

BLAIR WITCH II

By

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Original Story By

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**FOR EDUCATIONAL
PURPOSES ONLY**

FIRST DRAFT (Revised)

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BLACK SCREEN

And in that darkness, white words silently FADE UP:

The following is based on actual events. Some dramatic re-creation was necessary for reasons that will become obvious.

Beat. And then slowly swelling up is the sound of panicked hyperventilation--spasms of words and weeping:

VOICE (HEATHER DONAHUE)
I'm...scared...to close my eyes--

SMASH UP ON

the teary and terrified EYES of HEATHER DONAHUE (the now ubiquitous scene from "Blair Witch Project" of her confessing to the camera):

HEATHER DONAHUE
--I'm scared to open them.
(beat)
We're going to die out here--

--then, suddenly, this image of Heather FREEZE FRAMES. And we hear the incongruously perky Voice of ABC's DEBORAH ROBERTS:

DEBORAH ROBERTS (V.O.)
--she'd be a much happier camper
if she'd lived to see this weekend's
grosses--

--abruptly, the freeze-framed image of Heather goes squeeze-boxing up into the upper left corner of the screen, revealing:

That we're watching ABC WORLD NEWS SUNDAY--the date bannered at the bottom of the screen: August 1, 1999. Reporter Deborah Roberts sits behind the Anchor Desk reading TelePrompter copy:

DEBORAH ROBERTS
In only its first week of wide release, "The Blair Witch Project" has taken in a whopping 36 million at the nation's box office. Not too bad for an independent film that was reportedly made for less than the cost of your average Buick--

CUT TO:

News Video - Day. The Angelika Theatre, New York City. Big and bold on the marquee: "Blair Witch Project." Tracking shot away from the theatre and down the street, to see:

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

--lines to see the new film stretching five blocks long down Houston Street--and this was for a 10 a.m. show--

CUT TO:

Close On the long line - Two YOUNG MEN in their late teens being interviewed on camera:

YOUNG MAN #1

--to get the holy sh--

(BLEEP!)

--scared outta me, man, what do you think?

YOUNG MAN #2

I heard last night they had people runnin' screamin' out of the theatre--

CUT TO:

The last scene of BWP projected on a big screen--Heather Donahue running screaming down the stairs inside the house--and seeing Mike standing facing the wall--

WHIP BACK

to see that we're inside a theatre, and the audience watching this is collectively shrieking with surprise--

--and then collectively shrieking even louder as Heather is hit from behind and goes down, camera with her.

CUT TO:

Another Theatre - Night - Video of an Audience exiting the film.

One YOUNG WOMAN being interviewed is particularly shaken:

YOUNG WOMAN

...the kid...Mike...he was turned
around towards the wall 'cause that's
what that guy in 1940 made all the
little kids do before he killed them--

A gaggle of Male Teenagers pass by in the b.g. of the shot. One of
them shouts:

TEENAGER

Just a movie, baby!

The Young Woman looks confused for a moment. Looks into the camera:

YOUNG WOMAN

....no...it was real, what we saw
....wasn't it?--

CUT TO:

Telecast of MARY HART on the set of "Entertainment Tonight."

MARY HART

--whatever you want to call it,
"Blair Witch" is definitely the
Cinderella story of the summer, if
not the century, with now an 80 million
dollar gross in just two weeks--

CUT TO:

News Video of a 30ish GUY railing at the People waiting to purchase
tickets to BWP:

30ISH GUY

--save your money, it's all bullshit
hype! Blair Witch sucks!--

CUT TO:

Some STONER being interviewed on camera:

STONER

--all repeat business, dude--I know
morons who've seen the stupid thing
like three times in one day.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

How many times have you seen the film?

STONER

Like maybe five. But not in one
(BLEEP)
-ing day--

CUT TO:

Critic LEONARD MALTIN holding forth on-air:

MALTIN

--it taps into our universal primal fears: of the boogeyman, of the things that go bump in the night-- there's something out there, you can't see it, and it's coming for you--

CUT TO:

Video of more audience exit interviews. Two YOUNG MEN in their 20s:

YOUNG MAN #1

--I'll tell you what was scary: trying to keep my lunch down. If that stupid camera jiggled one more time--

YOUNG MAN #2

--some guy the row in front of me actually did toss--

CUT TO:

WOMAN holding a baby.

WOMAN

--it was just so real--

CUT TO:

Solemn-looking GEEKY GUY:

GEEKY GUY

--it was real--

CUT TO:

Dubious-looking TEENAGE GIRL:

TEENAGE GIRL

--you gotta be kidding me--
there's people out there think
"Blair Witch" was real??--

CUT TO:

Bespectacled MAN IN SUIT:

MAN IN SUIT

--the story of the three students
was fiction. The legend of the
Blair Witch is, apparently, true,
however--

CUT TO:

DIANE SAWYER on "Good Morning America."

DIANE SAWYER

--the brass tacks of the matter
is, love it or hate it, "Blair
Witch" has escalated from being
merely another cinema success
story to a genuine nationwide
phenomenon--if not obsession.
Profits from merchandising tie-
ins going through the roof--

CUT AWAY TO:

Montage of Blair Witch paraphernalia:

- t-shirts and other apparel
- keychains
- posters
- the books-The Blair Witch Project: A Dossier; Heather's Journal
- the CD "Josh's Blair Witch Mix"

DIANE SAWYER (V.O.)

--the official "Blair Witch" web-
site now having received 75
million "hits" to date--

--shot of computer screen, on-line: The Blair Witch Store

DIANE SAWYER

--with that web-site, in just a matter of a few weeks, begatting dozens more web-sites, with chat rooms so packed with fans and foes you're lucky to get a cyber-word in edgewise--

CUT TO:

Computer Screen showing a Chat Room in progress--exchanges flying back and forth like lightning:

GIRLGENIUS: if story true, then how come end credits list "written by"???

WARLOX: all docs are written by--somebody has to put all the pieces together like a story

K-RATIONAL: that's EDITING, idiot--they made whole thing up--those were actors

CHERUBIM-BO: then how come characters had same names as "actors"

AK47: you call that acting

C.I.A-LIST: Congrats any U bought into big lie that BWP phony have successfully been suckered by dis-info campaign waged by U.S. govt they don't want us TO KNOW TRUTH

CUT TO:

Video interview with RONALD CRAVENS, Sheriff of Burkittsville. He's standing at the corner where the Union Cemetery abuts Route 17.

SHERIFF

--the truth is, this movie's probably been the best and worst thing ever happen to this town. The good thing--well, take a look down East Main there--

CAMERA PANS

) past him towards a stretch of two-lane blacktop with stores on either side.

SHERIF

--we've got people pouring in here like it's Times Square, some of 'em all the way from Europe, Japan. A whole lot of money being spent. The bad?

He points to a white wooden post stuck in the shoulder of the road.

SHERIFF

There used to be a sign on it, "Welcome to Burkittsville." They showed it in the movie. Somebody wanna show me where it is now? I swear to God, these people, they're coming in and making off with everything isn't nailed down. There's two other signs I had to take down myself, put away for safekeeping 'til this whole damn thing's finally over.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

When did you think that'll be?

SHERIFF

Just pray we get to see it this lifetime.

CUT TO:

Video footage - Burkittsville Union Cemetery. Two KIDS wearing Ohio State jackets. Wandering around, confused, with gravestone-rubbing kits under their arms.

KID #1

Can't seem to find 'em.

KID #2

Gotta be around here somewhere-- right here's where Heather stood in the movie.

Kid #1 looks into the camera.

KID #1

We're trying to find the graves of those seven kids Rustin Farr killed.

KID #2

Lotta dead kids--just can't find
any died later than like 1867.

Kid #1 stops, squints. The camera travels with his gaze: atop
nearly every other grave marker is a black candle melted into the
stone.

KID #1

What do you think all these candles
are for?

KID #2

I wouldn't touch 'em.

CUT BACK TO:

Sheriff Cravens on Video.

SHERIFF

Nothing much we can do--just enforce
the curfew. Which is dusk, for both
the cemetery and the Black Hills
Forest.

CUT TO:

Aerial shot of the Black Hills area: we see packs of people
everywhere.

CUT TO:

The overgrown foundation of Rustin Parr's house in the middle of
the woods. Manic-eyed Teenagers proudly display their souvenirs for
the camera: rocks and cement slivers.

TEEN #1

This is what you call "striking
gold."

TEEN #2

Fifty bucks a pop minimum back in
Philly.

CUT BACK TO:

The Sheriff on tape.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

There seems to be some controversy
whether or not any of this actually
happened.

SHERIFF

That what actually happened?

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

The three kids who disappeared,
everything that was in the movie,
the whole Blair Witch legend.

The Sheriff just stares for a beat towards the Interviewer like
he/she's completely insane. Then turns and walks away, rubbing his
eyes with a thumb and forefinger like a headache the size of
Manitoba just hit him.

SHERIFF

You'll excuse me--

CUT TO:

An office in L.A. Big "Artisan Entertainment" logo on the wall. A
well-turned out Gentleman (or Woman) who exudes "EXECUTIVE" smiles
gently for the camera.

ARTISAN EXECUTIVE

--the only statement we feel
comfortable making at this time
is: we're happy the film's been
such a success; we grieve with
the families of Heather, Josh
and Mike. Now, if you'll excuse
me--

CUT TO:

Dusk. Sheriff Cravens leaning on his car on a road at the edge of
the forest.

SHERIFF

--this is the only reality I
know: we're averaging about four
lost rubberneckers a week up in
these woods.

The Sheriff puts a bullhorn to his lips; bellows into the woods:

SHERIFF

Get outta these damn woods and go home! There is nothing in there!

SMASH TO BLACK

And silence. White words again appear in the darkness:

NINE MONTHS LATER

Music begins to be heard under it--uber Goth: Type O Negative's "Haunted." It suddenly swells--to ear-shatter proportions.

SMASH UP ON

EXT. A VAN - IN MOTION - HIGHWAY - DAY

Zooming fast down U.S. Route 70--West. We see the mileage signs on both sides of the median indicating where they're coming from and where they're now going: from Baltimore, towards Frederick, Maryland. [NOTE: this is shot on 16 or 35mm film, which will be the medium of "reality" for the rest of the movie.]

The music that's blaring isn't underscoring--it's coming from inside the Van. As is a WOMAN'S VOICE (ANNA) shouting over it:

ANNA (O.S.)

You want to turn that shit down just a hair??

INT. THE VAN - CONTINUOUS

TIGHT ON the Driver of the Van, a grunged-out 25 year old with shoulder-length hair, a well-worn black "Blair Witch Project" t-shirt and cap: COTTER KALLER. He yells towards the backseat:

COTTER

Shit? This is from "Josh's Blair Witch Mix," man!

ANNA (O.S.)

Down or off--you're giving me a migraine.

COTTER

(muttering)
Christ.

He turns the volume down.

COTTER
(petulant)
Just trying to set the mood for the
mission--get the "feeling."

ANNA (O.S.)
Only thing I'm feeling is homicidal.

Cotter grumbles. Then a wicked grin hits his lips. Turns to the
unseen Man sitting next to him in the passenger seat:

COTTER
Hold this.

NICK (O.S.)
What?

COTTER
The wheel.

He clamps Nick's hand on the steering wheel, picks up the 8mm
Camcorder beside him, turns around, and starts shooting into the
back seat.

