

THE CULLING

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Good Fear Content

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FADE IN:

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - MORNING

The head of a DEER in the dark.

Massive antlers rise above its head like a regal crown. It stares at us with black accusing eyes.

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

PULL BACK to reveal this deer head is mounted on the upper wall of a LOG CABIN.

PULL BACK even further to reveal more animal heads along the walls. Deer, foxes, raccoon, rabbits.

They all stare back. Eyes, black and menacing.

REVEAL the room below. Now we see why it's so dark in here.

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

The FRONT DOOR. Heavy. Wooden.

There's a large jagged HOLE in the lower part of it. Something big broke through out of it.

Or in...

That hole is our only source of light. It's daytime outside.

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

THROUGH THE HOLE: We see SOMEONE coming up the steps of the snowy porch outside.

We won't see this person's face until way later. For now, we'll call him the WATCHER. He wears a heavy winter coat and construction boots. Winter hat and gloves.

He slowly opens the door and steps in. With the door open we get a lot more light now.

WE FOLLOW his boots as they step over the snow.

Over missing planks of floorboards.

Over empty SHELL CASINGS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sheets of PAPER flutter about in the breeze. The Watcher's boot steps down on one to stop it.

His gloved hand reaches down to pick it up.

It's a page from the BIBLE.

CUT TO:

An old HANDY CAM on a tripod. It stands in the doorway of the KITCHEN. Aimed into the MAIN ROOM. It's off.

The Watcher dismounts the camera from the tripod. Takes it with him into the...

INT. CABIN / KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

He hits a light switch. Nothing. The room stays dark.

He takes out his phone. Uses it as a flashlight.

An old stove and fridge.

Cabinets are open. The drawers, emptied. Missing silverware.

A cellphone on the counter. He checks it. It's dead.

A table by a wall. A single chair sits askew next to it.

A small MAHOGANY BOX sits on top of the table.

The Watcher moves closer to the box. It's open and empty. Red velvet compartments. Whatever was in here was valuable.

The watcher sits in the chair at the table. He opens the side slot on the camera.

There's a tape already inside it. It's at its end.

He closes the slot. Rewinds the tape. Opens the display screen. Sets the camera on the table and hits play.

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

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

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

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

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

DARYL (VIDEO)

(emotional)

If you've found this tape it means I'm already dead. For the record I want you to know, I did not take my own life. It may look as such but there are reasons for my actions - reasons that I will try to explain. What you are about to hear may be hard to believe but every word of it is true. This is my story...

CUT TO:

ONE WEEK EARLIER

EXT. ST. ANGELA CHURCH - MORNING

Winter. A light snow on the ground.

A modest church in a low income New York neighborhood. A HEARSE is parked out front. The back doors are open.

Mourners in black enter the church.

FATHER CURTIS (PRE-LAP)

Anyone who knew Father Liam knew he had a way with words.

INT. ST. ANGELA CHURCH - MORNING

A FUNERAL SERVICE. A few PRIESTS in attendance. The first pew is dotted with black shirts and WHITE CLERICAL COLLARS.

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

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER CURTIS

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

(polite laughter from
the pews)

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

(gestures to casket)

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

We zero in on DARYL in the first pew. Nearly everyone in his
pew wears the clerical white collar. He wears a suit.

This is a very different Daryl than who we saw on the tape.
He's clean shaven, revealing a younger, solemn face.

FATHER CURTIS (O.S.)

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

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

CUT TO: **LATER**

The service is over. The attendees and the casket are gone.
The church is empty and quiet.

Life-like statues of saints line the walls. They feel eerily
similar to the taxidermy on the walls of the Cabin.

WE PUSH in on the CONFESSIONAL BOOTHS at the back.

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

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

Daryl remains quiet. Hoping the woman will leave.

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

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

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

Daryl waits.

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

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

DARYL
And not hearing His voice - has it
affected other aspects of your life?
Your job. Home. Family. How are those
things?

WOMAN (O.S.)
Good. Much better than they've been
in a long time. But... I still miss
Him. Why has He abandoned me, father?
What am I doing wrong?

Daryl takes a moment to consider his words.

DARYL
When I first started coming to this
church, I didn't know this part of
the city well. I'd constantly get
lost. It was so bad I ended up
getting a GPS for the car. Five years
later, I still have it. Not that I
don't need it anymore, I know my way
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARYL (cont'd)
around now. Still, I keep it on
whenever I drive.
(making sense of it
all)
It's always nice to hear a familiar
voice steering you in the right
direction. But to me, it sounds like
you already know your way, sister.
Maybe not hearing Him means you're on
the right track. I'm sure you'll hear
Him if you ever get lost again.
(then)
And if not, come back and I'll give
you my GPS.

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

WOMAN (O.S.)
God bless you, father. Thank you.

She leaves her booth. Daryl listens to her go.

FEMALE GPS (PRE-LAP)
In 300 feet you will reach your
destination.

EXT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE - DAY - LATER

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

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

He joins the crowd of MOURNERS entering the house.

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

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

Daryl quietly sneaks away. Heads down a hallway.

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

Daryl opens the door and steps into the room.

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

A writing desk littered with open books and papers.

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

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

A pentagram symbol is on the cover.

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

Apparently some very dark research was going on here.

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

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

Daryl can't help himself. He turns it on.

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

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

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

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

FATHER CURTIS

Daryl. Just the man I wanted to see.

DARYL

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

FATHER CURTIS

(re: photo of Liam)

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

(then)

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

This is a sore topic for Daryl.

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

FATHER CURTIS
I hear you moved back upstate?

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

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

Father Curtis squeezes Daryl's shoulder.

FATHER CURTIS (cont'd)
You belong behind the pulpit, not the pew. But take as long as you need. I'll be praying for you.

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

DARYL
What happened to Parker?

FATHER CURTIS
Who?

DARYL
His dog.

FATHER CURTIS
They brought him to the shelter I believe. A couple days ago.
(shakes his head)
Poor thing. The neighbors heard him barking for three days straight. When they came over to check on him they found Father Liam instead...

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

FATHER CURTIS (cont'd)
When was the last time you two spoke?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DARYL
Over a year ago.
(off his surprise)
I turned my phone off for a bit. Just
needed to unplug.

FATHER CURTIS
I see.

DARYL
He was trying to reach me.

FATHER CURTIS
(a little too fast)
Did he leave a message? Say anything?

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

FATHER CURTIS
(understands)
I imagine it must be difficult
hearing his voice at this time.
(but...)
Do give me a call once you listen.
I'd like to know if he said anything.

DARYL
(sensing)
Anything like what?

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

FATHER CURTIS
I want to show you something.

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

They descend a dark narrow STAIRCASE towards the basement
door. Father Curtis leads the way.

We can still hear the distant CHATTER of mourners upstairs.

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

FATHER CURTIS
Except for the police, no one else
has seen this. I'm only showing you
because the two of you were close.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER CURTIS (cont'd)
Maybe you can help me to make sense
of it all.

He turns to hit the light switch but again he hesitates.

FATHER CURTIS (cont'd)
I've asked the authorities to leave
everything intact as they found it.
The church will be launching its own
private investigation into this
matter.

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

Father Curtis finally clicks the switch. A light comes on
above them revealing the wooden BASEMENT DOOR.

Daryl's taken aback by the sight of it.

It's slightly ajar. The rubber handle of a HACKSAW sticks
out of the middle of the door. The blade is stuck deep
inside it, jutting out to the other side. One long vertical
slit has been carved straight through the wood. You can see
right through it into the dark room on the other side.

FATHER CURTIS (cont'd)
Father Liam had a weak heart. He had
no business doing such strenuous work
by himself. They believe it's what
triggered the heart attack.

Daryl, puzzled. Touches the handle of the hacksaw.

DARYL
What was he trying to do?

FATHER CURTIS
Who knows. He never got to finish.
This is where they found him. He was
still holding onto the saw...
(grim)
He had a crucifix in the other hand.

FLASH-CUT TO: A dead Father Liam sitting on the floor like a
propped up rag doll. His back against the open door. One arm
hanging limp over his head, still clutching the handle of
the saw. The other arm hangs loose at his side, holding a
CRUCIFIX. Eyes wide. His mouth agape in a silent scream.

FATHER CURTIS (cont'd)
There's more...

Father Curtis opens the door and they enter the darkness.

INT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE / BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

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

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

But that's not the weird part...

The entire room is covered in BIBLE PAGES.

The ceiling. The floor. The back of the door. All four walls are completely covered in scripture.

This was done a long time ago. The pages are yellowing, beginning to fade.

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

Father Curtis studies the wall, his back to Daryl.

FATHER CURTIS

Any idea what Father Liam could have been doing here?

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

AUTOMATED VOICEMAIL (PRE-LAP)

Your voicemail box is full. You have thirty new messages. < BEEP >

INT. SUV - DAY - LATER

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

Father Liam's voice is troubled.

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL)

< BEEP >

Daryl, where are you? We need to speak. It's urgent.

< BEEP >

I keep thinking about that day I found you in the woods. I just... I had this-this feeling. That's why I came back to the cabin.

(beat)

I feel that feeling now. Like-like you need help... Call me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

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

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

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

INT. SUV / MOVING - DUSK

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

INT. HIGH SCHOOL / GYMNASIUM - MOMENTS LATER

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

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

He sits. The circle applauds him.

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

OWEN
Thank you for that, Calvin.
(to the group)
Would any one else like to share with
us tonight?

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

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

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVERYONE

Hi, Susan.

SUSAN

This is my first time here --
Actually no it isn't. I...
(looks to Owen)
Can I start over?

OWEN

Take your time, Susan.

She takes a deep breath. Re-calibrates herself.

SUSAN

What I'm trying to say is I've been
here before. I've reached this point.
It's just a different room with
different people. Same stories. The
meetings help... until they don't.
(tearing up)
And then I don't come back...

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

DARYL

"Humble yourselves before the Lord,
and he will lift you up."

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

DARYL (cont'd)

You have to let go of the notion that
you have control. Reality is, none of
us do. We never have. When we accept
our powerlessness and let God take
care of us, He'll give us the
strength to lead the lives we want.
(then)
What do you want, Susan?

You could hear a pin drop.

SUSAN

I want to come back.

Everyone claps. Somehow, Susan looks lighter. Her burden a
little less heavy.

One woman JANET (35) studies Daryl. Impressed.

CUT TO: **LATER**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The meeting's over. The chairs are empty. Everyone mingles by the snack table. Daryl keeps to himself. Pours a cup of coffee. He's just about to leave when Janet approaches.

JANET

(puts her hand out)

Hi. We haven't formally met. Janet.

DARYL

(shakes her hand)

Daryl.

JANET

That was pretty thoughtful, what you said tonight, Daryl.

DARYL

James 4:10.

JANET

Man of the Word?

DARYL

Just read the Bible a few times.

JANET

Most people don't read it once.

(then)

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

Daryl isn't in the mood to chat. He's looking to the exit.

JANET (cont'd)

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

DARYL

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

JANET

I highly doubt that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DARYL
(smiles)
Good night, Janet.

JANET
(smiles back)
Good night, Daryl.

Daryl heads out the doors. Janet watches him go.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Daryl exits the doors and heads for his SUV.

And someone watches him from the TREES nearby...

A VERY STRANGE POV: *The colors are saturated. The "darks" are darker. Images are slightly elongated, bleeding into each other like a painting melting. It's quite jarring. We're not looking through human eyes. We watch Daryl get into the SUV and drive away...*

FEMALE GPS (PRE-LAP)
Turn left to merge onto highway.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DUSK

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

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

INT. SUV / MOVING - NIGHT

Daryl drives, pensive.

FEMALE GPS
In 300 feet, you will reach your destination.

