

P U M P K I N H E A D

Screenplay
by
Mark Patrick Carducci
(with)
Stan Winston
Richard Weinman
Gary Gerani

Second Draft
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PUMPKINHEAD

A BLACK SCREEN

Which we MAINTAIN, as the DISTANT CRY of a COUN heard. It is a mournful sound; yet, BENEATH it something mysterious; something dark, oppressiv ancient. After a while, it FADES, to be replac of the WIND...

FADE IN:

EXT. BACKWOODS - NIGHT

TRACK PAST a dark, forbidding, thickly-wooded landscape: hilly terrain full of tall, evil-looking TREES with BRANCHES that seem to be eternally GRASPING. Forest Primeval. No one could possibly live here. But now, a FENCED and cultivated PUMPKIN PATCH comes into view.

ROWS of FAT ORANGE PUMPKINS. They GLISTEN in the moonlight. A simple SCARECROW, shirt stuffed with straw, draped over a t-shaped pole and crowned with a floppy hat, stands SENTRY in the center of the patch. Crickets chirp. Nearby, but out-of-view, a STREAM can be heard flowing.

A LOG CABIN appears. Candlelight FLICKERS in the windows. Next to it is a tiny BARN, a skinny HORSE tethered to a crabapple tree and an old PICK-UP TRUCK. Smoke drifts SKYWARD from the cabin's chimney. Way out here in the backwoods, someone's decided to farm.

Superimpose the following:

1954

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

A SHOTGUN is BROKEN OPEN and LOADED by an intent man in overalls. TOM HARLEY is powerfully-built, bearded, mid-40's. He shares this cabin with a wife and son. Here and there about the cabin we might spot a familiar modern article, but overall the cabin interior is incredibly primitive.

BEDROOM

EDDIE HARLEY, 7, finishes his prayers at bedside, kneeling. MRS. HARLEY, pretty, 30's, of sturdy pioneer stock, looks on. For some reason, her face is etched with WORRY this night.

EDDIE

...and God bless Ma, and Pa, and the farm. Amen.

Eddie jumps beneath a hand-made down comforter. His mother tucks him in.

EDDIE

Ma? What's wrong with Pa tonight?

Mrs. Harley GLANCES out at her husband, visible in the main room putting on an overcoat.

MRS. HARLEY

(hiding concern)

Nothing, Eddie. Now you mind me and go right to sleep, hear?

EDDIE

Yes'm.

Off-screen, Tom Harley EXITS the cabin.

EXT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Tom steps out onto the roofed porch of the cabin, shotgun SLUNG over a shoulder. A STIFF BREEZE is gathering. Tom HUNCHES into his overcoat. Squints a moment out into the DARK WOODS. Satisfied, he crosses to the HORSE tethered to the tree in the yard. The SPOOKED animal snorts and bucks nervously.

TOM

(un-tethering her)

Easy, girl.

Tom leads the horse toward the barn. An owl HOOTS. The skittish horse REARS, whinnying with FRIGHT. Tom calms her skillfully, holding tightly to her reins.

TOM

(soothingly)

Easy...easy, girl...

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Tom shuts the nervous horse into her stall.

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Mrs. Harley PEERS out of the cabin window into the empty yard. Outside, she can hear the wind WHISTLING. She sees her husband come OUT of the barn, lock it and CROSS to the old pick-up.

EXT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

TOM ROLLS UP the pick-up's windows. The wind is HOWLING, as if a storm were brewing. Tom locks the truck.

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Tom re-enters and drops a heavy CROSS-BAR across the cabin door.

MRS. HARLEY
(watching him do it)
It's tonight...isn't it?

TOM
(stripping off his overcoat)
Heard tell.

MRS. HARLEY
Will it be all right, Tom? Should I
be afraid?

TOM
Everything'll be fine. I'm just
taking sensible precautions, is all.
We mind our own business, we'll be
fine.

Tom turns AWAY from her, hanging up his coat. His EYES look LESS
CERTAIN than his words. With a BURST OF MUSIC:

EXT. BACKWOODS - NIGHT

TRACK BACK on a TERRIFIED RUNNING MAN, a backwoodser, like Tom
Harley, RACING through the woods, breath coming in LABORED GASPS.
His eyes are FRANTIC with FEAR. His clothing is TORN, his face is
dirty and full of cuts, and his LEFT ARM has been RENDERED
USELESS. This man is running for his life, along a NARROW PATH
through the trees and the darkness...

Tree branches SCRATCH at his face as he runs. He tries to push
them away, but there are TOO MANY. He stops a moment, falls to
his knees to catch his breath. He looks all around, lost. Then,
BEHIND HIM, he HEARS the SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS advancing TOWARD HIM
through the forest. Implacable, relentless footsteps...

The running man's terror DOUBLES itself. Moaning, he STRUGGLES to
his feet and TAKES OFF again.

EXT. OPEN FIELD - A LONG SHOT - NIGHT

The forest temporarily gives way to an OPEN FIELD. Crossing it,
the running man releases a long, desperate SCREAM, which MIXES
with the howling wind in a dreadful HARMONY.

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

PULL BACK from a ROARING FIREPLACE to reveal Tom and Mrs. Harley
seated before it in silence. She attempts to concentrate on some
sewing, while he sits in a rocker staring BLANKLY, lost in
thought, shotgun at his side.

EXT. BACKWOODS - NIGHT

The running man STUMBLES. Casts a HORRIFIED look over his shoulder. RESUMES his flight.

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Tom prods a log in the fireplace with a poker. Little Eddie pads into the room, rubbing sleepy eyes with a balled fist.

EDDIE

I'm thirsty.

Mrs. Harley gets up.

EXT. BACKWOODS - NIGHT

TRACK BACK on the running man. He gulps air needfully, lungs on fire, near exhaustion.

INT. LOG CABIN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eddie, back in bed, finishes his glass of water. His mother tucks him in again, kisses his brow.

MRS. HARLEY

Now go to sleep.

EXT. BACKWOODS - NIGHT

The running man reaches a CLEARING. LEAPS a low picket fence. And comes CRASHING DOWN on a PUMPKIN, smashing it. He finds himself SURROUNDED by pumpkins, in the middle of Tom Harley's patch. The SIGHT of them SPURS his fear. He HURRIES through the patch -- hurtles HEADLONG into the patch's SCARECROW! SCREAMS and pushes PAST the stoic sentry, crushing pumpkins underfoot. Suddenly, his eyes FLASH with hope, as, up ahead, Tom Harley's CABIN comes into view.

EXT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

The running man CROSSES the yard, VAULTS the porch steps and HURLS himself at the cabin door, POUNDING on it furiously.

RUNNING MAN

Heeeeeelllllppppp! Open up!

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Mrs. Harley JUMPS. Tom REACHES for his shotgun. Both of them STARE at the cabin door, as the running man's pounding FILLS the cabin.

RUNNING MAN (o.s.)

Tom! Tom Harley! Let me in!

More pounding.

EXT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

The running man BEATS on the door in a FRENZY.

RUNNING MAN

Please, Tom! It's Clayton Heller!
Open up! It's after me! It's gonna
get me!

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Clearly STRUGGLING with his resolve to do so, Tom stoically ignores the poor man's pleading.

MRS. HARLEY

God in heaven! We can't just sit here
while...

TOM (cutting her off)

We have to, Ellie! This has nothin'
to do with us! We interfere and we'll
be damned as he is!

BEDROOM

Eddie sits up in bed, wide-eyed, LISTENING to the screams, the pounding, the voices of his parents, the howling wind... More curious than frightened, he SLIPS out of bed and TIP-TOES into the main room. His father sees him.

TOM

Go back to bed!

Double-quick, Eddie DARTS back into the bedroom.

EXT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

The running man KICKS and CLAWS desperately at the cabin door.

RUNNING MAN

Pleeeaaaasse! I've known you my whole
life, Tom Harley! What kind of
Christian are ya?! You got to help
me! You got to!

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Mrs. Harley presses her hands to her ears, unable to stand any more. There are tears in her eyes. The man's pleas are heart-wrenching.

MRS. HARLEY

Tom!

EDDIE

(o.s., from the bedroom)

Mama!

TOM

See to the boy!

BEDROOM

Mrs. Harley RUNS into the bedroom, SCODPS UP her frightened son, cradles him in her arms.

EDDIE

Why doesn't Pa let the man in? I want
Pa to let the man in.

MRS. HARLEY

He can't, sweetheart. He can't...

THE CABIN DOOR

Tom stands inches from it.

TOM

You listen to me, Clayton! Get away
from my door! Get away from me and my
family!

RUNNING MAN (o.s.)

Please, Tom! It's comin'! It's gonna
get me! Pleeeaaassse!

TOM

Go hide! Hide in the woods!

RUNNING MAN (o.s.)

You can't hide from it! You know
that!

(pause)

RUNNING MAN (o.s.)

I didn't kill that gal, Tom! I swear!
They said I did, but I didn't!

TOM

I don't know nothin' about that,
Clayton! And I don't wanna!

(pause)

I'm sorry! Truly, I am! But I can't
risk my family for you! Now, I got my
shotgun here, Clayton! You get away
before I have to use it!

On the OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR, the running man begins to cry...

EXT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

The running man SLUMPS to the porch floor, sobbing PITIFULLY.

He casts a GLANCE over his shoulder, and his eyes WIDEN in HORROR. He SCREAMS, pulls himself to his feet. Screaming and sobbing at the same time, he STUMBLES off BEHIND the cabin.

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Tom Harley's face is ASHEN. The hand holding the shotgun SHAKES. Mrs. Harley comes into the main room, face STREAKED with tears. Tom looks at her. In her eyes there is just the hint of an accusation.

TOM

Don't look at me like that, Ellie.

EXT. LOG CABIN - BACK YARD - NIGHT

The running man SCURRIES THROUGH an OPENING between a STAND OF TREES behind the cabin. The wind CONTINUES to HOWL.

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Tom turns to AVOID his wife's stare. His own eyes are haunted, guilt-wracked...

TOM

God knows I had no choice.

EXT. BACKWOODS - NIGHT

The running man reaches a small STREAM. He STUMBLES through the shallows, STRUGGLING to SCALE the muddy OPPOSITE BANK. It's too SLIPPERY. He keeps sliding back DOWN in a HEAP.

EXT. LOG CABIN - A LONG SHOT - NIGHT

An angle on the CABIN, taking in the PUMPKIN PATCH and the star-flecked NIGHT SKY.

The running man RELEASES a piercing, SANITY-SHATTERING SCREAM!

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Tom and his wife HOLD to one another, as the running man's scream CONTINUES unabated.

BEDROOM

Eddie, full-awake, sitting up in bed, HEARS the scream, too. He slips out of bed and scurries to his BEDROOM WINDOW, which looks OUT on the OPENING between the stand of trees leading to the stream.

OPENING IN STAND OF TREES

In SILHOUETTE, Eddie SEES a TALL, STRANGELY SHAPED FIGURE obscured by the trees. It LIFTS the running man UP into the air, as he screams and screams...

Frightened, Eddie DUCKS DOWN. A moment later, the running man's scream CUTS OUT. Now, the only sound is a faint WHISTLING WIND. After several moments, Eddie PEEKS up over the sill again. And GASPS. The FIGURE now stands ALONE in the opening in the stand of trees, FACING the cabin. Eddie stares at the FIGURE, open-mouthed, until he REALIZES...it is LOOKING BACK AT HIM!

On our soundtrack: the distant cry of a country fiddle is heard...

EXT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

FULL BACK SLOWLY from Eddie's awe-filled FACE in the window, until the ENTIRE CABIN is in LONG SHOT...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Heat rises in RIPPLING WAVES off a BLACK RIBBON of HIGHWAY stretching into infinity. Set back from this quiet highway is

A FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND/GENERAL STORE.

Not yet OPEN, it is a semi-modern pillbox structure with a roofed porch, screen door and a sign on the roof reading: ED HARLEY'S.

A PUMPKIN sits by the side of the road, rotting in the sun. Yellow jackets BUZZ around it.

STRETCH OF HIGHWAY

A demonic-looking tractor trailer MATERIALIZES out of the shimmering heat waves. Superimpose the following:

TODAY

Air horn BLASTING, the truck ROARS PAST the stand, CRUSHING the pumpkin in the road under its WHEELS. Splat! On the WAIL of its horn:

PUMPKINHEAD (1/27/87)

EXT. ED HARLEY'S FARM - DAY

The CHURNING BLADES of a SOIL TILLER being pulled TILT UP to the DRIVER, a well-built man, late 30's, sweating in the morning sun. It is ED HARLEY, the boy PROLOGUE, now grown. A transistor radio DANGLES from the tractor's dash, giving out with Hank Williams' 'Ramblin' Man', as Ed TILLS his fields.

His fields display a small but hearty crop of CORN, SWEET POTATOES and PUMPKINS.

Behind Ed, a curving DIRT ROAD leads up a HILL to a small, old, subsistence-level two-story FARMHOUSE and BARN. A roadside MAILBOX bears the name: E. HARLEY.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRUCK STOP DINER - DAY

The PARKING LOT of a diner situated on the outskirts of a POPULATED AREA.

A camper with two dirt-bikes on a trailer pulls out onto the highway revealing a high-sitting LAND ROVER and a DATSUN 280 ZX. Three Honda RACING CYCLES sit atop a trailer hitched to the Rover.

A group of FIVE is VISIBLE in a WINDOW of this busy diner.

INT. TRUCK STOP DINER - DAY

The GROUP seen from outside are nearly finished with lunch.

They are: STEVE and MAGGIE, both blond, blue-eyed, OUTDOORS TYPES; Steve's older brother JOEL, good looking but truculent; CHRISTOPHER HAUSER an out-of-town friend of Steve's; and TRACY MATHESON, Maggie's best friend.

Pretty, but serious, Tracy projects intelligence and sensitivity. Tracy's bag has several paperbacks spilling out of it--a Norman Mailer bio and a copy of The Blood of Others. Maggie's the "girl-next-door" complete with a small gold cross necklace.

Chris is the only one still eating and doing so with GUSTO, to Maggie's wistful amusement.

MAGGIE
(To Tracy)

It's disgusting. He never gains a pound.

Chris, caught in mid bite, just smiles. There's a sixth place by Joel with a FULL cup of coffee. Joel pours the coffee into his own cup and sips at it innocently as...

KIM, Joel's model-gorgeous girlfriend, exits the nearby Ladies Room. Her BOD, clad in tight jeans, a tight t-shirt and black pumps, attracts the admiring STARES of a tableful of Redneck LOCALS on her way back to the table.

She slides into the booth beside Joel, who is glancing IRRITABLY at the locals ogling her. One of the LOCALS says something inaudible to his buddies, cracking them up. Joel glowers at them, trying to keep a lid on his temper.

JOEL
Redneck assholes...

KIM
Hey, who drank my coffee?
Joel?

CHRIS
Hey, what's the big deal.
You Should be flattered.

Kim elbows Joel in the ribs. The WAITRESS comes over with coffee.

JOEL
Flattered? I'd like to
kick their asses!

WAITRESS
More coffee anyone?

CHRIS
Just lighten up. You
always make a lot out
nothin'...

KIM
(glancing mock-exasperated
at Joel)
Yes. Please.

The Waitress fills Kim's cup.

(to the Waitress)
What kind of pie do you
have?

Several groans around the table.

JOEL
(to Chris)
Fuck you!

WAITRESS
We got blueberry, banana,
chocolate cream, banana cream,
rhubarb, apple and pumpkin.

