SOUTHOFHELL

Ep. 101

"Demons Are Forever"

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CAST LIST

Maria Abascal/Abigail Man with Ebony Cane**

David Abascal One-legged Society Woman*

Enos Abascal Swamp Metal Band*

Father Isaac Bledsoe Chinese Man*

Robin Bledsoe Sixteen-year-old Maria*

Corky Mental Patients/Loved Ones*

Dusty Cleft-lipped Receptionist*

Sweetmouth Enos's Army (200 Shadows)*

Pastor Neezer Bowe One-legged Society Woman*

Charlotte Robertson Homeless Woman*

Tory Culland Newborn Baby*

Brenda Culland Butcher*

Jeremy Culland Old Man*

Older Lady Granddaughter*

Disaster Woman Antiques Vendor*

Bad Wig Man

Well-Dressed Couple (Mr. And Mrs. Robertson)*

^{* -} indicates non-speaking roles

^{** -} featured extra

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LOCATIONS LIST

INT./EXT. STOREFRONT CHURCH

EXT. SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

INT. FLEA MARKET

INT./EXT. CULLAND HOME

- STAIRWELL
- JEREMY'S ROOM

INT. "SPUNK SHACK" (DIVE BAR)

INT. MARIA AND DAVID'S HOME (TRAILER)

INT./EXT. FEDERAL-STYLE MANSION

INT./EXT. BLEDSOE'S CAR

INT. STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL

- HALLWAY
- COMMON ROOM
- ROBIN'S ROOM
- HALLWAY OUTSIDE ROBIN'S ROOM

EXT. TRAILER PARK

INT. CHARLOTTE'S CAR

EXT. SAVANNAH RIVER FRONT

ON TV/MONITORS:

"Reality Show" Enduranol Commercial FADE IN:

EXT. STOREFRONT CHURCH - NIGHT

A dilapidated former movie theater huddled between two boarded up buildings on an empty street in a run-down section of town. The marquee reads: "TRUE HOLINESS HOUSE OF LIGHT AND WORSHIP -- PASTOR NEEZER BOWE."

PASTOR BOWE (O.C.)

Go on now! Tell me! Tell me what you'd say if he was standing here now, right there in front of you!

Yellow light spills from the windows onto the sidewalk. A loud ROAR of approval escapes from the people inside.

INT. STORE FRONT CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

PASTOR NEEZER BOWE, 40's, dripping in righteousness and sweat, bellows into the timid face of an OLDER LADY in a wheelchair.

PASTOR BOWE

Go on and tell him. Tell the Devil what you have to say.

The CROWD erupts with shouts of encouragement.

PASTOR BOWE (CONT'D)

He's right there. Even closer. That Devil is sitting in your lap at this very moment, <u>pressing</u> you down into that wheelchair.

OLDER LADY

I can feel the Devil pressing down!

PASTOR BOWE

And what are you gonna tell him?

OLDER LADY

Devil, you leave me alone!

PASTOR BOWE

And now, Devil, I am commanding you to get <u>OUT</u> of this good woman --

Pastor Bowe lifts the Older Lady onto her feet and KICKS HER WHEELCHAIR BACK ACROSS THE FLOOR --

PASTOR BOWE (CONT'D)

AND BE GONE!!

The Pastor releases his grip on her shoulders. The crowd GASPS as the old woman sways on her feet BUT DOES NOT FALL!

OLDER LADY

God bless you god bless you god bless you...

PASTOR BOWE

You see that? THE DEVIL HAS. NO. POWER HERE!!

The crowd erupts into a frenzy, quivering with faith. Standing off to the side, we see the church custodian, TETRA, 40's, a striking, light-black-skinned "Gullah" woman, in a white robe, amulets around her neck. (We will learn more about her and her culture as our story unfolds.)

PASTOR BOWE (CONT'D)

Now...who's next?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Pastor.

Bowe turns to see BRENDA, 40's, thin face and desperate eyes. Her expensive clothes out of place in such a modest church. Beside her stands JEREMY, a shy 12 year-old, with neatly combed hair. As they move across the stage we --

CUT TO:

<u>P.O.V - SOMEONE WATCHING</u> - The effect is eerie and disorienting (this will be a cinematic signature used throughout the series). Then --

BACK ON:

BRENDA

Please...my son, he has something very bad inside him.

PASTOR BOWE

We all have a piece of darkness in our souls.

