

THE WANTING WELL

an original screenplay by

Michael Alberstadt

Michael Alberstadt
25660 Dundee Road
Royal Oak, MI 48067
(248) 763-6019
mike@creativesmith.com

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FADE IN:

EXT. THE WELL - NIGHT

A well centers a stately brick patio, shaded by an ancient oak tree. Flowers bloom in ornate urns beside stone benches.

The air is thick and deathly still.

In the distance, a mechanical whine shrills urgently.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

The grind of stone on metal rends the damp air.

An Amish carriage rests there. Hay stacked to the ceiling. But no horses. No bridles. No hint they were ever there.

A giant shadow looms over it all. Its movement frantic.

Behind a bare light bulb, a sturdy BOY (15) in Amish shirt and suspenders hunches over a workbench. He presses a circle of turquoise to an electric grinding wheel

Tears run down his face.

BOY

-- Give Your angels charge over us
to keep us in all our ways. Let no
evil befall us, nor --

Lightning draws his attention. He switches off the grinder. Steps to the open door, and hears screaming.

His mother. Screaming.

BOY

No...

EXT. THE WELL - MOMENTS LATER

An Amish FARMER (40s) steps onto the patio with a bundle in his arms. Behind him, his wife's screams shatter the calm.

FARMER

You wanted too much, woman.
Too much.

He coos at the bundle in his arms. A baby's hand reaches out and touches his tear-streaked face. He smiles.

His wife's screams die and silence descends once again. The farmer holds his head in agony.

FARMER

No, demon, you will not persuade me.

He walks defiantly to the well...

FARMER

NO! Here is my wish. That you remain chained here for eternity. May nobody find you. EVER!

...And then he drops his child into it.

Thunder rolls and rain begins to fall. The farmer slumps beside the well and weeps, inconsolable.

Then a shadow falls over him. He looks up with horror-filled eyes and screams.

The scene goes black but the screaming continues. A different pitch. Strident. Feral. Insane.

CUT TO:

INT. INSTITUTIONAL CELL - DAY

Institutional tile. Glaring lights. STEVEN (16) rants in a bed, his hands and feet immobilized. Writhing. Screaming.

STEVEN

KILL ME! I'M A BUTCHER!!

A DOCTOR with a syringe steps forward and the POV pulls back from Steven. To outside the cell. A YOUNG MAN's face reflects in a window.

CUT TO:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL BATHROOM - DAY

That young man - BRENDAN WYATT (mid-20s) - splashes water on his face. Stares at his reflection. Troubled.

STEVEN (V.O.)

A killer! A dirty WHORE!

An athletic man, twenty extra pounds removed from college competition. Strong face, trimmed beard. Soft eyes with bags beneath them. Creased brow. Rumpled blazer and tie.

We see other bits of Brendan. Fingers rubbing a forehead. A nice watch on his wrist. A laminated press credential that he pulls from his pocket.

He studies it like an alien artifact, something not his own.

BRENDAN

I do not like green eggs and ham.

Steven echoes in his head.

STEVEN (V.O.)

I'm a sinner. Please...kill me...

BRENDAN

I do not like them, Sam I am.

The screaming recedes, replaced by a rhythmic thumping behind him. A WOMAN'S enthusiastic voice joins the sound:

WOMAN (O.S.)

God, plow my field.

MATT (O.S.)

Shhh...quiet!

Brendan drapes the credential around his neck. Notes the two hands gripping the top of the stall behind him. White knuckles. Livid red fingernails.

The stall creaks. The door rattles. The muffled glory of climax. Then, silence. A fly zips.

Brendan fusses with his hair.

MATT (O.S.)

You stay put, sugar-tits.

MATT LUCIANO (30s) struts to a sink, damp from exertion but godly in his beauty. Chiseled body. Expensive suit. And he knows he had an audience.

Yet his eyes avoid Brendan.

BRENDAN

There was a Ramada down the street.

MATT

Don't you have a yearbook to edit?

BRENDAN

And you would be Most Likely to..?

Matt sees Brendan's press credential as he dries his hands.

MATT

Stick to your beat, greenhorn. Leave
the news to real journalists.

Matt tosses a three-point shot at the wastebasket that caroms
onto the floor.

MATT

Get that, would you?

And he saunters out the door.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL LECTURE HALL - MOMENTS LATER

JOAN

...And small farms are dying, so why
should we subsidize them? I mean,
Heinz grows one hell of a tomato!

The packed crowd laughs as charismatic JOAN CANNON (mid-40s)
exhorts them from stage. She is formidable. She owns them.

Brendan joins a small knot of reporters. Pulls out a ledger
pad. Scribbles notes on it.

Joan's press secretary TRISH (30s, efficient and in-charge)
notes Brendan. And his ledger pad.

TRISH

Are you with the press corps?

BRENDAN

Yeah, yeah, my credential was -- it
arrived late.

TRISH

I'm sure I sent you one. There must
have been a mix-up on our end.

Brendan fumbles to show it to her. Points to the name.

BRENDAN

I'm Brendan. Wyatt. As in Earp.

TRISH

Trish Sandberg. As in -- Sandberg.

They shake, sharing an immediate affinity. She steps back and watches him. He takes notes, aware of her attention.

Matt watches them both.

CHARLIE CANNON (mid-50s) – a substantial man nattily dressed in suspenders – joins them. Assesses the cheering crowd. Several SUPPORTERS shake his hand as they leave.

CHARLIE

Thanks for coming. Visit our donor page, would ya?

He greets several others as he slithers toward Matt.

CHARLIE

Mr. Luciano. I trust you'll write glowing commentary about the senator?

MATT

Italy is beautiful in the fall, isn't it? I do love a good Brunello.

CHARLIE

You seemed more a bourbon guy.

The crowd claps as Joan sashays from the stage and embraces a throng of SUPPORTERS. Hugs one, glad-hands another.

Brendan pushes toward her.

BRENDAN

Senator, I have questions...

But Charlie blocks him, maneuvering between he and Joan.

FISHER (16), a muscular lad, bounds over to Joan with her purse and a bottle of water. Joan chats with a BUSINESSMAN.

JOAN

Thank you, Fisher. Buck, this is my intern and man Friday, Fisher Carlyle. He keeps me sane through all this.

The businessman extends a hand to Fisher. They shake.

FISHER

A pleasure, sir. May I bend your ear? I'm new to all this...

JOAN

-- Spanking new, and unspoiled by
the jaded dance of politics.

Fisher charms the businessman as Joan greets her constituents
– feigning interest and keeping one eye on her intern.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Joan and Charlie lead the contingent down the hallway. Hold
hands. Smile for the cameras.

CHARLIE

I saw you ogling Fisher.

JOAN

It was electric in there, wasn't it?

CHARLIE

I hired that faggot for a reason.

Joan pauses for a photo with several handsome STUDENTS. She
cuddles in to them. Kisses one on the cheek.

JOAN

You lads! Tell your parents to vote!

Brendan waits for a chance to accost her. Fisher puts a hand
on his shoulder.

FISHER

So, you're joining our merry junket.
I'm the welcoming committee so,
welcome! Come this way.

Fisher pulls Brendan – over his objections – away from Joan
and her admirers.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

A custom bus emblazoned with "CANNON for U.S. SENATE" rests
at the curb. Drizzle falls as Trish accesses her cell phone.
Dials a number.

TRISH

Good morning, is Dr. Atri available?
Um, ok, maybe the nurse practitioner?

She wraps her coat around herself.

TRISH

Does anyone work there before noon?

(beat)

I'm sorry, I know it's hospice and everyone's busy preparing to -- it's just that I want to be there when...

Tears flood her eyes. She sees Joan exit the building and wipes the tears away angrily.

TRISH

No, I can't hold. I'll call back.

A VOLUNTEER gives Fisher two bags of ice and he adds them to a cooler. Joan works the crowd. Brendan observes it all.

SHARON (20s), the busty bus driver, examines her livid red fingernails beside Fisher without helping him. She blushes when Matt winks at her.

FISHER

He would be quite a ride.

SHARON

I wouldn't know.

BRENDAN

(eyes fixed on Joan)

She's a virtuoso. In a Gucci blazer.

FISHER

St. John blazer, and she's a velvet hammer. Best not be the nail, right?

Trish huddles with Joan and Charlie.

CHARLIE

Matt's opinion piece is for sale.

TRISH

Of course it is.

JOAN

Voters do love hearing that liberal whore bloviate.

TRISH

We're not buying his article.

JOAN

I want that opinion piece.

TRISH

Right. Let's just step into that ethical quagmire --

JOAN

-- Formulate a plan and make it happen. And get some Visine; people will think you have pink eye.

Trish buries her distaste and boards the bus. Charlie follows her. Joan motions for Sharon to join her.

JOAN

Take the Indian road, would you? We need time to strategize.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

Brendan boards behind two women.

BRENDAN

Finally made it, Does it matter where we sit? I'm Brendan...

He offers to shake hands. Both ignore him.

GILLIAN (20's) - a social media climber in conservative blue - slides into a seat. Checks e-mail. Twitter. Instagram.

ANNIE (50s) - a lesbian powder keg in a man's suit and pearls - makes a beeline to Charlie.

ANNIE

I need some time with the senator.

CHARLIE

Maybe tonight at the hotel. Maybe.

Annie plops beside Gillian. Frustrated. They watch Matt march on, assess them with scorn, and sit alone.

GILLIAN

I wish I knew how he became the "it" political wonk.

ANNIE

Matt Luciano would sell his Italian sausage and his mother's clam to get ahead. My advice, sweetheart? Hold on to your ethics and be careful what you wish for.

Charlie watches Joan as she flirts with Fisher. Squints at his antagonists on board. Focuses on forlorn and anxious Brendan Wyatt.

He leans in to Brendan. Flashes a reptilian smile.

CHARLIE

I know your work at *The Times*. It's green, rudimentary. Suitable for a puff piece about Joan, however -- help you earn those press credentials?

BRENDAN

Yeah, yeah, I'll do -- whatever.
(beat)
So will you, I assume. Both of you.

EXT. LONELY COUNTRY ROAD - LATER

The bus cruises past a sign for Chippewa County. Barren fields stretch behind it. Road quality deteriorates.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Matt bounces in his seat as the bus hits a pot hole.

MATT

Why am I in Chippewa County? Cell service sucks out here.

Fisher pauses in the aisle with a box of refreshments.

FISHER

Coffee, tea -- Twinkie?

MATT

Not on a dare. Can you whip up four bars of 5G service?

FISHER

Different box. Different bus.

He offers Brendan a snack.

FISHER

Dude, Charlie had me give you the bum's rush back there. Tick tock and all that shit. Sorry.

(MORE)

FISHER (CONT'D)

(offering a hand)

Fisher the intern, overworked and undervalued. That's a killer watch. Shinola?

BRENDAN

Wittnauer. A gift. My brother -- he hawked pumpkins to pay for it.

FISHER

Awesome guy. Good taste. Does handsome run in your family too?

BRENDAN

I, um, your call on that -- you seem way too young for this game.

FISHER

For what, politics?

BRENDAN

Well that, and --

FISHER

-- Dude, I'm nearly seventeen. The campaign's a co-op thing: school part time, work part time...
(he leans in)
...On the make all the time.

BRENDAN

Learning how to stuff the sausage.

FISHER

I guess, yeah, whatever. I wanna do politics someday. Run things, y'know? Who doesn't want that kind of power?

BRENDAN

Right. I bet a stud like you could get me time with the senator?

FISHER

Well, yeah, maybe. Let's find out.

Fisher leads Brendan to the back of the bus. Annie sees them and isn't happy about it. Neither is Trish.

Joan's face brightens when they step up.

FISHER
Can Mr. Wyatt have a moment?

CHARLIE
She's busy --

JOAN
-- I just finished. These convoluted
bills bore me silly.

Brendan slides in beside her, forcing her to the window.

