

IF IT BLEEDS

written by

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EXT. MOBILE HOME BACKYARD - DAWN

The back porch of a mobile home is lit by a single porch light. The sound of crickets and the wind blowing the leaves fills the air.

The sound of a MOTHER from inside the home breaks the silence.

MOTHER (O.S.)
Don't go too far!

A LITTLE GIRL wearing a bright yellows dress runs out the back door and down the porch steps carrying a mason jar covered in princess stickers.

Hey backyard is a small patch of grass surrounded by an endless forest. Fireflies fly around the yard which is exactly what she's looking for.

Using her jar she attempts to catch some of the fireflies. After a few attempts she finally catches one.

She looks closely at the jar to examine the bright bug.

She looks too see many more fireflies around her and runs to catch more. After some unsuccessful attempts, she spots what seems to be another firefly where her backyard ends and the forest begins.

It is brighter than the others and sphere shaped. She abandons the fireflies around her and makes this one her main target.

She runs to the light but as she approaches it smoothly moves a little bit into the forest. The little girl takes a look back at her home knowing she shouldn't go into the woods but the light is too enticing. She follows it into the forest.

EXT. FOREST - DAWN

She runs up to the light but again it moves away at the last moment deeper into the forest.

The light begins to move at a steady pace away from her. She tries to catch up but trips over a branch and falls over.

Looking up she cannot see the light for a moment, until over her shoulder she spots it hovering next to a small ruined chapel in the middle of the woods.

The stone chapel is tiny, but has all the features of a typical church. A box body with a pointy top. It is partially destroyed and part of the roof is missing.

The light then glides inside the chapel.

She gets on her feet and takes a look around. The forest is silent as she makes her way inside.

INT. FIRST CHAPEL - NIGHT

Inside the chapel is dark. The light from the moon coming through the broken roof illuminates a small portion of the middle of the room. Loose stones and twigs cover the floor.

She takes her steps carefully toward the light making sure it can't get away this time. She reaches her jar out to capture the light but just before it is her's a LARGE HAND emerges from the darkness and cups the light.

The little girl is frozen in fear as a tall MAN squats down to her level. His face still covered in darkness.

A man's deep voice echo's in the chapel:

MAN

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to scare you. We're you trying to catch this?

She doesn't answer.

MAN (CONT'D)

I know there's a lot of things to be scared of in the forest but I promise I'm not one of them. We're safe inside here. He'll protect us.

LITTLE GIRL

Who?

MAN

My friend.

Melany looks down at her feet.

MAN (CONT'D)

Oh please don't be nervous, he's friendly. Do you want to meet him?

The man can sense the little girl is scared, he wants to comfort her.

MAN (CONT'D)

What's your name?

MELANY

Melany.

MAN

Melany. What a beautiful name. I'm Stolas.

(Chuckling)

I know it's a silly name.

Melany giggles.

STOLAS

What are you doing here so late?

MELANY

I wanted to catch the lighting bug.

STOLAS

It's enticing isn't it?

Stolas slowly releases his hands allowing the light to hover.

STOLAS (CONT'D)

But this is no bug.

MELANY

What is it?

STOLAS

A guide.

Melany reaches out her hand to grab the light but Stolas quickly closes his hands back together.

MELANY

I need to go home.

STOLAS

If the light guided you here, it must mean your already home.

MELANY

(Pointing outside)

My homes that way.

STOLAS

Not anymore.

Melany takes a step back.

STOLAS (CONT'D)
Let us take you to your new home.

The word "us" shakes Melany to her core. She looks around the chapel to see if there is anyone else but it's too dark.

STOLAS (CONT'D)
It's not far. I promise.

Melany begins to slowly back out of the chapel but Stolas opens his hands allowing the light to fly towards a dark corner. Melany can't help but fixate on it.

STOLAS (CONT'D)
Go ahead, you can grab it this time.

Melany steps towards the light.

STOLAS (CONT'D)
There you go. Follow the light.

Just as Melany reaches out her hand to take the light:

DEAFENING SCREECH.

The flash of a DEMONIC FIGURE forcefully grabs a screaming Melany from behind the light.

TITLE: IF IT BLEEDS

EXT. HOTEL ENTRANCE - DAY

Outside a lively hotel sits a frame sign that reads "IN CONVERSATION WITH TERRY GRISHIM: WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A DOCUMENTARIAN IN THE 21ST CENTURY. OCTOBER 13TH 2006".

A young adult, CHARLIE (27), wearing a backpack and holding a large notepad passes the sign and enters the automatic doors of the hotel.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

The hotel is packed full of FIFTY OR SO PEOPLE, but very few are actually checking in. They are conversing with drinks and all wearing name tags.

Off to the side of the lobby is a table with pens and name tags. Charlie makes is way there and once in line overhears a conversation between TWO FRIENDS sipping white wine. They seem rather high-class.

FRIEND #1

His work with the victims of the salt mines is what inspired me to get into this field of work.

FRIEND #2

I'd imagine. Your involvement with the staving Thumpwa village certainly had a Grisham quality to it.

FRIEND #1

The critic's weren't shy about letting me know they thought all the shots of the children's bellies were tasteless.

FRIEND #2

So stupid, they never know what their talking about. It was necessary.

The table cleared and Charlie writes his name on the name tag then sticks it on his chest.

He walks away from the table, passing by all the people drinking and laughing.

INT. HOTEL COMMON AREA - DAY

Charlie walks around.

Checking his flip phone he sees that he has time to kill before the convention starts.

A voice calls out to Charlie from across the room. This is CHRIS (28).

CHRIS (O.S.)

Charlie! Yo Charlie!

Charlie looks over to see his old college friend standing at a table with THREE PEOPLE.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Dude what's up? Come over here man!

Chris signals for Charlie to come over.

Charlie is reluctant to come over but regardless he walks across the room to the group.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
 What's going on man long time to
 see.
 (Gesturing towards group)
 This is Roxy, Steph, and Scott. But
 we call him Fudge don't ask why.

The group laughs and Charlie tries his best to produce a
 genuine smile.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
 Guys this is Charlie.

The group smiles and nods their heads.

ROXY
 How do you guys know each other?

CHRIS
 We were at Rutgers together.

SCOTT
 Great school.

CHRIS
 The best! And this guy...

Chris playfully punches Charlie's arm.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
 Made the coolest documentaries.

ROXY
 Oh yeah?

CHRIS
 It was college you know, so
 everyone wanted to make their stuff
 about street racing or drugs and
 other cool shit right? But Charlie
 was always making the meaningful
 stuff.

This somewhat of a compliment makes Charlie smile.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
 Ah what was it? I remember you made
 this really cool one about some
 orphanage or something that needed
 funding. It really pulled at the
 heart strings.

ROXY
 Oh wow that's amazing.

CHARLIE

It was actually homeless shelter
but yeah it was really rewarding to
make.

The group nods their heads.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

So what are you guys up too?

CHRIS

Oh dude! Wait till you hear this.
Steph and I got the ball rolling on
this mini series about a rock
climber who tried to scale one of
the steepest mountains in Montana.

STEPH

The footage we have is amazing. I
mean we're just so excited on how
it's turned out.

CHARLIE

Oh wow. Did he do it?

CHRIS

Did who do what?

CHARLIE

The climber. Did he get to the top?

Steph and Chris look at each other with disingenuous sad
faces.

STEPH

Oh.

CHRIS

Yeah... No no.

STEPH

He fell.

CHRIS

Far.

STEPH

Like really far.

CHRIS

It was bad.

STEPH

Really bad. We're arguing right now with the studio because we want to show it but they say it's too graphic. Blah blah blah. You know how it goes.

Charlie's mouth is ajar. He can't believe this shit.

SCOTT

I'm not working on anything right now. Just enjoying the success of my recent release.

CHRIS

(To Charlie)

He's got a DVD deal.

CHARLIE

Wow.

ROXY

Next week I'm heading to South East Asia to document some tribes that are rumored to participate in some light cannibalism.

CHARLIE

Light cannibalism?

ROXY

CNN is sending me with a few guards, I'll be fine.

Charlie is suddenly aware that everyone around him is the real deal, it frustrates him.

CHARLIE

That's- yeah wow. You guys are doing some great work.

CHRIS

What about you man? What you working on?

Charlie takes a moment to answer.

CHARLIE

Nothing.

The group is silent for a moment.

SCOTT

Cool.

ROXY
Taking a break?

CHARLIE
I have a few things circling around
here and there but nothings
catching on at the moment.

CHRIS
Do you have good representation?

CHARLIE
I don't have any. I've tried but.

Another hush falls over the group. They're wondering who the hell doesn't have representation here.

STEPH
I'm sure it'll all work out.

ROXY
It took me years to get my first
deal.

Charlie nods. He knows their just saying this to make him feel better.

CHRIS
Well hey, I think we're gonna go
find our seats but we'll catch you
later? Maybe we can grab some
drinks tomorrow night. Still got
the same number?

CHARLIE
Hm hum.

CHRIS
I'll hit you up then.

CHARLIE
Sounds good.

STEPH
It was nice to meet you.

CHARLIE
You too.

The group waves goodbye leaving Charlie alone feeling hardhearted by everyone else's success.

INT. BALLROOM - DAY

ONE HUNDRED OR SO PEOPLE are in their seats in a large ballroom.

On stage is an INTERVIEWER and TERRY GRISHIM. Terry is an old man, he looks like a weathered sailor.

Charlie is sitting in the far back taking notes.

INTERVIEWER

People now more than ever want to be documentary filmmakers.

(Gestures toward audience)

Just look at this crowd compared to what it was five years go.

Terry smiles and gives a small nose laugh.

INTERVIEWER (CONT'D)

Why do you think that is?

TERRY

Because it's easy.

The crowd laughs. Terry looks at them passionately.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Or at least they think it is. Everyone now thinks they can pick up a camera, film their little Puerto Rico vacation and call it art. A camera is not just some piece of technology used to film your friends getting shitfaced and buttfucking strippers. It is powerful, it can move mountains when used correctly.

(Pause)

What we do here is make art yes?

Terry waits for the crowd to answer.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Yes?!

CROWD

Yes.

TERRY

Then make some fucking art! Most of the films out now bore me to death.

(MORE)

TERRY (CONT'D)

What you all need to understand is that we do not simply film life, we attempt to explain life. Why are we here? What is our purpose? Why does any of this matter?

This hits Charlie.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Everything you create should try to answer these questions. *That is* what a real documentarian does.

The crowd claps while Charlie remains still in his seat pondering what was said.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Charlie sits alone in his hotel bed drinking beer and watching the news. Empty beer cans lie on the floor next to him.

He finishes his drink and adds another to the pile as breaking news story comes on the TV:

REPORTER

Breaking news out of western Carolina today that a nine year old girl has gone missing. Authorities ask at this time that if you have any information that could help investigators to please call-

Charlie could not care less about this story and mutes the TV.

He gets out of bed and opens the mini-fridge. Seeing it's empty he looks up and sighs.

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

Charlie sits alone at the bar drinking a beer. He is picking away at the label.

The BARTENDER comes by.

BARTENDER

Can I get you another?

CHARLIE

Sure.

The bartender opens a bottle and slides it to him.

BARTENDER
You here for the conference?

CHARLIE
Yup.

BARTENDER
Nice. You a documentarian?

CHARLIE
I think you can only say you're one
if you sold one. So no, I am not.

The bartender nods his head then leaves knowing he should
leave Charlie alone to pick at his new label.

