

SINISTER 2

Written by

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BLACK SCREEN

We hear the sound of an OLD TURNTABLE NEEDLE HITTING A VINYL RECORD, followed by the CRACKLE HISS THUMP of the album before any sound starts.

Then ultra-creepy MUSIC, projected from a 1920s GRAMOPHONE.

The creepy music continues throughout the next few scenes.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

DYLAN COLLINS, aged 9, a clean cut little boy, is asleep. We track slowly up the bed and see him in the throes of a terrible nightmare.

CUT TO:

INT. FARM HOUSE (NIGHTMARE) - NIGHT

Dylan slowly walks down a long, dark hallway. At his feet is a winding BLOOD-SMEAR that he seems to be following.

He comes to the main bedroom of the farmhouse, which is covered head to toe in BLOOD.

QUICK CUTS OF BODIES on the floor that appear and disappear in discordant chaos.

In the corner we see Dylan's PARENTS: CLINT COLLINS towers over COURTNEY COLLINS, who is cowering on the ground. Clint balls his fist and brings it down on Courtney.

Dylan turns and RUNS down the hallway. Behind him, Clint follows angrily in slow motion.

Clint approaches the screen until he swallows it up.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dylan writhes, still struggling against the nightmare.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE (NIGHTMARE) - DARK ROOM - NIGHT

Dylan cowers in a corner, breathing heavily. Light streams in under a door nearby. Two large feet appear, blocking some of the light.

The door knob jiggles. But it's locked.

Dylan stares at the doorknob, terrified. The feet move away.

Then from across the room...

A 1928 16MM FILM PROJECTOR WHIRS TO LIFE

Part of the projector's body is a VINYL RECORD TURNTABLE WITH A GRAMOPHONE.

The PROJECTED 16MM FILM IMAGE SPILLS ACROSS THE WALL:

The front of a SMALL BOAT moves through a DARK SWAMP, somewhere in the vast and lonely MISSISSIPPI DELTA.

A CAMERA-MOUNTED LIGHT illuminates the path of the boat as it moves deeper into the inky blackness of the swamp.

JUMP CUT: The boat is STILL now.

IN THE SWAMP WATER AHEAD, WE SEE A FAMILY OF FOUR: MOTHER, FATHER, TEENAGE DAUGHTER, AND PRE-TEEN SON.

The family members are all UNCONSCIOUS. FLIMSY LIFE VESTS barely keep them each afloat in their sleep.

JUMP CUTS: Slight moans as one-by-one, they slowly start to awaken.

And then ANOTHER SOUND - a low, bone-chilling GROWL. Inhuman.

ON DYLAN

He looks nervously from the screen over to the door - he doesn't know what to do.

And when he looks back at the screen he sees...

BUGHUUL

standing in the light of the projected image, staring right at him. Dylan covers his eyes in horror.

The sound of the projector stops.

Dylan pulls his hands away from his eyes, and findd that he's now standing in...

EXT. WHEAT FIELD (NIGHTMARE) - NIGHT

The vast field is covered in blood and flickers in the light of a large fire.

Dylan stands holding A WHEAT SICKLE, flickering with flame.

A 16MM CAMERA whirs, watching Dylan as he lets out a horrifying SILENT SCREAM.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The crackle hiss thump of the vinyl record and the creepy music immediately STOP.

Dylan awakens, drenched in sweat. He sits upright in bed and looks around, terrified.

Standing silently around him are FIVE CREEPY-LOOKING CHILDREN, each of them wearing peculiar clothing.

Dylan is about to scream, but then in unison, the Creepy Kids all bring their fingers to their lips, give him the Sinister stare, and "SSSSSHHHHH."

CUT TO:

A VIEW OUT A WINDSHIELD

We're looking over the wheel of a car driving down a single lane road, just like the opening scene with the Sheriff in the first *Sinister*.

The car pulls into...

EXT. OMINOUS CATHOLIC CHURCH - NIGHT

Leather shoes step out onto stained asphalt. We track up jeans, a tightly buttoned up shirt, then pull back.

It's DEPUTY SO AND SO. No uniform. He looks darker now. Weary. Haunted.

He takes a deep breath and walks toward the church.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - NIGHT

The large heavy doors close loudly behind him. So and So looks around. This place is clearly foreign to him. The church is dark, lit only by prayer candles.

He walks up the aisle, steps near the confessional.

SO AND SO

Hello?

FATHER RODRIGUEZ (O.C.)

Have a seat.

So and So opens the confessional and sits down.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ

When was your last confession?

SO AND SO

I've never had one.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ

You've never had the sacrament of reconciliation?

SO AND SO

I've never had any sacraments. That I know of. I mean, I might have had one, by accident, you know?

FATHER RODRIGUEZ

You don't have one by...

FATHER RODRIGUEZ pauses, then gets up and steps out of the confessional.

He's an old, grizzled sort of priest. A kind face, but one that's seen some shit. So and So opens the door and steps out.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ

What's this about?

SO AND SO

I'm sorry. I didn't know who else to talk to.

INT. FATHER RODRIGUEZ'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

A nondescript office with a portrait of Mary on the wall and a handful of personal effects. Father Rodriguez sits behind a desk, leaning back in his chair as he lights a cigarette.

SO AND SO
I didn't know priests could smoke.

Father Rodriguez nods.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
How can I help you, Deputy?

SO AND SO
How did you -

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
- You didn't think we could watch
the news either? You're the Deputy
from the Oswald thing.

SO AND SO
Well, I'm not with the force
anymore.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
But you are him?

SO AND SO
Yeah.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
You didn't come here to confess
about that, did you? Because I
can't -

SO AND SO
- No. Nothing like that. Mr. Oswald
was my friend... It's just...

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
Just what?

SO AND SO
What's said between us stays
between us, right? Like lawyers?

Father Rodriguez narrows his gaze. He doesn't like the sound
of that.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
Yeah. But I'm going to ask you not
to say anything I can't unhear, if
you know what I mean.

SO AND SO
Do you believe in evil?

Father Rodriguez leans back in his chair, peers over his cig.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
Are you asking if I believe in the supernatural?

SO AND SO
I mean, of course you do. But -

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
- Do I believe in demons and ghosts and the devil himself?

SO AND SO
Something like that, yeah.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
What did you find?

SO AND SO
What do you mean?

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
Your friend's case. The one he was writing about when he -

SO AND SO
- I did find something. I can't explain it.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
But you want to know how to protect yourself from it.

SO AND SO
Yes.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
What do you want me to say? That you should carry around a cross and holy water and shout "the power of Christ compels you?"

SO AND SO
Would that work?

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
No.

SO AND SO
Oh.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ
So what did you find?

SO AND SO

A lot of things that can only add up to something much bigger than I thought we were dealing with.

(beat)

Something...*other-worldy*.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ

So you want my professional advice?

SO AND SO

Yes.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ

Stay out of it. Do I believe things like your talking about exist? Yes. And I believe they exist to lure men like you into them. In my experience, wise men don't wrestle with evil, they avoid it.

SO AND SO

I'm afraid I can't do that.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ

Be careful when you fight the monsters, lest you become one.

SO AND SO

Is that the Bible?

FATHER RODRIGUEZ

Nietzsche.

SO AND SO

I think what happened to the Oswalt family will happen again.

Father Rodriguez takes a moment to absorb that, then stabs out his cigarette in an overflowing ashtray.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ

Do you pray, Deputy?

SO AND SO

No.

FATHER RODRIGUEZ

You should start.

(beat)

You really think it could happen again?

SO AND SO
Father, between you and me, it's
just a matter of where and when.

CUT TO:

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

A rural supermarket. Big and well-stocked, but not very busy and more than a little run down. A handful of employees are on duty and only a few shoppers in the aisles.

COURTNEY COLLINS, a beautiful woman in her mid-to-late 30s (and Dylan's mother from the opening nightmare), strolls down a supermarket cereal aisle with a cart.

She looks relaxed, calm, peaceful. Not a care in the world. She picks up a few boxes of healthy generic cereals and puts them in her cart.

Dylan (the 9-yr-old who had the opening nightmare) pops out from behind the end of the aisle with a devilish gleam in his eye.

DYLAN
Mom. Mom, mom, mom.

COURTNEY
There you are.

DYLAN
Watch this! I found a portal.

COURTNEY
What?

DYLAN
Watch!

Dylan stands at the end of the aisle, right in the middle, then takes a standing long jump off the left side of the screen, disappearing behind the shelf.

At the same instant, he appears from behind the shelf on the right side of the screen - but his clothes are different.

It's not Dylan. It's ZACH, his TWIN BROTHER.

ZACH
Cool, huh?

COURTNEY
(hint of a smile)
Funny, boys. Funny.
(MORE)

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
(good-natured sarcasm)
Never gets old.

Zach pops back out from behind the shelf.

COURTNEY
Pick out your cereal. One box each.

They run for the shelves.

Zach is excited, athletic, outgoing, somewhat adventurous.
Always ready to do something ill advised at any moment.

Dylan on the other hand is quiet, reserved, a bit morose.
He's inquisitive but seemingly always overshadowed by his
brother. Whenever Zach begins speaking, Dylan instinctively
shuts up and lets him talk.

Courtney continues pushing the cart down the aisle.

THE CREEPER, a nondescript man in a dark suit, walks past with
a cart at the end of the aisle, where the boys had just jumped.

Courtney sees The Creeper, but he keeps moving, disappearing
behind the shelf. Courtney pays him little mind.

She turns the corner into the next aisle. The Creeper is
there comparing two items as if trying to make up his mind.
He looks up and smiles at Courtney. She smiles back, but
doesn't flirt. She just keeps moving past him.

Courtney stops, picks up something from the shelf and puts it
in her cart, then moves on.

At the end of the aisle she turns back toward the cereal aisle
and looks at the boys who are each making up their minds about
which brightly-colored sugar-coated box to choose.

COURTNEY
Come on. Pick one.

ZACH
But they all look so good.

DYLAN
Can't we just get two each?

COURTNEY
No. I want you boys staying close.

Both boys look up, a bit concerned. They each grab the nearest
box without hesitation and rush to drop them in the cart.

DYLAN

Is it -

COURTNEY

- It's nothing. Just stay where I
can see you.

They both nod, suddenly alert and obedient.

Courtney turns the cart around and wheels it a few aisles down.
She glances down one as she passes and sees The Creeper.

He looks up as she passes and she quickly looks away. Turning
down another aisle, Courtney begins grabbing things more
quickly. She's not openly worried, but now seems more serious.

She turns down another aisle and almost runs into THE
CREEPER. He's slipped around them in the store and gotten
ahead of her. He looks down at the boys, then at Courtney.

She doesn't make eye contact. She just moves quickly down the
aisle, the boys closely in tow. She discretely whispers over
her shoulder to them.

COURTNEY

(whispering)

You boys remember what we do if mom
say Rutabaga, right?

ZACH & DYLAN

(whispering)

We run.

COURTNEY

Right. And stay close to each other.

She turns the cart, peering over her shoulder.

The Creeper pulls out his phone, presses a button and brings
it to his ear, watching her.

She turns the corner and reaches into her pocket for her keys.
Rushing down the aisle now, she stops at the end, takes a deep
breath, then presses the power unlock on her remote entry.

EXT. PARKING LOT - SAME

The lights on an SUV flash and the doors unlock.

INT. SUPERMARKET - SAME

Courtney steadies herself, takes a firm hold of the cart with one hand and handing the keys to Dylan with the other.

COURTNEY

Rutabaga.

She pushes the cart quickly, wedging it into the end of the aisle with The Creeper. The Creeper looks up, on the phone.

For a moment their eyes meet.

The boys run. Courtney follows, leaving the cart behind to slow any pursuit.

They make a break for the automatic doors up front. A bored OVERWEIGHT SECURITY GUARD hobbles quickly toward them with a halting hand out.

SECURITY GUARD

Whoa. Stop.

The boys split and rush around him, leaving him spinning in a circle as they hurry out the door.

Courtney breezes past the Security Guard, but he grabs her firmly by the arm. She shoots him a death glare.

The Creeper is coming up behind her. Courtney turns toward him.

COURTNEY

(to the Security Guard)

That man just *touched* one of my boys.

A switch flips in the Security Guard and he goes from loss-prevention to white knight in the blink of an eye. He lets go and waddles boldly toward the Creeper as if he was John Wayne.

Courtney flies out the door.

SECURITY GUARD

Son.

THE CREEPER

Excuse me.

The security guard reaches for the sidearm peering out from behind a roll of fat. He doesn't grab it, but he makes it look like he intends to.

SECURITY GUARD

Son. You need to step back.

THE CREEPER
What'd she tell you?

EXT. PARKING LOT - SAME

The boys are already climbing into the SUV as Courtney races toward it.

INT. SUV - SAME

Dylan slides the key into the ignition from the passenger seat and starts the car. Zach leans over the driver's seat at the same moment and opens the door. They've done this before.

Courtney leaps into the front seat, slams the door behind her, shifts gear and hits the gas.

She peels out of the parking lot.

INT. SUPERMARKET - SAME

The Creeper watches as Courtney and the boys speed off. He looks out to a BLACK SEDAN parked a row over and gives a silent nod. Then the sedan slowly drives out of the lot after them.

THE CREEPER
Now, Barney Fife, why don't you go
check the tape and see if I did what
she said I did so you can apologize
and tell me that I'm free to go.

He holds the phone up to his ear.

THE CREEPER
Yeah. It's her alright.

INT. SUV - MOMENTS LATER

Courtney breathes a sigh of relief and looks in her rearview mirror. Nothing behind her. She reaches over and puts a proud hand on Dylan's knee, smiling. Zach puts a hand on her shoulder. She reaches back and squeezes it lovingly.

The boys did good.

EXT. COLORADO HIGHWAY - SAME

The SUV speeds off down the highway, surrounded by mountains. Behind them, just far enough away to be barely out of sight, the BLACK SEDAN follows.

INT. NOIRISH OFFICE SPACE - PENNSYLVANIA - RAINING - DAY

So and So works alone in a cramped room filled with files.

Behind So and So is a wall filled with PHOTOGRAPHS of the ELLISON OSWALT HOUSE PAINTING MASSACRE, as well as photographs from the crimes from the other short films in the original *Sinister*.

