

FEAR THE TRUTH

FADE IN.

1 EXT. EL SALVADOR - NIGHT

Built directly into a hillside, an ancient monastery sits under the faint glow of a half-moon. Few lights are on throughout the sprawling, archaic structure.

2 INT. CHAMBER ROOM - NIGHT

Seated at a wooden table, a PRIEST (45) is mumbling to himself in an unfamiliar language. He slides open the bottom drawer of his desk to reveal a bottle of rum. He pours himself a drink and eventually downs it.

He looks distraught as he stares out across the room. The Priest looks over to the far end of the table to a stack of old parchment, bound together into a make-shift book. It is illuminated by the flames in the fireplace beyond it.

His praying becomes intense, morphing into chanting. He opens up a clenched fist to reveal a crucifix. He was squeezing so tightly that his hand is bleeding.

The room is a mess. Words are carved into the walls, numbers have been crossed out like they've been counting down to something. He begins to shout. He looks down to a single sheet of parchment in front of him; the writing is cryptic.

Without looking over, he pours another drink then sets the bottle down but not upright. It rolls off the table and *smashes*.

He takes hold of the glass, and with his other hand, pounds his fist, blood splattering onto the parchment. He turns and shouts toward the fire. The priest lowers his head and begins to sob. After a moment, he reaches into his lap and picks up a pistol and quickly shoves it into his mouth... *BANG*.

He slumps over in his chair, a black mess glistens on the wall behind him.

FADE TO:

3 EXT. LOCAL STORE - DAY

A tarantula is traveling across the width of a dirt road. A bicycle tire almost ends it's progress, then a near miss by another. It makes it safely across, then crawls up onto a sidewalk. After a lengthy charge of about ten meters, an opening door brushes it away.

Two young men are on their way out of the store. GREG(24) an American college student, catches the door before it slams shut. One of the locals says something to him in Spanish, then walks away laughing.

4 INT. LOCAL STORE - DAY

Greg Enters and begins to shop. The place is run-down and minimally stocked. He picks up a jar from the shelf. He can't read what it says, but it's obviously animal parts suspended in some kind of thick liquid.

GREG
Ugh, poor thing.

He picks out a few pieces of fruit, then after encountering a few more unsavory items he is relieved to see a container of Slim-Jims. He grabs a handful and walks up to the counter where the STORE OWNER (40s) is tending the register.

GREG (CONT'D)
Hola.

STORE OWNER
Hola. American?

GREG
San Diego.

STORE OWNER
Well, we must be the new hot spot for Americans these days. I hope you're not staying in our crappy hotel down the street.

GREG
I am. Me and some friends are down here on sort of a work assignment for school. And trying to squeeze in a little summer vacation at the same time.

Greg turns and looks out the window. Across the street is an old man sitting in a bent up aluminum chair. He is gazing up at the sky, staring blankly into the sun.

STORE OWNER
Ah, school is good. What are you studying to be, a scientist maybe?

GREG

A journalist, hopefully. We're down here doing a paper on Central American cultures; Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras and your lovely El Salvador.

STORE OWNER

Lovely? (chuckles) My friend, to be traveling through places like this, you and your friends I think must be...

GREG

Crazy?

STORE OWNER

I was going to say highly motivated.

Greg watches as the store owner takes a bite of something fleshy and stringy. It stretches quite a bit before snapping.

GREG

Hey, you wouldn't happen to have any donuts, would you?

STORE OWNER

Do-nuts? Doh... ah, nuts! Si.

He dips down behind the counter.

GREG

(to himself)
Oh God, please don't be something's nuts.

The Owner springs up holding a small tray full of homemade brownies.

STORE OWNER

Si.

GREG

I'll take 'em all.

As the owner drops them into the bag, a young boy bursts into the store yelling frantically. He and the Owner have a brief, intense conversation before the boy abruptly runs out. The Owner seems a bit taken.

GREG (CONT'D)

Who was that?

STORE OWNER
The Sheriff's youngest son.

GREG
What'd he say?

5 EXT. LOCAL STORE - DAY

Greg loads the groceries into a red Jeep. He stops for a moment and looks over again at the old man staring up at the sun. He looks up himself, but has to immediately turn away from the blinding light.

He jumps in the jeep and pulls away. PAN over to a nearby half-rusted thermometer, just long enough to notice the temperature dropping slightly.

6 EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

The jeep pulls in and parks next to a dusty pick-up. Both have California plates.

Greg gets out and grabs the groceries. He makes his way toward the stairs but stops abruptly when two mangy dogs approach.

GREG
Hey. Hope you two are friendly.

One dog lets out a bark.

GREG (CONT'D)
Okay.

They start to growl, as thick drool hangs from their jaws.

Greg looks up to the second floor.

GREG (CONT'D)
Hey guys!

The dogs advance further/threaten. After a tense moment, they begin to snap at each other. A fierce battle ensues until one ends up chasing the other down the street.

7 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

ERIC(23) and CHEEKS(24) are playing cards at the table. Eric slaps down three kings and one card face-down on the pile.

CHEEKS

Shit!

Eric smiles and throws his hands up in triumph.

ERIC

Who's the five-thousand rummy king? Woo! I'm so pretty.

CHEEKS

Bull shit.

ERIC

Must thou blaspheme the five-thousand rummy king?

CHEEKS

Let's play to six.

ERIC

Six? Who the hell plays six thousand rummy?

CHEEKS

Me and you.

ERIC

Your mom.

CHEEKS

What!? Did you just...

ERIC

Sorry.

CHEEKS

How old are you? You know, even joking that's not cool, right?

ERIC

Your right, I'm sorry. I've never even met your mom.

CHEEKS

That's right, you never even met her so don't even talk about her.

ERIC

I said "my bad". I mean I'm sure if I did meet her we'd probably hit it off... pretty good.

CHEEKS
 Man, we're playin' to six
 thousand right now!

There's *kicking* at the door. Eric turns and looks out the window.

ERIC
 It's Greg.

CHEEKS
 Well let him in, I'm hungry as
 hell.

Eric reaches over and twists the knob.

Greg Enters.

GREG
 Didn't you guys hear me? I
 almost got killed out there.

CHEEKS
 What? Somebody tried to steal
 the food?

GREG
 No, a pack of wild dogs almost
 had me for breakfast.

ERIC
 Oh.

They both ignore him and dig into the grocery bags.

CHEEKS
 What the hell is this shit?
 It's just a bunch of...

He pulls out the Slim-Jims.

CHEEKS (CONT'D)
 Oh yeah, God bless America.

Cheeks flops onto the bed and starts to eat. Two young girls in their early twenties, TRACY(23) and SAM(22) Enter. Tracy's hair is a mess.

TRACY
 It's about time.

ERIC / CHEEKS
 (mockingly)
 It's about time.

TRACY
Fuck you guys.

GREG
(to Sam)
Morning, baby.

They kiss. Tracy gags, then digs into the groceries.

TRACY
I'm so hungry.

GREG
Where's David?

ERIC
He went out with the camera a
little while ago.

GREG
Good. I hope he gets something
we can use.

ERIC
Yeah, good luck with that.
Yesterday he filmed forty-five
minutes of "the coolest clouds
I ever saw."

Tracy examines a few brownies.

TRACY
Damn, these all have nuts on
them. I don't do nuts.

CHEEKS
Yeah we already know that, but
do you have to keep dragging
your sex life into everything?

Glaring, she throws a brownie at him.

TRACY
Go ahead Cheeks, keep talking.

SAM
He's just jealous 'cause you
see more vagina than he does.

CHEEKS
Shit, I see vagina all the time.

TRACY

Please, the last time you saw
it was on the day you were born.

A bit of food comes flying out of Eric's mouth.

CHEEKS

Oh.

ERIC

(covering his mouth)

Oh.

CHEEKS

I know you did *not* just
involve my mom's vagina in
this conversation.

SAM

Oh what ever, you're the one
who brought it up.

CHEEKS

I did not.

TRACY

Uh huh, we were talking about
nuts on a brownie and you
started in with your mom's
vagina.

CHEEKS

I did not!

GREG

Hey, can you guys chill out for
a second, I want to talk to you
about something.

CHEEKS

Yeah, but why do I have to sit
here and listen to...

GREG

Trace, can you just please not
talk about his mom's vagina
anymore? Look what we have to
deal with.

Tracy stands there, arms crossed, while everyone stares at
her.

TRACY

Okay.

GREG

Okay, so listen, when I was at the store, this little kid comes running in, and starts yelling about how somebody was killed at a church outside of town this morning.

ERIC

And people say San Diego's rough.

GREG

He thinks it was one of the priests.

SAM

How's he know that?

GREG

He said no one else ever goes out there.

CHEEKS

You know, I had a bad feeling about this place ever since we got here.

TRACY

Do you even know where we are?

CHEEKS

Yeah, Ecuador.

TRACY

El Salvador, shit head. Remind me why you're even here.

CHEEKS

What's the difference? Ecuador, El Salvador... shit, we've been third-worldin' it for a whole month now. I seriously can't wait to get back home to my own damn bed...

ERIC

Oh yeah.

CHEEKS

Eat a plate of real food...

ERIC

Preach on.

CHEEKS

And snuggle my ass up to a pillow and a Play Station.

ERIC

Can I get an Amen?

GREG

Can I get back to my story? Anyway, I was thinking we should go down there and check it out. You know, find out what happened, maybe we can use it somehow.

CHEEKS

Check what out?

GREG

The church. It's about a half hour west of here.

CHEEKS

Yeah, I'm gonna have to pass on that. My mom always told me to stay out of neighborhoods where the priests are getting killed. She's always full of good advice like that.

ERIC

I have to say, I'm with Cheeks' mom.

Cheeks shoots Eric a look, Eric gestures back like "what?"

GREG

Does anybody know where I can find a journalist around here?

Cheeks and Eric answer simultaneously.

CHEEKS

Not really, I mean not until we graduate.

ERIC

Technically not for another year, at least.

The door suddenly bursts open. DAVID (23) rushes in out of breath. He slams the door and leans back against it.

DAVID

I just got attacked, (breath) by a pack of wild dogs.

TRACY

God, you're so dramatic.

David spies the food.

DAVID

Oh yeah.

GREG

Look, our paper is shit so far.
Trace?

TRACY

It's shit.

GREG

If we don't pull this together,
we're all screwed. And we'll all
have to do another semester with
Nazi Von Brown. We get no slack
this time, you heard him.

EVERYONE

(German accent)

Blow my mind or fail zee class.

CHEEKS

How the hell is a paper on
culture gonna blow anybody's
mind?

ERIC

That's probably why he picked
culture, 'cause he hates us.

TRACY

He doesn't hate *me*.

ERIC

He doesn't hate your tits.

TRACY

That's what I meant.

GREG

C'mon. We'll find out what
happened, juice it up a little
and tie it in to the culture
around here, piece of cake.
Trace, I'm gonna need you to
translate incase nobody there
speaks English.

TRACY

I thought we were leaving tomorrow. Sorry, you can count me out.

GREG

Great. Eric?

ERIC

Out.

GREG

Cheeks.

CHEEKS

I don't want to spend another semester with the Nazi. But If I go and I see a dead body, I better get a damn "A".

DAVID

(mouth full of food)
What the hell did I miss?

8 INT. MONASTERY - DAY

CU of the Dead Priest, bloody gunshot wound to the head. A white sheet is whipped up over his face. The local SHERIFF (45) is kneeling down beside the body. The head priest, FATHER ELIAS (55) is there observing the situation.

SHERIFF

You heard the shot?

FATHER ELIAS

Yes.

The sheriff looks around the room. He then scans the table and notices blood splatter. A clean spot on the table reveals that something has been removed.

Just then DEPUTY 2(24) rushes into the room. (*Italicized* dialogue will be spoken in Spanish with English subtitles.)

DEPUTY 2

We found two more!

The Sheriff and Father Elias react.

9 INT. CHAMBER ROOM - DAY

Upon entry of the room, the Sheriff notices several Monks who have congregated a few meters down the hall. They are looking on with great concern. The Sheriff, Father Elias and Deputy 2 Enter, joining DEPUTY 1. (35)

The room's condition is similar to the first. The Sheriff approaches another dead body and dons a disgusted look.

