

THE RITUAL
3RD DRAFT

Written by

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Based on 'The Ritual' by Adam Nevill

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A scruffy looking hatchback pulls into a parking space. Inside is a man in his 30s. He looks a bit hung-over, with an unshaven jaw and a rumpled off-the-rack suit. He gets out the car holding a takeaway coffee but, despite his dishevelled appearance, whistles cheerfully as he heads through the car park towards a grim looking office building. This is LUKE. On the way he passes a man in his forties, overweight and balding - BOB. BOB is sitting at the wheel of his parked car staring at the office.

LUKE

Alright Bob? How's the hangover?

BOB doesn't answer him. LUKE shrugs and carries on.

LUKE (CONT'D)

(muttered)

Cheer up you sad bastard, it's almost Christmas.

Another man, RYAN, catches up with him.

RYAN

Luke!

LUKE

Hello no-show.

RYAN

How was the party?

LUKE

Standard. Drank a lot of cheap booze, photocopied my arse, danced with the fit one from HR.

RYAN

Kenneth?

LUKE

I was thinking of Debbie, though I was pretty drunk...

RYAN

You two getting cosy then?

LUKE

Oh, you know. Couple of extracurricular team bonding exercises.

RYAN

You're the Don Juan of middle management.

LUKE

Thank you. That's not at all an incredibly depressing thing to be called.

RYAN

I live vicariously through you, you know that.

LUKE

How's Felicity?

RYAN

About ready to pop.

LUKE

Aren't you worried she'll have the baby on the 25th? Something weird about kids born on Christmas day.

RYAN

Like Jesus?

LUKE

For example.

They enter the office building.

2

INT. LIFT - DAY

2

LUKE and RYAN stand in the lift.

RYAN

Doing your usual Christmas Day piss up?

LUKE

A truncated version. Probably just an hour down the pub before my mates get back to their wives and kids. Or in Phil's case his boyfriend and their labradoodle. Bloody loves that dog.

The lift doors open and LUKE and RYAN step out into --

3

INT. OPEN PLAN OFFICE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

3

Christmas decorations still strung up from the party the night before. LUKE and RYAN walk through.

RYAN

Sounds alright.

LUKE

Yeah. It's not bad.

LUKE winks at RYAN and heads to his desk. He sits down. Across the office is an attractive woman - DEBBIE. He smiles at her, she smiles back. He mouths something at her - "hungover," and pulls a face. She stifles a laugh and shakes her head. She lifts something up - a box of Paracetamol. She holds her hand up to the side of her head, makes a gun motion, and pretends to shoot herself. LUKE grins.

LUKE gets to work. He plugs his headphones into his computer and fires up some music. We listen to the track with him, the music filling the scene. We move around him as he types at his keyboard.

In the background the lift doors open again. No one takes any notice of BOB as he enters the office. Not until he raises a rifle and blasts RYAN in the stomach.

LUKE's music is so loud he doesn't register the sound of the gun at first, doesn't clock the people starting to run. Not until a woman near him is hit by the second shot, thrown clear off her feet. Blood mists LUKE's desk, and he feels the warm drops as it sprays onto his shirt and face. He looks up just as another shot hits the desk next to him, sending stationery and papers up into the air. He hits the floor as his computer EXPLODES in a shower of glass and sparks.

Looking out at the office from under his desk he sees only feet - a mad dash of people running, and BOB walking calmly, blasting away. An OLDER MAN stumbles, looks up in time to see the gun barrel pointing down at him. LUKE can't see BOB pull the trigger, but he can see the OLDER MAN take the hit; his life violently extinguished. LUKE is shaking uncontrollably, unable to move, unable to look away. Frozen in terror.

4

INT. TAXI - DAY

4

LUKE opens his eyes, waking from a troubled dream. His head is leaning against the window of the car, rivets of rain water dribbling down the glass. Alongside him are squeezed three other men in their early 30s. They wear cagoules and camping gear. They are HUTCH, DOM and PHIL. HUTCH is sitting up front next to the DRIVER, reading from his phone.

CAPTION: July

HUTCH

Sweden is a Unitary Parliamentary Constitutional monarchy. It has a population of just under ten million people, roughly sixty percent of which are buxom blonde bikini models. It is ruled by King Carl XVI Gustaf, hair colour and swim-wear preference unknown...

PHIL glances at LUKE.

PHIL
How you doing mate?

LUKE
(unconvincing)
Fine. Good.

DOM
Hutch, tell me more about these bikini models.

PHIL
Let me call your wife and see if she knows anything about them.

DOM flicks his ear.

HUTCH
Children! No fighting in the back or mummy and daddy will turn this taxi right back round to Stockholm.

DOM
Heaven forbid we spend the weekend in a nice hotel.

HUTCH
The tent I got Luke is nicer than the Marriott. Isn't that right, Lukey? Got everything but a mini bar.

LUKE manages a small smile, but stays looking out the window. DOM shifts uncomfortably in his seat, feeling LUKE's tension.

DOM
How long till we're there? Just so I know if I should start re-mortgaging my flat to pay for this taxi.

As LUKE looks out of the window the taxi crests a hill and a small town can be seen in the distance.

LUKE
Not long.

5

EXT. SWEDISH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

5

The taxi cuts down a long, thin, road, as the grey sky deposits sleet of rain onto the flat green hills that surround them. Ahead is a small town, and beyond that, an expanse of countryside, heading on to the horizon.

6 EXT. YOUTH HOSTEL - DAY

6

LUKE stands outside on the wooden deck smoking a cigarette. Rain drips down from the guttering. Beyond the rooftops of the small town we can glimpse mist-shrouded countryside. LUKE stares out at it, blankly.

7 INT. YOUTH HOSTEL - RECEPTION - DAY

7

HUTCH, PHIL, and DOM wait at the reception. They can see LUKE through the window.

DOM

This is going to be bloody miserable isn't it.

PHIL

Oh Jesus, Dom, a bit of compassion, mate.

DOM

I'm just saying, maybe this was the year to skip the lad's holiday.

HUTCH

I think he needs it more than ever. A couple of days yomping about in the countryside will do him the world of good.

DOM

Do you really believe that?

HUTCH

I don't know. But if he's out here with us at least he's not moping about back in London. That has to be good for him.

8 INT. HOSTEL - DORM - DAY

8

HUTCH, LUKE, DOM, and PHIL follow the HOSTEL OWNER (Male, 50s) into the dorm.

HOSTEL OWNER

Here is everything; beds, and towels on the side. The bathroom is down the hall.

HUTCH

Lovely, thanks very much.

HOSTEL OWNER

You're walking the trail?

HUTCH

Yes, heading out to Gammelstad.

HOSTEL OWNER

A long walk. Well, tonight you will be very comfortable and from then on in your tents, not so much I think. You're lucky, though, you've caught the festival.

HUTCH

What's that?

HOSTEL OWNER

Vilda Jakten. Lots of food, lots of drinking and dancing. Maybe you start your walk off tomorrow with a hangover.

The HOSTEL WORKER smiles and goes to leave.

LUKE

What's *Vilda Jakten*?

The HOSTEL WORKER pauses at the door.

HOSTEL OWNER

'The Wild Hunt'.

9

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

9

The festival is in full swing. A drum is beaten, and a procession of locals dressed up as Nordic mythological characters makes its way across the muddy ground.

LUKE, HUTCH and PHIL stand and watch.

PHIL

Not very 'wild' is it.

LUKE looks over and spots something - nearby a group of local HUNTERS stand laughing and drinking and watching as one of them guts a deer. They watch the insides of the animal spill out, steaming, onto the grass.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Gross.

The locals look over at the Brits. One of them says something to the others in Swedish. The other men all laugh. Whatever was said doesn't seem friendly.

A man holding a large hammer and wearing a blonde wig and a Viking helmet appears. He is on a chariot being pulled by two inebriated FAT MEN wearing makeshift goat costumes. LOCALS laugh and cheer at them.

HUTCH

I think the one in the wig is a rather liberal interpretation of Thor.

THOR sways on his chariot. We see a bottle of whisky is in his belt.

HUTCH (CONT'D)

(dry)

The mighty God of Thunder.

DOM emerges from a beer tent on the other side of the procession. He carries four glasses of beer unsteadily and tries to make his way across the procession to join the other three.

As he hurries across he slips and hits the deck, covering the people around him with beer.

DOM

Bollocks!

DOM struggles up as the procession threatens to collapse around him. He staggers over to the others, wiping spilt beer off his trousers and jumper.

PHIL and HUTCH are in hysterics. LUKE look over uneasily at the HUNTERS who have witnessed the incident and are heading over. One of them still wiping down the bloody knife he was using to gut the deer.

HUNTER

Hey, Englishman. We don't appreciate people coming here and disrespecting our culture.

DOM

Are we calling this culture?

LUKE is looking at the knife. The HUNTER notices, and smirks, enjoying the power.

HUNTER

Watch respectfully or you'll find out what the wild hunt's all about.

HUTCH notices how scared he looks.

HUTCH

I don't think there's any need for threats, chaps.

HUNTER

We don't come to England and joke around while you drink tea and suck each other's dicks.

(MORE)

HUNTER (CONT'D)

So do us the courtesy of respecting
our traditions.

He spits and the HUNTERS grin and head off.

LUKE watches them. He's stayed stock still throughout the
confrontation.

PHIL

It's almost as though they don't
want a tourist trade.

HUTCH

Fucking hillbillies. Come on.

He hits LUKE on the arm and they head off to a beer tent.

10

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - EVENING

10

The festival is mostly just drinking now, though the various
poorly constructed Norse mythological characters can still be
seen scampering around. HUTCH is drinking a beer and trying
to talk to his wife on a dodgy line. LUKE moves away from
him, heading off. He bumps into DOM. It's instantly a bit
awkward between them - two friends who have drifted apart
slightly.

DOM

Hey mate.

LUKE

Hey.

DOM looks around.

DOM

Think I'm gonna turn in before the
fucking locals try an spit roast
me.

LUKE forces a grin.

DOM (CONT'D)

Looking forward to getting going
tomorrow?

LUKE

I guess.

DOM

Bloody long way.

LUKE nods.

DOM (CONT'D)

Yeah. Well. We're all here now so
lets just try and enjoy it, I
guess.

LUKE

Is that what we're supposed to do?
Enjoy it?

DOM

I don't know mate. Remember when we
used to go to Ibiza every year?
Must be getting old.

LUKE nods again, looks away, out at the festivities, a man
who feels permanently on the outside, looking in. DOM stands
awkwardly.

DOM (CONT'D)

Hey maybe we'll get a chance to
have a chat when we're out there.

LUKE

Yeah, that'd be good.

DOM

Alright.

LUKE

Alright.

They slap each other on the back and head their separate
ways, both relieved that the brief conversation is over.

11

INT. BAR - EVENING

11

LUKE enters. He sits at the bar and orders a drink and looks
over - in the corner are several of the locals dressed up for
the festival. Amongst them are the GOAT MEN, their costumes
still on. Make-up smeared around their eyes. Antlers made of
sticks still fastened to their heads. They drink with THOR
and other, less recognisable Nordic Gods. All around them
locals, some dressed in their garish costumes, drink and
smoke and roar.

A MAN sits next to LUKE at the bar. He's in his forties, with
a weather beaten face. Could be a shepherd or a farmer.
Doesn't look like he's ever been anywhere else than here.

He looks at LUKE checking out the costumed locals.

MAN

And if the Gods could see us now
they would weep.

LUKE

They aren't watching.

The MAN tilts his head - 'you could be right.' LUKE continues to look at the locals. The MAN nods at them.

MAN

Loki, Thor. Odin is outside
throwing up.

LUKE stares at the two GOAT MEN. The MAN nods at them in turn.

MAN (CONT'D)

Tanngnjóstr and Tanngrísir. Teeth
grinder and teeth bearer. The goats
who bore Thor's chariot. He would
kill them at the end of the day and
eat their flesh. Then he would
raise them from the dead in the
morning.

LUKE

Neat trick.

MAN

He certainly thought so.

LUKE

My cat got run over a year ago.
Think Thor could have bought her
back to life?

MAN

That depends. Did Thor give the
gift of life to his goats, or did
they give it to him?

LUKE

Well, that's a real conundrum.
Shame it's all completely made up.

MAN

It's no fairy tale, friend. It's
history.

LUKE

If you say so.

MAN

So you didn't come for Vilda
Jakten, what did bring you here?

LUKE

Walking the trail under duress.

LUKE takes another drink. The MAN studies him for a few beats.

MAN

It wont cure you, you know.

LUKE

Who says I need curing?

MAN

Round here in the winter, when the sun stops rising, some people get this look - when they've spent too long in the darkness. I see it in you.

LUKE

Yeah, well, it's more of a metaphorical darkness with me.

MAN

You have the fear.

LUKE

What are you, like a bar stool prophet?

The MAN laughs.

MAN

No. I can just tell when someone's shit scared. And you're shit scared of something, friend.

LUKE shakes his head, returns to his drinks, not enjoying the conversation.

MAN (CONT'D)

A scared man, out in the wilderness. And during The Wild Hunt and well.

LUKE

As far as I can see the Wild Hunt is a bunch of idiots in silly costumes.

MAN

Perhaps. But even if the men wearing them are fools, those costumes still mean something.

LUKE

Sure.

MAN

Piece of advice, Englishman? When you're out there - don't go off the trail.

The MAN nods and finishes his drink. He glances over at the costumed drunks in the corner, laughing and singing.

MAN (CONT'D)

This land was wild once. Sometimes,
it still is.

- 12 EXT. SWEDISH COUNTRYSIDE - MORNING 12
The four of them head off. Behind them the town, sleeping off its hangover, ahead of them an expanse of fields.
- 13 EXT. SWEDISH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY 13
The Brits walk, spread out, HUTCH leading, LUKE second, PHIL next, then DOM.
- 14 EXT. SWEDISH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY 14
LUKE walks along the crest of a hill. In the distance he can just make out the shadowy form of a distant forest.
He reaches into his pocket and brings out a hip flask. Takes a surreptitious swig.
- 15 I/E. OLD CAMPING LODGE - DAY 15
The bare skeleton of an old lodge stands on a wind swept hill. HUTCH, DOM and PHIL poke around inside. DOM prods an old, rusty, stove. HUTCH takes photos of everything.
LUKE lights a cigarette, bored.
- 16 EXT. SWEDISH COUNTRYSIDE - EVENING 16
In the 24 hours of sunshine this is as dark as it gets. A sort of hovering twilight, as the sun considers sinking below the horizon, before changing its mind and returning to the sky.
Four tents set up. A little camping stove on, a pot of food bubbling happily. The four of them sit outside their tents. PHIL is talking about work, DOM and HUTCH listening intently.

PHIL

We've actually managed to weather the financial storm pretty well so far. Question is, if Peterson and Whalberg merge what are the after effects going to be...

