

Feral

by

Scott Parisien

#40-135 Keedwell Street
Saskatoon, SK
Canada, S7W 0A3
306.665.1050
screenwriter@sasktel.net

FADE IN:

INT. SMALL ROOM - NIGHT

A SMALL BOY of about 4 years squats in a corner. He wears only a dirty, makeshift diaper that barely even fits him. His hair is long and matted, his eyes blank, his body bone skinny and pale.

The room looks much like a prison cell in a third world country; a paper thin mattress on an old iron bed and a foul, hastily thrown together potty chair in the corner.

The only light comes from a slat of a window three inches high at the top of the wall.

The boy holds a small red, white and blue striped foam-rubber ball and he lets it fall from hand to hand.

A SHOUT echoes from outside the room and the boy's eyes widen in reaction. He rushes to the far wall and pushes the ball deep into a hole near the floor.

The SHOUTS outside the room grow in anger and the boy pushes himself further against the wall.

MAN (O.S.)

Go to hell!

CRASH! Dishes explode against the door. An all out scuffle takes place outside the room.

The boy scurries across the floor and under the bed, the whites of his eyes barely visible in the shadows.

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

I say what happens here!

Two high-pitched GUNSHOTS echo from behind the door. The boy closes his eyes and covers his ears with his dirty hands.

Suddenly an echoing GUNSHOT erupts and the door smashes off the frame and falls to the floor, along with the body of an OVERWEIGHT MAN.

The man is dead before he hits the ground, his throat and face torn by buckshot, a huge hole in his chest. His head falls to the side and his eyes stay open, void of life, staring at the boy, who stares back at the dead man in fear.

Outside the room something big and hard hits the floor like a felled tree.

The only sound in either room comes from the drips of blood down a small central drain in the floor.

The boy slips out from under the bed and backs into the far corner. He curls himself into a ball and never breaks eye contact with the dead man, as he sits there and rocks himself, scared to death.

INT. SMALL ROOM - MORNING

Light fills the room from the small window and broken down door. A ray falls across the boy's closed eyes, his body in the exact position from the night before.

He looks to the doorway and slowly stands, his limbs cramped. He walks slowly, cautious, like he's never left this room and is afraid to do so.

His rough little feet avoid the blood as he warily steps over the dead man into the

OUTER ROOM

to find he's in a run down cabin basement. Wooden walls, wooden floor, tiny and cramped. A flight of stairs leads the way out.

A dead woman is on the floor, her neck crooked where it hit the wall as she fell, two blood crusted holes in her stomach. Her limp hands hold a rusty shotgun.

The boy doesn't give her a second look, he's too enthralled with the newness around him. He takes the stairs to the

MAIN FLOOR

where cracked, weathered windows surround the rotten, soiled room. Thick trees flank every window. He wanders outside.

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

The leaves of the deep thick forest are turning as the cool fall breeze barrels in around the solitary cabin.

The boy's eyes flash with wonder, as something he's never seen before enters the trees.

He quickly creeps up to where it entered and doesn't hesitate for a second as he follows it in.

The trees swish back into place as the green brush and darkness beyond envelop him, no trace of the boy left behind.

INT. WARD'S FOYER - DAY

TITLE OVER: EIGHT YEARS LATER

JACKSON WARD, 33, with a smile to charm the world and the charisma to take it over, enters the large foyer of his beautiful home, a small back pack over his shoulder.

JACKSON

I don't know how you keep track of that many girlfriends.

JACOB WARD, 11, full of life and spunk, saunters into the house behind his dad.

JACOB

Sarah's in grade seven, and Michelle and Ella are in two different classes. I got it all figured out Dad, don't worry.

JACKSON

Little Casanova.

Jackson laughs at his son and throws the backpack at him. They wrestle for a bit.

AMANDA (O.S.)

I recall banning wrestling from anywhere but the basement.

The guys stop and look up at AMANDA WARD, 32, with the face of a mischievous teenager as she stares at them from the hallway. She's quite petite, barely five foot nothing on a good day.

JACKSON

Hey, sweetie. I thought you had the arts meeting after school?

Jacob runs and hugs his mom and tries for a big smooch. She leans back from him to avoid it.

AMANDA

Nope, kisses are off limits.

Jacob leans out of the hug, rolls his eyes.

JACOB
Just because I turned eleven doesn't mean
I can't kiss my mom.

Amanda ruffles his hair.

AMANDA
You say that now.

JACKSON
Like a man with a harem needs more
kisses.

Jacob sniffs the air like crazy.

JACOB
Hey, what's that smell, Dad? Oh, never
mind, it's you, burning with jealousy.

Jacob lets out a howl of laughter and melodramatically
bends over at the gut.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Oh, ow, my stomach, laughing, so hard it
hurts, oooooh.

Amanda can't help but laugh. Jackson tries to hide his
crack of a smile. Jacob walks away hunched over,
laughing.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Burn...

JACKSON
Laugh it up, fuzzball.
(to Amanda)
What's goin' on, you okay?

AMANDA
One of my students went home with Mono
today. So no kisses, sharing glasses,
nada until I get my test results back.

Jackson steps into her space.

JACKSON
(lowered voice)
Does that include me kissing you down...
You know.

He tries to be as seductive as possible. She smiles at
him and softly smacks him in the chest, then spins away
after Jacob.

INT. WARD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amanda is cuddled up in bed under the covers, a food tray on her lap. It holds an empty plate, a rolled up magazine and a half empty bottle of 'Gatorade'.

Jacob quietly steps into the room.

He leans down and kisses his mom on the cheek, then softly removes the tray, flicks off the light and leaves.

INT. WARD'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Jacob sets the food tray on the counter and grabs the 'Gatorade' bottle. He quickly sucks it all down and lets out a small burp.

He tosses it in the overflowing recycle bin just as Jackson enters the kitchen.

JACKSON

Hey bud, thanks again for grabbing that.
You up to gettin' annihilated on X-Box?

JACOB

You gonna make me tie one hand behind my
back again?

Jacob and Jackson elbow each other as they leave the kitchen. They pass the empty bottle of 'Gatorade' as they go.

INT. JACOB'S BEDROOM - MORNING

A sweep of light fills the dark room as Amanda, tired as hell, opens the door.

AMANDA

Hurry up, hun, you'll be late for school.

A low, soft moan comes from under the covers.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Jacob?

Amanda sluggishly steps to Jacob's bedside and pulls back the covers. Jacob shivers uncontrollably, his pajamas soaked through with sweat. Amanda grabs his chin and pulls his face to hers.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Jacob?

His eyes are rolled back and he softly moans.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
(shouting)
Jackson!

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Amanda and Jackson sit on either side of a hospital bed, each holding one of Jacob's hands. Jacob is hooked up to machines and wires, with tubes all over. He looks weak and underweight.

Amanda looks like she's been crying for months, and Jackson looks tired as hell, five o'clock shadow more than apparent.

A KNOCK at the door turns their attention to an older DOCTOR. He smiles at them with empathy.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - LATER

A very well dressed GENETIC SPECIALIST sits next to the Doctor at his desk. Amanda and Jackson sit side by side, hand in hand, confusion painting their faces.

AMANDA
I just... I don't get it, I don't understand. He's been perfectly healthy his entire life, how could this just happen?

GENETIC SPECIALIST
That's how Duncan's Disease works. The child is perfectly fine until he comes in contact with the Mononucleosis virus. At that point the entire immune system is attacked and becomes too weak to keep the virus under control.

Amanda stares ahead at the Doctors, then drops her head in sad defeat.

JACKSON
He'll be alright though, right? He'll recover?

The Specialist and Doctor look at each other, then back to Jackson.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Hello?

GENETIC SPECIALIST

In the rare cases documented, most boys don't survive past the age of seventeen.

Amanda's head snaps up like a snake.

AMANDA

Seventeen?

GENETIC SPECIALIST

I have the name of an excellent counselor who deals with situations like these and there are plenty of procedures and tests that we can --

AMANDA

I need to get back to my son.

She storms out of the room and her PANICKED CRIES echo throughout as she barrels down the hallway.

Jackson, tears in his eyes, stays put, like his feet are in cement.

INT. FUNERAL OFFICE - DAY

Amanda stands in the center of a large, dimly lit room. Her clothes are pressed and proper, her makeup is perfect, but her eyes are empty.

Jackson is off to the side with a FUNERAL PLANNER. They whisper to each other.

Amanda stares ahead at a few small caskets, all slightly different in size. One for a baby, a toddler and a young adolescent. She stares at them but her eyes don't focus on a thing.

INT. WARD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amanda is on the edge of the bed. She looks like she hasn't slept in weeks. She stares across the room like a model posing for a artist, as he paints the portrait of a broken soul.

The ticking of the clock is all that can be heard.

INT. WARD'S FOYER - DAY

Jackson leads Amanda into the house. Jackson is in a precisely ironed black suit and Amanda's black dress matches her mood. She lets her hat and veil fall to the floor; she looks completely broken.

Jackson closes the door while Amanda stands frozen. Her eyes dart around and her knees become weak and she begins to fall. Jackson catches her and she lets it out. All of it.

She pushes off of him and crumbles into herself on the floor as he looks down on her helplessly.

INT. GENETICS OFFICE - DAY

The Genetic Specialist has a DNA chart held out for Amanda and Jackson. Amanda's hair is a few inches longer and her dark roots have taken over.

AMANDA

So if I get pregnant and happen to have a boy, the same thing may happen again?

GENETIC SPECIALIST

The odds are staggering in its favor.

AMANDA

And just with a boy, not a girl?

GENETIC SPECIALIST

Correct, but as you know there is no way to guarantee the sex of a baby when getting pregnant.

AMANDA

So you're saying I shouldn't have another child?

GENETIC SPECIALIST

Unless you are willing to risk another loss.

Amanda would cry but she's numb. Jackson tries to hold her hand but she has a white knuckle grip on the chair arm and won't let go.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Amanda sits in a plastic chair in the back corner of the room, staring into space as young children run and play around her. She looks as if she may break into a thousand pieces if the air changed direction.

A LITTLE BOY comes up to her and holds his arm out. On his sleeve is a perfect little lady bug and he smiles at her, so proud of himself.

Amanda smiles back but suddenly bursts into uncontrollable sobs. The little boy is scared and he backs away, almost bursting into tears as well.

Amanda curls into herself on the chair and the rest of the kids in the room stop and stare at her with uncertainty.

One LITTLE GIRL walks up to her and pats her softly on the back.

INT. WARD'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Bright sunlight blasts the room and the faint songs of birds force their way in through the windows.

Amanda lies on the bed in the fetal position, her eyes open but void of anything but sorrow. Her face is and the circles under her eyes have grown darker.

Jackson pops his head in from the doorway.

JACKSON

I need to head into the office, need anything while I'm out?

She offers no response, doesn't even blink.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Beautiful day out there, might be good to get some fresh air, take a walk...

Still nothing from her. Jackson looks lost. He hesitates, then leaves the room.

Amanda closes her eyes and a tear runs a tiny river down her face to the bedsheet.

EXT. WARD'S HOUSE - DAY

The door slowly opens to reveal Amanda, still in her bed clothes, her eyes squinting from the bright sun.

She staggers out onto the lawn, something clutched in her hand.

She takes a few more steps as TWO TEENAGED BOYS ride by the house on their scooters, laughing and doing stunts.

Amanda stares after them and her eyes flit really quickly then grow heavy.

She falls to her knees and then slams down onto her face. The object in her hand comes loose and falls to the grass... a bottle of pills with only a couple left inside.

Just then a shiny SUV pulls into the driveway and slams to a stop.

Jackson jumps out of the SUV.

JACKSON

Amanda!

He rushes over to her and sees the bottle of pills on the ground. He rolls her over, grabs her head and shakes her.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Amanda?!

Jackson puts his ear to Amanda's mouth and hears a low gasp of air escape. His eyes spark with hope and he lifts her up, cradles her in his arms and hurries to the SUV.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Amanda is asleep, tubes in her arms, the blood vessels around her eyes burst. Her lips are chapped and she's very pale.

Jackson stands at the doorway with huge tears in his eyes. He looks so hurt, so sad. He wipes away his tears as a thought hits him. He leaves.

INT. JACKSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Jackson has his speaker phone activated. He has a photograph of a beautiful cabin on his computer screen.

JACKSON
 (into the phone)
 And when should the offer be accepted?

REALTOR (V.O.)
 Midnight tonight. I know you'll be happy with Cardef Hill, Mr. Ward. It's secluded and quiet, just what you're looking for.

Jackson smiles as he looks at the

COMPUTER SCREEN

where an image of a cabin stares out at him. It's the cabin anyone would want to vacation in. The name on the page reads: CARDEF HILL.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Jackson is at Amanda's bedside. He holds her hand and caresses her fingers. She softly opens her eyes.

JACKSON
 Remember our road trip to Vegas for our first anniversary?
 (a slight chuckle)
 We were at the Circus Circus playing the midway games and you had a tiny little elastic from some toy you won. You knew I was tired and getting grumpy and you wanted to make me laugh. So you put that tiny little elastic on your pinky so it would turn blue?

He looks to Amanda, and she has a little smirk on her face.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
 And it did... but then you couldn't get it off. And then when you finally did, you hung it out of your nose and said --

AMANDA
 (in a silly, whiny voice)
 Winners get prizes.

They laugh together at the memories.

JACKSON
I miss that girl.

AMANDA
I do too...

Jackson holds her hand and squeezes it.

JACKSON
You and I are going away for a while.
Get away from all this. Decompress.
(putting his hand where the
I.V. injects her arm)
Maybe plan out a new future?

He runs his fingers along her forehead and leans in to kiss her there. She closes her eyes.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Think you're up for it?

Amanda looks at his hand, then up to his loving eyes. For the first time in a long while her eyes have the slightest twinkle.

INT./EXT. WARD'S SUV - LAKE ROAD - DAY

Amanda talks on her cell in the seat next to Jackson as he drives.

AMANDA
Sheila no, I told you already, Jackson doesn't want any company up here for a while. Look... hello? Sheila?