DEPUTY 1
It looks like he tried to get
the whole thing inside him.

A large cross is all but buried in the man's stomach. Blood is everywhere.

SHERIFF
And the other?

Deputy 1 walks over to a broken window.

DEPUTY 1
He had to have a running start to
hit those rocks.

The Sheriff approaches the window and looks down. A man lies badly disfigured on some rocks below.

SHERIFF
You're sure he's dead?

Deputy 1 takes a long squinty look.

DEPUTY 1
He sure looks dead.

The sheriff gives a brazen look.

DEPUTY 1 (CONT'D)
I'd better go check.

He Exits.

SHERIFF
And your explanation for all
of this?

FATHER ELIAS
Explanation? For this?

SHERIFF
You were aware of nothing
unusual before last night?

A young priest, SANTOS(25) is standing outside the doorway, listening in.

FATHER ELIAS
I rarely visit their private
rooms.

The Sheriff walks over to the wall and gazes up. The word "Liar" is scribed dozens of times into the stone.

FATHER ELIAS (CONT'D)
We have to find the others.

10 EXT. DESERTED ROAD - DAY

Greg, David, Cheeks are in the Jeep. Greg's driving, David is in the back. Cheeks is in passenger seat, holding a map.

CHEEKS
So what did this kid say
exactly?

GREG
I don't know, exactly, I don't
speak Spanish. But the guy in the
store seemed pretty freaked out.

CHEEKS
Right.

GREG
It's just a few more miles, we'll
find out more when we get there.
Dave!

DAVID
Yo.

GREG
You bring the camera?

David is leaning back, videotaping the sky above.

DAVID
Yeah man. Hey are you guys checking
out these clouds? They're really
fucking weird.

Cheeks looks up.

CHEEKS
He's losing it. I told you four
weeks was too long.
(MORE)

CHEEKS (CONT'D)

The man's starting to crack, and he was never really all there to begin with.

DAVID

(pointing up)
You don't see that?

CHEEKS

See what?

David hands Cheeks the camera.

DAVID

Right up there.

Cheeks scans the sky with the camera.

CHEEKS

I don't see anything.

DAVID

Right up there, one o'clock.

Cheeks zooms in on a strangely colored/shaped dark cloud up ahead in the distance. There looks to be a faint electrical charge fluttering around its edges.

CHEEKS

Holy Shit.

DAVID

What?

CHEEKS

You got to be kidding me.

DAVID

What is it?

CHEEKS

I'm not sure but, I think back on Earth we call that a storm cloud.

He hands the camera back to David.

DAVID

It doesn't look like any storm cloud I ever seen.

CHEEKS

Well I guess you need to get out more.

DAVID

(mumbles)

Get out more? How much more out more can I get? I just spent the last fucking month in Central America. I *am* getting out more.

CHEEKS

He's gonna need therapy after this trip.

GREG

So am I.

11 INT. GIRLS' HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Tracy is on the bed, working on the laptop. Eric is kicked back in a chair, feet up on a small round table, reading a book.

The bathroom door opens and Sam comes walking out wrapped in a towel. She walks over to an open suitcase on the bed, while Eric's eyes covertly track her across the room. She begins to disrobe but stops abruptly when she notices him. She grabs her clothes and holds them in front of her.

SAM

Why are you in here?

TRACY

Oh stop. It's not like he's never seen it before.

SAM

Yeah, well he doesn't see it anymore. (to Eric) Do you mind?

He lifts up his feet, snaps the book shut, stands up and bows.

ERIC

A thousand apologies.

He Exits.

SAM

Why didn't you tell me he was in here?

TRACY

I don't see what the big deal is. He knocked, so I let him in. I mean c'mon, the guy's harmless. Besides, I think he still has it pretty bad for you.

SAM

That doesn't matter. What do you think Greg would say if he saw me standing here naked in front of my ex-boyfriend?

TRACY

We both know he wouldn't say shit. The man's got more confidence than Superman. And if you ask me, Eric's been pretty damn good about it this whole trip. I see the way he looks at you, and he never says a word.

SAM

Thank God.

TRACY

Okay, maybe I just thought the poor guy deserved a little sneak peak for old time's sake.

Tracy reaches up and lets her hair down while she walks toward the bathroom for her shower. Sam picks up the wet towel from the bed and throws it at her. Tracy catches it.

SAM

If you like him so much why don't you get naked in front of him?

TRACY

Sorry, he's not my type, too many nuts. Now you on the other hand...

Sam charges her, but Tracy shuts the door in time.

12

EXT. JEEP/ROAD - DAY

CHEEKS

Hey, you don't think we're on a wild goose chase do you? I mean
(MORE)

CHEEKS (CONT'D)
you know how these people feel
about outsiders.

GREG
What do you mean?

CHEEKS
You know, the locals might be
screwing with us.

GREG
What the hell would they do
that for?

CHEEKS
You're kidding me, right? You
don't remember what happened
to us the first week, when our
compass broke?

DAVID
Oh God, why did you have
to mention that?

CHEEKS
And that guy at the gas station
seemed real nice when he said he
would fix it for us "no problemo."

DAVID
I just stopped thinking about
that.

CHEEKS
See, a lot of these people down
here don't like Americans all
that much. It's like we rub
them the wrong way. So, when
they say to our face, "Hey, let
me help you guys out with that
broken compass," what they
really mean is "Hey, let me
drop a tiny magnet in there and
let you be on your way."

DAVID
That sucked for two days.

GREG
Okay, so let me get this
straight. They send some kid
running into the store I'm
shopping at, screaming about a
(MORE)

GREG (CONT'D)

dead priest, so we would drive
thirty miles out of town, just
so we can look like idiots.

CHEEKS

Speak for yourself. We're only
out here because of you.

Just then, David's eyes widen. He slowly grabs the two front
seats and pulls himself forward

DAVID

I think you guys can cross that
theory off the list.

Greg and Cheeks both react to what David sees.

The jeep comes to a skidding stop. They all get out and walk
toward the edge of the road. They look across the ravine to a
large and ancient-looking monastery, which seems to rise over
the hillside in front of them.

It's not so much the monastery itself that's caught their
attention, as it is the dozen or so dead bodies covered in
white sheets sprawled across the property.

Two police cars, (one is an older Ford Bronco) and two
hearses have their lights on. It is obviously an active crime
scene. They walk closer to the edge of the road and David
begins filming.

CHEEKS

I gotta start listening to my
mom.

DAVID

So much for our boring paper
on culture.

David zooms in with the camcorder.

GREG

What do you see?

Cheeks grabs the camera, and after watching for a moment,
hands it back to David and starts for the jeep.

CHEEKS

Yeah, I'm out.

GREG

Whoa, wait!

CHEEKS

Oh no, I'm out. You can take me back now.

GREG

Come on Cheeks, we can't just leave.

CHEEKS

No man, we can just leave and we should just leave. That's a church down there. And if that's a bunch of dead priests...

GREG

We don't know what happened down there. That's the whole reason we're here.

CHEEKS

Greg, you're not opening your eyes. We've got no business here. Look, I know we're supposed to be journalists and we're supposed to find and report the truth and all that happy horse shit, and sooner or later we'll be working on stories where people die. But what happened down there... It's got nothing to do with us. And we're way too far away from home to be getting in the middle of it.

DAVID

I think he's right. I mean think about where we are. Maybe we shouldn't get involved.

13 EXT. MONASTERY - DAY

A body is being wheeled on a gurney toward the hearse. After it's loaded, the rear door slams shut.

The Sheriff lights a cigarette and looks off into the distance. Deputy 1 walks over.

DEPUTY 1

That's twelve altogether, but we still have one missing; a Father Benavidez.

SHERIFF
Let's get back to town and
begin the autopsies.

DEPUTY 1
Autopsies? I think it's pretty
clear they all...

SHERIFF
Have you ever heard of a priest
suicide pact?

Deputy 1 nods in compliance and signals everyone that they're moving out. The Sheriff looks back to Father Elias who is standing in the doorway. They share an uncomfortable stare before the Sheriff gets in the Bronco.

14 EXT. ROAD - DAY

The Ford Bronco leads the caravan, directly behind is Deputy 1. Deputy 2 trails the column, behind the two hearses.

15 EXT. ROAD/PATROL CAR - DAY

DEPUTY 2 (V.O.)
*Have you ever seen anything
like this?*

Deputy 1 picks up the radio.

DEPUTY 1
What do you think?

DEPUTY 2 (V.O.)
*I thought men of God were
forbidden from this act.*

Deputy 1 says nothing.

DEPUTY 2 (V.O.)
Why would they do this?

16 EXT. ROAD - DAY

As the caravan races passed a rock wall, the Jeep pulls out from behind it and onto the dirt road. It proceeds down the ravine, toward the monastery.

GREG
 (to Cheeks)
 You don't even have to get out
 of the car.

CHEEKS
 Don't worry, I won't.

17 INT. FATHER ELIAS' ROOM - DAY

Father Elias is working on paperwork at his desk. The Doorbell Chimes, but he ignores it. After a moment, Santos pushes open the door.

SANTOS
 Father?

FATHER ELIAS
 The police again?

SANTOS
 Three men. I've never seen them
 before.

The Doorbell Chimes again.

FATHER ELIAS
 Leave it be. I won't speak to
 anyone else today.

SANTOS
 Yes Father.

He pauses.

SANTOS (CONT'D)
 What about Father Benavidez?

FATHER ELIAS
 What about him?

SANTOS
 He's still missing.

FATHER ELIAS
 He may have gone into town.

SANTOS
 Over night?

Father Elias reacts.

FATHER ELIAS
Keep searching.

18 EXT. MONASTERY - DAY

Greg and David are at the door.

DAVID
Maybe everybody's dead.

CHEEKS
(shouting from the jeep.)
Everybody's dead, can we go
now?!

GREG
Somebody's got to be in there.

David holds up the camera.

DAVID
At least we got something.

GREG
Yeah, but what?

From a window above, someone watches David and Greg talk for a moment before walking back to the jeep. Hang on the outside of the window as they pull away.

19 INT. FATHER ELIAS'S ROOM - DAY

Father Elias is staring intensely at a page he is working on. He then takes a key from his pocket and unlocks a desk drawer. He pulls out the make-shift book and adds the page to it. He carefully replaces the book and Exits the room.

20 INT. MONASTERY - DAY

He travels through a series of hallways before heading down a flight of dimly lit stairs, then into the basement. He unlocks and opens a large, heavy door.

21 INT. CATHEDRAL - DAY

He enters a very large cathedral-like chamber. It has a high domed ceiling and looks like it hasn't been occupied in a long, long time. An altar sits at the far end, as everything is covered in dust/cobwebs.

He walks over to the altar and sets the book down. Suddenly he cringes, shaking his head like he is in pain.

When he closes his eyes, we glimpse a disgustingly hideous demon-like creature (rotten teeth and glowing red eyes) charging at him with a *deafening growl*.

He quickly snaps out of it and pulls his trembling hand away from the book. He looks up above the altar to the dusty outline of a recently removed crucifix high on the wall. Then he then cautiously scans the room.

FATHER ELIAS

Please. I'm almost finished.

22 EXT. MORGUE - DAY

The police and hearses pull up. From inside, the Coroner peers out the window.

A small crowd has gathered.

23 INT. MORGUE - DAY

The Coroner is shocked as the bodies are wheeled in one by one. Deputy 2 shares an uncomfortable look with the coroner as he passes. The Sheriff takes the Coroner aside.

CORONER

What in God's name happened?

SHERIFF

This is what we need to find out. I want a report done on each one of them, immediately.

The Coroner lifts the sheet of one body and quickly recovers it.

CORONER

What exactly am I looking for?

SHERIFF

The wounds seem to be self-inflicted, but if even one of them was murdered, I want to know.

The Coroner turns and looks around. He is amidst a sea of dead bodies. He pulls an inhaler out of his pocket and takes a blast.

24 EXT. MORGUE - DAY

The Sheriff walks outside. Deputy 1 is leaning against the front of his car looking out. The Sheriff approaches.

DEPUTY 1
It's getting cold. It's the
middle of July, why is it cold?