BRENDA

I can't take it any longer. He can't control himself, the things he does...the violence...

(shudders)

My god, the things that come out of his mouth...

The room seems to quiet as Bowe approaches Jeremy. The poor boy stares at his feet, frightened and ashamed.

PASTOR BOWE

What's your name, child?

JEREMY

Jeremy.

PASTOR BOWE

Is it true what your mother says?

JEREMY

(nodding)

I want to be good.

PASTOR BOWE

I know you do. But the Devil takes over sometimes, doesn't he?

Jeremy nods yes.

PASTOR BOWE (CONT'D)

He won't leave you alone no matter how hard you try, will he?

JEREMY

No.

PASTOR BOWE

The Devil likes to think that he can make himself at home anywhere he pleases, right here in our very hearts -- but that's just not the way it's gonna be tonight!

Pastor Bowe THRUSTS HIS PALM against Jeremy's forehead.

PASTOR BOWE (CONT'D)

Come out of there, Devil!

Jeremy's body shivers -- but whether it is from Pastor Bowe's hand or some greater force we cannot tell...

PASTOR BOWE (CONT'D)

OUT, DEVIL!! We command you!

The crowd comes alive again, excited by Bowe's passion.

PASTOR BOWE (CONT'D)

Out...

Jeremy begins to whimper...

PASTOR BOWE (CONT'D)
OUT, foul demon...

His body trembling now like a fever. Eyes rolling back...

PASTOR BOWE (CONT'D)

OUT!!!

AN INHUMAN HOWL escapes Jeremy's lips --

And the next thing Neezer Bowe sees is the boy's teeth lunging for his face.

Tetra rushes forward, shouting prayers in her "Geechee" language as she vainly tries to pull Jeremy off of the pastor. Bowe SCREAMS in agony as the boy tears into his tender cheek, stripping flesh from bone, like a rabid animal, biting his face AGAIN AND AGAIN.

EXT. STORE FRONT CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

We can HEAR the congregation SCREAMING IN TERROR over Bowe's CRIES and Jeremy's BESTIAL HOWL...

SMASH TO:

MAIN TITLES: SOUTH OF HELL

Over haunting images of a battered wooden skiff drifting along the dark and foggy Savannah River...if this city is our Hell, then this title sequence will be our River Styx.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAVANNAH, GEORGIA - EARLY MORNING - MONTAGE

A city of Southern Gothic character. Where history lingers and the streets lie saturated with spirits of the dead.

We move along the winding Savannah River, through a fog thick as sulfur. It parts before us like a death-shroud being lifted, revealing glimpses of the city in the dim light of dawn, opening and closing like a curtain between a series of ghostly vignettes...

WE SEE:

...a ONE-LEGGED SOCIETY WOMAN dressed in rich furs limping across a cobblestone lane to board a street car. The fog thickens around us, then thins again to reveal...

...a HOMELESS WOMAN sitting alone on the edge of the majestic Forsyth Park fountain. She is dressed in black plastic trashbags, like a junkyard shawl. Her NEWBORN BABY sucking on her unwashed tit, as the fog transports us to...

...a BUTCHER with several missing fingers decorates a bisected pig carcass with a top hat and bow-tie in his shop's window display.

END MONTAGE

The fog closes around us again and all goes...WHITE. After a beat, the fog thins and we see that it has turned to STEAM spewing from a simmering pot of boiled peanuts, their leathery husks glistening like maggots. A ladle dips into frame as a MANGY CAT hovers over the pot's rim, sniffing.

We pull back and see that we are at a street vendor's table in the midst of a sprawling--

INT. FLEA MARKET - DAY

Set within an old dilapidated barn. Spanish moss drips from the rafters. Stirring the ladle is an OLD MAN with small lazy eyes. He swipes the ladle at the mangy cat, splashing boiling water onto the SHRIEKING animal's back. The man giggles cruelly even as his 10 year-old GRANDDAUGHTER scolds him and slaps his face, which only makes the old man laugh harder.

We drift past the scene, past more tables filled with eclectic wares and steaming food. Past stalls hawking bad oil paintings, weather-worn furniture, Civil War kitsch and cracked porcelain figurines. Past CUSTOMERS from all walks of life, from a wheelchair-bound VET to a WEALTHY GENTLEMAN walking with a distinctive EBONY CANE...

