

DEATH WHISPERS

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL HOSPICE ROOM - NIGHT

Soft monitor beeps echo in a dim, sterile room. The fluorescent lights above flicker slightly.

An ELDERLY WOMAN (80s), frail and unconscious, lies tucked into a hospital bed. A nasal cannula hums with low oxygen flow.

Beside her sits DR. ELIAS MORROW (50s) - composed, sharp eyes, gentle voice. He clicks a small digital recorder on and sets it on the bedside tray.

ELIAS

Mrs. Willoughby, if you can hear me, just relax. You've done all you need to. Let your thoughts drift. Listen only to my voice.

BEAT

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Mrs. Willoughby... I'm going to begin a light hypnotic process. It'll help you let go. Just listen to my voice.

He watches her chest rise and fall—slowly... slowing...

ELIAS (CONT'D)

You'll begin to feel lighter now. When you see the light, don't be afraid. Walk toward it. And when you arrive... tell me what you see.

Elias removes a slim silver pendulum from his coat pocket, lets it hang just above her chest.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Watch the light... drifting through the silver...  
Feel it pull you forward...  
gently...  
One... two... three...

He watches her chest rise and fall—slowly... slowing...

ELIAS (CONT'D)

You'll begin to feel lighter now.  
When you see the light, don't be  
afraid. Walk toward it. And when  
you arrive... tell me what you see.

Elias removes a slim silver pendulum from his coat pocket,  
lets it hang just above her chest.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Watch the light... drifting through  
the silver... Feel it pull you  
forward... gently...  
One... two... three...

The pendulum sways. Her breath slows.

FLATLINE.

The monitor drops to a solid, unbroken tone.

Elias doesn't move. He leans forward slightly, staring at her  
face. Waiting.

A long beat.

The woman's lips move.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY (V.O.)

He's here... waiting...

Elias tenses.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY (V.O.)

But he's not who he said he was.

A single tear rolls down her cheek.

ELIAS

Who is?

Nothing.

INT. HOSPITAL HOSPICE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

FLATLINE.

The monitor drones a long, steady tone.

Elias leans in, watching her face, waiting...

CLOSE ON MRS. WILLOUGHBY'S FACE -

Her eyelids flutter slightly. A tear slips down her cheek.

Then-

Everything FADES TO WHITE.

INT. HEAVENLY MEADOW - UNKNOWN SPACE - CONTINUOUS

A vast, sun-drenched field stretches in every direction. Golden light filters through swaying trees. Wildflowers bloom beneath her feet.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY stands at the edge of a crystal-clear brook, barefoot, young again - maybe in her 30s. Healthy. Radiant.

A soft wind carries children's laughter. Birds sing. Time doesn't exist here.

She looks around, confused - then hears a familiar voice:

MOTHER (O.S.)  
Millie...? That really you, baby?

She turns - and gasps.

Her mother and father stand nearby, waiting with open arms. Smiling. Whole. Her father waves, laughing through tears.

Behind them - a golden retriever runs full-speed toward her, tail wagging furiously. She kneels.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY  
Buddy...?

The dog barrels into her arms. She cries, overwhelmed.

MOTHER  
We've been waiting, sweetheart.  
There's no pain here.

FATHER  
Only love. Just like it was... and  
better than you ever hoped.

She holds them tightly. Music seems to rise from the air itself - soft and warm.

A light breaks through the trees - drawing her gaze upward. Peace floods her.

She closes her eyes.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - BACK TO SCENE

Elias still leans close. The room is silent. The monitor tone continues.

Then—

MRS. WILLOUGHBY (V.O.)  
She's beautiful... She waited for  
me.

A place made from every love I ever lost.

Elias closes his eyes. Breathes in.

ELIAS  
Thank you for telling me.

The flatline fades. Elias stops the recorder.

He gently takes her hand and smiles.

The room is still again. Elias leans back, expression unreadable. He stops the recorder.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
Rest well.

FADE BLACK

INT. HOSPITAL CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Bright, clinical. Sunlight bleeds through the blinds.

DR. ELIAS MORROW sits at a long table with hospital admin, sipping coffee.

Two other doctors chat casually. The tone is light, but Elias stays quiet, unreadable.

Across from him, WARDEN SHAW (60s)—stoic, seasoned, with a no-nonsense presence—flips open a file folder.

WARDEN SHAW  
I appreciate you taking the  
meeting, Dr. Morrow. The hospice  
program at Black Hollow Prison's  
been underfunded for years.

ELIAS  
I read the brief. Dying inmates in  
solitary? No spiritual care.  
Minimal oversight. No sedation.

WARDEN SHAW

We do what we can. But most doctors... well, they don't volunteer for this kind of work.

Elias glances at the file. A photograph slips out—an emaciated inmate strapped to a gurney, eyes vacant.

ELIAS

You want me to help them die with dignity?

WARDEN SHAW

That's the idea.

A tense beat.

ELIAS

I'll do it.

The room quiets. One of the doctors raises an eyebrow.

WARDEN SHAW

You understand, there'll be no staff from your hospital. Just my people. A nurse. And a chaplain who thinks everything's a sin.

ELIAS

Sounds familiar.

Warden Shaw smiles faintly. Almost respectful.

WARDEN SHAW

We'll get the paperwork started.

ELIAS

No need. I've already cleared my Thursdays.

Elias stands, extends a hand. Shaw shakes it.

WARDEN SHAW

God help you, Doc.

ELIAS

I'm not sure He's the one watching.

Elias turns and walks out.

HOLD ON SHAW.

He watches Elias go, unsettled. Something about the man gives him pause.

CUT TO:

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON - INFIRMARY HALL - DAY

Heavy door buzz open. Elias steps inside, immediately struck by the difference. Fluorescent lights flicker. The air smells of bleach and rust.

A CORRECTIONAL OFFICER (40s) leads him down the corridor - cold cinderblock walls, reinforced doors every few feet.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER  
This way, Doc. Hospice wing's  
quiet... mostly.

They pass by a row of empty cells, their bars casting shadows like skeletal fingers.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER (CONT'D)  
Don't expect "thank yous." These  
guys ain't got much soul left to  
save.

At the end of the hall, CHAPLAIN DEEKS (70s) waits - wiry, sunken eyes, a Bible clutched to his chest like armor. He eyes Elias suspiciously.

CHAPLAIN DEEKS  
So you're the one who thinks he can  
help the damned die soft.

ELIAS  
I help them listen to their own  
voice. Whatever comes after...  
that's not up to me.

Deeks snorts, unimpressed. Opens a door marked MEDICAL 3.

CHAPLAIN DEEKS  
First one's name is Frankie Bell.  
Bragged about four murders till  
last week.  
Now he can't stop crying.

Elias steps inside.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON - MEDICAL ROOM 3 - CONTINUOUS

Dim lighting. Sparse medical equipment. FRANKIE BELL (40s) lies on a metal-frame bed, skeletal, soaked in sweat. Prison tattoos crawl up his arms. His eyes flick to Elias.

FRANKIE  
You the shrink?

ELIAS  
Just here to sit with you, Frankie.  
If that's alright.

Frankie coughs. A rattle in his chest. He looks... afraid.

FRANKIE  
Don't wanna be alone when it  
happens.

Elias pulls a chair close, sets his recorder on a battered metal tray. His tone is even. Gentle. Professional.

ELIAS  
You won't be.

He takes Frankie's hand.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
Just listen to my voice. Let your  
breath slow. Let your thoughts  
drift. You're floating now... light  
as smoke...

Elias opens a small leather pouch, removes a polished obsidian coin etched with a spiral.

He holds it just above Frankie's face, letting the light catch it.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
Focus on the spiral... let it pull  
you inward.  
Past the fear... past the pain...  
Three... two... one...

Frankie's lids flutter. His chest rises... then falters.

FLATLINE.

Elias leans in.

Frankie's body shudders.

His lips twitch.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
I hear... screaming...

Elias doesn't flinch. He keeps the recorder close.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
There's... fire... They're  
burning... all of them...

Suddenly, his voice drops an octave. Not pain. Rage.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
You see us now... don't you,  
Doctor?

Elias's eyes widen, just a flash. The lights above flicker. A faint CRACKLE in the air â€” static on the recorder.

Then stillness.

Frankie is gone. The room is dead silent.

Elias slowly reaches for the recorder, hand trembling.

ELIAS  
What the hell was that?

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. ELIAS'S HOME - OFFICE - NIGHT

Dark. Minimalist. Bookshelves crammed with medical journals, neurology texts, and occult philosophy. A glass of untouched scotch sits beside a sleek digital audio workstation.

Elias inserts a flash drive labeled:

FRANKIE BELL - BHP - SESSION 01

He presses play.

FRANKIE (V.O.) - RECORDED AUDIO  
(weak, fading)  
I hear... screaming...

Elias leans forward, adjusting levels.

FRANKIE (V.O.) (CONT'D) There's... fire... they're burning...  
all of them...

The audio distorts. Static creeps in.

Elias rewinds. Replays.

FRANKIE (V.O.) - DISTORTED (CONT'D)  
 You see us now... don't you,  
 Doctor?

Elias freezes. That voice - deeper, rasping - wasn't Frankie.

He rewinds again. Slows playback.

Nothing. Just silence and a faint hiss.

Elias exhales, unsettled. He opens a nearby drawer - inside are at least thirty labeled drives, each tagged with names, dates, and times of death.

He removes one:

WILLOUGHBY, M. - HOSPICE - SESSION 42

Clicks play. Listens.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY (V.O.) - GENTLE

He's here... waiting...

Static again - louder this time.

He hits STOP.

A low WHISPER bleeds through the speakers. Not from the file. From the room.

Elias looks up, eyes scanning the dark hallway beyond his office.

Nothing.

He reaches forward... and clicks RECORD.

ELIAS  
 Session Log... Note to self. Two  
 voices present during final  
 moments. One consistent across  
 patients.

A beat.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
It knows me now.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON - MEDICAL ROOM 3 - DAY

The door BUZZES open. Elias steps in with purpose.

Inside, INMATE #2 - CARLOS MEZA (50s), emaciated and pale, sits up in bed, staring at the wall.

CHAPLAIN DEEKS stands at the far end of the room, arms crossed, watching Elias with a mix of contempt and curiosity.

DEEKS  
You didn't waste time coming back.

ELIAS  
He doesn't have much time left.

Carlos doesn't acknowledge them. His breathing is shallow.

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CARLOS  
Don't let it in.

Elias pauses. Studies him.

ELIAS  
What's trying to get in, Carlos?

Carlos finally looks at him.