POV OF VIDEO CAMCORDER

On a not-very-happy-at-the-moment-looking Blonde Woman:

ANNA TASSIO - ON VIDEO

age 20. She rolls her eyes as Cotter begins narrating:

COTTER (O.S.)
The bitched-out babe in back here
is one Anna Tassio--we met one
dark and stormy night in a Blair
Witch chat room, we all did--

ANNA
--Christ almighty--

COTTER (O.S.)
--but she was nicer then--sweeter--
she hadn't vomited twice already
like today--

ANNA

--it's called "morning sickness,"
asshole--

COTTER (O.S.)

(editorial aside)

--a six week bun in the oven--

NICK (O.S.)

(wearily)

--Cotter, just turn the camera
off?

Cotter responds by panning the Camcorder towards the passenger seat. We see on video:

NICK LEAVITT

a lanky 21 year old wearing wire-rims.

COTTER (O.S.)

This is her equally on-the-rag boy-
friend, Nick Leavitt--

NICK

--turn the camera off--

COTTER (O.S.)

--they're from UMass, doing some
kind of fucking term paper--

NICK

--Graduate Thesis--

COTTER (O.S.)

--about the Witch--

VOICE FROM BACK SEAT

--she doesn't exist--

NICK

--you got that right--

THE CAMERA pans again into the back seat, showing HEATHER ARENDT, 19, with a huge mane of fire-engine red hair.

HEATHER

--and if she ever did--

ANNA (O.S.)
--which she may have--

NICK (O.S.)
--bullshit--

HEATHER
--she wasn't a witch--we embrace
nature, not evil--

COTTER (O.S.)
--thank you, Heather Arendt--and
arend't we glad you're here--a real
witch--

HEATHER
--fuckin' A right--

NICK
--Cotter--

COTTER
--a Wiccan--

NICK (O.S.)
--turn the goddamn camera off!

The Camcorder swings back to Nick.

NICK
We're not making Blair Witch II
here.

COTTER (O.S.)
I am.

One big blur of a pan--Cotter's turned the camcorder on himself. He
issues his manifesto:

COTTER
And let it be known--before we even
get to Burkittsville--it's gonna be
an eighteen thousand times better
movie--for half the cost--

HEATHER (O.S.)
--which'd be about ten bucks--

COTTER
--and unlike the first one, every
second of it's gonna be true! "Blair
Witch: The Real Story!"

NICK (O.S.)
Cotter?

COTTER
I'm not finished.

NICK (O.S.)
We're all going to be if you don't
hit the brakes.

The Camcorder WHIP-PANS towards the windshield:

The Van is about to plow into the rear of a

HUGE COCA-COLA TRUCK

COTTER (O.S.)
Jee-zuz!

Visual pandemonium as the Camcorder goes flying from his hands and
down next to the

BRAKE PEDAL

We see both of COTTER'S FEET smash down on the pedal. Hear O.S.:
screeching of the passengers--screeching of the brake shoes--
screaming of the tires as the Van swerves into the next lane--and
then an angry symphony of CAR HORNS.

HEATHER (O.S.)
You're a complete fucking idiot,
aren't you?

COTTER (O.S.)
Hey, Mr. Graduate Fucking Thesis
here was s'posed to be driving!

NICK (O.S.)
You drive, I'll handle the video,
okay?

COTTER (O.S.)
Fine.

We see the view from the Camcorder as it's scooped up from the Van floor and brought back up to eye-level again.

ON NICK'S FACE

As he waves two fingers at the lens.

NICK
Bye-bye--

--and the Video zaps to black.

SMASH BACK TO - FILM

Where Nick can be seen tossing the camcorder into the backseat. Anna catches it, puts it in a back pack and zips it.

COTTER
What're you doing?

NICK
This isn't about us.

COTTER
Right. And the check's in the mail.

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. THE VAN - TWO HOURS LATER - DAY

Doing a relaxed 35 down the narrow ribbon of Route 17. Rural farm country. The weather's turned grey--making all the 19th Century-vintage houses and barns they pass look dismal, if not a little foreboding.

NICK
Cheery little place.

ANNA
It's like traveling back in time.

HEATHER
The good old days: toasting marshmallows over a burning witch.

NICK
The never burned witches in this country, they hanged them.

HEATHER

Whatever--all I know is the persecution's going to start all over again, they keep pumping out inflammatory bullshit like that fucking movie--

COTTER

--hey: check that out!

Ahead of them, at a crossroads, is a sign:

Welcome To Burkittsville

COTTER

'Thought those all got stolen.

ANNA

Guess they thought it was safe to put some up again.

COTTER

Think again.

He starts to slow the Van alongside the sign.

COTTER

Somebody wanna hand me that claw hammer in back--

--Nick pushes Cotter's leg back down on the accelerator. The Van jerks past the sign and down the road.

NICK

Get busted on your own time.
We've got a schedule to keep.

Cotter just glares at him.

COTTER

Was it every day or just semi-weekly you got your ass kicked as a kid?

NICK

(ignoring him)
Now you can bring the vehicle to a stop: there on the left.

EXT. BURKITTSVILLE UNION CEMETERY - JUST AFTER

The four of them stand there by the sign to the graveyard, Anna searching the gray horizon.

COTTER
Why are we here?

ANNA
She e-mailed me yesterday this is where we should meet her.

COTTER
Who?

NICK
Whatzername--the "psychic" Anna hired.

ANNA
Domini. Domini Van Teer.

COTTER
What's she look like?

ANNA
No idea, just talked to her on the 'Net--she's very good.

NICK
So says her website

ANNA
She is--she's helped solve a bunch of murders: Arizona, New Mexico--

COTTER
--how old?

ANNA
I dunno, probably right up there, based on her resume.

COTTER
Then there she blows.

Cotter points to

THE WOODS

near the far edge of the cemetery. Standing there is an old, gaunt and particularly Unattractive Woman, staring at them.

COTTER

Terrific--and I was afraid I wasn't gonna get laid on this trip.

The four of them start tromping towards her.

NICK

Jesus.

ANNA

What?

NICK

That's not whatzername--it's Mary Brown.

COTTER

From-the-movie-Mary-Brown, Trailer Park Bible Psycho?

HEATHER

Oh, for chrissake, she was an actor.

ANNA

No, the kids were actors, the townspeople were real. Her, the Sheriff, the Convenience Store guy--

NICK

--whatever; that's her.

FLASHBACK - B&W

To the interview with Mary Brown from "Blair Witch Project." The years have apparently not been kind: she looks a good two decades younger.

CUT BACK TO - THE PRESENT

They're less than 20 feet now from MARY BROWN.

She speaks without expression:

MARY BROWN
What do you want?

ANNA
Just came over to say hello.

MARY BROWN
It's five bucks for signin'
something; ten for signin' a Bible;
twenty, you want to take a picture
with me. Any kind've conversation,
that's subject to negotiation.

COTTER
(sotto)
I don't believe this.

HEATHER
(sotto)
I do.

NICK
Thanks just the same. I think
we're fine.

MARY BROWN
Heather's not.

Heather double-takes.

HEATHER
Me?

MARY BROWN
Heather. I saw her. Elly Kedward's
hands were on her throat, and she
was sucking out the girl's insides
with her mouth.

COTTER
(to Heather)
Heather from the movie.

Mary Brown shakes her head.

MARY BROWN

Heather.

NICK

Been a pleasure meeting you;
we need to go now.

He hustles the other three back towards the cemetery.

HEATHER

I take it back--she wasn't an
actor. She's a nutjob.

COTTER

That's what Josh and Mike said.

HEATHER

Shut-up.

TIME CUT TO:

The cemetery. Everyone spread out looking for:

ANNA

Domini? Domini Von Teer...??

Beat. And then, out of nowhere, seemingly just plunging right out
of the earth

AN ARM

extends into the air not far from them. Paper-pale and stick-thin,
almost skeletal.

DOMINI

Present.

They walk over. See, lying atop a cracked granite grave marker, a
Young Woman who can't be more than 18. Heroin-chic skinny. All in
black, including her make-up--uber Goth: DOMINI VON TEER.

ANNA

Domini?

DOMINI

Yes.

ANNA
What're you doing there?

DOMINI
Trying to find the energy.

ANNA
Inside the grave?

DOMINI
To stand up--I'm exhausted. Been
on the road since yesterday.

COTTER
You want a hand?

DOMINI
I want amphetamines.

Cotter helps her up.

COTTER
Beer and weed is what I've got.

DOMINI
Both. Now.

Anna and Heather look at the faded marker Domini's been lying on.
It says:

BOY KURTH
May 28 '00

HEATHER
Sweet place to take a nap.

ANNA
Strange girl.

HEATHER
You think so?

As they walk away, Heather sees Mary Brown across the cemetery,
staring at her.

EXT/INT. THE VAN - LATER - AFTERNOON

Snaking its way down the road that wends through the Black Forest
Hills.

INSIDE

Domini and her second beer have commandeered the shotgun seat, Nick relegated to a tight squeeze in the back seat. Dead silence. She's slightly unnerving. Finally:

COTTER

So, I hear you're from New Mexico!

DOMINI

Sometimes.

ANNA

Her father's Sheriff of Taos County.

DOMINI

Sometimes. Where are we going?

NICK

Ruins of the Rustin Parr house.

DOMINI

Guy who killed all the kids in the '40s.

COTTER

("Outer Limits" tremelo)
"The Voiiiices made him do it."

ANNA

The Witch's voice.

HEATHER

She wasn't a witch.

NICK

Whatever.

DOMINI

I hear voices all the time.

That pretty much kills the rest of the conversation.

EXT. THE VAN - LATER - AFTERNOON

Parked at the edge of the woods. Back-packs being hauled out of the rear, camping gear, video equipment.

DOMINI

What is all this shit?

NICK

We're doing dusk-to-dawn taping
of all the places where there've
been alleged Blair Witch "sightings"
--the Parr House, Coffin Rock,
Tappy Creek.

DOMINI

Why?

NICK

See what turns up--which I
guarantee will be nothing. Some
of the rest of the party are more
hopeful--

HEATHER

--or incredibly fucking naive.

ANNA

Hey, folklore--

NICK

--~~myth~~--

ANNA

--doesn't just pop out of thin
air. It spins off of real events.
At some point there was a Blair
Witch--

NICK

--or one huge attack of group
hysteria.

COTTER

(snide)

Either way, maybe there's a book
in it, and they both make a ton of
money.

NICK

(snapping)

It's a serious sociological study.

DOMINI

The four of you really have too much spare fucking time on your hands, don't you?

HEATHER

And what's your excuse for being here?

NICK

She got paid.

DOMINI

(shrugs)

I thought the movie was bitchin'.

EXT. THE WOODS - SOON AFTER

Mammoth backpacks strapped on, the five begin walking into the forest.

COTTER

Wait a sec!

He spins and runs back towards the Van.

NICK

What?

Through the trees, they see Cotter place a pint of bottled water on the roof of the Van. Starts video-ing it as he walks away.

HEATHER

He really is a fucking idiot.

EXT. DEEPER IN THE WOODS - LATER - AFTERNOON

Slogging up a 45-degree angled hill. This is not exactly Sir Edmund Hillary and Co.--the five of them already look exhausted.

HEATHER

Didn't we already do this hill?

Nick is staring at three different maps at once as he walks.

NICK

No.

ANNA
You sure?

NICK
Yes.