CHARLIE
Here, take mine --

BRENDAN
-- Sit. Stay. I won't bite.

JOAN
I'm fine, Charlie. I have my shots.

Charlie glares at him impotently and plods to the front.
Fisher winks at Brendan and follows Charlie.

JOAN
I suppose we're talking legislation?

BRENDAN
Nothing so pedestrian. Tell me about
the effervescent Joan Cannon.

Charlie drops into a seat behind Annie and stews.

ANNIE
You're an asshole, Charlie.

Sharon briefly consults a map on her phone.

Sunshine suddenly pours into the bus. Sharon reaches for her
sunglasses.

SHARON
God, to be anywhere else right now.

A voice enters her mind. Like so many inner monologues, it's
a whisper. A suggestion.

THE WELL (V.O.)
Find another way.

Sharon flips on the turn signal.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The bus turns onto the narrow rural road.

INSIDE THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

Matt feels the bus turn. He fixates on a huge owl that suddenly lands on a bare sign post as they pass. Its unsettling eyes bore into his soul.

He tears his gaze away. Wipes sweaty hands on his pants. Rubs his forehead, assuaging a pain – or a thought.

INT. BUS - LATER

Hot sunlight pours into the bus. Jackets come off. Notebooks become fans.

GILLIAN
Is the WI-FI broken?

ANNIE
You'd put censorship past madam?

Annie hears Joan and Brendan laughing behind her.

ANNIE (V.O.)
That bitch is going down.

Perspiration beads on Brendan's forehead. Joan leans in to him, toying with her pearls.

JOAN
You're quite amusing.

BRENDAN
Some young whelp told me that joke.
It's too blue for most people.

JOAN
Salty humor is under-appreciated.
It's my favorite kind.

BRENDAN
Students a favorite too? The kids in
the hallway, your interns...

JOAN

They're dears, aren't they? Our country's future. Pure, raw material.

BRENDAN

They sound like coal – ready to be strip-mined and burned. Used up.

JOAN

Such a murky view of life!

BRENDAN

Your interns: bright, athletic --

JOAN

-- The ripest fruit finds the best markets, the best opportunities. You went to college.

BRENDAN

All your interns get scholarships. It can't be just a perk.

JOAN

But it is! I choose the best, no matter how different they are.

BRENDAN

Like Fisher? He's gay, not different.

JOAN

I don't discriminate. Have you?

BRENDAN

Discriminated?

JOAN

Experienced a man.

Brendan blushes. She fondles the Greek pin on his lapel.

JOAN

Give a frat boy a six-pack and...

BRENDAN

-- Are your interns all as young as Fisher?

JOAN

Is that the way you like them?

BRENDAN

I could ask you the same thing.

Joan's goodwill disappears.

JOAN

Regarding kids and achievement, I believe in schools of choice and vouchers. Public schools fail our children.

She offers no more.

BRENDAN

He was fifteen.

JOAN

Beg pardon?

BRENDAN

The young whelp who taught me that joke was fifteen.

Indifferent, she returns to her legislation.

Brendan plods to his seat with a sense of missed opportunity. He studies the barren fields.

ANNIE

Nothing good lives out here, hon.

GILLIAN

It's ridiculous, really. It's fertile land. Three company towns nearby.

ANNIE

There was a Catholic church near here that lost its entire congregation in a year. Odd cases of schizophrenia --

BRENDAN

Schizophrenia? Like, voices?

ANNIE

Voices in their heads. Catatonia. A few unexplained deaths. Does that freak you out, sweetie?

Brendan stares at the rural wasteland outside.

ANNIE

County record, May, 1953. Some
journalists still do research.

MATT

The sooner we leave Chippewa County,
the better I'll like it.

ANNIE

Our dear senator knew cellular was
terrible here.

GILLIAN

Here we go -- conspiracy theories.

MATT

Conspiracy? It's business as usual.

Matt sets his iPad down and fiddles with the A/C vents

MATT

I wish I had a dime for every lapse
of ethics Ms. Cannon has probably
committed -- shit, can I get a little
A/C from this hooptie?

He rises from his seat...

... And knocks a bag of coins onto the floor. Dimes cascade
down the aisle.

MATT

What the..?

ANNIE

Point made.

MATT

Like I'd bring a, a barista's tips
with me on a press trip -- hold on...

He searches his seat. The floor. His briefcase.

MATT

Okay, who grabbed my iPad?

He grabs Brendan by the tie and yanks him from his seat.
Charlie and Annie jump up to help him.

MATT

Fresh meat, huh? What the fuck's
your angle, newbie...

Brendan punches Matt in the eye. Matt staggers back, slipping on the dimes and crashing to the floor.

Annie holds Brendan back.

BRENDAN

LET ME GO, I'm fine. I'll let the gorilla live.

Matt scrambles from the floor, pulling himself free from Charlie. He stomps to the bathroom in back of the bus.

BRENDAN

Back to your office, Casanova?

TRISH

-- That's enough! I know none of us are hot, tired or pissed off because we're so enjoying this junket, but if you'd just maintain that enthusiasm until we get to the hotel?

INT. BUS BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Matt crashes into the head. Locks the door behind him.

MATT

God-damned, fucking...

He looks at his swelling eye. Wets some paper towels. Tries to repair his battered face.

MATT (V.O.)

I'll end his fucking career.

Another voice joins his internal monologue.

THE WELL (V.O.)

A worm like you. What. Have you. Ever done.

Sweat glistens on Matt's face. He stares at his reflection and hates what he sees.

THE WELL (V.O.)

Remember...

Memories flood his mind. It horrifies him.

EXT. TWO-TRACK - CONTINUOUS

The road abruptly narrows. The coach crashes off the pavement and onto an unconditioned two-track. Branches shriek as they rake the bus.

INSIDE THE BUS

Trish marches forward to Sharon.

TRISH
Where the hell are we?

SHARON
I thought -- the map showed a county road. A short cut.

TRISH
Was it written on birch bark? It looks like a wagon trail.

SHARON
It goes through. With all the drama on board, I just figured we needed to get there, you know?

The bus crashes through a pot hole. Brendan joins Trish.

BRENDAN
Sorry. Mr. Armani caught me on a bad day.

TRISH
You were protecting yourself.

BRENDAN
Is he always such a douche?

TRISH
Some people have the gift.

Another pothole jostles them. Trish grabs Brendan's arm to steady herself. He notices.

STEVEN (V.O.)
Dirty whore.

BRENDAN (V.O.)
Not in a box. Not with a fox...

TRISH
Was that bag of dimes your idea?

BRENDAN
Why, do I win a prize?

Trish smiles despite herself.

The road closes in on the bus. Tight. Threatening. Branches shriek. Gravel rattles in the wheel wells.

A blinding light suddenly blasts into the bus.

EXT. FARM LOT - CONTINUOUS

The two-track ends at a barren farm seared by sunlight. The bus swings onto the sun-baked lot. Shudders. And dies.

INSIDE THE BUS

Sharon tries to restart it, but the engine doesn't respond.

Annie shields her eyes from the bright sunlight.

ANNIE
(wryly)
End of the line.

Matt hurries to the front. Panicked.

MATT
Get me out of here.

BRENDAN
Happy to shove you off right now.

MATT
Nothing good can happen here. For any of us.

Chaos erupts as they all talk at once.

CHARLIE
Where the fuck are we?
What happened?

ANNIE
This is gonna blow my
deadline.

GILLIAN
How did we get here?

TRISH
It was a short cut.

JOAN

Who's brilliant idea was it to take
a short cut --

SHARON

-- MINE, ma'am. I will fix this and
get us on our way.

TRISH

QUIET, please! I appreciate your --
kind input but, no, this was not on
the itinerary. Fisher will put out
some drinks. Everyone sit tight.

Brendan studies Matt's unquiet demeanor.

BRENDAN

What's wrong?

MATT

This place was green once.

BRENDAN

Shit, I didn't hit you that hard.

EXT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

Fisher crushes a dead crow beneath his foot as he steps off.
Disgusted, he kicks it under the bus.

Annie, Brendan, Gillian and Matt join Fisher and Trish beside
the bus. Charlie and Joan peer out the windows. They take in
the farm.

Typical of a once prosperous Midwestern farm: huge barn,
silos, outbuildings, corn cribs. A stately farmhouse sits on
a rise. Picket fence. Gardens. Sprawling fields.

All of it: overgrown, desiccated, lifeless.

Brendan runs a finger beneath his collar.

BRENDAN

So, the Sahara might be hotter.

GILLIAN

I'm sure I heard thirty-five and
rainy today.

ANNIE

No wi-fi, no cellular. The Joads
should be along any minute.

They all pull out their phones. They get nothing. Total
silence pervades the farm.

The well probes their minds:

THE WELL (V.O.)

Scandal.

Annie's eyes search for Joan. Plotting.

THE WELL (V.O.)

Domination.

Joan looks down on the reporters. Her eyes fall on Fisher.

THE WELL (V.O.)

Authority.

Charlie glances at Joan. Flexes his meaty hand.

THE WELL (V.O.)

Corruption.

Fisher runs his eyes over Matt's body.

THE WELL (V.O.)

You want.

MATT (V.O.)

I, I don't know...

MATT

Staying here is suicide.

SHARON

The bus is broken, hon.

GILLIAN

Some short cut --

SHARON

-- I didn't mean for this to happen,
lady, so fuck off.

ANNIE

I'm getting back on the bus.

Brendan steps away into a thicket. Unzips and urinates. A dejected sigh escapes him.

THE WELL (V.O.)

Steven.

BRENDAN (V.O.)

Steven is safe.

Desiccated bushes stand stiffly in the hot air. A single iris accepts his stream of urine.

BRENDAN (V.O.)

Spring flowers -- in October...

He listens for the other reporters, but hears nothing. Shivers in the bright sunshine. Finishes and zips.

Something on the ground catches his eye.

He pulls a piece of turquoise from the humus: quarter-sized, doughnut-shaped, highly polished.

Brendan studies it, then notices something else. He pulls a rosary from the dirt.

THE WELL (V.O.)

You want.

Brendan recoils, as if the voice was right beside him.

BRENDAN (V.O.)

I do not like them in a house. I do not like them with a mouse.

THE WELL (V.O.)

You want her. Or, him?

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

A vignette. Brendan exchanges a secret handshake with a tall FRAT BOY (20s). Brendan covets the press credential around his neck. Watches him pocket it. Waves for the bartender.

Frat Boy leers. Wanton. Brendan doesn't dissuade him.

CUT BACK TO:

THE THICKET - CONTINUOUS

BRENDAN (V.O.)
I do not like green eggs and ham.

Brendan crams the turquoise disk and rosary into his pocket.

BRENDAN
I do not like them, Sam I am.

He runs back to the bus.

EXT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Brendan returns to the group, shaken.

GILLIAN
What are we going to do? Who knows
we're even here?

TRISH
Maybe there's a phone up at the house.
I'll go. Brendan -- come with me?

BRENDAN
(without conviction)
Absolutely.

TRISH
Relax. Hydrate. Don't kill each other
or the senator. We'll be back.

Trish slings her purse over her shoulder and follows Brendan through the dry brush.

A harsh squeak agitates the others as Sharon opens the rear engine compartment. She notes rust on the hinges.

SHARON
I just oiled these.

MATT
I'm going back up the road.

GILLIAN
I'll go with you...

But he strides toward the two track without her.

Gillian retreats to her iPhone. Fisher opens a cooler and discovers the ice has melted.

FISHER

I filled this sucker with ice, like, before we left.

GILLIAN

In case you haven't noticed...

FISHER

-- These are rated for days of Vegas-like temps. It's mondo bizarro.

Fisher pulls out a Zip-Lok of cookies. Offers her one.

FISHER

Chocolate chip, fresh from the oven.

She takes one grudgingly.

FISHER

So, this sucks balls. I'm usually Mr. Prepared - keys, cards, condoms - but this? Warm water, soggy sandwiches and I'm sure as hell not munching the mayo.

