

The Hollow:  
The Beast Within

Logline: In the depths of New Mexico's Gila Wilderness,  
a park ranger's search for a missing hiker becomes a  
desperate fight for survival against a shapeshifting  
Skinwalker.

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EXT. GILA NATIONAL FOREST - DAY

The sun beats down on the GILA NATIONAL FOREST, a vast expanse of rugged terrain, pine trees, and hidden canyons. A lone hiker, EMILY (20s), navigates a narrow trail, her backpack jostling with each step. She wipes sweat from her brow, a determined look on her face.

EMILY

(To herself, panting)

Almost there... just a little further.

She rounds a bend in the trail and is met with a breathtaking view - a cascading waterfall surrounded by lush greenery. Emily's face lights up with joy.

EMILY

(Exhales)

Finally!

She sets down her backpack and pulls out her phone, snapping a selfie with the waterfall in the background.

A twig snaps behind her. Emily whips around, her smile fading.

EMILY

Hello? Anyone there?

Silence. She shrugs it off and returns to her phone, but a sense of unease lingers.

As she packs up her belongings, a shadow flickers at the edge of the forest. Emily doesn't notice, too engrossed in securing her backpack.

Suddenly, a guttural growl echoes through the canyon. Emily freezes, her heart pounding. She spins around, scanning the surrounding trees.

A figure emerges from the shadows - tall, gaunt, with glowing red eyes and a grotesque, animalistic face. It moves with an unnatural fluidity, its limbs contorting unnaturally.

Emily screams, dropping her phone and scrambling back. The creature lunges, its claws outstretched.

EXT. PARK RANGER STATION - DAY

JAKE BRODY (30s), a seasoned park ranger with a rugged charm, leans against his patrol truck, sipping coffee. He checks his watch, a hint of impatience in his eyes.

JAKE  
(Muttering to himself)  
Where the hell is that new guy?

A beat-up Jeep Cherokee pulls into the station parking lot. A young, eager park ranger, BEN (20s), hops out, a nervous smile on his face.

BEN  
Sorry I'm late, Ranger Brody! Got lost  
on the way.

Jake chuckles, a warm smile spreading across his face.

JAKE  
Don't worry about it, Ben. First day  
jitters, I get it.  
He claps Ben on the shoulder, then gestures towards the  
forest.

JAKE  
Now, let's get you out there and show  
you the ropes.

EXT. GILA NATIONAL FOREST - DAY

Emily stumbles through the forest, terror fueling her every step. The creature is hot on her heels, its growls echoing through the trees.

She trips over a root and falls to the ground, her breath coming in ragged gasps. The creature looms over her, its claws poised to strike.

A gunshot rings out. The creature recoils, a howl of pain escaping its throat. Jake emerges from the underbrush, his rifle aimed and steady.

JAKE  
Get back!

The creature hesitates, its eyes darting between Jake and Emily.

JAKE  
I said get back!

With a final snarl, the creature retreats into the shadows, vanishing as quickly as it appeared.

Jake rushes to Emily's side, helping her to her feet.

JAKE  
Are you okay?

Emily nods, her voice trembling.

EMILY  
What... what was that?

Jake glances in the direction the creature disappeared, a grim look on his face.

JAKE  
I don't know... but we need to get out of here.

He slings Emily's arm over his shoulder and leads her away, the forest eerily silent once more.

FADE TO:

EXT. GILA NATIONAL FOREST - DAY

Jake and Emily hike through the dense forest, their pace quickened by the adrenaline pumping through their veins. Emily leans heavily on Jake, her face pale and drawn.

JAKE  
(Looking around warily)  
Easy now. We're almost back to the trailhead.

EMILY  
(Gasping for breath)  
What was that thing? I've never seen anything like it.

Jake frowns, his eyes scanning the surroundings.

JAKE

I'm not sure. It looked like...  
something out of a legend.

Emily shivers.

EMILY

A legend?