COTTER
Terrific: an hour, we're already
lost--

--and then a look of trepidation crosses Cotter's face--

FLASH TO:

Footage from "Blair Witch Project"--panic, as Heather, Josh and
Mike realize they've spent all day walking in a circle.

NICK (V.O.)
Cotter?

CUT BACK TO - PRESENT

Nick's glaring at him.

COTTER
What?

NICK
Look over there.

Cotter looks up: less than 500 yards ahead can be seen the ruins of
an Old House.

COTTER
Okay, but--

NICK
--now there.

--Nick is pointing behind him. Cotter looks. From the atop the hill
he can see down to the road--and his Van with the water bottle on
the roof.

COTTER
Oh. Cool.

EXT. THE PARR RUINS - SHORTLY AFTER

All the backpacks and miscellaneous tonnage is already dumped on the ground. The five of them stretch their legs, massage sore shoulders and lower backs, while sightseeing the remnants of the old house and its environs.

Cotter, not surprisingly, is taping everything.

POV CAMCORDER

a huge bite taken out of one of the walls of the foundation, stone, brick and soil strewn everywhere around it.

COTTER (O.S.)

Where they found the backpacks and all the film a year later.

ANNA (O.S.)

Buried deep under 200 years worth of soil, ash, and compost layers.

DOMINI (O.S.)

Yeah, that was a cluster-fuck for the mind.

NICK/HEATHER (O.S.)

If it happened at all.

Suddenly, the camcorder image starts shaking wildly.

CUT BACK TO - FILM

Cotter seen running full-tilt towards Heather, who's facing one of the interior foundation walls. He's jiggling the camera like he's got St. Vitus dance.

CUT BACK TO - VIDEO

We hear Cotter doing a passable Heather Donahue impression--screeching as the shaking video image PUSHES IN right towards Heather Arendt's face.

COTTER (O.S.)

Mike! Miiiiiiike! Noooooo!

Heather turns, scowling, and puts her hand over the lens.

CUT BACK TO - FILM

Heather pushing the camcorder out of her face.

HEATHER

You're not only an idiot, you're
a goddamn child.

COTTER

Why does everyone here but me have
have a gigantic stick up their ass?

DOMINI

Hey! Check this out!

CUT TO - CAMCORDER POV:

On one of the foundation's interior walls: a gobbledygook of tiny
handprints and strange, angular glyphs.

DOMINI (O.S.)

Look at those marks--just like
in the movie.

NICK (O.S.)

Ancient runes--

COTTER (O.S.)

--what the fuck's a "rune"?--

CUT BACK TO - FILM

Nick erasing half the marks with one sweep of his palm.

NICK

--chalked just hours ago by ancient
adolescents. It's called vandalism.

ANNA

What is this?

All turn. She's pointing to the large, leafy tree with branches
stretching everywhere above them.

COTTER

Oak?

ANNA

No. What's it doing here in the middle of the foundation?

HEATHER

Growing. This place burnt down 50 years ago. Trees happen.

Nick flips through a voluminous loose-leaf notebook--points out a page to Anna.

NICK

Look it's right here--from the Blair Witch "Dossier"--the sketch the anthropology students made of their dig when they found the backpack.

The sketch shows a spindly growth in the middle of the foundation, no more than six feet high.

ANNA

That's a sapling--this mother's got to be three hundred years old, minimum.

NICK

It's a sketch, Anna--it's not to-scale cartography; the tree was not the kids' focus--

ANNA

--do you agree it's that old, Nick?

NICK

Okay, fine, whatever, yes--it's an old tree.

HEATHER

Why don't you just cut it down and count the goddamn rings--who cares?

ANNA

Because it means the tree is older than the house.

COTTER

Yeah, so?

ANNA

So whoever built this--

--Nick rustles through the loose-leaf--

NICK

--brother of Rustin Parr's maternal
grandfather, somewhere after 1858--

ANNA

--whoever--they built an entire
house around a tree. Sticking
up right through the living room
Somebody like to explain that to
me?

NICK

The rest of the family was
crazy as Rusty Parr.

ANNA

Oh, c'mon--even you have to admit
this is weird.

NICK

No--this is weird.

He reaches down and picks one of the now infamous wooden "stick
men" off the ground.

POV - COTTER'S CAMCORDER - CLOSE UP

Sudden, stunned silence as the camera examines it fore and aft.

And then Nick's hands are seen removing the material that secures
the Stick Man's "arms" to his "torso." Torso and legs fall to the
ground, leaving Nick holding a piece of--

CUT BACK TO - FILM

NICK

--sacred and occult Scotch Tape.

DOMINI

Rusty Parr had the right idea on
child care.

EXT. THE PARR RUINS - DUSK

By flashlight, Cotter's fiddling with five vid-cams on tripods that have already been set up.

Domini lies within the foundation walls staring up at the sky. Finishes the last of Cotter's beer and discards the empty.

Not far from there, Heather's already got her simple one-person tent erected.

Adjacent, Nick and Anna are wrestling with the nightmare of trying to put up some Barnum & Bailey-size number.

NICK

Your parents didn't have a bigger one?

ANNA

It was free--I recall that was the chief selling point for you.

NICK

No offense, sweetheart: fuck you.

ANNA

You know, Nick, you've been something of a total asshole the past few days.

NICK

Pardon me, I've had a few things on my mind--like putting this safari together.

ANNA

Like how weirded-out you are with this pregnancy thing.

NICK

Let's just leave it at: it was one hell of a surprise.

ANNA

You don't want it though.

NICK

Your body, your call.

ANNA
Why is there no "our" here?

NICK
Could we take this up later--like
indoors, without half the world
listening?

ANNA
You feel no need to get married or
anything.

NICK
Anna--

ANNA
--fine, later, fine.

COTTER (O.S.)
Sonovabitch!!

All eyes turn: Cotter's standing 20 feet away with rotted wooden
tentpoles and a piece of grommeted canvas that's literally mildew-
disintegrating in his hands.

HEATHER
Nice tent.

COTTER
Hadn't even opened the thing
since Cub scouts.

HEATHER
Never would've guessed.

COTTER
So where the hell am I going to
sleep?

HEATHER
If you're looking at me, look
elsewhere.

COTTER
I've got the Panasonic Portable
DVD player.

Beat. She stares at him.

HEATHER

What movies?

COTTER

Ask me what I don't have.

INT. HEATHER'S TENT - NIGHT

Heather and Cotter jammed in there like Spam, sharing a joint, and watching "Curse of the Blair Witch" on DVD:

The Interview Sequence with folklorist CHARLES MOOREHOUSE, explaining the "origins" of the Blair Witch story--Elly Kedward's banishment, etc.

HEATHER

What I never could figure about the movie?

COTTER

What?

HEATHER

Three people: two guys, a girl-- sleeping in the same motel room, the same tent night after night.

COTTER

Yeah?

HEATHER

No fucking.

COTTER

No.

HEATHER

Made no sense. Scared out of their minds, and the greatest stress reliever in creation right at their fingertips. Nada.

COTTER

No sense at all.

(beat)

I'm a little stressed.

HEATHER

Try a long walk.

INT. NICK AND ANNA'S TENT - SIMULTANEOUS

It ain't the Ritz, but they did come prepared: air mattresses, big Coleman lanterns, a kerosene heater--and heaps of books and brimming file folders.

They're sitting up in their respective mummy-style sleeping bags, studying documents, making notes--

--when this high-pitched MOANING can be heard outside the tent.

Nick and Anna looks at each other. Nick grabs one of the lanterns and dashes for the tent door.

EXT. THE TENT - CONTINUOUS

He shines the light slowly out into the foundation ruins--

--and there's Domini, still lying on her back, staring up, cooing:

DOMINI

Ooh. Ooh.

NICK

Ah, Domini?

DOMINI

What?

NICK

You planning on sleeping out there?

DOMINI

Not planning on sleeping at all.

She points up into the big oak in the middle of the foundation.

DOMINI

Ooh. Ooh.

The call comes back to her from the tree: "ooh-ooh."

Nick sees perched high up on one of the branches: A GREAT HORNED OWL. It's staring down at them.

DOMINI

I figure I lie here long enough,
maybe he'll swoop down and carry
me off in his talons.

Nick rolls his eyes and goes back into his tent.

COTTER AND HEATHER

are also watching this from their tent.

HEATHER

We should be so lucky.

COTTER

Butt-ugly owl.

They duck back into the tent.

The Owl keeps watching.

FADE TO BLACK.

Several beats. And then in the darkness, a rustling sound is heard.
A whisper that sounds like:

VOICE

...see if it's alive--

CLICK! Then Anna's hand seen--she's just turned on one of the
lanterns. Sits up in her sleeping bag. Listens. The sounds have
stopped.

Beat. She gets out of her bag, grabs the lantern, and goes to the
tent flap--

EXT. TENT - CONTINUOUS

--and just as she steps outside--

--something strikes her hand--

ANNA

--shit--

--the lantern goes flying into the dirt--

--and suddenly out of the darkness come flying:

LITTLE HANDS

wielding small sharpened sticks--or are they tent pegs?--

--and they stab into Anna's belly again and again, accompanied by shrieks of delight.

Anna screams--

NICK (V.O.)

Who's James?

ANNA TURNS

and finds she's inside the tent, wrapped tight in her sleeping bag. Staring at Nick, who's propped up on his air mattress with a book and a lantern, staring quizzically back at her.

ANNA

(disoriented)

What?

NICK

You said the name "James."

ANNA

I don't know.

She pulls her sleeping bag down, looks at her belly--unmarked, unharmed, bloodless.

NICK

Baby names?

ANNA

I don't know. Nightmare.

NICK

You want me to scooch over next to you?

ANNA

Yes.

EXT. THE RUINS - NIGHT

Domini is still supine, staring upwards.

DOMINI

This place is like a regular
K-Mart of bad vibes, ain't it,
pa!?

The Owl doesn't respond.

MAN'S VOICE

(distant)

Please, someone, help me--

SMASH TO

a static shot of dark, dark woods. The Voice continues to be heard
from somewhere deep in there:

MAN'S VOICE

--somebody, please!

PULL BACK

It's coming from the DVD of "Blair Witch Project."

HEATHER DONAHUE'S VOICE

Josh?!?

PULL BACK FURTHER

Cotter and Heather Arendt are fast asleep. Must have drifted off
during the umpteenth viewing.

MAN'S VOICE

(much louder)

Heather???

Heather Arendt is up like a shot.

MAN'S VOICE

Heather?? Josh???

Mild snort of amusement when she sees the movie's still playing on
the DVD. She buttons it off. Starts to lay back down--

MAN'S VOICE

(loud)

Heather????

--bolts right back up on the verge of a coronary.

The Man's Voice screams:

MAN'S VOICE
They're pulling my teeth out!!

Heather literally punches Cotter awake.

COTTER
Wha' the--

She clamps her hand over his mouth. Beat. They listen--
--suddenly, SCURRYING FOOTSTEPS heard; giggling--

COTTER
(through her hand)
--o-fug-me--

MAN'S VOICE
Heaaaaather????

Cotter wrenches himself away, grabs his little 8mm camcorder--

HEATHER
(scared)
What're you, crazy??

COTTER
(exhilarated)
What're you, nuts?

He lunges out of the tent, camera already whirring--

EXT. TENT - CONTINUOUS

--and right into a blinding, light-up-the-night battery of halogen lamps.

COTTER
Jesus!