Terry walks to the bar sits down a few seats away from
Charlie. He perks up as the bartender heads Terry's way.

BARTENDER
What can I get you?

TERRY
Get me the house red. But in a
whiskey glass.

The bartender heads off.

CHARLIE
Excuse me, Mr Grishim?

Terry looks Charlie's way.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Can I ask you a question?

TERRY
(Sighing)
Go for it.

CHARLIE
What am I doing wrong?

Terry can sense Charlie is a little drunk.

TERRY
A lot.

CHARLIE
No seriously, what am I doing
wrong.

TERRY

Kid I have no idea what you're talking about.

The bartender hands Terry his wine in a whiskey glass.

CHARLIE

Everything I make goes absolutely fucking nowhere.

Terry sees now he is talking about making films.

TERRY

Have you considered it's because you're not good at it?

CHARLIE

No see that's the thing I am. I'm better than half of these fucking idiots. See I get what you said up there, I make real art.

TERRY

What do you document?

CHARLIE

People who need help.

Terry starts laughing heavily. Charlie doesn't understand.

TERRY

What the hell does that mean?

CHARLIE

Like the homeless or victims of natural disaster. I document their struggles to raise awareness.

TERRY

That's not fucking art that's a pity party. No wonder nobody watches your shit.

CHARLIE

Why the hell not?

Terry settles back in his seat.

TERRY

When I first started out I wanted to make a film on the death penalty.

(MORE)

TERRY (CONT'D)

I did interviews with the departed's family members, protestors, prisons, the whole nine-yards. Not a single studio or executive gave a shit. I was like a ghost to them. Until one day I snuck inside the execution room and captured a man getting electrocuted to death. Now I don't know if they gave him too much shock or what but his hair caught on fire.

CHARLIE

Jesus.

TERRY

The guards were yelling, he was crying for his mother, it was awful.

Terry leans in towards Charlie.

TERRY (CONT'D)

But then all the sudden everyone wanted a piece of what I was doing. My phone was ringing off the hook. Everyone and their mother wanted to see the footage of that poor son of a bitch's last moments on earth.

CHARLIE

That's fucked.

TERRY

Maybe. But it lead to over three-hundred-thousand signatures to abolish the death penalty.

Charlie is stunned.

TERRY (CONT'D)

The point is people want action. The last thing anybody wants to watch is a homeless man's struggles. We all got fucking problems. People want something that takes them out of their boring lives for a second and throws them into a more passionate exciting world.

Charlie is solemn, thinking maybe Terry is right.

CHARLIE
How do I know what *that* is? What
the people want?

TERRY
You're in America kid, if it bleeds
it leads.

Charlie takes in all he just heard. Maybe he isn't cut out
for this life.

Terry on the other hand shakes his head, thinking maybe he
was too hard on Charlie. In fact, he kinda reminds him of
his younger self.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Look you want to be a
documentarian?

CHARLIE
More than anything.

TERRY
You sure?

CHARLIE
Yes, I'm sure.

TERRY
Alright.

Terry takes out his wallet and pulls out a business card,
giving it to Charlie.

TERRY (CONT'D)
I've got this thing in a few
months. Local film festival in
Wilmington I'm hosting. I owed the
theater manager a favor. It's small
but could help one get their career
started. There's a spot open. If
you want it, it's yours.

Charlie eye light up as he looks at the business card.

CHARLIE
Yeah- yes I would love too.

TERRY
Give me a call in a month or two.
I'll give you all the details.

Charlie reaches over the bar to grab a napkin and pen. He
writes his number down.

CHARLIE

And here's my number. Just in case.

He stretches out to give Terry the napkin. Terry takes it thinking he'll never need this.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Thank you. Thank you so much.

TERRY

No more of that trying to raise awareness bullshit alright? Make something that excites. The meaning comes after.

(To Bartender)

His drinks on me tonight.

The bartender gives Terry a thumbs up as Charlie gets out of his chair and moves toward the lobby.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Oh and hey. Best picture gets a thousand bucks. So make it good.

Charlie gives Terry a little salute and goes on his way.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Charlie sits down on his hotel bed staring at the business card.

CHARLIE

Fuck. What am I gonna do?

Out of the corner of his eye Charlie sees the TV. Another breaking news story.

He unmutes the TV.

REPORTER

Another breaking story from Charon tonight as the hunt continues for a little girl, now identified as nine year old Melany Summers.

He is absorbed by the screen.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

The police have stated that at this time to please be on the lookout for a nine year old girl last seen wearing yellow dress.

Charlie grins. This just might be exactly what he needed.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Charlie's white SUV drives down a highway in Western North Carolina. The mountains are covered in lush green trees with thick lines of fog covering much of the area.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - DAY

Charlie drives down the Appalachia road looking at a map. A camera sits on the passenger seat. He is completely lost.

His phone rings, he doesn't recognize the number but answers anyway.

CHARLIE

Hello?

CHRIS (V.O.)

Hey man it's Chris.

Charlie is surprised he actually called.

CHARLIE

Hey...

CHRIS (V.O.)

Just calling about those drinks.
The gang and I are heading out
tonight if you want to tag along.

CHARLIE

That sounds great- thanks for the
invite but I already left town.

CHRIS (V.O.)

Damn. Terry's conference got you
pretty pumped huh?

CHARLIE

Something like that.

CHRIS (V.O.)

Headed back home to brainstorm some
ideas?

CHARLIE

No actually. I already got
something.

CHRIS (V.O.)

Aye that's what I like to hear!
What is it?

Charlie scratches his head, not wanting to say.

CHARLIE
It's a local piece on some small
rural town.

CHRIS (V.O.)
Oh, cool. Some slice of life stuff?

CHARLIE
Yeah sure.

Charlie spots a rusted sign on the highway that reads
"CHARON: Exit 3A".

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Hey sorry I have to go but um
thanks for calling, was good seeing
you.

Charlie hangs up the phone and takes the exit.

Next to the highway on a hill is an OLD CABIN. It rests on a
large open field.

Behind the Cabin, what looks like a TALL STONE PILLAR
catches Charlie's eye for a moment before he passes trees,
blocking the view.

EXT. TOWN OF CHARON - DAY

It had just rained and is foggy. Small brick buildings with
chipped away paint of old school business logo's line the
sides of the street. Dust is settled on all the stained
windows. It's like another time.

The town looks abandoned but some TOWNS FOLK are in the
buildings looking out at Charlie's car suspiciously as it
drives down the road.

Street lamps hold old banners that display the people from
the town that had died in World War Two. The stop signs at
intersections are rusted and one has an even rustier bike
chained too it.

The layout of the town is almost too perfectly even. Like a
child's educational city rug.

Charlie's car pulls into a parking spot on the side of the
road in front of an INN. He gets out of the car and looks at
the streetlamp in front of him. It has a poster of the
missing girl taped to it. The paper is damp and partially
ripped off.

Charlie opens the back door to his car and grabs his
backpack and camera.

He starts filming the town and a close up of the poster. After some strange looks from some of the towns folk he decides it's best to head inside.

INT. INN - DAY

The INN is old fashioned and looks as if it hasn't been renovated since the 1950's. It's small and claustrophobic with old paintings on the walls. One of which depicts Jesus bringing Lazarus back from the dead.

Charlie walks up to the main desk and rings the bell. He wants to get the hell out of there.

An OLD WOMAN'S voice is heard.

OLD WOMAN (O.S.)
I'm coming.

She appears behind the front desk and slowly makes her way to Charlie.

OLD WOMAN (CONT'D)
What can I do you for?

The old woman pulls out a large ledger from under the desk and places it on the table.

CHARLIE
I'm looking for a room.

OLD WOMAN
Name?

CHARLIE
Charlie.

OLD WOMAN
And last?

CHARLIE
McAvoy.

She begins to write in the ledger.

OLD WOMAN
One bedroom?

CHARLIE
Yeah.

OLD WOMAN

Now just so you know our rooms
don't come with a bathroom. You'll
have to use the one in the hall.

CHARLIE

That's fine.

OLD WOMAN

How long is your stay?

CHARLIE

I'm not sure.

The old woman looks up at Charlie suspiciously.

OLD WOMAN

You don't know how long your stay
is?

CHARLIE

Might be a few days, maybe a few
weeks, I don't know.

OLD WOMAN

Well I can give you a room now but
eventually you'll have to tell me.
Otherwise my books get all
scrambly.

She continues to write in her ledger.

CHARLIE

I saw some posters on the way in.
Ones about a missing girl?

The old woman looks up from her ledger.

OLD WOMAN

Isn't it just awful. Three weeks
before her baptism too. Her mother
and I go way back.

CHARLIE

They know what happen yet?

OLD WOMAN

Not that I've heard of.
(Leans in and whispers)
But some say she was taken.

CHARLIE

Like kidnapped?

OLD WOMAN
Just a rumor.

Charlie is greatly intrigued by this rumor.

CHARLIE
Where was she last?

OLD WOMAN
It's been all over the papers.

CHARLIE
You have one here?

OLD WOMAN
Not here no, but the library down
the street might still have some.

He looks to the door.

CHARLIE
Good to know.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Like everything else in town the library is old and desperately needs renovation.

Charlie walks through the library and spots a small newspaper stand. He begins to flip through some.

LIBRAIAN (O.S.)
You have to pay before you read.

Charlie looks for the source of the voice and sees behind the front desk sits a LIBRARIAN flipping through a magazine.

Behind her are cameras and camera equipment available for rent. Their old but can do the job. This obviously catches Charlie's eye.

He goes up to the front desk.

CHARLIE
How much is it to rent some of the
camera equipment?

LIBRAIAN
No charge.

CHARLIE
No charge? Great! Can I have the-

LIBRAIAN
Student ID?

CHARLIE
Student ID- I don't have one.

LIBRAIAN
Sir you need a student ID to rent
any equipment from the library.

CHARLIE
There's a college in this town?

LIBRAIAN
(Accusatory)
You don't think we could have a
college?

CHARLIE
(Trying to ease the
situation)
No- just didn't see one on the way
in is all.

LIBRAIAN
Technically we don't. There's a
community college about fifty miles
from here but regardless this
equipment is intended only for
attending students here.

Charlie leans on the desk as if acting cool will change her
mind.

CHARLIE
Come on. We can make this work
right? School doesn't even start
for a few more weeks. Scratch my
back and I'll scratch yours.

The Librarian takes off her glasses and leans in.

LIBRAIAN
You know what?

Charlie grins, thinking he swayed her.

LIBRAIAN (CONT'D)
There's a small town two hours away
from here. Maybe they can help you.

Charlie rolls his eye's and walks away from the desk.

He passes the small newspaper stand. Charlie looks back at the Librarian who is flipping through a magazine, then stuffs the newspaper in his jacket.

On his way out he also spots a small stand of maps of the local area for sale, he steals one of those as well and leaves smirking.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

At your typical coffee shop, Charlie sits at a booth ripping pictures and articles out of the newspaper and putting them into his notebook.

A WAITRESS come by with coffee.

WAITRESS
More coffee?

CHARLIE
Sure.

She refills his coffee and takes a peak at Charlie's notepad. He closes it quickly.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(Nervously)
Scrap booking.

WAITRESS
Fun.

As she walks off Charlie opens his notebook back up and pulls out one of the small newspaper clippings.

In the clipping it mentions Melany's last known location as well as her street name "Boulder Landing".

Charlie consults the map he stole and looks for where that might be. When he finds it he circles the area.

CHARLIE
(To self)
There you are.