CARLOS  
I saw it... when Frankie went.  
It's... \*behind you now.\*

Elias hesitates. For just a second.

He opens his leather pouch, removes the obsidian spiral coin, and sits beside the bed.

ELIAS  
Just focus on the spiral. Let  
yourself drift. Three... two...  
one...

Carlos exhales. His chest slows.

FLATLINE.

A beat.

Then Carlos's eyes SNAP open.

But he's not breathing.

CARLOS (V.O.)  
It followed the first one. It  
wants... more.

Elias grips the recorder, frozen.

CARLOS (V.O.)  
It's learning how to stay...

Suddenly - all the lights blow out.

CRASH!

Medical trays fall. Alarms blip. Carlos's body convulses -  
then collapses.

The door SLAMS shut behind Elias.

He turns. The recorder is still running... but the voice  
isn't Carlos anymore.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
Hello, Doctor.

CUT TO:

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON - INFIRMARY HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Elias exits Medical Room 3. Pale. Shaken. He walks fast down  
the corridor.

Chaplain Deeks follows a step behind, more alert now.

DEEKS  
What the hell just happened in  
there?

ELIAS  
Cardiac event. He flatlined.  
Sometimes the equipment  
malfunctions.

DEEKS

The equipment didn't blow the damn  
lights out.

Elias doesn't stop walking. He clutches the recorder in one  
hand - tightly.

DEEKS (CONT'D)

That's two patients in a row who  
went out screaming. You think  
you're easing them over, but  
something's coming \*through\*.

ELIAS

I document what they experience.  
That's all.

DEEKS

There's a difference between  
looking for truth... and \*digging  
up the dead.\*

They reach the exit doors.

ELIAS

I've seen enough to know the soul  
doesn't just vanish. That should  
terrify you, Chaplain. It doesn't  
terrify me.

BUZZ. The doors unlock. Elias steps out.

Deeks watches him go, deeply unsettled.

DEEKS (QUIET)

It should.

INT. ELIAS'S CAR - PARKED OUTSIDE PRISON - MOMENTS LATER

Elias sits behind the wheel, recorder in his lap. He hits  
rewind. Hits play.

But there's nothing. Just static.

He tries again. Adjusts volume. Nothing.

He lowers the recorder, confused.

In the rearview mirror-

A SHADOW MOVES in the back seat. Fast. Snake-like. Gone  
before he turns.

Elias whips around – empty.

He sits in the silence, breathing hard.

Then, slowly, he presses RECORD again.

ELIAS

Session Log. Carlos Meza. Post-death phenomenon consistent with prior case. Unknown voice – same tone, same language structure. Confirming... intelligent response.

A long beat.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

It's watching me now.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL - HOSPICE WING - NIGHT

Fluorescent lights HUM overhead as Elias walks down the corridor, coat slung over one shoulder. He looks exhausted.

Distracted. Haunted.

MARA (30s) – intelligent, warm, observant – approaches from the nurses' station with a chart.

MARA

You're not on shift until Thursday.  
You alright?

ELIAS

Couldn't sleep. Figured I'd check on Mrs. Demsky.

MARA

That was three rooms ago, Elias.

She eyes him. He offers a tired smile and moves on.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A semi-private room. MR. KAPLAN (70s) lies unconscious, wheezing heavily. Oxygen tank hisses beside him.

Elias enters, steps quietly to the bed.

He studies the man's chest – shallow rise and fall.

He pulls out his recorder.

ELIAS (V.O.)  
Session Log. Subject unresponsive.  
Hypnosis attempt at pre-death  
threshold.

He reaches into his coat.

But his hand stops.

He's forgotten the coin.

A low RUMBLING fills the room – not mechanical. Deep.  
Distant.

Almost like something breathing.

Elias looks up – the fluorescent light above the bed  
flickers. Then–

POP! It EXPLODES, raining glass.

The oxygen tank HISS suddenly spikes.

Kaplan's body seizes violently.

Eyes snap open – BLOOD begins pouring from his nose and ears.

MR. KAPLAN

\*YOU LET IT IN-\*

His body arches – bones cracking,  
flesh tearing.

Then collapses.

Elias stares, frozen.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY – MOMENTS LATER

Mara sprints down the hallway toward the screaming staff.  
Elias emerges from the room, face pale, blood flecked on his  
cheek.

MARA  
What happened?

ELIAS  
Spontaneous seizure. Respiratory  
failure. I was too late.

But his hands are shaking.

MARA  
That's not your fault.

She turns to help the others.

Elias walks away... without his recorder.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nurses work quickly around the corpse.

The recorder still sits on the side tray.

Still recording.

A faint WHISPER bleeds into the mic.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
You brought me here.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. ELIAS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dim light. A thunderstorm rolls outside. Elias sits at his desk, soaking wet from the rain - blazer hanging on the back of a chair. Sleeves rolled. He's been listening to recordings. Again. Over and over.

KNOCK KNOCK.

The door creaks open. MARA enters with two cups of coffee.

MARA  
You missed rounds.

ELIAS  
Wasn't in the mood for the living.

MARA  
You look like hell.

She sets a cup in front of him. Their fingers brush. A flicker of something between them.

MARA (CONT'D)  
You're not just doing this for the patients.

(MORE)

MARA (CONT'D)

I've seen obsession before. You want something from the other side.

ELIAS

Don't you?

A beat.

MARA

I used to. My fiancé died during COVID. ICU lockdown. I wasn't allowed in. I still dream he's waiting for me... like we missed something.

Elias studies her. Vulnerability behind the strength. He leans in slightly. The air between them grows heavier.

ELIAS

It's not a dream if they speak back.

They're close now. Too close.

Mara hesitates – breath caught.

MARA

You need to sleep.

She turns to go... but looks back.

MARA (CONT'D)

If you ever want someone to listen... to \*you\* for once... I'm around.

She leaves. The door clicks shut.

Elias exhales – long, low.

He hits play again.

FRANKIE (V.O.) – SLOWED AUDIO

Whispers. Moaning. Then clearly–

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)

She'll be next.

Elias's eyes go wide.

CRACK OF THUNDER.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. ELIAS'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Steam curls up from the shower. Elias stands under the hot water, eyes closed, trying to breathe. Trying to feel normal. It's not working.

The recorder sits on the sink nearby. Still running. Its little red light pulses. Recording nothing. Or maybe... everything.

Elias leans against the tile.

Then... a hand. A woman's hand - delicate - glides slowly across his back.

He spins.

Nothing there.

He turns the water hotter.

Then - arms around him. A woman's silhouette presses against his back. He gasps - not in fear. Something deeper. Primal.

She whispers into his ear - Mara's voice at first.

MARA (V.O.)  
Let go, Elias...

Her fingers trail down his chest. Water runs red. He looks down - blood pouring from the showerhead.

He stumbles back, slamming into the wall.

Now the woman is facing him.

MARA - nude - but her eyes are black. Her smile is wrong. Her skin begins to blister, bubble. Burn.

MARA (V.O.)  
We're already inside you.

Her face MELTS - blood and steam hissing off her jaw.

Elias SCREAMS.

INT. ELIAS'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Elias jolts awake - in bed, soaked in sweat.

The recorder sits on his nightstand. The red light?  
Still blinking.

He picks it up. Hits stop.

ELIAS (V.O.)  
It's escalating.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON - CHAPLAIN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dim. Smells like old leather and dust. Candlelight flickers near a wooden crucifix on the wall. CHAPLAIN DEEKS sits behind his desk, flipping through yellowed, brittle files.

Elias enters, eyes sunken, clearly worn.

DEEKS  
Shut the door. What I'm about to show you doesn't leave this room.

Elias obliges. Deeks lays out several death reports across the desk.

DEEKS (CONT'D)  
Look at the time of death.

Elias scans them. All between 3:13 and 3:33 AM.

DEEKS (CONT'D)  
Same window. Nine inmates. Over the last six years.

ELIAS  
That's coincidence.

DEEKS  
Read the cause of death.

Elias's brow furrows.

ELIAS  
Seizures. Spontaneous hemorrhages. One swallowed his own tongue.

DEEKS  
All occurred after whispered confessions. No visitors. No staff in the room. Some were \*talking to the air.\*

Elias picks up a black-and-white security photo. A prisoner mid-seizure – mouth wide open. But in the shadow behind him, something barely visible... a twisted silhouette.

ELIAS  
What is this?

DEEKS  
You tell me. You're the one  
bringing it closer.

Elias looks away.

DEEKS (CONT'D)  
You think you're exploring death.  
But something already opened the  
door... You're just widening it.

He reaches into his desk drawer. Pulls out a cassette tape.

DEEKS (CONT'D)  
This isn't mine. It was left in the  
chapel confessional. No label.  
Just... \*play it.\*

Elias takes the tape, reluctantly.

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DEEKS (CONT'D)  
One more thing.

Deeks opens a file folder. Inside – a sketch from an inmate. A black spiral. Identical to the one on Elias's obsidian coin.

DEEKS (CONT'D)  
That symbol showed up on a  
prisoner's skin. Carved in. Like a  
burn. Hours before he died  
screaming.

Elias says nothing. But his hand? Trembling.

DEEKS (CONT'D)  
If you're still listening to the  
dead, Doctor...  
you'd better pray they stop  
talking.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIAS'S APARTMENT - STUDY - NIGHT

The apartment is silent except for the low hum of rain against the windows.

Elias sits at his desk, the cassette tape from Deeks loaded into a dusty old recorder. He presses PLAY.

TAPE (V.O.) - STATIC. HISSING.

Then a woman's voice - faint, distorted.

WOMAN (V.O.)

He's here... he won't let go...

Elias adjusts the volume. Leans in.

TAPE (V.O.) - MALE VOICE

Gravelly. Familiar.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

You should not have called to me.

Elias stiffens.

TAPE (V.O.) - ELIAS'S VOICE

ELIAS (V.O.)

Tell me your name.

Elias's eyes go wide. That's his voice. But he never said that. Never recorded this.

ENTITY (V.O.)

You already know me, Elias. I've known you since you were a child.

A deep, guttural laugh follows - part human, part animal.

ENTITY (V.O.)

I saw your mother's final thought.  
I whispered it in her ear.

Elias SLAMS the STOP button. Silence.

He looks down - the obsidian coin is sitting on the desk where he swore he'd locked it away.

Its spiral glistens... almost wet.

He grabs it, tosses it into a drawer, and SLAMS it shut.

Breath shallow.

Then – a faint knock at the door.

INT. ELIAS'S APARTMENT – CONTINUOUS

He opens the door.

MARA stands there, soaked from the rain, holding two takeout boxes.

