

THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

Inspired by True Events

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L A K E S H O R E



E N T E R T A I N M E N T

Lakeshore Entertainment Corp.

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BLACK SCREEN. We hear MUSIC. Modal. Foreboding.

Then a SOUND. Unrecognizable at first. Nightmare mutterings, guttural tones rising through the music's moody layers...

Until it emerges as a VOICE: More feline than female, like a big cat, a predator GROWLING and SNARLING defiance, then RISING AGAIN into SHRIEKS, OBSCENITIES, a WOMAN'S SCREAM --

SUPER, white letters against black:

In a rare decision, the Catholic Church officially recognized the demonic possession of a young college student named Emily Rose.

This is an actual recording of her exorcism ritual, performed on Halloween night...

The HORRIFIC GROANS and SCREAMS CONTINUE, rising in volume as we BEGIN MAIN TITLES -- then, when it's almost more than we can take...

SILENCE. And we FADE IN ON...

1

EXT. A SMALL HOMESTEAD FARM -- PREDAWN

1

A PALE GREEN GLOW on the horizon bleeds a weird TWILIGHT across harvested fields. Wheat stubble and wooden fences. Light SNOW falls on bare, frozen earth. Empty cornstalks WHISPER in the wind.

OFFSCREEN, we HEAR A CAR drive slowly up the unpaved driveway and park. We HEAR the CAR DOOR OPEN and SHUT, and a MAN in his late 60s approaches the FARMHOUSE, looking tired.

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The COLD WIND kicks up, and the Man buttons his overcoat. At the front door, he knocks and waits. No one comes. He shifts his feet, blows on his hands.

*

He steps down off the porch and drifts around to the side of the house, where he stops and stares pointlessly at a BARN.

The WIND GUSTS, and a weather vane CREAKS atop the barn, drawing his eye. HORSES STAMP and WHINNY inside. A few CATS slink about -- they look feral, as if they belong to no one.

Now the Man hears A DISCONCERTING SOUND. Warily, he turns, glancing upward, and sees...

INSERT

A HORNETS' NEST

beneath the eaves. The agitated wasps swarm feverishly, strangely active despite the winter cold.

He watches them, vaguely disturbed...

ONE UPSTAIRS WINDOW of the farmhouse is BROKEN, and only partially repaired with plywood and tape. Now a LIGHT comes on upstairs, and A MIDDLE-AGED MAN appears briefly in a second upstairs window -- then he is gone.

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The Man outside stands alone in the cold, staring up at the silent house. The place seems desolate, as if abandoned, and there's a pervasive sense of dread -- a nameless doom...

Now the BACK DOOR OPENS, and MARIA, a woman in her 40s, steps halfway out. She looks utterly exhausted, as if from a long, draining ordeal.

MARIA

You are the Medical Examiner?

The Man standing outside nods, then approaches and steps inside.

*

2

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN -- SAME

2

A YOUNG MAN of about 20 sits at the kitchen table, along with THREE TEENAGE GIRLS aged 17, 15, and 14. The girls CRY quietly, touching each other, trying to console.

The Young Man holds a coffee cup in the circle of his hands, as if clinging to its warmth. He looks shell-shocked.

Maria leads the M.E. out of the kitchen, passing a LARGE WOODEN CRUCIFIX mounted on the wall of the entrance hall...

3 INT. THE LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

3

Maria enters, followed by the M.E. -- and he pauses, noticing a MAN who sits alone in an old easy chair, facing the television. The TV set is OFF, but the Man looks at it numbly. With both hands, he clutches a worn-out BABY DOLL that's missing one eye.

MEDICAL EXAMINER

Mr. Rose...?

The Man in the easy chair turns slightly in the direction of the voice, but doesn't respond. Maria touches the M.E. on the arm, urging him on, and he follows her up the staircase.

4 INT. THE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

4

At the top of the stairs, Maria gestures, and the M.E. starts down the hall toward a BEDROOM DOORWAY that's slightly ajar. LIGHT from the doorway cuts sharply across the hall.

Before he reaches the door, it OPENS, and a MAN steps out of the room -- the same Middle-Aged Man who appeared in the window.

The M.E. stops, and the two men regard each other. The Middle-Aged Man wears the white collar of a PRIEST -- but this is no kindly counselor and soother of souls.

Tightly-wound, with a dark intensity, FATHER RICHARD MOORE looks like a battle-scarred veteran of both physical and spiritual wars.

After a moment, the priest steps aside, and Maria leads the M.E. into the bedroom: We glimpse A UNIFORMED POLICEMAN inside the room as Maria shuts the door behind her.

5 INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN -- A BIT LATER

5

Father Moore stands near the window, staring out at nothing. At the table sit the Young Man, JASON, and the father, SAMUEL ROSE, who still clutches the broken doll. The teenage girls are gone.

The only sound we hear is the QUIET TICKING of an old wooden clock on the wall...

Maria enters, followed by the M.E. and the Policeman. The M.E. looks shaken. Slowly, Samuel looks up from the broken doll and focuses on the M.E..

MEDICAL EXAMINER
 (deeply disturbed)
 I'm sorry, Mr. Rose...but I cannot state
 conclusively that the cause of death is
 natural. Your daughter, she...

The M.E. trails off, and just stands there, like a man unable to shake the effect of a nightmare. After a moment, Samuel, Maria, and Jason all turn to the priest.

Father Moore stares back at them a moment -- then looks out the window again, and sees...

6 EXT. FARM -- BACK YARD -- SAME 6

A TALL FIGURE is standing in the back yard, wearing a LONG BLACK ROBE and a broad-brimmed BLACK HAT.

Staring right back at him...

POLICEMAN #1 (O.S.)
 Excuse me...Father...

Now the Figure turns away, walking into the wind, his long robe flaring out behind him...

As the priest watches in wonder, the Figure steps into the shadow of the barn -- and like a phantom, he's GONE.

POLICEMAN #1 (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Father Moore...

6A INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN -- SAME 6A

Slowly, Father Moore turns to face the waiting Policeman.

POLICEMAN #1
 You'll have to come with me.

SMASH CUT TO:

7 A VIDEO IMAGE: FATHER MOORE 7

being led through a MOB OF REPORTERS and up the steps of a COURTHOUSE -- then we PULL BACK TO REVEAL...

INT. A CONFERENCE ROOM -- EVENING

It's dark and moody. The DISTRICT ATTORNEY and several ASSISTANT D.A.'S sit around a polished conference table, watching a TV play the footage of Father Moore's arrest. WIND rustles the trees outside the uncurtained windows.

MALE REPORTER (ON TV)

...Father Richard Moore, arrested today
in connection with the death of Emily
Rose, a first-year student at the
University, after she was apparently --
(he shifts to a dubious tone)
-- the subject of an "exorcism"...

The D.A. reaches over and turns down the volume, but he
leaves the TV on, so the IMAGES CONTINUE WITHOUT SOUND: Now
the TV shows PICTURES OF EMILY'S FAMILY...

A.D.A. #1

...Where are these people from?

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

The family lives on a farm out near the
county line.

A.D.A. #2

Yeah, that place is in the sticks -- it's
an hour and a whole world away. *

A.D.A. #1

What about the parents?

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

They're not talking to the police.

A.D.A. #1

Do we charge 'em? *

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

No, even the priest admits that he ran the
show. Besides, if we go after a grieving
mother, the press could turn sympathetic.
This could become a total monkey circus... *

And now a PHOTOGRAPH OF EMILY appears on the TV screen. It's her
high school senior picture: lovely, bright-eyed, eighteen.

A.D.A. #1

Huh. Pretty girl.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Yeah, the media's gonna eat it up -- I want
a good man on this. Who's available? *

A.D.A. #2

How 'bout Feltheimer? He's a great
courtroom guy. *

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

(sarcastic)

Oh, yeah, that's a brilliant idea -- I'm gonna have a Jew put away a priest... I want a Christian, preferably a Catholic -- somebody who knows this shit inside-out, and who the public will accept as unbiased. We're going after a Holy Man, here... Come on, anybody else...?

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A.D.A. #3

Owen Thomas.

They all turn to look at him.

A.D.A. #3 (CONT'D)

He's not a Catholic, though. Methodist, I think -- but the guy practically lives at church: choir practice, teaching Sunday school...

A.D.A. #1

He's no choirboy in the courtroom. I've seen him tear people up on cross, he's a shrewd vicious son of a bitch.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Alright. Pull him off whatever he's doing -- he's lead prosecutor.

8 INT. "SIDEBAR" -- NIGHT

8

An expensive watering hole near the County Courthouse, thick with LAWYERS trading war stories over "Happy Hour" drinks.

CUT IN CLOSE on a MARTINI GLASS with "Sidebar" stencilled beneath the rim -- then RACK FOCUS to an expensive Montblanc PEN in the hand of...

ERIN BRUNER

a striking woman in her 30s, wearing a stylish suit that shows off her figure. She sits alone at one end of the bar, marking a stack of legal pleadings. Now she glances across the room and notices...

*

KARL GUNDERSON

a fit, tanned, well-coifed man of 55 in a custom-tailored English suit, surrounded by middle-aged CRONIES sipping highballs. He motions for Erin to join the group. She gathers her papers and makes her way through the crowded bar.

KARL-

There's ambition -- she never stops, even works while she drinks. *

(to the others)

Gentlemen, you know Erin Bruner...

CRONY #1

Only by reputation. I was so sure Van Hopper would fry -- but you proved me wrong, lady.

ERIN

The system worked, that's all.

CRONY #2

Or maybe you worked the system. It's not like a jury said he was innocent.

ERIN

But then, who is? *

They all CHUCKLE at that. Karl addresses the other men:

KARL

Would you excuse us for a moment?

As Karl leads Erin to another part of the bar, he gives the other men a raised-eyebrow smile and they tip their glasses to him...

KARL (CONT'D)

(to Erin)

Have you seen the news about this priest?

ERIN

I heard something about an exorcism-gone-bad, but I don't know the details.

KARL

The D.A.'s charged him with negligent homicide. They offered a very reasonable plea bargain -- but he turned it down...

ERIN

Karl, please don't ask me to --

KARL

--The Archdiocese specifically requested you.

ERIN

Why me?

KARL

Because they followed the Van Hopper trial, like everybody else... They think you're smart -- and convincing. They want you to ask the priest to reconsider a deal.

ERIN

And what if he won't? This case sounds like a quagmire -- if I'm smart, I'll leave it alone...

*
*

KARL

(a crafty smile)
You can't win if you don't play.

ERIN

And don't play if you can't win.

KARL

Erin. The Van Hopper case got you back on the fast track -- once again, you're a rising star...

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(to the Bartender)
Chivas, neat.

ERIN

(to Bartender)
Tanqueray martini, dry.
(to Karl)
What are you saying?

KARL

I'm saying, do this for me, and the rising star keeps rising. The case is yours.

*
*

ERIN

(after a moment)
And how high do I get to rise this time? To full partner? I've been a junior partner for too long, Karl, and it's not like other firms haven't called --

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KARL

(interrupting)
Erin...

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*
*

ERIN

I want my name on the door. Right next to yours.

*
*

KARL

That's asking a lot...

ERIN

Like you said, can't win if you don't play.

She takes her martini from the bar and sips it, smiles at him slyly. Karl reaches toward her to get his drink off the bar, and stays close to her, in her space, as he takes a sip.

KARL

You do like to play, don't you.

He's making a pass at her, but Erin knows how to manipulate the situation to her advantage: She doesn't answer -- just looks up at him, a direct, measuring gaze -- and smiles, sipping her drink.

Karl leans a bit closer. He's feeling the alcohol -- warm blood, eyes shining...

KARL (CONT'D)

(intimately)

Maybe when you go see that priest, you should have him hear your confession.

ERIN

(also softly, flirting)

It won't work -- I'm not a Catholic.

KARL

So, what are you, then?

ERIN

A devout hedonist.

(turning it up a notch)

You'll learn that about me when I'm made a full partner, and we start to work more closely on things...

*

Karl looks her over subtly for a beat -- then leans back and smiles.

KARL

Okay. Try to get the deal. And if the priest won't do it, and this does go to trial, the Archdiocese feels that his testimony could be an embarrassment -- so, under no circumstance is he to testify.

ERIN

Of course. If I'd let James Van Hopper take the stand, he'd be marking time on death row instead of sunbathing on Miami Beach.

She smiles, finishes her martini and sets it on the bar.

ERIN (CONT'D)

(to Bartender, indicating Karl)

His tab.

Then she turns and walks fluidly toward the door. Karl nods appreciatively, taking out his wallet as he watches her go.

9 INT. COUNTY JAIL -- HALLWAY -- MORNING

9

MOVING WITH ERIN as a GUARD leads her down a hall of BARRED CELLS. PRISONERS CALL OUT to her -- obscene propositions and the like -- but Erin's been here before: She looks ahead, unfazed.

They stop at a cell. The Guard lets her in, locking the door behind her.

10 INT. FATHER MOORE'S JAIL CELL -- SAME

10

The priest is lying on his bunk, staring at the ceiling.

ERIN

Good morning. I'm Erin Bruner.

No response. All around them is the grim soundscape of prison -- CLANGING cell doors, SHOUTS, and occasional jarring SCREAMS -- but Father Moore seems impervious to the oppressive surroundings.

Erin gestures toward a small metal folding chair.

ERIN (CONT'D)

May I sit down?

FATHER MOORE

(evenly)

They brought the chair for my public defender. I guess they left it here when they decided I wouldn't kill myself with it.

There's a dark, edgy intensity to this man, and a sense of something held in reserve -- an agenda of his own.

ERIN

My firm represents the Archdiocese.

FATHER MOORE

Yes, I've been expecting them to send someone. Why did they choose you?

ERIN

(lies)

I wanted this case.

FATHER MOORE

You must like the spotlight.

ERIN

I'm used to it. I defended James Van Hopper.

FATHER MOORE

And now you've come to further your celebrity.

ERIN

No. I'm here to make senior partner at my firm.

*
*

Father Moore smiles slightly at her brazen honesty.

FATHER MOORE

Are you a Catholic?

ERIN

No...I'm an agnostic, I guess -- I'm not really sure.

FATHER MOORE

If you're not sure, then you are one.

(beat)

I'm sorry, but I don't think you're the right attorney for me. I'll stick with my public defender.

ERIN

He can't get the D.A. to offer you a better deal. I can.

FATHER MOORE

I won't be accepting any plea agreement.

ERIN

If you don't, the Archdiocese won't post your bail. You'll be stuck in here for the duration of the trial.

The priest says nothing. Inscrutable.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Father Moore, do you know how long they can put you away for this?

FATHER MOORE

It's been explained to me.

ERIN

The District Attorney's office doesn't like it when religion holds itself above the law. And this prosecutor, Owen Thomas? I've seen him work. You're going to need someone hungry, and smart, and aggressive to even have a chance.

FATHER MOORE

And what would be your strategy to defend me against such a formidable man?

ERIN

That depends.

FATHER MOORE

On what?

ERIN

On how you want to be defended.

Erin knew what he wanted to hear. He sits up and faces her. She's got his full attention now.

ERIN (CONT'D)

What's your main concern, besides staying out of jail? Is it how you're portrayed in the media?

FATHER MOORE

I don't care about my reputation, and I'm not afraid of prison.

(he leans forward)

What I care about is telling Emily Rose's story. I want the truth to be known about her condition -- even if that truth becomes detrimental to my case.

He pauses, his voice thickening with emotion, and Erin is taken aback by his sincere intensity.

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

I want the world to hear what only I can tell.

ERIN

What is that?

FATHER MOORE

What really happened to Emily...and why.

Erin looks into his eyes. His absolute resolve is undeniable -- and unfamiliar to Erin, in her equivocal world.

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

If I let you represent me, would you promise to let me testify and tell the truth about what happened to Emily?

ERIN

(after a moment)

What is the "truth" you would tell? That the ritual killed her...? Was it your fault that she died?

FATHER MOORE

No.

He says it with pure conviction. It's compelling...

ERIN

All right. I'll let you tell her story --
but only if you agree to let me do
whatever else I need to do to win.

Father Moore stares at her a moment, thinking...then he nods.

CUT TO:

11 A HISSING CAT

11

on the arm of a tattered couch...

*

INT. ROSE FARM HOUSE -- LIVING ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Maria and Erin sit at either end of the couch. This is
the meager home of a family that barely gets by, and Erin
-- with her designer-label clothes and hip salon haircut --
appears out of place in these surroundings.

*

*

Looking around, she sees the wooden crucifix hung in the entrance
hall -- and on the mantel, a painted statue of the Holy Virgin.

The HISSING CAT and TWO OTHER CATS prowl about the dim room.
Erin suppresses a feeling of creepiness as Maria pours a cup
of tea for Erin, then one for herself.

MARIA

You are not used to this kind of place.
I'm sure our life is very strange to you.'

ERIN

(smiles)

Not so strange. I grew up in a little
town -- but our home wasn't as big and
nice as this...

Erin knew just what to say. Maria begins to relax a bit.

ERIN (CONT'D)

My mother, she raised me alone. She was
a teacher, so we had very little money --

MARIA

(warming further)

--It is a wonderful thing to be! That was
Emily's dream -- to be a schoolteacher.

(MORE)

MARIA (CONT'D)

That is why she went away, to University...
She was the first of us to go.

Clearly, Maria has been won over by Erin's openness. As Maria is about to continue, one CAT approaches, MEOWING insistently. Maria SHUSHES it, giving it a piece of cheese from the tea tray.

ERIN

A lot of cats live here!

MARIA

Och! There are eleven now, I think...
Emily always brought them home, ever
since she was a little girl -- she could
never leave a stray abandoned.

ERIN

Before all these...troubles began, was
she a happy girl? *

MARIA

(smiles at the memory)
Oh, yes. Before she went away to University,
my Emily was so very happy...

SMASH CUT TO:

12 CLOSE ON EMILY

12

eighteen years old and radiantly beautiful, as she lets out a
SHRIEK of absolute joy...

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM -- DAY -- THE PAST

Emily holds a torn-open envelope and reads from a LETTER
while her THREE YOUNGER SISTERS crowd around her excitedly:

EMILY

"...and we are pleased to offer you this
scholarship for the fall semester."

(looks up)

They want me! Alice -- they want me,
just like you said they would...!

Her youngest sister, ALICE, 13, smiles up at Emily with
adoring eyes and gleaming braces -- then she JUMPS ONTO THE
BED and starts bouncing up and down...

ALICE

I knew it! I knew it! I knew it!

LAUGHING, Emily jumps onto the bed with her, and both of them -- youngest and oldest -- are BOUNCING with abandon while the middle sisters hug each other and LAUGH...

THE DOOR OPENS and Maria charges in, eyes blazing:

MARIA

WHAT is going on in here? Girls!

EMILY

Mama...

She holds out the ACCEPTANCE LETTER. Maria stares at it -- then slowly reaches out for it, realizing...

MARIA

Is it...?

EMILY

(nods)

It's a scholarship, Mama. They pay for it, they pay for everything...

Maria touches her fingers to her lips, shaking her head slightly as she reads the letter in disbelief...

MARIA

This is your dream, Emily.

Emily, nodding, steps down off the bed and into her mother's arms. They embrace...then, slowly, Maria pushes away from Emily -- who now sees the fear in her eyes.

MARIA (CONT'D)

You will be leaving us...to the city...
We will not be there to take care of you.

EMILY

(gently)

It's okay, Mama...I'll be okay.

MARIA

(after a moment; somber)

I'm going to show this to your father.

She leaves with the letter, shutting the door behind her. The girls stand in silence, clouded by their mother's gloom... *

Then Emily smiles, poking Alice in the arm -- and they burst into GIGGLES again and fall back onto the bed.

CUT TO:

13 A BLACK-AND-WHITE PICTURE OF EMILY

13

The smiling senior class picture we saw on the news...

INT. SIDEBAR -- EVENING

Erin sits at the bar, reading a front-page NEWSPAPER ARTICLE that features side-by-side photos of Emily and Father Moore.

KARL (O.S.)

I just spoke with the Archdiocese...

Erin turns to see Karl standing behind her, looking tense.

KARL (CONT'D)

...They said the priest is expecting to testify. What did you tell him?