He is clearly obsessed with the murder of his friend Ellison - a murder he failed to prevent.

We track over a wall of newspaper clippings:

"WRITER OF KENTUCKY BLOOD FOUND DEAD WHILE RESEARCHING NEW BOOK," along with a picture of Ellison Oswald.

"OSWALT MURDER HOUSE BURNS DOWN, ARSON SUSPECTED."

"DEPUTY INVOLVED IN OSWALT SLAYING CLEARED OF ALL CHARGES", along with a picture of So and So leaving a police station, swarmed by photographers.

"PROFESSOR GOES MISSING IN NORWAY WHILE RESEARCHING OSWALT BOOK," along with a photo of Professor Jonas.

In the center of the wall is THE MAP WITH YARN from Ellison Oswald's office. It shows the location of the murders from the first film.

And beside that we see...

ANOTHER MAP

This one also features yarn connecting pins - but all of them in different locations than the Ellison's map.

So and So is tracking another string of family murders.

He's slowly working his way through a search on his laptop, paging through other murders online, fishing for clues.

The FAX MACHINE behind him whirs to life, slowly spitting out a page with a photocopied POLICE REPORT from the 1950s.

He peruses it and we close in on the words MISSING CHILD just as the fax machine spits out a second page.

The second page is a photo copy of...

A POLAROID PHOTOGRAPH

IT'S AN OLD CRIME SCENE PHOTO: A SMALL BOAT atop a SWAMP, somewhere in the vast and lonely MISSISSIPPI DELTA, covered with the MUTILATED BODY PARTS OF A FAMILY, floating atop the swamp water.

THE POLAROID IMAGE SHOWS THE BRUTAL AFTERMATH OF THE 16MM FILM WE SAW PLAYING IN DYLAN'S NIGHTMARE DREAM.

So and So's eyes light up at the image. This was exactly what he was looking for. He rushes over to the map and puts a pin in a small town Mississippi. Then he picks up the phone.

SO AND SO

Yes, I need the number for the Hall
of Records in Batesville,
Mississippi, please.

EXT. LARGE CHURCH AND RECTORY HOUSE - DAY

The SUV pulls onto the large property atop a small hill.

The old Gothic church is made of red stone. It's built like a small castle, with a high steeple and GOTHIC BELL TOWER.

Beside the church is a small three-bedroom home structure. This RECTORY is where the pastor of the church is meant to live - but for now, it's the unlikely home of Courtney, Zach, and Dylan.

Zach jumps out of the car and runs inside. Dylan is more hesitant. He really doesn't want to go into the house.

Courtney comes up from behind him, puts a hand on his shoulder.

COURTNEY

You okay, baby?

Dylan nods, though it's clear something is bothering him. He looks off into the distant treeline at the edge of the property.

COURTNEY

What is it?

DYLAN

I don't really want to talk about it.

COURTNEY

Okay.

(beat)

(MORE)

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

I'm going to go work for a while.
You think you can make dinner with
your brother?

DYLAN

Yeah.

COURTNEY

You're my little badass, you know
that?

Dylan smiles a little as Courtney kisses him on the cheek.
She walks off toward the church as Dylan continues to stare
at the treeline.

INT. NOIRISH OFFICE SPACE - NIGHT

With a phone in one hand and a sheet of paper in the other,
So and So approaches the NEW MAP OF MURDERS - yarn connects
FAMILY PHOTOS to pinned locations.

SO AND SO

(on phone)

No, no, no. That's VERY helpful.
Thank you.

He hangs up the phone and looks at the sheet of paper. Then
he connects a dangling piece of thread hanging from one pin
to another pinned into Colorado. So and So taps the pin as
he thinks, then dials the phone from a number on the paper.

SO AND SO

Yes, hi, I'm calling about the
Jacobs property... Yes, I'm looking
at the listing now. Is it still
available...? It *is*? Oh, my client
is going to be very happy to hear
that... Yes, they're aware of the
incident. Their only question is
whether or not anyone has lived on
the property since then... No one?
So it's been vacant...? Seven
years. Wow. I'll let them know...
Thank you very much.

So and So hangs up, turning to the WALL OF PHOTOS.

He stares intently at A FAMILIAR PHOTO from the first film -
a photo he clearly took away from Ellison Oswalt's house:

CLOSE ON THE PHOTO: It's the bone-chilling face of BUGHUUL.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - LATER

So and So throws a duffle bag in the trunk of his car and slams it closed.

INT. SO AND SO'S CAR

So and So grips the wheel, hesitating for a moment. Then he turns the key and pulls out with renewed resolve.

EXT. SO AND SO'S CAR - SAME

So and So drives off as the sun sets.

INT. CHURCH - EVENING

A creepy, long-abandoned space. The PEWS are stacked in neat rows off to the side, leaving the large room mostly empty.

Courtney is alone, working inside the church sanctuary, using it as a makeshift workshop.

IN MONTAGE we see her bring in a massive amount of WOOD, PAINT, and other TOOLS for the HANDCRAFTING OF FURNITURE - that's what she does for a living.

Then, as she continues to work, she hears...

SCRRRITCH

A quietly menacing sound, like nails on concrete.

She turns to toward the sound, only a bit concerned.

Waits. Nothing.

She goes back to work, and then after a moment...

SCRRRRRITCH

Louder this time, the sound came from the beyond the altar.

Courtney looks. It's PITCH DARK back there.

Disconcerted now, she goes to the row of LIGHT SWITCHES, and flips the switch marked "altar". The light doesn't work.

She grabs a small flashlight from her box of tools, shines it toward THE ALTAR.

Covered with the dust and debris, the altar has the creepy look of the once sacred, now long-abandoned.

She moves slowly toward it, shining the flashlight into the dark spaces around her as she goes.

She steps up onto the stage area, and approaches the altar.

Walking around to the back side of it, she sees nothing.

She relaxes for a moment, and then...

SCRRRRRRRRRIIIIIITCH

Startled, Courtney spins and shines the light toward the sound:

A RAT KING

moves in the corner, vibrating with grotesque life.

The disgusting Rat King is comprised of about A DOZEN LARGE BLACK RATS (a few of them dead now) intertwined at their TAILS, which have become stuck together with knots, blood, dirt, and excrement.

It's an absolutely hideous sight.

SCRRRRRRRRRIIIIIITCH. It moves again, the nails of the live rats scraping against the marble floor.

As Courtney winces in disgust, DYLAN appears at the doorway of the church.

DYLAN

Mom?

Courtney looks up. She sees him all the way across the church, right at the edge of the threshold.

COURTNEY

Yeah, sweetie?

DYLAN

Dinner.

COURTNEY

I'll be there in a minute.

DYLAN

Okay.

Courtney notices that Dylan looks afraid, staring into the old church sanctuary.

COURTNEY

Dylan?

DYLAN

Yeah?

COURTNEY

It's just an old building, baby.

And now we cut to an over-the-shoulder POV of Dylan. We see his small frame in front of us and Courtney across the room.

But between them, we now see what Dylan sees...

LARGE POOLS OF BLOOD

all over the floor, crimson puddles showing the final death spot of several people.

Only Dylan can see the blood pools - to Courtney, the floor looks perfectly normal.

DYLAN

I know.

COURTNEY

I'll be there in a minute. Just gotta clean up in here first.

Dylan turns and walks away, leaving Courtney to stare past the pools of blood that she cannot see.

When she turns back toward the floor behind the altar...

The Rat King is GONE.

INT. ZACH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Courtney tucks Zach into bed.

COURTNEY

Did you have a good day, Zach?

Zach nods and then shrugs.

ZACH

Kinda.

COURTNEY

Kind of? You mean the grocery store?

ZACH

I'm worried about Dylan.

COURTNEY

Why, baby?

ZACH

He's just...different out here.

COURTNEY

He'll come around. But he'll need a little help from his brother. You think you're up to it?

(Zach nods)

Good. Because I can't do this alone. I need my boys.

Courtney kisses him on the forehead, gets up and turns off the light.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

Courtney peeks in on Dylan, who is already tucked in. Then she walks downstairs.

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Dylan's eyes open. Standing in his room just a few feet away, he sees...

A YOUNG BOY

About the same age as Zach and Dylan, the boy is dressed conservatively - white shirt and black tie, black pants, well-shined black shoes.

He was one of the five creepy children in Dylan's nightmare, but now he seems less creepy; more friendly and inviting.

DYLAN

(whispering)

Hi, Milo.

MILO

Hi, Dylan.

DYLAN

What are you doing here?

MILO

I have something to show you.

DYLAN

Milo, I'm supposed to be in bed.

Milo glances over at the church, sees the sanctuary light on.

MILO
Your mom just started working.
She'll be in there for hours.

DYLAN
What if she comes back?

MILO
(shrugs)
She won't.

DYLAN
How do you know?

MILO
I just know. Do you trust me?

Dylan manages a smile - he's up for some fun with this mysterious 'friend' of his. He glances out at the church light, then gives Milo a nod.

Milo leads Dylan out the door and down the stairs.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

DYLAN
Where are we going?

MILO
You'll see.

CUT TO BLACK

And now a CRACK OF LIGHT above us, and a DOOR IN THE FLOOR of the rectory opens up. The two boys stare down into...

INT. A HIDDEN CRAWL SPACE - NIGHT

The boys step down into the darkness, crouching. As short as they are, even they can't stand up straight in here.

MILO
(points)
It's back there.

DYLAN
I can't see anything.

FWOOSH! Milo lights a ZIPPO LIGHTER, illuminating the space.

DYLAN
Where'd you get that?

MILO
I always carry it. C'mon.

Together the boys now move deeper into the crawl space, and the light of Milo's Zippo eventually reveals...

A TRUNK MARKED "KEEPSAKES."

They both stare like it's hidden treasure.

MILO
Open it. I wanna see.

DYLAN
You don't know what's in it?

MILO
Just open it.

Dylan flips the latch, and opens it. Atop the objects that fill the trunk, we see...

VINYL RECORDS

Milo grabs one, takes it out of its sleeve.

MILO
You gotta check these out!

Dylan grabs a few records as well, studies them with interest.

DYLAN
What's on them?

MILO
There's only one way to find out.

Milo reaches into the box and pulls out...

A 1928 CINETONE 16MM FILM PROJECTOR.

Part of the body of the projector is a VINYL RECORD TURNTABLE WITH A GRAMOPHONE.

Dylan's face lights up with awe. Milo studies Dylan - he likes what's happening here, but it's a bit eerie how he seems more interested in Dylan than the projector/gramophone.

DYLAN
Does it work?

MILO

I hope so.

Milo takes one of the records and places it on the turntable. He flips the switch, and to Dylan's delight, it begins to SPIN.

DYLAN

What do we do now?

MILO

(points to the needle)

This.

Milo puts the needle on the record. We hear the sound of the TURNTABLE NEEDLE HITTING THE VINYL RECORD, followed by the CRACKLE HISS THUMP of the album before any sound starts.

Then CREEPY MUSIC - the same music we heard in the opening scene. Suddenly, the crawl space feels much more ominous.

Dylan, feeling uneasy, turns around and is startled by...

ANOTHER BOY standing right behind him!

The boy, 13, wears a khaki-colored FISHING VEST with lours hanging off it, HIP-WADERS, and a FISHERMER'S CAP.

DYLAN

(quietly)

Hey Ted. What are you doing here?

TED

Milo said he was gonna show you the thing.

Dylan nods.

Now the CREEPY MUSIC on the record gives way to DISTORTED SOUNDS: *SPLASH! CREAK. SPLASH! CREAK. SPLASH! CREAK.*

The sounds are eerie and menacing - but Milo and Ted are both clearly captivated. Dylan doesn't know what to make of it.

Next, the three kids hear the slight MOANS OF PEOPLE, as if they are just now coming around from unconsciousness.

And then...

BLOODCURDLING SCREAMS

several of them - and EXTREME THRASHING in the water.

Dylan looks to Milo, wide-eyed with shock and burgeoning fear.

MILO
Don't worry. It's not real.

Dylan absorbs that, then Ted starts laughing. This makes Dylan SMILE and he too stifles a laugh, starting to play along.

DYLAN
This is crazy.

Milo smiles back at him.

MILO
And that's not all there is...

Milo takes the needle off the record and reaches into the trunk, pulling out a 16MM FILM CANISTER. On the side of the canister, written in black ink, are the words "**FISHING TRIP**".

Dylan stares at the film canister with apprehensive wonder, then looks up at Milo.

QUICK CUTS:

- Ted putting the reel on the projector.
- The film being threaded into the projector.
- The needle placed back at the beginning of the vinyl record.
- Ted flips the switch on the projector lamp.

AND THE FIRST 16MM KILL FILM BEGINS...

ON SCREEN: We see footage of A FAMILY OF FIVE having a good time on A SMALL FISHING BOAT in the MISSISSIPPI DELTA.

They are CRAWFISHING, collecting their catch from pre-set traps in the murky water.

We see DAD, MOM, OLDER BROTHER, MIDDLE BROTHER (TED), and YOUNGER SISTER.

Under the hot Southern sun, they drink water from a CANTEEN to stay hydrated.

HARD CUT TO NIGHT:

The open canteen on the floor of the boat now GLOWS with phosphorescent poison (Bughuul blood).

We see IMAGES that match the now-familiar vinyl record sounds:

The front of a SMALL BOAT moves through a DARK SWAMP, somewhere in the vast and lonely MISSISSIPPI DELTA.

IT'S THE FILM THAT DYLAN SAW IN HIS NIGHTMARE AT THE
BEGINNING OF THE MOVIE!

SPLASH! CREAK. SPLASH! CREAK. SPLASH! CREAK. We hear the sound of OARS SLAPPING THE WATER.

A CAMERA-MOUNTED LIGHT illuminates the way of the boat, as it moves deeper into the inky blackness of the swamp.

JUMP CUT: The boat is STILL now.

IN THE BLACK SWAMP WATER AHEAD, WE SEE A FAMILY OF FOUR: MOTHER, FATHER, TEENAGE BROTHER, AND PRE-TEEN DAUGHTER.

The family members are all UNCONSCIOUS. FLIMSY LIFE VESTS barely keep them each afloat in their sleep.