Jackson keeps his eyes trained on the road ahead. Amanda claps her cell phone closed.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
I lost the signal.

JACKSON
Shame.

He smiles but Amanda doesn't appreciate the sarcasm.

Guided by a tree lined road that grows narrower by the foot, they pass through an old broken gate holding a sign for CARDEF HILL.

AMANDA
I still don't know...

JACKSON
You can trust me.

Jackson looks to her but she stares ahead.

AMANDA
Looks like we're here.

Jackson rounds the turn at the top of the hill.

Ahead of them lies a beautiful old cabin with a wrap-around porch, a porch-swing and windows all around.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Wow.

Jackson reaches over and squeezes her hand. She doesn't squeeze back and after a moment she pulls her hand away.

INT. CABIN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amanda slides a folded pile of underwear into a dresser drawer. She turns back to her suitcase, open on the bed.

She unzips a pocket and it's empty. She opens another one and then reaches in and pulls out an unexpected piece of clothing.

Her eyes freeze when she looks at it and a tear suddenly flows.

She looks down on a bunched up, wrinkled shirt. She lets it fall open to reveal a kid's soccer jersey. She checks out the back and it has the number 14 on it with the name WARD across the shoulders.

She brings it to her nose and takes in a deep breath, her eyes closed. She softly pushes it back into the pocket it came from and looks out the window to the flickering red glow from below. She smiles to herself.

She grabs a digital camera out of another bag and exits the room.

EXT. CABIN - FIRE PIT - LATER

A large fire SNAPS in a pit in front of Jackson. He looks pretty damn proud of himself.

CLICK, CLICK. Jackson turns to see Amanda as she snaps off a few pictures with the digital camera. He poses like a rough mountain man and she snaps off a few more.

AMANDA

Scrapbook page... 'Signaling a search party'.

She sets the camera down on a chair as Jackson chuckles at her joke.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

We trying to flag down a rescue party? I thought we didn't want to be found.

Jackson reaches out for her hand.

JACKSON

We don't. We're ten miles from the closest soul and I couldn't be happier.

She takes his hand and he pulls her down onto his lap on the lounge chair. She curls up close.

AMANDA

This is nice...

JACKSON

Mmm, I'm full of great ideas.

He pushes in to kiss her but she drops her forehead to meet his. They stare at each other.

AMANDA

It's just gonna take some time to --

SNAP. Just above their heads a large branch snaps and splits off the trunk of a huge poplar. They jump out of the chair and the branch stops and hangs there, still attached, only a foot above the telephone line that hangs across the yard.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

That's not safe.

JACKSON

I'll take a look at it tomorrow.

He grabs her hand and drops back down into the chair but she pulls away.

AMANDA

Long day, tired...

She backs away and heads into the cabin. Jackson sits there, grabs a small log and whips it into the fire.

A WOLF HOWL echoes in the distance.

INT. CABIN - KITCHEN - MORNING

Amanda fries up some eggs and bacon. The window above the sink is open and the sounds of birds fill the air.

AMANDA

I tried to order in but they wouldn't drive out this far. Go figure.

She turns to find Jackson smiling at her joke. Jackson is dressed for hiking, a walking stick in hand, and Amanda lets out the slightest trace of a smile.

JACKSON

Sure you don't want to come for a walk, share my adventure?

Amanda pulls out a piece of bacon and nibbles on the end. She taps a laptop on the counter, the camera and some connection cables next to it.

AMANDA

I was gonna put the pictures onto the computer, maybe start a new scrapbook page. I didn't realize I was so low on supplies though, so I thought I'd drive to that little town, see if they have a craft store or something.

JACKSON

Good luck with that, I'm off to give Grey Owl a run for his money.

Jackson stands up, jabs his walking stick forward with a grunt. Tough guy.

She smiles, a real smile this time, and sets down a plate filled with bacon and eggs.

AMANDA

Don't want you dying of malnutrition.

EXT. WOODS - LATER

The woods are thick. Nearly impassable in parts.

Jackson pushes, bends, breaks his way through, uses his walking stick as a makeshift machete.

He finally gets through the thick stuff, then trips over a rock into a clear patch. He recovers nicely but trips on a stump and falls into

A CLEARING

where he rolls onto his back. He laughs at himself and looks up. The sky is clear, blue, a few birds fly by. He is surrounded by trees at every glance.

INT. COUNTRY STORE - DAY

Amanda meanders her way through the aisles of the tiny store, not much to choose from; essential amenities, canned food, bug spray. Definitely not a scrapbook store.

Amanda grabs a can of bug spray and some beef jerky. She notices the price sticker on the bug spray and immediately puts it back on the shelf.

AMANDA
(to herself)
Don't think so.

She stops to pay at the counter where an ambitious young small-towner captain's the cash register.

CASHIER
(reminiscent of Joey
Tribianni)
How you doin'?

Amanda finds it amusing, cracks a smile.

AMANDA
Just toasty, yourself?

CASHIER
Better now.

He winks at her. She plays along and smiles.

AMANDA
How sweet. How much do I owe you?

CASHIER
Haven't seen you around here, just move to town?

AMANDA
Guess you could say that.

He leans forward on his elbows; perfect breast admiring level.

CASHIER

They call me the welcome wagon around these parts. Maybe I can drop by and make you feel at home, whereabouts are you?

Amanda lets her giant diamond ring sparkle under the florescent tubes.

AMANDA

My husband and I bought the cabin at the top of Cardef Hill, you know of it?

The Cashier slowly stands back up and punches a few numbers into the till. Complete mood change.

CASHIER

Be eleven seventeen please.

Amanda senses something not quite right and stares the boy down. He won't look her in the eyes.

AMANDA

Did I miss something?

CASHIER

You mentioned a husband. I have boundaries.

He holds her stare with all seriousness.

Amanda grabs her bags and leaves the store a little bewildered. The Cashier's serious look shifts to worried haunting.

EXT. WOODS - ROCK HILL - LATER

Jackson takes a few final steps up a rocky incline. He gets to the top and looks down on a deep valley below.

He takes a seat with his back against a large rock, leans back and drinks in the breathtaking view. It's so quiet.

For a moment he looks quite vulnerable and he stifles his breathing as a cry tries to escape.

From off screen comes a soft, low GRUNT.

Jackson spins his head to the right to see a GREY WOLF leaning around a corner of the rock wall, about ten feet away. It stares at him, its mouth open in a pant.

Jackson's eyes go wide and he instinctively grabs his walking stick.

The wolf's stare follows Jackson's hand as it moves. It takes a step closer, then another, and another.

Jackson tries to move back but the wall of rock is right behind him. He has nowhere to go.

The wolf is only a few feet away. It doesn't look menacing, but rather calm, curious. It closes its mouth, steps to about a foot from Jackson's boot and stares at him.

JACKSON

Hey, boy. Who's a good boy?

Jackson is scared shitless.

The wolf drops its head, sniffs Jackson's boot, licks it. Jackson flinches slightly and his eyes suddenly go wide with a thought.

He slowly moves his free hand to his vest pocket. He pulls out a small plastic bag filled with cheese and crackers and opens it, slides out a piece of cheese.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Hey boy, hungry?

The wolf looks at him, hunger flashes in its eye. It licks its lips at the instant salivation.

With a flick of his wrist Jackson lets the cheese fly and it lands about ten feet behind the wolf. The wolf turns and runs for the cheese.

Jackson bolts up and runs back down the way he came.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Shit, shit, shit, shit!

Jackson bounds down without looking back to see if the wolf is on his heels.

BACK UP TOP

the wolf looks over the ledge and licks his chops. FOUR MORE WOLVES appear behind him, hungry and wild.

JACKSON

is almost back to level ground. He looks over his shoulder back up the hill to see if he's safe and he sees the

PACK OF WOLVES

staring down at him as he runs away. Just then something strange appears alongside them in the shadows...

A dirty, rough looking YOUNG BOY.

JACKSON

is shocked. He turns to get a better look and trips, falls hard on his face and shoulder.

He grunts, rolls over a few times and grabs his shoulder, his face scraped and cut. He looks back up to

THE ROCK CLIFF

but the pack is gone, nothing left behind.

JACKSON

gets back up and runs at a good pace down the path.

EXT. CABIN - LATER

Jackson bounds out of the trees, legs wobbly. He keeps his balance, jumps up the steps and slams into the door.

He pulls out his keys, fumbles, looks back to the trees. No wolves. He gets the door open and darts inside.

INT. CABIN - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

He closes the door fast and stares out the window as he tries to catch his breath.

INT. CABIN - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Jackson is asleep on the couch with drool on his cheek.

BANG.

Jackson bolts up. A SCRAPE comes from the living room window. The tip of the splitting branch shimmies back and forth across the window as the wind caresses it.

He relaxes then looks at his watch: 4:30. He walks to the phone and dials a number.

OPERATOR VOICE (V.O.)
(crackling line)
The cellular customer you are trying to reach is either --

Jackson hangs up. The ROAR of an engine comes from the yard. He steps outside.

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Amanda exits the parked SUV.

Jackson hurries over to her.

JACKSON
What took you so long? I was worried, tried your cell.

AMANDA
No signal up here, remember? Here, take some bags.

Jackson looks agitated. She notices.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
What happened to your face?

Jackson reaches up to his eye, a bit scabbed over from his fall.

JACKSON
Surprised a pack of wolves on my hike and ran away like a little girl, tripped and fell on my face.

AMANDA
Wolves?

JACKSON
Yeah, but they were a good ways off, seemed more scared of me than I was of them. Come here.

He snuggles into her space and holds her tight. She lets him and almost welcomes it. They hold each other for a long beat.

Jackson pulls away and takes the bags into his arms.

AMANDA

Thanks...

She looks at him strangely as she heads into the cabin. Jackson follows but looks unsure as he stares off into the trees.

EXT. CABIN - LATE NIGHT

Jackson walks away from the fire pit, a large plume of smoke cycling up to the sky.

He stops at the door and looks from left to right, seems relieved. He closes and locks the door.

After a moment, the figure of a young boy with messy matted hair appears and squats next to the smoking embers.

The boy eerily stares up at Jackson and Amanda's bedroom window like a dog waiting for a treat.

INT. CABIN - BEDROOM - MORNING

The sun paints its bright apricot rays across the room. Amanda awakens and pats Jackson's side.

AMANDA

I'm gonna start breakfast.

Jackson grunts into his pillow.

INT. CABIN - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Amanda cracks a few eggs into a bowl. She yawns and sees the whisk at the edge of the sink.

She steps over and grabs the whisk then reaches to open the small window above the sink.

Her hand jolts up as if she's been hit with a thousand volts as her head jerks back, her mouth open in shock.

INT. CABIN - BEDROOM - SAME TIME

A SCREAM kicks Jackson right into the land of the living. He jumps up and heads to the doorway in a groggy run.

He bolts down the

HALLWAY

and into the

KITCHEN

where he finds Amanda facing him, her face twisted in shocked fear, her hands shaking.

JACKSON

What happened?

Amanda closes her eyes and slumps her face down into his chest. She begins to hyperventilate. He looks over her shoulder and what he sees explains it all...

On the high railing of the porch is a fox; or at least what's left of it. Its bloody body is heaped over the railing like an old coat, ripped apart down the middle, its insides hanging down to the weathered wood below.

EXT. CABIN - LATER

A CONSERVATION OFFICER stands next to the fox's body, now stretched out across the gravel. He's one of those guys who lives for the laid back, worry free small town life and watches C.S.I. religiously. He scribbles notes on his pad.

Jackson has his arm around Amanda as they await an answer.

OFFICER

Found some wolf tracks around the yard, marks on the fox corroborate the evidence.

JACKSON

Evidence?

AMANDA

The wolves were in our yard?

OFFICER

Couple packs known to roam around the area.

JACKSON

I came across one or two the other day.

OFFICER

Musta riled 'em up then. Always a pet or two lost to 'em over the summer, but nothing to worry about as far as your own safety. They fear people, so if one comes close to you just shout at 'em, shake a stick, or even ignore 'em, usually does the trick.

AMANDA

And they usually leave bodies on people's porches instead of eating them?

The Officer winks and steps over the fox's remains.

OFFICER

Food ain't scarce around here. Plus, I've seen a lot of strange things in these woods so I wouldn't put it past 'em. Remove the carcass for ya?

The look on Amanda's face tells him it was a stupid question to ask. The Officer tips his hat and slips on a pair of gloves. He picks up the fox and heads to the cruiser.

Jackson grabs Amanda by the shoulder.

JACKSON

Why don't you go inside, brew us some tea?

She trudges into the cabin. Jackson jogs after the Officer, who's just closed the trunk of his car. He slips off the bloody gloves.

OFFICER

Somethin' else I can help you with?

JACKSON

How sure are you that it was wolves?

The Officer raises an eyebrow and cocks his head.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

The way the fox was hung over the railing like that, a wolf could have lifted it four feet in the air?

OFFICER

Did you see the teeth marks on the fox, sir?

Jackson slowly nods. The Officer gets right in his face.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

So is there somethin' else here you're not tellin' me?

Jackson locks eyes with the Officer.

JACKSON

Is it possible a person did this? Like a teenager or something?

OFFICER

You city people crack me up.

The Officer smiles and slightly rolls his eyes then ducks into his cruiser.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

Just forget about the small town jokes and have a better day, Mr. Ward.

The Officer pulls away. Jackson shakes his head in frustration and walks back to the cabin.

INT. CABIN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jackson is asleep under a cozy afghan. Amanda tosses and turns and finally gives up. She jumps out of bed and shuffles out of the room.

INT. CABIN - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Amanda stands in front of the sink under a pot light. She downs a tall glass of water and wipes her face, her brow sweaty.

She looks around the kitchen, antsy. The digital camera on the counter catches her eye.

She grabs the camera and flips open the laptop computer on the kitchen table. She plugs a USB cable from the laptop into the digital camera. The camera makes a little beep.

Amanda stops as she sees the laptop wallpaper image of Jacob, all piss and vinegar.

Her eyes well up. She lets it in for a moment then sniffs the tears back, chokes off her sadness and moves on.

The computer begins to read the pictures from the camera and they transfer to the computer at lightning speed.