SHERIFF
I'm going back to see the priest.
He's not telling us everything,
I'm sure of it.

DEPUTY 1
I don't know how you can be
sure of anything after today.

25 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

A refrigerator door opens. A hand reaches in and grabs a bottle of soda. The door closes. Eric pops the top and sits down. He sets the bottle down on the end table and continues watching TV. He is holding a Spanish-to-English dictionary, trying to understand the program.

After a moment, the bottle begins to slide across the end table on its own. He slowly reaches out and caps his hand on it.

He slides it back toward the center and lifts his hand. It starts to slide again. Just then, a picture on the wall begins to rattle. It's an earthquake.

He stands up and tries to keep his balance. The picture falls.

26 EXT. JEEP/ROAD - DAY

On their way back to town, the road begins to shake violently.

CHEEKS
Pull over! Pull over!

GREG
I'm trying.

The jeep goes out of control as a huge section of the road gives way in front of them.

ALL THREE

Shit!!

27 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Eric is bracing himself against a wall. The shaking subsides. Sam and Tracy Enter.

ERIC

You girls all right?

SAM

Yeah. You?

TRACY

You call that an earthquake?
I've had orgasms that
registered higher on the
Richter-scale.

SAM

I hope the guys are okay.

ERIC

I'm sure they're fine.

28 EXT. JEEP/ROAD - DAY

The jeep has already come to a stop. Greg, David and Cheeks find themselves teetering on the edge of a shear drop-off.

CHEEKS

Doesn't anything good ever
happen around here?

Greg opens his door. The jeep begins to rock and Cheeks, looking at the bottom of the canyon, starts to freak out.

DAVID

Wait. Wait guys. Everybody just
stop. Cheeks, when I tell you
to, climb over Greg real slow.
Then I'm gonna slide...

The jeep begins to sway over the edge. They all scream and frantically clamor out. They dive to the ground and watch as the jeep slides a bit more over the edge and abruptly stops, getting high-centered on a rock.

They look each other over, breathing heavily.

DAVID (CONT'D)
I think I have to pee.

Cheeks looks down at his crotch.

CHEEKS
I think I already did.

Greg walks over to the jeep and assess the situation.

GREG
Now what?

29 EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The sheriff is traveling down a dirt road in his Bronco. He is writing notes about the case as he drives. Among the words, he writes "twelve dead", then circles it. He looks up to see the three men walking toward him in the distance.

Greg slaps Cheeks on the shoulder.

GREG
Hey, there's your one good thing.

CHEEKS
Alright.

The sheriff reaches them and comes to a stop.

GREG
Hola.

SHERIFF
Hola.

GREG
Speak English?

SHERIFF
Sure.

CHEEKS
Thank you, God.

GREG
We could sure use some help.

The Sheriff gives them a concerning look.

SHERIFF
Who the hell are you?

30 INT. MORGUE - DUSK

The Coroner bends down and picks up a few pencils that fell from the quake. He replaces them into a small cup. He then continues examining one of the bodies. It's a grotesque scene.

He then walks to his office. A large glass window separates it from the examining room. He grabs a small folder and drops it on his desk.

After writing a few notes, he walks back to the examining room with a different folder. He slowly approaches the body he'd been working on and pulls the sheet back up over it. He makes the sign of the cross then proceeds to the next body.

He whips off the sheet exposing a gruesome scene. He begins the examination, starting with the eyes. He notices what looks like a dark liquid slowly filling the whites and is bewildered. He writes a note in the folder then begins to unbutton the shirt. He quickly spreads the shirt open and is startled to see the words "I see you" carved across its chest.

The Coroner backs off and nervously scans the room.

31 EXT. ROAD - DAY

A loud revving engine and a spinning tire, and the jeep starts to creep up over the edge. The Sheriff's Bronco drags it back onto the road.

GREG

Thanks, we really appreciate this. I don't know what we'd have done way out here.

The Sheriff unhooks the chain.

SHERIFF

Do you mind telling me what you all are doing out here?

DAVID

We're on vacation.

SHERIFF

Vacation.

GREG

We heard something in town this morning and we just wanted to
(MORE)

GREG (CONT'D)
come out and, you know, check
it out.

SHERIFF
And what exactly did you hear?

GREG
We heard someone was killed.

SHERIFF
Is that what you heard? Well,
maybe I've spent all morning
asking questions to the wrong
men. What do you know about
what went on out here?

CHEEKS
Nothing, nothing at all. Hey,
we were just being nosey. You
know us nosey Americans, just
gotta know everything. But some
things are just none of our
damn business. Wouldn't you say
so Greg?

GREG
We thought...

CHEEKS
There, you see? I mean shit,
people die every day, no big
deal, right?

The Sheriff reacts.

CHEEKS (CONT'D)
So, I think we should thank the
sheriff for all his help, then
thank God we're not lying dead
at the bottom of that canyon.
And then we should just head
back to the hotel and start
packing our shit so we can go
home.

SHERIFF
I think your friend has the
right idea. (glancing over the
cliff) There's nothing out here
worth risking your lives for.

He looks into the back of the jeep, reaches in and pulls out
the camcorder.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
Vacation pictures?

All three nod vigorously.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
Well, just in case I have any
questions, why don't you tell
me where you're staying.

32 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Eric is replacing the fallen picture onto the wall. The door opens. Enter Cheeks, Greg and David. Sam hops off the bed.

SAM
Oh, you guys are alright.
How'd it go?

No one answers.

ERIC
Well, what happened?

CHEEKS
Greg?

GREG
No, you go ahead.

CHEEKS
Uh okay. Let's see, we ended up
about an inch away from driving
off a five-hundred foot cliff,
then we damn near got thrown in
jail by a pissed off sheriff who
thinks we had something to do
with something we had nothing to
do with, uh, I think there was
an earthquake, and let's see,
what was that other thing? Oh
yeah, you couldn't swing a dead
cat without hitting a dead
priest, they were everywhere.
I leave anything out Dave?

DAVID
Uh, you peed your pants.

CHEEKS
And I pissed myself, I almost
forgot. Thanks man.

David gives him the "thumbs-up".

ERIC
What the hell are you guys
talking about?

David hands the camcorder to Eric. Tracy walks over to view it as well.

Sam turns and looks out the window. She watches an old woman who is sweeping her door step across the street.

CUT to camcorder video as they view the gruesome crime scene at the monastery.

TRACY
Damn.

ERIC
Holy shit, what happened?

GREG
We don't know. When we got there, nobody answered the door.

CHEEKS
(mumbles)
I wonder why.

ERIC
Wait, who's this?

Eric rewinds, and pauses the tape.

ERIC [CONT'D]
This guy right here.

He points to Father Elias standing in the doorway.

GREG
I don't know. But what ever happened out there, it looks like he came out of it okay.

Sam is still watching the Old Woman across the street.

Suddenly the woman is attacked by about half a dozen small birds. They are hovering/swarming over her head. As she tries to bat them away with the broom, they take turns swooping in and picking at her face and scalp. After a moment, she seems completely defenseless from their attack.

SAM

God. Come here and look at
this.

Everyone gathers around the window. Eric starts taping.

SAM (CONT'D)

Should we do something?

Splat! a bird smashes with tremendous force into the window. Everyone reacts, then watches out the window as hundreds of birds begin swarming the town, pelting the cars, buildings and the streets below. Another slams into the window.

They turn/react toward the door at the loud thumping, as a seemingly steady stream of birds is pelting it from outside.

DAVID

What the fuck?

33 INT. FATHER ELIAS' ROOM - DAY

Father Elias is working at his desk. The fireplace is lit and casts an eerie glow across the room. He opens up a small drawer and pulls out a bottle of "stay-awake" pills and pops a few into his mouth. He shakes his head to wake up. He then walks over and stokes the fire. He kneels down in front of it, exhausted.

He hears a *Crash* in the distance and reacts.

34 INT. DARK ROOM - DAY

The light from an opening door appears. Lantern in hand, Father Elias walks in.

He raises the lantern in front of him, but it barely reveals the room. The light tracks across the room until it settles on a large wooden crate. He raises the lantern which reveals another crate on top of it. Atop that, crouched just below the ceiling is a man, FATHER BENAVIDEZ (46). His face turns toward the light. He has been weeping.

FATHER ELIAS

Father Benavidez.

BENAVIDEZ

It's not true.

Father Elias doesn't answer.

BENAVIDEZ (CONT'D)

Tell me it's not true.

FATHER ELIAS

What are you doing? Come down from there.

BENAVIDEZ

We tried to warn you but you wouldn't listen to us. We trusted you and now it's too late.

FATHER ELIAS

By now, you should know that it's always been too late.

Benavidez breaks down, sobbing. He reaches out into the darkness and pulls into the light, a noose.

FATHER ELIAS (CONT'D)

You don't have to do this. What purpose will it serve?

BENAVIDEZ

Purpose? What purpose do I serve Father? (He shrieks) What is my purpose now?!

He secures the noose around his neck. Father Elias takes a step forward.

BENAVIDEZ (CONT'D)

No! Please. It's all that's left for me. Father, tell me you haven't seen them. Tell me they haven't been watching you. They're all around us. And they're here because we've called them.

Benavidez searches the Priest's eyes. Just then, a shadow moves behind Father Elias. Benavidez reacts wildly. Father Elias glances over his shoulder but sees nothing.

BENAVIDEZ (CONT'D)

I see you. I see you! What are they waiting for?!

With that, he takes a step forward and the rope jerks tight.

Father Elias steps back as Benavidez hangs dead, the rope creaking back and forth.

Father Elias Exits the room. Santos approaches.

After a moment and a curious look, he peers into the room, then rushes in and cries out. He grabs Benavidez and frantically tries to lift his weight, but is offered no help from Father Elias.

SANTOS
Help me! Father, please!

FATHER ELIAS
It's too late.

SANTOS
What do you mean?!

FATHER ELIAS
Santos! Look at him, he's dead!

Santos looks Father Benevidez over, slowly catching his breath, realizing that it's too late.

35 INT. LOWER CHAMBER ROOM - DAY

Father Benavidez is being laid down on a small cot. Santos bends over him. He mumbles a few words of prayer, then leans in close. He clenches the cross around his neck and rips it off. He places it on the chest of Benavidez and says a prayer.

SANTOS
I'll call the sheriff?

FATHER ELIAS
We'll call tomorrow.

Santos reacts.

FATHER ELIAS (CONT'D)
Do as I say.

Father Elias clears his throat and the two exit the room. As they exit, HANG on a dimly lit lantern on the wall across from the doorway.

36 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Cheeks is steadily packing his clothes. Tracy is pacing the floor.

TRACY

All right, that does it. This place is too fucking creepy for me. I mean, this is some freaky-ass Stephen King shit here.

ERIC

Hitchcock.

TRACY

What?

ERIC

More like that Alfred Hitchcock movie. You know, with the birds.

TRACY

Was that supposed to make me feel better?

ERIC

No, not really.

David walks to the front door and opens it. He pushes a small pile of dead/dying birds aside and pokes his head out. Some of the towns people are gathering outside their homes. David spies the bar across the street.

SAM

(to Tracy)

Alright, calm down.

TRACY

Honey, I am calm. This is my calm face. All I'm trying to say is I don't feel like we should be here right now. I mean Cheeks, what would your mom say about all of this right here?

CHEEKS

Well, for starters she'd ask why the hell I'm the only one packing up my shit. Then she'd probably say something about a dead bird being a bad omen. And if she was here and seen that, (motions toward the window) she'd tell me to mother-fucking run.

Eric raises his hand.

ERIC

Again, I'm with Cheeks'...

CHEEKS

Eric! Can you please stop saying that?

TRACY

And can somebody tell me why it's so God damned cold in here? I thought you said the air didn't work.

ERIC

It doesn't.

DAVID

You guys can debate this all you want. I'm moseying across the street to that bar over there and I'm getting completely shit-faced.

ERIC

I'm coming with you.

DAVID

Then I'm gonna stumble back here, pack up all my shit and pass out till morning. You guys can wake me up when you're ready to head out the door.

TRACY

That's a great plan.

