

THE BLACK COACH.

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OVER BLACK:

"The bad deed returns on the bad-deed doer."

- Traditional Gaelic quote.

FADE IN:

INT. MARGARET'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

A dim, dated room. A HEART MONITOR beeps softly.

MARGARET ELMWOOD, 80s, frail, lies in bed.

DOCTOR ED BRANDT, 50s, sits beside her.

A faint MOAN.

Brandt looks up.

Margaret's eyes flutter open.

A weak smile.

Brandt stares.

INT. THE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

The bedroom door CREAKS open.

Brandt steps out -- nearly collides with NICK BRANDT, 60s, sharp suit, a layer of Grecian formula.

DOCTOR
She woke up. She spoke.

NICK
What!? She's in a coma!

DOCTOR
Not anymore. She asked for tea.

Nick grips his shoulder.

NICK
You said she was on her way out.

DOCTOR
I... I don't know what happened.

Nick pulls him close.

NICK
You're saying she's fine now? The town needs this.

DOCTOR
Nick, what are you --

NICK
Everyone's expecting her to go.

A beat.

DOCTOR
I'm not a murderer.

Nick leans in.

NICK
She's barely hanging on. You'd just... ease her suffering.

DOCTOR
I can't.

Nick's voice drops.

NICK
Don't make me tell Helen about the Motel.

Brandt stiffens.

NICK (CONT'D)
Life would get very bad for you.

Nick nods toward the door.

NICK (CONT'D)
Take care of it.

INT. MARGARET'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Margaret lies still.

The door CREAKS.

Her eyes open.

MARGARET
How long was I asleep?

Brandt steps in. Closes the door.

He moves to the bed.

His hands grip the pillow.

He yanks it free -- presses it over her face.

Margaret's hands claw at him.

Muffled cries.

Her body jerks. Fists pound weakly.

He presses down.

The HEART MONITOR FLATLINES.

Silence.

Crickets outside.

Brandt lifts the pillow.

Margaret's lifeless eyes stare back, her mouth locked in a silent scream.

He pulls her hands off his arms.

INT. THE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nick smokes, ear to the door.

The knob turns.

He steps back.

Brandt stumbles out.

NICK

When this joint makes money,
you'll thank me.

Three loud POPS echo below.

POP! POP! POP!

Wet thuds.

They look at each other.

Move to the railing. Peer over the edge.

NICK (CONT'D)

Old pipes.

EXT. MANSION OF THE ELMS - NIGHT

A large Victorian mansion under a clouded moon.

Mist drifts across the field.

The driveway disappears into black.

EXT. FRONT DOORS - NIGHT

A POLICEMAN stands at the entrance.

A hearse and patrol car nearby.

Nick leans against his luxury car.

Headlights approach.

The car pulls in. Stops.

The door opens. CLAIRE TAYLOR, 60s, steps out. Curlers tucked beneath a tied kerchief.

CLAIRE

I just heard the news. Poor Miss Elmwood. She was so young.

NICK

You call eighty-three young?

CLAIRE

These days... yes.

NICK

I won't argue with the great preserver of Elmwood history herself.

The front door opens.

The FUNERAL DIRECTOR and ASSISTANT carry out a covered body.

The Doctor follows as they move toward the hearse.

He stops near Nick and Claire.

CLAIRE

Did she die peacefully, Ed?

A beat.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
She didn't suffer, did she?

DOCTOR
No.
(to Nick)
I'll send someone tomorrow to
collect the equipment.

Nick nods.

CLAIRE
She should have gone to the
hospital.

DOCTOR
She wanted to stay at Elmwood.

CLAIRE
To die in her own bed. I suppose
that was her wish.

Nick watches the Doctor.

NICK
We'll need the death certificate
to get things moving.

CLAIRE
For God's sake, Nick, she hasn't
even left the property!

NICK
This place is on the town's dime
now, Claire. I've got to make sure
the Elmwood Legacy.

The Doctor turns. Walks to his car.

He gets in. Drives off.

EXT. THE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Headlights cut through thick ground fog.

Trees loom on either side.

INT. DOCTOR'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

The Doctor grips the wheel.

Tears streak his face.

THUMP!

Something slams the driver's door.

He jerks toward the window.

A SHADOW FIGURE runs alongside the car. Its form flickers -- a man in work clothes.

A SHADOW HAND SLAMS the glass.

An imprint spreads across the condensation.

DOCTOR

What the hell!?

He snaps between the window and the road. His foot presses harder on the gas.

THUMP!

He turns to the passenger side.

Another Shadow Figure keeps pace. Its shape warps -- flashes of old clothing.

A Shadow Hand bangs the glass.

THUMP! THUMP!

The pounding builds.

His foot drives the pedal down.

The engine ROARS.

EXT. THE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The car tears through swirling fog.

Headlights cut a narrow path.

Shadow Figures race alongside, shifting as they run.

INT. DOCTOR'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

The Doctor's eyes dart to the gate ahead.

His grip tightens on the wheel.

EXT. THE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The Mercedes swerves down the drive.

More Shadow Figures break from the woods.

One leaps onto the roof.

STOMP! STOMP!

INT. DOCTOR'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

The roof caves inward. Metal groans.

Fists hammer the doors and windows.

The wheel jerks in his hands.

He SCREAMS.

EXT. THE DRIVEWAY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

The car fishtails.

TIRES SCREECH. Metal GRINDS against stone -- bright sparks burst as it clips the columns.

SHADOW FIGURES swarm the car.

It ROARS onto the road.

INT. DOCTOR'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

The roof buckles again.

STOMP! STOMP!

He turns to the passenger window.

A faceless Shadow stares back.

EXT. THE CAR WINDSHIELD - NIGHT

A spectral horse head looms.

It NEIGHS.

Fog blasts from its nostrils across the glass.

INT. DOCTOR'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

He SCREAMS. Covers his eyes.

The wheel spins.

EXT. ELMWOOD ROAD - NIGHT

The car swerves off the road.

It SLAMS into a tree.

Dirt and steam burst upward.

Shadow Figures break apart into fog.

Silence.

Smoke rises from the wreck.

Inside, the Doctor's body is crushed behind the engine.

Blood covers his face.

His eyes stare.

His mouth hangs open -- frozen.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

A small store along a wooded road.

SUPER: One Month Later.

KALI SAVIN, 30s, leans against her car, phone to her ear.
She's confident, professional, and composed.

KALI

So it's still "wait and see"?

THOMAS (V.O.)

Like I said, the lab is backed up.

KALI

The home test said I was positive.
I just filed for divorce, for
God's sake!

THOMAS (V.O.)

Home tests aren't one hundred
percent accurate. It shouldn't be
much longer.

KALI

It has to be wrong. No symptoms.
Nothing.

THOMAS (V.O.)

I'll call you as soon as I know.

KALI

Fine. I'll be on a job site for
the next couple of weeks. Call me
here.

THOMAS (V.O.)

Got it.

She ends the call. Turns --

Nearly collides with JOHN PARO, 40s, holding snacks and a
large soda. His suit is rumpled.

PARO

Didn't mean to eavesdrop, but
voices carry in the wilderness.

Tears well in her eyes.

KALI

I can't believe this is happening.

PARO

It'll be okay, Kali.

KALI

How can you know that?

PARO

I don't, but when life looks like
crap, that's what people say.

KALI

A baby. I've wanted this for so
long. But Ron --

Paro hugs her.

PARO

I know... I know... but...
somehow, things will work out.

KALI

Paro...

PARO

Trust me, Kali.

KALI
Paro...

PARO
I'm right.

KALI
Maybe so, but... your soda's
leaking on my shirt sleeve.

He pulls back. Looks down at the spill.

PARO
Damn! Sorry!

MATTHEW OSTRUM, 20s, a polished, preppy, exits the store with
a bag.

MATTHEW
What's this? Did I miss a group
hug?

PARO
Yeah, and you weren't invited.

Matthew reaches into the bag. Hands Kali a bottle of water.

KALI
Thanks.

She opens her car door.

Matthew tosses cigarettes to Paro.

MATTHEW
You forgot these at the checkout.

KALI
Paro! Seriously?

MATTHEW
Reformed? Yeah, right.

PARO
I am!

MATTHEW
You don't carry a pack if you've
quit.

PARO
It's part of my process.
Temptation on me every day --
fight it, win it.

Matthew eyes him.

MATTHEW
Whatever you say.

EXT. ELMWOOD ROAD - DAY

Kali's car moves along a tree-lined road.
Sunlight spills through.

INT. KALI'S CAR - DAY

Matthew studies the GPS on his phone.

PARO
So, this is the nowhere everyone's
five hundred miles away from.

MATTHEW
Is that original?

PARO
I got it from an old movie.

MATTHEW
Which movie?

PARO
You never saw it.

MATTHEW
How do you know?

PARO
It's in black and white.

MATTHEW
Right. Never saw it.

KALI
What's it saying?

Matthew checks the screen.

MATTHEW
Less than a minute.

PARO
Why the hell would someone build a
mansion out here?

MATTHEW

Privacy?

PARO

More like solitary confinement.

Matthew points ahead.

MATTHEW

Turn here.

EXT. THE FRONT GATE - DAY

The car passes under a corroded iron arch: ELMWOOD.

EXT. MANSION OF THE ELMS - THE FRONT DOORS - DAY

Nick leans against his car.

A cigarette burns between his fingers.

He checks his watch. Exhales smoke.

INT./EXT. KALI'S CAR - TRAVELLING - DAY

The mansion rises above the treetops.

Turrets cut through the canopy.

PARO

Did they ship this place in from
one of those crusty British shows?
You know... with the butlers and
drama?

The full mansion comes into view.

MATTHEW

(doubtful)

Just the three of us, Kali?

KALI

The Boston office is sending
backup.

Matthew gestures toward the driveway.

MATTHEW

Looks like we've got a welcoming
committee..

Nick paces. Checks his watch again.

KALI
That doesn't scream "Claire
Taylor" to me.

MATTHEW
Uh-oh, the dreaded watch-check.

PARO
Classic. "My time is more valuable
than yours."

The car slows. Stops.

Kali forces a smile at Nick.

Nick doesn't return it.

KALI
(through her teeth)
Let me handle this.

Doors open.

EXT. THE FRONT DOORS - DAY

Kali, Paro, and Matthew approach.

NICK
Well, well.

KALI
Hello, I'm Kali Savin.

They shake.