He looks up and sees a young man, JAKE (19), sitting alone at a booth across him reading a book and eating pancakes.

Charlie yells out:

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Hey.

Jake looks up and points to himself unsure if Charlie was talking to him.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
What book is that?

JAKE
Uh, The Sun Also Rises.

CHARLIE
You reading it for pleasure or for school?

JAKE
School.

Charlie gets up and goes to Jake's booth carrying his notebook.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I mean but also pleasure. I think it's pretty good. I never read Hemingway before but-

CHARLIE
Yeah, yeah great. So you have a student ID too right?

Charlie sitting in the booth across from Jake is making him uncomfortable.

JAKE
Yeah?

CHARLIE
You wanna make ten bucks?

JAKE
Doing what?

Charlie rips a piece of paper out of his notebook and starts writing.

CHARLIE
I need you to go to the library and pick up these things for me.

Jake points out the window. The library is directly across the street.

JAKE
That library right there?

CHARLIE
Is there any other?

Charlie gives him the paper. Jake scans it.

JAKE
This isn't illegal or anything
right?

CHARLIE
What no. They only rent this stuff
to students is all.

JAKE
(Relief)
Woo. Okay yeah, I can do this.

CHARLIE
I'll meet you outside.

Charlie stands up as Jake pulls out his wallet to pay for his meal. He can see the kid doesn't have much as Jake starts reaching into his pocket looking for any loose change.

EXT. LIBRARY - DAY.

Charlie waits outside the library with his car's trunk open.

Jake comes out the doors struggling to hold all he's got. A camera bag, two camera lights and two microphones.

JAKE
Where should I put it?

CHARLIE
The back is fine.

Jake puts the equipment in the trunk.

JAKE
A lot of stuff. Making a movie?

CHARLIE
Documentary.

Charlie checks out the equipment.

JAKE
I didn't realize there was much to
film here.

CHARLIE
There isn't.

Jake nods his head. For whatever reason he wants to be on Charlie's good side.

JAKE
Yeah totally.

Charlie reaches into his pocket and hands Jake a five dollar bill.

CHARLIE
Thanks for the help.

Jake sees his was only given a five.

JAKE
Yeah for sure um-

Charlie closes the trunk and heads to the car door.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Sorry it's not a big deal or
anything so no worries but I
thought it was ten.

CHARLIE
Sorry, only had a five.

Charlie closes the door and starts it up. Jake looks at the five. He needs more.

Jake knocks on the window. Charlie rolls it down.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Yeah?

JAKE
You need any help with your thing?
Not that you need it or anything
but I know the area pretty well.

Charlie thinks.

CHARLIE
Honesty I could use some extra cash
and I took a photography class last
semester so I kinda know how to
work a camera. I mean not kinda I
do know how to work a camera -
kinda.

Charlie takes a long look at Jake.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
What's your name?

JAKE

Jake.

CHARLIE

Jake. I'm Charlie.

Charlie takes a moment. Jake smiles trying to entice him.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Alright.

Jake can barely control his excitement.

JAKE

Yeah?

CHARLIE

Yeah, get in.

Jake's smile fades.

JAKE

Now?

CHARLIE

Yeah come on, it's going to get dark soon we need to get some footage.

JAKE

Okay, okay yeah. This is happening, this is really happening.

Jake runs around the car and gets in the passenger seat like a kid getting picked up from school.

Charlie drives off.

INT. CAR - DAWN

They drive down an old road with a forest on either side in silence.

Jake wants to say something but is nervous in front of his new employer. His eye's dart back and forth between Charlie and the road.

JAKE

So what's your film- I mean documentary- or film-

CHARLIE

Either way is fine.

JAKE
What's your documentary film about?

CHARLIE
You know what little girl that went missing?

JAKE
Who doesn't.

Charlie looks at Jake, indicating that is what his film is about.

JAKE (CONT'D)
(What did I get myself into)
Oh wow.

CHARLIE
When I heard the story I knew it could be a good opportunity for me.

Jake looks at Charlie shocked he said that but not wanting to be confrontational.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(Trying to save face)
Also I wanna try and do anything I can to help of course.

JAKE
(Still shaken)
Definitely.

The car pulls up to a red light and stops. Charlie looks both ways.

With not a single car in sight Charlie drives through.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Oh um, I think that was a red light.

CHARLIE
Eh, I didn't see any cars.

JAKE
Yeah but I mean, it's still illegal right?
(Too confrontational?)
Is it? I actually don't know, maybe you can if there's nothing there.

CHARLIE
(Laughing)
It's alright man.

JAKE
It's just that sometimes people
drive without their headlights on
here. Which is stupid- definitely
more stupid than running a red
light.

Charlie looks at Jake.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Not that running a red light is
stupid though. I mean there was
nobody there.

CHARLIE
(Changing topic)
We're almost here.

Jake puts his head down, thinking he probably shouldn't
speak for the rest of the ride.

EXT. MOBILE HOME PARK - DAWN

The car is parked on a gravel road near the mobile homes and
a forests edge.

Charlie and Jake are out of the car and setting up the
camera equipment from the open trunk.

JAKE
Where are we?

CHARLIE
Last known location. Most
kidnappings take place a quarter
mile away from the victims home.

JAKE
Who said she was kidnapped?

CHARLIE
Just wishful thinking.

Charlie steps back from the car with his camera and looks
around the area.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(Pointing around)
So if her house was that way then I
think if we enter the woods here
and just go right we'll get pretty
close.

JAKE
Sounds good.

CHARLIE
I'm gonna test out the camera.

Charlie holds the camera up to his face.

CAM FOOTAGE

Low quality footage of the surrounding area over a low-frequency drone.

The camera pans to Jake who is still setting up. Jake looks directly at the camera.

JAKE
Is it true the camera adds ten
pounds?

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Yeah but each additional camera on
you adds another ten.

Jake goes back to work.

JAKE
Is that why Chaney always looks
like that?

CHARLIE (O.S.)
(Laughing)
I think so.

Jake is finally done. He shakes his fist in victory and turns to the camera.

JAKE
You ready?

The footage cuts to black.

EXT. FOREST. DAWN

CAM FOOTAGE CONT'D

The camera cuts back on. It moves with Charlie through the trees. The camera loudly picks up the crunch of the leaves from their footsteps.

In the short distance is a small light from a mobile home. The camera zooms in.

CHARLIE (O.S.)
I think this is the place.

Through a window of the mobile home the Mother can be seen in the kitchen doing dishes. She pauses for a moment then bursts into tears.

JAKE (O.S.)
Should we be filming this?

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Shh.

JAKE (O.S.)
I'm just saying it seems-

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Shh shut the fuck up.

The crying Mother moves out of frame.

END OF CAM FOOTAGE

The two are in the forest looking towards the mobile home with camera straps around their necks.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Shit! She moved.

JAKE
Are we just allowed to record her?

CHARLIE
Why not?

JAKE
It just seems like we're invading her privacy you know? She grieving.

CHARLIE
Then maybe she shouldn't have put her address in the paper.

Charlie walks past Jake.

EXT. FOREST - DAWN

It's getting darker as the two venture deeper into the forest.

JAKE

What got you into making documentaries?

CHARLIE

Just something I always wanted to do. When I was a kid there was this snake in our back yard eating all the rabbits. I told my mom about it but she said that's just how life is. Circle of life or whatever. But for whatever reason I cared- so deeply about those little white rabbits. So I got our family camera and waited outside until the snake came and filmed it eat one of the baby rabbits. When I showed it to my mom she was mortified. Next day, I came back from school and saw an exterminator walking down our driveway holding a dead snake. I guess for whatever reason I found it fascinating. That if you show somebody the reality of a situation. They start to care more.

JAKE

Is that why you're doing this?

Charlie ponders this question for a moment.

CHARLIE

I think so.

A crackle in the forest is heard. Charlie whips his head around with the camera ready to shoot.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

What the hell was that?

JAKE

Sorry I stepped on a stick.

Charlie sighs exhausted from all the searching and still finding nothing. He is getting frustrated.

JAKE (CONT'D)

So... What exactly are we looking for?

CHARLIE
Something. Literally anything.

JAKE
We've been out here for awhile and
its getting dark.

CHARLIE
There's gotta be something out here
that can tell us what happened to
her. Something worth filming.

Charlie bumps his head into a tree he didn't see. He going
to lose it.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Fuck!

JAKE
Are you okay?

Charlie starts kicking the tree.

CHARLIE
Stupid. Piece. Of. Fucking. Shit!

Jake turns off his camera.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
You know what? You're right this is
stupid.

JAKE
I never said that.

CHARLIE
You we're thinking it. This is so
fucking stupid! I don't know what
the hell I'm doing here. I just
thought if I could make something
good for Terry-

JAKE
Terry?

CHARLIE
That maybe he'll give me a shot and
I'll get some notice but fuck.

Jake sees a strange light in the forest moving ever so
gracefully.

He turns his camera back on.

JAKE
(Worried)
Charlie?

CHARLIE
Why'd I even come here? I'm stuck
in the middle of the fucking woods,
in a dumb fucking town and for
what?

The light moves closer to Jake, soon to pass him. Jake puts his camera up and records anxiously.

JAKE
Charlie?

CHARLIE
I should have been a fucking doctor
or something. This sucks. I fucking
suck.

The light DARTS past Jake, then glides gently into the trees disappearing. Jake hands are shaking.

JAKE
There's something over there.

Charlie stops his rant and moves to Jake who is looking off into the forest.

CHARLIE
Where, over there?

Charlie is immediately back on the hunt for footage.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Let's go.

Jake goes to the footage he just got and watches it back. The light isn't showing up on camera.

JAKE
What the-

He see's Charlie is farther ahead now.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Hey, wait up!

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

The two walk to where the light was headed.

JAKE
You really didn't see that?
It was like this bright moving
light.

CHARLIE
If you have us chasing a lighting
bug I swear to fucking God.

JAKE
No it wasn't I swear. It was like
someone was controlling it.

They hear some rustling in the leaves in the distance. Jake
grows pale.

CHARLIE
Probably a deer, relax.

Jake looks anxiously around and sees the light again. It is
moving towards a small chapel. The same chapel Melany saw.

JAKE
Please tell me you see it this
time.

The light disappears when Charlie looks over.

CHARLIE
What the hell is that?

JAKE
You saw it.

CHARLIE
What no. There's a church or
something.

Charlie moves toward the chapel.

JAKE
This a good idea?

CHARLIE
Get your camera ready.

INT. FIRST CHAPEL - NIGHT

Charlie enters the chapel first with Jake following close
behind.

CAM FOOTAGE

The camera light illuminates much of them room. The camera slowly looks around the room. Then up to see the moon shining through the broken roof.

JAKE (O.S.)
Charlie...

The camera whips toward Jake who is shining his camera light on a small jar covered in princess stickers on the wooden floor.

The camera moves toward the jar. There's a dead firefly inside.

JAKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
What do you think?

CHARLIE (O.S.)
I think we just found our first
clue.

The camera pans up showing Jake. Still nervous but finding this brings a small smile to his face.

CHARLIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Let me see if her name is on it or
something.

The camera is placed down, lens facing up showing the ceiling.

In the top corner of the ceiling THE DEMON is floating weightlessly, back against the roof, watching Charlie and Jake.

The six foot tall Demon has scaly hind legs with talons, a somewhat pointy face with shark like teeth, red eyes and arms like wings with claws. It's like a velociraptor and an angel had a baby. It stalks the two patiently.

The camera is picked back up.

CHARLIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Keep looking there's gotta be
something else.