Amanda manipulates the laptop pointer and scans through the pictures of Jackson and his giant fire from the other night. She can't help but smile at his cheesy poses.

She pauses on the next picture but doesn't pay it much attention... something is bothering her.

She clicks back to the previous picture. She moves the pointer to the left of Jackson, just into the dark underbrush. The flash of the picture has lit up the leaves and there is something strange in the bushes.

Amanda moves the pointer to the ZOOM icon and enlarges the picture in that spot. Through a break in the bush a little pair of eyes glow back at her. Human eyes. Childlike eyes.

AMANDA

What...

Her own eyes fill with questions and a flicker of life.

INT. CABIN - KITCHEN - MORNING

Amanda enters the kitchen to find Jackson tossing his jacket on.

AMANDA

Going somewhere?

JACKSON

We ran out of milk, so I thought I'd --

AMANDA

Oh hey, since you're going I need some things.

Amanda reaches to the fridge, rips a page from a "to do" list and hands it to him.

The list has at least a dozen or so grocery items scribbled on it.

JACKSON

We need all this now? I didn't want to leave you for too --

AMANDA

Well, since you're going.

Jackson grudgingly puts the list in his pocket, grabs his keys and he's gone.

EXT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Amanda, unlaced shoes slipped on, waves as Jackson heads off in the SUV.

Once he's out of sight she bolts back into the cabin. A few seconds later she returns with her shoes tied up and her jacket on.

EXT. WOODS - CLEARING - LATER

Amanda slaps at a mosquito on the back of her neck, annoyed. She slaps another one on her face.

AMANDA

Leave me alone already!

She looks out before her and her eyes fill with slight wonderment at the beautiful spot.

She walks over to a huge dead tree. She closes her eyes and takes in a deep, long breath then lets it out through her nose and sits silently.

She opens her eyes and they bulge in astonishment.

Sitting in front of her, a mere ten feet away, is a boy, the boy from the picture.

He is dirty and naked, except for what looks like a strip of vinyl from an old tent, knotted around his waist like a diaper.

He sits on his haunches like a dog. He is a solid twelve years old, lean, muscular and quite tall if he were to stand up. His long hair is matted and thick and riddled with debris.

He curiously tilts his head at her.

Amanda is frozen. She looks at him with intrigue and shifts to stand.

The boy skitters away to the edge of the trees. He runs as if he were a wolf; it's a strange thing to see, not humanistic at all, his knee caps are enlarged and bulbous.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Wait, stop, wait!

The boy stops and turns to her, his wild eyes fearful.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

What's your name?

The boy lets out a soft whimper and runs off into the trees.

Amanda's stricken with the shock of the moment.

A HOWL sounds off in the distance. Then another, from a different location. Amanda's suddenly afraid. She stands up, trots, jogs, then sprints towards the cabin.

INT. TOWN LIBRARY - SAME TIME

Jackson peruses the handful of shelves in the tiny library. A lone SENIOR LIBRARIAN works the old table that acts as a check out desk.

LIBRARIAN

I been orderin' lotsa them true crime books from Amazon, been popular lately. I actually met that Bill Curtis from American Justice once, when I's visiting my sister in Spokane. What a nice fellow...

JACKSON

Mmm...

Jackson runs his fingers along the spines that fill a shelf and stops. He pulls out his desired book; a children's book on wolves.

Jackson flips it open to a page with a beautiful photo of a grey wolf, its feet deep in the snow.

He flops himself down in an old wooden chair and reads.

INT. CABIN - OFFICE - DAY

Amanda is in front of the laptop. Dial-up internet is connected and she pounds away at the keyboard. She has a search engine up and she enters: WILD CHILDREN.

As the options come up on the search, she clicks on the first link to FERAL CHILDREN. The connection kicks her off. She jiggles the phone jack cord with a huff and the internet reconnects.

After a moment, a new page slowly loads up. It's filled with a huge amount of information on recorded cases of feral children living with, and raised by animals.

She begins to take notes.

INT. COUNTRY STORE - SAME TIME

Jackson tosses a couple cans of stewed tomatoes into his basket, which almost overflows. He crumples up the grocery list and tosses it in as well.

He gets to the till and meets the same Cashier who attempted to flirt with Amanda.

CASHIER

Find everything you're looking for?

JACKSON

Actually, do you guys have any kind of like, animal spray, for big animals?

CASHIER

Like bear spray?

JACKSON

Yeah, something like that.

CASHIER

Nope.

The Cashier processes Jackson's groceries.

CASHIER (CONT'D)

Have a run in with something out there camping, did ya?

JACKSON

Not yet, can't be too careful.

CASHIER

No, sir.

The Cashier sees a girl walk by the window. He leans just so far as to get a glimpse of her ass for as long as physically possible.

CASHIER (CONT'D)

That ass should have an internet site.

JACKSON

Hey, you ever hear of wolf packs wandering around this area?

CLERK

Sometimes. Friend'a mine trapped one
once, tried to turn it into a pet.
Called it Wolf Lundgren.

The Cashier laughs to himself like it's one of the
funniest things he's ever heard. Jackson doesn't catch
the humor.

The Cashier sees a couple of hot girls walk by.

CASHIER

Nice...

Jackson takes stock of the strange young man and keeps a
straight face.

CASHIER (CONT'D)

You should have seen this MILF that was
in here a couple days back. Talk about
an ass you could lick all day. Just
moved into a cabin north of town, too bad
she was married or I'd make a visit up
there and introduce her to some real
wildlife if you know what I mean.

The Cashier takes a swig of an energy drink.

JACKSON

Cardef Hill?

The cashier almost chokes at the mention of the place.
He coughs and sputters, wipes his face.

CASHIER

What'd you say?

JACKSON

Did she happen to say her new place was
Cardef Hill?

The cashier gives Jackson a once over and his eyes go
wide. Jackson smiles and spins his wedding ring with his
thumb. The Cashier shrinks a bit in stature.

CASHIER

Uh, no, uh, never heard of that place.
Um, how did you want to pay for this,
sir?

Jackson smirks to himself and shakes his head at the
pathetic young stud.

INT. CABIN - OFFICE - SAME TIME

Amanda closes the laptop. She scans her notes, has certain lines highlighted:

CAN'T BE INTEGRATED BACK INTO SOCIETY

NEED TO BE INSTITUTIONALIZED

NEVER LEARN PROPERLY

At the bottom is a list of names. One is circled: *SILAS*, and a note beside it reads: *MEANING - FROM THE FOREST*.

EXT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Amanda leaves the cabin with a Ziploc bag of beef jerky tucked into her belt.

She heads into the trees.

EXT. WOODS - CLEARING - LATER

Amanda enters the clearing. Leery. It's calm as death. She looks around for the boy then whistles.

AMANDA

Here boy.

She makes a face to say, 'like that'll work'.

She looks around and something moves in the far off trees. She looks closely.

A shadow moves off deep into the underbrush.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Wait!

She runs to the trees, stops at their border and looks in. She can't see anything. She reaches for the Ziploc, pulls out a large piece of jerky and tears off a few pieces.

She backs up and lays the pieces down, forming a trail, as she backs across the clearing.

She waits.

The shadow appears in the trees. It comes into view: it's the boy.

He's on his hands and knees. He crawls to the first piece of jerky, snaps it up in his jaws and disappears back into the trees.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Come on.

Amanda backs into the trees towards the cabin as she extends her trail of jerky.

EXT. CABIN - LATER

Amanda backs into the yard from the path, lays two last pieces of jerky down before her and sits on the top step.

Rustling suddenly comes from the path.

The wolf boy appears from the trees and comes closer. He looks up at her and stops. Amanda looks at him closely. His hands and knees are calloused and his skin is quite dark.

AMANDA

Hey there...

The boy is leery of her. He looks around and sniffs the air, smells the other pieces of jerky then crawls to them.

He squats about five feet from Amanda. He enjoys the jerky and chews it fiercely, stares at the last piece of meat in her hand. Amanda smiles to herself.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

I'll call you Silas.

A low GROAN...

Amanda's smile slowly disappears from her face as it fills with fear.

Barely moving her head, she looks to her right and is met with a pair of drooling, sharp, large teeth, only six inches away.

She fully turns her head and faces a HUGE BLACK MOTHER WOLF. Right in her face.

Amanda's breathing quickens, her entire being shakes.

The wolf's eyes are steeled and calm, she looks down at the jerky in Amanda's hand. Amanda notices and lets the jerky fall from her grip.

The wolf doesn't take it. Instead, the wolf looks towards the boy with scolding eyes.

Amanda doesn't move an inch.

The female wolf's ears perk up. She tenses, turns and runs.

Amanda watches the female wolf hurry away. The boy starts to follow but then stops. He stays and stares at Amanda while he chews on the beef jerky.

The sound of the SUV quickly fills the air and Jackson pulls it to a stop.

The boy tenses but stays for the food.

INT. WARD'S SUV - CONTINUOUS

Jackson immediately sees the disheveled boy.

JACKSON

What the hell --

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Amanda puts her hand up, motions Jackson to stay inside the vehicle.

She stands and slowly steps towards SILAS, who warily shimmies backwards as she comes closer.

She has one final piece of jerky in the bag. She pulls it out and squats down to Silas' level. He eyes the meat while he watches her carefully.

AMANDA

It's okay Silas, you're just a boy. Just a scared, lost little boy.

Silas leans forward and snatches the meat out of her hand with his teeth. Amanda lets her hand run along his arm. She reaches out and puts her hand on his shoulder and softly pets him.

Silas' eyes are down. Amanda doesn't see his face.

He opens his mouth wide and he's either enjoying the contact, or he's about to plunge his teeth into her throat --

BEEP BEEEEEP!

Amanda and Silas spin in surprise and a bit of fear.

Jackson stands with one leg still in the SUV, his hand blaring the horn.

Silas whimpers and bolts away from Amanda into the trees.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

No, wait, Silas!

She spins around to Jackson, who runs to her side.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

What the hell are you doing?

JACKSON

Me? Are you out of your mind? That's a wild animal!

AMANDA

It's a boy, Jackson, are you blind?

JACKSON

He was about to attack you, I --

AMANDA

Attack me? We were connecting with ea --

JACKSON

Connecting?

Jackson heads to the path where Silas fled to.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Only things about to connect were his teeth and your throat. And did you just call him Silas? How do you know what his name is, did you name him?

Amanda stares at Jackson. Something is shifty about the way he's acting.

AMANDA

Did you know?

JACKSON

Know what?

AMANDA

About the boy? You did. You knew.

Jackson heads back to the SUV, grabs a couple bags of groceries and slams the door.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Jackson?

JACKSON

You have no idea how silly you're acting.

AMANDA

Why didn't you tell me about him if you knew?

Jackson hesitates then looks her straight in the eye.

JACKSON

I thought I was seeing things, I only saw him for a split second and I wasn't even sure it was real.

Amanda knows he's being honest. She doesn't push.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

But when I did see him he was with a pack of bloodthirsty wolves!

AMANDA

He's just a boy.

JACKSON

That is an animal. And you are going to stay away from him.

Jackson breezes past her and heads to the cabin door.

AMANDA

No, I'm not.

Jackson turns to her and stares her dead in the eye, sees the fire inside her.

JACKSON

He is not the child we lost, Amanda. He can't replace Jacob.

Amanda looks like a deer frozen in the headlights of a Mack truck.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I --

She turns from him and steps to the tree line like an unbalanced tightrope walker.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

We should just call the authorities and let them deal with --

AMANDA

They throw children like these in institutions where they rot away for the rest of their lives, where they can't even speak, feed, or go to the bathroom themselves. I may be able to help this boy have a future.

JACKSON

And the authorities should be the ones to make that decision.

Jackson turns towards the cabin.

AMANDA

I need this!

Jackson stops and turns to her. She turns to face him.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

You've been able to move on easier than I have... But I need this. I need him.

After a long beat of painful silence, Amanda walks to the cabin and as she passes him --

AMANDA (CONT'D)

I'm asking you to give me two weeks.

Jackson stares off in the trees, uneasy, unwilling, but offers no argument. Amanda continues into the cabin.

INT. CABIN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amanda is in bed, the laptop on her knees, phone jack connected, and she reads through an internet page on EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMUNICATION.

Jackson flips through a magazine.

JACKSON

But where is this kid's family? Like how did he end up in the forest living with a wolf pack in the first place?

AMANDA

I don't think that makes any difference.

Jackson shoots her a confused look.

JACKSON

Makes any difference? He could be a kid that got lost on a camping trip years back, or maybe he was kidnapped or something. Don't you think we should find that out, or at least try to --

Amanda closes the laptop.

AMANDA

You're giving me the goddamn two weeks. End of discussion.

She sets the computer on her side table, rolls over and turns out her light. Jackson stares ahead through the dark, his magazine on his lap.

EXT. CABIN - MORNING

A large plate filled with an exorbitant amount of bacon, eggs and hash-browns sits isolated on the gravel lot.

Not too far away sits Amanda, on the porch steps, reading from computer printouts.

Behind her in the

KITCHEN WINDOW

is Jackson. He watches her. Guarding. Scrutinizing.

INT. CABIN - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jackson slowly reaches over and picks up the phone, a tiny local phone directory laid out on the counter before him. He dials the SHERIFF'S OFFICE NUMBER, with a free finger pointing out the listing.

COMM OFFICER (V.O.)

Cardef Sheriff's Department, how may I help you?

Jackson is about to speak when -

Amanda enters the cabin. He spins to her and slams the telephone down. She gives him a once-over.

JACKSON

That was the office, told them I'd check in from time to time.

AMANDA

I have to go to the bathroom so watch for him and shout for me if he comes.

She skitters down the hall to the bathroom. Jackson looks out at the yard and the telephone rings. He snatches it up fast.

JACKSON

Hello?

COMM OFFICER (V.O.)

This is the Sheriff's department, did -- ju -- place a call here, we got cut off?

Jackson jiggles the phone cord to stop the line from breaking up. He looks down the hall to the bathroom.

JACKSON

Oh, I uh...