Halo-ed in the glare of those lights stand

FOUR LARGE TEENAGERS

in various states of grunge. They all but scream of STONERS. One of them's got a huge running Beta-Cam on shoulder, another's hefting a DAT recorder and shotgun mic.

We see Cotter from the POV of these guys camera:

POV BETA-CAM - VIDEO

Cotter shooting back at them with his puny-by-comparison camcorder, his thermal long-johns halfway down his legs.

STONER #1

Check this out: Burkittsville's
Funniest Home Videos.

Cotter's still shaking.

COTTER

Jesus-Jesus-Jesus--

A furious Heather can be seen scrambling out of the tent. Gets right in the lens:

HEATHER (O.S.)

What the fuck?!?

CUT BACK TO - FILM

The Stoner Cameraman snaps the Beta away from her.

STONER CAMERAMAN

Hey, that's 50K worth of hi-tech,
chickee.

HEATHER

You gave me a fucking heart attack!

STONER #2

Oh, and you boogied all the way up
here to get a good night's sleep.

STONER #3

We just made your every dream come
true, darlin'.

HEATHER

Get out of here!

COTTER

What're you doing with all this
shit?

STONER #4
Shootin' "Blair Witch II," man--
what's your excuse?

COTTER
Shooting "Blair Witch II."

STONER #2
Oh, dude, I don't think so--that
is just not happening.

STONER CAMERAMAN
This is our gig.

STONER #3
We got jurisdiction, man--we got
fuckin' permits to be here.

HEATHER
Oh, yeah? Let's see 'em.

STONER #4
They're, uh, like, in the car.

HEATHER
Bullshit.

STONER #2
Let's put it this way: one of us
is going, and it's you.

NICK (O.S.)
What's the hassle here?

Nick and Anna appear from their tent.

STONER #2
You and the Brady Bunch, Mr.
Scorsese.

STONER CAMERAMAN
You're interfering with the commerce
of independent film!

Cotter asides to Nick.

COTTER
They're making "Blair Witch II," too.

NICK

No problem, just give us 'til dawn
and we're gone.

COTTER

What?

NICK

Look, guys, we're cold, we're tired
we're shook--we just want to get out
of here as soon as there's light.
We saw something up at Coffin Rock
today--

ANNA

(catching on)

--or someone--

NICK

--scared the living shit out of
us.

STONER #3

What?

NICK

I don't know, I don't know--

HEATHER

--yeah, a hand or something--

COTTER

--coming out of the water--

Now even Domini joins the prevarication party, popping up from
inside the foundation:

DOMINI

--stop it! Stop talking about it!
I'm gonna freak!

ANNA

(tearing up)

I just wanna go home.

STONER #3

(impressed)

Whoa.

STONER CAMERAMAN
You didn't get it on tape, didja?

NICK
Tried, but--

Stoner #2 starts barking orders to his crew:

STONER #2
Strip it down and ship it out!
Coffin Rock!

They're packed up and ready to move in a flash. Stoner #4 turns as they trot off:

STONER #4
Any other voices or noises you hear
tonight--it ain't us.

The Stoners make Josh Leonard-like cries as they disappear back into the darkness:

STONERS (O.S.)
Heather??? Mike???? Somebody???
Please????

NICK
They were never seen again. Their
footage was found a year later--
underexposed and useless.

Tired laughter.

NICK
How're the cameras doing?

COTTER
Due for a re-load and battery
check. I'll get on it.

HEATHER
'Give you a hand. I think my
sleep for the night just ended.

ANNA
Join the club.

NICK

Well, everybody grab a coat, and
pull up a rock for a night of
witch-watch.

The four campers proceed to their respective tasks.

Domini stays perched on the foundation, watching where the Stoners
disappeared. To herself:

DOMINI

Something...really twisted...is
going to happen.

She looks up. The Owl's gone.

FADE TO BLACK.

Birds heard in the darkness. And snoring.

FADE UP ON:

INT. NICK AND ANNA'S TENT - DAWN

Cuddled together, fast asleep.

EXT. THE PARR FOUNDATION - SIMULTANEOUS - DAWN

Domini conked out on the grass, curled in a fetal position.

INT. HEATHER'S TENT - SIMULTANEOUS - DAWN

Ditto Heather, sprawled half-in/half-out of her sleeping bag.

Only Cotter is awake--well, making an attempt at it, anyway.
Squints at his digital watch: 5:45am.

COTTER

Jesus...wha' happened...

He groggily gets to his knees and dog-walks out of the tent.
Several beats.

And then we hear outside the tent:

COTTER (O.S.)

Oh, fuck me! Oh, Jesus!

The cries wake Heather--

INT. NICK AND ANNA'S TENT - SIMULTANEOUS

--as well as Nick and Anna--

EXT. THE PARR FOUNDATION - SIMULTANEOUS

--even Domini, who pops her head up and starts to ask:

DOMINI

What happ--

--and then she sees; they all see--

COTTER

--they're all gone!--

--five tripods, all minus the Video cameras they used to support--

COTTER

--and none of 'em were mine!
I-am-so-fucked, I-am-so-fucked--
where the hell was everybody???

NICK

Asleep--

COTTER

--what happened to the goddamn
"Witch-watch??"

NICK

--I dunno, I just woke up--

DOMINI

--last thing I remember were those
four clowns shooting the movie--

COTTER

--yeah, the goddamn stoners! Who
you think stole the stuff!?

NICK

Yeah. Got to Coffin Rock, found
zip, and came back, ripped off
the cameras.

Domini looks at one of the mangled tripods.

DOMINI

Ripped? They look like they were
bit off.

NICK

Smells Like Teenage Spirit.

COTTER

This is funny?? This is tens of
thousands of fucking dollars!
(shouts into the woods)
You pricks! I'll see you in
fucking court!!

ANNA (O.S.)

Not the only things missing, Nick.

Nick turns. Anna's at the tent door holding a pile of empty file
folders and two looseleaf notebooks that have somehow been torn
clean in half. Now Nick's incensed:

NICK

That's almost a year's worth of
work!
(into the woods)
Scumbags! Ch, Jesus, Jesus....

DOMINI

At least you still have the tapes.

COTTER

One set. Everything from midnight
on--

DOMINI

--no. I think they're all in there.

She's pointing to the collapsed section of the basement foundation
where the original "Blair Witch Project" tapes were found.

The other four stop and stare at her.

And then Cotter goes diving in the hole. Beat.

COTTER (O.S.)

Sonovabitch!

And emerges with two grimy handfuls of VHS, Beta, and 8mm video tapes.

HEATHER

Those ours?

Cotter brushes dirt from them; holds them up for inspection.

COTTER

My handwriting on the face labels.

And then his excitement switches to confusion. Turns to Domini:

COTTER

How'd you know they were--

DOMINI

(shrugs)

--hunch. Just sort've saw 'em there.

COTTER

My ass--you saw those four fucking baboons put 'em there!

DOMINI

No.

NICK

Cotter, I think she's right. Why would those guys go to all the trouble of stealing the cameras and all this other stuff and leave the tapes?

COTTER

Spite.

NICK

They were making a movie--if they were going to steal anything it'd be just the tapes, to see if we had anything they didn't.

DOMINI

I don't think it was them.

COTTER

Oh, who did then? Blair Witch?
Snatching equipment to make her
own sequel?

DOMINI

I don't know yet.

COTTER

Well, please keep me fucking
informed!

HEATHER

Those four guys--it's the only
thing that makes sense.

She looks over at Domini, who says nothing--just stares into the
woods.

NICK

This is a goddamn disaster. Let's
just pack it up and go.

ANNA

I want to see the tapes.

NICK

And what do you possibly think
you're going to fucking see there?

ANNA

No idea. But if that's all we've
got left--

COTTER

--nothing left to play 'em on,
honey.

ANNA

Oh, sorry, right.

COTTER

You can be goddamn sure, though,
I'm going to be looking at every
second of 'em when I get back
to Baltimore--I get proof who
stole my shit and I call the cops!

ANNA

We're ticketed to fly back from
Baltimore, anyway.

HEATHER

Me, too.

COTTER

Hey, I got a whole editing suite
in my loft--more the fucking
merrier.

NICK

Pointless.

DOMINI

No. I don't think so.

EXT. STREET IN N. BALTIMORE - SEVERAL HOURS LATER - AFTERNOON

The Van pulls up to the curb in a savagely decrepit and extremely
desolate old industrial section of North Baltimore.

COTTER

403 41st Street, kids: home.

NICK

I dunno it's safe to even get out
of the car.

COTTER

By day? No sweat.

HEATHER

What about night?

COTTER

Not a great idea. Especially
'cross the street.

All four look: a thickly wooded area that looks like mostly sumac.

COTTER

Druid Hill Park.

ANNA

That's a joke?

COTTER

That's its name. A pastoral
glade gamboling with crackheads
and homeless and averaging at
least one homicide a week.

NICK

Let's get inside.

COTTER

First enormous brick warehouse
on your right.

INT. COTTER'S BUILDING - JUST AFTER

Four of the five of them ride nervously in a huge, ancient elevator
that ascends in a series of jerks. Cotter's oblivious.

COTTER

Used to be a meat-packing plant.
Slaughter on the ground floor--
carcasses schlepped up on this
thing for dissection and grinding
and--

HEATHER

--Cotter: shut up.

COTTER

What?

INT. DOOR TO COTTER'S LOFT - JUST AFTER

Cotter opens the elevator grates, revealing a metal door with a
single lock. He fits a key into it

NICK

Just one lock in this neighbor-
hood?

COTTER

All I need--

--throws the door wide--

--the LOUD BARKING of what sounds like a pack of pit-bulls greets
them.

COTTER
Get inside quick, they'll stop.

HEATHER
Too busy eating us?

COTTER
Just go.

INT. COTTER'S LOFT - CONTINUOUS

He shuts the door; the BARKING stops. Everyone's eyes zapping all 360 degrees around them: no dogs.

Cotter taps a small speaker above the door.

COTTER
Baltimore's cheapest burglar alarm.

He re-opens the door a crack--the BARKING starts anew. Closes it. Nothing.

COTTER
Had the door jimmied a few times.
Nobody yet's made it inside.

He ushers them into a huge

DOUBLE-STORIED SPACE

easily 30 feet high. Exposed brick walls--massive iron roof beams.

And crammed to bursting with bizarre esoterica everywhere:

--carousel horses, huge airplane propellers, a bowsp'rit from an old clipper ship, lawn jockeys, a set of bunkbeds made entirely of wagon wheel parts, bowling balls, cannonballs, pinball machines.

COTTER
Mi casa y su casa!

HEATHER
Su casa y shit-o hole-o.

COTTER
Hey, hon'--this is what pays the
rent and tuition.

NICK
Running a junk yard.

COTTER
A Cyber Entrepreneurialship.

HEATHER
English.

COTTER
I spend a lot of time on e-Bay.
Buying, selling--sometimes buying
then re-selling at substantial
mark-up, sometimes just selling
crap I find in the street.

ANNA
Looks like business is booming.

COTTER
There's some stuff that's hard to
part with. Editing's stuff's up
there--

--he points to a loft overhanging the big room--a thin wooden
railing separating the work space from a sheer 20 foot drop.

COTTER
--stairs are back through the
kitchen--and a ton of bedrooms,
you wanna dump your stuff or
catch a nap--

INT. COTTER'S LOFT WORK SPACE - A WHILE LATER - DUSK

Cotter's running tape through his new video iMac. The rest of them
are gathered around the screen in various degrees of discomfort.

