

THE GRAVEYARD TREE

Written by

Lee Copeland

lee.copeland9206@gmail.com  
(814)-504-4516

WGA REGISTRATION #I369349

INT. LYLESBURGH - COUNTY JAIL - JAIL CELLS - EVENING

A dimly lit row of jail cells line a hall, with three on each side. In the first cell sits ELVIRA BENDER (40's, WHITE FEMALE). In the neighboring cells sit her husband JOHN BENDER SR. (40's, WHITE MALE), son JOHN BENDER JR. (20's, WHITE MALE), daughter KATE BENDER (late teens, WHITE FEMALE), and son DAVID BENDER (early teens, WHITE MALE).

KATE  
Mama...I'm Scared

ELVIRA  
There's no need to be.  
(beat)  
And don't let these feeble-minded  
fools know that either.

KATE  
But...

ELVIRA  
No buts! Hush now and don't pay  
them any mind.

In walk two deputies pushing a cart. They stop at the center of the hall. The first deputy starts handing out trays with the family's last meals. The second deputy stands by with a shotgun, supervising.

DEPUTY 1  
Last meal everyone.

The Benders all stand to receive their last meal.

ELVIRA  
Were you able to accommodate my  
last request deputy?

DEPUTY 1  
Yeah, we got your last request.

The deputy slides a tray of food into Elvira's cell consisting of an overdone steak, potato, and an apple.

ELVIRA  
And the apple is from our grove?

DEPUTY 1  
It is.

ELVIRA  
Thank you, Deputy.

The Bender family devour their last. Elvira even finishes her apple, core, seeds, and all. She picks up her napkin and dabs the corners of her mouth.

EXT. LYLESBURGH - CENTER OF TOWN - EVENING

SUPERIMPOSE:

"LABETTE COUNTY, 1875"

A large group of angry townspeople have gathered in the center of town holding torches, shotguns, and have their children in tow.

EXT. LYLESBURGH - CENTER OF TOWN - GALLOWS - EVENING

The Bender family stands at attention with their hands tied behind their backs and a noose around each of their necks. SHERIFF CLARK (50's, WHITE MALE) looks out over the crowd.

ANGRY TOWNSPERSON 1

Hang 'em!!

ANGRY TOWNSPERSON 2

Send 'em to hell!!

SHERIFF CLARK

Now, now everyone. Justice will be served but ya'll have got to be patient.

ANGRY TOWNSPERSON 3

To hell with patience. Get on with it already!

SHERIFF CLARK

Then shut the hell up so we can get on with the formalities and get to the show you all seem so eager for.

Sheriff Clark turns to a deputy holding a piece of paper.

DEPUTY

The Benders are convicted of the charge of murder on twelve separate counts.

The crowd revs up at this mention. The deputy pauses, then recommences reading the document.

DEPUTY (CONT'D)

The judge and jury have sentenced  
the Bender family to death by  
hanging...

The deputy folds up the paper and looks out over the crowd.

DEPUTY (CONT'D)

... which will be carried out  
immediately after their last words.

The crowd quiets with this last statement.

SHERIFF CLARK

Well. Do any of you have anything  
you'd like to get off your chests  
before you hang?

The Bender family all look to Elvira.

ELVIRA

I do Sheriff.

Elvira looks out over the crowd.

ELVIRA (CONT'D)

We're not sorry for one tiny bit of  
what we've done.

A murmur spreads through the crowd.

SHERIFF CLARK

Quiet everyone. This is their one  
and only right before they hang.  
Let her finish.

ELVIRA

Had we more time, we would have  
gotten a few more of you buried in  
our orchard.

The crowd begins to push forward towards the gallows and  
collide with the deputies at the front of the platform.

SHERIFF CLARK

(towards the crowd)  
EVERYONE STOP!

ELVIRA

Hang us high and put us in the  
ground. We can't be stopped by the  
likes of you.

The crowd begins throwing rocks at the Benders. One hits John Sr. and cracks his head open.

ELVIRA (CONT'D)

What we done will live on and  
there'll be hell to pay.

Sheriff Clark motions to another official to pull the lever. With a loud CLANG, the prop holding up the stage folds back and the Benders suddenly drop.

CUT TO:

EXT. LYLESBURGH - CENTER OF TOWN - GALLOWS - EVENING

P.O.V. - ELVIRA

The angry crowd is in front of her and with one quick drop the view of the crowd is suddenly tilted forty-five degrees.

EXT. LYLESBURGH - CENTER OF TOWN - GALLOWS - EVENING

The Sheriff walks to the edge of the gallows watching the last death spasms.

SHERIFF CLARK

With this final act, we have  
delivered the justice the victims  
deserve.

(beat)

And I hope the lot of you rot in  
hell.

Sheriff Clark spits on Elvira's swaying body.

EXT. LYLESBURGH OUTSKIRTS - REMOTE FIELD - ENTRANCE - DEAD OF NIGHT

A wagon speeds through an old stone archway to the deepest reaches of an open field.

EXT. LYLESBURGH OUTSKIRTS - REMOTE FIELD - FURTHEST CORNER - DEAD OF NIGHT

The wagon comes to a stop at the back corner of the field. Three men are already there digging a large hole. Four sets of feet stick out from the end of the wagon. Inside piled up are the Benders.

SHERIFF CLARK

Come on boys. Let's get this over with.

HENRY

The hole's almost dug Sheriff.

SHERIFF CLARK

If it's deep enough to cover their corpses...

The sheriff peers into the hole.

SHERIFF CLARK (CONT'D)

...it's plenty deep for me.

HENRY

Then we're ready here Sheriff.

SHERIFF CLARK

Alright, let's grab 'em off the wagon and be done with this.

The men grab the bodies out of the wagon and toss them into the grave one at a time. After the last body goes in they begin filling it in with dirt.

SHERIFF CLARK (CONT'D)

Now, I don't want anyone to know these bastards are buried here.

HENRY

We're not laying grave markers?

The Sheriff stops shoveling.

SHERIFF CLARK

Absolutely not! Not a single soul is to know other than us. Not the Bender's other kin, and no one looking for revenge against 'em.

Sheriff Clark puts one last shovel full of dirt on the grave.

SHERIFF CLARK (CONT'D)

This nightmare's over, and it's time we put it to rest.

The group of men all nod in unison, agreeing with the Sheriff.

HENRY

No problem Sheriff. You can count on us.

They finish the work, pack up, and leave the secret location.

EXT. LYLESBURGH OUTSKIRTS - REMOTE FIELD - ENTRANCE - DEAD OF NIGHT

The wagon and the group of riders leave the secret mass grave behind as they race off into the night.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. MILLER FARM - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE:

"LABETTE COUNTY, 1930"

A family farm with a large white house and a large red barn are separated by a curved driveway. A pasture with grazing horses, cows, and couple goats encircle the barn. At the back of the farm is a chicken coup and a pig sty with clucking hens and a pig rolling in the mud.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

A clenched fist crashes down on the counter.

MARY

That's enough!

MARY MILLER (35, WHITE FEMALE) is at the counter working on some canning with mason jars all laid out. Her children, ELLIE (14, WHITE FEMALE), EDDIE (12, WHITE MALE), and HARLEY (8, WHITE MALE) all freeze in their tracks.

KIDS

(in unison)

Sorry mama.

MARY

I know you three didn't mean  
nothin' driving your mother crazy  
but I need you all to get  
outside...now!

KIDS

(in unison)

Yes mama.

Mary goes back to her canning but before her children exit the kitchen she gives them a task.

MARY

You know what. If you kids have so much life in ya, go gather up some dandelion greens for dinner.

(beat)

I don't want to see your faces until I call you. You got that!?

ELLIE

Yes mama.

HARLEY

Yes Ma.

EDDIE

Yes Ma'am.

MARY

Good. Now skedaddle.

Heads downcast, the children march single-file out of the kitchen. Mary lets out a sigh, smiles, shakes her head, and goes back to her canning.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - BACK DOOR - MORNING

The children exit the house without another word until they're outside and far enough away from their mothers wrath. Ellie shoves Eddie's shoulder

ELLIE

Thanks a lot, you dumbbell.

Eddie returns the shove to Ellie.

EDDIE

If you didn't want me reading your diary you shouldn't have left it out.

HARLEY

What do we do now?

EDDIE

You're gonna gather greens for Mama.

Eddie turns to walk away, but Ellie grabs him by the shoulder.



ELLIE

I don't think so. Mama told us to gather some greens for dinner, and that's what we're all gonna do.

She motions to all three of them.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

After that. I don't care what you get up to.

EDDIE

You ain't the boss of me.

ELLIE

I am your big sister...

Ellie buries a finger into her brother's chest.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

...and you will do whatever Mama tells you to. Or I'll tell Pa.

EDDIE

Fine.

(beat)

Let's go and get this done with.

EXT. MILLER FARM - LARGE BARN - MORNING

The kids all head over to the barn.

INT. MILLER FARM - LARGE BARN - MORNING

Their father CHARLES MILLER (36, WHITE MALE) is throwing hay into the hay rack for the cows. He looks up to see his kids walking in.

CHARLES

What brings you out here?

Charles pokes the pitchfork into the ground and leans on the handle.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

(sarcastically)

Did you come to help?

ELLIE

Sorry Pa, Mama wants us to pick some greens for dinner and we're looking for something to put 'em in.

CHARLES

You can borrow one of the egg baskets over there.

(beat)

Just be sure to bring it back when you're done.

ELLIE

We will Pa.

Ellie grabs the basket and the kids head out. Charles goes back to filling the hay rack.

EXT. MILLER FARM - LARGE BARN - MORNING

As they exit the barn, BILLY WILLIAMS (13, BLACK MALE) approaches waving his hands in the air trying to get their attention. They all stop.

EDDIE

Hey Billy!

BILLY

Hi Eddie. What're ya'll up to?

EDDIE

We're on a mission for our Ma. You're welcome to come along if you don't mind helping us pick some greens?

BILLY

Might as well. I got nothing better to do. Afterward, we could head down to the creek to catch some crawfish if you want.

EDDIE

Yeah!

ELLIE

If you two are done clucking away like a couple a' hens...can we please get moving?

BILLY

Absolutely.

The group marches off to the nearby tree line.

EXT. MILLER FARM - NEARBY FOREST - LATE MORNING

The children enter the canopy of the ancient trees. Ellie is leading the way with Eddie and Billy trying to pull out front and little Harley picking up the rear.

EDDIE

If we're going to find those  
dandelion greens we need an open  
field.

ELLIE

(sarcastically)  
Really?

Eddie kicks a small stone.

EDDIE

You don't have to be so mean.

ELLIE

And you don't have to be such a  
dunce.

Harley sprints to catch up to his older siblings.

HARLEY

Yeah.

EDDIE

You don't even know what we're  
talking about.

HARLEY

Yeah, I do. you're talking about  
what Mama told us to do.

EDDIE

Lucky guess.

ELLIE

Hurry up, there's a clearing up  
ahead.

EXT. OPEN FIELD - LATE MORNING

The children exit the darkness of the forest into the bright landscape, covered in wildflowers. In the distance, an old cobblestone wall separates it from a neighboring field.

ELLIE  
See. I told you.

EDDIE  
My eyes told me the same thing.  
(beat)  
We'll check over there...and you  
losers can check over by that wall.

ELLIE  
Fine.

The kids split up and begin searching the area. Ellie, Eddie, and Billy begin searching the field. Harley walks towards the short cobblestone wall and sees dandelions on the other side.

HARLEY  
Hey guys. I found some.

Ellie and Eddie rush over to see if their youngest brother is correct.

ELLIE  
Well, I'll be. Good job.

Ellie roughs up Harley's hair.

BILLY  
Way to go little man.

EDDIE  
Not bad for a pipsqueak.  
(beat)  
I don't see a gate. Let's climb on  
over.

ELLIE  
Are you sure? We don't know who it  
belongs to.

EDDIE  
Does it matter? I don't think  
anyone will complain if we fill the  
basket with some greens. Do you?

ELLIE  
No. I suppose not.

EXT. NEIGHBORING FIELD - LATE MORNING

Eddie and Billy climb up onto the wall. Eddie hops down, but Billy stays on top of the wall. He reaches down to help Ellie and Harley up and over, then jumps down afterward.

ELLIE

Thanks.

HARLEY

Yeah. Thanks Billy.

BILLY

You're welcome. Anytime.

Billy gives Ellie a smile and a look. Ellie shyly smiles and turns away.

EDDIE

Huh. Never been over this way before.

ELLIE

Me neither.

Parroting his older sister.

HARLEY

Me neither.

EDDIE

Of course you haven't. You're eight.

ELLIE

Enough of the bickering. Let's get to picking.

Eddie and Billy split off leaving Ellie and Harley to look for greens on their own. Ellie is bent over selecting the best greens to pluck while Harley's attention is elsewhere.

HARLEY

What's that over there?

ELLIE

What's what over where?

Harley points off to the horizon. Ellie and Eddie are both focused on the ground and never notice what Harley is referencing. Ellie looks up squinting.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

You mean that tree way over there?

HARLEY

Yeah. I'm going to go check it out.

ELLIE

Fine. Just be careful...and don't go climbing it. We don't need you getting hurt.