Above them the sky is vast and dark blue and dotted with stars. LUKE lies back, ignoring the chat.

17 EXT. SWEDISH COUNTRYSIDE - EVENING

17

LUKE stands in the middle of a field, taking a piss, a cigarette sticking out of his mouth. Ahead of him, illuminated by the dusky light, is the forest. Closer now. Vast and dark.

Overlay: The unmistakable sound of rain drumming onto the hood of a waterproof.

18 EXT. SWEDISH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

18

The rain batters down. LUKE and HUTCH walk twenty metres ahead of PHIL and DOM, their hoods up against the sleeting rain. The sky a dull grey.

They pick their way through a field of small boulders.

HUTCH

Can we talk about it?

LUKE doesn't say anything.

HUTCH (CONT'D)

It's just that... You know we're all worried about you.

LUKE

Don't need to be.

HUTCH

I don't know what I'd have done either, mate. And I'd probably be doing just the same as you if it happened to me.

LUKE

And what am I doing?

HUTCH

I think you're punishing yourself.

LUKE

Look, Hutch, I appreciate all this, I do. But if we're gonna get through this lets not make it the world's longest counselling session, alright? I'm fine. You were right. This is helping.

He pats HUTCH's shoulder and carries on. HUTCH watches him, worried.

19

EXT. SWEDISH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

19

A way behind them PHIL is walking painfully. He is wearing sodden jeans and he pulls at them now with red chaffed fingers, trying to get the heavy material away from his thighs. He sucks air into his mouth in pain and grimaces.

DOM passes him.

PHIL
This is awful in almost every conceivable way.

They stagger on. DOM nods at the distant figure of LUKE.

DOM
What would you do if it happened to you?

PHIL
There's a disabled toilet down the hall. I'd lock myself in there.

DOM
It's good to have a plan.

PHIL
What would you do?

DOM
Run.

PHIL
I'd like to see you running.

DOM
Haha, very funny -

DOM takes a step forward, but his foot slips on a rock and he goes down.

HUTCH and LUKE turn as they hear him yell in pain. They glance at each other and back to their two friends.

When they reach them DOM is sitting on the ground holding his knee. PHIL is trying to crouch down next to him but his jeans, so sodden tight with rain water, won't let him.

DOM (CONT'D)
I think it's twisted.

HUTCH helps DOM up.

HUTCH
Can you walk on it?

DOM hobbles along before collapsing with a yelp of pain.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
Yeah, that's twisted. We need to
get you something to lean on. Phil?
Stick duty.

PHIL
(sighing)
On it.

PHIL begins to nose painfully around looking for a suitable
walking stick for DOM who sits down holding his leg
painfully.

DOM
Shit. *Shit.*

HUTCH looks back the way they came.

HUTCH
What did we do yesterday? Five
hours?

PHIL
Five wonderful hours.

HUTCH
And, what? Four today? Nine hours
walking back to the town.

DOM
I can't walk for nine fucking
hours.

LUKE
Well it's at least the same again
if we go on to the end point.

HUTCH
Phil, give us your GPS thingy won't
you.

PHIL tosses it to HUTCH who catches it. He presses a button
on its side. The little machine whistles loudly as it turns
on.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
See if R2-bloody-D2 can get us out
of here.

HUTCH finds a packet of fags in his pocket and taps out two
smokes. He looks at LUKE.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
Luke, my office?

A waterproof sheet is thrown up and LUKE and HUTCH huddle
underneath, both of them spark up and look down as HUTCH
brings out his map and checks the GPS finder.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
Dom isn't messing about, that
knee's fucked, no mistake. He's not
going to make it back to the town,
not without helicopter.

LUKE
Phil isn't looking so good either.

HUTCH
No, he looks great. Skinny jeans,
brand new shoes. Very trendy.

LUKE
Blisters the size of a small
country by now.

HUTCH traces the map, finds their position on the GPS.

HUTCH
Okay here we are. Middle of sodding
nowhere.

LUKE
We might really have to get that
helicopter you know.

HUTCH
We've only been walking for two
days, we can't call a chopper in
because Dom's fallen over and
Phil's got his fucking Levis soggy.
Besides...

HUTCH digs out his mobile.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
No bars.

LUKE shows him his phone.

LUKE
No battery.

HUTCH
Okay. Well this is a dilly of a
pickle, isn't it.

HUTCH studies the map, intensely.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
Look...

HUTCH moves his finger down the map, towards a wide expanse
of green.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
See where the forest thins out in
the middle?

He points to a river that snakes below a thin section of the forest.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
This river leads straight to the
nearest town. I'd say that's less
than a day. We squeeze through the
trees here and camp by the water
tonight, we're in civilisation by
tomorrow afternoon, tops.

LUKE
We'd have to pass through the
forest.

HUTCH
Barely.

LUKE chews his cheek and looks down at the map, thinking.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
I don't see another way out.

LUKE sighs.

LUKE
Just squeeze through the trees?

HUTCH
A walk in the woods.

The waterproof sheet is thrown off them and they stand. PHIL has abandoned the hunt for a walking stick and instead has his shoe off and is trying to rub a small pot of lip care Vaseline over his foot. He and DOM look at them expectantly.

DOM
Well?

LUKE turns, we follow his gaze and, for the first time, we see the forest behind him, huge and shrouded in mist.

20

EXT. FIELD LEADING TO FOREST - DAY

20

A grassy field leading up to the lip of the forest. LUKE leads the pack, HUTCH behind him, PHIL helping DOM forward on his twisted knee.

LUKE slows down as he passes something in the grass - a rusted old Volvo car, looking like something out of the 1950s.

They all stop and stare at it.

PHIL
Everything in this fucking country
is a relic.

HUTCH
Think they need a push start?

PHIL grins. DOM limps over to the car and prizes its logo off
the bonnet.

DOM
My boy collects these.

PHIL snaps a picture of DOM by the car on his phone.

PHIL
Wasn't a completely wasted trip
then.

They continue on toward the forest.

21

EXT. TREE LINE - DAY

21

The four of them walk along the thick wall of trees that
shoot out of the ground, marking the beginning of the forest.
It's impenetrable.

DOM
What are we looking for?

HUTCH
A way through.

PHIL gazes at the thick, twisted, tree branches.

PHIL
(dubious)
Right.

DOM finds a long branch and tests its use as a crutch.

HUTCH
How's the knee, Dom-Dom?

DOM
Killing me.

HUTCH roots around in his bag and tosses a little bottle of
aspirin at DOM.

HUTCH
Don't OD.

DOM necks a few aspirin and looks up at the trees.

DOM
Are there bears in this forest?

HUTCH
Might be.

DOM
We should have gone to Vegas again.

PHIL
Oh, you'd have found something to
fall over there as well.

DOM
Yeah, a big pile of booze, money
and prostitutes.

LUKE moves further away from them, staring intently at the
trees.

HUTCH
There might be some prossies in
there, you never know.

PHIL
I've got some sleeping pills.

HUTCH
And I'm sure Phil'll give you a
hand job if you ask nicely.

PHIL
What happens in Sweden stays in
Sweden.

DOM
Piss off.

Ahead of them, LUKE sees something. He doesn't look happy
about it, and he hesitates - as though deciding whether or
not to tell the others. Eventually he turns and calls.

LUKE
Found a path.

HUTCH
There you go, he's found a path.

DOM
Brilliant, I was starting to worry
we wouldn't be able to get into the
creepy woods at *all*.

22

EXT. TREE LINE - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

22

HUTCH, DOM and PHIL join LUKE at the entrance to the forest.
They stare down the narrow path that cuts into the trees and
quickly disappears round a dark corner.

PHIL gets his GPS out.

HUTCH
Alright Inspector Gadget, what's it
telling us?

PHIL frowns at the thing. Smacks it against his palm.

PHIL
It's a bit temperamental. Tried it
out in Hyde Park and got lost.

He presses a few buttons. It beeps at him.

PHIL (CONT'D)
Ah, here we go. Think this is about
where we want to be.

HUTCH checks the GPS over his shoulder.

DOM
*Is this where we want to be,
though?*

LUKE
You scared of the woods, Dom?

DOM
I don't particularly want to be
stumbling around in there after
dark.

HUTCH
We've been here seventy two hours
and the sun hasn't gone down once.

PHIL
Bit like your missus on honeymoon.

DOM gives him the finger.

PHIL (CONT'D)
Straight South West from here,
we'll hit the river in no time.

HUTCH pats DOM on the back and steps forward, crossing the
threshold.

HUTCH
Come on, lets get this done.

PHIL follows and then DOM. Finally LUKE, slightly more
reluctantly, follow them in.

We stay back, taking in the immensity and scope of the forest
as the four of them disappear into the dark mass of trees.

23

EXT. FOREST - PATH - DAY

23

The forest is thick and dark and the path twists and turns narrowly through the trees.

LUKE is looking around him at the close knit trees, the wet leaves, the faint blanket of mist.

HUTCH looks down at the compass - South West still. He is whistling, but the jolliness of the tune sounds forced in this setting.

DOM limps along the path. Rain hits the top of trees above them, occasionally great torrents of water drip down onto them.

The path almost disappears and LUKE has to push through a thick mass of shrub to find it again. He holds the foliage back as the others pass him.

HUTCH checks his compass again and his grin wavers, the needle flits between South West and North East, as though it's suddenly unsure which way they're facing... HUTCH taps it. He looks up, the others are disappearing round a corner, he hurries to catch up with them.

24

EXT. FOREST - PATH - DAY

24

They walk. PHIL glances backwards, nervously. HUTCH starts whistling again but quickly stops.

DOM's walking stick suddenly snaps under his weight and he goes down, yelling in pain. HUTCH helps him up.

HUTCH

You alright?

DOM

No, I'm not bloody alright. Soon as the words 'walking' and 'holiday' were put together I should have vetoed. I just assumed it meant from our hotel to the pub, not traversing the entirety of Northern fucking Europe.

PHIL looks up at the sky which is growing dark.

PHIL

What happened to twenty four hours of sunshine?

HUTCH

Don't panic. We still get a dusk, it just never gets truly dark.

LUKE

It didn't get this dark yesterday.

HUTCH

We weren't in the woods yesterday.

DOM

No, we bloody weren't.

HUTCH

Come on. Sooner we get going,
sooner we get to the river, sooner
we get to the town, sooner we get
to the bar.

LUKE picks up a suitable walking stick replacement and tosses it to DOM who catches it.

DOM

Amen.

On they go.

25

EXT. FOREST - PATH - DUSK

25

The four of them trudge forward. No one speaks, each is in their own little world. DOM is grimacing and softly cursing his knee. PHIL's face is a mask of pain as his trousers chaff and his trainers blister him. LUKE walks, his eyes taking in the surroundings, working over the trees and undergrowth, listening out at the bird calls that occasionally echo through the forest.

HUTCH

Anyone else getting hungry?

PHIL

Famished.

LUKE

I could eat.

They all look at DOM.

DOM

What do you think?

HUTCH

I'm thinking... Steak. Medium rare.
Bit bloody. Peppercorn sauce. Thick
cut chips, side salad. A nice
tumbler of scotch. Maybe a cigar
afterwards.

DOM

Big Mac. On a plastic tray, by
myself, no one talking to me.

HUTCH grins.

PHIL

A Bar. Little nibbles. Nice cold beer. Pre-theatre dinner, post-theatre drinks.

LUKE

Kebab.

DOM

Oh god yes. Donner?

LUKE

Chicken shish.

DOM

(appreciatively)

Chicken shish! Salad with that sir?

LUKE

Onion, tomato, and lettuce. Chilli sauce. Chips stuffed *into* the pita.

DOM

Maestro, maestro...

LUKE

For best results serve on night bus. Perfect.

PHIL

You're such white trash.

LUKE shakes his head.

LUKE

It's not fine dining but it's good enough for me.

HUTCH

Don't worry, we've got a nice meal of boiled noodles to look forward t-

HUTCH stops. The path has cleared slightly and pulls away in a straight line, running down a hill in front of them. A tree, its roots half over the path, stands just at the peak of the descent.

There's something in the branches.

LUKE draws level with HUTCH, follows his gaze. The tree is about fifteen metres away.

DOM and PHIL join them.

PHIL

What's going on?

LUKE

There's something there.

PHIL digs around in his pocket and brings out his glasses.

PHIL

What is it?

They all walk forward, tentatively. Something about this feels wrong. Though you couldn't put your finger on what. Not until they get closer and see what it is. What it *was*.

What it was, was an elk. Now it's a corpse.

It hangs, slightly above head height, from the branches that protrude over the path. Its stomach is cut open, flayed almost. Strings of muscle and flesh splay out, caught in the tree like a spider's web. The head of the animal is lolling loosely to one side. On the ground in front of it are its insides, fallen onto the blood soaked dirt.

PHIL(CONT'D)

Jesus Christ.

They all stare at it.

DOM

What did that?

PHIL

Could be a bear?

DOM

Would a bear do that?

PHIL

I don't know, Dom, I'm not a fucking bear expert am I?

HUTCH

Don't worry. This is just the bit they don't show you on the nature documentaries. Meat doesn't come out of a freezer in the wild.

PHIL

I don't think this was eaten.

DOM

Okay. Can we keep going please?

PHIL

Yeah. Lets keep moving, guys.

They start to walk, each of them has to pass underneath the ruined creature.

LUKE

No smell.

DOM

What?

LUKE

No smell coming off it.

They all look at him for an explanation. He shrugs.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Fresh kill.

An aghast silence from the others.

DOM

Oh fuck off.

They hurry on.

26

EXT. FOREST - PATH - DUSK

26

The sun is low in the sky, the first creeping tendrils of darkness are snaking through the trees. The men trudge forward.

HUTCH stops, he reaches into his bag and brings something out - a torch. He turns it on with a 'click'.

It's a symbol, for just how badly this has gone. The men behind him visibly sag, giving in to the inevitability of a night in these woods.

One by one they, too, find and turn on their torches.

'Click'.

'Click'.

'Click'.

27

EXT. FOREST - PATH - NIGHT

27

The kind of darkness you forget exists. A blackness so thick, so all encompassing, that it feels palpable, like you could reach out and scoop it up in your hands.

Through this come four beams of light, tripping and stumbling.

We can hear the sound of a torrential rain storm pounding on the canopy above them. Occasional claps of thunder and glimpses of forked lightning.

PHIL
This isn't fucking 'dusk.'

DOM
Are we still on the path?

DOM is at the back, then PHIL, then LUKE, then HUTCH leading the way. HUTCH keeps his torch trained on the ground in front of him, DOM's beam flickers about, left, right, up and down, providing no bloody use to anyone.

HUTCH
We're still on the path.

DOM
I'm looking down and I'm not seeing it.

HUTCH
It's faint, but it's there. Soon as we find a flat bit of land we'll pitch the tents.

PHIL
That's it, is it? We're giving up on the river then?

HUTCH
Don't see we have a choice Philip.

Another clap of thunder, close by and loud. HUTCH glances up.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
That's not good...