Jackson runs his finger along the phone directory and stops at the number just above the Sheriff's.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Sorry, that was rude of me to hang up, I meant to call... Sherry's Pharmacy.

COMM OFFICER (V.O.)

Not a problem, sir, happens all the time. Have a good day.

Jackson softly hangs up and stares at the phone.

EXT. CABIN - LATER

Amanda rocks herself in the same position, internet printouts at her side... impatience begins to set in.

Jackson is in the yard, further down the driveway. He plunges a huge sponge into a soapy bucket of water and washes the SUV.

Amanda looks up and sees the bushes move.

There he is. Silas. He stays in the trees.

AMANDA

Hey there...

Jackson isn't aware Silas has arrived.

Amanda motions for Silas to come out from the bushes. She gets up, steps cautiously towards the plate of food and squats next to it.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

You hungry? Come on, don't be scared.

Silas takes a single step forward but stops. He sees Jackson and looks unsure. Amanda notices and turns to Jackson.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Jackson?

Jackson turns and instantly sees Silas, who slightly retreats.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

I think he's afraid of you. Can you go in the cabin?

Jackson almost rolls his eyes. Amanda's face pleads with him like a spoiled brat wanting a candy bar. Jackson grudgingly drops what he's doing and heads into the cabin.

He watches from inside the door.

Amanda turns her attention back to the boy and gets down on all fours, just like Silas. She motions for him to come forward, mimics eating the food on the plate. She points to Silas.

He sniffs the air like a dog, steps out and timidly trots over on all fours. He no longer seems afraid of her.

He gets to the food and devours his way in. Amanda stays low. She tries to slow him down but he snaps at her hand and she pulls away, backs off a bit.

Silas sucks it all down like he's on speed.

He looks at her, all done, grease and pieces of food all over his face. She slowly reaches forward to wipe the food away and he watches her hand carefully.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Food. Food...

She manages to get her fingertips to his cheek and she wipes away the mess. She brings her messy fingers to her mouth and pretends to eat it off her finger.

He watches attentively and grunts softly, whimpers and looks around. He pushes at the plate with his hand.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Food...

Silas is disappointed. He pushes at the plate again, upset. He grunts.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Food... is gone. No more food.

Silas paces back and forth like a wolf. He almost seems to grow in size as his face adopts a menacing look.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

You like food?

SILAS

Ooo.

Amanda's eyes bulge in surprise at the vocal reaction.

AMANDA

Food?

SILAS

Ooo.

AMANDA

Fah-oo-duh.

SILAS

Ooo!

She smiles at him and nods her head in reinforcement. But he doesn't care. He is angry and arches his back as he paces. A low rumbling growl escapes his mouth. His ears perk up and he rushes off through the trees.

Amanda flops down on her bottom. She turns to Jackson and the smile of joy and accomplishment on her face can't help but make him smile right back.

But what they don't see is another dark form only a few feet into the trees. It turns and follows after the boy along the same route.

EXT. WOODS - LATER

Silas runs along swiftly and takes a fast corner. He meets a few members of his wolf pack.

They stare at him, panting. Silas stops and suddenly hunches his back and with a violent heave, vomits.

All the food he ate at the cabin comes back up in a messy pile. The pack circles around and he backs away.

The pack feasts on the second hand meal, all except the large male grey wolf. He watches Silas with an air of distrust.

The black mother wolf appears behind Silas and stares at him. He senses it and looks at her, barks softly but proudly and jumps around in circles.

The mother wolf simply stares at him.

INT. CABIN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jackson snuggles close to Amanda. She is busy writing notes and cross-referencing more printouts.

JACKSON

Are you sure he actually said a word,
didn't just grunt?

AMANDA

I think I know what I'm talking about.

Jackson runs his hand along Amanda's arm and up near her breast. She shrugs him off.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Do you mind?

JACKSON

Not at all.

He continues on his trek.

AMANDA

I'm serious, can you not see I'm busy?

Jackson throws his arm away from her, slaps the blankets in frustration.

JACKSON

We're kind of moving away from the whole
reason we came here, 'Manda.

She sets down her pen and paper.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

The idea was for us to get away from the reminders... reconnect.

After a pause, she sets her things on her side table and turns to him.

AMANDA

You're right. I'm sorry.

JACKSON

So what do we do?

Amanda reaches to his hand and pulls herself towards him. She leans into him and kisses him softly. They kiss with their eyes open for a few moments as if remembering each other's lips, then shift into a full on passionate embrace.

Amanda shimmies herself under Jackson and he slips inside of her. They make love, Jackson's face nuzzled into her neck, kissing her as he enjoys his wife.

Amanda's face shows her distraction as she stares to the side and out the window, uninterested in her husband and out of the moment completely.

But Jackson never notices.

EXT. CABIN - MORNING

Amanda has another plate of food out, this time it's meatballs lathered in tomato sauce. She sits beside the plate, has some children's building blocks at her feet. She shifts them around.

Jackson is near her. He has a cracked old fishing tackle box open in front of him and he checks out the contents.

AMANDA

Maybe he won't come because you're out here.

JACKSON

I'm not running away every time you want to play with that kid.

AMANDA

He has a name. It's Silas, it means 'from the forest'.

Jackson tosses some hooks around and mumbles under his breath.

Amanda stands up and shuffles over to the tree line.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

I think I'm gonna go look for him --

JACKSON

No!

Amanda turns at his reaction.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

I'll only allow this experiment of yours to happen if you keep yourself out of danger, and going into the forest with those wolves is inviting too much danger.

Amanda throws down a block in a miniature tantrum. She eyes the tackle box.

AMANDA

Where did you get that ugly thing anyways?

He looks at all sides of the tackle box.

JACKSON

Found it in an old box in the basement, last owners must've left it. Not sure what's salvageable.

AMANDA

What else was down there?

JACKSON

Old linen and candles, junky old toy blocks.

Amanda spins her head to him at the mention of the blocks, suddenly very interested.

AMANDA

Those might come in handy.

JACKSON

Kinda smells a bit down there.

AMANDA

Call me if Silas comes.

She heads into the cabin. Once she's inside...

JACKSON

(under his breath)
Yeah, sure will.

INT. CABIN - BASEMENT - SAME TIME

Amanda takes the stairs down. She flicks on the light, which only partially lights the basement.

The lower level is small, about six by eight feet, more of a crawl space than a basement.

Amanda's at the bottom of the stairs. She gets to the two boxes and looks inside. Checks both. She sorts through the old junk.

She finds the wooden toy blocks but they are water damaged, cracked, moldy. She wrinkles her nose in offense.

She finds a crusted fish filleting knife and tosses it aside.

AMANDA

Bunch'a junk.

She looks around. The far corner is dark and she steps towards it, squints her eyes to adjust to the darkness. She stubs her toe on something in the middle of the floor and murmurs in pain.

She hops, grabs for her toe and picks up what she stubbed her toe on... a hammer.

Pissed off, she throws the hammer at the far wall.

There's a CRACK and something moves that shouldn't have. A dim line of light appears where there was none before. Amanda squints at it, curious.

She carefully walks to the line of light and runs her fingers along it. She peeks through but it's so narrow she can barely get a visual. She wrinkles her nose in offense.

She pushes on the wall and it gives an inch. She pushes harder and the wood splits. Dust puffs into the air. It gives just enough for a limber body to slip through.

Amanda is way too intrigued to go back now. She shimmyes her way into the

SMALL ROOM

We have seen this room before. The small window has been boarded up, so only a sliver of light peeks through. With a struggle, she pulls the door open further to let in more light.

Amanda looks the room over very carefully. She shivers as goose bumps push their way through her skin. The line of light from the outer room leads her across the floor.

Something catches her eye.

She treads lightly across the room and squats down where the floor and the wall meet. There is a small hole caught by the light and a crack leads up through the wall.

Amanda lowers her upper body to peer into the hole. She sees colors... red and white. She reaches into the

HOLE

and her fingers maneuver their way close to the stripes. They inch closer and closer.

AMANDA

struggles to push her hand in far enough.

IN THE HOLE

she finally reaches the object. But barely. Her nails claw the surface until they dig in. It pulls away from the rest of the object and

AMANDA

falters back as her hand gives way from the hole. Under her fingernails are small pieces of foam rubber, red on the back side. She reaches back into

THE HOLE

CLOSE ON HER FINGERS as the POV of something alive in the hole approaches her hand.

She struggles to reach in and she finally manages to get the object to roll towards her. As the living 'thing' near her hand is about to strike, the object releases and

AMANDA

Falls hard on the floor. In her hand is a small rubber ball with red, white and blue stripes.

Amanda's eyes spark. She tosses the ball up and catches it squarely in her hand. She races out of the room.

EXT. CABIN - SAME TIME

Jackson examines a small hook. Could be worth keeping.

Amanda jettisons out of the cabin.

AMANDA
Jackson, you --

JACKSON
Dammit!

Amanda stops, notices Jackson clutching his thumb tight in his grip, a fish hook dangling from the end of it... blood trickles down his hand.

AMANDA
What happened?

She drops the ball on the porch and rushes to Jackson. He kicks the tackle box away and holds out his clutched finger.

JACKSON
Damn hook got me good. Where's the first aid kit?

AMANDA
I don't know, didn't you bring it?

JACKSON
I told you to pack it.

Amanda examines his hook infested thumb as well as she can.

AMANDA
It's too deep anyways, you most likely need it cut out.

Amanda examines the hook closely. It's rust-ridden.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Rusty.

Jackson doesn't like the news.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
You could get lock jaw.

JACKSON
Goddammit!

Jackson has trouble getting to his feet. Amanda grabs his arm and helps hoist him up.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Grab a towel for me and we'll go to the town clinic.

Amanda looks at him as if he's stupid.

AMANDA

I can't leave.

JACKSON

Excuse me?

AMANDA

I can't leave, I just made a breakthrough with Silas. If he came back and I wasn't around he might never --

JACKSON

I'm standing here with an open wound and you're thinking about the wolf-boy?

AMANDA

You're thumb isn't even that bad. I'll wrap it up and you can drive with your other hand.

She turns to the cabin.

JACKSON

You know what? Don't do me any favors.

He turns to the SUV.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

At least I know where I stand with you.

Jackson stomps off red faced and bloodies the vehicle door as he sluggishly gets in, the hook flicking around as he does so.

AMANDA

(like he's overreacting)

Jackson. Just wait a minute.

Jackson slams the door closed, guns up the engine and spins the tires as gravel flies behind him down the driveway.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Wait, Jackson! I'm sorry, I...

Amanda is left in Jackson's dust.

At the tree line behind Amanda, barely peeking through the bushes, is Silas. He has been watching their argument. He has a dead squirrel in his mouth and he lets it fall into the long grass.

His eyes flicker and he creeps back into the thick trees.

INT. TOWN CLINIC - LATER

A large needle jabs Jackson's bottom and injects a good measure of fluid.

The DOCTOR withdraws the needle. He's a cute little man with a white coat over his flannel plaid, and slightly foggy eyes. He has the rosy red nose of an alcoholic.

DOCTOR

L'be uncomfortable to sit and read by the fire for a while, but you'll live.

Jackson raises his pants and awkwardly buckles his belt, a cleanly dressed bandage on his injured thumb. The Doctor cleans up his supplies.

JACKSON

Thanks again for fitting me in, Doc.

DOCTOR

Not many Sundays I'm in here anymore, so ya got lucky. Which piece of property did your family purchase?

JACKSON

Oh, the wife and I bought the cabin on Cardef Hill.

The Doctor pauses momentarily and looks back at Jackson.

DOCTOR

Cardef Hill?

JACKSON

Yeah, up the old, um, Creekside road about ten miles --

DOCTOR

I know where it is, son, I'm just surprised someone finally bought it.

JACKSON

Why's that?

DOCTOR

It's only been on the market seven years.

This takes Jackson by surprise.

JACKSON

I think you have it mistaken with a different place, my cabin is brand spankin' new.

DOCTOR

It would be. It's only had one owner since the incident. They renovated it, cleaned it all up, but were out within a few months. Couldn't stand to be there. Understandable if you ask me.

Jackson steps closer to the Doctor.

JACKSON

Incident?

DOCTOR

You don't know?

JACKSON

That obvious, huh?

DOCTOR

Lose the sarcasm, son.

The Doctor sits down and lets out a sigh.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

'Bout eight years back there was a gruesome murder suicide in that cabin. Talk of the town. A coupl'a crazies were living up there, makin' moonshine or some damn thing, had some kind of domestic dispute and it turned ugly. Real ugly. The wife shot the husband, husband shot the wife, both died on the spot. Moonshine business went sour I guess.

Jackson is almost in a daze as he processes the information.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

The bodies were there for almost a week before someone found 'em, wind blew the smell over a camping spot.

JACKSON

By chance did they, uh, have any kids?

The Doctor stops cold at the question.

DOCTOR
Why do you ask?

Jackson hesitates, seems unsure.

JACKSON
Just wondering.

The Doctor smiles at him coyly.

DOCTOR
Heard them rumors already, have ya?

JACKSON
Rumors?

DOCTOR
About the boy. Supposedly living as part
of a wolf pack or something.

(beat)

A few of the summer kids played a big
prank years back and started a rumor
about some wild boy living with a wolf
pack up in the hills. One of 'em even
got all dirtied up and ran around naked,
scarin' folks. Legend grew bigger year
after year, but that's all it is, a
legend. Every year a few more kids play
along and you're sure to hear reports of
a wolf boy terrorizing campers. But you
can put your mind at ease, there ain't no
wild child living in them woods that's
gonna come getcha when the lights go out.

The Doctor jumps forward at Jackson in taunting.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Boogedah boogedah!

Jackson almost falls back and the Doctor lets out a
hearty laugh.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
It's funny how these legends grow.

JACKSON
I guess...

The Doctor stands up and heads to the door, opens it for
Jackson to leave.

DOCTOR

Sleep tight Mr. Ward, and don't let the
wolf-boys bite.

He laughs again and Jackson smiles at the taunting. The Doctor pats him on the back as he ushers him out of the room.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

And enjoy the weather while you can,
we're on the eve of storm season.

The Doctor closes the door behind Jackson and snickers to himself.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Amanda pushes the food around on the messy plate.