JAKE

Yeah. There are stories about  
creatures in these woods. Skinwalkers,  
they call them. Shapeshifters.

Emily's eyes widen in fear.

EMILY

Shapeshifters? You mean like  
werewolves?

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE

Not exactly. Skinwalkers are more...  
sinister. They prey on the lost and  
the vulnerable.

Emily glances over her shoulder, a shiver running down her  
spine.

EMILY

Do you think it's still out there?  
Watching us?

Jake tightens his grip on his rifle.

JAKE

I don't know. But we need to get out  
of here before it finds us again.

They emerge from the trees onto the main trail. Emily lets  
out a sigh of relief as she spots the ranger station in the  
distance.

JAKE

Come on. Let's get you back to the  
station and get you checked out.

Emily nods, her legs wobbling as she takes a step forward.

JAKE

(Gently)

Take it easy. You've been through a lot.

He wraps his arm around her waist, supporting her as they make their way towards the station. The forest looms behind them, its shadows seeming to lengthen with each step.

CUT TO:

INT. PARK RANGER STATION - DAY

Jake and Emily burst through the door, the tension still clinging to them. Ben, who has been studying maps at a desk, jumps up in surprise.

BEN

(Wide-eyed)

What happened? Are you guys okay?

Jake guides Emily to a chair and gently lowers her down.

JAKE

We ran into some trouble out on the trail. This is Emily, she needs to rest.

Ben rushes to grab a bottle of water and a first-aid kit. He kneels beside Emily, concern etched on his face.

BEN

Are you hurt? Do you need me to call for an ambulance?

Emily shakes her head, taking a deep breath.

EMILY

I'm just shaken up. I'll be fine.

Jake places a comforting hand on her shoulder.

JAKE

Take your time. We're safe here.

He turns to Ben, his expression hardening.

JAKE

Ben, I need you to radio dispatch.  
Tell them we encountered a hostile  
situation on the trail and need  
backup.

Ben nods, his youthful eagerness replaced by a newfound seriousness. He grabs the radio and relays the message, his voice clear and concise.

JAKE

(To Emily)

Can you tell me what happened?

Emily takes a sip of water, her hands still trembling slightly.

EMILY

I was hiking to the waterfall when I  
heard a noise. I turned around and saw  
this... creature. It was tall, with  
glowing eyes and...

She shudders, unable to finish the sentence.

JAKE

It's okay. Take your time.

EMILY

It lunged at me, but you showed up  
just in time.

She looks at Jake with gratitude in her eyes.

JAKE

I'm just glad I was there.

He glances out the window, his gaze fixed on the forest in the distance. A dark cloud seems to hang over the trees, casting an ominous shadow over the landscape.

FADE TO:

INT. PARK RANGER STATION - DAY

Hours later, the station is buzzing with activity. Two additional rangers, SARAH (40s) and CARLOS (50s), have arrived, along with a local sheriff, SHERIFF DAVIS (60s), a weathered man with a no-nonsense demeanor.

They gather around a table, poring over maps of the forest. Jake stands at a whiteboard, sketching a rough outline of the creature Emily described.

SHERIFF DAVIS

So, you're telling me this girl saw  
a... what did you call it? A  
Skinwalker?

Jake nods, his face grim.

JAKE

That's what it looked like. Tall,  
gaunt, with glowing eyes. It moved  
like nothing I've ever seen before.

SARAH

(Skeptical)

Skinwalkers are just folklore, Jake.  
Old wives' tales.

JAKE

Maybe. But Emily saw something out  
there, and it wasn't human.

CARLOS

(Leaning in)

What about the hiker? The one reported  
missing yesterday. Any connection?

Jake exchanges a look with Sheriff Davis.

SHERIFF DAVIS

We found his backpack near the  
waterfall. No sign of him.

Emily, who has been sitting quietly in a corner, speaks up.

EMILY

I saw the backpack too. It was right  
before...

She trails off, her voice catching in her throat.