LUKE is staying quiet, his eyes are peering out into the night. He shines his torch light on the trees to the side of the path, picking out pale white trunks and vines, and the fat drops of rain that make it through the canopy. Moths flutter about the beam as it is swallowed by the endless forest.

Suddenly he sees something. He stops. PHIL bumps into him.

PHIL
Watch out.

HUTCH turns.

HUTCH
What is it?

LUKE moves forward, following his beam of light.

Something is scratched into the bark of a tree. It's a symbol - old runes and an upside down crucifix.

HUTCH runs his hand over it.

HUTCH (CONT'D)

Ancient.

HUTCH moves further into the trees.

PHIL

Hutch, don't go off the path.

HUTCH squeezes through two trees and suddenly he's in the open. The rain falls freely onto him. His torch picks out a garden of dead, knee high, grass.

LUKE and PHIL follow him, DOM comes soon after.

DOM

Lads we're going to lose the path!
We're...

He stops when he looks up. All four torch beams together have penetrated the night and now illuminate what's at the end of the garden.

It's a little black house.

Above them lightning flashes and thunder rolls. The rain pounds down.

HUTCH

Come on.

They hurry towards the house. As they get closer their lights pick up more details. The house is two stories, it looks ancient, windows battered shut, no light coming from inside, clearly long deserted.

DOM

No. Fucking. Way.

Above them a fork of lightning cuts through the sky. The thunder is instant and deafening. The storm right above them.

HUTCH

We need to get under cover.

They make it to the front door. HUTCH tries it. It's wedged shut.

HUTCH (CONT'D)

Shit, help me with this.

PHIL joins him in putting his weight against the door.

LUKE glances back with his torch, picks out the trees behind them.

DOM lends his shoulder to the door charge. A few more whacks and the old wood gives way and the men pile in. DOM yelping as his twisted knee takes his weight.

LUKE stays outside, eyes straining in to the pitch black. Just him and the forest and the rain.

And then a noise, somewhere out there in the dark. A distant, low, cough. Animal-like. LUKE stares out. HUTCH appears at the door.

HUTCH (CONT'D)

Luke, come in for Christ sake you're getting soaked.

LUKE

Did you hear that?

HUTCH

No mate, come on.

LUKE gives on last look outside then turns and enters the house.

28

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT

28

The four flashlights pick out the house. It's mostly one big room, with a small doorway leading to a cellar at one end, a stairway leading upstairs and a fireplace at the other.

PHIL

Well, this is the house I get murdered in. That much is clear.

HUTCH grins.

HUTCH

It's worse than Halls of Residence, lads.

DOM

Who *lived* here?

PHIL closes the door, they notice that it used to be barred with a thick piece of wood across the frame. The wood is long rotted, and has split in two when the door was pushed open.

On the wall hangs an old rifle, rusted beyond use. HUTCH picks it up and inspects it. Even though it's clearly beyond use, we see LUKE eyeing the weapon uneasily.

HUTCH

They were packing, whoever they were.

HUTCH looks at LUKE - sees his reaction to the gun. He puts it back on the wall quickly and goes to investigate the wood burner at the end. Its rusted shut. He gets out a pen knife and jimmys it open.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
Right chaps, start breaking up the
furniture.

PHIL and DOM go to the old rickety chairs and table and
smashing them up. The noise echoing uncomfortably around the
house.

LUKE goes to the door that leads down to the cellar. He
shines his light down into it, revealing a small, cobweb
infested room.

HUTCH (O.C.) (CONT'D)
Any supplies?

LUKE jumps, and turns to see HUTCH behind him.

LUKE
I don't like this place.

HUTCH
Not too keen on it myself mate. But
what's the alternative? Middle of
the forest in a lightning storm?
'Lesser of two evils' kind of
situation.

They look over to where DOM and PHIL are stuffing furniture
into the wood burner.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
It's keeping Sally and the fat man
happy at least.

LUKE
I really think I heard something
out there.

HUTCH
Maybe you did. We're not the only
animals in the woods, Lukey.

LUKE turns his attention to the stairs.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
Might be stuff to burn up there.

LUKE hesitates.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
Want me to come with you?

LUKE
(defensive)
No.

HUTCH heads off to help get the fire started. LUKE exhales
and moves towards the stairs.

29 INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - STAIRCASE/LANDING - NIGHT 29

LUKE heads up the stairs, taking them slowly, one at a time, each stair depressing under his feet with a loud groan. In the background DOM and PHIL give a small cheer as HUTCH gets the fire flickering.

He enters the landing.

Two doors lead off from a short, narrow, corridor.

Both doors are open, but LUKE's torch reveals nothing but darkness inside.

He moves closer to the first doorway, and slowly pushes the door open, entering the room --

30 INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT 30

LUKE enters the pitch black room. He brings his torch up --

It illuminates a yellow eye staring at him from the shadows. THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE BED.

He falls back with a strangled yell.

The torch beam swings wildly. It picks out features - animal eyes, antlers, hands, a dress, a coffin. Fuck, fuck, fuck... LUKE backs out of the room.

31 INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT 31

LUKE comes clattering down the stairs, the others look at him.

LUKE
There's something upstairs! There's something up there!

DOM
What?!

PHIL, who is standing in his underpants as his jeans steam dry by the fire, puts a hand on DOM.

PHIL
What is it?

LUKE
I don't know. It's an animal or something, it's...

LUKE looks back at the stairs, they all stand in silence. The house is completely quiet. Only the sound of the rain outside and crackle of the fire.

HUTCH
Let's go and take a look.

He glances at PHIL and DOM.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
All of us.

32 INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - STAIRCASE - NIGHT 32

The men creep up. HUTCH leading. He prises the longest blade of his pen knife out.

PHIL
Anything happens it's good to know
someone's got a tin opener.

HUTCH
I can do some damage with this
don't you worry about it...

33 INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT 33

The four of them creep into the room. DOM is shaking. HUTCH shines his torch light up and DOM whimpers.

PHIL
Jesus Christ.

It's a monster. But not one that's going to hurt anyone. There's a deer's head and body, the fur rotted away years ago. It's wearing a little white robe, complete with frills around the throat and wrists.

The hands are the worst bit. Human hands. Mummified, sewn onto the body.

The thing is set up as though it is standing - its body propped up with leather belts holding it in what almost looks like a crude upright coffin.

On the floor by its feet is a carpet of dried, dead flows, littered with the skeletal remains of dozens and dozens of tiny dead animals.

34 INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT 34

More wood is stuffed into the wood burner.

HUTCH
They probably went mad, whoever
lived here. In the winter the sun
doesn't come up. Drive anyone nuts.
They used to have their own Gods;
(MORE)

HUTCH (CONT'D)

pagan rituals, all that Nordic shit. Probably what that was, like an offering or something.

DOM

Well I almost offered up a massive shit when I saw it.

The men sit around the fire, in their sleeping bags.

PHIL

We should burn this place down when we leave.

LUKE

No. We should just leave quietly.

DOM

As long as we go I don't care how we do it.

A camping stove is bubbling away. HUTCH checks it. He pours the food into four separate camping plates and hands it around.

PHIL plays with his GPS tracker but the thing doesn't seem to be working. He hits it with the palm of his hand, frowning.

PHIL

On a scale of one to slitting my wrists, how fucked are we, Hutch?

HUTCH

We're not fucked. We're fine. Bit of food in your belly and some kip and we'll be alright. Tomorrow we'll find the river.

DOM

This was a shit idea.

LUKE

If you didn't want to try the shortcut you should have stayed back in the field.

DOM

I had a scout master when I was a kid. He always used to say that if a shortcut was really a shortcut it wouldn't be called a shortcut, it'd be called the route.

There's a pause.

PHIL

Fuck off were you ever in scouts.

DOM

Where'd I get the quote from then?
Where'd I get the quote from?

HUTCH

Shut up the lot of you. Look, the path leads somewhere. If people lived here once that means there's a water supply nearby and that means the river's nearby. We have a compass, we have a map, we have supplies. As long as we don't panic, as long as we don't fuck ourselves, we'll be okay.

Silence. LUKE gets out his hip flask, takes a swig. Sees HUTCH looking at him, concerned.

LUKE

If I can't drink now, when can I?

He offers the hip flask to HUTCH who takes it and drinks from it, before handing it to DOM and PHIL who do the same. LUKE gets it back. It's empty. He pockets it.

PHIL

I'll give any of you a thousand pounds to spend the night with that thing upstairs.

HUTCH

No thanks.

DOM

My wife would never forgive me.

They look at LUKE.

HUTCH

You've woken up next to worse.

LUKE manages a small smile. He lays down, wearily, and closes his eyes.

LUKE

I'm good, thanks.

35

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT

35

The little house sits in the dark glen. The torrential rain stops, as suddenly as if someone had turned a tap off.

- 36 INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT 36
- LUKE lies asleep in front of the fire. He's dreaming. We move in on him. His face contorts - anger and fear flashing over his features. His hands clench and unclench...
- We see a quick FLASH of an image - LUKE standing in the work lift. Then back to him on the floor of the house, muttering. Another flash of an image - the lift doors open --
- 37 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS 37
- LUKE steps out of the lift, but instead of stepping into the office he steps into the forest. Ahead of him, arranged neatly amongst the trees, are desks with computers on. He walks forward. Music is piping out of the lift - the song he was listening to during BOB's attack at the beginning.
- LUKE walks through the forest office. The music gets louder and louder. And there's the sound of someone - *something* - coming. Something moving through the trees quickly. Something getting closer and closer. LUKE starts to run...
- He hurls through the trees and then sees it - a man, standing a way away, with his back to him. It's BOB. BOB starts to turn...
- 38 INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT 38
- LUKE thrashes, murmuring something under his breath, something is happening to him in his dream, something awful, something he can't bear... and then - He opens his eyes. The dream over. Awake.
- He jumps back.*
- Pull out - he's no longer downstairs, instead we see we're now in --
- 39 INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAWN 39
- LUKE is lying a few feet from the effigy in the bed which leers down at him with its lifeless eyes, still as creepy as before. LUKE pushes himself away from it, dragging himself through the dead animal skeletons on the floor.
- 40 INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - DAWN 40
- LUKE comes down the stairs, shaking. The place is empty. Sleeping bags discarded on the floor.
- LUKE
(panicked)
Hutch? Dom? Phil?

LUKE hurries down, looking around. The front door is open.

41 EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - GARDEN - DAWN

41

LUKE runs out into the garden. It's empty. Just the sound of early morning birdsong. He is starting to really panic when he hears a voice -

HUTCH (O.S.)

Luke?

The voice is coming from the back of the house. LUKE runs round -- and bumps into the other three.

PHIL

Jesus Christ, there he is.

HUTCH

Where'd you go?

LUKE

Woke up upstairs.

DOM

Where upstairs?

LUKE

(getting worked up)
In the bedroom, in the fucking
bedroom with that thing...

HUTCH

Alright mate, it's alright.

LUKE is shaking slightly. HUTCH puts a hand on his shoulder.

HUTCH (CONT'D)

Sleep walking, that's all. Gave us
a fright. Thought you'd found a way
out and fucked off and left us.

HUTCH turns to PHIL.

HUTCH (CONT'D)

Think technically you owe Luke that
thousand pounds now mate.

The others laugh, the tension abating.

42 EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - MORNING

42

The men leave the house, packs and clothes back on. In the light of the morning they can see what they couldn't before - three great pits of blackened earth outside the front of the house, ringed with black stones. Fire pits.

43 EXT. FOREST - PATH - DAY

43

LUKE leads the other three away from the house and back onto the path. In the light of day they can see what they couldn't last night - that almost all of the trees that surround the perimeter of the garden are carved with strange runes and crucifixes, all of them clearly done many, many, years ago.

44 EXT. FOREST - PATH - DAY

44

The four of them walk in silence.

DOM

We should be there by -

PHIL

We should be there by now. Yeah, we know, Dom.

DOM

So why aren't we?

They all look at Hutch.

HUTCH

Guess whoever made this path had other plans.

DOM

Right, and we just, what? *Assumed* it was going to take us to the river?

HUTCH ignores him.

PHIL

Luke, how much were you shitting yourself when you woke up in that room?

LUKE

It was a relief to wake up to be honest.

HUTCH

Having the nightmares again?

DOM and PHIL look over, interested - no one's told them about LUKE's nightmares. LUKE shifts uncomfortably.

LUKE

Not like this.

(pause)

This felt real.

They carry on in silence. Suddenly DOM spots something. He reaches down and picks it up - it's a chocolate bar wrapper, some brightly coloured Swedish brand.

DOM

Look.

He pokes inside, some melted chocolate still on the inside.

HUTCH

That's not been there long.

DOM

Guys, I mean... This is good, right? Means we're not the only one's in here.

PHIL

Or there's a sweet shop round the corner.

They start to walk on.

DOM

Least it's not raining today.

45

EXT. FOREST - PATH - DAY

45

Of course. It's raining. Big, hard, determined drops of rain.

HUTCH and LUKE walk ahead of the other two.

LUKE is furthest forward. He's stopped. HUTCH catches up with him, sees where he's looking - through a gap in the trees there's another three little houses, ancient and black and lifeless as the last place.

LUKE

What do you think?

HUTCH looks at the house, and we can see uncertainty and fear in him for the first time, as his mind drifts back to the shame and terror of last night.

HUTCH

There's no reason to stop now.
Clearly abandoned.

They walk on.

46

EXT. FOREST - PATH - DAY

46

LUKE leads the way, the others follow in silence.

They walk like this for a while, each lost in his own thoughts.

DOM
Can we stop?

LUKE
We only just got started.

DOM
My knee's killing me.

LUKE
You might have to push through the pain barrier a bit, we can't keep going at this pace.

DOM
Screw you, I'm through the pain barrier, I'm in bloody agony here.

LUKE
No you're not, you're uncomfortable, there's a difference.

DOM sits down.

DOM
Oh, I didn't realise you'd secretly qualified as a doctor. That's a relief. Why don't you bugger off and give yourself a prostate exam and leave me in peace.

LUKE
Dom, get up.

DOM
No.

LUKE
Dom get the fuck up. I mean it; I want out of these woods.

HUTCH interjects before DOM can retort.

HUTCH
Luke, why don't you scout ahead, see if the path leads somewhere?

HUTCH steps away from the others and speaks quietly to LUKE.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
Help me keep this together, mate. Okay?

HUTCH gives LUKE a look - he doesn't want any arguments.

LUKE nods, slipping out of his rucksack, taking only a water bottle, his pen knife, and a flash light.

LUKE

Fine.

HUTCH

Stick to the path. I mean it. *Do not go off the path.*

LUKE begins to head off.

47 EXT. FOREST - PATH - DAY

47

LUKE walks. The forest is dense and dark and spooky. Rustles and bird calls make LUKE jump.

Wet branches claw at his face as the path takes him through ever thicker undergrowth.