NICK
Nick Brandt, Town Treasurer.

KALI
Nice to meet you, Mr. Brandt.
These are my associates, John Paro
and Matthew Ostrum.

NICK
You're late.

KALI
Apologies. We didn't realize how
far out the house was.

NICK

Right.

KALI

I was expecting to meet Claire Taylor?

NICK

She's running late, too.

KALI

I see.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

A dated kitchen.

Tile floors slope toward floor drains.

Scarred counters line the walls.

An old stove dominates the space.

No windows.

A key turns in the lock.

The heavy door scrapes open.

Nick enters. The others follow.

He flips a switch.

A single bulb flickers on, casting a dim yellow glow.

NICK

I promised the Board of Selectmen this whole thing stays on budget. Will it?

KALI

I won't know the answer until I've seen the rooms and their contents.

NICK

It's seventy rooms filled with old shit. What's there to know?

MATTHEW

An 18th century table by Thomas Tufft of Philadelphia recently sold at auction for four point sixty-two million.

NICK

What the hell -- for one table?

PARO

Easily mistaken by the untrained
eye as a piece of shit.

Nick claps his hands.

NICK

We've got a ton of tables! Okay,
the sooner this gets done, the
sooner the house can be turned
over to the town and start making
money.

The bulb BURSTS.

Glass scatters. Smoke.

Darkness.

NICK (CONT'D)

Son of a bitch! Damned wiring in
this place. Hang on, I'll get a
new one.

Nick moves off into the dark.

MATTHEW

Jeez, this place is creepy in the
dark.

Kali pulls out her phone. Switches on the flashlight.

The beam hits the broken bulb.

Paro steps in. Twists out the base.

KALI

How could it explode?

MATTHEW

Mr. Brandt mentioned bad wiring.

PARO

This bulb is ancient. Early
twentieth century. These old ones
are supposed to last forever.

MATTHEW

Well, that one didn't.

The kitchen door CREAKS open.

Light spills in, framing a figure.

CLAIRE

Hello, hello!

Claire steps inside, well-dressed and polished, a stark contrast to the dreary room.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

I see you found the place!

She crosses to Kali, hand out.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

You must be Kali Savin!

They shake.

KALI

I am. And you're --

CLAIRE

Mrs. Claire Taylor, the one and only.

KALI

This is John Paro, specializing in antique clocks.

PARO

Pleasure to meet you.

CLAIRE

Mister Paro.

Matthew steps forward, offers a hand.

KALI

This is Matthew Ostrum, our furniture and art expert.

MATTHEW

Hello.

Nick returns from the dark, a new bulb in hand.

NICK

This place as a museum. Can it pull in two hundred grand a year?

KALI

That depends on how many visitors you attract.

NICK

Right. So what's the process?

KALI

We'll start by photographing every room, every angle. Then we evaluate and categorize all the furniture, paintings, and anything of historical value.

Nick turns to Claire.

NICK

Finally got here, eh?

INT. THE SERVANTS' HALLWAY - DAY

A narrow hallway. Peeling paint. Water stains. Closed doors line the walls.

Claire leads them to a creaking stairway.

CLAIRE

These rooms would have been for kitchen staff. The house staff lived on the third floor.

They start up the stairs.

Footsteps echo.

INT. THE MAIN HALLWAY - DAY

A door CREAKS open.

A glass display case sits across from it.

Claire leads them inside.

CLAIRE

The Main Hall.

KALI

Impressive.

Matthew studies the display case. Dust coats the glass.

PARO

What we can see of it.

Claire feels along the wall.

CLAIRE

Just a moment.

CLICK!

The chandelier hums on.

Dim light spreads across the hall.

Matthew wipes the glass.

Inside: Old tools. A mallet. Mason instruments. A cracked photograph. In the photo: An OLD MAN seated with workers.

Behind him, a TEEN WORKER stands with eyes closed.

Matthew leans closer.

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

That's Joseph Elmwood in the
photograph, with some of the
workers.

The Teen Worker's eyes are open now. Fixed on him.

Matthew jerks back with a GASP.

PARO

What's the matter?

Matthew shakes it off.

MATTHEW

Nothing.

CLAIRE

Library, study, ballroom, family
and formal dining rooms all on
this floor. Bedrooms on the
second, servants' quarters on the
third, as I said.

POP! POP! POP!

Sharp cracks echo through the house.

Everyone stops.

Nick looks up toward the second floor.

NICK

Pipes.

Claire turns toward the stairs.

CLAIRE
Shall we head upstairs?

She moves on.

INT. THE STAIRCASE - DAY

They climb.

Steps CREAK.

Nick lingers at the base. Pulls out a cigarette.

Matthew hangs back near the display case.

He looks at it again.

Moves toward the stairs.

A sudden BUMP from a nearby room.

He stops.

French doors sit closed. Grime covers the glass.

He steps closer. Listens.

Nothing.

He pushes one door open.

Darkness inside.

A faint SCRAPE.

MATTHEW
Hello?

He steps in.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

A grandfather clock stands still at twelve.

Wind whistles through the fireplace.

Dust covers the furniture.

Chairs and sofa sit in shadow.

A faint RUSTLE.

Matthew looks toward a corner. A rocking chair sits still.

He turns back toward the door. Moves out.

Behind him, darkness gathers in the chair.

A SHADOW FIGURE takes shape... rises from the chair. A red velvet cushion shows beneath it.

INT. THE STAIRCASE - DAY

Nick leans against the wall. Smoke drifts around him.

CLAIRE (O.S.)

You have your pick of the
bedrooms.

KALI (O.S.)

Thank you. They're all quite
wonderful.

Nick turns.

Claire, Kali, and Paro come down.

Matthew joins them.

PARO

Find anything interesting?

MATTHEW

Just more dark.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The front doors shake. Nick stumbles into Paro.

NICK

Shit!

They stare at the doors.

NICK (CONT'D)

See who it is, Claire.

Claire moves toward the doors.

The banging grows louder.

She stops.

Paro steps up beside her. Holds out his hand.

PARO

Keys.

She hands them over.

He unlocks the door.

Swings it open.

No one there.

Claire steps past him.

EXT. FRONT DOORS - DAY

Claire steps onto the stoop.

CLAIRE

Hello?

RON (O.S.)

Hello!?

She turns.

RON GARRICK, 30s, sharp, well-dressed, rounds the corner of the mansion.

CLAIRE

Yes?

RON

Elmwood Mansion?

CLAIRE

Yes. Can I help you?

RON

I rang the bell but no one answered.

CLAIRE

That's the original door -- no need to bang on it like you did.

RON

I didn't knock. I just rang the bell.

CLAIRE

The bell doesn't work.

Paro joins her.

PARO
You're kidding.

RON
Paro! Long time, bud?

PARO
Look what the wind blew in.

RON
Came by car, actually.

Claire looks between them, curious.

CLAIRE
You two know each other?

Kali steps out.

RON
Kali!

KALI
Let me guess. The Boston office
sent you.

RON
Took some convincing, but yeah,
I'm here!

KALI
He's with us, Mrs. Taylor.

CLAIRE
Oh! Good.

Nick pushes out the door.

NICK
So, when can I expect a value on
this place?

KALI
We'll get started --

NICK
-- yeah, yeah. Just make it
thorough and quick.

He heads down the steps toward his car.

NICK (CONT'D)

Let me know if you find a million-dollar desk or a four-million-dollar table!

He gets in and drives off.

CLAIRE

You can say it. He's an asshole.

Claire hands Kali the keys.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

You've got my number. Call if you need anything. The fridge is stocked. I'll check in later this week.

She heads down the steps.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Take care, now.

KALI

Thank you, Claire.

Ron leans in beside Kali..

RON

So... hi.

Kali turns away.

KALI

Let's grab our luggage.

She heads down the steps.

Paro and Matthew follow.

Ron lingers, rubbing his arms.

RON

Brrr! Freezing around here!

EXT. MANSION OF THE ELMS - NIGHT

The moon sits behind thin clouds. The mansion and woods fall under a pale glow.

INT. THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Paro twists in a final bulb.

Light fills the room.

PARO
Let there be light.

Kali enters with a legal pad.

KALI
You starting on the clocks down
here?

Paro hesitates.

PARO
Hey, ah...

Kali writes.

KALI
I didn't invite him here.

PARO
I know, but what's the plan? You
gonna tell him?

KALI
Not until I hear back from the
doctor.

PARO
I can take him outside... get him
to leave.

KALI
I know how you'd "get him to
leave."

PARO
I wouldn't lay a hand on him!

POP! POP! POP!

The sound cuts through the room.

Kali and Paro freeze.

Silence.

Paro scans the room.

Matthew rushes in.

MATTHEW
Did you hear that!?

PARO
(Screams)
Son of a bitch! Damn it, Matthew!

MATTHEW
Did you hear it?

PARO
Yes! It wasn't as bad as you
running in here like a nut! If I
keel over, it's on you!

MATTHEW
That wasn't the pipes, Kali.

Kali grips the pad.

She looks at Paro.

INT. KALI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A large room. Dark wood walls. Brass fixtures.

Moonlight passes through a sheer curtain.

Kali sits on the bed. Papers spread out.

She writes.

A horse WHICKERS outside.

She stops.

Sets the pen down.

Moves to the window.

Parts the curtain.

Fog covers the ground beyond the house.

The WHICKER again.

She leans closer. Looks across the property.

INT. THE SERVANTS' HALL - NIGHT

At the far end, a FIGURE slips into the kitchen.

PARO

Ron?

He moves down the hall.

INT. THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Paro enters.

The room is empty.

The service door is bolted.

A distant SCREAM carries from outside.

He listens.

EXT. THE FRONT DOORS - NIGHT

Matthew stands on the stoop.

SCREAMS echo across the field.

He grips the railing. Looks out.

Kali steps out behind him.

KALI

Did you hear that?

Matthew nods.

Eyes fixed on the tree line.

The SCREAMS stop.

MATTHEW

Someone in trouble?

Kali scans the trees.

Stillness.

Crickets return.

Kali exhales. They step inside and close the door.

INT. THE FRONT DOORS - NIGHT

Matthew throws the bolt. CLUNK.

Paro steps out from the hallway.

PARO

You two weren't just downstairs,
were you?

Kali shakes her head.

PARO (CONT'D)

Where's Ron?

KALI

In his room, I think.

A loud POP echoes from upstairs.

INT. BOTTOM OF THE STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Kali, Paro, and Matthew gather at the foot of the stairs.