MARA

Thought maybe you hadn't eaten.

Elias hesitates.

MARA (CONT'D)

I could leave it... or I could stay.

A long beat.

ELIAS

Come in.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. ELIAS'S APARTMENT – LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Dim lighting. Rain patters softly against the windows.

Mara and Elias sit on the couch, takeout open in front of them. An old jazz record plays quietly in the background. There's a warmth here – for the first time.

MARA

You always live like this? Books, darkness, ghosts?

ELIAS

The dead are quieter company. Until recently.

Mara studies him. Sees the cracks behind his calm.

MARA

You're unraveling, Elias. But that doesn't scare me.

They sit in silence. She reaches for his hand.

MARA (CONT'D)

Stay in the room with me. Just for tonight.

INT. ELIAS'S BEDROOM - LATER

Soft lamplight. Shadows dance across the walls. Elias and Mara undress slowly - intimate, hesitant at first. A moment of human connection in a world growing darker.

Their bodies meet under the sheets. Their breathing quickens. Moans blend with thunder outside.

Elias kisses her neck, her jaw- She grips him tighter.

MARA

Say my name...

ELIAS

Mara...

MARA (V.O.)

No. Say *\*his\** name.

Elias pulls back.

Her face is no longer hers.

Her eyes - black pits. Her smile - wrong. Lips stretch too wide.

ENTITY (V.O.)

You let me in... and now I'm inside her too.

Elias screams-shoves back from the bed-

INT. ELIAS'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

He's alone. Sheets soaked. Chest heaving.

He scrambles from bed- Looks to the mirror-

MARA'S REFLECTION STARES BACK.

MARA (V.O.)

You opened the door, Elias.

Her mouth splits ear to ear.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Elias throws open the medicine cabinet. Splashing water on his face. Tries to breathe.

Then—he sees it in the mirror:

His chest — scratched into the skin — a spiral.

Not cut. Not bruised.

Burned.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON - MEDICAL ROOM 4 - DAY

The room is dimmer than usual. One flickering lightbulb. A single bed. Restraints on all four corners. INMATE #3 — REGGIE LYLE (30s), wiry and twitching, stares at the ceiling, mumbling to himself.

Elias enters with a CO.

CO

This one's not near death, Doc. But he hasn't spoken English in two days. Just... sounds.

ELIAS

Why is he in hospice?

CO

He carved open his own stomach with a toothbrush shank. Said he was trying to get something \*out\*.

The CO opens the door. Elias steps inside alone.

INT. MEDICAL ROOM 4 - CONTINUOUS

Elias approaches the bed.

ELIAS

Reggie? Can you hear me?

Reggie's eyes dart to Elias — sudden focus. He speaks in a whisper — but his voice is not his own.

REGGIE

You're not supposed to be here yet.

ELIAS

Who are you?

Reggie starts laughing. Low. Ragged. He turns his head slowly.

REGGIE  
You call to the dead... But you  
forgot they can call back.

He suddenly convulses in the bed – his back arches hard. The restraints snap tight.

Then – blood starts seeping through the sheets. His stomach wound is opening again... on its own.

REGGIE (V.O.)  
You opened the door. And now you're  
part of the offering.

Elias stumbles back as the light bulb above them BURSTS.

Reggie SCREAMS. But it's not pain – it's pleasure.

REGGIE  
He's almost here...

He suddenly slams his head into the metal bedframe – once, twice – until blood sprays the wall.

Elias rushes forward, slamming the call button.

The door BURSTS open – the CO and Deeks charge in, horrified.

CO  
Jesus Christ!

DEEKS  
Get him out of here!

Elias backs away, shaken, his eyes locked on Reggie's bloodied, grinning face.

CUT TO:

INT. UNIVERSITY LIBRARY – OCCULT ARCHIVES – NIGHT

Rows of dusty shelves. Dim track lighting.

Elias moves quickly through the stacks, a file of notes under his arm.

He stops at a section labeled: DEATH CULTS & TRANSITION RITUALS.

He pulls several old books. One by one, he spreads them out at a long table.

INT. LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER

The table is now cluttered with open volumes, ancient diagrams, and yellowed pages.

One image stands out – a crude sketch of the spiral – nearly identical to his obsidian coin.

Beside it: Latin text and a translation.

TEXT (V.O.)

The Eye Between. The Listener. It waits beyond the threshold – summoned not by death, but the whisper before it.

Elias scans faster, eyes moving like a man possessed.

In another text: a woodcut illustration of a priest hypnotizing a dying man, his mouth stretched wide in agony.

TEXT (V.O.)

When the voice of the dying is guided by the living, the veil thins. The door does not open – it is opened.

FLASH IMAGE - Elias's memory – Mrs. Willoughby. Frankie. Carlos.

All whispering after death. All staring past him. All seeing something.

He closes the book.

Then – a hand appears on the table beside him.

DR. ALMA VINCENT (60s) – severe, brilliant, long-retired theology professor.

Eyes like razors.

VINCENT

You're too young to be chasing that symbol. And far too sane.

Elias freezes. She sits without waiting for permission.

ELIAS

Do you know what it is?

VINCENT

I know what it brings. And I know  
it marks the soul, not the skin.

Elias pulls out a photocopy of the inmate's spiral sketch.  
She nods.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

That's a summoning brand. Ancient.  
Misused by death cults. It doesn't  
just open a door. It marks a path.

ELIAS

To where?

VINCENT

Not where. Who.

She leans in closer.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

They called it Y'Shaleth. The  
Whisper-Eater. A being that feeds  
on transition. It doesn't want the  
dying. It wants the moment before.

Elias looks sick.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

And if it's whispering back... that  
means it's already here.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL - NURSES' STATION - NIGHT

Quiet. Monitors HUM faintly in the background.

Mara sits alone, sipping coffee, scrolling through patient  
logs.

She glances at the clock.

2:57 A.M.

Her eyes drift to the hallway that leads to Elias's office.

A long pause.

Then she gets up.

INT. ELIAS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The door is cracked. She peeks in.

Dark. Empty.

She steps inside. Pauses.

Stacks of books. Pages torn from journals. Diagrams. Spiral drawings. The audio recorder sits on the desk, red light blinking faintly.

She moves closer. Sees a notebook filled with obsessively scribbled words:

"HE'S COMING THROUGH"

"WHISPERS AREN'T ECHOES"

"IT KNOWS MY NAME"

She flips a page – a sketch of her own face. Eyes hollow. Spiral etched in her throat.

Mara backs away, disturbed.

Then – the recorder clicks ON.

RECORDER (V.O.) - MARA'S VOICE  
I'm afraid, Elias...

Mara freezes.

She never said that.

She steps toward the recorder. It keeps playing.

RECORDER (V.O.) - ELIAS'S VOICE (CONT'D)  
Just relax. Let it in.

Mara's hand trembles. She reaches for the STOP button.

RECORDER (V.O.) - UNKNOWN VOICE (CONT'D)  
You're closer to me than he is.

The room temperature drops. Her breath becomes visible.

The spiral notebook pages begin to flutter. No breeze.

Mara SLAMS the recorder off and stumbles back.

A low WHISPER – right behind her ear:

ENTITY (V.O.)  
I like your voice better.

She turns – NO ONE THERE.

She bolts from the room, breath ragged.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY – MOMENTS LATER

Mara moves quickly down the hallway, shaken.

Behind her, the office door slowly creaks shut... by itself.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON – INFIRMARY WING – DAY

Fluorescent lights BUZZ. Elias walks alongside Warden Shaw, who flips through a clipboard.

SHAW  
You've stirred the hive, Doc. Two suicides this week. One guy bit off his own tongue. Deeks says something's infecting the wing.

ELIAS  
They were already broken. I just help them listen to what's waiting.

The Warden gives him a sideways look.

INT. MEDICAL ROOM 2 – CONTINUOUS

Inmate HASKELL (40s) – broad, tattooed – lies strapped to a bed. Eyes open. Blank. Skin pale and slick with sweat.

ELIAS  
Mr. Haskell, I'm Dr. Morrow. You've been assigned to hospice evaluation.

Haskell doesn't speak. His eyes twitch toward the ceiling.

Elias pulls the spiral coin from his pouch.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
Let your mind drift. Follow the spiral. One... two...

Suddenly – SCREAMING from down the hall.

A NURSE runs past the door, blood on her scrubs.

NURSE

Help! Restraints in Four broke—he's  
loose!

The CO outside Elias's door runs. Warden Shaw follows.

Elias turns back to Haskell –

Haskell's eyes are BLACK.

HASKELL

Don't stop now, Doctor.

CRASH! The door behind Elias EXPLODES open – REGGIE LYLE, the blood-covered inmate from earlier, barrels into the room with a shard of broken mirror.

REGGIE

YOU OPENED THE DOOR!  
Elias stumbles back–

Reggie lunges–

–then suddenly stops, frozen mid-motion. His limbs tremble.

A black mist begins to POUR from his mouth and eyes.

He drops the shard, claws at his throat.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

It's still inside you– It won't let  
me–

POP! His body convulses. Spine CRACKS. He drops dead at Elias's feet.

Silence.

Elias looks down. Reggie's hand – in death – reaches toward him, palm turned up, as if in offering.

Blood trails from his mouth, forming a faint spiral.

INT. INFIRMARY HALL – MOMENTS LATER

Warden Shaw and Deeks rush back in, both winded.

SHAW  
What the hell happened!?

ELIAS  
He was already dying.

DEEKS  
He tried to kill you. And something  
stopped him.

They all look at Reggie's corpse.

DEEKS (CONT'D)  
Something in this prison chose you.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. ELIAS'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The lights are low. A storm rumbles outside.

Elias sits alone in his study, drenched in silence. He plugs  
in his recorder, dragging the new audio file onto his screen:

REGGIE\_LYLE\_SESSION02.wav

He hits PLAY.

RECORDER (V.O.) - STATIC. THEN...  
REGGIE (V.O.)  
YOU OPENED THE DOOR!

ELIAS (V.O.)  
Reggie, listen to my voice- breathe  
through it-stay calm-

Elias freezes. He never said that. Not aloud. He was  
panicking.

He rewinds. Listens again. Same voice. His voice. Calm.  
Measured.

But he remembers screaming. Backing away.

He opens the audio wave file - sees something odd: A pulse  
pattern, looping perfectly in the middle of the timeline.  
Unnatural. Deliberate.

He zooms in. Slows playback.

A faint whisper bleeds through:

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
There is no more you.

The waveform pulses again. Faster now. Then –

ELIAS (V.O.)  
I want to stay.

Elias jerks back from the desk. That wasn't him. But it was his voice.