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

FEMALE GPS (cont'd)
You have reached your destination.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

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

EXT. BACK OF THE CABIN - NIGHT

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

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

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Daryl enters. Locks the door behind him. Home sweet home.

This is the same room from the opening scene. With the light on now we see much more of it. Everything is in order. Whatever chaos that's about to befall this Cabin hasn't happened yet.

Taxidermy on the upper walls... A NAVAJO RUG covers most of the floor... An old COUCH by the FIREPLACE with a CHIMNEY.

A HUNTING RIFLE hangs above the fireplace.

A bookshelf. That MAHOGANY BOX is on top of it.

There are MORE ROOMS going towards the back of the Cabin down a long HALLWAY.

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

BEDROOM - NIGHT

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

He gets up and straightens it. Lies back in bed. Closes his eyes and tries to get some much needed sleep.

And as he drifts off, we slip into...

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

RIFLE SCOPE POV: We're looking through the sights of a rifle, aiming at a SMALL DEER in the snow. It nibbles on some branches. A WOMAN'S VOICE whispers close to our ear.

ERIN (O.S.)

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

A 12-year-old Daryl has one eye shut. The other looks through the scope of a hunting rifle. He's lying on his stomach in the snow in his hunting gear.

Next to him is ERIN (40s). His mother. Tough. Intense eyes. She's used to fending for herself. A woman of the woods.

She lies on her stomach next to Daryl, in hunting gear too. Her eyes are locked on Daryl.

ERIN

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

YOUNG DARYL

The hunter.

ERIN

Really? Then tell me what you see.

YOUNG DARYL

The deer.

ERIN

And what else?

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

ERIN (cont'd)

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

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

ERIN (cont'd)

Pay attention to what's going on around you.

Daryl lowers the rifle. Opens the other eye. Erin's staring behind him now. He turns to see what she's looking at...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANOTHER DEER. A much bigger one. And much closer. It stands eerily still among the bushes. Watching them. Antlers rising high over its head like gnarled fingers.

Its presence is threatening. Daryl stares back, uneasy. Erin slowly takes the rifle from his hands.

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

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

SMASH TO:

INT. THE CABIN / BEDROOM - SAME TIME

--BAM-- Daryl jumps up in his bed. Eyes searching the dark. His bed sheets are soaked.

The cross has fallen off the wall - that's the --BAM-- that woke him. He stares at the nail it used to hang on.

That RUMBLING sound again. Low in his ears.

KITCHEN

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

MAIN ROOM

Daryl sits on the couch cleaning the RIFLE. He handles the weapon well. Could do this in his sleep. It's therapeutic for him.

Logs crackle from the wood burning stove in the corner. Heat hisses from it. The only sound in the room...

Until a loud THUDDING sound comes from the front door.

Daryl stops. Eyes on the door. He listens...

Could be the wind. *Could be something else.*

He gets up with the rifle. Checks out the window. Too dark to see anything out there.

But he doesn't want to open the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He waits... Rifle ready. But the sound doesn't return. He moves back to the couch. Continues cleaning the gun.

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

INT. SUV / MOVING - DAY

Daryl drives. We're in an upper middle class New York neighborhood now. Nice size houses zip past the windows.

FEMALE GPS
You have reached your destination.

He parks outside of a house under construction. It's two stories. WORKERS head in and out carrying tools and wood.

INT. HOUSE UNDER CONSTRUCTION / DOWNSTAIRS - DAY

It's noisy. DRILLING and HAMMERING. Bare walls. Ply wood, sheet rock, and tools everywhere. Everyone's hard at work.

Daryl is among the other WORKERS. He wears a hardhat as he sets up sheet rock. Looks like he really knows his stuff.

CUT TO: **LATER**

UPSTAIRS ROOM

Daryl puts up sheet rock with another worker, RUBEN (40s). Tough. Tattoos. The two are alone in here. As they work...

RUBEN
College professor?

DARYL
Huh?

RUBEN
That's what you did before this, right? You got this, I don't know, teacher vibe about you.

DARYL
I did a little teaching. What about you? What did you do before this?

RUBEN
Prison. But I'm not that man anymore.
(then)
So why'd you put down the chalk?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daryl goes to get some sheet rock by the window. He stops.

DARYL

I think I got into the field for the wrong reasons.

RUBEN

Ha. Cute girls. Summers off. I totally get it. But hey, who gives a shit why you started teaching. As long as you're making a difference with the students. That's all that counts, right?

Daryl's still by the window. Staring out at the TREES. Something about them. Gnawing at him.

DARYL

Not sure if I'm that man anymore either.

PRE-LAP the sound of dogs BARKING.

INT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

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

DARYL

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

FEMALE EMPLOYEE

Yeah, we got him three days ago.

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

FEMALE EMPLOYEE (cont'd)

Good thing you came when you did. They were gonna put him to sleep this afternoon.

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

DARYL

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

INT. SUV MOVING - DUSK

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

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

EXT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

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

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

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

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

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

ROSARY BEADS are sticking out the pages of one of the books. He picks it up. ARABIC SYMBOLS are on the cover of it. Hmmm.

He opens the book to the page marked by the beads...

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

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

And now the record player on the shelf.

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

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

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

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

Just Daryl trying to slow his heartbeat.

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

Daryl and Parker head down the dark steps. Daryl shines his phone ahead of them.

Parker stops halfway. Doesn't want to go any further.

DARYL
Come on, boy. What's wrong?

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

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

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

Parker stays. Daryl continues down to the basement. Moves his light over the hacksaw. Shines the phone through the jagged slit in the door and into the room behind it.

INT. FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE / BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

He enters. Pockets his phone. Turns on the flickering light.

He moves along the walls, pouring over all the bible pages. Trying to make sense of it all.

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

MATCH-CUT TO:

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

--Daryl's hand touching the very same page. Except now it's a fresh new page. And Daryl's hand is much younger now.

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

Someone else is in the room with young Daryl. We can't see him but we hear his reassuring voice from behind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (O.S.)
*Good. Now, the next one. I can't help
you. You must do this on your own.*

Daryl tears out about a page from a bible.

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

....CREEEEEEEEAK...

BACK TO SCENE

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

Parker starts BARKING from somewhere upstairs.

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

Someone else is in the house.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LIVING ROOM

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

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

DARYL
(worried / whispers)
Parker?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

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

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

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

DARYL

Hello?

Only the kettle answers him back. The whistle rising.

Daryl moves for the

KITCHEN

Turns on the light. The room is empty. He moves in further. Turns the flame off. The kettle quiets.

He turns from the stove. And that's when he sees it...

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

Daryl, freezes. He's seen this before.

And the WHISTLE of the kettle starts up again.

But there is no flame under it. And the sound is not coming from the stove...

It's coming from the corner of the room. Slowly rising...

Daryl, freaked out now. Turns to the sound. Sees nothing.

But *SOMETHING* sees him...

THAT STRANGE POV AGAIN: *Saturated colors. Dark elongated images bleeding into each other. We watch a frightened Daryl staring in our direction, but not seeing us.*

Daryl, shaking now. HE KNOWS what's in here with him.

The whistle from the corner gets more shrill. Earsplitting.

He starts to back away into the

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LIVING ROOM

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

CREAK...CREAK... The sound of something HEAVY. Moving on the floorboard.

COMING OUT OF THE KITCHEN -- **FOLLOWING HIM** -- THE CREAKS COMING FAST -- THE WHISTLE COMING WITH IT.

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

INT. THE STUDY - CONTINUOUS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

And Daryl does the only thing he can do.

He turns around and pushes the bookshelf forward...

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

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

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

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

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

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

Parker starts BARKING from upstairs.

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

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

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

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

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

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

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

Because he can still hear Parker barking.

DARYL
Just go. Go now.

But he doesn't.

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

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

DARYL (cont'd)
Damn it!

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

He can hear Parker BARKING from upstairs.

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

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

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

Daryl cautiously enters the front door.

Down the HALLWAY, the couch is no longer blocking the door to the STUDY. It's has been turned on its side.

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

IT'S OUT...

Daryl's eyes scan the house.

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

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

No time to think. Daryl has to make his move. He runs for the STAIRCASE --

--and the COFFEE TABLE in the **LIVING ROOM** suddenly FLIPS UP INTO THE AIR by itself. CRASHES up to the ceiling. Shatters.

IT'S STILL HERE!

Daryl shoots up the STAIRCASE to the **UPSTAIRS HALLWAY** and scrambles in the direction of Parker's barks. He runs into

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

And slams the door shut behind. Locks it.

Parker's under the bed. Scared. Barking.

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

DARYL
Parker! Come on!

STOMPING. Outside of the door. Coming up the staircase.

Daryl grabs Parker by the paws. Pulls him out.

They move toward the window when --

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

Parker starts BARKING at the door. Daryl picks the dog up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Slides the window open with his free hand and...

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

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

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE OF FATHER LIAM'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

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

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

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

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

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

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

INT. SUV - NIGHT

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

Parker sits quietly in the passenger seat watching Daryl.

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

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

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

He grabs the door handle...

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

DARYL

...don't.

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

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - DAY (DARYL'S MEMORY)

Erin and Young Daryl (12) move stealthily through the woods, their eyes on the ground. They're following CLOVEN-HOOVED PRINTS - the tracks the BIG DEER left in the snow.

ERIN

I know I hit the damn thing. No way I missed from that close.

YOUNG DARYL

(beat)

But where's the blood?

He's right. There's no blood in the snow. Just hooved prints. They stop at the base of a tall tree.

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

DARYL

Where did it go, Mom?

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

SMASH TO:

INT. SUV - DAY

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

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

POLICE OFFICER

Move it! No sleeping here.

The officer continues on to another car.

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

Sees the LIQUOR STORE outside the window.

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRE-LAP the sound of APPLAUSE.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

The ALCOHOLISM SUPPORT GROUP again. The circle is applauding a man (50s), who's just finished telling his story.

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

OWEN

Would anyone else like to share
tonight?

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

OWEN (cont'd)

Daryl? Would you like to share?

A beat. Daryl slowly stands.

DARYL

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

The circle tries to encourage him.

RANDOM PEOPLE

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

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

He opens his mouth to try again when--

--a LOUD CRASH comes from behind him.

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

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

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

OWEN

(stands)

Is everything OK? Daryl?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

HALLWAY

Janet comes out of the room. Hurrying after him.

JANET
Daryl, hold on!
(catches up)
Are you in some kind of trouble?

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

DARYL
I have to go.

JANET
(fishing)
See you tomorrow?

DARYL
(beat)
Yeah, tomorrow.

They both know he's lying.

JANET
Give me your phone.

A beat. Daryl pulls out his phone. Hands it to her. She
plugs her number into it.

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

Daryl pockets the phone.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

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

INT. SUV / MOVING - NIGHT

Daryl drives. Parker's in the passenger seat wearing his
seat belt. He eats from a can of dog food in front of him.

FEMALE GPS
Turn left to merge onto highway.

EXT. THE CABIN - LATER - NIGHT

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

EXT. BACK OF THE CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Daryl's in the **SHED**, putting oil into the old generator. He's frantic. Moving fast. He yanks the rip cord a few times to get it going. It hums to life.

The lights come on in the windows of the Cabin.

Daryl comes out the shed. Locks the door. That's when he notices Parker. Sitting very still. Watching the woods.

Daryl's eyes dart around, searching. Sees nothing.

DARYL
(worried)
What is it? You see something?

Parker turns around and heads back toward the front of the Cabin. Guess it was nothing. Daryl follows him back.

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

They hurry in. Daryl slams the door behind them. Locks it.

CUT TO:

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

ON THE DISPLAY SCREEN, Daryl's story continues. He sits in the same chair in kitchen. The closed box in front of him. His head in his hands. The cuffs dangle off his wrist.