JAKE

(Soothingly)

It's okay, Emily. You don't have to  
talk about it if you don't want to.

Emily takes a deep breath.

EMILY

I need to. Maybe it'll help you find him.

She recounts her encounter with the creature, the terror in her voice evident. The other rangers listen intently, their faces a mixture of disbelief and concern.

SHERIFF DAVIS

(Stroking his chin)

This is starting to sound like more than just a missing person case.

JAKE

I agree. We need to find this thing before it hurts anyone else.

The rangers nod in agreement, a sense of determination settling over the room.

SARAH

What's the plan, Jake?

Jake looks at each of them in turn, his eyes steely.

JAKE

We're going back out there. And we're not coming back until we find that hiker and put an end to this Skinwalker.

CUT TO:

EXT. GILA NATIONAL FOREST - DAY

The sun dips below the horizon, casting long shadows across the forest. The search party, consisting of Jake, Ben, Sarah, Carlos, and Sheriff Davis, trek through the dense undergrowth, their flashlights cutting through the darkness.

JAKE

(Whispering)

Stay close. We don't know what we're up against.

The group moves in a tight formation, their senses heightened. The only sound is the crunch of leaves underfoot and the occasional hoot of an owl.

BEN  
(Nervous)  
Do you really think there's a  
Skinwalker out here?

Jake glances at him, his expression grim.

JAKE  
I don't know what else it could be.

SARAH  
(Scoffs)  
It's probably just a bear or a  
mountain lion.

CARLOS  
Or a prankster trying to scare us.

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE  
This is different. I can feel it.

They come to a clearing, the moonlight illuminating a small, abandoned cabin.

SHERIFF DAVIS  
Let's check it out. It might be a  
clue.

The group approaches cautiously, their weapons drawn. Jake reaches the door and slowly pushes it open.

The interior is dark and dusty, filled with cobwebs and decaying furniture. A musty smell hangs in the air.

SARAH  
(Shines her flashlight around)

Looks like nobody's been here in years.

Jake notices a strange symbol carved into the wall above the fireplace. It's a crudely drawn figure with elongated limbs and a misshapen head.

JAKE  
(Frowning)  
That's not a good sign.

Suddenly, a chilling howl pierces the silence. The rangers spin around, their flashlights searching the darkness.

A pair of glowing red eyes appear in the doorway, followed by the shadowy outline of a tall, gaunt figure.

JAKE  
(Raising his rifle)  
There it is!

The creature lunges, its claws outstretched.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED CABIN - NIGHT

Chaos erupts as the creature lunges into the cabin. Gunshots echo through the cramped space, shattering the silence. The rangers scatter, firing blindly into the darkness.

JAKE  
(Shouting)  
Hold your fire! Don't hit each other!

The creature moves with lightning speed, dodging bullets and leaping over furniture. It swipes at Carlos, its claws tearing through his jacket but missing his flesh.

CARLOS  
(Cursing)  
Damn it! It's too fast!

Sarah takes aim and fires, hitting the creature in the shoulder. It lets out a screech of pain, but the wound seems to heal instantly.

SARAH  
(Frustrated)  
What the hell is this thing?

Ben, frozen in fear, drops his rifle and backs away. The creature corners him, its glowing eyes fixated on his face.

BEN  
(Terrified)  
Stay away from me!

Just as the creature is about to pounce, Jake tackles it from behind, knocking it to the ground. The two grapple, a whirlwind of fists and claws.

JAKE  
(Grunting)  
Get back, Ben! Run!

Ben scrambles to his feet and stumbles out of the cabin, the sounds of the struggle fading behind him.

Inside, Jake manages to pin the creature to the floor, his fingers digging into its throat. The creature's eyes widen in surprise, then narrow with rage.

SKINWALKER  
(Hissing)  
You cannot stop me. I am the land. I  
am the night.

JAKE  
You're a monster. And I'm going to put  
you down.

He raises his rifle, ready to end the fight. But as he looks into the creature's eyes, he sees a flicker of something else. Fear.