STEVE
Come on guys!

Steve starts to UNFOLD a ROADMAP before them on the table.

CHRIS
(after a brief hesitation)
Apple, please.

WAITRESS
Anybody else?

No one else orders. The waitress splits.

STEVE
(getting down to business)
Here we are...

STEVE

(continuing, pointing to the map)
...and here's the track, in Meredith.
About...a hundred miles from here. I
hope you girls realize you're looking
at the winners of Sunday's Dirt Bike
Moto-Cross even as we speak.

JOEL

Bet your ass.

CHRIS

(to Steve)

Where's this cabin?

STEVE

On Bradley Mountain, about thirty
miles from the track. It's our
uncles's place. Joel and I used to go
hunting with him there when we were
kids. Getting to it's a little bit of
a hike -- we'll have to park the cars
and walk a ways up the mountain -- but
it'll be worth it.

KIM

What's it like?

STEVE

Trust me, you'll love it.

JOEL

(savoring the memory)

It's great. Steve and I used to take
girls up there when we were in high
school. Wild times, huh Steve-o?

On that note, Maggie rises.

MAGGIE

Tracy?

Steve glares at Joel.

TRACY

(rising, too)

Definitely.

MAGGIE

Excuse us.

Chris stands to let Maggie, then Tracy, out of the booth. Tracy
brushes past him a tad self-consciously. Chris watches her go.

STEVE
(to Joel)
Why'd you have to say that for?

JOEL
(sadly unaware of his faux pas)
What?

INT. TRUCK STOP DINER - LADIES ROOM - DAY

Maggie and Tracy primo before a mirror, talking as they go.

TRACY
It's incredible to me that Joel and
Steve came out of the same womb.

MAGGIE
Tell me about it. That's what I'm
looking at for a brother-in-law.

Maggie looks at Tracy expectantly.

MAGGIE
So, what do you think of him?

TRACY
(non-committally)
Chris? He's okay.

MAGGIE
So?

TRACY
I didn't come on this trip to meet a
guy, Maggs.

MAGGIE
He's got a great job.

TRACY
He's a gopher on TV commercials.

MAGGIE
A Production Assistant on TV
commercials. And rock videos. He
actually knows Mick Jagger.

TRACY
Really? He probably got him coffee
once. Big deal.

MAGGIE
Give the guy a chance! At least he's
your type...

TRACY
What's my type?

MAGGIE

You know -- intellectual.

Tracy groans. Maggie notices The Blood of Others sticking out of her bag.

MAGGIE

I'll bet you he's read this book.

TRACY

What?

MAGGIE

(picking up the book)

I'll bet you he's read this book.

TRACY

(shaking her head)

Maggs...

MAGGIE

(insisting)

No -- if he's read this, you promise to let your guard down a little. Deal?

TRACY

(exasperated)

Yeah, okay. Can we stop now?

Maggie sticks the book into her bag.

CUT TO:

EXT. ED HARLEY'S FARM - DAY

Ed walks the rows of a just-planted field with a tank-type WEED BURNER strapped to his back, defoliating the earth of weeds, BACKGROUNDED by his house.

INT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - BILLY'S BEDROOM - DAY

BILLY HARLEY, Ed's ten-year-old son, sits cross-legged on the floor, modeling a smiling STICK FIGURE out of paper mache. His Irish setter, GYPSY, sits on the floor across the room, watching him. Billy's movements, something about the WAY he focuses his eyes might strike us odd. In fact, Billy is nearly blind and lives in a shadow world enriched solely by the love of his father and the unconditional devotion of his dog.

Dipping into a bowl of flower and water one last time, Billy finishes the tiny sculpture and sets it on the open window sill to dry in the sun. Beside it is an arts-and-crafts type rope chain.

Outside the open window, Ed is VISIBLE in the field. Suddenly, Billy hears a LOUD LAPPING sound. And turns to see Gypsy bent over the bowl of flower and water, hungrily LICKING UP its contents.

Billy's P.O.V. -- dimly and out-of-focus, the outline of his dog can just be discerned, nose buried in the bowl.

Billy rushes over to stop him.

BILLY
Gypsy, stop that!

INT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - A SHORT TIME LATER

Ed and Billy have just finished a pancakes and sausage breakfast. Ed pours himself more coffee. Gypsy sits beside Billy and begs. Billy feeds him a sausage.

ED
(tolerantly)
Billy, not at the table.

BILLY
But, dad, he's hungry.

ED
Then put it in his dish, that's what it's for you know.

As Billy puts the sausage in the dog's bowl he turns to his father, face lit up with anticipation.

BILLY
Comic time, dad!

Ed smiles. Starts to rise.

ED
Okay, okay...

Ed retrieves the NEWSPAPER from the FRONT PORCH, scanning the HEADLINE on his way into the living room.

Billy pops into the room, and plops himself on the couch as Ed reads aloud:

ED
"MURDERER FREED IN STORM OF PROTEST"

BILLY
STAR WARS first, okay, dad?

Ed is lost in the story.

ED

(continues reading so Billy can hear)
"A man convicted of killing a family
of three has been released after
serving just three years of an eight
to ten year sentence, in what many
feel is further proof that the
criminal justice system in this
country simply isn't working."

BILLY

One sec, okay, dad? I gotta get
something.

ED

Go.

Billy races upstairs. Ed continues to read the story to himself.

Billy bangs downstairs, races into the room and plunks himself
down beside his father, hiding something in his hand.

ED

(reacting to what he's reading)
That's a damn shame...

BILLY

What is, dad?

The question snaps Ed out of the story. He opens the paper to the
comics.

ED

Oh, nothing...just...seems like the
Law can't seem to do nothin' for
nobody, that's all. There's no
justice.

Billy looks at his father uncomprehendingly, then:

BILLY

Dad?

ED

I know, the comics...

BILLY

I made you a present.

ED

You did? Let me see.

Billy brings out the stick figure, now dried and strung to the
rope chain. Ed accepts it like a rare treasure, holding it
delicately.

ED

This is something!

Billy beams.

BILLY

You put it on like a necklace...

Ed slips it on.

ED

Thank you buddy! How's it look?

BILLY

Great! You really like it?

ED

Like it? I love it!

BILLY

You don't have to wear it every day...just when you want to.

ED

You are a talented kid.

Ed admires the necklace for a few moments more, then folds the comics page back to begin his and Billy's daily ritual.

ED

Okay, what's it gonna be?

BILLY

STAR WARS! Then Peanuts, then -
Garfield, then...

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The ZX, followed by the Land Rover, SHOOTs past camera. Joel and Kim are in the ZX. Steve drives the Land Rover with Maggie next to him. Chris and Tracy are in the back seat.

INT. 280 ZX - DAY

Joel starts to steadily ACCELERATE, eyes on the road ahead. Something's eating him. Kim tries to ignore him, but can't help trying to get a glimpse of the speedometer.

INT. LAND ROVER - DAY

Steve shakes his head, as, with a BURST OF SPEED, the ZX disappears up the road ahead of him.

STEVE

Shit! There he goes again.

INT. 280 ZX - DAY

Joel drives INTENTLY. The car's speed CLIMBS.

KIM

Would you mind slowing down? I'd like to survive this weekend.

Joel's response is to ACCELERATE FURTHER.

KIM

What is your problem?

JOEL

Did you have to strut back from the Ladies Room in that diner like a Goddamn hooker?

KIM

(incredulously)
Excuse me?

JOEL

Every guy in the place must have had his fuckin' eyes on you.

KIM

I did not strut, I walked. The way I always walk. Can I help it if some local yokels...

JOEL

Yeah, you can help it. You can help it.

KIM

God, I am so sick of having this argument! Just drop it, okay?

INT. LAND ROVER - DAY

Steve hefts the C.B. mike.

STEVE

Cruiser One to Reckless Dork-- where's the fire? Slow down, you'll miss the turn-off!

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The ZX screeches as it makes a sharp right onto a blacktop road -- almost missing the turn. The Land Rover follows.

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - PARKING AREA - DAY

Kim SLAMS shut the hatch back of the ZX. Both vehicles are now parked at the far end of a paved PARKING AREA in the middle of nowhere. It FACES a PATH leading DEEPER into lush woods. A sign nailed to a tree declares: BRADLEY MOUNTAIN. An arrow points toward the path.

Steve, Maggie, Chris and Tracy are loaded with camping gear and ready to proceed to the cabin. Steve is carrying an automatic rifle like an experienced hunter.

STEVE

Fall in, troops! Yonder cabin awaits!

CHRIS

How far?

STEVE

Close -- a quarter-of-a-mile, maybe.

KIM

(looking around)

Wait...where's Joel?

The others look around. Joel is gone.

KIM

Joel?

STEVE

Joel!

CHRIS

(to Tracy)

Quicksand, do you think?

TRACY

(chuckling)

No such luck.

Suddenly, with a LOUD thrashing and snapping of branches, Joel PUSHES through the underbrush, zipping his fly.

JOEL

Ahhh...that's better. Hadda drain the dragon.

Reacting to Joel, Tracy looks at Maggie with an expression that says, "What a jerk."

The group starts off into the woods: Steve, Maggie, Chris and Tracy in front, Joel and Kim taking up the rear. Joel has taken out the machete and whacks at various plants as he walks.

STEVE

Wait'll you try racing, Chris -- you're gonna love it. I'm starting to think seriously about it professionally. There's a hell-of-a-lot of money in moto-cross racing. You manage yourself right, get the right sponsor, prize money's just the tip of the iceberg.

MAGGIE

(to Chris)

How'd you get into commercials?

CHRIS

I was always into film.

STEVE

He'd come up from New York for a visit, then spend most of the time watching movies on TV.

TRACY

(just a touch sarcastic)

Don't tell me -- what you really want to do is direct.

CHRIS

(not noticing her slight sarcasm)

I wouldn't mind. We'll see.

TRACK WITH Joel and Kim. Joel is walking purposely faster than she is able to.

KIM

Honey, wait up.

JOEL

(still a little angry)

Catch up.

KIM

(touches him)

Come on. Don't be angry anymore.

Joel softens, and takes her hand.

EXT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Ed brakes his PICK-UP TRUCK to a squeaking stop before the fruit stand seen earlier. He, Billy and Gypsy get out and Ed opens up for the day.

INT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

The interior is dark. We HEAR Ed un-lock the door, SEE it open and daylight spill in. The lights SNAP ON. Ed and Billy enter. Ed flips the CLOSED sign to OPEN, while Billy raised the shades in the windows. The place is an old-fashioned country General Store -- the basics, plus a sprinkling of delicacies.

EXT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - MINUTES LATER

Ed pushes a rolling cart laden with PRODUCE out onto the porch, where Billy stands waiting with a water hose.

BILLY

Now, Dad?

ED

Let 'er rip.

Billy SPRAYS the produce with water, to keep it cool in the sun. Ed pushes a second cart outside for him to spray.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - WOODS - DAY

Our six walk through the woods. Suddenly, Steve points.

STEVE

Cabin dead ahead.

All SEE a nice, big cozy LOG CABIN in the middle of a clearing. A sign hammered into the ground informs all: PRIVATE PROPERTY.

INT. LOG CABIN - DAY

Steve un-locks the door and all enter. The interior is very Field-and-Stream: sturdy wicker furniture, stuffed trout mounted over the mantle, working fireplace, etc. Sunlight pours through the windows. They drop their camping gear, rifle, machete, and all in the middle of the floor.

Steve moves to a light switch, running through the following in a comic breezy manner.

STEVE

Do we have lights?

He flicks the switch, the lights come on.

STEVE

Yes! We have lights.

Joel plops down in a chair. Chris crosses to the phone.

CHRIS

(in Steve's manner)

Do we have a phone?

Chris lifts the receiver. A dial tone sings out reassuringly.

CHRIS

Yes!

Steve goes into the BATHROOM.

KIM

Do we have...

A flush is heard from the toilet.

KIM

Yes!

STEVE

(leaving the bathroom)

No toilet paper!

KITCHEN AREA

Maggie enters, and goes to the refrigerator.

MAGGIE

We have a refrigerator.

She opens it. A lonely, empty ice cube tray stares back at her.

MAGGIE

Emp-ty!

Steve opens a door, REVEALING a walk-in PANTRY.

STEVE

We have a pantry!

He turns on the light inside it. The cupboard's bare.

STEVE

Empty. This place is...emp-ty!

TRACY

But nice.

STEVE

My Aunt and Uncle thank you.

While Maggie looks for a hair brush in her bag, Steve starts organizing the cabin. Maggie comes upon Tracy's book.

MAGGIE

Oh, here's your book back, Tracy.

Maggie hands Tracy the copy of The Blood of Others.

CHRIS

(noticing the title; to Tracy)
You're reading Blood of Others?

MAGGIE

You haven't read it, have you?

CHRIS

(confused)
What do you mean? I told you I did
when you asked me before.

Tracy realizes she's been set up, gives Maggie a look.

MAGGIE

Oops -- right -- forgot.

Chris looks from Tracy to Maggie, then back to Tracy, feeling weird, sensing something passing between them that he isn't in on.

CHRIS

(shrugging this off)
I read it at N.Y.U. Heavy stuff...

Tracy takes the book back from Maggie.

Maggie has found her hairbrush and starts brushing her hair, using a wall mirror nearby.

Steve has been moving BACKPACKS into the bedrooms and announces:

STEVE

Okay troops -- listen up--

All re-group in the Main Room.

STEVE

Joel and Kim--you're suite--to the left. Miss Tracy and Miss Maggie--The Blue Room--to the right. Chris and I will remain in the parlor.

(pause)

And, I hate to say it, troops, but considering the poor stocks of rations, I think we'd better make a brief, but necessary return to civilization for supplies.

JOEL

You're kidding?--We just got here.

STEVE

Do I hear dissent--from a member of my
own family?

Joel playfully grabs Kim and pulls her down on his lap.

JOEL

You guys go. I got something better
to do.

Kim pops up rejecting him.

KIM

Jo-el. Not now. I wanna go too.

JOEL

(miffed)

Okay... okay.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKWOODS DIRT ROAD - DAY

The ZX, followed by the Land Rover, shoots past camera, kicking up
dust along this narrow dirt road flanked by woods.

EXT./INT. LAND ROVER - DAY

Steve hefts the Rover's C.B. mike. Ahead, Joel is sending back a
lot of dust.

STEVE

Joel-- what the hell are you doing?

EXT./INT. 280 ZX - DAY

Joel maintains his speed, ignoring his brother, and makes a
screeching turn onto a two lane blacktop with dirt shoulders:
AHEAD: a BEAT-UP YELLOW FARM TRUCK full of corns appears. Joel
shifts gears, fixes his eyes on the truck as if challenged, moves
into the trucks lane, and accelerates...

KIM

Joel...not again.

EXT./INT. LAND ROVER - DAY

Steve and the others SEE the on-coming truck.

CHRIS

What the hell is he doing, now?

TRACY

(guessing)

This I don't believe.

CHRIS

You're big brother's a real asshole,
man. Make him get over.

STEVE

(into the C.B.)

What the hell do you think you're
doing, Joel? Get over!

EXT./INT. 280 ZX - DAY

Joel ACCELERATES to MEET the on-coming truck. Its DRIVER starts
BLOWING its HORN. Joel honks back, cackling.

KIM

(panicking)

Come on, honey, stop...

JOEL

(eyes riveted to the truck)

Shut up.

STEVE

(filtered v.o.)