GILLIAN

Hell just about sums up this place.

FISHER

Zippo cell service. What's next: a signal fire? Hot air balloon? Maybe we should hike out.

GILLIAN

Not in these heels.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Charlie paces. Joan marks up legislation. Annie works and listens. They all sweat.

CHARLIE

Got any aspirin, Joanie?

Joan removes a bottle from her purse and shakes it as if attracting her pekingese.

He takes it from her. Gulps four pills.

JOAN

Now, sit, before you give me hives.

Charlie yanks open a window.

CHARLIE

FISHER! I don't pay you to flirt. DO SOMETHING.

FISHER

Your ideas, good sir?

CHARLIE

Help the driver. Call your father. Set a signal fire...

FISHER

So, I'm mechanicly-challenged, I don't have cell service, and I left my lighter in my other pants. Any other brilliant ideas?

Charlie slams the window shut, cracking it.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

That kid's a liability.

He watches Fisher. Chews a fingernail. Contemplates a thought.

EXT. TWO-TRACK - MOMENTS LATER

Matt jogs down the two-track. Scans the tangled bushes around him. Anxious.

THE WELL (V.O.)

Nothing.

The voice echoes in his head. Matt covers his ears.

THE WELL (V.O.)

You are nothing.

Matt bolts. The two-track ends at a grove of young saplings. He notes bent grass, a tire track – the bus came this way.

THE WELL (V.O.)

See your failure.

ASSISTANT (V.O.)

I can get you that meeting, if...

A beautiful personal ASSISTANT (20s) unbuttons her blouse beside the road. A figment. Beside her, a CHUBBY GIRL in a skirt drops her panties to her ankles:

CHUBBY GIRL

I'll write your term paper, if...

Other figments appear in the road, their words overlapping:

FRAT BOY

Steal that beer and
become one of us.

GIRL

I'll say you raped me, if
you don't fuck me.

PRIEST

God wants me to touch
you there. It's okay.

EDITOR

Write the story, Matt.
Sell me your liberal soul...

They crowd Matt. He tries to fend them off. Cowers. Breaks beneath their offers and accusations.

MATT

Please, I needed, I couldn't -- GET
AWAY FROM ME!

THE WELL (V.O.)

You could be. Better. Immortal.

Matt raises his head. The voices -- the figments -- are gone, but he remains kneeling in the dirt.

He weeps then, his shallow life stark before him.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Brendan shoves through the dry undergrowth.

BRENDAN

(muttering)

Not in a box. Not with a fox. Not in
a house. Not with a mouse...

He pulls the turquoise from his pocket. Shows it to Trish.

TRISH

Yours?

BRENDAN

I found it beside the bus. Tell me
it's odd -- that I'm not crazy.

TRISH

It's odd. And you don't appear crazy.

He assesses her a moment.

BRENDAN

Turn around.

TRISH

Is this where you disappear on me?

BRENDAN

As if I get breakfast the night after.

Brendan slides the turquoise disc onto the rosary until it rests firmly against the crucifix, and hangs the resulting necklace around her neck.

BRENDAN

Double protection. From -- excessive heat and bitchy reporters.

TRISH

Was this your rosary..?

...But Brendan has pushed ahead.

They enter a clearing facing the house. Fabric scraps hang from a clothes tree. A picket fence molders.

TRISH

Green Eggs and Ham --

BRENDAN

-- It's quite the fixer-upper --

TRISH

-- You're reciting *Green Eggs and Ham*. Is that a favorite?

Brendan toes some bones in the dust. Dozens of bird-like skeletons poke from the dry earth.

BRENDAN

Look at this. Chickens, fried in situ.

TRISH

I read *Go Dogs, Go* with my sister...

Her voice catches. She shakes it off. Strides to the clothes tree. Hanging there: a faded apron, the remains of shirts.

The socks of an infant.

BRENDAN
So you have a sister?

TRISH
Let's check the house.

She yanks open the gate and yelps at a splinter.

BRENDAN
Let me see.

He gently pulls the splinter from her hand.

BRENDAN
I read *Green Eggs and Ham* to my little
brother. It gives me --
(beat)
I guess it just stuck.

They enter the front yard together. Brendan stumbles over a metal stake, banging his shin.

He kicks the stake angrily. A chain attached to it jingles, and he pulls it until it catches, immovable. He yanks on it hard and it releases, throwing Brendan to the ground.

A dog collar flops beside him.

They gape at the skeleton of the family hound.

BRENDAN
Nobody just abandons their dog.

The house towers above them like a mausoleum. Trish helps Brendan to his feet. Holds on to him, disquieted.

TRISH
Outside first?

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie menaces Annie. She is undeterred.

CHARLIE
-- NO. NOTHING. Not one shred. Not
one financial document.

ANNIE

Then I would be forgiven in assuming
that you're hiding something.

CHARLIE

Which you can't publish without proof.

JOAN

Could we flog this dead elephant
later, please?

Charlie abandons them. Stomps to the driver's seat and plops
into it. Chews a fingernail.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

Friggin' dyke bulldog.

THE WELL (V.O.)

End it.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

I should -- end it.

EXT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

Gillian sits in a sliver of shade beside the bus.

GILLIAN

This place gives me the creeps. It's
like every bird is judging me.

FISHER

Have you heard a bird?

She listens to the silence. Disconcerted.

FISHER

So, Munchable Matty's been banging
the bus driver.

GILLIAN

He can't be that desperate.

FISHER

He needs an injection of Vitamin Me.

GILLIAN

Oh, right. That man doesn't have a
homo bone in his body. Five bucks
says he completely blows you off.

Fisher pulls a five from his wallet.

FISHER

You're on, hon. At the very least, I wish I could see his six-pack.

A wind gust tears the five from his hand as Matt plods around the bus. Dazed. Suit coat missing. He yanks off his tie.

MATT

That road is, is impassable. Trees right in the middle. I can't leave.

He unbuttons his shirt and flaps it to cool himself off.

MATT

Can you stand this heat? It's October for fuck's sake.

Fisher and Gillian appreciate Matt's exposed torso, not quite sure what just happened.

FISHER

Can I get you *anything*, Mr. Luciano?

MATT (V.O.)

Please. Nothing...

MATT

Yeah. You can do something for me.

Fisher follows Matt around the bus.

MATT (V.O.)

He's only a kid.

THE WELL (V.O.)

Take him.

Matt kisses Fisher deeply. Guides Fisher's hands to his body before pulling away. He wipes his mouth.

MATT

I can't seem to -- control myself.

Fisher can't believe what just happened – but he wants more.

Gillian feigns work on her iPhone as Matt staggers around the bus – but she heard everything.

GILLIAN

We should check on Trish and that
dumpy new guy.

MATT

I'm staying here. It's safer...

Fisher plods into view. Nods to Matt with forced nonchalance.

GILLIAN

With him? I don't think so.

Sharon stakes her claim.

SHARON

I'll come too. The gas tank has water
in it somehow. Maybe there's something
I can use up there.

GILLIAN

Fine.

Gillian shoulders her purse/backpack and takes Matt's arm.
Sharon takes the other. They lead him into the undergrowth.

EXT. AT THE WELL - MOMENTS LATER

Brendan and Trish step onto the patio. The oak tree lies in
broken pieces, the ornate urns empty.

The well sits abandoned.

Brendan pulls at his shirt to cool off. Trish peers down the
well.

TRISH

Dry as a bone. Figures. I could drink
Lake Huron right now.

BRENDAN

Don't wish for the impossible.

TRISH

Why not? Afraid I'll learn something --
maybe something about you?

BRENDAN

This place is off, is all. The
chickens, that dog.

Trish examines her turquoise/crucifix necklace.

TRISH

Turquoise protects people. If you believe the sales guy in Albuquerque.

BRENDAN

Albuquerque?

TRISH

My sister and I went once.

Trish finds a coin in her purse and tosses it into the well.

TRISH

I wish we had some ice-cold drinks.

She looks around, feeling ridiculous.

A flash of sunlight gleams off of a RED BOX beside a nearby building. Trish draws Brendan's attention to it.

BRENDAN

Maybe we can rent *Titanic* to go with those drinks.

EXT. FARM OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

They stare at a Coca-Cola cooler, damp with condensation.

Trish opens it and frosty air billows out. She grabs two bottles. Pops their tops. Drinks deeply.

Brendan demurs. She takes his hand, sets a bottle against his wrist. He succumbs and slams the whole thing.

TRISH

I bet you weren't the designated driver much at J-school.

BRENDAN

This is a joke, right? You guys set all this up.

TRISH

Why would we do that?

BRENDAN

I've heard about these press boondoggles...

Brendan digs a trench around the cooler. Nothing.

BRENDAN

...You treat the reporters like crap
then take them to a five-star spa.
How's it getting power?

TRISH

Brendan, none of this is our doing.

He visually inventories the area. His eyes fall on a power pole. Its electric cable hangs uselessly.

BRENDAN

No juice? Maybe if I flip this over --

TRISH

-- You could dump our cold drinks
into the sand, sure. Look...

She picks a bright yellow flower from beside the cooler.

TRISH

Place isn't as dead as we thought.

EXT. AT THE WELL - CONTINUOUS

Grass sprouts from cracks between the bricks. Day lilies bloom beside the well.

And deep in the bottom of the well, water begins to bubble up through the hard ground.

EXT. FARM OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Brendan paces, unnerved.

BRENDAN

An ice-cold cooler, no power source --

THE WELL (V.O.)

Take her.

BRENDAN

(anxiety growing)
We need some answers.

TRISH

Yes. Answers would be good.

BRENDAN

I mean, there's nothing wrong -- we don't know anything, really...

THE WELL (V.O.)

Take her. Now.

TRISH

You're dancing around something.

BRENDAN (V.O.)

I would not, could not in a tree...

Brendan finds the door to the office. Tries the knob and it opens easily. He peers in.

BRENDAN

Old McDonald's office. I, ah, YOU -- you give it a once over.

TRISH

You're ditching me?

BRENDAN

I'll go through the crap out here. Divide and conquer, right?

Skeptical, Trish creeps into the building. Brendan sneaks out of her sight.

THE WELL (V.O.)

Dirty. Killer. Boy.

BRENDAN (V.O.)

-- Get out of my head! You're not real, you don't control me --

THE WELL (V.O.)

I am. Very real.

Brendan squeezes his eyes shut.

BRENDAN (V.O.)

You can't control me. Get out. GET. OUT!

Sweat beads on his face -- his concentration total -- as he brings his inner dialogue under control.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

The kitchen door sash splinters as Matt throws his weight against it. He swings it open.

Gillian shoves past him and takes in the place.

Everything is rot and decay. Tattered curtains flutter from a broken window. Grimy dishes fill the sink. But there is an electric stand mixer, an Amana Radar Range...

GILLIAN

Nice appliances. Too nice for these hicks.

Matt leans against the table. Nauseous.

MATT

It won't stop.

GILLIAN

What? Are you okay..?

MATT

-- Voices. Memories. I can't think.

Gillian checks Matt's forehead temperature.

SHARON

Leave him alone.

GILLIAN

He's acting weird.

SHARON

Because you're hanging all over him.

GILLIAN

I suppose you want round two, or ten, with him?

SHARON

Jealous much?

MATT

-- WOULD YOU JUST LOOK FOR WHATEVER THE HELL YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

GILLIAN

ALL RIGHT! GEEZ.

Gillian and Sharon ransack the cupboards. Inside: festering mason jars; stale food boxes; a Cuisinart.

Sharon checks for Matt as she moves to a closet – but Matt is gone. A glance at Gillian, then she slips away too.

Gillian yanks open a pantry.

GILLIAN

What are we looking for, exactly?

No answer. Gillian finds herself alone.

INSIDE THE WELL - MOMENTS LATER

Water fills the well.

A ripple mars its perfect surface – then A HAND thrusts from the water. Skeletal, with rotten flesh clinging to the bones. Vines wreath it like veins. Algae drips.