JUMP CUTS: Slight moans as one-by-one, they each slowly start to awaken.

And now another sound - a low, bone-chilling GROWL. Inhuman.

An 8-FOOT ALLIGATOR APPROACHES slowly in the distance.

The camera sees the Gator, the groggy family members to do not.

It comes closer and closer, with nightmarish purpose.

ON DYLAN, wide-eyed, watching the film in abject horror.

DYLAN
(a terrified whisper)
This isn't fake. This is real.

He slowly backs away from the screen, afraid to see what will happen next.

DYLAN
We shouldn't be watching this.
Turn it off, Milo. Let's get out of -

But before he can finish, Ted and Milo both turn to Dylan and gives him the eerie Sinister smile, fingers to their lips.

MILO AND TED
SHHHHHHH.

Scared now, Dylan turns back to the screen.

ON SCREEN: THE ALLIGATOR BITES INTO THE TEENAGE GIRL, its powerful jaws CLAMPING AROUND HER TORSO IN A FLASH!

BLOODCURDLING SCREAMS from the other family members as the ALLIGATOR ROLLS THE GIRL IN THE WATER, THRASHING VIOLENTLY, DROWNING its prey before feeding.

And then we hear A GROWLING SOUND, and A SECOND ALLIGATOR enters frame!

Just as the second alligator BITES DOWN ON THE FATHER'S EXPOSED HEAD, we CUT BACK TO:

DYLAN

utterly horror-struck. He turns slowly to Milo, aghast.

DYLAN

How did you know this was here?

MILO

This is where I left it.

DYLAN

I... I'm going to go to bed now.

He walks back through the dark crawl-space, never looking back.

As Milo and Ted just sit there watching Dylan in the flickering Zippo-light, the only sounds we hear are the STATIC-SKIPPING of the needle at the end of the vinyl record, and the spun-out film reel SLAPPING against the projector.

INT. SO AND SO'S CAR - DAY

So and So drives down the highway. He sees a gas station and slowly pulls into it.

EXT. 24 HOUR GAS STATION - DAY

This place hasn't been updated since the 70s.

So and So steps out of his car and looks around, first up at the station window, then around to the corners of the awning overhead - he sees that THERE ARE NO VIDEO CAMERAS.

He walks around to the trunk of the car, pulls out A PLASTIC GAS CAN. Then he pulls out another one. Then another.

He quickly fills the gas cans.

INT. SO AND SO'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

So and So drives, the gas cans on the passenger seat floor below A MAP with a RED CIRCLE around a particular spot.

EXT. COLORADO HIGHWAY - DAY

So and So drives down a familiar stretch of Colorado Highway.

INT. SO AND SO'S CAR - DAY

So and So drives slowly up the winding drive onto the land, looking at the map and at the dirt road ahead to make sure he's in the right place.

As he comes around the corner he sees Courtney's SUV and the twin boys playing outside.

The boys look at the car, then each other, and run inside.

Seeing that the place is occupied, So and So's face falls.

SO AND SO

No. No no. No no no nononono.

He's driven all this way, only to discover that the house he thought was empty, is inhabited by Bughuul's next victims.

EXT. RECTORY - SAME

So and So gets out of his car, staring agape at the house, confused and unsure how to proceed.

Courtney barrels out of the house, pissed.

COURTNEY

This is private property.

SO AND SO

I know, ma'am. I- I thought it was for sale. The listing -

COURTNEY

- That doesn't give you the right to come out here. You're trespassing and you know it. Who are you?

SO AND SO

Well, I'm...

COURTNEY
You're what?

SO AND SO
Well, ma'am, I'm a private investigator.

Courtney loses any cool she had remaining.

COURTNEY
You son of a bitch! How the fuck did you find me? Was that your partner at the grocery store?

SO AND SO
No, I -

COURTNEY
- You're not taking them! HE is not taking them! He can't have them! I don't care who his friends are!

She stops, collects herself, wipes a tear from her eye before it can fall.

COURTNEY
You look like a reasonable man. Are you a reasonable man?

SO AND SO
Um. Uh-huh. I mean, I think so.

COURTNEY
Then what's it going to take? I don't have a lot, but I'll pay what I can to make sure you never saw me. So what is it? What'll it take.

SO AND SO
Can I get a cup of coffee?

COURTNEY
Excuse me?

SO AND SO
Coffee. It's been a long trip and I think there's been some sort of misunderstanding.

COURTNEY
You're a private investigator?

SO AND SO
 Yes, ma'am. But I don't work
 for...your husband? Ex-husband?

COURTNEY
 Soon to be ex-husband.

SO AND SO
 Yeah. I have nothing to do with
 that.

COURTNEY
 (after a moment)
 What exactly are you doing here?

INT. RECTORY - LATER

So and So sits at the breakfast table. As Courtney prepares coffee, she glances out the window: Zach is playing near the church, Dylan is running with his arms out, like he's an airplane, running towards the trees.

SO AND SO
 Have you ever heard of Ellison
 Oswald?

COURTNEY
 The writer?

SO AND SO
 Yes, ma'am.

COURTNEY
 Who hasn't heard about that?

She pauses for a moment. Things are starting to click.

COURTNEY
 What do you have to do with any of
 that?

SO AND SO
 Mr. Oswald was a friend. I was
 working with him on his book - the
 case that -

COURTNEY
 - You came because of what happened
 here, didn't you?

SO AND SO
 Yes.

COURTNEY

You think they're related?

SO AND SO

Not directly, no. But the cases share a number of similarities. I'm just following up cold cases that look similar.

COURTNEY

How is there any money in that?

SO AND SO

(laughs)

There isn't. Fortunately there's almost always someone that needs a detective to check in on a spouse or an employee or something. But when there isn't...

COURTNEY

You do this.

SO AND SO

Yeah.

COURTNEY

Well, I don't really know anything that wasn't in the papers, so I don't know how I can help you.

SO AND SO

You... you weren't supposed to be here. I was told the place was empty.

COURTNEY

My friend, Gillian - her dad owns the land now. When she found out about... when things between my husband and I went south, she set me up out here. No one ever comes up here, she says. Ever.

SO AND SO

So, the boys. Do you have legal custody or is this -

COURTNEY

- I do. Temporary.

SO AND SO

Was it you or the kids?

COURTNEY
Excuse me?

SO AND SO
That he hit.

Courtney is silent.

SO AND SO
I was a cop for a lot of years. No
one hides like this unless someone
got hit. So was it you or the kids?

COURTNEY
A little of both. A lot of both,
actually.
(beat)
You know, no offense, but you're
much smarter than you come across
at first.

SO AND SO
I get that a lot.

She studies him for a moment. And then...

COURTNEY
Look, you're welcome to stay a
while and look around.

SO AND SO
(glances out the window)
It's starting to get dark.

COURTNEY
Don't want to creep around a murder
scene in the dark, huh?

SO AND SO
No, ma'am. In all honesty, I do not.

COURTNEY
It's Courtney.

SO AND SO
Courtney. Do you mind if I come
back tomorrow?

COURTNEY
On one condition. No one gets to
know we're here. No one.

SO AND SO
I don't know who I'd tell.

Courtney smiles a bit. So and So has made an impression.

INT. SO AND SO'S CAR - SUNSET

So and So pulls off the property, then pulls over to the side of the road. He looks down at the gas cans then stares wistfully for a moment, lost in thought.

Then he beats the steering wheel with a balled fist.

INT. RECTORY - NIGHT

Courtney, Dylan and Zach sit around the dinner table, eating.

ZACH

What did that man want?

DYLAN

Was he one of Daddy's friends?

COURTNEY

No. He's just... He was just looking for something.

ZACH

Was he here about what happened in the church?

Courtney looks up from her food, horrified.

COURTNEY

What do you mean, happened?

ZACH

We know about the church, mom.
We're not stupid.

COURTNEY

Who told you?

DYLAN

We just...heard about it.

Zach looks at his brother and tries to cover for his lie.

ZACH

Yeah, everyone knows about that.

COURTNEY

Well, I don't want you thinking about that.

ZACH

Is that why that man was here?

COURTNEY

Yes. He's a friend of a writer
who's working on a book about it.

(looking at Dylan)

Is that why you won't go into the
church?

Dylan looks down at his plate, playing with his food. He
nods, not making eye contact.

COURTNEY

You don't need to worry about that
honey. There's nothing in that
church that can hurt you.

Dylan looks up at her. He doesn't believe her, but nods anyway.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

So and So sits at his laptop, searching for articles. He
clicks on one that reads SON OF AGRICULTURAL MAGNATE BURT
COLLINS MARRIES HIGH SCHOOL SWEETHEART.

There's a picture of Courtney and CLINT, her estranged
husband and father of Zach and Dylan.

We recognize CLINT as the man in Dylan's opening nightmare.

So and So googles CLINT COLLINS. Several searches turn up,
all reading some variation of CLINT COLLINS SOLE HEIR TO
COLLINS AGRICULTURAL DYNASTY and COLLINS BECOMES YOUNGEST AG
MAG IN THE COUNTRY.

He hears a sound outside his door. He looks up, startled.

He gets up, and pulls out a crucifix and a thumbtack from his
bag. Then he puts the chair against the door, stands on it and
puts the tack above the door, hanging the crucifix above it.

He steps down, admiring his handiwork, and swallows hard,
still nervous. He waits, tense.

A CAR DOOR SLAMS. So and So jumps.

An ENGINE REVS UP. So and so relaxes, sighs with relief.

SO AND SO

Oh, god dammit.

He looks up at the crucifix.

SO AND SO
(truly apologetic)
Sorry.

CUT TO:

FRAGMENTS OF DYLAN'S SAME NIGHTMARE...

...the one we saw in the opening of the film. The images are again intercut with Dylan in his bed, writhing in his sleep:

- *THE BLOODY HALLWAY.*
- *CLINT BEATING COURTNEY.*
- *DYLAN RUNNING DOWN THE LONG HALLWAY, CLINT CHASING BEHIND.*
- *THE WHEAT FIELD OF BLOOD AND CARNAGE.*

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - DEAD OF NIGHT

Dylan awakens, scared and exasperated. He needs these nightmares to stop.

Silence for a moment, and then...

THE SOUND OF A RECORD NEEDLE ON A VINYL

The sound is looped STATIC, never getting to any other sound.

The static pervades the soundtrack, like it's not coming from somewhere in particular, but from EVERYWHERE.

Dylan gets up out of bed and dreamily wanders into the hall and down the stairs.

As he walks into the dark living room he passes...

The towering shadow of BUGHUUL!

Dylan doesn't see him. He continues toward the crawlspace in the floor.

INT. THE CRAWLSPACE

Dylan peers down into the crawlspace.

Milo sits on the floor, and next to him sits...

A 10-YEAR-OLD GIRL

dressed completely in HEAVY WINTER CLOTHES: down parka, gloves, hat, etc...

The RECORD SPINS on the 16mm projector gramophone, filling the room with OMINOUS MUSIC.

Milo and the girl turn around and look over their shoulders, smiling.

In Milo's hand is a film cannister marked "**CHRISTMAS MORNING**".

DYLAN
(to the girl)
Hi Emma.

Emma smiles. Dylan nods at the film canister in Milo's hand.

DYLAN
I don't wanna watch those any more.

EMMA
Are you having the dreams?

Dylan nods.

MILO
We all had the dreams.

EMMA
The movies make the dreams go away.

MILO
Once you've watched all of them,
you'll never have a bad dream
again.

DYLAN
For real?

MILO
Swear.

DYLAN
Show me.

QUICK CUTS:

- Emma putting the reel on the projector.
- The film being threaded into the projector.
- Emma flipping the switch on the old projector lamp.

The projector roars to life, showing the beginning of the film on the wall.

Dylan sits down on the floor next to Milo and Emma, watching nervously.

AND THE SECOND 16MM KILL FILM BEGINS...

ON SCREEN: AN OPEN FIELD ON CHRISTMAS MORNING.

A FAMILY plays in the snow. Each member of the family is bundled up in bright colored snow gear.

Emma is the youngest child of the family.

They all throw snowballs at one another in an elaborate snowball fight, behind snow forts.

They build a snowman and finish it off by placing a carrot as a nose and two pieces of charcoal as eyes.

They all drink HOT COCOA from a green and red THERMOS.

One of them sleds down a hill while the rest of the family watches.

The film flickers a bit and then HARD CUTS TO:

CLOSE ON THE THERMOS: lying on the snow, spilled cocoa mixed with PHOSPHORESCENT POISON stains the ground brown and green.

JUMP CUT TO: A WIDE STATIC SHOT OF AN OPEN SPACE AT NIGHT.

In the open space are FOUR SHALLOW GRAVES dug in the snow.

The film flickers and jump cuts again, only this time the four graves are filled with the unconscious bodies of the family - only Emma is absent.

Stripped of their warm clothing, the family members are wrapped up in all the right places with duct tape, unable to move.

The camera angle changes to a CLOSE-UP of the Father's face. A snowball hits him in the cheek. He groggily awakens.

Dad tries to scream, but cannot through the duct tape around his mouth. He writhes and contorts, but cannot move.

The camera angle changes again, this time to Mom. The same scenario repeats itself. Mom gets awoken by a shovel full of snow. She tries to scream and free herself, but she can't.

The camera angle changes again, showing all four family members writhing in their shallow graves. None of them can work their way out of their graves.

The shot lingers, almost painfully so, relishing in their futile attempts to escape.

The camera angle changes again, this time looking over Dad as snow is shoveled in from out of frame. He winces at the cold, but the snow keeps coming.

A shovelful covers his chest and he tries to shake it off. Another shovelful comes in.

He begins wriggling like a caterpillar, trying to shake the snow off of him. The snow keeps coming.

The camera angle changes again, this time looking over mom as snow is shoveled on her as well.

A shovelful of snow falls down on her. Then another, and another. She is crying, begging through the tape for mercy.

A TIME CUT and we see that a MAJOR SNOWSTORM has descended upon the open space. Harsh wind blows thick snow everywhere, creating a near WHITEOUT.

The camera cuts to the family completely buried, with the snow packed down tightly, covering all but their faces.