The camera scans the room and focuses in on a wall that has a strange symbol on it. It moves closer.

CHARLIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You see this?

JAKE (O.S.)
What's that smell? Like somethings
rotting.

The camera is on the symbol. Drawn in black ink is a wide, short triangle with the outline of circle at each end point, except for the topmost point which is fully colored in.

The roof creeks.

Charlie runs his hand across the symbol.

CHARLIE (O.S.)
What is this?

JAKE (O.S.)
Maybe if we come back during the
day we can see it better.

CHARLIE (O.S.)
The light works fine.

JAKE (O.S.)
No I know I'm just saying. It's
dark maybe we should just go back.

CHARLIE (O.S.)
We just got here.

The camera whips back towards Jake.

CHARLIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
What are you so afraid of-

The Demon stands behind Jake towering over him.

JAKE
I don't really like the dark okay?

The camera remains still.

JAKE (CONT'D)
What?

A beat.

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Run.

The camera shakes violently as the two sprint out of the chapel.

END OF CAM FOOTAGE

EXT. FIRST CHAPEL - NIGHT

While the two sprint out of the chapel the Demon makes a loud deafening screech. It flies out through the broken roof and lands hard on the ground.

It begins its hunt.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Charlie and Jake run through the forest as fast as they can dodging trees and jumping over logs. The Demon makes another deafening screech.

JAKE

What the fuck, what the fuck, what
the fuck!

The Demon is fast. It's hind legs give it powerful forward movement.

Charlie spots a light up ahead.

CHARLIE

This way!

Jake follows and turns his head around. The Demon is catching up quickly.

They are at the home stretch now. The car is in sight.

The Demon tucks in its wings to move even faster.

EXT. MOBILE HOME PARK - NIGHT

Charlie and Jake run out of the forest to Charlie's car.

Jake is trying to open the door but it's locked.

JAKE

Why isn't it opening!

Charlie at the car door is paused. He is looking towards the forest edge.

CHARLIE

It stopped.

JAKE

Okay? Great, can we go now?

Charlie grabs his camera.

CAM FOOTAGE

The camera zooms in on the Demon. It stands at the forest edge remaining still with a steady hot breath.

END OF CAM FOOTAGE

JAKE (CONT'D)

Can we please go?

Charlie smiles, he can't believe he got that on thing on camera. Now he's got a documentary.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - NIGHT.

Charlie's car stops in front of the library. Jake is in the passenger seat having a panic attack.

JAKE

Why did we stop?

CHARLIE

I have to grab a few things.

JAKE

Why are we back here?

CHARLIE

I said, I have to grab a few things.

Charlie gets out of the car.

INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

Charlie goes through the library doors and heads straight for the front desk. The Librarian doesn't even look up.

LIBRAIAN

We close in five minutes.

CHARLIE

I know. I just thought you should know it looked like some kids were spray painting the back wall outside. Like genitals and stuff.

The Librarian jumps up and rushes toward the exit.

LIBRAIAN

Not again!

Once she is out of sight Charlie makes a break towards the back of the library.

In rows of metal shelves rest boxes labeled all sorts of things from "Property Records" to "Ordinances and Bylaws".

CHARLIE
(To self)
Come on, come on.

He scans through the boxes then stumbles upon one labeled "Building Permits". Just what he was looking for.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(To self)
Good, good.

He places it down next to him then starts searching for another. He can't seem to find what he needs for a moment then eventually he finds one labeled "Historical Records".

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(To self)
Fuck yes!

He places one box on top of the other than runs towards the door.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Charlie jumps into his car parked outside the library. He throws the boxes in the back and quickly drives off.

JAKE
We good?

CHARLIE
Oh we good.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Charlie's car parks outside of Jake's house.

CHARLIE
This the place?

JAKE
Yeah.

Just before Jake gets out:

JAKE (CONT'D)
You can stay here the night if you want. Our basement has a couch. It's pretty comfortable. Sometimes I even sleep on it.

CHARLIE
I got a hotel room.

JAKE
Oh.

As Jake gets out Charlie see's he wants him to stay.

CHARLIE
You know what? Yeah, why not.

Jake gets a small burst of energy.

JAKE
Yeah?

CHARLIE
Sure.

Charlie grabs the boxes and gets out of the car.

INT. JAKES LIVING ROOM. - DAY

Jake walks through the living room in his pajamas yawning, holding a tray that has soup and water.

He enters a hallway which has a door on either side. As he opens the one to the right, the left door SWINGS open. It's Charlie.

Jake almost drops the tray.

JAKE
Jesus Christ.

CHARLIE
Hey I got something to show you.

JAKE
Okay. Sorry um just give me one second.

Jake opens the door to the right and quietly walks in.

Charlie watches Jake enter and sees JAKES MOM laying in bed with an oxygen concentrator and IV in her arm.

Jake places the tray on his mothers bedside table, whispers something in her ear then kisses her forehead.

Charlie stops peaking and looks up at the ceiling to pretend he did not see anything.

Jake leaves the room and closes the door.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Sorry it's my mom. She's a little sick and it's too expensive to keep her at the hospital so I've been taking care of her.

(Wants to change topic)

Here let's go to the basement.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Charlie leads Jake down the stairs to a small basement.

JAKE

So what did you want to show me? You know I was thinking it's best we call the police sooner rather than later. I don't want them to find that jar before we tell them and have them thinking we had anything to do with her disappearance.

Charlie stops mid staircase.

CHARLIE

The police?

JAKE

Yeah. Did you already call them?

CHARLIE

No.

JAKE

Should I have called them?

CHARLIE

No- why would we call the police?

JAKE

Well since we found that place I thought we'd let them know. Help with the investigation.

CHARLIE

I don't know if we should.

JAKE

Why?

Charlie pauses, trying to come up with a reason other than the cops involvement could ruin the documentary.

CHARLIE
We haven't found anything
substantial yet. It would just be
wasting their time.

Jake doesn't understand this logic but wants to be agreeable.

JAKE
Oh okay, yeah why waste the cops
time right?

CHARLIE
Exactly.

They continue down the stairs

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
That being said, we really got
something now.

Jake gets down the final step and sees papers and boxes scattered across the floor and a table.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
It's what I got at the library last
night. I found building permits,
historical records, old newspapers.

JAKE
How did you get this?

CHARLIE
You can just take them.

JAKE
I didn't know that. You know I've
always wondered why the post office
smells like fish. I wonder if they
have it in there.

Jake starts searching through the historical records box.

CHARLIE
Sure yeah. But look at this.

Charlie shows Jake the table which has old newspaper clippings and building permits on it.

He hands Jake a clipping which has a photograph of a GROUP OF PEOPLE wearing white clothes. The headline reads "NEW IN TOWN: CHURCH OF VERRINE".

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

In the seventies a huge group of people migrated here apart of some new church. According to the papers their behavior was- cult like.

Charlie picks up the documents.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

So I went through all the building permits around this time and look. Three new chapels were built only months apart after they arrived. Ones just like the one we found. They differ in size but besides that it's the same thing.

JAKE

My God you went through all the permits?

CHARLIE

It look like five minuets. This place is so small and boring, it's not like their building a Club Med here or anything.

Jake takes some offense to this but doesn't protest.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Only issue is that the town went through some big infrastructure soon after these were built so the addresses on them don't mean shit. But-

Charlie pulls out an old newspaper clipping from his notebook.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I did find this.

It is an article about a new church and its pastor. Below the article is a photo of a PREACHER and what looks like his SON standing in front of a chapel.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Look familiar?

Jake looks at the photo for only a split second. All of this is too much for him.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

This is the only clue we got. We have a picture of one of the places but just no idea where it's at. I'm thinking if we find it then maybe it might tell us where the girl went.

JAKE

Yeah... Look this has been fun and all but-

CHARLIE

But what.

JAKE

(Stressed)

But I don't know if I wanna keep going. I mean we almost died. I've never done anything like this before, have you?

CHARLIE

No. But that's why it's exciting.

JAKE

Exciting? Whatever that thing was almost killed us.

CHARLIE

That's why this is worth doing. Nobody else knows about this but us.

Jake is still unconvinced but Charlie has a trick up his sleeve.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Think of the money.

This peaks Jake's interest.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

We'll have the only documentation of whatever the hell this is. Everyone's gonna want a bite of what we got.

JAKE

(Unconvinced)

I don't know.

CHARLIE

Come on.

JAKE
What do we even really have.
Newspaper clippings?

Jake picks up the newspaper clipping of the Pastor.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I don't even know what I'm looking
at here. It's just some guy-

Jake pulls the photo closer to his face. Something caught his eye.

CHARLIE
What?

Jake's eye's widen.

JAKE
Holy shit!

Jake runs up the basement stairs.

CHARLIE
What is it?!

Charlie chases after him.

INT. JAKES LIVING ROOM. - DAY

Jake opens a drawer and is quickly flipping through multiple different printed photo's.

CHARLIE
You alright?

Jake frantically continues, throwing photo's on the ground after he has seen them.

JAKE
(To self)
I know it's here.

Jake finally finds the photo he was looking for. He stares at it for a moment. Then runs back to the basement.

INT. BASEMENT. - DAY

Jake runs down the stairs then slams the photo down next to the newspaper clipping.

Charlie comes down the stairs.

CHARLIE

You gonna tell me what the hell's
going on?

JAKE

I know him.

Charlie goes up to the table and sees the photo.

It is a Sunday school class picture. The same man from the newspaper is standing in front of the class teaching the children. On the chalkboard is written "What is free will?".

CHARLIE

Holy shit.

JAKE

I remember him. Mr. Fletcher. He used to teach at the Sunday school but was fired after trying to take a kid home. His son was crazy and shot himself in front of his mom. He was a part of a cult or something.

The two shoot each other a glance. A cult you say.

Jake points at Fletcher in the picture.

JAKE (CONT'D)

As kids we weren't allow to even go near his house. Parents didn't trust him.

CHARLIE

You still know where he lives?

JAKE

I mean if he lives in the same house then yeah I guess.

CHARLIE

I say we give Father Fletcher a little visit. You in?

Jake looks up the basement stairs. He can see his mothers door.

JAKE

Yeah. I'm in.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - DAY

Charlie and Jake are parked outside of an old house that is gated off. It looks like nobody's lived there for years.

CHARLIE
You sure this is the place?

JAKE
I think so, but looking at it I hope I'm wrong.

CHARLIE
Let's rock and roll.

EXT. OLD HOUSE - DAY

The two step out of the car with their cameras and Charlie with his notepad. The gate was already unlocked.

They make their way to the front door.

JAKE
What do we say?

CHARLIE
Let me do the talking.

They stroll up the steps to the front door and knock. A WOMAN'S voice from inside yells.

WOMAN
One moment please!

The young woman, HELEN, opens the door in a nurses outfit.

HELEN
Hi how can I help y'all?

CHARLIE
Hi Ma'am we're looking for a Mr. Fletcher.

HELEN
May I ask the reason for the visit?

CHARLIE
I'm Steve and this is Carl. We are with the Appalachia times and we're working on an article about the rich religious history of Charon.
(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

So we were wondering if it would at all be possible to ask Mr Fletcher a few questions about his old preaching days.

Jake looks to Charlie astonished by how effortlessly he lies.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

In fact, Carl used to be one of his students at the Sunday school.

HELEN

Oh wow!

JAKE

Yup. I remember he was so kind and generous and he never made me feel uncomfortable- sexually ever. So.

Charlie rubs his eye. He can't believe he said that shit.