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

He stares off camera, considering this. Looks back.

DARYL (VIDEO) (cont'd)
Once it touches you, it can get
inside.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARYL (VIDEO) (cont'd)
(then)
I had to keep it out.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Daryl pulls the Navajo rug back revealing a WOODEN HATCH in the center of the floor. He pulls it open. Descends the narrow steps into the...

CELLAR

Parker at his side. Daryl turns on the lights.

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

Parker snoops around, sniffing through all the old junk.

Daryl searches the shelves. Finds the HANDY CAM - the same one he's telling his story with now. He puts it aside.

Finds a TOOL BOX and a stack of old SLATS OF WOOD.

PRE-LAP the sound of HAMMERING.

- **MAIN ROOM.** Daryl boards up all the windows. Hammering with haste.

- **KITCHEN.** He boards up the window in here too.

- **BATHROOM.** Same story in here.

- **BEDROOM.** He finishes boarding up the window and leaves.

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

HALLWAY

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

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

LAST ROOM

He enters the darkness. Hits the light.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Old dust covered furniture and picture frames on the walls.

Daryl can't help himself. He wipes dust off one of the frames with his sleeve revealing a yellowing NEWSPAPER ARTICLE inside it.

The headline reads "Officer Richard Collins, killed in the line of duty." Under the headline is a photo of a man with an honest face wearing a POLICE UNIFORM. One hand up to his cap in salute.

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

Daryl stares at his parents. A dark memory returning...

EXT. WOODS - DAY (DARYL'S MEMORY)

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

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

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

ERIN

That's deep enough. You did good.

She helps pull him up out of the hole.

ERIN (cont'd)

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

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

YOUNG DARYL

What's it for?

ERIN

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

(points)

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daryl uses a SWISS ARMY KNIFE to carve a LONG CROSS into the trunk of the tree closest to the pit. When he's done he turns to find ERIN is gone.

YOUNG DARYL

Mom?

CUT TO:

Daryl walks through the woods, shovel on his shoulder. Searching for his mother. He steps into a smaller CLEARING and sees...

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

But there's no one in the tree. Just dark branches above.

Daryl stays quiet. Watches his mother, concern growing.

That low RUMBLING again. It follows us back to...

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / LAST ROOM - NIGHT

Daryl boarding up the window. Pounding nails into the wood. The hammer swinging hard and fast. BANG-BANG-BANG

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

The plank splits in half. He stops. Exhausted. Sweaty. Backs away from the window to find...

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

DARYL

I'm sorry boy. I...

The RUMBLING growing in Daryl's head. He drops the hammer on the bed. Hurries from the room. Parker follows.

WE LINGER on the dusty photo on the wall. Erin, holding hands with the faceless man.

BATHROOM

It's cramped. The shower curtain is open. An old claw foot tub sits behind it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daryl opens the cabinet above the sink. Pulls out some ASPIRIN. He tries to uncap it but his hands shake too much. The pills spill out into the sink. He grabs a handful before they go down the drain and dry swallows them.

The rumbling growing...

KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Parker licks a plate of corned beef clean.

Daryl's at the table. Sweaty. Jaws clinching. He's got the old SWISS ARMY KNIFE. Slowly twisting the CORKSCREW into the top of the table. The RUMBLING growing in his ears.

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

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

God, he needs that drink...

He jumps up from the table and leaves the room. WE LINGER on the corkscrew still sticking out of the surface of the table.

MAIN ROOM

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

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

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

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

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

EXT. THE CABIN - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

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

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

DARYL
Anything?

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

DARYL (cont'd)
Let's go.

The two hurry off the porch toward the SUV.

Daryl holding the leash tight. His boots CRUNCHING in the snow. His eyes darting around, watching. Alert.

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

DARYL (cont'd)
Come on. Come on.

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

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

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

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

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

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

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

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

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

A SNOWMAN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

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

Snow outlines the MASSIVE TWISTED ANTLERS that stand on the top of its head making this thing stand about 8-feet tall.

DEMON POV: *Because by now you should have guessed what this thing is. Dark dripping colors bleeding into each other. Daryl and Parker in the windshield.*

It looms there about forty feet away from the car, just beyond the reach of the headlights.

Parker's BARKING louder now that he sees it.

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

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

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

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

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

Time to go!

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

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

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

Daryl keeps reversing. In the WINDSHIELD...

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

Fuck that!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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

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

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

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

EXT. THE CABIN / PORCH STEPS - CONTINUOUS

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

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

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

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARYL

Is it gone--

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

Parker's BARKING up at the ceiling now.

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

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

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

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

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

Daryl can't get his legs to move.

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

DARYL (cont'd)

Parker, no!

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

DARYL (cont'd)

NO!

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

Reaches his arm up into the chimney grabbing for Parker.

DARYL (cont'd)

Parker! Parker!

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

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

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARYL (cont'd)
LET HIM GO!!

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

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

Daryl pushes the couch against the fireplace. Blocking it.

We can still hear FRANTIC MOVEMENT inside the wall.

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

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

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

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

It's gone.

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

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

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

He hugs the dog tight.

CUT TO:

MAIN ROOM - LATER

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

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

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

Parker sits in the corner, watching Daryl.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Daryl follows the sound into the

MAIN ROOM

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

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

KITCHEN

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

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

YOUNG DARYL

Mom?

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

ERIN

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

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

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

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

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

ERIN (cont'd)

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

YOUNG DARYL

(confused)

With who?

She takes hold of his hand.

ERIN

Your father.

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

ERIN (cont'd)

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

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

ERIN (cont'd)

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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

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

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

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

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

ERIN (cont'd)
 B...

She slides the glass to the next letter.

ERIN (cont'd)
 A...

She slides to the next letter.

ERIN (cont'd)
 L...

YOUNG DARYL
 Mom...

But she slides the glass to the next letter.

ERIN
 A...

YOUNG DARYL
 Please. Stop...

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

ERIN
 A...

Slides to the last letter.

ERIN (cont'd)
 M--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

YOUNG DARYL

--Mom, stop!

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

ERIN

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

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

CUT TO:

ERIN'S BEDROOM

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

ERIN (cont'd)

(drunk / dozing off)

He said he'll come and see you too.

S, O, ... O... N....

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

CUT TO:

KITCHEN

- Daryl picks up the whiskey glass from the floor and puts it in the cupboard.

- He empties the rest of the whiskey bottle into the sink.

- He cleans the table top with a wet rag. The black ink from the symbols and letters are all dripping into each other.

- He finally gets it all off. The table is completely clean.

*- He's got an **OLD CASSETTE TAPE RECORDER**. He hides it inside the cabinet under the sink. Closes the cabinet doors.*

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / KITCHEN - UNKNOWN

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

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

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

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

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

MAIN ROOM

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

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

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

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

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

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

It's been circling the Cabin all night.

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

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

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

Daryl lowers the rifle. His face, pale.

He leans the gun against the wall. Starts to board the window back up. Fast.

KITCHEN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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

FLASH-CUT TO: (DARYL'S MEMORY)

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

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

FLASH-CUT TO: (DARYL'S MEMORY)

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

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

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

Only four more to go...

PRE-LAP the solemn voice of Father Liam.

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL)

< BEEP >

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

BEDROOM

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

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL) (cont'd)

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

Daryl is visibly stunned by this news.

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL) (cont'd)

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

(beat)

But something's changed, Daryl. It's getting stronger. I can hear it... Banging on the walls. It won't stop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Maybe we're imagining it, but there's a low THUDDING sound coming from the B.G. of the call, from somewhere distant.

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

In the next messages, there's more panic in his voice. And it turns out we weren't imagining that THUDDING after all. It's much louder now. Angrier.

FATHER LIAM (VOICEMAIL) (cont'd)
 Strengthen your walls, Daryl! You
 mustn't let it out. You mustn't--
 < BEEP >
 I think I found something. A way to
 end this. I need to see you. < BEEP >

Daryl hits a button. Replays the last message.

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

Off Daryl's face, remembering something.

MAIN ROOM

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

CUT TO:

KITCHEN

Daryl stands over the table this time. All of the papers from Liam's desk are scattered all across it now.

He shifts them around like pieces to a puzzle. Trying to make sense of it all. Still hungover. Fighting to focus.

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

Sacred scripture... Through the cross... Consumed by light of Christ...

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

He remembers something else...

Finds the pages he tore out of the Arabic book. The sketches of doors with CRUCIFIXES cut through them. Rays of light shining through the crosses.

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

CUT TO:

HANDY CAM DISPLAY SCREEN: The tape's still playing. Daryl continues his tale. The closed box in front of him. His head in his hands. Guilt ridden.

DARYL (VIDEO)

Father Liam is gone because of me.
I'm the reason it got out. He was
trying to destroy it before it did.
(tears falling)
He found a way, he just couldn't
finish it.

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

DARYL (VIDEO) (cont'd)

But I will.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / LAST ROOM - UNKNOWN

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

- Daryl takes the bed apart... Removes the headboard...
Takes the mattress off of the bed frame.

- He carries all the parts out of the room.

- One by one he takes all of the furniture out of the room
until it is completely bare.

HALLWAY

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

PRE-LAP the sound of WOOD being sawed into.

CELLAR

Parker sniffs around in a corner piled with OLD BOXES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

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

He finishes. Puts the saw on a shelf and picks up the door. He's carved a LONG CRUCIFIX through the upper part of it just like the door of Father Liam's basement.

He angles the door to the light bulb above. The light shines through the cross, forming a cross of light on Daryl's face.

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

But the moment is interrupted by a loud CRASH--

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

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

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

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

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

He closes the box like he found a bomb inside. Heaves it against a wall. Bottles BREAK inside as it lands on the floor.

Parker runs up the steps, startled by the noise.

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

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

The cross stares back at him.

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

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Daryl steps closer...

YOUNG DARYL
...Mom?

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

Except that's not a broom she's holding. It's the RIFLE.

She's got the barrel up to her mouth.

YOUNG DARYL (cont'd)
MOM!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

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

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

It's changing...

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

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

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

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

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

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

Daryl runs to a light switch. Turns it on.

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

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

She nods off. Passes out on the couch.

CUT TO:

KITCHEN

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

CUT TO:

CELLAR

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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

INT. THE CABIN / CELLAR - UNKNOWN

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

CUT TO: **LATER**

HALLWAY

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

MAIN ROOM

Daryl's at the book shelf. Takes down all the BIBLES he can find on it. Carries an armful down the **HALLWAY**.

EXT. CABIN - DUSK

The sun's ending its shift.

The bare branches of trees cast long twisted shadows in the snow. Like crooked arms. Stretching toward The Cabin...

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

INT. THE CABIN / LAST ROOM - SAME

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

The entire ceiling has been covered with BIBLE PAGES.

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

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

FATHER LIAM (V.O.)

You do know that defacing a bible is sacrilegious, right?

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

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

A younger FATHER LIAM (50s) stops at the pew. He wears his priest collar.

The church is empty except for them.

YOUNG DARYL
I'm just making some notes.

Liam enters the pew and sits next to Daryl.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
Anything I can help with?

Daryl closes the bible. Looks up at Liam.

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

Liam's face sours.

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

YOUNG DARYL
I'm just curious about it.

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

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

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

YOUNG DARYL
But how do you perform one?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YOUNG FATHER LIAM

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

He eyes Daryl sternly.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)

...Not a twelve year old alter boy.

Daryl's clutching the backpack now. Liam notices.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)

What's really going on here, Daryl?

Daryl takes a long time to answer.

YOUNG DARYL

I think my mother is being possessed.

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

YOUNG DARYL (cont'd)

I hid this in the kitchen. She sits in there all night... talking to something.

CLICK. He hits play.