POP!

A sharp crack from upstairs.

The sickening sound ripples through the house.

BANG! BANG! BANG! The front door rattles violently.

Kali throws the bolt. Yanks the door open.

Nothing outside.

PARO

This place is screwed up.

Kali gives a small nod.

INT. RON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ron, shirtless, lies on the bed.

Earbuds in.

Phone in hand.

Music leaks faintly.

A whiskey bottle sits on the table.

A glass beside it.
Photos scroll across his screen --
All with him and Kali.
Beach. London. Skiing. Horses. Wedding.
His grip loosens.
The phone drops onto the bed.
A horse WHINNIES outside.
Silence.
He breathes deep.
His eyes close.
Another WHINNY.

INT. KALI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kali enters with a laptop and coffee.
Closes the door.
A horse WHINNIES.
She moves to the window. Pulls the curtain aside.
Another WHINNY.
She throws the window open.

EXT. THE FIELD - NIGHT

CLOP-CLOP-CLOP.
Hooves on grass.
A wagon CREAKS.
Kali scans the field.
Nothing.

INT. KALI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

She turns from the window. Heads for the door.

INT. THE STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Kali rushes down the stairs.

INT. THE FRONT DOORS - NIGHT

She unlocks the deadbolt.

Throws the door open.

Runs out.

EXT. THE FIELD - NIGHT

Kali runs into the field.

She turns, searching the dark.

Ground fog shifts around her.

She stops.

Looks to the woods.

EXT. THE WOODLINE - NIGHT

Mist hangs low among the trees.

A faint WHICKER.

Kali holds still.

A DARK SHAPE gathers in the haze.

It thickens. Takes form -- a sleek BLACK HORSE.

A tall black plume sways above its head.

Breath rolls from its nostrils.

CLOP. CLOP. CLOP.

It steps forward, pulling a BLACK COACH from the mist.

Large. Heavy.

Iron-rimmed wheels.

Black wood slick with moisture.

Two lanterns burn on either side, their glow dull and yellow against the night.

A driver sits above -- features indistinct, form shifting.

Kali steps closer.

Her foot catches. She stumbles.

She looks down --

Looks up.

No horse. No coach.

Kali turns in place.

Alone in the field.

EXT. ELMWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUILDING - DAY

A row of storefronts.

A sign: Elmwood Historical Society.

INT. CLAIRE'S OFFICE - DAY

A cramped room crowded with file cabinets, books stacked high, and maps pinned to the walls.

Behind a desk buried in clutter, Claire sips her coffee while flipping through the morning paper.

The phone RINGS.

CLAIRE
Elmwood Historical Society, Claire
Taylor speaking.

Silence.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Hello?

KALI (V.O)
Claire?

CLAIRE
Kali? Is that you?

EXT. THE FRONT DOORS - DAY

Kali paces on the stoop. Phone to her ear. Clothes ruffled.

KALI

Yes.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

CLAIRE

I didn't expect to hear from you
so soon. How are things going,
dear?

Kali says nothing.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Kali? Is something wrong?

KALI

Did you tell me... everything
about the Mansion of the Elms?

Claire pauses.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

Paro sits at the table.

Coffee in one hand. Cigarette in the other.

Matthew enters, heads to the stove.

Both look worn.

MATTHEW

Where's Kali?

PARO

Outside on the phone.

MATTHEW

Hopefully calling the office to
tell them we're leaving.

PARO

Leaving? We're just getting
started.

Matthew eyes the cigarette.

MATTHEW

I thought you were keeping those
to resist temptation?

He pours coffee.

PARO

Temptation won. Bit me right on
the ass.

Matthew sits.

Ron stumbles in.

Disheveled.

He pours coffee with a shaky hand.

RON

Morning, gents.

PARO

You look like hell.

Ron glances at him.

RON

Glass houses, Paro.

He drops into a chair.

MATTHEW

Did you hear anything last night?

RON

Hear what?

MATTHEW

Screaming. In the woods.

PARO

At least you didn't see a strange
guy wander into the kitchen.

MATTHEW

What strange guy?

PARO

It was a blur. I was tired. Shut
up.

RON

What blur?

PARO
I thought it was you.

RON
Me?

Paro takes a long drag from his cigarette.
Matthew stares into his coffee.
Ron studies them. Takes a sip.

EXT. THE FRONT DOORS - DAY

Kali lowers the phone.
It vibrates in her hand.
The screen reads: DR. THOMAS.
She answers.

KALI
Doctor Thomas?

THOMAS (V.O.)
Kali. How are you?

KALI
Did you hear from the lab?

THOMAS (V.O.)
Kali, the test results are
negative.

A beat.

THOMAS (V.O.)
Kali?

KALI
I'm here. Thank you, Doctor.

She ends the call.
Stands still.
Phone in hand.

INT. THE MUSIC ROOM - DAY

A large room. Ornate woodwork.

Covered piano.

Kali types on her laptop.

Stops.

Closes it.

She pulls the tarp from the piano.

Dust lifts into the air.

KALI

Oh, God!

She coughs. Waves it away.

Ron enters. Moves to help.

RON

Let me give you a hand.

KALI

Just... leave it, please.

The tarp drops to the floor.

Ron pauses.

RON

I was hoping we could talk.

KALI

About?

She lifts the piano lid.

Yellowed keys.

She sets the laptop on the stand.

RON

Everything.

KALI

Talking about "everything" takes a lifetime. You blew that chance.

RON

I know. I know I did.

Kali checks a brass plate behind the keys.

Types into the laptop.

RON (CONT'D)
I just realized it too late.

KALI
You realized it when I walked in
on you and the redhead.

RON
It was a mistake!

KALI
Along with the drinking.

RON
Because you wouldn't forgive me!

Kali looks up.

KALI
So now it's my fault?

She shuts the laptop. CLICK.

RON
No. No, it's not your fault. It's
mine. I own it. All of it. I
fucked up and I'm sorry!

Kali watches him.

RON (CONT'D)
My lawyer gave me the papers. I
just... I just want to know if
there's any chance left.

A beat.

KALI
Start work in the breakfast room.
There are a few paintings we need
cataloged.

Ron nods.

RON
Got it. I need to run into town
first.

KALI
Ron.

He heads for the door.

RON
Back in an hour.

KALI
I'm calling the office today to
have someone else sent out.

Ron pauses.

RON
If you hated me that much you
would have called them last night.

He exits.

Kali sits at the piano.

Her fingers hover.

She presses one key.

A low note rings out.

INT. THE LIBRARY - DAY

Shelves line the walls.

Matthew photographs a chair. The camera CLICKS.

Paro leans over a mantle clock.

Headlamp on. Tools spread out.

PARO
Kali used to have a light in her
eye. Then she met Ron.

MATTHEW
And?

PARO
He shut it off.

MATTHEW
You've known her a long time, huh?

Matthew lowers the camera.

PARO
Longer than Ron.

MATTHEW
Did you meet her through work?

PARO

I worked with her father first.
Now I work with her.

Paro studies the clock.

Adjusts a loupe.

PARO (CONT'D)

These Swiss gears... amazing
craftsmanship.

Behind them, the door eases open without a sound.

MATTHEW

What happened to her father?

PARO

Passed away when she was in high
school.

MATTHEW

That's rough.

PARO

Yeah. I guess I've always felt
like I should look out for her.
Not that she needs it, but
still...

Paro glances at his laptop.

The screen goes dark.

PARO (CONT'D)

What the... ? Battery's dead.

MATTHEW

Change it.

PARO

It was fully charged this morning!

Matthew checks his camera.

MATTHEW

This is dead, too.

PARO

Great. Something's up with the
chargers.

Paro taps his headlamp.

The light fades out.

He waves a hand in front of his face.

PARO (CONT'D)

Perfect.

They fumble with batteries.

Behind them, the door closes.

EXT. ELMWOOD ROAD - DAY

Ron's car speeds along a narrow, winding road.

Tires ride close to the edge.

INT. RON'S CAR - DAY

Ron grips the wheel.

The radio blasts.

Trees whip past the windows.

EXT. ELSIE RYER'S HOME - DAY

A small, tidy house on a quiet street.

Claire's car pulls up.

She gets out. Heads to the door.

CLAIRE (V.O.)

Thank you for seeing me on such
short notice, Elsie. I hate
dropping in like this.

ELSIE (V.O.)

Nonsense, Claire.

INT. ELSIE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

A neat, orderly room. Everything in place.

ELSIE RYER, 80s, composed, sits upright.

ELSIE

How are things at the Historical
Society?

CLAIRE

I'm afraid I'm a poor substitute
for you.

ELSIE

I hear otherwise. The school roof?

CLAIRE

We got the estimates.

ELSIE

Nick will be pleased.

CLAIRE

I'm dreading it.

ELSIE

I'm glad he's your headache now.
So tell me, Claire, what can I do
for you?

CLAIRE

It's about Elmwood Mansion.

Elsie stills.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

I know you've always taken a keen
interest in it.

ELSIE

I have.

CLAIRE

We brought in appraisers to assess
the value of the property and its
contents.

ELSIE

And?

Claire pauses.

CLAIRE

They think it's... haunted.

Elsie studies her.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Have you ever heard... anything
like that?

Elsie doesn't reply.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

I told them Margaret never mentioned ghosts. It's silly, isn't it?

Elsie crosses to a curio cabinet.

ELSIE

In 1850, Joseph Elmwood began construction of the mansion.

Opens a drawer. Removes a leather folder.

ELSIE (CONT'D)

He hired a crew of Irish immigrants, all skilled stonemasons.

She hands the folder to Claire.

ELSIE (CONT'D)

Their craftsmanship was excellent. But hiring Irish workers back then? Unheard of.

CLAIRE

Because of the famine?

ELSIE

Yes. They flooded into the country. Storefronts had signs in their windows: "N-I-N-A."

CLAIRE

No Irish Need Apply.

Elsie nods.

ELSIE

But Joseph Elmwood hired them regardless. The townsfolk didn't take kindly to it.

Claire opens the folder. An old newspaper clipping.

ELSIE (CONT'D)

Workers in the town were angry. There were threats -- rumors and whispers. That's where the history ends, and the legends begin.

CLAIRE

"Joseph Elmwood Hires Irish Workers."

A photograph beneath it.

Joseph Elmwood stands with workers.

One young man stands apart.

Claire looks up.

ELSIE

They never finished the mansion.