HARLEY

I'll be careful.

Ellie goes back to plucking greens while Harley wanders off through the field to investigate. Harley finds a dirt path wide enough for a motorcar or wagon and follows it towards the tree.

EXT. NEIGHBORING FIELD - APPLE TREE - LATE MORNING

After walking over a couple of low rolling hills Harley sees a gnarled and hideous-looking apple tree growing in the back of the neighboring field. Nothing around it except the wall just a short way behind it.

The sounds of crows screech out from the tree, but none are seen. Five red apples all hang from the lowest branches and are just in reach for his eight-year-old frame.

Harley pauses, making sure no one is around, and he begins plucking the apples from the branches. He pulls up the bottom of his shirt to cradle his prizes to carry them back to his brother and sister.

He hurries back to the others, but on his way he notices something in the distance, catching the light of the sun.

EXT. NEIGHBORING FIELD - LATE MORNING

Harley follows the dirt path toward what caught his attention and sees a field of stone markers peppering the landscape.

He gets close enough to see the polished marble of tombstones and instantly turns tail and runs back to his brother and sister. Only stopping to pick up a dropped apple.

HARLEY

(out of breath)

We're in the back of a cemetery!

EDDIE

What are you talking about? There ain't no headstones around us.

Harley motions in the direction he just came from.

HARLEY  
They're over that hill.

EDDIE  
So? There ain't no bodies buried  
over here. Who cares then scaredy  
cat?

Ellie crouches down so she's eye to eye with Harley.

ELLIE  
For once Eddie is right. There  
ain't no bodies around here.

Ellie takes an apple from Harley's shirt.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
Where did you get those?

HARLEY  
Off that tree back by the wall.

ELLIE  
These look real good.

HARLEY  
Figured Mama could make us  
something tasty.

Eddie grabs the apple from Ellie.

EDDIE  
Or I could eat one now. You want  
one Billy?

ELLIE  
Hey!

She tries to get the apple back from Eddie but fails.

BILLY  
Sorry, I'll pass.

EDDIE  
Why?

BILLY  
I'm the wrong color to be taking  
anyone's apples from them.

EDDIE  
Come on Billy. Don't be crazy.  
These don't belong to no one.

BILLY

I can't take that chance. At the worst, you'll get your hides tanned if anyone catches you.

(beat)

Me on the other hand...there will be a whole different set of consequences. Not including the blistering I'd get from my Nana.

EDDIE

Sorry Billy. I keep forgetting.

BILLY

It's ok. It's good you keep forgetting.

Ellie snatches the apple back from Eddie.

ELLIE

How about we take them all to Mama?

EDDIE

...fine.

Ellie takes the rest of the apples from Harley and puts them in the basket along with the greens.

ELLIE

Maybe she can make a pie or crisp with 'em.

HARLEY

Yeah!

EDDIE

That does sound pretty good.

EXT. NEARBY FOREST - NOON

The children retrace their route back to the family farm.

EXT. MILLER FARM - EARLY AFTERNOON

They exit the tree line and see their father feeding the chickens. Charles lifts his hand and waves. The kids all wave back. Eddie turns to Billy.

EDDIE

Now that that's done, let's get going Billy.



BILLY  
Sure thing.

Before Billy takes off with Eddie he turns to face Ellie one last time.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
See you, Ellie.

ELLIE  
Yeah. See you later Billy.

Billy and Eddie head off and leave Ellie and Harley to deliver the apples and greens to their mother.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - EARLY AFTERNOON

Harley excitedly enters the house to show their mother what they found and inadvertently startles her.

HARLEY  
Mama! Look what we got!

MARY  
What in blue blazes are you doing  
back already?  
(beat)  
And the ruckus you're making is  
making my head spin.

ELLIE  
But Mama, look...

Ellie puts the basket on the kitchen table. Her mother sees the apples and her face brightens up.

MARY  
Where did you find these?

ELLIE  
Harley here found them in a tree  
hiding in the back of an old field.

MARY  
What tree?

Ellie nudges Harley to tell their Mama where he found them.

HARLEY  
I was looking for the greens like  
you told us to Mama...and I saw  
this ugly tree in the back of a  
field.

MARY

So you didn't take them from  
someone's tree then?

ELLIE

No way Mama. No houses, no farms,  
just an open field in the middle of  
nowhere with no one around.

Mary gives them a suspicious look but relaxes her gaze.

MARY

So what should we do with these?

HARLEY

Crisp!

ELLIE

A pie?

MARY

I'm out of oats, but I may have  
enough flour to make us a tasty  
pie.

(beat)

How's that sound?

HARLEY

Sounds good to me.

ELLIE

Me too. can I help?

HARLEY

I can help too.

MARY

Of course. The more the merrier.

Ellie and Harley stand on each side of their mother as she  
begins prepping the ingredients.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - DINING ROOM - EVENING

Everyone but Charles is sitting at the table, patiently  
waiting to have dinner. Chipped beef, dandelion greens,  
biscuits, and mashed potatoes are all laid out on the dining  
room table.

Charles finally enters and sits down.

CHARLES

Sorry to hold you all up. One of the cows broke the fence.

MARY

Was it Buttercup?

CHARLES

More than likely. That cow is always causing problems...but she keeps us in milk so I'll let it go.  
(he smiles at this)  
Well. I'll say grace.

The family all lower their heads and hold hands while Charles says grace.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Our heavenly father, bless this feast my lovely wife prepared and most importantly bless this family and our farm. Thank you for watching over us...  
(beat)  
Amen.

MILLER FAMILY

(in unison)  
Amen.

After the prayer, food is scooped and piled onto everyone's plates. It's a quiet meal with the occasional small talk. Once the plates are clean the three children all look to their mother.

MARY

(with a smile)  
What?

HARLEY

Where's the pie, Mama?

MARY

I don't know. Where is it?

The children all begin looking around the dining room, but Mary gets up and walks into the kitchen. She comes back with the apple pie in hand.

MARY (CONT'D)

It was cooling on the window sill.

Charles looks impressed and surprised.

CHARLES

Where in Sam Hill did you get the apples?

MARY

These mighty adventurers found some apples growin' in the wilds today.

CHARLES

Well...and all this time I thought you kids were just messing around.

Mary takes a large knife and cuts the pie up into five pieces.

MARY

Alright everyone. Here you go.

After each piece has been delivered everyone waits for their mother and father to take the first bite, then they quickly dig in. No small talk this time, only empty plates.

MARY (CONT'D)

Alrighty. Who's helping me clean up?

CHARLES

If all three of you help it'll go much faster.

ELLIE

Yes sir.

EDDIE

We're on it Pa.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - BACK PORCH - EVENING

Charles goes outside to smoke his pipe, while everyone is washing, drying, and putting away the dinner dishes.

While the children are finishing up Mary comes outside to spend some quiet time with Charles. She slides her arm around Charles and he returns the gesture.

MARY

Beautiful night.

CHARLES

It is.

MARY

What're you thinking about?

CHARLES  
Nothing much. Just appreciating  
what we got here.

Charles takes a puff off his pipe.

CHARLES (CONT'D)  
Times are tough but we're making it  
work.

MARY  
I knew we would. We've got a good  
thing here.

CHARLES  
We do.

Charles squeezes his wife, kisses her, and goes back to  
looking out at the farm.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HARLEY'S BEDROOM - LATE EVENING

Harley is in bed with the blanket pulled up to his chin as he  
waits for his mother to tuck him in. Mary enters his room.

MARY  
I'm here. No need to worry.

HARLEY  
Thanks Mama. You tuck me in the  
best.

Charles overhears this while walking down the hallway and  
pokes his head into Harley's room.

CHARLES  
What do you mean by that young man?

HARLEY  
You do good too Pa.

CHARLES  
Alright. Good to know. Good night.

HARLEY  
Good night Pa.

Charles leaves.

HARLEY (CONT'D)  
You still do it the best Mama.

MARY  
Of course I do...monster check?

HARLEY  
Please.

Mary grabs the lantern on Harley's bedside table and checks under the bed first.

MARY  
Nothing here.

She opens the squeaky closet door slowly. Mary peaks in and takes a few steps disappearing from view. All is silent.

HARLEY  
Mama? You there?

Nothing is seen or heard. Until...Mary Steps out suddenly.

MARY  
(loudly to surprise her  
son)  
Nothing in here either!

This makes Harley chuckle with relief.

HARLEY  
Mama, you scared me.

MARY  
Just wanted to show you, you've got  
nothing to worry about.

Mary kisses him on the forehead, tucks him in nice and tight, and takes the lantern with her. Before leaving she turns one last time.

MARY (CONT'D)  
Sleep tight. Mama loves you.

HARLEY  
Love you too Mama.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - ELLIE'S BEDROOM - LATE EVENING

Charles pokes his head in on Ellie.

CHARLES  
Sleep tight, and good job making  
sure those apples made it back  
here.

ELLIE  
What'd you mean Pa?

CHARLES  
I know if it were up to your  
brothers those apples would never  
have made it.  
(beat)  
You're a good one, Ellie.

ELLIE  
Thanks Pa.

CHARLES  
Get some rest. I'll see you in the  
morning.

ELLIE  
Goodnight Pa.

CHARLES  
Goodnight Ellie

Ellie rolls over and stares out her bedroom window while her father pulls her door closed.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - EDDIE'S BEDROOM - LATE EVENING

Eddie is sitting up in his bed reading a comic book when his father pokes his head in his room.

CHARLES  
Lights out, Eddie.

Eddie quickly folds up the comic book and slides it under his blanket.

EDDIE  
Yes Pa.

CHARLES  
Oh, and try to hide those better.  
You know what your mother thinks  
about those comic books of yours.

EDDIE  
Yes...I mean no...I mean...

CHARLES  
Let me stop you right there slick.  
Goodnight.

EDDIE  
Night, Pa.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HALLWAY - LATE EVENING

Charles closes Eddie's door and heads off to his room.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - CHARLE'S AND MARY'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Mary finishes getting ready for bed and slides in under the covers as Charles walks in.

CHARLES  
We got some good kids.

Charles begins changing into his sleeping clothes.

MARY  
We really do. Now hurry up and get  
into this bed with me.

CHARLES  
You don't have to tell me twice.

Charles gets into bed and kisses Mary.

MARY  
I love you.

CHARLES  
Love you too. Goodnight.

Mary smiles and rolls over. Charles puts his arm over her and holds her close.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - DEAD OF NIGHT

A full moon shines brightly with no clouds to block the light. The quiet of the farm is disrupted by the sounds of the animals raising a racket. Cows, chickens, and pigs all start to react as though there is a predator on the prowl.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HALLWAY - DEAD OF NIGHT

INVISIBLE PRESENCE - POV - MOVING

Muffled sounds of distress come from each of the sleepers' rooms. It moves quietly down the hallway into Harley's room.



INT. MILLER HOUSE - HARLEY'S BEDROOM - DEAD OF NIGHT

Harley tosses in bed but never wakes. His eyes are darting from one side to the other under his closed eyelids.

DREAM SEQUENCE - INT. STRANGE OLD HOUSE - KITCHEN - DEAD OF NIGHT

Harley is standing behind a man sitting in a chair, and has a hammer in one hand and a knife in the other. He lifts the hammer and punches a deep hole into the back of the man's head, and with his other hand, he slices the man's throat from side to side. He is horrified but unable to control himself.

CUT TO:

DREAM SEQUENCE - EXT. APPLE ORCHARD - DEAD OF NIGHT

Harley's digging a hole deep within an apple orchard. Once the hole is deep enough, the body of the man he murdered appears at the bottom. Its eyes open, and stare up at Harley.

END DREAM  
SEQUENCE

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HARLEY'S BEDROOM - DEAD OF NIGHT

Harley is unable to wake and throws his head from one side to the other, whimpering under his breath.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HALLWAY - DEAD OF NIGHT

INVISIBLE PRESENCE - POV - MOVING

It continues moving down the hallway and passes through Ellie's door.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - ELLIE'S BEDROOM - DEAD OF NIGHT

Ellie is drenched in sweat breathing heavily but still asleep.

DREAM SEQUENCE - INT. STRANGE OLD HOUSE - CELLAR - DEAD OF NIGHT

Ellie is standing in a pitch black basement. Suddenly a light appears above her.

A trapdoor opens, and a dead body comes falling through it landing on top of her, pinning her to the ground.

She panics and scrambles to crawl out from under the dead weight. Just as she is about to free herself another body lands on her. Then another, and another.

She lets out a gasping, silent scream. Laughter is heard just above of the trapdoor. The weight of the bodies begins to squeeze the air out of her.

END DREAM  
SEQUENCE

INT. MILLER HOUSE - ELLIE'S BEDROOM - DEAD OF NIGHT

Ellie is lying in her bed, clawing at her sheets, and gasping for air.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - MILLER HALLWAY - DEAD OF NIGHT

INVISIBLE PRESENCE - POV - MOVING

The invisible presence continues down the hallway and through Eddie's door.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - EDDIE'S BEDROOM - DEAD OF NIGHT

Eddie is asleep and lucidly dreaming.