Joel, don't be an asshole! Get over!
Now!

CHRIS

(filtered v.o.)

Drop back, Steve!

The ZX and farm truck HURTLE toward one another, neither giving
way. At the LAST SECOND, moments before a collision, the farm
truck SWERVES, runs off the road onto the shoulder.

A BACKWOODS MAN jumps out of the truck with his rifle as the ZX
and Rover pull away in the distance.

JOEL

(a whoop)

Yeah!

KIM

(scared, angry)

You're such a shithead!

EXT./INT. LAND ROVER - DAY

STEVE

(into the C.B.)

That was too close, Joel!

CHRIS

Man --

JOEL

(filtered v.o.)

Come on, people. I knew he'd chicken.

Joel clucks like a chicken.

STEVE

(into the C.B.)

Goddamnit, Joel, you could've got us
all killed!

TRACY

(out loud)

You're a moron, Joel!

JOEL

(filtered v.o.)

Yeah, yeah, yeah...

CHRIS

(as they all start to calm down)

Does he always drive like that?

MAGGIE

Always.

STEVE

(uncertainly)

He's all right.

EXT. BACKWOODS ROAD - DAY

The ZX, then the Land Rover, turn off the backwoods road onto a
highway.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Billy sits outside the stand tossing Gypsy a rubber ball. No
matter which way he throws it, the NIMBLE dog makes the catch.
After a beat, the 280 ZX, then the Land Rover, pull in and park
outside the stand. Joel, Kim and the others link up. Joel grins,
cocky, full of himself.

Joel doesn't get the reaction he expects. Nobody's very amused or
impressed.

STEVE

Don't do that shit anymore. It's
stupid.

JOEL

I'll do what I want to do!

Gypsy starts barking at Joel. Billy can't calm him.

CHRIS

Made a friend already, huh Joel?

Joel frowns. All realize, after a moment, that Billy is handicapped. Joel scrutinizes Billy quizically, then:

JOEL

Is it me, or is there something wrong with that kid? Look at his eyes.

Billy looks up a moment, as if he's overheard, returns to calming Gypsy.

TRACY

(with contempt)

Jesus...

JOEL

All I said was...

CHRIS

(to Joel)

We heard you, man.

Tracy crosses to Billy, pets Gypsy. Kim helps herself to a bottle of pop from a cooler out front. Chris joins Tracy. Steve and Maggie head for the stand. Joel is left alone.

JOEL

Fuck this!

Pissed, Joel heatedly OFF-LOADS his MOTORCYCLE from the trailer hooked to the Land Rover. Steve and Maggie ENTER the stand. Billy and Gypsy follow. Chris, Tracy and Kim all TURN at the ROAR of Joel's cycle, as he KICK-STARTS it.

TRACY

Now what?

KIM

Joel!

Joel JETS across the highway to an OPEN DIRT FIELD and starts to RACE around in a wide circle, sending up a thick cloud of dust.

A battered PICK-UP TRUCK sputters to a stop before the stand. At the wheel is a taciturn old BACKWOODS FARMER and his five SCRAWNY KIDS, three boys and two girls. They're all between the ages of six and twelve, barefoot and dressed in old clothes.

The kids pile out, while their grandfather remains inside, absentmindedly searching his pockets for something.

One of the girls begins bouncing a ball. The youngest boy SNATCHES it from her.

GIRL
Jimmy! Give it here!

Jimmy holds the ball out, taunting her with it, making faces.

GIRL
Frank! Jimmy took my ball and won't give it back!

FRANK, twelve, the eldest, looks up from WHITTILING.

FRANK
(seeing a chance for fun)
That's bad, Jimmy. And you know what happens to bad boys, don'tcha?

Frank exchanges CONSPIRATORIAL LOOKS with the others. They quickly RING Jimmy IN and begin CIRCLING him, intoning a strange, single-word CHANT...

(ALL)
(in unison; low)
Punkinhead, Punkinhead, Punkinhead,
Punkinhead...

(JIMMY)
(trying to break out of the circle)
Stop, you guys...

Chris and Tracy watch the children with bemused-curiosity.

INT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Steve and Maggie shop the aisles. Ed, wearing an apron, smiles at them from behind the checkout.

ED
You folks don't see what you want,
just ask.

MAGGIE
Thank you.

EXT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Inside his pick-up, MR. WALLACE finds what he's digging through his overalls for--his shopping list. He gets out, enters the stand. As Chris and Tracy watch, the backwoods children CONTINUE circling their youngest brother. Now, they begin chanting a CURIOUS VERSE about a legendary BOOGEY MAN, obviously endemic to the region.

Note: This is the PUMPKINHEAD verse. Though we will only hear SNATCHES of it in the scene, it is included in its entirety below.

Keep away from Pumpkinhead
Unless you're tired of living;
His enemies are mostly dead;
He's mean and unforgiving.

Laugh at him and you're undone,
But in some dreadful fashion;
Vengeance, he considers fun;
And plans it with a passion!

Time will not erase or blot
A plot that he has brewing;
It's when you think that he's forgot',
He'll conjure your undoing!

Bolted doors
And windows barred,
Guard-dogs prowling
In the yard,
Won't protect you
In your bed;
Nothing will,
from Pumpkinhead!

So keep away from Pumpkinhead,
Unless you're tired of living;
His enemies are mostly dead;
He's mean and unforgiving.

Time will not erase or blot
A plot that he has brewing;
It's when you think that he's forgot',
He'll conjure your undoing!

CROSS-CUT the backwood children CIRCLING their brother and chanting, with Joel RACING around on the other side of the highway.

INT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Ed RINGS UP Steve and Maggie's purchase, filling a big box with them. In the background, Mr. Wallace shops.

The CHANTING of the children DRIFTS inside. It REGISTERS STRONGLY with Ed, calling up a frightening memory for him. He shakes it off a second later.

ED
(handing Steve his change)
Thanks. Come again.

Steve and Maggie exit. Mr. Wallace comes up before Ed, sets down several items on the counter.

ED

What can I do for you today, Mr.
Wallace?

MR. WALLACE

(irritably)

This, and my feed.

ED

(remembering)

It's, ah, just up at the house. If
you'll wait ten minutes...

MR. WALLACE

Ain't got ten minutes. Got to get
back to the farm.

ED

(trying to oblige)

Okay -- I'll drive it over myself,
within the hour. How's that?

Mr. Wallace's habitual scowl deepens, but he nods.

EXT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Kim crosses the highway to watch Joel. Chris and Tracy's attention is SPLIT between the backwood's children's CHANTING and Joel's GRANDSTANDING. Whooping like an indian, Joel SPINS the bike in a 360 degree circle, using the front end as an AXIS. Joel is not without some skill on a bike.

CHRIS

Come on, he may be an asshole, but he
is good.

TRACY

I don't like him.

CHRIS

Come on.

Chris leads Tracy across the highway.

BACK OUTSIDE THE STAND

Steve and Maggie finish loading the supplies into the Land Rover. Steve's eyes are riveted to his brother, across the highway. Steve begins un-chaining HIS bike.

MAGGIE

Must you?

STEVE
(with compassion)
Forgive and forget, Maggs.

Steve jumps on his bike.

MAGGIE
(not without fondness)
You're too good to him.

STEVE
(winking)
How 'bout to you?

MAGGIE
(smiling)
Impossibility, mister.

Steve KICK-STARTS his cycle, rumbles across the highway. Mr. Wallace and his grandchildren climb back into their pick-up and sputter off. Maggie follows Steve across, joins the others.

EXT. OPEN FIELD

Steve comes up ALONGSIDE Joel, grinning. Joel, racing ANGRILY until now, breaks into a smile upon seeing him.

STEVE
(shouting above the bikes)
Don't look back, turkey. I'm on your
ass.

INT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Ed slips off his apron, steps out from behind the checkout, and calls Billy inside. Billy and Gypsy enter.

ED
Stay right here, and mind things. I
gotta get something back at the house,
then we'll take a little ride, okay?

BILLY
Okay, Dad.

EXT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Ed exits the stand, jumps into his truck, glances at Steve and Joel across the highway, and drives off.

INT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Gypsy stares OUTSIDE through the screen door, and starts snarling. She nudges the door open with her nose and BOLTS OUT.

BILLY

Gypsy!

EXT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Billy runs outside after his dog. Gypsy shoots across the highway toward the bikes.

BILLY

Gypsy! No, Gypsy!

EXT. OPEN FIELD

Steve chases Joel's tail, sending up so much dust that at times they're completely obscured.

Gypsy runs out into the field chasing and barking at the bikes.

Now , Steve OVERTAKES Joel, whooping victoriously.

Billy chases blindly after Gypsy. Now and then clouds of dust obscure him.

Maggie spots the dog chasing the bikes as Billy runs past her chasing Gypsy. She SCREAMS to the boy to "Stop," but her voice is lost in the roar of the engines. Still screaming, she runs after Billy to try and stop him.

Steve hops a small dirt mound as Billy streaks across his path. Steve SWERVES, narrowly MISSING both boy and dog, skidding to a stop.

Joel comes OUT of Steve's DUSTY WAKE to SEE Billy freeze RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM! Too late. Joel strikes Billy HEAD-ON, sending him into the air like a rag doll. Billy lands in a heap at Maggie's feet, HARD, spattering her with blood. Joel is thrown clear. All this in a SPLIT-SECOND.

Tracy, Chris and Kim run over. Gypsy barks steadily. Kim helps Joel up. He's a mess and his nose is bleeding, but otherwise he's un-hurt.

JOEL

I'm okay...

Tracy and Chris drop beside Billy. The dust all around them settles. Maggie stands stiffly before Billy's splayed-out body, staring down at the blood spattered all over her. She clutches her stomach, backing away...

MAGGIE

(hysterical)

He's dead, isn't he...? Dead... he's
dead, isn't he...?!

JOEL

He just came out of nowhere!

Steve joins all of them beside Billy. Billy is unconscious and there are nasty CUTS all over him. Joel stares down at him, frightened, then picks up his bike and starts pushing it back across the highway.

Steve looks up from Billy to SEE Joel moving off. Runs to catch up with him. Kim looks after Joel, then at Chris and Tracy bent over Billy. Gypsy keeps up a steady round of barking.

TRACY

(to Chris, anguished)

Should I move him? I don't know what to do...

EXT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Joel hurriedly RE-CHAINS his bike to the trailer. Steve reaches him.

STEVE

What the hell are you doing?!

JOEL

We stay, I fry! Is that what you want? Is it?

STEVE

It was an accident! I almost hit him myself!

JOEL

Yeah, but I've been drinkin'. Listen Bruh--this time you gotta help me. You really gotta help me!

Kim comes over.

KIM

(totally lost)

What are we going to do, Joel? We can't just leave...

JOEL

Get in the car.

EXT. OPEN FIELD

Tracy and Chris are still bent helplessly over Billy. Maggie, dazed, walks in circles nearby--a basket case.

TRACY

(to Chris)

Oh, God...I think his neck is broken.
Get to a phone, Chris... Call an
ambulance!

CHRIS

Right!

Chris RACES across the highway.

INT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Chris HURTLES inside, frantically SEARCHES for a phone behind the
checkout, but there isn't one.

CHRIS

(anguished)

Oh, God...

EXT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Chris runs back outside to see Joel and Kim drive off.

CHRIS

(to Steve)

What's going on?

STEVE

(jumping into the Land Rover)

Forget Joel, he's in trouble. How's
the Kid?

Steve starts the Land Rover. Chris gets in beside him.

CHRIS

He looks bad. Maggie's in bad shape,
too.

Steve DRIVES the Land Rover across the highway to the others. He
jumps out and drops beside Tracy. Chris comes up behind him.

TRACY

(confused)

Chris?

CHRIS

There was no phone in the stand.

STEVE

(to Tracy, urgently)

I'll stay with the kid. Help Chris
with Maggie. Get to the cabin and
call for help...

TRACY

Okay.

CHRIS

You drive. I'll take care of Maggie.

Maggie is now crumpled on the ground, still sobbing, completely out-of-it. Chris picks up Maggie, puts her in the Land Rover, and climbs in after her. Tracy jumps behind the wheel. They peel out.

Alone now, Steve looks scared. He stares down at Billy. Gypsy licks Billy's face, trying to revive him. After a beat, Steve stands. Across the highway and up the road, he SEES Ed's pick-up returning. Steve AGONIZES for a moment, then rights his bike, KICK-STARTS it, and speeds off.

EXT./INT. ED'S PICK-UP - DAY

Ed SEES the cyclist race off. Puzzled, he pulls up outside the stand, gets out of the truck and goes inside.

INT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Ed enters.

ED

Billy?

EXT./INT. LAND ROVER - DAY

Tracy drives as fast as she can. Maggie, seated between her and Chris, rocks back and forth, almost autistically, getting worse.

TRACY

She needs a doctor, Chris...

CHRIS

She'll get one...

TRACY

Maggs? It's all right...that little boy'll be all right...

EXT. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STAND - DAY

Ed comes back outside.

ED

Billy?

Ed hears Gypsy BARKING. It's a hollow sound. He sees the dog across the highway, and SPOTS Billy. He starts running for him.

ED

Billy!

Ed reaches his son, drops beside him.

ED

(helplessly)

Oh, Jesus...

Ed reaches beneath Billy's head. It comes away bloody.

ED

Oh, Jesus, Oh, Jesus, Oh, Jesus...

EXT. RISE IN HIGHWAY - DAY

Ed fumbles slightly as he carefully scoops up Billy. He runs back across the highway towards his truck.

We CRANE up and away from Ed to reveal Steve, watching from the crest of the highway, in the distance. His face is ANGUISHED, torn.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - PARKING AREA - DAY

Joel's ZX sits parked and empty. The Land Rover arrives and pulls up beside the ZX. Tracy and Chris jump out. Chris has to lift Maggie out and carry her in his arms like a baby.

CHRIS

(urgently)

Run ahead! Get to the cabin and call
an ambulance! I'm right behind you!

Tracy nods, and makes for the cabin.

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - LOG CABIN - DAY

An angle on the cabin. The front door is open.

INT. LOG CABIN - DAY

An angle on the OPEN front door. Outside, Tracy APPEARS, crosses the clearing, and RACES into the cabin. Joel is rummaging through some of the camping gear, and stands as Tracy enters.

TRACY

(out-of-breath)

Did you call for help?

Joel doesn't answer. Tracy looks to Kim. Kim stands back from the phone, a small trickle of blood at the corner of her mouth, as if she'd been struck. Joel looks guilty, but says nothing.

TRACY

This is crazy!

Tracy moves to the phone, picks up, and dials. A second later the line GOES DEAD. Tracy SPINS as Joel finishes ripping the cord VIOLENTLY out of the wall.

TRACY

Damn you!

Chris enters, still carrying Maggie, out-of-breath, arms aching.

CHRIS

Give me a hand, somebody...

Tracy helps Chris set Maggie down on the couch.

TRACY

(to Chris, shooting daggers at Joel)
He just ripped the phone out!

CHRIS

What?

TRACY

I'm going back. I'll drive to the nearest town.

Outside, the sound of a motorcycle is heard approaching. Tracy takes a step toward the door. Joel grabs her arm -- hard. TEARS the keys to the Land Rover out of her hand.

JOEL

You're not going anywhere!

CHRIS

Hey!

Chris pulls Joel's arm off Tracy, and FLINGS Joel against the wall.

CHRIS

What is going on here, man?

Steve walks into the cabin. All TURN toward him.