ERIN

I told Father Moore what he needed to hear. Don't worry, Karl. When the time is right, I'll talk him out of it.

Now, looking past Karl, Erin sees...

OWEN THOMAS

enter and scan the room. Like Erin, he's in his 30s -- clean-cut good looks, relentlessly focused. He sees her, and approaches.

KARL

(to Erin)

I hope you know what you're doing.

Karl walks away quickly as Owen makes his way to the bar.

OWEN THOMAS

...May I join you?

ERIN

Sure... Can I buy you a drink? He makes an excellent martini, very dry --

OWEN THOMAS

--I don't drink.

(sits down next to her)

The judge thinks we should offer your client a new plea agreement. Apparently, she feels the community might be better served without this trial...

*

ERIN

How do you feel about it? Personally.

OWEN THOMAS

"Personally"...? My job is to represent the interests of the People. I try to be objective in my work.

*
*

ERIN

Hmm. I ask because I know that you're a churchgoer -- and now, you're set to prosecute a man of God.

OWEN THOMAS

The priest broke the law. A young girl is dead. If he's a "man of God," then, personally, I think he's even more subject to the laws of moral behavior and punishment... If it were up to me, he'd get no deal at all.

*

ERIN

What about compassion and forgiveness -- isn't that part of your creed? Or does that just get in the way of your work.

Owen stares at her a long moment before responding. She's fishing for insights into her opponent, but he's not gonna bite.

OWEN THOMAS

If you have compassion for your client, Counselor, you'll get him to accept this: Charges reduced to reckless endangerment. Twelve months in county jail -- reducible to six plus probation, if he can stay out of trouble. Somehow, I expect he can manage that.

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(leans closer; a quiet ferocity)

But if he refuses, then I go all the way: I'll seek the maximum. Ten years.

*

ERIN

(after a beat)

Father Moore has made it clear that he'll accept no plea agreement. He won't lie, he won't admit to something he's not guilty of -- and he was never neglectful of Emily.

OWEN THOMAS

"Never neglectful"? Have you seen the photographs of her body?

Erin's a bit shaken by that -- she has seen the photos. But she remains firm:

ERIN

We'll go to trial. My client says he wants the world to know the truth.

OWEN THOMAS

Good. So do I.

14 INT. ERIN'S LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

14

The condo of a sophisticated single woman with taste: eclectic art and photographs, plants, books, subtle fabrics. A LARGE WINDOW frames a stunning city-lights view.

We see Erin's lonely, late-night ritual: She's slumped on the couch, wearing a nightshirt, with a glass of wine in her hand.

Erin sips the wine and stares blankly at the TV screen, bathed in its flickering light...

15 INT. ERIN'S BEDROOM -- LATER

15

It's dark and quiet. Linen CURTAINS BILLOW at a slightly-open window. Erin lies in bed, asleep under silk sheets.

Slowly, we PUSH INTO THE ROOM, angling toward the NIGHT STAND beside the bed...

Now we're MOVING across the top of the night stand IN EXTREME CLOSE-UP: past a bottle of aspirin and an alarm clock, then finally coming to a stop on...

ERIN'S EXPENSIVE WATCH

We're so close to it, the watch face fills the screen. The HANDS of the watch indicate that it's a few seconds before 3:00 a.m..

As the SECOND HAND makes its way around, we hear it at exaggerated volume: *tick tick tick tick...*

When the second hand reaches the "12" -- at EXACTLY 3:00 A.M. -- the watch STOPS TICKING.

16 INT. COURTROOM -- MORNING

16

JUDGE ELIZABETH BREWSTER, a redhead in her 50s wearing tortoiseshell glasses, is seated at the bench.

*

JUDGE BREWSTER

Is the prosecution ready to proceed?

We see Judge and BAILIFF, COURT CLERK, STENOGRAPHER, and a packed house of SPECTATORS separated from the action by the fence-like wooden "bar."

Owen Thomas sits at the prosecution table with a couple of JUNIOR A.D.A.s who will be assisting him. *

OWEN THOMAS
(rises to his feet)
Yes, Your Honor. *

JUDGE BREWSTER
Let the record show that the defendant and his counsel are present, and that the jury is seated...

AT THE DEFENSE TABLE

ERIN sits between FATHER MOORE and RAY, her 30-year-old assisting attorney. She glances at her watch for the first time today -- and sees that it STOPPED AT 3:00 A.M.. *

Frowning, she winds it and resets it by the courtroom clock...

JUDGE BREWSTER (CONT'D)
Mr. Thomas, you may begin.

OWEN THOMAS
Thank you, Your Honor.

Owen approaches the JURY BOX, holding a thin MANILA FOLDER in one hand. He stops behind a PODIUM that's a few feet from the jury box, and places the folder on top of it.

The JURORS are eight women and four men, plus TWO ALTERNATES -- one male, one female.

Owen wears his game face: neutral, no smile or even the slightest hint of casualness -- but not too imposing, either. As he speaks, he will, at some point, look each Juror in the eye.

OWEN THOMAS (CONT'D)
I'm Assistant District Attorney Owen Thomas, and I represent the People of this state. In this case, the evidence will show that the victim had a serious medical condition that demanded medical treatment. We will prove that the victim's condition rendered her physically and psychologically incapable of caring for herself. Her care was wholly entrusted to that man --
(points at FATHER MOORE)
-- the defendant, Father Richard Moore.
(MORE)

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*

OWEN THOMAS (CONT'D)

She became his responsibility. And he betrayed that responsibility by persuading her to abandon her medical treatment in favor of "religious treatment" -- a ritual "exorcism" performed by the defendant, allegedly to cure the victim's condition by ridding her of "demonic" forces.

Saying this, when one might be tempted to adopt a sneering, dubious tone, Owen's voice remains factual and unbiased.

OWEN THOMAS (CONT'D)

We will demonstrate that the resulting abandonment of the victim's medical treatment directly resulted in her death. By presenting you with this factual, unequivocal evidence, the People will prove beyond any reasonable doubt that the defendant is guilty of negligent homicide.

*

Owen pauses, then steps out from behind the podium and stands beside it, so there's nothing between him and the Jurors.

OWEN THOMAS (CONT'D)

I said a few moments ago that I represent the "People." We all know what that means, but it's rather abstract, isn't it?

*

His tone has changed now, ever so slightly: More familiar, a trusted, authoritative voice sharing its observations.

OWEN THOMAS (CONT'D)

Ms. Bruner, the attorney for the defense, is seated right next to the man she represents -- and I have to stand here and represent "the People." But...that's really not why I stand here today.

*

He pauses, and searches the jury members' eyes. He comes across like a man who feels deeply, but remains focused only on justice.

OWEN THOMAS (CONT'D)

I'm here on behalf of someone who can't sit at a table, and look at you, and gain your sympathy, day after day. Someone who can't take the stand, and testify in an effort to win your hearts and minds. A person who trusted that man...
(again, gestures toward Father Moore)
...with her life. And died.

He opens the manila folder, and takes out A PHOTO OF EMILY:
It's her high school senior class picture -- smiling, beautiful.

OWEN THOMAS (CONT'D)

This is what she looked like before the defendant began his "religious treatment" of her condition. And this...

(reaches into folder again)

...is one of several photographs that will be entered into evidence, taken of her on the day that she died.

And now HE SHOWS A SECOND PHOTOGRAPH TO THE JURY...

THE JURORS GASP IN HORROR -- several visibly recoil from the image in shock. A WOMAN JUROR in her 20s raises a hand to her face, then quietly begins to CRY.

There's a COMMOTION among the spectators as they crane their necks in an attempt to see the photo -- but it's no use: Owen's body blocks the view of everyone in the courtroom but the jury.

OWEN THOMAS (CONT'D)

I'm here for Emily Louise Rose, who died, horribly, at age nineteen.

All of the jurors having clearly seen the photograph, Owen puts it back in the folder, smart enough not to overplay his hand. Gravely, he stands there a moment, letting it sink in.

OWEN THOMAS (CONT'D)

You won't be able to see Emily sitting before you, day after day, during this trial. But I hope you will remember her as she was when she was alive and full of hopes and dreams...

(beat)

And, as she was when the defendant was finished with her, and left her to die.

Owen gathers his folder and returns to his seat. There's a considerable pause, punctuated by the MURMURS of the spectators...

JUDGE BREWSTER

Is the defense prepared to make its opening statement?

Erin sits absolutely still for a moment, her brow slightly furrowed -- calculating, absorbing Owen's words. Then she looks up at the Judge, and rises.

ERIN

Your Honor, I would like to reserve my opening statement until the presentation of the defense's case.

JUDGE BREWSTER

As is your privilege. The prosecution
may begin.

As Erin sits down, she notices Father Moore regarding her intently.
She leans toward him and speaks with quiet confidence:

ERIN

Don't worry. That was already my plan.

OWEN THOMAS

The People call Dr. Edith Vogel. *

TIME CUT TO:

17 DR. VOGEL

17

seated on the witness stand: a tiny, bird-like woman in her
70s with sharp eyes and a small, clear voice.

DR. VOGEL

I've known Emily her entire life -- I
took care of all the Rose girls.

OWEN THOMAS

Can you describe Emily as you knew her,
growing up?

DR. VOGEL

She was a bit sickly in her early years.
She stayed inside a lot -- reading,
learning music...

OWEN THOMAS

Dr. Vogel, did you see Emily right before
she went away to the University?

DR. VOGEL

Yes. For the required physical exam.

OWEN THOMAS

Describe her general health at that time.

DR. VOGEL

(shrugs slightly)

Perfect. A bit thin, my mother would have
said -- but, that is popular these days...

Mild LAUGHTER from the spectators, and several Jurors smile.
Owen notes this with satisfaction: They like this old lady...

OWEN THOMAS

How did she feel about going away to school?

ERIN

Objection -- speculation. The witness is not a psychiatrist.

OWEN THOMAS

I'll rephrase. Did Emily talk to you about going off to college?

DR. VOGEL

Yes. She told me that she was excited -- but nervous that she would be away from her family in the big city, and not know anyone. This was an overwhelming change for her.

OWEN THOMAS

Did this strike you as unusual, that Emily would confide in you...?

DR. VOGEL

Not at all. Emily always said that I was someone she could talk to, even about things she could not tell her parents... They were very protective of her. They even had mixed feelings about her going away to university. But I had encouraged her, helping with her entrance essay and writing her a letter of recommendation to my alma mater.

OWEN THOMAS

Did you stay in touch, after she went away?

DR. VOGEL

Yes. She wrote me a letter, saying that she had gone to a dance and met a boy named Jason. She didn't want her mother to know -- she said that her mother did not approve of dancing, and had warned her about the boys at school.

*
*

OWEN THOMAS

And did Emily communicate with you again last fall -- after you received the letter?

DR. VOGEL

Yes -- well, actually, it was her mother...

18 EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS -- LATE NIGHT

18

Emily stands in front of her DORMITORY, next to a PAY PHONE that's mounted on the wall. Wearing only a long nightshirt, she hugs herself, shivering in the WIND.

DR. VOGEL (V.O.)

She telephoned, waking me out of a deep sleep at four in the morning -- and asked me to call Emily at a pay phone on the University campus.

The PAY PHONE RINGS, and Emily snatches it off the hook.

DR. VOGEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

When Emily answered, she was quite hysterical. At first, she just sobbed uncontrollably.

TEARS run down her cheeks. She's alone, surrounded by darkness.

DR. VOGEL (CONT'D)

But, eventually, she calmed down enough to tell me what had happened...

19 INT. EMILY'S DORM ROOM -- EARLIER THAT NIGHT

19

Emily is asleep. Her ROOMMATE'S BED is empty.

DR. VOGEL (V.O.)

She said that she was alone that weekend -- her roommate had gone home.

Emily's EYES pop open. She looks over at her BEDSIDE CLOCK:
IT'S EXACTLY 3:00 A.M..

DR. VOGEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

She had awakened, and thought she smelled something burning. There was no alarm, but she got up, afraid there was a fire...

Barefoot, and wearing only a nightshirt, she pads out into...

20 INT. A LONG, DARK HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

20

DIM NIGHT-LIGHTS GLOW at intervals along each of the walls.

Slowly, Emily walks down the long, dim hallway, toward the EXIT DOOR at the hallway's end -- SNIFFING the air curiously.

She frowns, looking around: No smoke...no alarm...

*

A LOUD BANG stops her. She spins back around.

Nothing. No lights are coming on in dorm rooms, no one else seems to have heard or smelled anything. It's dead quiet.

ANOTHER BANG

makes her jump -- and now Emily sees that the OTHER EXIT DOOR at the far end of the hall is PROPPED OPEN, and it's BANGING from the WIND in the stairwell.

Relieved, Emily walks down the hallway and shuts the door, then returns to her room, and goes inside.

*
*

21 INT. EMILY'S DORM ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

21

As she starts to shut the door behind her -- BANG! -- it SLAMS, vacuum-sucked by the wind's shifting air pressure, and she JUMPS again.

She sits down on her bed and takes a deep breath, waiting for her heart to slow down.

Now she lies down, sliding under the covers. But as she settles her head onto the pillow and starts to close her eyes...

SOMETHING MOVES

Emily lifts her head, peers into the DIMNESS: A CUP FULL OF PENS on her desk is JIGGLING BACK AND FORTH on its own.

Frozen with fear, Emily stares wide-eyed at this impossibility.

And now the cup of pens begins to MOVE SLOWLY across her DESK. As she stares in disbelief, it SLIDES to the edge of the desk, then TOPPLES and SPILLS onto the floor.

Emily sits up with a GASP, and for a moment, we hear nothing but her heavy breathing as we...

PULL BACK SLOWLY

along the mattress until we come to the foot of Emily's bed.

THE MATTRESS COMPRESSES as an invisible weight presses down on it...Emily STOPS BREATHING, paralyzed by fear...

Then suddenly SOMETHING SHOVES HER BACKWARDS, PINNING her to the mattress!

She starts to CRY OUT -- but A FORCE clamps tightly around her throat and, CHOKING, she can't make a sound.

AN INVISIBLE PRESENCE

is on top of her, pressing down on the mattress, making the bed SQUEAK under the added weight.

BENEATH THE COVERS, the force gropes its way UP HER BODY, now reaching UNDER HER NIGHTSHIRT, lifting it up, sliding across her belly and up toward her breasts...

Insane with terror, unable to scream, Emily FIGHTS DESPERATELY to beat it back, pulling her nightshirt down --

But it's too strong for her. Slowly, her arms are pushed down and pinned to her sides.

Completely immobilized, she feels HOT BREATH on her face, and her HAIR is blown back slightly as she turns her face away in terror and disgust.

All the while, the force gropes up and down her body like some molesting INVISIBLE MAN...

Then, suddenly, she's RELEASED -- the BED SQUEAKS AGAIN as a WEIGHT lifts visibly from the mattress, and is GONE.

Emily bolts upright with a SCREAM, hyperventilating as her lungs fight for air -- then rolls off the bed, onto the floor. Scrambling to her feet, she RUNS out of the room... *
*

OWEN THOMAS (O.S.)

Dr. Marek, what is your position at the University Hospital?

DR. MAREK (O.S.)

I am Chairman of the Department of Neurology...

22 INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

22

DR. ANTON MAREK, a cool professional, is calm as Owen questions him.

OWEN THOMAS

Tell me, Doctor, how did Emily Rose come to be your patient?

DR. MAREK

She was referred to me by Dr. Edith Vogel.

OWEN THOMAS

And after hearing about the dorm room incident, what were your initial thoughts?

DR. MAREK

At first, I thought perhaps Emily had taken illegal drugs. LSD, mushrooms, psilocybin -- some type of hallucinogen. But we ran tests, and found no trace of drugs in her system... And the more she explained the incident to me, the more I began to suspect something else...

CUT TO:

23 AN OVERHEAD VIEW: EMILY

23

is lying on her back in bed, fast asleep...

INT. EMILY'S DORM ROOM -- NIGHT

DESCEND SLOWLY TOWARD EMILY, the CAMERA TURNING almost imperceptibly, corkscrewing down, as Dr. Marek continues:

DR. MAREK (V.O.)

Epilepsy results from rapid, uncontrolled electrical activity in the brain...

Suddenly, EMILY'S EYES POP OPEN, and she stares blankly at the ceiling as we CONTINUE TO DESCEND toward her...

DR. MAREK (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In a severe, or "grand mal" seizure, a person may lose consciousness for several minutes, and suffer involuntary contractions of all the muscles of the body...

Now she STIFFENS, arching her back, her arms clamped to her sides, as if her whole body has received an electric shock. Her EYES ROLL BACK into her head, showing white...

OWEN THOMAS (V.O.)

Is it possible that a person suffering such a seizure would have hallucinations, or perceive the things Emily described?

She's SHAKING UNCONTROLLABLY, GRINDING HER TEETH, her arms and legs JERKING in spasms, thrashing the sheets...

DR. MAREK (V.O.)

The muscle contractions could feel like an extreme pressure on the body, and it is certainly possible, with all that brain activity, for a person to perceive all sorts of strange and violent things...

FOAMING slightly at the mouth, Emily LURCHES off the bed and begins to TWITCH and WRITHE about on the floor -- it's terrifying to behold. And now we CUT BACK TO...

24 INT. THE COURTROOM -- DAY

24

Owen nods, facing the jury, then turns back to Dr. Marek:

OWEN THOMAS

Suspecting that Emily was epileptic, how did you proceed?

DR. MAREK

I administered an electroencephalograph.

OWEN THOMAS

And what did the EEG reveal?

DR. MAREK

It showed no epileptic patterns, no evidence of seizures in her brain.

OWEN THOMAS

Really? Did this test result surprise you?

DR. MAREK

Not at all. It is not uncommon to diagnose and treat epilepsy without EEG confirmation of epileptic seizures. However, I immediately ordered further tests to confirm the epilepsy diagnosis.

OWEN THOMAS

And what did those tests indicate?

DR. MAREK

I observed a possible epileptic focus in the patient's left temporal lobe.

OWEN THOMAS

Did this require any specific treatment?

DR. MAREK

Yes. I began a medication schedule for Emily, with the drug Tegretol. I also advised regular follow-up examinations and further tests.

OWEN THOMAS

Did she adhere to your treatment schedule?

DR. MAREK

After her release from the hospital, the Tegretol prescriptions continued to be filled, through the end of October... But, Emily failed to keep her follow-up appointments with me.

OWEN THOMAS

(feigning a puzzled look)

Did she give any reason for discontinuing her appointments?

DR. MAREK

(still indignant about it)

Yes. She told me she was convinced that her condition was a spiritual one, and that she would no longer seek medical help. It was the conviction of her priest, she said -- and she shared his beliefs.

OWEN THOMAS

Was it your impression that Emily had placed her care entirely into Father Moore's hands?

ERIN

Objection -- he's leading the witness.

JUDGE BREWSTER

Sustained.

OWEN THOMAS

(after a beat)

After the end of October, did you ask Emily why she had stopped filling her Tegretol prescriptions?

DR. MAREK

Yes. She said that Father Moore had suggested that she stop taking the drug.

OWEN THOMAS

(steps closer to him, intense)

And what, in your medical opinion, was the direct result of Father Moore's suggestion?

DR. MAREK

I firmly believe that Father Moore's suggestion killed her: Stopping the treatment led directly to her death.

Erin springs to her feet:

ERIN

Objection, Your Honor! The witness is asserting outrageous conclusions from pure hearsay evidence....!

JUDGE BREWSTER

Technically correct... But I'll allow it, as part of his expert opinion testimony.
(turns to the JURY)

The jury may consider Dr. Marek's opinion -- but is warned that Emily's statement to Dr. Marek cannot be considered evidence of what Father Moore said she should do.

Dismayed, Erin watches the jury members' faces as they try to absorb and make sense of what they've just heard...

Owen smiles slightly -- confident that no matter what the Judge said, the jury got the message.

*
*

OWEN THOMAS

Thank you, Dr. Marek.
(smugly, to Erin:)
Your witness.

Erin rises, her demeanor more warm and relaxed than Owen's bulldog focus.

ERIN

Doctor, you said you observed a "possible" epileptic focus in the temporal lobe -- doesn't this imply that what you observed may not have been an epileptic focus?

DR. MAREK

Yes, that's also possible.