It feels for the stone wall. Finds crevices there.

Something begins to climb.

EXT. FARM OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Brendan paces behind the farm office.

BRENDAN

I'm not crazy. I will not go crazy.

He takes several cleansing breaths. Yanks his wallet from his pocket. Holds it out in front of him.

BRENDAN

Okay, whatever you are. Take this: money, gym membership, Best Buy gift card, all of it and -- and what?

He nibbles his lip for a moment.

BRENDAN

Damn it. I wish I had more muscle and less fat on me. My physique from college...

... And the wallet disappears from his hand.

Brendan gapes at his empty hand. Suddenly, pain wracks him. He doubles over – and his dress shirt bursts a seam.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

ANNIE

What about these other hot-button issues that you're skirting?

JOAN

The same question, ad nauseum --

ANNIE

-- Rhetoric and Machiavellia. You don't have any real positions...

JOAN

How about I take a position now?

Joan strides to exit the bus. Charlie catches her arm.

CHARLIE

Where do you think you're going?

JOAN

Out.

CHARLIE

You're staying put --

She yanks her arm away and storms down the steps. Charlie follows her.

Annie moves to within earshot of them. Watches them through the windshield as they argue.

ANNIE

GOD, I wish that bitch would fall into a scandal so I could end her frigging career.

Annie's necklace breaks, dropping a cascade of pearls down the front of her suit coat.

They all disappear before they hit the floor.

OUTSIDE

CHARLIE

You *will* get back on that bus and
you *will* keep your mouth shut around
that lesbian bitch --

JOAN

-- Or you'll leave me? Using what
for money, or brains, or reputation --

CHARLIE

-- You be very careful - *candidate*.

Fisher shoves between them and thrusts them apart.

FISHER

You get away from her.

Fisher tries to extricate Joan, but Charlie grabs him. Fisher
wrenches Charlie's arm behind his back. Slams him against
the bus.

FISHER

I'll break it, I swear to God.

Charlie fumbles in his suit pocket with his free hand. Finds
a brass pen. Sharp. Pointed.

He stabs it into Fisher's thigh.

Fisher howls and releases Charlie. Charlie slashes with the
pen. Fisher dodges then floors Charlie with a brutal punch.

He hurries Joan away into the thicket.

Charlie pulls himself to his feet. Staggeres around the bus.

THE WELL (V.O.)

Feel me.

He stops in his tracks. A psychic caress overwhelms him.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

Yes. I feel -- oh, God...

THE WELL (V.O.)

You want. Something.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

Money. Lots and lots and lots...

THE WELL (V.O.)

A kill.

Charlie sinks onto the cooler. Delves into the cookie bag. Chews messily, his eyes unfocused.

EXT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

Fisher leads Joan into a Garden of Eden of greening bushes and vines. He pauses to check his leg.

JOAN

You're injured!

FISHER

Fucker stabbed me with something.

She stoops to examine the wound.

JOAN

I can't ascertain how deep -- maybe if you drop your trousers.

FISHER

You -- what?

JOAN

Young man, I have children. I've applied a bandage or two.

Fisher lowers his pants, uninhibited.

JOAN (O.S.)

It's not deep. Oh, my...

FISHER (V.O.)

What is she -- oh, God...

THE WELL (V.O.)

Take her.

FISHER

Ma'am, you're a, a senator, I -- you know, I'm not -- ohhhh.

Joan stands, her hands busy on his body.

JOAN

You want me. My money, my connections.

THE WELL (V.O.)
Her money. Her power.

Buttons fly as she pulls open his dress shirt. His hands fumble with her blouse. Shaking.

FISHER (V.O.)
I, I can't -- this isn't me...

Their tongues tangle. He tries to pull away.

FISHER
Ma'am, please! I can't --

JOAN
-- You can. A full ride for a full ride. At my disposal, whenever --

Fisher shoves her against a tree. Presses against her as she strips off his shirt. He unfastens her bra.

THE WELL (V.O.)
Take her. NOW.

FISHER (V.O.)
It'll be worth it. Won't it..?

THE WELL (V.O.)
Yes. It will.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

Annie scours the floor on her hands and knees.

ANNIE
Where could 50 pearls go on a bus?

She stands, disgusted, and something outside catches her eye. She slips the window open. The clamor of coitus confronts her.

ANNIE (V.O.)
Madam senator, in flagrante delicto --
what reporter could wish for more?

Annie pulls out her iPhone and begins recording.

Below her window, flowers burst from the soil and bloom.

INT. FARMHOUSE BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Matt bursts in. Staggered to the sink and cranks on the faucet – water explodes from the spigot. He rips off his shirt as if on fire and splashes water over himself.

THE WELL (V.O.)

See yourself. See the worm.

People crowd his reflection: figments of women and men, grabbing at him – too many people demanding too many favors.

THE WELL (V.O.)

You're not. A man.

Matt punches the mirror, smashing it. Sinks to his knees.

THE WELL (V.O.)

Feel me. Know me.

Matt convulses as if run through with electricity. Water overflows the sink and cascades onto the floor.

INT. FARM OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Handmade desk, chair, filing cabinets. A map of the property. An incongruous nudie calendar and Xerox machine.

Trish has clearly been through the place.

She rifles the desk, piling things onto it. Discovers a small leather journal. Examines it, pausing at a page:

TRISH

"A priest arrived and broke bread with us. An odd, sweaty man..."

Brendan hurries in – shoulders wider, waist thinner, t-shirt stretched over his now beefy torso.

BRENDAN

Hey -- you find anything?

TRISH

I did my best Woodward and Bernstein and just found this journal.

Trish's eyes linger on him.

BRENDAN
Your best what?

TRISH
Woodward and Bernstein?

BRENDAN
We've got to get out of here. Off
this farm. We're in danger.

TRISH
Now you're screwing with me --

Brendan grabs her wrists and pulls her to her feet.

TRISH
-- Ow! That hurts!

BRENDAN
Look at me! These muscles, this body!
I wished for this and -- and it just
happened!

He presses her hand against his chest. Her pulse quickens.

TRISH
Right. They're nice, but -- HEY!

Brendan abruptly dumps her purse on the desk. Finds her
billfold. Pulls out a dollar bill and slams it down.

BRENDAN
I wish I had a chocolate bar.

A draft blows the bill off the desk. Brendan reaches into
his back pocket. Produces a chocolate bar.

TRISH
Nice chocolate-in-the-pocket gag.
Let me try.

She holds a twenty out and before he can stop her...

TRISH
I wish I had a mannequin dressed in,
oh, a really tacky bridesmaid dress.

Trish gasps as the bill disappears from her hand. A file
cabinet crashes over -- and a mannequin wearing an awful
fuchsia bridesmaid dress stands in its place.

BRENDAN

Maybe it's a curse, or really *IS* a wishing well, but staying here to find out seems a bad idea.

TRISH

We've got to warn the others.

BRENDAN

Have you seen this farm? Socks on the line? The family dog? It'll destroy us!

TRISH

I get that, but we can't just abandon --

BRENDAN

We cannot tell them!

TRISH

Well, you're used to hiding things -- like posing as a journalist!

Trish shoves Brendan aside and stomps from the building.

BRENDAN

Trish, wait!

BRENDAN (V.O.)

You gotta protect yourself.

Brendan scans the room. Grabs a hatchet off the wall.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

Annie reviews her footage of Joan and Fisher as if she's won the Pulitzer Prize. Their rutting sounds fill the cabin.

Charlie enters the bus and shuffles toward Annie.

She notes his presence without looking up.

ANNIE

That wife of yours must have cost you a fortune in "scholarships."

Sunlight glints off of something in his hand.

A giant wrench.

ANNIE

How old do you suppose Fisher is?

Charlie smashes the wrench onto her laptop, crushing her hands in the process.

Annie tries to protect herself, but can only scream as Charlie beats her to death.

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Annie's blood splashes onto the window. Her screams echo through the woods.

They reach the bed of grass where Fisher thrusts into Joan. His muscles strain. Her hands grasp and urge. So complete is their union, they hear nothing else.

A red hibiscus flower opens its petals to the sun.

EXT. THE WELL - MOMENTS LATER

Leaves spring open on a large bush. Moss greens the bricks.

A bipedal CREATURE draws itself erect beside the well. Flesh rots from its bones. Lichen blooms on its shoulders. A suspender supports decaying Amish pants.

Unholy green eyes glow in deep sockets.

It clicks together bared teeth - a joyful staccato - and shambles toward the house.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Trish pauses at the front porch. Listening.

TRISH

What was that?

BRENDAN

Call of the wild, or -- the dead --
let's head back to the bus.

Unseen, a shadow moves in a window. A curtain flutters.

She mounts the front porch. Tries the door. Locked.

Brendan sees figments of his mind materialize beside Trish: the Frat Boy from the bar; Brendan intimately close; a shot of whiskey for courage; and a whisper in Frat Boy's ear.

TRISH

Give me that hatchet.

Brendan steps back from the house.

TRISH

I know you're not a reporter. You never struck me as a coward.

He dispels the memory. Secures the hatchet into his belt. Marches up the steps.

Trish scampers away as Brendan throws his now-beefy frame against the door. Once. Twice. It crashes open.

Brendan steps into the house. Trish follows.

INT. FARMHOUSE FOYER - CONTINUOUS

They crunch across bird skeletons and take in the foyer. Dust and cobwebs. Rot and death.

TRISH

You stole that press credential.

BRENDAN

I borrowed it.

Brendan points to footsteps in the dust.

BRENDAN

They were here.

TRISH

So he just said, "Take this press pass. Please. Be me for a day."

Brendan's memory returns: a bathroom stall; Brendan and Frat Boy kissing; Frat Boy's jeans tugged to his ankles. Brendan kneels - and steals the press credentials while...

Brendan squeezes his eyes shut.

BRENDAN

I, I got him really drunk first.

TRISH

I had a drink with the real Brendan
Wyatt a month ago. Nice guy. Tall...

(beat)

I'm checking down here. You better
check somewhere else.

Trish shoves him aside and strides into the living room.

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Trish takes in the room. Tries to raise a window shade, but
it crumbles in her hand. She yanks it from the window and
daylight streams in, revealing rich paintings and furniture.

She moves to a portrait: mother, father, teenage boy and
girl, baby - a nice Amish family.

Sharon watches Trish from the shadows.

THE WELL (V.O.)

She is not. A friend.

Sharon reaches for a crystal candlestick.

Trish feels something drip on her from above. She looks up.
Stoops to feel the carpet.

TRISH

HELLO?

No answer.

She moves into the dining room. Sharon watches, candlestick
in hand. A whisper invades her mind:

THE WELL (V.O.)

Wait for me.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Brendan stomps up the stairs, Trish's rejection etched on
his face. Then, he hears something. Moves to a partially
opened door. A bedroom.

IN THE BEDROOM

Brendan enters a room as sparse and chaste as a nun's cell.

Gillian nearly jumps from her skin.

GILLIAN
Geez, newbie. Warn a gal next time!

BRENDAN
C'mon. We gotta get back.

GILLIAN
I found these *Cosmos*. Maybe she was doing that rumspringa thing, where Amish teens "experience the outside world."

BRENDAN
Lady, there's a -- it's...

GILLIAN
What, you have a big deadline? What's your rush?

INT. FARMHOUSE BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

BRENDAN (O.S.)
We'll miss the senator's remarks.

Brendan's voice brings Matt back from catatonia. He scrambles up like a feral beast.

GILLIAN (O.S.)
She never gives unscripted remarks.
You are new at this, aren't you?

Matt's eyes dart around -- there is another door.

MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Matt lurches in, squishing onto a soaked area rug.

Sunlight steals past drawn shades. It glimmers off a swampy puddle on the floor.

His eyes focus on the rotting four-posted bed. The tangle of bedclothes.

HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Brendan urges the recalcitrant Gillian from the room. They splash onto soaked carpeting outside the bathroom door.

He opens the door. Water pours over the sill.

KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Trish enters the kitchen. Sees the others have been there. Touches the mixer. The toaster.

TRISH (V.O.)
They wished for all of this?

The well does not answer. Her mind is still free.

MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Matt creeps to the bed. Grabs the coverlet. And pulls.

A desiccated corpse flops over. Dead vines enrobe the body and protrude from the gaping mouth.

It slips to the floor and shatters.

BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brendan hears the CRASH in the next room. Carefully steps into the room. Finds Matt's shirt in the water.

GILLIAN
Why is that..?

Brendan urges silence. They move toward the bedroom door.

KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Trish scans the room. Notices something on the window.

She moves closer. Drops of green slime pool on the sill. A muddy hand print smears the dirty glass.

TRISH
Oh, God.

MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Matt backs away from the corpse...

...And into the Creature.

Creature pursues Matt, backing him against the wall. Pinning him with inhuman strength.

It dissects Matt with unholy emerald eyes. Its teeth click together. Excited.

CREATURE (V.O.)
Ask for. Anything.

Matt's mind floods with possibilities.

CREATURE (V.O.)
Give yourself. To me.

AT THE DOORWAY

Brendan and Gillian see Matt and the Creature.

Matt bursts into hysterics, eyes wild, like Steven in the straitjacket and Gillian tries to scream. Brendan stifles her with his hand.

The Creature stands eye to eye with Matt. Deep in his mind.

CREATURE (V.O.)
Feel me. Feel -- power.

MATT (V.O.)
Yes. YES. It's, so...

CREATURE (V.O.)
What do. You want?

MATT (V.O.)
I want. I...

CREATURE (V.O.)
You KNOW! Not respect. NOT LOVE. SAY IT!

Matt finds his voice.

MATT
I want to live forever.

The Creature presses against Matt. A green light blooms between them. It invades Matt's body, through skin and bone, past rib and muscle.

Matt howls as a faint green image pushes out of Matt's body – a final version, whole and handsome. It fades to nothing.

The bones of the Amish boy crumble to dust. Matt's body collapses to the floor.

Gillian bites Brendan's hand. Escapes his grasp. Flees.

BRENDAN

WAIT!

EXT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Trish dashes out onto the porch.

TRISH

BRENDAN!

She steps into the yard and scans the house. Stumbles over tufts of grass as they grow in front of her.

HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Gillian dashes into the hall. Opens the first door she reaches: stairs, leading to an attic.

BRENDAN

Don't..!

But she runs up the stairs. Brendan follows.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Fog rises. Trish circles the house. Plunges through tangles of bramble and grass. Cranes her neck to see in windows.

TRISH

Damn it, Brendan, where are you?

She glances into the greening woods. Leaves pop open on trees. Bushes flower. Still, a deathly quiet.

INT. ATTIC - CONTINUOUS

Gillian lingers at the top of the stairs. Brendan joins her and steps into the attic – a high space of rafters and dormer windows, sparsely furnished. Table. Chair. Stained mattress.

Brendan examines the small table. Discovers a box, candles and syringes along with DVDs, porno magazines, condoms...

BRENDAN

She rumspringa-ed like a pro.

Gillian rattles windows. Searches for an exit.

Brendan opens the box. Pulls out a plastic-wrapped block of heroin. Stuffs it into his pocket.

CREATURE (V.O.)

(to Gillian)

I will. Help you.

GILLIAN

Help me? How will..?

BRENDAN

What?

CREATURE (V.O.)

Ask. Who is he?

GILLIAN

Who are you?

BRENDAN

What are you talking about?

GILLIAN

I know everyone at *The Times*. Brendan was new, and you're -- I don't think you're --

BRENDAN

-- It's in your head. Don't listen to it. Block it!

Gillian panics as the creature delves into their minds. The messages overlap.

CREATURE (V.O.)

He is. A fraud. An impostor.

CREATURE (V.O.)

Killer. Dirty whore. Do you hear. His screams?

BRENDAN (V.O.)

GET OUT OF MY HEAD!

She dashes from window to window, hysterical. Trips over a seam in the floorboards. Crashes to the floor. Bloodies herself. Brendan reaches her. Pulls her to her feet.

They both see it. Words, painted on the wall, in blood: "PAYMENT IS DUE. FOR OUR GREED. FOR OUR SINS."

CREATURE (V.O.)

Run.

Gillian stomps Brendan's foot. Dashes to a window. Flings herself through it...

Brendan catches her wrist just before she falls.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Trish sees the window explode outward. Sees Brendan save Gillian as she bursts out.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Moss mats the floor. Water drips from mold on the ceiling.

The MATT-CREATURE sits up. Lichen covers its shoulders and vines tangle its hair – vestiges of the rotting creature. But its eyes shine green. Alive.

It stands carefully. Weaves. Grabs a bed post for support. Shuffles to the window and rips down a window shade. Sunlight bathes it, and it looks to the horizon.

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)

Freedom. At last.

The Matt-Creature hears Gillian's screams. Turns from the sunlight. Considers that freedom -- and changes its plan.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Brendan pulls a bloodied Gillian up by the wrist. She fights him as he pulls her into the attic.

BRENDAN

Stop fighting me! I'm the good guy.

She scratches his face. Brendan shoves her over the sill and hangs her out the window so she can see the drop.

BRENDAN

Or you can die. Your choice.

Gillian freezes. Brendan yanks her back in and strips the purse/backpack from her back.

GILLIAN

What -- what are you..?

BRENDAN

Anything worth anything in here?

GILLIAN

I, I -- credit cards, my phone.

He shoves it into her hands. Sweeps her up into his arms.

BRENDAN

An offering. I'd say a prayer were I you.

GILLIAN

Holy God, I, I have made You my dwelling place, the Most High, who is my refuge --

BRENDAN

-- We freely give everything in this bag to you. I wish for us to jump from here and reach the ground safely.

GILLIAN

WHAT?! You, you can't..!

He does. They drop to the ground and land softly.

Brendan sets Gillian down. Her legs fail her and she collapses into a quivering heap.

Trish hurries to them.

TRISH

Brendan! There's something --

BRENDAN

-- I know! We gotta move.

GILLIAN

You work for Price Waterhouse.

BRENDAN

She's in shock.

TRISH

An accountant. Really?

BRENDAN

I am just one disappointment after another for you. I needed to get close to your boss --

GILLIAN

-- You blew a *Times* reporter for his credentials?

Her eyes stare forward, as if watching a movie.

BRENDAN

Get the fuck up.

TRISH

What kind of man are you?

BRENDAN

I don't know anymore. Imperfect. Probably insane. I don't really remember the old me. I remember their blood and, and I forgot myself completely. Who I was. What I was. Desperate, mostly, to cling to something. Anything. A job, a condo -- a nursery rhyme --

He wipes a bloody scratch that Gillian left on his face.

BRENDAN

My brother lost his mind and chopped our parents apart with an ax. I don't know why he did it. But he's all I have left and I will bribe, steal, sell my body, even kill to protect him and learn the truth. I know that, I know I am that -- but what kind of man that is..?

(beat)

Tell me you wouldn't do the same for your sister.

He yanks the hatchet from his belt and strides into the woods.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sharon peers out the window at Brendan and company.

SHARON (V.O.)

You should go with them.

The Matt-Creature watches her from the shadows.

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)
You are safe. Here.

SHARON (V.O.)
They need to know about the bus. The
water in the tank.

MATT-CREATURE
Why?

Tentative with Matt's voice. Unused to it. Sharon peers into
the shadows but can't see him.

SHARON
Matt?

MATT-CREATURE
Here.

SHARON
We should get back.

The Matt-Creature moves from shadow to shadow toward Sharon.

SHARON
I saw them outside. They look --

MATT-CREATURE
-- Soon.

A vine-like house plant sways in a draft. Green and vital.

SHARON
Please, can we go?

MATT-CREATURE
Ten minutes. Won't kill them.

The Matt-Creature reaches from behind, scaring her. Slides
an arm around her waist. Pulls her against him.

MATT-CREATURE
Twenty.

She feels his familiar body – and relaxes.

SHARON
Here? Now? We can't...

MATT-CREATURE

I want you.

SHARON

You're a crazy-ass fuck.

MATT-CREATURE

Give yourself to me.

The Matt-Creature kisses her neck.

MATT-CREATURE

Tell me. What do you want?

SHARON

This is nice, and -- ohhhh...

The Matt-Creature finds her pleasure centers.

SHARON

Escape. From my shitty little life.

MATT-CREATURE

You want. A car. A house --

SHARON

-- A child...

MATT-CREATURE

(whispering to her)

Say it. Shout it.

SHARON

I wish we had a child! GIVE ME A
CHILD!

Sudden pain stabs her abdomen. He wraps her with his arms.

SHARON

Something is, is MOVING inside me!

Her belly grows as a new life grows inside her.

The house plant grows as well. Vines creep down the sides of the pot. Reach toward Sharon.

MATT-CREATURE

Kiss me.

She faces him. Sees his lichen-speckled face, his moss-covered chest. His evil green eyes.

A forked vine slips from the Matt-Creature's mouth. It shoves between her lips as the Matt-Creature kisses her deeply.

The vines circle both of them and bind them together. Constrict her throat. Enter her.

Sharon fights but death takes her. Moss springs from the blood pooled beneath them.

The Matt-Creature snaps the vines and drops Sharon's corpse. It shakes like a dog, casting vegetal matter from its body, then draws itself erect. Powerful.

It turns its mind to other things:

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)

Charlie.

EXT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie shuts the luggage compartment of the bus. Gore speckles his face. He licks his lips, tasting his kill.

A noise startles him. Voices.

TRISH (O.S.)

(distant)

Brendan, wait...

Charlie realizes that he is spattered with blood. He grabs the wrench and slinks off into the woods.

EXT. FARM LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Brendan hacks the dense green vegetation with the hatchet. Trish supports Gillian as they follow him.

TRISH

Would you wait, please?

Brendan waits. He doesn't look at her.

TRISH

What you said --

BRENDAN

-- You've heard it, right? This other voice in your head?

TRISH
No. Not a word...

She suddenly pulls Brendan and Gillian to the ground.

BRENDAN
What? What is it?

Charlie stumbles through the mist. They hear Charlie mumbling as if carrying on a conversation with someone. He tosses a wrench into the woods. Discards his blazer.

TRISH
What's he doing?

Brendan grips the hatchet.

BRENDAN
Politics 101: cover up.

EXT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

They reach the bus. Gillian boards it like a Titanic passenger at a lifeboat.

TRISH
(calling out)
Fisher? Annie?!

BRENDAN
(sotto voce)
Where are you, ya scheming bitch?

A noise in the woods startles them.

Joan and Fisher saunter around the bus. Her hair is a disheveled mess. Fisher's shirt hangs open.

BRENDAN
Well, this is...

JOAN
-- He wanted to stroll in the woods --

FISHER
-- Looking for a way out, y'know?
The trees are, like, alive out there.
Hiking out looks, um, hey, are there
cookies left?

Fisher hurries to the cooler. Joan has Brendan's attention.

TRISH
Are Annie and Charlie taking a stroll?

JOAN
As if I'm their governess.

TRISH
Brendan says we're not alone here.

JOAN
Who else could possibly be here?

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Death.

Charlie steadies himself against the bus. Blood spots his shirt and tie.

CHARLIE
Death makes it stronger.

JOAN
You've been drinking...

BRENDAN
What have you done, Charlie?

TRISH
Has anyone heard anything? Like --
like another voice in their head?

Charlie giggles. Joan smirks at the silliness of it all.

TRISH
I haven't.

FISHER
I have.

JOAN
Oh, for God's sake.

FISHER
-- I know what I think. What I hear
in my head. How I analyze and judge
and compare and rip myself down and
beat myself up. I know exactly what
that sounds and feels like. This is --
foreign. Suggestive. Persuasive in a
way that, that pushes me to...