TRACY

(after an incredulous beat)
What the hell are you doing here?

CUT TO:

INT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - DAY

Ed BURSTS through the front door carrying Billy, sets him down on the living room couch and frantically tries to revive him.

But it's no use. Ed feels for a pulse and finds none. He grows MORE FRANTIC, cradling Billy in his arms and hugging him TIGHTLY, as if trying to pass his OWN life energy into him.

Finally, Ed starts to rock Billy back and forth.

ED
Please don't die, Billy...please don't
die...

Slowly, PULL BACK from Ed as he rocks Billy in his arms, until they are in LONG SHOT in the room.

ED
...please...don't die, Billy...please
don't die...please...

Ed's head slumps forward and he begins to cry. Billy is dead.

After a long, long time, just sitting like this, Ed looks up. His look is blank, stripped of all emotion.

Gypsy pads into the room. Ed automatically pats her side, but the action is zombie-like. Now, he crosses the room as if his feet weighed a thousand pounds each. And stops beside the telephone. After a few beats, he lifts the receiver and dials. His call rings once, twice, then is picked up.

OPERATOR
(filtered v.o.)
Good afternoon, County Sheriff -- hold
the line, please.

Ed waits. Camera moves slowly IN on him, as the strange VERSE chanted earlier by the backwoods children RETURNS to him. Finally, the operator comes back on the line.

OPERATOR
(filtered v.o.)
County Sheriff -- may I help you?

Ed stares blankly into the mouthpiece. The strange verse CONTINUES...

OPERATOR
(filtered v.o.)
Hello? Hello, may I help you?

The strange verse fades...and Ed somnambulantly takes the receiver away from his ear.

OPERATOR
(filtered v.o.)
Is someone there? Hello...?

Click. Ed hangs up. HOLD on him for several beats.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - LOG CABIN - DAY

Voices rise in ARGUMENT within the cabin.

INT. LOG CABIN - DAY

TRACY

(yelling)

Leaving that little boy was wrong,
Steven! I don't want to hear anymore!
We're going back! Now!

CHRIS

Gimme the keys.

JOEL

(backing away, panicking)

I ain't going to jail!

Maggie has resumed her rocking back and forth, mercifully lost to all this.

CHRIS

(moving toward Joel)

Hand 'em over! Now!

JOEL

(backing against the fireplace)

No, man! I'm not spending the rest of
my life in jail for a fuckin' -
accident!

Chris GRABS Joel by the shirt collar. They STRUGGLE for the keys to the Land Rover. Joel swings out and strikes Chris. Chris jumps Joel, and they drop to the floor. The fight escalates.

KIM

Stop! Stop it!

Tracy looks to Steve to step in. Steve tries to pull Chris off Joel. Chris pushes Steve back, and the fight continues.

Tracy's eyes fall on the hunting rifle sticking out of the pile of camping gear. She grabs it, fumbles with the unfamiliar weapon for a second, then aims it at the ceiling, half-snorts her eyes and FIRES a single SHOT.

Kim and Maggie scream. Chris, Steve, and Joel freeze, turn toward Tracy, stunned.

TRACY

(rifle trained on Joel)

I don't know what this is all about,
and I don't care! Just give me the
goddamn keys, Joel!

Everyone is gulping air, breathing hard. As they catch their
breath:

STEVE

(between gasps)

Look -- Joel was in another accident a
couple of months ago. A girl was
hurt. They pulled his license -- he's
on probation.

Tracy listens. Chris, too. But, as his brother talks, Joel's
frightened eyes fall on a CAMPING SHOVEL at his feet. Unseen by
the others, he slowly bends to pick it up...

STEVE

If the cops get him, he'll do time.

Before Tracy can respond, Joel BRINGS UP the camping shovel and
whacks Chris across the side of his head. Chris drops, out cold.

TRACY

(watching him slump to the floor)

Jesus!

In the next instant, Joel RIPS the rifle out of Tracy's hands.

Joel backs away, terrified, not sure what to do next. The rifle
is leveled at all of them. Joel could do anything here.
Anything.

CUT TO:

EXT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - DAY

Ed walks out of the house with Billy's body in his arms. Opens
the passenger door of his pick-up, and places Billy inside.

EXT./INT. ED'S PICK-UP - DAY

PAVED COUNTRY ROAD

Ed drives INTENTLY. Billy's body is BESIDE him on the front seat,
length-wise, covered by a blanket.

Ed turns OFF the paved road onto a DIRT ROAD leading into DENSE
WOODS.

EXT. HILL PEOPLES'S ENCLAVE - DAY

Bouncing and bumping along, he travels it for a mile, begins passing hand-lettered WOODEN SIGNS nailed to trees: NO TRESPASSING, KEEP OUT, VISITORS NOT WELCOME!

After a while, Ed begins PASSING tiny old cabins and shacks; small houses plunked down in still half-wild clearings. An occasional backwoods man, woman or some children stare at him SUSPICIOUSLY as he drives past. These Hill People, their ancient, dilapidated homesteads, their stunted, pathetic farms -- everything Ed passes bespeaks isolation, superstition and poverty.

Finally, Ed nears a TWO-STORY HOUSE, the only one he's seen. The yard around it is BETTER-CLEARED than most. In it, a group of mostly young men work cooperatively on a bear-proof HOG PEN. It is painstaking, difficult work with axes and fresh-cut LOGS. Nearby, three LIVE HOGS root, tied to stakes.

Ed gets out of his truck and walks up to one of the men, a BURLY MAN. He faces Ed as Ed draws near.

BURLY MAN

(unfriendly)

Can I help you, mister?

ED

I got a delivery for Zeb Wallace.

The man turns to a boy of twelve among the men now all looking at Ed with suspicion. We recognize him. It's Frank, the eldest of the kids seen earlier at Ed's stand, singing the PUMPKINHEAD verse.

BURLY MAN

Frank, get your Grandpa!

EXT. MR. WALLACE'S HOUSE - SHED - DAY

Ed LOADS Mr. Wallace's feed into a shed behind the house. Mr. Wallace looks on, scowling, picking his teeth with a tooth pick. Frank helps with the loading.

MR. WALLACE

How much I owe you?

ED

Nothing, if you can help me with something, Mr. Wallace.

MR. WALLACE

(instantly mis-trustful)

Like?

ED

(pausing from the work)
I'm looking for somebody. Maybe you
know her. An old woman -- lives way
up in the mountains hereabouts?

Ed pauses.

ED

Some folks say she's got powers.

MR. WALLACE

What kind of foolishness you talkin',
son?

ED

(looking Wallace in the eye)
I think you know what I'm talking
about, Mr. Wallace.

MR. WALLACE

(spits; then:)
'Fraid I don't follow you.

ED

Please. It's very important...

MR. WALLACE

(obstinately)
I lived 'round here all my life.
Never heard of anyone like you're
talkin' 'bout.

ED

Are you sure? Please... I know you
people have your own ways, your own
beliefs...

MR. WALLACE

(growing ornery)
I said I never heard of who you're
talkin' bout. Can't tell you what I
don't know.

Ed sees Wallace isn't going to help him, even if he knows.

MR. WALLACE

(taking out his wallet)
You'd best let me pay cash for the
feed.

Ed's shoulders droop, his hopes fading.

EXT. MR. WALLACE'S HOUSE - DAY

Ed reluctantly gets back into his truck. As Ed drives off, Mr. Wallace comes into the yard and says something to the Burly Man and the others. ALL the men WATCH Ed's truck drive away with hostility in their eyes.

EXT./INT. ED'S PICK-UP - DAY

As Ed drives, nearly having left the backwoods enclave behind, FRANK suddenly steps out of the woods UP AHEAD and flags him down. The boy walks around to Ed's window.

Ed slows, reaches over to cover Billy's body completely with the blanket.

FRANK

Mister? I heard you talkin' to my Grandpa. I know who it is you're lookin' for. Maybe we can make a deal.

ED

Where is she?

FRANK

(holding out his hand)
Ten bucks.

Ed takes out a ten dollar bill, hands it to him.

FRANK

(sensing he can get more) -
Wait a minute. Twenty.

Ed takes out another ten. Frank stares at the bills almost reverently. It's a lot of money when you're twelve.

FRANK

She lives on Black Ridge. You know where that is?

ED

Not so I could get there. You'll have to show me. Get in back.

FRANK

(reluctantly clambering onto the flatbed)
Okay, but I'm only goin' part of the way. That crazy old lady scares the piss out of me!

Ed drives off down the road.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - LATER

Ed's pick-up BUMPS along a craggy mountain road. The topography here is BARREN, ROCKY, unlike the green forests we've so far seen. Frank looks unhappy to be in the area. He RAPS his knuckles on the cab of the truck. Ed stops.

FRANK

(jumping off the flatbed)

This is as far as I go. You keep goin' straight -- follow the road till you can't no more.. You'll see a cabin. That's her place. Good luck.

ED

Thanks, kid.

Ed drives on. Frank watches him go, gives a mock-shudder at the surrounding area, then starts RUNNING back in the direction from which he came.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - LOG CABIN - DUSK

An uneasy quiet surrounds the cabin.

INT. LOG CABIN - DUSK

Kim is curled up in a chair in a corner of the main room, dozing.

Maggie sits on the couch wrapped in a sleeping bag -- a mindless stare.

Joel stands at a window, staring outside, lost in thought. The rifle stands nearby.

Steve sits at a table, also contemplating. Occasionally, he glances at Joel.

A fire CRACKLES in the fireplace.

Now, an off-screen BANGING is heard. It's coming from the pantry, which has been shut and WEDGED tightly closed.

Steve looks toward the banging, then at Joel. Joel shows no reaction.

INT. LOG CABIN - PANTRY - DUSK

Tracy stands on the other side of the door, POUNDING it. Finally, she cuits.

TRACY
(frustrated)

Damn.

Chris sits on the floor, back to the wall. A single bare bulb overhead is their only light. Chris has a washcloth pressed to the side of his head. Tracy looks at him.

TRACY
You okay?

CHRIS
Terrific. Except I got a feeling
we're gonna miss that bike race.

Tracy smiles softly at his joke.

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. ED'S PICK-UP - DUSK

Our view is Ed's, THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD. The truck CLIMBS a STEEP mountain road, reaches the CREST. Suddenly, the road DESCENDS and the land all around falls away DRAMATICALLY, revealing a CLIFF that looks out on a SPECTACULAR EXPANSE of green ROLLING HILLS in a valley. And there, perched almost at the EDGE of this cliff, an ANCIENT-LOOKING LOG CABIN squats on barren red clay.

EXT. OLD WOMAN'S CABIN - DUSK

Ed slows the pick-up before the cabin. Far off in the valley below, a long peel of rolling thunder echoes.

Ed removes Billy's body from the truck. Approaches the cabin, carrying it before him like an offering. Its ROOFED PORCH is DOTTED with hanging and potted plants, with withered vines and evil-looking roots. Raccoon and other animal skins are tacked to the cabin's exterior walls.

Ed steps up onto the porch, reaches the front door. Just ABOVE the doorway, a bleached GOAT SKULL is fixed, seeming to hover there. Ed knocks on the door. No answer.

ED
Hello?

Still nothing. Ed pushes IN on the door and it creaks open, swinging on worn leather hinges.

INT. OLD WOMAN'S CABIN - DUSK

The cabin INTERIOR is even more primitive than the one Ed was raised in. And, over all, there hangs an air of decay. The only light comes from a crackling fire in the fireplace.

Ed squints, moving deeper into the room. It seems the cabin is presently empty. Low-hanging overhead BEAMS drip with cobwebs. Two flanks of MEAT hang from one, curing slowly in the smokey interior. Everywhere are SHELVES crammed with labeled BOTTLES and JARS: bat wing; calf's caul; spider eggs; eye of newt, and dozens of arcane others. One entire shelf is comprised solely of jars of FETAL ANIMALS swimming in some sort of preserving liquid...

As Ed's eyes grow used to the darkness, he notices a ROCKING CHAIR facing the fireplace. Its back is covered with a large animal skin. Suddenly, a great HORNED OWL flutters PAST Ed, lighting on the chair back. It puffs out its chest, shrieks at Ed. Now, Ed SEES a thin, long-fingered human hand resting on the rocking chair's arm. The hand comes up toward the owl and the creature steps onto it, calming.

OLD WOMAN

(o.s.; from the chair)

What do you want, stranger?

The voice is rasping, raw, yet vital.

ED

(slowly; afraid)

It's...it's my boy, Maam...

With a slow, weary rustle of movement, the Old Woman in the rocker turns to FACE Ed. She is easily in her 90's, with a face like old leather. The thick, blue-white caul of a cataract OBLITERATES one of her pupils, giving her a drowned stare. Now, she slowly stands. Her height is a surprise. She is very tall and thin. She is frail-seeming, yet NOT FRAIL. She focuses her one good eye on Billy. She sets the OWL on her hand on the back of the rocker again

OLD WOMAN

(blunt by nature).

He's dead, son.

ED

(staring down at Billy)

I hoped...maybe...you could...

The Old Woman smiles, shaking her head back and forth. She turns her chair away from the fire, toward Ed and sits in it again.

OLD WOMAN

(with just a touch of irony)

Afraid raisin' the dead ain't within
my power...

She studies Ed's face.

OLD WOMAN

I know you...

ED

You knew my Daddy, Maam -- Tom Harley.

OLD WOMAN

(pointing)

Set the boy down there...

Ed sets Billy down on a bed of animal skins.

OLD WOMAN

(pleased with herself)

I remember you, Ed Harley, old as I
am.

After a long pause:

OLD WOMAN

What kilt your boy?

ED

Some kids... from the city. They ran
over him...and left him.

Ed drops beside Billy on the bed of skins. His hands are shaking,
as if he were freezing cold. The Old Woman watches Ed shake,
watches him try to steady himself.

OLD WOMAN

Sorry 'bout your boy. But you brought
him to me too late. There's nothin' I
can do for him.

ED

(suddenly)

But there is.

OLD WOMAN

(shaking her head)

I already told you I can't...

ED

(cutting her off, forcefully)

You can give us justice!

The Old Woman's good eye FLASHES. She stares at Ed with NEW
INTEREST and begins rocking back and forth in her rocker.

OLD WOMAN

(cagey)

That's a peculiar notion. Where'd you
git it?

Ed leans forward. The Old Woman lights a pipe.

ED

When I was a boy, Growing up? Folks
used to talk about you. They said you
had powers...that you could do
things...

OLD WOMAN

Oh, I'm a fair healer, that's true.
But justice, now...

ED

(with growing fervor)

They used to tell stories about you,
too.

(pause)

Stories about a thing -- a special
thing -- a thing only you knew about.

(pause)

The story went: if a man'd been
wronged, he could come to you. And
you'd call upon this special thing in
his name. And that man -- he'd be
avenged.

OLD WOMAN

(after a considering pause)

Folks talk all kinds of foolishness.
A modern, educated fellah like you
shouldn't pay it no mind.

ED

(gravely)

Don't lie to me... I remember.

OLD WOMAN

What do you remember?

Camera moves IN on Ed as he speaks.

Ed

(haunted)

I remember... a dark night...and a man
running, screaming for his life ...
running from something huge, something
awful...and that something tearing
that man to pieces...

OLD WOMAN

Nightmare. You dreamt it.

ED

(standing)

I didn't dream it, I saw it! I saw it
with my own eyes and not you or
anybody else is gonna tell me I
didn't!

Ed's face is dark with the rage of desperation.