ERIN

And would Father Moore's advice to stop taking Tegretol be good advice if Emily were not, in fact, epileptic?

DR. MAREK

Of course. But that's not the case here. She was epileptic.

ERIN

Really? Tell me, Doctor, when Emily saw objects move on their own and felt an invisible presence on top of her -- was she experiencing symptoms typical of epilepsy?

DR. MAREK

Not typical, no.

ERIN

Are they typical indications of any other condition -- say, for example, psychosis?

DR. MAREK

(bristles slightly)
Yes, I would say that's correct.

ERIN

But isn't psychosis an entirely different medical condition from epilepsy?

DR. MAREK

(quietly hostile)
Yes...in my experience, it is.

ERIN

So, Doctor, aren't you selectively choosing what parts of Emily's experiences fit your epilepsy diagnosis, while simply ignoring those that might indicate something else...?

OWEN THOMAS

Objection, Your Honor! Argumentative.

ERIN

(raises a hand)

Withdrawn. No further questions.

She returns to her seat, smiling slightly, enjoying the game.

25 INT. COUNTY JAIL -- HALLWAY -- NIGHT

25

Once again, the Guard leads Erin down the gauntlet of cells. This time, amid the SHOUTS and CLANGING and other random prison sounds, Erin hears A WHISPER cut through the cacophony:

WHISPERING VOICE

(IN LATIN, subtitled)

One, two, three, four, five, six...

It seems to come from a cell just ahead. Erin slows down as she approaches it, hearing the WHISPER again:

WHISPERING VOICE (CONT'D)

(IN ENGLISH THIS TIME)

One, two, three, four, five, SIX...

And now she stops, peering into...

THE CELL

It's empty. Puzzled, Erin stares into the cell for a moment... Then she shrugs it off, and catches up to the Guard, who lets her into Father Moore's cell.

26 INT. FATHER MOORE'S CELL -- CONTINUOUS

26

The Guard locks the door, and Erin sits on the metal folding chair. Father Moore sits up on his bunk, facing her.

ERIN

We have to work fast -- they're only giving me an hour with you tonight.

FATHER MOORE

Before we get started, there's something I must tell you -- something I should have said before I let you take my case.

ERIN

Okay...

FATHER MOORE

There are forces surrounding this trial -- dark and powerful forces. Be careful, Erin. Watch your step. The grass you tread upon is home to many deadly serpents.

His expression is grave. Erin tries to contain her skepticism.

ERIN

I see. Look, don't worry about me, Father. Besides, I'm an agnostic, remember?

FATHER MOORE

Demons exist whether you believe in them or not, and your involvement in this case may open you up to their attacks.

ERIN

(a bit impatient)

Father Moore, I appreciate your concern, but you should be worried about yourself. Owen Thomas is using the medical aspects of this case as ammunition, and I have to be prepared for his attacks. With what little time we have, we need to focus on your defense.

Father Moore studies her a moment. Nods.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Now, what I need from you is more information about Emily's condition -- the specific details of how it progressed after the dorm room episode.

FATHER MOORE

After that initial incident, she was sent to the University hospital for testing and observation...

CUT TO:

27 A SERIES OF CLOSE-UPS

27

The DETAILS of a HOSPITAL ROOM: a steel-framed bed...a food cart with a half-eaten meal...a vase of plastic flowers...a prescription bottle of TEGRETOL...

Finally ending on a GIRL'S FEET in paper hospital slippers, SWINGING slowly back and forth as we hear...

*

EMILY

(SINGING in a whispery voice)

"Ten-der shep-herd hear me, bless your
lit-tle lamb to-night..."

INT. UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL -- DUSK

Emily sits on the side of her hospital bed, gently swinging her feet and SINGING SOFTLY as she stares out...

HER WINDOW

across the CITY and the landscape of low hills beyond it. It's the most beautiful time of day, the twilight afterglow. ON THE SOUNDTRACK, low, pulsing MUSIC begins...

EMILY

(SINGS softly)

"Through the dark-ness be thou near me,
wake me with the mor-ning light..."

CLOSER ON EMILY

Her eyes are wide, and there's a faint glow on her face. She looks serene and beatific, like one of those saints portrayed in paintings in moments of religious ecstasy.

EMILY (CONT'D)

(SINGS softly)

"All this day thy hand hath led me, and I
thank thee for thy care..."

The LOW, OMINOUS MUSIC begins to BUILD and...

THE WINDOW

now frames STORM CLOUDS gathering on the horizon: They're forming a MASSIVE, dark, roiling SHAPE...

Emily rises from the bed and steps slowly toward the window...

EMILY (CONT'D)
 (SINGS softly)
 "Thou hast warmed me, clothed and fed me,
 lis-ten to my eve-ning prayer..."

IN THE WINDOW

the CLOUDS are a great sphere of TURBULENCE, beginning to assume an organic, almost solid shape...

The SOUNDTRACK MUSIC BUILDS toward a rhythmic, percussive climax...

And Emily's EXPRESSION shifts to one of CONFUSION and TERROR as she watches the CLOUDS suddenly crystallize into...

A HUGE GHASTLY FACE

that looms over the horizon, LEERING and BARING ITS TEETH!

BOOM! The SOUNDTRACK MUSIC EXPLODES, and Emily STAGGERS BACKWARDS IN SLOW MOTION -- reeling as if from a TREMENDOUS BLOW...

She SCRAMBLES BACK across the floor, her hands twisted like CLAWS. She knocks over the food cart, the vase, and falls back across the bed as...

THE DOOR OPENS, and JASON -- the young man from the opening farmhouse scene -- steps into the room, holding a bouquet of FLOWERS.

JASON
 EMILY...!

Then he FREEZES IN HORROR when he sees...

EMILY'S FACE

turning toward him -- SKULL-LIKE, the eyes COMPLETELY BLACK.

JASON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Emily once told me that in her dorm room,
 she resisted the demons, but at the
 hospital, they overcame her...

28 EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS -- LATE AFTERNOON

28 *

Erin and Jason are walking, side-by-side, across the campus grounds.

ERIN
 So she believed her actual possession
 began that night at the hospital...?

JASON

Yeah...I think she did. And after that,
things just went from bad to worse...

CUT TO:

29 EMILY

29

walking, head down, a book satchel slung over her shoulder...

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS -- LATE AFTERNOON

Emily appears distracted, her attention turned inward,
meeting no one's gaze.

The sky is low and heavy with clouds, and the STUDENTS all around
her, hurrying to class, seem like dangerous obstacles in her path.

GOTHIC BUILDINGS seem to crowd her, oppressive and draped
with shadows. A COLD WIND RISES, blowing fallen leaves along
the stone path ahead of her.

THUNDER RUMBLES as she ducks into a building...

30 INT. A CLASSROOM -- (RAINING OUTSIDE) -- NIGHT

30 *

STUDENTS lean over their desks in the quiet room, taking an
exam, as RAIN SPATTERS against tall, narrow windows.

Emily, seated near the back, turns to look outside...

ON THE WINDOW

the RAINDROPS that trace their way down the pane are FORMING AN IMAGE
ON THE GLASS: It's a GHASTLY FACE like she saw on the horizon.

Emily averts her gaze and covers her eyes with her hand,
BREATHING with difficulty...

A NEARBY STUDENT hears her GASPING, and turns toward Emily --
and when she looks up to meet his gaze...

ANOTHER GHASTLY FACE is staring back at her.

CRYING OUT, Emily jumps to her feet, knocking over her chair.

Now the PROFESSOR and all of the other Students are staring
at her curiously, including the Student who turned around --
and his face now looks completely normal.

PROFESSOR

What is it, Emily...?

She grabs her satchel and BOLTS from the classroom.

31 EXT. CAMPUS -- RAIN -- NIGHT

31 *

She's practically running -- looking around in wild-eyed fear, clutching the satchel to her chest and SPLASHING through puddles as the RAIN hammers down.

LAMPPOSTS cast fuzzy circles of LIGHT. The buildings are misshapen, hulking shadows in the DARKNESS.

Crossing a street, Emily stops for a PASSING CAR. The SIDE WINDOWS are fogged, and as she stares, the WINDOW MIST FORMS INTO A GHASTLY FACE, sliding slowly past...

Terrified, Emily hurries on across the street and starts across the quad on a gravel pathway.

A STUDENT COUPLE, sharing an UMBRELLA, are coming the opposite way along the path. As they draw near to Emily, the UMBRELLA TILTS UP to reveal TWO GHASTLY FACES leering back at her...

Emily SCREAMS, dropping her satchel, and takes off RUNNING away from the path, her feet slipping and SQUELCHING on the muddy grass.

THE UNIVERSITY CHAPEL looms ahead of her, a Gothic-spired refuge...

32 ACROSS THE QUAD -- JASON

32

stands inside a doorway, sharing a smoke with some FRIENDS. Reacting to the SCREAM, he turns to see Emily RUNNING toward the chapel with a terrorized expression.

JASON

EMILY!

She doesn't seem to hear him as she rushes up the chapel steps and disappears inside.

33 INT. THE UNIVERSITY CHAPEL -- (RAIN OUTSIDE) -- CONTINUOUS

33 *

It's VERY DIM. Rain DRUMS softly against the stained-glass windows. Emily enters, and moves slowly toward the ALTAR. Her breath quickens. She's fighting a sudden urge to panic.

CLOSE ON EMILY -- her pupils DILATING like someone on an acid trip. Her breath comes in great GASPS, as if she's suffocating...

HER POV: AS SHE'S MOVING TOWARD THE ALTAR

Emily sees TWO OLD WOMEN kneeling in prayer. To her, they appear RIGID, as if paralyzed. Moving closer, Emily can now see...

THEIR GHASTLY FACES

with LIPS that are grotesquely PEELED BACK -- and instead of murmuring prayers, they seem to be GNASHING and GRINDING THEIR BLOODY TEETH...

They both look up at Emily...and SCREAM.

34 EXT. THE UNIVERSITY CHAPEL -- RAIN -- NIGHT 34 *

Jason approaches the front door of the chapel, and the Two Old Women hurry out, looking terrified -- but otherwise, to Jason, they appear normal. After they rush past him, he heads inside.

35 INT. THE UNIVERSITY CHAPEL -- (RAIN OUTSIDE) -- CONTINUOUS 35 *

The door opens, and Jason enters. He speaks quietly:

JASON

Emily...?

He moves slowly toward the altar, then stops as if stricken, staring at...

EMILY

She stands before the altar in the FAINT GLOW of HOLY CANDLES, her unblinking gaze locked on the CRUCIFIX, her face contorted with hatred.

She emits a low, continuous GROWL through gritted teeth.

Her body is twisted, and impossibly bent -- arching backwards, away from the altar, even as she reaches toward the cross.

It's as if she's being torn by an internal battle of conflicting desires, of attraction and repulsion -- and it looks like she's about to break in two...

JASON (CONT'D)

Oh my God, Emily...

Compassion overcomes his fear, and he steps forward to help --

EMILY

(in a LOW, GUTTURAL VOICE)

DON'T TOUCH ME!!!

She turns toward him with claw-like hands -- and for an instant, her own face is TRANSFORMED into the GHASTLY FACE that has been haunting her.

RECOILING, Jason trips and falls. He's CRAWLING backwards, trying to get away from her, utterly terrified...

Then he sees that she has crumpled to the floor, and stares at him in helpless fear.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Jason...please, don't leave me...

And now we hear Jason's voice:

JASON (V.O.)
...And I didn't leave her. I stayed
until the end...

36 EXT. HILLSIDE PARK -- OVERLOOK -- TWILIGHT

36

Jason now sits on a bench next to Erin, who's listening intently. He stares out at a beautiful view of the campus as he continues:

JASON
So much of what we shared was like a
nightmare, but I wouldn't give up a
single minute I spent with her. She woke
me up, you know? To things I'd never
felt, things I never knew I could feel...
(turns to Erin)
I mean, I used to get stoned all the time
-- shit, I was half-drunk and high the
night I met her -- but I don't need that
anymore. I don't even want it.
(looks back out at the view)
We loved to slow dance together...and I
swear to God, it was better than any drug
I've ever done. I never knew how dead I
was until I met her.

Erin nods slightly. She seems quietly moved by his story -- and on some deeper level, in a way she can't quite identify -- she feels deeply disturbed.

37 INT. SIDEBAR -- NIGHT

37

Erin is seated at her familiar spot at the bar, watching the Bartender set a martini in front of her.

She still seems affected by her afternoon interview of Jason. Picking up the martini, she methodically drinks it down, like she's taking her medicine...

ABOVE THE BAR -- A SMALL TELEVISION SET silently plays the EVENING NEWS.

Beside the ANCHORMAN is the image of A LONG-HAIRED MAN and the name "JAMES VAN HOPPER." Curious, Erin stares up at the TV screen.

ERIN
(to the Bartender)
Can you turn that up, please?

The Bartender TURNS UP THE VOLUME as the news cuts to a live, on-the-scene REPORTER: He's standing in front of a LARGE SUBURBAN HOME that's surrounded by POLICE TAPE and crawling with INVESTIGATORS.

REPORTER (ON TV)
It was inside this quiet suburban home that police say James Van Hopper murdered a young couple earlier today...

PUSH IN ON ERIN as she absorbs the news report like a punch in the gut...

REPORTER (ON TV) (CONT'D)
Sources close to the investigation say that Van Hopper, who was acquitted of murder charges in April of last year, may have known both of the victims. Their names are being withheld pending family notification...

38 INT. SIDEBAR -- LADIES BATHROOM -- SAME

38

Erin steps into the single-stall bathroom, paces anxiously for a bit, then goes to the sink and splashes water on her face.

For a moment, she just stands motionless in front of the mirror, her head down, as if she's refusing to look up at her own reflected image.

Then the door opens behind her, and for an instant, Erin glances up and sees... *

A REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR *

Just a glimpse of DARK CLOTH passing behind her -- *

With a GASP, Erin spins around, and sees... *

A TALL DARK-HAIRED WOMAN

dressed in black -- startled by Erin's frightened expression... *

39 INT. SIDEBAR -- MAIN BARROOM -- SAME

39

Erin returns to her seat at the end of the bar, still shaken. On the bar in front of her is A FRESH MARTINI.

ERIN
(to Bartender, a bit disoriented)
I didn't order this...

The Bartender just smiles and nods toward A HANDSOME GUY a few years younger than Erin, who is drinking at the bar a couple of seats away from her. Erin turns to meet his gaze.

HANDSOME GUY
(flashes a charming smile)
You look like you could use a friend.

For a moment Erin just stares back at him, her mind reeling... Then she picks up the martini, and starts to drink it down.

40 INT. ERIN'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

40

The DOOR OPENS, and Erin and the Guy stumble in, already kissing hungrily. Then Erin pushes him gently away:

ERIN
Wait...

She walks over to the STEREO and clicks on MUSIC -- slow R&B, soft and low. Feeling it, she starts to move...

ERIN (CONT'D)
Dance with me.

He hesitates, then goes with it -- obviously not into dancing, but hoping to get into her.

Erin rests her head against him and closes her eyes, hanging on to him almost desperately. He's kissing her ear, her neck, trying to unhook her skirt...

ERIN (CONT'D)
Wait...stop, let's just...

He's still groping her -- more aggressive now. Erin opens her eyes, suddenly realizing what she's doing.

ERIN (CONT'D)
No, wait...stop.
(SHOVES him off)
STOP! Just, back off!

He stares at her, surprised.

ERIN (CONT'D)
I've got to be in court early tomorrow,
okay? Let's just call it a night.

HANDSOME GUY
(glances at his watch)
It's only ten o'clock -- come on...

Regrouping, he starts toward her again.

ERIN
(holds up a hand)
Don't. I made a mistake...I'm sorry.
Just go. Please.

He stares at her, and for an extended beat, it looks like things might get really ugly...

Then he turns and walks out without a word, SLAMMING the door.

Erin goes to the door and looks out the tiny PEEPHOLE...

HER POV -- THROUGH THE PEEPHOLE

is a distorted, wide-angle view of the hallway: The Handsome Guy is pacing in front of her door, his anger rising...

As Erin reaches down to turn the LOCK --

BAM!

The Handsome Guy KICKS the door in a frustrated rage.

Erin flinches and steps back, afraid. Then she quickly looks through the peephole again, and sees the Guy turn and walk away.

Relieved, Erin goes to the stereo and SHUTS OFF THE MUSIC.

For a moment, she just stands in the silence, staring at nothing, looking lost...

ERIN (CONT'D)
(whispers to herself)
What's wrong with me...?

41 INT. ERIN'S BEDROOM -- LATER THAT NIGHT

41

It's dark and quiet. MOONLIGHT filters through the curtains. Erin lies in bed, asleep. Slowly, we PUSH INTO THE ROOM, angling toward the NIGHT STAND beside the bed...

MOVING across the top of the night stand IN EXTREME CLOSE-UP, we come to a stop on...

ERIN'S ALARM CLOCK

as the time switches from "2:59" to "3:00 A.M."

CLOSE ON ERIN as her eyes POP OPEN. For a moment she just lies there in the darkness -- then she SITS UP SUDDENLY, SNIFFING the air as if she smells something burning.

Erin gets out of bed, and walks quickly into...

42 THE LIVING ROOM

42

where she glances up at the FIRE ALARM on the ceiling: It's quiet, not responding. Still sniffing the air, Erin enters...

THE KITCHEN

and FLIPS ON the FLUORESCENT LIGHTS. Squinting in the sudden brightness, she leans over the gas stove and sniffs the air above it -- but whatever the burning smell was, it's gone now.

Moving to the sink, Erin fills a glass with water. As she lifts it toward her mouth...

THE LIGHTS GO OUT

and the CLOCK on the wall STOPS TICKING. It appears to be a power outage -- but then...

A WIDENING SLIVER OF LIGHT

creeps across the kitchen floor, and it's accompanied by...

A QUIET CREAKING SOUND

that's coming from the living room.

Erin's breathing quickens. In the dimness, she attempts to set the glass on the counter -- but she misses and it falls, SHATTERING when it hits the tile floor.

Nerves frayed, Erin slowly steps through the kitchen doorway and back into the living room...

THE FRONT DOOR is WIDE OPEN, letting light angle in from the hall. For a moment Erin just stares at it, paralyzed by fear.

Then she LUNGES for the open door, SLAMS it shut, and LOCKS it. She looks through the PEEPHOLE.

HER POV: THE HALLWAY IS EMPTY -- there's nobody there. On edge, Erin turns around and scans her apartment, waiting for something else to happen...

But nothing does. After a moment, she stumbles through the darkness, feeling her way across the living room and into...

43 HER BEDROOM

43

where she sits on the bed, visibly shaking -- then slowly lies down, breathing deeply, closing her eyes...

We PAN AWAY FROM HER to the DIGITAL ALARM CLOCK -- and it COMES BACK ON, BLINKING the time of the power outage:

Exactly 3:00 a.m..

44 INT. COUNTY JAIL -- NIGHT

44

We're MOVING SLOWLY down the DIM HALLWAY of PRISON CELLS. As we PASS BY EACH CELL, we hear the PRISONERS -- breathing heavily in sleep, one SNORING softly, another MUTTERING to himself...

Reaching FATHER MOORE'S CELL, we stop -- and then PUSH THROUGH THE BARRED DOORWAY, INTO THE CELL...

45 INT. FATHER MOORE'S PRISON CELL -- CONTINUOUS

45

CONTINUE PUSHING IN on Father Moore, who lies on his side, sleeping on his cot. A SHADOW passes across him, and he AWAKENS, sitting up with a start. His chest rises and falls.

He scans the room, from toilet to barred door, seeing nothing but dim, empty space, while we HEAR HIS BREATHING...

Father Moore stands, walks to the door, and peers out into...

THE HALLWAY

THE TALL BLACK-ROBED FIGURE stands across the hall, wearing a broad-brimmed BLACK HAT that shadows his face.

For a moment, Father Moore just stares out at the Figure, as if paralyzed. Then he manages a fearful WHISPER:

FATHER MOORE

"Most glorious Prince of the Heavenly Army, Holy Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle against the princes and powers and rulers of darkness..."

As Father Moore prays, the Figure steps away and disappears into the shadows.