Then the camera moves over the FROZEN CORPSES of the two Children and Mom, with Dad the only one still breathing.

The camera is down, almost completely on the ground next to Dad's face. Patches of black indicate frost bite on his cheeks and nose. Tiny icicles hang off his ears. He finally succumbs and freezes to death.

The footage rolls out.

BACK ON MILO, EMMA, AND DYLAN:

MILO

Let's watch another one.

DYLAN

I should get back to bed.

MILO

(nods)

We can watch another tomorrow.

DYLAN

I don't want to watch another one.

MILO

But you have to. I haven't showed you the best ones yet. Besides, you won't have any more bad dreams tonight. And you won't have any tomorrow if you watch another.

Dylan mulls it over a second, weighing both terrible options.

DYLAN

Goodnight, Milo. Goodnight Emma.

MILO & EMMA

Goodnight, Dylan.

Dylan closes the trapdoor.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - SAME

So and So is back at the tiny motel room desk. He opens A HAND-MARKED FILE FOLDER that reads "WESTMINSTER CHURCH MURDERS."

Inside the file folder are old NEWS CLIPPINGS, POLICE REPORTS, and CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHS.

So and So first looks at NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS that feature PICTURES of the murdered family - typical happy family photos of the Reverend, his wife, and their kids.

A SECOND CLIPPING shows THE MISSING CHILD taken from the crime scene:

IT'S MILO - he's the 'missing child' from the church murders.

Now So and So flips through the CRIME SCENE PHOTOS.

In these pictures, the bodies have been removed from the church sanctuary, but huge POOLS OF BLOOD remain on the floor - it's the same image that Dylan saw when he walked into the church.

EXT. PORCH - AFTERNOON

Dylan sits on the porch, staring out into the woods.

HIS POV: MILO, EMMA, TED, and THE TWO OTHER CHILDREN are playing a game of Hide & Seek just inside the edge of the woods.

Zach steps out onto the porch and looks toward the kids.

ZACH

You aren't so special, you know?

Dylan looks up.

DYLAN

What?

ZACH

I can see them too. You aren't so special.

Before Dylan can speak, Zach steps off the porch as if he's going to walk towards the children. But he stops, turns around.

And now Dylan sees...

BUGHUUL

inside the forest, barely visible. The other kids see him too, and immediately they all HIDE, as though Mr. Boogie himself is a part of the game.

ZACH

Aren't you going to say anything?

Dylan shakes his head.

ZACH

Pussy.

Suddenly, Courtney steps out the front door.

COURTNEY

Zachary Collins, what did I just hear you say?

ZACH

Nothin'.

COURTNEY

Nothing?

He shrugs. Courtney stares at him, confounded by both his language and his brazen lie. Then Courtney turns to see...

SO AND SO'S CAR pull into the drive.

She gives a friendly wave to So and So. Zach brightens up like the cat that ate the canary. None of that just happened.

COURTNEY

Okay boys, remember what I told you.

DYLAN AND ZACH

Speak only when spoken to and tell you what he asks us.

COURTNEY
(fake smiles)
That's right.

INT. CHURCH - AFTERNOON

Courtney leads So and So into the main sanctuary.

COURTNEY
Here it is. Scene of the crime.

SO AND SO
(warily)
Mm-mm.

COURTNEY
The news never said exactly how the family was killed. Do you know?

SO AND SO
Unfortunately, I do.

COURTNEY
Tell me.

SO AND SO
You don't want to know.

COURTNEY
Yes I do. I work in here now, I want to know what happened.

SO AND SO
Trust me on this. You don't.
(beat)
I'm just gonna look around for a few minutes, compare the space to the crime scene photos.

COURTNEY
Okay. Come back to the house if you have any questions.

SO AND SO
I will. Thanks.

They smile at each other, then Courtney leaves the church.

So and So removes the CRIME SCENE PHOTOS, and walks around the FIVE SPOTS that had large pools of blood.

Closer examination of the floor reveals the blood stains are still there in the wood, barely visible.

Slowly, carefully, he walks toward the altar.

Reaching the altar, he hears a SOFT, DISTANT SOUND:

Ping...ping...ping...ping...

He tracks the sound to an open doorway that leads to...

A LONG DARK HALLWAY

So and so turns on his MAG-LIGHT and slowly makes his way down the hall.

There are DOORS along the hallway, some open and some closed.

He shines his light into each of the open doors - mostly empty, but with an occasional desk or chair in some.

Half-way down the dark hall, the sound is getting louder...

Ping...ping...ping...ping...

And then the sound STOPS. So and So stops.

Dead silence.

He looks around nervously, listening, when suddenly...

MILO

DARTS across the hallway right behind So and So!

Hearing something, So and So spins and shines his mag light down the hall behind him, then points the light at the room Milo just ran into...

So and So enters...

INT. SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Chairs, round tables, and flannelgraph boards for teaching Sunday School stories.

TED hides behind one of the boards, smiling.

They are playing HIDE & SEEK.

As So and So passes by, Ted PUSHES OVER THE BOARD, and it SLAMS to the ground scaring the shit out of So and So.

He waves the light everywhere, but sees nothing.

Underneath the tables, Ted and Milo both cover their mouths, stifling laughter.

And now the sound returns: *Ping...ping...ping...ping...*

So and So goes back out into...

INT. THE LONG, DARK HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

He traces the sound to the bottom of...

A DARK, SPIRAL STAIRCASE

Gathering his courage, So and So ventures up the stairs.

ON EMMA

Half-way up the spiral staircase.

The PINGING SOUND STOPS.

Seeing So and So's mag light beam, Emma smiles wide, then runs up the stairs to HIDE.

ON SO AND SO

hearing her FOOTSTEPS, as if they were far away and underwater. He pauses, sweat now beading on his forehead.

Then the PINGING SOUND returns, louder now:

Ping...ping...ping...ping...

Carefully, he ventures on. Soon he reaches...

A DOOR IN THE CEILING.

He opens it and crawls up into...

THE CHURCH BELL TOWER

The room features several empty CABINETS covered in DUST, and various boxes of church belongings.

The pinging sound is coming from in here:

PING...PING...PING...PING...

So and So follows the sound, shining his light UPWARD.

There, illuminated by his flashlight, he sees...

THE RAT KING

It's the same blood-encrusted monstrosity that Courtney saw in the sanctuary, but now...

THE RAT KING IS TIED TO THE END OF THE BELL ROPE!

A dozen rats, some live and some dead, wriggle in mid-air, the tail of the largest rat tied in a knot around the rope that pulls the clapper into the body of the large bell.

The writhing Rat King moves the rope just enough to make the clapper barely tap against the big bell:

PING...PING...PING...PING...

CLOSE ON THE RAT TIED TO THE ROPE as it DANGLES upside down, and CHEWS OFF IT'S OWN TAIL, severing it from the rope!

THE RAT KING FALLS straight down, right onto So and So's face!

He lets out a YELL, pulls it off, and THROWS it to the ground.

In a fury of rage and panic, So and So BEATS the rat king with his mag light until all the rats are dead.

Then he sits there in silence for a moment, catching his breath.

Enough of this shit, he stands up and turns to leave...

BUGHUUL IS RIGHT THERE!

So startled by the appearance, So and So DROPS his flashlight and it GOES OUT.

We hear him panic in the darkness...

SO AND SO
Shit shit shit shit shit...

CLICK. The light comes back on. He shines it everywhere around the room...

...Bughuul has vanished.

A moment of silence. And then...

So and So's phone goes off. He jumps like he's been snake bit. He calms himself and answers.

SO AND SO
Hello?

INT. DOCTOR STOMBERG'S OFFICE - SAME

STOMBERG
Deputy!

SO AND SO (O.C.)
Yeah, but I'm not -

STOMBERG
- Oh, I know. Sorry. I'm Doctor
Stomberg. We spoke a few months
back.

SO AND SO
Oh, you're the new Professor Jonas.

STOMBERG
Minus the afternoon pot breaks and
the predilection towards young TAs,
yeah, more or less.

EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

So and So walks out from the dark into the light as he exits
outdoors, still talking on the phone.

SO AND SO
How can I help you?

STOMBERG
I need you to come in and look at
something as soon as possible.

SO AND SO
I'm kind of tied up with something
right now.

STOMBERG
I'm afraid this won't wait. I've
found something. It's about Jonas.

So and So stops dead in his tracks.

SO AND SO
Tell me.

STOMBERG
Not on the phone - I can't risk
that. Besides, you wouldn't believe
me if I told you - you have to see
it for yourself.

So and So considers that, and then...

SO AND SO
I can be on a flight in the
morning.

EXT. PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Dylan sees So and So hangs up the phone while walking across the yard.

SO AND SO
(approaching)
Now which one are you?

DYLAN
Dylan.

So and So looks around, taking in the scenery.

SO AND SO
How do you like it out here?

DYLAN
It'd be better if I didn't live
somewhere people got killed.

So and So stammers for a second. He doesn't know how to deal with that answer.

SO AND SO
Oh, I... How are you dealing with
that?
(Dylan shrugs)
I guess it would scare me too. I'd
get nightmares in a place like this.

Dylan looks up. That struck a nerve.

SO AND SO
You having nightmares?
(Dylan NODS)
I have really bad nightmares
sometimes.

DYLAN
(sarcastically)
About dead people?

So and So nods sadly.

SO AND SO
About a friend.

DYLAN
Did he die?

So and So nods again.

SO AND SO

Yeah. I dream about it. It can be pretty scary sometimes, not being able to tell the difference between what's real and what isn't.

DYLAN

What do you do? To stop the dreams.

So and So thinks for a moment.

SO AND SO

When I'm awake, I try to help people. I try to make the world less like the nightmares.

From inside the house, Courtney looks out the window and sees So and So talking with Dylan.

At first she seems surprised, but then watching Dylan's expression, she can tell that her son is opening up to So and So. She decides not to interrupt just yet.

But then she sees...

A PICK UP TRUCK and TWO STATE POLICE CARS pull into the drive. So and So and Dylan look up.

Courtney's eyes go wide, her face flush with panic. She BURSTS OUT the front door.

COURTNEY

No! Nononononono. This isn't happening.

So and So stands up from the porch.

SO AND SO

What is it?

Courtney runs right past him and out toward the truck, her fists balled, screaming.

COURTNEY

Clint! You son of a bitch!

The door of the truck opens. Workbooks and blue jeans slide out of the cab. It's CLINT - a rugged, handsome bastard with a shit-eating grin. He puts out a hand to stay Courtney.

CLINT

Now Courtney, I told you this would happen. I told you I'd come for them.

The doors of the State Police cars open and FOUR IMPOSING STATE TROOPERS get out, walking toward the house. Courtney turns and runs to get in their way.

COURTNEY
You are not taking my boys.

TROOPER 1
Step aside, ma'am.

COURTNEY
You don't have a court order.

Ignoring that, Trooper 1 approaches Dylan.

COURTNEY
Stop! You can't do this!

CLINT
Oh, I'm doing it. They're my boys too. And they belong with their father.

Clint looks over at Dylan, who stands there, terrified. He pisses himself, urine leaking out of his jeans onto the porch. Of all the things he's seen, going back with his father scares him the most.

Courtney looks over at So and So, her eyes desperate.

CLINT
(looks at So and So)
Who's this? You fucking this guy or something?

Trooper 1 is about to reach Dylan when So and So steps in between them.

SO AND SO
Let's see the order.

We've never seen So and So like this. He's all cop and moxie. There isn't a single ounce of fear in him.

TROOPER 1
Step aside, sir. Now.

SO AND SO
Who's the officer in charge here?

TROOPER 1
You best stay out of this.

SO AND SO
Do I need to quote state law to
you, or are you going to tell me
who the officer in charge is?

Trooper 1 gets in So and So's face, like he's about to kick
his ass. So and So, unflinching, holds his ground.

TROOPER 1
I'm in charge, asshole.

SO AND SO
Okay, officer...
(looks at his NAMETAG)
...Shermer. Let's see that court
order.

OFFICER SHERMER
Sir, I don't have to show you shit.

SO AND SO
Where's the Sheriff?

OFFICER SHERMER
We're State Troopers. We don't have
a Sheriff. Now if you could -

SO AND SO
- I know you're state troopers - I
can read the car. But I also know
that child custody transfer is the
responsibility of the Sheriff.

The troopers become slightly nervous. Officer Shermer takes a
step back. So and So is calling their bluff.

SO AND SO
I've had to do it. It's never fun.
Messy affairs. And I can tell you
that the only reasons the Sheriff
isn't here is because he either
doesn't know it's happening, or he
doesn't want to know. Either way...
(holds up his PHONE)
...he's not going to like getting
this call.

OFFICER SHERMER
Sir, put away the phone or I'm
going to throw you in the back of
that car myself. Then you can read
it all you like.

So and So winces as if that's a terrible idea.

SO AND SO
Hsssssss. You'd arrest me?

OFFICER SHERMER
In a heartbeat.

So and So leans a little closer, speaking softly.

SO AND SO
Then I should probably inform you that I was arrested for a capital offense a few years back. Big national story. I was cleared of all charges, but if I were to be arrested again, that would be pretty big news.

OFFICER SHERMER
(unimpressed)
Yeah?

SO AND SO
Yeah. And then the journalists would want to know why I was arrested and then they would want to see the court order. But if it turned out there *wasn't* one, if it turned out that you're just a couple old friends of the local rich guy taking his kids back for him off the clock, well...that'd be an even bigger story. And then every woman's group in the country would blog and blog and blog and blog about it until they saw to it that Mr. Collins over there never saw his kids again and that you guys got to know your union reps on a first name basis before they handed you the want ads and put in a good word for you at the mall.

Officer Shermer gets up in So and So's face.

OFFICER SHERMER
Are you threatening me?

SO AND SO
No, sir. I'm saying this was a bad idea, and the only way this day doesn't go any further to shit is if you turn those cars around and don't come back until you have a court order.

Officer Shermer stares down So and So for a moment, then nods to his men and heads back to his car.

OFFICER SHERMER
Let's go.

CLINT
Gary! What the fuck?

Clint runs up to Officer Shermer.

CLINT
Don't you walk away from this.

Officer Shermer speaks quietly.