GREG

Wait, what about everything we saw today? I mean we still don't know what the hell happened out there. We've got dead priests and we've got dead birds, but we don't have a story.

CHEEKS

Well damn Greg, at this point I vote we just make one up. Bubonic Plague sound good to everybody?

ERIC
Works for me.

TRACY
I'm down with the Plague.

CHEEKS
See? My creative writing
classes are starting to pay
off already.

David, Eric and Tracy head for the door. Greg has his head
down.

GREG
He's not going to believe it
was the Bubonic Plague.

CHEEKS
How the hell is he gonna know?
Besides, I'm really starting
to not give a damn about Von
Brown or this bull-shit paper.
Hey, you know what? How about
if you write a few pages on
whatever the hell you think is
going on around here, and
we'll change our paper to
"Come to Ecuador, where it's
so shitty even the damn birds
are committing suicide."

EVERYONE
El Salvador.

CHEEKS
Man, whatever, I'm with Dave
on the whole passing out 'till
morning thing.

Cheeks, Eric and Tracy head out the door. David walks over to
Greg.

DAVID
Why don't you come with us?

SAM
(to Greg)
Come on, I can use a drink.

DAVID
We can all use a drink. Look,
I know what you're saying.
(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

This paper is due or die for
all of us, but...

GREG

Screw the paper. I mean
shouldn't we be trying to
find out what happened out
there today? Isn't that what
we're supposed to be doing?

DAVID

I don't know. But one thing I
do know, is I sure as hell
don't want to get caught up in
any murder investigation down
here. And if we so much as run
into the local law again, who
knows where we'll end up.

37 EXT. MORGUE - DUSK

A red-orange sun dips behind the "morgue" sign.

38 INT. MORGUE - DUSK

The Coroner is staring out the window, hesitant to continue with the autopsies. He takes a deep breath, walks over to another body and whips off the sheet. He notices the blackened eyes here as well. Then he discovers a rash-like mark on the corpse's neck.

He walks over to a desk, opens up the top drawer and withdraws a magnifying glass. He examines the rash again, then walks back over to the desk and exchanges the magnifying glass for a Polaroid camera. A flash goes off.

He waves the undeveloped picture back and forth as he walks back to his office. He sets the camera down and drops the picture on his desk. He turns on a lighted, more powerful magnifying glass and sits down to examine the picture. After a moment, he maneuvers a small desk mirror into place. Through it we notice that the rash is actually words written backwards with letters that are near perfect and impossibly small. They spell out the words "keep your tongue from evil" over and over again.

Just then, glass *crashes* in the other room. He quickly turns and looks through the large window, and notices that one of the gurneys is empty. The Coroner stands up wide-eyed.

As he approaches the empty gurney, he spots the broken glass on the floor.

He walks over and opens the front door, peering outside. He then proceeds to a store room in the back. The store room door opens and the light comes on.

39 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DUSK

The phone rings. (loud)

The place is dusty. A dim sunbeam barely pierces the blinds. Deputy 1 has his feet kicked up on his desk. Deputy 2 is pouring a cup of coffee.

DEPUTY 1
*Hello, sheriff's office...
 He's not here, did you find
 something?... What do you mean
 a body is missing?*

Deputy 2 drops his cup.

DEPUTY 1 [CONT'D]
*Can you calm down and just
 tell me what happened?*

40 INT. MORGUE - DUSK

CORONER
*Please listen. Something is
 very wrong. These men I've
 examined, they have mutilated
 themselves. Words, prayers are
 carved into their skin. I've
 never seen anything like it.*

DEPUTY 1 (V.O.)
What about the missing body?

CORONER
 (removing his glasses)
*I heard something, a noise,
 and when I looked up, there was
 no...*

The Coroner stops abruptly. He slowly stands up, intently staring through the window.

DEPUTY 1 (V.O.)
And then?

The Coroner hesitantly puts on his glasses. His jaw drops, along with the phone as the body he's just been working on is sitting up and staring at him. Its eyes are blacked over.

Overwhelmed, he falls to the floor and scrambles against the wall. He mumbles to himself in disbelief. After gathering himself, he puffs on his inhaler then crawls across the floor. He slowly peers up through the window to find all of the priests standing there peering down at him.

DEPUTY 1 (V.O.)
(no subtitle)
Hello... hello!

41 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DUSK.

The Sheriff Enters. He notices the deputies' expressions and the puddle of coffee on the floor.

SHERIFF
What now?

42 INT. BAR - DUSK

The front door opens and a bright orange light pierces the room. A beam of light slashes across the face of one of the patrons as he watches them file in. The door shuts and the light vanishes.

They are standing in a tight group and start to scan the room. There are two patrons sitting at the bar; one is passed out, then two men standing by a pool table, leaning on their pool cues, then an old woman standing next to a bird cage. The bird had obviously followed suit with the others and lay dead at the bottom, feathers and blood strewn about. Everyone is just staring at them.

ERIC
What is up with this place?

Cheeks steps forward, he looks around nodding his head.

CHEEKS
Alright. That's how it's gonna
be, huh?

He walks over to the BARTENDER(40's). Cheeks then looks over at an old man who is still staring.

CHEEKS (CONT'D)
What the hell are you looking
at?

The old man quickly looks away. David and Greg start toward the bar.

DAVID
Hey man, come on.

ERIC
Cheeks.

BARTENDER
(no subtitle)
Is there a problem?

CHEEKS
What did he just say?

TRACY
He wants to know if you have a
problem.

CHEEKS
Oh, I got problems. Ask him if
he's got a problem.

TRACY
Cheeks...

CHEEKS
Ask him.

GREG
Cheeks, c'mon.

CHEEKS
No, everybody in this whole
damn town can go to hell.

TRACY
*Please excuse my friend. He's
not having the best day.*

BARTENDER
*Look around, does it look like
anyone is having their best day?*

She looks out across the room, two men at the pool table still staring with missing teeth, an old man who is passed out at the bar w/empty beer bottles in front of him. And the old woman, who is now lovingly trying to replace strewn feathers back onto a dead bird.

TRACY
We need to get very drunk.

The bartender sets down a bottle of Tequila on the bar, and answers in English.

BARTENDER

Now you are talking my language.

43 INT. MONASTERY - NIGHT

Father Elias closes his chamber door. He decides to get some fresh air and heads toward the balcony, adjacent from his room.

44 EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Father Elias walks onto the balcony and rests his fingertips on the balcony wall. He stares out into the night, then closes his eyes.

All is quiet when he hears a distant rustling off in the woods. He begins scanning the woods, and after a moment, we hear a loud *suffering moan*. It startles him and for the first time he looks scared. The door behind him flies open. He spins around to find Santos standing in the doorway.

SANTOS

Is anything wrong father?

Father Elias looks back out toward the woods, then regains his composure.

SANTOS (CONT'D)

Perhaps you should get some rest, at least for a while.

FATHER ELIAS

Thank you Santos. There won't be time for rest tonight, at least not for me. But you must be exhausted after all that's happened today. Why don't you turn in and try to get some sleep. I promise, tomorrow will be a new day.

SANTOS

Sleep? Father, I haven't slept in days.

FATHER ELIAS

What is it?

SANTOS

It's just that many of us have been having these unbearable nightmares, and well, now everyone is...

FATHER ELIAS

And you believe they were killed by something in their dreams?

SANTOS

No. I don't know.

FATHER ELIAS

Tell me, you've been having these dreams as well?

SANTOS

Nightmares, Father. They are... Yes, I have.

FATHER ELIAS

Yet you haven't felt compelled to take your own life like the others?

SANTOS

No.

FATHER ELIAS

No urge to throw yourself out of a window, or to blow your brains about the room with a pistol?

Santos says nothing.

FATHER ELIAS (CONT'D)

Well then, I'm not sure I know what point you're trying to make.

SANTOS

My point, Father, is that everyone should still be alive. All of this has happened because of our work.

FATHER ELIAS

No! (pounds his fist) It's happened in spite of our work. In spite of the millions who faithfully followed the

(MORE)

FATHER ELIAS (CONT'D)
 almighty word! Can't you see?
 It's happened in spite of God,
 Himself.

He gathers himself for a moment.

FATHER ELIAS (CONT'D)
 Go Santos. None of this will
 matter after tonight.

With that, Santos Exits, slamming the door.

Suddenly, a loud, *inhuman cry* from the woods. Father Elias whips around, staring intensely, then snatches a lantern from the wall.

45 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Father Elias exits the monastery and crosses an open field. Lantern in hand, he disappears into the woods.

After traveling through the dense brush, he begins to hear sounds all around him; whispers, growling etc... He abruptly stops, and hears one distant branch snapping.

He reacts.

46 INT. BAR - NIGHT

SMACK! Two Billiard Balls Collide.

The six ball travels into the rail and ricochets off. But bounces right back again, travels/bounces down the rail and dribbles into the corner pocket, the result of an extremely uneven table.

CHEEKS
 Nice shot.

At the bar, Greg, David, Sam and Tracy are drinking while having a conversation with the bartender. Eric is over by the jukebox.

BARTENDER
 So where are you from, in
 America?

DAVID
 California.

BARTENDER

Ah si, California. Just last month we had two Americans stay at the hotel across the street. They come in every night, and they were from California. They told good stories. Hey, do dogs really wear clothes there?

Greg ponders the question.

GREG

Some do, I guess.

SAM

This place doesn't strike me as a tourist hot spot.

BARTENDER

Tourists? No, they were scientists. They come here for the terremoto. Same as you, no?

GREG

Terremoto?

BARTENDER

Si. Uh...

TRACY

Earthquake?

BARTENDER

Si. The earthquakes.

DAVID

Now why the hell would anybody have to leave California to study earthquakes?

BARTENDER

It's strange because I have lived here for forty-five years and we never have an earthquake. But already this year, there has been more than twenty, like today.

The group reacts.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

And, your scientist friends say there isn't even a fault line anywhere near here.

DAVID
Great, we're probably sitting
onan active volcano.

At the pool table, Cheeks takes a shot but comes nowhere close. His opponent smiles a shit-eating grin, then makes his next shot, thanks to the table roll. He and the other local laugh.

CHEEKS
Gotta love that home field
advantage, eh?

Back to the group.

BARTENDER
And it's not only the
earthquakes. Other things,
strange things are happening.

DAVID
Yeah we kind of noticed your
kamikaze bird problem.

BARTENDER
That's just it, many of the
animals have been dying, but
none of them from disease or
sickness. It's like they...

SAM
What?

BARTENDER
Like they don't want to live.

Over at the jukebox, Eric slams a shot of Tequila.

ERIC
Hey guys, they have La Bamba.
It's the only thing I recognize.

Back to group.

GREG
Maybe there's some kind of
sulfur or methane deposit
nearby.

BARTENDER
At first, that's what we
thought. But the Americans were
sure it was something else.

DAVID

Like what?

BARTENDER

I don't know, I never saw them again.

GREG

So what do you think happened at that church last night?

The Bartender seems reluctant. Cheeks walks over.

CHEEKS

You know, you're pool table sucks, I'm just saying.

BARTENDER

I know.

GREG

Do you know what happened?

BARTENDER

I haven't been to the monastery in years. But if anyone knows anything, (nods) it would be him.

He points to an old man, PATRON 1(51) passed out at the bar.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

His brother has been a priest there for many years. They were very close.

DAVID

Looks like he really tied one on today. Was his brother one of the ones who...

BARTENDER

Yes. He knows his brother is dead, but he is like this every day. He has a black-lung from the mines, and ever since his brother abandoned him years ago, this is what he does.

SAM

Abandoned him?

BARTENDER

Not just him. The priests at that monastery abandoned all of us. For generations, people from all around would go there for guidance and to worship. Now no one is welcome.

He looks over to the passed-out patron.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

If you talk to him, he would tell you he lost his brother long ago.

GREG

I do want to talk to him.

CHEEKS

Whoa wait, what? Nobody needs to be talking to anybody.

BARTENDER

I don't think he will talk to you. He doesn't speak about his brother anymore. He barely even talks to me, and I am the one who gets him like that.

GREG

Does he speak English?

BARTENDER

In his condition, he'll be lucky to speak Spanish.