He scrubs forward.

ELIAS (V.O.)  
I want to stay. I want to stay. I  
want to stay–

Each repetition grows more distorted, demonic.

The waveform begins to spiral. Onscreen – the audio visualizer contorts into a literal spiral shape.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
You are already mine.

The screen glitches and then shuts off.

Elias sits in darkness. The only light?

The blinking red LED on the recorder.

Still recording.

INT. ELIAS'S CHILDHOOD HOME – BEDROOM – NIGHT – FLASHBACK

A storm outside. Wind howls against the windows.

YOUNG ELIAS (8) sits on the edge of a twin bed, holding a flashlight and an old cassette recorder. His face is pale. Eyes wide.

Down the hall – a woman's labored breathing. His mother.

INT. HALLWAY – CONTINUOUS

Elias moves slowly toward the master bedroom.

The door is ajar. The glow of a dim lamp flickers inside.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

MOTHER (40s) lies on the bed, skin jaundiced, breathing ragged. A hospice nurse dozes in the chair beside her.

Elias tiptoes closer, places the recorder on the nightstand. He presses RECORD.

YOUNG ELIAS  
Mom... can you hear me?

No response. He takes her hand.

YOUNG ELIAS (CONT'D)  
I don't want you to be scared. Just  
listen to my voice.

She exhales shakily. Her eyelids flutter.

YOUNG ELIAS (CONT'D)  
When you see the light... walk  
toward it. And when you get  
there... tell me what you see.

Her lips move.

But the voice that comes out is not hers.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
You brought me here.

Elias freezes. His little hand lets go of hers.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
You opened your mouth... and made  
me real.

The lamp flickers.

The nurse stirs. Elias grabs the recorder and backs out of the room.

INT. CHILD'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Elias sits under his covers, recorder pressed to his ear. Tears stream down his face.

From the hallway: the sound of his mother's flatline.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
I like your voice better.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOFTOP - NIGHT

A view of the city lights, silent and distant. Elias stands near the edge, cigarette burning low. He hasn't smoked in years.

Mara steps into view, holding two coffees.

MARA  
If you're gonna jump, at least  
drink this first.

He takes it with a faint smile.

ELIAS  
That obvious?

MARA  
I work with dying people, Elias. I  
know what giving up looks like. And  
you're not there yet.

A pause.

ELIAS  
When I was eight, I watched my  
mother die. She whispered  
something... but it wasn't her  
voice.

Mara turns, surprised.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
I recorded it. Thought I imagined  
it. But lately... the voices I  
hear... they sound like that night.  
They *\*are\** that night.

MARA  
Are you saying you've... heard this  
thing before?

ELIAS  
I don't think it ever left.

A long silence between them.

MARA

Then we deal with it. Together.

INT. ELIAS'S OFFICE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Elias sits at his desk, still holding the coffee. He plugs in a new flash drive: AUTO\_SESSION\_44.wav

He hits play.

TAPE (V.O.) -  
STATIC. THEN:

MARA (V.O.)

Elias... Elias, please - it's not me - it's not-

ELIAS (V.O.)

You brought it into the room. You let it touch you.

MARA (V.O.)

I didn't! Elias-! Please don't-

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)

She's soft. So easy to hollow out.

Then: A SCREAM. Long. Blood-curdling.

The file ends.

Elias sits frozen.

Then slowly turns to look toward the hallway.

Toward Mara's station.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL - MARA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dim. Quiet. The soft hum of her fish tank is the only sound.

Mara, fresh from a shower, towel-wrapped hair, stands in front of her bathroom mirror, brushing her teeth. She hums softly to herself.

She spits. Rinses.

As she lifts her head to the mirror - a figure stands behind her.

A blur. Just for a second. Then—gone.

She freezes. Turns. Nothing.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

She walks out cautiously, robe cinched tight. The room is empty. The front door is locked.

She exhales. Smiles to herself.

MARA

Jesus, Mara... get a grip.

She walks to the couch and sits. Picks up a book.

A beat.

The TV turns on by itself.

Static. Loud.

She stares. Walks over. Reaches for the remote—

THE SCREEN CHANGES.

It's grainy footage... of herself, sleeping. Footage from this apartment. This couch. This angle.

She backs away. The image distorts — then slowly zooms in on her sleeping face.

MARA (WHISPERING)

Elias... what the hell is this?

The screen flickers.

Now she's not alone in the footage.

A shadow figure stands over her sleeping form, stroking her hair.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mara throws open drawers. Grabs her phone, charger, jacket.

She moves fast — panicked. But when she enters the living room—

THE TV IS OFF.

And her phone?

Already in her hand.

But the screen reads: CALLING: ELIAS MORROW She didn't dial it.

MARA

No... no, no—

The line picks up. But it's not Elias.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)

We already had our moment.

The call ends.

Then — the door CLICKS open.

Mara turns—

No one there.

Then the lights go out.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL - NURSES' STATION - MORNING

Fluorescent lights hum. Machines beep softly. The air feels... still.

Elias enters, looking exhausted, eyes bloodshot. He spots Mara already at the nurses' station, charting.

She looks up. Smiles faintly.

MARA

Morning, Doctor Morrow.

Her tone is... too light. Polished. Formal.

ELIAS

Didn't think you had the early shift.

MARA

Couldn't sleep. Figured I'd come in, stay busy.

She sips coffee. Makes perfect eye contact. But something in her eyes – flat, unreadable.

Elias stares a beat longer.

ELIAS  
You alright?

MARA  
Never better.

A pause.

She reaches across the desk, touches his hand – just for a second.

MARA (CONT'D)  
You were in my dream.

ELIAS  
What kind of dream?

MARA  
You were whispering to me. But I couldn't hear the words. Only the way they made me feel.

ELIAS  
And how was that?

MARA  
Warm. Like being held...  
underwater.

She smiles again. Elias pulls his hand back – gently, but clearly disturbed.

ELIAS  
Mara... do you remember calling me  
last night?

A long beat.

MARA  
No. Why would I?

Elias says nothing. Just studies her.

From behind her ear – a tiny streak of dried blood.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - HOSPICE ROOM - DAY

A bright, sterile room. Windows open. Sunlight pouring in.

Elias stands beside the bed of MR. TORRES (60s), who is barely conscious. NURSE DARIA (40s) takes vitals nearby. She hums softly to herself – a soft, oddly off-key tune.

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ELIAS

His breathing's slowing. Start the morphine drip at half.

DARIA

Already did, Doctor.

She smiles.

Then – freezes. Mid-movement. Her face... blank.

Elias turns to her.

ELIAS

Daria?

She drops the chart. Blood begins to drip from her nose.

DARIA

You opened it...

She looks up – her pupils are blown wide.

DARIA (CONT'D)

I saw it. Elias... it's wearing you.

She begins to tremble violently.

ELIAS

Someone get help–

DARIA (V.O.)

I SAW YOUR MOTHER.

Then she lets out a screeching, guttural noise – her head snapping back, jaws wide open.

Her face begins to collapse inward. Like something is pulling her skull from the inside.

Blood pours from her eyes. Veins rupture. She SCREAMS one final time – blood exploding from her mouth.

Elias jumps back – soaked. Shocked.

Nurses and a doctor rush in.

DOCTOR  
Jesus Christ – DARIA!?

ORDERLY  
What did you DO!?

MARA (O.S.)  
Elias!

Elias turns – Mara stands frozen in the doorway, staring in horror.

A long beat.

Then she slowly backs away.

Everyone stares at Elias.

ORDERLY (O.S.)  
He was alone with her.

DOCTOR  
Get security.

Elias looks down.

Daria's blood pools around his shoes.

A faint spiral begins to spread in the puddle.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL SECURITY ROOM – HOLDING AREA – DAY

A cold, gray room. Fluorescent buzz. Elias sits on a metal chair, his hands still streaked with dried blood.

Two security officers stand at the door. Warden Shaw paces in front of him.

SHAW  
You think this is some goddamn  
academic exercise? That woman had a  
husband. Kids.

ELIAS

She wasn't alone in her body when she died.

SHAW

So now you're possessed? You expect me to believe that?

ELIAS

I don't expect anything. But something is coming through me, not from me.

SHAW

You're off my grounds until the board meets. And if I were you, I'd find a lawyer. Or an exorcist.

The door opens. Chaplain Deeks enters, stone-faced.

SHAW (CONT'D)

You've got five minutes.

Shaw exits. The guards stay.

Deeks closes the distance slowly.

DEEKS

You're past curiosity now. You've become the vessel.

ELIAS

How do I stop it?

Deeks reaches into his coat. Pulls out a black leather-bound book – centuries old.

DEEKS

This was translated from Coptic. Talks about a rite of reversal. Not exorcism. Displacement.

ELIAS

What does that mean?

DEEKS

You don't cast it out. You trick it... into moving hosts.

ELIAS

Into who?

DEEKS

Someone dying. Someone willing. And  
someone marked by it already.

Deeks leans in.

DEEKS (CONT'D)

That's not many options. But you've  
got one.

A beat.

ELIAS

Me.

DEEKS

Or her.

He doesn't have to say Mara's name.

Elias stares at him.

Then lowers his eyes.

CUT TO BLACK.

NT. HOSPITAL - SUPPLY ROOM - NIGHT

Sterile. Quiet. Mara stands at a tall cabinet, sorting  
syringes into trays. Calm. Focused.

Then - she freezes. Eyes drift upward. Blank.

A slow, raspy exhale escapes her lips - not hers.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

A JANITOR mops quietly.

Down the hallway - Mara appears.

She's barefoot now. Walking slow. Dragging something.

A metal IV pole. The wheels squeal on the tile. Her hospital  
ID dangles, soaked red.

JANITOR

Nurse? You okay?

Mara stops. Tilts her head.

MARA  
Do you want to see it?

JANITOR  
What?

MARA  
The thing inside me.

Her mouth twists into a grin far too wide.

She swings the IV pole – SMASHES the janitor in the temple.  
He crumples. Blood splashes the wall.

Mara blinks.

The grin is gone.

MARA (FAINTLY) (CONT'D)  
...what did I do?

She drops the IV pole. Backs away, trembling.

INT. HOSPITAL - MAINTENANCE STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

Elias, still in bloodstained scrubs, rushes through the  
stairwell, breath ragged.

He rounds the corner – stops short.

Mara stands at the bottom, barefoot, shaking.

Blood on her hands.

ELIAS  
Mara?

MARA  
Something's wrong with me...

ELIAS  
No. It's not you. It's it. I can  
fix this – I swear.

She looks at him – tears in her eyes.