OLD WOMAN

(at last relenting)

All right, all right, simmer down...

Ed looks at her, confused, his anger fading.

OLD WOMAN

(after a few beats, grudgingly)

What you saw...was real. Now, sit
down young fellah and let me think.

Ed sits again. The Old Woman deliberates.

OLD WOMAN

It'd be bendin' the rules. You're an
Outsider. You don't Believe...

ED

I'm willing to do anything...

OLD WOMAN

(scrutinizing Ed, sizing him up)

What you're askin's got a powerful
great price... in this life, and in
the next.

As she says this, the Old woman inserts a twig into the FIRE in
her fireplace and re-lights her pipe with it. Ed is held a
moment by the roaring flames.

OLD WOMAN

It don't make no difference to me --
I'm just an in-ter-mediary, But
you're strikin' a bargain here. You
got a right to know.

ED

(with iron resolve)

Whatever it costs, I'm willing to pay.

OLD WOMAN

(impressed)

I can see that you are, Ed Harley.

Ed realizes the Old Woman is going to help him. She stands, begins to pace the cabin, starting to plan, to plot, PREPARING herself for the ordeal ahead.

OLD WOMAN

I ain't done what you're askin' in thirty years 'n more. If'n I didn't know your daddy, I wouldn't consider it now. But mind what I'm saying', Ed Harley: the ritual is taxin'... and the vengeance extreme. You got to be sure it's what you want.

(pause)

OLD WOMAN

(continuing)

Once we start this, it can't be stopped, not by me or anybody. Once we start this, it ain't over 'til it's finished.

ED

I understand.

OLD WOMAN

(calming; pleased)

Good. Good. Now -- you got an errand to run. Ever hear of Razorback Hollow?

Ed nods in the affirmative.

OLD WOMAN

There's an old graveyard way back deep in them woods. Mountain folks used to bury kin in there -- kin they was ashamed of. It's a scary place. Bring a shovel. The thing you're lookin' for's in there. Bring it back here. There's some things I got to do to it a'fore it'll be of any use to you.

ED

You say there's people buried in there? How will I know where to...

OLD WOMAN

(with fearful certainty)

You'll know, Ed Harley. You'll know.

Ed moves to pick up Billy.

OLD WOMAN

Leave the boy here.

Ed has a difficult moment of decision.

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. ED'S PICK-UP - NIGHT

Ed is alone. He drives WITH PURPOSE through the DENSEST WOODS we've yet seen.

EXT./INT. ED'S PICK-UP - OLD GRAVEYARD - LATER

Ed drives on. Suddenly, he is forced to stop. The path he's on ABRUPTLY ENDS, swallowed whole by the woods.

Ed gets out of the truck, carrying a flashlight, shovel and cheesecloth sack--begins to pick his way through the MAD TANGLE of foliage. TRACK WITH him.

Crickets chirp. An owl hoots. The going is slow, but Ed presses on. Somewhere, a coyote yelps.

Finally, the woods begin to thin out a little. Ed begins passing strange PLATFORMS, constructed of sapling poles. Similar to the burial platforms of certain American Indian tribes, they are decorated with animal skins and bones. Ed stops at one, shines his flashlight. Atop each platform is a dead animal in some stage of DECOMPOSITION.

Leaving these sacrificial platforms behind, Ed enters a hilly, OPEN AREA with dozens of LITTLE MOUNDS OF EARTH marked by sticks. The SKULL of a small animal CROWNS each of the markers. There is almost NO SOUND at all here. Even the omnipresent chirp of crickets has fallen off. The surrounding woods MUFFLE everything.

Ed advances, realizing he has found the graveyard the Old Woman spoke about. He begins to notice the many WILD PUMPKINS growing all around. They're the largest, and ugliest Ed has ever seen -- malformed, gnarled, cancerous things. Ed grimaces at the sight of them, presses on through the yard.

Now, ahead in the BEAM OF HIS FLASHLIGHT, a GIGANTIC MOUND comes into view. It is the largest by far and is situated in the VERY CENTER of the graveyard.

An ESPECIALLY THICK concentration of malignant pumpkins FESTER around it. Ed realizes: this is the place he must dig.

Ed sets his flashlight down, lifts the shovel, and begins digging. The CALCIFIED earth of the mound SPLINTERS easily. Ed chops the mound into sections and begins pulling GREAT CHUNKS of the hardened earth away by hand.

After laboring like this for a while, Ed suddenly pulls away a HUGE chunk of earth and stops, HELD by something he's EXPOSED.

A blackened, fossil-like mishapen hand protrudes from the mound. Encouraged, Ed excitedly pulls away MORE AND MORE of the earth. Finally finishing, he STANDS BACK from the thing he's unearthed, breathing hard.

Exposed by his own hand, Ed is CONFRONTED with a mis-shapen, dimly-human MASS of dried-out flesh, hair and bone, curled IN on itself in a fetal position. Staring at it, Ed is unable to reconcile it with the memory of the huge, powerful thing he saw as a child. Only the oddly-shaped head, suggestive of the monstrous pumpkins ringing its grave, strikes a chord.

Ed BUNDLES the thing into the cheesecloth sack, as a chill breeze begins to blow.

CUT TO:

INT. LOG CABIN - PANTRY - NIGHT

Chris is now POUNDING on the pantry door.

CHRIS

Come on, Steve! Joel! This is stupid!

More BANGING.

TRACY

This...is...stupid.

INT. LOG CABIN - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Steve stares at the pantry door, WANTING to let them out. Kim sits beside Maggie, who is shivering. Kim bundles the sleeping bag around her more tightly. Steve looks to Joel.

STEVE

Joel?

Joel doesn't answer. Steve goes over to him.

STEVE

(not without compassion)

What are you gonna do, keep them in there forever?

(pause)

They're our friends.

Joel still doesn't answer.

STEVE

Look, I can't fight you. But it's not too late to do the right thing.

Joel turns to him.

JOEL

They'll put me away, Steve. I'm scared. I don't want to go to jail.

STEVE

You won't. It was an accident! I'll stand by you. We all will.

(pause)

I love you.

Joel meets his brother's gaze, SEES he means what he says.

KIM

(beside Maggie)

Please, Joel...I'm really starting to worry about Maggie...

Steve turns. Crosses to Maggie in concern, as Joel turns toward the pantry door.

CUT TO:

INT. OLD WOMAN'S CABIN - NIGHT

The Old Woman takes a pestle and grinder down from a shelf, and sets it atop a table, beside a collection of OCCULT INGREDIENTS. Billy's body is still on the bed of animal skins. Outside, she hears Ed pull up in the pick-up. She admits him. Ed enters with the thing he's unearthed in his arms, BUNDLED in the cheesecloth. The Old Woman nods with satisfaction, RECOGNIZING the form beneath.

ED

I brought back what I found, but this can't be it...

OLD WOMAN

(certain)

It's what you want, Ed Harley. Bring it here...

She directs Ed to set it down atop the table, beside the pestle and grinder.

ED

But what I saw was huge...

OLD WOMAN

Don't worry, it'll get bigger...

Eagerly, the Old Woman removes the cheesecloth covering and stares at the BLACKENED CHRYSALIS before her. Suddenly: the cabin door BANGS OPEN, blown by a GUST OF WIND. Ed goes to close it, stops a moment to stare up at the ROLLING SKY.

ED

A storm's coming...

Ed turns BACK to see the Old Woman drop a few bits of the earlier-glimpsed occult ingredients into the pestle. Then, she lays her hands on the thing he's unearthed and closes her eyes, murmuring. Ed comes up behind her, eyes on the thing, both fascinated and repelled by it.

ED

What is it?

OLD WOMAN

(with an almost maternal pride)

For each of Man's Evils a special demon exists.

(pause)

You're lookin' at Vengeance, Ed Harley
-- cruel, devious, pure-as-venom
Vengeance.

Outside, there is a CLAP OF THUNDER.

OLD WOMAN

(turning to him)

Give me your hand.

ED

(confused)

What?

Without waiting, the Old Woman firmly grasps Ed's right hand and SLICES a GASH along the skin between his index and middle finger with a knife.

Ed cries out, pulling away, but the Old Woman's grip is surprisingly strong. She holds his hand over the pestle and SQUEEZES a quantity of his blood into it as he watches, horrified. Then, she releases his hand. Ed sucks on it, to stop the bleeding.

Ed watches in amazement as the Old Woman takes blood from Billy in the same manner. Outside, a CLAP of thunder in the distance. The Old Woman mixes their blood with several more occult ingredients in the pestle, then leans over the thing Ed unearthed and DRIPS the dark, clotted mixture onto its lips.

Instantly, its flesh begins to HISS and SIZZLE, as if in contact with some kind of corrosive. The sound of the rain and thunder outside seems to fade away. The Old Woman backs away, eyes FIXED on the thing. For a held moment, RIPE with the ABOUT-TO-HAPPEN, there is deathly silence in the cabin. Then, Ed hears an unmistakable BEATING -- the thing's HEART. Plainly VISIBLE to the naked eye, the blackened chrysalis now PULSES WITH LIFE!

A mild WIND, some sort of PSYCHIC TURBULENCE seemingly generated by the thing itself, begins blowing INSIDE the cabin. The thing's veins ENGORGE. THROB. Its length and breadth EXPAND, as it undergoes some kind of unholy metamorphosis. Ed watches as it TRIPLES its size, until it is near-to-bursting...

Suddenly: the outer layer of petrified flesh SPLITS APART! And slowly, dripping with fluids, a MASSIVE, SENTIENT BEING of UNEARTHLY DESCRIPTION begins to rise up out of the old form. The wind inside the cabin INCREASES in velocity.

Ed looks on, THUNDERSTRUCK, the Old Woman in a kind of AWE, their faces LIT by flickering light from the fireplace. As it REARS UP, a SHADOW of the thing is CAST on the wall, behind them.

The head is deformed...the face blank, embryonic, in fact. The eyes and mouth are little more than slits, as if it were still AWAITING a face.

The Old Woman eases back into her chair, visibly weakened by the strain of the re-animation ritual. Finally, the thing stands at its full TREMENDOUS HEIGHT before them. Demonic eyes FOLLOW EVERY MOVEMENT in the cabin with QUICK DARTING glances. Its formidable TALON-LIKE hands twitch and wriggle SPASMODICALLY, as it just stands there, breathing. Outside, THUNDER rumbles. PUMPKINHEAD looks UP at the cabin rafters, in response.

OLD WOMAN
(drained)

You can go now, Ed Harley. Now, it begins...

EXT./INT. ED'S PICK-UP - NIGHT

Ed drives in a DAZE along a highway. A bolt of lightning flashes in the distance. Still in shock over all he's just participated in, he VEERS DANGEROUSLY into the path of an on-coming car. The car's BLARING HORN sends him SWERVING back into his lane just in time.

Ed shakes his head, trying to clear it. Focuses his gaze on the road ahead.

Billy's body, wrapped in a blanket, lies length-wise on the seat next to him. A CRASH of thunder...Billy SITS UP! The blanket FALLS AWAY, revealing his face freshly scratched and bloody, like it was right after the accident.

BILLY

(echoed; an accusing plea)
What did you do, daddy? What did you do?

Another BOLT of lightning.

Horrified, Ed JAMS the brakes. The truck FISH-TAILS to a SCREECHING HALT and STALLS OUT.

Eyes WIDE, Ed SLOWLY looks beside himself. Billy's body is as it was, lifeless again beneath the blanket. Thunder ROLLS in the distance. Ed just stares.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

The winds buffeting the Old Woman's cabin HOWL mildly here, as well.

INT. LOG CABIN - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Another bolt of lighting.

Maggie's eyes suddenly FOCUS weirdly.

Without a word, Maggie takes the brush from her bag, walks to the mirror and begins brushing her hair. Steve, Joel and Kim watch her, trading concerned looks.

Now, Maggie, still brushing her hair walks to the refrigerator.

MAGGIE

We have a refrigerator...we do, we
have a refrigerator...a very nice
one...

Maggie swings it open, revealing the supplies bought earlier at the stand.

MAGGIE

Empty...so empty...

Maggie closes the refrigerator.

MAGGIE

(tilting her head, as if listening)
Yes, Steve, we should go for supplies.

STEVE

(anguished)

Oh...God...

Maggie slips on an empty backpack, and crosses to the cabin door. Maggie opens the door and walks outside. Steve gives Joel and Kim a look that says, I'll stay with her, and follows Maggie outside.

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Steve walks alongside Maggie, unsure whether to stop her or just remain with her until this episode passes.

MAGGIE

I don't believe Joel...he's so reckless...so reckless...don't you think he is, don't you...?

STEVE

(gently)

Maggs?

INT. LOG CABIN - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Joel drops into a chair, exhales. Runs a hand through his hair.

JOEL

What've I done, Kim?

Kim crosses to him, gently massages his neck, Joel stares at the wedged-shut pantry door.

INT. LOG CABIN - PANTRY - NIGHT

Chris and Tracy sit on the floor with arms wrapped around curled-up knees.

TRACY

What time is it?

CHRIS

(checking his watch)

Five forty-two.

TRACY

My god, it's been over four hours.

Chris stares at his reflection in a tin can, examining the cut on his temple.

CHRIS

(musingly; trying for a laugh)

You think this'll leave a scar?

TRACY

I hate this. I really hate this.

CHRIS

As long as I've known Steve, it's always amazed me -- I never knew anybody who loved his brother so much. It's like he was Joel's father. And Joel -- he's just scared, that's all.

TRACY

I understand all that, Chris. I do.
But I just can't stop thinking about
that little boy. I pray to God that
he's all right.

Chris nods, understanding.

CHRIS

Yeah, I know.

TRACY

And I should be out there, with
Maggie.

A shiver runs through Tracy's body.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN CEMETERY - NIGHT

A shovel BITES DEEPLY into the earth beside LYNN HARLEY'S GRAVE.
The headstone is inscribed simply: LYNN HARLEY, 1956 - 1979. It
is Ed who is digging.

Billy's body is wrapped in a blanket, nearby. The winds blow
steadily.

ED

(as he digs)

They killed our boy, Lynn honey...

Ed snovels, enlarging a hole in the ground...

ED

They gotta pay...

CUT TO:

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - WOODS - NIGHT

Steve walks alongside Maggie. The cabin is out-of-sight, now.
Overhead, countless branches sway in the breeze. Steve stops,
takes hold of Maggie gently by the shoulders.

STEVE

Maggie...?

Steve turns her toward him.

STEVE...

It's okay...it's gonna be okay...that
little boy's gonna be fine...

Tears well up in Maggie's eyes, and an awareness of her surroundings begins to return to her.

MAGGIE

(really seeing him)

Steve? Oh, Steve...

Steve draws her close, and hugs her. Maggie's whole body shudders and she starts to cry a purge of tears that bring her back from the edge of her mental abyss.

The winds in the area SURGE.

STEVE

It'll be fine...

(pause)

I'm sure his father's taken care of everything...

Suddenly, Steve CONVULSES and is yanked upwards with shocking violence. Maggie screams, backing away. There is an off-screen SOUND of a violent gag from Steve, as Maggie is SPLATTERED with his blood!

Steve is slammed against a tree. Blood continues to trickle from his mouth.

EXT. TOWN CEMETERY - NIGHT

Ed, FILLING IN Billy's grave, suddenly DOUBLES OVER. His head JERKS backwards, his body WRACKED by some kind of SEIZURE! As he WRITHES, gripped, the cemetery DISAPPEARS for him! Suddenly, PUMPKINHEAD'S FIELD-OF-VISION is Ed's! Ed EXPERIENCES Steve being slammed against a tree again. Maggie continues screaming, turns, and starts RUNNING back toward the cabin.