47 EXT. MORGUE - NIGHT

The Sheriff and Deputies pull up.

48 INT. CORONER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The Sheriff Enters first, his gun still holstered. Both Deputies Enter, guns drawn. They see that all of the gurneys and tables are empty.

DEPUTY 2

(no subtitle)

What?

They scan the room in disbelief.

SHERIFF
Check the back.

Deputy 1 reluctantly heads that way.

DEPUTY 1
 Where are they?

Deputy 1 opens the door to the store room in the back. He peers in.

The Sheriff walks over to the coroner's office. He notices the dangling phone receiver and replaces it. He then sees the picture on the desk and begins to examine it.

Deputy 2 searches the room. He notices a small pool of blood on the floor right next to him. He kneels down to examine. He sees that it has been trickling down a large instrument table. He uses his gun barrel to slowly pull open the top drawer. He notices a hand. (Gasp)

He leaps back and falls into one of the gurneys, then onto the floor.

The Sheriff and Deputy 1 rush into the room.

DEPUTY 2
 (no subtitle)
Jesus... Jesus.

The Sheriff sees the fingers sticking out of the drawer. He walks over and pulls it open a little more. (Goopy special effects w/glasses)

DEPUTY 2 (CONT'D)
God, he's in there.

For the first time, the Sheriff looks shaken. A bloodied plastic inhaler drops out and bounces onto the cement floor.

49 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Father Elias is making his way through the woods. He stops when he notices a faint red glow coming from a clearing up ahead. He proceeds toward it.

In the center of the clearing there is a large hollowed-out tree stump, it seems to be the source of the red glow. He reluctantly approaches it and peers down inside. He sees what looks like flames/magma. It looks like hell itself.

As the flames become more detailed, dark shapes form and begin to dance back and forth.

After a moment, and all at once, the shapes move toward the center and combine to form one round dark mass. The form seems to dilate, as a set of eyelids blinks. *Deep Growl.* (The eyeball encompass the whole shot to appear that the eye is pressed against the stump, looking back at him).

Father Elias bounds backward and falls. He frantically looks around, only to find a set of glowing red eyes staring at him through the trees. He whirls around and sees another, then another. He hears hissing, branches snapping as they close in.

50 INT. FATHER ELIAS' ROOM - NIGHT

The door to Father Elias's room creaks open. Santos peers in then Enters. He walks over to the table and pulls out a pocket knife. He jimmys the lock on one of the drawers and withdraws "the Book". He opens it and begins to read, scanning the pages. He glances back at the door, then closes the book.

51 INT. BAR - NIGHT

A hand (Bartender's) reaches over to the passed out Patron to wake him. Nothing. He tries again. The man slowly comes to. He looks at the bartender, who is blurry.

PATRON 1

What is it?

The Patron looks over, everyone in the group is staring at him. He stares back until they come into focus.

PATRON 1 (CONT'D)

I need to go home and bathe again?

BARTENDER

No. (squints and nods) Yes, but these people would like to talk to you.

PATRON 1

About what?

TRACY

Your brother.

Patron 1 reacts.

PATRON 1

My brother is dead.

TRACY

We know. We're very sorry.

PATRON 1

*Sorry for what? You didn't
kill him.*

TRACY

*Do you know who did kill
him?*

Each of the locals dons an uneasy look.

PATRON 1

*I don't know. What do you think
happened to him?*

He begins to laugh hysterically.

ERIC

*Come on, this guy's not in his
right mind.*

Tracy turns away.

PATRON 1

*Excuse me! I thought you wanted
to hear about my brother.*

She turns back.

PATRON 1 (CONT'D)

*I'll tell you a story, but it
might not be the one you want
to hear.*

TRACY

I'm sure you're probably right.

He laughs, which turns into a violent cough. The episode ends when he hacks into a white handkerchief and reveals a black/bloody goo.

PATRON 1

(no subtitle)

*Four years ago, I was at work
in the mine.*

TRACY

*Four years ago, he was at work
in the mine.*

PATRON 1

(no subtitle)

It was my birthday and I was going to leave early. But there was too much work, so I had to stay.

TRACY

He says he planned to leave early, it was his birthday.

FADE TO FLASH
BACK

52 EXT. COAL MINE - DAY

We watch a mine cart full of coal as it travels up a set of tracks, through a dark shaft and finally out into the bright sunlight. Workers are walking about. The cart comes to a stop near the back of a transport truck. Two sets of hands reach in and start to unload large chunks of coal from the cart. Patron 1 and WORKER 1(30's) heave them into the truck.

WORKER 1

I thought you were going to visit your brother today?

PATRON 1

As soon as this truck is filled, I can go.

Worker 1 leans up and looks into the back of the truck. It's almost completely empty, with hours' worth of work to go.

Worker 1 lets out a laugh.

WORKER 1

Ha, ha. This place... even when you're not down in the mine, they can still give you the shaft. Ha, ha. Get it?

Patron 1 smiles and nods.

WORKER 1 (CONT'D)

They gave you the shaft.

PATRON 1

I work in a mine, I get the joke.

A bell rings in the distance, someone is shouting.

WORKER 1

Time for lunch.

He walks over to a spigot and washes his hands. Patron 1 slowly shuffles over to a stack of crates and sits down to relieve the pain in his back.

PATRON 1

My back is too old for this.

WORKER 1

*Stay here, I'll bring something
back for you. Maybe I can find
a piece of birthday cake.*

Patron 1 manages a wave and a nod. Then, after nursing his back for a moment, he notices an oddly shaped piece of coal in the cart in front of him. It appears to be squared off at the edges. He picks up a hammer and chisel from the crate beside him and walks over to the cart. With two or three taps, the front of the rock shears off. He examines it for a second then lightly digs into it with the point of the chisel. Underneath is a thick blood-red wax.

FLASH TO PRESENT

53 INT. BAR - NIGHT

DAVID

What was it?

PATRON 1

(no subtitle)

A book.

TRACY

He says it was a book.

DAVID

A book? Aw man, I thought it was going to be something crazy; like a dragon egg or an alien fetus or something.

ERIC

(laughs)

Alien fetus.

Patron 1 reacts.

PATRON 1
They're laughing.

TRACY
I guess they was expecting something a little more... interesting.

PATRON 1
(no subtitle)
More interesting? Ask them if they're ready to be judged by God.

Tracy is taken aback.

DAVID
What?

TRACY
He wants to know if you're ready to be judged by God.

David seems to sober up slightly.

DAVID
What? Right now?

PATRON 1
When I finally got to see my brother, it was very late.

FLASH BACK

54 INT. BROTHER'S CHAMBER ROOM - NIGHT

Patron 1 and his BROTHER (40's) look on patiently while the book, clamped inside a make-shift wire basket sits above the flames in a fireplace. Red wax slowly drips into the fire. After the coal and wax are burned away, they withdraw it from the fire.

BROTHER
Where did you find it?

PATRON 1
Rio Lempa.

BROTHER

Rio Lempa?

PATRON 1

Below Forty-five hundred feet.

BROTHER

(scoffs)

Forty-five hundred feet.

He searches his brother's face for a smile, but doesn't find one. They open the book.

BROTHER (CONT'D)

What language is this?

They both gaze curiously at the book. Montage of his brother working to decipher the text throughout Tracy's narration.

TRACY (V. O.)

"Once I left, weeks went by, and I hadn't heard from my brother. When I went back to see him, he told me they had already begun to translate the words from the book, but that it would take much more time. It had been written in several languages and would have to be deciphered by many men. That was the last time I saw the man who I knew as my brother. After that, the doors of the monastery were closed to everyone. In four years, he has come to see me only once. And when he did, I promise you, he was not my brother. I could tell by his eyes, they were... different. They were like the eyes of an old dog, in the last moments before being put down by its master. His eyes knew of something terrible".

FLASH TO PRESENT

TRACY
And when was that?

PATRON 1
Last night.

The locals react.

FLASH BACK

56 INT. PATRON 1'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Patron 1 is sleeping in his bed, and after a moment, his eyes open. He is startled to see his brother standing at the foot of the bed. His brother does not look well.

PATRON 1
What is it?

BROTHER
I'm sorry my brother. I was wrong, it's all been a lie.

PATRON 1
What do you mean?

BROTHER
Salvation is just a tale.

Patron 1 reacts.

BROTHER (CONT'D)
If you take your own life, I will understand.

PATRON 1
Why would I do that?

Tears stream down his brother's face.

BROTHER
Because he'll be coming for us. We are his children now.

FLASH TO PRESENT

57 INT. BAR - NIGHT

CHEEKS

Whoa, whoa, wait a minute.
What the hell is that supposed
to mean?

There is utter silence in the room.

CHEEKS (CONT'D)

Ask him what the hell
that's supposed to mean!

We hear the distant barking of dogs, which increasingly becomes louder. Suddenly a dog begins clawing at the door from outside, then another. Soon the bar is surrounded by wild dogs.

BARTENDER

What the hell?

The howling intensifies, overwhelming the silence inside the bar. But the barking seems to not be of aggression. They are yelping and whining, seemingly terrified of something, and are only trying to get in. Their paws bloody as they frantically try to claw their way through the outside wall.

Suddenly, a dog lunges into one of the windows, cracking the glass. Then another tries coming through an adjacent window.

SAM

Shit!

Everyone stands up.

The howling becomes deafening. Tracy covers her ears.

TRACY

What do they want?!

But then everything goes quiet, as the pack of dogs flees down the street, into the darkness.

58 EXT. MONASTERY - NIGHT

A loud *Crack of Thunder* and lightning, as rain begins to pour.

Father Elias emerges from the woods and runs through a clearing toward the monastery.

59 INT. MONASTERY - NIGHT

Father Elias bursts in. He is soaked, out of breath and looks distraught. He immediately begins to break down and cry. Then, just as quickly, he forces it back. He rushes toward his room.

60 INT. FATHER ELIAS' ROOM - NIGHT

Father Elias Enters and walks over to his table. He is still breathing heavily. He notices the partially opened drawer and yanks it open, then scans the table, then the floor.

FATHER ELIAS
Santos! You can't stop this!

61 EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The wind picks up as the group walks fast-paced back toward the hotel. Greg is in the lead.

CHEEKS
Hold up man, now what are we doing?

GREG
They all killed themselves.

CHEEKS
And that affects us how?

GREG
I'm gonna find out why.

CHEEKS
Is he crazy?

SAM
Greg, I don't think you should go back out there.

DAVID
Hey, you're really not serious are you?

Greg stops and so does the group.

GREG
Look, some serious shit is going on here. I don't know why the hell you guys bothered
(MORE)

GREG (CONT'D)

to come down here if you didn't care about getting the story. Now I'm going out there to find out what made a dozen priests commit suicide. And I'll go by myself if I have to.

CHEEKS

Oh you're going by yourself.

ERIC

I'll go.

TRACY

Eric, you're drunk.

ERIC

Pff. Buzzed, maybe. Besides, he's right, if something like this doesn't get our blood flowing, then what the hell are we doing here?

GREG

Alright, go grab the camera.

62 EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Patron 1 Exits the bar, and slowly staggers off down the street.

63 EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

SAM

Greg! Greg why don't you go tomorrow? You can go in the morning.

We watch Eric as he scrambles up the stairs. He reaches the door at full speed, but is stopped in his tracks, as the door is covered in crawling maggots. He looks down to the concentration of maggots infesting a pile of dead birds at the base of the door.

Greg is walking at a brisk pace with the others trying to keep up.

GREG

(to Sam)

I won't be long. (to Tracy)
Hey, do me a favor, go talk
(MORE)

GREG (CONT'D)

to the hotel owner and see if you can get the names of those two guys that stayed here last month. We can look them up when we get back, it might help us figure this whole thing out.

TRACY

How am I going to do that?

He nods toward her breasts.

GREG

Use your God-given talents.

She stops walking and looks down at her breasts. *Thunder booms* in the distance.

64 INT. PATRON 1'S HOME - NIGHT

The door opens. Patron 1 Enters and is greeted by his loving dog. He dumps dry dog food into a bowl on the floor until it overflows. He then walks into the bedroom and shuts the door.

After a few moments... BANG! The light from a muzzle flash is seen under the door. His dog lets out a frightened whimper.