OFFICER SHERMER
Clint. You know I want to help, but I won't lose my job over this.

CLINT
If you walk away, I'll see to it that you lose your job one way or the other.

Officer Shermer gives him a dirty look and walks back to his car. Officer Shermer returns to his car with the other troopers.

CLINT
God dammit, Gary!

Clint turns to Courtney and points a stern finger.

CLINT
This isn't over, you cunt!

The troopers drive away. Clint gets into his truck, slams the door and speeds off, kicking up gravel.

Courtney runs over and hugs So and So. He has no idea what to do in this moment - he's back to being nervous old So and So.

COURTNEY
Oh my god, thank you! Thank you so much!

SO AND SO
It's no problem, ma'am.

She steps back, looks into his eyes.

COURTNEY
I told you, call me Courtney.

So and So scratches his head and puts on his boyish charm.

SO AND SO
Sorry. Old habits and all.

COURTNEY
(her expression darkens)
We can't stay here. We need to
leave.

SO AND SO
NO!

COURTNEY
What?

SO AND SO
(frantic)
You can't leave.

COURTNEY
He's going to come back. And we
won't be here when he does.

So and So thinks quickly. He can't let her leave.

SO AND SO
Do you have a restraining order?

COURTNEY
No. He had too many character
witnesses. I was lucky I got
custody.

SO AND SO
Then you can't leave. Those
officers can testify that they saw
you here and if you change
residences overnight, he'll have a
case that you're a flight risk -

COURTNEY
- And he could get the boys.

SO AND SO
He will get the boys.

COURTNEY
But you saw him - he'll come back.
Will you stay? At least for dinner?

So and So looks at the church and swallows hard.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

So and So, Dylan and Zach sit around the dinner table in an awkward silence. Courtney puts the last of dinner on the table and sits down opposite So and So.

Dylan and Zach look at So and So, waiting for him to make a move. So and So waits for everyone else to go first.

COURTNEY

Hey, hey, hey. Not everyone all at once!

Courtney leans over and takes So and So's plate, and begins serving him.

SO AND SO

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to be rude.

COURTNEY

They're used to their... well, Clint always ate first.

She hands him his plate back and the boys tear into the food, greedily serving themselves.

ZACH

So were you a cop or something?

SO AND SO

(nods)

A sheriffs deputy.

ZACH

So you saw dead bodies and stuff?

COURTNEY

Zachary!

ZACH

What? Cops see dead bodies.

SO AND SO

I saw more than I'd like.

DYLAN

Did you catch a lot of bad guys?

SO AND SO

Not *bad* guys. Just people having bad days.

ZACH

But you're not a cop anymore?

SO AND SO

No.

ZACH

Why not?

Courtney gives Zach a dirty look, So and So waves it off.
It's a fair question.

SO AND SO

I got tired of seeing people on
their bad days.

DYLAN

I think you're really good at
dealing with people on their bad
days.

Courtney reaches over and caresses Dylan's hand, proud. Zach
looks down at his plate.

INT. RECTORY - LATER

So and So stands by the door, ready to leave. Courtney eases
herself between him and the door. They stare at each other
for a moment, both of them suddenly longing for the other.

COURTNEY

You don't have to leave.

SO AND SO

It's late and I have an early flight.

COURTNEY

Does this place really spook you so
much?

SO AND SO

No, it's just that... yeah. It
really does.

COURTNEY

Please stay. I'll fix up the couch.

SO AND SO

No, ma'am, I...

She looks into the kitchen, watching the boys clear the table.

COURTNEY

For my boys.

So and So looks into the kitchen and softens.

INT. RECTORY - LATE NIGHT

A CLOCK reads 12:35 a.m..

So and So lays on the couch in inky darkness. The house is eerily silent, small creaks and groans of the old house playing tricks on him. He looks at the clock.

SO AND SO
(whispers to himself)
What the hell am I doing?

He tosses and turns, trying to get comfortable. He can't.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

So and So switches on the kitchen light and sits at the table. He lays the crime scene file in front of him. He begins pouring over the photos again.

But now So and So notices something in one of the photos.

In the dark area just beyond the altar, barely visible...

BUGHUUL

is visible, his hideous mouthless face staring out from the darkness. So and So leans in close to get a better look.

CLOSE ON THE PHOTO as we see Bughuul standing in the dark distance of the room...

And suddenly, inside the photograph...

BUGHUUL STEPS OUT INTO THE LIGHT!

So and So LEAPS UP out of his chair.

He stands there for a moment, paralyzed with fear, then he looks back at the photo...

...and now Bughuul is GONE.

SO AND SO
(whispering)
Jesus fucking Christ!

So and So hears a CREAK on the stairs. He looks up, startled. There's another CREAK.

A dark shape emerges from the dark of the stairs.

So and So looks terrified. He gets up and creeps toward the sound.

The dark shape takes another step closer, becoming visible. It's Courtney, wearing a nightshirt and nothing else.

So and So breaths a sigh of relief.

COURTNEY
Can't sleep?

SO AND SO
No.

COURTNEY
Do you need anything?

SO AND SO
No. I think I'm good.

COURTNEY
You sure?

SO AND SO
Yeah.

Courtney turns to go back up the stairs, then thinks better of it.

COURTNEY
When a woman comes to you in a
night shirt the middle of the night
and asks you if need anything, it's
not because she thinks YOU need
something.

She puts out her hand.

SO AND SO
Oh!

COURTNEY
Come on.

So and So gets up, takes her hand and they creep quietly back up the stairs.

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - SAME

Dylan has his back to the door. His eyes are open as we see Courtney and So and So slip by in the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

Courtney and So and So slip into the room as Courtney slowly, silently, CLOSES it.

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - SAME

Milo stands in the doorway, looking in at Dylan. Dylan can't see him, but knows he's there.

MILO

Come on.

DYLAN

(whispering)

I don't wanna.

MILO

Would you rather listen to that?

DYLAN

I'm going to go to sleep.

MILO

Sweet dreams.

Dylan rolls over and gives Milo a telling look.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Milo and Dylan creep down the hall and down the stairs.

INT. ZACH'S BEDROOM - SAME

Zach awakes. He swings his legs out of bed and creeps into the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

Zach looks into Dylan's room, sees that he isn't there.

He hears the sound of creeping coming from downstairs and walks slowly toward it.

INT. CRAWLSPACE - NIGHT

Milo and Dylan sit on the floor. In Milo's hand is a 16mm film reel labeled "**SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE**"

MILO

You're gonna like this one. It's my favorite.

Dylan looks frightened, but determined to stay.

MILO

I made it.

DYLAN

Just play it.

Milo puts the needle on the record and flips the switch, and SHIT-SCARY MUSIC begins to play.

We track back out of the crawlspace and see...

ZACH

hiding, watching and listening with baited breath.

QUICK CUTS:

- Milo putting the reel on the projector.
- The film being threaded into the projector.
- The needle on the spinning vinyl record.
- Milo flips the switch on the projector lamp.

AND THE THIRD 16MM KILL FILM BEGINS...

ON SCREEN: A SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE IN THE CHURCH SANCTUARY:

THE REVEREND speaking from the pulpit.

PARISHIONERS standing and singing a hymn in unison.

FOUR LARGE SILVER BOWLS OF HOLY WATER are atop the altar. The Reverend dips his fingers into each, then BAPTIZES four different PARISHIONERS.

CRIMSON VELVET OFFERING BAGS are passed down each pew - the Parishioners place their financial offerings inside.

And now COMMUNION is being served by the Reverend and his FAMILY - A WIFE, A TEENAGE SON, A TEENAGE DAUGHTER, AND MILO. Each Family member holds a GOBLET OF WINE as the Parishioners dip the bread and partake of the sacrament.

The Parishioners all LEAVING the sanctuary, passing by the Reverend and his family as they go.

And now, with the Parishioners all gone, the Reverend privately serves communion to his family, and takes the sacrament himself.

AND WE HARD CUT TO THE SANCTUARY AT NIGHT:

CLOSE on the COMMUNION WINE GOBLET - the inside laced with the now-familiar PHOSPHORESCENT GLOW.

The PEWS have now all been moved off to the edge of the room.

The room is eerily lit by nothing but HOLY CANDLES.

On the wooden floor of the sanctuary, we see the REVEREND, his WIFE, and the TWO TEENAGE KIDS.

They have all been NAILED TO THE FLOOR by hands and feet - each of them has been CRUCIFIED. The CRIMSON VELVET OFFERING BAGS cover each of their heads.

Their SHIRTS have been pulled up, and A SILVER BAPTISM BOWL has been turned upside down, and STRAPPED atop each victim's exposed stomach.

In the center of the room, rests a small BLACK IRON POT filled with BLACK COALS.

CLOSE ON MILO'S ZIPPO LIGHTER as it's used LIGHT the coals.

JUMP CUT: THE COALS NOW BURN RED WITH HEAT.

Smoke rises in the room, filling the air with ominous dread.

The whole scene now looks like some kind of unholy ritual.

Each family member begins to awaken from their Bughuul-blood induced stupor. They begin to struggle against the pain in their hands and feet, but they are completely immobilized, pinned to the floorboards, like insects on display.

In the darkness beyond the altar, we now see...

BUGHUUL

He's barely visible. And then, from where he stands we see...

A DOZEN RATS

Scurry forward, toward the crucified family members.

The rats, as if commanded by Bughuul to do so, CRAWL under the upside-down silver bowls atop each victims stomach.

THE CAMERAMAN'S (Milo's) POV approaches each silver bowl, and TIGHTENS THE STRAPS, TRAPPING THE RATS ATOP THE STOMACHS OF EACH VICTIM.

Then the CAMERAMAN (Milo) uses BLACK TONGS to place HOT COALS ATOP EACH BOWL.

We don't see it, but we know exactly what is happening - the rats, to escape the heat, begin EATING THEIR WAY THROUGH EACH FAMILY MEMBER'S STOMACH.

The victims writhe in agony. STREAMS OF BLOOD spill out from underneath the bowls and onto the wooden floor.

We can't see the family member's covered faces, but we know that they are screaming. All we hear is the SHIT-SCARY music that still plays from the vinyl record.

The FINAL IMAGE is a CLOSE UP of the RATS, now COVERED IN BLOOD, gathering together in the center of the room. In a kind of brainsick frenzy, they CRAWL ALL OVER one another, their TAILS INTERTWINING...

CLOSE ON THE FILM REEL

as it SPINS OUT, SLAPPING against the projector.

Milo reaches over and shuts the projector off.

Dylan stares ahead in horrified silence. He knows now that these movies are real.

Dylan gets up and rushes out of the crawlspace.

Watching him leave, Milo smiles wickedly.

INT. RECTORY - NIGHT

Dylan moves quickly but quietly through the house and up to his bedroom. He doesn't see Zach hiding behind the couch.

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - SAME

Dylan climbs into bed and covers his head with the blanket.

INT. RECTORY - SAME

Milo now stands next to the crawlspace, staring out the window.

MILO
I know you're there.

Zach stands up from behind the couch.

ZACH
Why did you have to pick him?

Milo turns his head slowly. He glares evilly at Zach.

MILO
Because you're not good enough to
be one of us. You're not smart
enough to do what he can do.

Zach is almost in tears.

ZACH
Nuh uh. I'm better than him. And
I'm smarter too.

MILO
If you were, we would have chosen
you.
(beat)
Tell anyone about this and he'll
take you first and kill your whole
family.

Zach takes a step backward.

ZACH
Who, Dylan?

Milo shakes his head "no".

MILO
Then who?

Milo raises a stiff finger to his lips.

INT. COURTNEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

So and So rolls over, exhausted. Courtney gets out of bed and opens the bedroom window.

She opens the night stand drawer and pulls out a pack of cigarettes, pulling two from the pack with a lighter. Then she hops back into bed, pulling the covers over her.

She offers a smoke to So and So. He waves it off.

SO AND SO

No thanks.

She offers again, silently insisting.

SO AND SO

Oh, all right.

COURTNEY

That was easy.

She lights her smoke and then his.

SO AND SO

I didn't know you smoked.

COURTNEY

Neither do my boys, got it?

SO AND SO

Yeah.

COURTNEY

I used to smoke in High School. I thought it made me look cool. I know I shouldn't, but, it reminds me of what it was like... before... you know?

SO AND SO

There's always a before, isn't there? No matter how old you get, there are always things that come along and change the way you look at everything that comes after.

They both smoke, reflecting on that for a moment.

COURTNEY

What you said earlier today, about getting arrested. Was that true?

SO AND SO

Yeah.

COURTNEY

Is that why you're not a cop anymore?

SO AND SO

Kind of. The whole thing. I really screwed up.

COURTNEY

You didn't do it, did you? Whatever they arrested you for?

SO AND SO

No, no. But I sure made it look like I did.

COURTNEY

Was it that writer thing?

So and So nods.

SO AND SO

I gave him a bunch of files and information after the Sheriff told me not to. Since I was the last one to talk to him and the only other person they saw coming and going from their house, I was an easy suspect. I was cleared, but...

COURTNEY

Your boss was pissed that you went behind his back?

SO AND SO

Fired me the day I was cleared. Everyone googles you before they hire you these days. No one was going to ever hire me again.

COURTNEY

Do you miss it?

SO AND SO

Most days, yeah. What was yours? Was it your...your...Clint?

She shakes her head.

COURTNEY

You know, that's the thing. I didn't leave him because he hit me. He always had me thinking it was my fault, that I deserved it. That maybe if I were a better wife or... lover... he wouldn't have to.

SO AND SO

I wouldn't worry about the last part.

She smiles coyly.

COURTNEY

I don't.

Then she gets somber again.

COURTNEY

No. Even when I knew it wasn't me,
I stayed for my boys. Through three
broken ribs, a broken arm, both
collarbones.

SO AND SO

And he hit one of the boys too,
didn't he?

COURTNEY

Dylan. Sent him to the emergency
room. The cops weren't going to do
anything. Clint's business is that
whole town. He goes away, the work
goes away and there's no town.
Everyone's afraid of him.

SO AND SO

So you left.

COURTNEY

No one touches my boys. I'd do
anything to keep them safe.