There's the snap of a branch, somewhere in the trees. He hurries on, some primordial sense in his brain telling him he's being followed. He speeds up, looking around, his breathing getting heavier.

The way suddenly becomes blocked with thick branches from trees on opposing sides of the path. LUKE pushes through them, wanting to keep on going, wanting to push forward.

As the panic starts to inexplicably grip him more and more, he begins to run. He's not looking where he's going, and the trip, when it comes, is inevitable.

He hits the ground with a thud, biting his tongue, tasting blood.

He pushes himself up, leaves and dirt on his face. He looks back at what he fell over. It's a little stone, sticking up out of the ground. It's smooth, curved. A gravestone.

LUKE looks forward. The thick branches stop and the path makes way onto an open area. The stones are everywhere. *It's a graveyard.*

48 EXT. FOREST - PATH - DAY

48

LUKE hurries back to the others.

He rounds a corner, can hear talking. He stops, he can see the other three. He stays spying on them for a little while.

They're laughing. Relaxed, relieved, almost enjoying themselves.

HUTCH is smoking a fag. PHIL takes a sip of water, DOM chortles at some offhand comment, whilst he lazily finishes off an energy bar. They look easy in each other's company. LUKE watches them, jealous.

He steps out of the path and they all look up. The laughter stops.

DOM
Here he is.

HUTCH
Find anything?

LUKE
Yeah.

PHIL
What?

LUKE picks up his bag and unzips it. He stops. Slowly he brings something out... The old crumpled dress that effigy was wearing back in the abandoned house. He looks up at the others.

LUKE
Who put this in here?

The others all look at each other, confused.

HUTCH
I didn't.

PHIL
You think I'd go anywhere near that thing?

LUKE
Well someone put it there.

LUKE looks at DOM.

DOM
Why would I do that?

LUKE
To be an asshole?

DOM
I'm an asshole? I dragged myself out of work to go and trudge around in the pissing fucking rain just because you -

He stops himself.

LUKE
Because I what?

DOM
Nothing.

LUKE

No. Go on - say it.

DOM

Look, you went through something horrible, okay? Fucking unimaginable. I know that. And I know you haven't got over it, but that doesn't mean I'm going to tiptoe around you. I didn't fucking shoot anyone.

HUTCH

Jesus, Dom.

DOM

Just because that happened doesn't negate the fact that we're now all fucked in here. They're not mutually exclusive.

LUKE

If it was such a trauma for you to get off your fat arse and come here you shouldn't have bothered.

DOM

You need therapy, mate. Not a hike in the woods.

LUKE

He was just like you, you know. A sad, fat, wanker.

DOM

Well working with you every day no wonder he bought a fucking rifle in

-

LUKE swings and punches him. DOM falls back, shocked. HUTCH jumps in and restrains LUKE.

HUTCH

Woah! Woah! Stop!

DOM

You broke my nose!

LUKE

Fuck you! You have no idea -

HUTCH pushes LUKE away.

HUTCH

You, chill out.

(to DOM)

You, shut up. Your nose isn't broken.

(MORE)

HUTCH (CONT'D)

You need to lock this shit up, the pair of you. This is exactly the sort of situation that makes people fall out and this is *exactly* the sort of situation where we need to all be working together.

LUKE and DOM eyeball each other, breathing hard, but calming down.

PHIL

Blimey. That's the most animated I've seen either of you in years.

They look at him. LUKE lets out a small laugh.

LUKE

Fuck me.

He heads off, stepping the old lace dress into the mud. PHIL helps DOM up and gives him a look.

DOM

What?

49

EXT. FOREST - PATH - DAY

49

LUKE walks out in front alone. HUTCH catches up with him. He hands LUKE something - an energy bar. LUKE takes it silently. Nods in thanks.

HUTCH

You've never told me the details. I haven't wanted to press...

LUKE

There's nothing to tell.

HUTCH

Can't imagine what it must have been like, mate.

LUKE

No.

HUTCH looks at the compass. Frowns.

LUKE (CONT'D)

We're not going in the right direction, are we.

HUTCH

Don't worry. I'm going to get you out of here.

50

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

50

LUKE pushes through the foliage and re-enters the graveyard. Ahead of him the graveyard stretches out, taking in the small area of open ground in the middle of the forest.

Behind him HUTCH, DOM and PHIL appear. HUTCH walks forward, impressed.

HUTCH

Wow.

PHIL

You know, I was hoping there'd be a graveyard at some point. It's just what this trip's been missing

HUTCH walks forward, marvelling at the place. They pass two shallow pits of blackened soil, with a ring of burnt stones around the edges like the ones found outside the abandoned house.

DOM

What are these things?

HUTCH

Fire pits.

DOM

They liked burning shit around here didn't they.

PHIL

Whatever keeps the darkness away.

HUTCH runs his hand over the gravestones, peers at the stone work.

HUTCH

This is actually an incredible find. It should be on display somewhere.

PHIL

Get us home I'll happily point the folks at the Natural History Museum in the right direction.

HUTCH shakes his head.

HUTCH

In a way we're lucky. Not many people will ever get to see this.

DOM

That is, in fact, the opposite of lucky.

LUKE comes to a stop, the others fan out behind him.

LUKE

This is what I wanted to show you.

In front of them is a camp. Two tents, pitched many years ago. One fell long ago and is flat to the ground, overgrown with moss. The other is now almost sagged to the floor, its sides filthy with grime and age. One side of it ripped all the way down.

HUTCH picks up an old pair of child's walking boots, stiff and mud caked and rotting away - they've been there for years.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Couple of decades old at least, you reckon?

HUTCH

Easily.

LUKE goes to unzip the tent. The others tense - not wanting to see what's inside.

LUKE unzips the fabric and *pulls* it back... The tent is empty, save for a long forgotten rucksack.

LUKE pulls the rucksack out, its once bright colours faded through time. He opens it, roots around, brings out a purse.

HUTCH takes the purse and looks inside. He brings out a small photo. It's of a smiling couple, a man and a woman, and their two children - a boy and girl, around 10 years old. They stand in front of a gleaming new pale blue Volkswagen camper van.

LUKE takes the photo, stares at it. HUTCH continues his exploration of the purse. Finds a credit card, reads it.

HUTCH (CONT'D)

'Anna Eriksson'. Expires August 1975.

PHIL

Think they made it out?

No one bothers to answer him. LUKE looks up at the darkening sky.

LUKE

Looks like rain again.

HUTCH

We'll pitch here.

DOM

In a graveyard?

HUTCH
It's the clearest ground we're
likely to find.

DOM
This is worse than the house!

HUTCH
You want to pitch your tent in the
dark, surrounded by trees, in a
storm?

DOM doesn't answer.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
Graveyard it is then.

The others set about making camp. DOM looks on miserably.

51 EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

51

Four tents pitched. Wind snapping at them, rain drizzling.
HUTCH tries to get a fire going, eventually managing to get a
wisp of flame out of the pyramid of sticks he crafted.

DOM sits in his tent massaging his bad knee. PHIL listens to
music on his mp3 player.

LUKE stares at the flames, moodily.

HUTCH comes over and sits by him, hands him some food.

HUTCH
How you holding up?

LUKE
Fine.

Pause.

LUKE (CONT'D)
You read about idiots that go off
the path and have to get a rescue
team sent out to bring them back.
You always think - how stupid do
you have to be? Yet here we are.

HUTCH
Think all this is character
building?

LUKE grins, despite himself. HUTCH shakes his head.

HUTCH (CONT'D)
This trip was supposed to be about
you. Now it's about us being lost
in the bastard woods.

LUKE

It's fine.

HUTCH

Do you think you're getting better?

LUKE

I don't know what 'better' feels like.

There's a pause. LUKE sits and thinks.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Work paid for us all to go to a councillor for a while after it happened. Mostly it was bullshit. But the guy told me something, last time I saw him. He said; there's only two things you really need to figure out in life - what's your greatest hope and what's your greatest fear.

HUTCH

And did you?

LUKE

Well I know my greatest fear is getting shot by a disgruntled co-worker.

HUTCH shakes his head, they both grin.

HUTCH

Your greatest hope?

Pause. LUKE looks down.

LUKE

I really don't know anymore.

HUTCH

Well, finding a way out of here would be a start, huh?

LUKE grins. HUTCH puts a hand on LUKE's shoulder and stands up.

LUKE

We're not like those idiots that get a rescue team sent out for them, you know.

HUTCH

Why's that?

LUKE

Because nobody's going to have called one.

52 INT. LUKE'S TENT - NIGHT

52

LUKE sits eating in his tarpaulin cave, his torch hanging from the roof giving off a pool of light. The rain hammers onto the plastic above him. Outside he can hear the others murmuring to each other.

In the corner is Anna's rucksack. He pulls it towards him, opens it and upturns it, letting its contents spill out. Out of it falls an old mouldy jumper, a rusty thermos flask, a change of clothes... And a bunch of long rotted flowers, the stems entwined with string, the dead petals falling out onto his lap.

LUKE stares at them, and shivers.

53 EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

53

The four men have all retreated into their tents. The rain picks up slightly, the drizzle and the wind conspiring to vanquish the little camp fire. The flames dying with a sizzle. The last light gone.

54 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

54

The trees swaying gently in the wind provide the only sound.

Slowly, another noise begins to bleed in - a refrain from the song that LUKE was listening to during the office massacre. Just a small part of the music, on loop, echoed and eery.

We move through the trees. On the ground are bodies - men and women in work suits, their bodies torn up by shotgun fire. Ahead of us is a light - an odd, neon interruption the dark - an exit sign.

We get closer to the sign but before we make it something shifts its weight in the trees ahead of us. There's something in the darkness, something we mistook for the forest but is now moving; slowly unfurling its limbs and shaking itself clear of the foliage. a dark, blood chilling, growl reverberates from the blackness as whatever it is gets ready to pounce...

The snap of a branch behind us. We turn.

Bob is standing right behind us. His eyes spring open. They are not human eyes. They are animal. Goat's eyes. Yellow, beady, and staring straight at us.

55

I/E. TENT/GRAVEYARD - NIGHT - LATER

55

LUKE lies asleep. His face is twitching. He is dreaming.

Something passes by his tent.

It disturbs the tent enough to wake LUKE up.

It takes him a moment for him to realise it -

He's not in his tent anymore.

He is lying in ANNA's tent. He lies still, breathing heavily, freaked out.

In his hand is the bunch of dead flowers. He drops them like they're something hot.

His breathing gets harsher - claustrophobia and panic setting in. To the side of the tent he can see that long ago the fabric has been sliced open with something sharp.

He jumps up, and stumbles out of the tent. He turns his torch on, walking through the dark graveyard back towards the camp. His breathing heavy, fear coursing through him.

He arrives at the camp sight, his torch picking out the four tents. He stops. The beam of light settles on HUTCH's tent and we see that along the side of it are three great rips in the fabric.

LUKE pulls back the tent flap and looks inside - it's empty.

HUTCH's torch lies on its side. His boots in the corner, a half-read guidebook to Sweden next to them. LUKE looks up with his torch and shines a light on the far end of the tent where there are several more long gashes in the material. As though something had raked sharp nails down the canvas.

LUKE straightens up out of HUTCH's tent. Swings his torch around.

LUKE
Hutch?! HUTCH?!

LUKE runs to the other two tents, unzipping them, waking DOM and PHIL.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Hutch is gone.

PHIL
What?!

LUKE
Hutch is fucking gone!

DOM and PHIL climb out, shivering, in to the cold night. PHIL looks at HUTCH's tent. Runs a hand through the sharp cuts in its side.

LUKE (CONT'D)
HUTCH! HUTCH!

LUKE looks down - shines his torch, they are standing on the dead ashes of the fire.

56 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

56

LUKE pushes through the trees as best he can.

LUKE
HUTCH?!

No reply comes. He stops, shinning his torch around, revealing only a thick wall of trees surrounding him. In the distance he can hear PHIL and DOM calling for him.

LUKE (CONT'D)
I'm here!

PHIL and DOM get closer, eventually coming through the trees and joining him.

PHIL
We need to go back.

LUKE
HUTCH!

Only silence answers them.

PHIL
Luke we're getting turned around out here.

LUKE
HUTCH!

Nothing.

PHIL
Lets got back to the tents. That's where he'll head to.

57 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

57

LUKE, PHIL and DOM struggle through the dark trees.

DOM
Wait. Stop.

LUKE and PHIL carry on.

DOM (CONT'D)

Stop!

LUKE and PHIL pause, look back at DOM.

DOM (CONT'D)

We should be back at the camp by
now.

LUKE and PHIL know he's right. They shine their torches all
around.

58 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

58

They walk. LUKE's torch flickers. He hits it on his palm,
rattling the battery, bringing it back to life.

He looks around at the trees, shining his light all about
him, searching for signs of the tents.

LUKE

Fuck.

PHIL

Should we retrace our steps? Maybe
we passed the camp already.

DOM leans against a tree, resting his knee, trying not to
panic.

DOM

Which way? Which way are we even
going?!

PHIL has his GPS out.

PHIL

I'm not getting anything from this
piece of shit.

They look at LUKE.

LUKE

(realising)
Hutch has the compass.

59 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

59

LUKE, PHIL and DOM walk through the darkness, lost.

60 EXT. FOREST - PATH - NIGHT

60

LUKE, PHIL and DOM walk. Suddenly LUKE's torch light picks
something up ahead - a small, dilapidated, stone building.
Surrounded on all sides by impenetrable forest.

The three men stop. Their torch lights pick out a symbol carved onto the front - a small rectangle at the top, its sides curving outwards as the lines travel down, almost forming the shape of an upside down bird. They don't know it but this is the **Mjolnir symbol** - the symbol of Thor's hammer.

DOM

Church means we must be near the graveyard, right? We've got to be near our camp.

LUKE

Could be.

A scream rings out. *It sounds like its coming from inside the church.*

61

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

61

LUKE, PHIL, and DOM enter. Their torch lights weak in the dark.

PHIL

Hutch?!

They move forward, down an aisle between rows of rotten benches, their torch lights feeling their way into the dark. The place is empty.

They walk gingerly forward, along the ancient floorboards. LUKE looks down. The aisle is covered in dried, dead flowers. A carpet of them. And within the flowers, the tiny skeletons of dead rodents.

They get to the end, where there's a bed of rotted wood, not much more than a frame now. Their torches work over it and we see that at the top and bottom on both sides are old, dry, leather straps.

Around the straps at the top of the bed LUKE notices something - a clump of very old blonde hair, caught in a knot around the leather...

Hanging above the bed is another effigy. Much more rotted than the one in the abandoned house. It barely hangs together.

DOM is looking around the aisle. Suddenly his leg goes down through a rotten floorboard. He yells out, sinking up to his thigh. PHIL runs to him, helps him out. They shine their torches down into the hole DOM has made. Below them seems to be a crypt.