There is an awkward pause.

CHARLIE

Well what do you say?

HELEN

I think this would be great. He's always talking about his preaching days. Only in his sleep but still counts.

CHARLIE

That's great!

HELEN

Come on in, I'll show y'all to his room.

INT. OLD HOUSE - DAY.

The inside of the home screams haunted house. Jake sniffs the air, he doesn't like it.

Helen leads the two through the home and to a bedroom door.

Before opening:

HELEN

Now just to warn you he isn't the spring chicken he used to be.

CHARLIE
I'm sure it'll be fine.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

The bedroom is small, cluttered and damp. Old books and clothes scatter the floor.

FLETCHER lays on a bed hooked up to medical machines. He seems asleep. His breaths are long and deep. It is clear his time on earth is close to an end.

HELEN
Mr. Fletcher? These two kind men are journalists and they want to ask you a few questions about your preaching days. And one of them used to be a former student!

Fletcher doesn't respond.

Charlie pulls up a chair next to his bed while Jake stands anxiously at the front bed frame.

Jake turns to Helen.

JAKE
(Whispering)
Are you sure he's alive?

HELEN
(Didn't hear)
What was that now?

JAKE
Nothing- You're doing a great job.

HELEN
(Smiling)
Thank you!

Jake gives Charlie a side eye.

Charlie turns on his camera then signals Jake to do the same. He leans in somewhat close to Fletcher.

CHARLIE
Mr. Fletcher, what can you tell me about your old preaching days?

Fletcher slowly turns his head toward Charlie.

His head is shriveled up and his teeth are piss yellow. His voice, dry and grainy.

FLETCHER
It was beautiful. All those
children.

JAKE
(To self)
Jesus Christ.

CHARLIE
Where was it you preached again?

MR FLETCHER
Wherever he needed me.

CHARLIE
Hmm and who is *he*?

MR FLETCHER
My friend.

Fletcher turns his head towards Jake who is anxiously
looking around the room.

MR FLETCHER (CONT'D)
He's your friend too you know.

JAKE
I'm not entirely sure who we're
talking about here but- yeah I mean
he sounds nice.

Charlie pulls out his notebook and shows Fletcher the
picture of himself by the chapel in the newspaper.

CHARLIE
Where was this picture taken?

Fletcher grins at Charlie then turns back to Jake.

MR FLETCHER
Do you miss Sunday school?

HELEN
He sounds parched, I'm going to get
him some water.

Helen exits the room.

MR FLETCHER
I remember you. You were never
baptized. It's why you were my
favorite. Total and utter free-
will, just like he wants us to be.

Jake avoids making eye contact with Fletcher.

JAKE
(Wanting to move on)
Yup Sunday school was fun.

Charlie thinks Mr. Fletcher is losing his mind and is fed up.

He puts the picture up to Fletcher's face.

CHARLIE
Where is it?

Jake looks off to the corner where there is an eerie painting depicting children running in a circle around a banner displaying the severed head of a green beast wearing a crown of skin.

He squints. He knows this from somewhere.

MR FLETCHER
(To Jake)
You're beautiful.

CHARLIE
Sir- Jesus fucking Christ. Where is the chapel where you preached?

The realization hits Jake.

JAKE
The school. It's in the Sunday school.

Charlie turns to Jake.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I've seen that painting in there before.

MR FLETCHER
Ah Stolas. I'm so glad you remember him.

CHARLIE
Who?

JAKE
Where's the girl?

CHARLIE
Jake-

MR FLETCHER
On her way home.

CHARLIE
He's lost his mind he has no idea
what the hell he's talking about.

JAKE
How did you recognize me?

CHARLIE
He remembers all the kids he
diddled. Come on let's go.

Mr Fletcher grasps Charlie's arm.

MR FLETCHER
I'm so sad I cannot bear witness.

Charlie tries to break free but his grip is too strong.

MR FLETCHER (CONT'D)
He's coming.

Charlie yanks his arm free.

Mr. Fletcher's body begins to violently shake as if having a seizure. He yells to the heavens.

MR FLETCHER (CONT'D)
Save us from His grasp. Free us
from the hell of living!

Jake opens the bedroom door and yells out:

JAKE
Miss? I think he's having a seizure
or something!

Charlie films Mr. Fletcher shaking and screaming.

MR FLETCHER
Be our salvation!

Helen runs into the room and lies on top of Mr. Fletcher trying to calm him.

MR FLETCHER (CONT'D)
Drain their blood!

Fletcher looks directly at Jake.

JAKE
Consume his body!

Charlie steps back and continues filming on his way out the door with Jake.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - DAWN

Charlie and Jake drive down the road.

JAKE
Should we have stayed and helped her?

CHARLIE
No she's got it under control.

JAKE
It really looked like she didn't though. It was like he was on the most violent massage chair on all time.

CHARLIE
(Not paying attention)
How far away now?

JAKE
Close. Maybe fifteen.

Jake taps his thighs with his hands nervously.

JAKE (CONT'D)
But um, I was thinking we shouldn't go.

CHARLIE
What why?

JAKE
There's a problem. The Sunday school was apart of like a school, school.

CHARLIE
Okay? So we ask for a tour or something. Say we are doing an article on religion in schools.

JAKE
That's the other thing. It's kinda abandoned. For a few years now.

Charlie laughs.

JAKE (CONT'D)
What?

CHARLIE
That just made our jobs a lot
easier.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - NIGHT

The car pulls up to a traffic light.

JAKE
Take a left here.
(Remembering what
happened last time)
And um it's no left turn on red.

CHARLIE
I know. That's pretty universal
everywhere.

JAKE
(Covering his ass)
Is it? Oh wow I had no idea.

Charlie takes a left and is distracted by flashing red and
blue lights up ahead.

CHARLIE
Hell is that?

Jake sees the lights now too. There are a few police cars
parked outside a school.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Charlie's car drives up to the front yard of the school and
stops. He gets out with his camera and goes up to an
OFFICER.

CHARLIE
What's going on?

OFFICER #1
Someone called in claiming they
heard some yelling inside the
school. Probably just some kids, we
get these calls all the time.
Nothing to be worried about.

CHARLIE
They happen to say what the yelling
sounded like?

OFFICER #1
We don't have any details yet.

CHARLIE
But was it like a girl screaming
or?

OFFICER #1
Like I said, we don't have any
details.

CHARLIE
You know my partner and I are with
the Appalachia Times, maybe we
could go in there and-

OFFICER #1
No, no, no you can't do that. It's
still under investigation. But I'm
telling you it's nothing.

CHARLIE
We're journalists. We'll go in
there and let you know.

Charlie starts walking towards the school.

Officer #1 reaches out his arm to stop him.

OFFICER #1
That's not how this works okay? As
a matter of fact I'm going to need
you to leave the premiss.

CHARLIE
Come on.

OFFICER #1
Seriously, I need you to leave.

CHARLIE
But-

OFFICER #1
Now.

CHARLIE
Whatever.

Charlie gets back in the car.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

JAKE
What happened?

CHARLIE

We need to find another way in.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - BACKYARD - NIGHT

The back of the school is a large field of grass with some standard yet rusted play equipment.

ANOTHER OFFICER, is walking close to the back of the building with a flashlight scanning the area.

Charlie and Jake with their cameras are crouched near some bushes across from the building. Charlie spots a door and points it out to Jake.

Once the Officer #2 passes the door they crouch run across the open field.

At the door, Charlie slowly opens it allowing Jake to move in first, then goes in himself.

The door closes slowly and creaks just loud enough for Officer #2 to hear. He turns his head and notices something is off.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - MAIN STAIRCASE - NIGHT

The two stand on the bottom level of the schools main staircase next to a broken trophy case. The school is two floors.

It's dark. Papers, books and broken glass scatter the floor. Some of the windows are broken and graffiti is on many of the walls.

CHARLIE

Which way is the chapel.

JAKE

I don't remember.

CHARLIE

Nothing, really?

JAKE

I mean it's all kinda a blur. I was like six. Plus it's all dark and depressing now. I don't know- I just don't know.

CHARLIE

Alright. In that case let's split up.

JAKE
(Doesn't like this idea
at all)
Are you sure? We might get lost or
like I don't know be scared
shitless.

CHARLIE
It'll be fine. We can cover more
ground this way.

Charlie looks around.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
It looks like the classrooms are
upstairs. That might ring a bell
for you. I'll take the bottom
floor.

JAKE
Should we have a signal in case
something goes wrong? Like a bird
call or something?

CHARLIE
Do you know how to do a bird call?

JAKE
No but I don't know maybe in the
heat of the moment it will come to
me.

CHARLIE
Let's just meet back here in ten,
okay?

JAKE
Yeah, okay.

Jake reluctantly heads up the stairs.

CHARLIE
And hey, keep that camera rolling.

JAKE
Got it.

Charlie heads off into the dark abyss.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

The hallway is covered in school pride posters and quotes
from the Bible. Jake walks down trying to remember where the
chapel was.

He turns on his camera flashlight. He spots a wall covered in framed photo's of the different graduating years. He walks up to the photos to analyze.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Charlie walks through the hallway recording everything he sees. Even with his camera light on it's hard to see in the distance.

He comes across double doors labeled "Cafeteria" above. He looks down the hallway knowing he should move on but on the other hand this would make for some great b-roll. He opens the creaking doors.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - CONTINUOUS

In your run of the mill school cafeteria Charlie records the room. From the distance he sees something written on the walls but cannot make it out. He goes to investigate.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jake uses his finger to guide though all of the photos until he stumbles upon his graduating year. Seeing his younger self in the photo makes him smile.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Charlie gets closer to the writing on the wall and discovers a message written in blood that reads "VERRINE FREES".

He hears footsteps and turns around to see for a split second a CRAZED MAN running in all white clothing out of the cafeteria.

Charlie turns his camera light off.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jake's smile fades away as he hears giggling come from down the dark hallway.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CAFETERIA

Charlie scans the cafeteria. He hears more footsteps.

CHARLIE
(Whispering)
Jake? Jake is that you?

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jake aims his camera light down the dark hallway. The giggling continues and now he hears footsteps coming towards him.

JAKE
Charlie?

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - NIGHT

All is silent as Charlie tip toes around.

CHARLIE
(Whispering)
Hello?

He hears the sound of metal trays falling to the floor behind the buffet from across the room.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(Whispering)
Jake?

A beat.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(Whispering)
Is anybody there-

BAM, the Demon jumps on top of the buffet and lets out a loud screech.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jake stares down the dark hallway with his light. The giggling grows louder. The footsteps grow faster.

He hears the Demon's screech from a distance.

Just as he turns around, BURSTING from darkness behind the camera light is a CRAZED WOMAN wearing a white dress. She tackles Jake to the floor and stays on top of him.

CRAZED WOMAN
You're not supposed to be here! You
have to wait your turn!

Jake throws her off and runs down the hallway.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Charlie quickly hides underneath one of the tables.

The Demon crawls over the buffet to the dining area and sniffs the air.

Charlie lies down back against the floor covering his mouth as the Demon searches around. It screeches again.

Charlie looks over to see an exit door close by. He looks to see where the Demon went but it is out of sight. Just before making his move BAM. The Demon jumps on top of the table he is under.

Charlie still covering his mouth looks back to the exit when one of the Demon's hind legs steps on the seat of the table. Its large talon taps the seat then jumps off to another table.

Charlie turns to see the Demon is now across the room sniffing a trash can. He starts to record:

CAM FOOTAGE

The Demon sniffs the inside of a trash can then with its leg pushes it to the ground.