For a second, Ed's OWN field-of-vision returns. Then, AGAIN, PUMPKINHEAD'S.

Steve is FLUNG to the ground! The shadow of something HUGE looms over him. He is yanked and dragged several feet by his ankles. Then, with INCREDIBLE FORCE, he is yanked UP and OUT OF FRAME!

Ed's field-of-vision returns to him again. The seizure PASSES. Ed is doubled-over, gasping for air, drenched in cold sweat, as the REALIZATION of what is happening to him sinks in...

ED

Oh, my God...Oh, my God...

INT. LOG CABIN - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Joel sits at the table. Kim stands nearby.

JOEL

I'm always fucking up. My whole life,
one big fuck-up...

KIM

I know you, Joel. That's not true.

JOEL

(shaking his head)

No. It is.

(pause)

But it stops, now.

Joel stands decisively, knocks the wedge out of the pantry door and opens it. In the same instant: Maggie BURSTS into the cabin, screaming, frenzied, hysterical.

MAGGIE

It's killing him! It's killing
Steve! Do something!

Chris and Tracy emerge from the pantry, as confused as Joel and Kim.

JOEL

What?

TRACY

Who, Maggie?

MAGGIE

(pulling at Joel to go outside)
The Devil! It got him!

JOEL

What are you talking about?!

MAGGIE

We've got to help him!

Tracy pries Maggie from Joel, trying to calm her down.

MAGGIE

Pleeease!!!

Joel and Chris trade looks. Joel hefts the rifle. Then looks directly at Chris and HANDS it to him. Chris holds Joel's gaze, accepting the weapon. Joel grabs up the machete and a flashlight and they move to the door.

CHRIS
(to Tracy)
Keep the door locked. We'll find him.

TRACY
Be careful!

Tracy sits Maggie down on the couch. Joel and Chris go outside.

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - LOG CABIN - NIGHT

TRACK WITH Chris and Joel. They cross the clearing, move into the woods. All around them, winds HOWL.

CHRIS
(shouting)
Steve?!

JOEL
(shouting)
Steeeeeve! Where are you?!

INT. LOG CABIN - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Kim stands at a window, watching them move out-of-view. Tracy cleans the blood off Maggie with a washcloth. Maggie's eyes are glued to the front door and she clutches the gold cross she wears around her neck, praying aloud.

MAGGIE
God, please help us...God, please help
us...God, please help us...

Outside, the wind wails. The cabin creaks and groans. After several beats, there is a loud POUNDING on the door. Kim rushes to open it.

MAGGIE
No, don't!

Too late. Kim throws open the door. There's nothing outside. The girls stare. Suddenly, Steve's body is SWUNG into frame! Upside down, held from above, FACING them! Kim and Maggie SCREAM.

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - WOODS - NIGHT

Chris and Joel HEAR the girl's screams above the wind.

CHRIS
Shit!

They both start running BACK toward the cabin.

INT. LOG CABIN - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Steve's body HANGS SUSPENDED in the open doorway, covered with blood, as Kim and Maggie continue to scream. He's still alive. His eyes are half-open. He moans. Now, he is YANKED BACK UP and OUT-OF-SIGHT.

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Chris and Joel cross the clearing. Ahead, they SEE the open front door, run inside the cabin.

INT. LOG CABIN - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

CHRIS

What happened?!

Maggie, sobbing, can only point at the still-open front door. Kim is only slightly more coherent.

Chris and Joel look to Tracy. She's shaking.

TRACY

It was Steve! Steve...something -- I don't know...was hurt...hurt...

Suddenly, Steve is slowly lowered, feet first, into the open doorway with a jerking movement, until he is in full view. Maggie screams. Winds swirl through the cabin.

Steve is held by his head by two four-fingered TALONS. PUMPKINHEAD juggles Steve's body before them, tormentingly. There is indescribable pain in Steve's half-opened eyes.

STEVE

(an excruciated whisper)

It hurts...please...

JOEL

Oh, God.

This is more than Maggie can take. She jumps up and rushes FAST Chris and Joel, wraps her arms around Steve and tries to PULL HIM FREE of the thing gripping him.

TRACY

(in alarm)

Maggie!

PUMPKINHEAD CRUSHES Steve's head. It PULPS with a sickening sound. Steve's lifeless body slides down Maggie, as suddenly she is grabbed by the hair, and held dangling. She SCREAMS and SCREAMS as PUMPKINHEAD turns her around FACING the others, and jiggling her up and down before them still screaming! She's then hoisted up and yanked out-of-frame.

KIM
(shrieking)

No! Noooooo!

Chris and Joel PULL Steve's body INSIDE the cabin. Chris slams shut the door. On the floor, Joel, crying, HUGS Steve's body.

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - LOG CABIN - NIGHT

A moment of uncomfortable calm.

INT. LOG CABIN - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

A sleeping bag covers Steve's lifeless body and head. Outside, the sound of Maggie's SCREAMS break the silence. For a moment, no one moves.

TRACY
Maggs...

Finally, Tracy can't stand it any longer. She grabs the rifle, and moves toward the door. Chris steps in front of her.

CHRIS
No.

TRACY
Chris, I've got to! I can't just sit here! Listen to her!

Maggie's screams WORSEN.

CHRIS
Joel -- unless you hear my voice on the other side of this door, don't open it.

Joel nods. Chris takes the rifle from Tracy, they step outside, cautiously, especially wary of the roof overhead as they pass through the front door. They circle around back trying to follow the sounds of Maggie's screams.

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. ED'S PICK-UP - NIGHT

Ed drives like a DEMON, headed up the road toward his farm. In his head he can HEAR Maggie's tortured screams.

ED
(trying to keep a lid on his sanity)
It's all right...not real...I'm all right...I'm all right...

Ed is sweating, breathing hard. He pulls up in his yard and stumbles out of the truck toward his house, Maggie's screams ECHOING in his head...

INT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ed KICKS OPEN the front door, SLAMMING it behind himself. His body SHUDDERS with little SPASMS -- another SEIZURE building...Gypsy races into the room to greet him. Takes one look at him and starts to back away, as if he were a stranger.

ED

(staring down at his trembling body)
No! Not again! No! Noooooooo!

In his head, Ed CONTINUES to hear Maggie screaming.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - WOODS - NIGHT

Chris and Tracy move through the dark woods toward Maggie's screams.

TRACY

I'm coming, Maggie! I'm coming!

Suddenly, Maggie's screams CUT OUT. Chris and Tracy stop dead, listening...

Now, there is only the moan of the high winds, which begin to subside. Maggie has stopped screaming.

TRACY

(fearing the worst)

No...

CUT TO:

INT. LOG CABIN - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Joel holds Kim tightly in his arms, listening to every sound. Outside the window they HEAR the sound of crunching metal. The sound draws their attention to the window as Maggie's head slowly appears peering in with a gaping STARE and open mouth frozen in a silent scream. She's covered with blood.

KIM

Maggie!

Kim takes a step toward the window--Suddenly, as though hit with a RAM from behind, Maggie's head is ripped from her shoulders and shatters the glass as it is hurled through the window directly at Kim. Kim Brings up her hands in revulsion, screaming, knocking the head aside. It lands in the fireplace and begins to burn.

Kim passes out.

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - WOODS - NIGHT

Chris and Tracy HEAR Kim's scream.

CHRIS

Oh, God, what's going on!

They immediately turn and run BACK toward the cabin...

CUT TO:

INT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ed lies on the floor, nearly unconscious. The seizure is over.

After a beat, he opens his eyes. The room's walls are DISTORTED -- impossibly TALL. Ed's hearing is distorted, too. Every sound echoes weirdly.

With GREAT DIFFICULTY, moving as if underwater, Ed PULLS himself to his feet. Pitching dizzily, he makes his way into the living room and COLLAPSES on the couch.

ED

God...help me...please...no
more...please...no more...

Ed TIGHTLY closes his eyes, TORMENTED by the horror he's just experienced. He squeezes his forehead, TORTURED.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - LOG CABIN - NIGHT

PUMPKINHEAD'S FIELD-OF-VISION, a DISTORTED PERSPECTIVE, is OURS. Within the turbulence it creates, it moves FAST Maggie's headless body, and the twisted wreck of Steve's motorcycle, AROUND the cabin and TOWARD a rear BEDROOM WINDOW. It is closed.

INT. LOG CABIN - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Joel is momentarily frozen in shock. Then, in a blind rage, he picks up the machete and FLYS at the shattered window, hacking WILDLY at the remaining glass and wood.

JOEL

Mother fuckerrrrrrrr! You dirty Mother
fuckerrrrrrrr!

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - LOG CABIN - NIGHT

The rear bedroom window is NOW OPEN, curtains blowing in the existing turbulence.

INT. LOG CABIN - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Joel moves toward the front door. Kim is still passed out on the floor, her hair is blown by the inner turbulence. Frantic, Joel flings open the door, then in an instinctive moment, he turns back toward Kim.

PUMPKINHEAD'S smiling, dripping, snarling jaws loom over her. Joel's face REGISTERS stunned horror and disbelief.

In the NEXT INSTANT, Joel FLINGS himself at the monstrosity, machete RAISED.

A TALON shoots out. GRIPS Joel's MACHETE ARM. SNAPS it like a WHIP.

Joel's arm BREAKS.

Joel is sent HEAD-LONG into a wall as: a TALON closes on Kim's hair and she is dragged OUT-OF-FRAME toward the door. Joel groans...

CUT TO:

EXT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ed comes out of the front door, SLAMMING it shut behind him. TRACK BACK on him as he walks quickly to his pick-up and gets back in.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Chris and Tracy reach the cabin door as Joel stumbles outside. Joel clasps his right arm, now shattered and useless.

JOEL

It's got Kim!

CHRIS

What's got Kim?

JOEL

(struggling to put what he saw into words)

A...a thing!

TRACY

What about Maggie?!

CHRIS

(pushing for a description)

What thing?!

JOEL

A thing, man! A fucking thing!

CHRIS

An animal...

JOEL

No! I don't know...

TRACY

What about Maggie?!

JOEL

She's dead! It killed her, goddamnit,
and now it's got Kim!!!

Suddenly, they hear Kim's scream. Joel, Chris and Tracy look around, not sure where it's coming from. She screams again. This time they PINPOINT it. It's coming from overhead, high UP in a tree. They all look UP to see Kim held out over the ground by her hair 30 feet in the air. By PUMPKINHEAD.

JOEL

Kiiiiiiiiiiiiim!

The creatures LIPS curl back in a rictus of sadism. It HISSES, savoring the moment. Then, it opens its TALON and Kim falls...

JOEL

Noooooooooooooooooooooooooooo!!!

Joel's scream MINGLES with Kim's. She PLUMMETS to the ground in an uninterrupted drop, lands right at their feet, snapping her back -- dead instantly. PUMPKINHEAD begins climbing BACK DOWN the tree TOWARD them...

Joel drops down to Kim's side. Chris looks UP, sees PUMPKINHEAD descending and is momentarily transfixed. Tracy looks too, eyes wide, silenced completely by what she sees.

CHRIS

(after a beat)

We gotta get out of here. Come on --
let's get to the cars...

Chris pulls Joel away from Kim.

CHRIS

Come on, you can't help her.

They turn and run. TRACK WITH them as they move through the dark, unfamiliar WOODS. Chris still carries the rifle.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

Ed's PICK-UP is parked cock-eyed and idling along a CRAGGY MOUNTAIN ROAD. Ed's eyes are closed, and he's gasping for breath. A thin trickle of foam runs from his mouth. He's had another seizure. He looks drained, as if his very life energy is being sapped... Brain on fire, he groans. Opens his eyes. Sits up, throws the pick-up into gear and FEELS OUT.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - WOODS - NIGHT

TRACK BACK on our surviving trio as they RUN ON, winds SCREAMING all around them. Tracy looks around, no longer sure where they are.

TRACY

(shouting above the wind)

I don't think this is the right way!

CHRIS

(also shouting)

Just keep running!

Joel trips, falls, cries out in pain. Tracy and Chris go back and help him up. They all run on...

They reach a STREAM they've never seen before. Wade KNEE-DEEP across it.

JOEL

I'm gonna kill that thing, man! I'm
gonna kill it!

CUT TO:

EXT. OLD WOMAN'S CABIN - NIGHT

Ed's pick-up SLOWS to a stop before the Old Woman's cabin.

INT. OLD WOMAN'S CABIN - NIGHT

The Old Woman cleans MUSHROOMS over a bucket of water. Her knife PAUSES against the skin of a mushroom as she hears the truck.

EXT. OLD WOMAN'S CABIN - NIGHT

Reeling, dazed, Ed STUMBLES from his truck, UP the porch steps and pounds weakly on the cabin door. A moment and the Old Woman throws it open. She takes in Ed's condition with a scowl. In her eyes there is NO PITY.

ED

I have to talk to you...please...

CUT TO:

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - WOODS - NIGHT

Wet and muddy from the stream, Chris, Tracy and Joel RUN through DENSE FOREST.

EXT. HILL PEOPLES ENCLAVE - NIGHT

They begin passing hand-lettered wooden signs nailed to trees -- signs we have seen before: NO TRESPASSING, KEEP OUT, VISITORS NOT WELCOME...the PERIMETER of the Hill People's enclave. The forest GIVES WAY to a wide DIRT ROAD and soon the first TINY CABIN comes into view. Candlelight FLICKERS in its windows.

CHRIS

A cabin!

TRACY

I see it!

The three of them make a BEE-LINE for it, shouting.

TRACY

Help!

JOEL

Hey! Let us in!

CHRIS

Help! Somebody help!

All around them, the wind wails. Just as they reach the cabin, the candlelight inside is SNUFFED OUT. They all pound on the door. No one answers. They KEEP pounding.

TRACY

I saw a light! I know I did!

JOEL

Me, too!

CHRIS

Come on -- let's keep going!

All three run DEEPER into the enclave. Several more cabins loom ahead. They stop at the first, pound on ITS door. Again, no one answers...

TRACY

What is this?!

JOEL

Hey! Open up! What gives with you people?!

(pause)

Cocksuckers!

Joel hefts a rock, HURLS it through the cabin window. The three of them RUN ON. Reach ANOTHER cabin. Tracy PEERS IN through a window, raps on the glass.

TRACY

Hello? Anybody, please! We need help!

Without warning, the spectral, wrinkled face of an old MOUNTAIN WOMAN appears in the window, staring out at them as if from another dimension.

TRACY

Miss? Please help us! There's something after us!

The mountain woman's eyes instantly fill with ALARM. She backs quickly AWAY from the window, disappearing into the darkness of her cabin.

TRACY

Wait! Please! Come back!

Turning to Chris and Joel.

TRACY

Did you see her face? She was terrified.

(pause)

Why would she be so terrified?

JOEL

'Cause these people are scumbags, that's why!

CHRIS

Let's try the next one...

They RUN ON toward a DILAPIDATED HOUSE with a poorly-constructed BARN attached, its yard STREWN with discarded AUTO PARTS and OLD TIRES, etc.

JOEL

(heading for the barn)

We need wheels! One of these hicks must have a truck or a car or something!

Joel finds the barn door PADLOCKED. He SMASHES the padlock with an old carburetor and SWINGS the door OPEN. A TERRIFIED HORSE GALLOPS out, nearly TRAMPLING him!