The creature whimpers, its body going limp. Jake hesitates, his finger hovering over the trigger.

Suddenly, the cabin door bursts open and Sarah and Carlos rush in, their guns raised.

SARAH  
Jake! Are you okay?

Jake looks up at them, his expression troubled.

JAKE  
I don't know... I think it's...

Before he can finish, the creature vanishes in a puff of smoke, leaving behind only the lingering smell of sulfur.

The rangers lower their weapons, their faces etched with disbelief.

SHERIFF DAVIS  
(Entering the cabin)

What happened? Where is it?

Jake gestures to the empty space where the creature once lay.

JAKE

It's gone.

CUT TO:

EXT. GILA NATIONAL FOREST - NIGHT

The rangers emerge from the cabin, their flashlights sweeping across the moonlit clearing. The forest is silent, the only sound their own ragged breathing.

CARLOS

(Shaking his head)

I don't believe it. It just...  
disappeared.

SARAH

Like it was never even there.

Jake examines the ground where the creature vanished, a frown creasing his brow.

JAKE

It left something behind.

He holds up a small, feathered object - a talisman of some kind.

SHERIFF DAVIS

What is it?

Jake turns it over in his hands, studying the intricate carvings.

JAKE

I don't know. But it feels...  
important.

Ben, who has been standing silently at the edge of the clearing, speaks up.

BEN

Maybe we should go back to the  
station. It's not safe out here.

Jake nods, his eyes still fixed on the talisman.

JAKE

You're right. We need to regroup and figure out our next move.

The group makes their way back through the forest, their silence broken only by the crunch of leaves underfoot. The moon hangs heavy in the sky, its light casting an eerie glow over the trees.

As they reach the edge of the clearing, Jake pauses, a shiver running down his spine. He turns and looks back at the abandoned cabin, a sense of unease settling over him.

JAKE

(To himself)

We're not done yet. Not by a long shot.

CUT TO:

INT. PARK RANGER STATION - NIGHT

The rangers gather in the dimly lit station, their faces etched with weariness and concern. They spread out maps and documents on the table, the talisman placed prominently in the center.

JAKE

(Holding the talisman)

This is unlike anything I've ever seen. It's definitely not Navajo.

SARAH

Could it be Zuni? Or Apache?

CARLOS

We need to get this to someone who can identify it.

Sheriff Davis pulls out his phone.

SHERIFF DAVIS

I'm calling in a favor. I know a guy who might be able to help.

He dials a number and waits for an answer.

Meanwhile, Ben pours himself a cup of coffee, his hands shaking slightly.

BEN

I can't believe what I saw. It was like... a nightmare come to life.

Jake places a reassuring hand on his shoulder.

JAKE

We all saw it, Ben. You're not going crazy.

Ben forces a smile.

BEN

I just hope we can stop it before it hurts anyone else.

Emily, who has been sitting quietly in the corner, speaks up.

EMILY

I think it already has.

Everyone turns to look at her.

EMILY

The missing hiker... I think the Skinwalker took him.

A heavy silence falls over the room.

Sheriff Davis hangs up the phone.

SHERIFF DAVIS

My friend is on his way. He's a professor of anthropology at the university. He specializes in Native American culture.

JAKE

That's great news. Maybe he can shed some light on this talisman and what we're dealing with.

The rangers exchange hopeful glances.

Suddenly, the lights flicker and go out, plunging the station into darkness.

FADE TO:

INT. PARK RANGER STATION - NIGHT

The rangers are plunged into darkness, the only light coming from the moon filtering through the windows.

BEN  
(Startled)  
What the hell?

SARAH  
(Calmly)  
Must be a power outage.

JAKE  
(Reaching for his flashlight)  
Everyone stay calm. We'll get this sorted out.

The rangers fumble for their own flashlights, illuminating the room in sporadic beams of light.

CARLOS  
I'll go check the breaker.  
He disappears into the back room, his flashlight bobbing in the darkness.