JOAN

Do things you don't want to do? A very naive assessment.

TRISH

I honestly haven't heard anything.

BRENDAN

Fisher's nailed it. This thing --

JOAN

Am I the only adult here? Possession, persuasion -- this is a dead farm, probably poorly-managed out of existence -- and you have all baked in the sun too long.

BRENDAN

And where have you been, Joan?

CHARLIE

You can't win.

JOAN

I ALWAYS WIN -- and I deserve respect.

A wind kicks up. Dark clouds move in.

BRENDAN

I respect Mother Nature.
(brandishing his ax)
We're too exposed here. Everyone on the bus, including you -- Joan.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Trish leads everyone onto the bus. Brendan locks the door.

BRENDAN

(to Charlie)
Remember when I said "Sit" and "Stay."
Do that, or you'll be playing dead.

Joan strides to her place in the back.

JOAN

Oh my God!

Gillian quivers, her legs drawn up to her chin. Trish grabs a coat from a storage bin and covers her.

JOAN
That was my seat.

TRISH
She's in shock, Joan. Could you think
about someone else for one minute?

JOAN
I hope your resume is current.

Trish gives Joan the finger, then sits to study the journal
she found.

Brendan scrutinizes the greenery outside. Uneasy.

BRENDAN
It's toying with us.

Fisher discovers Annie's seat covered with moss. Her purse
crushed into the seat. Her laptop upended on the floor.

BRENDAN
(to Fisher)
What did you find in the woods?

FISHER
Nothing. The brush was real thick.
(assessing Brendan)
You find a Bowflex out there?

TRISH
Brendan! Look at this.

She shows Brendan a map. Points to red circles on it.

TRISH
Here's the farm. That abandoned
Catholic church is here.

BRENDAN
These are Indian burial mounds. My
dad -- I went there once. Hold on...

TRISH
Is this a school? Or an orphanage?

BRENDAN
Does anyone have a pen?

FISHER
Finally. Useful.

He joins Brendan and Trish. Offers his pen. Brendan draws a line on the map.

BRENDAN
It has a plan.

FISHER
What do you mean "it?"

TRISH
It's a --
(lowering her voice)
-- A wishing well. Stationary.

FISHER
It's a fucking what?

BRENDAN
It's a thing that needed legs.

FISHER
An "it"? A thing? What the fuck are you talking about?

TRISH
If it has legs, maybe it walked away.

FISHER
WHAT'S walked away?

A demented giggle flees Charlie's lips.

CHARLIE
It hasn't walked away.

Gillian whimpers. Her eyes dart around.

JOAN
The fog is getting thicker.

CHARLIE
It's hungry.

TRISH
How..?

CHARLIE
I feel it --

BRENDAN
-- Shut it down!

CHARLIE

Or you'll hurt me? Kill me? Are you
a killer – like Steven?

Brendan gapes at Charlie in surprise.

CHARLIE

It showed me all about you. Crazy
brother Steven. Locked up. Such a
dirty boy. Right, Joanie?

Joan powders her nose.

JOAN

This is too ridiculous. I just wish
I had a martini to temper this idiocy.

She doesn't see the bracelet disappear off her wrist. Gillian
moans. Points. A cooler sits behind Joan.

Joan opens it. Pulls a cocktail shaker and a martini glass
from the ice. Amazed.

FISHER

A wishing well.

JOAN

But, I just asked...

BRENDAN

-- Don't ask, don't hope, don't wish!
It takes --

JOAN

-- But it gives?

The sounds of copulation fill the bus. Charlie waggles Annie's
iPhone in his hand.

TRISH

Is that -- and..?

Fisher withers under Trish's questioning stare.

JOAN

I don't know what that is.

TRISH

Those scholarships to high school
students. That wasn't altruism.

CHARLIE

Joan does like the boys.

BRENDAN

Steven canvassed with you for an entire summer. Went off his anti-psychotics. Raved about some woman he met, a scholarship he received.

JOAN

We never hired a Steven.

TRISH

Not a Wyatt.

BRENDAN

Steven *Webb*. Big, good-looking kid. Football player --

Brendan's knuckles whiten as he strangles the hatchet.

BRENDAN

-- Worked evenings. Weekends --

JOAN

Curly brown hair? Oh, yes. Jovial. So helpful. He --

BRENDAN

(grabbing her)
He WHAT!?

TRISH

Brendan, STOP IT!

JOAN

He was insolent. He, he came to my house -- our house -- after canvassing. Went right to the bar.

BRENDAN

Not my Steven.

FISHER

Let go of her!

JOAN

And then forced himself on me! When your mother found out...

BRENDAN

He couldn't. He wouldn't...

CHARLIE

-- He didn't. She lured in every one of them.

There is a moment of realization between them.

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)

Kill her.

Brendan hacks at Joan with the hatchet but Trish grabs his hand in time. He struggles between Joan and Trish.

TRISH
Stop it! Don't!

JOAN
PLEASE, NO!

FISHER
I WISH I HAD A BASEBALL BAT!

Fisher's watch disappears from his wrist and a baseball bat appears in his hand. He smashes Brendan's arm, breaking it.

Brendan howls in pain. Drops the hatchet.

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)
Give yourself to me.

BRENDAN
Steven...

Trish pulls Brendan away. Takes his face in her hands.

TRISH
Brendan. Come back. PLEASE!

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)
You want. TELL ME.

BRENDAN (V.O.)
NO!!

Brendan jolts back to her, feels his broken arm. Fisher hefts his bat. Joan cowers in a seat.

FISHER
So, compadres -- let's do this.

He tosses money from his wallet beside Brendan.

FISHER
I wish Brendan had a cast and sling
for his fucking arm.

A cast and sling appear on Brendan's arm.

FISHER
Right, so, you all are crazy, and
I'm taking over this shit show and
(MORE)

FISHER (CONT'D)
gettin' us out of here. First, some
grub 'cause I'm starvin'. So, Mr.
Genie...

TRISH
-- Fisher, don't!

FISHER
I wish we had a buffet of my favorite
foods. Here and now.

The gold chain around Fisher's neck disappears. Steaming
chafers appear at the back of the bus.

BRENDAN
Don't! It wants too much!

FISHER
Off and running, my friend. I wish I
had a monster truck, fully road-worthy
and full of gas so we can get the
hell out of here.

Lightning flashes. A breeze rends the fog, revealing a monster
truck on giant tires. Livid orange. Flame decals.

FISHER
Shit, man, this is easy --

Some invisible force suddenly snaps Fisher's wrist backward.
Twists his hand 180°. And rips it off of his arm.

Blood sprays from the stump as the hand disappears.

Trish catches Fisher as he drops to his knees. Pulls the
ribbon from her hair. Rigs a tourniquet.

She grabs the turquoise disc and rosary around her neck.

TRISH
Please! I wish to stop his bleeding.
Give him a proper bandage. Sutures...

The necklace vanishes. Her wish comes true.

GILLIAN
IT'S HERE!

Something rips open the door of the bus.

Gillian comes unhinged. Charlie bulldozes through them to the back of the bus.

The Matt-Creature enters, lichen-free and fully acclimated to Matt's body. Its emerald eyes scan them with malice.

JOAN
Matthew, thank God...

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)
(to all of their minds)
Matt Luciano. Is dead.

It tosses Fisher's severed hand onto the floor. It sizzles as it crumbles into dust.

Brendan picks up the hatchet. Trish grabs the baseball bat.

MATT-CREATURE
Run, my little fawns.

Charlie and Gillian frantically scrape at the escape window, and trigger the escape latch. The window swings open.

Charlie sees the thorn bushes below. Gillian throws herself out anyway and lands in the bushes with a scream.

Uncertainly and fear paralyze Charlie as their minds fill with suggestions. Everyone hears what they want to hear:

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)
Fornication. Money. Power. The Senate.
Escape. Steven. Mary...

TRISH
Mary..?

BRENDAN
Get them out of here.

TRISH
To where?

BRENDAN
There's a floor hatch. By the buffet.

The Matt-Creature steps forward. Brendan brandishes the hatchet and it pauses.

Trish shoves Joan to the back of the bus. Kneels and finds a latch. Opens a hatch to the luggage compartment.

Charlie shoves Trish out of the way. Disappears into the dark hold.

MATT-CREATURE

I know you. I know everything.

Brendan swings the hatchet. It dodges easily.

Brendan attacks, slashing wildly. The Matt-Creature dodges again, but the hatchet opens a gash on its chest. Green matter oozes from it.

The Matt-Creature retreats a step.

BRENDAN

You are mortal.

MATT-CREATURE

Like your parents? Remember...

Figments of their savaged corpses appear beside him.

Trish only sees Brendan as he drops the hatchet. He clutches the seat beside him, agony on his face.

TRISH

BRENDAN!

Brendan struggles for control.

BRENDAN

Get. Out.

Trish helps Joan into the hold but doesn't release her hand once she gets there until:

JOAN

(emphatic)

You help him.

Trish slides Fisher into the hold with Joan's help. With a last look at Brendan, she follows them.

Brendan withers under the Matt-Creature's psychic attack.

MATT-CREATURE

What do you want?

BRENDAN

Nothing from you.

Steven appears in a straitjacket behind him, another figment in Brendan's mind. Convulsing. Mouthing words mutely.

MATT-CREATURE
Everyone wants something.

INT. BUS CARGO HOLD - CONTINUOUS

Charlie claws at the door as Trish scans the cargo hold with her iPhone's flashlight.

Light illuminates Annie's corpse. Joan sees it and screams.

IN THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

The Matt-Creature relishes Joan's horror.

Brendan has no weapon. Won't retreat. Can't advance.

MATT-CREATURE
Let me in, little man.

BRENDAN
NO.

MATT-CREATURE
You can't fight me forever.

STEVEN
Help me. Brother...

The Matt-Creature stands eye to eye with Brendan.

MATT-CREATURE
So you want that. As I suspected.
Well, you just have to ask.

IN THE CARGO HOLD - CONTINUOUS

Trish finds a latch. Yanks on it. The door begins to open - but catches on a tangle of vegetation outside.

Charlie attacks the door and forces it open. Squeezes out.

EXT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Charlie flees. Gillian tears herself from the thorns and chases after him.

Trish helps Joan and Fisher through the opening. Fisher weaves, weak from blood loss. Joan tries to hold him up.

TRISH

Let's move. Toward the barn.

JOAN

He will find us.

TRISH

It will. It most certainly will.

She helps support Fisher and they hobble into the mist.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Brendan and the Matt-Creature clinch like wrestling opponents.

MATT-CREATURE

Tell me. Give me a thrill.

BRENDAN

I'll die first.

MATT-CREATURE

You're not a fame guy. A money guy.

BRENDAN

I'm nobody! Alone, unloved --

The Matt-Creature throws Brendan to the floor. It sees Trish and the others disappear into the fog.

It fixes its emerald glare on Brendan. Stabs his mind.

MATT-CREATURE

See this, pale face. Something from the good senator's memory.

Brendan gapes at the Matt-Creature in horror.

BRENDAN

Oh God, no...

JOAN (V.O.)

Stevie, take me.

STEVEN (V.O.)

I love you, Joan. So much...

BRENDAN (V.O.)

No, no, no ... NO!

The Matt-Creature leaves Brendan writhing on the floor with that memory deep inside his mind.

OUTSIDE THE BUS - MOMENTS LATER

The Matt-Creature steps off of bus. Pauses to attune its mind. Then strides into the fog.

EXT. FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie and Gillian flee across the farm field. Vines spring from the ground. Pumpkins bulge and ripen.

A brier hedge bursts from the ground. It stretches in both directions to the horizon.

Charlie and Gillian tear at the hedge, overcome by their flight response. But they cannot escape.

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)

What do you want?

GILLIAN

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?

The Matt-Creature strides from the mist. It palms a pumpkin and hurls it at Charlie, knocking him down.