They look like they've been there for some time. A lot of yawns.
Nick's rubbing his temples like somebody's pounding a marimba
inside his head.

ON SCREEN: they're all watching minute after minute of nothing.
Darkness. The outlines of the Parr Foundation. Trees in the back-
ground. Silence.

Several beats as they continue to watch this stasis. Then:

NICK
I think we get the gist.

ANNA
We've looked at half of one
tape.

COTTER
There's four other angles, man,
we haven't even--

NICK
--great: we can watch Domini
sleep for hours--or, shit,
maybe if we stay at it for
a couple of days, maybe a deer'll
dash by!

ANNA
For once could you just sit down,
shut up, and give something a
chance?

NICK
We're leaving--case dismissed for
lack of evidence. Maybe on the
ride home we can figure how the
fuck we're going to graduate
with no thesis.

ANNA
I'm not going anywhere, 'til--

NICK
--bullshit!

COTTER
Hey, chill, man--

DOMINI
--there's something here, Nick--

NICK
--fuck you--all of you--

--he grabs Anna by the wrist and yanks her up--

NICK
--now c'mon!

ANNA
Get your goddamn--

--and suddenly Anna stops. Doubles over, clutching her abdomen.

NICK
What--

COTTER
--oh, Jesus--

--blood can be seen soaking through her jeans.

ANNA
I need to go to a hospital.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, BALTIMORE - NIGHT

Domini, Heather and Cotter standing grimly in the Waiting Area. Finally, they see Nick exiting a Trauma Room, looking even grimmer.

DOMINI
She lost it.

Nick nods.

INT. TRAUMA ROOM - JUST AFTER

Anna's lying on a OB/Gyn table in a johnnie, clearly sedated, but with a face and eyes still soaked with tears. An E.R. INTERN (Female) is cleaning her up.

ANNA
Why?

INTERN
Any number of reasons--pick one,
it's as good as the other.

ANNA
I was out hiking, camping the past
two days--that's what did it--I
killed it--

INTERN

--doubtful, Mrs. Leavitt. The main thing to remember is, whatever the reason, it was for the best-- it meant something was wrong.

ANNA

Something was wrong.

INTERN

Look, this is not my field of expertise. You seem stabilized, but why take any chances? Let's keep you overnight and have the Staff obstetrician do a follow-up tomorrow.

ANNA

I guess--

--and then Anna sees what the Intern is writing on her chart:

To see Boyd Kurth
5/26/00

Anna's eyes go wide.

INSIDE HER HEAD

she flashes on the grave marker that Domini laid on in the Burkittsville Cemetery: same name, same date.

BACK IN THE TRAUMA ROOM

Anna yells:

ANNA

No!

INTERN

Mrs. Leavitt--

ANNA

--I'm not staying here!

INTERN

Let's talk to your husband--

ANNA
--he's not my husband!

She flails at the Intern, trying to get up, tearing pages from her chart.

ANNA
Where are my clothes??

EXT/INT. COTTER'S VAN - LATER - NIGHT

They all sit silently as Cotter drives. The now-fully clothed Anna just sits in back like a zombie.

NICK
(softly)
We'll stay overnight, get a hotel--

ANNA
--Cotter's--

COTTER
--whatever you want, no problem--

NICK
--still go see the OB in the morning--

ANNA
--no.

Anna tosses a crumpled ball of paper into Domini's lap. She opens it. It's the top page of Anna's chart. Domini looks at the Intern's jotting "see Boyd Kurth--"

--her head snaps up. Beat.

DOMINI
Nick. Do what she says.

INT. COTTER'S LOFT - BEDROOM - LATER - NIGHT

Nick tucks her into an elderly four-poster bed. Colonial in style. Another one of Cotter's "finds."

NICK
What can I get you?

ANNA

Sleep.

She closes her eyes.

INT. COTTER'S WORK SPACE LOFT - SIMULTANEOUS

Domini, Heather and Cotter gathered around his iMac, drinking beer.

DOMINI

Something happened to Anna in
Burkittsville, in the woods,
I don't know.

COTTER

What? That made her lose the baby?

DOMINI

Something. Someone.

HEATHER

Who? What?

Domini just shakes her head.

HEATHER

Women miscarry all the--

DOMINI

--no.

COTTER

This is a little nuts.

DOMINI

Turn the tapes back on.

COTTER

Fine.

He goes to it. Without even looking, Domini pulls the shoulder of her shirt down, rubs something on her upper arm. Heather sees it: a good-sized burgundy-colored mark, oblong, vaguely spidery in shape.

HEATHER

What's that?

DOMINI

Hmm? I dunno. Chafing from the backpack, something.

HEATHER

That'd be up on your shoulder, maybe your lower back.

DOMINI

Then I have no idea.

And now Cotter's staring at it.

COTTER

Does it hurt?

DOMINI

Like hell. Play the goddamn tape.

The first image that pops up is Domini sprawled out on the grass of the Parr Foundation. Deep in REM sleep, her leg jerking like a dog's. Domini sees it--a snort of embarrassed laughter.

INT. NICK AND ANNA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nick bolts awake to the sound of laughter. Looks next to him, Anna's fast asleep. He looks relieved--then clucks to himself when he sees that he's fallen asleep next to her on the big old four-poster with his clothes on.

Starts to take off his shirt--

--and then he hears the laughter again. Louder. It seems to piss him off.

He gets out of bed, opens the door. Hisses:

NICK

Hey, knock it off, willya?

But there's nobody there. He walks down the hallway towards the kitchen.

INT. COTTER'S WORK SPACE - JUST AFTER

Nick appears on the stairs leading into the work-loft. Sees the three of them huddled over the iMac.

NICK
You wanna keep it down, she's
trying to sleep.

COTTER
Sorry, I didn't think we were
making that much noise.

NICK
It's not a real "funny" time for
us, okay?

HEATHER
(confused)
No....it's not.

Nick just shakes his head, snorts with disgust. Goes back down the
stairs--

INT. KITCHEN - JUST AFTER

--when he hears the laughter again.

NICK
Christ almighty--

--he starts to storm back up the stairs to the loft--

--when he realizes he's walking away from the sound of the
laughter. He stops. It's coming from the hallway--

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

--further down the hallway. Louder. He walks faster towards it.

It's coming from the open door of his and Anna's bedroom. Starts to
trot. Louder. Takes the corner into--

INT. THE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

--the laughter stops--

--as does Anna, who appeared for a moment to be twirling round and
around in the middle of the room.

NICK
What's going on?

Anna looks down at herself and lets loose a giggle of astonishment.

ANNA
Nothing. I dunno--

NICK
--you should get back into bed.

ANNA
I guess, yeah.

She does so. Nick once again tucks her in.

NICK
Was that you laughing?

ANNA
What?

NICK
Just now?

ANNA
No.

NICK
Just...try and go back to sleep.

ANNA
I get dreams. I don't like 'em.

NICK
What'd you dream?

ANNA
Little boys. Looking up my skirt
as I danced. Giggling.

NICK
Here.

He pops out two Xanax from a hospital sample bubble pack. Hands them to Anna.

NICK
This'll help.

She swallows them dry.

ANNA

Good.

She closes her eyes.

DOMINI (V.O.)

There--

INT. COTTER'S WORK LOFT - LATER - NIGHT

Domini's pointing to the iMac screen.

COTTER

There, what? I didn't see anything.

DOMINI

Back it up, rewind, whatever you call it.

COTTER

Fine.

He does so.

HEATHER

What'd you see?

DOMINI

Motion. Stop there. Play it again.

Cotter hits PLAY. They're watching tape from a camera that was placed almost to the ground, aimed upwards--

DOMINI

--there! In the tree.

Cotter freezes the image. The tree is so dark and so far in the distance of the shot, he and Heather have to put their eyes right up to the screen to even see it.

COTTER

Whatta you got, telescopic vision?

HEATHER

Still don't see it--

DOMINI

--that blur, right by that branch.

She puts her finger right on the screen. Cotter quickly removes it --squints.

COTTER

Okay, a blur.

DOMINI

Can you zoom it or something, make it real close, real big?

COTTER

I'm the ebay Boy, remember? I can't exactly afford that kind of equipment.

DOMINI

Who do you know who can? Where do we go?

HEATHER

For a blur?

DOMINI

There is something there--don't ask, just trust me.

COTTER

Can't you like just divine it?

DOMINI

If I could do that, I'd be at the goddamn racetrack, not here.

COTTER

(sighing)

I got a friend at a Lab. I could get the whole thing blown-up, enhanced--

DOMINI

--go!

COTTER

Four in the morning?

EXT. 41ST STREET - NIGHT

Cotter wearily unlocks the door to his Van.

He looks all around him--finally up:

There's an Owl staring down at him from a tree in Druid Hill Park across the street.

INT. COTTER'S WORK LOFT - LATER - NIGHT

Heather is bringing a cup of hot tea and 40 ounce bottle of Malt Liquor up the stairs. Sees Domini still in front of the iMac, trying to figure out how to work the thing.

HEATHER
Cotter'll kill you.

DOMINI
He'll never know.

HEATHER
Two-to-one he dusts the keyboard for
fingerprints the second he gets back.

She hands Domini the beer. Keeps the tea for herself.

HEATHER
At least go drink it somewhere
spilling it won't drive him
to suicide.

DOMINI
Okay.

Domini gets up and slumps down on the broken-backed couch in the work-loft.

HEATHER
What is it you thought you saw
on that tape?

DOMINI
Still working on it.

HEATHER
Elly Kedward?

DOMINI
No. Elly Kedward's not the problem
here, I don't think. She was just a
good old-fashioned white witch--

SID
You're gonna owe me the rest
of your life, bud.

COTTER
I know, I know.

SID
Beta Cam's still coming back
tomorrow, right?

Beat. Cotter flushes for a moment.

COTTER
Absolutely.

SID
Before 5:00--

COTTER
--hours before--

SID
--Christ, they find out I let you
have it for the weekend--

COTTER
--no one'll ever know.

Sid pauses the tape.

SID
This is what you wanted enhanced?

COTTER
Yeah.

SID
You mind me asking: why the fuck?

COTTER
The, uh, blur there.

SID
Looks like a rope.

INT. COTTER'S WORK-LOFT - NIGHT

Heather has apparently gained a tad enough mastery to run tape through the iMac.

She's playing and replaying a short section of Cotter's camcorder tape where the bunch of them were interacting with the Stoner Film Crew.

She keeps seeing a FLASH on the tape. Between two trees far in the background. But she can't seem to freeze the image inside the flash. It looks vaguely like a MIDDLE-AGED MAN.

HEATHER

Does this look like a person
stand there to you?

(no response)

Domini...?

She turns. Sitting on the couch where Domini was is now the very clear presence of

A MIDDLE-AGED MAN

in a topcoat. He says nothing, just stares straight ahead. There's a horrible wound in his forehead.

Heather is mindboggled--and petrified. She manages to stammer out the word:

HEATHER

Dad...?

DOMINI (O.S.)

What'd you say?

Heather's neck snaps to her right. She's sitting on that same couch with Domini.

Her eyes scan the entire loft. There's no one there but the two women.

DOMINI

Are you alright?

HEATHER

....I don't know.

FADE TO BLACK.

Beat. And then in the darkness, a pack of dogs heard BARKING.