Suddenly Silas steps out from the trees.

Amanda's eyes grow wide with excitement as he steps right up to her, about two feet away.

AMANDA

Well haven't you just made my afternoon.

Silas' ears perk up. He turns his attention to the long grass where he was watching Amanda and Jackson earlier. He squats down... hunter mode.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

What is it?

Silas watches carefully, moves in almost slow motion, then pounces. He grabs whatever it is that's in the trees. He wildly shakes his head as it's gripped between his teeth and puts it out of its misery.

He turns to a shocked Amanda with the dead, bloody squirrel hanging out of his mouth. Amanda fights the urge to gag. She slightly backs away from the boy.

He steps with her, brings her the squirrel and drops it at her feet. Blood drips down his lips and chin.

Amanda stares at the dead squirrel, unsure what to do. Silas looks proud. He paws it towards her but Amanda still doesn't do anything.

Silas' eyes change. He looks sad, denied, he drops his head.

Amanda understands.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
A present? For me? Awww...

Amanda reaches forward to the squirrel and pokes it to make sure it's dead. It doesn't move.

Silas perks up.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
You shouldn't have.

SILAS
Voo. Tuh.

Amanda's eyes flash with inspiration.

AMANDA
Food! You said food... food for me? To eat?

She makes an eating motion. Silas nods wildly. Amanda smiles.

Silas watches her facial expression carefully and slowly mimics her smile... kind of creepy with the squirrel's blood and his chipped, broken teeth.

Amanda sees the smile and her spirits lift.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
I knew you were still in there, I just knew it.
(eyeing the squirrel)
But I don't think so, sweetie.

Silas leans down and takes a bite out of the squirrel. He pushes on it with his hand to keep it in place. He looks up as he chews, rips a chunk out, an eye pops up with the flesh. He's proud as proud can be.

Silas tunes in on something at the back of the lot behind Amanda.

The SUV comes to a stop by the cabin and Jackson jumps out. His eyes go wide when he sees Silas' face... blood all over.

Amanda sees the reaction and stands up, steps towards Jackson with her hands up to stop him.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Wait, calm down.

JACKSON

No, this little game has gone too far.

AMANDA

This isn't a game.

JACKSON

This is not a wild, lost boy Amanda, it's a group of kids playing a pretty sick joke on you.

AMANDA

You're talking crazy. We were just starting to connect, you need to --

JACKSON

That is it, this stops right now -- And is that blood on his face?

The wind gusts and the trees howl in its wake. Jackson tries to move past her but she puts herself in the way.

AMANDA

Jackson, give me some credit, I think I would know if this was some school-boy playing a joke. He just killed a squirrel with his teeth for chrissake. He offered it to me as a gift.

Jackson looks to the boy in disgust, sees the dead squirrel at the boy's feet.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

He's for real Jackson, and I've finally managed to bring a glimpse of the little boy inside to the surface. He's just trying to impress me, make me happy, like a little boy would do for his mother?

Jackson looks at Silas. Behind the blood on his face are excitement and innocence wrapped into one. There is no way this is a normal kid playing a joke.

JACKSON

You're sure?

AMANDA

Trust me.

He stares at Silas with ambivalence. Silas looks back at him like a puppy who's just been spanked and has no idea why.

JACKSON

Fine, but we're gonna have a little talk
as soon as he goes.

Jackson walks up the steps to the porch and sits down in
a chair. He stares at Silas.

Silas lets out an excited yelp like a puppy as Amanda
heads back to him and scruffs up his hair.

Jackson examines his thumb wrappings and notices the
little red, white and blue ball from the basement sitting
on the porch.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Hey where'd ya find this, I had one just
like it when I was a kid?

He tries to pick it up, but mishandles the ball. It
bounces down the steps and rolls across the gravel
towards Amanda and Silas.

A look of worry hits Jackson's face.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Amanda?

Amanda looks to Jackson and stops dead at the look on his
face as he stares at Silas in alarm.

Amanda looks back to Silas.

Silas is down low, his back up, his eyes steeled on the
ball. He stares at it, starts to breathe heavy.

He looks to who the ball came from... Jackson.

Jackson rushes down the steps and places himself in front
of Amanda to protect her.

Silas looks at the cabin and something suddenly connects.
He looks back and forth between Jackson and the cabin.

He remembers...

He starts to prance sideways and barks and growls, his
eyes targeted in on Jackson alone. His eyes shift from
anger to fear, to flashes of pain.

AMANDA

Jackson...

Jackson leans down and picks up a large rock, grips it
tight in his fist.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

No, don't hurt him.

Silas gives Jackson a good once over then bolts into the trees with amazing quickness, barking the entire way.

Amanda is in slight shock at the lightning fast change that happened in Silas.

Jackson looks down at the ball.

JACKSON

What the hell was that?

AMANDA

A ball.

JACKSON

No shit it's a ball, where'd it come from and why'd he go crazy when he saw it?

AMANDA

The basement.

JACKSON

The basement?

Amanda nods, unfocused, in disbelief.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

In the boxes?

Amanda shakes her head no, stares off into the trees.

AMANDA

In the room.

JACKSON

What room?

AMANDA

The hidden room.

Jackson looks at her like she's seriously lost it.

JACKSON

'Kay, you're not making any sense.

She finally turns to him.

AMANDA

There's a hidden room in the basement.

Jackson waits to see if she breaks the charade. No chance. No jokes here.

JACKSON

Where?

Amanda points at the base of the cabin.

AMANDA

Right there. Looked like there was a window boarded up.

Jackson walks to the base of the cabin.

JACKSON

(mockingly)

A window, huh? Right here?

He is clearly frustrated. He grabs an old digging shovel and jabs and picks at the gravel and dirt around the base of the cabin, demolishes the flower bed.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Kills you a squirrel... I told you that kid was trouble. I should never have --

AMANDA

He was only trying to gain my acceptance.

Jackson stomps and kicks and takes out his frustrations on the ground and the cabin wall.

JACKSON

Then maybe the fox was a gift from your secret admirer as well!

He sees a wooden plank that seems out of place. He stops, stoops down and checks it out.

He immediately tries to yank the plank out. No such luck.

He gets on his knees and digs like a dog, removes more and more of the dirt. Amanda watches him frantically work.

He digs enough dirt away to finally get a good grip on the plank. He grabs it and pulls as hard as he can, adrenaline driving his movements.

The plank breaks free to reveal a pane of glass.

Jackson stares at it in disbelief. He slowly turns his head to Amanda.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Take me to this room.

INT. CABIN - SMALL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jackson turns in small circles as he takes it all in.

JACKSON
Why didn't you tell me about this?

AMANDA
I was going to --

JACKSON
When?

AMANDA
I was about to when you caught that fish
hook in --

JACKSON
(shouting)
Bullshit!

Amanda jumps back at the echoing volume of his shout.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
You would have kept it from me if that
didn't just happen out there!

He motions around him at the secret room.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
And where was the ball?

Amanda points to the hole she found it in.

Jackson squats to the hole. Thinks. Turns to Amanda.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Not that a boy living with a pack of
wolves isn't strange enough, but don't
you think it's odd he recognized the ball
you found in this room, in this cabin?

Amanda bites her fingernail.

AMANDA
I... I don't...

JACKSON
Take off your blinders Amanda!

Amanda backs away, almost out of the room.

AMANDA
You're overreacting.

JACKSON
Then why did he freak out after he saw
this?

Jackson holds up the ball. Amanda offers a dead pan
stare.

AMANDA
So what if he did? It doesn't change
anything, he still needs my help. I've
already made strong progress, if you'd
just let --

JACKSON
(shouting)
Stop it!

WHAM. Jackson whips the ball against the wall. It
bounces off on a wild angle and connects hard against
Amanda's face. She screams in shock and grabs her face.

Jackson reaches for her but she turns and rushes off.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Amanda, wait. I didn't mean...

She runs upstairs.

Jackson slams his hand against the wall as the ball
settles in the corner of the room.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Dammit!

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Silas stands in front of a thick tree trunk.

He stares at the trunk through heavily watered eyes, as
if someone has turned a dial in his head to let the hate
and hurt slowly drip free.

He grabs a branch and rips at it until it breaks loose.

He uses the branch like a baseball bat and starts to
methodically slam it hard against the tree. He swings it
harder and harder with each pass, and his vocal chords
strain as each shout grows louder and louder.

He soon works himself into a blinding rage...

Something approaches him from behind.

Silas spins around and levels the intruder with incredible force. A solid CRACK sounds off from the branch as it makes contact.

He stops to look down at who interrupted him.

It's a smaller wolf, a younger one, and it lays there still and silent. Blood starts to seep out from the side of its sunken in head.

Silas' chest heaves from the heavy exertion. When he realizes what he's done, his face twinges for a moment and he looks worried.

He drops the branch and squats down. He pushes on the wolf and grunts a couple times. No response.

Silas rocks himself a few times as he looks down on the dead animal. He grabs the wolf's paws and with a fair bit of exertion he drags it into the heavy brush beside the tree.

He grabs some heavy fallen branches and covers the wolf's body, like he was never there and nothing is wrong.

He looks around, waits a moment, then runs off in another direction.

INT. CABIN - OFFICE - LATER

Jackson has a printed picture of the cabin from online, with the contact person's info highlighted.

He dials the number and waits. The ringer cuts in and out, crackling and silence interjecting. Jackson hangs up and walks to the window, his brow furrowed.

Through the window, Jackson looks to the

TELEPHONE LINE

where the broken branch has pulled the wire loose from its connection.

JACKSON

drops the phone without ending the call and tosses the paper on the floor.

INT. CABIN KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Amanda stares down into the sink, an ice filled towel on her cheekbone.

Jackson appears and reaches for his jacket. He sees Amanda's bruising face and looks deflated, but says nothing.

AMANDA

Where are you going?

JACKSON

To find out more about this murder and this boy.

AMANDA

Murder?

JACKSON

That's right.

AMANDA

What are you talking about?

JACKSON

Apparently a husband and wife blew a few holes in each other and their bodies rotted in here for weeks.

Amanda throws the towel of ice into the sink.

AMANDA

You're trying to scare me and it's cruel.

JACKSON

What, you couldn't smell it down there?

(beat)

I have a funny feeling that boy was part of the crime scene that managed to slip away without anyone knowing. And I'm gonna find out.

He opens the door to a cool breeze. He zips up his coat and grabs his keys.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

You stay inside and if that kid comes back you just ignore him, got it?

AMANDA

Yes boss.

JACKSON

Goddamnit Amanda, I'm serious. Just try not to control everything for once and stay in the damn house.

He slams the door and leaves. Amanda wanders to the window and watches him spin off down the drive.

After a beat she opens the fridge and examines her options.

INT. WARD'S SUV - MOMENTS LATER

Jackson drives the narrow road at a good clip. He looks in the rearview mirror, adjusts it and looks to his cell phone on the seat next to him. He grabs it and flips it open.

The screensaver displays a playful picture of Amanda, obviously from a time long before now.

Jackson loses a bit of his vigor and smiles at the picture, but his eyes look so sad. He closes the phone and slows the car down, starts to do a U-turn when - BAM.

Something hard and fast slams into the windshield and spiders the glass.

JACKSON

Mother-f --

EXT. DIRT ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The SUV skids to an angled stop, a dirt cloud floating around it. The door opens and Jackson, pissed right off, jumps around the door and checks out the windshield.

He looks around like a teacher who just had a spit ball spewed at him.

The only movements around him are the rustling trees swaying in the wind.

He waits another minute and gives the area a good once over.

He heads around the open door and is about to enter the car when --

SLAM! A thick log about a foot long lands on the hood with a denting thud.

Jackson jumps from the shock and immediately darts to the edge of the road.

JACKSON

Alright ya little bastard, where are ya, huh? You wanna play games, let's play some frickin' games.

Something moves in the trees and Jackson rushes in after it.

INT. THICK TREES - CONTINUOUS

The trees are thick and they block out the sunlight, making it quite hard to see.

Jackson runs as best he can through the trees. He ducks, gets hit in the face with a branch and smashes some others out of his way.

He trips and twists his ankle, shouts from the pain, but keeps going, on an enraged mission.

He sees his prey dart through the dark trees just ahead. He sucks up the pain and barrels down a decline through the trees to a

GULCH

He gets to a stream near the bottom of the little gulch, splashes down into it and stops. He looks around like a soldier stalking his enemy... sees no movement.

He waits. Something moves up ahead.

He takes a step and THWACK. He takes a rock in the shoulder. He jolts and spins to the direction it came from.

THWACK. Another rock, a smaller one, smacks him in the nose. Jackson brings his hands up and luckily they deflect the next rock thrown at him.

JACKSON

Stop it!

Jackson slishes through the mucky water to dry ground. A long branch about three inches thick bounces off of his back.

He spins around and tries to see his aggressor, but the woods are so thick and dark he can't see anyone.

A barrage of thin stones suddenly fly down on him like a hailstorm.

Jackson's had enough. He runs back up the hill, tripping and slipping the whole way.

EXT. THICK TREES - MOMENTS LATER

Jackson stops at a huge tree. He looks left, looks right, not sure which way to go.

Silas peeks out from behind a tree, only feet from where Jackson stands, behind him... he has a sharp stick in his rough hand.

Jackson hears movement behind him and spins around.

Silas pulls back into hiding before Jackson can see anything.

Jackson gets sweaty and frustrated. He looks back to his choice of which way to go and grudgingly takes the right turn.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - LATER

The trees shake with fury as Jackson falls through them, spent, red faced and splattered with dirt and leaves.

His eyes fill with relief as he sees his idling SUV about eighty yards down the road.

A creepy yipping filters out from the trees where Jackson escaped.

Jackson turns, his face filled with fury.

JACKSON
(at the top of his lungs)
Laugh it up, ya little bastard!

Jackson shakes his head and his eyes focus. He squints his eyes as he tries to catch his breath.

Jackson gains his bearings and makes his way back to his vehicle.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Lock you up once and for all.

Jackson gets into the SUV, revs the engine and blows rocks as he speeds down the road towards town.