Their torch lights work over the crypt floor. We see the outlines of bones down there... large animals. Legs, ribs, bits of skull. And twisting antler-like horns. Lots of them.

Another scream rings out in the darkness. This one is coming from the forest behind the church.

All of their heads snap up.

At the far end of the church is a door. The men step through -
-

62 EXT. BACK OF CHURCH - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS 62

The three of them step out of the church and stop.

On the other side of the church is a clearing. Stuck into the dirt are dozens and dozens of old wooden 'spears', bedded in at an angle, pointing out towards the forest behind the church, the ends of them sharpened into points. Littered amongst them are old fire pits and sections of charred earth.

LUKE looks down - the path restarts here. Weaving past the spears and traps. He looks at the others.

63 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT 63

The three of them walk, aimless. Leaderless.

64 EXT. FOREST - PATH - NIGHT 64

LUKE, DOM and PHIL trudge on grim silence, broken occasionally by LUKE calling out for HUTCH. Every time he yells DOM winces - LUKE's voice sounding too loud in the darkness.

LUKE rounds a corner. He freezes.

HUTCH is in the trees.

He's ahead of them, ten metres or so.

He is naked, propped, Christ like, his feet a metre above head height. His arms outstretched, held up by the branches.

His belly is sliced open, his lower half covered in black viscera.

His insides splayed around him.

His eyes are open and they stare lifelessly at his friends as they gather below him.

DOM
No. No, no, no...

DOM is shaking. PHIL's hand is over his mouth in shock.

LUKE is staring at the body. He's rooted to the spot.

PHIL
Oh God. Hutch.

LUKE backs away from the body, walking until his back hits a tree, making him jump. He leans against it, closes his eyes, terror absolutely taking hold of him. There's a SNAP of a breaking branch in the dark forest behind him. He turns and shines his torch into the thick knot of trees and shrubs but can see nothing.

LUKE, DOM and PHIL gather together on the path, each of them looking out a different way, anticipating an attack. But the forest remains still. The only sound is the heavy breathing of the three terrified men.

DOM
I want to go home. I want to
fucking go home now.

PHIL shines his torch around. The beam hits HUTCH's body, illuminating something - the compass, that still hangs around his bloody neck.

65 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

65

LUKE helps PHIL up, giving him a boost so that he can reach HUTCH's leg. After a few, sickening, yanks, HUTCH's ruined body dislodges from the tree and hits the ground with an awful thud, sending them all springing back.

PHIL gingerly goes to the body and leans down, gently closes HUTCH's eyes, then carefully taking the compass from around HUTCH's neck.

The three men stand, looking down at their friend.

DOM
We can't leave him like this.

66 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

66

LUKE, DOM and PHIL finish covering HUTCH's body with branches and foliage.

DOM
When we get out we'll need to send
someone back in to get his body.

LUKE
Phil, can you get a GPS reading?
Find our coordinates?

PHIL gets his GPS out and checks it. The little machine beeps at him. He shakes his head.

PHIL
Nothing. Nothing since we came into
these fucking woods.

The men all look at each other, grimly.

PHIL (CONT'D)
We'll come back for him.

Slowly they all head off, glancing back at the covered body
of their friend.

67 EXT. WOODS - PATH - NIGHT

67

They walk. Numb. No one saying anything. Tears still fall
from DOM's eyes, PHIL too looks like he might cry. LUKE just
stares ahead, fixated on the next step.

DOM
What are we going to tell his wife?

PHIL
I don't know.

DOM
His kids...
(beat)
Who could of done that to him?

PHIL spots something, just off the path - it's a big stick,
as thick and long as a baseball bat. He picks it up and gives
it a practise swing.

PHIL
Someone strong. Probably more than
one of them.

DOM
Jesus.

PHIL
Everyone keep your eyes open. Stay
alert.

68 EXT. - WOODS - NIGHT

68

They walk. PHIL gets out a bladder-style water carrier. He
upends it, getting the last few trickles out into his mouth,
and folding the empty holder back into his pocket.

DOM
I have to stop.

He collapses against a tree. PHIL looks at LUKE.

PHIL

Half an hour, then we keep go on.

LUKE nods.

69

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

69

DOM and PHIL huddle together. DOM is asleep. PHIL is slowly nodding off.

LUKE crouches a way off. The wind whistles through the forest. LUKE rubs his hands for warmth. In his hand he holds a penknife. He slowly extends the longest blade. Examining it.

A noise. The snap of a twig being trodden on, out in the dark of the forest. LUKE looks up, alert. His hand closes around his pen knife, the blade out.

Silence. LUKE stands up, faces into the darkness of the trees.

Somewhere an owl hoots. And then another sound, a rustling, movement. Close by. Footsteps. The hint of a whisper. LUKE turns on his torch, letting the beam hit the pale tree trunks.

He stares at the forest, looking for movement.

A shadow is thrown up onto a nearby tree. It is as though someone has stepped in front of the torch - someone's shape beamed onto the trunks of the forest. But there was no one there to cast the shadow, and the shadow is gone, disappeared into the darkness.

LUKE takes a step forward, slipping between the trees, entering the forest. He hears something ahead, his torch picking up the hint of movement, something gliding through the undergrowth ahead of him.

70

EXT. GREAT TREE - NIGHT

70

LUKE enters a small clearing, caused by the roots of a tree much taller than the others around it.

LUKE approaches the tree. He shines his torch up, the light creeping up the great trunk till it hits something - a foot. Up the light goes and we reveal more - The foot belongs to a man, and hanging with him, their feet level with the man's waist, are two children and a woman. They are the family from Anna's photo. They are dead. Hanging in the tree like HUTCH, their faces pale, eyes bulging.

LUKE sinks to his knees at the foot of the tree. He is crying. Sobs wrack through him, he leans his head on the bark of the tree and wails.

PHIL (V.O.)
LUKE! LUKE!

LUKE cries out in his fear and anguish.

PHIL (V.O.)
LUKE!

A hand appears from out of nowhere and grabs LUKE's shoulder -

71 EXT. GREAT TREE - MORNING

71

Suddenly it's morning. But it's as if no time has passed - as though someone had suddenly turned the light on in the sky. LUKE's tears still fall down his cheek. Out of thin air have appeared PHIL and DOM behind LUKE. PHIL with his hand on LUKE's shoulder. LUKE is blinking, the sobs catching in his throat.

PHIL
You were asleep.

LUKE pulls himself up, wipes his face.

LUKE
I don't... I don't know what happened.

He looks up at the tree. PHIL and DOM follow his gaze. The bodies are gone. Instead all we can see is an ancient bit of material, a faded blue, flapping on one of the branches. Grimy and old but still colourful enough to stand out. It could be a piece of jacket, or it could be nothing at all.

72 EXT. WOODS - PATH - DESCENT - DAY

72

The men follow the path as it descends down a steep valley. DOM winces as he slips and slides down the perilous hill side.

PHIL
What did you dream about, Luke?

LUKE just looks at him, doesn't answer. They trudge on. DOM swallows painfully.

DOM
Any chance either of you has a bottle of water you're not telling me about?

LUKE and PHIL both shake their heads, grimly.

- 73 EXT. WOODS - PATH - ASCENT - DAY 73
The men almost crawl up the other side of the valley.
- 74 EXT. WOODS - PATH - DAY 74
LUKE licks his tongue over dry, cracked lips.
He looks around. A way away he spots something - some ferns, brighter green and more lush than the rest of the forestry.
- LUKE
Wait.
- DOM and PHIL stop, exhausted.
- LUKE heads over to the ferns. The air ahead of him is heavy with tiny bugs.
- LUKE pushes through.
His feet start to suck through mud. He breaks through the foliage and stops - in front of him is a little stream, barely more than a trickle. He falls to his knees and scoops water into his mouth.
- LUKE (CONT'D)
Water!
- DOM and PHIL push through. Without a word they sink down and drink.
- LUKE rubs water over his face.
He looks up.
On the other side of the stream are a set of footprints, leading out into the forest.
- PHIL and DOM notice them too. The euphoria of finding water is replaced with a dark tension, and the realisation that they aren't watching their backs. LUKE stands, unsteadily, penknife in hand.
- 75 EXT. FOREST - DUSK 75
They walk. Asleep on their feet. Beyond weak.
LUKE stops, resting against a tree. He looks out into the darkening light of the forest.
What seemed like part of the forest moves.
What could have been a thin trunk of a tree bends and transfers its weight. Leaves rustle. There is someone or something out there. *Something watching him.*

LUKE strains his eyes.

76 EXT. FOREST - PATH - DUSK 76

LUKE's eyes spring open. He is leaning against a tree. Ahead of him are PHIL and DOM. PHIL looks back to him.

PHIL
Luke, come on.

LUKE forces himself on.

77 EXT. FOREST - PATH - DUSK 77

They walk.

LUKE stops, rests against a tree, catches his breath.

He looks up - the tree has many small branches coming off the trunk. He sees a small bunch of red berries hanging at head height. He reaches out and grips the branch. PHIL sees him.

PHIL
Don't.

LUKE just gives him a tired look. Instead of picking the berries he grasps the branch and, with all his effort, hauls himself up. Climbing the tree.

LUKE
I'm taking a look.

PHIL and DOM crane their heads to watch him go.

PHIL
(wearily)
Hey, you want some good news? I think I finally broke in my new shoes.

78 EXT. CANOPY - DUSK 78

LUKE climbs. Sweating and panting.

He pulls himself up to the highest point of the tree, breaking through the canopy.

He takes a moment to absorb the spectacular view of the forest that is laid out before him, vast and shrouded in mist in the dying light.

And then, directly in front of him, he sees it - far in the distance the trees stop, and beyond it the vague grey promise of open fields.

A smile breaks out on his face. He brings up the compass, checks the direction they need to head in - North.

He calls out, his voice cracking.

LUKE

I can see it! I can see the end!

His call echoes below him. Followed by silence. And then there's a sound, carried on the air. A snap of a branch...

A flock of birds is disturbed, fifty metres away.

LUKE ducks back down under the canopy, looks down at the dizzying drop to the forest floor below, already almost totally in shadow from the quickly setting sun.

LUKE (CONT'D)

(hisses)

Dom? Phil?

There's no reply.

Suddenly there's the sound of a body moving through the undergrowth.

LUKE shimmies down a few metres, still safely high up. He strains his eyes.

A flash of movement. A fluorescent orange blur - PHIL.

PHIL (O.S.)

Dom, run!

LUKE stays silent, frozen in fear. Below him is the sound of someone running, panting.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Oh Jesus, please no...

And then there's a scream so piercing, so painful, that LUKE closes his eyes and whimpers.

The scream turns into a guttural cry of pain. Then it cuts off all together and the forest turns horribly, terrifyingly, quiet.

79

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

79

LUKE clings to the tree. Shivering.

The forest is silent below him.

He looks down, fear etched across his face. He lets out a fearful little sob. He presses his forehead against the bark, his eyes squeezed shut. He's willing himself on.

He hits his head against the tree, again, and again. Trying to force himself into action.

LUKE
(muttered)
I can't. I can't.

LUKE is crying. Exhaustion and terror coursing through him.

His hands gripping the tree branch are getting tired. He slips, almost falling down the tree. He holds on harder but can't manage it for much longer. He knows he has to go down.

Slowly, ever so slowly, he begins to descend.

He lands at the base of the trunk. Stands stock still, terror coursing through him. He looks around, eyes trying to get accustomed to the pitch blackness.

LUKE turns his torch on, wincing at the loud 'CLICK' and the bright beam of light that now leads back to him.

He inches forward. The only sound is the breath in his lungs, the heart beat that pounds in his chest.

He carries on. Jumping at every twig snapping under foot or bird call in the trees.

He sees something on the floor. Inspects it. It's PHIL's GPS navigator.

Something grabs him by the ankle!

He lets out a strangled yell; spins, kicking, panicking, pen knife drawn. His torch picks out DOM, pale faced, terrified. He is curled up in the hollow space inside a dead tree.

LUKE crawls in with him. Switches off the torch.

Together they sit. Breathing hard. They whisper.

LUKE (CONT'D)
Phil?

DOM
We heard something coming. He started run...

LUKE
Was that you screaming?

DOM
No.

Silence. LUKE reaches out and picks up the GPS. He turns it on. The little machine whistles in the darkness. LUKE checks the screen but its broken - the numbers constantly changing, unable to get a reading. LUKE tosses it away.

DOM (CONT'D)
What do we do?

LUKE
We have to push on.

DOM
I don't think I can.

LUKE
Dom, I saw the end of the forest.
It's directly North of here. A days
walk.

DOM
What about Phil?

LUKE
We'll look for him. That's all we
can do.

DOM nods. Slowly they creep out of their hiding place.

LUKE looks around. The forest is dark and still.

He finds the path with his torch and the two of them carry
on.

80 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT 80

LUKE and DOM push through the undergrowth. LUKE checks the
compass.

There's movement in the forest. The sound a rotten tree stump
being crushed. Birds squawk. Wood creaks. DOM and LUKE look
around, fearfully. The forest returns to silence. They push
on.

81 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT 81

LUKE and DOM struggle forward. Somewhere deep in the forest
there is the call of an animal. They don't stop.

LUKE
What did you see when Phil
disappeared?

DOM
Nothing.

LUKE
But you heard something, right?
Something moving.

DOM
Yeah.

LUKE
What did it sound like?

Pause.

DOM
Fast.

LUKE
Did it sound like people. Or an
animal?

DOM
I don't know.

82 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

82

LUKE and DOM walk. Always with the sense that there is something just out of sight, following them through the trees.

DOM is getting slower, wincing with every bit of pressure he puts on his knee.

83 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

83

LUKE pushes through a clump of stubborn shrubbery and feels something crunch beneath his foot. He stops and looks down.

Beneath his boot is PHIL's GPS. LUKE closes his eyes.

DOM comes out of the forest behind him. He sees what LUKE's looking at.

DOM
No. No, you're kidding me. How is
that possible?

LUKE just shakes his head.

DOM (CONT'D)
We've been going in circles.

LUKE checks the compass. The needle swings this way and that, not finding any direction. Furious, he hurls it away into the darkness.

LUKE
I hate this *fucking* forest.

DOM falls against a tree. He has to bite his tongue to stop himself crying out. He slides down to a sitting position.

DOM
I can't... I can't do it any more.

LUKE shines his torch on DOM's knee. It's swollen through his trousers. He grimaces whenever he moves it.

DOM (CONT'D)

You should just go. I'm fucked.

LUKE runs a hand through his hair, sodden with sweat and moisture. Tears are in his eyes. He shakes his head.

LUKE

Dom...

DOM

You gave me hope, you bastard.
Actually thought we might get out
out of here.

LUKE stares out at the dark. Swears he can see movement ahead. He stops, strains his eyes looking forward. Silence again. Nothing out there.

LUKE sits down next to DOM.

LUKE

I'm sorry.

DOM

What for?