DREAM SEQUENCE - EXT. CENTER OF TOWN - GALLOWS - EVENING

Eddie is standing on a wooden stage with five people all lined up with nooses around their necks and hoods over their heads. One by one the hoods are removed and he sees that they are his family, with another Eddie standing at the end.

A sheriff he's never seen before turns to him.

SHERIFF CLARK

The sentence will now be carried out.

(beat)

Pull the lever deputy.

Eddie struggles to pull his hands free from the lever, but is unable to.

EDDIE

I can't.

SHERIFF CLARK  
You will deputy.

The lever begins to slowly move towards the position to drop the floor out from under the prisoners. He continues to struggle, trying to stop the lever.

EDDIE  
What's happening?!

SHERIFF CLARK  
You're carrying out your duty son.

His family on the gallows all look at Eddie.

MARY  
What're you doing Eddie?

An exaggerated grin forms on their faces extending from ear to ear. The lever is almost in the release position.

EDDIE  
(whimpering)  
No...

SHERIFF CLARK  
Yes.

With a CLICK the stage drops out from under his family. They drop, twitching, and all with a frozen smile on their face staring at Eddie who is finally able to remove his hands from the lever.

CUT TO:

Eddie's suddenly hanging from the noose he saw himself in, and he grasps at the rope, fighting to breath.

END DREAM  
SEQUENCE

INT. MILLER HOUSE - EDDIE'S BEDROOM - DEAD OF NIGHT

Eddie gasps for air while reaching for his throat, but never wakes up from his nightmare.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HALLWAY - DEAD OF NIGHT

INVISIBLE PRESENCE - POV - MOVING

It continues down the hallway to Charles and Mary's bedroom door and travels through it.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - CHARLES & MARY'S BEDROOM - DEAD OF NIGHT

Charles has his arm draped over Mary as he spoons her. He rolls over onto his back and Mary does the same. Their eyelids open but all you see are the whites of their eyes.

DREAM SEQUENCE - INT. STRANGE OLD HOUSE - KITCHEN - DEAD OF NIGHT

Mary and Charles are sitting at a table in a strange kitchen they don't recognize. A man and a woman sit across the table from them.

MARY

Who are you?

ELVIRA

Friends. I'm Elvira and this is my husband John.

MARY

I'm...

ELVIRA

(cuts her off)

We know who you are.

CHARLES

What do you want?

(beat)

Why are we here?

ELVIRA

I wanted to give you a chance to go peacefully.

CHARLES

Peacefully?

ELVIRA

We have your children.

MARY

I don't understand. This is only a dream, isn't it?

ELVIRA

No. It's not.

CUT TO:

DREAM SEQUENCE - MILLER HOUSE - ELLIE'S BEDROOM - DEAD OF NIGHT

Mary and Charles are suddenly standing in Ellie's bedroom doorway. They are unable to move. Elvira is behind them with a hand on each of their shoulders.

CHARLES

What...how?

ELVIRA

Just watch.

They see duplicates of themselves standing at Ellie's bedside. Mary slides Ellie's pillow out from under her head.

Mary places the pillow on Ellie's face and presses it firmly. Charles reaches down and helps to smother their daughter. Ellie struggles to free herself but to no avail.

MARY

STOP! Please stop this!

CHARLES

Whatever you want. Please don't make us...

CUT TO:

DREAM SEQUENCE - INT. STRANGE OLD HOUSE - KITCHEN - DEAD OF NIGHT

Mary and Charles are back at the kitchen table with Elvira and John again.

ELVIRA

Just wanted to get our point across. If you want to keep your family safe...

(beat)

Don't give us any grief when the time comes. That's all we ask.

MARY

Please. Don't hurt our children. We'll do what you want.

ELVIRA

That's all I wanted to hear.

Elvira and John reach across the table toward's the Miller's. Mary and Charles also reach out to meet their hands. Mary and Elvira clasp hands together and so do Charles and John.

END DREAM  
SEQUENCE

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

The children are all sitting in their chairs at the kitchen table waiting for breakfast. Charles walks in shambling and sits down at the head of the table. All eyes are looking down at the empty plates before them.

Mary enters the room with a plate of scrambled eggs, and a pile of toast. She drops it on the center of the table with a CLANG, then sits down herself.

Everyone looks up at Mary with bags under their eyes.

MARY

Go on and eat.

With this command everyone begins scooping up piles of eggs and grabbing some toast.

CHARLES

Wait just a minute. Am I going to say grace first?

MARY

I'm sorry. Yes... of course.

CHARLES

Bless this meal, bless this farm,  
and bless this family...Amen.

KIDS/MARY

(in unison)

Amen.

CHARLES

It's Sunday so get cleaned up after  
breakfast for church.

The children are too busy eating, not paying any attention to their father. Mary pounds her fists on the table.

MARY

Don't you dare ignore your father!

KIDS  
 (in unison)  
 Yes Pa.

MARY  
 Now hurry and finish up.

KIDS  
 (in unison)  
 Yes mama.

An angry look on Mary's face disappears and a tired smile replaces it.

The family finishes their meal and the children collect the breakfast plates. Charles gets up and heads outside to finish up the chores before church.

EXT. MILLER FARM - LARGE BARN - MORNING

Charles exits the house and walks across the barnyard and sees the barn doors flapping open and closed.

CHARLES  
 (to himself)  
 Hmm. I know I latched those doors  
 last night.

Charles approaches the open doors and grabs a pitchfork that is leaning against the outside wall.

INT. MILLER FARM - LARGE BARN - MORNING

He enters with the pitchfork pointed forward and scans the interior looking for anything missing, out of place, or if someone is still inside.

CHARLES  
 Hello. Is there anyone in here?

Charles walks slowly through the barn peering behind stacks of clutter and bales of hay.

CHARLES (CONT'D)  
 If there's anyone in here you best  
 be...

Charles is cut short when a shadowy figure walks out from behind a stack of hay bales and stops in the middle of the barn. It is in the shape of a man. Its eyes glow a crimson red, staring in Charles' direction.

It walks to the farthest corner in the barn and melts into the darkness of a shadow. Charles chases after it and pokes his pitchfork into the the corner. Nothing is there.

He stops, stands back, and rubs his eyes.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Light playing tricks on me.

(beat)

That's all it was.

He walks over and begins filling a bucket with chicken feed while keeping an eye out for the shadowy intruder.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HALLWAY - MORNING

On her way to her bedroom Ellie overhears Harley having a conversation with someone in his room.

She stops outside of Harley's room and pokes her head in.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HARLEY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Ellie sees Harley sitting on his bed with his legs folded under him, facing the foot of his bed.

ELLIE

Harley you need to be getting ready.

(beat)

Who you talkin' to anyway?

HARLEY

No one.

ELLIE

I heard you talking to someone.

HARLEY

...Just my imaginary friend I guess.

ELLIE

What's his name?

HARLEY

David Bender.

ELLIE

Wow. What a name. You better tell him bye for now.

(MORE)



ELLIE (CONT'D)  
Mama will blister your behind if  
you make us late for church.

HARLEY  
I'll be ready.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HALLWAY - MORNING

Ellie turns to continue down the hallway but stops when she  
hear's Harley talking to someone again.

HARLEY  
(off camera)  
Sorry David I've got to go. We'll  
play some more when I get home.

Ellie hears an inaudible WHISPER and stops to listen if it's  
Harley answering himself.

HARLEY (CONT'D)  
(off camera)  
I know. Why don't you come with me?

Ellie hears another inaudible WHISPER. She approaches  
Harley's door quietly to see what's going on.

HARLEY (CONT'D)  
(off camera)  
I understand. It's not much fun for  
me either.

Ellie tiptoes to the doorway, and pokes her head around  
quickly trying to catch a glimpse of what Harley is up to.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HARLEY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Harley is tying his shoes, and is finishing up getting ready.

ELLIE  
Were you in here talking to  
yourself again?

HARLEY  
Nope. Busy getting ready. I don't  
want to make Mama angry.

ELLIE  
That's good. I guess I'll follow  
your fine example.

Ellie leaves Harley's doorway and continues on to her room.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HALLWAY - MORNING

Ellie walks down the hall towards her bedroom and passes a full length mirror hanging on the wall. Out of the corner of her eye she catches a strange reflection in the mirror that isn't hers.

She freezes, then slowly turns her head towards the mirror. She tip toes towards the mirror and slowly leans in, only to see her own reflection.

ELLIE  
(laughing a bit to  
herself)  
Boy oh boy.

Ellie rubs her eyes, chuckles, and heads off to her bedroom to get ready herself.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Mary is washing the last of the dishes from breakfast while staring out the kitchen window.

A slight tickle in her throat causes her to cough. She grabs a glass, fills it with tap water, and chugs it down. The coughing seems to be weakening but all of a sudden she drops the glass in the sink, it shatters, and she begins coughing uncontrollably.

Mary grips the edge of the sink, bracing herself as she wretches. She slips her fingers and thumb into her mouth up to her knuckles. Standing tall she tilts her head back fishing around inside her mouth.

Her hand tenses up and she slowly slides her fingers out of her mouth. When her finger tips get to her lips the sight of a clump of black, wet hair is pinched between her fingers.

Slowly she pulls it out inch by inch. She gets to the end after a foot of hair and a clump of something fleshy is ejected into the sink.

Mary takes a deep breath and stands back. She leans in to see the hair and what appears to be a clump of scalp resting in the sink.

MARY  
What...what the hell is going on?

The look of distress on her face melts away and a look of cold defiance takes its place. Mary picks up the lock of hair and buries it in the bottom of the trash can under the sink.

EXT. MILLER FARM - LARGE BARN - MORNING

Charles opens the barn doors wide and leads a horse out with a wagon attached. He pats the horse and gives it a handful of hay.

CHARLES  
 (Yells towards the house)  
 Alrighty everyone! It's time to  
 load up!

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - BACK DOOR- MORNING

Eddie is the first to exit the house.

EDDIE  
 Why ain't we taking the auto Pa?

CHARLES  
 You paying for the gas?

EDDIE  
 Well...no.

CHARLES  
 Then Max here will be taking us to  
 worship. Enough sassing and get  
 your bottom in the wagon.

Mary, Ellie, and Harley head out. Mary locks the door behind them.

EXT. MILLER FARM - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

They climb up into the wagon, and with a snap of the reins Max and the Miller's head off into town.

EXT. LYLSEBURGH - MOREHEAD CHURCH - LATE MORNING

A standard looking small town church painted white, small windows, with two large red doors pulled outward. It sits in the middle of a field with horses tethered to the trees offering shade and a beaten down patch of grass where the automobiles are all parked.

At the front door, three people are shaking hands, giving hugs, and greeting each and every person as they enter the church.

The Miller family finds a place to tether their horse and head towards the entrance of the church.

Out front, is PASTOR WAYNE TORRANCE (50's, WHITE MALE), his wife JOAN TORRANCE (50's WHITE FEMALE), and MAYOR DAVID ALLEN (45, WHITE MALE). As the Miller family walk up, Pastor Wayne reaches out to shake Charles' hand.

PASTOR WAYNE

I hope you and your family are having a blessed day.

CHARLES

Of course Pastor. Any day we're upright and breathing is a good one.

PASTOR WAYNE

Well I can't argue with that.

Mayor Allen wedges himself in-between the Pastor and Charles.

MAYOR ALLEN

Greetings Charles.

CHARLES

Mayor.

MAYOR ALLEN

It's a glorious day that the lord has made and we are all here together. Amen.

PASTOR WAYNE

Yeah...that's about right Mayor.

MAYOR ALLEN

So Charles...I'm just checking in with my constituents...making sure I can count on your vote come election day.

CHARLES

Well Mayor...this is the lords day and I'm not up to discussing politics in or around gods house.

MAYOR ALLEN

Oh of course. My apologies.

PASTOR WAYNE

Don't worry Charles. You are the last person the Mayor is going to harass this morning...right Mayor?

MAYOR ALLEN

Of course. I think it's high time  
for me to find my seat anyway. I'll  
see everyone inside.

The Mayor quickly makes his way to the door and disappears  
inside.

With the distraction gone Joan reaches out to shake Mary's  
hand. Mary ignores her gesture, and hurries her family along.

MARY

Come along young'uns. Let's get to  
our seats.

Mary leads her family indoors. Pastor Wayne and Joan exchange  
a look between them.

JOAN

Do Mary and her family seem alright  
to you?

PASTOR WAYNE

It's these times we're living in  
dear. Everyone is stressed not  
knowing what tomorrow may bring.

JOAN

I suppose...

A loud POP from an old exhaust catches the couple by surprise  
and an old beat up Ford Model T pulls into the church parking  
lot.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Goodness gracious. That scared the  
devil out of me.

PASTOR WAYNE

If it were only that easy.

JOAN

Oh you.

Billy is in the passenger seat of the Model T, and behind the  
wheel sits Billy's grandma PATRICIA WILLIAMS (65, BLACK,  
FEMALE, wearing a floral dress, hair pinned up and glasses).  
She pulls the car into the lot and it gives out one last POP.

Billy gets out first and quickly runs around to the other  
side to help his grandmother step out of the car. Billy loops  
his arm around Patricia's arm and they walk towards Pastor  
Wayne and his wife.

PATRICIA

Good morning, good morning Pastor  
Wayne...Joan.