Silas pops out of the trees as Jackson disappears down the road, his eyes blank and dark.

He turns and runs on all fours back towards the cabin.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Amanda toys with a flower bed. She has a plate of thick meat sandwiches close to her.

She uses a small garden tool to dig out some weeds. She nonchalantly turns her head and WHOA.

Silas is there, right behind her on his haunches, staring at her, calm as death.

Amanda collects herself and puts down the tool.

AMANDA

Whew, you scared me. Welcome back.

Silas immediately looks to the food.

Amanda keeps it a good distance away from him.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Are you hungry, Silas? Want some food?

SILAS

Ooo!

AMANDA

Food. Fah-oo-duh. Food.

Silas tilts his head, furrows his brow and paws forward for the food. Amanda shuffles the plate a tad closer.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

You gotta give me something more, hun, we're running out of time.

Silas nabs a sandwich in his teeth and swallows it in a couple bites. He yelps for more.

Amanda smiles and moves the plate even closer to him.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Eat.

Silas moves forward and messily gobbles down the remaining sandwiches.

Silas sneezes at the mustard and mayonnaise all over his face. He drops the plate and Amanda can't help but laugh at the messy little slob.

With quite an effort he shapes his mouth so his top teeth are on his bottom lip.

SILAS

Ff-ff-faaa...

Amanda's face fills with shock.

The next syllable comes easy for him.

SILAS (CONT'D)

Oooo...

Amanda waits in silence as she watches him attempt communication.

SILAS (CONT'D)

Ti.. di.. duh.

AMANDA

Say that again.

She motions for him to repeat what he's done.

SILAS

Ff-fa, oo... duh.

Amanda puts her hand on his shoulder and he lets her. She rubs his arm and he enjoys it. He closes his eyes.

AMANDA

I keep telling everyone how smart you are...

Amanda slowly, patiently, inches forward as she leans into his space and wraps her arms around his tiny little frame.

Silas looks unsure but he lets her embrace him.

Amanda begins to cry. Softly. Gently. Quietly.

Silas hears it and pulls his face back to look her in the eye. He sees the tears, slowly reaches his face forward and licks the tears from her cheek.

Amanda startles back from the action.

Silas stares at her in wonder, a little bewildered. Amanda looks back at him and smiles through her tears.

What Amanda doesn't see is

THE BLACK MOTHER WOLF

staring at them from a distance, watching Silas. She waits. She lowers her head, turns and quietly walks away.

SILAS

hears the sound and perks up his ears. He sniffs the air and heads off into the trees after his wolf mother.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

No wait, don't go.

Silas looks back at Amanda. He struggles over which way he should go. Finally he makes his decision and heads into the trees.

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Silas runs along after his mother wolf.

Amanda quietly follows Silas into the trees. She sees something and stops, ducks down in the bush and watches.

UP AHEAD

Silas' mother wolf has stopped and turned to Silas. She sits back on her haunches and stares at him.

Silas runs up to her and yips at her nose. He jumps around excitedly.

The mother takes a few soft steps towards him. She stares at him and a rolling growl surfaces in her throat.

Silas looks threatened. His back slightly rises and he yelps at her like a playful pup would.

Silas takes a step forward but the mother bares her teeth and violently barks at him.

Silas retreats a step.

He whines and yelps a few more times. The mother charges him and nips his forearm.

Silas stares at her and a large tear drips down his cheek. He retreats back, stops and lowers his head.

AMANDA

watches closely and softly smiles at the beautiful moment between mother and son, truly touched by the magic of it.

She quietly backs her way out of the trees and heads back to the cabin.

SILAS

finally takes his mother's hints and turns away from her. He stops and looks back again to find her staring him down hard.

He lets out a light whimper and heads back towards the cabin and Amanda.

The mother looks almost proud as she watches Silas grudgingly walk away. After a moment she drops her head down, turns, and heads off deep into the trees of her isolated world.

EXT. TOWN STREET - DAY

Jackson steps out of his vehicle on the little stretch of main street. The usual mountain town staples: Doctor's office, corner store, a smattering of small town life.

Jackson looks around, a tad confused; it looks like a ghost town, not a car or soul in sight.

The wind picks up and a small cyclone of dirt and leaves cuts across Jackson's path. He covers his mouth and closes his eyes as he catches the tail end of it.

As he opens his eyes he sees a WOMAN skitter out of the barber shop.

JACKSON

Hey!

She turns at his shout and looks a little defensive as she looks him up and down.

WOMAN

What on earth you doing out here?

JACKSON

Where is everyone?

WOMAN

Batton'n down the hatches. Big storm comin'! Should cover up your own windows, too.

She hurries along the sidewalk. Jackson slinks after her.

JACKSON

I'll do that, but can you point me towards the Sheriff's office?

WOMAN

Sheriff Creely and Simon headed off to ready their own for the storm. Creely's place is south of town, might be back in an hour or so. Usually sticks out these nights in his office when a big one comes, case someone has trouble. I better hurry along, Mitzy's most likely shivered all her fur off, she gets so shaky in storms.

The Woman takes a corner and Jackson is alone once again.

The wind gusts even more and the skies grow darker as the clouds gather thicker and thicker.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Amanda plays with her building blocks near the tree line. She looks up at the skies with concern and shivers from the wind.

Silas jumps out and scares the crap out of her. He pants joyfully at her and she can't help but laugh.

She picks up the blocks and runs away from him, throws them up around her as she goes. Silas jumps after her, ready to play.

EXT. SHERIFF'S STATION - DAY

Jackson stands outside the Sheriff's station with his hands cupped around his eyes as he peeps in through the front door window.

Nobody's inside and the lights are off.

Jackson reaches down and rattles the door knob but to his surprise it turns and the door pops open.

JACKSON

Small towns.

A huge gust of wind pushes onto Jackson and swings the door open wide.

Jackson enters the building and closes the door.

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - CONTINUOUS

Jackson looks around the area. There's a 'missing person's' wall of pictures; about a dozen different faces, different dates.

Jackson peruses the faces, none resemble Silas.

He heads over to the reception desk and stands there, his hands steepled, and waits.

EXT. CABIN - SAME TIME

Amanda tosses blocks for Silas as he jumps, trots and spins in circles around the yard. He's a playful little thing and she is truly bringing out the little boy inside of him.

As he returns with a block, he barrels into her and his force knocks her to the ground. He playfully jumps on top of her and Amanda giggles.

Silas copies her giggle and they roll around in fun, giggling and tickling each other.

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - SAME TIME

Jackson is in the same position as he waits. He eyes a chair and wanders over, sits down and drops his head back.

He looks behind the desk and sees a large filing cabinet. He looks back to the door and stands up.

He hurries over to the filing cabinet and sees the drawer labeled with sections of letters. He grabs the handle of the drawer that reads A-F and slides it open.

The drawer holds a few dozen file folders, some thick, some thin. Jackson runs his fingers along and stops on CARDEF HILL.

He slowly pulls the file out and takes a seat at one of the two desks in the small station.

EXT. CABIN - SAME TIME

Amanda has an unwrapped candy bar in her hand. Silas sniffs the air like a madman.

She squats down and then slowly rises up, rolling her arched back to a straightened posture.

AMANDA

Stand...

She does the act again and motions for Silas to do it. He tries but has a hard time.

Amanda steps close to him and holds the candy bar high above Silas' head. Silas sniffs it and tries to jump at it.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

No. Stand.

Silas looks her in the eye. He takes a deep breath and starts to straighten himself out. He has a hard time with his curved spine but he manages to somewhat stand up.

He tries to nab the candy bar but isn't tall enough. His face grimaces and his back cracks. He whines and falls back on all fours, defeated. He pouts.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Good boy!

She hands him the candy bar as a reward. He sniffs all around it, licks it, and his eyes bug out at the strange new taste. But he likes it, licks it and bites it and smiles at her with excitement.

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - SAME TIME

Jackson has the file open and papers strewn about. He has two specific sheets in front of him. He flips from one to the other.

The papers headings read: CRIME SCENE REPORT. Jackson scans over different lines:

BODY IN SECONDARY ROOM... POTTY CHAIR... ROPE TIED TO BED... POSSIBLE SEX ROOM.

Jackson sets down the papers.

JACKSON

Potty chair...

BAM. Jackson jumps as the front door slams open from the tremendous wind.

Jackson looks to the door and his eyes flicker. Through the doorway, across the street, he sees the library sign in a small building's window.

He gets up and leaves, slams the door closed behind him.

EXT. CABIN - SAME TIME

Amanda exits the cabin with Silas waiting patiently in the yard.

She has two pairs of old gym shorts in her hands. She sets one before him and shimmies herself into the other one, showing him how to put them on.

Silas grabs the shorts and rolls around quite a bit as he mimics what Amanda did. Amanda doesn't help, simply watches him.

He eventually manages to slip the shorts over his feet. He shimmies them up above his knees and covers himself. It's better than the old tent vinyl but he keeps the vinyl tied around his waist.

Amanda comes over to him and gives him a hug.

AMANDA

That's my boy.

Silas jumps on top of Amanda in a playful mode. He nibbles at her arms and hands and ears. He yelps and barks and plays, more like a family dog than a boy.

INT. TOWN LIBRARY - SAME TIME

A force outside bashes on the door. And again. Suddenly the old door bursts open and Jackson almost falls to the ground with the propulsion of force.

He gains his balance and flips on a light switch. He makes a beeline to a wall of non-fiction books. He runs his fingers along the spines.

JACKSON

Children... children.

He can't find what he's looking for.

He steps to the shelf that the Librarian pointed out as true crime and scans the books. He pulls out an old battered book and checks out the cover: *WAR AGAINST CHILDREN: OVERCOMING CHILD ABUSE*.

Jackson flips to the table of contents and runs his fingers down the page.

EXT. CABIN - SAME TIME

Amanda stands on the porch and wraps her arms around herself, the wind berating her from every angle. Big fat rain drops pierce the dirt and gravel.

She steps into the cabin and looks over her shoulder. She waves Silas inside.

Silas stares at her from the yard, afraid. He takes a slow step forward and then stops, paces back and forth and lets out a small whine.

Amanda steps back out of the cabin and takes the couple steps down to Silas.

AMANDA

Hey...

She takes a hold of his hand.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

This is your home now, it's safe here. I promise.

Silas watches her speak and she seems to put him at ease.

She takes a step towards the cabin. Silas lets her pull him forward and he cautiously steps along with her as they enter the cabin together.

INT. CABIN - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Silas' eyes are as big as golf balls as he examines the strange structure around him. Amanda lets go of his hand but he nabs it right back and stays at her side.

AMANDA

It's okay, sweetie. You're safe here.

Amanda walks into the

KITCHEN

and opens the fridge. She pulls Silas to it and his nose comes alive with the wash of scents from the well stocked shelves.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Food. Any food... you want, it's yours.

Amanda lets go of his hand, he's too caught up in the aromas to worry about her letting him go.

She grabs her camera off the counter. She focuses in on Silas and snaps a picture. He turns and looks so confused she can't help but smile.

She squats down and puts her hands on his shoulders.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

You're home now. A perfect little family.

She smiles at him and he smiles back.

SILAS

Ffa... ow... eee

AMANDA

Yes, family. You are so smart I can hardly believe it.

She rustles his hair when --

SMASH. The sound comes from outside and Silas turns to it in alarm.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Just the wind. Probably knocked over a flower pot or something.

Amanda rises and heads to the door. Silas is right behind her. She opens the door to find a broken flower pot on the porch.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

See, Momma's always right. You look around while I clean this up.

Silas watches her stoop down to fix the pot. She looks back at him and motions for him to check out the cabin.

Silas slowly turns and warily looks around. He spots the front closet and steps in.

Amanda salvages what she can of the broken flower pot and sweeps up the dirt with a small hand broom.

A BUMP sounds off behind her and she turns to see Silas on the floor with one jacket over his head and another hanging off his arm.

Amanda laughs at how cute he's being.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Let's get you some real clothes.

INT. TOWN LIBRARY - SAME TIME

Jackson has the book open to a chapter. He skims through the paragraphs until a certain sentence stops him.

JACKSON

Similar locations... trigger violent reactions...

Jackson looks up and out the broken door.

He throws the book down and pulls out his cell phone. He dials a number and puts the phone to his ear.

A busy signal screams out at him.

INT. CABIN - OFFICE - SAME TIME

The phone sits on its side on the office desk, a fast busy sound coming from the ear piece.

Amanda's LAUGHTER echoes from another room.

INT. TOWN LIBRARY - SAME TIME

Jackson slaps his cell phone closed, runs out of the building to the

STREET

and jumps into the SUV. He speeds back up the road to Cardef Hill.

INT. CABIN BATHROOM - LATER

Amanda stands behind Silas. He faces the bathroom mirror and stares at himself in awe.

Amanda adjusts the shirt on his shoulders. It's Jacob's soccer jersey from her luggage pocket. It fits him perfectly.

Amanda steps beside him and grabs a wet wash cloth. She softly wipes the dirt away from Silas' face. It looks like a completely different boy as the years worth of dirt washes away. She blows cool air on his face and he likes it.

Silas stares at her with wonder and awe and almost melts at the human touch and care he receives from her.

She tries to wash a thick chunk away off his neck but it's not dirt. It's a mole. As she scrubs it, the mole tears free. Blood trickles down and Silas yelps.

He rips around her and runs out of the bedroom.

INT. WARD'S SUV - SAME TIME

Jackson rounds the corner and fishtails to a stop in front of the cabin.

INT. CABIN - HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Amanda barrels into the hallway from the bedroom and stops. Only a few feet away, at the flight of stairs to the basement, is Silas.

He stares into the descending darkness, frozen. His eyes are steeled and his body slowly begins to shake.

AMANDA

Silas?

Silas' lip begins to quiver and his neck slightly twitches.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Silas...

Amanda slowly takes another step towards Silas.

The front door flies open and Jackson barrels into the cabin. He sees Silas in Jacob's soccer jersey and stops like he's hit an invisible wall.

Silas is in a trance and is oblivious to anything going on around him.

Amanda looks to Jackson.

Jackson looks confused and hurt as he looks at Silas.