CLAIRE

What happened to them?

ELSIE

Some say they fled. They were never seen again.

CLAIRE

And the mansion?

ELSIE

Finished by outsiders. No records, no details. Just... completed, as if by unseen hands.

Claire closes the folder.

INT. THE MAIN HALLWAY - DAY

Kali walks toward the living room.

A faint voice.

MATTHEW (O.S.)

(Faint)

Kali?

Kali stops.

She turns toward the display case.

KALI

Matthew? Where are you?

Silence.

KALI (CONT'D)

Matthew?

MATTHEW (O.S.)

(Faint)

Upstairs.

She heads for the stairs.

KALI
You'll never guess what the piano
is worth --

MATTHEW (O.S.)
(Urgent)
Hurry.

She climbs faster.

INT. THE SECOND FLOOR - DAY

Kali reaches the landing. A row of closed bedroom doors.

KALI
Matthew?

Silence.

From below --

MATTHEW (O.S.)
Kali? Are you calling me?

Kali grips the railing. Turns.

Matthew stands at the bottom of the stairs.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

Kali looks back at the doors.

KALI
Where were you just now?

MATTHEW
Working in the library with Paro.
I just came out to get the battery
charger.

Kali holds the railing.

KALI
Did you hear anyone upstairs?

MATTHEW
No. Just dead batteries -- again.
Fully charged this morning, too.
Did you need me?

Her gaze returns to the hallway.

KALI
I'll be down soon.

Matthew hesitates.

Nods. Heads off.

Kali turns back to the corridor.

A row of closed doors.

She approaches the first.

Grips the knob.

Turns.

CLICK!

The door CREAKS open.

Her eyes stare into the room.

Inside --

A drawn shade.

Sheets draped over furniture.

Dust and cobwebs cling to the room.

EXT. MAIN STREET - ELMWOOD - DAY

Ron pulls hard to the curb outside a liquor store.

He jumps out. Heads inside.

Nick strides past moments later, folder in hand.

INT. THE LIBRARY - DAY

Paro works on a clock gear with an X-Acto knife.

Matthew circles a table, recording.

MATTHEW
Regency period Gonçalo Alves
Breakfast Table, circa 1820.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
Circular top with crossbanding,
leaf and strap gilt brass edging,
narrow frieze --

He crouches to inspect underneath.

PARO
(Sharp cry)
Damn it!

Matthew hits his head on the table.

MATTHEW
Ow! What the hell, Paro!?

He stands, rubbing his head.

Paro wraps his finger in a tissue.

PARO
Sorry, I'm bleeding to death over
here.

INT. CLAIRE'S OFFICE - DAY

Claire sits at her desk.

Computer open. Notes spread across a legal pad.

She writes.

A bell CHIMES in the outer office.

NICK (O.S.)
Claire!

She keeps writing as Nick enters.

CLAIRE
Kali phoned. She thinks the house
is haunted.

Nick stops.

Sits.

NICK
What exactly did she say?

CLAIRE
She's... seen something.

NICK

Margaret?

CLAIRE

Margaret Elmwood? Why would she
haunt that place?

Nick says nothing.

EXT. ELMWOOD ROAD - DAY

Ron's car speeds toward the mansion.

Dust trails behind.

Music pounds inside.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Kali sits at a desk. Laptop open.

Her phone vibrates.

She pulls it from her pocket.

The screen reads: RON.

She answers.

KALI

This better be important.

RON (V.O.)

It is.

KALI

Well?

RON (V.O.)

I need you.

KALI

That's your definition of
important!?

RON (V.O.)

It is to me!

KALI

I'm in the middle of something,
Ron.

RON (V.O.)
I can't live without you.

KALI
It's only been two months. Give it
a try.

RON (V.O.)
Kali, I'm serious.

KALI
So am I. Goodbye.

She ends the call.

Sets the phone down.

It vibrates again.

She grabs it.

KALI (CONT'D)
Ron! You need to --

RON (V.O.)
(Voice twisted with
rage)
Listen to me, bitch! Don't you
fuckin' hang up on me again, got
that, bitch!? When I say I fuckin'
need help, then that means I
fuckin' need help! Scully! Scully!
And when I say I had a life, don't
mock me! Don't you fuckin' mock me
or you'll be dead! Fuckin' dead!
Understand me, bitch!? Scully!

The line cuts.

Kali stares at the phone.

She dials.

RRRING! RRRING!

A faint RING echoes deeper in the house.

RON (V.O.)
Hi, this is Ron. You know the
routine.

BEEP.

She hangs up.

Dials again.

Faint RINGING answers from inside the house.

Kali stands.

Moves into the hallway.

EXT. THE HALLWAY - DAY

She heads toward the stairs.

The RINGING stops.

RON (V.O.)
Hi, this is Ron. You know the
routine.

BEEP!

She hangs up.

Looks up the staircase.

Dials again.

Her phone vibrates.

A muffled RING from upstairs.

She ends the call.

Silence.

She looks up.

Moves toward the stairs.

Dials again as she climbs.

The faint RING grows louder.

RON (V.O.)
Hi, this is Ron. You know the
routine.

She hangs up at the landing.

Dials again.

RINGING -- closer now.

She walks down the hall.

Past closed doors. The sound leads her.
Stops at the last door.
She grips the knob... and twists.
The door CREAKS open.
Inside -- Ron's phone sits on a dresser.
RINGING.
The screen reads: KALI.

RON (V.O.)
Hi, this is Ron. You know the
routine.

BEEP.
Kali's hand shakes as she ends the call.
Her phone HUMS.
RON on the screen.
She answers.

KALI
Who the hell is this!?

RON (V.O.)
I'm right behind you.

Kali turns.
The room is empty.

INT. THE LIBRARY - DAY

Matthew rewinds the recorder.

MATTHEW
This still works.

PARO
Good.

He presses PLAY.

MATTHEW (V.O.)
 (On recorder
 playback)
 -- circa 1820. We have a
 crossbanded circular top with leaf
 and strap gilt brass edging above
 narrow frieze --

A new voice cuts in --

VOICE ON RECORDER
 What are you doing, Matthew?

They stop.

PARO (V.O.)
 (on recorder)
 Damn!

MATTHEW (V.O.)
 (on recorder)
 What the hell!?

PARO
 What the hell was that?

Matthew rewinds. Hits PLAY.

MATTHEW (V.O.)
 (On recorder
 playback)
 -- circa 1820. We have a
 crossbanded circular top with leaf
 and strap gilt brass edging above
 narrow frieze --

VOICE ON RECORDER
 What are you doing, Matthew?

Matthew grips the recorder.

MATTHEW
 That's not me!

Rewind. PLAY.

PARO (V.O.)
 (On recorder
 playback)
 Damn!

Again.

Rewind. PLAY.

VOICE ON RECORDER
What are you doing, Matthew?

MATTHEW
Is this some kind of joke?

He plays it again.

VOICE ON RECORDER
What are you doing, Matthew?

MATTHEW
Who is that?

They look at each other.

EXT. THE FRONT DOORS - DAY

Kali paces near the steps.

Ron pulls up. Parks.

He steps out with a brown paper bag.

RON
Waiting for me?

Kali holds up his phone.

RON (CONT'D)
Let me guess. My phone?

KALI
Don't even try to be funny, Ron.

RON
Okay, okay! I forgot my phone!
Relax!

KALI
You called me on this phone ten
minutes ago!

RON
How could I?

She shoves the phone into his hand.

Holds up hers -- call log visible.

RON -- 5:40 PM.

Ron looks at it.

His smile fades.

RON
That's... impossible.

KALI
I know.

MATTHEW (O.S.)
Kali?

They turn.

Matthew stands in the doorway, holding the recorder.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
You need to hear this.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

They gather around Matthew.

He plays the recording.

VOICE ON RECORDER
What are you doing, Matthew?

PARO
(On the recorder
playback)
Damn!

Matthew stops the playback.

RON
Whose voice is that?

MATTHEW
No idea.

KALI
This place has bigger issues than
antiques.

MATTHEW
Yeah. Ghosts.

PARO
Oh, give me a break.

The Living room door SLAMS.

RAPID IMAGES

-- The library door SLAMS.

-- Kali's bedroom door SLAMS.

-- Matthew's bedroom door SLAMS.

-- The kitchen door SLAMS.

-- Ron's bedroom door SLAMS.

-- A whiskey decanter flies off the table. SHATTERS.

Matthew drops to his knee.

POP!

He jerks forward.

POP!

He slams sideways.

POP!

He curls up, arms over his head.

An unseen force yanks him across the floor.

SLAMS him into the wall.

Kali, Paro, and Ron rush to him.

KALI

Matthew! Are you hurt?

Paro and Ron help a shaky Matthew to his feet.

PARO

What the hell is going on!?

KALI

We're leaving. Right now!

EXT. THE FRONT DOORS - DAY

The doors burst open.

Paro supports Matthew down the steps.

Kali and Ron follow.

INT. KALI'S CAR - DAY

Kali drops into the driver's seat.

Paro and Matthew climb in.

She turns the key.

Nothing.

MATTHEW

Hurry!

She tries again.

CLICK CLICK CLICK.

KALI

Come on --

Again.

CLICK CLICK CLICK.

PARO

Battery's dead! Damn it!

A sharp RAP on the window.

Ron stands outside.

RON

My car's dead. You got cables?

KALI

Mine's dead, too.

RON

What!?

Matthew looks up.

MATTHEW

Oh, shit.

PARO

What "shit?"

MATTHEW

Ghosts. They drain batteries.

RON

How the hell do you know that?

Matthew thinks fast.

MATTHEW

I saw it on a show. Cameras,
electronics -- they just die
around them. It's a thing.

PARO

But our ghosts are overachievers.
They do cars as well.

They step out.

A distant SCREAM.

The group freezes. Eyes locked on the field.

More SCREAMS -- closer.

The sound builds. Agonized. Directionless.

They search the trees.

No one there.

The screams peak --

Cut off.

Silence.

Ghostly faces materialize in the mansion's windows.

Gray and lifeless. Watching.

Kali pulls a business card from her coat.

Phone in her other hand, she dials.

KALI

I'll call Nick Brandt. He has to
get us out of here.

She presses the final digit --

Stops.

RON

Don't tell me.

They check their phones.

Dead.

The faces fade from the windows.

RON (CONT'D)
Son of a bitch!

Kali looks back to the field.

The tree line stands still.