EXT. RECTORY - MORNING

Courtney and So and So stand outside. Wearing a robe,
Courtney hands So and So a thermos of coffee.

COURTNEY

For the road.

SO AND SO

(touched)

Thank you.

COURTNEY

You're going to have to bring that
back.

SO AND SO

Tomorrow, I promise. Just a quick
trip home.

COURTNEY

Give me your phone.

So and so hands her his cell phone. She quickly puts her number in.

COURTNEY

There. Call me when you land so I know you got there safe. Or if you need anything.

So and so taps his phone. Courtney's phone buzzes.

SO AND SO

There. Same deal.

Courtney smiles and then goes back into the rectory.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Courtney goes to the sink and starts rinsing off the dirty breakfast dishes. She glances out the window and sees...

ZACH

Walking through the field behind the rectory, carrying something in his hand.

A SMALL, BEAUTIFUL BLACKBIRD

lands on a fence post about ten feet away. Zach starts moving carefully toward it.

Watching her son, Courtney SMILES...but then Zach stops and raises A SLINGSHOT.

POW!!! ZACH SHOOTS THE BLACKBIRD with a stone from the slingshot. Feathers fly and the blackbird drops to the ground.

Courtney FLINCHES with surprise.

The blackbird FLAPS AROUND HELPLESSLY, its wings broken. Zach approaches the helpless bird, smiling, then KICKS it like a soccer ball.

Courtney GASPS, covering her mouth in shock.

Now Zach marches over to the bird, and viciously STOMPS IT TO DEATH in a mad rage.

He picks up the dead blackbird, examines it up close, then tosses aside like a piece of used garbage.

Courtney stares at this moment, thunderstruck.

A single tear escapes her eye.

EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

A jet touches down.

INT. DOCTOR STOMBERG'S OFFICE - SAME

A bland room with no windows. Shelves of OCCULT BOOKS AND OTHER MATERIALS, neatly organized by someone who takes themselves very seriously.

DOCTOR STOMBERG sits behind his desk. He's young for a professor, good looking in a nerdy sort of way.

So and So sits directly across from him.

On the desk between them sits...

A VINTAGE WORLD WAR II ERA HAM RADIO.

Also on the desk is Stomberg's LAPTOP COMPUTER, connected to several small, quality SPEAKERS which face toward So and So.

STOMBERG

You ever hear of the Norwegian Hell
Call?

SO AND SO

No.

STOMBERG

Years ago, back in the 70's, several
Ham radio enthusiasts ran across a
numbers station broadcasting in the
middle of the night.

SO AND SO

What's a numbers station?

STOMBERG

Cold war stuff. Spies would
broadcast codes, over and over
again. Numbers usually.

SO AND SO

For passing secret messages back
and forth?

STOMBERG

Exactly. Ham Radio was the internet
of its day. Enthusiasts would stay
up all night, just listening to
static, trying to find broadcasts
no one else had found.

(MORE)

STOMBERG (CONT'D)

New broadcast stations used to cause a big stir whenever they would crop up. People recorded them, passed them around. And one night, out of nowhere, on a rarely used band, this children's piano starts tinkling.

Stomberg delivers this with a creepy smile, fluttering his fingers like he's playing the piano.

STOMBERG

And that was just the beginning. For years it would come and go, but no one could ever catch it on tape. Then, one night in the late 90s, someone did.

ON HIS COMPUTER, Stomberg clicks a file, and the speakers begin to PLAY:

GARBLED STATIC from a HAM RADIO RECORDING fades in. The eerie classic whine of tuning through the dial chips away at the static bit by bit until it becomes a dull crackling hum in the background.

We then hear a TINNY PIANO, like a child's toy, playing a melody. Then it plays again.

There's a short moment of silence. We slowly track in on the computer screen, just listening...

THE VOICE OF A LITTLE GIRL begins coldly RECITING NUMBERS in Norwegian. And then she says...

LITTLE GIRL

(Norwegian)

...Stop!

She recites the numbers again.

The tinny piano plays once more.

And then...

A WOMAN SCREAMS

Begging for her life in Norwegian, the WOMAN'S VOICE is MUFFLED like she's speaking through a gag. The pleading gets louder and more frenzied. It's very disturbing...

And then the woman's screams are joined by the sound of a SLOPPY AXE CHOP!

The little girl begins yelling, but we don't translate it.

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)
 (Norwegian)
*Bughuul can't hear me over your
 yelling, mom!*

In the background we hear muffled mumbles and groans. Then more axe chops. The chops get more frequent, more frenzied.

And then it STOPS. Silence.

Then the tinny piano.

And the numbers one last time.

Then we hear nothing but a wall of static...

STOMBERG
 People argue over what many of
 these old ham radio stations mean -
 the numbers and all. But not this
 one. The numbers spoken by the
 little girl were not a code.

SO AND SO
 What were they?

STOMBERG
 Coordinates.

SO AND SO
 Like longitude and latitude?

STOMBERG
 Precisely.

So and So is visibly weirded out and squirms in his seat.

SO AND SO
 To what?

STOMBERG
 To a house. A small farm. In the
 middle of Norway. Where a family
 was murdered...in 1973.

Stomberg slides several CRIME SCENE PHOTOS across the desk, as well as A SNAPSHOT of the family inside their house.

So and So shivers, bristling. He peruses the photos.

Stomberg reaches across and points to the family snapshot. In the background is...

THE SAME HAM RADIO THAT NOW SITS ON THE DESK.

Close on So and So as his blood runs cold. He swallows hard.

STOMBERG

That broadcast you just heard has been playing on that frequency, on and off, for thirty years.

SO AND SO

Anyone ever trace the source?

STOMBERG

No. The reason numbers stations were so popular with spooks is that it takes a long time and a lot of work to triangulate them. One that comes on for five minutes...

SO AND SO

You could never track it. Tell me, was there a -

STOMBERG

- Missing child?

Stomberg nods.

STOMBERG

Did you hear the best part?

SO AND SO

There was a best part?

Stomberg runs the file back a bit.

LITTLE GIRL

(Norwegian)

Bughuul can't hear me-

So and So looks up, startled.

SO AND SO

Bughuul.

(thinks a moment)

There are other broadcasts, aren't there?

STOMBERG

At least three others like it.

SO AND SO

Where did you get this radio?

STOMBERG

It was sent over with Jonas's things.

SO AND SO

Jonas found the pattern. To the next house.

STOMBERG

In Oswalt's papers he wrote about finding 8mm films that never turned up. Jonas chased leads for years about wood carvings and frescos, but nothing ever came of it. Until this.

Stomberg points at the radio.

STOMBERG

It played one of the broadcasts the other night, you know. One I'd never heard before.

(beat)

That's when I knew it was all real. That's why I had to call.

SO AND SO

Why the art? The films? The broadcasts?

STOMBERG

They're offerings. Maybe Bughuul can't kill for himself. Maybe he just likes doing it. Maybe, just maybe, he can only feed on corrupted souls.

SO AND SO

But why go from house to house, only killing families after they've moved away from the scene of a previous murder?

STOMBERG

Whatever this thing is, it wants to stay hidden. It wants to stay a myth. No one's ever written a book on Bughuul. Ellison couldn't. Jonas couldn't. And I don't think anyone ever will.

So and So nods.

STOMBERG

The little girl in the broadcast.
It's Norwegian. She says "Quiet.
Bughuul can't hear me over your
yelling, mom."

So and So begins putting it all together.

SO AND SO

You ever go out to the Oswalt
house?

STOMBERG

The one with the hallway painted in
Oswalt's blood? Somebody burned it
down before I could.

SO AND SO

Have you seen the Oswalt's King
County house where they were living
before moving back home?

STOMBERG

You're talking about the little
girl's room. The paintings?

SO AND SO

They match the style and brush
strokes of those at the murder
scene.

STOMBERG

Yes they do.

So and So reels in horror.

SO AND SO

It's the kids.

STOMBERG

He gets the kids.

SUDDENLY, THE HAM RADIO CRACKLES TO LIFE!

We hear THE VOICES OF SEVERAL CHILDREN singing a NORWEGIAN
CHILDREN'S SONG through the static.

Over the song we hear the previous few words just spoken by
Stomberg and So and So, repeated over and over again:

HAM RADIO

It's the kids. He gets the kids.
It's the kids. He gets the kids.
It's the kids. He gets the kids.

So and So jumps out of his chair, staring at the ham radio on the desk.

Then he unplugs the radio from the wall, gaping at Stomberg.

SO AND SO
You need to destroy that.

STOMBERG
(aghast)
Yeah. I really do.

CUT TO:

A FIST HITTING A FACE WITH A LOUD SMACK!

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Dylan hits the ground, reaching for his bloody nose.

Zach steps into frame, fists balled.

ZACH
I'm better than you.

He kicks Dylan.

ZACH
You hear me? I am better than you.

DYLAN
Stop it!

ZACH
Say it!

DYLAN
What?

ZACH
Say I'm better than you!

DYLAN
No!

Zach starts pounding on his brother, while Dylan crawls into the fetal position, taking the beating.

For an instant, Dylan looks up but instead of seeing Zach he sees CLINT, standing over him, fists balled like Zach's.

CLINT

SAY IT!

Dylan cowers.

DYLAN

Okay! Okay! You're better than me!
You're better than me!

He looks back up. Zach is above him again.

ZACH

Say you're nothing. Say they made a
mistake.

Now Zach looks up and sees...

THE FIVE GHOST KIDS - Milo, Ted, Emma, and the two others.

They are all standing in a semi-circle behind Dylan. They
look pissed.

In unison, they all take a single step toward Zach, who takes
a step back. He stumbles and falls backward.

ZACH

I hate you! I hate all of you! I'm
telling mom!

Milo shakes his head and puts a single finger to his lips.

MILO

Sssshhhh.

Zach scrambles to his feet and runs off.

Dylan wipes tears from his eyes and sobs a little. He pushes
himself to his feet.

EMMA

You don't deserve that.

TED

You should do something about him.

GHOST KID 4

And your father.

GHOST KID 5

And your mother.

DYLAN

My mother didn't do anything.

MILO
She's doing your new friend.

Dylan wipes tears from his eyes again and then turns and runs off toward the house.

EXT. RECTORY - NIGHT

COURTNEY (V.O.)
Damnit, Zachary!

INT. RECTORY - SAME

Courtney looms over Zach, waving an angry finger. Dylan is behind her with a piece of tissue paper in his nose.

COURTNEY
What were you thinking? You do not
hit your brother. Ever!

ZACH
But mom!

COURTNEY
But mom, what? Give me one good
reason why it was okay to hit your
brother?

Zach thinks about it for a moment.

ZACH
Because, they -

- Dylan shakes his head, scared out of his wits.

COURTNEY
Who? They who?

Zach thinks better of it, then says defiantly:

ZACH
Never mind. I'm sorry, okay?

COURTNEY
Tell that to your brother.

Zach looks indignantly at his brother.

ZACH
I'm sorry.

COURTNEY
Like you mean it.

ZACH
I'm sorry.

COURTNEY
Now go to your room. Don't take a
single step out until I tell you.

Zach storms off, fuming. Courtney turns to Dylan and puts on a more mothering demeanor. She walks over and puts an arm around him.

DYLAN
I didn't do anything.

COURTNEY
I know, sweetie. I know. Some
people... well, you take after me.
Your brother...

DYLAN
Takes after dad.

COURTNEY
I didn't mean that.

DYLAN
But it's true. And you know it.

Dylan starts walking toward his room.

COURTNEY
Don't you want supper?

Dylan shakes his head, not looking back.

COURTNEY
(whispering)
Fuck.

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - LATER

Dylan awakens to STATIC SOUND of the vinyl record player.

He covers his head with the pillow, but can't get the sound out of his head.

He gets up and goes to the door.

Across the hall, looking out his door, is Zach.

The twin boys make eye contact. Zach moves to step out of his door, but Dylan shakes his head then points to their mother's door - a warning.

Zach looks down at the floor of his doorway and makes sure his feet are in the room. He grimaces at Dylan.

Dylan creeps down the stairs.

INT. RECTORY - SAME

The door to the crawlspace is open. Flickering light spills out of it. Dylan goes down it.

INT. CRAWLSPACE - SAME

ALL FIVE GHOST KIDS are in the room, sitting on the floor, the projector set up and ready to go.

Dylan shakes his head.

DYLAN

Not tonight. I don't -

MILO

- It has to be tonight.

DYLAN

No.

MILO

It has to be. If we don't do this tonight...

DYLAN

Then what?

EMMA

He'll get real mad at us.

TED

You don't want to make him mad.

MILO

Tomorrow everything changes. If we don't watch Peter's film tonight, everything is ruined.

PETER (Ghost Kid 4) is 10 years old, and wears only pajamas. He holds a film reel that reads "**KITCHEN REMODEL.**"

PETER
 (pleading)
 Please, Dylan?

Dylan swallows hard, then nods.

They all smile.

QUICK CUTS:

- Peter putting the reel on the projector.
- The film being threaded into the projector.
- The needle on the vinyl record.
- Peter flipping the switch on the projector lamp.

AND THE FOURTH 16MM KILL FILM BEGINS...

ON SCREEN: A LARGE KITCHEN IN AN UPSCALE HOME.

The kitchen is in the middle of a minor REMODEL - unfinished CUPBOARDS, stacks of soon-to-be-placed FLOOR TILES, PIPES, and VARIOUS WRENCHES are strewn about.

THE FATHER is working underneath the new sink, sealing in the base. He uses a handheld WORK LIGHT to illuminate the dark space inside the cabinet below the sink.

In the background we see THE MOTHER, 14-YEAR-OLD SON and PETER eating dinner at the kitchen table.

THE FILM STUTTERS AND JUMP CUTS TO NIGHT:

CLOSE on the dinner glasses, glowing green.

JUMP CUT TO CLOSE ON THE FAUCET: COLD WATER POURS OUT.

JUMP CUT TO A WIDER SHOT: we see the water from the faucet running through the sink, but there is no piping below - the water pours out angrily into the empty cabinet and out onto the floor.

JUMP CUT TO WIDER SHOT: The WORK LIGHT now hangs from the ceiling, casting an eerie light around the room.

