

Sudden VIOLENT SCRATCHES rip into the Bible pages. Jagged angry lines start to run from the floor... up a wall... across the ceiling... back down another wall...

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL) (cont'd)
 Whatever it is you're going through,
 I think it can sense it somehow. It
 knows you're weak--< BEEP >

In the next messages, there's more panic in Liam's voice. Loud angry BANGING noises coming from the B.G. of the call.

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL) (cont'd)
 Strengthen your walls, Daryl! You
 mustn't let it out! You mustn't--
 < BEEP >

I think I found something. A way to end this. I need to see you. < BEEP >

Daryl hits a button. Replays the last message.

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL) (cont'd)
 I think I found something. A way to end this. I need to see you. < BEEP >

Off Daryl's face, remembering something.

MAIN ROOM

He heads straight to his coat on the rack. Digs in the pocket. Pulls out The PAPERS he found on Father Liam's desk.

CUT TO:

KITCHEN

Daryl stands over the table this time. All of the papers from Liam's desk are scattered all across it now. He shifts them around like pieces to a puzzle. Trying to make sense of it all. Still hungover. Fighting to focus.

He finds a paper with notes. There's some sections circled on it. He runs his finger across some of words:

Sacred Scripture... Through the Cross... The Light of Christ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

DARYL
(reads to himself)
... through the cross... where all
darkness shall be consumed by the
light of Christ.

He remembers something else... Finds the pages he tore out of that book. The sketches of doors with CROSSES cut through them. Rays of light shining through the crosses.

He looks up from the page. Starting to understand it now.

CUT TO:

HANDY CAM DISPLAY SCREEN: Daryl continues his tale. The closed box in front of him. His head in his hands. Tears falling through his fingers.

DARYL (VIDEO)
Father Liam is gone because of me.
I'm the reason it got out.
(then)
He found a way to destroy it, he just
couldn't finish it.

He picks his head up. Wipes his face. Looks right at us. Determination in his eyes now.

DARYL (VIDEO) (cont'd)
But I will.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / LAST ROOM - UNKNOWN

There's a new surge of energy in Daryl now.

- He takes the bed apart... Removes the headboard... Takes the mattress off of the bed frame.
- He carries all the parts out of the room.
- One by one he takes all of the furniture out of the room until it is completely bare.

HALLWAY

He unscrews the hinges from door of the **LAST ROOM**. Takes the entire door off of the frame.

PRE-LAP the sound of WOOD being sawed into.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CELLAR

Parker sniffs around in a corner piled with OLD BOXES.

All the old furniture Daryl took out from his mother's bedroom is down here now.

The door of the last room is propped up between two shelves. Daryl saws through the upper part of it with a HAND SAW.

He finishes. Puts the saw on a shelf and picks up the door. He's carved a LONG CROSS through the upper part of it.

He angles the door to the light bulb above. The light shines through the cross onto Daryl's face.

He smiles for the first time in a long time. His face bathed in the holy light. He closes his eyes. Soaking in this moment. It feels like we're witnessing something divine.

But the moment is interrupted by a loud CRASH--

--Parker's knocked the pile of boxes down. Some of them have fallen in front of him, blocking his path.

Daryl leans the door against the wall and goes to help him. He moves the boxes blocking Parker's way. The dog escapes.

DARYL

See? That's what you get for snooping around where you shouldn't be--

He STOPS. The box he's holding...

It's full with BOTTLES OF ALCOHOL. Dusty rums and Bourbon.

He shuts the box as if there were a bomb inside it. He heaves it against a wall. Bottles BREAK inside as it lands on the floor.

Parker runs up the steps, startled by the noise.

Daryl kicks another box, livid. He storms back to the cross-door. Glares at it.

DARYL (cont'd)

Is this another one of your damn tests?! Huh? I'm really trying here, damn it! I'm trying and you're...

The cross stares back at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARYL (cont'd)
I'm trying. I'm...

He stops. Realizes he's arguing with a door.

He turns back to the crushed box by the wall. The bottom of it is soaked now. Alcohol slowly pooling underneath it.

It's taking him back to another dark memory...

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - NIGHT (DARYL'S MEMORY)

The room is dark except for the glow from the fireplace. The light dances in the eyes of the animal heads on the walls. Making them feel alive.

CLOSE ON a RECORD spinning on an old record player on a shelf. It's an old song. "Earth Angel" by THE PENGUINS.

Erin drunkenly dances in the dark with something in her hands. It looks like a broom. She's bumping into stuff. Knocking shit over. It's sad to watch.

ERIN
(singing / slurring)
Earth angel, earth angel. Will you be
mine?

She's woken up Young Daryl. He comes into the room, still in his pajamas. He sees the EMPTY RUM BOTTLE on the floor.

Erin dances, her dress twirling at her feet. Her hair is wild. She sings into the broom like it's a microphone.

It's too dark to see her face. We catch glimpses of it in the light of the fire.

ERIN
(singing/ slurring)
My darling dear, love you all the
time.

Daryl steps closer...

YOUNG DARYL
...Mom?

...and Erin turns into the light of the fire. Singing into the top of the broom...

Except that's not a broom she's holding. It's the RIFLE. She's got the barrel up to her mouth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YOUNG DARYL (cont'd)
 MOM!

He tries to pull the gun away from her face but she holds on to it. They struggle for it. But all the while she keeps dancing, pulling him into her eerie waltz with her.

YOUNG DARYL'S POV: Spinning with his mother. Her hair obscuring her face. Round and round they go.

And every time she passes the fire, we catch a glimpse of her face in the light.

It's changing...

Elongating. Her chin and cheek bones, protruding. Her lips widening into a smile that would make the Joker cringe.

YOUNG DARYL (cont'd)
 Mom! Let go! Mom, stop! Please!

ERIN
 (singing)
I'm just a fool. A fool in love with you.

Daryl manages to pull the gun from her grasp. She twirls and lands on the couch. Daryl backs away with the rifle.

EERRRRR -- He stops the record. The room quiets. Just the CRACKLING of the fire.

Erin doesn't get up from the couch. The fire plays tricks on our eyes. Her face keeps changing shape. Extending...

Daryl runs to a light switch. Turns it on.

Erin's face is normal again. Her eyes drunk and heavy.

ERIN (cont'd)
 (singing / slurring)
Earth angel, earth angel. Please be mine.

She nods off. Passes out on the couch.

CUT TO:

KITCHEN

Young Daryl standing on a chair. Takes all the bottles of alcohol from the cupboards and packs them into a box.

CONTINUED: (2)

CUT TO:

CELLAR

Young Daryl carries this heavy box down the steps and hides it way in the back, deep within a pile of the other boxes.

INT. THE CABIN / CELLAR - UNKNOWN

And now our Daryl stands here. Staring at the crushed box he hid down here so many years ago.

CUT TO: LATER

HALLWAY

Daryl screws the cross-door back on the hinges. He closes it. Steps back and admires his work. He can see right through the cross and into the empty room behind it.

MAIN ROOM

Daryl's at the book shelf. Takes down all the BIBLES he can find on it. He pauses on that MAHOGANY BOX, stares at it for a beat. Then turns away from it.

Grabs another bible and carries an armful down the **HALLWAY**.

EXT. CABIN - DUSK

The sun's ending its shift. The bare branches of trees cast long twisted shadows in the snow. Like crooked arms. Stretching toward The Cabin...

PRE-LAP the TWHACK-TWHACK of a staple gun in use.

INT. THE CABIN / LAST ROOM - SAME

TWHACK. Daryl steps down from a ladder. He's holding the staple gun. We follow his gaze up to the ceiling and see...

The entire ceiling has been covered with BIBLE PAGES.

One of the Bibles lies open on the floor. Half empty.

He picks it up. Tears a page out, careful not to lose any of the words. CLOSE ON a page he tears out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER LIAM (V.O.)
 You do know that defacing a Bible is
 sacrilegious, right?

INT. AN OLD CHURCH - DAY (DARYL'S MEMORY)

12-year-old Daryl sits in a pew wearing a white ALTER BOY ROBE. A backpack by his side. He's writing in a Bible.

A younger FATHER LIAM (50s) stops at the pew. He wears his priest collar. The church is empty except for them.

YOUNG DARYL
 I'm just making some notes.

Liam enters the pew and sits next to Daryl.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
 Anything I can help with?

Daryl closes the Bible. Looks up at Liam.

YOUNG DARYL
 Father Liam, do you know anything
 about exorcisms?

Liam's face sours.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
 Why the fascination with such a
 morbid topic?

YOUNG DARYL
 I'm just curious.

Liam eyes the boy. Sensing there's something more to this.

YOUNG DARYL (cont'd)
 How do you perform an exorcism on
 someone?

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
 Well, that depends on what stage of
 the possession the person is in.
 (off Daryl's look)
 If the demon gets inside you, it's
 extremely difficult to remove. It's
 safer to perform an exorcism before
 it invades the host - to undo the
 latching. This is when the demon is
 most vulnerable to the Word of God,
 when it's outside the body.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YOUNG DARYL
 But how do you perform one?

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
 The church requires an exorbitant amount of proof before it can confirm that there is actual demonic possession. And if given permission to move forward, the rite can only be performed by an ordained priest...

He eyes Daryl sternly.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)
 ...Not a twelve year old alter boy.

Daryl's clutching the backpack now. Liam notices.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)
 What's really going on here, Daryl?

Daryl takes a long time to answer.

YOUNG DARYL
 I think my mother is being possessed.

Liam frowns. Daryl unzips the backpack and pulls out the TAPE RECORDER.

YOUNG DARYL (cont'd)
 I hid this in the kitchen. She sits in there all night... talking to something.