*

CUT TO:

46 INT. COURTROOM -- MORNING

46

ON THE PHOTOGRAPH OF EMILY that Owen showed the jury during his opening statement: Now it has been BLOWN UP TO POSTER SIZE, and pinned to a DISPLAY BOARD.

Compared to the smiling class photo of her that we've seen, the transformation depicted in this photo is truly startling.

Emily's face is terribly gaunt and bruised, the skin pale and tight across the bones. Her front teeth are broken, and her eyes are wide and empty, sunken in hollow sockets...

The gallery is packed, everyone is in place. The GRUESOME PHOTO is displayed in full view of the court, and the SPECTATORS and JURORS stare at it, MURMURING among themselves.

Father Moore and Ray sit waiting at the defense table -- but the chair between them is empty. Erin isn't here.

Now the heavy doors at the rear of the courtroom swing open, and Erin rushes in, looking exhausted and a bit dishevelled.

Seeing the HORRIFIC PHOTO OF EMILY, Erin stops in her tracks: After last night's events, this seems to rattle her even further, and she stares at it almost as if in fear...

JUDGE BREWSTER

Counselor Bruner, my courtroom day begins at 9:30 a.m..

ERIN

I'm sorry, Your Honor, I --

JUDGE BREWSTER

--That was seventeen minutes ago. Are you ready to proceed?

ERIN

(looking miserable)

Yes, Your Honor.

OWEN THOMAS

(rises)

The prosecution calls Dr. Maurice Briggs.

TIME CUT TO:

47 DR. BRIGGS ON THE WITNESS STAND

47

as Owen questions him -- a self-assured, reasonable-sounding man.

OWEN THOMAS (CONT'D)

Doctor, please state your qualifications for the court.

DR. BRIGGS

I have advanced degrees in medicine, psychiatry, and neurology from Johns Hopkins, and I have written three books and published several dozen articles in the fields of neurology and neuropsychiatry.

OWEN THOMAS

(gestures toward the photo)

Are you familiar with this photograph of the deceased?

DR. BRIGGS

I am. It was in the autopsy report.

OWEN THOMAS

And what was the cause of death, as determined by the autopsy?

DR. BRIGGS

The decedent expired due to a gradual shutdown of her bodily functions.

OWEN THOMAS

And why did her body "shut down"?

DR. BRIGGS

It was the cumulative effect of a number of injuries, exacerbated by malnutrition that severely weakened her ability to recover. In other words, her starving body couldn't withstand the trauma it received -- so, eventually, it just gave out.

OWEN THOMAS

Can you describe the nature of her injuries?

DR. BRIGGS

Extensive soft tissue damage -- such as the contusions clearly visible in the photograph -- as well as bone fractures and damage to her internal organs.

OWEN THOMAS

(watching the jury absorb this)

How did Emily get these injuries?

DR. BRIGGS

Some were the result of violent epileptic seizures. Others were self-inflicted.

OWEN THOMAS

And why, in your opinion, did Emily injure herself -- and why did she stop eating?

DR. BRIGGS

Upon reviewing the medical file, I have concluded that Emily's epilepsy evolved into a form of "epileptic psychosis" -- a rare development, but one that I have seen a number of times before.

OWEN THOMAS

(glances at Erin)

You mean that Emily was both epileptic and psychotic?

DR. BRIGGS

Yes. Her condition was one that is nearly indistinguishable from schizophrenia -- in fact, it is often misdiagnosed as such.

OWEN THOMAS

Please explain how this epileptic psychosis would manifest itself.

FLASHCUT:

48 INT. EMILY'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

48

Emily stands at the window, staring out at the sunset view. It's the scene we saw before, but we see no ghastly face on the horizon.

DR. BRIGGS (V.O.)

The seizures would have the characteristic symptoms of schizophrenia -- such as auditory and visual hallucinations...

As Jason enters the room with flowers, Emily falls back from the window, and then onto the bed in a swoon.

The way we see her now, she's no skull-faced horror with jet-black eyes and claw-like hands -- she's a hospital patient in a moment of illness and weakness, nothing inexplicable. Just a pale, trembling girl who looks sick and afraid.

DR. BRIGGS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And, sometimes, extreme paranoia...

FLASHCUT:

49 EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS -- RAIN -- NIGHT

49 *

Emily walks across the quad in the RAIN, looking around anxiously: It's the same scene we saw earlier, but now we see none of the ghastly faces -- and Emily looks crazy, like a patient escaped from an asylum...

DR. BRIGGS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The seizures may lock up the joints and slightly contort the body -- and the pupils will dilate, making the eyes appear black...

FLASHCUT:

50 INT. UNIVERSITY CHAPEL -- (RAIN OUTSIDE) -- NIGHT

50 *

Emily stands stiffly, staring up at the cross. She's swaying slightly and dripping rain, but not straining from some internal battle.

Her body is twisted, but not impossibly contorted like before.
She just looks like a sick girl -- lost, confused, and forlorn...

51 INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

51

Owen continues to question Dr. Briggs:

OWEN THOMAS

So, you believe that Emily had epilepsy, which developed into a form of violent psychosis -- a condition that can be controlled by the drug Tegretol?

DR. BRIGGS

Yes. And it would have been -- if she had continued her treatment.

OWEN THOMAS

Dr. Briggs, in your opinion, if Emily had continued her medical treatment, would she be alive today?

*
*

DR. BRIGGS

Absolutely. This epileptic psychosis, if treated early, is rarely fatal.

*
*

(turns toward FATHER MOORE)

This was a very sick girl. The defendant should have realized that Emily needed continued medical treatment.

OWEN THOMAS

Your witness.

As Owen Thomas heads back to the prosecution table, Erin rises and approaches the witness stand.

ERIN

Dr. Briggs, you just testified that Tegretol could have controlled Emily's condition -- how do you know that?

DR. BRIGGS

Based on her diagnosis, it's the inevitable result of taking the drug. Tegretol would control the epileptic seizures, which are the root cause of the psychosis.

*
*

ERIN

But wasn't Emily still experiencing psychotic symptoms after she started taking the drug?

*

DR. BRIGGS

Yes, because Tegretol has a cumulative effect -- it takes time to build up in the patient's system.

ERIN

So you assume Tegretol would have helped her, but you don't know that it would?

DR. BRIGGS

(reluctantly)

It's a reasonable assumption, but, no, I don't know for certain.

ERIN

Dr. Briggs, is "epileptic psychosis" a common medical term, or did you make it up?

DR. BRIGGS

I named the illness, when writing about it in the Oxford Journal of Medicine.

ERIN

So "epileptic psychosis" is really just your own pet theory?

OWEN THOMAS

Objection -- argumentative.

*

JUDGE BREWSTER
Sustained.

ERIN

Doctor...when Emily chose to eliminate her medical treatment, what exactly do you think should have been done?

DR. BRIGGS

Upon recognizing Emily's physical and mental deterioration, Father Moore -- as her caregiver -- should have forced her into the hospital, and placed her under the care of medical professionals.

ERIN

(caught off-guard by that)
Forced her? How?

DR. BRIGGS

Recognizing her condition, I would have tranquilized her and force-fed her -- then, if necessary, I would have treated her with electroconvulsive therapy.

*

ERIN

(you smug bastard)
Electroshock treatment...? You would have done this against her will?

*

DR. BRIGGS

(looks her right in the eye)
To save her life? Absolutely.

Erin stares back at him. She's blown it and she knows it.

ERIN

Nothing further.

JUDGE BREWSTER

The witness may step down.

Owen rises and gestures toward the GRIM PHOTO OF EMILY that's pinned to the display board:

OWEN THOMAS

Your Honor, I offer into evidence this photograph as People's Exhibit Two -- and having done so, the People rest.

*
*
*

JUDGE BREWSTER

The photograph is entered into evidence. We are recessed until tomorrow morning, 9:30 sharp, at which time the defense will give its opening statement and call its first witness.

*

She raps her gavel, and the courtroom bustles with movement.

ERIN

(to Father Moore)

Sorry I was late -- I didn't get much sleep last night, and a power outage knocked out my alarm clock... It won't happen again.

FATHER MOORE

I didn't sleep either. What kept you awake?

ERIN

(avoiding his eyes)

It doesn't matter.

Father Moore studies her a moment with his penetrating gaze, as if he can see directly into her soul...

FATHER MOORE

I believe you're under attack.

ERIN

...What are you talking about?

FATHER MOORE

You're in a spiritual battle, Erin. The forces of darkness want to keep you from the light... Don't let them.

He's struck a chord: Erin doesn't know exactly what happened to her last night -- but it scared the shit out of her. As Erin is letting his words sink in, the Bailiff approaches them -- and now she's all business again:

ERIN

Don't worry about today. We're doing fine.

The priest manages a nod, and the Bailiff takes him away.

ERIN (CONT'D)

(turns to Ray; kicking herself)

We're getting creamed -- I can't believe I walked right into that... If we don't find a doctor to testify that Emily wasn't epileptic or schizophrenic, or -- fucking schizo-epileptic...then we're going to lose.

*
*
*

52 EXT. CITY STREET -- SNOW -- DUSK

52 *

LIGHT SNOW FALLS as Erin, hands in pockets, walks slowly past SHOPKEEPERS who are closing up for the night. She's pensive, staring down at the sidewalk, lost in thought...

Something catches her eye -- a tiny glint of metal winking up at her from the concrete. She stops, and picks up...

A SMALL SILVER LOCKET

with the letters "E.C.B." etched in gold.

PUSH IN ON ERIN as she just stares at it, transfixed...

53 INT. LAW FIRM LIBRARY -- NIGHT

53

Erin sits at a long table that's strewn with LEGAL CASEBOOKS and various MEDICAL and SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS. Ray enters, carrying a STACK OF BOOKS and a bag of Chinese take-out.

RAY

Care of the city's main branch and the university library, I bring you a dozen more fun-filled books about the demonic and the mentally deranged.

He shows her the top book on the stack: A History of Possession. The cover depicts several men executing a "witch."

RAY (CONT'D)

They burned women at the stake during the witch-hunts for being "demon-possessed" -- be glad you don't have to defend those guys.

ERIN

(taking a carton of food)
How are we doing on our medical experts?

RAY

Not good. The psychiatrist you wanted is tied up in another trial, and the neurologist is sailing to Costa Rica...

Erin sighs in frustration... Then she slides over a BOOK that she's been reading: On the cover is a PHOTO of a young South American NATIVE GIRL -- eyes closed, lost in a trance...

ERIN

This book is by an anthropologist -- it's about contemporary cases of possession, mostly in the Third World.

RAY

(shrugs)
Sure, people there are still primitive and superstitious.

ERIN

Maybe -- or maybe they see possession for what it really is. Maybe we've taught ourselves not to see it.

RAY

You're saying you believe in this stuff?

ERIN

I'm saying, maybe we shouldn't just try to invalidate the prosecution's case by punching holes in the medical approach. Maybe we should also try to validate the alternative...

RAY

Validate possession? In a court of law?

Erin indicates the stack of scientific journals.

ERIN

I've got three articles here by the anthropologist who wrote this book. She approaches the subject of possession from a scientific perspective -- and doesn't try to debunk it. She says it's real.

RAY

So, you want me to track her down?

ERIN

Yeah... Keep looking for a medical expert to refute Dr. Briggs -- but send the case file to this...

(she glances at the BOOK)

..."Dr. Sadira Adani."

54 INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

54

Erin steps up behind the podium that faces the JURY BOX.

ERIN

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, as you know by now, my name is Erin Bruner, and I represent the defendant, Richard Moore.

She's giving her opening statement, and her manner -- in contrast to Owen's cool, formal precision -- is more warm and personal: the voice of an equal, an empathetic friend.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Mr. Thomas has contended that Emily Rose had a serious medical condition that required medical treatment -- nothing more. He has asserted that any attempt by my client to help Emily by anything other than medical means was not only inappropriate, but criminally negligent.

PAN across the JURORS' FACES as Erin continues her statement:

ERIN (CONT'D)

I'm now going to ask that you keep an open mind to what our testimony and evidence will show: that medical treatment was not the answer for Emily, because she simply did not suffer from a medical condition. She was neither epileptic, nor psychotic.

Erin steps out from behind the podium, draws in a deep breath, and takes the leap:

ERIN (CONT'D)

Emily Rose's condition was, in fact, demonic possession -- and exorcism was her only hope for a cure.

An AUDIBLE REACTION -- movement, intake of breath -- sweeps through the courtroom. Even Owen appears shocked that Erin would take this head-on approach.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Some of you may find yourself unable to reconcile Emily's beliefs, or those of the defendant, with your own. You may not believe that demons exist. You won't have to. Because you will see that after the utter failure of the doctors to help Emily, Father Moore simply tried to help Emily in a different way, using an approach that he, Emily, and her family firmly believed was her only chance for relief. And we will show that, despite his greatest efforts, and his sincere love for Emily, there was absolutely nothing that Father Richard Moore could have done to prevent the death of Emily Rose.

CUT TO:

55 A PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE

55

of the anti-seizure drug TEGRETOL...

INT. UNIVERSITY CAFETERIA -- (RAINING OUTSIDE) -- NIGHT

*

Jason watches Emily pop TWO TEGRETOL PILLS and swallow them down without water. She's not yet emaciated, but she already looks much changed by stress, fear, and fatigue.

On the table before Jason and Emily are two trays of food -- his half-eaten, hers untouched.

JASON

Aren't you gonna eat anything?

Emily shakes her head, then turns away, and we're...

IN HER POV: IN SLOW MOTION

as she looks around at OTHER STUDENTS -- they're eating, TALKING happily -- and ALL SOUND IS MUTED except for the CLINKING of their dishes and silverware as they eat.

CUT IN CLOSER on a KNIFE CLATTERING against a plate as it cuts through a Salisbury steak...a FORK as it stabs a bite, raises it to a MOUTH...the SHIFTING OF ICE in a tilted glass...

All of the sounds EXPLODING, a CACOPHONY in the tortured consciousness of Emily.

JASON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

She said it was terrible to hear the clinking of spoons and forks. She was always hungry, but she said they wouldn't let her eat...

56 INT. THE COURTROOM -- DAY

56

Jason is on the witness stand, answering Erin's questions.

ERIN

Who did she mean by "they"?

JASON

The forces that were in control of her. That were inside her...

(shrugs, looking uncomfortable)

Y'know...the demons.

ERIN

Tell us what else happened that night.

JASON

I walked her back to her dorm...

57 INT. EMILY'S DORM ROOM -- LATER THAT NIGHT

57

Jason's asleep on top of Emily's bed. His coat is off, but he's still dressed, the bed is still made.

JASON (V.O.)

She seemed really nervous and scared, so
I held her for a while, trying to calm
her down. I fell asleep, but when I woke
up, she wasn't beside me...

His eyes open, and he stares at something for a moment, as if
in gradual recognition...then he BOLTS UPRIGHT on the bed.

JASON (CONT'D)

Emily!

SHE'S ON THE FLOOR

her body TWISTED, her LIMBS CONTORTED and INTERTWINED into a
HORRIBLY GROTESQUE POSITION -- rigid, unmoving.

Her WIDE EYES are OPAQUE -- the pupils completely BLACK.
STARING right back at him... Staring THROUGH him...

Terrified, Jason unconsciously slides backwards across the
bed until he's against the wall.

He stares at her: She doesn't move, doesn't blink, doesn't
even seem to breathe...

JASON (CONT'D)

(a small voice in the silence)

Emily...?

Nothing. Slowly, he creeps forward across the bed, then
steps down and approaches her. She stares right through him
like a catatonic, like he's not even there.

JASON (CONT'D)

Baby...hey...hey, can you hear me...?

He reaches toward her -- and as his fingers touch her face...

SHE SCREAMS

her mouth STRETCHED IMPOSSIBLY WIDE, a black empty hole --

CUT TO:

58 A WAXING MOON that hangs over the silent Rose farmhouse... 58

EXT. FARMHOUSE -- NIGHT

Jason's car turns up the driveway, trailing dust that rises,
shimmering in the MOONLIGHT.

JASON (V.O.)

I called her mother, and she told me to
bring Emily home...

59 INT. ROSE FARMHOUSE -- BEDROOM -- NIGHT

59

Samuel and Jason carry Emily to the bed. She's still impossibly
contorted, wide-eyed and unmoving, a rigid catatonic shell.

JASON (V.O.)

Mr. Rose called Father Moore, then we put
Emily to bed, hoping she would sleep...

60 INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

60

Now Erin has SAMUEL ROSE on the witness stand:

ERIN

What happened when Father Moore arrived?

SAMUEL

I sent my daughter, Alice, upstairs to
see if Emily was awake...

61 INT. ROSE FARMHOUSE -- UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- NIGHT

61

A long hallway. Dark and empty. We hear the slow FOOTSTEPS
of someone coming up the stairs...

Then Alice -- Emily's youngest sister -- reaches the top of
the staircase and steps into view.

Nervously, she moves down the hallway, toward Emily's BEDROOM
DOOR. As she nears the door, she hears a soft SHUFFLING SOUND,
and low MURMURING, almost like someone repeating a prayer.

ALICE

(a little voice)

Emily...? Are you praying?

(she KNOCKS lightly on the door)

Emily, may I come in?

No answer. The MURMURING continues. After a moment, Alice
tries the doorknob: It TURNS. She opens the door, and
enters...

62 INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

62

The MOONLIT room is DIM and edged with shadows. The bed is a
tangle of sheets. A POOL OF LIQUID -- urine, most likely --
glistens on the hardwood floor, which is blotted with stains.

*

CRACKS on the wall seem to indicate spots where something struck repeatedly, with brutal force...

*

And the paint of the walls has been PEELED AWAY in hundreds of thin, jagged strips -- SCRATCH-MARKS that reveal the PALE COLOR of the paint underneath.

*

*

It's as if the walls were flesh, clawed by an animal in a vicious attack -- or a desperate attempt to escape.

Emily crouches in a corner, her back to the door, MURMURING.

Is she praying...? Repeatedly, Emily raises her hands toward her face, as if kissing her Rosary beads -- but Alice can't make out her muttered words.

ALICE

(softly)

Emily...?

No reply. Emily remains hunched over, squatting barefoot on the floor and MURMURING. Slowly, Alice takes a step toward her...

A CLOUD OF GNATS

suddenly blows into Alice's face, making her JUMP BACKWARDS -- then they're GONE, vanished into the shadows.

Gathering her courage, she starts across the room again. Coming closer, she can discern Emily's MURMURED WORDS:

EMILY

(very quietly)

"Thy kingdom come...Thy will be done on earth...as it is in heaven... Give us this day...our daily bread..."

The prayer is punctuated by pauses, during which Emily makes a strange sound, as if SMACKING her lips and GRUNTING...

Hearing the words, Alice steps toward her with a smile of relief:

ALICE

Emily, Father Moore is here. Can you come downstairs...?

Reaching Emily's side, she FREEZES, her smile turning to revulsion as she sees...

EMILY

hunched over not Rosary beads, but a pile of INSECTS -- dead FLIES and SPIDERS. And at each pause in her praying, she SHOVES some of them INTO HER MOUTH, SMACKING her lips and swallowing them down.

Alice lets out a horrified SCREAM...

Then Emily also lets out a SCREAM -- but it goes on, and on, and on...

Impossibly. It seems like it will never end.

Reaching out blindly, Emily SCRATCHES along the wall, leaving a long, spidery mark with her broken, claw-like fingernail...

And now Alice watches in horror as Emily is YANKED UP onto her feet, then SLAMMED back down onto her knees for an instant before being YANKED UP and SLAMMED down again...

Over and over, a hellish mockery of an attempt to kneel and pray.

The movements are FREAKISH -- too fast, too violent and strong. It seems impossible that she could do this to herself.

Still SCREAMING, TEARS running down her cheeks, Emily looks like a puppet jerked up and down by unseen hands.

Behind her, the bedroom door FLINGS OPEN...

SAMUEL AND FATHER MOORE

rush headlong into the room. Emily YANKS OUT two fist-fulls of her OWN HAIR, then begins ROLLING AROUND on the floor. She clutches at her throat as if she can't breathe, then rolls onto her stomach, pressing her face into the floor... *

Samuel GRABS Emily and tries to flip her onto her back, but as he does, she starts BUCKING like a billy goat, her legs kicking backwards with impossible power and speed.