Gillian screams as Charlie struggles in the mud. Vines claw at his legs.

CHARLIE

Please. I have children.

MATT-CREATURE

My last vessel was a child. Fifteen.
Virginal -- until I defiled him. I
could have lived in that body for...

Gillian bolts into the fog and the Matt-Creature does not stop her. It focuses on Charlie.

CHARLIE

I killed Annie for you --

MATT-CREATURE

-- YOU killed her for YOURSELF. You thought it. You did it.

Charlie rips at the vines. The Matt-Creature shoves Charlie into the mud with its foot.

MATT-CREATURE

Remember...

STEVEN (V.O.)

Hey Mr. Cannon. Where's the senator?

MATT-CREATURE

I know what you've done.

JOAN (V.O.)

His parents know.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

He's weak. I'll persuade him.

CHARLIE

I didn't, I swear.

MATT-CREATURE

It only took one push.

Charlie sees Steven beside the Matt-Creature, deranged.

STEVEN

SHE'S MINE. Not yours, MINE!

Charlie remembers every word. They spill from his mouth.

CHARLIE

If your parents pursue this, you can kiss your football, your scholarship -- all of it -- goodbye.

STEVEN

They can't! THEY CAN'T!!

CHARLIE

Convince them.

An ax appears in Steven's hand, and his figment disappears.

CHARLIE

I, I didn't think he'd -- he was crazy, he, he butchered them.

MATT-CREATURE

You thought. You acted.

CHARLIE

But you can fix this, right? You can do anything, fix anything.

The brier hedge blooms. Thunder rolls. Rain begins to fall.

MATT-CREATURE

Anything. For a price.

EXT. THE WELL - MOMENTS LATER

Gillian stumbles onto the now moss-covered patio. Her eyes dart around, suspicious of everything.

She sits on the edge of the well. Paralyzed with fear

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Gillian? Where are you?

Charlie steps onto the patio. He hurries over to her.

CHARLIE

My God, child. Are you okay?

He puts an arm around her shoulders. She leans in to him, completely undone.

GILLIAN

Where can we go?

CHARLIE

Somewhere. And I'll protect you.

She stands. Circles the well, trying to decide where to go. Charlie moves to her. Puts his hands on her shoulders.

CHARLIE

It will be okay.

GILLIAN

Which way? Which...

CHARLIE

You've been through so much.

Gillian tries to move away from him but he holds her fast - and maneuvers her toward the well.

GILLIAN

What are you -- stop it! HELP!
Someone, please...

CHARLIE

You don't understand. I need you.

GILLIAN

Please, no. You can't, you wouldn't...

She sees the Matt-Creature step onto the patio. Screams.
Fights like a rabid dog. But Charlie holds her.

Forces her to the edge of the well.

And shoves her in.

Her scream fades as she falls. Then, nothing.

MATT-CREATURE

Your want is my command.

CHARLIE

I want to be away from here. Far
away where no one will ever find me.

The Matt-Creature sneers at Charlie's change of plan. Then
nods – and Charlie vanishes.

EXT. ANTARCTICA - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie appears on a glacier in the middle of nowhere. Snow
falls. The wind howls.

He glances about in horror. Staggeres in one direction, then
another, with no coat to warm him. He stumbles. Falls. Gets
up and walks two steps before stumbling again.

His hands freeze to the ice. Snow begins to cover him. He
screams as hypothermia takes him.

INT. BARN - LATER

Piles of rotting hay bales. A crumbling Amish carriage.
A wall of carefully arranged tools: saws, axes, scythes.
Rain crashes against the tin roof.

Trish evaluates the workbench below the tools. Discs of
turquoise, polishing rags, desiccated ribbons of leather –
and a dozen completed turquoise necklaces.

Fisher sits with his back against the carriage. He examines his bandaged stump. Blood seeps through it.

Joan sits alone on a hay bale.

JOAN

Charlie always was a coward.

Trish moves to the barn door. Opens it a crack to look out.

TRISH

Do you suppose there's a lock on this door?

FISHER

What if Brendan wants in?

JOAN

What if crazy runs in his family?

Trish slams it shut.

TRISH

Brendan is a good man. He'll beat that thing.

JOAN

He's just a man. I'm a U.S. senator. I demand that you get me out of here.

Trish moves to Fisher. Fusses with his bandage. Though weak, his color has returned.

FISHER

So, I guess my football career is pretty much history.

TRISH

Ever hear of Jim Abbott?

FISHER

Wrong sport, but I get your meaning.

Trish returns to the tools. Pulls down a three-prong hand tiller and gives it to Fisher.

TRISH

I'd screw it into your stump, but...

Fisher takes it. Hefts it.

JOAN

We should just go, shouldn't we? Why don't we just run for it?

Trish grabs a hoe from the wall.

FISHER

You'll see your sister again.

TRISH

You know nothing about me.

FISHER

Maybe, but cancer? Two grandparents, one aunt and a cousin. He had leukemia. Thirteen years old.

His admission – her callousness – hurts her.

FISHER

People don't ask enough questions.

TRISH

I should be there.

FISHER

I'm glad you're here.

JOAN

Hello, employees? Still here too!

FISHER

Unless you've literally grown a pair, sit there and shut your pie hole.

Trish tosses a scythe across to Joan.

TRISH

We quit. You're on your own.

Thunder rumbles outside.

BRENDAN (O.S.)

Hey.

Brendan stands behind them – arm still in the sling, soaked to the skin – but alive. Trish rushes to meet him.

FISHER

WAIT! He might be --

She looks into his brown eyes. Touches his face. Checks him for injuries.

Fisher surprises Brendan with a hug. He accepts it gratefully.

TRISH

Are you okay? How did you get here?

BRENDAN

Back door.

FISHER

Fuck, there's a back door?

JOAN

Is it gone? Dead?

He avoids Joan. Sees the tools and the turquoise. Grabs a pitchfork from the wall.

BRENDAN

We can injure it. Maybe we can force it to stay here.

TRISH

It could have killed you. Why didn't it kill you?

BRENDAN

It -- there were easier targets.

TRISH

Could not, would not, in a bus?

He smiles, his first smile in years.

BRENDAN

Green Eggs and Ham always kept me sane, y'know? I, I was sure I'd become like Steven if I didn't have some simple mantra to focus me.

Brendan looks for Trish's turquoise necklace and rosary. She touches where it used to hang.

TRISH

I used it to help Fisher -- his hand. I can't imagine it had any value.

BRENDAN

You received it from -- because it was a gift. What has it asked you?

FISHER

What I want. Always, what I want.

JOAN

(joining them)

I still haven't heard a thing.

TRISH

I didn't until after --

Brendan winces at a crushing headache. Trish loops a necklace around his neck.

He touches the turquoise disc, and then realizes:

BRENDAN

Wait. I don't hear it.

He loops one over Trish's head. Hands them to the others.

JOAN

I'm not wearing that heathen thing.

Fisher puts his on. Examines the worn band. Feels peace.

BRENDAN

That map you found? It's -- it seems to be moving with purpose toward the city. If it does...

FISHER

Dude, that's two million people.

BRENDAN

That thing looked Amish, like someone from this farm, before he -- was he making these? Did he wish for, for --

TRISH

Protection? We could get a weapon.

FISHER

We have weapons.

TRISH

No, something definitive. Something that will kill it.

JOAN

Talk sense. It's not going to provide the means of its own destruction.

FISHER

And I'm not sacrificing my last hand.

Brendan pulls the heroin from his pocket. Hefts it.

BRENDAN

It's worth a lot.

TRISH

Hold it up...

BRENDAN

-- No. Let me do it.

Brendan prepares his thoughts. Then:

BRENDAN

Take this heroin. I wish for the one thing that will kill you. Give it to us.

The heroin disappears from Brendan's hand. They glance around. The silence is deafening.

FISHER

Was that there before?

A mayonnaise jar filled with an off-white powdery substance sits there. Trish picks it up.

TRISH

Not quite what I was expecting.

Brendan opens the jar. Carefully sniffs the contents. Rubs some between his fingers.

BRENDAN

It's silica - a desiccant. It lives in a well, a creature of the water.

TRISH

We're supposed to dry it to death?

BRENDAN

I was very specific; something to kill it.

TRISH

Now all we need is a pompom to dust it with.

BRENDAN

I have a plan.

FISHER

So do I. And it sucks.

INT. BARN - LATER

Fisher sits on a hay bale, the turquoise glowing at his throat. The hand tiller and Trish's hoe sit beside him.

The barn doors yawn wide before him. Rain pours down outside.

Brendan peeks out from behind a barn door, pitchfork in hand.

BRENDAN

Anything?

Fisher shakes his head. Wipes sweaty hands on his pants.

Joan waits behind the other barn door. Fingers the scythe.

Fisher paces. Glances into the loft, at the dark stalls of the barn. Turns back to the open doors:

The Matt-Creature stands there. Dripping wet, infinitely handsome – a perfect iteration of its host.

MATT-CREATURE

You look good enough to eat.

It circles Fisher with Matt's confident swagger. Fisher eyes the Matt-Creature. Terrified.

MATT-CREATURE

You can't hear me.

Fisher shakes his head.

The Matt-Creature smirks, then steps toward him suddenly.

Fisher reacts and stumbles back onto the hay bale. The Matt-Creature quickly straddles him. Subdues. Entices.

MATT-CREATURE

I give and take – but I'm not opposed
to pleasure. Touch me. Touch the
body of a god.

It presses Fisher's good hand onto its body.

MATT-CREATURE

Built for lovin', wouldn't you say?
My last vessel was hot, but this?

It licks Fisher's nipple and he swoons. Glances at the doors.

MATT-CREATURE

Olly olly oxen free.

In one swift move, it has Fisher on his feet in a choke hold.

It flushes Joan.

JOAN

Don't hurt him.

The Matt-Creature grabs Fisher's stump and squeezes. Fisher cries out in agony.

MATT-CREATURE

You have the power to save your beau.
Another head for your trophy wall.

Joan circles them, shakily brandishing her scythe.

MATT-CREATURE

What do you want?

JOAN

You know what I want. Take the other
two. Leave Fisher for me.

MATT-CREATURE

No.

It wrenches Fisher's arm behind his back.

MATT-CREATURE

I can break bones, tear flesh, bruise,
batter, maim, disfigure, keep him in
agony for weeks, months --

JOAN

-- He means nothing to me.

MATT-CREATURE

Yes. I know.

The Matt-Creature suddenly throws Fisher to the floor and spins around and away from him.

He faces Brendan, who holds the pitchfork in his good hand. Green slime oozes from wounds in the Matt-Creature's back.

Brendan stabs forward and it retreats.

BRENDAN

Shall we dance, ass wipe?

He threatens again and the Matt-Creature backs away toward the Amish carriage.

Trish peers from the carriage with the mayo jar in her hand.

BRENDAN

You can't hurt us anymore.

MATT-CREATURE

When it rains, it pours.

A water trough beside the animal stalls begins to rattle. Suddenly, a tower of water jumps from it, arches over their heads and crashes down on the carriage.

The power of the water knocks Trish to the floor. She loses hold of the mayo jar and it rolls under the carriage seat.

Water cascades over both the Matt-Creature and Brendan, knocking Brendan from his feet.

The Matt-Creature grabs Trish and yanks her from the carriage, throwing her to the ground. She lands hard, but scampers away from its grasp, pulling Brendan with her.

They regroup with Fisher and Joan. Fisher weaves unsteadily with his three-prong hand tiller. Joan wields the scythe.

The Matt-Creature glares at them.

MATT-CREATURE

Now we're even.

BRENDAN

Do the math; it's four to one.

The Matt-Creature holds up a turquoise necklace.

Fisher chops his tiller into Brendan's shoulder and Brendan drops the pitchfork. Trish jumps onto Fisher's back and pounds him with her fists.

Fisher flips Trish backward onto the hay bale, snapping the hoe into two pieces. She releases him. He spins to attack...