We slowly PUSH IN on the SPINNING SPOOLS of the tape inside. It's very poor audio. Mostly the HISSING of the tape.

But somewhere inside we can just barely make out Erin's voice. It's faint. Hard to hear what she's saying.

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

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

CLICK. Daryl stops the tape.

YOUNG DARYL (cont'd)

Does that count as exorbitant proof?

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

YOUNG FATHER LIAM

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

Daryl looks away. Liam sees he needs more.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)

Have you prayed for her?

YOUNG DARYL

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

YOUNG FATHER LIAM

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

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

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

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)

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

He hits stop and hands the recorder back to Daryl.

YOUNG DARYL

Is that for her?

YOUNG FATHER LIAM

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

(then)

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

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

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / LAST ROOM - NIGHT

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

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

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

DARYL

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

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

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

We're in the **CELLAR**

He shines the light along the shelves of tools and junk, searching for something.

The light bounces along the shelves. Comes to stop on an old FLASH LIGHT. He snatches it up.

MAIN ROOM

It's dark. The only light we got is from the FLASH LIGHT. Daryl paces back and forth with it in his hand. The beam moves erratically around the dark room.

DARYL (cont'd)

Shit! Shit! Shit!

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

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

DARYL (cont'd)

Parker. Here boy. Parker.

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

DARYL (cont'd)

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

Parker licks Daryl's face. Good boy.

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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

He opens the door...

EXT. THE CABIN - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

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

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

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

DARYL

Come on, boy. Stay close.

Daryl hurries off the porch. Parker follows him to the

BACK OF THE CABIN

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

What is that?

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

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

Only three more letters to go now...

Daryl, frozen. Just stares at the door.

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

Got to move fast.

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

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

Shit! Where are they?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Nearby, Parker's growling is getting louder.

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

SHED

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

Parker's BARKING now. *Shit!*

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

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

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

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

Parker's outside BARKING like mad now.

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

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

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

DARYL (cont'd)
Parker! Parker!

But Parker's too busy BARKING at the dark woods. At whatever he sees coming.

Daryl runs over to the dog. He shines the light up at the dark woods. But of course, he can't see it.

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

Parker turns and follows. They run back together.

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

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

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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

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

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

They stumble inside...

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

WE STAY on this door as night turns into day.

A hand KNOCKS on the door.

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

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

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

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

ERIN

Father Liam? What a nice surprise.

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

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

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

Daryl sits on the bed, vigorously cleaning the RIFLE.

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

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

YOUNG FATHER LIAM

May I?

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

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (cont'd)

I spoke to your mother...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daryl waits, anxious to hear what Liam will say.

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

Daryl, deflated. Goes back to cleaning the gun.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
Daryl, look at me.

Daryl lowers the gun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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

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

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

Daryl stares down at the items in his hands.

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

Off Daryl's face, taking these words in.

CUT TO:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Daryl stands at the window. Peeking through the blinds.

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

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

And then she turns and looks back at the window. Right at Daryl. At us.

Daryl quickly snaps the blinds shut.

PRE-LAP the sound of a phone VIBRATING.

INT. THE CABIN / KITCHEN - NIGHT

Daryl's phone VIBRATES on the table. But no one's here to answer it. Finally it stops. We hear the voicemail. **<BEEP>**

JANET (VOICEMAIL)

Hey, Daryl. It's Janet.

(then)

We missed you at today's meeting. I just wanted to check in and see how you were doing. You didn't look so good last time we spoke...

THWACK... THWACK... the sound of the staple gun from somewhere down the hallway.

JANET (VOICEMAIL) (cont'd)

Wherever you are right now, whatever hole you're in, you can put the shovel down and stop digging. It's not too late.

(then)

Come back whenever you're ready. We'll be here. **< BEEP >**

WE FOLLOW the THWACKING down the **HALLWAY** to the...

LAST ROOM

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

Parker WHIMPERING. Uh oh...

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

HALLWAY

Daryl hurries up the hall into the...

MAIN ROOM

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

DARYL

What is it?

Parker's whining at the BARRICADE in front of the fireplace.

Daryl stares at the piled up furniture.

DARYL (cont'd)

What? In there?

Parker's circling him now, whimpering.

DARYL (cont'd)

Shhhhh! Quiet!

Daryl strains his ears. Hears nothing. It's quiet.

DARYL (cont'd)

There's nothing there.

But Parker keeps whining. Daryl studies the dog. Parker doesn't look scared or on alert. There is no threat. He keeps pawing at the barricade. Trying to tell him something.

Daryl frowns. Parker hasn't been wrong yet.

Very slowly, Daryl starts to take apart the barricade until it's only the couch that's left. He looks back to Parker.

Parker's pawing at the couch. Whimpering.

DARYL (cont'd)

OK, OK.

Daryl slowly pulls the couch away from the fireplace.

He grabs the old flash light from the shelf. Shines it into the fire place...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

But there's nothing in the hearth but wood. The wood is noticeably darker and wet. *What is that?*

Parker moves closer to the fireplace. Daryl blocks his path.

DARYL (cont'd)
Wait! Stay! Stay!

Parker obeys.

Daryl slowly moves to the fireplace. Kneels inside it.

Shines the light up into the chimney.

DARYL'S POV: *The light bounces around the dark walls, searching... And then it lands on something. It looks like a WET BLACK BAG wedged into the space above. There's a ROPE dangling down from it. It's reachable.*

DARYL (cont'd)
What is that?

Only one way to find out.

Daryl stretches his free arm up... reaching for the rope.

Parker watches from a distance, whimpering.

Daryl's got his whole shoulder up in the wall now. stretching... grunting... almost got it... almost...

DARYL (cont'd)
I think I got it...

He pulls the rope hard and --THUMP-- the BAG comes down and lands in the hearth in a cloud of dirt and soot.

Daryl, COUGHS. Waves the cloud from his face. He's got a hold of the rope still. Keeps pulling. Gets the bag out of the hearth and drags it into the room. It's covered in soot.

And that's when he sees that he's not holding a rope...

It's a BELT. A make-shift leash.

And that's not a bag he just dragged out.

It's PARKER. A very dead Parker.

And Daryl's holding the "leash" that's wrapped around the dead Parker's neck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

A gaping hole in the dog's throat. Looks like something big took a huge chunk out of it.

And there's something else...

A single jagged letter has been craved into the dog's side. Ripped right into the fur. A twisted letter "A"

Daryl stares at the dead dog. His mind fighting to process what he's seeing. But he already knows...

The room falls silent. Like the air's been sucked out of it.

Daryl slowly rises to his feet. Slowly turns around...

The OTHER PARKER is sitting by the door. Statue still.

It's eyes are different now. No pupils. SOLID BLACK.

It stares at Daryl. Doesn't blink. Doesn't breathe. Nothing. Like the taxidermy on the walls above.

Daryl's blood runs cold because he knows...

This is the Demon.

It's been here with him all this time.

The demon doesn't move. Just watches Daryl.

DEMON POV: *That jarring POV with the saturated colors. Everything's bleeding into each other.*

Daryl slowly backs away towards the hall.

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

--and he bolts down the **HALLWAY.**

The dog bolts after him. Faster than Parker could ever move.

It's right on Daryl's heels as he dives and slides into the

LAST ROOM

Daryl rolls inside. Scrambles up on his knees. And sees...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

The dog has stopped right at the threshold of the door. It won't enter the room. It just sits there. Statue still.

DEMON POV: The jarring colors and melting images. Daryl on his knees. And behind Daryl the words on the walls are glowing brightly. Like little prickles of light.

Upon seeing the walls, the dog turns and runs away.

WE FOLLOW IT as it runs back up the **HALLWAY**... into the **MAIN ROOM** and -- CRACK -- Goes headfirst into the bottom half of the door. Leaving a massive hole in it.

THROUGH THE HOLE we watch the dog run into the snow and disappear into the dark woods beyond.

LAST ROOM

Daryl, shaking on his knees. Adrenaline coursing through him. He collapses on the floor on his back.

MATCH-CUT TO:

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

Young Daryl laying on his back, asleep in bed. We can see his breath. It's cold in here.

The WHISTLE OF A TEA KETTLE, rising from outside his door.

Daryl wakes. Sits up, half asleep. Shivers from the cold.

He gets out of bed. Gets dressed in a hat, sweater and jeans. He steps into his boots.

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Young Daryl enters the room.

The front door is wide open. A trail of wet snow comes in from the doorway leading to the Cabin.

VOICES coming from the KITCHEN. Erin is talking to someone.

But a wall blocks Daryl from seeing into the room. He slowly moves along the wall, creeping to the edge of it. He peers around it into the KITCHEN. From here he can see...

The fire is high on the stove. The kettle is SHRIEKING now.

Daryl inches closer past the wall...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Now he can see Erin sitting at the table. Giggling. Very drunk. Still in her nightgown. Disheveled. An empty BOTTLE OF WHISKEY on the table next to her.

Her arm is outstretched over the table like she's holding someone's hand.

The wall still blocks our view of whoever it is. Daryl finally comes around the wall and enters the...

KITCHEN

And now he can see the other side of the table.

There is no one there. Erin is alone.

She doesn't seem to notice Daryl is here. Nor does she notice the screaming kettle on the stove.

Daryl turns the flame off. The kettle dies down. Quiet.

Erin finally turns to her son. Delighted to see him. When she talks we can see her breath. It's really cold in here.

ERIN

Daryl, you're up!

YOUNG DARYL

You didn't hear the kettle?

ERIN

I was just making some tea for your father.

Daryl looks at the EMPTY CHAIR on the other side. It's two feet away from the table. Slightly turned toward us.

Erin stares at Daryl, expectantly.

ERIN (cont'd)

Well, aren't you gonna come give your daddy a hug? He's been waiting up all night to see you.

WE PUSH IN on the empty chair. It sits still. Ominous.

ERIN (cont'd)

(stern)

Daryl, don't be rude to your father.

YOUNG DARYL

Mom... there's no one there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERIN

Young man, stop being silly. Come over and give him a hug, right now.

WE KEEP PUSHING IN on the empty chair. It sits there, askew.

YOUNG DARYL

Mom! Dad's not here. Dad's dead--

--**SCRAAAAAAPE!** THE CHAIR S-L-O-W-L-Y TURNS ON THE FLOOR. ALL ON ITS OWN. NOW IT'S TURNED, FACING DARYL.

Daryl GASPS. Erin glares at her son.

ERIN

Why would you say something horrible like that, Daryl? Now you've got him all upset. You know how he gets when you upset him.

Daryl can't move. Eyes glued to the chair.

YOUNG DARYL

...Mom. Let go of it.

ERIN

What?

YOUNG DARYL

Get away from it! Don't touch it!

The urgency in his voice makes Erin snatch her hand back.

ERIN

(alarmed)

What's gotten into you?

(to the empty chair)

Charles, please. He didn't mean it.

THE CHAIR LEANS BACK SLIGHTLY ON ITS BACK LEGS AND COMES BACK DOWN. WHATEVER IS IN IT HAS JUST STOOD UP.

FLOORBOARDS CREAK. IT'S MOVING. COMING TOWARDS DARYL.

Daryl backs away into the cupboard behind him.

Remembers...

Turns and flings open the cupboard. Pulls out the TAPE RECORDER he keeps hidden there.

CREAK... CREAK... CREAK... It's coming...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Daryl spins around with the recorder. He hits play - CLICK -

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (TAPE RECORDER)

*Fear not, for I am with you; be not
dismayed, for I am your God; I will
strengthen you, I will help you--*

*--AND THE FLOORBOARDS ABRUPTLY CREAK **BACKWARDS** THIS TIME. IT
MOVES AWAY FROM DARYL. AWAY FROM THE RECORDER.*

*BACK TO THE TABLE. AND THE EMPTY CHAIR SUDDENLY FLIES UP
FROM THE FLOOR AND CRASHES UP TO THE CEILING AND BREAKS INTO
PIECES. THEY CLATTER BACK ONTO THE FLOOR.*

ERIN

Charles! Stop it!