JOEL

(jumping aside)

Jesus!

The crazed animal RUNS OFF toward the perimeter of the enclave.

EXT. HILL PEOPLE'S ENCLAVE - PERIMETER - NIGHT

Suddenly, the RUNNING HORSE REARS UP, with a NEIGH of PURE EQUINE TERROR, at the sight of the demonic image before him. It GALLOPS OFF across the enclave.

EXT. HILL PEOPLE'S ENCLAVE - NIGHT

Chris, Tracy and Joel RUN ON... Suddenly, Joel's eyes FLASH at the sight of something up ahead: wheels!

A beat-up, yellow PICK-UP sits out in front of a cabin. The same one Joel ran off the road earlier.

They reach the truck. Joel tries the doors, finds them locked.

JOEL

Shit!

Tracy and Chris cast WARY GLANCES in the direction from which they're running. The wind in the enclave is STRONG AND CONTINUOUS. Joel picks up a rock, SHATTERS the driver's window, un-locks the door and slides behind the wheel of the Truck. He starts FUMBLING under the dash, trying to HOTWIRE it.

Tracy and Chris look on ANXIOUSLY. He twists a few wires together. There's a SPARK, then the engine sputters, and TURNS OVER.

JOEL

Yes!

WITHOUT WARNING, a SHOTGUN BLAST! ALL FLINCH, SPIN. A grizzled, frightened HILL MAN stands beside the truck, pointing his DOUBLE-BARRELED SHOTGUN at them.

HILL MAN

Get out of there and get your hands up!

(to Chris)

Empty your hand, son.

Joel slides out of the truck. Chris drops the rifle.

Joel puts up his hands. Tracy and Chris do the same. The Hill Man looks around the enclave, clearly TERRIFIED at being outside. Tracy spots several pairs of EYES watching them from the cabin.

HILL MAN

Get away from here! Go on, git!

CHRIS

Mister -- Something's after us. We need to get away from here quick. We need your truck.

TRACY

We can pay you...

HILL MAN

Git, I said! I can't help you! I won't! You folks is marked!

The WINDS in the enclave are BUILDING dangerously.

TRACY

What did you say?

HILL MAN

(getting panicky)

That's enough talk! Get the hell off my land! Don't make me have to shoot the three of you!

The Hill Man COCKS BACK the shotgun's hammer. A scrawny sow squeals, ROOTING at his feet.

CUT TO:

INT. OLD WOMAN'S CABIN - NIGHT

Ed stands across from the Old Woman, WAITING on her words.

OLD WOMAN

I told you! There's nothin' I can do! It's got to run its course, now! You'll survive. I warned you there was a cost.

ED

But I...it's horrible. I'm there...I kill them...it's horrible!

The Old Woman rises, angry.

OLD WOMAN

(with contempt)

What did you think? It'd be easy?!
Neat and clean and painless?! You're
a fool! A fool!

ED

(face filling with rage)

Goddamn you...

The Old Woman just snorts, almost a laugh.

ED

(with more passion)

Goddamn you!

OLD WOMAN

He already has, son. He already has.

CUT TO:

EXT. HILL PEOPLE'S ENCLAVE - NIGHT

The Hill Man MOTIONS with the shotgun barrel, still trained on
Joel, Chris and Tracy.

HILL MAN

I'm telling' you for the last time --
git!

JOEL

Okay, mister, we're going...

Suddenly, the Hill Man's eyes go wide in primal horror. He starts
to back away from our three. Chris, Joel and Tracy SPIN to see:
PUMPKINHEAD moving methodically towards THEM!

The winds in the area SURGE. Joel with his good arm, grabs the
rifle and tosses it to Chris.

JOEL

Blow the Mother fucker away!

Chris FIRES on the advancing creature. PUMPKINHEAD jerks backward
as he is hit. PUMPKINHEAD continues to advance -- Chris fires
again. The bullets throw him back again. He staggers, then drops
to the ground. His TALONS CLAW the air. Finally, he is still...

Our three look around the enclave.

The Hill Man stands near his house, guarded, still terrified,
watching.

JOEL

We got it! We got it! We killed the
Mother fucker! Killed it!!!

Chris stares down at the creature, exhausted relief in his eyes. Only Tracy, like the Hill Man, is still wary, afraid... Joel grabs the rifle from Chris, then walks over to the creature's corpse, gives it the TOE of his boot -- hard. Once. Twice.

TRACY

Don't! You don't know it's dead!

Joel empties the gun, POINT-BLANK, into the creature's head; blows open a GAPPING HOLE.

JOEL

It's dead. .

Suddenly, PUMPKINHEAD GRABS Joel's ankle. PUMPKINHEAD'S eyes COME OPEN! It snarls a smile, as it shatters the ankle. Joel screams. The creature jerks him down on his back. Rises up, yanks the rifle from him and BAYONETS him with it. Joel writhes, screaming. Now the creature brings up the rifle, suspending Joel in the air on the end of it, kicking and screaming. PUMPKINHEAD displays Joel to the others as if he were a trophy.

Chris and Tracy BACK AWAY. They turn and RUN.

EXT. HILL PEOPLE'S ENCLAVE - NIGHT

PUMPKINHEAD drops Joel. Joel agonizes, struggles to crawl away, then convulses. And dies.

PUMPKINHEAD drops beside Joel's body, picks him up, and delicately LIFTS his tilted-back head, then lets it go. It drops back, lifelessly. He lifts his head AGAIN, watches it drop back, seemingly FASCINATED by the way his head can no longer support its own weight.

Now PUMPKINHEAD turns toward the cowering Hill Man. ADVANCES. The Hill Man presses back against the side of his house. As PUMPKINHEAD nears, there is a horrified plea from the Hill Man.

HILL MAN

No! No!

But PUMPKINHEAD strides FAST HIM, moving DEEPER into the enclave.

INT. OLD WOMAN'S CABIN - NIGHT

Ed is pressed up against a wall of the cabin, eyes shut tightly, gulping air. Slowly, he comes OUT of the seizure, opens his eyes. The Old Woman watches him from her chair, still cleaning her mushrooms, as he STUMBLES across the room to the bed of animal skins.

ED

(dropping onto it)

Have...to...lay down...

Outside, thunder rumbles.

OLD WOMAN

(after several beats)

The pain will pass, Ed Harley. Let it finish.

EXT. HILL PEOPLE'S ENCLAVE - NIGHT

TRACK WITH Chris and Tracy as they run. Thunder rumbles. AHEAD: the open area of COMMUNAL BUILDINGS looms...

CHRIS

Those buildings! Maybe we can hide in one of them!

They stop at first one building, then the next, but find EACH of the barracks-like structures securely PADLOCKED.

CHRIS

(finding the final building locked)

All locked! Damn it!

Chris glances BACK in the direction FROM WHICH THEY'RE RUNNING. No sign of PUMPKINHEAD. Yet. But the WIND moans all around them. They run on...

TRACY

Did you hear what that man said?

CHRIS

What?

TRACY

About us being "marked"? What do you think he meant?

CHRIS

Who knows? He was afraid.

TRACY

He was afraid of what's after us.

CHRIS

What is after us?

TRACY

I don't know...

They stop. Chris takes hold of Tracy by the shoulders, SEEING how scared she is.

CHRIS

Well, whatever it is, it's not gonna
get us. Okay? It's not gonna get us!

Tracy nods, shivers. Chris hugs her for a few moments, then looks around the enclave. The winds are BUILDING...

CHRIS

(noting this)

The wind is getting stronger.

(pause)

That means it's getting closer.

Come on...

EXT. HILL PEOPLE'S ENCLAVE - NIGHT

PUMPKINHEAD passes a cabin, winds GUSTING in his path...

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

A teenage MOUNTAIN GIRL, burning with curiosity, RAISES the window shade and PEEKS out into the yard.

REVERSE on the girl, as her eyes WIDEN. She SEES PUMPKINHEAD pass, just as someone inside the cabin roughly pulls her AWAY from the window and YANKS DOWN the shade.

EXT. HILL PEOPLE'S - ENCLAVE

Chris and Tracy RUN ON, numb, near-to-exhaustion...

CHRIS

(taking her hand as they run)

You okay?

TRACY

(a brave smile)

I'm okay. How about you?

CHRIS

Terrific.

Ahead of them, another small cabin appears.

TRACY

Another cabin! Let's try it!

CHRIS

What's the point?

TRACY

We've got to try! There must be
someone in this place who'll help us!

On a CLAP OF THUNDER:

CUT TO:

INT. WALLACE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

A FLASH OF LIGHTNING ILLUMINATES the INTENT FACE of Frank Wallace, the boy who led Ed Harley to the cabin of the Old Woman. Frank's hunkered down at the top of the stairs, straining to EAVESDROP on the conversation of the adults DOWNSTAIRS.

INT. WALLACE HOUSE - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Here, a SILENT VIGIL is being kept. Mr. Wallace sits stoically in a big chair, surrounded by his sons and their wives. No one speaks. Outside, the wind HOWLS. The only sound INSIDE is the ticking of a grandfather clock.

MRS. WALLACE enters with a tray of coffee. The Burly Man takes it from her.

BURLY MAN

Thanks, mama.

The coffee is welcome. All help themselves. One of his daughters-in-law hands Mr. Wallace a cup. Outside, thunder rumbles. In the barn, the animals can be heard making frightened noises above the wind. Another of Mr. Wallace's sons, ETHAN, parts the curtains, stares out at the barn.

MR. WALLACE

(warming his hands on the coffee
cup)

Get away from the window, Ethan.

ETHAN

You sure that thing won't kill our
animals, daddy?

MR. WALLACE

It'll only kill them it was called
upon to kill. Them, and them that
gets in its way.

(pause)

The animals is safe. You just get
away from that window.

The sons all trade looks. Ethan steps away, as he's told.

CUT TO:

EXT. HILL PEOPLE'S ENCLAVE - NIGHT

Chris and Tracy SEE the Wallace house come into view. Press on toward it.

EXT. HILL PEOPLE'S ENCLAVE - WALLACE HOUSE - NIGHT

Chris and Tracy CROSS the Wallace YARD, making for the front door. They come up before it and begin POUNDING on it.

CHRIS
(shouting above the wind)
Hello? Is anybody there?

TRACY
Will you help us, please?

CHRIS
Please! This is an emergency!

TRACY
If you're in there, please open the door! For God's sake, please!

INT. WALLACE HOUSE - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

TIGHT on Mr. Wallace, STONE-FACED as he ignores Chris and Tracy's pleading and pounding. His sons and their wives exchange looks of fear, confusion, even compassion. But no one moves.

UPSTAIRS -- Frank can hear Chris and Tracy, too. Now, he JUMPS UP and RACES down the hallway to his bedroom.

INT. WALLACE HOUSE - FRANK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frank enters QUIETLY, so as not to wake his sleeping brother, JIMMY. Gathers a bulging sack and a flashlight and OPENS his BEDROOM WINDOW, preparing to climb out and down the side of the house.

JIMMY
(stirring sleepily)
Frank?

FRANK
(giving this a shot)
Go back to sleep, Jimmy -- you're dreamin'.

JIMMY
(sitting up)
No I'm not. What're you doin'?

Frank deliberates telling Jimmy what he's up to.

FRANK

If I tell you, you can't tell a soul.

JIMMY

(crossing his heart)

I swear.

FRANK

(eyes full of excitement)

I'm gonna help those folks.

(pause)

I got to get a look at it, Jimmy. I got to know if it's real or just a story...

JIMMY

Grandpa'll whip you good, he finds out.

FRANK

He ain't gonna find out. I'll be back before they ever know I'm gone. You just go back to sleep. I'll tell you all about it when I get back.

Frank steps out onto the roof.

JIMMY

Be careful.

FRANK

(in exasperation)

'Course I'm gonna be careful.

On cue, the window DROPS SHUT on Frank's foot.

FRANK

(trying to keep his voice down)

Ouch!

EXT. HILL PEOPLE'S ENCLAVE - WALLACE HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Chris KICKS at the front door, frustrated.

CHRIS

(shouting above the wind)

What's the matter with all of you people?!

ALL AROUND the Wallace house, the winds are INCREASING...

CHRIS

It's hopeless...come on...

Chris takes Tracy's hand and they RUN ON.

EXT. HILL PEOPLE'S ENCLAVE - WOODS - NIGHT

TRACK BACK on Chris and Tracy as they RUN.

CHRIS

That was it, the last house!

TRACY

We're back in the woods again.

Suddenly, UP AHEAD along the narrow path, they both see a FLASHLIGHT BEAM playing around in the woods off to their right.

TRACY

Chris...?

CHRIS

I see it...

They stop. Hunker down behind some BUSHES. The flashlight beam gets CLOSER. As whoever wields it steps onto the path, Chris JUMPS him.

FRANK

(caught off-guard)

Hey!

Chris is surprised to see it's only a boy, releases him.

FRANK

I'm here to help you, for Cripe's sake!

Chris and Tracy exchange looks. Frank looks like Huck Finn to them.

EXT. HILL PEOPLE'S ENCLAVE - WOODS - NIGHT

Frank leads Chris and Tracy into a natural clearing.

CHRIS

Who are you? What's your name?

FRANK

Frank Wallace. I live in that house back there.

TRACY

(handing Chris the canteen)

I'm Tracy. This is Chris.

CHRIS

How come nobody answered the door back there? Didn't you hear us pounding? Didn't your parents hear?

FRANK

They heard. But they weren't allowed to let you in. They aren't allowed to get involved.

CHRIS

Aren't "allowed"...?

TRACY

But you...?

FRANK

I'm not supposed to be doing this!

(pause)

You're the ones, aren't you? The ones it's after. What's it look like?

CHRIS

What's it look like?

TRACY

(seeing a chance to get some things clear)

Wait, Chris.

(pause)

Frank? What is after us? How much do you know about it?

FRANK

Some. Not everything. But we shouldn't talk here. I know a place. Might be safe there.

Frank turns and walks deeper into the woods. Sees Chris and Tracy aren't following.

FRANK

Come on.

Chris and Tracy exchange looks, then follow him.

CHRIS

Listen -- our cars are around here someplace...

INT. OLD WOMAN'S CABIN - NIGHT

WRACK FOCUS from the FLAMES in the Old Woman's fireplace, to the Old Woman, back-to-camera, TURNING at the SOUND of ED SITTING UP.

Ed sits on the edge of the bed of animal skins, doubled-over, his stomach a tight knot of pain. Now, he raises his eyes and MEETS the Old Woman's gaze.

ED

If you won't help me stop it, I'll
stop it myself.

OLD WOMAN

You'll fail.

ED

(getting to his feet)
There must be a way...

OLD WOMAN

There ain't.

ED

(shaking his head to clear it)
I've got to try.

OLD WOMAN

(looking back to the fire)
Then you'll die, too.

Ed crosses to the cabin door, opens it.

ED

(breathing in gasps)
Then I'll die...

OLD WOMAN

(turning back to him)
And pay the final price all the
sooner, Ed Harley!

Ed stares at her a moment, grasping her meaning; then exits the
cabin.

EXT. OLD WOMAN'S CABIN - NIGHT

Ed STUMBLES down the porch steps, gets into his truck and drives
off.

EXT. HILL PEOPLE'S ENCLAVE - NIGHT

Frank leads Chris and Tracy into a CLEARING, toward the BURNED-OUT
SKELETON of an OLD CHURCH, smack in the middle of the woods.
Most of the roof is gone and only a single flagstone wall remains
standing. Charred beams CRISS-CROSS the roof and lay about the
interior, which is overgrown with WEEDS.