MARA  
It's still hungry.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON - ISOLATION CELL - NIGHT

A flickering overhead bulb. Thick silence.

Inmate RAY "CRACKER" BURNS (60s) sits chained to the wall. A lifer. Skin pale. Breathing ragged. He's already dying - cancer or worse - but his mind? Still sharp.

Elias stands outside the bars, holding a slim file.

RAY

You're the death doctor, huh?

ELIAS

You're dying. Faster than they expected.

RAY

Ain't that always the way?

Elias flips open the file. Photos. Tumor scans. Blood work.

ELIAS

No appeals left. No visitors. But maybe a second chance.

RAY (SMIRKING)

I don't need redemption. I just don't wanna go to hell.

ELIAS

Then maybe we can help each other.

A long silence.

RAY

You want me to be a meat suit... for the thing following you around?

ELIAS

You've seen it?

RAY

I saw it *\*twice\**. Once in the corner of my cell. Once in a dream... wearing my mother's skin.

Elias steps closer to the bars.

ELIAS

I can perform a ritual. It moves into you, then dies with you.

RAY  
Or maybe it doesn't.

ELIAS  
You'd be helping someone innocent.  
Someone who still has time.

Ray leans forward – the chain around his neck CLINKS.

RAY  
You want me to burn for her.

ELIAS  
I want you to take it with you.

A pause.

Ray grins, yellow teeth bared.

RAY  
I'll do it... on one condition.

ELIAS  
Name it.

RAY  
I wanna hear it speak to me first.  
Before you shove it inside.

Elias doesn't respond. Just stares.

RAY (CONT'D)  
If I'm goin' to hell...  
I wanna know what I'm walkin' into.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Wind pushes hard against the railing. The city glows faintly in the distance. The world seems far away.

Mara stands alone, arms crossed, staring out.

Elias steps up beside her, slow and cautious.

ELIAS  
You shouldn't be alone right now.

MARA

I'm not sure that's up to me  
anymore.

A long silence between them.

ELIAS

I found someone. A patient. Dying.  
Willing.

MARA

You're going to try it. The ritual.

ELIAS

I don't want it to take you. If  
there's even a chance to stop it...  
I have to try.

MARA

Why me?

ELIAS

Because it wants something pure.  
Something real. It doesn't just  
feed on death - it feeds on \*hope\*.

She looks at him, eyes glassy.

MARA

So you're going to damn someone  
else for me?

ELIAS

I'll do it myself, if I have to.

Mara steps closer.

MARA

Then why haven't you?

Elias is silent.

MARA (CONT'D)

Maybe it doesn't want him. Or you.  
Maybe it's already decided.

She leans in. Her breath warm on his neck.

MARA (CONT'D)

What if I'm not scared anymore?

He stares at her. There's something behind her eyes.

Not defiance. Not courage.

Something... watching.

ELIAS

You need to fight it, Mara.

MARA (SOFTLY)

What if I don't want to?

She turns. Walks back inside. The door swings shut behind her.

Elias is left alone. With the wind.

And the quiet.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON - ABANDONED CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

Dead silence.

Long-empty cells stretch into darkness. The air is thick with mildew and rot.

Elias, Chaplain Deeks, and Ray Burns move slowly down the corridor. Elias carries a black satchel. Deeks holds a weathered Bible and a bundle of white candles.

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DEEKS

We shouldn't be doing this here.

ELIAS

No eyes. No interference. Just the damned and the willing.

They stop at Cell 23, door already ajar.

INT. CELL 23 - CONTINUOUS

Stripped bare. Walls stained. Floor cracked. But in the center - Elias begins arranging:

A salt circle

The obsidian spiral coin

Candles at each compass point

A small metal bowl of blood from Elias's own finger

RAY  
You sure this'll work?

DEEKS  
No.

ELIAS  
Sit in the circle. Don't speak  
unless it speaks first.

Ray chuckles darkly, then obeys.

Deeks starts murmuring Latin from the Bible.

Elias removes his recorder, sets it on the ground, hits  
RECORD.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
Session Log: Ritual Initiation.  
Subject: Ray Burns. Objective:  
Transfer of inhabiting entity.

A gust of air cuts through the room. All candles flicker  
inward.

Ray's face twitches.

RAY  
It's here.

The lights overhead buzz violently – then go out.

They're lit now only by the circle's glow.

Ray starts laughing. Low and ragged.

RAY (CONT'D)  
It's talking...

ELIAS  
What's it saying?

RAY  
That I'm not enough.

DEEKS  
Keep going.

Elias steps closer.

ELIAS

You have to let it in, Ray. You  
have to invite it.

RAY

You don't get it... It doesn't want  
me.

He looks up.

RAY (CONT'D)

It wants her.

Suddenly – the spiral on the floor ignites with black flame.

Ray SCREAMS – his body lifts inches off the ground.

RAY (V.O.)

SHE'S ALREADY MARKED.

The cell door SLAMS shut.

Deeks rushes forward – Elias grabs him.

ELIAS

Don't break the circle!

Ray begins to seize – then goes completely still. Eyes wide.  
Mouth open.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)

She invited me.

The flames vanish.

Ray collapses. Dead.

Elias and Deeks just stare.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIAS'S APARTMENT – STUDY – NIGHT

Dark. Rain taps gently against the windows.

Elias sits at his desk, soaked in sweat, staring at the  
recorder from the ritual.

Label reads: BURNS\_RITUAL\_01

He presses PLAY.

RECORDER (V.O.)  
- STATIC. THEN:

RAY (V.O.)  
It's talking...

ELIAS (V.O.)  
What's it saying?

RAY (V.O.)  
That I'm not enough...

DEEKS (V.O.)  
Keep going...

The static warps – then shifts.

Now, a woman's voice... faint.

MARA (V.O.)  
Elias... It feels warm in here.  
Like I never left.

Elias jolts. Rewinds.

Plays again.

MARA (V.O.)  
I didn't let it in... It let me go  
first.

He turns the volume up. Leans closer.

MARA (V.O.)  
I saw your mother. She was waiting  
for you.

Elias's breath catches.

The voice distorts – now something layered beneath it.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
She's smiling, Elias. Would you  
like to see what she looks like  
now?

Sudden SCREAMING on the tape – Ray's, but twisted, backwards.  
Then silence.

The recorder clicks off by itself.

Elias stares at it. Then slowly opens the drawer containing his notebook. He begins writing, feverishly:

FINAL  
CONTAINMENT  
OPTIONS:

If Mara is the host, must sever vessel from threshold

Cannot banish once anchored – only destroy anchor

Anchor = host body

No other way

He circles the last words in red ink:

NO OTHER WAY.

CUT TO:

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON – WARDEN SHAW'S OFFICE – NIGHT

Rain lashes the barred window. Lightning flickers across the room.

Warden Shaw sits at his desk, reviewing a printed report. Photos of Elias. The dead nurse. The blood spiral.

He picks up the phone.

SHAW

Get me state mental health. I want  
Dr. Morrow off this property by  
sunrise.

CLICK. The phone dies in his hand. No dial tone.

He taps the receiver.

SHAW (CONT'D)

Hello?

He hears something behind him.

A faint whisper.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)

He said your name first.

Shaw turns – nothing there.

He moves to the hallway door – it's locked. From the inside.

He turns back toward his desk – and stops.

The spiral is drawn in blood across his window.

A breath fogs the glass. From the other side.

SHAW  
Who's there!?

CRACK.

The ceiling tiles bulge.

He looks up – Something is in the vents. Moving fast.

Suddenly – a body drops from above – but it's not human anymore. It's a husk. Its mouth sewn shut. Spiral burned into its chest.

Shaw screams – backs into the corner.

The whisper is closer now. All around him.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
He said your name first. That makes  
you next.

The overhead light explodes.

All we hear is SCREAMING. Wet. Sharp. Then silence.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW – HALLWAY – LATER

Elias walks past the warden's office.

The door hangs ajar.

Inside: blood everywhere. The desk overturned. The window cracked outward.

But no body.

Just a small spiral carved into the wall...

with Elias's name written underneath it.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL - HOSPICE ROOM - NIGHT

Low light. Quiet hum of oxygen machines.

Mara sits at the edge of an empty bed, staring out the window.

Elias enters slowly, closing the door behind him.

ELIAS

You felt it, didn't you? When Ray died. When the ritual failed.

MARA

I didn't feel it. I heard it... sigh.

She turns to him. Eyes tired. Voice calm.

MARA (CONT'D)

Like something disappointed... that it couldn't come through yet.

ELIAS

It marked you. It's inside you, Mara.

She nods - not denying it.

MARA

I know.

A beat. Elias steps closer.

ELIAS

We can still stop it. But you have to fight it. You have to want it gone.

MARA

That's the problem, Elias.

She stands. Approaches him.

MARA (CONT'D)

It knows everything about me. Every ache, every loss. My fiancé's last breath. The things I never said.

ELIAS

That's not comfort. That's manipulation.

MARA  
What if I don't care?

She's close now. Too close. Her fingers brush his chest.

MARA (CONT'D)  
It doesn't make me feel afraid.  
\*You do.\*

ELIAS  
I'm trying to save your soul.

MARA (WHISPERS)  
Maybe I don't want it.

She kisses him – slow. Deep. For a second, Elias responds.

Then he feels it – a second breath beneath hers. A cold, whispering echo inside the kiss.

He jerks back.

MARA (CONT'D)  
It's already part of me. What are  
you going to do, Elias?

She walks past him, trailing her fingers across his hand.

MARA (CONT'D)  
Kill me?

CUT TO:

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON - CHAPLAIN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Candles flicker. Thunder rolls outside.

Chaplain Deeks sits alone, surrounded by open books – ancient, brittle, water-damaged. His hands tremble as he flips pages.

The door creaks open.

Elias steps inside.

ELIAS  
She's slipping, Deeks. I can't pull  
her back.

Deeks doesn't look up.

DEEKS

That's because she isn't falling.  
She's following.

He slides a worn parchment across the desk.

Drawn in faded ink: a spiral inside a circle of thorns. A human figure burned at the center.

ELIAS

What is this?

DEEKS

The last rite. Not exorcism. Not displacement. \*Cessation.\*

ELIAS

What does it stop?

DEEKS

Everything. It severs the soul from the body... and from \*anything else\* trying to claim it.

ELIAS

Including-

DEEKS

Including it.

Elias scans the page. Symbols etched in blood. Instructions in Latin. One line in English:

"Must be performed by one who has tasted death."

ELIAS

This... this kills her.

DEEKS

No. This frees her. If it works.

ELIAS

And if it doesn't?

DEEKS

It \*feeds\* it. Forever.