LUKE

For everything. You all did this
for me... You're good mates, and
it's my fault you're here. It's my
fault Phil and Hutch were here. You
were just trying to help but it
wasn't worth it.

DOM

Course it was. They wanted to be
here. We all did.

LUKE

I should have died that day. When
it happened. I couldn't save
anyone. Couldn't even try.

DOM

Jesus, Luke. What were you supposed
to do? You couldn't have done
anything mate.

LUKE

My boss had four kids and a
husband. She had a life. And he
took her life away from her and
left me with mine. And it's
worthless. Not like you, or Hutch,
or Phil.

(MORE)

LUKE (CONT'D)

You made something of yourselves. I didn't. So why didn't I die? Why didn't I just die?

Pause. DOM looks at him, broken hearted.

DOM

She left me, you know. Sarah. I lost my job six months back. They caught me skimming money off the top. I couldn't tell her. She didn't know till the bailiffs were carrying the sofas out the front door. Now she won't even let me see the kids. Point is, you're not the only one who feels useless. You're not the only one who's lost. You're not worth anything less than me or anyone else. And this isn't your fault. You hear me?

LUKE nods. They sit in silence for a few moments.

DOM (CONT'D)

I'll take that kebab now.

LUKE lets out a little laugh.

DOM (CONT'D)

I'll even spring for the expensive meat. Maybe when we get out we can be flat mates again. Live in a shit hole together.

LUKE

That'd be nice.

Out in the forest there's the *rustle* of movement. Something is out there, circling them.

LUKE's head snaps up, like an animal at a watering hole, alert.

He looks out at the forest, sensing something. Some presence out there in the trees...

DOM

What is it?

LUKE

Can you fight?

DOM doesn't even answer.

With a shaking hand LUKE brings out the pen knife. He stands with his back to the tree DOM is resting against.

Something is approaching. LUKE's ears prick up, he looks around, there is definitely the sound of footsteps coming from behind. He turns, penknife ready. DOM whimpers.

DOM

Oh Jesus.

Out in the trees something runs, circling LUKE and DOM. We hear the body crashing through the undergrowth. LUKE spins to follow the noise.

LUKE

Dom get up.

DOM struggles to stand, whimpering and crying.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Dom get up we have to go.

More crashing in the undergrowth.

LUKE grabs DOM and together they move as fast as possible.

They push through the thick forest, branches whipping at their faces and hands.

Behind them something follows.

DOM

Oh fuck me, fuck me, fuck me...

LUKE glances back. He sees something in the darkness, bursting through the undergrowth.

LUKE

Keep going!

DOM is hobbling and crying, every step on his ruined knee agony.

And then there is a point of light ahead of them. A flaming torch, stuck in the ground.

They pass it, and we see that ahead is another torch, and beyond that more...

They pass them, following the lights...

And slowly something happens to the forest. The random placing of the trees become more uniform, so that the higgledy-piggledy forest starts to be straightened out, and the trees themselves now, as well as standing more in line, are suddenly smaller, with thinner trunks.

DOM looks down and notices something - they are running over fallen apples. They are in an orchard.

Suddenly the air around them seems to be thicker, tendrils of smoke are caught in the beams of torch light.

They keep running.

Something grabs them!

Hands pull them down, behind a thick bush. LUKE faces their assailant - it's a boy, about eighteen years old. His face is smeared with dirt to camouflage him, but his blonde hair still stands out. He holds a rifle.

Nearby is another figure - an older boy, early 20s. Tall. Also camouflaged. A bandana pulled up over his mouth, goggles on to protect his eyes from the smoke. He holds a large wood-chopping axe.

LUKE and DOM, breathing hard, look back the way they came.

The forest rustles. Something out there. But then there's stillness. Whatever was following them has retreated.

The taller, older, man says something Swedish to his companion.

DOM

What the fuck was that?

The OLDER BOY straightens up and takes off his goggles.

OLDER BOY

It has many names.

He helps LUKE and DOM to their feet.

OLDER BOY (CONT'D)

I am Loki. This is Fenris. And you just ruined our hunt.

LUKE

Hunting what?

LOKI

The beast.

84

EXT. ORCHARD - NIGHT

84

LUKE and DOM follow LOKI and FENRIS through a gap in the trees and we see the source of the smoke -

Ahead of them is a clearing, and in that clearing sits a little wooden house. Not as dark and inhospitable as the ones they have seen before. This one has been lived in recently, its shutters open, its windows not caked in filth. It looks almost appealing.

Around it are half a dozen large burning bonfires. Crackling away in the night.

LOKI
How many of you came into the forest?

DOM
Two.

LOKI
The others?

DOM
One's dead, one's missing.

FENRIS
They're both dead.

DOM
We don't know that yet.

FENRIS
If the beast got your friend, he's dead.

LUKE
What is this beast? What exactly is out there?

The door of the house is opened and we can see a girl looking out - she's about seventeen, blonde. She waves at them to hurry.

LOKI
Do you believe in God?

LUKE
No.

FENRIS
That might need to change.

85 INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

85

LUKE and DOM enter with FENRIS and LOKI. The girl (SURTR) hugs FENRIS and kisses LOKI. She looks at LUKE and DOM and says something in Swedish which LOKI replies to.

LUKE looks around the kitchen. Dinner has been prepared here recently. A fire blazes in the corner, a pot of stew bubbling over it.

LUKE
Is this your house?

LOKI

It's hers.

He nods. For the first time, in the corner of the room, we see a little OLD WOMAN. She looks to be at least 90, frail, with wispy hair on her head, wearing a simple floor length dress. She looks at LUKE and DOM with watery eyes. She goes to the fire and brings back two bowls of steaming stew. She places them on the table.

LUKE

Who is she?

LOKI

Our host.

DOM tentatively sits down and tries the food. Ascertaining it's safe, he quickly wolfs it down.

LUKE

Do you know a way out of here?

LOKI

There is no way out.

DOM looks up from his bowl, food on his chin.

DOM

What do you mean?

LOKI

This is not any normal forest. If it doesn't want you to leave, you can't.

LUKE and DOM glance at each other, uneasily.

86

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

86

FENRIS serves up more stew. LUKE and DOM sit on one side, the Swedes on the other.

The rifle is propped against the wall by the fire, equidistant between LUKE and LOKI.

DOM glances at the OLD WOMAN who is mashing up roots and plants in an old wooden bowl. She makes a paste and, presently, brings it to DOM. She touches his knee. He flinches.

FENRIS

Let her. She's old, man. Old people know about herbs and shit, everyone knows that.

The OLD WOMAN smears the paste over DOM's knee. He grimaces.

LUKE

I don't believe that there's no way out of here.

LOKI

It doesn't matter to us. We're not trying to leave. Not until we kill her.

LUKE

Who?

FENRIS

The beast, man. Don't you listen?

DOM

Is it really a beast out there? We thought it was people...

LOKI

People didn't kill your friends.

LUKE

Why are you hunting it?

LOKI

Vilda Jakten.

LUKE

The Wild Hunt.

LOKI nods.

LOKI

The Wild Hunt.

LUKE looks up. The OLD WOMAN watches them all, she's decrepit, but has a sharp intelligence, the fire light flickering in her eyes. LUKE turns to FENRIS.

LUKE

How long have you been in here?

FENRIS

A month.

LUKE

And her?

FENRIS

Her whole life.

LUKE

She knows a way out. She's not telling you.

LOKI looks at him sharply.

LOKI
This is her table. Her house. You
will respect her.

LUKE looks back at him, noting the sudden outburst.

DOM
So what is it, then? The beast?
Like is it a bear or a big dog
or... something?

LOKI
It is the last link to the Old
Gods.

DOM
So... not a bear?

LOKI
Many stories have been told about
this forest. Many mis-truths, many
wild tales.
(he nods at the Old Woman)
As for her, she'll call the beast
Moder. But I believe she goes by a
different name. We call her
Tanngrisnir.

LUKE looks at him sharply.

LUKE
Teeth Bearer.

LOKI looks surprised, slightly impressed.

LOKI
You know the legends.

LUKE
I've heard a little.

The OLD WOMAN speaks again, in Swedish, staring straight at
LUKE.

LUKE (CONT'D)
What is she saying?

FENRIS
She says that here in the forest is
where the legends were born.

LOKI
Do you know the story of
Tanngrisnir, Luke? Do you know what
Thor would do to her, every night?
He would kill her. And he would eat
her.

(MORE)

LOKI (CONT'D)

And then he would bring her back to life. The God of Thunder. Able to take life. Able to give it.

SURTR

Immortality.

LOKI brings a book out of his pocket and shows LUKE - it's an old text, with reproductions of ancient pictures showing a goat-like creature pulling a chariot. And on another page hand drawn maps. All of it conjecture, but it's been enough to convince this young man of so much...

LUKE takes the book. He checks the inside sleeve. There's a library ticket there. LUKE shakes his head, hands the book back.

LUKE

(dubious)

You think Tanngrisnir is real? You think a mythical chariot pulling goat is hunting us?

LOKI stands up and picks up the rifle. LUKE can't help but flinch slightly from it.

LOKI

Teeth bearer. Many teeth. Many horns. She does not pull a chariot anymore, Luke. She does not live in the world of the Gods. Not for many years. You can stay here as long as you like, or try and find a way home. But I wouldn't go out at night if I were you. We're not alone here.

87

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

87

LUKE turn the pump handle at a well. The fires burn around them. FENRIS stand with him, holding the rifle. FENRIS looks out nervously at the forest.

LUKE

So you haven't actually seen it, then?

FENRIS

Tanngrisnir? Yes. For a moment. Sort of. It was like the forest came alive.

LUKE

You were scared?

FENRIS looks at him - it's a stupid question.

FENRIS

I haven't stopped being scared
since we got here.

88 EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT 88

LUKE washes his face in the water. The reflection of the fires dancing on the black surface. Beyond the fires the forest. Dark, dark, dark.

89 INT. HOUSE - LANDING - NIGHT 89

LUKE walks up the creaking stairs. He turns onto the landing and jumps - the OLD WOMAN is at the end of the corridor. She stares back at him, and then turns and heads up another set of stairs into the attic.

LUKE opens a door, goes in --

90 INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM 3 - NIGHT 90

The Swedes room. Sleeping bags laid out on the floor, stuff spread everywhere. Like a teenager's bedroom. LUKE looks around - notices some rucksacks lined up against the wall.

SURTR (O.S.)

Your bedroom's down the hall.

LUKE turns sharply, sees SURTR standing in the doorway.

LUKE

Thanks.

91 INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM 1 - NIGHT 91

LUKE comes in, goes to the window. DOM sits on the bed, his bad leg propped up.

Outside of the house LUKE watches FENRIS and LOKI checking the bonfires, keeping them stocked with wood. The smoke rising up. The forest beyond standing tall and dark and imposing.

LUKE

How's your leg?

DOM

I can hobble a little. That gunk she put on it actually seems to be doing the trick.

LUKE

Good.

DOM

So... just to make sure we're on the same page; the ancient mythical goat theory. We're dismissing that, right?

LUKE

Whatever's out there is real. It was following us and it sensed a trap and it turned back.

A pause. DOM seems to pluck up the courage to say something.

DOM

Luke. These nightmares you've been having...

LUKE looks at him. DOM looks almost embarrassed.

DOM (CONT'D)

You're being followed in them, aren't you. Something's following you. It's going to attack, and then you wake up.

LUKE nods.

DOM (CONT'D)

I've been having them too.

LUKE looks at him, hard.

LUKE

Well you're not going to sleep so don't worry about it.

DOM

Why not?

LUKE

When I went into their room I saw an extra rucksack. I think there used to be four of them here and now there's only three. I don't want to find out why. We're leaving tonight.

92

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

92

DOM and LUKE sneak down. DOM looks around the kitchen, finds a kitchen knife, picks it up. Looks at LUKE. LUKE nods.

They open the door, are about to step out. There's a noise behind them. LUKE turns - the OLD WOMAN is there.

For a moment she stands and watches them. And then she opens her mouth and *screams*.

93 EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

93

LUKE and DOM burst out of the door and run, past the dimly lit fires, towards the orchard.

94 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

94

LUKE and DOM leave the orchard and head for the trees.

As they're running they realise they are passing cars - cars from many different eras. Ancient and rusty. Abandoned to the forest. LUKE passes one brand new car, parked on the edge of a set of tyre tracks that lead into the forest. He tries the door, locked.

DOM

Luke, come on!

They head along the tracks. And then they stop - Because PHIL is in the tree above them. He's like HUTCH. His stomach is cut open, his body stuck high in the branches, higher than any man could lodge him. His pale face looks down, lifelessly, at them.

CLICK. The sound of a rifle bolt being pulled back.

LUKE and DOM turn. LOKI has the rifle pointed at them. FENRIS is with him.

LUKE stares at the rifle.

LOKI

It looks like Tanngrisnir found your friend.

DOM

Or you did.

LOKI

I told you, we aren't the ones hunting you.

DOM

Let us leave then.

LOKI

Can't.

DOM

Listen, you litte shit -

SURTR comes at him from the side. Hits him over the side of the head with the handle of an axe. DOM goes down, drops the knife. LUKE is frozen to the spot. Staring at the rifle barrel pointing at him. He's shaking.

SURTR beats DOM, aiming kicks at his midriff and his head. He loses consciousness eventually, his moans and wails fading out. SURTR stops beating him. LUKE just stands there, shaking. LOKI stares at him, curious.

LOKI

I'm sorry Luke. But we aim to catch the beast. And we can't do that without bait.

LOKI steps up and swings the rifle butt round, hitting LUKE in the face.

95

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM 1 - MORNING

95

LUKE wakes with a gasp and tries to sit up, but something stops him. We see that he is tied to the bed by his wrists and ankles.

He looks up. The OLD WOMAN is looking down at him.

LUKE

Where's Dom?

The OLD WOMAN leans down and silently begins to clean the dried blood from his forehead with a wet rag.

SURTR enters the room. She is holding the rifle.

She cuts LUKE free, and steps back, holding the rifle up warningly.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Surtr, Don't do this...

SURTR

Why not?

LUKE

You're just a kid. You're just a kid that's got involved with something they don't understand. We could get out of here together. Me and Dom could help you.

SURTR stares at him, impassive. Then she smiles.

SURTR

You cry in your sleep you know. I was watching you. Fenris has been getting the nightmares too. I think it's because you're both cowards. I dream of fire and blood and an endless night but they don't scare me. Loki says they're dreams of the future. Of what's to come.

(MORE)

SURTR (CONT'D)

He says I have to be patient, but I'm tired of waiting. I want the fire, I want the blood. I want them now.

LUKE steps towards her and she holds up the rifle to his face.

SURTR (CONT'D)

Don't be a silly boy.

SURTR turns and leaves. The OLD LADY follows. The door is locked behind them.

The only sound is someone chopping wood outside.

'Chop'.

'Chop'.

'Chop'.

96

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM 1 - DAY

96

LUKE goes all around the room, checking the wooden panelling.