Until we find ourselves at a peculiar stall covered in arcane spiritual oddities: black candles and alligator heads, monkey paws, crystals, and talismans carved from bone...

MARIA (O.C.)
(slight southern accent)
I'm seeing...loneliness.

We land on MARIA ABASCAL, 30 -- our hero. A haunting beauty with eyes too old for her slender young face. She is reading the palm of a thin-haired DISASTER of a woman.

DISASTER
That's true! Gracious, which line told you that?

Lady, they <u>all</u> did. They sit at a table amidst Maria's curious market stand. Maria offers her a SILVER PENDANT.

MARIA

This here's a bonafide wudu love charm. Most assured way in all of Georgia to break a lonely streak, and today it's only eighty dollars.

DISASTER

Well...if you say it'll help...

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.) Is that what I think it is?

The women look up to see a priest standing over the table -- a handsome black man in his 40's. Wingtips on his feet, his white clerical collar framed between the lapels of his dark jacket - a real Southern gentleman. This is ISAAC BLEDSOE.

BLEDSOE

So sorry to interrupt, ladies. But my niece lost a chain just like that down the tub, and the Wal-Mart tells me they're all out of stock. I hate to turn this into a bidding war, but I'd be willing to go ten dollars for that necklace.

The Disaster shoots Maria a toxic look and exits, leaving the cheap pendant sitting on the table.

MARIA

Anyone ever tell you that you're bad luck, padre?

BLEDSOE

Sounds kinda superstitious.

He gives her a charming smile and helps himself to the freshly vacated seat. Maria scoots her chair back an inch - her guard always up around men she finds attractive... Bledsoe points to a pile of Tarot cards.

BLEDSOE (CONT'D)

How much for a reading?

MARIA

Twenty dollars.

BLEDSOE

Your sign says five.

MARIA

Sign's old.

BLEDSOE

Sometimes the old ways are best.

Bledsoe pulls a crumpled twenty dollar bill from his pocket. Maria takes his money and shuffles her deck.

MARIA

Don't get a lot of preacher-men at my table. Kinda goes against your rules, don't it?

BLEDSOE

It ain't really me I'm interested in hearing about.

His hand snaps across the table and plucks a card from her deck, holding the card face-down between them.

MARIA

(wary)

I know you, padre?

BLEDSOE

Father Isaac Bledsoe.

A pause while she considers whether to reciprocate. But something about those eyes makes it hard to say no...

MARIA

Maria Abascal. And if this is your way of trying to launch into some kind of sermon, you can go peddle your God somewhere else.

BLEDSOE

Shucks, am I really so obvious? Well, do I at least get my money back?

MARIA

Sorry, Ike. Paper only moves one way across this table.

BLEDSOE

Come on, at least give me a chance to win back my Jackson.

MARIA

Boy, do you have the wrong game.

BLEDSOE

What if I can guess the card in my hand?

He lays another twenty onto the table.

BLEDSOE (CONT'D)

What do they call that...double or nothing?

MARIA

You hustling me, padre?

BLEDSOE

(calmly)

It's your deck.

She eyes the priest carefully...is he a con or a fool?

BLEDSOE (CONT'D)

Tell you what. You win, you keep my money. You lose, and I do my best to keep the sermon brief.

Maria glances down at his hand, still in plain sight. Shit, she can always use the money.

BLEDSOE (CONT'D)

Devil.

MARIA

What'd you call me?

BLEDSOE

(laughs)

Not you. The Tarot. That's my guess -- the card of the Devil.

The priest holds the card just inches above the table. And in the glossy black of her nail polish, Maria can just make out the card's reflection: THE FOOL CARD. She swallows her smile like a riverboat queen.

MARIA

Make it sixty. Or you and the devil can both go to hell.

BLEDSOE

Sixty dollars? Your sign gets older every minute, doesn't it?

MARIA

That's the way time works, I hear.

But he lays the money out all the same. Three twenties.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Let's see 'em, padre.

He lays the card down face up: THE DEVIL. Maria's eyes flash daggers. Fingers curling into white-knuckled fists...But she keeps her rage in check.

BLEDSOE

Something wrong?

MARIA

You're lucky I'm good at controlling my temper. But <u>real</u> lucky.

BLEDSOE

Dark times. People seldom in control as they think.

A pale, shaky hand grabs Bledsoe's shoulder from behind.

DAVID (O.C.)