PASTOR WAYNE

Well, good morning to you Patricia  
and you too Billy.

BILLY

Hi Pastor Wayne, hello Mrs.  
Torrance.

PASTOR WAYNE

I'm glad you've made it.  
(beat)  
We were just about ready to start.

PATRICIA

Oh I know. The mule wasn't  
cooperatin' and that dang  
automobile wouldn't start until  
Billy took a look at it.

PASTOR WAYNE

You must be blessed to have a  
little mechanic living with you.

Pastor Wayne pats Billy's shoulder.

PATRICIA

So...what's it going to be today  
Pastor? Fire and brimstone or the  
Lord is our shepherd?

Pastor Wayne winks at Patricia.

PASTOR WAYNE

I'm not going to give anything  
away. You'll have to come inside  
and find out.

Pastor Wayne looks at his wrist watch.

PASTOR WAYNE (CONT'D)

Well...It's about that time folks.  
Let's all head on in.

Patricia, Billy, and Joan head inside and Pastor Wayne closes  
the doors behind them.

INT. MOREHEAD CHURCH - NOON

Two rows of pews line each side of the room. Almost every seat has someone in it. Pastor Wayne is standing behind a podium watching the organist finish playing the hymn everyone is singing along to.

PASTOR WAYNE

Thank you Mrs. Seaton. That was some fine playing.

He turns back to his congregation.

PASTOR WAYNE (CONT'D)

Now lets talk about the big guy up there.

He motions and looks up to the sky.

PASTOR WAYNE (CONT'D)

...and what the Devil is busy doing down here. Right now.

(beat)

I know the current situation in our country is creating hardships and temptations for every one of us, but we need to prop one another up and be there for each other.

Mary begins squirming in her seat.

PASTOR WAYNE (CONT'D)

The Devil is waiting in the wings to take advantage of us all, and we cannot give in.

CONGREGATION

(all together)

Amen!

Pastor Wayne locks eyes with Mary and is unable to look away.

PASTOR WAYNE

The Devil will infect your soul.  
Rot you from the inside out.

Pastor Wayne digs his fingernails into the top of the podium.

PASTOR WAYNE (CONT'D)

The Devil will not only corrupt your very soul but will take all of your loved ones with him.

Mary's smile widens with every word the Pastor utters.

PASTOR WAYNE (CONT'D)

We can't just turn our backs on the Devil. We need to come together. Support each other, and smite this evil where it lives.

Mary sensually licks her lips. Beads of sweat appear on the Pastor's brow.

PASTOR WAYNE (CONT'D)

Evil is right here with us as I speak.

Pastor Wayne begins sweating even more and a tremor builds throughout his body.

PASTOR WAYNE (CONT'D)

Our garden of Eden has been invaded by an evil so pure that if we're not careful it will consume us all!

With his final word he rips the top of the podium from its base. Mary stands up suddenly and leaves with her family following after her.

Members of the congregation begin whispering and looking at both the Millers leaving and the Pastor who seems to have just had a "fit".

PATRICIA

Pastor...are you alright?

Pastor Wayne pulls a handkerchief out of his jacket pocket and dabs his forehead.

PASTOR WAYNE

I'm fine...It seems the Holy Spirit took control.

He smiles and tucks his handkerchief back in his pocket.

PATRICIA

Billy, get the man a glass of water please.

BILLY

Yes Nana.

Billy runs off to get a glass of water. The Pastor looks out the window and sees the Miller's racing off out of the lot.

Billy gets back and hands a glass of water to the Pastor.



BILLY (CONT'D)  
Here you go Pastor

PASTOR WAYNE  
Thank you Billy.

Pastor Wayne takes the a sip of water. Billy follows the pastors gaze out the window. Watching the departing Miller's.

BILLY  
What do suppose that was all about?

PASTOR WAYNE  
I'm not quite sure Billy.

EXT. MILLER WAGON - HATHAWAY ROAD - AFTERNOON

Mary and Charles are in the front of the wagon and the children are all squatting down in the back.

CHARLES  
Did we have to leave like that?

MARY  
Yes.

CHARLES  
Why?

MARY  
That's my business, and if you were so smart you'd stop asking dumb questions.

Charles gives Mary a side eyed glance, and focuses back on the road.

EXT. MILLER FARM - DRIVEWAY - AFTERNOON

The Miller's pull into their driveway. The family climbs out of the wagon and head indoors, leaving their father to put the horse and the wagon away.

INT. MILLER FARM - LARGE BARN - AFTERNOON

Charles leads the horse into the barn and unhitches it from the wagon. The horse starts to rear up. He opens the gate to the pasture and the horse races off putting a good distance between it and the barn.

He begins putting the horse's tackle away when he sees the glowing eyes of the shape he saw earlier staring back at him from the same dark corner it disappeared in earlier.

CHARLES

Hey! Whoever you are...you're trespassing.

He picks up a pitchfork and begins walking towards the intruder.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

You hear me!?

The shape walks out of the shadows. Its eyes glow red, and Charles backs up holding the pitchfork defensively.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Who...what are you?

It dashes towards Charles.

CUT TO:

EXT. MILLER FARM - LARGE BARN - AFTERNOON

A loud SCREAM is heard coming from the barn.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Mary is in the kitchen preparing Sunday dinner. She hears the scream, looks up, and smiles. Ellie walks in.

ELLIE

Was that Pa yelling?

MARY

Yeah. The horse must've stepped on his foot again. The damn fool.

ELLIE

I hope he's ok.

MARY

He will be.

Ellie exits the kitchen.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Ellie walks down the hallway to her room. As she passes the hallway mirror, she notices the reflection of someone else in the surface again.

She stops and stares into the mirror. The girl in the reflection appears to be a little older than her, and dressed in clothing her grandmother would have worn.

ELLIE

Who are you?

The reflection places her hands on the glass. Appearing trapped within the mirror.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Do you need help?

The reflection nods her head "yes", slowly and motions for Ellie to come closer.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

What can I do?

Ellie walks up to the mirror, and touches the glass. Upon contact, the girl in the mirror reaches out of the mirror, grabs Ellie by her wrists and pulls her into the mirror and switches places with her.

Ellie's body is still standing in front of the mirror, but the reflection in the mirror is now Ellie. The reflection of Ellie looks panicked and pounds on the glass. No sound is heard.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

(to the reflection)

Sorry...This is mine now.

Ellie turns and the mirror now shows the proper reflection as she heads into her bedroom and SLAMS the door behind her.

INT. HARLEY'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Harley is sitting on his bed. He jumps with the sudden sound of his sisters door being slammed shut.

HARLEY

Boy. She sounds mad.

A faint whisper is heard.

HARLEY (CONT'D)  
So what do you want to do now?

A faint whisper is heard.

HARLEY (CONT'D)  
Sure. Hide and seek sounds fun. Do you want to hide first?

A faint whisper is heard.

HARLEY (CONT'D)  
What do you mean you want permission to hide? Of course I give you permission to hide silly.

Harley chuckles for a moment then his eyes grow wide. He takes a giant breath as his eyes roll back into his skull. Harley tilts his head back for a moment. Then tilts it forward.

HARLEY (CONT'D)  
What a wonderful place to hide.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Eddie walks in sweating, not looking well.

EDDIE  
Ma. I'm not feeling well.

MARY  
Come here and let your mother take a look at you.

Mary places the back of her hand on Eddie's forehead.

MARY (CONT'D)  
You do feel a little warm.

She picks up a chunk of dried meat and gives it to Eddie.

MARY (CONT'D)  
Here. Have this. Don't chew it. Swallow it. It'll fix you right up.

EDDIE  
Are you sure Mama. It's awful big.

MARY  
Swallow it!

EDDIE  
Mama...are you ok?

MARY  
Of course I am...here.  
(beat)  
It'll pull out all the bad stuff as  
you swallow it.

EDDIE  
If you say so Ma.

Eddie takes the chunk of dried meat and attempts to swallow. The meat makes it part way down and gets lodged in his throat. Panic fills Eddie's face.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
(gasping)  
Help...can't breath...

Eddie grabs his throat. Mary just watches.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
(gasping)  
Please...Mama...help me.

Eddie turns purple still holding his throat and collapses on the floor.

Once Eddie's movements slow to a stop, Mary stomps down on his chest, dislodging the chunk of meat. It lands on the floor beside him.

Eddie's eyes pop open, and deep breath is sucked in, and he begins coughing.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
(raspy)  
Thanks Ma. I'm feeling much better  
now.

EXT. HATHAWAY ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON

The sun is shining, and Billy is walking down the road towards the Miller's farm.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - LATE AFTERNOON

Billy walks up to the front door and knocks. No one answers. He walks along the porch and peers through the front window into the dining room.

BILLY  
(to himself)  
What?!

The Miller's are all sitting at the table with empty plates. Behind each member of the family stands a human-shaped shadow, their hands on the shoulders of each member of the Miller family. The Miller's each have their mouths wide open and their heads tilted back.

Billy panics and races back to the front door, and pounds on it. No one answers, so he goes back to the window to knock on it but no one is there. He hears the front door open.

ELLIE  
Billy? What's wrong?

Billy walks back to the front door.

BILLY  
Ellie? Is everything alright?

ELLIE  
Of course Billy. Why wouldn't it be?

BILLY  
I...well I saw...I don't know what I saw. Is Eddie around?

ELLIE  
He is...but he's busy helping Pa.

Ellie steps out on the porch and closes the door behind her.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
Did you want to go for a walk?

BILLY  
Uh, yeah. Sure.

Billy and Ellie walk side by side towards the road.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - FRONT WINDOW - LATE AFTERNOON

Eddie pulls back the curtain watching Billy leave with his sister.

EDDIE  
Why wasn't I the one to go with him?

Mary walks up behind him.

MARY

It's not your turn Eddie. You need to be patient.

EDDIE

He's supposed to be my best friend. I should get him...Plus I don't like seeing them together.

MARY

It's a different time now. Don't worry. You'll have your chance.

EXT. HATHAWAY ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON

Ellie and Billy walk side by side down the road. Billy kicks the occasional pebble.

ELLIE

Do you like me?

BILLY

What?!

ELLIE

I think it's a pretty simple question. Do...you...like...me?

BILLY

Of course. You're my best friends sister. All of you are like family to me and my grandma.

Ellie stops and grabs Billy's hands.

ELLIE

You know that's not what I'm talking about.

Billy pulls his hands away.

BILLY

I'm sorry. I like you a great deal, but we can't.

Something shifts in Ellie's mannerisms and tone suddenly.

ELLIE

Billy?...RUN!

BILLY

What...why?!

ELLIE  
 RUN...NOW!

Billy takes a few steps back, turns, and begins to run home. A wicked look appears on Ellie's face.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
 (sarcastically)  
 Billy. Don't go. I'm sorry.

A smile creases the edge of her mouth.

ELLIE (CONT'D)  
 Please don't go. Ha ha ha ha ha ha!

Billy ignores her pleas, and runs as fast as he can back home.

EXT. WILLIAM'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

A ranch style home sits on a small lot of land with fields of corn on both sides. It's painted white with blue shutters, and has been well looked after.

Billy walks up to the front door and enters.

INT. WILLIAM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Patricia is prepping a batch of vegetables for canning. She stops what's she's doing when Billy enters.

PATRICIA  
 Billy, why are you home so soon? Is everything alright?

Billy flops down into a kitchen chair at the table.

BILLY  
 I don't know Nana.

Patricia gets a glass of water for Billy, sits down in a chair across from him, and grabs his hand.

PATRICIA  
 It's alright sweetie. You know you can tell me anything.

BILLY  
 I know...I just don't know what to tell. You'll think I'm crazy.



PATRICIA

Try me.

BILLY

(sighs deeply)

I walked over to the Miller's like I said I was gonna. I knocked on the front door and no one answered but I knew they were there...so I peaked through the front window...

Billy trails off and just stops talking.

PATRICIA

Go on child. Don't leave your Nana wondering.

She squeezes his hand and shakes it gently.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Be brave my little man and tell me.

BILLY

I didn't mean to be snooping, but I wanted to be sure the Millers were alright. After seeing them storm off during church I was worried...

PATRICIA

As am I.

BILLY

So I looked through the front window and saw them all sitting at the kitchen table. In some sort of a trance.

Billy takes a big drink of water.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Then I saw...it must have been a trick of the light. It looked like there were shadows standing behind each of 'em with their hands resting on the Millers' shoulders.

Patricia looks alarmed and leans in closer to Billy.

PATRICIA

Shades. What you saw were shades.

BILLY

What are shades?

PATRICIA

Unclean, vengeful spirits filled with hate. They were people who could never find peace in this world or even the next. What happened after you saw them?

BILLY

I ran back to the door and knocked like crazy. No one answered again and I ran back to the window and they were all gone.

(beat)

I was ready to pound on the door again but Ellie opened it. Looking at me like I was crazy, and then she started acting all weird.

PATRICIA

You're not crazy.

BILLY

You believe me?

PATRICIA

I do.

Patricia gets up from her chair, walks around the kitchen table and wraps Billy up in a big hug. She releases him and looks down at him.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Something is going on with the Millers, and it's up to us to help them.