As well as the entrance to the room there's another door - a partition door to the next room. LUKE tries it. Of course, it's locked.

He stops. There's something in the room above him. Something moving. The sound of sharp footsteps. LUKE walks across the room and the footsteps follow him, as though someone was tracing his movements in the room above.

LUKE looks up at the ceiling, hating whatever it is.

SOMETHING BANGS HARD ON THE CEILING ABOVE HIM.

LUKE jumps.

He hears movement in the corridor outside.

He looks through the keyhole of his door. He can see the stairs going up to the attic. The OLD WOMAN passes and heads up there. He listens to the sound of her walking across the ceiling above him.

97

EXT. HOUSE - SUNSET

97

The sun goes down over the house.

LUKE works at a loose panel in the wall that connects to the next room over. Suddenly we hear voices in the corridor outside.

FENRIS (O.C.)

Okay Dom. Let's go.

DOM (O.S.)

Hey, stop! Luke!

LUKE looks out of the key hole which gives him a very narrow view into the corridor outside. He can just about make out DOM being manhandled out of his room and along the corridor.

LOKI is barking orders at the others in Swedish.

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

Get off me! Ow! Get off!

LUKE

Dom!

DOM (O.S.)

LUKE! Luke, they're taking me upstairs.

LUKE

Dom! It's okay mate, just hold on.

DOM (O.S.)

Fuck me, they're taking me upstairs.

LUKE

Dom!

The sound of DOM being manhandled up the thin staircase towards the loft.

Above LUKE a noise begins. Weakly at first, and then harder. The sound of banging. As though people were stamping their feet against the floor, getting louder and more excited.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Dom! Can you get away?!

DOM (O.S.)

Oh fuck, Luke. It's dark, we're coming up to the door. Luke. Please... Please...

The sound of a door being opened. The banging on the floor above LUKE intensifies.

SURTR (O.S.)

In you go!

DOM yells out in pain and there's the sound of him being thrown forward into the attic. The door slams behind him. We hear LOKI, SURTR and FENRIS hurry downstairs.

The sound of the banging on the ceiling grows louder and louder and then, suddenly, stops.

Silence. We can just hear DOM's muffled whimpering.

DOM (O.S.)
Oh god. Oh please...

A moment later there's a new noise - a heavier, more deliberate footfall which begins at the far end of the room and makes its way carefully towards the creaking weight of where DOM is standing. We hear him pulling at the door, scratching desperately.

DOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Please... Please... Oh no! No!
Luke!

The footsteps seem to reach him. And suddenly there's silence.

LUKE
Dom!

The sound of the attic door opening, A body falling down the stairs, crashing to the bottom. DOM is crying, moaning.

LUKE's door is suddenly wrenched open. LOKI stands there, he grins, madly.

Behind him DOM is being dragged away by FENRIS and SURTR - someone has scratched a cross into his forehead and it bleeds freely. A rag is stuffed in his mouth. He looks at LUKE with mad, terrified eyes.

LOKI
Are you ready, Luke?

99

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

99

LUKE and DOM are led by the Swedes. Their hands are tied, gags in their mouths. DOM is in a tatty white robe, with a crown of thorns on his head.

Around the perimeter a dozen flaming torches ring them.

As he drags LUKE along, LOKI hisses in his ear.

LOKI
Once the people of the forest would make sacrifices to her. It kept her strong. Kept her *magic* strong.
(MORE)

LOKI (CONT'D)

Cheer up, Luke, you're about to meet a God.

100 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

100

LUKE and DOM are lead through the forest into a small clearing. FENRIS looks around nervously, eyeing the trees.

LOKI forces DOM down onto his knees and ties him to a thin but sturdy tree.

LUKE is lead to the side by FENRIS. They take cover in the undergrowth.

SURTR and LOKI light torches around DOM.

DOM thrashes, moaning. He seems to be trying to tell LUKE something.

LUKE can't say anything, just give a muffled yell of anger and fear through his gag.

LOKI picks up a long hunting knife and approaches DOM.

He places the knife on DOM's forehead and closes his eyes, taking a second to compose himself. Then he slices down, opening up the skin and releasing a wave a red over DOM's face. LUKE yells through his gag.

DOM opens his eyes and stares straight at LUKE.

LOKI picks up the rifle and heads to their hiding place.

The three Swedes wait in anticipation. LOKI has the rifle, FENRIS an axe, SURTR takes the hunting knife.

LUKE stares at DOM. Who kneels, vulnerable and exposed, in a circle of light. Blood dripping down his face onto the robe. The forest all around him. Ready to consume him.

DOM stares, wild eyed, into the trees. He is breathing hard, his heart pounding in his chest.

FENRIS and SURTR look to the dark tree line in nervous anticipation - but there is no movement.

LUKE can't take his eyes off DOM. Like his friend, he is breathing hard, terrified.

But nothing happens.

The three Swedes stay still, ready to pounce. LOKI with the endless patience of a hunter, SURTR and FENRIS with the nervous energy of teenagers.

It seems at any minute that the forest will come alive and a creature will burst forth from the blackness and grab DOM.

But still nothing happens.

LUKE glances to his side, at SURTR. He sees something - she has a set of car keys attached to a chain on her belt. She looks at him looking at her. He turns his head away and she smirks.

101 EXT. FOREST - DAWN

101

The sun slowly begins to rise. DOM is still tied to the tree. The blood on his head is dried. He is freezing, shivering, still scared witless.

LOKI, FENRIS and SURTR all watch him. FENRIS yawns. LUKE is frozen in shock. Not taking his eyes off his friend.

With DOM: We see him staring forward at the forest. Fixed determination. He looks almost mad. We realise that he hasn't spent all night waiting to die... His wrists are raw from where he has been rubbing and working his way out of his binds.

His hands are finally free. He reaches down, slowly, and frees his legs, the foliage around him shielding him from LOKI's watchful gaze.

Suddenly DOM springs up. He runs.

SURTR leaps up as DOM disappears into the trees. She goes to follow him but LOKI grabs her.

LOKI

No.

From out in the forest there is a scream. The sound of the trees moving. Then the scream cuts off. And silence returns.

LOKI yells something at the other two in Swedish. SURTR answers back, angrily.

LUKE sinks to his knees. Closes his eyes.

102 EXT. FOREST - DAY

102

LOKI, SURTR and FENRIS lead LUKE back. They all watch around themselves warily.

LOKI stops them, listens carefully. He pulls back the hammer of his rifle and glances into the trees to the left. He moves through the foliage. FENRIS and SURTR follows behind, pushing LUKE with them.

103 EXT. FOREST - DAY

103

LOKI stops and looks up. DOM is propped in the tree above them. He is still alive, barely. He moans lightly, his mouth opening and shutting weakly. His beard is stained red with blood. His stomach opened, his insides slowly starting to unravel.

LUKE looks up in appalled horror. FENRIS looks away. SURTR doesn't.

LOKI raises the rifle and shoots DOM, blasting off the top of his skull, silencing his pitiful death moans. LUKE looks at LOKI with hate.

LOKI

He should not have run.

LOKI passes them and continues back towards the house.

104 INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM 1 - DAY

104

LUKE is thrown back into his room and the door slammed and locked.

He sinks to the floor and weeps.

105 INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM 1 - NIGHT

105

Heavy metal music booms from downstairs. We can hear LOKI yelling, crashing around, angry.

The sound of footsteps approaching. The door opens. FENRIS enters.

FENRIS puts a plate of food down on the floor. His hands are crusted with dried blood. He turns to leave and LUKE prepares to pounce... But FENRIS stops, and unexpectedly sits on the bed.

FENRIS

I know how you are feeling, you know.

LUKE just glares at him.

FENRIS (CONT'D)

Lars was my friend. He was with us when we came in here. Loki told us we were going to change the world. All of us. The first week we waited for the beast in the forest but nothing happened. Lars couldn't sleep. Every night he was crying and screaming. Plagued by dreams. I think you know what they are like.

LUKE stares at him. For a moment they say nothing. Downstairs the music blares out, the singer growling something in Swedish.

FENRIS (CONT'D)

We were out in the forest and we heard her. Lars gave chase. We lost sight of him. We called and called but he didn't reply. Then, on the way back to our camp, we found him. In the trees. Hanging where she knew we would see him. Now we are more careful. We set traps. We wait.

FENRIS doesn't look at LUKE, instead playing absentmindedly with the sharp wooden edge of the bed.

FENRIS (CONT'D)

I'm sorry your friends are dead.
I'm sorry that you'll be dead too.

106

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM 1 - DAY

106

LUKE lies, tied up, in bed. His eyes are red. He cries.

Downstairs music is blaring loudly, and next door he can hear the sound of LOKI and SURTR having aggressive sex against the wall.

The OLD WOMAN enters. She stares down at LUKE. She seems angry.

LUKE

Help me, please. Do you speak English?

She doesn't react to him. Instead she places the ceremonial gown that DOM was wearing, now blood stained, on the edge of the bed, neatly folded. On top of that she places the crown of thorns.

A particularly loud bang on the wall and a scream from SURTR makes the OLD WOMAN close her eyes in anger.

LUKE (CONT'D)

You don't like them anymore than I do. Just let me go. Let me go. I can get them out of here. What do you want? Tell me what you want.
Tell me what you want!

She reaches into her dress and pulls out her little silver knife and a wrinkly apple from the ORCHARD. She cuts a slice of apple and places it in LUKE's mouth.

OLD WOMAN

Moder.

The OLD WOMAN turns and leaves, locking the door behind her.
LUKE lets his head falls back onto the bed.

107 INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM 1 - NIGHT 107

LUKE lies in bed. His eyes red. We move to the window.
Outside the forest looms under a full moon. The trees
reaching in, towards the house.

108 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT 108

We run through an endless line of computer desks, set up in
the forest. Behind us something is pursuing him.

We stop.

BOB is ahead, his back to us. He turns. His limbs are longer
than they should be. His skin is mottled and darker, as
though he has grown into the forest. From his scalp twist two
horns, one short and stubby, one longer.

His yellow eyes bore into us.

109 INT. OPEN PLAN OFFICE - DAY 109

(Flashback)

DEBBIE lies on the floor dead. Blood pooling around her. LUKE
lies under his desk. He stares at DEBBIE in disbelief.

There is the occasional scream, the occasional cry or beg for
mercy. But there's an odd silence to the place, punctuated by
the sound of the rifle.

LUKE closes his eyes. He's shaking. He looks over - a Fire
Exit is near by. Some of his colleagues make a break for it,
but LUKE is frozen.

LUKE stays under his desk. The sound of footsteps getting
closer.

LUKE looks up. BOB stands over him. Rifle in hand. Blood
splatter on his shirt. LUKE doesn't move. BOB raises the
rifle and points it at LUKE. He pulls the trigger.

'Click'.

'Click'.

'Click'.

No bullets. BOB stares down at LUKE, no expression on his face. And then he walks away, digging in his pocket for more shells.

LUKE stays where he is, unable to move. Terror leading to inertia. He starts to cry.

There's a hiss. He looks over. Under a desk nearby is an OFFICE WORKER, in his twenties. He motions to BOB, who is walking away from them, reloading his gun. LUKE doesn't say anything, doesn't move. The OFFICE WORKER signals again, then gets up and runs.

LUKE watches as the young man hurls himself at BOB. BOB is caught off balance and the two of them grapple for the rifle.

If LUKE ran and joined in with the OFFICE WORKER they could overpower BOB. But LUKE can't move. He can only watch as the OFFICE WORKER is pushed away by the bigger, stronger, BOB. BOB picks up his rifle and LUKE closes his eyes as the sound of rifle fire fills the room again.

110 INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM 1 - NIGHT 110

LUKE wakes up. The house is silent.

He looks down at his hands. The rope that binds his hands together has been cut through. His hands are free.

Free.

On his chest is a line of cold silver. A sharp little knife. The OLD WOMAN's knife. He picks it up and gets out of bed.

He looks out of the window. The night is dark.

LOKI is in the garden, lighting the flaming torches around the perimeter. He's a quarter of the way through, working his way around methodically.

LUKE goes to the door. The key is in the lock. He turns the handle slowly. The door opens.

LUKE breathes heavily, anticipation rising in his stomach. He turns and, not completely understanding why, picks up the crown of thorns on the bed. He places it gently on his head. One of the thorns nicks him and a thin trickle of blood works its way down his head.

111 INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR - NIGHT 111

LUKE steps out into the dark corridor. He heads to the stairs, trying to be as silent as possible but each footstep feeling like it sends a creak through the whole house.

He is just in his underpants, the moonlight that comes through a window reflects off his wiry, sinewy, body as he moves, animal like, down the corridor.

112 INT. HOUSE - STAIRS/KITCHEN - NIGHT

112

Creep, creep, creep... LUKE winces as he makes his way down the rough wooden stairs and into the kitchen.

FENRIS has his back to LUKE. He sits at the table reading a comic by candle light. He has headphones on, from which we can hear the tinny sound of loud music.

On the other side of the kitchen, past FENRIS, is the hunting rifle.

LUKE stares at the back of the teenage boy. Not even old enough to grow a beard...

LUKE strides across the room.

FENRIS sees him at the last minute.

The boy turns, headphones still on. He grabs LUKE's wrist and falls at him, knocking the chair over. The two of them wrestle. They fall back onto the table. LUKE is heavier than the boy and his weight flattens him onto FENRIS. The little knife slips into the flesh where FENRIS's collarbone meets his neck, almost by accident.

LUKE backs away from FENRIS, in shock.

FENRIS staggers away and sinks down onto the floor, gasping, blood pooling. The music still blaring in his ears.

LUKE is shaking as he hurries round the table and picks up the hunting rifle.

113 EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

113

The torches are all lit now. And in the centre of the garden LOKI is touching one of them to the bonfire and watching as the flames catch and rise towards the sky.

LUKE takes a few steps out into the garden. His bare feet hitting the grass.

LOKI stiffens, sensing something. He turns.

LUKE

Loki.

LOKI manages a smile.

LOKI

Luke. Don't be crazy. You are all alone. Surrounded by darkness.

LUKE doesn't say anything. He strengthens his grip on the rifle. Swallows.

LOKI (CONT'D)

You're afraid, Luke.

LOKI glances over at the axe which lies in the grass nearby.

LOKI (CONT'D)

You should be.

He takes a step towards the axe.

LUKE pulls back the hammer on the rifle and fires. LOKI's chest blooms a red flower and he is sent back, crashing into the bonfire, rolling out the other side a wailing, screaming, human torch.

LUKE walks carefully towards him. Points the rifle at him and fires again. The screaming stops.

114 EXT. PATH - NIGHT

114

LUKE looks at the cars. He finds a modern one, tucked away, and beyond it tyre tracks leading into the forest. He tries the door. Locked.

He glances back at the house, surrounded by the lit torches. He's on the edge of the forest here, already a few trees in. He shivers. Stuck between one horror and another. He makes up his mind and heads back towards the house.