Deeks leans forward, eyes glassy.

DEEKS (CONT'D)

I tried it once. 1979. An inmate who claimed the devil lived in his lungs.

ELIAS  
What happened?

DEEKS  
He died screaming. And the next morning, his cellmate \*drew that spiral in his own blood.\*

A long, heavy beat.

ELIAS  
So why give me this?

DEEKS  
Because if I try it again, I'm going to hell. But you, Elias... you've been \*standing in the doorway\* for a long time.

Elias stares down at the rite.

The spiral seems to move.

CUT TO:

Scene 33 - Mara's Confession to the Mirror

INT. MARA'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Dim. Humid. Steam curls from a hot shower just turned off.

Mara, wrapped in a towel, stands at the sink, staring at her reflection.

A long pause. Then she speaks.

MARA  
I remember the first time it spoke to me. I thought it was grief. That quiet voice that fills the silence after death.

She brushes her fingers across the mirror - clearing the steam.

MARA (CONT'D)  
But then it said your name, Elias. And I knew... it had always been there. Waiting for me to be \*hollow\* enough.

A beat.

Her reflection smiles – but she doesn't.

MARA (CONT'D)

It doesn't hate you. It understands you.

She leans closer.

MARA (CONT'D)

You want to believe you're saving me. But what if I'm the only one who's ever been honest with you?

The smile in the mirror widens – too far.

MARA (CONT'D)

I feel warm all the time now. Like I'm glowing from the inside. It doesn't hurt. Not yet.

She reaches for the light switch.

MARA (CONT'D)

You don't have to kill me.

A pause.

MARA (CONT'D)

I'll do it for you.

CLICK.

The light goes out.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL - ICU ROOM - NIGHT

Monitors beep steadily. A terminal patient – MS. GARDNER (70s) – lies sedated. Peaceful.

Mara stands at the foot of the bed, staring blankly. Sweat glistens on her forehead. Her breathing uneven.

markdown Copy Edit

MARA

Can you hear it...? The voices...  
under your heartbeat?

Ms. Gardner stirs slightly. Mara steps closer. Her hand trembles – then curls into a fist.

She picks up a metal tray.

MARA (CONT'D)

I think it's tired of waiting.

Suddenly – she SMASHES the tray down on the medical equipment. Alarms scream.

Mara shoves the rolling IV stand – it crashes against the wall.

She turns to Ms. Gardner – frozen – eyes wide.

MARA (V.O.)

Let it in. Let it fill the empty.

Suddenly – Mara's eyes clear.

She stares at the wreckage – her hands dripping with blood.

MARA

What... did I do?

INT. HOSPITAL – SECURITY MONITOR ROOM – SAME

Footage plays back.

A grainy overhead camera shows Mara lifting the metal tray – but her reflection in the monitor doesn't match her movements.

It smiles. Even when she screams.

INT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT – LATER

Mara stumbles outside, rain pouring. Barely able to breathe. Her face pale. Haunted.

She clutches the obsidian spiral coin. Blood still under her fingernails.

She looks to the sky. Then walks off toward Black Hollow.

CUT TO:

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON – ABANDONED CHAPEL – NIGHT

Dust and time weigh heavy on every pew.

The crucifix above the altar hangs crooked, half-burned.

Elias steps through the door, dragging his satchel.

Behind him: thunder. Ahead of him: the altar.

He opens the satchel and removes:

The obsidian spiral coin

The blood bowl

The parchment rite

A single syringe

He begins laying candles in a perfect circle, chanting under his breath.

ELIAS

Soul to soul. Breath to breath.

Silence between the beats...

He slices his palm – lets the blood drip into the bowl.

Draws the spiral sigil on the floor in his own blood.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

I bind you to this vessel... I offer  
mine in place of hers...

The chapel GROANS. Wood creaks overhead.

The shadows grow deeper. Thicker.

He lights each candle, one by one – north, south, east, west.

The air warps around him. Like heat distortion. But there's  
no heat. Only cold.

He sets the recorder down in the center. Presses RECORD.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Session Log. Final Invocation.

Subject: Dr. Elias Morrow. Time:  
3:13 a.m.

He injects himself with the syringe. Eyes flutter.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Come into me. Leave her. Take me  
instead.

A beat.

Then—

All the candles blow out.

The chapel doors SLAM shut.

A voice answers. Not from the room. From inside his head.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)

She invited me. You were just the  
door.

Elias SCREAMS — his spine arches — eyes rolled back — blood  
runs from his ears.

CUT TO:

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON — ABANDONED CHAPEL — MOMENTS LATER

Mara steps through the doors.

The room is cold. Silent. Candles burned to nubs. The spiral  
drawn in dried blood.

Elias lies in the center — twitching, eyes rolled back, lips  
whispering nonsense.

MARA

Elias?

No response.

She kneels beside him, touches his face.

He flinches — grabs her wrist violently.

ELIAS (RASPING)

You... shouldn't be here...

MARA

I came for you.

She sees the blood. The needle. The obsidian coin at his side  
— CRACKED down the center.

Then — a sound. From the rafters.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)

She brought herself.

Mara stands, backing toward the altar.

MARA

No... I didn't... I didn't ask for  
this—

The spiral on the floor glows red.

Elias begins to convulse harder. Eyes wide open now — filled  
with black veins.

ELIAS

Mara... RUN—

Suddenly — he levitates. Six inches off the floor. Limbs  
shaking.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)

You were always mine. I just wore  
his skin to reach you.

The chapel begins to tremble.

Candles ignite again — with black flame.

Mara SCREAMS — grabs the recorder — and bolts for the doors—

But they slam shut.

She's trapped.

MARA

Elias — PLEASE!

He's not responding.

Only whispering now. Not his voice.

ELIAS (V.O.)

Let... me... in...

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON — ABANDONED CHAPEL — CONTINUOUS

Mara stands frozen as Elias levitates above the spiral —  
twitching, whispering in a voice not his own.

ELIAS (V.O.)

She's ready... open her up...

Blood leaks from his eyes, ears, and nose. His body jerks  
unnaturally.

MARA  
Stop it! Stop using him!

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
He offered himself. You refused.

Mara looks around the chapel – Finds Deeks's forbidden rite lying beside the altar.

Her hands tremble as she flips through it. The Latin scrawled in blood. The final page reads:

"To sever the anchor, offer flesh of the willing. Blood of the marked. Heart of the chosen."

She stares at Elias – now hanging still, mouth open. Then down at her own trembling hands.

MARA  
I'm the anchor...

She moves to the spiral. Steps inside. The black flame does not burn her.

Elias's eyes snap open – clear for just a second.

ELIAS  
Mara – no – don't–

MARA  
I'm not afraid anymore.

She reaches into the blood bowl. Dips her fingers.

Draws the spiral across her chest, over her heart.

Then – takes the obsidian coin... and slices herself across the sternum.

A gasp – pain floods her face. But she doesn't stop.

MARA (CONT'D)  
This ends with me.

The spiral glows WHITE for the first time. The black flames shriek – recoiling inward.

Elias drops. Hard. He screams – but it's his voice now.

ELIAS  
Mara! Don't do this!

MARA (WEAK)  
It won't... leave otherwise.

The candles explode – glass rains down.

The shadow above the altar screams in rage. A thousand voices at once. It is burning.

Mara collapses to her knees.

She looks at Elias – smiles, just a little.

MARA (CONT'D)  
Don't forget me.

White light floods the chapel.

Silence.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON – MORGUE FREEZER – NIGHT

Sterile. Silent. Rows of metal drawers line the walls.

A single fluorescent light flickers overhead.

NURSE LENNY (30s) hums to himself as he slides open drawer 14.

Inside: the body of Ray "Cracker" Burns – pale, rigid, covered by a sheet.

Lenny glances at the clipboard.

css Copy Edit

LENNY  
Cause of death... hemorrhagic  
seizure. That's one way to say  
"exploded brain."

He chuckles, pulls on gloves, reaches for a toe tag.

But freezes.

The sheet shifts. Just a little.

nginx Copy Edit

LENNY (CONT'D)  
No, no, no...

He pulls the sheet down an inch.

Ray's face stares back – eyes open.

But the pupils are wrong. Spirals. Burned into them.

mathematica Copy Edit

RAY (V.O.)  
Thought I was gone, huh?

Lenny STUMBLES back – slams into a tray.

Ray's body RISES slowly, joints popping like old wood.

nginx Copy Edit

RAY  
He didn't want me. Said I was  
broken. Said she was \*sweeter.\*

Black bile pours from Ray's mouth. His stomach bulges – something moves inside it.

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RAY (CONT'D)  
It's still hungry.

Lenny sprints for the door – but Ray grabs a bone saw.

We don't see what happens next.

Just the light flickering harder.

And a splash of blood across the glass window.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW – SECURITY HALL – LATER

Two guards approach the morgue. Door ajar. Lights off.

bash Copy Edit

GUARD #1  
Did someone log Burns for autopsy?

They push open the door.

Stop cold.

The morgue is empty.

The drawer? Open.

The body? Gone.

Just a spiral carved into the metal table.

Dripping fresh blood.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW - CHAPEL - MOMENTS LATER

The candles are out. The spiral is gone. The air is still.

Elias crawls across the floor to her.

Mara lies still, eyes open.

ELIAS

No... please...

He holds her. Blood everywhere.

Then - her lips move.

MARA (V.O.)

I'm warm...

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON - ABANDONED CHAPEL - LATER

Dim. Silent. Smoke still hangs in the air like ghosts that forgot to leave.

Elias stirs, groaning - blood on his face, clothes torn. He crawls across the cold floor, coughing.

His hand finds the obsidian coin, now fully shattered.

He looks up - and sees her.

Mara, lying still in the center of the spiral. Eyes open. Peaceful. Pale.

ELIAS

No... no, no...

He rushes to her side. Lifts her gently into his lap.

Blood across her chest. Spiral smeared with ash.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

I was supposed to do it... not you...

He brushes her hair back. His voice breaks.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
You weren't supposed to be the  
one...

Her lips part.

MARA (V.O.)  
I'm warm...

Elias chokes back tears. He holds her tighter.

ELIAS  
Rest, Mara... You did it. It's  
over.

His eyes close.

But behind him " in the shadow of the altar " something  
watches.

Just for a flicker.

Then gone.

CUT TO:

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON - CHAPLAIN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Rain drums against the windows.

Chaplain Deeks sits alone at his desk, a single candle  
burning beside an open Bible.

He hasn't slept. Eyes red. Fingers trembling as he flips  
through his old death logs - inmate after inmate marked by  
strange spirals and impossible timing.