...And gets blind-sided by Brendan. They crash to the floor and wrestle, each hampered by injury but crazed to survive.

Trish bolts for the carriage. Scrambles for the mayo jar.

She grabs it just as Joan grabs her hair and pulls her from the carriage. Trish crashes against the carriage wheel.

Joan plunges the broken hoe handle into Trish's stomach.

JOAN

Something to match that bleeding
heart of yours.

She yanks it out and throws it aside as Trish slumps to the ground, the mayo jar still in her hand.

TRISH

You said -- it never spoke to you.

JOAN

It didn't have to. I know what I
want -- people like me always do.
That's why we're in power.

Joan crushes the mayo jar, then turns her attention to Brendan and Fisher.

Fisher pins Brendan to the floor. Pounds Brendan's broken arm. The Matt-Creature feeds on Brendan's agony.

JOAN

Fisher, leave him. Come to me.

Fisher stands, shell-shocked, his mind overthrown. He struggles between the pull of Joan and the Matt-Creature.

Brendan crawls toward the hay bale. Toward the pitchfork.

JOAN

Come here, boy.

Fisher shuffles to Joan as a child to his mother. He doesn't see the scythe.

Joan swings it high and severs Fisher's head from his body. Blood sprays. Fisher's corpse droops as his head rolls to a stop at Joan's feet.

MATT-CREATURE

Your want is my command.

JOAN

I want to be President of these --

Joan's eyes bulge. She gurgles with surprise.

The tines of Brendan's pitchfork jut from her chest. She tries to finish her sentence. Brendan yanks it out, and Joan's body drops to the floor.

Brendan drops the pitchfork. Horrified.

Thunder crashes outside. The Matt-Creature laughs...

...As a cloud of silica dust envelopes its head and torso. It screams as its flesh sizzles.

Trish holds her stomach -- and a piece of the mayo jar.

TRISH

Laugh at that. Ass wipe.

The Matt-Creature bolts away from them. Blinded. It crashes around the barn as it seeks escape.

Trish pulls Brendan from the barn.

EXT. FARM LOT - CONTINUOUS

Trish leads Brendan through the thick undergrowth.

TRISH

Brendan, where do we go?

Brendan follows her, dazed. Unresponsive.

TRISH

BRENDAN!

Trish kisses him. With gusto. He responds to that, and they embrace for one glorious moment before separating.

TRISH

You said you had a plan.

Brendan nods with a grin -- and then sees the blood. She droops against him.

BRENDAN

Oh, God, it's -- you're...

TRISH

You need to leave me here.

BRENDAN

I should have protected you.

Brendan rips off his t-shirt, wincing in private agony. He presses it into her wound.

BRENDAN

Compress by Perry Ellis. Keep pressure on it.

She touches his face.

BRENDAN

Okay, this might hurt.

He carefully drapes her over his shoulder in a fireman's carry. She stifles a scream.

Brendan plunges forward into the woods.

EXT. MONSTER TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

Brendan reaches the truck. Leans Trish against its giant tire. Checks her. She manages a smile.

BRENDAN

So, how to get into a two-story truck?

TRISH

I can't.

BRENDAN

You can. I'll help you.

Brendan opens the passenger door. Sees her holding her wound.

BRENDAN

Bad?

TRISH

It's not great.

BRENDAN

You need to stand on my shoulders. Use the truck's understructure to brace yourself.

TRISH

Sounds like a piece of cake.

Brendan kisses her again, both thrilled and scared-to-death. He crouches. Holds his one good hand for her as a step.

She kicks off her shoes. Weaving a bit, she manages to climb onto his shoulders. He raises from his squat.

Trish climbs into the truck.

BRENDAN

You good? Tell me you're good.

No answer. Brendan struggles to the cab with his good hand. Reaches it. She smiles weakly from one bucket seat.

BRENDAN

What was that kid thinking?

TRISH

We can do this.

Trish grabs the steering wheel and lifts herself from the seat. Brendan slips in behind her. She sits on his lap.

BRENDAN

Cozy. Now -- oh, God the keys!

Trish points to a handle that reads "PULL START". Brendan does and it does -- with a mighty roar.

EXT. FARM LOT - CONTINUOUS

BRENDAN (O.S.)

Thank God it's an automatic.

The monster truck jumps forward and swings around the farm lot. The rain falls harder.

INT. MONSTER TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

BRENDAN

Which way? I, I can't tell where --

TRISH

Aren't there wipers?

Brendan finds them. He sees the house in front of them.

TRISH

Left through there. Around the barn.

Brendan swings the truck around. Approaches the barn.

The Matt-Creature staggers from the barn. The flesh on its head and shoulders hangs acid-seared from bare bone.

Brendan guns it.

The truck jumps forward and mows down the Matt-Creature, crushing it into the ground.

It plows through a fence. Crushes a grain bin. Roars onto the sloppy farm field – and its wheels spin in the mud.

BRENDAN

C'mon, c'mon...!

The truck swings in an arc. Plunges over a small rise and into a deep puddle. The wheels slip.

Brendan tries to rock it free but it sinks into the mud.

Buried for good.

INSIDE THE MONSTER TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

Brendan clutches Trish to him. She winces as he puts pressure on her wound.

TRISH

You tried. Now, Plan B.

BRENDAN

We don't have a Plan B.

Trish slips off his lap and opens the door.

BRENDAN

What are you doing?

TRISH

We gotta walk.

She slides from the cabin of the truck.

EXT. FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Brendan joins Trish on the sloppy field.

TRISH

There's the farm office. The broken
oak tree. Head that way.

Brendan touches his bare neck.

BRENDAN

My turquoise. Yours too.

TRISH

The leather was so frayed. Are they
in the truck?

BRENDAN

It's dead. It can't hurt us now.

Brendan drapes Trish's arm around his less-battered shoulder
and they begin to plod through the slop.

EXT. THE WELL - LATER

The well centers a leafy paradise. Flowers bloom from pots
and dangle from bushes. New saplings jut from the bricks.

Brendan and Trish hobble onto the patio.

He eases Trish onto a bench. Daisies bloom beside her as
Brendan checks the blood-soaked t-shirt. He stands to assess
their situation. Frantic.

TRISH

You need to run.

BRENDAN

Keep pressure on it.

TRISH

There's no EMS or firemen or rescue
that can save me.

BRENDAN

Maybe in the house...

Trish forces Brendan to look at her.

TRISH

Stop.

BRENDAN

I will fix this.

Trish kisses him.

TRISH

You're a kind man, a man with a soul.
A man I would have had a drink with.
And dated and made love to and ditched
my career for and married - but you
can't fix this.

Brendan is bereft.

TRISH

Tell me your name.

BRENDAN

Brendan...

TRISH

Your real name.

BRENDAN

Samuel Webb. Sam. Sam I am.

TRISH

Sam, I could wish you away from here.

BRENDAN

We have nothing more to offer.

He realizes what she's saying.

BRENDAN

No. No, please, I'm not worth that.

Trish pushes a small fetish - perhaps an Indian talisman -
into his hand. She wraps his hand around it.

TRISH

This was in the mayonnaise jar. Take
it. Figure out what it means. You
must survive. To warn others --

BRENDAN

-- You can't. PLEASE, no...

TRISH (V.O.)

What about Mary?

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)

Yes. Mary.

Bushes rustle near the edge of the patio. Something creeps toward them, through the tall flowers and grass.

TRISH

It can't..?

A mangled arm thrusts from the vegetation. Exposed bones. Torn muscles. It grips the bricks and pulls.

The Matt-Creature emerges, its body ruined beyond repair. But those green eyes still glare from its ivory skull.

BRENDAN

You -- you stay back.

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)

Or. What?

Brendan puts himself between Trish and the creature.

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)

I can show you. So much. The memories.
Every being I have met. A farmer. A
priest. An Amish boy.

A figment of the Amish boy appears. A bestial priest with green eyes steps to him, and the boy sinks to his knees.

TRISH (V.O.)

STOP IT!

Brendan sees the priest embrace the boy; the green light of the boy's vanquished soul; then bone and dust.

A rosary and a turquoise necklace drop to the ground.

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)

You need. To make a choice.

TRISH (V.O.)

I know.

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)

We're. Running out. Of time.

Trish takes Brendan's face in her hands. Brings him back.

TRISH

I need to go.

BRENDAN

I'll kill it. We'll run.

TRISH

It will destroy you. Don't let it.

BRENDAN

-- We just found each other. Please,
stay with me...

Trish weakens. Sinks to the ground.

MATT-CREATURE (V.O.)

YOU. ARE RUNNING. OUT. OF. TIME.

Trish kisses Brendan. Then turns to the Matt-Creature:

TRISH

Take me.

BRENDAN

Trish, please, DON'T DO THIS!

MATT-CREATURE

Your want is my --

TRISH

-- I want my sister Mary whole again.
Free of cancer. And for her to live
a long, healthy life.

The Matt-Creature scrambles across the patio as Brendan retreats in horror. It sweeps Trish into a morbid embrace and presses against her. Its green life force invades her.

Trish tries to scream. Matt's rejected form crumbles into ash. A faint green image of Trish pushes from her body. It peers at Brendan for a moment, then fades to nothing.

Brendan crawls to the bench and weeps. Abandoned and alone.

Rain gently falls.

A delicate hand reaches out and squeezes Brendan's shoulder.

Dread fills him. He looks up, into the green eyes of the TRISH-CREATURE. Behind it: Steven and his butchered parents.

BRENDAN

I, I don't like green -- green..?

He can't find the words. Can't remember the story.

TRISH-CREATURE

Sam. Dearest. I can share memories.
And I can erase them.

Brendan bolts. Stumbles on a root and falls on his broken arm. A crack. A scream. A bone juts from his tricep.

The Trish-Creature and the figments inch toward him.

Brendan pulls himself away on his one good elbow, crabbing backward until he runs into the lip of the well.

TRISH-CREATURE

Tell me.

Brendan weeps.

TRISH-CREATURE

What do you want?

BRENDAN

PLEASE...

TRISH-CREATURE

Riches. Power.

BRENDAN

Walk away. You can just walk away!

The Trish-Creature grabs Brendan's shattered arm, eliciting a scream of agony.

BRENDAN

Just kill me. WHY CAN'T YOU JUST
KILL ME??!

TRISH-CREATURE

The ancient forbade it. But I can
keep you alive for years. It will be
fun – the begging, the agony.
Infection. Amputation...

Anguish consumes him.

TRISH-CREATURE

Your brother? Whole again?

Brendan looks up, horror and hope mixed on his face.

BRENDAN

No. I, I can't.

TRISH-CREATURE

His mind clear. Free of all pain.
All guilt --

BRENDAN

-- I CAN'T PAY YOU! I HAVE NO MONEY,
NO CAMPAIGN FUND, NO HOUSE. NOTHING!

TRISH-CREATURE

Give me your body. Your soul. They
are worthless to you now.

Brendan's shoulders shake as he sobs.

BRENDAN

Tell me that her sister will live.
That her cancer is gone.

TRISH-CREATURE

It is as you say. Mary is reborn.

Brendan holds up his good arm – the watch from his brother.

BRENDAN

I wish to walk back to the city,
unharmd and unmolested. Give me a
clear path to the city.

The watch disappears.

TRISH-CREATURE

Go.

Brendan stands – and finds himself completely healed. Bare
bricks reveal a simple path that meanders into the woods.

TRISH-CREATURE

Go.

He takes a tentative step across the patio. Then runs.

Into the woods. Tree branches tear his bare torso. Roots
catch his feet. But the chance of escape consumes him.

Brendan reaches the two-track. His foot splashes into an ice-
coated puddle. A cold wind blasts his exposed skin.

Shivering, Brendan flees up the two-track.

FROM THE WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

The Trish-Creature watches Brendan. The figments of Steven and his parents follow unnoticed behind him.

The Trish-Creature follows them all.

FADE OUT