Now we see the family - Father, Mother, and older brother, bound and gagged with duct tape, each laying on their backs on the kitchen floor, which is now FLOODED with SEVERAL INCHES OF WATER.

One by one, the family members begin to waken from their drugged state, helplessly struggling in the water.

THE CAMERA PANS over to...

A TOASTER on the counter.

JUMP CUT TO A HIGH ANGLE: The TOASTER, now plugged into an orange EXTENSION CORD, IS THROWN ACROSS THE ROOM. It strikes the light, creating a dizzy lighting effect on the room.

And then the toaster lands in the water...

THE FAMILY IS ELECTROCUTED!

The three bodies CONVULSE as the deadly volts tear through their bodies.

SMOKE AND SPARKS rise from the toaster, and the bodies begins to BLEED from the mouth and ears...it's an excruciating sight.

BACK ON DYLAN

He can't watch - he covers his eyes. The films are taking their toll on him.

BACK ON SCREEN the toaster finally dies out, and the bodies stop convulsing. All three are dead - surrounded by smoke and water mixed with blood.

CLOSE ON THE PROJECTOR as it spins out, slapping against the projector.

MILO turns off the projector and begins removing the reel.

CATHERINE (Ghost Kid 5), age 14, wears a beautiful WHITE DRESS that is covered with BLOOD SPATTER.

She pulls a vinyl record and film reel out of the box. The kids work together assembling and disassembling the projector with precision - as if they've done it hundreds of times before.

Catherine holds up the reel which reads "**RECITAL PRACTICE**".

CATHERINE
(to Dylan)
We saved the best for last.

DYLAN
No. No more.

MILO
Just. One. More.

DYLAN
No.

The ghost kids all turn and look at Dylan, angry.

And now, for the first time in the movie, they look like the ghost kids from the first - veiny, pale white, evil.

MILO

YES!

Dylan is freaked out. He jumps up and runs out of the crawlspace.

INT. RECTORY - SAME

Dylan makes his way toward the stairs, but Peter is standing there, reaching for him.

Dylan turns around, but the other four are behind him, walking toward him slowly.

MILO

Get downstairs, Dylan.

Dylan shakes his head.

MILO

Get. Down. Stairs.

He scrambles for the door and runs out side.

He reaches for the door, flings it open...

EXT. RECTORY - CONTINUOUS

He runs outside, but they're waiting for him, several ghost kids blocking his path, leaving only one way to run.

Dylan runs for THE CHURCH!

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Dylan BURSTS into the main sanctuary at full speed. He sees the BLOOD POOLS on the ground - not wanting to step in them, he hops over one and navigates around another.

He reaches the front of the church - it's darker up here. He turns and looks behind him and sees...

BUGHUUL STALKING RIGHT TOWARD HIM!

Dylan TAKES OFF RUNNING into...

INT. DARK HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Dylan RUSHES down the hallway, deeper into the inky darkness.

Behind him, Bughuul follows in slow motion - just like Clint followed Dylan in the opening nightmare.

Dylan DUCKS into...

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM

The same room that So and So investigated earlier: chairs, round tables, and flannelgraph boards.

Dylan closes the door behind him and COWERS under a table, breathing heavily.

Light streams in under the door. Two large feet appear, blocking some of the light.

The door knob jiggles. But it's locked.

Dylan stares at the doorknob, terrified. The feet move away.

Dylan comes out from under the table, and behind him...

THE FIVE GHOST KIDS

step out of the dark shadows of the room.

MILO

Last chance to watch the last movie, Dylan.

DYLAN

No! I won't watch any more movies. I don't want to be like you!

The Ghost kids all smile.

MILO

That's fine. They were never really meant for you anyway.

DYLAN

What?

MILO

You did what we needed you to do.

And with that, the ghost kids VANISH.

Dylan stands there, alone in the dark. The only thing we hear is the sound of his breathing.

EXT. CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

Dylan exits the church and heads back toward the rectory. He looks around nervously, expecting something to happen...but nothing does...

INT. RECTORY - CONTINUOUS

Dylan enters the house, and immediately he hears THE PROJECTOR RUNNING, accompanied by VINYL STATIC and the recorded sounds of PEOPLE SCREAMING.

He creeps slowly through the house. Finally reaching...

THE TRAPDOOR

He gets on his knees and PEERS into...

THE CRAWLSPACE

There, before the makeshift screen, sits DYLAN surrounded by ALL FIVE GHOST KIDS.

The 16mm film spins out, slaps against the projector.

ZACH

That was awesome. Let's watch another.

DYLAN

(whispers)

Zach.

Wanting to rescue his brother from this horror, Dylan steps down into the crawlspace...

DYLAN

(louder)

ZACH!

...But then Zach and all five ghost kids turn at once, fingers to their lips. SSSHHHHH.

Silently, Catherine stands, holding up her film entitled **"PIANO RECITAL"**.

QUICK CUTS:

- The film being threaded into the projector.
- The needle on the vinyl record.
- Catherine flipping the switch on the projector lamp.

AND THE FIFTH 16MM KILL FILM BEGINS...

On the VINYL RECORD, we hear BEAUTIFUL PIANO MUSIC.

ON SCREEN: We are inside a SCHOOL AUDITORIUM of a wealthy PRIVATE SCHOOL, we see CATHERINE playing the piano as part of a school recital.

Watching Catherine from the audience is her MOTHER, FATHER, and two YOUNGER SISTERS.

JUMP CUT to the FAMILY HOME, huge, upscale. In the massive living room is a full GRAND PIANO. Post-recital, the room buzzes with guests who all eat, drink and mingle.

JUMP CUT TO NIGHT. We are now in the BACKYARD.

The MUSIC has ended - we hear a DISTANT CACOPHONY OF SOUNDS.

The CAMERA'S (CATHERINE'S) POV moves across the yard toward...

AN OPEN TOOL SHED

The shed is already in shambles: tools, power chords, etc are strewn about the lawn in front of the shed.

It's as if somebody has already gone through the shed in a kind of mad craze.

The CAMERA POV continues forward into the shed, knocking more objects over. Looking for something...

On the floor near the back, the camera ZOOMS IN ON...

A LONG CHAIN

We hear the chain as one end is picked up off the ground and then is DRAGGED BACK across the lawn.

As we approach the house, the CACOPHONY OF SOUNDS get LOUDER.

We enter the dark house.

We move carefully, quietly through an opulent DEN, and then down A LONG, DARK HALLWAY.

The CACOPHONY OF SOUNDS is getting louder. We can now make out the awful sounds of RUNNING POWER TOOLS.

The camera swings around and we see THE CHAIN being dragged behind by the cameraman (Catherine).

We cross another large room and into another hallway, then turn and enter...

THE LARGE LIVING ROOM - A TERRIBLE SIGHT:

The lid of the GRAND PIANO LID is HELD OPEN by the LID PROP.

The family of four has been bound and gagged with PIANO WIRE that CUTS into their skin, and their bodies have been carefully placed INSIDE THE BODY OF THE PIANO, their heads facing the down at keyboard. Execution style.

Above each individual family member, attached to the LID of the piano, is a RUNNING POWER TOOL.

Above DAD'S HEAD is a running POWER DRILL.

Above MOM'S HEAD: a running handheld POWER SAW.

Above THE FIRST SISTER'S HEAD: a five-inch POWER NAIL GUN.

Above THE SECOND SISTER'S HEAD: a running POWER GRINDER.

The CACOPHONY OF SOUND is now deafening, and very disturbing.

JUMP CUT: Now THE CHAIN is attached to the LID PROP.

Slowly, the CHAIN TIGHTENS, as it is PULLED BACK.

And then...

WHAM!! THE LID PROP SNAPS IN HALF, and THE PIANO LID FALLS!

THE DRILL, SAW, GRINDER, AND NAIL GUN DROP ONTO THE FOUR HEADS BELOW.

CUT TO DYLAN - HE COVERS HIS EYES.

We hear the continuing sound of DRILLING, SAWING, STAPLING, AND GRINDING. SCREAMS and GROANS. A hideous audio assault.

Dylan turns from the screen and covers his ears, trying to block out the sound.

Milo approaches, leans in close to him and whispers.

MILO

*Tell anyone, say one word, and
we'll kill you and your whole
family. Then we'll watch the film
over and over and over.*

The film SPINS OUT. All we hear now is VINYL STATIC and the sound of film slapping against the projector.

Zach slowly approaches Dylan with a clenched fist.

ZACH
Go to bed, Dylan. Or I'll make you
wish you had.

Dylan climbs up out of the crawlspace. Zach turns to Milo:

ZACH
Let's watch another.

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Dylan cowers in bed, eyes pinched tight, hands over his ears, trying to drown out the sound of the skipping record static and the projector.

He opens his eyes, and there on the pillow...

A HUGE BLACK WIDOW is inches from his face. He slowly sits up and stares at it, numb to yet another horrific occurrence.

He dumps the spider from his pillow onto the ground, then watches blank-faced as it crawls away.

INT. RECTORY - MORNING

There is a knock at the door.

Courtney answers in a robe. The door opens to reveal Officer Shermer and Trooper 1. Behind them we see Clint standing next his truck and a moving truck pulling in.

COURTNEY
What the hell is this?

OFFICER SHERMER
Guess who?

COURTNEY
We've been through this. He doesn't
have a court order.

Officer Shermer holds up a freshly minted court order.

OFFICER SHERMER
He does now.

COURTNEY
What...?

She snatches the order and pushes past the officers.

EXT. RECTORY - CONTINUOUS

COURTNEY

There wasn't a hearing! What the hell is this shit?

CLINT

There was an emergency hearing. Last night. Sorry you couldn't make it.

Courtney looks down at the court order in her hand.

COURTNEY

Judge Simmons? Rory Simmons? His boys work for you!

CLINT

You'd be hard pressed to find anyone within five counties that doesn't have family that works for me.

COURTNEY

You son of a bitch!

She charges Clint, but the officers restrain her.

COURTNEY

This isn't right! This isn't legal.

OFFICER SHERMER

Don't make this any harder than it has to be. Don't let your kids see you in cuffs.

Clint nods to the officers and they release her.

COURTNEY

You can't keep me from seeing my boys.

CLINT

Our boys. And I won't. I'm just taking them back where they belong. You're welcome to come with them if you like.

COURTNEY

Fuck you. I'm not going back.

CLINT

Then that's on you. If you want to stay here and shack up with your new boyfriend that's your choice.

Clint steps close to Courtney, speaking so only she can hear.

CLINT

You can either stay here without the boys fighting in the courts for custody until you run out of money, or you can come home with me and spend all the time in the world with them. Either way I'm taking them.

INT. RECTORY - MORNING

Courtney walks through the house, looking for something. She looks behind the couch, in the kitchen, then goes upstairs.

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Courtney leans down and looks under Dylan's bed. There, cowering back in the darkest part, is Dylan.

COURTNEY

Pack your stuff. Quickly.

Dylan shakes his head.

COURTNEY

The police are here. If you don't come out on your own -

DYLAN

- We can't go.

COURTNEY

Baby, we have to. We're going home.

DYLAN

You don't understand. You don't know what's going to happen.

COURTNEY

Nothing's going to happen.

DYLAN

He's going to hurt us.

Courtney sighs, broken.

COURTNEY

I don't like this any more than you do. But I won't let that happen. I'm going to take care of us, okay.
(MORE)

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

I'm going to make sure no one ever hurts us again.

DYLAN

You can't do that.

COURTNEY

Your father won't ever touch you again. I promise. Get your stuff. Don't make the cops do it. They'll just break everything.

Courtney gets up and exits.

DYLAN

(whispering)

I didn't mean dad.

Dylan shuffles out from under the bed. He looks up and sees Zach standing in his doorway, smiling wickedly.

INT. TRUCK - LATER

Clint drives. The boys sit in the back seat, all of their belongings stuffed and covered in the bed of the truck. We look back out the truck window to see the SUV following close behind.

INT. SUV - SAME

Courtney drives, crying.

EXT. RECTORY - NIGHT

So and So pulls up to the Rectory, glances around. The house is dark and the SUV is gone.

He walks up to the window and peeks in. The kitchen has been hastily emptied. There's nothing left.

SO AND SO

No, no, no. Not again.

He pulls out his phone and dials.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Courtney's phone lights up, buzzing.

Clint and Courtney sit across one another at the dinner table, the boys on either side of them. Courtney looks down at the phone and grimaces. She's in trouble.

Clint looks at the phone, puts out his hand and snaps his fingers. Courtney hands him the phone. Clint begins typing a text, then sets the phone back down next to him, smiling.

CLINT
Pass the mashed potatoes.

EXT. RECTORY - EVENING

So and So looks at his phone. The text reads DON'T EVER CALL THIS PHONE AGAIN. SIGNED, HER FUCKING HUSBAND.

So and So looks very concerned. He takes a deep breath, his finger hovers over the CALL button.

SO AND SO
(boldly)
No. Not again. Not this time.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

So and So drives.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Courtney picks at her food, but tries to put on a brave face. Zach enjoys his smugly, as if it tastes like victory. Dylan just stares down at his plate.

CLINT
(to Dylan)
You haven't touched your food.

DYLAN
I'm not hungry.

CLINT
I don't give a shit if you're hungry. Eat.

Dylan pushes a little food around on his plate with his fork. Clint grows visibly upset. He clenches a fist. Dylan's eyes go wide.

Dylan puts scoops a forkful of mashed potatoes. He looks up at Zach, who is chewing through his subtle grin. Dylan puts the potatoes in his mouth.

CLINT
That's better.

Clint finishes off the last few bites on his plate as everyone eats in silence. Then he leans back and pats his belly.

CLINT
Man. After a meal like that, I am
going to sleep well tonight.
(beat)
This. I love this. All of us back
together again. This is gonna be
great. I promise.

INT. DOCTOR STOMBERG'S OFFICE - NIGHT

A single desk lamp illuminates the room.

Stomberg sits at his desk, looking through a FILE FOLDER of material that once belonged to PROFESSOR JONAS.

Along with various crime scene photos and images of the Ham Radio, Stomberg sees ARTWORK from throughout the centuries.

Each piece of art contains THE BUGHUUL SYMBOL and images of BLACK CREATURES - specifically, we see BLACK RATS (tied together as a RAT KING), BLACKBIRDS, and BLACK WIDOWS...