65 EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Greg gets into the jeep, Eric comes sprinting down the stairs with the camera.

ERIC

Watch out for the maggots.

TRACY

Huh?

Just before Eric gets in, Sam jumps into the front seat.

GREG

What are you doing?

SAM

I'm going with you.

GREG

You really shouldn't.

SAM

I really am, drive.

Greg affords a half-smile, then after Eric jumps in they peel out of the parking lot. David, Cheeks and Tracy watch as the tail lights disappear into the darkness. Tracy looks down and cups her breasts.

TRACY

Do these look like they're getting smaller?

CHEEKS / DAVID

No!

66 INT. CHAMBER ROOM - NIGHT

There is complete darkness. Then a lantern is lit. Santos is crouched on the floor with "the book". He breaths heavily as he reads aloud to himself.

SANTOS

On this, the final day of man's trial, all shall be judged forever. And as man falls in disgrace of his own kingdom, so shall he be handed over from the kingdom of God.

He reacts.

67 INT. HOTEL/FRONT DESK - NIGHT

CU of Tracy's breasts/cleavage as she leans them on the front desk.

Ding! She rings the bell on the counter.

A man, HOTEL OWNER (35) emerges from a dimly-lit room in the back, smoking a cigarette. He looks her up and down, then smiles.

HOTEL OWNER

Can I help you?

TRACY

I hope so. About a month ago some friends of mine stayed here at this hotel, they were Americans.

He reacts knowingly.

HOTEL OWNER

Sure, I remember them.

TRACY

Well, they were the ones who told us about this place, I was supposed to send them a letter when I got here. But, somehow, if you can believe it, I lost their address. You wouldn't happen to have it here on file would you? Or maybe a phone number?

HOTEL OWNER

Your friends are back in America?

TRACY

Yeah, of course.

HOTEL OWNER

I see. They sure did leave in a hurry. Maybe they should call the authorities here and let them know they are okay.

TRACY

Why's that?

HOTEL OWNER

They were reported missing.

TRACY

Missing?

HOTEL OWNER

Yes. After three days, when they didn't pay, I went to their room and they were gone. They never returned.

TRACY

Really? Maybe they just had enough of this place, you know with all the earthquakes and all.

HOTEL OWNER

And they would leave without their things? They're clothes?

Tracy is at a loss and doesn't know what to say.

HOTEL OWNER (CONT'D)

Wait.

He retreats to the back room and re-Enters with a large box(a jacket, a few folders, misc. paperwork... etc).

HOTEL OWNER (CONT'D)

Here, they left this. Maybe you can find an address in there.

TRACY

Can I take this back to my room?

HOTEL OWNER

You can take it. The sheriff was supposed to pick it up weeks ago, but he never did.

TRACY

Hey, you know what? Why don't I just take this back to them myself.

HOTEL OWNER

And what about the money they owe me?

TRACY

Just charge it to our bill. Would that be okay?

The owner thinks it over for a moment, then reaches below the desk and pulls up a lap-top computer. He places it in the box.

HOTEL OWNER

I'll charge it to your bill, but don't you go missing too. I wouldn't want to think all Americans untrustworthy.

TRACY

Don't worry. I promise, I won't leave without saying good bye.

HOTEL OWNER

I hope not.

She Exits. The shot Hangs on the Hotel Owner as he watches her leave. He then picks up the phone and begins to dial.

68 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Greg, Sam and Eric are in the jeep. The road is very rough and almost completely dark. Sam looks queasy.

SAM

I think I'm gonna be sick.

Eric reaches back behind his seat and grabs an empty paper bag. He gets it to Sam just in time. She pukes, then attempts to hand it back to him.

SAM (CONT'D)

Thanks.

ERIC

No, you keep it.

SAM

Okay. (hiccup) What did I drink tonight?

ERIC

The local Tequila.

SAM

Oh, (hiccup) I don't think I like Teq(hiccup)ila.

GREG

Hold on, we're almost there, I think. It's right around here where the road drops off.

ERIC

Oh, I forgot about that.

SAM

(Hiccup).

69 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The Sheriff is on the phone.

SHERIFF

I see. No, that's alright, I'll take care of it. Thank you.

He hangs up.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

(to Deputy 1)

I want you two to meet me in
(MORE)

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
 front the hotel in fifteen
 minutes. It looks like we may
 have new information on our two
 missing Americans from last
 month.

70 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

David and Cheeks are checking each other for maggots.

DAVID
 Are they off? Are they off
 me?

CHEEKS
 Hold still, I don't see any
 more.

DAVID
 Fuuuuck!

Tracy Enters with the box of belongings and drops it onto the
 bed.

DAVID (CONT'D)
 What's that?

TRACY
 Scientist stuff.

Cheeks starts to root through the box and discovers the
 laptop.

CHEEKS
 What do you mean, they just left
 all this stuff?

DAVID
 Here, let me see that.

CHEEKS
 Back off man, I had it first.
 Finders keepers, you know the
 drill.

DAVID
 C'mon, we'll flip for it.

CHEEKS
 You do a flip, I already got
 it.

TRACY

Oh that's great, I flash my
tits to that creep and you
guys get the laptop.

DAVID

Hey, go do it again and see
what else he gives us.

She walks over and deliberately snatches the laptop out of
Cheek's hand.

TRACY

How you men have managed to
rule the world this long, I'll
never know. Now can we please
at least pretend that one day
we'd like to be professionals?

DAVID

Whatever.

TRACY

Besides, I don't think they
left this stuff here on purpose.
The guy at the desk said they
went missing.

DAVID

Missing as in...

TRACY

As in they went out one day and
never came back.

Cheeks pulls a folder from the box.

CHEEKS

Hey, look at this.

He opens it and pulls out a penciled sketch, decently
detailed of the monastery.

CHEEKS (CONT'D)

Look familiar? Looks like they
spent a little bit of time out
there.

TRACY

What's it say?

CHEEKS

Don't have a clue.

David reaches for the sketch.

DAVID
Here let me see.

CHEEKS
Thank you, I can read. I'm
saying is it's just a bunch
of numbers and dates.

DAVID
These are Richter Scale
measurements. Look how many
there are.

TRACY
Guys?

She points out the word "Epicenter" written below the
monastery.

CHEEKS
Shit.

TRACY
(to David)
You remember how to get back
out there?

CHEEKS
Shit!

71 INT. SANTOS' ROOM - NIGHT

Father Elias is rifling through Santos' desk, then ransacks
the room, searching for the book.

After a failed attempt, he Exits.

72 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The jeep travels through rough/rocky terrain. Sam hiccups as
she looks out the passenger window toward the woods. It's
dark, but by the moonlight she can make out the shapes of the
trees as they race by.

ERIC
So then I kicked the door
and they came this close to
landing on me.

Suddenly, Sam sees another shape. (a Demon) It is running through the woods, seemingly unaffected by the foliage.

ERIC (CONT'D)
It was so... disgusting, I almost threw up in my mouth.

Sam watches it as it keeps up with the jeep. Just then, it looks over at her. Greg glances over.

GREG
What's wrong? What is it?

She turns to Greg.

ERIC
Hey, your hiccups are gone.

73 EXT. MONASTERY - NIGHT

Through the storm, headlights approach. The jeep comes squeaking to a stop. The monastery is an ominous sight through a rain-spattered wind shield.

ERIC
I think my buzz is wearing off.

SAM
Why don't we come back tomorrow?

GREG
Stay here. I'm gonna see if anybody answers.

Sam reacts.

GREG (CONT'D)
If someone's here we'll all go in together.

He leaves the jeep and approaches the door. He reaches for the bell, but opts to go for the door knob instead. He turns the knob and pushes the door open slightly. Sam uses her hand to wipe the fog from the windshield.

Suddenly, a hand darts out and yanks Greg inside. Sam scrambles for the door handle.

SAM
Oh my God. Oh, my God.

ERIC
Wait!

She pushes Eric away and scrambles for the latch, they both jump out.

HANG on the keys dangling from the ignition.

74 INT. MONASTERY - NIGHT

The door opens. Sam and Eric push their way in.

ERIC
Greg. What the hell man? Where
are you?

PAN through the next wall.

Santos has Greg pinned up against the wall, a knife to his throat, a hand over his mouth. He has a wild look in his eyes.

CUT BACK.

SAM
What's going on? He was just
here.

ERIC
My buzz is totally gone.

SAM
Shit. Greg?!

75 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

CU of the front door. *Two loud pounds* and the door flies open.

Enter both Deputies, followed by the sheriff. Cheeks snaps the lap-top closed and tosses it on the bed.

CHEEKS
Come on in.

The Sheriff walks over to the bed and casually begins shuffling through the contents in the box. He picks up a folder and scans its contents.

CHEEKS (CONT'D)
That stuff ain't mine.

SHERIFF
I already know that. Where are
your friends tonight?

CHEEKS
They uh, they went out.

SHERIFF
Out where?

CHEEKS
I uh...

SHERIFF
You see, some things have happened and I think that maybe your friends are involved. What do you think about that?

CHEEKS
I swear I don't know where they went.

SHERIFF
I don't believe you. I'll tell you what, I'll take a guess, and if you tell me the truth, I won't put you in a hopeless, cockroach-infested jail for the rest of your life.

The Sheriff flips over the drawing of the monastery.

CHEEKS
(blabs)
Yeah. See, I told them not to go. I told them they were crazy for even messing around down there, but they wouldn't listen. So I was like, go ahead get yourselves into more trouble, just as long as you leave me out of it...

SHERIFF
Now I believe you. Put on your shoes.

CHEEKS
Why? I'm not going anywhere.

76 INT. MONASTERY - NIGHT

Eric and Sam are wandering down a hall way. Eric slides his arm around her as they walk. She pulls away.

SAM
What the hell are you doing?

ERIC
I thought you might be scared.

SAM
Fuckin' A I'm scared, and I
don't want to have to worry
about you too.

ERIC
Damn, easy okay? I just want
to protect you.

SAM
Look, let's just find Greg so
we can get the hell out of this
place and go back home.

She leans into him crying. He embraces her.

ERIC
Okay. As soon as we find him,
we're gone. He's got to be
around here somewhere.

77 INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

GREG
Look, I don't know what's
going on...

SANTOS
Shhh! Who told you to come
here?

GREG
No one.

SANTOS
Who are you?

GREG
We came to find out what
happened last night. I'm a
journalist, I thought there
might be a story.

SANTOS
A story? I'm afraid you're
too late. All that's left is
the end of the story.

GREG

I don't ...

SANTOS

Nothing matters after tonight.
We are *his* children now. And if
anyone knew... the things he will
do to us.

GREG

And by he, you mean?

SANTOS

Who do you think?!

GREG

You're talking about Satan.

Santos lunges to cover Greg's mouth.

SANTOS

Shhh! He is too close. His
minions are already here. I've
seen them. They're making sure
his way is clear.

GREG

Okay, I have to tell you, I'm
a little lost here.

SANTOS

More than you know.

Santos walks over and picks up "the book".

SANTOS (CONT'D)

The priests here have discovered
something that should have never
been found. They were asked to
translate pages from this book,
and I was brought in to help.
I was teaching ancient language
in Portugal when they sent for
me.

Santos' eyes seem to recall something sorrowful; something
regretful.

SANTOS (CONT'D)

Each of us was given one page
to decipher. If we were
successful, then we would get
another.

(MORE)

SANTOS (CONT'D)

But they were never consecutive,
there was no way to make sense
of it. And we were forbidden to
speak of anything we'd read or
written. Not to anyone,
especially not to each other.

GREG

What did they find?

Santos dons an incredible look of despair.

SANTOS

The holy bible.... the original
version.

Greg reacts.

SANTOS (CONT'D)

Spoken by God himself. When
Adam and Eve were cast out in
sin, the Lord, *He* wept. *He* was
so enraged by their betrayal,
He declared at that moment that
all men would be judged as one.
Every man... for all of sin.
One single judgment.

Greg is speechless.

SANTOS (CONT'D)

Personal salvation, it turns
out, was just an edit.

He laughs hopelessly.

GREG

How can that be true?