She gets up and runs to her son. Pushes him out into the

MAIN ROOM

*In the chaos, Daryl drops the recorder. It hits the floor
and stops. He tries to go back for it but Erin keeps pushing
him along.*

HEAVY STOMPING BEHIND THEM. IT'S FOLLOWING THEM.

*They almost make it to the front door when -- WHAM -- ERIN
IS SLAMMED ON THE FLOOR BY AN INVISIBLE FORCE.*

*Daryl grabs her hand to pull her up. She gets back on her
feet and --WHAM-- SHE'S SLAMMED BACK DOWN TO THE FLOOR.*

*We can see the impression of something on her nightgown and
her skin. SOMETHING HEAVY is pressing down on her back. Her
eyes are bugling. She can't breathe.*

YOUNG DARYL

MOM!!

*Daryl's still got her hand. Pulling. But he can't move her.
She's been pinned to the floor.*

*HER PUPILS BEGIN TO DILATE. TWICE THEIR SIZE. TAKING OVER
BOTH HER EYES, TURNING THEM SOLID BLACK.*

She screams. Her mouth WIDENING.

*AND HER SCREAM IS CUT SHORT AS A LARGE LUMP BULGES DOWN HER
THROAT AND MOVES DOWN INTO HER CHEST.*

And it's Daryl's turn to scream now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

He lets go of his mother's hand.

And runs out the FRONT DOOR. Leaving her behind...

CUT TO:

HANDY CAM DISPLAY SCREEN: We're back to the tape. Daryl and the box. He's shaken up. Can barely look up at us.

DARYL (VIDEO)

My mother used to tell me about this thing called culling. It's a hunting technique - when you separate an animal from their herd. You isolate from it's pack so the kill will be easier.

(coming to terms with this)

I thought I was the one trapping it but maybe it's the other way around.

Looks up at the camera. His face, the gravest we've seen it.

DARYL (VIDEO) (cont'd)

It's made physical contact. It... It touched me. Which means it's ready to move to the next stage. It's ready to get inside.

That RUMBLING begins to rise from somewhere...

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Daryl SLAMS a slat of WOOD against the front door. Frantically boards up the HOLE at the bottom of it.

He's sweaty. Feverish. Losing it. The hammer's moving way too fast in his hands.

The RUMBLING rising in his head...

HARD-CUT TO:

CELLAR

The RUMBLING follows Daryl down the steps. He's wrapped Parker in some old blankets. Carries the dog in his arms.

He gently lays him on an old wooden SNOW SLED. Keeps his hand on the body for a long moment. Saying his goodbyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Anger welling up in his eyes. His face hardening. Jaw clinching.

His only friend.

Gone.

HARD-CUT TO:

The box he threw at the wall earlier. The bottom is soaked through. He opens the top.

Most of the bottles are broken now. He finds TWO that are still intact. Snatches them up.

The rumbling growing in his ears...

HARD-CUT TO:

BATHROOM

And now those bottles are in the tub. Two dusty WHISKEYS. Daryl cleans them off with a wet towel.

HARD-CUT TO:

He's twisting the cork out of one the bottles with the Swiss army knife.

His hands, shaking way too much. He can't get the cork out.

HARD-CUT TO:

He tears it out with his teeth instead... Spits the cork out... Throws his head back... And guzzles the bottle down.

He can't drink it fast enough.

The RUMBLING, deafening now. Shaking the walls of the room.

HARD-CUT TO:

MAIN ROOM

The RUMBLING continues. Everything's shaking, disorienting. Dizzying. Nauseating.

Daryl staggers. Drunk as fuck. Looking to hurt something.

He finds a victim. The old record player. Pulls it off the shelf... brings it high over his head and... SMASHES it on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He spins. Almost loses his balance. Searching for his next victim - the coffee table. He flips it over.

What else? The bookshelf. He brings it down, CRASHING to the floor. The MAHOGANY BOX coming down with it.

The ANIMAL HEADS watch from above. It almost looks like they're grinning. Like they're enjoying the show.

HARD-CUT TO:

HALLWAY

The RUMBLING shaking the walls of the hall.

Daryl in front of the crucifix door. Bottle in hand. Almost empty. Slurring at the door.

DARYL

Where were you when we needed you!
Huh? Where!

He paces back and forth.

DARYL (cont'd)

Even after you let that happen to
her... I still came to you! I still
gave my life to you! I spread your
word! I was always there! But you...

He gets right up on the door. Face to face with the cross.

DARYL (cont'd)

Are you even here now?! Were you
ever?!

The cross just stares back at him.

DARYL (cont'd)

Say! Something!

But the door doesn't.

Daryl finishes the bottle. Drops it on the floor.

DARYL (cont'd)

Guess I'll just have to do this
myself.

He storms off. Back up the hall.

WE LINGER on the cross in the door.

CONTINUED: (3)

HARD-CUT TO:

Daryl ransacking the drawers of a desk. Pulls some out. Throwing them on the floor. Searching for something...

BULLETS. He's found some. A few boxes in fact.

HARD-CUT TO:

KITCHEN

The rumbling stops abruptly. The Cabin is quiet. The walls are no longer shaking.

A very drunk Daryl is slouched on the chair. Completely disheveled. Tears flowing. His coat and hat are on.

Bullets all over the table, scattered on top of Liam's papers. He's loading the RIFLE. Dropping more on the floor than he's loading into the gun.

DARYL
(rambling / slurring)
It touched me... I felt it... which
means I can touch it back. It can
feel... It can hurt...

He cocks the rifle. A casing flies out past his face.

He gets up. Grabs a handful of bullets and stuffs them in his coat pocket. Grabs more. Stuffs them. He staggers out.

EXT. THE CABIN - NIGHT

It's snowing.

The front door swings open. Daryl comes out with the rifle.

He storms off the porch -- past the SUV and -- BANG -- lets a shot off into the sky. Lighting up the night.

DARYL
Come on!

BANG! BANG! He shoots at the dark WOODS. The flash of the shot illuminating the rage in his face. Casings flying out.

DARYL (cont'd)
Where are you?! Come on!

He stops right at the edge of the trees.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARYL (cont'd)
I know you're in there!

BANG! BANG! FLASHES of light. Daryl, SCREAMING. Snot and tears. Years of rage all coming out now. The noise echoing into the night.

He keeps shooting at everything and nothing. BANG! BANG! BANG! Cocks it. Casings flip out onto the snow.

DARYL (cont'd)
Come on! I'm right here!

He runs back to the SUV... Pulling bullets out his pocket... Dropping some in the snow... Reloading as he goes...

He reaches the SUV and STOPS in his tracks...

And on one side of the car, the fifth jagged letter has been scratched into it. From door to door. Another "A"

Daryl's eyes flare up, fuming now. He flings the driver door open. Jumps behind the wheel. Starts it...

INT. SUV / MOVING - CONTINUOUS

He SLAMS the gas. The SUV shoots forward. Skidding. Snow shooting from the tires.

Speeding for the WOODS... Straight for the trees.

He's going too fast. Going to crash into them...

But he BRAKES just in time. Comes to a hard stop right at the edge of the woods. He turns on the HIGH BEAMS.

Lighting up the trees ahead. An ominous army of twisted giant trunks standing before him in the WINDSHIELD.

He presses the horn hard. Keeps his hand on it. It BLAAAAAAAARES LOUD, echoing into the night.

DARYL
Come on!

He stops. The last remnants of the horn echo in the woods. And then they die out. Leaving only the wind in the trees.

EXT. EDGE OF THE WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Daryl steps out of the car with the rifle. Stands before the trees. His fast breaths steaming up the cold air.

DARYL
(weaker / lower)
Come on... come on...

But there's no sign of the dog. Just the trees.

Let's try this another way.

Daryl climbs up on the hood of the SUV. Up to the roof. Legs wobbling. Almost falls. Finds his balance.

Stands on the roof of the SUV.

DARYL (cont'd)
Our Father who art in heaven!

His shouts echo into the night.

DARYL (cont'd)
Hallowed be thy name!

The wind seems to be picking up some. He hears it too.

It's working...

He holds the rifle up. Eye in the scope. Turning. Searching.

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *We're doing a three sixty turn with him, searching for the dog. But all we see are dark trees.*

DARYL (O.S.)
Thy kingdom come!

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *We complete the 360 turn. Still nothing.*

DARYL (O.S.) (cont'd)
Thy will be done!

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *We're doing another 360 turn. Searching...*

DARYL (O.S.) (cont'd)
On earth as it is in heaven!

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *And when we come back around we catch a quick glimpse of--*

--FATHER LIAM CLIMBING DOWN A TREE. HEAD FIRST.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daryl does a double take. Swings the rifle back--

RIFLE SCOPE POV: -- *Father Liam is in his priest collar. He sits in the snow on all fours like a dog. Legs out on the sides. Statue still. Just beyond the reach of the lights.*

Daryl pulls his eye away from the scope. Shaken at the sight of his dead friend. Shakes his head side to side.

DARYL

No... it's not you. Not you. Not you.

He brings the rifle back up to his eye. Swaying. Tries to keep still and lock on his target.

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *His aim is drunken, unsteady. Double vision. Struggles to get Liam in the cross-hairs. Almost got it. Almost...*

He pulls the trigger -- BANG!

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *He hits the tree next to Liam. Wood splinters in the bark. Liam doesn't budge.*

Daryl curses. Shoots again -- BANG!

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *Misses again. A burst of white explodes where the bullet struck. Leaving a hole in the snow.*

Daryl roars. Aims again and BANG! BANG! BANG!

RIFLE SCOPE POV: *He keeps missing. Snow and tree bark explode all around Liam. The crouched priest never moves.*

Daryl aims again. CLICK - CLICK. He's empty.

He pulls out the last of the bullets. Loads as fast as he can. Dropping most of them on the roof.

Swings the rifle up to his eye--

RIFLE SCOPE POV: --*And this time LIAM IS MUCH CLOSER! HIS SOLID BLACK EYES staring right through the scope. Shining in the headlights. He's smiling. Way too wide.*

Daryl, startled -- BANG! -- the gun goes off before he's ready -- knocks him off balance -- he falls off the roof of the SUV -- WHAM -- lands hard on his back in the snow.

The rifle's thrown far out of his reach. He rolls around in pain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The last shot echoes away into the night. And then it's gone. Just the cold wind now.

Daryl lies there on his back in the snow.

AND FROM THE WOODS...

DEMON POV: *The jarring, dark melting colors. We're moving, approaching Daryl. He's a good fifty feet away. WE HEAR the demon's steps CRUNCHING in the snow.*

ON DARYL. He doesn't move. Just lies there. Defeated. Exhausted. His eyes wet, staring up at the dark sky.

DEMON POV: *Coming closer. We're forty five feet away now. CRUNCHING closer.*

ON THE SNOW. It's leaving CLOVEN FOOTPRINTS in its wake.

ON DARYL. Drunk. Crying hard. Can barely get the words out.

DARYL (cont'd)
please...

DEMON POV: *CRUNCH... CRUNCH... CRUNCH... Thirty feet away...*

ON DARYL.

DARYL (cont'd)
Lord please... I need you... I need you...

And in the background BEHIND HIM. VIA THE HIGH BEAMS, WE SEE HOLES POPPING UP IN THE SNOW. THE DEMON CRUNCHING CLOSER...

Twenty feet away...

ON DARYL. Hears the CRUNCHING coming.

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

CRUNCH CRUNCH. Fifteen feet away...