INT. THE MAIN HALLWAY - DAY

A Shadow Man stands near the display case.

The front door swings open.

Kali and the others rush in.

PARO
Bolt the door, Matthew.

MATTHEW
Bolt the door? Ghosts go through
walls! What's that gonna do!?

Matthew fumbles with the lock.

The display case comes back into view.

The Shadow Man is gone.

PARO
It's just too screwed up to be
real.

MATTHEW
It's real, Paro!

PARO
I know it's real, but it's still
screwed up!

They move toward the living room.

Footsteps echo.

Behind them, a TRANSPARENT MAN, in period work clothes,
silently ascends the stairs. It fades into the upper level.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Paro kneels at his bag. Pulls out a charger. Plugs it into the wall.

PARO
Got power. What's the number,
Kali?

Kali pulls the card from her pocket.

KALI
518...

POP POP POP!

A wet, crushing sound fills the house.

The lights cut out.

PARO
Oh, fantastic!

He digs through his bag.

MATTHEW
It doesn't want us to leave.

PARO
Enough with the ghost theories,
Matthew!

CLICK!

Paro's lighter sparks. A small flame steadies.

RON
Let's hope the lamps in this place
still have kerosene.

EXT. NICK'S HOME - NIGHT

A dark Colonial farmhouse.

One window glows.

INT. NICK'S DEN - NIGHT

Nick sits in an armchair.

A drink in one hand.

An old journal in the other.

Faded ink on the page:

"DEC. 15, 1880. Thirty years and the bastards still live in my nightmares. All I have are nightmares."

Nick stares at the entry.

Turns the page.

OLD BRANDT (V.O.)

"Dreams never make pleasant my sleep.

Nick shuts the journal.

Grips it tight.

EXT. DISTORTED FOREST - NIGHT

Trees bend and twist.

A SHADOW moves through them. Gliding between trunks.

OLD BRANDT (V.O.)

But I am close to death and will soon be in the inferno and purgatory where I belong.

The Shadow disappears.

OLD BRANDT (V.O.)

May my descendants... and the descendants of this town... forgive the hell I have unleashed upon them.

Branches settle.

OLD BRANDT (V.O.)

May God have mercy.

INT. NICK'S DEN - NIGHT

Nick stares at the journal.

On the desk -- a business card.

He picks it up.

Grabs his phone.

Dials.

It rings once.

Voicemail.

KALI (V.O.)

Hello, this is Kali Savin of
Jenkins Estate Appraising. I can't
take your call at the moment. If
you --

Nick ends the call.

Leans back.

EXT. THE MANSION OF THE ELMS - NIGHT

Two windows glow with kerosene light.

One upstairs.

One below.

INT. KALI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kali rests uneasily on her bed, her eyes fixed on the open
window. The curtain lifts and falls with the breeze.

Night sounds drift in.

Three soft TAPS at the door.

KALI

Yes?

The knob turns.

CLICK.

The door opens.

Ron stands in the doorway.

KALI (CONT'D)

Ron.

RON

You should come downstairs with
the others. Safety in numbers.

KALI

I don't think that matters when
dealing with spirits.

RON

I guess you're right.

He steps inside.

Closes the door.

Moves to the window. Looks out across the field.

Moonlight falls across his face.

KALI

You know, I got a call from Doctor
Thomas today.

RON

Everything all right?

KALI

Yeah. Yeah, I guess.

RON

What does that mean?

Kali watches him.

KALI

I'm... remembering the first time
I saw you... you looked just like
that.

He turns.

KALI (CONT'D)

Standing by a window at that
mansion in Beverly Farms.

RON

No ghosts on that job.

Ron moves to her bedside and sits at the edge.

He leans in, cupping her cheeks in his hands, and kisses her.

She pulls back.

KALI

Ron... no... no, we can't.

RON

Kali... I love you... I still love
you.

He works at his shirt buttons.
Her hands rise to his shoulders.
She eases his shirt down his back.
He leans in.
They kiss.
He lowers onto her.
She arches beneath him --
Her eyes shift to the curtain.
It rises. Falls.

KALI

Beverly Farms wasn't a job. It was
Jim and Rachel's wedding.

Ron's mouth moves along her neck.
A wet SQUISH.

KALI (CONT'D)

Ron?

She looks down at his arm -- decayed, leathery, and covered
with patches of mold.
Her hand sinks into the flesh.
Black fluid seeps out.
She looks up.
His face -- decayed. Hollow eyes.
Black fluid drips onto her cheek.
It speaks in a guttural, clipped, voice.

APPARITION

What's the matter?

Kali SCREAMS.

The APPARITION LAUGHS.

She wrenches free, shoves it off, jumps from the bed.

The Apparition grabs her ankles.

She falls.

Scrambling on all fours, she scurries across the floor, desperate to escape.

RON (O.S.)
Kali! Kali!

PARO (O.S.)
In her room!

The door bursts open.

Paro and Ron rush in.

Kali thrashes -- strikes Ron away.

KALI
No! No, get away, get away!

Ron drops beside her.

RON
Kali, it's me. You're safe. You're
all right now.

Kali looks to the bed.

KALI
He was here! On the bed! He's
here!

Paro checks the closet.

Moves to the window.

Nothing.

PARO
There's no one here, Kali.

Kali looks around the room.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kali sits on the sofa. Ron pours whiskey.

RON
This'll help.

KALI
No. I can't.

RON
Might take the edge off.

KALI
No, Ron.

Ron joins Paro and Matthew.

RON
Any ideas?

MATTHEW
Maybe it needs something...
help... I don't know.

PARO
Or maybe it just wants to kill us.

RON
Whatever it wants, we need to get
out of here before it gets worse.

KALI
And how do you suggest we do that?

RON
Walk.

KALI
Twenty miles?

RON
Not all of us. Just me.

KALI
It's too far.

Ron straightens.

RON
I run five miles a day.

KALI
Used to.

Ron pauses.

Paro mimes drinking.

PARO
Glug-glug-glug-glug.

RON
I can still walk twenty.

KALI
We should all stay together.

RON
You were physically attacked. If
it can touch us, it can kill us.
We need help.

PARO
He's got a point.

RON
See? Even Paro agrees. That's how
you know we're screwed.

Paro smirks.

INT. THE MAIN HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ron heads for the doors. The others follow.

RON
I wish I had a gun.

MATTHEW
Ghosts are already dead.

RON
It's for my peace of mind.

Ron reaches for the knob.

Kali grabs his hand.

KALI
Are you sure about this?

He turns to her.

A faint smile.

She lets go.

Ron opens the door.

Steps out.

Kali shuts it -- slides the bolt.

EXT. THE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Ron moves down the driveway.

Trees press in on both sides.

A RUSTLE in the brush.

He stops. Looks toward the woods.

A branch SNAPS.

Silence.

RON

Hello?

POP! POP! POP!

The sound echoes through the trees.

A SHAPE moves between trunks.

Gone.

Ron waits.

Nothing.

Footsteps CRUNCH in the brush.

He moves faster -- glances back.

The steps follow - closer.

He hurries down the drive.

EXT. THE DRIVEWAY GATE - NIGHT

The gate looms ahead. Ron breaks into a jog.

A Shadow Figure materializes in front of it.

He stops.

More figures appear -- blocking the exit.

Ron looks around.

He turns -- runs into the woods.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Paro and Matthew sit.

Kali paces. Checks her watch.

She grabs a lamp and moves toward the hallway.

PARO
Where are you going?

KALI
To check the fuses.

INT. THE MAIN HALLWAY - NIGHT

Paro and Matthew follow Kali.

She passes the display case. Moves down the hall.

INT. A CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Kali stops at a closed door.

PARO
This is a terrible idea.

She opens it.

A steep stairway drops into darkness.

Lamp light spills down the steps.

PARO (CONT'D)
Why is it always the basement!?

Kali starts down.

Matthew and Paro follow.

INT. THE BASEMENT - NIGHT

Shapes under tarps. Matthew spots the fuse box.

MATTHEW
There.

He opens it.

Dust falls.

He checks the fuses.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
Nothing's blown.

As they inspect the box, a dark mass gathers behind them.

It thickens -- forming into the figure of a TEEN WORKER in 19th-century work clothes.

He stands trembling.

TEEN WORKER
Help me.

Kali, Paro, and Matthew hold still.

TEEN WORKER (CONT'D)
Please, help me.

The boy drops to his knees.

TEEN WORKER (CONT'D)
Help me!

A sharp metallic STRIKE --

Blood sprays from the back of his head.

The boy is yanked upright.

Another STRIKE --

His face caves inward. He collapses sideways.

Another STRIKE --

His body breaks apart into smoke.

Silence.

PARO
(quietly)
Jesus wept.

A beat.

MATTHEW
I know who he is.

EXT. THE WOODS - NIGHT

Ron pushes through brush. Branches scrape his arms.

WHISPERS surround him.

He stops.

Listens.

The WHISPERS fade.

A RUSTLE nearby.

Silence.

EXT. ELMWOOD ROAD - NIGHT

Ron stumbles out of the woods onto the road.

He bends, catching his breath.

A horse WHINNIES.

He looks up.

The Black Coach blocks the road.

The horse stands still.

Breath rolling from its nostrils.

On the box --

A DRIVER.

Cloaked in black.

Fabric hangs in torn strips.

No head.

Just an empty collar above the coat.

One hand grips the reins.

The other holds a long whip.

Ron doesn't move.

The driver raises his arm.

WHOOSH-CRACK!

The sound cuts through the night.

The horse steps forward.

The coach rolls closer.

Ron backs away.

Turns -- bolts for the woods.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The basement door opens.

Matthew leads Paro and Kali to the display case.

PARO
So, who is he?

Matthew points to the glass.

MATTHEW
Him.

Paro leans in.

The photograph -- Joseph Elmwood. Workers behind him.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
The man behind Joseph Elmwood.

Paro and Matthew scrutinize the image.

KALI
You're right.

PARO
I don't rattle easily. I'm
rattled.

MATTHEW
Wait till you see his eyes move.

PARO
What?

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The front door shakes.

PARO (CONT'D)
Shit!

BANG! BANG! BANG!

INT. THE FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Kali slides the bolt.

Opens the door.

Ron staggers inside.

RON

I don't know what the hell they
are... or who they are...

He breathes hard.

RON (CONT'D)

But one thing's clear... they want
us to stay.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ron pours a whiskey.

RON

No jokes. I earned this. So, the
guy from the photo... you saw him?