SANTOS

It was done out of sheer mercy
to be sure. You would do it if
you could, spare mankind from
an existence of utter despair?
For man, evil has always
existed. Look at what we did
with a world full of hope. And
then to God's only son when he
came to warn us.

He begins to weep.

SANTOS (CONT'D)

We crucified him.

GREG

That's why they all killed themselves. They found out there was no hope?

SANTOS

And so they've been fulfilling a prophecy; the ending to your story.

He opens the book and reads.

SANTOS (CONT'D)

And twelve of his children who are closest to *Him*, in final insult, shall commit the last sins of the earth, ending the trial of man. So shall he be judged.

GREG

And so judgment day...

SANTOS

Is today. And we have failed.

78 INT. MONASTERY HALLS - NIGHT

Eric and Sam are nervously walking along.

SAM

(whispers)
Greg!

ERIC

Maybe we should split up.

SAM

You leave and I'll kill you.

ERIC

Make up your mind, you want me, you don't want me...

SAM

Eric, we dated for a month, get over it.

He scoffs.

ERIC

Please, I *am* over it. I've *been* over it.

SAM
You sound over it.

Sam then reacts to a horrible odor, sniffing the air.

SAM (CONT'D)
Ugh. What's that smell?

Eric, sniffing the air, walks over to a closed door. He opens it and slowly walks into the room.

79 INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

Eric reacts harshly to the smell.

ERIC
What the fuck is that?

Sam doubles over and starts to gag. Eric hesitantly walks over to a closet door and pulls it open. When he does, two decaying bodies fall out and onto him.

He screams.

SAM
Oh God.

She throws up. Eric composes himself, then inspects the gruesome scene.

ERIC
I guess we don't have to worry
about looking these guys up
when we get home.

SAM
You think it's them?

ERIC
I think so. Okay, we need to
just get the fuck out of here.

SAM
I'm not leaving without Greg.

ERIC
I didn't say that. I meant
let's find Greg so we can get
the fuck out of here.

Suddenly, a look of terror comes over Sam, and a demon emerges right behind Eric.

ERIC (CONT'D)

What?

The demon reaches down and palms the top of Eric's head, sinking its claws deep into his face.

Sam reacts.

Then, at a quick pace, it drags him screaming down a hallway. Sam reluctantly pursues them through a series of corridors. After a lengthy chase, she turns a corner to find *IT* sitting in a corner with Eric. She watches as it playfully pulls Eric's head off, extruding his spine and examining it.

She back-peddles then runs in the other direction. She spots an open door and ducks inside. Pulling the door shut, she doesn't realize that she's in a stairwell. She tumbles down a long staircase before slamming onto a dirt floor at the bottom.

She coughs.

80 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT [RAIN]

The pick-up is barreling down the road.

TRACY

Are you sure you remember how to get there?

DAVID

Of course I'm not sure.

TRACY

I think we're lost.

DAVID

Of course we're lost, we're in the middle of Central fucking America.

81 INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

GREG

Okay, so let's say this is all true. What can we do now?

SANTOS

Do?

GREG

You said this is all being coordinated by one man, he needs to do some kind of ritual to make this happen. What if we can still do something?

Santos ponders the question.

SANTOS

He needs the book. The words to open the gate are in here.

GREG

So that's it. We take the book with us. I have a jeep outside.

Suddenly, Father Elias comes rushing in.

Greg's POV as a sledge-hammer bashes him square in the face.

He then walks over to Santos and pulls the book from his grip.

FATHER ELIAS

Did you really think you think you could erase ten thousand years? Such a fool.

82 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT [RAIN]

DAVID

We're almost there.

TRACY

Are you sure? I don't see anything.

DAVID

Yeah, can't you smell the death in the air?

Tracy smacks him in the arm. After a moment, she sniffs the air and winces.

TRACY

I do smell something. It smells like...

She screams as they plow into a demon standing in the middle of the road. The pick-up swerves, and after a harrowing ride, it finally comes to rest, again teetering over the edge of the road.

TRACY (CONT'D)

Holy shit.

DAVID

Don't worry, I've done this before.

Just then, a claw springs up over the front end and lodges into the hood, a Demon pulls itself up. It stares at them through the windshield, they stare back. Another crashes onto the roof of the truck, caving it in, the steel crinkles as it moves above.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Listen. I'm going to open my door.

TRACY

The hell you are.

DAVID

I'm going to open the door...

TRACY

Don't you leave me in here.

DAVID

They'll come after me.

TRACY

What the fuck are they?

DAVID

I don't know, I guess the old man at the bar wasn't so crazy.

David grips the door handle as he and the Demon stare each other down.

TRACY

Maybe they'll go away if we just don't move.

DAVID

I don't think so.

David pops the handle. The Demon on the hood suddenly lunges through the windshield and begins ripping him apart. The other comes in through the driver's window and joins in the slaughter.

Tracy leaps out and backs away. She watches as the truck slides over the cliff, and after a few blood curdling screams it drops out of sight.

Left alone in dead silence, Tracy looks around then scampers down the road, to the monastery far off in the distance.

83 INT. MONASTERY HALLS - NIGHT

Father Elias is dragging a large burlap sack through a corridor. He opens the door to the cathedral. Sam is crouched low against a wall. She watches him enter and notices a trail of blood coming from the sack.

He sets the burlap sack by a large marble podium. He then withdraws a thick piece of white chalk from his pocket and begins to draw an enormous pentagram on the cathedral floor. Sam approaches the doorway and watches.

After a moment, she hears something behind her. When she turns, she sees a pair of glowing red eyes drop from the darkness above. She picks up a large rock and slowly backs up as it starts to advance on her. She backs all the way into the cathedral, and trips over a stone. When she gets back up, she notices the demon is gone.

FATHER ELIAS

Don't be afraid of them. They
may be the best thing that
happens to you.

With that, she smashes him across the face with the rock and flees back down the hall. He picks up the sledge hammer and chases after her.

After a frantic chase through the dark corridors, she finds a stairway and heads up. Sam makes it to the top of the stairs and falls onto the landing, Father Elias is right behind her. She manages to stand up and heads for the front door.

CUT to the keys dangling from the Jeep's ignition - then back.

Sam reaches for the door then looks back over her shoulder, Father Elias is closing. She flings the door open and rushes out, but stops abruptly when she is met by the twelve Dead Priests; soaked by the rain and looking very... dead.

CLAP of THUNDER - as she cowers to the ground. Father Elias approaches from behind and greets them with a smile.

FATHER ELIAS (CONT'D)
(no subtitle)
Welcome home.

84 INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

Father Elias is now dragging Sam along a dusty floor, tracing the wet trail of blood. She is no longer putting up a fight. He then leans her up against a wooden cross and begins to chain her arms and feet. We see that Greg is chained to a cross beside her, limp, bleeding and barely conscious.

SAM
Oh God, Greg.

GREG
Everything's gonna be all right.

Father Elias approaches Greg.

FATHER ELIAS
Is that how you see this playing out? Well, why should you be any different? The truth's been kept from you as well. And in case you haven't noticed, everything is not all right.

GREG
I know what you're trying to do.

Father Elias seems insulted.

FATHER ELIAS
What do you know about anything?! You know what it's like to find out everything you've lived your whole life for was nothing but a lie? That you're sole purpose was never to guide, but to distract everyone from the truth. (shouts) And that there was never any hope?! Tell me... do you know betrayal? Well you will, Hell is on its way.

Father Elias turns away.

GREG
But you can stop it, right now.

FATHER ELIAS

No one can stop it. I thought
you knew.

85 EXT. MONASTERY - NIGHT [RAIN]

Tracy approaches the monastery and sees the jeep. She walks
up to the main door and enters.

86 INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

SAM

Please, you can just let us go.
We're not supposed to be here.

GREG

This isn't right. This can't be
right. You think *He's* just
going to let you get away with
this.

FATHER ELIAS

Is who going to let me?

GREG

The one you've been serving
your whole life, asshole. You
remember God Almighty don't
you?

He walks back over to Greg.

FATHER ELIAS

I'm sorry, I thought I'd made
that part clear. From now on,
He has got nothing to do with
it. *He* has forsaken us.

SAM

But you don't need us. Just
please can you let us go?

FATHER ELIAS

Sorry, but you will bear witness
to destiny. Besides, where would
you run?

GREG

You know, I really pity you. I
mean, talk about irony.

FATHER ELIAS

Spare me the...

GREG

Come on, (coughs) you base your whole life on the principal of faith, and then turn your back on it in the end when it counts the most. Talk about dropping the ball.

Father Elias reacts.

GREG (CONT'D)

Some of us still have faith, so excuse me if I don't feel like joining your little pity party.

Father Elias stares intently at Greg for a moment, then...

Thht - Greg gasps as he is stabbed through the heart.

FATHER ELIAS

Then don't. As we are all learning, there is a difference between faith and fate.

Sam screams as the bloody dagger is pulled from Greg's chest. He steps back and wipes it clean with a handkerchief, putting them both in his pocket. He steps over to Sam, who is sobbing uncontrollably. He then turns and walks away, toward the center of the cathedral.

CU of black chalk-like substance. Father Elias' hand reaches in and sifts it through his fingers. Sam looks on. He then begins to pour the chalk onto the floor, outlining the pentagram with it.

87

INT. MONASTERY - NIGHT

TRACY

(whispers)

Sam? Samantha? Shit. Greg? David's dead, you should of seen... we need to leave this place. (breaks down) Where are you guys?

She wanders for a bit then comes upon a partially opened door. She puts her ear to it and quietly listens. She can hear whispers coming from the darkness.

As she opens the door, the whispers get louder. After a moment she hears a faint voice laughing; it calls out to her.

TRACY (CONT'D)

Sam? Is that you?

She proceeds down the steps.

88 INT. CHAMBER-ROOM - NIGHT

Sam watches as the ELIAS works on the pentagram.

89 EXT. MONASTERY - NIGHT [RAIN]

The Sheriff's Bronco pulls up behind the Jeep. The Sheriff, Cheeks and the Deputies get out. They take notice the moon, it is the strangest color.

CHEEKS

Man, can't I just stay in the truck? You can cuff me to the steering wheel or... hit me over the head with something and knock my ass out...

Sheriff shoves him.

SHERIFF

Move.

90 INT. MONASTERY HALLS - NIGHT

Tracy is making her way through the dark corridor. She is breathing heavily as she emerges from the shadows.

TRACY

Sam? Greg? Eric? Shit... Okay now, God? I really hope you're listening. I'm not sure what the hell I did to end up in this mess, but it must have been pretty bad, 'cause this is some serious shit. I know we haven't been talking a lot, I blame myself. But that's all going to change now. My ass will be in church every Sunday, if you let me. It's what ever you want from here on out. Just please get me out of here.

91 INT. MONASTERY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

The exterior door bursts open - Lightning/crashing Thunder.

The Sheriff enters first, followed by Cheeks and two very hesitant Deputies. The Sheriff scans the room.

SHERIFF

Start searching. Find anyone.

92 INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

Father Elias continues with the pentagram as Sam looks on.

93 INT. MONASTERY - NIGHT

The Sheriff and Cheeks are searching the first floor.

CHEEKS

Greg?! Hey man, where the hell
you guys at? Yo Eric! I hope
you guys ain't playing around,
try to jump out from behind
something and scare me. You
already know how weak my
bladder is. Besides, I have some
policemen
with me and you know they're
just itching to shoot somebody.

SHERIFF

That's enough.

Just then, they both see a large silhouette of... something,
race across the ceiling and out of view up ahead. They both
react, then look at each other. The Sheriff finally draws his
gun.

94 INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

Father Elias finishes the pentagram and walks over to the
podium. He drops the bag of chalk to the ground, reaches into
his pocket and pulls out the bloody handkerchief. He raises
it above his head and chants a short prayer, then drops it
into a large bowl of liquid sitting atop the podium. He
raises his arms, looks up and shouts.

FATHER ELIAS

Now I have forsaken you!

The twelve Dead Priests then start to file into the cathedral.

95 INT. MONASTERY - NIGHT

The Sheriff and Cheeks are moving down a hallway, there is a tense moment when they are startled by Deputy 2 coming from another direction.