Now, I know the men of your industry ain't particularly versed when it comes to the fairer sex...

Maria looks up to see her older brother DAVID, 32, with a beat-up guitar hanging across his back, standing over the priest. He would probably clean up nice, if not for the waxy skin and glassy eyes of a heroin addict.

DAVID (CONT'D)

But when a girl looks at you the way my sister's eye-balling you right now, means she'd like you to leave.

Bledsoe rises and David moves to step in between him and Maria, but David over-commits a step and knocks over one of Maria's stands, sending a display of crystals and bundled herbs to the ground. The flea market crowd turn to stare at the commotion. Maria frowns, unhappy with all the attention--

MARIA

David, knock it off --!

DAVID

There, you see that? Now she's upset. That's no good. That's a real, real bad show for everyone.

Bledsoe is not intimidated. He turns to Maria, lets her make the call.

BLEDSOE

Ma'am?

MARIA

Guess we'll have to postpone that sermon.

BLEDSOE

(smiles)

I'm a patient man.

P.O.V - SOMEONE WATCHING

Bledsoe turns and disappears into the bustling crowd. Maria picks up the Devil card up from her table. Stares at its grinning red face.

DAVID

You good, Mar? You looked like you were going to kill that man of God.

Maria grabs David's shirt and yanks his face to hers.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Hey! Watch the temper, sis!

MARIA

My temper is just where I want her. You trying to get my vendor's license revoked?

Off David's glassy stare:

MARIA (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ...are you high?

DAVID

(defensively)

No...

MARIA

(overlapping, staring into his eyes)

You didn't chip a little?

DAVID

(retreating)

I told you...

MARIA

(right back)

Jesus, David -- We're trying to start a new thing here and I'm depending on you.

(takes a breath)

You make any money busking today?

DAVID

Chump change...

(smiles)

...but Tetra's got a good lead. Good money.

MARIA

(eyes him)

You always say "good money."

Maria loosens her grip on him.

DAVID

No such thing as bad money and this is real strong...

MARIA

Just like the last one, huh?

DAVID

(softly)

That wasn't our fault, Maria. We just got there a little too late. (shudders at the memory)
Nothing we could have done.

QUICK FLASHES:

Of two dead OLD PEOPLE sitting in oversized rocking chairs still slowly creaking back and forth...their mouths wide open and large nails hammered into their blacked-out, blood-caked eyes.

BACK TO:

FLEA MARKET

As Maria watches the corpulent ANTIQUES VENDOR in the neighboring stall, hammering a nail into the leg of a damaged chair. The man catches Maria watching him, flashes her a lewd yellow-toothed grin. Maria locks up her stall, starts walking away.

MARIA

This whole place keeps getting worse. And so does the job...

DAVID

(following her)

You got a better idea? Besides, you haven't sold so much as a charm-bracelet all week, and I know she's gotta be hungry.

(softens)

You eat anything? Here...

David pulls a bag of boiled peanuts from his jacket.

MARIA

You didn't steal these --?

DAVID

Just eat it, Mar. You're gonna need your strength today.

And just then, stepping slowly from behind a tree, they see...

MARIA

Tetra -- how are you?

But Tetra (the Gullah woman we saw at Pastor Bowe's church) just smiles and says nothing. Instead she hands Maria a tabloid rag and a piece of paper with an address on it, then walks away.

DAVID

Sometimes she scares me.

MARIA

She's been through a lot. So who is it this time?

And Maria opens the paper and the headline reads: "FAITH HEALER MAULED BEFORE FLOCK, UNIDENTIFIED SUSPECT ESCAPES. 'THE DEVIL DID IT,' CLAIMS CONGREGATION."

EXT. CULLAND HOME - AFTERNOON

A beautiful old house, set amidst the oak-lined streets of wealthy Abercorn Heights. The dull red light of the afternoon sun catches on the trees above us, illuminating a spider web in which an unlucky HUMMINGBIRD has gotten itself trapped, its wings buzzing uselessly as it exhausts itself to death...

DAVID (O.S.)

Nice neighborhood...

Find Maria and David standing on the front porch.

MARIA

Too old-money for my taste.

P.O.V - SOMEONE WATCHES FROM ACROSS THE STREET

Maria presses the DOORBELL as David stares across the street at an old Federal-style mansion, where a WELL-DRESSED COUPLE are loading suitcases into a black towncar -- clearly on their way out of town. David watches them maybe just a little too closely.