Together, Father Moore and Samuel manage to turn her over. Her face is bright RED. CHOKING, she SWINGS WILDLY at them. *

Father Moore pins her arms down, then leans in close to her, so their faces are just a few inches apart:

FATHER MOORE

Emily, can you hear --

EMILY

(in LATIN, subtitled)

--I am the one who dwells within.

Everyone literally jerks back in shock: THE VOICE was low and guttural and MALE -- not Emily's own.

And now her body LOCKS UP again -- totally rigid and unmoving.

FATHER MOORE

(after a moment)

Let's get her up off the floor.

They lift Emily into a standing position, and it's like raising a statue off the ground -- her shoulders stiff and hunched, her head twisted to one side...

And her eyes -- wide and black, like a cornered animal's -- are fixed on Father Moore.

EMILY

(again, in LATIN, subtitled)

I am the one who dwells within.

FATHER MOORE

(in LATIN, subtitled)

And I am the one who comes in His name.

She SCREAMS, FROTH and SPITTLE flying from her lips. Then her eyes roll back, showing white, and she emits a WHEEZING SOUND from deep in her chest, like an old emphysematous man suffocating to death...

*

Now her head SNAPS forward. Her eyes lock on Father Moore.

EMILY

(in LATIN, subtitled)

Think you can force me out, priest...?

Try. I dare you.

And there's a tremendous CRACKING SOUND, as if all of her joints are violently and instantly released from their rigid state.

Suddenly LIMP, she TOPPLES back down to the floor. As Father Moore drops to his knees and reaches out for her...

*
*

Emily SWIPES at him with hooked fingers, RAKING his cheek. Shocked, he JERKS AWAY from her --

*
*

Then he turns back to stare at her in shock and fear -- reaching up to touch the FRESH SCRATCH on his face...

*
*

63 EXT. THE FARMHOUSE -- NIGHT

63

The door opens, and Father Moore steps out onto the porch. He starts across the lawn toward his car. As he does, Emily is standing in the brightly-lit LIVING ROOM WINDOW, watching him go.

Now, as Father Moore crosses the yard, she walks across the room -- still in view -- sits down at the PIANO, and begins to PLAY...

Father Moore stops short, and slowly turns back to see Emily: Her back to him, gently swaying from side to side, she plays a HAUNTINGLY BEAUTIFUL SONATA.

After what just transpired, this behavior is creepy as hell. Father Moore feels his short hairs rise...

OWEN THOMAS (V.O.)

You've suffered a terrible loss, Mr. Rose. I know this is difficult, so thank you for being here today...

64 INT. THE COURTROOM -- DAY

64

On the stand, Samuel nods in response to Owen, who now cross-examines him -- gently, but precisely. *

*
*

OWEN THOMAS

Do you often read the Bible?

SAMUEL

Yes, I do.

OWEN THOMAS

(smiles)

So do I. What about the "DSM" -- The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, commonly referred to as the Bible of abnormal psychiatry -- have you read that?

SAMUEL

No.

OWEN THOMAS

So you're not aware that, according to the DSM, a person's refusal to eat is a common indication of a psychiatric condition known as anorexia?

ERIN

Objection. The witness just said he hasn't read the DSM, Your Honor.

JUDGE BREWSTER

Sustained.

OWEN THOMAS

Mr. Rose, are you aware that "catatonic rigidity" -- specifically, the locking up of the joints of the body -- is a known symptom of psychosis?

SAMUEL

No. I have not studied these things.

OWEN THOMAS

Have you ever visited an "insane asylum," or hospital for the treatment of the mentally ill?

SAMUEL

Once...my aunt was in one before she died.

OWEN THOMAS

Really? So there's a history of mental illness in your family?

SAMUEL

(uncomfortable)

I suppose.

OWEN THOMAS

Mr. Rose, if you saw somebody eating insects on a street corner, wouldn't you think that person is crazy...?

SAMUEL

Probably, yes.

*

OWEN THOMAS

So can you really say with confidence that the behavior you saw in your daughter's bedroom that night could not be the behavior of a person suffering from psychosis or extreme mental illness?

SAMUEL

I don't know... She never had any problems like that before, and -- it just didn't feel that way to me. Or to Father Moore.

OWEN THOMAS

And you trusted him, right?

SAMUEL

Yes. He is our parish priest.

OWEN THOMAS

Fair enough. And after that night, would you say that you put your daughter entirely in Father Moore's care?

SAMUEL

Yes -- we had done all we could. We said she was in his hands now -- body and soul.

Even as he says it, Samuel knows that it's not only the truth, but also that it's exactly what Owen hoped he would say.

OWEN THOMAS

No further questions, Your Honor.

JUDGE BREWSTER

Thank you, Mr. Rose. You may step down.

Samuel looks over at Erin, who manages a reassuring smile -- but as soon as Samuel turns away, we see her sinking... She recovers quickly, though -- rising to call her next witness:

ERIN

The defense calls Dr. Sadira Adani.

TIME CUT TO:

65 INT. THE COURTROOM -- DAY

65

Dr. Adani is on the witness stand. In her 50s, she is keen-eyed and gentle, but firm, in demeanor.

DR. ADANI

I am currently Professor of Anthropology and Psychiatry at Northwestern University.

*
*

ERIN

Where did you receive your education?

DR. ADANI

At Yale, and then at Cambridge.

*

MURMURS ripple through the courtroom: She's no lightweight.

ERIN

What is your specific area of expertise?

DR. ADANI

I study the spiritual experiences of people in various cultures, and the physiological and psychological changes they undergo during these experiences.

ERIN

Would it be accurate to say you specialize in the scientific study of "possession"?

DR. ADANI

Yes. Possession is one term for a basic human experience reported by a great number of people all around the world. In my field work, I've seen many people who experienced a sense of being invaded by an entity from the supernatural realm.

ERIN

Why do you think Emily was invaded? Why did this possession happen to her?

DR. ADANI

Based on my study of the case file, I believe that Emily Rose was a "hypersensitive" -- a person with an unusual connection to what Carlos Castaneda called "the Separate Reality." Hypersensitives are born different from everyone else. They can have visions of the future, or see the dead -- and sometimes be uniquely susceptible to "invasion" by an entity that is alien to them.

*
*

OWEN THOMAS

Objection...!

JUDGE BREWSTER

On what grounds?

OWEN THOMAS

How about silliness, Your Honor? A young girl suffered terribly and died... Do we have to subject her illness to this goofy, pseudoscientific analysis?

*

JUDGE BREWSTER

Both Counselors please approach the bench.

*
*

Erin and Owen approach, and stand before the Judge in a sidebar conference.

*
*

OWEN THOMAS

Your Honor, this testimony is beyond ridiculous. "Visions of the future"? "Seeing the dead"...? We've entered the "The Twilight Zone" here.

*
*
*
*
*

ERIN

Supernatural belief systems are shared by millions -- perhaps billions -- of people in the world. And her expertise is directly relevant to the issues of this case.

OWEN THOMAS

Sure, and let's bring in a witch doctor to sift through some monkey-bones...

JUDGE BREWSTER

Counselor!

Owen shrugs, and looks away. The Judge considers a moment.

JUDGE BREWSTER (CONT'D)

We've heard a great deal of testimony in support of a medical explanation of Emily's condition... Now, we have a witness who has spent her career studying the defense's alternative explanation -- an "exorcism expert"... I think we'll hear what she has to say.

ERIN

Thank you, Your Honor.

Erin shoots Owen a mildly triumphant look as he retreats to the prosecution table. Then she returns to the witness:

ERIN (CONT'D)

Dr. Adani, why do you think Emily's exorcism failed?

DR. ADANI

The possession experience usually lasts a finite period of time, and does no permanent harm. I believe that Emily's possession would probably have run its course without tragedy, but something prevented it from doing so.

ERIN

And what prevented it from running its course without tragedy...?

DR. ADANI

The medical treatment. Specifically, the drug, Tegretol.

ERIN

Please explain.

DR. ADANI

The exorcism ritual results in specific brain activity that cuts a person off from the possession experience. But Emily's exorcism could not have achieved this, because the doctor gave her Tegretol, which has an intoxicating effect on the brain. The drug made her immune to the psycho-spiritual shock that exorcism is intended to provide.

ERIN

And what do you believe was the ultimate result of treatment with this "intoxicating" drug?

DR. ADANI

Tegretol locked Emily in the possessed state. This left her unable to respond to the exorcism -- and therefore, it directly contributed to her death.

There's an AUDIBLE REACTION from the jury and spectators -- murmurs and conversations...

ERIN

Thank you, Doctor. No further questions.

AT THE PROSECUTION TABLE

Owen starts to rise from his seat. One of the Junior A.D.A.s puts a hand on his arm:

*

*

*

JUNIOR A.D.A. #1
(quietly, to Owen)
Let it go.

*
*
*

The BUZZ in the courtroom continues as Owen thinks it over...

*

But he can't resist. Looking very skeptical, he stands up
behind the prosecution table with a STACK OF PRINTED PAGES in
his hand.

*
*

OWEN THOMAS

I've been looking at your list of published articles, Doctor... You've been quite busy, and prolific.

*
*

Beat. Then he tosses the list onto the table dismissively, and approaches the witness stand as he continues...

OWEN THOMAS (CONT'D)

So, based on your time spent with Holy Roller snake-handlers, voodoo priestesses "calling the loas," and Indians in the desert tripping on peyote buds -- based on observing those bizarre individuals, you've decided that "possession" is a basic, normal, typical human experience?

DR. ADANI

I must say, Counselor, that's quite a laundry list of disdain, and one that thoroughly mis-characterizes my research... No, I don't think possession is a "typical" experience. But I am convinced that it is a scientifically verified, culturally universal one.

OWEN THOMAS

I believe you mentioned "changes in the brain." Can you be a bit more specific?

DR. ADANI

Certainly. First, you may know that the cerebral cortex reacts to stimuli in a distinct pattern that is unique to each individual, sort of like a fingerprint....

OWEN THOMAS

No, I didn't know that...

DR. ADANI

Well, now you do. And that pattern changes in a person undergoing the "possession experience" -- as if, for the duration of the possession, they become an entirely different person.

(beat)

Second, during possession studies, I have also measured by EEG the predominance of theta waves, instead of alpha waves -- and normal adults do not show theta-wave patterns while they are awake.

OWEN THOMAS

Have you ever used Tegretol in these studies, to test your theory about its effect on the "possession experience"....?

DR. ADANI

Absolutely not. That would be dangerous to the patient...

OWEN THOMAS

So, this notion of Tegretol "locking" someone in the "possessed state" -- the key to your assertion that the medical treatment somehow harmed Emily...

(glances at Erin)

...this would be your own "pet theory," correct? You're just making this one up.

ERIN

Objection, Your Honor! Argumentative! *

JUDGE BREWSTER

Sustained. Although I believe he's just taking a page from your book, Counselor.

The Judge is smiling slightly. Owen smiles right back at her.

OWEN THOMAS

I always try to learn from my betters, Your Honor... No further questions.

He walks back to the prosecution table as several spectators and jurors CHUCKLE softly -- and they're not laughing at him. Sitting down, he turns to the Junior A.D.A., and shrugs. *

Erin smiles at Dr. Adani as she steps down -- but we see from Erin's face that she suspects the jury didn't buy it... *

66 EXT. THE COURTHOUSE -- DAY

66 *

Preoccupied, ERIN sits on the courthouse steps, looking small and alone. Behind her, through the courthouse windows, we can see FATHER MOORE inside, being watched by TWO DEPUTIES.

*
*
*

RAY (O.S.)

ERIN....!

She turns to see Ray hurrying toward her. His excited expression gives her spirits an instant lift.

RAY (CONT'D)

I've got a doctor who wants to testify!
He's an eyewitness, Erin! He was there --
he was at the exorcism!

ERIN

(stunned)

What...? How did you find out about him?

RAY

He called us!

(reads off a MESSAGE PAD)

"Dr. Edmund Cartwright," -- Department of
Abnormal Psychiatry at St. Mary's Hospital.

INT. COURTHOUSE LOBBY -- SAME

*

Quickly, Erin approaches Father Moore, and snaps at him:

*

ERIN

Dr. Edmund Cartwright. Ring a bell?

FATHER MOORE

Yes.

Erin waits for more, but he just regards her patiently.

ERIN

(can't hide her exasperation)

Father, if you want me to defend you,
you've got to give me the info I need!
With all of this medical testimony helping
the prosecution, how could you not tell me
that a doctor attended the exorcism?!

FATHER MOORE

He asked that I keep his involvement
confidential, and I told him I would.

Erin just stares at him, feeling the anger drain away --
leaving just her astonishment at this man...

67 EXT. A CITY PARK -- DUSK

67

A BULKY MAN sits on a bench, tearing up a bagel and tossing scraps to the PIGEONS. He looks ill-at-ease, almost paranoid: His gaze is darting about, and he's sweating despite the blustery cold.

As Erin approaches, she notices his uneasiness.

ERIN

Dr. Cartwright...?

CARTWRIGHT

(squints up at Erin)

I recognize you from those courtroom drawings on the news. You're much prettier in real life.

ERIN

May I sit?

He nods and gestures, but doesn't scoot over. Erin sits next to him on the bench, feeling uncomfortably close. Anxiously, Cartwright mops his forehead with a monogrammed silk handkerchief.

CARTWRIGHT

You're losing. I'd hoped Father Moore wouldn't need me, but...I don't want to see him put away.

ERIN

How do you know him?

CARTWRIGHT

I was his parishioner at St. Vincent's Church, fifteen years ago. I had a summer house on the Tulee River, and he liked fishing, so...we became friends. When he called me last fall, I hadn't seen him or heard from him in years -- but, he needed help.

*

*

ERIN

What kind of help, Doctor?

CARTWRIGHT

(wipes his forehead again)

He wanted a medical perspective -- a psychiatrist that he knew, and trusted, who could observe Emily's physical and mental state during the...

He pauses, his gaze darting around nervously.

ERIN
During the exorcism...?

He nods. The pigeons flit about, taking off and landing, and their fluttery movements in the corner of his eye seem to increase his agitation -- but he keeps on feeding them.

ERIN (CONT'D)
(getting to the point)
Doctor, can you help our case?

Cartwright stares into the indistinct mass of DARK, SHIFTING TREES that border the park. His expression is haunted.

CARTWRIGHT
That girl was not epileptic, and she was not schizophrenic or some crazy combination of the two. I've seen people with those problems. They can be terrible afflictions -- but they don't scare me.

ERIN
But that night...what you saw, in Emily...that did scare you?

CARTWRIGHT
What I saw...the sounds...the things her...body did... If I had known, I never would have been there that night.

Tossing the rest of the bagel aside, he fishes a silver FLASK from his coat, takes a drink, offers it to Erin. She shakes her head.

CARTWRIGHT (CONT'D)
Since then, I've been praying again...
(he LAUGHS humorlessly)
I examined the girl before I drove back to the city. She was lucid, and totally aware of the "separate entity" that was inside her. When not in its grip, she was entirely herself -- that is, she seemed completely normal to me. And that awareness of the "alternate mental state" is not indicative of psychosis.

ERIN
Crazy people don't know they're crazy...

CARTWRIGHT
That's right.

ERIN

You'll testify to all of this, in detail
-- everything you saw?

CARTWRIGHT

Send me the case file, and tell me when
to be in court...

ERIN

Thank you Doctor. We needed this.

Cartwright now takes a MICROCASSETTE RECORDER from his coat
pocket. There's a TAPE inside. *

CARTWRIGHT *

Before he was arrested, Father Moore sent
this to me, and asked me to take care of
it... *

(hands the tape to her) *

It's your burden now. *

Cartwright gets up to go. Erin quickly rises: *

ERIN *

One more thing: When you saw Emily, did
Father Moore ask you to give her any
medical help?

CARTWRIGHT

He was already trying to keep her from
injuring herself, and urging her to
eat...I told him that, as a doctor, I
couldn't help her.

ERIN

Why couldn't you help her? *

CARTWRIGHT

Because there are no injections against
the Devil.

And then he turns, and walks quickly away.

68 INT. FATHER MOORE'S JAIL CELL -- NIGHT

68

Father Moore sits on his bunk -- his back against the wall,
the empty plate and cup from his jailhouse dinner beside him
-- watching the Guard let Erin into the cell.

Erin sits down, very excited, and places the MICROCASSETTE
RECORDER on the bunk next to Father Moore. He stares at it. *

ERIN

Dr. Cartwright's going to testify...!

*

She watches Father Moore, waiting for a response -- but now
he just stares at her impassively.

*

ERIN (CONT'D)

Don't you get it? He's not just an
eyewitness to the exorcism -- he can
refute the prosecution's medical case!
This is huge for us --

FATHER MOORE

--When do I get to tell Emily's story?

His gaze is unwavering. Erin avoids his eyes.

ERIN

I don't know...let's just take this one step at a time...

FATHER MOORE

Remember Erin: What matters most is that the world hears her whole story -- which only I can tell.

She nods, still avoiding his eyes. He leans toward her -- probing, intense.

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

Have you thought about what I said before -- about dark forces, and demonic attacks?

ERIN

(now she meets his gaze)

Yes, I have...

(after a moment)

That day, after Briggs testified, I was feeling pretty low... I went for a walk, just trying to clear my head, and I was thinking about what you said to me, thinking what if demons really do exist -- and wondering what it would mean if I really believed that... Then I saw something lying on the sidewalk. It was a silver locket, engraved with the initials "E.C.B."

(leans closer to him)

My middle name is Christine -- Erin Christine Bruner -- and of all the people walking by that day, I found the locket... What are the chances of that?

(beat; shakes her head)

I don't know...maybe it was a sign, or maybe it was just an incredible coincidence -- but it comforted me. It made me feel like no matter what mistakes I had made in the past, at that moment, I was exactly where I was meant to be... Like I was on the right path.

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FATHER MOORE

(smiles slightly)

You sound more like a mystic than an agnostic.

Erin doesn't smile back -- she just stares at Father Moore a moment, thinking... Then she drops the bomb:

ERIN

The Archdiocese doesn't want you to testify.

FATHER MOORE

(bitterly)

They're afraid I'll embarrass them.
Testify to a lot of medieval-sounding,
supernatural nonsense.

ERIN

That's about right. They're expecting me
to talk you out of it... But I've just
decided that I'm not even going to try.

FATHER MOORE

...Why not?

ERIN

(intently, holding his gaze)

If the Archdiocese wants to avoid
embarrassment, they need you to walk out
of here a free man. I believe a jury will
find you sincere and credible, and I think
that when Dr. Cartwright corroborates your
testimony and refutes the prosecution's
medical arguments, we'll get an acquittal.
And everyone will thank me for it.

69 INT. ERIN'S LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

69

Erin sits on the couch, preparing for the big day in court tomorrow: On the coffee table in front of her are various notes, trial documents -- and A CLEAR PLASTIC BAG containing the MICROCASSETTE AUDIOTAPE RECORDER.

*
*

Exhausted, she puts aside the work and settles into her lonely, late-night ritual: Shutting off the light and clicking on the TV, she leans back and indulges in her glass of wine -- eyes heavy, staring at the TV SCREEN...

70 INT. ERIN'S BEDROOM -- LATER

70

It's dark and quiet. Erin is asleep in bed. Slowly, we PUSH INTO THE ROOM, angling toward the NIGHT STAND... Now we're MOVING across the top of the night stand IN EXTREME CLOSE-UP toward...

THE DIGITAL ALARM CLOCK

It reads "2:59 A.M." As the MOVING CAMERA COMES TO A STOP, the time on the clock switches to "3:00 A.M." -- and we hear...

A WHISPERING VOICE (O.S.)
One, two, three, four, five, six!

ERIN BOLTS UPRIGHT IN BED

her eyes wide, her breath quickening with fear...

Silence. Erin looks over at the CLOCK, sees that it's 3:00 A.M. -- and then she hears...

THE NIGHTMARISH VOICE OF EMILY ROSE

It's the EXORCISM RECORDING we heard at the beginning of the film: feline GROWLING, followed by horrific SHRIEKS, SCREAMS, and OBSCENITIES...

Slowly, fearfully, Erin gets out of bed and steps into...

71 THE LIVING ROOM

71

She looks around, disoriented -- then, cautiously, she approaches...