DEPUTY 2
This floor is empty.

The Sheriff gets on his radio and signals Deputy 1. He then notices an open door across the hall, with stairs descending into the darkness. He reacts as he hears a faint, haunting whispers. PUSH IN.

He is startled by a *radio chirp*.

DEPUTY 1 (V.O.)
Go ahead.

SHERIFF
Have you found anyone?

DEPUTY 1 (V.O.)
No one yet.

SHERIFF
I need you back here with me now.

96 INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

Father Elias is now standing in the middle of the pentagram, all of the Priests then step forward to take their place around it.

97 INT. MONASTERY HALLS - NIGHT

The Sheriff, Cheeks and Deputies are making their way through the halls, flashlights in hand. Deputy 2 reaches into his collar and pulls out his crucifix necklace. He squeezes it tightly and begins to pray. Cheeks gives an uneasy look.

98 INT. CATHEDRAL-NIGHT

FATHER ELIAS
Tonight we all realize our true
destiny and prepare for the
(MORE)

FATHER ELIAS (CONT'D)
second beginning. Let the whole
world behold the truth!

With that, the ground begins to shake. Rubble starts to fall from the ceiling and Father Elias falls to the ground. The quake intensifies.

We hear a loud suffering moan.

Suddenly, a huge support beam swings in and completely pulverize one of the dead priests.

Father Elias reacts.

FATHER ELIAS (CONT'D)
No!

99 INT. CATACOMB HALLS - NIGHT

The quake subsides, and there is nothing but dust and darkness. Someone is coughing, and after a few moments light from a flashlight appears. It shines first on the Deputies, who are catching their breath, then settles on a large pile of rubble. Visible at the bottom is one of Cheeks' mangled tennis shoes. The Sheriff's reaction is minimal.

SHERIFF
Let's keep moving.

Neither of the deputies move.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
Do you want to be down here
for another one of those?

The deputies gather themselves and press on.

100 INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

Father Elias walks over to the Priest pinned under the beam.

FATHER ELIAS
No. There must be twelve.

We hear a Deep *inhuman cry*.

FATHER ELIAS (CONT'D)
Tell me what to do!

101 INT. CATACOMB HALLS - NIGHT

There is barely any light. We can hear rubble shifting.

TRACY
Aahh! Shit. Ugh.

As the dust begins to settle, a lantern on the wall across from her starts to flicker a tiny flame.

TRACY (CONT'D)
Come on. (cough) Please.

She tries to move her leg.

TRACY (CONT'D)
Ow! Damn it.

The flame in the lantern then flares up and gets significantly brighter.

TRACY (CONT'D)
There we go. Thank you, thank you God.

As the light grows stronger, the room behind her becomes illuminated. She doesn't notice Father Benavidez, who sits up and look over toward her.

TRACY (CONT'D)
It's okay, everything's gonna be okay. Rule number one; don't panic. Rule number two... Shit, what's rule number two?

Suddenly, a crucifix necklace drops into her lap. She looks up, then starts to hyperventilate.

102 INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

Sam is fading in and out of consciousness. She hears rustling behind her and starts to panic. She looks over and notices Benavidez emerge from a dark doorway. He walks passed her and meets Father Elias by the pentagram.

FATHER ELIAS
You see, the purpose you serve has become clear after all. You don't have to fear anymore.

Just then, the door flies open. Enter the Sheriff and Deputies, guns drawn... to Sam's relief.

- BEAT

FATHER ELIAS (CONT'D)
I'd almost given up on you.

With that, the Sheriff turns his gun on Deputy 1 and shoots him in the temple, killing him instantly. He then turns the gun on Deputy 2 and shoots him three times, square in the chest. Sam reacts in horror.

SHERIFF
I wanted to make sure there was
no interference.

FATHER ELIAS
(motions to Sam and Greg)
And you almost succeeded.

Father Elias nods to Benavidez, who now takes his place along the pentagram.

FATHER ELIAS (CONT'D)
You might want to stand back.

The Sheriff takes a step back. Father Elias reaches into the bowl and pulls out the blood-soaked handkerchief. He raises it out above his head and chants a loud prayer. The blood runs through his fingers and down his arms. He then wrings it onto the center of the pentagram. The blood spills onto the black chalk and there is an immediate reaction. The chalk turns into thick sludge and begins a chain reaction that spreads outward from the center of the pentagram. The ground begins to shake again.

Sam hears something and looks over to find two Demons creeping toward her. Another drops from the ceiling right in front of her and begins to advance.

CUT back to the sludge bubbling along the pentagram. We notice that when it reaches each priest along the circle, a pool of blood forms around their feet.

CUT back to Sam, the Demons are closing in, rubble falling between them. She cries out. Then all of a sudden the Demons begin to shriek. Looking toward the pentagram, they panic and hastily retreat. The center of the pentagram starts to cave in.

There is an explosion as a huge claw punches up through the floor.

FATHER ELIAS (CONT'D)
I told you I wouldn't fail you.

With that, a flood of Demons comes pouring up through the gate - (different types - C.G.I.)

103 EXT. LOCAL STORE - NIGHT

We see the thermometer, as the temperature now begins to rise.

104 INT. LOCAL'S HOME - NIGHT

A man and his wife are watching TV. They start sweating profusely. A baby in the next room begins to cry. The wife, wiping her neck with a towel, walks in to the baby's room. She flicks on the light to find the baby standing up in the crib, and a horrific Demon clinging to the wall just above it.

She reacts as the Demon ravages the baby, abruptly silencing it. She drops a glass of water and lets out a blood-curdling scream. She backs up into the living room to find her husband being mauled by another.

105 INT. HOTEL FRONT DESK - NIGHT

The Hotel Owner is watching TV when he hears the front door slam shut. He pauses with the remote and begrudgingly gets up. He walks through the hallway but doesn't see anyone. Then a horrific Demon comes crawling up over the front counter.

- *DING* (counter bell)

It lunges and begins to ravage him as he shrieks in terror. Another comes over the counter, then another.

- *DING, DING, DING, DING...* as more climb over the counter to join in

106 INT. BAR - NIGHT

The Bartender walks back into a storeroom to retrieve a bottle of booze. A Demon is waiting for him.

At the pool table, Pool Player 1 is about to break, then reacts to the screams in the back room. He watches as a Demon crawls up from the other end of the table and approaches. Pool player 2 looks on.

POOL PLAYER 1
Hit it. Hit it!

But instead, Pool Player 2 heads for the door, leaving his friend. When he gets to the door, he looks back and gives his friend an apologetic look. He opens the door and is immediately pounced on by a Demon.

Pool Player 1 backs up against the jukebox. The Demon lunges at him, smashing the glass and begins to shred him apart.

A song starts to play - (intro to La Bamba.)

107 EXT. BAR - NIGHT

From outside the bar, we hear the distant high-pitched screams and get an overall view of the townsfolk running through the streets, getting massacred... all as La Bamba plays on.

108 INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

A gigantic Beast pulls itself up and climbs out of the pit. It stands more than twenty feet tall.

Everyone reacts.

CUT to Sam as a dark figure approaches directly behind her. She feels it moving against her and begins to scream.

CHEEKS

Shhh, be quiet.

SAM

Cheeks?

CHEEKS

Yeah, you believing this shit?

SAM

Oh God Cheeks, please hurry up.

CHEEKS

No shit.

The Beast looks down at Father Elias, then snatches him up. It draws him in close for a look. It lets out a deafening growl, saliva clinging to its jaws. The Head Priest immediately begins to smoke. After a moment, he then bursts into flames and begins to melt gruesomely, screaming in pain.

The Sheriff backs away but the Beast spies him. It snaps him up, rears back and throws him across the cathedral. He slams into the wall and drops to the ground, smoldering.

He is still alive when he is swarmed by Demons and ripped apart. He too goes screaming in pain.

Cheeks reacts, then begins to frantically shake Sam's cross, trying to dislodge it. It twists to the side and falls partly to the ground. She lets out another scream. Her scream gets the Beast's attention. It shrieks in their direction, then begins a steady gate toward them.

Just then, Santos appears on the altar, bible in hand. He yells out to the beast, which stops abruptly and turns. Santos starts to quote/shout verses from the bible.

The beast lets out a rumbling screech and immediately starts toward him instead. Santos shouts out another passage as the Beast closes in and advances directly upon him... the prayers are having no effect. The Beast looks down at him, almost amused at his feeble attempt. Santos looks up and realizes that these are his last moments and drops to his knees.

SANTOS

What have we done? (screams out)
How can this be the truth?!

The Beast raises its powerful fist, Santos' reflection in its glaring eyes. Then, Santos dons a serene expression.

SANTOS (CONT'D)

God, please... forgive us.

With that, the Beast becomes enraged. It shrieks out at Santos and raises its fist even higher. Just then, a huge crack appears in the wall behind Santos. The Beast watches it as it travels up the wall. It shrieks again. The crack travels all the way up to the cathedral ceiling, which begins to crumble.

Cheeks reacts as the ground begins to shake one final time.

The ceiling continues to crumble as the Beast backs up. Suddenly, a blinding ball of light explodes onto the altar. Its shape keeps shifting, and for a split second - a face.

SAM

What's happening?!

CHEEKS

My God.

The Beast turns to escape when the lighted form lets out a deafening cry. The Beast then begins to liquefy and is drawn back toward the center of the pentagram.

As the ground shakes tremendously, the Beast, as well as the demons, gets sucked back into the pit. As the last bit of evil gets sucked down through the gate (kicking and screaming), the rubble from the collapsing ceiling begins to fill it, plugging the pit.

Sam finally breaks free from the cross and drops, face-up to the ground. With the ground still shaking, Greg's cross twists down and falls on top of her, stopping inches from her face. She screams. Greg seems to be floating there for a moment before he is whisked away from her.

His body is swiftly dragged down the embankment to the cathedral floor, then up onto the mountain of rubble. The cross then raises upright and plants itself firmly into the top of the rubble. (church bell) Hang as the quake subsides.

Sam frees herself while the moon light shines in through what's left of the structure.

SAM

Cheeks, come on. Cheeks..

Cheeks doesn't respond, and when she moves over to him she notices that all of his hair is turning white before her eyes.

SAM (CONT'D)

Oh God, Cheeks.

CHEEKS

Did you see it? Did you see...
him?

SAM

I don't care. You have to get
up right now.

As she reacts, she is startled by a rustling at the far end of the room. Tracy emerges from a doorway, limping toward them. Sam sees her and begins sobbing with delight/confusion. Tracy stops when she notices Greg, lifeless on the cross. She cups her mouth as a tear runs down her face.

SAM (CONT'D)

Trace, help me.

She limps over and helps Sam get Cheeks on his feet.

FADE TO:

109 EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT - DAWN

Duffle bags are dropped into the back seat of the jeep. Cheeks is unconscious in the passenger seat. The two girls jump in and the jeep peels off down the road. Suddenly the brake lights come on and the jeep skids to a stop. Tracy gets out.

110 INT. HOTEL FRONT DESK - DAWN

Tracy walks in and slowly approaches the front desk. She raises her hand to ring the bell when she notices what used to be the hotel owner mangled on the floor. After a moment, she reaches in her pocket and pulls out a wad of money and drops it on the counter.

TRACY

Good bye.

111 EXT. HOTEL - DAWN

Tracy Exits. She looks around at the carnage and dead bodies strewn about the town. For a moment she watches as a black crow indulges itself, picking at the flesh of one of them. She climbs back into the jeep, as it once again peels away and heads down the road. The shot pulls back to showcase the mutilated/ravaged bodies littering the town.

112 INT. CATHEDRAL - DAYBREAK

Santos slowly emerges from the rubble. Distraught, he gazes up at Greg on the cross, the sunlight from the open roof breaking in. He notices that the shadow from the cross is casting a long shape. His eyes follow the shadow to its end, it seems to be pointing to a spot in the rubble. Santos walks over and removes some of the rocks, exposing "The Book". For a moment he is confused, but then takes the book, tucks it under his arm and quietly staggers off, disappearing into the shadows of the ruins.

HANG on the cross... until it is violently sucked under the rubble.

FADE OUT.