CLICK. He hits play. We slowly PUSH IN on the SPINNING SPOOLS of the tape. It's very poor audio. Mostly just HISSING. But somewhere inside it we can just barely make out Erin's voice. It's faint. Hard to hear what she's saying.

PUSH IN closer on the spools until they are all we see.

Somewhere deeper in the hiss is another voice. It sounds deeper. Manly. Responding to her. We can't make out what it's saying. But it's not any language we ever heard.

CLICK. Daryl stops the tape.

YOUNG DARYL (cont'd)
 Does that count as exorbitant proof?

Liam stares down at the recorder. Pity on his face. He considers his next words.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

YOUNG FATHER LIAM

Daryl, it's no secret your mother has been dealing with her own demons for some time, but I assure you, hers don't come from the fiery pits of hell.

Daryl looks away. Liam sees he needs more.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)

Have you prayed for her?

YOUNG DARYL

I don't think a prayer is going to help, father.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM

You came here asking about an exorcism, right? Well, what do you think an exorcism is?

Daryl takes this in. Never thought of it quite like that.

Liam takes the recorder. Brings it to his lips. Hits record.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

He hits stop and hands the recorder back to Daryl.

YOUNG DARYL

Is that for her?

YOUNG FATHER LIAM

That's for you. Just a little reminder for the times you forget.

(then)

Go on. I'll stop by tomorrow and see how she's doing.

Daryl zips the recorder back up in his backpack. He actually manages a smile. Hope in his face.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / LAST ROOM - NIGHT

THWACK -- Daryl staples the last empty spot on the back wall. It's completely covered with Bible pages.

Only three more walls to go. Oh, and the floor.

He tears out another page. Gets ready to start on the next wall when--

--The light starts to flicker above. Daryl looks up to it.

DARYL

No... Please No-no-no-no-no--

...and it goes out, putting the room in total darkness.

IN THE DARKNESS. We hear the sound of the cellar hatch opening. Daryl comes down the steps using the light from his phone to guide his way. We're no longer in the Last Room.

We're in the **CELLAR**

He shines the phone along the shelves of tools and junk, searching for something. The light comes to stop on an old **FLASHLIGHT**. He snatches it up.

MAIN ROOM

It's pitch black in here. The only light we have now is from that flashlight. Daryl paces back and forth with it in his hand. The beam moves erratically around the dark room.

DARYL (cont'd)

Shit! Shit! Shit!

He stops pacing. Coming to terms with his situation. There's no way around it.

He takes his coat from the rack. Roughly puts it on. He shines the light around, looking for Parker.

DARYL (cont'd)

Parker. Here boy. Parker.

Parker steps into the light. Daryl kneels. Holds the dog's face close to his.

DARYL (cont'd)

Stay close to me. Don't wander off. I need you OK. I need you.

Parker licks Daryl's face. Good boy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daryl moves to the door. He watches the dog closely, waiting for some kind of sign but Parker seems fine.

Daryl slowly unlocks the door. Holds the knob. Looks back to Parker again. Nothing from the dog. It must be safe. *Right?*

He opens the door...

EXT. THE CABIN - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

They come on to the porch. Daryl shuts the door behind them.

The SUV is right where he left it. Its bumper parked right up to the porch steps. The trunk is still open. The backseat is filled with snow now.

Daryl shines the light in front of him. Scanning the snow. No footprints. The coast looks clear.

DARYL

Come on, boy. Stay close.

Daryl hurries off the porch. Parker follows him to the

BACK OF THE CABIN

Daryl, moving fast. Boots CRUNCHING in the snow. The light guiding the way. He makes it to the shed and STOPS.

What is that?

He brings the light up to the door of the shed...

Another crude letter has been scratched in the middle of the door. The letter "**L**"

Daryl, frozen. Just stares at the door.

But Parker's GROWL snaps him back to the moment. He turns and sees Parker's shoulders arched. Growling at the dark WOODS behind the Cabin. The dog senses something.

Got to move fast.

Daryl pulls the keys out... Tries to open the lock... His hands shaking... He drops the keys in the snow... *Shit!*

Can't see where they went... He drops to his knees... Frantically searches for them in the snow with the light

Shit! Where are they?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Parker's growling is getting louder.

Daryl, pushes snow around... Searching wildly... Finally finds the keys... And he's back on his feet... back at the lock... gets the door open... Hurries into the...

SHED

Hands shaking... He finds the oil can... Pours oil in the generator... Spilling some... Empties the whole can in it.

Parker's BARKING now. *Shit!*

Daryl pulls the ripcord... But of course... Nothing's happening. The generator's not coming on.

DARYL (cont'd)
No-no-no. Not now. Not now! Please!

He keeps pulling. Yanks harder. A little too hard--

--The cord rips in half! *Fuck!!*

Parker's outside BARKING like mad now.

Daryl, frantic. Digs a key into the hole, trying to get the other half of the cord... digging...digging... He's got it!

He wraps the cord around his finger... yanks... and yanks... and the generator finally comes to life. *Thank God!*

And Daryl's out of the shed. Slams the door shut. Locks it.

DARYL (cont'd)
Parker! Parker!

But Parker's too busy BARKING at the dark woods. At whatever he sees coming. Daryl runs over to the dog. He shines the light up at the dark woods. But of course, he can't see it.

DARYL (cont'd)
Come on, boy! Inside! Inside!

Parker turns and follows. They run back together.

WE CHASE AFTER THEM... Parker in the lead...

Daryl running behind him... Slipping in the snow...

Shining the light back AT US, trying to keep us at bay.

WE FOLLOW THEM... To the front of the Cabin...

CONTINUED: (2)

Up the porch steps... closing in on them....

We're so close... Daryl pushes the front door open....

They stumble inside...

WE TRY TO FOLLOW but the door SLAMS in our face.

WE STAY on this door as night turns into day.

A hand KNOCKS on the door. PULL BACK TO REVEAL this hand belongs to a younger Father Liam. He's in his coat and hat.

We're back in Daryl's memory...

EXT. THE CABIN - MORNING (DARYL'S MEMORY)

Erin answers the door with the warmest smile. She's still in her night gown. Just woken up.

ERIN
Father Liam? What a nice surprise.

INT. THE CABIN / DARYL'S BEDROOM - DAY (DARYL'S MEMORY)

Not your typical 12-year-old boy's bedroom. No posters on the wall. No toys. It's mostly bare. A small book case in the corner. A few books in it.

The same CROSS hangs above his bed. It's newer. Not crooked.

Daryl sits on the bed, vigorously cleaning the RIFLE.

Father Liam stops at the door. Watches how well Daryl handles the weapon. Liam senses the maturity of this boy. Hardened by circumstances. Forced to grow up too fast.

He knocks at the door. Daryl looks up from the gun.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
May I?

Daryl moves over some. Liam sits next to him on the bed.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)
I spoke to your mother...

Daryl waits, anxious to hear what Liam will say.

CONTINUED:

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)
She told me about the night in the kitchen. Sounds like she just had a little too much to drink. She gave you quite a scare but that's all it was. We had a nice long chat about it. She's going to get help.

Daryl, deflated. Goes back to cleaning the gun.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)
(fishing)
Did your father teach you how to do that?

Daryl doesn't answer his question. He's got some of his own.

YOUNG DARYL
(doesn't look up)
What do demons look like?

Daryl's obviously not letting this go. Liam goes along with it for now.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
Demons? Well, they walk among us everyday but we can't see them with our eyes. They can however, take on the forms of others to trick us.

YOUNG DARYL
So it can look like me? Or you?

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
Not living people. They can only mimic the dead. People that have passed on. Empty vessels without souls.

Daryl aims the gun at the window. Puts his eye to the scope.

YOUNG DARYL
When it comes back I'm going to kill it.

Liam's tone gets serious. He's entertained this long enough.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
Daryl, look at me.

Daryl lowers the gun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)
There is no demon here. I can assure
 you of that. And even if there was,
 it can't be killed by the weapons of
 man. Here...

Liam carefully takes the rifle from Daryl's hands and rests it in a corner. He takes the CROSS off the wall. Takes a BIBLE from a shelf and puts them in Daryl's palms.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)
 (re: cross)
 This is your rifle.
 (re: Bible)
 These are the bullets.

Daryl stares down at the items in his hands.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)
The Word is the only weapon against
the adversary.
 (then)
 But first, we must defeat our demons
 on the inside before we battle the
 ones on the outside.

Off Daryl's face, taking these words in.

CUT TO:

INT. CABIN / BATHROOM - DAY (DARYL'S MEMORY)

Young Daryl sits in the tub, angry. Father Liam sits on a chair on the outside of the tub. The closed shower curtain separates them. This is their makeshift CONFESSORAL BOOTH.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
 Whatever it is that's weighing you
 down, this is the time to let go of
 it. Let the Lord carry your burden so
 that you can be free.

Daryl is mute. Stares down into the tub. The silence is awkward. Father Liam's SILHOUETTE is on the other side of the shower curtain. He's nodding, encouraging Daryl on.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)
 Cast your burden up to the Lord and
 He shall sustain you--

--RIP-- Daryl tears the curtain aside. Jumps out of the tub and storms out the room. Liam just shakes his head.

INT. CABIN / MAIN ROOM - DAY (DARYL'S MEMORY)

Daryl stands at the window. Peeking through the blinds.

WINDOW POV: Erin and Father Liam are in front of the Cabin, saying their goodbyes. The priest gets in his car and drives off. Erin waves after it. The car disappears down the path.

But Erin remains out in the cold long after it's gone. Her lips are moving. It looks like she's talking to someone.

And then she turns and looks back at the window. Right at Daryl. At us. Daryl quickly snaps the blinds shut.