EXT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

A two-story home sits on a suburban street with a white picket fence, and a beautiful garden that lines the front.

INT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Pastor Wayne is in his lounge chair with a notepad on his lap and glasses on his face. Joan walks in with a cup of coffee and sets it on the table beside his chair. He doesn't notice so she kisses him on the forehead to snap him out of his thoughts.

PASTOR WAYNE

Oh. Thank you.

JOAN

You're welcome. What's got your mind a-wondering tonight?

PASTOR WAYNE

I'm just wondering what happened today.

Pastor Wayne puts his notepad and pencil down on the end table and grabs his coffee. Joan sits in her chair next to him.

PASTOR WAYNE (CONT'D)

I'm afraid I may have offended the Millers.

He grabs the notepad and shakes it.

PASTOR WAYNE (CONT'D)

But there's nothing here to offend anyone but the Devil.

JOAN

Maybe they weren't feeling well. They seemed a bit distant when we greeted them out front.

PASTOR WAYNE

They weren't themselves. Were they?

JOAN

How about we invite them out to bingo this week? It might do them some good to get out of the house.

Joan gets up and places her hands on his shoulders, rubbing them gently.

JOAN (CONT'D)

How's that sound?

He turns his head and kisses the back of Joan's hand.

JOAN (CONT'D)

I'll even bake something up for the event too.

PASTOR WAYNE

That does sound nice.

JOAN

How about you? You had me worried too.

PASTOR WAYNE

I'm sure it was just the Holy Ghost working its way through me.

JOAN

It seemed to be more than that.

PASTOR WAYNE

It's fine. It's...it was strange. I just couldn't stop.

JOAN

Why don't you go lie down? You've been working a little too hard honey.

PASTOR WAYNE

You might be onto something.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - DINING ROOM - EVENING

The family is sitting at the kitchen table with their hands folded on each of their laps. Mary walks in with a casserole and drops it on the middle of the table.

MARY

Who's going to say grace?

Everyone else turns their head in her direction but no one speaks up.

MARY (CONT'D)

Ellie. Why don't you say grace?

ELLIE

Yes Mama.

Everyone bows their heads.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Dear lord. Thank you for our freedom. Bless this meal, bless this family, and bless our mission.

(beat)

Amen.

MILLERS

(all together)

Amen.

Mary stands back up and begins chopping blocks of the casserole out and splattering them on each person's plate.

MARY

Eat up. We've got work to do.

EXT. MILLER FARM - LARGE BARN - LATE EVENING

Lantern light spills out into the farmyard from between the cracks in the planks and the windows of the barn.

INT. MILLER FARM - LARGE BARN - LATE EVENING

Charles is standing near a group of shovels, pick axes, and hoes. The rest of his family lines up, and in turn, takes a different tool from their father. Mary motions for him to grab a pick axe while she grabs two lanterns.

EXT. MILLER FARM - TREE LINE - DEAD OF NIGHT

Mary leads her family towards the forest as they disappear into the darkness one by one.

EXT. MILLER FARM - EARLY MORNING

The Millers are covered from head to toe in dirt, they march single file back towards their house. Mary leads the way.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - BACK PORCH - EARLY MORNING

Mary walks to the backdoor and holds it open as her family file in one by one. She enters and closes the door behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. MILLER HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - LATE MORNING

A knock is heard at the front door. Ellie opens it and sees Patricia and Billy standing there.

ELLIE

Morning Ms. Williams...Billy. What can I do for you?

PATRICIA

Morning child. Is your mother around?

ELLIE

Yes Ma'am.

There is an awkward moment of silence until Patricia breaks it.

PATRICIA

You can invite us in, or you can run off and fetch her. Either will be fine dear.

ELLIE

Of course...come on in.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - LATE MORNING

Patricia and Billy follow Ellie inside and close the door behind them.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HALLWAY - LATE MORNING

They follow Ellie down the hallway and notice the inside is colder than the outside. It's so cold Billy can see his breath.

PATRICIA

Awful chilly in here.

ELLIE

Haven't noticed.

PATRICIA

Cold enough to catch your death if you're not careful.

ELLIE

Thanks for the concern, but we're fine.

They continue down the hallway.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATE MORNING

Ellie leads Patricia and Billy into the kitchen. Mary is standing at the stove stirring a large pot. She stops and turns to her guests.

MARY

Hello Ms. Williams...Billy. What brings you here?

PATRICIA

we were passing by and wanted to check in on you.

MARY

Why's that?

PATRICIA

We were a little worried when you stormed off during the Pastor's sermon yesterday.

Mary stops stirring the pot and turns to face Patricia.

MARY

Patricia.....we really appreciate you checking in on us. Little Harley wasn't feeling well and was going to be sick. To avoid a scene and a mess we rushed off.

PATRICIA

Well that's too bad. How's the little guy doing today?

MARY

Harley's still resting. He picked up one hell of a bug.

(beat)

Where are my manners? Why don't you two have a seat? I'll put some tea on.

Ellie and Mary each pull out a chair on the same side of the table for their guests. Movement can be heard from the back of the house.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - BACK HALLWAY - LATE MORNING

Charles and Eddie, only seen from the waist down, are holding a hammer and a large knife.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATE MORNING

Patricia turns towards the sound she hears, and stays standing.

PATRICIA

Charles...Eddie...is that you?

MARY

They're out doing chores.

PATRICIA

Odd. Thought I heard someone moving around back there.

MARY

We have mice so we brought a cat  
in. I'm sure that's what you heard.  
(beat)  
So how about having a seat and a  
cup of tea?

PATRICIA

Oh, I do love cats. Might I see  
him?

The SQUEAK of a floorboard is heard. Patricia leans over  
hoping to have a peak of what's making the commotion.

MARY

He's still getting used to the  
place I'm afraid, and is a bit shy.

The phone on the wall CLANGS loudly with a metallic ring.

MARY (CONT'D)

Sorry, let me get this.

Patricia motions for Billy to come along.

PATRICIA

That's alright. Billy and I've got  
to get going. Thank you for your  
hospitality, Mary.

MARY

That's too bad. We'll see you at  
service this Sunday.

PATRICIA

You will, and you be sure to take  
care of that little boy of yours. I  
want to see the whole family this  
Sunday.

MARY

Lord willing. Goodbye Patricia...  
Billy.

Patricia ushers Billy along.

ELLIE

I'll show you and Billy out Ms.  
Williams.

PATRICIA

Thank you, dear.



Mary answers the phone. A distorted sound of a voice is heard from the earpiece.

JOAN  
(filtered through the  
phone)  
Hi Mary. This is Joan.

MARY  
Why hello Joan.

JOAN  
(filtered through the  
phone)  
I don't want to take up too much of  
your time, but I wanted to invite  
you and the whole family out to  
bingo this week.

MARY  
I'm not sure we can make it...

Mary is cut off.

JOAN  
(filtered through the  
phone)  
It'll do you some good Mary.  
(beat)  
And I won't take no for an answer.

MARY  
(laughing)  
I see...fine. We'll be there  
tomorrow.

JOAN  
(filtered through the  
phone)  
You promise?

MARY  
I promise.

JOAN  
That's all I wanted to hear. We'll  
see you then.

MARY  
You will. Goodbye Joan.

JOAN  
(filtered through the  
phone)  
Goodbye Mary.

Mary hangs the phone up with a CLICK.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - HALLWAY - NOON

Ellie leads Patricia and Billy to the front door.

ELLIE  
Goodbye, Ms. Williams...Billy.

PATRICIA  
Goodbye Ellie. You take care now.

Patricia walks outside. Ellie reaches out to stop Billy for a moment.

ELLIE  
We'll be seeing you real soon  
Billy.

Billy rushes past her and catches up to his Grandma.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NOON

Patricia ushers Billy along and off the front porch towards their car in the driveway.

PATRICIA  
Get a move on boy.

BILLY  
Yes Nana. What's wrong?

PATRICIA  
This.

EXT. MILLER FARM - DRIVEWAY - NOON

Before climbing into the driver's seat Patricia rolls up her sleeve and shows Billy goosebumps the likes of which he's never seen before.

BILLY  
It was chilly in there.

PATRICIA

This isn't because of that drafty house. This only happens when there are spirits around.

Patricia rolls her sleeve down and Billy helps her into the car. Billy runs around to the other side and gets into the passenger seat.

BILLY

Is that why Ellie was acting weird?

PATRICIA

Yes. I'm afraid they might not be themselves anymore.

BILLY

If they're not themselves then who are they?

PATRICIA

I don't know but we need to find out.

Patricia puts the car into drive, and races off out of the driveway.

INT. MILLER HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NOON

Ellie is standing by the small window beside the front door. Her mother walks up behind her with Charles, Eddie, and Harley. The whole Miller family watches the Williams drive off.

MARY

We may have a problem with that one.

CHARLES

I reckon you might be right.

MARY

She suspects something, but she has no idea what...yet anyway.

Charles tightly grips the handle of his claw hammer.

CHARLES

We'll get 'em soon enough.

EXT. MOREHEAD CHURCH - EVENING

Automobiles and wagons fill the parking area. A sign-out front reads "BINGO TONIGHT".

INT. MOREHEAD CHURCH - SOCIAL HALL - EVENING

Folding tables and chairs line the room with a table at the front with a large wire sphere with numerous ping pong balls with numbers and letters filling it.

There is a hustle and bustle in the crowd. Each person helps with the setup for the event. The Pastor and his wife stop what they're doing with the arrival of Mary and Harley, and walk over to greet them.

PASTOR WAYNE

Welcome. Glad you could make it.

MARY

Thanks for the personal invite,  
Pastor.

JOAN

I hope everything is well with you.  
(beat)  
We were worried.

Mary places a hand on Joan's arm.

MARY

You're too kind. Little Harley here  
was about to be sick and we didn't  
want that to happen in god's house.

Pastor Wayne leans down to look Harley eye to eye.

PASTOR WAYNE

I hope you're feeling better.

HARLEY

I am sir. Thanks for asking.

PASTOR WAYNE

Where's Charles and the rest of  
your family?

MARY

They're back at home finishing up  
the chores Pastor. Work on a farm  
is never done.

PASTOR WAYNE

That's too bad. I'm glad you two made it though.

He looks at the clock on the wall and sees everything set and ready.

PASTOR WAYNE (CONT'D)

It looks like we're ready to start if you and Harley want to find a couple 'a seats.

MARY

Certainly.

Mary and Harley are welcomed to a table with two empty seats.

Pastor Wayne steps up behind the wire orb and begins calling out letters and numbers.

PASTOR WAYNE

Alright everyone. You ready?

BINGO CROWD

Yeah!

PASTOR WAYNE

Well lets get started then...I 9.

EXT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - BACKDOOR - EVENING

The door knob on the back door is pried open with a screwdriver and the door is pushed open.

Three people only seen from the waist down walk through the doorway with hammers and large knives in hand.

INT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Charles, Ellie, and Eddie are all standing in the kitchen.

ELLIE

What do we do now Pa?

CHARLES

We stick to the plan. They'll be home soon. Then we do what needs done.

EDDIE

I understand Pa.

Ellie elbows her brother.

ELLIE

No, you don't you clod.

CHARLES

Stop it! Both of you! We need to do this otherwise it's back to the tree for all of us! Do you want that?!

EDDIE

No.

ELLIE

Sorry pa.

CHARLES

Now go and be sure you're ready when they get home.

They split up and head off into the house.

INT. MOREHEAD CHURCH - SOCIAL HALL - EVENING

Bingo is over and the attending townsfolk are chatting with one another before heading off. Mary and Harley wave goodbye to the Torrence's before they leave.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - LATE EVENING

The Torrences bounce along a dusty road with the headlights of their car lighting the way. Joan leans her head on Wayne's shoulder.

EXT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - LATE EVENING

Their automobile pulls into the driveway beside their house. Pastor Wayne turns the ignition and the car putters a bit before turning off.

They walk up to the front porch, unlock the door, and walk inside.

INT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATE EVENING

Wayne flicks the light switch on the wall. Nothing happens. The house is in complete darkness.

PASTOR WAYNE

Damn it!

JOAN

Language.

PASTOR WAYNE

Sorry. It's probably a blown fuse again.

(beat)

Wait here. I'll head down to the fuse box and get this fixed.

JOAN

Better you than me. Please be careful going down those steps.

Wayne kisses his wife on the cheek.

PASTOR WAYNE

Of course.

INT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - LATE EVENING

Pastor Wayne extends an arm and feels his way to a cabinet in the hallway. He opens it, grabs a flashlight, and turns it on.

PASTOR WAYNE

(yelling back to Joan)

I found the flashlight.

JOAN

(off camera yelling back)

Good. I'd hate it if you broke your neck.

He continues down the hallway to the door leading to the basement. He opens it and shines the light down the stairs.

INT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - LATE EVENING

With each step, a creak is heard. He shines the light into the darkness revealing his path. Once at the bottom, he aims the light to the opposite wall finding the fuse box.

Wayne walks up to the fuse box, opens it, and finds all the fuses have been removed.

PASTOR WAYNE

(to himself)

What the...?

Wayne is struck from behind and falls to the ground dropping the flashlight, sending it rolling across the floor.