The camera turns towards the exit door. Charlie's breath is heard, quiet yet anxious. It's now or never.

The camera shakes violently as it moves from under the table and bursts through the exit door into the hallway for a brief moment then bursting through another door.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - MANNEQUIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CAM FOOTAGE CONT'D

Now in a small room filled with rows mannequins.

They are dressed in all white clothing, some wearing dresses, some tunics and others completely naked. One thing they all share in common is their white paint is chipped and turned into a disgusting yellow.

There are three rows of mannequins. The camera maneuvers through the first row then stops hiding behind the last mannequin. It turns around to the door.

A beat.

SLAM. The Demon breaks down the door. The Demon twitches its head like a chicken.

END OF CAM FOOTAGE

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Jake runs inside a classroom and locks the door. He looks for a place to hide but there is nowhere. He grabs a pencil for self defense knowing it's not much and looks at the door bracing for impact.

SLAM. The crazed woman slams against the door.

CRAZED WOMAN
(Aggressively)
You can't hide from me!

She slams the door with her body repeatedly over and over again until it falls over with her on top. She looks up at Jake and smiles sinisterly before attacking.

She jumps on top of Jake trying to restrain him causing Jake to drop the pencil.

CRAZED WOMAN (CONT'D)
It's not fair to the others if you
go now!

She holds him down not letting him get up. Jake looks off to the side and sees the pencil he dropped. He starts to reach for it.

CRAZED WOMAN (CONT'D)
Everything in your life has led to
this!

Jake grabs the pencil.

CRAZED WOMAN (CONT'D)
You should be honored they choose
yo-

Jake STABS the pencil into the crazed woman's ear. Her eyes fill with blood as she falls over.

Jake can hardly catch his breath.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - MANNEQUIN ROOM - NIGHT

Charlie sits on the floor resting against a mannequin on the first row so to not be seen. He peaks at the exit door. He doesn't see the Demon.

Charlie grabs his camera peaks his head out to see the middle row, the coast looks clear. He's ready to make his next move.

He stands up slowly and again peaks at the exit door. Clear again. Then back to the middle row...

When he turns he is face to face with the Demon. It screeches and Charlie break for the exit door with the Demon close behind.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Jake slowly rises from the floor.

He puts his hands on his knees and vomits.

After wiping his mouth he look off to the side and sees the crazed woman dead on the floor is wearing a necklace.

He yanks it off her body and studies it as just in his field of view a orb of light passes the door window.

JAKE

Charlie?

Putting the necklace in his pocket, he steps outside the room.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Charlie sprints down the hall with the Demon tailing him. The Demon is faster than Charlie. However, when Charlie takes a quick turn the Demon is thrown off course due to his own speed and SLAMS against some lockers.

Charlie decides now is the best time to hide. The next door he sees he runs into.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Books and toys scatter the floor of the classroom. On the walls are pictures drawn from the children. Some are quite gruesome.

Charlie looks around the room for a moment then spots a closet, just big enough for him to hide in. He makes a move for the closet door but accidentally trips over an electronic teddy bear toy and drops the camera.

This action set off the toy into play mode. It begins walking around and singing a childrens song.

Charlie stops for a moment, he wants to grab the camera but now with the toy going off, he decided to make a break for the closet.

CAM FOOTAGE

On the floor the camera sits displaying the room from a corner. There are ABC blocks on the floor, dolls and the bear toy moving, still singing its song. All is calm.

A beat.

From the side of the room where the door is, the Demon crawls into frame on the wall searching. It cocks its head back and forth, then crawls on the roof quickly out of frame. The toy bear stops moving and singing. Everything again is still.

A beat.

Toys, chairs, and books start getting THROWN across the room. The Demon, like a kindergartner, seems to be having a temper tantrum.

The Demon enters frame, it is trashing the room in search of Charlie. It calms itself, then whips it's head around toward the back of the room.

It begins to crawl on the floor towards where Charlie is hiding, leaving frame.

END OF CAM FOOTAGE

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jake goes down the hallway seeing the light from a distance. The light stops and fades away. As he get's closer he sees double doors with a sign above reading "St. Peter's Chapel".

Next to the door he sees the painting from Fletcher's house. But instead of a green beast it is red.

He opens the doors.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - SCHOOL CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS

Jake enters the second chapel. It is larger than the first, has rows of pews, an alter, and above the alter a hanging cross off it's wires making the shape of an "X".

He hears a buzzing sound. Jake looks around and sees a few feet away from the alter is a flip phone ringing. He looks around to see if anyone else is here then goes to the phone.

He notices it is covered in something. He looks down to see a small puddle of blood.

The phone is receiving a call. The caller ID reads "MARTHA".

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM - NIGHT

In the closet Charlie can barely see anything from the outside. He is trying is hardest to keep his breath steady.

The Demon's head pops out in front of Charlie trying to see through the closet blinds. Its eyes are bloodshot red. The claws scrape the outside. It is just about to open the closet door when from outside the classroom:

OFFICER #2 (O.S.)
Ten-four. I'm clearing the back of
the building. Heard some commotion.
Think some kids are spray painting
again.

The Demon jumps onto the roof and scurries out of the classroom.

Charlie takes a large sigh of relief.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - SCHOOL CHAPEL - NIGHT

The phone is still buzzing. Jake answers.

The woman's voice, on the other line is old and frantic.

MARTHA (V.O.)
John? John are you there? Hello?
We're worried about you, you've
been gone for hours. Are you okay?

Jake doesn't know what to do.

MARTHA (CONT'D)
Hello? Who is this? Where's John?

Jake slowly closes the flip phone thinking maybe he shouldn't have answered.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - MAIN STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Charlie stands at the main stair case.

CHARLIE
Jake? Jake? Shit.

Charlie runs up the stairs.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Charlie runs down the hallway and sees the double doors. He stops and the door and sees it's the chapel.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - SECOND CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS

He slowly enters and notices Jake. Just before saying something he sees the Demon perched on top of the hanging cross watching Jake.

Charlie squats down to hide. Unsure of what to do, he starts recording Jake.

Jake drops the phone and begins sniffing the air. Something smells putrid. He follows the scent looking up and sees the Demon above him.

It jumps down in front of him.

Jake turns around to run and sees Charlie recording him. He can't believe it. He turns back around to see the Demon open up its wings. Jake covers his face thinking this is it.

Just before the Demon strikes, Officer #2 appears.

OFFICER #2

Freeze! Everybody put their hands up. Now!

The Demon tilts its head like a confused puppy.

Officer #2 now sees what stands before him. He knows he's fucked but doesn't go down without a fight. He fires a bullet at the Demon. It hits right in his chest.

The Demon lets out a deafening screech opening its mouth wide. A powerful light emits from its mouth and Officer #2's body goes limp and his eyes glow bright. He begins to levitate to the ceiling.

Jake runs to Charlie.

JAKE

Come on!

CHARLIE

One second.

Jake looks around as Charlie records the levitating Officer. Jake doesn't want to leave Charlie behind but considering what is going down, he has too.

Officer #2's body reaches the ceiling. Then SLAMS back into the ground. Blood gushes out of his skull.

Charlie looks up from the camera, realizing he should have gone with Jake.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Shit.

He runs out the chapel.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - MAIN STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Charlie runs with the Demon close behind. He gets to the stairs and tries to run down but the Demon's claw starches his back.

He falls down the stairs and lands on the floor hard.

The Demon jumps down and lands on Charlie, it's claw sinks into Charlie's shoulder.

It's mouth opens wide and emits the same light. Just as Charlies eyes start to light up slightly:

THWAP, Jake hits the Demon in the head with a large trophy. The Demon rolls off of Charlie.

Jake reaches his hand out to Charlie, he grabs a hold and stands up putting his arm around Jake's shoulders limping in pain.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jake with Charlie hanging on his shoulders runs down the hallway. In this distance the Demon lets out another screech.

As they run down the dark hallway the Demon crawls on the ceiling coming up fast.

Jake BURSTS through the exit door.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

They run across the yard to where the car is. Jake turns back to see the Demon standing at the open door, not moving forward.

Jake throws Charlie in the passenger seat and grabs the key's from Charlie's pocket then drives off.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Charlie is lying up in a hospital bed with a sling on his shoulder. Jake is by his bedside sitting down, anxiously tapping his feet.

A NURSE enters the room holding a clipboard.

NURSE
How we feeling Mr. McAvoy?

CHARLIE
Great. A little sore but.

NURSE
You were out for awhile. Looks like the medication is working.

The nurse looks at the clipboard.

NURSE (CONT'D)
(Not buying it)
Now you said a mountain lion did this?

CHARLIE
Yeah.

JAKE
It came out of nowhere.

NURSE
What are you boys doing in the mountains this late?

She looks at their cameras.

CHARLIE
Uh.

JAKE
Just needed some piece and quiet you know? To do guy stuff- in a tent just- filming stuff. Being dudes.

Charlie looks to Jake shaking his head.

NURSE
Um hum... Anyways, your scheduled to be released tomorrow. *If* you still feel fine. In most of these cases there is at least nerve damage. You're lucky Mr. McAvoy.

CHARLIE
I'm feeling lucky.

NURSE
Again, the medications.

The Nurse places a piece of paper by his bedside.
Prescription.

NURSE (CONT'D)
You can pick those up tomorrow.

Jake stands up and leans in to ask the Nurse something
secretly.

JAKE
Hey um you don't happen to have
anything that you can give me
right?

NURSE
Sir this is a hospital.

JAKE
No, not like drugs or anything. But
something to like calm me down or
put me in a coma for a little.

The nurse rolls her eye's and leaves the room.

JAKE (CONT'D)
You think she's getting it or?

CHARLIE
You alright?

JAKE
Yeah totally. Just that almost
dying from some sort of demonic
velociraptor and evil school
teacher is giving me anxiety for
some reason.

Jake sits back down.

CHARLIE
Hey man, I wanna say thanks. You
saved my ass back their. You could
have just left but you didn't. It
means a lot.

JAKE
No man left behind.

CHARLIE
No man left behind.

They sit in silence for a moment. Jake is rubbing his hands
aggressively.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Come on really, what's wrong?

JAKE
I think whoever was in there before
us was- taken. Like the girl.

Jake puts his head in his hands for a moment.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I found this phone and it was
ringing and I didn't know what to
do so I answered and- someone was
on the other line. This woman-
looking for her husband.

Charlie looks off to the distance.

CHARLIE
There's gotta be something we're
missing. Why not just kill them?

JAKE
There was some blood next to the
phone so- maybe they are and every
time were too late.

CHARLIE
No that can't be it. It doesn't add
up.

JAKE
Why would they take them?

CHARLIE
I don't know but we're gonna find
out.

Jake doesn't like the sound of that. Regardless he reaches
into his pocket.

JAKE
Also, I found this.

He gets up and hands the necklace to Charlie.

CHARLIE
What is it?

JAKE
I'm starting to think that place
was never a school. Just a breeding
ground to indoctrinate kids into
their weird little religion.
(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)
Anyway I found it on the woman who
attacked me.

Charlie fiddles with the necklace then opens the pendant.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I didn't see that.

Charlie looks inside.

It is the symbol seen from the first chapel. A short, wide triangle with the outline of a circle on each end of the triangle.

But instead of the top circle being colored in like in the first chapel, this one's left circle is colored in.

CHARLIE
It's what we saw in the first
chapel. But a different circle is
shaded in.

Charlie grabs his camera from the bedside table and searches for the footage for the first symbol.