THE MICROCASSETTE AUDIOTAPE RECORDER

on the coffee table, inside the PLASTIC BAG: The "PLAY" button has been clicked on, causing the HIDEOUS SOUNDS of the exorcism to play at full volume. *

Her hand trembling, Erin presses STOP, ending the nightmarish sound of Emily's voice.

ERIN
(a terrified whisper)
God help me.

And then we HEAR:

BAILIFF (V.O.)

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God...?

FATHER MOORE (V.O.)

I do...

72 INT. THE COURTROOM -- DAY

72

Erin questions Father Moore, who is on the witness stand.

ERIN

Father Moore, before you could actually perform an exorcism of Emily, you had to get the sanction of the Church -- correct?

FATHER MOORE

Yes. On October twenty-seventh of last year, I presented my assessment and recommendation to the Archbishop -- and he authorized the exorcism that day, before I left his office.

*
*

ERIN

Tell us what happened that night.

FATHER MOORE

I drove home and had dinner, then sat up until after midnight studying the Roman Ritual, thinking about what lay ahead.

ERIN

You mean The Roman Ritual of Exorcism, a text used by Catholic priests as a guide to the performance of the exorcism rite?

FATHER MOORE

Yes. I think I actually fell asleep with the book in my hand.

ERIN

And what happened next...?

FATHER MOORE

I woke up freezing...

73 INT. CHURCH RECTORY -- BEDROOM -- NIGHT

73

Father Moore wakes with a start, sits up in bed. The ROMAN RITUAL BOOK slides off his chest and THUMPS onto the floor. The BEDSIDE LAMP FLICKERS, and GOES OUT.

In the MOONLIT DARKNESS, his gaze finds the LUMINOUS DIAL of his CLOCK on the night stand --

FATHER MOORE (V.O.)

It was exactly three a.m....

74 INT. THE COURTROOM -- DAY

74

Father Moore continues:

FATHER MOORE

Three a.m. is the demonic "witching hour" -- a way for demons to mock the Holy Trinity. It's an inversion of three p.m. -- the "miracle hour" -- which is traditionally accepted as the hour that Christ died.

Erin reacts, remembering her own strange 3:00 a.m. phenomena since she took on this case.

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

I thought I smelled something burning...

As Erin reacts again, remembering the burning smell that she perceived in her condo, we CUT BACK TO:

75 INT. THE RECTORY BEDROOM -- NIGHT

75

Shivering, Father Moore slides his legs from under the covers and stands up next to the bed. He frowns, sniffing the air.

FATHER MOORE (V.O.)

Only later did I connect it, and remember that the same smell of something burning had been perceived by Emily.

He unhooks a small FIRE EXTINGUISHER from the wall, steps into...

76 INT. RECTORY -- UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

76

HIS POV: THE HALLWAY is perceived as if through a VERTICAL SLIT -- as if Father Moore is gazing through the slit-like pupil of a giant REPTILIAN EYE.

Walking slowly down the hallway, he notices that THE FIRE ALARM on the hallway ceiling is SILENT -- not responding...

Ahead of him is a STAIRCASE that descends to the first floor. There's a LARGE STAINED-GLASS WINDOW above the landing...

IN HIS POV: THE STAINED-GLASS WINDOW seems to RIPPLE for an instant, the colors and images MELTING TOGETHER before his eyes.

And for an instant, the WALL beside him RIPPLES, as if molten -- then appears to DRIP slow, descending tears, like liquid mercury.

Father Moore staggers slightly, dropping the fire extinguisher, and MUTTERS:

FATHER MOORE

"Holy Mary...mother of God...pray for us sinners...now and at the hour of our death..."

Desperately, Father Moore RUSHES DOWN THE STAIRS and plunges out into...

77 EXT. THE CHURCH COURTYARD -- NIGHT

77

GULPING air, Father Moore RUNS until he is fifty yards from the rectory -- then he stops, clutching his knees and GASPING.

THE TALL BLACK-ROBED FIGURE

stands at the far side of the courtyard, next to the church. The broad-brimmed BLACK HAT still shrouds his features.

The Figure slowly nods to Father Moore, the tall hat dipping low -- then recedes into the shadows of the church, and is gone.

OWEN THOMAS (V.O.)

...And what did you make of this gesture, this "nod" in your direction...?

78 INT. THE COURTROOM -- DAY

78

Owen Thomas now faces Father Moore, who's still on the stand.

FATHER MOORE

I don't know... Sort of an acknowledgment, I guess, that...the game is on.

OWEN THOMAS

You're really God's gunslinger, aren't you, Father? Standing tall and facing down the Devil with your Bible and your prayer book at your side...?

ERIN

Objection, Your Honor! Counsel is harassing my witness!

*

JUDGE BREWSTER

Sustained. Mr. Thomas, I'll have no more outbursts like that.

OWEN THOMAS

(takes a moment, then:)

Did you understand this black-robed
"Figure" to be the Devil?

FATHER MOORE

I believe it was a demonic manifestation.

OWEN THOMAS

Like the "demonic force" that you believe
possessed Emily...?

FATHER MOORE

Yes.

OWEN THOMAS

And why do you think it appeared to you?

FATHER MOORE

I believe that the demonic can appear as
an apparition, much like a ghost, in an
attempt to excite our fear...

OWEN THOMAS

And did it excite your fear, Father Moore?

FATHER MOORE

(deadpan)

Yes. It scared the hell out of me.

That provokes a few CHUCKLES. Erin hangs her head slightly.

OWEN THOMAS

So, this night, when you began to prepare
for Emily's exorcism -- was it your first
encounter with this "demon-ghost"..?

FATHER MOORE

Yes.

OWEN THOMAS

And have you seen it again?

FATHER MOORE

I've seen it ever since.

MURMURS from the spectators. Owen takes a moment to let his
dubious gaze sweep the courtroom...

OWEN THOMAS

No further questions at this time.

Ray checks his watch, then WHISPERS to Erin. She nods, and he hurries out of the courtroom...

ERIN
Redirect, Your Honor...

Erin stands, picking up the MICROCASSETTE AUDIOTAPE RECORDER, and approaches the witness:

ERIN (CONT'D)
Father Moore, after you received the Bishop's authorization, when did you proceed with an exorcism?

FATHER MOORE
On October thirty-first.

ERIN
On Halloween? Isn't that a bit dramatic?

FATHER MOORE
The Halloween tradition is based on legends throughout history that indicate a real increase in spiritual activity on that night...I thought the occasion might help us to draw them into the open.

ERIN
The demons, you mean?

FATHER MOORE
Yes.

Erin hands the tape recorder to Father Moore.

ERIN
Father Moore, can you identify this?

FATHER MOORE
This is my tape recorder -- I used it to record the exorcism. Inside it is the tape I made that night.

ERIN
Why would you make such a tape?

FATHER MOORE
Ever since the technology has been available, exorcists have often used tape recorders to authenticate the ritual, and to provide a record for later review.

ERIN

I offer into evidence this cassette
recorder and audiotape as Defense
Exhibits One and Two.

OWEN THOMAS

Objection, Your Honor. We have not been
made aware of the existence of this tape.

ERIN

Neither had we, Your Honor -- the tape is
new evidence that just came into our
possession yesterday evening.

JUDGE BREWSTER

(frowns)

You mean this tape was not provided by
your client?

ERIN

(glances at Father Moore)

No, Your Honor. It was provided by a
reluctant witness, Dr. Edmund Cartwright,
who will also be called to testify to its
authenticity.

At the prosecution table, Owen and his Junior A.D.A.s
scramble through paperwork...

ERIN (CONT'D)

(watching Owen)

The People will find his name on the
updated witness list we provided to them
this morning.

Owen finds it: He stares at the list, then glares at Erin...

JUDGE BREWSTER

Very well. I'll allow it into evidence.

ERIN
 (turns back to Father Moore)
 Will you play the tape for us now?

*

FATHER MOORE
 Yes.

More MURMURED REACTIONS from the spectators. They're enthralled, enjoying the show.

Father Moore CLICKS IT ON. At first there is just the TAPE HISS, and the muffled sounds of MOVEMENT...then we hear:

FATHER MOORE'S VOICE
 (ON THE AUDIOTAPE)
 This is the exorcism of Emily Rose. The following are present: Myself, being Father Richard Moore...

79 INT. FARMHOUSE -- EMILY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

79

We PAN FROM ONE PERSON TO THE NEXT as the VOICE-OVER CONTINUES, naming each in turn:

FATHER MOORE
 Samuel, Emily's father...

*
*

Samuel looks grave, but is trying to be strong for Emily -- he strokes her forehead and smiles...

*

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)
 Jason, her friend...

*
*

Standing on the other side of the bed, Jason looks nervous and earnest, ready to be instructed and to do his best...

*

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)
 A doctor, who is here to monitor Emily during the ritual...

*
*
*

Dr. Cartwright stands off in a corner, looking both uneasy and fascinated as he studies Emily...

*

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)
 And Emily, who has given her permission for this ritual to be performed.

*
*
*

Emily sits on the bed, clutching A DOLL: It's the same one we saw Samuel clutching in the film's opening sequence.

*

Father Moore has the MICROCASSETTE RECORDER in his hand. Now he slips it into the pocket of his coat and clips the tiny extension microphone to his shirt. He takes out his copy of the Roman Ritual, and a small bottle of HOLY WATER.

Around his neck is a SILVER CRUCIFIX on a chain. He kisses it, then turns to the other three men:

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

*

You may say the Rosary, or your own private prayers for her deliverance, when you are not responding to my words. Above all, do whatever I say, without question -- and do not ask it any questions, or pay any attention to what it says.

JASON

"It"?

FATHER MOORE

We will not be dealing with Emily tonight.

And suddenly, EMILY LAUGHS -- a soft giggle, like a young girl enjoying a secret -- but her mouth offers no hint of a smile. Jason looks down at her fearfully...

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

Restrain her.

Emily's BREATH quickens. Samuel and Jason each take her by the wrist and, using strips of thick cloth, tie her firmly to the bedposts. As they do, her WRISTS seem to twist unnaturally... *

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on us...

He makes the SIGN OF THE CROSS. Then he opens the bottle of Holy Water, and SPRINKLES it on Emily. She takes a sharp breath, and closes her eyes...

When she reopens them, they're WIDE and COMPLETELY BLACK, fixed on the priest.

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

It has begun.

(he opens his RITUAL BOOK)

Let us pray...

80 EXT. THE ROSE FARM -- NIGHT

80

DARK STORM CLOUDS drift before a FULL MOON, and cold October RAIN begins to fall...

81 INT. THE ROSE FARMHOUSE -- LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

81

Maria and her other daughters sit in the dim, LAMP-LIT room. THUNDER RUMBLES, and a LIGHTNING FLASH ILLUMINATES...

THE WOODEN CRUCIFIX

on the wall in the entrance hall: ANOTHER THUNDER-CLAP RATTLES the crucifix against the wall -- and the top nail comes loose, causing it to TURN UPSIDE-DOWN and SWING back and forth like a pendulum...

Staring at it fearfully, Alice feels her breathing quicken...

FATHER MOORE (V.O.)

(reads from the Ritual)

"Save this woman, your servant."

SAMUEL & JASON (V.O.)
 (IN UNISON, reading the reply)
 "Because she hopes in you, My God..."

CUT TO:

82 INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

82

CLOSE ON EMILY'S FACE: She's lying on her pillow, eyes closed, as if she's peacefully asleep. PUSH IN VERY SLOWLY ON EMILY as they continue:

FATHER MOORE (O.S.)
 "Send her help from the Holy Place, Lord."

SAMUEL & JASON (O.S.)
 "And give her Heavenly protection."

It's a BIG CLOSE-UP OF EMILY NOW, still PUSHING IN...

FATHER MOORE (O.S.)
 "May the Lord be with you."

SAMUEL & JASON (O.S.)
 "And with your spirit."

Now we're just on her EYES, still closed...

THE THREE MEN (O.S.)
 (IN UNISON)
 "Our Father who art in Heaven: Hallowed
 be thy name..."

And we CUT WIDE as...

...Emily suddenly SITS UP, SNAPPING the cloth restraints. She STRIKES her father with the DOLL, SHATTERING one of the doll's blue glass eyes. Samuel STAGGERS BACKWARDS, touching his BLEEDING head.

EMILY
 (IN GERMAN, subtitled)
*Dolls and kisses and crosses and wishes,
 you think that can save your little girl?*

The VOICE she speaks in is low and guttural and male -- and it always will be, when she speaks during the exorcism.

CARTWRIGHT
 (steps toward Samuel)
 My God -- are you all right?

Emily HURLS the one-eyed doll at Father Moore -- but he dodges it, and the doll SMACKS against the closed bedroom door.

With a CREAK, the BEDROOM DOOR slowly OPENS...

FATHER MOORE

"Thy Kingdom come! Thy will be done, on
Earth as it is in Heaven!"

Samuel waves off the doctor. He and Jason join in with Father Moore:

THE THREE MEN

"Give us this day our daily bread. And
forgive us our offences, as we forgive
those who offend against us..."

Dr. Cartwright steps back into the shadows again -- not praying with them, unconsciously trying to hide. Emily turns toward him...

THE THREE MEN (CONT'D)

"And lead us not into temptation..."

Emily joins in with a SNARL -- her lips seeming to peel back unnaturally far:

EMILY

"But deliver us from eeee-villlll..."

Cartwright flinches from her, in fear...

FATHER MOORE

Who are you, demon?! Tell me your name!

Now the LIGHTS GO OUT. Cartwright notices MOVEMENT in the dimness, near the OPEN DOOR -- a series of SHADOWY SHAPES coursing liquidly across the floor...

CARTWRIGHT

Father...there's something...

EMILY

(IN LATIN, subtitled)

I am the one who dwells within...

FATHER MOORE

(IN LATIN, subtitled)

In the Name of Christ, IDENTIFY YOURSELF!

EMILY

One, two, three, four, five, SIX! One,
two, three, four, five, SIX! Trick or
treat? I give you treats and tricks!
One, two, three, four, five, SIX!

Now Samuel and Jason also turn toward the doorway, and see...

SIX CATS

gathered in a semicircle at the foot of the bed, faces upturned, eyes shining in the darkness.

JASON

Father -- the cats...!

And as Father Moore turns, the CATS LEAP UPON HIM, CLAWING and BITING, HISSING and SHRIEKING. He falls to the floor.

In the distraction, Emily LUNGES from the bed with inhuman speed and agility, and...

SHE LEAPS THROUGH THE BEDROOM WINDOW

and is GONE in an EXPLOSION of SHATTERING GLASS.

83 INT. FARMHOUSE -- LIVING ROOM -- SAME

83

Maria and the girls stare out the window in shock, watching Emily RUSH through the WIND and RAIN toward the BARN.

A heartbeat later, Samuel comes thumping down the stairs and hurries out the door...

ALICE

(jumps up)

PAPA!

While the other two girls and Maria just stand there, as if paralyzed, Alice RUNS after her father.

84 EXT. FARMHOUSE -- RAIN -- NIGHT

84

*

As Alice emerges from the farmhouse, she sees Emily disappear into the BARN. Samuel is chasing her.

SAMUEL

EMILY -- WAIT...!

Now Father Moore bursts from the house, Jason and Cartwright close behind him.

Jason snatches a LIT KEROSENE LANTERN from a hook beside the doorway, and they all race toward the barn.

85 INT. BARN -- NIGHT

85

When Father Moore SWINGS OPEN the doors at the south end of the barn, he sees Samuel struggling to hold Emily, who is fighting her way toward THE WATER TROUGH that's used for the animals.

*

She's GRUNTING and GROWLING, like a beast in a fight for its life.

SAMUEL

Stop, Emily -- no!

(turns to the others)

She feels so hot, Father -- she's burning up...!

Samuel tries to hold his daughter back, but she's too strong -- reaching the trough, she PLUNGES her head into it.

STEAM RISES from the ICY WATER at the touch of her flesh.

Jason hangs the LANTERN, and rushes to help Samuel. *

Together they pull her from the water trough -- GASPING, her FACE BRIGHT RED...

FATHER MOORE

Hold her down -- there, on the straw!

Samuel and Jason manage to pin Emily down, just as Alice and Cartwright reach the entrance to the barn.

ALICE

(RUSHES FORWARD)

Emily...!

A SOUND

from Emily FREEZES Alice in her tracks: It's a lupine HOWL and the SHRIEK of an ape and the feline SCREECH of a panther -- it's all, and none of these...

It's a primordial, marrow-chilling, inhuman sound.

Horried, Jason and Samuel back away from Emily...

The HORSES -- both the powerful black STALLION and the old russet MARE, begin to STAMP and WHINNY in their stalls...

Cartwright hunches over, covering his ears at the sound...

Alice now backs slowly away, TEARS sliding down her cheeks -- and then she turns and RUNS back toward the farmhouse.

FATHER MOORE

Doctor! I need you, here!

Snapping out of it, Cartwright hurries over to Emily -- who now STOPS HOWLING, and offers him a girlish smile.

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

Watch her vital signs, as we proceed.

Cartwright nods, staring at Emily, fighting panic...

Hands trembling slightly, Father Moore opens his BIBLE to a book-marked page.

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God..."

Emily throws her head back unnaturally far, and MUTTERS:

EMILY

...And the Word was the Word what a wonderful Word it was...

FATHER MOORE

"Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made..."

*

THE DOORS

at the north end of the barn were still closed -- but now they SWING OPEN as a GUST OF WIND WHIPS through the barn...

EMILY

(as the WIND hits her -- a sexual purr:)

Ooohhhmmmmmm...

A SPASM rips through her body -- and in that instant, it's as if ten pounds are SUCKED from her already underweight frame. Her face grows gaunt, her cheeks sink in. She looks' skull-faced and hollow-eyed, like when Jason saw her in the hospital.

Father Moore turns to ANOTHER BIBLE PASSAGE, and reads:

FATHER MOORE

"And the seventy disciples returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name..."

Emily's breathing is quick and shallow. Cartwright takes out a STETHOSCOPE, checks her heartbeat:

*

CARTWRIGHT

Her heart is racing -- one-eighty...one-ninety...two hundred beats a minute...

FATHER MOORE

(reads from Bible)

"And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven --"

CRASH! LIGHTNING STRIKES outside, STROBING the interior of the barn. WIND and RAIN rush in through the open barn doors, SWINGING the lantern and making it cast CRAZY SHADOWS... *

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

(reads from Bible)

"Behold, I...I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and...and over all the power of the enemy...and nothing shall by any means hurt you..."

Emily SITS UP, SNAPPING her head toward the priest -- and for an instant, she bares what seem to be TINY, RAT-LIKE TEETH:

EMILY

(IN GREEK, subtitled; a HISS:)

Nothing...?

CRA-CRA-CRA~~SH~~!!! A SERIES OF LIGHTNING-STRIKES illuminate the barn in metallic black-and-white -- and the men see...

INSECTS AND SNAKES

pouring forth from every nook and cranny and hole -- ANTS tracing endless lines across the beams, SPIDERS scuttling across the dirt floor, SERPENTS coiling through the rafters...

ONE SNAKE FALLS onto Father Moore's shoulder -- as he SPINS, flinging it off, A GUST OF WIND strikes him in the face...

EMILY (CONT'D)

(MOANS again as the WIND hits her)

Ooohmmmmmm...

EMILY'S FLESH seems to RIPPLE from her feet to her head, as if a WAVE of some kind is passing through her body.

Father Moore takes the CRUCIFIX from around his neck and lays it on her CHEST. Emily SHRIEKS -- twisting and bucking -- but it sticks to her as if it's glued to her skin... *

Then she YANKS the crucifix from her chest with one hand, and flailing with the other hand, finds CARTWRIGHT: She GRABS him by the throat, SQUEEZING TIGHT. He GASPS, clutching at his throat, and Samuel rushes toward him to help...

*
*
*

FATHER MOORE

Release him, Demon! I command you in the
name of Our Lord Jesus Christ --

SNARLING, Emily RELEASES CARTWRIGHT. He falls to the ground,
GASPING for air, and...

EMILY RISES

to a STANDING POSITION as if lifted by an unseen force.

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

Tell me your name, wicked one!

EMILY

(in LATIN, subtitled)

One, two, three, four, five, SIX!