115 EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

115

LUKE looks through the window into the house. He can't see anything in the gloom.

He moves around, checking the windows...

LUKE goes all the way around the house checking the windows, looking for SURTR...

When he gets back to the front of the house there is something new. A trail of blood, leading from the front door out.

LUKE follows the trail of blood and finds, not SURTR, but the OLD WOMAN.

She has FENRIS up on his back on the sacrifice table. The boy is still alive.

The fire, raging a few minutes ago. Has been put out.

The OLD WOMAN starts to intone some strange, dark, words.

She pulls the knife out of FENRIS and grips his head. She carves a cross deep into his scalp as the boy wails and moans.

LUKE

Jesus.

The OLD WOMAN looks at him now. She smiles. There is no light in it, no kindness. It is an evil smile, full of hatred and violence. She stays staring at LUKE as she raises the little knife above her head and, with surprising strength, brings it down into FENRIS's skull. The boy's eyes roll back into his head and he goes limp.

OLD WOMAN

Moder! Moder! Moder!

LUKE

No...

LUKE points the rifle and fires.

The OLD WOMAN flies backwards, as though yanked by an invisible rope around her waist.

As the gun smoke clears LUKE walks forward. He stops, blinks a few times, lowering the rifle, shocked.

The OLD WOMAN lies in the wet grass. LUKE looks down and pales.

Her little dress has ridden up revealing spindly white legs that start to curve at the knee, ending, unmistakably, awfully, *in hooves*.

OLD WOMAN

Moder...

The last breath leaves her lungs. She dies.

In the forest comes an animal roar. It is the sound of terror and fury. A primal, deafening, outraged, furious, *inhuman* sound. And it grows closer each time we hear it.

LUKE

(realising)

Mother.

LUKE turns and runs for the house.

116 INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 116

LUKE enters, slamming the door behind him. He looks out of the window at the dark forest. No movement.

117 INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR/BEDROOM 3 - NIGHT 117

Up. Up the stairs, into the bedroom where the teenagers have left a detritus of sleeping bags, rucksacks, food and drink.

LUKE searches desperately, pulling out clothes and maps...

LUKE
Keys, keys, keys...

He stops when he gets to LOKI's bag. It is full of books and manuscripts. We see briefly the man's obsession with the occult, with pagan rituals, with Nordic mythology - dark texts on ancient civilisations, old tomes with graphic drawings of monsters believed by most people to be a product of ancient campfire stories. But we know different, because one of those monsters is outside right now...

Something creaks in the attic above LUKE. He looks up...

118 INT. HOUSE - ATTIC STAIRS - NIGHT 118

LUKE stands at the foot of the stairs. He slowly starts to ascend...

119 INT. ATTIC - NIGHT 119

The door creaks open. Something scuttles away in the darkness. LUKE enters.

LUKE
Surtr. I'm armed. Fenris and Loki are dead. You don't have to die as well. I just need the car keys.

He clicks a torch on. The beam is weak, flickering on and off.

He creeps forward, the rifle ahead of him. Something moves in the darkness. His torch light can't find it.

He swallows his fear.

LUKE (CONT'D)
No one else has to die.

Ahead of him are seats, set up so that they all face into the darkness, an aisle running down the middle of them. And in the chairs are bodies. Ancient, almost mummified.

Unseeing eyes gazing into the dark. Paper-like skin, strands of hair stuck to pale white scalps. It's a congregation.

The floor is covered with flowers, some dead, some new. The dead petals crunch under foot. Amongst them are the skeletons of dead rodents.

He looks to the side and sees something - *a backpack, and it's one of many, piled in a corner, from all different eras. The equipment of dead men and women. There are also piles of shoes, hats, clothes...*

LUKE carries on, walking down the aisle.

At the end is a small wooden table. A body is on it, held in place with leather straps. It is cloaked in darkness. LUKE's torch picks out details - an antler. Ancient, worn. Grown out from the skull. A face, half-human, half goat. It looks like the effigy in the first house.

Thud.

The sound of something in the attic stamping on the floor.

Thud. Thud.

Again.

LUKE looks around. Slowly the mummified figures are moving. Their feet stamping on the floor with growing purpose.

The noise gets louder, the movements stronger. Little faces turning towards him.

And suddenly, just as it crescendos... the noise stops.

LUKE looks back.

The thing on the table opens its eyes.

LUKE falls back. The creature rises slowly. In the flickering torch light we see it is half human half beast. Ancient, withered. It approaches LUKE...

The congregation of ancient people stamp their dusty feet - no, not feet, on closer inspection we see more terrible hooves - on the floor, their hands reaching out to him.

They all chant the same word.

Moder.

The creature that staggers towards LUKE tries to say it as well, its inhuman mouth barely forming the word.

Moder.

The creature extends it's hand - one sharp nail pointing at LUKE's forehead, ready to scratch and cut...

We see that the old creatures in the congregation are so decrepit that they might as well be dead, their chests rising and falling so faintly you have to watch for them. They look to be over a hundred years old each. One creature that is able to move starts to try and rise up from its seat, and now more and more of them are trying to move. Their toothless mouths clacking, their reed-thin arms raising up... One of them rises but then falls to its knees with the effort, moaning from its tongue-less mouth.

Terrified, LUKE forces his way through them, back to the door.

He wrenches the door open --

120 INT. HOUSE - ATTIC STAIRS - NIGHT 120

LUKE runs out, slams the door behind him, and hurries down the stairs --

121 INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS 121

-- LUKE steps off the stairs. He can hear SURTR coming up from the kitchen. She's running. She appears in the corridor. Stops when he sees him. For a second they stare at each other.

LUKE

That's immortality? You can keep it.

She grins at him, evilly, then slips into the nearest door to her - LUKE's old bedroom (bedroom 1).

And that's when LUKE hears it - A bullock-like cough from downstairs.

We can hear something walking carefully down there. Their feet on the cold floor. The click of hooves on stone.

LUKE is frozen in fear. He backs away as we hear the creature stepping onto the first step and coming up towards them..

122 INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM 2 - NIGHT 122

LUKE slips into the middle room. He sees that the key to the locked partition door between this room and his old room (bedroom 1) is in this side of the door.

LUKE staggers back until he's against the wall. He sinks to the ground, hiding.

He points the rifle towards the general direction of the door.

We hear the sound of something *arriving at the top of the stairs*

It's sounds like an animal. Snuffling, coughing, its nostrils flared...

LUKE is shaking. He presses himself against the wall away from the door.

Tanngrisnir - MODER, passes by the door, her size unnatural, filling up the corridor with her bulk. It's dark. But we catch a glimpse of mottled fur, thin legs, bent backwards like a goat's. Twisted horns, the muzzle of a large animal, long curved arms, the elbows covered in shaggy fur, the tips ending in curved claws.

LUKE is hidden, frozen. We can hear MODER enter bedroom 3. *We can hear her leaving... Coming back out into the corridor.*

LUKE moves quickly, unlocking the partition door and slipping through into --

123 INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM 1 - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS 123

LUKE is back in his old room. He closes the door quickly and looks around for SURTR. Can't see her anywhere.

He listens carefully. MODER is in bedroom 2, the room he just left, next door. She shuffles slowly around. Almost sniffing the air.

A hand grabs LUKE!

LUKE spins. SURTR is half out from under the bed. She grabs his foot, the other hand coming up with her knife, slicing through the skin of his ankle. LUKE has to scream silently, falling to his knee. SURTR grabs the rifle. LUKE holds onto it. But then he sees something - *a chain on SURTR'S trousers*, one end clipped to a belt loop on her waist band, the other end in her pocket. He grabs the chain and lets go of the rifle. SURTR falls back and the chain tautens and come out of SURTR's pocket revealing the car keys on the other end. LUKE wrenches them off.

LUKE falls back - he is sunk to the floor, back against the wall. SURTR lies under the bed, pointing the hunting rifle at him.

LUKE, face drenched in sweat, puts a shaking hand out to stop her.

LUKE
 (whispered)
 One bullet left. Shoot me, she's
 coming for you.

In the room next door MODER shuffles around. SURTR is glaring at him, but she dare not fire. Instead she looks sharply at the door to the bedroom, because MODER is audibly leaving bedroom 2 and heading this way.

SURTR retreats further into the shadows of the room and LUKE presses up against the side of a cupboard, positioned against the wall, so that he is hidden from the door.

MODER enters the room. LUKE squeezes his eyes shut.

We can't make out much of MODER as she stands in the darkness, sniffing the air, strange animal sounds emitting from her.

She enters the room.

Still hidden from MODER by the cupboard, LUKE edges along the wall to the door. He makes it, reaches up and turns the handle, the door pushing out into bedroom 2. He slips through to the next room as MODER makes her way in.

124 INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM 2 - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS 124

LUKE creeps towards the door to the corridor, he makes it onto the stairs and descends as quietly as possible.

125 INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 125

LUKE makes for the door. Pauses - there's a can of petrol on the side. He upturns it on the wooden table and tosses it onto the wooden beams of the house. He grabs a packet of matches and flicks one onto the petrol. It takes quickly.

126 EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT 126

LUKE slips out of the house as the fire glows brightly inside the kitchen. There's still one or two small bonfires on the perimeter of the house. He grabs a flaming log from one and heads for the tree line.

127 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT 127

LUKE turns and looks at the little house as the flames take hold. From the attic window there comes the sound of screaming and shrieking.

It's followed by another sound - the loud BANG of the rifle being fired.

Then movement coming from the house catches his eye - SURTR, climbing from one of the top floor windows. Holding onto the sill, lowering herself down and dropping... She lands and rolls on the grass, then springs up and runs into the forest, along the tree line from where LUKE is.

LUKE

Fuck.

And then, from the house. There comes a wailing, awful scream. Flames engulf the building. The sound of pitiful crying and moaning coming from the attic as the creatures are engulfed in flame.

LUKE heads along the road, arrives at the cars. Finds the newest one, clearly belonging to the Swedes. He opens it with the keys and gets in.

He slips the key in the engine and turns and... nothing. The battery is dead. He sinks his head to the steering wheel in despair.

Then he hears the sound of *snarling*. He looks back. Against the roaring flames of the little house there stands a black outline, watching him. *Moder*.

LUKE abandons the car, grabs his flaming torch, and runs.

128

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

128

LUKE runs as fast as he can. His flaming torch ahead of him. Panting and gasping. Fear coursing through his body.

He passes by a large tree *and from nowhere SURTR leaps out at him.*

SURTR

Maggot! Horrible little maggot. I'm going to kill you for what you've done!

She grabs LUKE, they wrestle, her knife shining in the moonlight. LUKE holds her at arm's length as best he can.

A surge of strength and he pushes her off. Grabs his torch. Staggered up.

SURTR leaps to her feet. Circles him, coming in and out of the ring of light given off by the torch.

Out in the night they can hear MODER coughing and barking. Hard to tell how close she is.

SURTR (CONT'D)

Give me the torch.

LUKE

Scared of the dark, Surtr? Moder
isn't...

SURTR

Give me the torch Luke. I promise
I'll kill you a lot quicker than
she will.

They circle around each other.

SURTR makes another leap for the torch. LUKE steps back,
SURTR, off balance, misses the torch and stumbles past him.
She spins and jumps back at him. This time gets a hand on the
torch.

They swing round together, *and when the torch sweeps across
the shadows it part-reveals MODER, standing quite still,
watching them.*

SURTR lets go of the torch and instinctively backs away from
the creature. But LUKE doesn't. LUKE stares the beast down.
And for a moment those two eyes glint back at him, reflecting
the torch light.

Instead of pouncing, as we expect, MODER steps back. Melting
into the shadows.

SURTR steps back towards LUKE, crouched low, ready to pounce,
but also afraid of leaving the circle of light.

LUKE stares back at her. A small smile plays on lips. Knowing
what he has to do.

123 *He plunges the torch, head first, into the ground.* 123
 Extinguishing the flame.

SURTR (CONT'D)

No...

A few moments of pitch darkness. SURTR and LUKE face each
other. SURTR breaks first, running, panicked, wild eyed, into
the forest. LUKE watches her, then turns and slips away.

129 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT 129

LUKE moves. Almost naked, shorn of all possessions and
protections. He moves through the darkness. Out there, in the
darkness, MODER *growls*. He carries on with a fixed
determination. Not panicked, not fearful. Just moving. Just
another animal in the wild.

130 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

130

SURTR sprints away, turning constant circles as she hurries, looking out for LUKE and MODER. She can't see anything. Panic starts to gnaw at her.

SURTR

Luke?

She holds the knife up ahead of her. It looks small and useless now.

A noise behind her. A soft crunch of dirt and leaves being compressed by the weight of something big.

A growl in the dark.

SURTR stands. Too scared to move. Unable to turn around to face what's coming.

Behind her the shadows move as MODER approaches SURTR. She takes her time.

131 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

131

LUKE runs through the darkness. Behind him SURTR's terrible scream rings out. It turns from fear to pain to the rattles of death.

He comes across a car, rusted and dead, stuck in thick foliage. He opens the door and climbs through, out the other side... and onto a wide path of dead grass and old tyre tracks. He begins to follow.

132 EXT. FOREST - DAWN

132

LUKE stumbles along, taking an almost delirious pleasure as adrenaline pushes him forward. The world turning from black to blue around him as dawn pushes through the forest.

He looks down. He has found the path again. He begins to follow it. One foot in front of the other.

Gradually the path turns into a road.

LUKE stumbles forward.

And then he stops. Ahead, a hundred metres or so, is the end of the forest.

And there, standing very still, almost camouflaged against the trees, is MODER.

She moves. And we see the outline of her body, realise what is her and what is the forest around her.

She creaks, like old wood. And a low growl rumbles in her throat. She is ancient. Unknowable. She is pure terror.

But LUKE starts to walk, slowly and deliberately, towards her. Towards the source of his fear.

They meet half way. She towers over him, looking down, while he cranes his neck and looks right up into her black eyes.

They hold for a long moment. MODER hasn't decided whether to kill him or not.

And then she steps away. Melting back into the trees, returning to the gloom of the forest.

LUKE stands, listening to her retreat into the woods, until even the sound is gone. And it is just him and the bird song.

133

EXT. MEADOW - DAWN

133

A meadow of long grass.

An early morning rain patters down from the blue/grey sky.

Ahead of us is space. Miles of flat rolling fields.

A few metres from the forest is an old, rusted, pale blue camper van. From ANNA's photo.

LUKE stands on the edge of the forest. Still a part of it. Not out of its reach yet. He breathes heavily. Ready to step out...

He glances behind him at the path which leads back into the twisting, dark trees, disappearing into the shadows of the forest.

LUKE turns back to the meadow. Still not moving.

His hand grips the bark of the tree. His dry tongue runs over cracked lips.

He stands between two futures. Light and dark.

He steps forward. Out of the forest.

END.