He shows it to Jake.

JAKE
What does it mean?

CHARLIE
Where have I seen this before?

Charlie grabs his notebook and starts flipping around until he lands on his map.

Each location they have been too is circled on the map.
First chapel at the top and second chapel down some and off to the left.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Pen.

JAKE
Pen?

CHARLIE
Pen! I need a pen!

Jake runs around the room looking and finds a pen where the nurse keeps the clipboard.

He hands it to Charlie who draws a slanted line connecting the two circles he made on the map.

Then a horizontal line across the map starting from the left circle.

Lastly another slanted line connecting the top circle to the horizontal line he just made.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

It's not a religious symbol.

It's a triangle. He circles the right side point.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

It's a guide. To all the chapels.

JAKE

Oh shit.

Charlie looks to Jake with a wide smile.

CHARLIE

Hell yeah "oh shit"! We did it. We fucking did it!

Jake smiles disingenuously.

Charlie is so happy he could cry looking at the map.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

We know where the last one is now.

He turns sharply to Jake.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

We gotta see what's in there.

JAKE

(Reluctantly)

Actually I wanted to talk to you about that.

CHARLIE

(Not listening)

Maybe that's where they all are.

JAKE

Maybe yeah but-

CHARLIE

First thing tomorrow we gotta go.

JAKE
(Assertive)
Charlie, I'm done.

CHARLIE
Done? What do you mean done?

JAKE
Hey man look, it's just too much
okay? I mean I can't risk my life
for this shit. I have my mom to
take care of and school and I need
a job-

CHARLIE
But we're so close. Look at what
you just showed me- this is it.
Just a little bit further.

JAKE
No I can't! I'm losing my mind- I
keep seeing this- this fucking
light. Like it wants me. It has a
hold on me.

CHARLIE
Just a bit further. You can't quit
now. I mean you should see some of
the footage I have it's insane.

JAKE
Yeah? Footage like when you sat
their and filmed me about to die?
Like I was your little bunny
rabbit?

CHARLIE
It wasn't like that.

JAKE
I saw you, you just sat there!

CHARLIE
What you want me to do? Jump in and
get us both killed.

JAKE
Maybe- yeah. It's better than you
selling the footage of my death.

CHARLIE
I wouldn't do that.

JAKE
That's the thing Charlie. You
would.

Jake heads for the door.

CHARLIE
Whatever man, I don't need you. I
didn't ask for you to do this. You
did! You wanted this!

Jake rushes back into the room.

JAKE
I didn't ask for any of this shit!
You think I wanted to run around
risking my life for your stupid
little project? I at least thought
we might find the girl but clearly
you don't give a shit about that.

CHARLIE
Oh yeah? Then why else would I be
here? Why else would I be doing all
this shit?

JAKE
Because you're fucking insane! We
almost die and all you can talk
about is what you got on camera.

Jake takes a breath, calming himself.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Tomorrow morning I'm going to the
cops.

CHARLIE
What why?!

JAKE
Two people might be dead for all we
know. And whatever this shit is, we
clearly are not the ones to fight
it.

CHARLIE
What I- what we have here is
something special. We have at our
fingertips the opportunity to show
the world something they have never
seen before. We can't pass this up.

JAKE
I'm sorry. I can't.

Jake heads for the door.

CHARLIE
Think of the money Jake!

JAKE
Fuck the money.

Jake exits the room.

Charlie rests back in his hospital bed and slams his fist on the bedside.

After a few breaths he looks at his notebook. The page with the map is open.

CHARLIE
Fuck this shit, I don't need him.

He gets out of his hospital bed in pain.

INT. JAKES HOUSE - DAWN

Jake opens the door to his home and puts the keys down on a table. He takes a few breaths, glad he's done.

He walks to his mothers bedroom and quietly enters.

INT. JAKES MOTHERS ROOM - DAWN

Stepping quietly he goes next to her bed.

The food he left for her is untouched. He sighs and kisses his mothers forehead. Then exits the room.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - DAWN

Charlie still in his sling drives fast down the road with the map on the passenger seat. It is pouring rain and the windshield wipers can barely keep up.

He looks down at the map and takes such a sharp turn the car almost flips over.

Charlie continues speeding down the road for a moment then brings the car to a screeching halt. He picks up the map and looks out the window. He's close.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Charlie walks through the forest in the rain looking at the map, which is drenched and falling apart. Up ahead he spots a clearing and moves toward it.

The clearing opens up to show a small lake. He looks at the map again.

CHARLIE

What the- It's supposed to be right here. That's what it says it-

He looks ahead at the lake.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

You got to be fucking me.

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jake is doing the dishes humming a song to himself when he hears the metal trash cans outside clanking around.

He looks out the window to see one has fallen over.

Curiously he walks to the front door.

EXT. JAKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A thick layer of fog and light rain covers the outside. Jake goes up to the fallen trashcan and looks inside.

JAKE

Sorry Mr. Raccoons. Nothing good in there today.

He picks up the trash can and puts it back in place.

There is a cooing sort of sound down the street. With all the fog he cannot see what it is.

While looking, the light orb passes behind Jake.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Charlie is putting his notepad and camera on the ground but keeps the camera light. He takes a step into the water but remembers his sling. In pain he takes it off.

Feet in the water he looks toward the middle of the lake and takes a few deep breaths.

CHARLIE

Here goes nothing.

He turns on the flashlight then walks deeper into the water then dives under.

EXT. LAKE - UNDERWATER - NIGHT

The lake water is so murky that even with the light he can only see a few feet ahead. He continues to swim deeper and deeper.

With his shoulder having limited mobility he swims slowly and already needs a breath of fresh air.

Ahead he can make out something made of stone. The last chapel. He looks for a way in, desperate for air.

Swimming around he sees an entrance and goes in.

INT. THIRD CHAPEL - UNDERWATER - NIGHT

There is not much to see inside besides a few pews and some small paintings that go all around the chapel.

Charlie body is begging for air. He swims upwards in the chapel soon to pass out then BURSTS above the water gasping for air. He found a small air pocket.

EXT. JAKES HOME - NIGHT

Jake heads back to the front door but is stopped by another cooing sound.

He turns around still seeing nothing in the fog.

Thn through the fog the light appears. He stares at the light in the distance, already in its trance.

INT. THIRD CHAPEL - UNDERWATER - NIGHT

Charlie takes a deep breath then dives under the water. Swimming down he takes a look around and sees the paintings that line across the walls.

He swims to the nearest one and shines his light on it.

The painting is Renaissance style and depicts a young child entering a chapel guided by a light.

He swims to the next painting to the right which depicts a old man entering a chapel guided by a light.

He swims over again to the next painting which shows a woman entering a chapel guided by a light.

Charlie swims up to get some air then immediately swims back down to look at the other paintings.

Shining the light he sees one of a boy guided by a light to the open arms of a tall figure with a green mask.

Swimming to the next painting he see's the child, old wan, woman and boy guided by a light into a log cabin.

It looks exactly like the one Charlie saw on the way to Charon.

The next painting depicts the child, old man and woman tied to stone pillars placed in a triangular shape, similar to the symbol they have been seeing, with the boy tied to a pillar in the middle of the shape.

Charlie goes up for air one last time then back down.

The last painting he swims too depicts the child, the old man, and the woman bleeding from the neck. The boy in the middle is covered in blood but it is not his own. From the heavens a beast with a crown of flesh stands. His soul flows out of his body and into the boy in the middle's body.

Charlie's eyes widen. He swims to the top.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

In the fog Jake follows the light down the street.

The cooing continues and grows louder.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Charlie quickly gets in his car and slams the door. He starts the engine and speeds off.

He grabs his phone to makes a call.

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jake's phone rests on the kitchen counter top buzzing. Through the window Jake is seen walking deeper into fog.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - NIGHT

The call goes to voice mail.

CHARLIE

Fuck!

Charlie almost swerves off the road speeding in the rain, but gets the car back on track. Charlie brings the phone back to his ear. The rain is so loud he has to yell:

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

You were right Jake, you were right. Fuck the documentary, it's bigger than that its- it's some sort of ritual. A seance to bring someone back from the dead. Their going to sacrifice these people. But listen the light your seeing- I- for whatever reason they want you. They choose you. Don't go towards the light Jake! You hear me? Don't go towards the light!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Jake continues down the road guided by the light. The cooing stops and ahead he sees a tall man holding his arms wide open as if asking for a hug.

STOLAS

Come. Come my child.

Jake still in a trance goes into the arms of Stolas.

STOLAS (CONT'D)

There, there. You're safe now. Verrine thanks you for keeping his body so able.

Jake has no reaction to any of this still in a trance.

STOLAS (CONT'D)

Let us guide you home.

The Demon appears behind Stolas in the fog.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Charlie still speeding down road looks around trying to get his bearings. Ahead he spots the old cabin and goes pedal to metal.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

Charlie without his camera creeps around the woods outside the cabin to stay hidden.

He sees that behind the cabin is a clearing with three stone pillars in a triangular shape and another in the middle. Just like the painting.

He hears footsteps and crouches down.

Jake is brought around the outside of the cabin to an outside door that leads to a cellar. Stolas is holding him by the neck forcing his movements. Jake is out cold.

CHARLIE

(To self)

Don't worry. I'm gonna get you out buddy.

With Jake still in his grasp, Stolas opens the cellar door and takes Jake down closing the door behind him.

After a few moments Stolas comes out of the cellar door and goes out of sight.

As Charlie begins to move toward the cabin his phone starts ringing. He quickly tries to shut it off but sees the call is from Terry.

He takes a moment then answers.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(Whispering)

Hello?

TERRY (V.O.)

Hey kid is now a good time?

Charlie looks at the Cabin. He can't believe this shit.

TERRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Doesn't matter. Look, I probably had a few too many drinks when I told you we had a spot open for you at the festival.

Charlie turns away from the cabin.

CHARLIE

What?

TERRY (V.O.)

It's nothing personal but we have to make room for other talent. We got this other guy and his work is- he's more established.

CHARLIE

You can't do this to me.

TERRY (V.O.)
Did you even know what you were
going to do?

Charlie looks back at the cabin.

CHARLIE
I mean I thought I did but-

TERRY (V.O.)
I'm sorry kid, but your style just
doesn't work for something like
this. It's just the way it is. What
we're looking for is something
more- thrilling.

Charlie turns to look at the pillars and takes a moment. His
face turns stone cold serious.

CHARLIE
I can give you that.

TERRY (V.O.)
I don't know.

CHARLIE
Mr. Grishim. If you take a chance
on me I-

He considers what he's about to do for a second.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(Sternly)
I can show they world something
they've never seen. Something so
spectacular they won't believe it
until they see it. I found my man
in the electric chair. You just
gotta let me film it.

Terry is silent on the other line for a moment.

TERRY (V.O.)
Better be good.

Terry hangs up. Charlie looks deeply at the stone pillars
then smiles.

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

In a small cellar four victims are tied up to a pipe. Jake,
Melany, JOHN and a YOUNG WOMAN wearing a cross necklace.

The other three look awful, pale and starving. Their clothes dirty and John is bleeding at the waist.

Jake wakes up slowly.

JAKE
Where the hell are we?

YOUNG WOMAN
(Frantic)
I don't know. I was walking in the woods and saw this light and it led me to a lake- then I woke up here.

JAKE
Where are we?

JOHN
Hell.

JAKE
What?

Jake looks around then tries to move. He notices he's tied to a pipe.

Off to the side he sees Melany.