From the corner of the room, THE RADIO CRACKLES to life. Stomberg jumps, startled. He looks over at the cord. It's still unplugged.

We hear CHILDREN LAUGHING, singing a children's song in Norwegian. The sound fades in and out with the telltale whine of Ham Radio interference.

Stomberg gets up and steps back, terrified. He listens, then his curiosity gets the better of him and he moves his hand cautiously toward the knob to get better reception.

We close in slowly on the radio. It roars to life again.

RADIO CHILD (O.C.)
You shouldn't have kept it.

Stomberg jumps again. But behind him now is...

BUGHUUL!

Bughuul grabs him.

We cut immediately back to the radio which crackles with the sound of Stomberg screaming, the sound of knives stabbing him repeatedly.

STOMBERG (O.C.)
Oh God! Please God no!

WE PULL BACK SLOWLY to see Stomberg is now nowhere to be seen as the sounds of his death echo from the radio through the empty building...

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

The house sits alone in a dark field, fog rolling in.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Courtney sits at a dressing table, getting ready for bed. Clint slips in beside her and kisses her on the neck from behind.

COURTNEY
Stop it.

CLINT
You best get in the mood, Courtney.
It's been months. Not all of us
took our marriage vows so lightly.

There's a FURIOUS KNOCK at the door.

CLINT
What the?
(serious)
Stay here.

INT. FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

The door opens. It's So and So. Clint's eyes go wild.

SO AND SO
Mr. Collins, I'm sorry to bother
you so late, but I need to speak
with -

CLINT
- The hell you do.

SO AND SO
You don't understand, there's
something -

CLINT

- No, I get it. A woman like that,
once you've broken off a piece,
well, there's no just giving it
back.

SO AND SO

No, sir, you -

CLINT

- But she's my wife. My. Wife.

SO AND SO

You're in danger.

Clint steps out the door and gets in So and So's face. So and So gives him ground, cowering a little, expecting to get punched.

CLINT

Are you fucking threatening me?

He pushes So and So in the chest. So and So instinctively goes for his sidearm, but there's nothing there. He's not a deputy anymore and suddenly his eyes betray that realization.

Clint leans in close, speaking slowly and clearly so there is no miscommunication.

CLINT

If you ever step foot on my
property again, I'm going to shoot
you. If I ever pass you in the
street, I'm going to shoot you. And
if you ever try to contact Courtney
again, I'm going to take it out of
her hide, and then I'm going to
find you and I'm going to shoot
you. Now, have I made myself
perfectly clear?

So and So nods.

CLINT

Now, get the fuck off my property.
If you'll excuse me, I'm going to
go fuck my wife.

Clint walks back into the house, slams the door.

So and So pushes himself to his feet, then walks slowly, beaten, back to his car. We follow him. This is the long walk of defeat. He's failed. Again. He opens his car door, then takes one more longing look at the house and climbs in his car.

INT. SO AND SO'S CAR - SAME

So and So closes the car door, puts his key in the ignition, but doesn't turn it. He stares vacantly. All is lost.

EXT. WHEAT FIELD - DAY

A bright, sunny day. Beautiful like all is right with the world.

We follow behind Zach as he walks through the wheat field. He gets a little ahead of us and we see he's carrying something...

A 16MM CAMERA.

As he gets to the edge of the field, he gets down on one knee and begins filming.

Now we see what he's filming: the rest of his family, picnicking beside a tractor.

Dylan Looks forlorn, Courtney is trying to keep it together, but Clint is master of the roost, happy as can be.

Zach sticks a tripod in the dirt, locks off the camera. He turns to see...

THE FIVE GHOST KIDS

all standing beside him, smiling. Zach smiles wickedly and then runs off into the shot to be with his family.

Zach is making his kill film.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

The sun sets, light fades.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Clint sips a BEER, Courtney a glass of wine. They sit with Dylan and Zach watching television. It's like a smugly satisfied Norman Rockwell painting.

ZACH

Can I get you another beer, Dad?

CLINT

Yes you can, son.

Clint hands him his empty bottle. Zach also takes Courtney's empty WINE GLASS.

ZACH
I'll get you more wine too, Mom.

COURTNEY
No, I'm fine, thank you.

CLINT
Get her another glass. We need to
loosen things up around here.

Zach eyes Dylan and walks toward the kitchen.

INT. RECTORY - SAME

Dylan stares at Courtney's phone on the edge of the table.
Carefully, without Clint noticing, he takes Courtney's PHONE.

Then he gets up and walks toward...

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

As he enters the dark kitchen, Milo appears.

MILO
What are you doing, Dylan?

Dylan looks over Milo's shoulder and sees Zach, holding
CLINT'S BEER and COURTNEY'S WINE GLASS. Next to him we can
make out part of Bughuul, his hands clenched into fists,
green goo dripping from them into the glasses.

DYLAN
Nothing. Looking for Zach.

EMMA
Go back and watch TV, Dylan.

TED
You're not wanted Dylan. You're not
one of us.

PETER
You never were, Dylan.

AND NOW THE GHOST KIDS MOVE TOWARD HIM!

Dylan turns and runs into...

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

He shuts the door and locks it. The light is off. Dylan is
lit only by the phone. He's typing furiously.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

So and So sits at the motel table, staring at an opened bottle of bourbon, glass in hand. His phone BUZZES. He looks down. COURTNEY COLLINS.

He picks up the phone. It reads: HE'S COMING. HELP US.

So and So picks up the phone and types.

INT. BATHROOM - SAME

The phone buzzes in Dylan's hand. It reads: THAT'S BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND, COURTNEY. Dylan begins to type back.

Then Milo emerges from the dark of the bathroom.

MILO

What do you think you're doing,
Dylan?

DYLAN

Go away.

The doorknob jiggles.

ZACH (O.C.)

Open the door, Dylan.

DYLAN

Go away!

MILO

You know what's going to happen.
It's what always happens.

Dylan presses send.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - SAME

So and So reads the text: NOT MOM. DYLAN. NOT DAD COMING. HURRY.

So and So types back.

INT. BATHROOM

The text reads: WHO IS COMING? Dylan types as he talks.

Now a KNOCK at the bathroom door.

ZACH (O.C.)
Opennnnnn the dooooooor, Dylllllllan.

Milo looks up at the door. Emma is standing there, and turns the lock on the door.

The door bursts open and Zach JUMPS on his brother.

Dylan struggles, but Zach holds his head against the bathroom tile with one hand. He's unbelievably strong.

In his other hand he holds a glass which he force feeds Dylan. As Dylan struggles against it, choking on the liquid, he presses send on the phone.

DYLAN'S POV: looking up at his brother, his vision BLURS and then SLOWLY FADES TO BLACK.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - SAME

So and So stares down at the text, horrorstruck. The text from Dylan reads: MR. BOOGIE.

So and So sits back in his chair and thinks for a long second. Then he grabs his phone and his keys and walks out the door.

Just as he steps through the threshold, he stops, steps back in, reaches up and pulls down the crucifix.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Zach enters the room carrying a tray of drinks.

CLINT
What was all that ruckus?

Zach hands his parents drink.

ZACH
Dylan wouldn't let me into the bathroom. I had to go.

Clint and Courtney both sip their drinks.

Then after a moment, Clint's POV BLURS AND FADES, just as Dylan did.

INT. BURLAP SACK - NIGHT

Clint's POV fades back into focus. All we see is burlap sack.

CLINT
(groggy)
What the happy horse shit is...

A TRACTOR ENGINE roars to life. Everything starts to vibrate.

EXT. WHEAT FIELD - SAME

Zach is in the seat of A HUG HARVESTER TRACTOR, slowly pulling forward.

A rope tied to the back of the harvester tightens, slowly raising A SCARECROW POLE.

Clint is fastened to the pole, a burlap sack over his head. As soon as the pole is erect, Zach stop the harvester and hops down and stares up at Clint.

On the ground we see Dylan and Courtney, tied to scarecrow poles of their own, facing Clint's direction - it's a mockery of the classic 3-cross crucifixion image.

Next to the crosses are A CAMERA and A GRAMOPHONE.

Zach picks up the camera and walks toward Clint.

CLINT
(muffled)
What the FUCK? Get me down from here!

ZACH
What's the matter, Scarecrow?

Zach reaches down, pointing the camera at the ground.

From here on we're in the CAMERA'S POV...

AND ZACH'S 16MM KILL FILM BEGINS...

There's a trail of fluid in the dirt. Zach flips MILO'S LIGHTER, setting the trail on fire.

The fire races up the Scarecrow pole, SETTING CLINT ON FIRE!

Clint flails around, screaming, then eventually goes limp.

The camera walks slowly over to the harvester and we watch as it is hoisted into the cab. The camera is then placed up front so we have a view out ahead of the whirling blades.

The harvester lurches forward, and slowly approaches Courtney and Dylan.

The harvester is going to shred them to pieces.

Closer, closer, closer, but then we HEAR SOMETHING...

The harvester turns, the camera light illuminates SO AND SO, his car is parked in the distance, RUNNING toward into the field toward COURTNEY AND DYLAN.

The harvester comes to a stop. The camera is lifted and we see Zach pick up a WHEAT SICKLE.

The POV stalks slowly through the field, but because Zach is short, visibility is limited.

For a minute or so, it's cat and mouse. So and So evading Dylan, and he stalks him with the sickle.

And then we hear a RUSTLING SOUND AHEAD...

The POV SURGES FORWARD...but So and So isn't there.

Hearing another noise, Zach's camera POV SWINGS AROUND and sees So and So, now far behind him, RUSHING FAST toward Dylan and Courtney.

Closing in fast, we see So and So pull a POCKET KNIFE and quickly try to cut Courtney and Dylan loose.

The POV closes all the way in...

So and So turns around, just as the CHARGING POV reaches him...

THE SICKLE SWINGS

So and So instinctively falls back, lifting a hand to protect his head...

AND THE SICKLE SLICES OF SO AND SO'S HAND!

SO AND SO

Ahhhhhhh!

The knife drops but is just out of Courtney's reach. She struggles to reach it, but can't.

So and So tackles the camera - the camera goes on its side as we see So and So's legs as he struggles to restrain Zach.

Courtney writhes around, positioning herself to pop her collarbone out of place. As she does, she winces in pain.

She lifts her arm out, grabs the knife and awkwardly cuts herself free. She gets up and cuts Dylan free.

SO AND SO

RUN!

So and So moves his stump into frame as Zach's foot kicks it.

So and So howls!

Courtney and Dylan take off back toward the Farmhouse.

Zach's camera POV now swings up and sees Courtney and Dylan run into the farmhouse.

Wasting no time, Zach's POV rushes toward them.

Covered in So and So's blood, Zach screams. This is the moment from DYLAN'S dream.

Then Zach RUSHES after Courtney and Dylan.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

A series of JUMP CUTS:

- Zach's camera POV searches the dark house.
- Through the living room, down dark hallways.
- Up the stairs, slowly. Then looking through rooms, under beds, inside closets.

We hear the sound of distant SIRENS.

The camera POV goes to the window, and in the distance Zach sees APPROACHING POLICE VEHICLES.

The POV moves warily down the stairs, and finds So and So standing in the front doorway. His shirt is off, having tied off his arm to stop the bleeding.

Behind So and So is Courtney and Dylan.

SO AND SO

It's over Zach. The police are here.

(beat)

You're not making him a film.

And now we hear the SOUND OF THE PROJECTOR coming from THE ATTIC.

The POV turns and moves toward...

INT. ATTIC - MOMENTS LATER

Zach's POV steps up through a TRAP DOOR into the dark space.

He sees ALL FIVE GHOST KIDS staring him, shaking their heads, terrified.

The image we see is also PROJECTED ON THE SCREEN like a live feed filming itself.

MILO

He's gonna be mad.

EMMA

He's going to be so mad.

MILO

It's over. We never get to come back.

ZACH

I'm not finished!

MILO

It's too late, Zach. You had to kill them all.

The Ghost Kids looks past Milo, afraid. BUGHUUL is behind Zach.

ZACH

(scared)

Wh-what does that mean...?

BUGHUUL SNATCHES ZACH UP, the camera-POV falls SIDEWAYS to the ground. We still see the screen and the five ghost kids.

ZACH

No! NOOOO!

And now Bughuul CARRIES ZACH INTO THE PROJECTED IMAGE!

We see him walk further and further back, until he lost in the shadows.

And the projected image ROLLS OUT.

We CUT BACK WIDE within the attic.

THE ATTIC IS NOW EMPTY.

No ghost kids, no projector, no screen.

INT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

So and So looks up into the attic, as does Courtney and Dylan.

COURTNEY
(calls out)
Zach?! ZACH?!!

DYLAN
(softly)
Mom?

She turns to him.

DYLAN
He's gone...

She stares back at Dylan in shock, trying to comprehend what this means...

WE TRACK UP THROUGH THE HOUSE AND INTO...

INT. ATTIC - SAME

There, sitting on the floor, is the KEEPSAKES CHEST. It bursts into flames, the films POPPING AND HISSING, the vinyl melting with muted SCREAMS.

Then everything goes silent.

Five SCORCHES mark where the ghost kids stood, their screams echoing through the house and fade to nothing.

ANOTHER SCORCH marks where the chest used to be.

FADE TO BLACK, then FADE BACK IN ON:

INT. THE SAME ATTIC - MONTHS LATER - DAY

The attic trap door slowly opens as if someone is struggling with it. Light streams into the attic. An adorable little girl pokes her head through the trapdoor. Her eyes light up and she smiles big.

We pan over and see...

THE HAM RADIO

which CRACKLES to life, lighting up, broadcasting static. Then we hear the Norwegian children singing.

The little girl runs to the radio and sits down next to it, working the knobs and picking up the microphone. We subtitle the following conversation as it is in Norwegian.

ATTIC GIRL

You're back! I missed you. Where were you.

HAM RADIO

We had something to do.

ATTIC GIRL

Is it done now?

HAM RADIO

It's done.

ATTIC GIRL

Can I make my radio play now?

HAM RADIO

Yes. He would like that.

(beat)

He would like that very much.

CUT TO BLACK.