MATTHEW

Residual haunting.

Ron looks at him.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

They don't know we're here. They
just replay moments from the past.

SCREAMING and WAILING erupt from the woods.

Paro crosses to the window.

Grabs a camcorder.

KALI

Paro, it won't work.

PARO

This one will. It's solar-powered.

MATTHEW

Oh yeah, forgot about that one!

KALI

What are you planning?

PARO
To figure out who's screaming out
there.

MATTHEW
That's a bad idea.

KALI
What are you going to do?

PARO
If we catch something on camera,
we might keep our jobs.

Paro pats Matthew's shoulder.

EXT. THE WOODS - NIGHT

The screaming stops.

Paro films.

Matthew leads.

PARO
Night vision on this is pissa.

Green light washes the trees.

Paro tilts the camera.

Matthew walks into a tree.

MATTHEW
Ow! Damn!

PARO
Watch out for trees.

Matthew glares.

PARO (CONT'D)
You don't swear enough, Matthew.
It's good for the soul. Keeps the
blood pressure down. Medical fact.

A soft sob drifts through the trees.

Closer.

PARO (CONT'D)
Listen.

MATTHEW

That's different... not the same
as before, right?

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kali stands at the bay window.

Ron holds his drink.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The front doors shake.

Ron heads for the hallway.

Kali follows.

INT. THE MAIN HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ron opens the doors.

Darkness outside.

From upstairs --

WHISPERING VOICES drift down.

KALI

Who's up there?

The door SLAMS shut.

Ron pulls the handle.

It won't open.

SMASH!

Glass shatters.

THEY TURN.

The display case is broken. They rush toward it.

Ron grabs the photograph.

Red lines cut across the workers' faces.

Joseph Elmwood untouched.

Two figures step out from the trees.

Matthew and Paro.

Kali and Ron run toward them.

KALI

Paro!?

Paro and Matthew stand still.

Ron looks to the woods.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Gray light through the window. Paro sleeps on the sofa.

Matthew lies on a mattress.

RON

What did they see?

KALI

The coach... Shadow people...

Ron looks to the window.

RON

It's still out there.

Kali watches him.

RON (CONT'D)

The camera. Maybe it caught something.

Ron heads for the Hallway.

KALI

Ron, don't!

RON

We have to know!

INT. THE MAIN HALLWAY - DAY

Ron makes his way to the doors.

Kali follows.

KALI

Are you sure about this?

RON

Not at all, but we're out of appraisers, and someone has to stay. I nominate you.

He opens the door.

Steps into the morning mist.

EXT. ELMWOOD ROAD - DAY

Nick's car speeds along the wooded road.

Claire rides beside him.

INT. NICK'S CAR - DAY

Claire holds her phone.

KALI (V.O.)

Hello, this is Kali Savin of Jenkins Estate Appraising. I can't take your call at the moment. If you --

BEEP.

Claire lowers the phone.

Trees blur past outside.

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

Ron moves through the trees. He uses a stick to turn leaves.

A glint catches his eye.

The camcorder lies ahead.

He kneels. Picks it up.

A RUSTLE.

He stops.

Looks into the trees.

INT. THE MAIN HALLWAY - DAY

Kali opens the door.

Nick pushes past her.

Claire lingers behind him.

NICK

Ghosts? You've gotta be shitting me.

CLAIRE

I've been calling you since last night.

KALI

Every battery's dead... cars included. And we lost power.

Nick moves toward the living room.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Paro sleeps on the sofa.

KALI

We've had a rough night, Mr. Brandt.

Nick sees the photograph.

Red lines across the workers faces.

He picks it up.

CLAIRE

(to Kali)

I looked into the house's history. The only unusual thing I found...

She gestures to the photo.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

...is that two days after that photo was taken, they disappeared.

KALI

Disappeared? Where?

CLAIRE

No one knows.

The front door opens.

Closes.

Ron enters.

Holds up the camcorder.

KALI
Does it show anything?

Ron nods.

Sets it down.

Turns it on.

ON SCREEN

Night vision.

Matthew walks ahead.

Uneven ground.

Faint sobbing.

MATTHEW
It's definitely a woman --

PARO (O.S.)
She's just ahead.

MATTHEW
Do we need to get closer?

PARO (O.S.)
Keep moving. We need to see her.

The camera pans.

A BANSHEE stands ahead. Dressed in tattered black clothing.
Her back turned.

Still.

MATTHEW
Ma'am?

He looks back.

PARO (O.S.)
(whispers)
Go on.

Matthew steps closer.

MATTHEW

Are you all right? We heard you crying.

The sobbing stops.

Silence.

The Banshee rises.

Arms out.

Feet lift from the ground.

She turns --

A rotted face. One side bone.

Empty sockets.

Her jaw drops wide.

A SCREAM --

The camera falls sideways.

Image spins.

Matthew and Paro run.

The Banshee lunges -- grabs Paro.

She lifts him into the air --

Drops him.

Static.

BACK TO SCENE

The screen goes dark.

Ron turns off the camcorder.

No one moves.

NICK

Margaret! It's Margaret!

His composure breaks.

NICK (CONT'D)

She wants me dead! The bitch wants me dead!

He runs.

INT. THE MAIN HALLWAY - DAY

Nick throws the door open.

Rushes out.

EXT. THE WOODLINE - DAY

At the edge of the field -- the grass lies still.

Nothing moves.

In the distance, Nick stumbles down the front steps.

A disturbance forms along the grass.

Low. Spreading.

Moving.

It glides out from the trees.

Crossing the field.

Smooth at first --

Faster.

The grass parts in its wake.

It picks up speed.

Closing the distance.

Faster still --

A streak across the field.

It races toward the driveway.

EXT. THE DRIVEWAY - DAY

The force barrels into Nick.

He slams to the ground -- his hands claw at nothing.

NICK
Get away! Get away!

Red marks form on his neck.

Tightening.

Kali, Ron, and Claire run toward him.

Ron grabs Nick -- he's thrown aside.

Gasping and choking, Nick thrashes.

Ron dives back.

Pulls him free.

The pressure releases.

Nick gasps.

Nick staggers to his feet, keys in hand, stumbles to his car.

CLAIRE

Nick!

INT. NICK'S CAR - DAY

He inserts the key, turns it.

CLICK-CLICK.

NICK

What the hell!?

EXT. NICK'S CAR - DAY

Paro watches from the window.

Nick leans over the wheel.

Stares toward the woods.

EXT. THE WOODLINE - DAY

The unseen presence pulls back.

Slips into the trees.

Gone.

EXT. MANSION OF THE ELMS - NIGHT

Dim kerosene light glows in several windows.

INT. THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Paro and Matthew sit at the island.

A bottle of whiskey between them.

Nick pours a drink.

Paro studies the photograph.

NICK

I think you're done here.

KALI

What do you mean?

NICK

Pack up and leave.

KALI

We've tried.

CLAIRE

Why did you yell "Margaret" after watching it?

NICK

I don't know... because she died here.

PARO

The coach, the screaming ghost... they're connected. But how?

CLAIRE

Irish folklore talks about a death coach. A headless driver.

KALI

What about the woman?

CLAIRE

A banshee, maybe...

(uneasy)

In the old stories... she doesn't kill.

(beat)

She calls them.

PARO
Calls what?

CLAIRE
(quietly)
Whatever's out there.

Silence.

PARO
This sounds nuts.

RON
We caught it on camera.

PARO
I know, and it's still nuts!

NICK
What the hell are you saying,
Claire?

CLAIRE
I'm saying that in legend, a
banshee seeks the souls of the
dead.

RON
You're saying the legend... is
real?

A beat.

KALI
How else can you explain it?

PARO
The men in this photo vanished.
And Kali and Ron both saw the
coach.

Claire pours a drink.

Her hand shakes.

Silence.

Kali looks at the photo. Then around the room.

KALI
(quietly)
No.
(beat)

KALI (CONT'D)

This is all tied to the same
place. The house. The land.

PARO

What exactly are you saying,
because I'm not following you.

KALI

Whatever this is --

(beat)

it started here.

(to Claire)

The workers. Margaret.

(beat)

We're missing something.

RON

What?

KALI

What actually happened.

PARO

We know what happened. The place
is haunted.

KALI

(shakes her head)

No. That's what it looks like.

Claire told me Margaret never
mentioned anything about ghosts.

CLAIRE

And she would have.

KALI

So... what are we missing?

Nick, uneasy, lights a cigarette.

INT. KALI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kali sits on her bed. Stares toward the window.

INSERT - DIGITAL CLOCK

Changes from 2:59 to 3:00.

BACK TO SCENE

CLOP. CLOP. CLOP.

Wheels CREAK outside.

Kali sits still.

Listens.

CLOP. CLOP. CLOP.

She rises.

Moves to the window.

Mist swirls unnaturally, parted by something unseen.

A SHADOWED FORM -- the coach's silhouette -- drifts momentarily into view before vanishing back into the haze.

Kali watches -- focused, not afraid.

INT. THE STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Kali moves down the stairs.

EXT. THE FRONT DOORS - NIGHT

She steps outside.

A SCREAM cuts through the night.

Kali stops.

She turns toward the woods.

EXT. THE FIELD - NIGHT

Kali crosses the field.

A dark mass gathers near the woodline.

CLOP. CLOP. CLOP.

Louder.

The Black Coach emerges from the mist.

Plumes sway.

It stops.

Kali stands still.

Steps forward -- her eyes fixed on the Headless Driver.

KALI

Hello?

No response.

A low BUZZ builds.

Flies swarm the driver.

Thick. Loud.

Kali steps closer.

She recoils.

The coach door CREAKS open.

Dark interior. Upholstered seats.

Kali reaches out.

Her hand passes through the wood.

A distant SCREAM --

She turns.

Looks back --

The coach is gone.

Kali faces the woods... and moves forward.

EXT. THE WOODS - NIGHT

The scream fades.

Kali moves between trees.

Voices ahead.

Footsteps.

BRANDT (O.S.)

This is the way. The woodline is
up ahead.

Kali moves behind a tree.

Dozens of men appear, in 19th century work clothes.

Some carry pistols.

BRANDT, 30s, a bearded man radiating authority, leads.
Beside him, MORGAN, 17, scrawny, anxious, out of place.

MORGAN
Brandt, maybe we should think
about this.

Kali leans out.

A branch SNAPS underfoot.