PRE-LAP the sound of a staple gun in use. THWACK-- THWACK--

INT. THE CABIN / LAST ROOM - NIGHT

THWACK... THWACK. Daryl's hard at work stapling pages to the walls. He's covered up all four of them including the ceiling. The only thing left to do is the floor.

He's sweaty. Exhausted. But he can't stop. He starts to tear pages from another Bible when he hears...

Parker WHIMPERING. Uh oh...

Daryl stops. Puts the pages down. Heads out the room.

HALLWAY

Daryl hurries up the hall into the...

MAIN ROOM

Parker's moving around, frantic. Something's got him upset.

DARYL

What is it?

Parker's whining at the BARRICADE in front of the fireplace.

Daryl stares at the piled up furniture.

DARYL (cont'd)

What? In there?

Parker's circling him now, whimpering.

DARYL (cont'd)

Shh! Quiet!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daryl strains his ears. Hears nothing. It's quiet.

DARYL (cont'd)

There's nothing there.

But Parker keeps whining. Daryl studies the dog. Parker doesn't look scared or on alert. There is no threat. He keeps pawing at the barricade. Trying to tell him something.

Daryl frowns. Parker hasn't been wrong yet.

Very slowly, Daryl starts to take apart the barricade until it's only the couch that's left. He looks back to Parker.

Parker's pawing at the couch. Whimpering.

DARYL (cont'd)

OK, OK.

Daryl slowly pulls the couch away from the fireplace.

He grabs the old flashlight from the shelf. Shines it into the fire place...

But there's nothing in the hearth but wood. The wood is noticeably darker and wet. What is that?

Parker moves closer to the fireplace. Daryl blocks his path.

DARYL (cont'd)

Wait! Stay! Stay!

Parker obeys. Daryl slowly moves to the fireplace. Kneels inside it. Shines the light up into the chimney.

DARYL'S POV: *The light bounces around the dark walls, searching... And then it lands on something. It looks like a WET BLACK BAG wedged into the space above. There's a ROPE dangling down from it. It's reachable.*

DARYL (cont'd)

What is that?

Only one way to find out. Daryl stretches his free arm up... reaching for the rope.

Parker watches from a distance, whimpering.

Daryl's got his whole shoulder up in the wall now. Stretching... grunting... almost got it... almost...

DARYL (cont'd)

I think I got it...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He pulls the rope hard and --THUMP-- the BAG comes down and lands in the hearth in a cloud of dirt and soot.

Daryl, COUGHS. Waves the cloud from his face. He's got a hold of the rope still. Keeps pulling. Gets the bag out of the hearth and drags it into the room. It's covered in soot.

And that's when he sees that he's not holding a rope...

It's a BELT. A make-shift leash.

And that's not a bag he just dragged out.

It's PARKER. A very dead Parker.

And Daryl's holding the "leash" that's wrapped around the dead Parker's neck.

A gaping hole in the dog's throat. Looks like something big took a huge chunk out of it.

And there's something else...

A single jagged letter has been craved into the dog's side. Ripped right into the fur. A twisted letter "**A**"

Daryl stares at the dead dog. His mind fighting to process what he's seeing. But he already knows...

The room falls silent. Like the air's been sucked out of it.

Daryl slowly rises to his feet. Slowly turns around...

The OTHER PARKER is sitting by the door. Statue still.

It's eyes are different now. No pupils. SOLID BLACK.

It stares at Daryl. Doesn't blink. Doesn't breathe. Nothing. Like the taxidermy on the walls above.

Daryl's blood runs cold because he knows...

This is the Demon.

It's been here with him all this time.

The demon doesn't move. Just watches Daryl.

DEMON POV: *We're watching a very petrified Daryl staring at us. He takes a cautious step backwards...*

Daryl slowly backs away towards the hall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DARYL (cont'd)

(voice shaking)

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will--

--and he bolts down the **HALLWAY**.

The dog bolts after him. Faster than Parker could ever move.

It's right on Daryl's heels as he dives and slides into the

LAST ROOM

Daryl rolls inside. Scrambles up on his knees. And sees...

The dog has stopped right at the threshold of the door. It won't enter the room. It just sits there. Statue still.

DEMON POV: *Daryl on his knees. Behind him, the words on the walls are glowing slightly.*

Upon seeing the walls, the dog turns and runs away.

WE FOLLOW IT as it runs back up the **HALLWAY**... into the **MAIN ROOM** and -- CRACK -- Goes headfirst into the bottom half of the door. Leaving a massive hole in it.

THROUGH THE HOLE we watch the dog run into the snow and disappear into the dark woods beyond.

LAST ROOM

Daryl, shaking on his knees. Adrenaline coursing through him. He collapses on the floor on his back.

MATCH-CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / DARYL'S BEDROOM - MORNING (DARYL'S MEMORY)

Young Daryl laying on his back, asleep in bed. We can see his breath. It's cold in here.

The WHISTLE OF A TEA KETTLE, rising from outside his door.

Daryl wakes. Sits up, half asleep. Shivers from the cold.

He gets out of bed. Gets dressed in a hat, sweater and jeans. He steps into his boots.

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Young Daryl enters the room.

The front door is wide open. A trail of wet snow comes in from the doorway leading to the Cabin.

VOICES coming from the KITCHEN. Erin is talking to someone.

But a wall blocks Daryl from seeing into the room. He slowly moves along the wall, creeping to the edge of it. He peers around it into the KITCHEN. From here he can see...

The fire is high on the stove. The kettle is SHRIEKING now.

Daryl inches closer past the wall...

Now he can see Erin sitting at the table. Giggling. Very drunk. Still in her nightgown. Disheveled. An empty BOTTLE OF WHISKEY on the table next to her.

Her arm is outstretched over the table like she's holding someone's hand.

The wall still blocks our view of whoever it is. Daryl finally comes around the wall and enters the...

KITCHEN

And now he can see the other side of the table.

There is no one there. Erin is alone.

She doesn't seem to notice Daryl is here. Nor does she notice the screaming kettle on the stove.

Daryl turns the flame off. The kettle dies down. Quiet.

Erin finally turns to her son. Delighted to see him. When she talks we can see her breath. It's really cold in here.

ERIN
Daryl, you're up!

YOUNG DARYL
You didn't hear the kettle?

ERIN
I was just making some tea for your father.

Daryl looks at the EMPTY CHAIR on the other side. It's two feet away from the table. Slightly turned toward us.

CONTINUED:

*Erin stares at Daryl, expectantly.**ERIN (cont'd)**Well, aren't you gonna come give your daddy a hug? He's been waiting up all night to see you.**WE PUSH IN on the empty chair. It sits still. Ominous.**ERIN (cont'd)**(stern)**Daryl, don't be rude to your father.**YOUNG DARYL**Mom... there's no one there.**ERIN**Young man, stop being silly. Come over and give him a hug, right now.**WE KEEP PUSHING IN on the empty chair. It sits there, askew.**YOUNG DARYL**Mom! Dad's not here. Dad's dead--**--**SCRAAAAPE!** THE CHAIR S-L-O-W-L-Y TURNS ON THE FLOOR. ALL ON ITS OWN. NOW IT'S TURNED, FACING DARYL.**Daryl GASPS. Erin glares at her son.**ERIN**Why would you say something horrible like that, Daryl? Now you've got him all upset. You know how he gets when you upset him.**Daryl can't move. Eyes glued to the chair.**YOUNG DARYL**...Mom. Let go of it.**ERIN**What?**YOUNG DARYL**Get away from it! Don't touch it!**The urgency in his voice makes Erin snatch her hand back.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERIN
(alarmed)
What's gotten into you?
(to the empty chair)
Charles, please. He didn't mean it.

THE CHAIR LEANS BACK SLIGHTLY ON ITS BACK LEGS AND COMES BACK DOWN. WHATEVER IS IN IT HAS JUST STOOD UP.

FLOORBOARDS CREAK. IT'S MOVING. COMING TOWARDS DARYL.

Daryl backs away into the cupboard behind him.

Remembers...

He turns and flings open the cupboard. Pulls out the TAPE RECORDER he keeps hidden there.

CREAK... CREAK... CREAK... It's coming...

Daryl spins around with the recorder. He hits play - CLICK -

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (TAPE RECORDER)
Fear not, for I am with you; be not
dismayed, for I am your God; I will
strengthen you, I will help you--

--AND THE FLOORBOARDS ABRUPTLY CREAK **BACKWARDS** THIS TIME. IT MOVES AWAY FROM DARYL. AWAY FROM THE RECORDER.

BACK TO THE TABLE. AND THE EMPTY CHAIR SUDDENLY FLIES UP FROM THE FLOOR AND CRASHES UP TO THE CEILING AND BREAKS INTO PIECES. THEY CLATTER BACK ONTO THE FLOOR.

ERIN
Charles! Stop it!

She gets up and runs to her son. Pushes him out into the

MAIN ROOM

In the chaos, Daryl drops the recorder. It hits the floor and stops. He tries to go back for it but Erin keeps pushing him along.

HEAVY STOMPING BEHIND THEM. IT'S FOLLOWING THEM.

They almost make it to the front door when -- WHAM -- ERIN IS SLAMMED ON THE FLOOR BY AN INVISIBLE FORCE.

Daryl grabs her hand to pull her up. She gets back on her feet and --WHAM-- SHE'S SLAMMED BACK DOWN TO THE FLOOR.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

We can see the impression of something on her nightgown and her skin. SOMETHING HEAVY is pressing down on her back. Her eyes are bugling. She can't breathe.

YOUNG DARYL
MOM!!

Daryl's still got her hand. Pulling. But he can't move her. She's been pinned to the floor.

HER PUPILS BEGIN TO DILATE. TWICE THEIR SIZE. TAKING OVER BOTH HER EYES, TURNING THEM SOLID BLACK.