JACKSON
Not Jacob's...

Jackson takes another step...

Silas continues his frozen stare...

Amanda takes a step and reaches out her hand to Silas, only an inch from his shoulder...

A low growl starts to build up in Silas' throat. His eyes have gone blank and foggy...

Jackson reaches out...

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Amanda no!

Amanda touches Silas' shoulder and like the recoil of a handgun he spins to her in a wild rage. He springs at her and takes her down. He goes for her throat with supernatural force when --

Jackson grabs him off of her and throws him across the room.

Silas hits the wall and lets out a yelp. He stares at Jackson and tries to run back but his feet slip on the wood floor and he stumbles.

Jackson moves to him and kicks him hard in the ass. He propels Silas out the door and Silas tumbles down the steps.

He recovers, looks up at Jackson and growls, then runs off into the trees.

Jackson slams the door and moves to Amanda. She is shaking from the shock of the moment.

He helps her to her feet, kisses her on the forehead and runs his hand through her hair.

Jackson looks completely out of sorts as a loud shock of THUNDER cuts through the cabin and the lights flicker.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

A thunderstorm hits with a vengeance. Trees almost blow over as debris flies everywhere.

Lightning rakes the thick grey sky and THUNDER CRACKS too close for comfort.

Jackson lowers storm shutters into place over all the windows.

He closes a shutter on the window overlooking the kitchen sink and the shutter breaks off. The shutter and hinge fall to the ground. Jackson grunts in frustration and swears under his breath.

INT. CABIN - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Jackson enters to find Amanda leaning over the kitchen sink, dressed down in pajama-type sweatpants and a sweatshirt. She stares out the unprotected window.

AMANDA
I'm worried about him.

JACKSON
He'll be fine.

AMANDA
But the storm...

Amanda pushes past him to the door.

JACKSON
I'm sure he's survived plenty.

Amanda opens the closet and tosses on an oversized raincoat.

AMANDA
I'm going to find him, bring him inside.

Jackson steps in front of the door and puts his hand on Amanda's.

JACKSON
Like I read in that book, kids like him are time bombs and need to be dealt with by professionals. You're staying right here.

AMANDA
No. He's out there, Jacob's out there, and he's scared and cold.

Jackson sees Amanda's eyes are bloodshot and her hands are shaking as he grasps them in his. She won't look him in the eye.

JACKSON

You said Jacob.

She grows more hysterical and short of breath as she speaks.

AMANDA

He's so alone and scared and I can't just sit here and...

Jackson tries to make her look at him. She squeezes his hands hard and begins to shudder, her physical jerks turn into cries.

THUNDER rolls through the skies around the cabin.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

He was so cold... he was so sick, and weak, and cold, and I tried, I tried to warm him up and I held his hands and his feet and I put blankets and blankets on him and I just... he was so cold and I couldn't make him warm. I couldn't even make him warm...

She collapses into Jackson and he falls back into the solid door. She sobs so hard.

She slowly quiets down and her cries become whimpers as her body falls deeper into Jackson.

He holds her tight and strokes her hair.

JACKSON

I'll call the police, let them know the boy's out there.

Jackson picks up the phone and dials the Sheriff's number.

COMM OFFICER (V.O.)

Card -- Sheri -- artmen -- how m -- lp
you --

JACKSON

Yes, if you can hear me, this is Jackson Ward, at the cabin on Cardef Hill. Cardef Hill. Jackson Ward. I need someone to come up here, we've found an abandoned boy, he's been living in the woods and we need --

BOOM. A huge tree branch flies right through a pair of storm shutters and the living room window and straight onto the floor. They both spin at the huge crash.

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

The broken down tree that smashed through the window has been stopped halfway by the telephone line. The line holds the tree up, but the line starts to pull free and slowly split free from the telephone post.

INT. CABIN - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jackson checks out the damage in the living room.

Amanda watches as Jackson examines the damage from the tree. She suddenly rips open the door and rushes outside.

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

The skies are dark and the only sources of light are the flashes of lightning that follow each other every few seconds.

Amanda jumps down the porch and splashes through the puddles of rain and mud to the path through the trees.

She is immediately soaked and has trouble finding her way, but she quickly disappears into the darkness.

INT. CABIN - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jackson looks around to Amanda and his eyes go wide as he sees the door swinging violently in the rain.

He immediately bolts to the door and out to the

PORCH

where he runs into the yard and looks around in circles, blanketed by the heavy rain.

JACKSON

Amanda!

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Amanda sweeps her arms before her as she barrels through the trees.

AMANDA

Silas!

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

AMANDA'S SHOUTS ECHO to the cabin. Jackson stops and faces the pathway as he hears her.

JACKSON

Amanda wait!

Jackson runs towards the path and loses his footing. He slips on the thick mud and goes down hard on his back. His head cracks with force on a half submerged rock.

And he's out cold, the rain pelting down on his face.

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Amanda is pelted with branches and leaves and the rain makes her progress difficult and slow.

A nearby HOWL stops Amanda cold and spins her around. Everything's black. Just then lightning guides her line of sight. There's nothing behind her.

AMANDA

Silas!

She turns around again and the continuous lightning shows her she is in a thick patch of trees.

Another HOWL sounds off but it is very, very close this time.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Silas?

Amanda makes a decision and takes the direction where the howl came from. Lightning shows her a break in the trees ahead. She makes her way through and enters the

CLEARING

where she falls over something. She hits the ground hard with a splash.

Whatever she fell over WHIMPERS.

Amanda steadies herself and spins around to see the grey male wolf rolling up onto his feet from his back.

He stares her down, his fur wet and slick and his eyes full of anger. He arches his back and bares his teeth.

He barks at Amanda, resets his feet and begins to step towards her.

Amanda is on one knee, the wolf about four feet from her.

He is about to lunge at her when THWAP. He takes a dart in the neck and falls to his side with a whimper.

Amanda turns towards a cone of light that flashes on the wolf. The Conservation Officer stands only a few feet behind her, a huge flashlight in one hand, a tranquilizer gun in the other.

OFFICER

(shouting)

Mrs. Ward! You okay?

Amanda nods her head frantically.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

(shouting)

My vehicle caught a mudslide about a half mile out, I came to borrow your husband but I found him unconscious in the driveway. I heard your shouts --

AMANDA

Unconscious?

She gets up with the help of the Conservation Officer's outstretched arm and runs off in the direction of the cabin, the Conservation Officer right on her heels.

A flash of lighting reveals Silas standing right behind them, only a few feet from where they were, his matted hair framing his wet face.

He looks down at his brother wolf and the seething anger runs from his eyes like the rain on his cheek.

EXT. WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

Amanda runs and stumbles through the trees. The Conservation Officer's erratic flashlight beam lights her way from behind her as she goes.

The cabin lights appear about fifty feet away as she approaches the tree line... the flashlight beam is suddenly gone!

Amanda stops and turns around but there is nothing but darkness behind her, then a faint and muffled SHOUT.

AMANDA

Officer?

No response. Amanda waits.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Officer!

Lightning flashes and the Officer is not there. She keeps back-stepping towards the cabin as she watches for him.

She turns around and BAM. Silas is in her face, his mouth, chin and upper body covered in blood. Amanda screams and brings her hands up in defense.

Silas doesn't move an inch.

Amanda pushes past him and breaks through the tree line back to the

CABIN YARD

She sees Jackson and makes a beeline to him. He is still unconscious.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Jackson!

She slaps his face but it doesn't make a difference.

THE TELEPHONE LINE

that holds up the broken tree begins to unravel faster and faster from the force of the wind as it pulls at the tree.

AMANDA

looks back to see Silas standing at the tree line, the blood thinning out as the rain washes him clean.

Amanda's eyes scream in fear. She grabs Jackson's wrists and tries to pull him towards the cabin. He barely shifts the mud.

THE TELEPHONE LINE

is about to pull free.

AMANDA

tries to get a better grip. She grabs his shirt cuffs and pulls. Still no go.

She looks back to where Silas is and he's gone. She looks around in a panic at where he might be. He's nowhere to be seen.

SNAP. THE TELEPHONE WIRE RIPS FREE.

It snaps down to the ground.

The whipping force catches Amanda behind her knees and she falls hard, unbalanced, and drives her shoulder into the ground. It connects hard and dislocates her shoulder on impact.

Amanda screams from the pain and she rolls to the side. She becomes faint.

Silas is suddenly there and he picks her up over his shoulder like a scrunched over fireman. She is not quite coherent.

She moans as he tosses her around.

Jackson remains unconscious, the rain pelting his face.

Silas heads towards the trees with Amanda, sloshing water onto Jackson as he passes.

Amanda's head bobs up and her eyes focus. She sees Jackson lying behind as she's carried away.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

No, stop...

Silas keeps going and is about to enter the trees.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Silas, please stop!

Amanda cranks her head from side to side. With her good arm she reaches out and grabs onto a tree branch.

It pulls Silas off balance.

He drops her and she wails in pain as she falls on her injured shoulder.

She scrambles to her knees and sloshes through the mud and water over to Jackson. She gets to him and grabs his face.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Jackson, wake up!

Amanda is yanked from behind by Silas with ridiculous force by her injured arm. She lets out a hybrid of a scream and a cry, but the rain and mud make her slippery and Silas falls backwards as she slips from his grip.

She stares at him with scolding.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Silas, no! Bad boy! Stop this right now!

The gleam in Silas' eyes tells her there is no reasoning with him at this moment. He bares his broken teeth in a growl.

Amanda looks to Jackson then to the cabin, the open door swinging in the wind. She makes a beeline to the cabin.

Silas looks at Amanda as she bounds into the cabin. He looks back to Jackson. He tilts his head like a dog who doesn't quite understand. But oh, he understands...

INT. CABIN - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Amanda gets to the kitchen and flings open drawers.

She checks the spices and grabs the pepper, but it's peppercorns, not powder. Not what she wants.

She flings open the cupboard under the sink and pulls out the cleaning products.

She grabs a bottle of ammonia and spins off the lid. She takes a sniff and the strong smell causes her head to fly back in offence.

She grabs a dish towel and pours a good measure of the ammonia into the towel. She puts it over her mouth and takes a breath. It causes a coughing fit.

She shakes her head and rushes back to the door.

EXT. CABIN - PORCH - CONTINUOUS

As she comes out she stops dead.

Jackson's body is gone. It's not there. It's not where it was a few moments ago.

She takes a step down off the porch and as she gets closer she sees a trail lead from where his body was.

He's been moved. She follows the trail with her eyes until she sees -

Jackson's legs disappear behind the cabin as if his body is being dragged.

Amanda creeps towards the back of the cabin.

She peeks around the corner.

Silas has Jackson's arms held tight and he lets them go, Jackson still unconscious. Silas looks around and squats down, his back to Amanda.

He picks up a large stone that seems too big for him to lift, but he does it. He gets it up into his grasp and moves to hold it over Jackson's body.

He slowly moves it up towards Jackson's head.

Amanda looks to her right and sees Jackson's digging shovel leaned against the cabin. She tucks the ammonia soaked dish towel into her pocket and grabs the shovel in her wet grip.

She battles the conflict between her mind and heart as they scream conflicting orders.

She steps towards Silas' back.

Silas is almost over Jackson's head with the stone.

Amanda is only a few feet behind him.

Silas almost has the stone in killing position.

Amanda closes her eyes and gathers all the force she can muster and she brings the shovel down hard on the back of Silas' head.

The CRACK can be heard through the storm.

Silas' neck flops forward and he goes down. The stone falls just inches from Jackson's head.

Amanda cries as she drops the shovel. She pulls out the dish towel and holds it tight over Jackson's mouth and nose.

After a moment he jerks up with a gasp and snort and begins to cough. Amanda wraps her arms around him and pulls him to her.

AMANDA

Sorry baby, come on, you gotta get up.

Jackson gains his bearings as he coughs and sputters and wipes his face. He manages to stand up with the help of Amanda and her driving adrenaline. Together they hobble around the cabin, up the porch steps and through the door.

INT. CABIN - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jackson and Amanda let go of each other as he leans on the edge of the kitchen counter for relief.

JACKSON

You okay?

AMANDA

My shoulder. It's out of place.

Jackson reaches for it but she leans away from his hand.

JACKSON

We need to get it back in place before it starts to set.

AMANDA

Careful, it hurts.

JACKSON

What do you want me to do?

Amanda's lips start to quiver and she can barely speak through them.

AMANDA

Lock the door.

INT. CABIN - LATER

Jackson has his cell phone in his hand. The display reads: NO SIGNAL.

JACKSON

Can you hear me now? Can you hear me now? Fuckin' liars!

He throws the cell phone across the room.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Maybe our car can make it down the road.

AMANDA

It'll get sucked into the ditch like the Officer's.

JACKSON

Shit!

Amanda shifts in frustration, cringes at her shoulder and groans from the pain.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

I'll get you some pills.

Jackson heads into the kitchen and opens a cupboard above the sink. He grabs a bottle of Tylenol and fills a glass of water.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

This'll help the pain.

He carefully sits next to her on the couch and helps her take the pills. She drops her head back.

AMANDA

Thank you.

JACKSON

You're welcome.

Just then the power goes out and the room falls to black. A bolt of lightning gives them a quick flash but that's it.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Of course!

INT. CABIN BEDROOM - LATER

A flashlight beam pokes through the darkness like a blind man's walking cane. Jackson sets the flashlight on the floor and opens the closet. The beam lights up the closet's interior.

Jackson gets down on all fours and digs around.

JACKSON

Come on.

He tosses storage boxes around and flips open lids. He finds a large citronella candle almost burnt down to nothing. He throws it aside.

He gets up and heads into the

HALLWAY

where he ends up at the basement stairs. He looks down and second guesses himself. He takes a breath and heads down the

STAIRS

to the

BASEMENT

He surveys the room with the flashlight and stops the beam at the hidden door to the secret room.

He turns the beam another direction and ends up on the two boxes the last owner's left behind. He digs right in but is quickly frustrated with all the crap. He's fed up, tips the boxes over on their sides.

The contents spill out on the floor. The old fish filleting knife slides up against the wall.