She stumbles into their path -- a pistol aimed directly at
her. The man checks it, walks through her.

More men pass through.

Kali turns.

Moves with them.

KALI
Hello?

No one reacts.

They move through trees.

Bodies passing through trunks.

KALI (CONT'D)
Where are you going? Who are you?

She pushes closer to Brandt and Morgan.

MORGAN
Mr. Brandt, we can't do this.

BRANDT
Why not?

MORGAN
Just tell them to leave.

BRANDT
And you think they will?

MORGAN
They might.

BRANDT
You want to risk a cholera
epidemic wiping out the entire
town?

MORGAN
They don't have cholera!

BRANDT
As far as you're concerned they
do.

Kali stops.

KALI
(stunned)
Cholera? They're lying!

EXT. THE IRISH WOODLINE CAMP - NIGHT

The mob reaches the edge of the camp.

Rows of small tents.

Dim lights inside some.

Kali steps out.

Across the field --

The mansion under construction.

Wood framing. Scaffolding.

No modern lights.

Brandt raises a hand.

The mob stops.

BRANDT
Get them out here.

They rush the tents.

Drag men outside.

Shouting.

Struggling.

Workers are forced into a line.

Young men. Barely dressed. Shivering.

A worker COUGHS.

BRANDT (CONT'D)
Someone... ill?

The FOREMAN, a lean, tough 20-year-old, steps forward.

FOREMAN
What's this all about?

BRANDT
You've brought cholera to this town.

FOREMAN
Are you out of your mind?

BRANDT
You heard me.

FOREMAN
Mate, if we had cholera we'd all be dead, and you'd be dying.

BRANDT
You're doing work that we should be doing.

FOREMAN
Take that up with Mr. Elmwood.

BRANDT
I intend to... after you go "missing."

Panic spreads among the workers.

Pistols keep them in place.

Brandt signals, and the mob forces them to their knees.

One worker runs.

A hatchet flies --

THUD.

He drops.

The workers SHOUT.

Pistols cock.

BRANDT (CONT'D)
No pistols! Nestor's cabin's a
mile off -- we don't want
snooping.

He strides toward SCULLY, 22, who looks down.

FOREMAN
Be brave, Scully! Don't let these
Yankee bastards see you tremble!
Scully! Look at me! Scully!

Kali steps closer.

KALI
(whispers)
Scully...

Her gaze drops to the ground --

A wooden mallet at Brandt's feet.

He bends.

Picks it up.

BRANDT
There's plenty of these around.
Nice and quiet. Use 'em.

The mob grabs mallets.

FOREMAN
God damn your souls to hell!

The mob hesitates.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)
For what you bestow upon us,
revenge will come in kind!

Brandt grips the mallet.

The Foreman holds his gaze.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)
When the last Elmwood dies... this
land, and all who tread on it,
will be cursed. Forever cursed.

The words unnerve the mob.

Brandt forces a scoff.

BRANDT
Why wait, Paddy?

The Foreman doesn't look away.

FOREMAN
Elmwood is kind. No harm is due
him or his family. As for the rest
of you -- fury and terror will
rain down upon you and your
descendants until your black
hearts crack open and send your
souls to the bloody depths of
hell.

Silence.

Brandt moves behind a worker.

Raises the mallet --

Brings it down with brutal force.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

POP!

The sound, dense and wet, cuts through the room.

Ron wakes.

EXT. THE WOODLINE - NIGHT

Brandt stands over a young worker.

The man crawls.

Blood runs from his mouth.

Brandt grabs his hair.

Yanks him up.

The mallet rises --

Drops.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

POP!

A lamp falls.

Claire SCREAMS.

NICK

What the hell is going on!?

EXT. THE WOODLINE - NIGHT

Brandt holds another worker upright.

The mallet lifts --

Falls again.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A mirror SHATTERS.

CLAIRE

Oh, my God! Oh, my God!

RON

Kali!? Where's Kali!?

MATTHEW

She said she was going to stay in
her room.

Ron bolts.

EXT. THE WOODLINE - NIGHT

A mallet hangs in the air --

A worker looks up in terror.

It drops.

INT. THE MAIN HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ron races up the stairs --

POP! His head snaps back.

He falls down the stairs.

Paro and Matthew rush to him.

A SCREAM from upstairs.

EXT. THE WOODLINE - NIGHT

Brandt stands over the Foreman.

Blood on his clothes.

Around him, the mob swings and murders.

Kali turns away.

Brandt grabs the terrified Teen Worker from Morgan and shoves him to the ground.

TEEN WORKER
Help me... Please! Help me!

MORGAN
Brandt, stop!

TEEN WORKER
No! Please! Help me!

Kali looks back.

KALI
The basement. The boy in the
basement!

Brandt brings the mallet down on the boy's head.

POP!

The boy jerks forward.

Another blow --

He collapses.

KALI (CONT'D)
Oh, my God.

Brandt grabs the boy's hair and yanks him back as he lifts the mallet.

KALI (CONT'D)
(quietly)
This isn't random. They want us to
see what happened.

EXT. THE GRAVESITE - NIGHT

Shovels dig into the earth.

Lantern light.

BRANDT (O.S.)
That's deep enough.

Kali opens her eyes, now deep in the woods.

Men dig a wide pit.

Bodies lie in rows.

MORGAN
How will you explain this to Mr.
Elmwood?

BRANDT
As far as anyone knows, they moved
on. Back to the land of the
leprechauns.

Brandt grips Morgan's shoulder.

BRANDT (CONT'D)
More jobs for the men in town. No
Irish Need Apply in Elmwood.

A distant WAIL cuts through the night.

Kali stands alone beside a cracked boulder.

No grave.

No bodies.

THUNDER rolls.

RON (O.S.)
Kali!? Kali!? You out here!?

A faint glow moves through the trees.

PARO (O.S.)
Kali!?

Kali watches.

The light draws closer.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Claire grips the photograph.

Nick paces.

A phone RINGS.

Nick snatches it from his pocket.

NICK
Nick Brandt.

Silence.

NICK (CONT'D)
Hello?

Nothing.

NICK (CONT'D)
Anyone there before I hang up!?

TEEN WORKER (V.O.)
Filleann an feall ar an
bhfeallaire.

Nick freezes.

NICK
Who the hell is this?

TEEN WORKER (V.O.)
Dá fhada an lá tagann an
tráthnóna.

NICK
All right, who is this!? Hello?

TEEN WORKER (V.O.)
Poor Margaret Elmwood.

Nick's grip tightens.

TEEN WORKER (V.O.)
The last of the Elmwoods.
Treachery turns against the
traitor.

Nick throws the phone.

It smashes against the wall.

NICK
I'm done! I'm out of here!

He storms out.

CLAIRE
Where are you going?

NICK

Out!

Claire follows.

INT. THE MAIN HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nick and Claire stop.

Two Irish Workers, transparent and bloodied, drift silently down the staircase.

NICK

Shit!

CLAIRE

Oh, my God!

FOREMAN (O.S.)

Hello, Nicky!

The Foreman, spectral and grinning, appears near the glass display case.

He reaches inside, pulls out the wooden mallet.

He slams it against the counter.

THUD. THUD. THUD.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

Come here, Brandt! Let's have a bash!

Laughing, the Foreman smashes the mallet into his own head.

It sticks there grotesquely as he glides on air toward them.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

Nicky, boy! Come here, Nicky...
you murdering bastard!

Thunder RATTLES the house.

The spirits drift closer.

Nick fumbles with the door.

CLAIRE

Hurry!

NICK

Oh, shut up!

The Foreman yanks the mallet from his head.

FOREMAN
Ouch! That smarts, Nicky!

Nick wrenches the door open.

EXT. THE FRONT DOORS - NIGHT

Nick and Claire run for the car.

CLAIRE
It won't start, remember!?

EXT. NICK'S CAR - NIGHT

The engine roars to life.

Headlights snap on.

NICK
What the hell!?

Rain pours down.

The car rolls forward.

Gravel CRUNCHES under the tires.

Inside -- two decayed SPIRITS materialize.

The passenger window EXPLODES outward.

Glass sprays.

A rotting arm thrusts out and BANGS a mallet into the door.

Again.

Again.

The car surges forward.

Nick and Claire run.

NICK (CONT'D)
Shit! Run!

Claire stumbles -- rolls - slams into a tree.

Nick bolts for his life.

The car tears past her.

It swerves.

Nick veers -- ducks behind a tree.

The car barrels in --

SMASH!

The Spirits rise through the car roof.

They fade into the rain.

Nick drops to his knees, gasping.

FOREMAN (O.S.)
Nicky, boy!?

Nick turns.

The Foreman glides toward him.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)
A wee pint, Nicky! Just a wee
pint... of your blood.

The Foreman smacks his decayed lips.

Nick stumbles to his feet and races toward the field.

NICK
Help! Help me!

EXT. THE GRAVESITE - NIGHT

Rain pours. Kali, Ron, Matthew, and Paro search with lamps.

RON
And they're buried... here?

KALI
Yes.

MATTHEW
What are you saying, Kali? You
want to dig them up?

PARO
Hell no! What if they're really
down there!?

KALI

The leader. The one who started
the killing. His name was Brandt.

MATTHEW

Brandt!?

PARO

As in Nick Brandt?

A SCREAM cuts through the storm.

Above -- the Banshee hovers near the treetops.

Lightning flashes.

PARO (CONT'D)

Oh, my God...

A rotting hand bursts from the ground --

Grabs Matthew's ankle.

MATTHEW

Shit!

He falls.

Another hand claws at his shoulder.

The ground churns.

Mud erupts.

Arms and hands thrust upward --

Grabbing.

Pulling.

Paro is dragged down. Hands tear at his clothes.

Claw his arm.

PARO

Get them off me!

Ron grabs him, pulls him free.

Matthew and Kali scramble back.

Ron and Paro kick loose.

KALI

Ron! Paro! Over here!

The Banshee raises her arms, SCREAMING.

Bodies force their way out of the ground.

Ron and Paro fight through grasping limbs.

Kick. Stomp.

A loose arm flies into a tree.

They break free and reach Kali and Matthew.

Behind them, the rain beats down on the grotesque forms lit by flashes of lightning.

Thunder BOOMS.

The Banshee howls in a demonic voice:

BANSHEE

An cóiste báis Glacaimim ort!
Bailigh na hainmneacha seo!

The bodies collapse -- flesh gone. Clothes fall apart.

Bones scatter.