He props himself up with blood trickling down his face and reaches for the light. Wayne grabs it, tilts it up, and sees the faces of Eddie and Ellie Miller.

PASTOR WAYNE (CONT'D)

What? Why?

Wayne yells out a warning.

PASTOR WAYNE (CONT'D)

Joan...RUN!

INT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATE EVENING

Joan is sitting on the couch waiting for the lights to come on, and she hears Wayne's warning.

PASTOR WAYNE

(off screen)

Joan...RUN!

She gets up quickly and hurries to the front door and begins to open it only to be pushed to the floor by someone from the shadows. A quick blow to the head renders Joan unconscious.

INT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATE EVENING

The lights are back on in the house and Wayne and his wife are tied to kitchen chairs. They are on opposite sides of the table facing one another.

The radio can be heard playing from the living room.

PASTOR WAYNE

Joan...wake up.

JOAN

...

PASTOR WAYNE

Come on. Please...wake Up.

Joan's head rocks back and forth. Her eyes open and she lifts her head slowly.

JOAN

Wayne...what's happening?



Joan finally focuses on Wayne and notices a gaping wound in his head.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Oh my god, Wayne!

PASTOR WAYNE

Got jumped...in the basement. The Miller kids did it.

The radio is silenced with a CLICK. Footsteps from the living room approach. Charles, Eddie, and Ellie enter the kitchen.

JOAN

Why are you doing this?!

There is no response. Charles stands beside Joan while Eddie and Ellie walk around the table and stand on both sides of Wayne.

PASTOR WAYNE

Hold on now. What are you going to do?!

Eddie raises his hammer and smashes it down into Wayne's skull. This quiets him, but he is still alive. His eyes looking around wildly, blood drips from his mouth as he tries to mouth the words "I love you" to Joan.

JOAN

(screams)

NO!

Ellie reaches over with her knife and slides it across his throat spraying blood all over the kitchen table and Joan.

JOAN (CONT'D)

(sobbing)

Why? Why are you doing this to us?  
We've only ever been kind to you!

Charles leans down to look Joan in the eyes.

CHARLES

It's either you or us...and it ain't gonna be us.

Charles stands back up. Eddie hands him the hammer.

JOAN

Please...don't. You don't have...

Charles swings with such force the hammer is embedded into Joan's head. He struggles a bit to dislodge it.

A gargle and a bubble of blood escapes her mouth just as Ellie slices her throat wide open.

EXT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - BACKDOOR - DEAD OF NIGHT

The sounds of cutting flesh and the cracking of bones are heard from inside. All falls silent and Charles and his children walk out the back door into the darkness.

EXT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - MORNING

A shiny new automobile pulls up and stops in the driveway. Out hops Mayor Allen.

EXT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - MORNING

He walks up to the front door and knocks. As his fist makes contact with the door it drifts inward.

MAYOR ALLEN

Hello? Wayne...Joan...are you home?

He steps through the door.

INT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

He walks into the living room and notices a chair knocked over, and a couple of picture frames broken, lying on the floor.

MAYOR ALLEN

(yells)

Wayne! Joan!

Mayor Allen crosses through the living room and enters the hallway where he sees a streak of blood on the floor leading to the kitchen.

MAYOR ALLEN (CONT'D)

Is everything alright!?

(beat)

You're worrying me here!

INT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

He stops dead in his tracks when he enters the kitchen.

MAYOR ALLEN

My god!

He pulls a handkerchief out of his pocket to cover his nose and mouth trying to shield himself from the stench and the sight of the two dead bodies sitting at the table. Wayne and Joan are each tied to a chair with their heads bashed in, throats sliced, and a gaping hole in their chests where their hearts should be.

EXT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - NOON

The sheriff's car, state patrol, and an ambulance are all parked on the road out front.

EXT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - AFTERNOON

Mayor Allen and SHERIFF WEST (50's, WHITE MALE) step outside. The sheriff hands a cigarette to the Mayor and pulls one out for himself.

MAYOR ALLEN

What the hell happened here Jeff?

SHERIFF WEST

Murder.

The Sheriff takes a long drag off his cigarette.

MAYOR ALLEN

Well no shit! Any idea why? This just doesn't happen around here.

SHERIFF WEST

It has Mayor.

MAYOR ALLEN

What do you mean by "it has"?

SHERIFF WEST

I keep forgetting you're relatively new around here. There was a family of killers in these parts about sixty years ago. They had an inn for weary travelers and every so often, they ran across someone nobody would miss...

The sheriff takes a long hit off his cigarette and exhales slowly.

SHERIFF WEST (CONT'D)  
They would beat that person over  
the head with a hammer and slice  
their throat at the kitchen  
table...

The Sheriff points his thumb toward the house.

SHERIFF WEST (CONT'D)  
Just like that.

MAYOR ALLEN  
Are you serious?! That's exactly  
what looks like happened here.

SHERIFF WEST  
I know. The family was caught,  
hung, and buried over fifty years  
ago.

MAYOR ALLEN  
Do you think this is a copycat  
killer?

The sheriff leans against the wall and looks up toward the  
heavens.

SHERIFF WEST  
It'd be mighty odd to copy those  
killings...but it could be.

He directs his focus back to the Mayor

SHERIFF WEST (CONT'D)  
My granddad on my mother's side was  
sheriff at the time. He told me the  
story when I was acting up and he  
wanted to put the fear of god into  
me.

MAYOR ALLEN  
Jesus Jeff.

Sheriff West takes a long drag off what's left of his  
cigarette.

SHERIFF WEST  
If it is a copycat killer we'll  
find 'em and bring 'em to justice.

Sheriff West drops his cigarette butt on the ground, and  
steps on it. DEPUTY CARTER (30's WHITE MALE) walks out of the  
front door and approaches the two men.

DEPUTY CARTER

Mayor. Sheriff we need you inside  
to take a look at a couple things.

SHERIFF WEST

On my way Deputy.

The Deputy goes back inside.

SHERIFF WEST (CONT'D)

If you'll excuse me Mayor, I've got  
work to do.

The Sheriff follows after the deputy leaving the Mayor on the  
front porch.

EXT. NEIGHBORING FIELD - APPLE TREE - AFTERNOON

Mary hammers an old iron nail through a human heart into the  
trunk of the tree. Charles takes a nail and the hammer from  
Mary once she finishes and does the same.

MARY

We'll need more.

She focuses on the children who are excavating the Bender's  
remains from the mass grave under the apple tree.

KIDS

(in unison)

Yes Ma'am.

MARY

Ms. Williams and her grandson will  
need to be nabbed, and we'll need a  
third as well. Otherwise, this  
won't be permanent for all of us.

She swats Charles' chest and hers.

MARY (CONT'D)

That woman and her grandson are a  
danger to us, I can feel it.

(beat)

Tonight...we'll pay 'em a visit.

ELLIE

Who'll be our third Mama?

MARY

I'm sure our lord will provide.

EXT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - AFTERNOON

Sheriff West and Deputy Carter wave the Mayor off. The other cops and State Troopers have also left for the day.

SHERIFF WEST  
Finally some peace and quiet.

DEPUTY CARTER  
Yes sir.

The Sheriff heads back inside. The Deputy follows.

INT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Sheriff West and Deputy Carter walk through the house checking the scene together.

SHERIFF WEST  
One of our victims was jumped here.

He kneels down and looks at a small puddle of blood near the front door. The Deputy observes the Sheriff's process.

SHERIFF WEST (CONT'D)  
The door was partially opened. Joan must have been trying to get out.

DEPUTY CARTER  
How do you know it was Joan?

SHERIFF WEST  
Broken heel over there...under the end table.

He stands up and walks towards the kitchen as he's talking.

SHERIFF WEST (CONT'D)  
Plus...no blood streaks on the floor. The perpetrator must have carried her to the kitchen.

From the other hallway, a thick trail of blood leads off towards the basement.

SHERIFF WEST (CONT'D)  
Pastor Wayne was jumped in the cellar and drug up.

INT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - AFTERNOON

Sheriff West heads down to the basement with the Deputy behind him. He pulls a dangling string and turns on a light hanging from the ceiling.

SHERIFF WEST

The blood stains tell me he was nabbed by the fuse box.

A thick blood trail goes from the scene up the stairs.

SHERIFF WEST (CONT'D)

This killer wasn't as strong as the other. Had to drag our victim up.

DEPUTY CARTER

So we're looking for two killers?

SHERIFF WEST

Two at least...maybe more.

The Sheriff looks down at his watch.

SHERIFF WEST (CONT'D)

Damn! The town hall meeting's starting soon.

(beat)

Deputy...you head out and help the Mayor at the meeting.

DEPUTY CARTER

What should I tell him as to why you're not there?

SHERIFF WEST

You tell him I've got a job to do and I want to look at a couple more things before we lose daylight.

DEPUTY CARTER

Sure thing Sheriff.

SHERIFF WEST

It's the mayor's show, Deputy. Just follow his lead and you'll do ok.

DEPUTY CARTER

Yes sir.

Deputy Carter heads out the way they came in.

INT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Sheriff West walks back into the kitchen and out the back door.

EXT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - BACKDOOR - AFTERNOON

The Sheriff is about to pull out another cigarette until he catches something glistening in the grass. With the sun overhead he notices a trail of blood leading into the woods.

SHERIFF WEST  
(to himself)  
Well well well. What have we here?

EXT. TORRENCE'S HOUSE - NEARBY FOREST - LATE AFTERNOON

Sheriff West follows the trail into the woods. He stops every so often after losing the trail, but quickly picks it back up.

He stops suddenly when he hears footsteps crunching on the undergrowth. He crouches down and hides himself away to see who's approaching. A woman's voice is heard.

MARY  
(off screen)  
Pick up the pace.

The Miller family emerges from the thicket. Charles, Ellie, and Eddie are all covered in blood, and Mary's hands are stained red as well. Harley is blood-free but covered in dirt.

MARY (CONT'D)  
Get a move on.

The Sheriff remains hidden until the family passes by.

SHERIFF WEST  
(to himself)  
You seem to be headin' for home.

He looks back in the direction the Millers came from.

SHERIFF WEST (CONT'D)  
(to himself)  
Let's take a look at where and what you were up to.



Sheriff West heads in the direction the Millers came from. He follows their trail through the forest until he reaches the open field.

EXT. OPEN FIELD - LATE AFTERNOON

A path has been mashed down into the tall grass. Following this path he finds the stone wall and hops it.

EXT. NEIGHBORING FIELD - APPLE TREE - LATE AFTERNOON

He crests a hill and sees a lone, apple tree with the trail leading to it. Sheriff West draws his weapon and cautiously approaches the tree.

A large hole has been dug exposing an unmarked grave. The decayed remains in the hole are entangled in the roots of the tree. A great deal of care has been taken to expose the remains without damaging them. There's a tarp laid out with five neat piles of partial human remains.

The sheriff's attention is diverted to the two bloody hearts nailed into the trunk with old rusty iron nails.

SHERIFF WEST

(to himself)

What the hell? These must belong to the Torrence's.

A voice from behind the Sheriff startles him.

MARY

Nice detective work Sheriff West.

The Sheriff spins around facing Mary Miller. He points his revolver at her.

SHERIFF WEST

Mary...what's going on here? And who's that in the hole?

He points his revolver towards the hole then back at Mary.

MARY

We're just looking to lay them to rest. No one deserves to be piled up together in a big ol' hole like this. Don't you think Sheriff?

SHERIFF WEST

That's not for me to judge Mary,  
but I'm sure whoever's in that hole  
deserved what they got.

Sheriff West motions over his shoulder towards the apple tree.

SHERIFF WEST (CONT'D)

Mind explaining what those are?

MARY

Nothing for you to worry about.

SHERIFF WEST

It appears you and your family  
murdered the Torrence's last night  
so I'm afraid it is something for  
me to worry about.

He tosses a pair of handcuffs at Mary's feet.

SHERIFF WEST (CONT'D)

I'd appreciate it if you would put  
those on and come peacefully.

MARY

I can't do that Sheriff.

SHERIFF WEST

And why's that?

MARY

I wish I had the time to explain  
but time is in short supply.

Sheriff West pulls back the hammer on his revolver.

SHERIFF WEST

I must insist.

From behind the tree, a shovel comes crashing down on the back of the Sheriff's head. He drops his revolver and hits the ground hard.

SHERIFF WEST (CONT'D)

Ughh!!!

Charles steps around kicking the gun well out of reach as Ellie steps out from around the tree carrying a pickaxe.

Mary approaches the Sheriff. He's lying on the ground gripping the wound on the back of his head. She crouches down to look him in the eyes.

MARY

Like I said. Short on time but we do appreciate your assistance.

Mary stands up and nods to Ellie. She swings the pickaxe high and lands it square in Sheriff West's head. His body spasms for a good long while, then finally, all is still.

Ellie struggles to retrieve the pickaxe. Charles walks up, takes the handle from Ellie, steps on the Sheriff's head, and with one tug dislodges it.

Mary tosses a knife at Ellie's feet.

MARY (CONT'D)

Here. You know what to do.

Ellie bends down, picks up the knife, and begins cutting into the Sheriff's body.

MARY (CONT'D)

You nail his heart into that tree and Ellie will be no more.