Jackson sees some candles in the mess.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Gotcha.

EXT. CABIN - SAME TIME

Silas peeks through the one window that has not been closed up by a shutter. He sees Jackson approach Amanda with a lit candle and cuddle next to her.

Silas forces himself away from the window and reverts to all fours. He paces a ten foot line back and forth beneath the window.

He begins to snort and spit as his anger boils to the surface. He stops as a thought hits him and he races off into the trees.

EXT. WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

Silas appears through the rain as he runs on all fours. He stops at the body of his wolf brother, still under the tranquilizer. He struggles, but picks the wolf up and runs like a hurricane.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Silas, his wolf brother in his arms, enters the cave and approaches the wolf pack, who are all sleeping and curled up together in the cave.

A MALE WOLF stirs and jumps up, immediately growls.

Silas lays down the body of his brother wolf and stays low to the ground, submissive. The other wolves stir and the mother wolf struts over to him.

The mother wolf sniffs her son then licks around the dart. Silas motions to the dart and then back outside. He barks and moves around in an insane manner then runs out of the cave.

No wolves follow.

Suddenly Silas comes back and this time all of the wolves jump at him and drive him away. He tries to push back but he's bitten and rammed.

Silas backs off and then lets out a manic string of barks and growls, nearly foaming at the mouth. He finally runs off, alone.

The wolves stand guard at the edge of the cave and this time the mother doesn't look proud or happy, just plain pissed as she looks down at the tranquilized wolf before her.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - LATER

A pair of headlights come over a rise down the road and slowly approach. It's a SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT 4x4 and the SHERIFF drives slow and careful as he navigates the wet and muddy dirt road.

He heads towards the cabin, about a hundred yards ahead, almost gets stuck a couple times.

Something darts across his high beams and he slams on the brakes. He clips whatever it is with his fender but doesn't get a good look.

He puts the vehicle in park and looks through the windshield, then his side window. He pulls on his rain hat and steps out of the vehicle.

He steps carefully and checks around all tires, squats down to look underneath... nothing's there. He looks confused.

He very carefully walks around the entire perimeter of the vehicle and suddenly BAM. Something jumps on his back.

He falls to his knees, tries to get it off his back but it's almost the same size as him.

He spins around so his back is in the mud and his attacker shifts on top of him. When their eyes meet the Sheriff's eyes open wide in shock.

The attacker rips down and bites the Sheriff's throat and rips and chews and tears. Blood splatters all up the Sheriff's face and his wide eyes shift to a blank stare.

INT. CABIN - SAME TIME

Jackson settles Amanda into a nice cozy spot on the couch.

AMANDA

I just have to say I'm sorry. I should have listened, I didn't see what you were seeing, it was just --

JACKSON

It's alright, okay? I get it, I understand. And it's over now, so we just need to...

Jackson notices his shadow on the far wall. He shifts back and forth to make sure it's really there.

AMANDA

What's wrong?

JACKSON

My shadow.

Jackson turns and looks out the revealed kitchen window that he couldn't secure with the shutter. He can see the faint trim of headlights down the road.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Someone's out there.

Jackson picks up the flashlight from the floor and rushes to the door. He throws on a jacket and slips on boots.

AMANDA

What are you doing?

She awkwardly slips out of her covers and shimmies over to him.

JACKSON

I'll only be a second, they may need help. Keep the flashlight in case the candles die out.

Jackson sets the flashlight on the counter top, whips open the door and turns to her.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Lock the door behind me.

Jackson slams the door.

EXT. CABIN - SAME TIME

Jackson waits to hear the deep grinding click of the dead bolt being locked into place.

He steps off the porch and treads across the yard. His foot almost gets stuck a couple times and he loses his balance with every step.

As he gets closer to the high beams he holds his hand out to block the light.

JACKSON

Hello?

Jackson gets to the vehicle and sees the SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT logo on the door. But there is nobody inside or around... strange.

Jackson doesn't notice the diluted red pool of blood that he stands in. He gets into the

SHERIFF'S 4x4

and carefully drives it towards the cabin.

He suddenly comes to a creaking halt.

His high beams cast a dull haze over the front of the cabin. Silas stands at the front door, his back to Jackson's beams.

Silas slowly turns around and his face and upper body are splashed with wet and running smears of blood and matter.

Jackson sees the gun on the seat next to him. He reaches for it and opens his driver's door. He steps out to the

CABIN YARD

and uses the crook of the door frame to steady the gun.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Time to go to sleep...

He takes close aim at Silas and without the slightest hesitation he pulls the trigger.

Nothing happens, not even a click. Jackson stumbles with the gun.

Silas takes advantage of the moment and with unnatural quickness he dives off the porch at Jackson.

Jackson jumps back into the

SHERIFF'S 4x4

and locks the door. Like a maniac he tries to get the gun to work and pops open the clip to see that it's empty.

He searches for bullets. He finds a box in the glove compartment and spills the contents out onto the seat. He fumbles with the bullets and tries to load the clip.

Silas is at his driver's side window. He yips and growls to get in. Just then he pops out of sight. He reappears a second later and smashes a rock into the window. The glass shatters.

Jackson jumps across the vehicle and pops open the passenger door. He has the empty gun in his hand and nabs a handful of bullets as he goes.

Silas reaches for him and pulls his way into the 4x4. He cuts his stomach on the jagged window glass as he goes.

Jackson jumps out to the

CABIN YARD

and pushes the lock down on the passenger door. At the last possible moment he slams the door in Silas' face, which dazes him for only a moment.

Jackson bolts towards the cabin and looks over his shoulder to see Silas climbing out of the driver's window.

Jackson looks to the cabin door and back to Silas who is already halfway to the cabin.

Jackson fumbles with the bullets as he tries to load the clip. His wet hands make it difficult and he drops most of them.

Silas is almost there.

Jackson manages to load one bullet into the clip. He pops the clip in the gun and chambers the bullet. As he is about to bring it up to shoot, Silas flies into him like a linebacker.

He takes Jackson down and they slam into the wall.

Silas squeals with intensity and opens his jaw wide. Jackson tries to push him off but can't get a grip.

Silas tries to drive his teeth into Jackson's throat.

They roll back and forth, both doing their damndest to gain the upper hand. Jackson's elbow slips and he falls flat on his back. Silas takes advantage of his position and tears his jaw into the side of Jackson's neck.

Jackson screams and BANG.

Silas explodes off of Jackson with a yelp and cowers by the door.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Amanda is by the door and she jumps at the loud gunshot. She's nervous as hell. She puts her hand on the door handle and waits.

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Jackson stares up blankly. He coughs and sputters. He drops the gun beside him and holds the side of his stomach, his hands and jacket stained red.

Silas looks out of his little shell at Jackson. He crawls over to Jackson and smells the stomach wound. He seems happy with the entire situation.

Very slowly, enjoying every inch of the misery Jackson is in, Silas moves up until he cuts into Jackson's gaze.

He stares down at Jackson in great study. Jackson squints his eyes and lets out another hard cough. His eyes close.

Silas slithers off of Jackson and over to the door, where he bangs hard to be granted entrance.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Amanda reacts to the knocks and lets go of the handle.

AMANDA

Jackson?

No response. Banging pounds through again.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

(shouting)

Jackson?

Again, no response. No more knocking follows.

As she grabs the handle - BOOM.

Amanda spins to the sound and sees the large shutter on the main living room window start to move. A SHOUTING sound accompanies it as it's ripped away from the window and tossed to the ground.

Silas stands there, his chest heaving from the huge exertion. His eyes lock with Amanda's... but the intrigue and excitement he used to show her has been replaced with loathing.

He lifts up his hand to reveal he's holding a sharp rock. He grips it in his palm and slams it against the window.

The window takes the assault but cracks severely. Silas' face is steeled as he brings his arm back for another strike.

Amanda opens the door and sees Jackson bleeding on the porch. Her eyes fill with panic.

Silas smashes the window and it hits the floor in a staccato of a thousand little pieces.

Amanda bolts to Jackson and sees he's still alive, but struggling to breathe.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Jackson!

Amanda looks up to see Silas run around the exterior corner of the cabin. He targets her in his sights and bolts towards her.

Amanda sees the gun and grabs it. She has no time to aim so she pushes herself away from Jackson and darts back into the cabin.

She slams the door, locks it and spins around in a panic.

A HOWL comes from outside the living room and Silas jumps in through the smashed window.

Amanda looks to the gun in her hand with uncertainty. She grips her finger around the trigger and aims it up at Silas.

He steps towards her, his chest heaving and nostrils flaring. Amanda has the gun pointed at his face.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Please don't make me do this...

Silas growls and steps even closer.

Amanda's hands shake.

Silas enjoys the thrill of this new game, unadulterated madness in his eyes. He takes another step towards her.

Amanda holds her breath and pulls the trigger.

Nothing.

She clicks the trigger again and again and nothing happens.

Amanda looks to the front door, not close enough to beat Silas out. She's barricaded in...

She looks to the basement.

Silas is about to grab her. Amanda throws the gun at Silas and it diverts his attention enough for her to bolt to the basement stairs.

She reaches out and swipes the flashlight from the counter top as she goes. She painfully runs down the

STAIRS

to the

BASEMENT

and fires her light over the dumped out boxes. She darts to the hidden room and slips on the floor.

Her flashlight beam lights up the fish filleting knife and her eyes go wide. She grabs it, gets up and rushes into the

HIDDEN ROOM

She does her best to pull the door closed and she softly backs away into the corner.

A HIGH PITCHED SQUEAL echoes throughout the room. Amanda jumps and darts her light to see a large rat scurry away into the hole in the wall.

She backs her way into the corner and squats herself down, curls up like Silas when we met him for the first time.

She holds the crusted knife ahead of her, shaking uncontrollably, and shuts off her flashlight.

Her choppy breathing fills the darkness.

HEAVY STOMPS come from upstairs.

SILAS (O.S.)
(manic screams)
Foo! Foo!

SOFT CREAKS move across the ceiling from right to left as Silas searches the cabin above.

The CREAKING stops and soft THUMPS come down the stairs and stop at the bottom. The wind WHISTLES and rain angrily PELTS against the tiny window.

No more sounds come from outside the room.

The whites of Amanda's eyes barely show through the dark as her eyes dart back and forth.

She waits. And waits.

Nothing is coming.

Lightning flashes.

A GIANT RUMBLE of thunder follows.

Lightning flashes again and fires a short line of light through the small window.

Amanda jumps in fear as she expects Silas to be standing in front of her, lit up by the blast of light. But he isn't.

She takes a few deep breaths and stops. Lightning flashes again and again.

The strands of hair hanging beside her face softly flutters in a short rush of air, then another...

She flicks on the flashlight and turns her head to see Silas, drooling, right next to her.

Amanda screams and Silas lunges at her. She dives out of the way and swings the flashlight, it connects with Silas' eye and he goes down with a whimper.

The flashlight flies out of her grip and bounces off the wall. Amanda sees the door and moves to it but Silas has a hold of her dislocated arm and he pulls her back to him.

Amanda screams in pain and fear. She rolls over and away from him and flails her legs. She drops the filleting knife.

Her foot connects with his groin and he lets go of her wrist to hold his crotch.

As Amanda tries to reach the knife, Silas wraps his arms around her trunk and pulls her onto him.

She can't reach the knife. Silas holds her tight as she tries and tries to reach it. She is so close to grabbing it.

Silas opens his mouth, strains his neck forward and bites down hard on the flesh around her collarbone.

Amanda convulses in pain and the physical jerk sends her fingers on top of the knife. She grips it tight and is about to drive it up and back into Silas' neck when --

Silas' jaw goes slack as the scariest, most manic growling and barking fills the room.

Amanda falls away from him to the floor.

Behind Silas, lit up by the single beam of the flashlight, is his wolf mother, her teeth in full view.

Silas growls back and gets down on all fours. He barks right back at her... but this is no mother you'd ever want to mess with.

She darts right at him and overpowers him, clamps her teeth into his shoulder and flips him down onto his back. She straddles over him and her bloody drool drips down onto the side of his face.

She stares into his eyes.

He stares back, and his eyes grow weak.

She growls at him and slowly steps back, commands him with a bark.

Silas slowly gets up and looks over at Amanda. The mother barks again, Silas drops his head and limps across and out of the room.

Amanda watches the mother, her breath held. The mother steps a few feet towards Amanda and they lock eyes in the darkened room.

They stare at each other for a long moment. The mother offers a measured blink at Amanda and turns away. She slowly slinks out of the room.

Amanda takes a deep breath and grabs the flashlight. As she does so, she bumps the little striped ball and it rolls to the far wall where it settles next to the hole she found it in.

INT. CABIN KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Amanda enters in time to see the mother wolf follow Silas through the broken window. She stops once more to look back at Amanda to let her know she's safe.

Amanda rushes to the door and whips it open. She flops herself down next to Jackson, who is now awake, aware and has managed to lean himself up on one elbow.

He watches as the mother wolf follows Silas off into the darkness. He looks back to Amanda who has seen them disappear as well.

Her eyes come alive and she grabs his face.

Jackson reaches for her hand.

AMANDA
Where are you hurt?

JACKSON

Managed to shoot myself... I think I'll
be okay.

He half smiles at her and she chokes on her own laugh as
a cry takes over. She squeezes his hand and kisses him
hard on the lips and cheeks and eyes.

AMANDA

We're gonna be okay, we'll be okay.

EXT. WOODS - MORNING

The storm has broken and sunlight pierces over the tree
tops.

Silas follows his mother wolf up a large hill filled with
thick forest, his head hung low. She stops at the top
and waits for the wounded boy to arrive.

He stops next to her and she looks from him to the deep
valley below. No town, no cabin, no people. Just
endless trees and lakes.

She looks back to Silas and he understands. He looks
beaten, worn, and broken. He yips at his mother and she
simply looks back down into the valley.

Silas takes his cue and starts his haggard steps down the
rise of the hill. He meanders along until he is about to
be enveloped by the trees.

He looks back to his mother, but she's gone.

He finally enters the trees and disappears. The trees
shift softly back and forth as he sets out to explore his
new world.

FADE OUT