In their place -- phantoms. Whole. Unmarked.

They step forward.

Slow.

From the distance, a WHINNY.

Kali backs away.

The others follow.

They turn -- and run.

EXT. THE WOODS - NIGHT

Kali, Ron, Matthew, and Paro weave through trees.

THUD! Paro slams into Nick.

NICK

No!

PARO
Nick! It's me! Paro!

KALI
Where's Claire?

NICK
She's dead! They killed her!

Nick stares past them.

The Phantoms approach.

The Foreman leads.

Whole and unscarred, as he was in life.

FOREMAN
Nicky!

He gestures.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)
Join us, Nicky! Come on, Mate!

NICK
No! Stay away!

Nick runs.

The Phantoms give chase.

PARO
Come on!

Paro and Matthew take off in a different direction.

Ron follows.

Kali stares after Nick and the Phantoms.

Ron returns.

RON
Kali!

KALI
Maybe we should try and help him!

RON
We can't fight those things!

He grabs her arms and they run.

EXT. THE WOODLINE - NIGHT

Paro and Matthew burst from the trees into the field.

Rain lashes down.

Thunder BOOMS.

A horse WHINNIES.

Must rises fast.

EXT. THE FIELD - NIGHT

Paro and Matthew glance back.

Kali and Ron break from the trees.

PARO

Kali! Hurry!

CLOP. CLOP. CLOP.

Wheels CREAK.

The Black Coach appears from the mist.

Ron pulls Kali aside as the coach stops.

PARO (CONT'D)

Move!

They run.

EXT. THE WOODLINE - NIGHT

Above the trees --

The Banshee rises.

Her form whips in the storm.

She SCREAMS over the thunder.

EXT. THE FIELD - NIGHT

Nick gasps as he joins the others.

He stares at the coach.

The Banshee points.

BANSHEE

I mo pháistí
Fanann an cóiste báis!

The coach door CREAKS open.

The phantom workers appear from the dark.

One by one --

They enter the coach -- fading as they arrive inside.

The last one turns and grins at Nick.

He fades as he steps inside.

The Headless Driver SNAPS his whip --

CRACK!

The coach vanishes into the mist.

Silence.

PARO

What the hell just happened?

MATTHEW

The coach took their souls.

Nick starts laughing hysterically.

NICK

That's it!? They're gone!?
So long, you bastards!

KALI

Nick --

Nick shouts at the woods.

NICK

You vindictive Blarney Stone
pricks!

KALI

Nick!

NICK

You stupid green-ass shamrock
shits!

Kali watches him.

KALI
(quiet, controlled)
They're not just taking anyone.

Nick turns.

KALI (CONT'D)
They're finishing something.

NICK
What are you talking about?

KALI
Those men were already dead.
(realization forms)
This place... it's been holding
them here.

She looks toward the mist.

KALI (CONT'D)
Now it's letting them go.

Kali locks her eyes on Nick.

KALI (CONT'D)
Some of them... get taken.

NICK
What does that mean?

KALI
Margaret Elmwood.

Nick freezes.

KALI (CONT'D)
You keep mentioning her.

NICK
No.

KALI
You thought it was her screaming
in the woods.

NICK
What do you expect!? This house is
all fucked up!

KALI
Did you kill her, Nick?

NICK

No!

KALI

Nick --

A beat.

NICK

It was my brother.

KALI

And you had no part in it?

NICK

For God's sake she was dying anyway! She wasn't going to last till morning!

KALI

Margaret was an Elmwood. The Elmwoods helped those Irish workers. Your family killed them. The banshee called on you, Nick. Why?

A pause.

KALI (CONT'D)

Because you killed the last Elmwood.

Kali turns and heads for the house.

NICK

So what the hell does that mean?

Ron follows, with Paro and Matthew behind.

Nick stays where he is, watching them go.

RON

I'm not sure I understand what's going on.

KALI

The banshee called on Nick. She wants his soul.

Two thin wheel ruts form near the woodline, the grass pressing down under an unseen force.

The ruts advance, closing the gap on the weary group limping toward the mansion through the relentless downpour.

Amid the torrent of rain, a faint CREAKING grows, the unmistakable sound of wooden wheels.

EXT. THE FIELD - FARTHER BACK - NIGHT

Nick walks alone.

Slow.

The sound returns --

CLOP-CLOP-CLOP.

Wheels grind.

The ruts deepen.

Closer.

Nick stumbles back --

Turns --

Runs.

EXT. THE FIELD - NIGHT

Nick barrels past the others.

KALI

Nick?

They see it --

Grass crushed. Dirt kicked up.

No driver. No horse.

KALI (CONT'D)

Run!

They run.

Paro looks back.

Mist churns.

The coach bursts from it.

Full form.

PARO

Oh my God...

The Headless Driver CRACKS the whip.

MATTHEW

Paro! Move!

EXT. THE FIELD - WITH NICK - NIGHT

Nick runs -- glances back.

The coach veers. Tracks him.

The Driver yanks the reins.

The coach gains speed.

Mud sprays from the wheels.

The door flies open.

Four Irish phantoms leap out.

The coach ROARS past as the Irish phantoms close in on Nick,
wooden mallets in hand.

NICK

No! No, please! I didn't do
anything!

The Foreman steps forward.

Raises the mallet.

The others circle.

The mallet drops.

POP!

Nick jerks.

Blood runs down his face.

Another swing --

POP!

The coach turns wide -- circles back at top speed.

The side door swings open.

EXT. THE FAR EDGE OF THE FIELD - NIGHT

Paro and Matthew stop.

Panting.

They stare across the field.

PARO

Is that Nick?

EXT. THE FIELD - NIGHT

The Headless Driver snaps his whip --

CRACK!

Again --

CRACK!

The whip coils around Nick's neck.

The Driver yanks back --

Nick lifts off the ground.

His legs kick.

The Driver pulls hard as Nick hurtles into the open coach door with a THUD.

The door SLAMS shut.

The Driver leans into the reins.

The coach straightens out of its turn.

EXT. THE FAR EDGE OF THE FIELD - NIGHT

Paro and Matthew stand frozen.

The coach heads straight for them.

MATTHEW

Paro! We've got to move!

They run toward the mansion.

Behind them --

CRACK!

The whip snaps.

Paro stumbles, gasping for air.

PARO
I... I can't make it...

MATTHEW
Yes, you can!

PARO
Keep running!

Matthew hesitates, looking back at the THUNDERING coach.

PARO (CONT'D)
Go! Move!

Matthew breaks into a run toward the mansion.

Paro digs into his pocket.

Pulls out a crushed cigarette. Jams it in his mouth.

PARO (CONT'D)
Come on, you son of a bitch!

He turns and runs toward the center of the field.

The coach follows.

Matthew stops -- watches from a distance.

MATTHEW
Paro! Head for the woodline!

EXT. NEAR THE MANSION - NIGHT

Kali and Ron hear Matthew through the rain.

MATTHEW (O.S.)
Head for the woodline!

They turn to see Paro run across the field.

The coach bears down on him.

KALI
Oh, my God!

RON
That crazy bastard.

He grabs Kali's arm.

RON (CONT'D)
Get to the car.

KALI
What are you doing!?

RON
The car, Kali!

KALI
Ron! You can't fight that thing!

He runs toward Paro and Matthew.

EXT. THE FIELD - NIGHT

Paro slows -- looks back.

The coach races toward him.

WHOOSH! The door swings open.

The Headless Driver raises his arm --

CRACKS the whip!

It snaps around Paro's neck.

He lifts --

Slams to the ground -- dragged across the mud.

The Driver yanks back --

Paro flies into the air toward the open door.

THUD!

He disappears inside.

The door SLAMS shut.

EXT. THE FIELD - WITH RON A DISTANCE AWAY - NIGHT

Ron stops. Watches.

The coach turns.

Heads for him.

The Headless Driver CRACKS the whip --

Ron holds his ground --

Drops at the last second.

The coach passes through him --

Dissolves in the mist.

The horse. The driver. Gone.

Thunder BOOMS.

The Banshee fades into the storm.

Ron stands.

EXT. THE MANSION OF THE ELMS - NIGHT

Kali stands at the side of the mansion, her terrified gaze fixed on the field.

CLAIRE (O.S.)

Kali....

Kali turns and sees Claire, trying to lift herself up.

She rushes to her.

KALI

Claire! Are you all right?

CLAIRE

Bruised... and I think I passed out... but --

(almost surprised)

I'm alive.

Kali helps her to her feet.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Yes... I'm all right.

Ron emerges from the mist.

KALI

Ron!

They embrace.

The mansion's lights flicker back on.

Ron's eyes dart to Nick's wrecked car.

CLAIRE
Where's Nick?

RON
He didn't make it. Neither did
Paro.

CLAIRE
(quietly)
Oh, God.

EXT. KALI'S CAR - NIGHT

Ron pulls the door open --

They get in.

INT. KALI'S CAR - NIGHT

Kali turns the key.

The engine starts.

Kali lets out a breath. A small, disbelieving smile.

KALI
It starts!

BANG! BANG! BANG!

A fist slams against the driver's window -- startling all of
them.

Matthew's face presses to the glass.

MATTHEW
Kali!

He staggers to the rear door, yanks it open.

INT. KALI'S CAR - NIGHT

He collapses into the seat.

Kali throws the car into gear.

EXT. THE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The car speeds down the long driveway.

Headlights fade into darkness.

A phone RINGS.

INT. KALI'S CAR - NIGHT

Kali glances at the dash screen: Unknown Caller.

She answers.

KALI

Hello?

A rough voice.

FOREMAN (V.O.)

Where 'ya goin', Kali?

(beat)

You're on Elmwood land.

The brakes SCREECH!

The car jerks to a stop.

Ahead --

The coach sits in the road. Waiting.

Figures stand before it.

Not shadows. Men.

The Irish workers.

Watching.

Kali stares.

No panic. No confusion.

She shuts the engine off.

Opens her door.

RON

Kali...

She steps out.

EXT. THE DRIVEWAY GATE - NIGHT

Kali walks toward the gate.

Stops.

Faces them.

Holds.

CUT TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

Nuair a gheobhaidh an Elmwood deireanach bás -- déanfar an talamh seo, agus gach duine a thriús air, a dhamnú -- agus mallacht go deo.

Mallaithe go deo.

When the last Elmwood dies -- this land, and all who tread on it, will be damned -- and forever cursed.

Forever cursed.

FADE OUT.