FATHER MOORE

(reads from Ritual book)

"He who commands you is he who ordered
you thrown down from the highest Heaven
into the depths of Hell..."

(looks up at Emily)

In the name of Christ our Lord, I now
command you -- tell me your name!

EMILY

(IN HEBREW, subtitled)

One, two, three, four, five, SIX!

FATHER MOORE

(reads)

"Hear, therefore, and fear, Satan! Enemy
of the Faith!"

(looks at Emily)

Give me your name, Demon!

EMILY

(SHAKING HER HANDS impossibly fast)

NAMESSSSSS! NAMESSSSSS!

(IN ARAMAIC, subtitled)

One, two, three, four, five, SSSSSIX!

Father Moore pauses, now realizing the significance of the
number six. Hands trembling, he looks back down at the Roman
Ritual and continues to read:

FATHER MOORE

"ANCIENT SERPENTS! DEPART FROM THIS
SERVANT OF GOD!"

(looks back at Emily)

TELL ME YOUR SIX NAMES!

THE VOICES

that now emerge from Emily are both a HIGH SHRIEK and a BASSO RUMBLE -- like TWO OVERLAPPING VOICES speaking at the same time. They resonate like an explosion, SHAKING the building's foundation:

EMILY/THE VOICES
WE ARE THE ONES WHO DWELL WITHIN...!!!

And now SIX DIFFERENT VOICES speak, never more than two at a time, with each voice overlapping the next -- all subtitled:

EMILY/THE VOICES (CONT'D)
 (in HEBREW) (in LATIN)
 I am the one who I am the one who
 dwelt within CAIN! dwelt within NERO!
 (in GREEK) (in GERMAN)
 I once dwelt within And I within
 JUDAS! HITLER!
 (in ARAMAIC)
 I am BELIAL!

And now, as another LIGHTNING FLASH strobes the barn, EMILY IS GONE -- replaced by the BLACK-ROBED FIGURE, who is FACING AWAY from Father Moore. *

ALL SOUND BECOMES MUTED as IN SLOW MOTION, THE FIGURE TURNS AROUND to face Father Moore: *

EMILY
 (a terrifying WHISPER:)
 And I am LUCIFER, the Devil in FLESH...! *

ANOTHER LIGHTNING FLASH -- and now the Figure is EMILY AGAIN. She SCREAMS -- a BANSHEE WAIL and a DEEP, MASCULINE GROWL -- again, the tone sounding in TWO REGISTERS AT ONCE... *

THE BLACK STALLION

KICKS THE DOOR OFF ITS STALL and LEAPS into the center of the barn as the UNCANNY SCREAM continues.

The stallion WHIRLS ABOUT in agitation... *

Then it REARS UP, its EYES ROLLING WHITE -- as if balking at a rattlesnake. Samuel LUNGES toward the horse, SHOUTING its name -- *

And it KICKS HIM IN THE CHEST, sends him FLYING across the barn.

Then it TAKES OFF INTO THE NIGHT, the MARE also BURSTING her stall door and following.

The two horses VANISH into the RAIN.

Emily STOPS SCREAMING, and releases Father Moore. Both she and the priest fall backwards to the ground.

Jason hurries to Samuel's side: The man is apoplectic, his VEINS popping, pawing at his chest.

JASON

He's not breathing!

FATHER MOORE

Doctor! Help him!

But Cartwright -- though no longer choking -- is useless: He crouches in a corner, CRYING, in shock.

Father Moore glances at Emily: She looks peaceful, lying back on her bed of straw, her breathing deep and regular. Weakly, Father Moore drags himself toward Samuel...

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

(to Jason)

Go. See to Emily.

Jason goes to Emily and cradles her in his arms. Father Moore tries to find Samuel's pulse. Nothing. He leans over Samuel and begins performing CPR.

FATHER MOORE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

After a few moments, I revived Mr. Rose -- but the exorcism had to be abandoned...

86 INT. THE COURTROOM -- DAY

86

Father Moore CLICKS OFF the TAPE RECORDER and continues:

FATHER MOORE

Emily was taken back to her room, and soon fell into a deep sleep... It was a complete failure.

*
*

ERIN

Describe her behavior from the night of the failed exorcism until the time of her death.

FATHER MOORE

Violence toward others, and herself...
Sometimes, she would scream for hours...
She drove her head through windows, and
tried to bite holes in the walls,
breaking several more of her teeth -- as
you saw in the post-mortem photograph...

*
*
*
*
*

ERIN

You witnessed this?

FATHER MOORE

Some of it. I visited once a day, at
least, and her family told me the rest.

ERIN

Did you attempt another exorcism?

FATHER MOORE

I wanted to, but Emily refused -- and
without the consent of the possessed, the
exorcism ritual cannot be performed.

ERIN

Did you encourage her to eat?

FATHER MOORE

Every time I saw her -- but the few times
she tried, it seemed like she couldn't
swallow, or she couldn't keep it down.

ERIN

What about her medical care?

FATHER MOORE

I told her to continue it. I never
suggested that she should quit seeing the
doctors. That would be wrong -- medical
care is not my field.

ERIN

But you did suggest that she stop taking
the drug, Tegretol...

FATHER MOORE

Yes. After the exorcism, she asked for my
counsel. She said that the drug had not
helped her -- after all, she was on
Tegretol during her exorcism, when her so-
called "symptoms" were at their peak...
Ultimately, we both felt that her condition
was beyond medical care -- that she must
see this through to the end by faith alone.

Erin nods, and lets that sink in a moment -- then:

ERIN

The "dual voices" we heard on this tape -- you're certain that they were both coming from Emily, at the same time?

FATHER MOORE

Yes. I heard them.

ERIN

Have you tampered with this tape in any way?

FATHER MOORE

No. I have not.

ERIN

No further questions at this time.

As she returns to her seat, Erin glances at her watch, then looks toward the courtroom doors with concern...

Owen rises and approaches Father Moore like a shark closing in on its prey.

OWEN THOMAS

Father Moore, do you consider this tape to be proof of the supernatural?

FATHER MOORE

I think it is a record of certain indications that Emily was possessed -- "signs of possession," they're called.

OWEN THOMAS

By "signs of possession," would you mean her speaking in languages we might presume she could not know -- and the vocalization of two distinct voices simultaneously?

FATHER MOORE

Yes. Along with the other signs that I observed, and described to the court as the tape played. Things I saw, things that you can't really hear on the tape...

OWEN THOMAS

But we'll just have to take you at your word on those, won't we...?

JUDGE BREWSTER

Mr. Thomas...

The Judge shoots Owen a warning look. He bows slightly, chastened.

OWEN THOMAS

I apologize. *

(beat) *

Father Moore, as Emily's parish priest,
are you aware that she underwent advanced
Catholic catechism training? *

FATHER MOORE

Yes. Her family is very devout.

OWEN THOMAS

And in that catechism training, did she
study Ancient Greek, Hebrew, and Latin? *

FATHER MOORE

Yes...I think that's right.

OWEN THOMAS

And she might have even spent some time
studying Aramaic -- the language of
Christ and his disciples -- which we also
heard on the audiotape. Correct?

FATHER MOORE

She spoke Aramaic on the tape, but I don't
think that language was part of her training --

OWEN THOMAS

--But it was offered as an elective at
her catechism school.

(gestures toward the
prosecution table)

I have the school's curriculum, if you'd
like to see it...

FATHER MOORE

I'll accept that she might have been
exposed to that language.

OWEN THOMAS

And according to her transcript, German
was the foreign language she studied
during high school -- yes? *

FATHER MOORE

I don't know...if you say so... *

OWEN THOMAS

So that pretty much covers all of the
"strange languages" we heard -- correct?
Did I miss any...? *

FATHER MOORE

No.

OWEN THOMAS

Good. Now, Father Moore, we've established that you're no medical expert -- as you said, that's "not your field" -- but, are you aware of the dual sets of vocal cords that every human possesses?

FATHER MOORE

(frowns)

No...

OWEN THOMAS

(quickly pressing on)

Have you heard of the "superior vocal cords," which are a bit higher than the "primary" ones we use to speak?

FATHER MOORE

No.

OWEN THOMAS

So you didn't know that Tibetan monks -- as part of their religious training -- actually teach themselves to activate both sets of vocal cords at once...?

MURMURS ripple through the courtroom. The Jurors exchange looks of astonishment.

FATHER MOORE

No.

OWEN THOMAS

Well, now that you do know...would you think it's possible that Emily, in her psychotic state, might have activated both of her sets of vocal cords, so as to achieve the amazing effect we heard captured on your audiotape?

FATHER MOORE

Her "state" was not psychotic.

OWEN THOMAS

Father Moore, you told us that during the exorcism we just heard, you actually saw, once again, this "black-robed figure" or "demonic apparition," am I right?

FATHER MOORE

Yes.

OWEN THOMAS

But of course, we couldn't see him, when
you played the tape -- correct?

FATHER MOORE

Of course not, no.

OWEN THOMAS

So that would be one more "supernatural"
aspect of the exorcism that your tape
doesn't prove -- correct...?

FATHER MOORE

(after a moment)

Yes.

OWEN THOMAS

(nods solemnly, then:)

Do you see him now? Here, in court?

FATHER MOORE

(reddening)

...What?

Owen spreads his arms wide -- just as Emily did during the
exorcism, before she changed into the Black-Robed Figure.

OWEN THOMAS

Do I look like this "demon-ghost"...?

FATHER MOORE

No!

ERIN

(stands up again)

Your Honor!

OWEN THOMAS

(holds up a hand)

Just making sure -- I have nothing further.

The courtroom is ABUZZ... The Judge sighs wearily.

JUDGE BREWSTER

Does the defense wish to redirect?

ERIN

No, Your Honor, but we reserve the right
to recall the witness at a later time.

JUDGE BREWSTER

Very well. The witness may step down.

As Father Moore leaves the stand, the COURTROOM DOORS OPEN, and Ray enters. He looks grim as he hurries down the aisle.

Erin stares at him quizzically, and Ray shakes his head.

ERIN

One moment, Your Honor...

She meets Ray at the defense table. He WHISPERS in her ear.

Erin's expression falls. Slowly, she turns to face the Judge.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Your Honor, my next witness must have been detained. If we could have a short recess, so I can attempt to find out what --

JUDGE BREWSTER

--You've made this Court wait before, Counselor. I'm inclined to continue.

ERIN

Your Honor, please. Dr. Cartwright came to us, in good conscience, as an eyewitness to the exorcism recorded on Father Moore's audiotape. He can corroborate all of my client's testimony.

OWEN THOMAS

Your Honor, the defense has already presented the exorcism testimony in dramatic fashion. Must we delay merely in order to revisit --

JUDGE BREWSTER

(stops Owen with a raised hand)
We have absorbed some extraordinary testimony today... I think we'll take some time to consider it. This court is adjourned until 9:30 tomorrow.

87 INT. COURTHOUSE LOBBY -- MOMENTS LATER

87

Livid, Erin squares off with Ray.

ERIN

What do you mean, you can't find him?!

RAY

I went to meet him, and he didn't show! I called his office, I called his house...

Shrinking inside, Erin takes a deep breath, and nods.

ERIN

Okay. Go to the hospital and ask around
-- somebody's got to know where he is.

88 EXT. COURTHOUSE -- LATE AFTERNOON

88

The light's already fading. Erin emerges from a side exit, avoiding the REPORTERS camped out near the courthouse steps. As she quickly walks toward her car, she sees...

DR. CARTWRIGHT

emerge from his car, parked near the street. He glances furtively about as Erin stalks toward him angrily:

ERIN

What the hell happened...?!

Cartwright is even more pale and jittery than usual. He looks like he's been awake and drinking for days. As he answers her, his gaze darts past Erin, probing the gathering dusk...

CARTWRIGHT

Tell Father Moore I'm sorry... Tell him that I know the demons are real, and I admire his courage for standing, and speaking, against them...

He leans closer to Erin, and now she suddenly shares his fear -- his eyes are fervid, his voice almost a whisper:

CARTWRIGHT (CONT'D)

Tell him...I know what they can do.

He casts another frightened glance past Erin's shoulder -- and this time, his eyes widen with fear as he sees...

THE TALL BLACK-ROBED FIGURE

standing among rustling TREES at the edge of the parking lot. Terrified, Cartwright starts to back away toward the street...

Erin turns, following his gaze -- but the Figure steps quickly back into the shadows, and is GONE: Erin sees only the trees, shifting in the wind. *

Now SCREECHING TIRES make Erin spin back around, and she sees... *

A LARGE PICKUP TRUCK *

as it HITS CARTWRIGHT with a SICKENING CRUNCH. *

FLIPPING over the hood, Cartwright SMASHES through the windshield as the truck SKIDS SIDEWAYS to a STOP.

*
*

Erin SCREAMS with horror and revulsion as she sees...

*

CARTWRIGHT

his NECK BROKEN, his head twisted around to stare right back at her with wide, dead eyes...

*

*

CUT TO:

89 A TREMBLING HAND

89

pouring Johnny Walker Black into a Snoopy coffee mug...

INT. LAW FIRM -- ERIN'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Standing behind her desk, Erin knocks back the Scotch. Karl walks in, holding a rolled-up NEWSPAPER.

ERIN

Cartwright is dead.

KARL

I heard. Are you drunk?

ERIN

(refilling her Snoopy mug)
Not yet, but I'm working on it.

KARL

(angry)
Have you seen this?

He SLAPS the paper down in front of her. The headline reads:

FATHER MOORE SMELLED THE DEVIL
Describes Embrace by Demonic "Ghost"

KARL (CONT'D)

What the fuck were you thinking?!

ERIN

Karl --

KARL

--You told me you'd talk him out of testifying. Instead, you put on a freak show with tape-recorded demons and a dead girl speaking in tongues -- and your client testifies that the Archbishop sanctioned the exorcism??? We'll be lucky if the Archdiocese isn't named in additional charges!

ERIN

I had a doctor who was going to corroborate! Besides that, Father Moore's testimony was crucial to his defense!

KARL

Have you forgotten that the Archdiocese is paying for this defense?

ERIN

The Archdiocese isn't on trial! I swore an oath to do what's best for my client!

KARL

Spare me the law school pieties, Bruner. You know we both cashed in our conscience a long time ago.

ERIN

(stung)
...People can change.

KARL

Yeah, right -- like James Van Hopper?

That cut deep. Erin fights to hold herself together.

ERIN

It's not over. I'll put Samuel Rose on the stand to corroborate Father Moore about the exorcism -- or, or Jason, the boyfriend... And the girls -- her sister, Alice, she saw part of it...

KARL

They've already been portrayed as superstitious rubes -- they've got no credibility. Owen Thomas will rip 'em to pieces, and you'll end up worse off than you are now...if that's possible.

ERIN

Are you going to replace me on the case?

KARL

Why should I? You've already fucked it up beyond all repair, and the Archdiocese feels that replacing you would just draw more unnecessary attention to the trial.

(steps closer to her)

But just so we're clear, Bruner: If you put that priest on the stand again, I will fire your ass.

He walks out. Slowly, Erin sits down. Absently, she DROPS the Snoopy mug, and Scotch spills out onto the floor...

Then her head tips to the desk, and she breaks down and WEEPS like a little girl.

90 INT. FATHER MOORE'S JAIL CELL -- NIGHT

90

The Guard lets Erin into the cell. Looking miserable, Erin takes a seat and stares at Father Moore with bloodshot eyes.

FATHER MOORE
You've been crying...

ERIN
Dr. Cartwright is dead.

FATHER MOORE
What...?

ERIN
He was killed. An accident...I'm sorry.
I know he was your friend.

Father Moore nods slowly, distant...

ERIN (CONT'D)
We've lost. Without his testimony, it's over.

FATHER MOORE
(refocusing on her)
We're telling Emily's story. That's what matters.

ERIN
(emotional)
It can't be worth all of this.

FATHER MOORE
It is worth it. Put me back on the stand to tell the rest -- and then you'll know.

ERIN
(weary exasperation)
I can't do that, Father.

FATHER MOORE
You must.

Erin just shakes her head, stares at the floor. After a moment, Father Moore removes a YELLOW ENVELOPE from his Bible.

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

You said you felt like you were on the right path, Erin...

(holds out the envelope)

Don't stray from it now.

ERIN

(taking it)

What is this?

FATHER MOORE

Just read it. Then decide what you want to do... And who you want to be.

91 INT. ERIN'S APARTMENT -- LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

91

Dressed in her nightshirt, Erin sits on the couch, sipping a glass of wine. She's staring down at...

THE YELLOW ENVELOPE

that Father Moore gave to her, which rests on the coffee table.

Erin looks like she's afraid to see what's inside. Finally, she picks up the envelope and opens it, revealing a LETTER.

Erin unfolds the handwritten letter and begins to read, still sipping her wine.

Quickly, she becomes absorbed in the letter and sits forward, reading intently, setting her drink aside...

92 EXT. COURTHOUSE -- MORNING

92

Erin and Ray make their way up the courthouse steps, ignoring the SHOUTED QUESTIONS of REPORTERS.

93 INT. COURTHOUSE LOBBY -- SAME

93

As they approach the courtroom, Erin stops:

ERIN

Go ahead, I'll meet you inside.

Ray continues on into the courtroom, and Erin steps into...

94 INT. THE LADIES' REST ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

94

She stands before the mirror, nervously adjusting her outfit, checking her appearance...

Then she stops, and stares at herself more intently. Unlike the moment in the Sidebar rest room, when she avoided her own mirror-image, Erin now confronts herself with a steady gaze, the way she would take the measure of a witness on the stand.

Then, as if remembering something, she reaches into her pocket, and takes out the "E.C.B." LOCKET that she found on the sidewalk.

Erin looks at it for a moment -- then PUTS IT ON, clasping the chain around her neck.

She stares thoughtfully at her reflection, touching the locket, running her fingertips across the engraved initials...

CUT TO:

95 THE YELLOW ENVELOPE

95

that Father Moore gave to Erin, resting on a table...

INT. THE COURTROOM -- MORNING

Erin stares at the envelope on the defense table in front of her, absently fingering the locket at her throat -- then she looks back over her shoulder, and sees...

KARL

sitting in the back of the courtroom, eyeballing her: A warning.

JUDGE BREWSTER

Is the defense ready to proceed?

Erin turns away from Karl, then looks up at the judge. After a moment, she takes a deep breath, and STANDS.

ERIN

Yes, Your Honor. The defense recalls
Father Richard Moore.

Erin hands Father Moore the yellow envelope. The priest gives her a subtle, almost imperceptible nod, then rises and makes his way to the witness stand.

Erin doesn't turn to see Karl staring daggers at her before he rises and EXITS -- but she hears the big courtroom door close behind him, the sound of the door closing on her career.

JUDGE BREWSTER

The witness is reminded that he is still
under oath.

FATHER MOORE
(on the stand now)
Yes, Your Honor.

ERIN
Father Moore, when did you last see Emily
alive?

FATHER MOORE
The night before she died. Her mother,
Maria, called, saying that Emily was
asking for me.

ERIN
Why did Emily ask to see you?

FATHER MOORE
She wanted to give me this.

Father Moore sets the ENVELOPE on the stand in front of him.
Erin picks it up, and holds it for the court to see:

ERIN
I offer this letter into evidence as
Defense Exhibit Three.

OWEN THOMAS
Objection -- once again, Counsel has failed
to inform the People of this evidence.

ERIN
Your Honor, I apologize, but this
evidence only came to light in the last
twelve hours, and it is crucial to our
case. We ask for another exception.

JUDGE BREWSTER
Do you plan to offer any more evidentiary
surprises, Counselor Bruner...?

ERIN
No, Your Honor.

JUDGE BREWSTER
Very well. The Court enters the letter
into evidence. You may proceed.

ERIN
(to Father Moore)
Did Emily explain to you the letter's
significance?

FATHER MOORE

She said she had written it on Halloween night, after the failed exorcism, and that it would be important for me to share.

ERIN

(nods; then, after a moment:)

Do you believe Emily was a good person?

FATHER MOORE

I believe she will one day be recognized as a saint.

*

ERIN

So...she loved God?

FATHER MOORE

Yes. She was very devout.

ERIN

Father Moore, if Emily loved God, if she was so good and so devout, then why do you think God allowed this to happen to her?