ON DARYL. Eyes closed. Crying. Praying to the sky.

DARYL (cont'd)
I will help you, I will uphold you
with my righteous right hand...

A beat. Only the wind. And the CRUNCHING. Getting closer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

And then...

From the open door of the SUV comes that familiar voice...

FEMALE GPS

In one hundred feet, you will reach
your destination.

And Daryl's eyes open... *Did he just hear that?*

FEMALE GPS (cont'd)

In one hundred feet, you will reach
your destination.

Daryl turns his head in the snow. Blinks. Squints.

DARYL'S POV: His double vision coming into focus. The Cabin
looms ahead of him. It's about a hundred feet away.

FEMALE GPS (cont'd)

In one hundred feet, you will reach
your destination.

Daryl struggles to sit up. In pain.

And from behind him... CRUNCH... CRUNCH --

--CRACK. The rifle snaps in half under the demon's hoof.

THE SHADOW OF LONG CROOKED ANTLERS stretch over his back.
Eclipsing him in the snow.

Daryl lunges for the rifle... grabs it... crawls onto his
feet... and staggers back to the Cabin.

The CRUNCHING. Following him.

But he doesn't turn around... Just keeps going... Across the
clearing... up the porch... Fast as he can.

He scrambles through the doorway... rolls inside... kicks
the door shut behind him - SLAM.

WE STAY on the closed door for a beat.

And from far away we hear it...

FEMALE GPS (cont'd)

You have reached your destination.

WE STAY on the closed door as night turns into day. And
we're back in the final memory...

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

12-year-old Daryl stands in front of the Cabin. Trembling. Snow has collected on his hat and sweater. His nose is running. Frozen tears on his cheeks.

He's been out here for some time.

The front door is slightly ajar.

He finally musters up the courage to take the first step up on to the porch. And the next step. And the next.

Until he's at the door. He slowly opens the door.

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

Takes a cautious step inside.

The Cabin is quiet. Still.

Erin is right where he left her. Lying still on the floor on her stomach. It doesn't look like she's breathing.

Daryl steps closer. Tears welling. Imagining the worse.

YOUNG DARYL

...Mom?

Erin doesn't move. Daryl steps even closer. Panic rising.

YOUNG DARYL (cont'd)

Mom? Can you hear me?

Nothing. Daryl bends down and turns his mother over on her back. And now he sees she's holding the RIFLE.

And her eyes are SOLID BLACK like the deer. She stares up at her son with a look that could melt the ice caps.

Daryl runs.

Erin sits up. Lifts the rifle up to her face.

RIFLE SCOPE POV: Daryl disappears out the front door just as -- BANG -- she lets off a shot. Missing him.

She cocks the rifle. A casing flies to the floor.

And she is up on her feet in the blink of an eye. She moves to the door. Rifle up on her shoulder. Ready for the hunt.

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

She comes out to the porch. Rifle up. Bare-footed. Nightgown flapping in the wind.

No sign of Daryl.

She lowers the gun, surveys the fresh snow. Sees his boot prints leading to the woods. She runs off the porch with frightening speed. Follows his tracks into

THE WOODS

ON DARYL. The Deer. Running through the trees. Branches slapping his face as he goes.

ON ERIN. The Hunter. Following his tracks like a bloodhound. She keeps the rifle up. One eye in the scope.

ERIN'S POV THROUGH THE SCOPE: *Jarring. Branches and trees bleeding into each other. She has the eyes of the demon now.*

ON DARYL, stumbling into a

CLEARING

Gasping. Shivering. He gets on his knees and starts pushing snow around, covering up tracks. He does this as he moves backward, making his way to a tree.

ON ERIN. Still coming. She enters the same

CLEARING

And STOPS. Sees his tracks have come to an end. She lowers the rifle and waits. Listening...

ON DARYL, hiding behind a tree. Shivering. Trying to keep still. Waiting. Listening...

And then comes the SHRILL WHISTLE of the tea kettle. He tenses at the sound.

ON ERIN, Statue-still. The whistle coming from her lips. A horrible constant sound that goes on way longer than normal lips could whistle it.

It echos through the woods. Bouncing off the trees. Coming from all directions. Getting louder. Louder.

Eardrum splitting loud.

ON DARYL, covering his ears in pain. Trying not to scream.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON ERIN. The Statue. Whistling. Eyes darting side to side, searching...

A RUSTLING in the bushes catches her attention. She stops the whistle. Raises the rifle and heads in that direction.

Eye in the scope. Not watching where she's going...

Steps over small blanket of snow and branches and SHOOM--

Falls right into THE TRAPPING PIT!

The very same one they dug together.

She disappears from our sight. Hits the bottom and BANG!

The gun goes off. The shot echos through the woods.

And then it's quiet.

Daryl emerges from the tree he was hiding behind. And now we see the tree has the CROSS that he marked into it.

He cautiously approaches the hole. Looks in...

Erin. Laying face down in the dirt. She manages to turn on her back. She's shot herself in the chest. Blood sprays. Reddening her gown and the snow.

Daryl stands at the edge of the hole. Watching her bleed out.

And then she's gone. But her eyes remain wide. Staring.

Daryl drops to his knees. Head low. In tears.

Until he hears MOVEMENT in the hole. He looks up.

His mother remains still. Dead. Staring.

And then... she starts to move...

A LUMP starts to grow in her stomach... It moves up her chest... up her throat... Her mouth widens and whatever comes out, we don't see it.

The blackness dissipates from her eyes and they return to normal. She lies there, still. Mouth agape. Staring.

And DIRT crumbles down one side of the hole. Like something is trying to climb out of it.

Daryl backs away from the hole just as --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CRUNCH CRUNCH ... TWO LARGE HOLES appear in the snow at the edge of the hole. The demon has climbed out.

Daryl, paralyzed. Watches as... CRUNCH CRUNCH CRUNCH. MORE HOLES pop up in the snow. It's walking toward him.

Almost upon him when...

YOUNG FATHER LIAM (O.S.)
I drive you from us! Whatever you may
be!

Young Father Liam hurries into the clearing. A CROSS up in is hand. His coat open revealing his priest collar.

YOUNG FATHER LIAM
Unclean spirits! All infernal
invaders! All wicked legions!

AND CRUNCH-CRUNCH-CRUNCH- THE HOLES MOVE AWAY FROM DARYL AND RETREAT BACK AND OUT OF THE CLEARING. We hear something climbing up a tree. Something big. Heavy. Fast.

Liam reaches Daryl. The boy falls into his arms, crying. Liam holds on to him but keeps the cross up to the trees.

WE SEE the branches SHAKING from tree to tree as the demon climbs through them, retreating further into the woods.

And the branches calm. It's gone.

FATHER LIAM
(tearing up)
I'm sorry. I'm so, so sorry.

But Daryl is numb with shock. He can't hear Liam. He just stares over Liam's shoulder. Tears streaming.

Watching the branches above, swaying in the cold wind.

PRE-LAP the sound of APPLAUSE.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - DUSK

The ALCOHOLISM SUPPORT GROUP again. The circle applauds a woman (30s), who's just concluded her story. She sits.

OWEN
Thank you for sharing, Joan. We have
time for one more if anyone else
would like to share tonight?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He scans the circle looking for a volunteer.

Janet is here. Her eyes are on Daryl's empty seat.

OWEN (cont'd)
 Guess that's it for the night. Great
 work everyone. As usual there's
 coffee and bagels at the back. Stay,
 talk. Meet someone new.

Everyone gets up and heads for the tables. The room erupts
 in CHATTER. Janet is about to get up when--

Her cellphone VIBRATES in her pocket. She checks it, sees
 who's calling. She immediately answers. We can't hear what
 she hears but her face grows serious. She listens. Then...

JANET
 (stands)
 Everybody! Everybody, please!

The room quiets. All eyes on Janet. She holds the phone up.

JANET (cont'd)
 We've got one more for the night.

INT. THE CABIN / BATHROOM - SAME TIME

Daryl sits in the TUB. The shower curtain is closed. This is his makeshift CONFSSIONAL BOOTH he and Father Liam used before. He's got his phone on his ear. Still in his coat. Still pretty drunk. Can't bring himself to speak.

The last remaining BOTTLE OF WHISKEY is in the tub with him. It stands between his legs.

DARYL
 I'm sorry. I shouldn't have called...

INTER-CUT:

GYMNASIUM

Janet holds the phone closer to her mouth.

JANET
 Daryl, don't. Don't hang up. You
 called me, OK. You're here now. Stay.

He's breathing heavy over the line. This isn't easy for him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANET (cont'd)
(calm / reassuring)
I know you're tired. Some days that
cross can get so heavy, you feel like
you can barely stand. Believe me I
know, I've been there. But that's
what we're here for - to help you
carry it. We want to hear your story,
Daryl. We're all listening.

THE TUB

And he's listening to her. Taking in her words. Taking in
deep breaths. Here goes nothing.

DARYL
(long beat)
My name is Daryl and I'm... I'm an
alcoholic.

THE CIRCLE (PHONE)
Hi, Daryl.

GYMNASIUM

REVEAL, everyone's back in their seats now. Janet's got her
phone on speaker, holding it up for all to hear. WE MOVE
around the circle on their faces as they listen to Daryl's
confession.

DARYL (SPEAKER PHONE)
My mother had the disease first.
After my father died, she went
someplace dark and... And this...
This *darkness*, I watched it slowly
eat away at her.

THE TUB

Daryl's eyes never leave the bottle between his legs.

DARYL
In the end, she wasn't my mother
anymore. She's gone now... but the
darkness remains. It followed me.

The RUMBLING starts low. The bottle is calling him.

Daryl, fighting back tears. Phone shaking more in his hand.

There's a SILHOUETTE of Father Liam on the other side of the
shower curtain. Liam sits in the chair, listening. Nodding.
Encouraging Daryl on, like he did all those years ago.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARYL

It's surrounded me now. Trying to get inside and... and I don't know if I can fight it anymore.

(tears come)

If I had stopped it before... If I had saved her then maybe...

He breaks down in sobs.

GYMNASIUM

There is no rumbling here. The circle listens to him breaking down on the speaker. Some of them are in tears, thinking about the darkness in their own lives.

Janet, emotional. Brings the phone close to her mouth now.

JANET

(whispers)

You did it. That's it. Let it out now. Let it out. You did good.

She locks eyes with Owen. He nods - You did good.

She hands Owen the phone, passing the baton over to him now. Owen brings the phone close to his lips.

OWEN

Daryl. You may not have been able to save your mother then but you can save yourself now. I imagine that's what she would have wanted - for you to beat the darkness that she couldn't. Millions of people are going through that same darkness right now. When you're in the dark, it's easy to lose sight of who you are.

FLASH-CUT TO: A CHURCH. Daryl in full priest attire, giving a sermon from the pulpit. The pews are packed. We can't hear him but Daryl looks confident up there. In his element. This is where he belongs.

OWEN (V.O.)

The trick is you have to look beyond the dark and see who you were. Remember who you were before it came. Focus on that. Use it to get through this. You can be that person again.

THE TUB

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Daryl picks his head up. Affected by Owen's words.

The RUMBLING is as loud as it's ever been.

But Daryl ignores it. He uncorks the bottle. Slowly leans it over and spills it out into the drain of the tub.

The emptier it gets, the lower the rumbling gets. And when the bottle is empty, the rumbling stops. Quiet.

The SILHOUETTE of Liam is gone now.

Daryl puts the empty bottle down. Holds the phone close to his ear. He sits there in the quiet of the room.

It's the most quiet it's ever been for him.

WE STAY on his face. Something is building up in it.

BEGIN MONTAGE SEQUENCE

MAIN ROOM. Daryl staggers in. Surveys the scene from the night before. The mess he made.