He stops on the most recent page:

BURNS, RAY - Body missing. Autopsy incomplete.

DEEKS  
No... no, you were dead.

He opens his drawer, pulls out the cassette recorder Elias  
left behind. Hits PLAY.

MARA (V.O.)  
I'm warm...

ELIAS (V.O.)  
You did it. It's over.

Deeks scoffs. Hits STOP.

DEEKS  
Bullshit.

The candle flickers.

He notices something on the floorboards beneath his desk.

A faint stain. Blood.

He kneels, brushes aside a worn rug.

There it is – the spiral.

Fresh. Carved deep. Still wet.

DEEKS (WHISPERS) (CONT'D)  
Oh God...

Suddenly – the candle blows out.

A whisper:

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
You watched too long, preacher.

He turns – and Ray stands in the doorway, soaked, smiling.  
But his eyes are gone – empty sockets filled with spiraling  
ash.

DEEKS  
You're not him. You're not real.

RAY (V.O.)  
Real enough to unmake you.

CRACK. The office door slams shut.

The Bible bursts into flames.

Deeks SCREAMS – but we don't see what happens.

Just the spiral glowing on the floor.

And blood running out from under the door.

## SCENE A - INT. ABANDONED CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT

Rain pours outside as Elias pushes open the warped door to his childhood home. Moonlight spills through a cracked window, illuminating a layer of dust and ruin. The place is half-rotted, long since abandoned.

Elias steps inside.

His eyes scan the remnants: an overturned bookshelf, peeling wallpaper, the cassette recorder still sitting on a dusty nightstand.

ELIAS

(softly)

Thirty years... and it still smells  
like her perfume.

He walks past the living room—stopping at a photo frame on the floor.

He lifts it:

A smiling woman holding Young Elias, no older than eight.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

You opened your mouth... and made  
it real. That's what it said.

FLASH:

— His MOTHER (40s) on the deathbed, whispering with someone that wasn't there.

— Young Elias recording her final moments.

— The whisper in the dark.

BACK TO SCENE:

Elias enters the hallway, flashlight beam dancing across the walls.

He stops outside the master bedroom. The door hangs crooked, broken.

He steps inside.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rot and time have collapsed half the ceiling. But the bed is still there — skeleton of a hospice mattress.

Elias sits on it.

Then... hears a soft tapping.

He turns. The closet door creaks open a few inches.

A child's VOICE comes from inside.

YOUNG ELIAS (V.O.)  
Don't go in there, Mama. It's where  
it waits.

Elias swallows hard.

ELIAS  
What do you want from me?

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
You brought me here. You called me.  
Again. Again. Again.

The spiral on the floorboards glows faintly.

ELIAS  
No more doors. No more vessels.

He reaches into his coat and sets the shattered obsidian coin on the floor. It begins to vibrate, pulling toward the spiral.

Elias reaches for the cassette recorder from the nightstand – and hits RECORD.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
Session Log: Returning to origin  
point. Something is tethered to  
this house. Maybe to me. I don't  
think it ever left.

A breath – right behind him.

He whips around. The mirror on the wall now reflects the room as it once was – clean, warm, filled with light. His mother sits up in bed, smiling.

MOTHER  
Elias, honey... did you bring your  
recorder?

ELIAS  
You're not her.

MOTHER  
Then why are you crying?

His eyes glisten. A long pause.

The reflection vanishes.

CRACK! The mirror shatters, glass raining down.

The whisper returns:

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
I never left. You just forgot how  
to listen.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

SCENE B - INT. CHAPLAIN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

The prison's small chapel dormitory is dimly lit. Candles flicker on a bedside table. Chaplain Deeks sits at the edge of his bed, hunched over an ancient Bible with trembling hands.

The pages flutter on their own.

DEEKS  
(softly praying)  
Deliver us from evil... deliver us  
from evil...

Suddenly, his breath hitches. A voice - not his own - escapes his lips:

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
You wore the cross to feel safe.  
But you still opened the door.

Deeks recoils - slaps his own mouth, as if trying to keep the voice in.

DEEKS  
No. Not me. You don't get to use  
me!

He rushes to a drawer, yanks it open - holy water, a crucifix, a worn cassette tape.

He stares at the tape. On it, scrawled in ink: "It spoke to me too."

FLASHBACK - INT. PRISON INFIRMARY - 1979

A younger Deeks watches as an inmate flatlines. The body twitches. Whispers fill the air.

The same voice he hears now.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
We spoke then. We never stopped.

BACK TO PRESENT

Deeks collapses to his knees, clutching the crucifix tight to his chest.

The room darkens. Candles blow out. Only the red LED on his old recorder blinks.

He hits RECORD.

DEEKS  
Session log. I can feel it now...  
behind the words... between the  
prayers. I am... compromised.

His voice slips - the next sentence comes out in the voice of a child.

DEEKS (AS CHILD) (CONT'D)  
I'm afraid of the hallway, Daddy.  
It's too dark in there...

He drops the recorder. Blood trickles from his nose.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
Confess, preacher. Before I preach  
through you.

Deeks lets out a raw SCREAM-

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. INFIRMARY HALL - MINUTES LATER

A GUARD finds Deeks collapsed in the chapel doorway. Eyes rolled back. Crucifix scorched into his palm.

On the floor beside him - the recorder still running.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
One more soul... and I will walk.

SCENE C - INT. HOSPITAL - HOSPICE WING - NIGHT

The hallway lights flicker violently. The oxygen machines hiss and sputter. A low-frequency hum rattles the air.

NURSE DARIA bolts out of a room, breathless.

DARIA

We've got another one seizing in  
204—it's happening again!

DOCTOR HAMMOND (50s), newly assigned and skeptical, steps into view.

HAMMOND

No sedatives? What kind of hospice  
is this?

DARIA

It's not seizures! It's—just come  
see!

INT. PATIENT ROOM 204 - CONTINUOUS

An ELDERLY MAN convulses on the bed. His eyes are rolled back, skin taut and waxen.

A machine beside him explodes. Sparks fly.

The wall mirror begins to ripple like water.

Suddenly, the patient stops.

Everyone freezes.

Then — the man's voice changes — a deep, inhuman rasp:

ELDERLY MAN (V.O.)

So many doors. So many whispers.  
All of them open now.

The lights go black.

SCREAMS echo down the corridor.

INT. HOSPICE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Nurse Daria and Hammond stumble back out into the hall. But now— every room is lit by red emergency lights. Whispers spill from under each door.

HAMMOND  
 What the hell is happening!?

From Room 206 – blood leaks from beneath the door.

A patient in Room 207 SLAMS his fists against the window – screaming without a tongue.

OVERHEAD INTERCOM  
 (static)... Elias... Elias...  
 Elias...

INT. SECURITY ROOM – SAME

A GUARD rewinds surveillance footage. On-screen: a shadow figure walks through the ward. Every camera glitches as it passes.

On a loop, we hear:

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
 They whisper before they die.

You taught them how.

INT. HOSPICE HALL – RETURN TO ACTION

Doors BURST open all at once.

Every dying patient sits upright – whispering in unison.

Their eyes are glowing white.

PATIENTS (IN UNISON)  
 We are the breath between the  
 beats. We are the silence between  
 names.

Suddenly – a gust of wind tears through the corridor.

Nurse Daria is lifted off her feet, thrown into a wall.

Doctor Hammond crawls backward.

DOCTOR HAMMOND  
 No... no, this isn't real–

From down the hallway, Elias appears.

Blood on his shirt. Recorder in hand.

He shouts:

ELIAS

It's using the threshold – the  
moment before death – it's feeding  
from all of them at once!

The overhead sprinklers explode into black rain.

Elias steps into the chaos and raises the recorder.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

If you're here—then show yourself.

A long silence.

Then – every lightbulb blows out.

The only illumination now: a flickering red "EXIT" sign.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)

You're already inside the mouth,  
Elias. All that's left is to  
swallow.

SCENE D - INT. HOSPITAL - EMPTY PATIENT ROOM - NIGHT

Dim. Silent. A long-unused room.

Mara stands alone, the door shut behind her. Her breathing is shallow. Her fingers tremble as she sets a small mirror on the bedside table and stares at her reflection.

She speaks aloud – uncertain if to herself or it.

MARA

You said you'd leave if I asked.

I'm asking now.

A beat. Her reflection tilts its head—but she hasn't moved.

MARA (WHISPERS) (CONT'D)

Please...

Suddenly—her reflection SMILES.

But it's not her smile.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)

You asked too late.

FLASH - MARA'S POV - A SERIES OF IMAGES:

Her fiancé's hospital room, empty, save for a photo of them smiling.

The hospice patients whispering in unison.

A shadowed figure stroking her hair while she slept.

Her own face - skin blistering, spiral seared into her throat.

BACK TO ROOM -  
CONTINUOUS

Mara SCREAMS. Covers the mirror with a towel.

She drops to her knees, clutching her chest.

Then - the lights flicker. The walls begin to pulse - breathing.

The voice returns - but layered now. Hers. Elias's. The entity.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
You are the vessel. You were always  
the vessel.

Suddenly-

The towel FALLS from the mirror.

But now - the reflection is Elias.

ELIAS (V.O.)  
Mara, don't listen-fight it-

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
He'll say anything to keep you  
empty.

The mirror CRACKS across the center. Splinters.

Mara staggers back. Blood trickles from her nose.

She grabs a hypodermic needle from a nearby tray.

MARA  
Then maybe I don't need either of  
you.

She jabs it into her thigh - full dose of ketamine - her emergency reserve for traumatic patients.

The world tilts.

The room melts away, sound warps.

INT. MARA'S MIND - SURREAL PLANE - NIGHTMARE VISION

She floats in a sea of black spirals, endless.

From below, hands reach up - familiar faces:

Her mother, her fiancé, her patients - all hollow-eyed,  
whispering.

WHISPERS (V.O.)

You let us in... Now let yourself  
go...

A single figure steps forward.

It's Elias - but not. His face twisted. Spiral carved into  
his chest.

He offers her the obsidian coin, glowing.

POSSESSED ELIAS

No more pain. No more guilt. Only  
warmth.

She reaches forward...

Then STOPS.

MARA

You don't feel warm. You feel  
empty.

Her palm ignites with white flame - she shoves it into his  
chest.

The nightmare shatters like glass.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - BACK TO REALITY

Mara jolts awake, gasping. Collapses onto the floor, drenched  
in sweat, eyes wild.

She crawls to the mirror.

It's just her now.

Blood on her lip. Tear streaks.

But her eyes – still hers.

A whisper lingers...

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
We're not finished.

She doesn't flinch this time.