FADE UP ON

INT. COTTER'S ELEVATOR - DAWN

He's having trouble getting the key out of the lock. The door is wide open. The recorded pit-bulls bark and bark and bark.

INT. COTTER'S WORK - LOFT - SIMULTANEOUS

The barking bolts Heather and Domini up like a shot.

INT. NICK AND ANNA'S BEDROOM

Likewise Nick.

Anna doesn't seem to hear it--fast asleep.

As soon as Nick makes it to the door, the barking stops.

INT. COTTER'S WORK LOFT - JUST AFTER

Nick, Domini and Heather are gathered around him like kids on Christmas.

DOMINI

So lemme see it.

COTTER

Just let me get my coat off--I had eight cups of coffee, I'm wired for sound here.

HEATHER

Where is it?

COTTER

I got the tape enhanced--and I managed to sleaze a photo blow-up. Jesus, he's gonna kill me when he finds out about the camera.

HEATHER

Gimme it!

Cotter throws her the 8"x10" blow-up of the frame.

Heather looks at it, her face falls.

HEATHER

Still looks like a blur, only
bigger.

Domini grabs it. Stares at it, puzzled.

COTTER

My friend Sid said it looked
like a rope.

And now Domini's eyes go wide.

DOMINI

Jesus.

HEATHER

What?

DOMINI

That's the reason.

NICK

What?

DOMINI

Why she kills children.

COTTER

The witch?

DOMINI

It's not about witches, goddamnit!

NICK

Someone want to tell me what's
going on--

DOMINI

--and we brought it back with us!

HEATHER

What?

DOMINI

It touched me, don't you see
it now?

She yanks down the shoulder of her shirt: the burgundy-colored mark on her arm has grown larger and more distinct. It seems to have finger-like tendrils spreading out from it.

DOMINI

Its fingers! Here. And here--

--she yanks down the front of her shirt: there's another burgundy mark there--

DOMINI

--and here and here and here!

She pulls back her hair: there are two more growing on the back of her neck.

DOMINI

I don't know how to stop it!
I don't know how to kill it!
But it's here right now!

Domini's head is in her hands. She's hyperventilating. Heather puts her arms around her.

HEATHER

Slow it down, slow it down,
whatever it is, we'll figure
it out.

DOMINI

That's why she kills children.

HEATHER

I know, I know--

ANNA (O.S.)

--you don't.

They all look up. Anna's standing in the doorway looking at Domini:

ANNA

They put their palms in the blood.
And then they press them on your
skin.

And Anna walks out of the room.

INT. COTTER'S BEDROOM - JUST AFTER - DAY

Domini's lying down, Heather beside her. She's drinking a beer, seems much calmer--though she's got an afghan cinched around her entire body, toes to chin.

HEATHER

You gonna be alright?

DOMINI

Sure. I'm sorry.

HEATHER

No big deal. I'm just trying to understand.

DOMINI

Get some more beer.

HEATHER

(laughs)

I think you closed the bar again. I'll have to go out.

DOMINI

Go to the store. When you get back, I'll try to make sense of it for you.

Heather gets up, starts for the door. Stops.

HEATHER

What're you afraid's going to happen?

DOMINI

That they'll start touching us inside our heads.

INT. DELI - N. BALTIMORE - DAY

Heather sticks two six packs inside a cart. Double thinks. Goes back and grabs two more.

AT THE REGISTER

Heather waits in line. She sees that across the street is Druid Hill Park. Stares aimlessly into the woods, chewing on a thumb nail. She looks seriously worried.

CHECK-OUT CLERK (C.S.)
Sweetheart?

Heather shifts her gaze to the Check-Out Clerk--and she shrieks:

Standing behind the Clerk is

THE MIDDLE-AGED MAN

she saw in the loft, with the wound in his head.

CLERK (O.S.)
Miss?

Heather's eyes dart back to the Clerk.

CLERK
Are you alright?

Heather's eyes dance around the deli. The Man is gone.

HEATHER
You have a phone?

CLERK
Just outside--

EXT. 41ST STREET - JUST AFTER - DAY

Heather stands at a payphone by the curb. We hear ringing on the other end. Finally a pick-up. But an OPERATOR'S VOICE is heard first:

OPERATOR'S VOICE
You have a collect call from Heather. Will you accept the charges?

Long beat on the other end. Finally:

WOMAN'S VOICE (MOM)
...yes.

The Operator clicks off.

HEATHER
Mom...?

MOM'S VOICE
Yes.

HEATHER
I was just calling, I know it's
been a long time--

MOM'S VOICE
--what do you need this time,
Heather?

HEATHER
Nothing. It's nothing like that.
I just wanted to know if Dad--

--a sound on the other line of the phone dropping, banging on the
floor or against a wall--

HEATHER
--Mom...? Mom??

--a Voice comes back on the line. But it's MALE now:

MAN'S VOICE
She wants me to talk to you, Heather.

HEATHER
Who is this??

MAN'S VOICE
Your mother's pastor.

HEATHER
What happened to my Dad??

MAN'S VOICE
There was an accident early this
morning. Another car. Your father's
injuries were fatal.

HEATHER
Yes.

MAN'S VOICE

I'll tell your mother not to
expect you at the funeral.

HEATHER

No.

The phone clicks dead on the other end. Heather lets the receiver
just drop and begins walking, leaving her two bags of beer on the
sidewalk, in a daze.

And then she starts running.

INT. COTTER'S ELEVATOR - JUST AFTER - DAY

Heather's banging like crazy on the door to the loft.

Finally, she hears the sound of Cotter snapping open the deadbolt.
He opens the door. The recorded dogs bark. Heather slams the door
behind her.

HEATHER

Where's Domini?

COTTER

My room, asleep, last I checked.

Heather barges past him and towards Cotter's bedroom.

INT. COTTER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Heather walks in. The bed's empty. The afghan's lying in a pile on
the floor--

--along with all of the clothing Domini last had on.

HEATHER

Domini...?

he doesn't bother calling her name again, there's nobody in the
room.

INT. KITCHEN - JUST AFTER

Nick and Cotter look up at Heather, confused.

NICK

Well, she's got to be somewhere
here.

COTTER

No one's been in or out since you
left. Would've heard the dogs.

CUT TO:

Heather dashing up the stairs into the work-loft.

HEATHER

Domini??

Empty.

CUT TO:

Cotter poking through the two hallway closets. Nothing.

CUT TO:

Nick looking in the closet and under the bed of his and Anna's
bedroom. Nobody.

Anna sleeps through it all.

CUT TO:

Heather really starting to lose it. Rampaging through the big main
room, pushing aside all of Cotter's huge carousel animals, looking
behind those things she can't move, dumping things willy-nilly on
the floor.

HEATHER

Domini!!!!

CUT TO:

Cotter helping Heather open one of the windows in the big room.
Looking out on the ledge. Looking down to the sidewalk, five
stories below. Nothing.

HEATHER

Fire escape??

COTTER
Don't have one.

Heather screams out the window:

HEATHER
Domiiiiiiiiiii!!!

INT. KITCHEN - SOON AFTER - DAY

Heather, Anna and Cotter sit at the table nervously. Heather is literally shaking.

COTTER
She would've had to have a key,
anyway, to lock the deadbolt
behind her.

HEATHER
Well, she got out of here some-
how because she's not here!!

NICK
Parents. She might've called--

SMASH TO:

Heather on the phone.

HEATHER
Taos, New Mexico. The Sheriff's
Office, please....thank you.

She hangs up. Picks back up. Punches in a number in a blur. Beat.
Someone picks up on the other end:

WOMAN'S VOICE
Good morning, Sheriff's Office.

HEATHER
Yes! I need to speak to Sheriff Von
Teer.

WOMAN'S VOICE
He's in a meeting. Could I have him--

HEATHER
--it's urgent!

WOMAN'S VOICE
Could I tell him what it's
regarding?

HEATHER
His daughter, for God's sake--
I need to know if he's heard from
her this morning.

Beat on the other line.

WOMAN'S VOICE
...the Sheriff is a widower. They
never had any children.

Heather is struck dumb.

WOMAN'S VOICE
....Ma'am?

HEATHER
I'm talking to Taos, New Mexico--

WOMAN'S VOICE
--yes--

HEATHER
--the Sheriff's Office--

WOMAN'S VOICE
--yes, Ma'am, can I help you with
anything else?--

HEATHER
--his name's Von Teer! His daughter's
named Domini!--

WOMAN'S VOICE
--thank you for calling--

The line goes dead.

The three of them just stand there, staring at each other,
petrified.

And then Anna walks in the room.

ANNA

I'm glad she's dead. She brought
the thing that killed my child.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER - AFTERNOON

Heather sits at the table alone, staring at the 8x10 that Cotter
made for Domini.

HEATHER

What did you see here that I
can't see, damnit!

She runs a finger down the length of the blur in the branches.

HEATHER

What is it that scared you
so much?

Nick enters, heads for the blotched, '60s vintage Mr. Coffee maker.

NICK

Finally got her back to sleep.

HEATHER

Nick, what you should do is get
her back up and get her to a
goddamn doctor.

NICK

Jesus, you don't think I know
that? You don't think I've
tried? She won't fucking go--
she won't leave this place.

HEATHER

She's off her fucking rocker--

NICK

--I know!

HEATHER

I'm sorry.

NICK

Yeah, I know. It's...alright. We're
all a little--

HEATHER

--a lot.

NICK

Heather.

HEATHER

Yeah.

NICK

Okay. Hypothetically.

HEATHER

Shoot.

NICK

You think...there could've been something up in those woods that Anna--

HEATHER

--it's not a could've--there was, Nick. And it fucked up Anna, and did something to Domini, and it caused my father to die, and it's here with us in this place now. And I don't have one single idea in hell what's going to happen next, just that it's going to happen to one of us. And then the other. And then the other. It's going to get into our brains.

And Heather finally loses it and starts weeping--great wracking sobs. Nick's a little awkward at first how to comfort her. Finally just starts lightly massaging her neck.

NICK

There's explanations. Rational explanations for everything that's happened. We'll drive ourselves crazy if we keep obsessing on supernatural what-ifs.

HEATHER

That feels good. Lower--down into my neck.

Nick moves his hands down--

--and somehow the two of them are then guiding his hands down into her blouse, onto her breasts--

--and she's moaning, and grabbing hard onto his hair--

--and pulling his whole head down to her hers. And their lips and tongues meet, and they're biting each other like animals--

--and his hands are yanking and twisting hard on her breasts, between her legs--

--and she's literally clawing him with her fingernails, drawing blood down the length of his chest--

--until she reaches a burgundy-colored mark right at his belt line with tendrils like fingers--

--SNAP!--it's like someone woke them from a dream. They both look at each other, baffled--what the hell just happened? But it wasn't a dream. Nick's chest is streaming blood; there's blood on Heather's lips--

--matching the color of the mark on Nick's waist, and the one Heather now sees inside her elbow.

They both move away from each other, uncomprehending--and scared.

INT. NICK AND ANNA'S BEDROOM - DUSK

Nick pacing the floor as Anna lies in bed.

NICK

I don't know what it is, but there is something happening here, and it's starting to scare the living shit out me, and look, I'm just not going to argue the point anymore--you want to stay here, stay, but I've got to get the fuck out of here, and I'm begging you to come with me.

ANNA

I can't.

NICK
Then I'm going--

ANNA
--no, you're not. You love me too
much. You don't want to see them
kill me.