DAVID

Old money is just as good as new.

He and Maria turn as the front door before them swings open, revealing TORY, 40's, a real blue-blooded prick.

He eyes the poorly dressed visitors with suspicion -particularly Maria. From inside, we hear the jagged whistle of a TEA KETTLE echo through the house. Faint but rising...

DAVID (CONT'D)

You Jeremy Culland's dad?

TORY

I'm the stepfather. How can I help you?

BRENDA (O.C.)

Tory?

Tory turns to see Brenda standing in the hallway behind him -- the same woman we met in the teaser. The KETTLE crescendos to a teeth-setting SCREAM.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

These are the people I called to help us with Jeremy...

Tory turns back to Maria and David.

TORY

These are the exorcists?
(beat, to David and Maria)
What church are you from?

DAVID

Call us freelancers.

An inhuman SHRIEK suddenly rips through the house from upstairs, loud enough to drown out the whistling kettle. Maria steps past Tory, stares up towards the darkened second floor, then says simply --

TORY

I hope you can help that boy.

INT. STAIRWELL - CULLAND HOME - DUSK

Brenda leads the way up the stairs. Maria follows along with David.

BRENDA

It all started about a month back, after Tory and I got back from our honeymoon.

The overhead lights have all been shattered, leaving most of the floor in shadow. A twitching red light spills down the hallway, coming from a fireplace burning in the main bedroom at the far end of the hall. Its damp logs hissing and popping, throwing sparks across the tile.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

At first I thought Jeremy was just acting up. The way boys his age can get when there's changes at home. But then, three days ago, something in him...he changed.

But David seems to be paying more attention to the rich decor than to his client. He lingers by a sideboard decoratively laid out with antique jeweled and silver HAIRPINS. Picks one up to examine the fine work more closely...definitely worth a few bucks.

MARIA

(hisses)

Put it back, David.

David puts the silver hairpin back...and then POCKETS it again while Maria isn't looking. Brenda turns towards him and David flashes her a friendly smile. They stop in front of a door locked with a heavy padlock and thick chains.

MARIA (CONT'D)

This your son's room, Missus Culland?

Brenda solemnly nods and Maria turns to David --

MARIA (CONT'D)

Stay outside. Make sure no one interrupts me.

INT. JEREMY'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

ANGLE ON THE DOOR -- hung with posters of bands and pictures of Jeremy's school mates. The dim afternoon light seeps through the window. From the other side of the door we can HEAR the ominous CLANKING of heavy locks turning. A final THUD as the chains outside fall to the ground...and then the door slowly swings open with a plaintive CREEEEEEK...

Maria steps inside the room. Shuts the door behind her. The decor reflects a well-adjusted kid. Everything looks neat and tidy: the bed made, the floor swept, no clutter or mess.

MARIA

So I hear you got some demons, kid.

FIND JEREMY -- huddled in the corner amidst what can only be described as a NEST. A putrid pile of shredded clothing and shattered furniture, stuck together with some mysterious filth.

The boy's skin looks cracked and drawn, his lips curled back into a disgusting grimace. A few MOSQUITOES buzz around him, drinking from the open wounds on his skin.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Then again, might be you're just some teenage headcase who's seen a few too many midnight movies. What's the matter? Your mama's new fella stealing all your attention?

Jeremy growls - when he speaks, it is in the inhuman voice of the demon inside him, VARYN:

JEREMY/VARYN

(Latin)

Gero vestri pellis.

(w/English subtitles)

I'll wear your skin.

MARIA

Latin. Private school kid. Kinda cliché though, don't you think?

JEREMY/VARYN

(Sumerian)

Akalu pagru.

(w/English subtitles)

(MORE)

JEREMY/VARYN (CONT'D) And devour your corpse.

MARIA

Sumerian? Google translate? Now how about this — I say a few loud words of import. You flop around on the floor some, put on a good show for your parents. Then take a bath, tidy up your room, and I'll slip you fifteen percent of whatever your step-daddy pays us for services rendered. Sound fair?

Jeremy/Varyn unleashes a blood-curdling ROAR, his mouth stretched wide enough to actually split his cheeks.

MARIA (CONT'D)

(quietly, as if to herself)

Looks like we're doing it your way after all. Come on out, demon.