FRANK

(it's his own private hideaway)
Isn't it neat?

FRANK

(continuing)

It's an old Methodist church. 'Bout forty years ago they tried startin' a congregation around here. It didn't work out.

INT. OLD CHURCH - NIGHT

The three of them enter.

FRANK

I figure it's a holy place. Maybe it wouldn't like it.

NO WINDS blow. A normal calm prevails.

Chris looks for Tracy. Spots her concluding a prayer in one of the few still-standing pews.

TRACY

Tell us what you know about it, Frank. What is it?

Frank furrows his young brow, summons what he knows.

FRANK

It's...kind-of-a demon...

(pause)

Up till tonight, I didn't even really believe in it. I thought it was just something grown-ups made up to scare us kids.

(pause)

FRANK

(continuing)

But then, tonight, my grandpa got the whole family together and told us some outsider folks had done something real bad. He said Pumpkinhead would be out tonight, after 'em, and that we should all stay indoors till he got 'em.

CHRIS

Pumpkinhead?

FRANK

That's what we call it.

TRACY

Do you know why it's after us?

FRANK

No. But you must have done something.

(pause)

See -- accordin' to the legend, if a man does somethin' bad to another man? It's gotta be real bad -- like killin'. Then, the other man might have Funkinhead conjured up, to get...

TRACY

(finishing his sentence)

...revenge.

FRANK

That's right.

Tracy looks at Chris. They both have the same realization
TOGETHER.

CHRIS

The kid at the stand...

FRANK

Huh?

Tracy takes a deep breath...and explains.

TRACY

Earlier today there was an accident. One of our friends...hit a little boy with a motorcycle.

FRANK

Where?

CHRIS

At a fruit stand, a couple of miles from here.

FRANK
(hushed)

Gosh Almighty...Billy Harley...

TRACY

You know, you heard about it?!

FRANK

Not exactly...

Frank puts everything together. Realizes that when he took Ed to the Old Woman, it was so Ed could invoke PUMPKINHEAD.

Frank reaches into his pocket, looks at the two ten dollar bills Ed paid him.

FRANK

I saw his daddy, Mr. Harley, this afternoon.

(pause)

I took him somewhere...

TRACY

Is his son...all right...?

FRANK

I couldn't say, for sure. But if it's after you...probably not...

TRACY

(shutting her eyes)

Oh, God...

The winds around the church have begun to build. Caught up in their talk, neither Chris nor Tracy notice...

FRANK

Where are your friends?

CHRIS

(after several beats)

Dead.

FRANK

(awed)

Jeez...

The wind is building.

CHRIS

(staring up at the sky)

The wind...

(with certainty)

Maybe this place threw him off the scent for a while, but he's honing in on us now...

Chris turns to Frank.

CHRIS

Frank, do you know the spot where people who camp on Bradley park their cars?

FRANK

Uh, huh.

TRACY

(suddenly)

Wait a minute... Frank! Can you take us to this Mr. Harley?!

FRANK

Yeah.

CHRIS

(shaking his head)

Let's just get to the cars and to the police.

TRACY

But if we could talk to him, Chris -- explain how everything happened -- maybe he'd call this...this thing off!

CHRIS

And maybe he'd hold us at gunpoint till it came and tore us to pieces!

Frank stares PAST Chris and Tracy, at the door of the church. Slowly, his eyes go wide as SAUCERS.

FRANK

I think...it's here now...

Chris and Tracy SPIN. PUMPKINHEAD is STANDING silhouetted in the doorway of the old church. Just standing there, STARING at them, breathing. He makes NO MOVE toward them, just gazes around the church interior with a kind of INSTINCTIVE LOATHING.

Frank stares, AWESTRUCK. The creature seems almost reluctant to enter the church. Then, tentatively, he takes a step forward. The church is clearly repellent to him, but he MUST enter. He takes another step forward, then another...

Chris, Frank and Tracy begin backing away. The winds in the church begin to surge, beating against them. BEHIND THEM are the woods...and escape. The three of them turn and and TAKE OFF.

PUMPKINHEAD strides UP the center aisle, between pews, staring around the church interior. In REVULSION Its ire-filled EYES fall upon the remains of a Calvary (a life-sized statue of Christ on the Cross). The creature LASHES OUT in disgust, SMASHES the statue to pieces. It begins FLAILING wildly, raging, RAILING against the Master of this House...destroying everything in its sight.

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - WOODS - NIGHT

Chris, Frank and Tracy cross hilly, wooded terrain...

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The three of them come OUT of the woods to find themselves on BLACKTOP, at the edge of a two-way paved road.

FRANK
(getting his bearings)
This way!

Frank leads them down the road, Chris and Tracy glancing over their shoulders as they run...

EXT. BRADLEY MOUNTAIN - PARKING AREA - NIGHT

Frank, Chris and Tracy appear from beneath a RISE in the road. RACE down to the PARKING AREA. AHEAD is a sight they are unprepared for: the Land Rover's been OVERTURNED. The ZX too. The doors to both cars have been ripped off, and their windshields smashed. One of the two motorcycles is scattered in pieces around the area. The deliberate, thorough violence of the destruction is CHILLING.

TRACY
Oh, no!

In the middle of this devastation sits the other motorcycle gleaming, and apparently ready to go. Chris smells a trap, but they need the bike...

CHRIS
(to Chris and Frank)
Stay here...

Chris warily approaches the remaining bike. Glancing all around, he mounts it. Attempts to kick-start it. After two tries, the bike RUMBLES to life.

The winds in the parking area INCREASE. Chris whips around to see PUMPKINHEAD'S smiling, snarling JAWS.

Tracy screams...

CHRIS
Run!

Tracy and Frank start scrambling up the hill toward the highway. Suddenly, UP AHEAD, moving TOWARD them, a PAIR OF HEADLIGHTS appear... Tracy waves her arms, trying to get the vehicle to stop.

Chris kicks the bike into gear, and gives it full throttle -- the engine roars. But the bike doesn't move. Chris looks down to see that the bike's drive chain's has been removed. Suddenly, PUMPKINHEAD takes HOLD of the bike. WITH CHRIS STILL ON IT, the creature HURLS the bike into the air. It crashes to the ground ON TOP OF CHRIS. Chris lets out an agonizing scream.

TRACY
(turning)
Chris!!!

A PICK-UP TRUCK BRAKES to a SKIDDING STOP beside Frank and Tracy.
The door is THROWN OPEN.

The driver is ED HARLEY!

TRACY
Please, mister, help us!

ED
Get in!

Frank jumps into the pick-up.

PUMPKINHEAD effortlessly PULLS the bike OFF of Chris, and DRAGS
him into the woods.

Ed grabs Tracy and pulls her into his truck. She FIGHTS him.

TRACY
Nooooo! It's got him! Let me go!!!

High winds SCREAM all around them. Ed nails REVERSE and BACKS UP
toward the highway, BURNING RUBBER.

EXT./INT. ED'S PICK-UP - NIGHT

TRACY
Stop! We can't leave him!

ED
There's nothing we can do. It won't
kill him... not yet.

Tracy stares at Ed, THUNDERSTRUCK.

TRACY
How do you know?

ED
I know.

FRANK
Tracy? This is Mr. Harley... Billy's
dad...

The name REGISTERS. Tracy RECOGNIZES Ed. Ed drives, eyes FIXED
on the road. Tracy stares over at him, a volatile mixture of
emotions churning through her.

TRACY
Mr. Harley...? Your son...?

ED
He's dead.

TRACY

Oh, God...

There is a long silence, while Ed drives, then:

TRACY

(slowly; not looking at Ed)

I'm sorry, Mr. Harley...

(pause)

It was an accident. The guys were racing in the field. Your son ran across the highway. The bikes were kicking up dust...nobody saw him 'til it was too late...

Tracy turns to him again.

TRACY

I'm sorry.

Tracy tilts back her head, numb beyond all feeling.

TRACY

(full of dread)

Can't you stop it? Call it off...

ED

I can't. -- I tried. It can't be called off. But, maybe, just maybe, it can be destroyed.

Tracy looks at him, then looks away, out the window.

CUT TO:

INT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ed leads Tracy and Frank into the house through the front door.

TRACY
(to Ed)

Bathroom?

ED

(indicating)

Upstairs. I'll be out in the barn.
I'll lock the front door.

Tracy goes upstairs, without comment. Gypsy scurries into the room. Frank pets Gypsy. Ed watches them a moment, reminded of Billy. His hands go to the stick figure necklace around his neck. Then, Ed goes outside, locking the front door behind him.

INT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Tracy runs the cold water, washes her face. SEEING her reflection in the mirror, she examines it a moment. A shudder passes through her. She breaks down, starts crying.

EXT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ed crosses the yard, enters the barn. A mild wind stirs.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Ed enters and walks to his work bench. Hanging on the wall is the deadly-looking FLAME DEFOLIATOR seen earlier. Ed takes it down from the wall.

INT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - BILLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tracy enters, turns on a light. She crosses to Billy's dresser, where there are a row of FRAMED PHOTOGRAPHS of Billy and Ed involved in all sorts of Father/Son stuff -- fishing, camping, visiting the County Fair... She picks up a photo of a woman, Lynn Harley, Billy's mom...

INT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Tracy descends the stairs into the foyer.

TRACY

Frank?

FRANK

(O.S.)

I'm here. In the kitchen!

Tracy enters the kitchen to see Frank turning the stove's gas jets on and off, fascinated by the flame.

TRACY

I'm going out to the barn to talk to Mr. Harley. Stay put.

FRANK

Okay.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Tracy enters the barn to find Ed FILLING the flame defoliator with propane.

TRACY

Mr. Harley?

Ed doesn't respond. Ed twists a valve on the defoliator, IGNITES it, testing the flame. He looks at Tracy.

ED

I'm gonna send it back to whatever
hell it came from.

In the reflected glow and flicker of the fire, some HOPE comes into Tracy's eyes.

INT. - ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Frank walks through Ed's house, exploring. It's size and decor a quantum leap from what he's used to. He drifts upstairs. Gypsy follows.

UPSTAIRS, Frank moves down a hall. He enters BILLY'S ROOM--gazes all around.

INT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The empty kitchen. PUMPKINHEAD'S HULKING SILHOUETTE appears at the kitchen door. Suddenly, he RIPS the door off its hinges, and steps in CARRYING a limp, but still alive, Chris. He moves through the kitchen into the foyer.

INT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - BILLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gypsy brings Frank the ball Billy once tossed him. Gypsy BARKS.

INT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

PUMPKINHEAD reacts, hearing the bark, DROPS Chris and STARTS upstairs.

INT. - BARN - NIGHT

Ed STRAPS on the defoliator. The winds outside build.

ED

It's here.

EXT. ED HARLEY'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Chris, with the use of only one arm and one leg DRAGS himself onto the front porch. He TOPPLES down the steps to the ground. Pain SHOOTs through his body but he FIGHTS it. He starts to drag himself across the yard toward the barn just as Tracy comes out. She SEES him.

TRACY

Chris!

She runs to him.

TRACY
(screams)

Mr. Harley!

Instinctively, Tracy looks up. PUMPKINHEAD stands on the porch at the top of the steps with Frank clutched in one talon. The boy struggles defiantly.

FRANK
Let me go! Let go!

TRACY
(screams)
Mr. Harley! Mr. Harley!

EXT. - BARN/HOUSE - NIGHT

Ed comes RUNNING out of the barn. The defoliator catches on a hook on the barn door latch causing Ed to stumble and fall on the ground next to some stacked bails of hay.

A PITCHFORK PIERCES his arm as he lands. Ed grabs his arm and screams--drowned out by a shrill, unearthly WAIL.

PUMPKINHEAD drops frank, clutches his arm.

Ed AGONIZES as he pulls the pitchfork free from his arm. Another agonizing WAIL from PUMPKINHEAD.

All look in awe at PUMPKINHEAD. Then Ed's EYES LOCK with him. Ed stares at his Doppelganger, mesmerized. PUMPKINHEAD stares back intently at Ed. The Creature's EYES a MIRROR IMAGE of Harley's.

In pain, Ed pulls himself up, drops the defoliator, and starts running to his pick-up truck. Tracy and Frank drag Chris toward the barn. PUMPKINHEAD steps from the porch into the yard.

TRACY
(screams)

Mr. Harley!

Winds gust all around. Frantically, Tracy GRABS the defoliator.

ED'S PICK-UP

Ed opens the truck door and FUMBLES through the glove compartment. His hand CLOSES on the grip of a .45 AUTOMATIC.

Tracy steps forward and BLASTS PUMPKINHEAD with a SEARING TONGUE OF FLAME, but the fire has no effect.

Smoke rises from him HELLISHLY. PUMPKINHEAD advances, smiles, as he closes in for the kill.

TRACY, backing away from PUMPKINHEAD, SPRAYS the creature again. As flames envelope him, a GUNSHOT rings out.

PUMPKINHEAD convulses, REARS BACK his head and BELLOWS in MORTAL AGONY! Tracy watches in confusion, as the creature writhes, clearly gripped in DEATH THROES...

Ed walks STIFFLY across the yard toward her, smoking gun in hand, stumbles and drops to his knees...

PUMPKINHEAD drops to his knees, screaming...

Ed SLUMPS to the ground. The gun falls from his hand. BLOOD RUNS from the wound in his head.

The winds begin to quell.

PUMPKINHEAD slumps to the ground. He is still.

Frank stares at the un-moving creature. Steps toward it, fascinated.

Suddenly, PUMPKINHEAD's talon shoots out and grabs Frank.

Ed heaves a deep breath -- still alive.

PUMPKINHEAD starts to RISE as he holds on to Frank who fights frantically to free himself.

The winds surge again.

Tracy looks from Ed to the creature. Ed is STRUGGLING to reach the gun. It's only inches from his fingertips but he hasn't the strength. He looks to Tracy with pleading eyes.

Tracy reaches down and picks up the gun.

Frank screams. PUMPKINHEAD has gotten to his feet and has never looked as evil as he does at this moment. He holds Frank out, sadistically displaying his next victim.

Holding the pistol with both hands, Tracy, crying hysterically, SHOOTS Ed through the head. He rolls over on his back, and dies.

PUMPKINHEAD SPASMS, releasing Frank, then falls to the ground releasing an exhalation of death -- he is still -- frozen in death, in PRECISELY the SAME POSITION as Ed Harley.

The winds in the yard fade completely away.

PUMPKINHEAD'S corpse BURSTS into FLAME spontaneously, CONSUMING itself.

Tracy, Chris and Frank watch as the creature BURNS.

FADE OUT:

ON OUR SOUNDTRACK: the sound of SHOVELING...

FADE IN:

EXT. PUMPKINHEAD'S GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

The Old Woman digs a fresh grave in the abandoned cemetery, surrounded by malformed pumpkins. An oil lamp casts a yellow glow to work by.

She finishes digging. She bends and lifts a dimly-human mass of flesh, hair, and bone, curled in on itself in a fetal position. As she places it gently in the ground, we NOTE a necklace around its neck -- a stick figure, strung on a rope chain. As the Old Woman begins to cover the fetal husk with earth...

we HEAR a chorus of CHILDREN'S VOICES intoning the PUMPKINHEAD verse...

FADE OUT:

ROLL CREDITS, as the PUMPKINHEAD verse continues...

THE END