She screams. Her mouth WIDENING.

AND HER SCREAM IS CUT SHORT AS A LARGE LUMP BULGES DOWN HER THROAT AND MOVES DOWN INTO HER CHEST.

And it's Daryl's turn to scream now.

He lets go of his mother's hand and runs out the FRONT DOOR.

Leaving her behind...

CUT TO:

HANDY CAM DISPLAY SCREEN: We're back to the tape. Daryl and the box. He's shaken up. Can barely look up at us.

DARYL (VIDEO)
My mother used to tell me about this thing called culling. It's a hunting technique - when you separate an animal from their herd. You isolate it from its pack so the kill will be easier.

(coming to terms with
this)

I thought I was the one trapping it but maybe it's the other way around.

Looks up at the camera. His face, the gravest we've seen it.

DARYL (VIDEO) (cont'd)
It's made physical contact. It... It touched me. Which means it's ready to move to the next stage. It's ready to get inside.

That RUMBLING begins to rise from somewhere...

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Daryl SLAMS a slat of WOOD against the front door. Frantically boards up the HOLE at the bottom of it.

He's sweaty. Feverish. Losing it. The hammer's moving way too fast in his hands. The RUMBLING rising in his head...

HARD-CUT TO:

CELLAR

The RUMBLING follows Daryl down the steps. He's wrapped Parker in some old blankets. Carries the dog in his arms.

He gently lays him on an old wooden SNOW SLED. Keeps his hand on the body for a long moment. Saying his goodbyes.

Anger welling up in his eyes. His face hardening. Jaw clinching.

His only friend.

Gone.

HARD-CUT TO:

The box he threw at the wall earlier. The bottom is soaked through. He opens the top. Most of the bottles are broken now. He finds TWO that are still intact. Snatches them up.

The rumbling growing in his ears...

HARD-CUT TO:

BATHROOM

And now those bottles are in the tub. Two dusty WHISKEYS. Daryl cleans them off with a towel.

HARD-CUT TO:

He's twisting the cork out of one the bottles with the Swiss army knife. His hands, shaking way too much. He can't get the cork out.

HARD-CUT TO:

He tears it out with his teeth instead... Spits the cork out... Throws his head back... And guzzles the bottle down.

He can't drink it fast enough.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The RUMBLING, deafening now. Shaking the walls of the room.

HARD-CUT TO:

MAIN ROOM

The RUMBLING continues. Everything's shaking, disorienting. Dizzying. Nauseating.

Daryl staggers. Drunk as fuck. Looking to hurt something.

He finds a victim. The old record player. Pulls it off the shelf... brings it high over his head and... SMASHES it on the floor.

He spins. Almost loses his balance. Searching for his next victim - the coffee table. He flips it over.

What else? The bookshelf. He brings it down, CRASHING to the floor. The MAHOGANY BOX coming down with it.

The ANIMAL HEADS watch from above. It almost looks like they're grinning. Like they're enjoying the show.

HARD-CUT TO:

HALLWAY

The RUMBLING shaking the walls of the hall.

Daryl in front of the cross-door. Bottle in hand. Almost empty. Slurring at the door. Pacing back and forth.

DARYL

Look at me. This is your fault. You made me this way!.

(then)

"Just say the words and I shall be healed", right?

He gets right up on the door. Face to face with the cross.

DARYL (cont'd)

THEN FIX ME!

The cross just stares back at him.

DARYL (cont'd)

Even after everything that happened, I still came to you. I was always there. But you... You...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARYL (cont'd)
(this really hits him)
 Are you even here now?! Were you
 ever?! Huh?!

He waits for an answer.

DARYL (cont'd)
SAY! SOMETHING!

But the door is silent. Daryl finishes the bottle. Drops it on the floor.

DARYL (cont'd)
 Fine. Guess I'll just have to do this myself.

He storms off. Back up the hall.

CROSS-DOOR POV: We're in the **LAST ROOM** now, watching Daryl through the cross. Watching him walk away from us...

HARD-CUT TO:

MAIN ROOM

Daryl ransacking the drawers of a desk. Pulls some out. Throwing them on the floor. Searching for something...

BULLETS. He's found some. A few boxes in fact.

HARD-CUT TO:

KITCHEN

The rumbling stops abruptly. The Cabin is quiet. The walls are no longer shaking.

A very drunk Daryl is slouched on the chair. Completely disheveled. Tears flowing. His coat and hat are on.

Bullets all over the table, scattered on top of Liam's papers. He's loading the RIFLE. Dropping more bullets on the floor than he's loading into the gun.

DARYL
 (rambling / slurring)
 It touched me... I felt it... which
 means I can touch it back. It can
feel... It can hurt...

He cocks the rifle. A casing flies out past his face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He gets up. Grabs a handful of bullets and stuffs them in his coat pocket. Grabs more. Stuffs them. He staggers out.

EXT. THE CABIN - NIGHT

It's snowing.

The front door swings open. Daryl comes out with the rifle.

He storms off the porch -- past the SUV and -- *BANG* -- lets a shot off into the sky. Lighting up the night.

DARYL

Come on!

BANG! BANG! He shoots at the dark WOODS. The flash of the shot illuminating the rage in his face. Casings flying out.

DARYL (cont'd)

Where are you?! Come on!

He stops right at the edge of the trees.

DARYL (cont'd)

I know you're in there!

BANG! BANG! FLASHES of light. Daryl, SCREAMING. Snot and tears. Years of rage all coming out now. The noise echoing into the night. He keeps shooting at everything and nothing. *BANG! BANG! BANG!* Cocks it. Casings flip out onto the snow.

DARYL (cont'd)

Come on! I'm right here!

He runs back to the SUV... Pulling bullets out his pocket... Dropping some in the snow... Reloading as he goes...

He reaches the SUV and STOPS in his tracks...

On one side of the car, the fifth jagged letter has been scratched into it. From door to door. Another '**A**'

Daryl's eyes flare up, fuming now. He flings the driver door open. Jumps behind the wheel. Starts it...

INT. SUV / MOVING - CONTINUOUS

He SLAMS the gas. The SUV shoots forward. Skidding. Snow shooting from the tires. Speeding for the WOODS... Straight for the trees. Going too fast. About to crash into them--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

--But he BRAKES just in time. Comes to a hard stop right at the edge of the woods. He turns on the HIGH BEAMS.

Lighting up the trees ahead. An ominous army of twisted giant trunks standing before him in the WINDSHIELD.

He presses the horn hard. Keeps his hand on it. It BLAAAAAAAARES LOUD, echoing into the night.

DARYL
COME ON!

He stops. The last remnants of the horn echo in the woods. And then they die out. Leaving only the wind in the trees.

EXT. EDGE OF THE WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Daryl steps out of the car with the rifle. Leaves the door open. He stands before the trees. His fast breaths steaming up the cold air.

DARYL
(weaker / lower)
Come on... come on...

But there's no sign of the dog. Just the trees.

Let's try this another way.

Daryl climbs up on the hood of the SUV. Up to the roof. Legs wobbling. Almost falls. Finds his balance. Stands on the roof of the SUV.

DARYL (cont'd)
Our Father who art in heaven!

His shouts echo into the night.

DARYL (cont'd)
Hallowed be thy name!

The wind seems to be picking up some. He hears it.

It's working...

He holds the rifle up. Eye in the scope. Turning. Searching.

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *We're doing a three sixty turn with him, searching for the dog. But all we see are dark trees.*

DARYL (O.S.)
Thy kingdom come!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *We complete the 3-60 turn. Still nothing.*

DARYL (O.S.) (cont'd)
Thy will be done!

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *We're doing another 360 turn. Searching...*

DARYL (O.S.) (cont'd)
On earth as it is in heaven!

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *And when we come back around we catch a quick glimpse of--*

--FATHER LIAM CLIMBING DOWN A TREE. HEAD FIRST.

Daryl does a double take. Swings the rifle back--

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *Father Liam is in his priest collar. He sits in the snow on all fours like a dog. Legs out on the sides. Statue still. Just beyond the reach of the lights.*

Daryl pulls his eye away from the scope. Shaken at the sight of his dead friend. Shakes his head side to side.

DARYL
No... it's not you. Not you. Not you.

He brings the rifle back up to his eye. Swaying. Tries to keep still and lock on his target.

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *His aim is drunken, unsteady. Double vision. Struggles to get Liam in the cross-hairs. Almost got it. Almost...*

He pulls the trigger -- *BANG!*

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *He hits the tree next to Liam. Wood splinters in the bark. Liam doesn't budge.*

Daryl tries again -- *BANG!*

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *Misses again. A burst of white explodes where the bullet struck. Leaving a hole in the snow.*

Daryl roars. Aims again and *BANG! BANG! BANG!*

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *He keeps missing. Snow and tree bark explode all around Liam. The crouched priest never moves.*

Daryl aims again. CLICK - CLICK. He's empty.

He pulls out more bullets. Loads as fast as he can. Dropping most of them on the roof. Swings the rifle up to his eye--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *Liam is gone.*

Daryl climbs down to the hood. Jumps down to the snow. Runs into **THE WOODS.**

The glow of the high beams cast an eerie light through the trees. Long twisted shadows of branches move about in the snow. It feels like the woods are alive.

The sounds of FAST CRUNCHING coming from all around him, echoing through the trees. Liam is moving. *FAST.*

Daryl, rifle up. Follows the sounds deeper in to the dark woods. Trying to lock on Liam with the scope.

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *We're darting around chaotically, following the crunching. Liam is FAST. We catch QUICK GLIMPSES of him running on all fours, ducking behind trees.*

BANG! BANG! BANG! Daryl shoots. The woods light up. Tree trunks splinter. Snow explodes. But Liam is way too fast.