- He finds the MAHOGANY BOX on the floor. Picks it up.
- He starts to clean it up. Lifts the bookshelf back up.

LAST ROOM. THWACK. THWACK. Daryl on his knees. Stapling pages to the floor.

- He stands. The entire room is covered with bible pages.
- He drills a METAL C-PIPE into the middle of the floor.

CELLAR. He searches through boxes. Finds an old sewing kit. Takes all the rolls of YARN.

- Grabs random items from boxes. SCISSORS, PENS, KEYS, a roll of DUCT TAPE.
- He removes WIRES from the back of some OLD SPEAKERS.
- He finds some THICK ROPE.
- Grabs the HANDSAW from the shelf.

KITCHEN. Daryl eats some canned soup at the table. Trying to get some of his strength back. He's going to need it.

- He opens the drawers on the counter. Grabs handfuls of silverware - FORKS, KNIVES, SPOONS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

- He takes the BROOM. Snaps off the bristles. Now he's got a long STICK.

HALLWAY. TWHACK. He's on the ladder. Staple-guns strands of yarn to the ceiling. Cuts them to a length that they hang halfway to the floor.

CUT TO: **LATER**

- The entire hall is full of strands of yarn. He's tied all the SILVERWARE, SCISSORS, PENS and KEYS to the ends of them.

- He walks up the hall through the strings and all the metal items swing about, CLANKING together. It's an alarm system.

BEDROOM. He opens a drawer. Pulls out his old CASSETTE TAPE RECORDER. Sits on the bed with it. Stares at it in his hand.

END MONTAGE SEQUENCE

BATHROOM

Daryl enters with the HANDSAW. He's covered in sweat and SAW DUST, exhausted. He drops the saw in the sink.

Removes his clothes. His body is frail and bruised.

He steps into the tub and bathes for the first time in days.

BEDROOM

Daryl changes into a black shirt and black pants. The same clothes he wears in the video on the handy cam.

FLASH-CUT TO: *Young Father Liam, putting the cross and bible into young Daryl's palms.*

YOUNG FATHER LIAM

(re: cross)

This is your rifle.

(re: bible)

These are the bullets.

BACK TO SCENE. Daryl finds the CROSS on the floor. Puts it back on its nail.

CELLAR

Daryl opens a box with his father's OLD POLICE UNIFORM. He runs his thumb across the badge, wiping the dust off.

There's a pair of HANDCUFFS in the box. He picks them up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

A moment of truth. A decision is made in Daryl's face.

CLICK. Daryl cuffs one side to his left wrist. Leaves the other side open. He puts the KEY in his shirt pocket.

He turns to another shelf. Takes the HANDY CAM and tripod.

KITCHEN

The handy cam is set up on the tripod aimed at the chair. The mahogany box is on the table. Daryl sits in the chair. Handcuffs on his wrist. He takes a moment to find his words.

He hits record. Looks straight into the camera and begins his same testimony from the opening scene.

DARYL

(emotional)

If you've found this tape it means I'm already dead. For the record I want you to know, I did not take my own life. It may look as such but there are reasons for my actions - reasons that I will try to explain. What you are about to hear may be hard to believe but every word of it is true. This is my story...

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN / KITCHEN - DAY (THE PRESENT)

And we're right back where we started. The unseen WATCHER. His back to us. Watching the tape on the camera.

HANDY CAM DISPLAY SCREEN: Daryl at the table with the unopened box. The cuffs on his wrist. Resolve in his face.

DARYL (VIDEO)

Once the demon invades the body it's virtually impossible to remove. I need to detach now while it's on the outside - when it's most vulnerable to the Word.

And finally Daryl opens that damn mahogany box. Takes out a GOLD ORNATE CRUCIFIX. Lays it on the table.

Next he takes out the WHITE CLERICAL COLLAR and fastens it to the neck of his shirt. CRACKS his neck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And lastly he takes out a small LEATHER BOUND BOOK. Places it on the table. On the cover - The Rite of Exorcism.

DARYL (VIDEO) (cont'd)
November 18th, 2019. The time is just after midnight. This is the video record of the attempted exorcism of Daryl Collins.

(beat)

I am Father Daryl Collins. And I will be performing the exorcism.

Boom. Let that sink in for a moment.

EXT. THE CABIN - NIGHT

Daryl comes out the front door without a coat. He's wearing his priest collar. Has the book with him.

He walks off the porch into the snow. Stops midway between the WOODS and the Cabin. Stands there facing the trees.

Makes the sign of the cross. Opens the book and begins reading in a loud authoritative voice.

Right at the trees.

DARYL
I command you, unclean spirit, now attacking this servant of God!

THE WOODS

DEMON POV: *We're far away, high up a tree. We can't see Daryl from here but we can hear him reading.*

DARYL (O.S.)
By the mysteries of the incarnation, passion, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ!

DEMON POV: *We begin to climb down the tree.*

ON DARYL. The wind starts to pick up... The handcuff starts to sway in the breeze... The pages start to flutter.

It's working.

He holds the page down. Reads with more conviction now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARYL
I command you to obey me to the
letter! For I am a minister of God
despite my unworthiness!

THE WOODS

DEMON POV: *We're on the ground now. CRUNCH CRUNCH CRUNCH-ING through the snow. Moving towards Daryl.*

ON DARYL. Wind picking up more. He hears the CRUNCHING in the distance but he keeps reading.

DARYL (cont'd)
When time began, the Word was there!
And the Word was face to face with
God, and the Word was God!

DEMON POV: *We're out of the woods now. About fifty feet away from Daryl. Picking up speed. CRUNCH... CRUNCH....*

ON DARYL, hears the CRUNCHING getting closer.

DARYL (cont'd)
All things came into being through
Him, and without Him there came to be
not one thing that has come to be!

DEMON POV: *We're about thirty feet from Daryl now. Everything is dark and dripping. Everything except the book he's holding. It glows slightly in his hand.*

Daryl looks up from the book. Sees the HOLES APPEARING in the snow. Getting closer. They pass the SUV. Keep coming.

He starts to back up towards Cabin. Reading as he goes.

Wind whipping harder. He holds the fluttering pages down.

DARYL (cont'd)
In Him was life, and the life was the
light of men!

CRUNCH-CRUNCH-CRUNCH - coming faster.

Daryl's backing up with the book. Moving faster too.

DARYL (cont'd)
The light shines in the darkness, and
the darkness did not lay hold of it!

He backs up to the porch. Walks up backwards. Still reading.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARYL (cont'd)
 Almighty Lord, Word of God the
 Father, Jesus Christ, God and Lord of
 all creation!

And the holes are picking up speed. CRUNCH-CRUNCH-CRUNCH.

DARYL (cont'd)
 Who gave to your holy apostles the
 power to tramp underfoot serpents and
 scorpions!

The holes come faster. Angrier. EXPLODING in the snow now.
 They reach the foot of the porch...

Daryl backs into the door with the book.

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He closes the door. Backs away from it.

OUTSIDE

DEMON POV: *We're STOMPING up the porch steps...*

MAIN ROOM

Daryl backs away to the far wall with the book.

KITCHEN

The HANDY-CAM is on a tripod pointing into the MAIN ROOM
 now. It's recording the exorcism.

OUTSIDE

DEMON POV: *WE'RE RIGHT OUTSIDE OF THE FRONT DOOR. AND LIKE
 MAGIC, THE FINAL LETTER IS VIOLENTLY CARVED INTO THE WOOD BY
 INVISIBLE NAILS. A JAGGED "M"*

MAIN ROOM

Daryl hears the SCRATCHING on the other side of the door but
 he keeps reading aloud.

DARYL
 God and Father of our Lord Jesus
 Christ, I appeal to your holy name,
 humbly begging your kindness!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WE HOLD on door for the longest agonizing beat. Waiting for it to open. Waiting... waiting...

DARYL (O.S.)
That you graciously grant me help
against this and every unclean
spirit--

--AND BANG -- the slat of wood Daryl nailed on the door to cover up the hole SHOOTs off and flies into the room.

AND SOMETHING STARTS TO CRAWL IN THROUGH THE HOLE ON ALL FOURS.

Daryl sees it. Lowers the book. His face slacks in shock.

IT'S ERIN.

ON ALL FOURS. HER SKIN IS AS WHITE AS SNOW. SHE'S STILL IN THAT NIGHTGOWN. DRIED DARK BLOOD STAINS ON THE FRONT OF HER GOWN FROM THE BULLET HOLE THAT WENT IN HER CHEST.

HER FACE IS SLIGHTLY LONGER THAN IT SHOULD BE. SHE STARES UP AT DARYL WITH THOSE **SOLID BLACK EYES**. SLOWLY RISING ON HER BARE FEET.

Daryl, horrified. Staring at the face of his mother.

She steps forward. Her joints making SICKENING CRACKING SOUNDS. Like something frozen moving after a long time.

Daryl, frozen. Book in hand.

Erin steps closer... Reaches out a bone white arm for him...

Her bare feet stepping onto the NAVAJO RUG on the floor between them...

It's not until she reaches the middle of it that we see...

...the LONG SLIT that's been cut down the middle of the rug.

Erin falls through it and CRASHES into the cellar below!

The noise snaps Daryl back to the moment.

Daryl lifts the rug up and now we see...

He's sawed off the wooden hatch to the cellar and widened the hole. A huge section of the floor is missing now.

A homemade TRAPPING PIT.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Daryl steps to the edge of the hole with the book. Continues to read.

DARYL
God, by your name save me!
And by your might defend my cause!

The demon has gone invisible again. It's moving around frantically below. Boxes rip apart... tools fly about... shelves topple over. It's angry.

DARYL (cont'd)
Because from all distress you have
rescued me! And my eyes look down
upon my enemies--

--CRACK - a floorboard shoots up near Daryl's foot. It flies up past his face and hits the ceiling. Comes back down.

CRACK- CRACK -CRACK. More boards fly up from the floor.

Daryl backs away from the hole. Dodging the shooting floorboards. He hurries to the

HALLWAY

Ducks down and crawls on his stomach underneath all the SILVERWARE hanging from the ceiling of the hall.

MAIN ROOM

WE HEAR the demon climbing out of the hole. WE HEAR it STOMP onto the floor. It's in the room now.

HALLWAY

Daryl keeps crawling. Book in hand. Fast as he can for the LAST ROOM when... BEHIND HIM...

The makeshift alarm system goes off as--

THE DEMON CHARGES. HOOVES STOMPING ON THE FLOORBOARDS. SILVERWARE PARTS LIKE THE RED SEA AS IT COMES DOWN THE HALL, CAUSING A RIPPLE EFFECT OF SWINGING METAL THINGS CLANKING NOISELESSLY TOGETHER.

STRINGS AND SILVERWARE GETTING CAUGHT IN ITS INVISIBLE ANTLERS. SWINGING ON NOTHING.

But Daryl makes it to the room just in time...

And the demon STOPS in the middle of the hall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The silverware behind it, CLANKING loudly.

The silverware in front of it is still. Untouched.

DEMON POV: *Jarring. Shapes melting into each other. Watching Daryl on his knees inside the Last Room. And BEHIND DARYL, the letters are glowing on the walls. Pinpricks of light.*

The silverware starts to part in the opposite direction. The demon is moving backwards, away from the Last Room.

But Daryl's prepared for this. He reaches behind the door and pulls out the STICK that used to be the broom.

He steps back into the

HALLWAY

WE FOLLOW his hand, the handcuff dangling. As he raises the stick over his head towards the ceiling...

FLASH-CUT TO: (DARYL'S MEMORY) *We remember this scene. Erin and Daryl in the woods. She's showing him how to hunt. The small deer in the cross hairs of the scope.*

ERIN (V.O.)