INT. COTTER'S WORK LOFT - NIGHT

Cotter's behind the iMac, screening tape millimeter by millimeter, downing one Coke after another. He's so caffed-out, both his body and his voice is shaking.

COTTER
This could be something right
here, do you think it's some-
thing, Heather--?

Heather doesn't even look up. She's just sitting on the broken-backed couch staring at Domini's 8"x10".

COTTER
--but that could be just a shadow,
I think it's a shadow, it's nothing,
Heather, do you think it's nothing--

--and he just keeps prattling on oblivious, eyes fixed on the tape moving at a snail's pace in front of him.

HEATHER
It's about the tree, it's
something about the tree.

She puts it down on a cushion and snatches up the dog-eared copy of the "Blair Witch Dossier." Easily flips to the page Domini showed her: Elly Kedward trussed in the wagon in the woods.

Flips backwards in the book, looking for something--

HEATHER
--the goddamn tree, Domini,
for chrissake, what?

--and then she stops on the page that shows the anthropology students' sketch of the Parr foundation: the skinny little sapling in the middle--

--then back to the woodcut of Elly Kedward in the woods--

--then back to Domini's photo of the foundation--the huge tree--

HEATHER

Same trees. They took Elly Kedward
out to the same kind of trees.

COTTER

(still oblivious)

--I look and look in the tree, all
I ever see, he's always there watching,
that stupid owl, over and over--

HEATHER

--Cotter, where can I get on-line?

COTTER

--anywhere, anywhere, all up and live,
all the time--fucking owl--

Heather slips in front of one of Cotter's PC's.

TIME CUT TO

Heather on-line, in the middle of Blair Witch Chat Room, typing:

WICCA GIRL: anybody know where tree is they
tied Elly Kedward?

Beat. And then a response.

COFFIN BOX: Black Hills

Heather responds, types:

WICCA GIRL: thanx--anybody know where??? in Hills

Beat. Response:

TREACLE-TREACLE-LITTLE-EILEEN: My two cts? By Rusty Parr's
house hadda be that close how else could
she whisper into his ear?

Heather stops typing; absorbs this.

HEATHER

Cotter?

COTTER

Fucking owl!

HEATHER

You think it's possible the tree
in the Parr foundation is the same
one they tied Elly Kedward to?

COTTER

No idea--goddamitt!

And then suddenly another response appears in the Chat Room:

COFFIN ROX: Check SW Cult book, 1809--they have
full account

Heather grunts. Types back:

WICCA GIRL: 1 copy in exist. you got it?

COFFIN ROX: no just seen it

WICCA GIRL: where

COFFIN ROX: one of us

WICCA GIRL: if you're out there and got it anybody,
contact me this mailbx urgent

COFFIN ROX: location described pretty good in
section bout first boys disappeared
after Elly dies - James Kurth &
another kid

Heather stops typing. To herself:

HEATHER

Boy Kurth.

COTTER

Heather, does that look like Domini
there?

Heather doesn't look up from her screen. Impatient, trying to put pieces that don't fit together.

HEATHER

Where?

COTTER

Down there in the Park.

Heather looks up. Cotter is looking down through the big room's huge windows; he's waving to someone.

Heather gets up. Slowly peers over the loft railing. Squints.

HEATHER'S POV

A stark-naked Domini is standing in Druid Hill Park. Looking up at them.

EXT. DRUID HILL PARK - JUST AFTER - NIGHT

Heather and Cotter's pace slows drastically as they try and navigate the overgrown pathways inside the Park. The flora is dense below and above--moonlight barely penetrates where they're walking.

HEATHER

Domini...?

Cotter puts a finger to her lip. Whispers:

COTTER

Not the place you want to announce your arrival.

HEATHER

How's she going to know where to--

COTTER

--things got a way of finding you here.

They walk.

HEATHER

It's freezing.

COTTER

Next time try putting on shoes--

--the two of them stop dead in their tracks. Through the thicket ahead of them they can see a clearing. Illuminated by the moon is what appears to be an old

WOODEN OX CART

with SNOW drifted up nearly to the hubs of its wheels.

HEATHER AND COTTER

are suddenly so cold they can see their breath in the air.

HEATHER

What the fuck--??

COTTER

--I don't know.

He grabs her hand and pulls her through the thicket. They enter

THE CLEARING

the snow is now gone. Where the cart was is now just a stack of rotting cut brush. A clean-up effort someone must have started, then abandoned. Heather and Cotter stare at each other, baffled-- and not a little afraid.

COTTER

The moon trying to shoot down through all these trees--can make things funky--

HEATHER

--I saw what I saw.

COTTER

Yeah. Me too.

HEATHER

The cart they brought Elly Kedward into the woods with--

COTTER

--into the Black Hills with--200-something miles from here--

HEATHER

--Domini!

They both see it at the same time:

A NAKED WHITE BODY

face down at the base of a tree. Heather races over, kneels down next to it.

HEATHER

Oh, Jesus, what happened, are you--

--and Heather lets out a screech. The face of the body reveals an ELDERLY MALE. Filthy, tongue lolling black out of its mouth. He's been dead for some time.

COTTER (O.S.)

Be it still alive, James?

HEATHER

What--

Heather turns--

A PACK OF LITTLE BOYS

wild-eyed and wielding sticks, RUSH AT HEATHER--

BOY #1

--then finish the job, lads!

--Heather screeches again, throws up her arms to protect herself--

COTTER (O.S.)

Jesus!

Heather looks up: Cotter's lying on the ground, holding his bleeding forehead.

COTTER

What the fuck you do that for??

Heather looks at her hand. She's clenching a sharp stick in it. The Little Boys are gone. The body of the Dead Man is not.

HEATHER

I didn't.

She grabs his hand, pulls him up. They start running.

INT. COTTER'S KITCHEN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Heather and Cotter at the table, still out of breath and shaking, as they tell Nick what happened.

HEATHER

--and one of the little boys,
his name was James. As in the
boy James Kurth--the first child
to disappear from the town of
Blair after they banished Elly
Kedward.

A look of alarm comes to Nick's face. But he says nothing.

HEATHER

What?

NICK

I dunno it's anything. It's a
name Anna's mentioned--from her
dreams.

COTTER

I can't handle this anymore.

He produces a large, thick spliff and torches it up. Big hit, and
passes it to Heather, who takes an even bigger one.

NICK

How much of that stuff you guys
been smoking?

COTTER

Enough to keep sane.

NICK

Enough to make shapes and shadows
in the dark into something else.

HEATHER

Spare me.

NICK

Hey, chemicals, fear, sleep-deprivation--and a round-the-clock obsession with the occult--hell've a recipe for a mind-fuck.

COTTER

Except we seem about 18 times more together than you.

Heather spit-takes a lung-full of smoke.

COTTER

I'd strongly advise you to join us--

HEATHER

--before you lose your emotional lunch.

NICK

(shrugging)
Yeah, what the hell.

He takes the joint, sucks in mightily--

HEATHER

Atta boy--

--and then the entire kitchen seems to explode--

--GLASS and MULLIONS from the big window in the room come hurtling in shards at them--

--and then when the noise finally stops, and the flying debris has all hit the floor, they all look down and see:

ON THE PEELING LINOLEUM

A HORNED OWL

broken and bleeding from its header through the window. Spasming, and then dying. Eyes wide, staring up at them.

No one says a word. They just look at it.

INT. COTTER'S WORK-LOFT - LATER - NIGHT

A lot of chairs, but nobody's sitting down. Cotter, Heather and Nick all look like their nerves are fraying down to bare wire.

HEATHER

We are being fucked with here,
someone or something.

NICK

Domini.

HEATHER

Why in the world would she--

NICK

--why in the world she just fly
the coop in the first place?

COTTER

Chrissake: why any of this?

NICK

I think it's time to get out
of here.

HEATHER

Nobody's going anywhere--

COTTER

--hell, I don't think I'm ever
leaving this place again--

HEATHER

--one of us, all of us--I have
no idea--brought whatever this
thing is back here. We're not
going to go out there and spread
it around like Typhoid Mary. We're
gonna figure it out, we're gonna
bring a goddamn end to it.

NICK

Domini's the only logical
explanation.

HEATHER

We're not dealing with fucking logic here!

COTTER

It's Domari, it's not Domini, I don't care--all I know is I'm not dealing with something--~~anything~~--snuffing me in my sleep. I want to do what we did in the woods--surveillance of this whole place 24/7, with somebody monitoring those cameras every second. There's something, somebody here, I want to see 'em coming.

NICK

I thought all your equipment got stolen.

COTTER

All the shit that was worth anything, yes. You'd be amazed, though, what you can get free on the 'net.

He opens a desk drawer--there must be a dozen cheapo little palm corders in there.

INT. THE LOFT - VARIOUS LOCATIONS - NIGHT

What Cotter lacks in other equipment, he makes up for with cable: huge SPOOLS of it--and he's running it from the various tiny vid-cams to a motley bank of monitors he's set up on the kitchen table.

HEATHER

duct-tapes one of the little units on the top of a closet door-frame in the hallway.

COTTER

sees he has an excellent angle on the front door/elevator.

ANNA

watches half asleep and befuddled in their bedroom as Nick aims a camera on a jerry-rigged broom-handle tripod.

COTTER

connects the cables in the kitchen--sees Anna and a clear view of the bedroom door.

NICK & HEATHER

collaborate on installing a camera from Cotter's work-loft that provides a view of the dark area under the work-loft. Nick lowers the camera on a rope, while Heather guides and supports the cables attached.

COTTER

watches the camera descend on one of the monitors. Satisfied by the view it's giving him, he yells:

COTTER

That's good! Tie it off!

BACK IN THE WORK-LOFT

Nick does so. Ties the rope securely around the loft railing. Ties a slip knot in the loose end and lassoes it over one of the iron beams above to keep it from being a hazard. He has to jump to catch the rope as it comes down again from the beam--

--stumbles backwards slightly as he catches it--

--hitting the spindly loft railing--

--which suddenly SNAPS!

And Nick goes tumbling out into mid-air, the slip-knot in the rope in his hand the only thing keeping him from plummeting 20 feet to the floor below--

NICK

--Jee-zus!!!--

COTTER

sees it happen on the monitor.

COTTER

--Christ!!

He dashes out of the kitchen.

BACK IN THE WORK-LOFT

Heather is trying to lift Nick back up by the rope by sheer physical strength she doesn't have--

HEATHER

I can't do it!

NICK

Don't! You're making me lose my grip.

COTTER (O.S.)

I'm coming! I'm coming!

And Cotter comes dashing in with a tall metal step ladder.

COTTER

Just hold on!

NICK

I can't!

Cotter plays the ladder open, starts clambering up it.

COTTER

Just let it go, I've got you!

NICK

What're you nuts--

COTTER

--it's less than four feet,
just--

NICK

--shit!!!

Nick loses his grip--starts falling--

--Cotter snatches hold of him as he falls, pinning Nick between the ladder and his torso.

The ladder wobbles precariously--

COTTER

--don't move, don't even breathe--

--and then the ladder finally comes to a stable rest.

Nick is savagely shaken as he slowly climbs down.

NICK
Jesusjesusjesus....

Ditto Cotter:

COTTER
Yeah--please don't do that
again.