JAKE (CONT'D)
We gotta get out of here.

Jake looks around for anything to help them break free. Across the room is a sharp piece of glass. Jake tries to extend his leg out but can't quite reach it.

The cellar door opens with a blinding flash of light. All four victims look up.

Slowly down the stairs comes a dark figure behind the light. They are all terrified.

Down the stairs comes Charlie with his camera light on.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Charlie? Charlie! Thank God.

All four perk up.

JOHN
You know him?

JAKE
There's a piece of glass right there. You can cut us free!

YOUNG WOMAN

Oh my God, thank you lord.

Charlie steps down the last step then crouches on the floor. He pans the camera across all their faces.

CAM FOOTAGE

The light from the camera shines bright across all their faces. It moves closer to Melany showing her tied to the pipe.

MELANY

It hurts.

The camera moves to the side and shows the young woman and the old man.

YOUNG WOMAN

Please.

JOHN

The glass, the glass!

The camera then moved to Jake.

JAKE

What are you doing? Get the glass!

The camera pans down and zooms in on the glass, then back to all four victims.

END OF CAM FOOTAGE

Charlie moves around the room getting footage from all angles.

JAKE (CONT'D)

What the fuck Charlie, help!

Jake reaches for the glass with his leg. He barely touches it and tries to pull it back.

Charlie steps on the glass and pulls it farther away still recording Jake.

Jake's lips quiver. He sees now what is happening.

YOUNG WOMAN

What are you doing?

JOHN

Save us!

Charlie stands up and cuts off the camera and its light. He looks up the stairs.

JAKE
(Begging)
Charlie.

Charlie can't bring himself to look at Jake and goes up the cellar stairs closing the door behind him.

JOHN
What the fuck!

Melany starts crying. John and young woman yell.

Jake sits in silence, his eye's have no life.

EXT. RITUAL SIGHT - DAY

In a large field of grass behind the cabin rests the stone pillars. A low note from a horn is played. The ritual has begun.

FIFTY OR SO CULT MEMBERS dance around the middle stone pillar dressed in all white. Few hold banners which display the severed head of a red beast wearing a crown of skin.

Stolas stands in the middle on his knees praying.

The cult members start cheering celebrating the arrival of the sacrifices.

The four victims arms tied behind their backs are lead to the middle. Jake is in front of the line.

Stolas stands up and reaches his arms out to the sky.

STOLAS
What a wonderful day!

The cult members cheer.

One by one Melany, the old man and the young woman are lead to their own stone pillar and tied against it.

Melany to the left of Jake, the young woman to the right and John behind Jake out of sight.

Stolas grabs Jake's body and presses it against the middle pillar. Some members help tie Jake up.

Stolas looks up and down Jake's body.

STOLAS (CONT'D)
Beautiful.

Another sound of a horn is heard.

The cult members scatter outside of the middle and stand outside the triangle.

Jake begins sobbing.

Stolas stands alone in the middle. With a thunderous voice he speaks:

STOLAS (CONT'D)
Bear witness for what shall be done
today. For Verrine, like I many
years ago, will be born again!

The cult members cheer.

STOLAS (CONT'D)
Since Eden we have tried to gift
the world with our freedom and
salvation. Yet they do not listen.
For He tells lies of a kingdom ever
come. But today marks a historical
day as we show the world how to
have real power. How to stop
worshiping a false God-

Stolas looks directly in to Jake's eyes.

STOLAS (CONT'D)
And become one.

Another horn is heard. Cheers erupt from the crowd. THREE CULT MEMBERS come to the center wielding small blades.

Stolas takes one of the blades and presses it lightly against Jake's lower neck, then moves the blade down cutting his shirt in half. He hands back the blade

The three cult members spread out. One going to each of the other three pillars. They await their orders.

STOLAS (CONT'D)
For Verrine I offer this.

A beat.

STOLAS (CONT'D)
Blood of the old!

CULT MEMBER #1 steps in front of John and slits his throat.

Jake can't see but the young woman's scream lets him know all he needs to know.

Melany after days of no water and food is loopy. Thankfully she has no idea what is going on.

CULT MEMBER #1 brings the blade in front of Jake and thrusts the blade toward him so the blood splatters on his chest.

STOLAS (CONT'D)
Blood of the righteous!

The young woman screams and sobs.

YOUNG WOMAN
Please, please no.

CULT MEMBER #2 slits her throat and repeats the process of splattering the blood on Jake's chest.

Jake tries to kick free to no avail.

He looks around.

STOLAS
The blood of the young!

CULT MEMBER #3 moves in front of Melany.

Straight ahead across the field Jake sees the reflection of a light at the forests edge. He can't believe what he's seeing.

EXT. FOREST EDGE - CONTINUOUS

Charlie's camera lens reflects the ritual. Cult member #3 is right in front of Melany and raises the blade. The lens zooms in.

EXT. RITUAL SIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Jake looks across at Charlie having lost all hope. A cut is heard and soon after more blood is splattered across his chest.

The cult members begin chanting in an ancient language.

STOLAS
And lastly, a gracious host.

Jake shares one last look at Charlie before his body goes completely limp then instantly shoots up stretching toward the sky.

Beams of light shoot out of his eyes and mouth into the heavens.

EXT. FOREST EDGE - CONTINUOUS

Charlie's camera lens shows the reflection of Jake's light beams shooting into the sky.

EXT. RITUAL SIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Jake's body stretches more and shakes violently. It cannot take much more.

In an instant his body rests limply.

VERRINE, in Jake's body, looks up slowly. He has a faint smile.

STOLAS
Welcome home.

The cult members drop to their knee's.

STOLAS (CONT'D)
All hail Verrine!

CULT MEMEBERS
All hail Verrine! All hail Verrine!

Then louder:

CULT MEMEBERS (CONT'D)
All hail Verrine! All hail Verrine!

LOUDER:

CULT MEMEBERS (CONT'D)
ALL hail Verrine! All hail Verrine!

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: THREE MONTHS LATER

EXT. AIRPORT LUGGAGE CLAIM - DAY

Charlie, dressed nicer than usual waits at luggage claim. A TV behind him displays the news.

His phone rings. He reaches into his pocket and answers.

CHARLIE
Hello?

KATIE (V.O.)

Hi this is Katie your property manager. I'm calling because-

CHARLIE

I know I'm a little late on rent but in a few hours I'll be swimming in cash and can pay alright?. In fact, I'll probably be moving out into a nicer place soon anyway so- yeah bye.

Charlie hangs up the phone and collects his luggage that just came around.

As Charlie walks away, a breaking news story comes across the TV.

REPORTER

The search still continues for Jake Cole. A young man suspected of murdering his mother by purposefully withholding her medical care. He was last seen walking the streets of Winston-Salem on King Street, near St. Peters Chapel. If you or anyone you know has any information please contact-

INT. TAXI - DAY

Charlie sits in the back of a taxi making a call.

CHARLIE

Hey!

CHRIS (V.O.)

Hey man, you on the way?

CHARLIE

Yeah just got in a taxi.

CHRIS (V.O.)

Awesome. Steph is here too.

STEPH (V.O.)

Hey Charlie! Congratulations!

CHARLIE

Thank you.

CHRIS (V.O.)
Seriously man, we're so stoked for you. I know you've had some trouble in the past but- I'm glad it all worked out. Can't wait to see your film dude. See you soon.

Charlie hangs up the phone and looks out the car window with a smile.

He can't wait to see what life brings him next.

INT. THEATER LOBBY - DAY

In a small theater a local film festival is taking place.

Charlie walks around looking for Chris when Terry steps in front of him.

CHARLIE
Mr Grishim.

The two shake hands.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I want to thank you again for giving me this chance. You won't regret it.

TERRY
I hope not. I'm excited to see what you got kid.

Terry pats his back then walks off.

INT. THEATER - DAY

In a small but crowded theater. Around THIRTY PEOPLE sit in their seats.

Charlie finds his seat next to Chris and Steph in the middle row.

CHARLIE
There you guys are.

CHRIS
Hey!

STEPH
You missed it, they just showed a great film about-

CHARLIE
Whatever they had, I got it beat.

Steph is pleasantly surprised by his confidence.

The lights dim.

STEPH
Wait so I'm still confused on what
it's about. There wasn't any
description.

CHARLIE
You'll see.

STEPH
(To Chris)
So secretive.

They relax in their chairs as the film begins. Charlie is
anxious.

CHARLIE
(To Chris)
I'll be right back.

CHRIS
It just started.

CHARLIE
When you gotta go you gotta go.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Charlie washes his face in the sink and looks into the
mirror taking deep breaths.

CHARLIE
This is it. It's finally happening.

His phone rings and he answers.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(Annoyed)
Hello?

KATIE
Hi, it's Katie again.

CHARLIE
I told you, I'll have it in a few
hours.

KATIE
I'm not calling about rent. The police came by and were looking for you.

CHARLIE
What, why?

KATIE
They didn't say. I told them I would call you and see.

CHARLIE
Why the fuck- why would you do that?

KATIE
I don't know I-

CHARLIE
I can't deal with this now. For you information a film, that I made, is premiering right now and instead of being inside watching it, I'm stuck here talking to you.

KATIE
I'm sorry I-

Charlie hangs up the phone.

He looks in the mirror and takes another deep breath. Then fixes his clothes to look just right and exits the bathroom.

INT. THEATER -DAY

Charlie squeezes by people to get back in his seat. Chris leans over.

CHRIS
(Whispering)
Charlie, is this about?

STEPH
What the fuck was that thing? Is this real?

CHARLIE
Shh just watch.

ON SCREEN: Fletcher shakes violently in his bed with the nurse lying on top trying to calm him down as he yells.

Chris leans over to Charlie

CHRIS
(Whispering)
Is he okay? Who is that?

CHARLIE
(Whispering)
Doesn't matter.

ON SCREEN: Jake looks at Charlie as the Demon stands behind him then whips around to Officer #2 with his gun out yelling and firing a bullet.

Charlie looks to the side and sees a THEATER MANAGER whispering to a USHER. The two quickly head outside the theater.

ON SCREEN: Officer #2 SLAMS to the ground.

The audience gasps and some begin murmuring about whether it is real or not.

Charlie starts to smile.

ON SCREEN: The cult members dance in the distance around stone pillars as four victims are lead to the middle.

Terry turns around from his seat stares for a moment at Charlie in confusion as Stolas' speech is heard. Charlie gives him a smile.

ON SCREEN: Cult member #1 slits John's throat. Blood spews out of his neck as Cult member #1 splatters the blood on Jake.

The audience gasps. Some scream.

Chris looks at Charlie in pure horror.

ON SCREEN: The young woman's throat is cut.

More screams emerge from the audience. Charlie is locked in on the screen.

An audience member stands up.

AUDIENCE MEMBER #1
What the hell is this?

ON SCREEN: Cult member #3 steps in front of Melany.

Another audience member shouts:

AUDIENCE MEMBER #2
Not the girl!

Charlie looks at the screen as if he were watching the birth of his child while screams and crying emerge from the audience as they watch Melany's death.

Steph covers her eye's and screams. Audience members get up to run out the theater.

The theater doors BURST open. A SWAT TEAM with BRIGHT LIGHTS on their rifles enter, yelling directions for the audience to follow.

Audience members are on the floor crying, some vomiting and others just plain screaming.

ON SCREEN: Jake's body emits lights into the sky.

Charlie watches with a smile and a single tear running down his cheek.

The SWAT team moves in on him and aims their rifles.

The lights are now on him.

THE END.