Daryl stops. Stays still, swaying a bit. The crunching stops too. The woods are quiet. Daryl does a 360 with the scope.

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *And finds Liam on all fours. Eerily still. BLACK EYES staring right through the scope. Glinting in the headlights. His smile is way too wide. Way too many teeth...*

Daryl's got him. He pulls the trigger and -- *CLICK.*

SHIT! He's empty.

DARYL (cont'd)

No! NOOOOO!

He reloads fast. Hands shaking in the cold. Bullets falling through his fingers. He swings the rifle back up--

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *It's ALL BLACK now. We can't see a thing.*

He brings the gun down and sees what's blocking the scope--

--IT'S LIAM! STANDING RIGHT IN FRONT OF DARYL NOW!!

Daryl yells in surprise.

LIAM SUDDENLY THRUSTS DARYL BACKWARDS -- DARYL GOES FLYING OFF OF HIS FEET -- SLAMS HIS BACK HARD AGAINST A TREE.

He falls back in the snow, gasping. The wind knocked out of him. He climbs to his feet and runs in a wild panic... hunched over... in pain... still clutching the rifle...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Hurting bad... Can't breathe... Hard to run... He plunges himself forward... falling face first in the snow... Snow all over his face... All in his mouth...

He gets back up... gasping... crawling now... He makes it out of THE WOODS... dragging himself to the headlights... Loses the rifle... Collapses by the car... Can't go on...

He lies there on his back in the snow. Out of breath. Out of fight.

AND FROM THE WOODS...

DEMON POV: *We're moving through the trees approaching Daryl. He's a good fifty feet away. WE HEAR the demon's steps CRUNCHING in the snow.*

ON DARYL. He doesn't move. Just lies there. Defeated. Exhausted. His eyes wet, staring up at the dark sky.

DEMON POV: *Coming closer. We're forty five feet away now. CRUNCHING closer.*

ON THE SNOW. It's leaving CLOVEN FOOTPRINTS in its wake.

ON DARYL. Drunk. Hurt. Crying. Can barely get the words out.

DARYL (cont'd)
please...

DEMON POV: *CRUNCH... CRUNCH... CRUNCH... Thirty feet away...*

ON DARYL.

DARYL (cont'd)
Lord please... I need you... I need you...

And in the background BEHIND HIM. VIA THE HIGH BEAMS, WE SEE HOLES POPPING UP IN THE SNOW. THE DEMON CRUNCHING CLOSER...

Twenty feet away...

ON DARYL. Hears the CRUNCHING coming.

DARYL (cont'd)
Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I
am your God...
(louder)
I will strengthen you...

CRUNCH CRUNCH. Fifteen feet away...

ON DARYL. Eyes closed. Crying hard. Praying to the sky.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

DARYL (cont'd)
I will help you, I will uphold you
with my righteous right hand...

A beat. Only the wind. And the CRUNCHING. Getting closer.

And then...

From the open door of the SUV comes that familiar voice...

FEMALE GPS
In one hundred feet, you will reach
your destination.

And Daryl's eyes open... *Did he just hear that?*

FEMALE GPS (cont'd)
In one hundred feet, you will reach
your destination.

Daryl turns his head in the snow. Blinks. Squints.

DARYL'S POV: His double vision coming into focus. The Cabin
looms ahead of him. It's about a hundred feet away.

FEMALE GPS (cont'd)
In one hundred feet, you will reach
your destination.

Daryl struggles to sit up. In pain.

And from behind him... CRUNCH... CRUNCH --

--CRACK. The rifle snaps in half under the demon's hoof.

THE SHADOW OF LONG CROOKED ANTLERS stretch over Daryl's
back. Eclipsing him in the snow.

Daryl crawls onto his feet... Staggers back to the Cabin.

The CRUNCHING. Following him.

But he doesn't turn around... Just keeps going... Across the
clearing... up the porch... Fast as he can.

He scrambles through the doorway... rolls inside... kicks
the door shut behind him - SLAM.

WE STAY on the closed door for a beat.

And from far away we hear it...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

FEMALE GPS (cont'd)
You have reached your destination.

WE STAY on the closed door as night turns into day. And we're back in the final memory...

EXT. THE CABIN - MORNING (DARYL'S MEMORY)

12-year-old Daryl stands in front of the Cabin. Trembling. Snow has collected on his hat and sweater. His nose is running. Frozen tears on his cheeks. He's been out here for some time.

The front door is slightly ajar.

He finally musters up the courage to take the first step up on to the porch. And the next step. And the next.

Until he's at the door. He slowly opens it...

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS (DARYL'S MEMORY)

He takes a cautious step inside...

The Cabin is quiet. Still.

Erin is right where he left her. Lying still on the floor on her stomach. It doesn't look like she's breathing.

Daryl steps closer. Tears welling. Imagining the worse.

YOUNG DARYL

...Mom?

Erin doesn't move. Daryl steps even closer. Panic rising.

YOUNG DARYL (cont'd)

Mom? Can you hear me?

Nothing. Daryl bends down and turns his mother over on her back. And now he sees she's holding the RIFLE.

And her eyes are SOLID BLACK like the deer. She stares up at her son with a look that could melt the ice caps.

Daryl runs. Erin sits up fast. Brings the scope to her eye.

RIFLE SCOPE POV: Daryl disappears out the front door just as -- BANG -- she lets off a shot. Missing him.

She cocks the rifle. A casing flies to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And she is up on her feet in the blink of an eye. She moves to the door. Rifle up on her shoulder. Ready for the hunt.

EXT. THE CABIN - CONTINUOUS (DARYL'S MEMORY)

She comes out to the porch. Rifle up. Bare-footed. Nightgown flapping in the wind. No sign of Daryl.

She lowers the gun, surveys the fresh snow. Sees his boot prints leading to the woods. She runs off the porch with frightening speed. Follows his tracks into

THE WOODS

ON DARYL. The Deer. Running through the trees. Branches slapping his face as he goes.

ON ERIN. The Hunter. Following his tracks like a bloodhound. She keeps the rifle up. One eye in the scope.

ERIN'S POV THROUGH THE SCOPE: There is NO color. She has the eyes of the demon now.

ON DARYL, stumbling into a CLEARING.

Gasping. Shivering. He gets on his knees and starts pushing snow around, covering up tracks. He does this as he moves backward, making his way to a tree.

ON ERIN. Still coming. She enters the same CLEARING.

And STOPS. Sees his tracks have come to an end. She lowers the rifle and waits. Listening...

ON DARYL, hiding behind a tree. Shivering. Trying to keep still. Waiting. Listening...

And then comes the SHRILL WHISTLE of the tea kettle. He tenses at the sound.

ON ERIN, Statue-still. The whistle coming from her lips. A horrible constant sound that goes on way longer than normal lips could whistle it.

It echos through the woods. Bouncing off the trees. Coming from all directions. Getting louder... Eardrum splitting.

ON DARYL, covering his ears in pain. Trying not to scream.

ON ERIN. The Statue. Whistling. Eyes darting side to side, searching...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A RUSTLING in the bushes catches her attention. She stops the whistle. Raises the rifle and heads in that direction.

Eye in the scope. Not watching where she's going. She steps over small blanket of snow and branches and SHOOM--

--Falls right into THE TRAPPING PIT!

The very same one they dug together.

She disappears from our sight. Hits the bottom and BANG!

The gun goes off. The shot echos through the woods. And then it's quiet.

Daryl emerges from the tree he was hiding behind. And now we see the tree has the CROSS that he marked into it.

He cautiously approaches the hole. Looks in...

Erin is lying face down in the dirt. She manages to turn on her back. She's shot herself in the chest. Blood sprays. Reddening her gown and the snow.

Daryl stands at the edge of the hole. Watching her bleed out until she's gone. Her SOLID BLACK EYES remain wide. Staring.

Daryl drops to his knees. Head low. In tears. Sobbing hard.

Until he hears MOVEMENT in the hole. He looks up.

His mother remains still. Dead. Those black eyes, staring.

But then... she starts to move...

A LUMP starts to grow in her stomach... It moves up her chest... up her throat... Her mouth widens and whatever comes out, we don't see it.

The blackness dissipates from her eyes and they return to normal. She lies there, still. Mouth agape. Staring.

And DIRT crumbles down one side of the hole. Like something is trying to climb out of it.

Daryl backs away from the hole just as --

CRUNCH CRUNCH ... TWO LARGE HOLES appear in the snow at the edge of the hole. The demon has climbed out.

Daryl, paralyzed. Watches as... CRUNCH CRUNCH CRUNCH. MORE HOLES pop up in the snow. It's walking toward him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Almost upon him when...

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (O.S.)
*I drive you from us! Whatever you may
 be!*

*Young Father Liam hurries into the clearing. A CROSS up in
 is hand. His coat open revealing his priest collar.*

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
*Unclean spirits! All infernal
 invaders! All wicked legions!*

*AND CRUNCH-CRUNCH-CRUNCH- THE HOLES MOVE AWAY FROM DARYL AND
 RETREAT BACK AND OUT OF THE CLEARING. We hear something
climbing up a tree. Something big. Heavy. Fast.*

*Liam reaches Daryl. The boy falls into his arms, crying.
 Liam holds on to him but keeps the cross up to the trees.*

*WE SEE the branches SHAKING from tree to tree as the demon
 climbs through them, retreating further into the woods.*

And the branches calm. It's gone.

FATHER LIAM
 (tearing up)
I'm sorry. I'm so, so sorry.

*But Daryl is numb with shock. He can't hear Liam. He just
 stares over Liam's shoulder. Tears streaming.*

Watching the branches above, swaying in the cold wind.

PRE-LAP the sound of APPLAUSE.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - DUSK

The ALCOHOLISM SUPPORT GROUP again. The circle applauds a woman (30s), who's just concluded her story. She sits.