SHERIFF DAVIS  
(Muttering)  
Just what we need. Another complication.

Emily shivers, drawing her jacket tighter around her.

EMILY  
It's getting cold in here.

Jake notices her discomfort and offers her his own jacket.

JAKE  
Here, take this.

EMILY  
(Hesitantly)  
Are you sure?

JAKE  
(Smiling)  
I'm tougher than I look.

He helps her into the jacket, their eyes meeting for a brief moment.

Suddenly, a loud bang echoes from the back room, followed by a cry of pain.

JAKE

Carlos!

The rangers rush towards the back room, their flashlights trained on the doorway. They find Carlos slumped on the floor, his flashlight rolling away.

SARAH

(Kneeling beside him)

Carlos! What happened?

Carlos groans, clutching his arm.

CARLOS

(Wincing)

Something hit me from behind. I didn't see what it was.

Jake examines the room, his flashlight sweeping across the walls.

JAKE

There's no sign of forced entry.  
Whatever attacked Carlos was already in here.

A cold dread settles over the group.

SHERIFF DAVIS

We're not alone.

The power suddenly surges back on, flooding the room with light. The rangers blink, their eyes adjusting to the brightness.

Jake looks around, his gaze lingering on the shadows that dance in the corners of the room. He knows that the Skinwalker is still out there, lurking in the darkness, waiting for its next opportunity to strike.

FADE TO:

INT. PARK RANGER STATION - NIGHT

The rangers gather around Carlos, who is nursing his injured arm. Sarah examines the wound, her face grim.

SARAH

It's not too deep, but it's a nasty gash. We need to clean it and bandage it up.

Ben retrieves the first-aid kit, his hands still trembling slightly.

BEN

(Nervously)

Maybe we should barricade the doors. Just in case.

Jake nods in agreement.

JAKE

Good idea. Let's secure the perimeter and make sure all the windows are locked.

The rangers quickly move to secure the station, pushing furniture against the doors and checking the windows. Emily helps Sarah tend to Carlos's wound, her earlier fear replaced by a sense of determination.

SHERIFF DAVIS

(Pacing the room)

I don't like this. We're sitting ducks in here.

JAKE

I know. But we can't let fear control us. We need to stay focused and figure out our next move.

A knock at the door startles everyone. They exchange uneasy glances.

JAKE

Who is it?

PROFESSOR THOMAS

(From outside)

It's Professor Thomas. Sheriff Davis called me.

Jake cautiously opens the door, revealing a tall, thin man with graying hair and a scholarly air. He carries a worn leather briefcase.

JAKE  
Professor Thomas? Come in.

Professor Thomas steps inside, taking in the scene.

PROFESSOR THOMAS  
(Raising an eyebrow)  
I see I've arrived at an opportune moment.

Sheriff Davis steps forward, extending his hand.

SHERIFF DAVIS  
Professor, thank you for coming. We need your expertise.

Professor Thomas shakes his hand, his eyes scanning the room.

PROFESSOR THOMAS  
I understand you have a... situation.

Jake nods, gesturing to the talisman on the table.

JAKE  
We encountered a creature in the forest. We think it's a Skinwalker.

Professor Thomas approaches the table, his eyes widening as he examines the talisman.

PROFESSOR THOMAS  
(Intrigued)  
This is fascinating. May I?

Jake nods, and Professor Thomas carefully picks up the talisman. He turns it over in his hands, his fingers tracing the intricate carvings. A look of recognition dawns on his face.

PROFESSOR THOMAS  
This is Navajo. It's a protective charm, meant to ward off evil spirits.

The rangers lean in, eager to hear more.

PROFESSOR THOMAS

But the symbols... they've been  
corrupted. Twisted into something dark  
and malevolent.

JAKE

What does that mean?

Professor Thomas looks up, his eyes grave.

PROFESSOR THOMAS

It means we're dealing with something  
far more dangerous than we initially  
thought.

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