*
*

OWEN THOMAS

(SPRINGS UP from his chair)
Objection! What can possibly be the relevance of that question? Surely, this is sheer speculation...

*
*

JUDGE BREWSTER

(looks at Erin)
Counselor?

ERIN

Your Honor, Father Moore's belief in this matter is crucial in establishing his and Emily's understanding of her condition. And their mutual understanding of her condition is paramount in determining whether Father Moore was, in fact, negligent.

*

JUDGE BREWSTER

I'm going to allow it.

OWEN THOMAS

Your Honor! Are you really going to allow someone to testify in a court of law about why God would allow the death of a young girl...?!

JUDGE BREWSTER

His state of mind is critical. The objection has been overruled.

*
*

ERIN

Again, Father Moore: Why would God allow Emily to become possessed by demons, and then die...?

FATHER MOORE

I can let Emily answer that question.

Father Moore takes the envelope. His hands tremble as he opens it -- this is very emotional for him. He removes the letter, unfolds it, and begins to read:

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

"Last night, on All Hallow's Eve, Father Moore tried to cast six demons from my body. They refused to go.

(MORE)

FATHER MOORE (CONT'D)

After the attempted exorcism, I was taken
to my room, and fell into a deep sleep..."

*
*

96 INT. FARMHOUSE -- EMILY'S BEDROOM -- PREDAWN

96 *

She AWAKENS, and sits up -- looking pale and weak...

EMILY (V.O.)

I awoke a few hours later, hearing a
voice calling out my name...

Now she turns toward the WINDOW: The curtains are open, and
she sees FOG rolling slowly past the window glass...

97 EXT. FARMHOUSE -- PREDAWN

97 *

The BACK DOOR swings open and Emily STAGGERS quickly out of
the house, disappearing into the FOG.

98 EXT. OPEN FIELD -- DENSE FOG -- PREDAWN

98 *

The field is empty, save for the SWIRLING MIST.

Then Emily stumbles into view -- GASPING, hollow-eyed, bathed
in sweat. She looks like she's about to die.

She COLLAPSES to the ground and lies motionless. Is she dead...?

ANGLE ON HER BODY

as OUR POV RISES to standing height: We're staring down at
Emily's body as it begins to WRITHE on the wet grass.

RIPPLES pass through her flesh, like one did during the
exorcism -- but now it happens over and over again...

And now a WIDER SHOT reveals...

EMILY STANDING NEXT TO HER OWN BODY

which sprawls on the ground at her feet. She's staring down at it.

As she stands there in this SPIRIT-FORM, she is slightly
LUMINESCENT, and completely restored to her former self:
Healthy, beautiful, uninjured, without pain.

A SILVER CORD

her LIFELINE -- also semitransparent and slightly LUMINOUS, like
the tentacle of a jellyfish -- CONNECTS the Spirit-Form of Emily
to her Human Form, which is writhing on the ground.

EMILY (V.O.)

Again, I heard a voice, calling my name.
I followed it across the field...

Emily begins walking away from her suffering Human Form. As she does, the SILVER CORD that connects her to it STRETCHES, becoming thinner and thinner...

99 INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

99

Father Moore continues reading the letter:

FATHER MOORE

"It was the Blessed Holy Mother of God -- and when I looked at her, she smiled at me, and said: 'Emily, Heaven is not blind to your pain.'"

ERIN

She says the Virgin Mary spoke to her in the middle of a wheat field...?

FATHER MOORE

Yes.

ERIN

And do you believe her?

OWEN THOMAS

Objection -- the witness wasn't there, who cares what he believes...?

JUDGE BREWSTER

Overruled. The witness may answer.

Owen leans back and throws up his hands, like "I give up" -- a sane man alone in the madhouse.

FATHER MOORE

(quietly earnest)

I believe Emily told the truth.

ERIN

(nods)

Please continue.

FATHER MOORE

(reads from the letter)

"I asked the Blessed Mother: 'Why do I suffer like this?'"

100 EXT. OPEN FIELD -- PREDAWN

100 *

CLOSE ON EMILY staring up at something we can't see -- her face bathed in MOONLIGHT, tears shining in her eyes.

EMILY

...Why did the demons not leave me tonight?

A WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

(sadly)

I am sorry, Emily. The demons are going to stay where they are.

A SCREAM slices the night, and Emily looks back to see...

HER HUMAN FORM

tortured by RIPPLING SPASMS -- teeth clenched, GROWLING like an animal, WRITHING in desperate pain...

A WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I can cut the cord now, and you can come with me in peace, freed of your bodily form -- and leave the demons behind...

Emily looks down at the SILVER CORD that's attached to her: It VIBRATES slightly, like a taut string. A skin-like membrane, it's stretched so thin she can see right through it.

Now she looks up again, and sees...

A DOVE

FLYING toward her out of the mist in ULTRA SLOW-MOTION, with a TREMENDOUS SOUND of WINGS beating the air...

This time, the VOICE is MASCULINE -- deep and resonant:

VOICE (O.S.)

Or you can choose to continue this, and you will know the true agony of my Son -- you will share in his suffering, as only the Holy Saints have done...

The DOVE DISAPPEARS in a SHAFT OF LIGHT that STRIKES EMILY in the face. Closing her eyes, she STAGGERS BACK...

When she opens her eyes again, she sees...

A HUGE FULL MOON

in the sky directly above her: CLOUDS race across its surface at HYPER-SPEED, like a time-lapse film...

The VOICE is now TWO VOICES -- one male, one female -- speaking at once:

VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 You will suffer greatly -- but your
 suffering will not be without purpose.
 Through you, many will come to see that
 the realm of the spirit is real...

CLOSE ON EMILY, staring upwards, as the VOICE-OVER continues:

VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 ...The choice is yours.

Emily hesitates...then closes her eyes again, and NODS.

EMILY
 For the glory of God...I choose to stay.

With a HISSING SOUND, the SILVER CORD SUDDENLY RECOILS, DRAGGING Emily backwards across the grass, toward her HUMAN FORM...

AND SHE AWAKENS

as if from a dream -- lying on her back, alone in the middle of the field. Slowly, she stands up, WINCING as her feet touch the ground, and she sees 'the BLOODY WOUNDS of the STIGMATA on her feet and hands.

A VOICE penetrates the fog, calling to her:

ALICE (O.S.)
 EMILY...!

Emily turns toward the voice, and takes a halting step.

HER POV: TWO HORSES slowly emerge wraith-like from the FOG -- Samuel and Alice, Emily's youngest sister, are riding side-by-side.

Seeing her, Alice spurs her horse ahead, calling out again:

ALICE (CONT'D)
 Emily! PAPA, OVER HERE!

Emily's expression is radiant, beatific -- like a saint portrayed in a moment of religious ecstasy...

FATHER MOORE (V.O.)
 (reading the letter)
 "I heard hoofbeats, and again, my
 sister's voice -- and soon, I was in my
 father's arms..."

Alice dismounts and RUNS to Emily, with Samuel close behind her. Now they see Emily's BLOODY PALMS -- and notice that the SOLES OF HER FEET also drip BLOOD onto the wet grass.

WE RISE INTO AN OVERHEAD VIEW as Samuel falls to his knees before Emily, and lifts her sprawling form.

It's like an inverse Pietá, as the father cradles the limp, stigmatic form of his daughter in his arms...

FATHER MOORE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(reading)

"In the end, good will triumph over evil..."

We RISE FROM THIS IMAGE until it VANISHES INTO THE FOG...

101 INT. THE COURTROOM -- DAY

101

Father Moore finishes reading the letter:

FATHER MOORE

"Through my experience, the reality of the demonic will be exposed. People say that God is dead -- but how can they think that if I show them the Devil?"

The entire courtroom is silent. Father Moore puts the letter in the yellow envelope and places it on the witness stand.

ERIN

Father Moore, did you see these wounds on both of Emily's hands, and both feet?

FATHER MOORE

Yes. The wounds remained for some time.

ERIN

And did you attach any supernatural significance to these wounds...?

FATHER MOORE

I believe that they were stigmata.

ERIN

By that, you mean supernatural injuries that correspond to the crucifixion wounds of Jesus Christ...?

FATHER MOORE

Yes. The stigmata are a sign -- a mark indicating one who is touched by God.

Pause, as Erin lets that comment sink in...then:

ERIN

After that night, why did Emily refuse another exorcism?

FATHER MOORE

I believe she had accepted her fate.

ERIN

Father Moore, is there anything else you want to say about Emily...?

FATHER MOORE

No. There is nothing else to tell.

ERIN

(after a moment)

The defense rests.

102 INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

102

Owen stands before the jury as he delivers his closing statement:

OWEN THOMAS

Father Moore attaches divine significance to the wounds on Emily's hands and feet, because he sees this as confirmation of what he wants to believe: That Emily was a saint, touched by the hand of God... But, I'm afraid the truth is far less inspiring. The truth is, by the time these wounds "miraculously" appeared, Emily had already shown a tendency to injure herself. And in an effort to perpetuate the attention she'd been receiving, she made these wounds herself -- on one of the barbed-wire fences that surround the Rose family farm...

FLASHCUT:

103 EXT. OPEN FIELD -- PREDAWN

103 *

Barefoot in her nightgown, alone in the foggy night, Emily GRASPS and STEPS UP onto a BARBED-WIRE FENCE, wincing in pain...

104 INT. BACK IN THE COURTROOM -- DAY

104

OWEN THOMAS

Father Moore's beliefs are based on nothing but archaic and irrational superstition. Emily suffered because she was sick -- not because she was a saint.

Now he approaches the podium as he continues...

OWEN THOMAS (CONT'D)

I am a man of faith, but I am also a man of facts. Faith is for church. But in here, facts are what matter...and these are the facts of this case: Emily Rose had epilepsy, which caused psychosis -- and given time, medicine would have cured her. But it didn't. Why? Because Father Richard Moore convinced Emily that she wasn't ill, that she didn't need medicine, and in the weeks before her death -- when she was clearly in need of emergency medical treatment -- he failed to have her hospitalized.

From a folder on the podium, he takes out the GRUESOME POST-MORTEM PHOTO OF EMILY that he showed the jurors at the beginning of the trial. He TAPES IT TO THE PODIUM, and stares at it, and all the jurors stare at it with him...

OWEN THOMAS (CONT'D)

The defense gave us an extraordinary, creative explanation for the events that led to this...

(he indicates the PHOTO)

...the tragic death of Emily Rose. Don't you believe it! Because the fact is, it wasn't the Devil that did this to Emily...

(now he points at Father Moore)

...it was the defendant.

And then he walks away -- back to the prosecution table -- leaving the PHOTO taped to the podium.

There's a pause, as the jury and spectators gradually shift their attention to Erin -- who remains seated at the defense table.

JUDGE BREWSTER

Counselor...?

ERIN

(still seated)

Owen Thomas calls himself a "man of faith."
I, on the other hand, am a woman of doubt.

Now she stands up, and walks slowly to the podium...

*

ERIN (CONT'D)

Angels and demons, God and the
Devil...these things either exist, or
they do not exist. Are we all alone in
this life, or are we are not alone?
Either thought is astonishing.

*
*
*
*
*
*

She stares at the post-mortem photo of Emily -- left there,
taped to the podium, like a challenge, or an affront -- and
the jury waits for her to take it down...

*
*

But she doesn't. Still staring at the photo, she continues:

*

ERIN (CONT'D)

Do I really believe that this tragedy was the work of the Devil...? To be honest...I don't know.

(turns toward the jury)

But I cannot deny that it's possible.

(moves toward the jury box)

The prosecution wants you to believe that Emily's "epileptic psychosis" was a fact, because facts leave no room for reasonable doubt. But this trial is not about facts. It is about possibilities.

Erin walks along in front of the jurors...

ERIN (CONT'D)

(growing more passionate)

Is it a fact that Emily was a hypersensitive, as Dr. Adani suggests -- a person more likely, by her very nature, to become possessed? I can't say that -- but the question is, is it possible? Is it a fact that Tegretol anesthetized Emily's brain so that the exorcism ritual was rendered ineffective? I can't be sure of that -- but is it possible? Is it a fact that Emily was beloved of God, and that after her exorcism, she chose to suffer to the end so that we might believe in a more magical world -- a world where the spiritual realm really exists? I can't say that's a fact...but again, ask yourself, is it possible...?

(beat)

It's what Emily believed. It's what Father Moore believed. And that sincere belief is what determined her choices...and his. They did what they believed was right.

Now she walks back toward the podium, and indicates the GRIM PHOTOGRAPH of Emily.

ERIN (CONT'D)

And now, the most important question: Is it a fact that Father Moore is guilty -- beyond a reasonable doubt -- of negligent homicide? Did he, in fact, neglect Emily's needs in such a way that her death is now on his hands...? NO! This is not a fact!

She TAKES THE PHOTOGRAPH, and places it face down, out of view.

ERIN (CONT'D)

The fact is, Father Moore loved Emily Rose with his whole heart. The fact is, he did everything in his power to help her. And the fact is, he has risked his very freedom, just so you could hear her story...

Emotional, Erin turns and looks at the priest.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, in my job, I sometimes have to defend bad men...but Father Richard Moore is not one of them.

She turns back to the jury, holding back tears.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Don't send a good man to prison. I'm not asking you to believe everything that Father Moore believes...I am simply asking you to believe in Father Moore.

CUT TO:

105 A SERIES OF TV IMAGES

105

showing BELIEVERS gathered to pray at EMILY'S GRAVE... PICKETERS at the COURTHOUSE with signs supporting Father Moore... A SKIT with a PRIEST chasing a horned and fork-tailed DEVIL...

REPORTER (V.O.)

...And as the sensational trial reaches its conclusion, many still say that superstition cost Emily Rose her life, while others see her as a saint...

INT. SIDEBAR -- NIGHT

Eating dinner at the bar, Erin watches the TELEVISION.

REPORTER (ON TV)

...And all over the city -- indeed, all over the country -- people are sifting fact and faith, and confronting the question: What do you believe...?

CLOSE ON ERIN staring at the TV, thinking...

JUDGE BREWSTER (V.O.)

Foreman, has the jury reached a verdict?

JURY FOREMAN (V.O.)
We have, Your Honor...

106 INT. THE COURTROOM -- DAY

106

In the packed, silent room, Erin, Ray, and Father Moore are already on their feet.

The JURY FOREMAN hands A SLIP OF PAPER to the Bailiff, who hands it to the Court Clerk -- the paper's passage followed from hand-to-hand by a room-full of mesmerized eyes... *

The Court Clerk reads it, then hands it to the Judge -- who also reads it, poker-faced, before giving it back to the Bailiff, who returns it to the Foreman.

JUDGE BREWSTER
Please read the verdict out loud.

JURY FOREMAN
In the case of the State versus Father Richard Moore, we, the jury, find the defendant guilty of negligent homicide.

A collective GASP rips through the courtroom, followed by COMMOTION.

JUDGE BREWSTER
The Court thanks the jury for their service. Sentencing for this case will be set for April third.

Still absorbing the verdict, Erin manages to speak:

ERIN
Your Honor...if it pleases the Court, Father Moore requested before the start of trial that -- if found guilty -- he would be sentenced immediately.

JUDGE BREWSTER
Yes, I recall that. Does the prosecution have any objection to expedited sentencing?

Owen shakes his head.

JUDGE BREWSTER (CONT'D)
Very well. Father Richard Moore, do you understand this verdict that has been found against you?

FATHER MOORE
Yes, Your Honor.

JUDGE BREWSTER

Do you understand the gravity of this crime, and that you may, under the laws of this state, receive a sentence of up to ten years in the state penitentiary?

*

FATHER MOORE

(dry-mouthed)

Yes...I do.

JUDGE BREWSTER

Are there any statements you would like to make before I impose this sentence?

FATHER MOORE

(after a moment; very quietly:)

No, Your Honor.

The JURY FOREMAN clears his throat and speaks up:

JURY FOREMAN

(rising to his feet)

Excuse me, Your Honor...but the jury would like to make a recommendation regarding this sentence.

OWEN THOMAS

(stands up)

Objection --

JUDGE BREWSTER

--Sit down, Counselor. It's just a recommendation, and I want to hear it.

She nods to the Jury Foreman. He glances nervously at Father Moore, then at the spectators' faces, expectantly turned his way...and then he says:

JURY FOREMAN

We recommend a sentence of time served.

JUDGE BREWSTER

(after a moment)

I'll accept it.

For a moment, everyone -- even the attorneys -- is too stunned to react. Father Moore stares at the Judge, bewildered...

JUDGE BREWSTER (CONT'D)

You are guilty, Father Moore...and you're free to go.

(BANGS her gavel)

This Court is dismissed.

The Judge stands. The Bailiff calls out:

BAILIFF

All RISE...

And then it HITS, like a sudden rush of wind -- and a TUMULT fills the courtroom. Erin locks Father Moore in an embrace:

FATHER MOORE

(quietly, in her ear)
Thank you, Erin...

ERIN

...Thank you.

She glances at Owen as he walks stone-faced down the center aisle, past the swarming A.D.A.s and lunging SPECTATORS...

107 INT. SIDEBAR -- NIGHT

107

Erin's in her usual seat at the bar. Absently fiddling with the E.C.B. locket at her throat, she doesn't seem to notice as the Bartender sets a martini in front of her.

As if appearing from nowhere, Karl sits down beside her.

KARL

Well, you shocked us all. Everyone at the firm regards this as a victory. Have you seen the news? There's our priest, walking out of that courthouse a free man -- right next to you.

ERIN

I know, Karl. I was there.

KARL

The Archdiocese is pleased. They say the trial has even renewed public interest in the Church.

He smiles...then leans back, and gestures toward the entrance.

KARL (CONT'D)

The other partners are here -- they want to have a drink with you.

Erin sees them: a cluster of the same middle-aged CRONIES he introduced her to on the day that he assigned her the case. One of them raises his glass to her, and nods...

KARL (CONT'D)

Look, I'll say it: I was wrong. But I'm ready to make it right. So let's talk about what you want.

ERIN

(after a moment)

The dean of my law school called me today, to offer his congratulations. Then he offered me a job.

KARL

Teaching...? That's not going to buy you the life you're after...

ERIN

Maybe not. But I'm considering it.

KARL

Consider this, Erin: I'm offering you a full partnership in the firm.

ERIN

(nods slowly; then:)

Keep it. I quit.

She slides the martini over in front of him, and stands.

ERIN (CONT'D)

The drink's on me this time.

And she walks away, leaving Karl -- and her untouched martini -- at the bar.

108 EXT. CEMETERY -- MORNING

108

For the first time, the weather is beautiful and clear. Erin and Father Moore walk side-by-side through the graveyard, which is bright with the first blooms of spring. She carries a small bouquet of flowers, and the "E.C.B." locket hangs around her neck.

ERIN

Are you disappointed that I still doubt Emily's possession?

*

FATHER MOORE

I believe that faith and doubt can -- perhaps even should -- coexist. Faith without doubt can be a dangerous thing.

ERIN

Isn't it hard for you to have faith in a God that would let Emily suffer so much...?

FATHER MOORE

At times. But the scriptures teach that,
"as the Heavens are higher than the earth,
so are God's ways higher than our ways..."

ERIN

...And that solves it for you?

Father Moore pauses -- this question feels very personal to him...

FATHER MOORE

No. But I find the riddles of God more
satisfying than the answers of men.

ERIN

I suppose that's why you're the priest,
and I'm the lawyer...

FATHER MOORE

What's important is that now her death
means something. No matter what you
believe about what happened to Emily, her
death raises profoundly important
questions. And now people are asking
those questions... So her suffering, her
death, cannot be meaningless.

ERIN

That, Father, I do believe.

They have arrived at EMILY'S GRAVE, and now they stand a
moment in silence. Finally, Erin speaks quietly:

ERIN (CONT'D)

Who chose the epitaph?

FATHER MOORE

I did. It's from the second chapter of
Philippians -- verse twelve... Emily
recited it to me the night she died.

As Erin stares at the epitaph, she feels deeply moved. She
kneels to place her bouquet of flowers atop the grave, and
THE CAMERA MOVES AROUND THE HEADSTONE, PUSHING IN to FOCUS ON
THE WORDS engraved beneath Emily's name:

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling..."

HOLD ON THE EPITAPH as we slowly FADE TO BLACK.