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

BACK TO SCENE. The stick rising up. And now we see why...

Daryl's duct taped the TAPE RECORDER to the ceiling.

WE FOLLOW the SPEAKER WIRING that runs from the back of the tape recorder... all the way down to other end of the hall... to those TWO OLD SPEAKERS.

He's hung them above in the edge of the hallway. Facing towards the Last Room.

ERIN (V.O.) (cont'd)

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

YOUNG DARYL (V.O.)

The hunter.

The demon's almost out of the hall. Silverware swinging in its wake...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

When the end of the stick reaches the tape recorder above and hits the play button.

CLICK. The spools of the tape spin.

And from the SPEAKERS on the other end of the hall come Daryl's pre-recorded reading of the Rite.

Oh, and the volume is **ALL THE WAY UP!!!**

DARYL'S VOICE (SPEAKERS)
I COMMAND YOU, UNCLEAN SPIRIT, NOW
ATTACKING THIS SERVANT OF GOD!

AND THE DEMON ABRUPTLY REVERSES AWAY FROM THE SPEAKERS.
COMING BACK DOWN THE HALL. RUNNING AWAY FROM THE WORD OF
GOD. SILVERWARE FLYING EVERYWHERE.

DARYL'S VOICE (SPEAKERS) (cont'd)
I COMMAND YOU TO OBEY TO THE LETTER!

With the speakers blocking its path out, the demon goes in the only direction it can now... IT BARRELS TOWARD DARYL...

And Daryl sees the silverware parting in his direction. Knows it's coming.

He drops the stick, turns for the door. But the Demon is faster and -- WHAM

-- AN INVISIBLE FORCE SLAMS AGAINST HIM.

The book falls from his hand.

Daryl lands HARD on his stomach.

The upper half of his body is inside the Last Room. From the waist down he's in the Hallway.

He's GASPING. The wind knocked out of him. Arms flailing about, stretching for something in the room...

THE ROPE.

He gets a hold of the end... wraps it around his hand...

WE FOLLOW the rope and see that it's been tied to the metal C-PIPE he drilled to the floor.

Daryl PULLS on the rope with all he's got. Pulls himself (with the demon on top of him) into the

LAST ROOM

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Legs kicking wildly. One good KICK shuts the door.

Outside the door, Daryl's voice still BLARES on the speakers. This will continue for the rest of the scene.

And Daryl keeps pulling himself across the floor...

Closer to the C-PIPE...

The unseen Demon PRESSING DOWN on his back. The back of his shirt rips open. HOOVES imprinted on the skin on his back.

Daryl, fighting through the pain. He doesn't stop pulling.

The temperature must have dropped substantially because now we can see his cold breath.

He's still saying the rite. Repeating it along with his own voice outside on the speakers.

DARYL
(struggling)
When time began, the Word was there!
And the Word was face to face with
God!

HIS PUPILS START TO DILATE. TURNING **SOLID BLACK.**

Still Daryl pulls... pulls... fighting against it...

...He reaches the C-PIPE. And SNAPS the open side of the HANDCUFFS shut on the pipe.

Locking himself and the demon in the room together.

He fights to get his hand in his pocket... Pulls out the GOLD CROSS... Holds the cross up high.

DARYL (cont'd)
(struggling)
...And the word... was God--

--HIS MOUTH STARTS TO WIDEN... WIDER... WIDER... The demon's trying to get inside him.

We can see the intense struggle in his face. Daryl fighting to stay present. A tug of war over his body and soul.

But Daryl is stronger. He BITES down. Fighting to shut his jaw. His face, shaking. And his mouth starts to close...

More... more... until it's back to normal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

And he continues "rite" where he left off.

DARYL (cont'd)
(struggling)
...And all... things ... came into
being... through him...

And he holds the cross up even higher.

DARYL (cont'd)
Depart... then! Depart Balaam! Depart
from me! For God... has willed...
that man... be His temple!

And the blackness starts to dissipate from his eyes.

DARYL (cont'd)
Depart! I cast you out, Balaam! Out
from me! Out from the Lord's temple!

DEMON POV: *WE RISE out of Daryl's mouth and into the room.*

DARYL
I cast you out, unclean spirit! OUT!
UUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUT!

DEMON POV: *The words on the walls are glowing bright. We can see EVERY LETTER, EVERY SENTENCE. It's blinding us.*

We move around in a frenzy, trying to avoid the light from the walls but there is no escape. It surrounds us.

Daryl yelling from the floor. Holding the CROSS up. It's shining in his hand. Like looking into the sun.

The walls grow brighter. Blinding. Unbearable. We're bouncing around the room like a ping pong ball.

THE CROSS on the door. It's the only way out.

So we move for the door and go through the cross.

And as we do a BLINDING PURE WHITE LIGHT CONSUMES US.

HALLWAY

The other side of the door. RAYS OF LIGHT shining through the cross. Like the sun is rising inside the room.

And that PURE WHITE LIGHT spills into the hall. Until it's all we see. We're consumed by it too...

MATCH-CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

Fresh white snow.

On the ground. Untouched. Freshly fallen.

We're not inside the Cabin anymore. We're...

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Trees sway in the cold wind.

The SUV sits in the snow.

The Cabin sits still. Quiet.

The hole in the front door. The jagged letter "M" above it.

INT. CABIN / MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Snow on the floor. Blowing in from the hole in the door.

The room is still. Just the soft CLANKING of silverware.

Guess those weren't wind chimes after all.

The animal heads on the walls stare down at us.

Remnants of the night before...

The Navajo rug lies twisted on one side of the room. The long slit in the middle of it is visible.

The hole sawed into the floor.

The trashed cellar below.

Missing and cracked floorboards all over.

Hell of a night.

KITCHEN

Daryl's phone on the counter. Dead.

And the HANDY CAM is still on the tripod. Aimed into the room. It's not recording anymore.

HALLWAY

A few pieces of silverware still hang. Softly CLANKING together in the breeze.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bent and flattened silverware on the floor.

The SPEAKERS hang above. Silent.

The TAPE RECORDER. Duct-taped to the ceiling. The spools are still. The tape at it's end.

WE MOVE to the closed Crucifix door.

The wood on the edges of the cross have been singed.

WE MOVE through the cross and into the

LAST ROOM

Where Daryl remains still on the floor. On his back. Cuffed to the pipe. The cross still in his other hand.

He wakes. Slowly rises his head. It hurts to do so.

His lips are blue. He's pale. Weak. Shivering.

He pats his breast pocket. Can't feel the handcuff key. He reaches inside. Comes up empty-handed.

HALLWAY

REVEAL where the handcuff KEY has fallen - just outside of the door. Might as well be a million miles away.

LAST ROOM

Daryl shakes his head. He's stuck there now.

But he's won. He's defeated the demon.

His chapped lips break into a smile. Something we haven't seen him do in a long time. The smile turns into a laugh. His breaths visible in the brisk air.

He starts to cry. Relieved. Exhausted. Shivering. Content. So many emotions coursing through him at once.

A bitter sweet victory.

He lowers his head again. No where to go now.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK OF THE CABIN - DUSK

THE SHED

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

With no one to man it, the generator shuts off.

All the lights go off in the Cabin windows.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CABIN - NIGHT

The wind howls. Snow falls.

The Cabin is silent. Windows dark.

INT. CABIN / LAST ROOM - NIGHT

Daryl, weak and haggard. Sitting up in the floor. Trying to pick the handcuff lock with the SWISS ARMY KNIFE. No luck.

CUT TO:

Daryl trying to break the handcuff with the cross.

Nope. Not happening.

He lies back down. Closes his eyes. Prays to himself.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CABIN - MORNING

The sun's just starting its shift. It's snowing.

INT. THE CABIN / LAST ROOM - MORNING

Daryl paler. Hunched over on the floor. Could be dead.

The sound of a CAR pulling up outside. A car door SLAMS.

INT. THE CABIN / MAIN ROOM - SAME

The opening scene repeats.

THROUGH THE HOLE of the door. The WATCHER is coming up the steps of the porch. He slowly opens the door and steps in.

WE FOLLOW his boots across the ruined floor.

Bible pages flutter down the hall toward the boots. One of the boots steps on a page to stop it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Watcher's gloved hand reaches down to pick it up. WE FOLLOW the paper up to his face and see He is not a He.

It's Janet.

She stares at the page in her hand.

Looks to the hole in the floor. The wrecked cellar below.

Looks down the hall to the Crucifix door. *What the heck?*

But then she sees the CAMERA on the tripod.

KITCHEN

Janet sits in the chair. Hits play on the camera.

CUT TO: **LATER**

Janet watching the end of the tape.

HANDY-CAM DISPLAY: *The exorcism. Daryl backing up into the room reading the book... We're right at the part where Erin comes in through the door...*

But right before she does, the video warps. WHITE NOISE fills the screen. We can't see anything. All the sounds slow down and distort.

Janet frowns at the screen. Gets up and leaves the room.

INT. LAST ROOM - DAY

Daryl lies still on the floor.

FOOTSTEPS. Coming up the hall. Silverware CLANKING as they do. Janet reaches the door. She stares in at Daryl through the cross. Daryl doesn't wake.

BATHROOM - LATER

When he finally does, he's lying naked in a bathtub of steaming hot water. He's got a little color back.

His eyes open and see...

Janet is sitting on the edge of the tub pouring in more hot water from a boiling pot. Her face is wrapped with concern. She can see all the bruises and scars on Daryl's body now.

The handcuffs are gone. His wrist is raw and swollen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daryl sits up. Tries to say something.

JANET

Shhhh. Shhhh. Let's get your temperature back up then we'll get you to a doctor. You were probably a few hours away from frost bite.

DARYL

(shivering)

...how? How did you find me?

JANET

(beat)

That night, after we spoke in the hallway, I followed you here. Just wanted to make sure you got home OK.

(jokes)

I wish I would have known home was three hours away.

Daryl tries to explain. Teeth chattering.

DARYL

That room... It's...

JANET

Save it for the ride back.

(gets up)

I'll give you some privacy. If you need me, I'll be in the kitchen fixing you up something. Then we go see a doctor.

She goes for the door.

DARYL

Why?

She stops at the door.

JANET

When you spoke to Susan that day in AA, I recognized your voice.

FLASH CUT TO: ST. ANGELA CHURCH. We remember this. Daryl in the CONFESSIONAL BOOTH. Giving advice to the crying woman in the next booth. Only now we can see the distraught woman through the mesh is Janet.

JANET (V.O.)

It was the same voice that helped me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BACK TO SCENE

DARYL
(emotional)
Thank you.

She leaves, closing the door behind him. Daryl curls up in the tub. Tears welling up.

EXT. THE CABIN - DUSK - LATER

A piece of wood covers the hole in the front door now.

Daryl and Janet come out in their coats. Daryl has Parker in his arms. He's still wrapped in blankets.

They walk off the porch to Janet's VOLVO which is parked out front. She opens the trunk. Daryl gently lays Parker inside.

CUT TO:

Daryl opens the SUV door. Grabs the GPS.

INT. JANET'S VOLVO - MOMENTS LATER

The camera and tripod are in the backseat.

Daryl's in the passenger seat. The MAHOGANY BOX in his lap. He suctions the GPS to the dash. Plugs in the directions.

Janet starts the car. Drives away.

Daryl opens the box in his lap. The cross, the collar and the book is back inside it.

And something else now...

A picture frame. That same photo of his mother and father holding hands. All the dust has been wiped clean from it.

He closes the box.

REAR VIEW WINDOW: WE STAY on the Cabin as they drive away. It shrinks in the distance. Getting swallowed up into the trees. And then it's gone.

FEMALE GPS
In one hundred and fourteen miles,
you will reach your destination.

FADE OUT

(CONTINUED)