OWEN
 Thank you for sharing, Joan. We have
 time for one more if anyone else
 would like to share?

He scans the circle looking for a volunteer.

Janet is here. Her eyes are on Daryl's empty seat.

CONTINUED:

OWEN (cont'd)
 Guess that's it for the night. Great work everyone. As usual there's coffee and bagels at the back. Stay, talk. Meet someone new.

Everyone gets up and heads for the tables. The room erupts in CHATTER. Janet is about to get up when--

Her cellphone VIBRATES in her pocket. She checks it, sees who's calling. She immediately answers. We can't hear what she hears but her face grows serious. She listens. Then...

JANET
 (stands)
 Everybody! Everybody, please!

The room quiets. All eyes on Janet. She holds the phone up.

JANET (cont'd)
 We've got one more for tonight!

INT. THE CABIN / BATHROOM - SAME TIME

Daryl sits in the TUB. The shower curtain is closed. This is his makeshift CONFESSIONAL BOOTH he and Father Liam used before. He's got his phone on his ear. Still in his coat. Still pretty drunk. Stubble growing in hard.

The last remaining BOTTLE OF WHISKEY is in the tub with him. It stands between his legs.

DARYL
 I can't...

INTER-CUT:

GYMNASIUM. Janet holds the phone closer to her mouth.

JANET
 Daryl, don't. Don't hang up. You called me, OK. You're here now. Stay.

He's breathing heavy over the line. This isn't easy for him.

JANET (cont'd)
 (calm / reassuring)
 I know you're tired. Some days that cross can get so heavy, you feel like you can barely stand. Believe me I know, I've been there. But that's what we're here for - to help you
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANET (cont'd)
 carry it. We want to hear your story,
 Daryl. We're all listening.

THE TUB. And he's listening to her. Taking in her words.
 Taking in deep breaths. Here goes nothing.

DARYL
 (long beat)
 My name is Daryl and I'm... I'm an
 alcoholic.

THE CIRCLE (PHONE)
 Hi, Daryl.

GYMNASIUM. REVEAL, everyone's back in their seats now.
 Janet's got her phone on speaker, holding it up for all to
 hear. WE MOVE around the circle on their faces as they
 listen to Daryl's confession.

DARYL (SPEAKER PHONE)
 My mother had the disease first.
 After my father died, she went some
 place dark. And this... This
 darkness, I watched it eat away at
 her.

THE TUB. Daryl's eyes never leave the bottle. The RUMBLING
 starts low. The bottle is calling him...

DARYL
 In the end, she wasn't my mother
 anymore. She's gone now... but the
 darkness, it stayed. It followed me.

GYMNASIUM. The circle listens.

DARYL (SPEAKER PHONE)
 (angrier)
 Anyone who ever tried to help,
 everyone I care about, it just rips
 them away from me.

On Janet, holding the phone up. Listening close. Knows he's
 talking to her now.

DARYL (SPEAKER PHONE) (cont'd)
 That's why I push them away. I can't
 let it take anyone else.

THE TUB. Daryl, fighting tears. Phone shaking more.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NEXT TO HIM, There's a SILHOUETTE of Father Liam on the other side of the shower curtain. Liam sits in the chair, listening. Nodding. Encouraging Daryl on, like he did all those years ago.

DARYL

It's surrounding me now, trying to get inside and I've been fighting. I want to beat this thing... for what it did to them. For what it did to her. I just... I don't know how.

(tears come hard)

I ran. I couldn't save her... I couldn't save her...

He breaks down in shoulder shaking sobs. Unable to go on.

GYMNASIUM. There is no rumbling here. The circle listens to him breaking down on the speaker. Some of them are in tears, thinking about the darkness in their own lives.

Janet, emotional. Brings the phone close to her mouth now.

JANET

(whispers)

You did it. That's it. Let it out now. Let it out. You did good.

She locks eyes with Owen. He nods - You did good.

She hands Owen the phone, passing the baton over to him now. Owen brings the phone close to his lips.

OWEN

Daryl. You may not have been able to save your mother then but you can save yourself now. Millions of people are going through that same darkness. When you're in the dark, it's easy to lose sight of who you are.

FLASH-CUT TO: A CHURCH. Daryl in full priest attire, giving a sermon from the pulpit. The pews are packed. We can't hear him but Daryl looks confident up there. In his element. This is where he belongs.

OWEN (V.O.)

The trick is you have to look beyond the dark and see who you were. Remember who you were before it came. Focus on that. Use it to get through this. You can be that person again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

THE TUB. Daryl picks his head up. Affected by Owen's words. Something is building in his face.

The RUMBLING is as loud as it's ever been.

But Daryl ignores it. He uncorks the bottle. Slowly leans it over and spills it out into the drain of the tub. The emptier it gets, the lower the rumbling gets. And when the bottle is empty, the rumbling stops.

The SILHOUETTE of Liam is gone now. The room is quiet.

Daryl puts the bottle down. This is the most quiet it's ever been for him. He sits there, eyes closed. Taking in the silence... until Janet's voice brings him back.

JANET (PHONE)

Hey...

GYMNASIUM

Janet's got the phone back. She's off to the side of the room, away from everyone else.

DARYL (PHONE)

I'm sorry.

JANET

I know, I know. It's OK.

DARYL (PHONE)

Thank you.

JANET

(fishing)

See you tomorrow?

DARYL (PHONE)

(long beat)

Yeah. Tomorrow...

He hangs up. She lowers the phone from her ear.

Off Janet's face. She knows he's lying.

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Daryl staggers in. Surveys the scene from the night before. The mess he made.

BEGIN MONTAGE SEQUENCE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

- He finds the MAHOGANY BOX on the floor. Picks it up.
- He starts to clean up. Lifts the bookshelf back up.

LAST ROOM. THWACK. THWACK. Daryl on his knees. Stapling pages to the floor.

- He stands. The entire room is covered with Bible pages.
- He drills a METAL C-PIPE into the middle of the floor.

CELLAR. He searches through boxes. Finds an old sewing kit. Takes all the rolls of YARN.

- Grabs random items from boxes. SCISSORS, PENS, KEYS, a roll of DUCT TAPE.
- He removes WIRES from the back of some OLD SPEAKERS.
- He finds some THICK ROPE.
- Grabs the HANSAW from the shelf.

KITCHEN. Daryl eats some canned soup at the table. Trying to get some of his strength back. He's going to need it.

- He opens the drawers on the counter. Grabs handfuls of silverware - FORKS, KNIVES, SPOONS.
- He takes the BROOM. Snaps off the bristles. Now he's got a long STICK.

HALLWAY. TWHACK. He's on the ladder. Staple-guns strands of yarn to the ceiling. Cuts them to a length that they hang halfway to the floor.

CUT TO: **LATER**

- The entire hall is full of strands of yarn. He's tied all the SILVERWARE, SCISSORS, PENS and KEYS to the ends of them.
- He walks up the hall through the strings and all the metal items swing about, CLANKING together. It's an alarm system.

BEDROOM. He opens a drawer. Pulls out his old CASSETTE TAPE RECORDER. Sits on the bed with it. Stares at it in his hand.

END MONTAGE SEQUENCE

BATHROOM Daryl enters with the HANSAW. He's covered in sweat and SAW DUST, exhausted. He drops the saw in the sink.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Removes his clothes. His body is frail and bruised. He steps into the tub and bathes for the first time in days.

BEDROOM Daryl changes into a black long-sleeved shirt and pants - the same outfit he wears on the video tape.

FLASH-CUT TO: *Young Father Liam, putting the cross and Bible into young Daryl's palms.*

YOUNG FATHER LIAM

(re: cross)

This is your rifle.

(re: Bible)

These are the bullets.

BACK TO SCENE. Daryl finds the CROSS on the floor. Puts it back on its nail. Straightens it.

CELLAR

Daryl opens a box with his father's OLD POLICE UNIFORM. He runs his thumb across the badge, wiping the dust off.

There's a pair of HANDCUFFS in the box. He picks them up.

A moment of truth. A decision is made in Daryl's face.

CLICK. Daryl cuffs one side to his left wrist. Leaves the other side open. He puts the KEY in his shirt pocket.

He turns to another shelf. Takes the HANDY CAM and tripod.

KITCHEN

The handy cam is set up on the tripod, aimed at the chair. The mahogany box is on the table. Daryl sits in the chair. Handcuffs on his wrist. He takes a moment to find his words.

He hits record. Looks straight into the camera and begins his story. We remember this from the opening scene.

DARYL

If you've found this... No matter how bad it looks... I want you to know there are reasons for my actions - reasons I'll try to explain now.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / KITCHEN - DAY (THE PRESENT)

And we're right back where we started. The unseen WATCHER. Their back to us, watching the tape on the handy cam.

HANDY CAM DISPLAY SCREEN: Daryl at the table with the unopened box. The cuffs on his wrist. Resolve in his face.

DARYL (CAMERA)

Once the demon invades the body it's virtually impossible to remove. I need to detach it now while it's on the outside - when it's most vulnerable to the Word.

And finally Daryl opens that damn mahogany box. Takes out a GOLD ORNATE CROSS. Lays it on the table.

Next he takes out the WHITE CLERICAL COLLAR and fastens it to the neck of his shirt. He cracks his neck.

And lastly he takes out a small LEATHER BOUND BOOK. Places it on the table. On the cover - The Rite of Exorcism.

DARYL (VIDEO)

November 18th, 2019. The time is just after midnight. This is the video record of the attempted exorcism of Daryl Collins.

(beat)

I am Father Daryl Collins. And I will be performing the exorcism.