Mary walks over to Ellie and strokes her hair while she butchers the Sheriff.

MARY (CONT'D)

Two more hearts and nothing will separate our family ever again.

Ellie finishes slicing a hole in the sheriff's belly. She reaches in and upward grabbing hold of his heart and pulls it out with a strained tug.

She gets up, walks over to the tree, and with a nail, hammers it beside the heart of the pastor and his wife.

MARY (CONT'D)

Alright. Now let's go carve up that nose woman and her brat grandson.

EXT. LYLESBURGH - TOWN HALL - EARLY EVENING

A constant flow of townspeople are filing in one by one. The sound of multiple voices all talking at once can be heard spilling out of it.

INT. LYLESBURGH - TOWN HALL - EARLY EVENING

The townspeople are sitting on wooden folding chairs with some standing along the back wall of the room.

Mayor Allen steps up to the podium to try and establish some order. Deputy Carter follows and stands beside him.

MAYOR ALLEN  
Alright everyone, please quiet  
down.

No one listens.

MAYOR ALLEN (CONT'D)  
Come on. Once you settle we'll get  
things started.

Deputy Carter steps up and yells from the top of his lungs.

DEPUTY CARTER  
EVERYONE LISTEN UP!

The noise decreases to a slight murmur then complete silence.

MAYOR ALLEN  
Thank you, Deputy. Now...

ANGRY MAN  
(cuts off the mayor)  
What's being done about the  
murders?

The crowd murmurs in agreeance.

MAYOR ALLEN  
That's why we're here. If ya'll can  
pipe down we'll tell you exactly  
where we are with the  
investigation.

The crowd grows silent again.

MAYOR ALLEN (CONT'D)  
Deputy Carter. Can you please fill  
the people in, on what you and the  
police are doing?

DEPUTY CARTER  
Sure thing Mayor. I'll admit I was  
hoping the Sheriff could be here,  
but I'll do my best.

ANGRY WOMAN 1  
Where's the sheriff!?

DEPUTY CARTER  
He hung back at the crime scene to  
go over things one more time.  
(MORE)

DEPUTY CARTER (CONT'D)

(beat)

And since he's not here...I'm figuring he may have found something.

The crowd murmurs at this.

MAYOR ALLEN

And once he gets back we'll relay that info, but until then, I've put together a plan to keep the investigation moving and get the word out.

Mayor Allen motions to his assistant who proceeds to set an easel and a piece of poster board on it.

MAYOR ALLEN (CONT'D)

I've broken the town and the outlying areas up into zones, and with your help, we'll organize teams of two to go door to door asking if anyone has seen anything.

DEPUTY CARTER

A good number of you have shown up here tonight but there's still a lot of people who might not know what's going on.

MAYOR ALLEN

Anyone volunteering please line up, otherwise, everyone else please go home, lock your doors, and if you see or hear anything call the Sheriff's office...immediately.

(beat)

Let's get to it people!

The crowd gets up from their seats. Half head out the door and the other half line up to volunteer.

INT. WILLIAMS HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Patricia is in the kitchen cooking. Fresh herbs, animal bones, and a couple of crystals are all spread out on the counter. Billy walks in.

BILLY

Hi Nana.

(beat)

Whatcha cooking? It smells weird.

PATRICIA  
It's just a little something to  
keep us safe.

Billy walks up and peers into the pot.

BILLY  
How?

PATRICIA  
It's a recipe to create a blessing  
around our home. Nothing impure  
will be able to enter with this  
protecting us.

Patricia stops her preparations and looks down at Billy.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)  
I don't mean to scare you but there  
is some scary stuff happening and  
we can't take any chances.  
(beat)  
I'm not going to let nothing happen  
to you.

A KNOCK at the door is heard.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)  
You wait right here, I'll get it.

Patricia rinses her hands, dries them, and then walks off to  
answer the door.

INT. WILLIAMS HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - EVENING

Another knock is heard.

PATRICIA  
(off-screen)  
Hold your horses. I'm ah coming!

Patricia opens the door and sees the deputy and the mayor  
standing outside.

DEPUTY CARTER  
Evening Patricia.

PATRICIA  
Evening gentlemen. What brings you  
all the way out here tonight?

MAYOR ALLEN

It seems someone broke into the  
Pastors home...

(beat)

...and killed him and his wife last  
night.

Patricia catches herself on the doorframe, shocked by the  
news.

PATRICIA

Oh my.

The Deputy reaches to catch her but Patricia waves him off.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Thank you. I'm fine.

MAYOR ALLEN

For those who didn't make it to the  
town meeting, we're going around to  
let people know what happened.

PATRICIA

Any idea who could have done it?

DEPUTY CARTER

Not yet. That's why we're going  
door to door to see if anyone has  
seen or heard anything that might  
be helpful.

(beat)

Have you seen or heard anything?

PATRICIA

I'm afraid I haven't, but if I do I  
will call down to your office right  
away.

DEPUTY CARTER

We'd appreciate it.

Mayor Allen looks at his watch.

MAYOR ALLEN

Well, We've still got a few more  
doors to knock on and I think we've  
taken enough of your time Patricia.

PATRICIA

I appreciate it. You boys be safe  
out there.

MAYOR ALLEN

We will Patricia. You take care now.

PATRICIA

We'll do just that. Thank you gentlemen.

She closes the door and heads back to the kitchen.

INT. WILLIAMS HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Patricia bundles up four little pouches of what she was cooking up.

She puts a pouch over the front and back door, one on the east side of the house and one on the west side.

PATRICIA

Those pouches will keep us safe as long as they stay where I put 'em. You got that?

BILLY

Yes Nana.

Patricia walks over to Billy and gives him a big hug holding him tight.

PATRICIA

I promised your parents to keep you safe and I'm gonna do just that.

The silence is interrupted by another KNOCK at the door.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

That must be the Mayor and the Deputy again.

She lets Billy go and walks back to the front door to answer it. Billy follows after her this time.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

I wonder what they forgot.

She opens the door and sees it's Mary Miller.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Oh! Why Mary what brings you to my doorstep?



MARY

I'm sorry to be bothering you but I really need to talk to you.

PATRICIA

Alright then, let's talk.

Patricia steps away from the door leaving it wide open and turns to head back into the house. Mary is motionless at the front door.

MARY

You are a smart one, aren't you?

A male scream is heard from the back door. Billy jumps from the pained sound.

MARY (CONT'D)

You seemed to have been expecting us.

PATRICIA

I have. Who might I be speaking to?

MARY

Why I'm Mary Miller of course.

PATRICIA

No more games. I know you're not Mary any more than I'm the Queen of England.

A wide smile grows across Mary's face.

MARY

My name's Elvira...Elvira Bender.

Patricia raises her eyebrows and her eyes grow wide.

PATRICIA

I know that name...The Benders took someone precious from my Mama and me a long time ago.

FLASHBACK - EXT. LYLESBURGH - CENTER OF TOWN - GALLOWS - EVENING

The angry crowd is cheering. The five bodies dangle and twitch at the ends of the ropes.

FLASHBACK - EXT. LYLESBURGH - STREET - EVENING

At the back of the crowd, hidden away at the end of an alley a black mother and her daughter are watching quietly.

PATRICIA

(Flashback VO)

We were there at the hanging. The sound of the crowd cheering. The Bender's dangling at the end of a rope.

(beat)

It's a sight and sound I'll never forget.

A reflection of the five bodies is visible in the little girl's eyes as the crowd CHEERS on the execution.

END FLASHBACK

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

The Benders died that day. I saw it with my own two eyes, and there ain't no coming back from that.

MARY

Death isn't the end. Even your faith tells you that.

Mary begins to pace back and forth across the front porch.

MARY (CONT'D)

Which brings me to my point. We need what's inside of you and that whelp of yours.

PATRICIA

You're not getting in, and not getting what you need. I'll tell you that right here, right now.

MARY

We'll get you...

Mary leans and looks past Patricia right at Billy hiding behind a table in the hallway.

MARY (CONT'D)

...and Billy there. Hello Billy.

Patricia shifts, moving into Mary's line of sight, blocking her view of Billy.

PATRICIA

I'll find a way to save the Millers  
and stop you once and for  
all...Elvira.

MARY

Our occupancy is quite permanent...

Mary leans in as close as the spell will allow.

MARY (CONT'D)

once we get the two of you.

PATRICIA

Not. Happening.

Patricia grabs a baseball bat from behind the coat rack by  
the door. She holds it in her hands threateningly.

MARY

Hell or high water our business  
will be finished tonight. Mark my  
word.

Mary turns and begins to walk away.

MARY (CONT'D)

Alrighty everyone. Let's head home.

EXT. WILLIAMS HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - LATE EVENING

Mary continues walking away in the direction of the Miller  
farm and one by one the other Miller family members emerge  
from the shadows. Each one flanks Mary as they walk off into  
the darkness.

INT. WILLIAMS HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - LATE EVENING

Patricia closes the door and looks down at Billy.

PATRICIA

Don't you pay them no mind. Dark  
spirits will gab away trying to  
drive you mad when they got no  
power to do anything else.

BILLY

What about Ellie, Eddie, and little  
Harley?

PATRICIA

Most if not all of them are lost.

Patricia heads back to the kitchen.

INT. WILLIAMS HOME - KITCHEN - EVENING

Patricia gets right to work putting together more of the pouches she made to protect the house.

PATRICIA  
I'm hoping you can be my brave  
little man.

BILLY  
Why? What do you need me to do?

She puts together four more pouches and hands them to Billy.

PATRICIA  
I'll need you to sneak like you've  
never snuck before.

She presses the pouches into Billy's hands.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)  
I need you to head over to the  
Miller's and put one of these on  
each side of their house...as close  
to the foundation as you safely  
can.

BILLY  
I can do that Nana.

PATRICIA  
I have faith in you child. This  
will buy us some time to put an end  
to these Benders.

BILLY  
What do you mean...an end?

PATRICIA  
Whatever black magic is going  
on...the Miller's ain't no more.  
(beat)  
These dark spirits have done  
something awful to the Millers.  
Something that can't be undone.

Billy lowers his head.

BILLY  
I...I get it, Nana.

PATRICIA

Good. When you head over there you be safe and be sure every Miller is indoors before you hide those pouches.

(beat)

You understand?! This is the most important part. They all have to be inside.

Patricia squeezes Billy's hands and the pouches he's holding.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

And these will trap them in their house.

BILLY

You can count on me.

PATRICIA

Good. Now go and get back as fast as you can.

Billy puts the pouches in his pockets and grabs a large knife before heading out into the night.

EXT. HATHAWAY ROAD - EVENING

Billy takes the road for a half mile before darting into the woods to avoid being seen.

EXT. FOREST - EVENING

He carefully walks through the underbrush as quietly as can be until he sees the lights from the Miller farm.

EXT. MILLER FARM - TREE LINE - EVENING

Billy makes a large circle around the property looking for any stray Miller.

EXT. MILLER FARM - LARGE BARN - EVENING

Billy creeps up to the barn and peers through the windows. There's no sign of anyone inside.

He hears the sound of a loud knock and voices at the Millers front door. Billy moves around the barn and hides behind a rain barrel near the corner.

From his vantage point, he's able to see the front and back of the house.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - EVENING

Mayor Allen and Deputy Carter are at the front door and Mary opens it. Billy is close enough that he can hear the outside conversation.

MARY

Evening gentlemen. What can I do you for?

DEPUTY CARTER

Evening Mary. We're just doing welfare checks and letting folks know what's been going on.

MARY

What's been happening?

DEPUTY CARTER

Pastor and his wife were killed... and we're hoping someone has seen or heard something.

EXT. MILLER FARM - CHICKEN COOP - EVENING

Billy hears movement from the chicken coop. Out walks Charles. Upon hearing the visitors Charles drops the bucket of feed, and storms into the house through the back door.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - EVENING

MARY

Any idea who done it?

MAYOR ALLEN

We don't. Which is why a number of us are going door to door.

MARY

You know what... I think I remember Ellie saying something about strange goings on around town.

DEPUTY CARTER

Really!? May we come in and ask her about it?

MARY

Of course. Come on in.

The Deputy and Mayor enter the house. Once the door is closed, Billy sneaks up closer to the house.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - KITCHEN WINDOW - EVENING

Inside Mary sits the men down on the same side of the kitchen table. Ellie comes in and sits down opposite them.

The conversation is muffled and impossible to hear with the wind blowing through the trees outside.

Charles and Eddie enter the room each with a hammer. The Deputy and Mayor passively greet them, but their full attention is on Ellie.

The story Ellie is telling them has them on the edge of their seats, and unaware of what's going on around them. With synchronized swings, Charles and Eddie both smash their hammers into the skulls of their victims.

With the same speed and ferocity, Mary slides a large knife across both of their throats spraying the kitchen and Ellie in a crimson mist.

Billy slides down the side of the house onto his butt, and covers his mouth, stopping a scream from escaping.

BILLY

(whispering)

Oh my god...

While on the ground he digs a small hole at the foundation and buries one of the pouches.

He moves to the front, burying the second one under the front steps. Then works his way counterclockwise to the next side of the house doing the same.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - BACK PORCH - LATE EVENING

With only the back of the house left to do, he stops short. The back door flies open and the Miller's file out of the house. Mary and Charles are in the lead, with the children following behind.