A giggle is heard from the doorway to the big room. They all look:

ANNA

is standing there, laughing with her hand against her mouth like a little child. She sing-songs:

ANNA
I could see up your dress.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER - NIGHT

Cotter, Heather and Nick watch the monitors on the table in silence. Drinking coffee. They all look majorly exhausted--but none of them look in any immediate danger of falling asleep. Their eyes dart from monitor to monitor, relievedly seeing nothing--except Anna tossing restlessly in bed.

Heather sees that Nick is massaging something on his forearm that's making him wince. Without a word, she rolls his sleeve up:

A wine-colored mark that looks vaguely like a jagged 3.

HEATHER
Gothic rune--the letter "S."

NICK
Or a blood blister--or a bruise.

COTTER
Must be that blue collar life we
all lead.

Cotter pulls up his pant leg: two blurry burgundy marks--crescent shapes overlapping each other.

HEATHER
That's a "j."

COTTER
For "James?"

HEATHER
Goes right along with these two.

She pulls back her hair--where jaw meets neck: two smudgy marks that together look like badly-drawn lowercase "n"s.

HEATHER
Put 'em together that's a "k."
James Kurth--

NICK
--or Lyme Disease or poison sumac,
or God knows what-else we could have
picked up in the woods.

HEATHER
You know what we picked up in the
woods--

--and then there's a sharp knock at the door.

All three sets of eyes zoom towards the sound, but no one moves.

The knocking grows louder, more insistent. Still, they remain frozen. Frightened.

They look at the monitor giving an angle of the door/elevator.

Nothing can be seen--just a dark blur in the door's peephole indicating someone's standing in the elevator.

HEATHER
Who?

COTTER
No one ever comes here.

NICK
Have to open the door to find
out.

The knocking increases, along with muffled shouts of:

VOICE BEHIND THE DOOR
Cotter...? Cotter...?

COTTER
....I'll....go.

Cotter gets up and slowly walks to the door. The rapping and shouting increasing in volume with each step.

Finally, a deep breath. And then Cotter looks through the peep hole. He sees:

SID

his Techie friend from the Film Lab glowering back at him.

SID
I know you're in there, you
piece of shit!

COTTER
(quietly)
You have to go.

SID
Not until I get that Beta Cam
back! We're both in a world of
shit here!!

COTTER
(quietly)
I can't.

SID
It's my fucking job, man!!

COTTER
I can't let you in.

Sid starts knocking again.

Cotter walks back to the kitchen. Sits down in front of the monitors. Watches as the knocking continues. Finally stops. The expression on Cotter's face never changes.

TIME CUT TO - THE SAME - SEVERAL HOURS LATER

So quiet, so tense, they can hear the clocks ticking all over the loft: 4:10a.m.

NICK
I should check on Anna.

HEATHER
Check the monitor, she's fine.

NICK
She's far from "fine."

HEATHER
You're needed here--keep watching--

COTTER
--f'chrissake, Heather, it's not like the two of us are gonna doze off he leaves for two seconds--

HEATHER
--I don't trust anybody, not even me, anymore--

COTTER
--shhhh! #5, there's something up there!

Their eyes all go to the Monitor with the view of Cotter's work loft. Beat. They freeze.

A slight WHIRRING--then slow WHOOSHING heard. Movement seen in the darkness.

NICK
What?

COTTER
One of the printers.

Cotter gets up.

HEATHER
No. We all go.

NICK
Anna--

HEATHER
--fuck Anna!

COTTER (V.O.)
No, you--

INT. THE WORK LOFT - JUST AFTER

Cotter handing a sheaf of print-outs to Heather.

COTTER
--it's for you. Came through email.
How it started printing without a
command, though--

Heather looks up at them in astonishment; dithered:

HEATHER
--it's the "Blair Witch Cult"--a copy--
some pages from--one of them on the site
must've gotten my message--

COTTER
--who?

HEATHER
Doesn't say--it's just these pages.

She tries to make out the ancient, smeared scrawls of this nearly
200 year old book.

HEATHER
(reading)
"taken by the witch as they were
marked by her--first Jamie Kurth
when the stain appeared on his
brow that next summer--

--the next page is illegible, Heather flips forward:

HEATHER
"for t'was said he and Jon Edmunds
and other boys who found Elly Kedward
still on her tree in the snow. Poking
her with sticks finding her still
living. Taking her bonds and noosing
them to her neck, hanging her from
her tree until she perished."

Heather looks up at the others in wide-eyed.

HEATHER

That's the little boys. Elly Kedward didn't die from "exposure" out there: she was executed.

(resumes reading)

"Killing Elly Kedward, but not the Witch herself, who floated from the mortal husk--"

Heather looks up; she echoes Domini's words:

HEATHER

"It's why the witch kills children."

NICK

I thought all witches were benign and good.

HEATHER

Not this one.

INT. NICK AND ANNA'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Heather tries to rouse Anna in bed.

HEATHER

I need you to talk to me, talk to me about the dreams--about James, the other boys.

ANNA

I don't...I don't understand them myself.

HEATHER

Try, please, Anna--

ANNA

--bad boys, mean boys, cowardly boys--just like Domini.

HEATHER

What do you mean?

ANNA

A coward too. That's why she had to go.

HEATHER

What happened to her, where did she go?

ANNA

Don't know--just that she was afraid--

HEATHER

--Anna--

Anna winces.

HEATHER

What, are you alright?

ANNA

My eye, is there something in my eye?

Heather looks.

HEATHER

Not that I can see.

ANNA

Closer. Lift the lid and look-- it hurts.

Heather lifts Anna's eyelid, gets close to her face and looks.

HEATHER

No.

ANNA

Closer.

And Anna gently guides Heather's face down. Begins stroking it. And the next thing Heather knows, her body is gravitating towards Anna's. She's kissing her, stroking and fondling her as Anna guides her fingers. Pulling down the covers, guiding Heather down the length of her body to--

--a spot on the mattress between Anna's legs that's soaked solid with fresh, gleaming blood.

Heather yanks herself away, now seeing that the entire mattress is blood-covered. Runs from the room.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Heather stares at her face in the mirrored surface of a toaster. Blood blots on her cheeks--vaguely in the shape of little palm prints. She's hyperventilating as she tells Cotter.

HEATHER

Remember....what Mary Brown said--
she could see the witch's hands on
my face, her mouth sucking on mine.

COTTER

Anna's the witch.

Nick enters.

NICK

What the fuck's going on here?

HEATHER

Does she have marks, Nick--like the
ones we have, that Domini had?

NICK

Why?

HEATHER

Does she, goddamnit??

NICK

Not that I've seen--but that has
no meaning-- that means nothing.

COTTER

Why was she exempted, Nick?

NICK

Maybe whatever they are, they
just haven't appeared yet on
her?

HEATHER

You really believe that?

Beat.

NICK
It's possible for chrissake--

HEATHER
--the marks appear, then you
disappear. Like the little
Kurth boy, like Domini, as
soon as they come to full
bloom--and mine are!

She pulls down her blouse--the marks on her neck have grown--they
are the size of--and very clear image of--the palm-prints of a
child, ringing around Heather's neck as if strangling her.

COTTER
Mine, too. And so are yours,
pal.

He points to Nick's exposed midriff--the stains have spread up from
his waist into his abdomen--

HEATHER
Like a blueprint for disembowelment.

NICK
There are other explanations! She is
not the goddamn witch, that's insane!

HEATHER
Then just give me one of your
explanations that all three of
us'll buy.

NICK
I don't....

--and then Nick hears giggling. His eyes and everyone's eyes go to
one of the video monitors:

THE BIG ROOM

of the loft. Where they see Anna twirling round and round on her
tip-toes, laughing, as though she were simultaneously being hanged
and looking up the dress and giggling at the person being hanged.

Now even Nick looks petrified.

INT. THE LOFT - VARIOUS LOCATIONS - JUST AFTER
The Big Room. Nick enters on the run.

NICK
I want to see something!

ANNA
Whatever you want.

NICK
The clothes--take 'em off--
I want to see every square
inch--

ANNA
--no, what's wrong with you?

HEATHER & NICK

Watch on the monitor: Nick showing the huge mark on his torso.

NICK
Are you marked like this??

ANNA
Why?

NICK
I see for proof positive you're
the goddamn witch--

Anna dashes from the room.

AT THE ELEVATOR

Heather grabs her, as Anna's trying to open the door to escape. The
recorded dogs start barking madly.

HEATHER
You killed Domini, didn't you,
witch??

ANNA
I'm not a witch, you're all crazy!

Anna runs panicked into the kitchen--and right into Cotter. He
grabs her by the arms.

COTTER

Just say you are--we won't hurt
you--

--Heather runs in behind her--

HEATHER

--we'll just make you go away,
so you can't hurt anyone else--

--Nick enters the kitchen--

NICK

--like you hurt the baby--

ANNA

--what're you saying?? I didn't
have anything to do with--

COTTER

--the witch kills children--

ANNA

--I haven't killed any--

HEATHER

--Jamie Kurth, Jonathan Edmunds--

ANNA

(in terror)
--my God, Nick???

NICK

Just say the words, Anna.

She tries to dodge Nick and get back to the elevator, he cuts her
off.

Ditto, the other direction and Heather--

--Anna sprints up the stairs--

INT. COTTER'S WORK-LOFT - JUST AFTER

--and finds she's got nowhere to go but down--20 feet worth of
down. And Nick, Heather and Cotter are closing in on her from the
stairs.

ANNA
Please! Please...? I haven't
done anything.

HEATHER
Bullshit! Talk!

ANNA
Nick!!

NICK
Out of my hands.

Cotter barges past them all, grabs the rope that Nick dangled from
the loft space with--

ANNA
What're you doing??

--Cotter throws the slip-knot loop around her neck.

COTTER
Hang you like the witch you
are, unless--

ANNA
--Nick!!

HEATHER
Confess!

Cotter tightens the rope.

ANNA
Alright! Fuck you, fuck all of you!
I'm her.

Heather grabs the vid-cam from the railing and starts recording
her:

NICK
Oh, Jesus, no--

ANNA
--fuck your bullshit pieties! You
were the next to die, asshole!

COTTER
Just say you are--we won't hurt
you--

--Heather runs in behind her--

HEATHER
--we'll just make you go away,
so you can't hurt anyone else--

--Nick enters the kitchen--

NICK
--like you hurt the baby--

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INT. COTTER'S WORK-LOFT - JUST AFTER

--and finds she's got nowhere to go but down--20 feet worth of
down. And Nick, Heather and Cotter are closing in on her from the
stairs.

INT/EXT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS - DAYS FOLLOWING

A dizzying montage of video "real" footage much like the opening of the film.

TV Reporters telling us that "once again, like Columbine and "Basketball Diaries," life has imitated violent art. In this case, the Blair Witch Project," where, yesterday obsessed fans of the film performed ritualistic murder--"

Nick, Heather and Cotter seen: in cuffs, being led into the Baltimore Police Station.

Seen: grainy static-cam of them being interrogated.

Seen: news-film of the inside of the Loft--where Anna was found "murdered." And then a closet where an unidentified nude woman was found similarly "executed." The News camera zooms in on the nude body of Domini crumpled in that closet, visible rope burns on her neck.

Seen: Nick's confession. That Anna admitted to being The Evil.

Seen: the footage Heather shot of Anna "confessing."

But all the police and we see is Anna with a rope around her neck, pleading to Nick, Heather and Cotter not to kill her: "I haven't done anything!!! Why are you doing this??? Please, God--"

END