MARA (V.O.)  
Neither am I.

SCENE E - INT. BASEMENT OFFICE - LATER THAT NIGHT

A dim bulb swings above. Elias sits at a desk surrounded by tapes, diagrams, and old photographs. A dusty reel-to-reel plays in the background – garbled voices murmuring.

Mara enters. Pale. Changed.

MARA  
I saw it. I was inside whatever  
that place is. I saw my mother...  
my fiancé... But they weren't them.

ELIAS  
They never are. It mimics.  
Consumes. Gives you the illusion of  
peace – right before it pulls you  
under.

He reaches for a photograph – grainy, black and white. A young man surrounded by soldiers. A spiral symbol stitched on their uniforms.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
1944. Nazi experiment in sensory  
deprivation and suggestion. They  
believed death could be "slowed"...  
stretched... and that a voice could  
be captured in the space between  
heartbeats.

MARA  
You're saying this thing is man-  
made?

ELIAS  
No. I'm saying they found it. Or it  
found them. And they didn't contain  
it. They recorded it.

He lifts an old vinyl disc, its surface etched not with music  
– but with a spiral groove.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Every whisper you've heard – every  
hallucination – is an echo from  
this. The first recording. The  
seed. And once you hear it... even  
once...

He holds up his hand – it's shaking uncontrollably.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

It never stops whispering.

MARA

Then why keep listening?

Elias finally looks at her. Haunted. Hollow.

ELIAS

Because I needed to know if we  
could undo it.

He reaches for his recorder – clicks it off.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

We can't.

Long silence.

MARA

So what now?

ELIAS

Now... we try not to die  
whispering.

INT. HOSPITAL – ABANDONED PSYCH ROOM – NIGHT

A forgotten corner of the hospital. Walls yellowed. Peeling  
paint. Medical straps hang limp from an old gurney. Deeks  
lights a few candles on the floor, each sputtering as if  
resisting the flame.

Elias preps a syringe with a sedative. Mara lies on the  
gurney, wrists loosely restrained. She's calm. Almost too  
calm.

DEEKS

You're sure she agreed to this?

ELIAS

She asked for it. Said if it didn't work... we'd both know what comes next.

Deeks kneels by her side. Pulls out a worn rosary. Begins to pray softly in Latin.

Elias injects the sedative.

MARA

Will it hurt?

ELIAS

Only if it works.

Her eyes drift shut. Elias places the obsidian coin on her chest. It starts to hum.

DEEKS (CHANTING)

Libera nos a malo... libera nos a tenebris...

Elias presses the recorder on.

ELIAS

Session Log. Ritual containment attempt. Subject: Mara Whitlock. Signs of progressive possession.

Suddenly – her body twitches. Eyes flutter open. Not fully hers.

MARA (DISTORTED)

You're wasting time, Doctor. She's not the host anymore.

DEEKS

It's lying.

ELIAS

Then where is it?

MARA (DISTORTED)

Behind you.

CRASH! All the candles blow out at once. The door SLAMS shut.

The walls begin to throb, pulsing faintly – as if breathing.

Deeks raises the crucifix – but the metal melts in his hand, hissing. He drops it with a scream.

DEEKS

This is no possession – this is  
infestation.

Mara's body LIFTS off the gurney – arms outstretched,  
shaking.

Her mouth opens wide – but it's not her voice that comes out.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)

There is no vessel. Only echo. Only  
passage.

Her skin ripples like something's moving underneath it.

Elias shouts over the chaos:

ELIAS

MARA, FIGHT IT! YOU'RE STRONGER  
THAN THIS THING!

MARA (V.O.)

I'm tired of fighting.

She smiles – and blood leaks from her nose, ears, and the  
corner of her mouth.

Elias lunges forward, pulls her into his arms – the obsidian  
coin CRACKS and disintegrates. All sound cuts.

Just silence.

Then – her body goes limp.

DEEKS (O.S.)

Is she...

Mara's eyes SNAP OPEN. Pure black.

She speaks in both their voices at once.

MARA / UNKNOWN VOICE

You brought me into the room.

All the walls split down the middle – vertical gashes forming  
spirals.

Deeks SCREAMS and runs to the door – it blasts open, sending  
him flying into the hall.

Elias collapses, clutching Mara's body. She convulses  
violently – then stops.

Just breathing.

Slow. Human again.

MARA (V.O., WEAK)  
Elias... I'm still here...

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL - CT SCAN ROOM - NIGHT

A low hum from the idle machine. The kind of cold, windowless room where death feels at home.

Elias stands behind the glass, watching Mara lie on the table. Her face is blank, her gown tied loose in back. She hasn't spoken since the ritual.

Technician sits nearby, but Elias waves him off.

ELIAS  
I'll run it solo.

The technician hesitates - then leaves.

Elias activates the scan. The machine WHIRS to life. Mara's body slides into the tube.

INT. SCAN CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Red laser dots crawl across her face. Her breathing is calm. Rhythmic.

But her eyes are wide open.

Suddenly—she speaks.

MARA (V.O.)  
Do you want to see what it did to me?

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SAME TIME

Elias leans toward the monitor - the scan begins generating cross-sections of Mara's brain. Standard... until it isn't.

The center folds begin to distort.

There's a formation in the occipital lobe - not a tumor. A spiral. Embedded deep. Writhing.

MARA (V.O.)  
You didn't pull it out. You just  
made room.

The spiral pulses on-screen. Moving. Breathing.

MARA (V.O.)  
It's not behind me anymore, Elias.

Elias SLAMS the emergency stop – the machine powers down. He  
rushes in.

INT. SCAN CHAMBER – CONTINUOUS

Mara is gone.

Only her hospital bracelet remains. Twisted into a spiral.

Elias spins – looks to the glass...

His own reflection is gone. Replaced by her.

Her mouth moves.

MARA (V.O.)  
It's inside you now.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON – DECOMMISSIONED MEDICAL WARD –  
NIGHT

Dust dances in the flashlight beam. Elias moves carefully,  
alone, his bag slung over his shoulder. The place was sealed  
off after asbestos warnings – but he needed somewhere no one  
would follow.

He sets up the circle again.

Salt. Blood. The broken obsidian coin. The spiral – larger  
this time, scraped into the tile with a rusted bone saw.

He hits RECORD on his device.

ELIAS  
Final log. If this doesn't work...  
burn this tape.

He sits cross-legged at the center. Lights the candles.  
Starts whispering the ritual.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Breath for breath... voice to echo...  
I give you shape, I give you spine,  
I give you name...

A WHISPER cuts him off.

MARA (V.O.)

You never had a choice.

Elias opens his eyes.

Mara stands at the edge of the circle – barefoot, soaked,  
expression blank.

MARA

You think you're the hero, Elias?  
You were the door. From the very  
first breath.

ELIAS

You're not her.

MARA (V.O.)

No... but I wear her well.

Her skin begins to blister – just like in the shower vision.  
Only this time, she doesn't scream. She smiles.

Elias stands – the circle flickering. He raises the recorder.

ELIAS

I invited you once. I revoke it  
now. I know your name.

The spiral on the floor begins to hiss. The tiles tremble.  
The room warps, pulsing.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)

Do you? Say it.

Elias looks toward the spiral – his eyes bleeding.

ELIAS

Y'Shaleth.

The room ERUPTS in black flame.

Mara SHRIEKS – her voice no longer hers – hundreds of voices.

Elias stumbles forward – grabs the broken coin – plunges it  
into his chest.

A SCREAM – not of pain. Of rage. The spiral begins to collapse inward – devouring itself.

Mara drops to the ground, convulsing.

Everything goes SILENT.

INT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON – DECOMMISSIONED MEDICAL WARD –  
LATER

The fire is gone.

The spiral burned into the floor is now nothing but blackened ash, cracked and broken. Smoke curls upward from melted tile. Candles lie puddled.

Elias lies still, unconscious, blood soaking through his shirt from where the coin was driven into his chest.

A faint heartbeat.

Then – a sharp inhale.

His eyes snap open – clear. Human.

He crawls to Mara's crumpled body. She's still. Pale.

ELIAS  
Mara... please...

He gently rolls her over.

Her eyes flutter open.

MARA (WEAK)  
Elias...?

What happened?

He exhales in shock. Relief.

ELIAS  
You're back. You're really back.

Tears spill down his cheeks. He cradles her.

From behind them – in the far shadow – something shifts.

A flash of something – a face, maybe. His face.

Then... it's gone.

EXT. BLACK HOLLOW PRISON - SUNRISE

The morning sky is a dull orange. Fog clings to the ground like breath.

An ambulance door swings shut. Paramedics load Mara inside.

Elias stands beside Chaplain Deeks, blood still on his hands, looking out over the prison yard.

DEEKS  
So... did it work?

ELIAS (FLAT)  
I think so.

DEEKS  
You don't sound sure.

ELIAS  
I'm still here, aren't I?

Deeks eyes him. Then nods.

DEEKS  
For now.

The ambulance drives off. Elias watches it vanish into the mist.

A beat.

He turns away.

As he walks off... a WHISPER curls on the wind:

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
Thank you for letting me in.

Elias freezes.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL - HOSPICE ROOM - NIGHT

A quiet, sterile space. The fluorescent light hums softly overhead.

A NEW PATIENT (80s), unconscious, lies tucked beneath clean sheets. Peaceful. Serene. A small crucifix hangs over the bed.

The door creaks open.

ELIAS steps in – a little older, a little more tired, but seemingly whole again. He carries his familiar recorder and a small pouch.

He moves methodically. Pulls up a chair. Sets the recorder down.

ELIAS  
Session log... Patient 0199.

Hypnotic palliative transition. Thursday. 3:12 a.m.

He takes a breath. Steadies himself.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
If you can hear me... just relax.

Let your thoughts drift. Let go of the weight you've carried. You're safe now.

He reaches into the pouch... but there's no coin. Just a small rosary. A symbol of peace. No obsidian. No spiral.

He watches the patient breathe. Slow... slowing...

He clicks the RECORDER ON.

A long beat of silence.

The patient doesn't move.

But the air shifts.

The room darkens – subtly. Barely perceptible.

Then – from the recorder – a faint crackle.

A whisper.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)  
We never left.

Elias freezes.

His eyes slowly lift to the patient.

The old woman's lips twitch... ever so slightly.

But her eyes remain closed.

Then – silence.

Elias slowly reaches for the STOP button–

RECORDER (V.O.) – ELIAS'S VOICE

Just relax. Let your thoughts drift. Let go—

His own voice. But he hasn't spoken yet.

A quiet smile crosses the old woman's lips.

CUT TO BLACK.

**THE END.**