Boom. Let that sink in for a moment.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CABIN - NIGHT

Daryl comes out the front door without a coat. He's wearing his priest collar. Has the book with him.

He walks off the porch into the snow. Stops midway between the WOODS and the Cabin. Stands there facing the trees.

Makes the sign of the cross. Opens the book and begins reading in a loud authoritative voice. Right at the trees.

DARYL

I command you, unclean spirit, now attacking this servant of God!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE WOODS

DEMON POV: *We're far away, high up a tree. We can't see Daryl from here but we can hear him reading.*

DARYL (O.S.)

By the mysteries of the incarnation,
passion, resurrection, and ascension
of our Lord Jesus Christ!

DEMON POV: *We begin to climb down the tree.*

ON DARYL. The wind starts to pick up... The handcuff starts to sway in the breeze... The pages start to flutter.

It's working.

He holds the page down. Reads with more conviction now.

DARYL

I command you to obey me to the
letter! For I am a minister of God
despite my unworthiness!

THE WOODS

DEMON POV: *We're on the ground now. CRUNCH CRUNCH CRUNCH-ING through the snow. Moving towards Daryl.*

ON DARYL. Wind picking up more. He hears the CRUNCHING in the distance but he keeps reading.

DARYL (cont'd)

When time began, the Word was there!
And the Word was face to face with
God, and the Word was God!

DEMON POV: *We're out of the woods now. About fifty feet away from Daryl. Picking up speed. CRUNCH... CRUNCH....*

ON DARYL, hears the CRUNCHING getting closer.

DARYL (cont'd)

All things came into being through
Him, and without Him there came to be
not one thing that has come to be!

DEMON POV: *We're about thirty feet from Daryl now. There is no color except for the book he's holding. It glows in his hands.*

Daryl looks up from the page. Sees the HOLES APPEARING in the snow. Getting closer. They pass the SUV. Keep coming.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He starts to back up towards Cabin. Reading as he goes.

Wind whipping harder. He holds the fluttering pages down.

DARYL (cont'd)
In Him was life, and the life was the
light of men!

CRUNCH-CRUNCH-CRUNCH - coming faster.

Daryl's backing up with the book. Moving faster too.

DARYL (cont'd)
The light shines in the darkness, and
the darkness did not lay hold of it!

He backs up to the porch. Walks up backwards. Still reading.

DARYL (cont'd)
Almighty Lord, Word of God the
Father, Jesus Christ, God and Lord of
all creation!

And the holes are picking up speed. CRUNCH-CRUNCH-CRUNCH.

DARYL (cont'd)
Who gave to your holy apostles the
power to tramp underfoot serpents and
scorpions!

The holes come faster. Angrier. EXPLODING in the snow now.
They reach the foot of the porch...

Daryl backs into the door with the book.

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He closes the door. Backs away from it.

OUTSIDE

DEMON POV: *We're STOMPING up the porch steps...*

MAIN ROOM

Daryl backs away to the far wall with the book.

KITCHEN

The HANDY-CAM is on a tripod in the doorway, pointing into
the MAIN ROOM now. It's recording the exorcism.

CONTINUED:

OUTSIDE

DEMON POV: WE'RE RIGHT OUTSIDE OF THE FRONT DOOR. AND LIKE MAGIC, THE FINAL LETTER IS VIOLENTLY CARVED INTO THE WOOD BY INVISIBLE CLAWS. A JAGGED "M"

MAIN ROOM

Daryl hears the SCRATCHING on the other side of the door but he keeps reading aloud.

DARYL

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, I appeal to your holy name, humbly begging your kindness!

WE HOLD on door for the longest agonizing beat. Waiting for it to open. Waiting... waiting...

DARYL (O.S.)

That you graciously grant me help against this and every unclean spirit--

--AND BANG -- the slat of wood covering up the hole SHOOTS off and flies into the room.

AND SOMETHING STARTS TO CRAWL IN THROUGH THE HOLE ON ALL FOURS.

Daryl sees it. Lowers the book. His face slacks in shock.

IT'S ERIN.

ON ALL FOURS. HER SKIN IS AS WHITE AS SNOW. SHE'S STILL IN THAT NIGHTGOWN. DRIED DARK BLOOD STAINS ON THE FRONT OF HER GOWN FROM THE BULLET HOLE THAT WENT IN HER CHEST.

HER FACE IS SLIGHTLY LONGER THAN IT SHOULD BE. SHE STARES UP AT DARYL WITH THOSE **SOLID BLACK EYES**. SLOWLY RISING ON HER BARE FEET. AND AS SHE STANDS, SHE GROWS TALL... EVEN Taller... WAAAAY TALLER than Erin ever stood.

Her joints make SICKENING CRACKING SOUNDS as she grows. Like something frozen moving after a long time.

Daryl stares, horrified.

As Erin steps forward... Joints CRACKING... STRETCHING OUT THOSE BONE WHITE ARMS FOR HIM...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Her bare feet stepping onto the NAVAJO RUG on the floor between them...

It's not until she reaches the middle of it that we see...

...the LONG SLIT that's been cut down the middle of the rug.

Erin falls through it and CRASHES into the cellar below!

Daryl hurries and lifts the rug up and now we see...

He's sawed off the wooden hatch to the cellar and widened the hole. A huge section of the floor is missing now.

A homemade TRAPPING PIT.

Daryl steps to the edge of the hole with the book. Continues to read.

DARYL

God, by your name save me!
And by your might defend my cause!

The demon has gone invisible again. It's moving around frantically below. Boxes rip apart... tools fly about... shelves topple over. It's angry.

DARYL (cont'd)

Because from all distress you have rescued me! And my eyes look down upon my enemies--

--CRACK - a floorboard shoots up near Daryl's foot. It flies up past his face and hits the ceiling. Comes back down.

CRACK- CRACK -CRACK. More boards fly up from the floor.

Daryl backs away from the hole. Dodging the shooting floorboards. He hurries to the

HALLWAY

Ducks down and crawls on his stomach underneath all the hanging SILVERWARE.

MAIN ROOM

WE HEAR the demon climbing out of the hole. WE HEAR it STOMP onto the floor. It's in the room now.

HALLWAY

CONTINUED: (3)

Daryl keeps crawling. Book in hand. Fast as he can for the LAST ROOM when... BEHIND HIM...

The makeshift alarm system goes off as--

THE DEMON CHARGES. HOOVES STOMPING ON THE FLOORBOARDS. SILVERWARE PARTS LIKE THE RED SEA AS IT COMES DOWN THE HALL, CAUSING A RIPPLE EFFECT OF SWINGING METAL THINGS CLANKING NOISELESSLY TOGETHER.

STRINGS AND SILVERWARE GETTING CAUGHT IN ITS INVISIBLE ANTHERS. SWINGING ON NOTHING.

But Daryl makes it to the room just in time...

And the demon STOPS in the middle of the hall.

The silverware behind it, CLANKING loudly.

The silverware in front of it is still. Untouched.

DEMON POV: *Watching Daryl on his knees inside the Last Room. And BEHIND DARYL, the letters are glowing on the walls - even more than before.*

The silverware starts to part in the opposite direction. The demon is moving backwards, away from the Last Room.

But Daryl's prepared for this. He reaches behind the door and pulls out the STICK that used to be the broom.

He steps back into the

HALLWAY

WE FOLLOW his hand, the handcuff dangling. As he raises the stick over his head towards the ceiling...

FLASH-CUT TO: (DARYL'S MEMORY) *We remember this. The opening scene. Erin and Daryl in the woods. She's showing him how to hunt. The small deer in the cross hairs of the scope.*

ERIN (V.O.)

The deer has tunnel vision. All it sees is a meal. It's not paying attention to what's happening around it. Makes it an easy kill.

BACK TO SCENE. The stick rising up. And now we see why...

Daryl's duct taped the TAPE RECORDER to the ceiling.

CONTINUED: (4)

WE FOLLOW the SPEAKER WIRING that runs from the back of the tape recorder... all the way down to other end of the hall... to those TWO OLD SPEAKERS.

He's hung them above in the edge of the hallway. Facing towards the Last Room.

ERIN (V.O.) (cont'd)
What are you, Daryl? The hunter or the deer?

YOUNG DARYL (V.O.)
The hunter.

The demon's almost out of the hall. Silverware swinging in its wake...

When the end of the stick reaches the tape recorder above and hits the play button.

CLICK. The spools of the tape spin.

And from the SPEAKERS on the other end of the hall come Daryl's pre-recorded reading of the Rite.

Oh, and the volume is **ALL THE WAY UP!!!**

DARYL'S VOICE (SPEAKERS)
 I COMMAND YOU, UNCLEAN SPIRIT, NOW
 ATTACKING THIS SERVANT OF GOD!

AND THE DEMON ABRUPTLY REVERSES AWAY FROM THE SPEAKERS. COMING BACK DOWN THE HALL. RUNNING AWAY FROM **THE WORD OF GOD.** SILVERWARE FLYING EVERYWHERE.

DARYL'S VOICE (SPEAKERS) (cont'd)
 I COMMAND YOU TO OBEY TO THE LETTER!

With the speakers blocking its path out, the demon goes in the only direction it can now... IT BARRELS TOWARD DARYL...

And Daryl sees the silverware parting in his direction. Knows it's coming.

He drops the stick, turns for the door. But the Demon is faster and -- WHAM -- AN INVISIBLE FORCE SLAMS AGAINST HIM.

The book flies out of his hand.

Daryl lands HARD on his stomach.

The upper half of his body is inside the Last Room. From the waist down he's in the Hallway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

He's GASPING. The wind knocked out of him. Arms flailing about, stretching for something in the room...

THE ROPE.

He gets a hold of the end... wraps it around his forearm...

WE FOLLOW the rope and see that it's been tied to the metal C-PIPE he drilled to the floor.