Billy sees Eddie and Harley each carrying something red, moist, and small in their hands. The Millers disappear into the tree line leaving Billy with his task incomplete.

He finds some old unused farm equipment with bushes and weeds growing all around it in a spot that he won't be seen but can keep an eye on the back door of the house. He crawls under it on his belly and waits for the Millers to return.

EXT. MILLER FARM - TREE LINE - DEAD OF NIGHT

Billy dozes off for what feels like a moment and is startled awake by the sound of voices.

MARY

It's done.

CHARLES

What now Elvira?

MARY

We go inside, pack up, and get the hell out of here. The law will be showing up sooner than later.

ELLIE

But we killed the lawmen Mama.

MARY

There'll be more of 'em. There always is. We'll pack up and disappear before they know what happened.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - BACK DOOR - DEAD OF NIGHT

Mary opens the back door and holds it open, as each member of the family walks inside. She follows in after them.

Billy quickly slides out from under the equipment digs a small hole under the back steps and places the last pouch under it. Sealing the family inside of their own home.

EXT. HATHAWAY ROAD - DEAD OF NIGHT

With the last pouch buried, he runs off to the road. A scream can be heard as he reaches the road.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DEAD OF NIGHT

The front door is open and Mary is raging.



MARY  
 WHAT HAVE YOU DONE YOU LITTLE  
 BASTARD!... WHAT HAVE YOU DONE!?

EXT. HATHAWAY ROAD - DEAD OF NIGHT

Billy runs off into the night.

INT. WILLIAMS HOME - FRONT DOOR - DEAD OF NIGHT

Billy runs in through the front door and slams it behind him.  
 Patricia gets up from her chair in the living room.

PATRICIA  
 Oh, child, you're safe. I was  
 worried about you.

She wraps him up in a hug.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)  
 Were you able to do what I asked?

BILLY  
 Yes Nana. I did it.

PATRICIA  
 Good. I knew you could...and  
 everyone was inside before you did  
 it?

Billy breaks his eye contact with Patricia and looks at the  
 floor.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)  
 What's the matter?

BILLY  
 I saw... I saw them kill the Deputy  
 and the Mayor. Then...

Billy begins to cry.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
 (tearfully)  
 They butchered them like  
 hogs...they took their hearts and  
 walked off into the woods all  
 covered in blood. I waited. I  
 waited and waited until they came  
 back.

He wipes the tears on the sleeve of his shirt.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Then I put the last pouch under the back steps... and when I was running away Mary was hollering something fierce at me.

Patricia pulls a handkerchief from her pocket dries Billy's eyes and gives his nose a quick squeeze.

PATRICIA

There...There. That part is over now.

BILLY

(sniffing)  
What else needs done?

PATRICIA

We can't save 'em. The spirits did something to make whatever they did to the Miller's permanent.

Patricia walks over to a cabinet. Inside are empty glass bottles of various shapes, colors, and sizes. She picks out five corked bottles, and opens a drawer for a ball of twine.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

The best we can do is put the Millers out of their misery, save anyone else who might cross their path, and trap those vile spirits.

BILLY

Are you talking about killing them?

PATRICIA

It's no longer them. If we don't...who knows what kinds of evil they'll spread.

Patricia grabs a wooden box and places everything in it.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Now load up the car with anything that will burn real good like fuel, kindling, paper...anything like that.

Billy rushes off to do as he's told. Patricia looks down at the bottles in the wooden box.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Lord...or whoever else might be watching.

(MORE)

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Give me strength and watch over us  
while we do what needs to be done.

EXT. WILLIAMS HOME - DRIVEWAY - DEAD OF NIGHT

With a loud POP from the exhaust, the Williams' auto chugs its way out of the driveway and down the road towards the Miller's.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DEAD OF NIGHT

Patricia and Billy speed into the Miller's driveway. The car comes to a sudden stop. Billy hops out and gives his Grandma a hand getting out.

She grabs the wooden box from the back.

PATRICIA

Alright Billy. Start dumping the  
kerosene around the house.

Billy grabs the canister of kerosene from the back of their car.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

I'm going to start setting up the  
bottle tree out front if you need  
me.

Billy nods and takes the fuel can around the side of the house.

Patricia carefully walks over to the tree right out front of the Miller's home. She sets the wooden box down picks up the twine cuts off five lengths and places them in the box.

One by one she takes a bottle from the box and ties it to a separate branch in the tree. The front door slowly opens.

MARY

Patricia...what might you be up to?

PATRICIA

Just setting a trap for you and  
your unholy kin Elvira.

MARY

I'm impressed. I would never have  
expected this from a pious woman  
like yourself.

Patricia continues her work.

PATRICIA

The Millers are long dead and you know it. So are you. I'm just giving their poor souls eternal rest. It's what they deserve.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - EAST SIDE - DEAD OF NIGHT

Billy is splashing the fuel on the house when he sees Ellie standing at the window with her hands on Harley's shoulders.

ELLIE

What are you doing Billy?

He ignores this.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Please stop. You don't want to hurt us.

HARLEY

Billy...you're like a big brother to me.

Billy stops.

BILLY

You're not Ellie anymore...and you're not Harley either.

He starts splashing the fuel again.

ELLIE

Billy, I love you. Please stop...and get rid of the...whatever is buried under the back steps so we can leave together.

BILLY

Sorry Ellie. I can't.

ELLIE

(screaming at the top of her lungs)  
YOU STOP THAT RIGHT THIS SECOND OR YOU'RE GOING TO HELL WITH US!

Ellie regains her composure.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Please Billy. We can be happy together.

BILLY

We both know...it would never  
happen.

Billy splashes fuel over the window distorting Ellie and  
Harley's image, and continues on his way around the house.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - FRONT YARD - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Patricia is tying up the last bottle. She picks up a box of  
matches from her little wooden box.

MARY

That won't stop us.

PATRICIA

Have you ever heard of a bottle  
tree?

MARY

Can't say that I have.

PATRICIA

It's an old tradition passed down  
from my Mama, and her Mama. All the  
way back.

Patricia walks over to the front porch.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

It's said it'll trap a wandering  
spirit in each of the bottles.

MARY

Until someone opens the  
bottles...am I right?

PATRICIA

You're right. That's why I'm going  
to hide these bottles away so good  
no one will ever find them.

MARY

So you think.

PATRICIA

I'm not gonna let you take anyone  
else's loved ones from them ever  
again.

MARY  
 Who did we take from you?  
 (beat)  
 That farm hand?

Mary laughs so hard she braces herself on the wall.

MARY (CONT'D)  
 He was your daddy? Wasn't he?

Mary finishes her laughter, and catches her breath.

MARY (CONT'D)  
 We truly have come full circle,  
 haven't we?

PATRICIA  
 We have and with God as my  
 witness...

Patricia gives the box of matches a little shake.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)  
 I'm gonna make things right.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - BACK PORCH - DEAD OF NIGHT

As Billy splashes the back porch, Charles is in the back doorway, and gives Billy a look that sends a chill up his spine.

BILLY  
 I'm sorry Mr. Miller...or whoever  
 you are.

CHARLES  
 When we break free and we will. You  
 and everyone you've ever loved will  
 pay. We can be real patient boy.

He makes sure to send a good splash all over Charles's feet and pants.

BILLY  
 We'll see about that.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - WEST SIDE - DEAD OF NIGHT

Billy quickly moves on around the side of the house. Standing at the kitchen window is Eddie. He knocks on the widow.

EDDIE  
Billy. Buddy. Let me out.

BILLY  
No.

EDDIE  
Come on. We've been pals for...well  
a real long time.

Billy stops.

BILLY  
How long Eddie? How long have we  
been friends?

Eddie freezes and smiles.

EDDIE  
A long time Billy.

Billy begins splashing the kerosene again.

BILLY  
You don't know because you're not  
Eddie.

EDDIE  
Let us out or else...

BILLY  
OR ELSE WHAT?! I'm sick of you  
Bender's trying to scare me. It  
worked in the beginning but now  
you're just making me mad as hell.

EDDIE  
(laughing)  
Who's the brave little guy now?

Billy finishes what he's doing and makes his way around to  
the front of the house.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - ALMOST DAWN

Billy rounds the corner and sees his Grandma face to face  
with Mary.

MARY  
So this is how it ends then?

PATRICIA

It is. You and your kin were a blight then, and you are a blight now, but not for much longer.

Billy splashes the last of the fuel on the front porch, throws the can in the back of their car, and joins his Grandmother.

MARY

How are you going to explain this to the fine townsfolk?

PATRICIA

I'll tell 'em you were the ones killing folks and the guilt drove you to take your own lives.

MARY

All tied up in a nice little bow, huh?

PATRICIA

No. We'll grieve for the Millers while the town celebrates. Their names will be mud, but we'll know the truth and we'll take it to our graves.

Patricia pulls out a wooden match from its box lighting it on the side. She holds it in front of her face.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

I'm ending this. Once and for all.

She throws it at the fuel-soaked floor boards of the front porch. Flames instantly appear creating a wall between Mary and Patricia.

MARY

I'll see you on the other side, Patricia.

Mary turns and goes inside closing the door behind her. Billy walks up beside his Grandmother and holds her hand as they watch the flames race around the exterior of the house.

Before long the building is fully engulfed in flames, and the sounds of screams are heard.

BILLY

Nana...



PATRICIA

I told you what we were doing was gonna be difficult. Here it is. What we done shouldn't come easy. Otherwise, we'd be no better than them.

The screaming inside intensifies and can be heard over the crackling of the wood. Billy takes his hand back from his Grandma and covers his ears.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

May the lord forgive us and give us strength.

The cacophony of screams begins to diminish. A bottle hanging in the tree begins to glow. Then another and another until all five bottles are glowing and the screams from the house are no more.

Billy takes his hands from his ears and Patricia drapes one of her arms around him.

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - FRONT YARD - EARLY MORNING

They stand and watch the flames burn until the early morning rays of the sun begin to peak out over the treetops.

BILLY

Is that it then?

PATRICIA

Not quite.

She walks over to the tree and begins removing each of the glowing bottles.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

We've got to hide these where no one will ever find 'em.

Patricia takes the last bottle from the tree.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

I'll also need you to show me where you found the Bender's grave.

BILLY

You mean the apple tree?

PATRICIA

Yes. I need to see what Elvira and her kin were up to.

BILLY  
Sure thing Nana.

PATRICIA  
Once we know their evil is done,  
we'll break the news to the  
authorities.

EXT. MILLER FARM - TREE LINE - MORNING

Billy leads Patricia through the Miller's farmyard to the path they took to the forgotten portion of the old cemetery.

EXT. MILLER FARM - NEARBY FOREST - MORNING

With his Grandmothers hand in his, Billy guides her through the underbrush until they finally break out into the open field.

EXT. OPEN FIELD - MORNING

Patricia and Billy walk through the field to the old stone wall. They follow it a ways and find a portion that collapsed giving Patricia the chance to cross it easily.

EXT. NEIGHBORING FIELD - APPLE TREE - LATE MORNING

As they walk up to the apple tree, they see a tarp with five neat piles of remains laid out beside the tree, and a large hole dug beside it. In it are more skeletal remains tangled within the roots of the tree.

PATRICIA  
This is where it all started. I'm  
so sorry you young'uns found this.

Patricia steps around the tree and finds the remains of Sheriff West.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)  
Oh my.

Billy walks around the tree to see what his Grandma is looking at.

BILLY  
What is...OH!

PATRICIA  
They were real-life monsters,  
Billy. You mustn't forget that what  
we did saved lives.

BILLY  
I'll never forget. Never.

Patricia walks over to the tree. Five hearts are nailed to  
the trunk all in a row.

PATRICIA  
This must have been how they made  
it permanent...and why they paid us  
a visit.

She points to the hearts and recites who they belong to.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)  
The Torrence's...Sheriff West...

She stops and looks at Billy.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)  
And these last two would have been  
us...thankfully the old ways saved  
us, but it wasn't able to save the  
Deputy and the Mayor.

Patricia grabs Billy's hand and lowers her head.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)  
May god bless this tainted land and  
bless and guide these poor souls to  
their eternity in heaven. Amen.

BILLY  
Amen.

PATRICIA  
Alright child. Let's get going.  
I've seen enough.

INT. WILLIAMS HOME - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Patricia is standing over Billy who has a crowbar, pulling up  
the floorboards. He lowers the wooden box into the hole.

BILLY  
Why here Nana?

PATRICIA

This way I can keep an eye on them  
and in time you'll pick up the  
vigil.

The glowing bottles give a bluish hue to the space under the floor. Patricia hands Billy a handful of straw to put around the bottles and a piece of canvas to cover it up. Billy replaces the boards one by one. He stands up, pulls the area rug back over the spot, and puts the couch back.

BILLY

When are we gonna tell the  
authorities?

PATRICIA

We will child. Let's just sit here  
for a moment.

Patricia and Billy sit down on the couch staring off into space. The SCREAMS from the Miller's place echo in their minds.

Patricia reaches over and turns on the radio. A song comes on, drowning out the sound of the screams.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END