Daryl PULLS on the rope with all he's got. Pulls himself (with the demon on top of him) into the

LAST ROOM

His legs kicking wildly. One good KICK shuts the door.

Outside the door, Daryl's voice still BLARES on the speakers. This will continue for the rest of the scene.

And Daryl keeps pulling himself across the floor...

Closer to the C-PIPE...

The unseen Demon PRESSING DOWN on him. The back of his shirt rips open. HOOVES imprinted on the skin on his back.

Daryl, fighting through the pain. Doesn't stop pulling.

The temperature must have dropped substantially because now we can see his breaths.

He's still saying the rite. Repeating it along with his own voice outside on the speakers.

DARYL
(struggling)
When time began, the Word was there!
And the Word was face to face with
God!

HIS PUPILS START TO DILATE. TURNING **SOLID BLACK**.

Still Daryl pulls... pulls... fighting against it...

...He reaches the C-PIPE. And SNAPS the open side of the HANDCUFFS shut on the pipe. Locking himself and the demon in the room together.

He fights to get his hand in his pants pocket... Pulls out the GOLD CROSS... Holds the cross up high.

CONTINUED: (6)

DARYL (cont'd)
(struggling)
...And the word... was God--

--HIS MOUTH STARTS TO WIDEN... WIDER... WIDER... The demon's trying to get inside him.

We can see the intense struggle in his face. Daryl fighting to stay present. A tug of war over his body and soul.

But Daryl is stronger. He bites down. Fighting to shut his jaw. His face, shaking. And his mouth starts to close...

More... more... until it's back to normal.

And he continues "rite" where he left off.

DARYL (cont'd)
(struggling)
...And all... things ... came into
being... through him...

And he holds the cross up even higher.

DARYL (cont'd)
Depart... then! Depart Balaam! Depart
from me! For God... has willed...
that man... be His temple!

And the blackness starts to dissipate from his eyes.

DARYL (cont'd)
Depart! I cast you out, Balaam! Out
from me! Out from the Lord's temple!

DEMON POV: WE RISE out of Daryl's mouth and into the room.

DARYL

I cast you out, unclean spirit! OUT!
OUT! OUT! OUT! OUT! OUT! OUT!

DEMON POV: *The words on the walls are glowing bright. We can see EVERY LETTER, EVERY SENTENCE. It's blinding us.*

We move around in a frenzy, trying to avoid the light from the walls but there is no escape. It surrounds us.

Daryl yelling from the floor. Holding the CROSS up. It's shining in his hand. Like looking into the sun.

The walls grow brighter. Blinding. Unbearable. We're bouncing around the room like a ping pong ball.

CONTINUED: (7)

THE CROSS on the door. It's the only way out.

So we move for the door and go through the cross.

And as we do a BLINDING PURE WHITE LIGHT CONSUMES US.

HALLWAY

The other side of the door. RAYS OF LIGHT shining through the cross. Like the sun is rising inside the room.

And that PURE WHITE LIGHT spills into the hall. Until it's all we see. We're consumed by it too...

MATCH-CUT TO:

Fresh white snow on the ground. Untouched. Freshly fallen.

We're not inside the Cabin anymore. We're...

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Trees sway in the cold wind.

The SUV sits in the snow.

The Cabin sits still. Quiet.

The hole in the front door. The jagged letter "M" above it.

INT. CABIN / MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Snow on the floor. Blowing in from the hole in the door.

The room is still. Just the soft CLANKING of silverware.

The animal heads on the walls stare down at us.

Remnants of the night before...

The Navajo rug lies twisted on one side of the room. The long slit in the middle of it is visible.

The hole sawed into the floor.

The trashed cellar below.

Missing and cracked floorboards all over.

Hell of a night.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KITCHEN

Miraculously the HANDY CAM is still standing in the doorway. Aimed into the room. It's not recording anymore.

HALLWAY

The surviving silverware still hangs. Softly CLANKING in the breeze. Guess those weren't wind chimes after all.

The rest of the silverware is bent and flattened on the floor.

The SPEAKERS hang above. Silent.

The TAPE RECORDER. Duct-taped to the ceiling. The spools are still. The tape at it's end.

WE MOVE to the closed cross-door.

The wood on the edges of the cross have been singed.

WE MOVE through the cross and into the

LAST ROOM

Where Daryl remains still on the floor. On his back. Cuffed to the pipe. The cross still in his other hand.

He wakes. Slowly rises his head. It hurts to do so.

More stubble. His lips are blue. He's pale. Weak. Shivering.

He pats his breast pocket. Can't feel the handcuff key. He reaches inside. Comes up empty-handed.

HALLWAY

REVEAL where the handcuff KEY has fallen - just outside of the door. Might as well be a million miles away.

LAST ROOM

Daryl shakes his head. He's stuck there now.

But he's won. He's defeated the demon.

His chapped lips break into a smile. The smile turns into a laugh. His breaths visible in the brisk air.

He starts to cry. Relieved. Exhausted. Shivering. Content. So many emotions coursing through him at once.

CONTINUED: (2)

A bitter sweet victory.

He lowers his head again. No where to go now.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK OF THE CABIN - DUSK

THE SHED

With no one to man it, the generator shuts off.

All the lights go off in the Cabin windows.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CABIN - NIGHT

The wind howls. Snow falls.

The Cabin is silent. Windows dark.

INT. CABIN / LAST ROOM - NIGHT

Daryl, weak and haggard. Sitting in the dark. Trying to pick the handcuff lock with the SWISS ARMY KNIFE. No luck.

CUT TO:

Daryl trying to break the handcuff with the cross.

Nope. Not happening.

He lies back down. Closes his eyes. Prays in the dark room.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CABIN - MORNING

The sun's just starting its shift. It's snowing.

INT. THE CABIN / LAST ROOM - MORNING

Daryl paler. A small beard growing in now. Hunched over on the floor. Could be dead.

The sound of a CAR pulling up outside. A car door SLAMS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAIN ROOM

THROUGH THE HOLE of the front door we see Janet slowly walk up the steps of the porch. She knocks at the door.

JANET (O.S.)

Daryl!

The house is quiet. Only the soft clanking of silverware. She knocks harder. More urgent.

JANET (O.S.) (cont'd)

Daryl! You in there!

Nothing. She tries the doorknob. It's locked. She bends down and peers through the hole. Alarm fills her face.

She crawls into the hole. Slowly rising to her feet, surveying the condition of the place. Concern mounting.

She sees at the massive hole in the floor... The wrecked cellar below. She looks down the hall... past the hanging silverware... to the cross-door. *What the heck IS that?*

JANET

(really worried now)

Daryl! Daryl!

And then she spots the CAMERA on the tripod.

CUT TO: **LATER**

HANDY-CAM DISPLAY SCREEN: *The exorcism. Daryl backing up into the room reading the book... We're right at the part where Erin comes in through the door... Right before she does, the video warps. WHITE NOISE fills the screen. We can't see anything. All the sounds slow down and distort.*

KITCHEN

Janet "the Watcher" sits in a chair, staring at the snow on the handy-cam screen. Deeply troubled by what she just saw. She gets up and hurries out.

LAST ROOM

Daryl lies still on the floor.

Janet's FOOTSTEPS. Coming fast up the hall. Silverware CLANKING as they do. She reaches the door. Stares in at Daryl through the cross. Daryl doesn't wake.

BATHROOM - LATER

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

When he finally does, he's lying naked in a bathtub of steaming hot water. He's got a little color back.

His eyes open and sees Janet sitting on the edge of the tub, pouring in some more hot water from a boiling pot. Her face, wrapped with concern. She can see all his bruises and cuts.

The handcuffs are gone. His wrist is raw and swollen.

Daryl sits up. Tries to say something.

JANET (cont'd)

Shh. Shh. Let's get your temperature first.

Daryl shivering. Teeth chattering. Tries to explain...

DARYL

That room...

JANET

Save it for the ride back.

(gets up)

I'm gonna fix you up something to eat. Then we get you to a doctor.

She goes for the door.

DARYL

(weak)

Why'd you come back?

She stops. Turns around. He locks eyes with her - *Tell me.*

It takes her a moment...

JANET

When you spoke to Susan that day in AA, I recognized your voice.

FLASH CUT TO: ST. ANGELA CHURCH. We remember this. Daryl in the CONFESSORIAL BOOTH. Giving advice to the crying woman in the next booth. Only now we can see the distraught woman through the mesh is Janet.

JANET (V.O.)

It was the same voice that helped me.

BACK TO SCENE. They hold each others' gaze for a long emotional beat. She turns and leaves, closes the door behind her. Daryl curls up in the steam of the tub. Eyes brimming.

EXT. THE CABIN - DUSK - LATER

A piece of wood covers the hole in the front door now.

Daryl and Janet come out in their coats. Daryl has Parker in his arms. He's still wrapped in blankets.

They walk off the porch to Janet's VOLVO parked out front. She opens the trunk. Daryl gently lays Parker inside.

CUT TO:

Daryl opens the SUV door. Grabs the GPS.

INT. JANET'S VOLVO - MOMENTS LATER

Daryl's in the passenger seat. The MAHOGANY BOX in his lap. He suctions the GPS to the dash. Plugs in the directions.

There are two cups of coffee in the cup holder.

Janet starts the car. Drives away.

Daryl opens the box in his lap. The cross, the collar and the book is back inside it. And something else now...

The photo of Erin and his father holding hands. He's removed it from the frame and taped it under the lid of the box.

REAR VIEW WINDOW: WE STAY on the Cabin as they drive away. It shrinks in the distance. Getting swallowed up into the trees. And then it's gone.

FEMALE GPS
In one hundred and fourteen miles,
you will reach your destination.

FADE OUT