Jeremy gets closer, eyes glinting with malice. Maria stands her ground, but we can see the sweat gathering on her brow...

MARIA (CONT'D)

You hear me? I said <u>out</u>, you foul stinking <u>bitch</u>!

Closer still now, Jeremy starting to spread his jaws wide...

MARIA (CONT'D)

Out.

Closer...

MARIA (CONT'D)

Out.

CLOSER -- Maria is now trembling like a fever. (We will soon realize that she is summoning ABIGAIL - the demon spirit that lives within her.)

MARIA (CONT'D)

OUT!

A HIDEOUS MALE BLACK ARM SHOOTS OUT FROM JEREMY'S THROAT, GRABS MARIA BY THE FACE AND FLINGS HER ACROSS THE ROOM. She hits the far-wall with a sickening CRUNCH. Her thin limbs twisted into impossible angles as she slides to the floor...

Jeremy CACKLES, the monstrous arm slithering back down his throat as he stalks towards Maria's body --

WHICH SUDDENLY RISES TO ITS FEET. Maria stands on twisted legs like a terrible marionette yanked up by its strings - her demon spirit taking over her body. Hair hanging down over her face and then -- she looks up. HER FACE NOW THAT OF A WOMAN POSSESSED. Light blue veins visible under her pale white skin, eyes burning red. (This is the way Maria looks when ABIGAIL emerges as the demon fighter.) She's dirty, dangerous and wildly sexual. Makes us wonder if we should call the cops, or cop a feel. Jeremy stops in his tracks.

ABIGAIL

(w/out southern accent)
Can you believe that tramp called
me a bitch?

Jeremy backs away: What. The. Hell?

Abigail stretches out her body as if waking from a long nap. This is made grotesque by the fact that her limbs are still crooked and broken. But as Abigail stretches, the breaks and tears seem to smooth themselves out as easily as knots. Her body now completely healed.

JEREMY/VARYN

Who are you...?

ABIGAIL

Oh, no way.

Abigail takes a step towards Jeremy -- responds with a HISS.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Is that you in there, Varyn?

JEREMY/VARYN

(Greek)

Faei ton kolo tis miteras sas.

(w/English subtitles)

Eat your mother's ass.

ABIGAIL

(laughs)

You still speak Greek like a Spartan rat.

JEREMY/VARYN

What..?

ABIGAIL

Come on now, after all the souls we devoured back in Thessaly? Are you trying to hurt my feelings or what?

JEREMY/VARYN

... Abigail. Hell has been looking for you, sister.

ABIGAIL

And lucky you, you found me. Hope they're offering a big reward.

ABIGAIL POUNCES AT JEREMY/VARYN WITH A SNARL. The boy finds himself pinned to the ceiling -- gravity be damned as Abigail kneels down on his chest. Abigail's mouth leers open in a thirsty grin.

JEREMY/VARYN

What do you think you're doing?

ABIGAIL

It's dinner time, brother.

Jeremy growls like a territorial dog.

JEREMY/VARYN

You're even greedier than I remember. The Culland boy is for me. You have your own flesh to feed from. Now leave me be to take what's mine.

ABIGAIL

It's not the boy I want.

And suddenly there's real fear in Jeremy/Varyn's eyes.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

(Sumerian)

Mina gibil nam hi-li.

(w/English subtitles)

-I want some new kind of kick.

JEREMY/VARYN

So it's true what they say -- you've gone mad. Turned against your own kind!

Jeremy shoves Abigail off with all his strength and scrambles towards the door. Something catches him by the ankle.

ABIGAIL

(Latin)

Sicut mater infantem indiget...

(w/English subtitles)

Like baby needs mom...

Jeremy looks back to see Abigail's hand clamped around his foot -- her arm stretched impossibly long, its joints popping freakishly as it keeps Jeremy from escaping.

JEREMY/VARYN

Hell will see you burn for this!

ABIGAIL

(Macedonian)

Kako Suzy treba Dik... ova bebe treba nekoi novi vid na udar! (w/English subtitles)
Like Suzy needs Dick... this baby needs, some new kinda kick!

JEREMY/VARYN

Stop it, sister! We both know the souls of this world are a pathetic waste of flesh!

Abigail drags the terrified Demon back towards her, a starved look gleaming in her red eyes...

Jeremy glances back at her -- and for a moment his face looks innocent again, his voice back to normal...just a scared young kid as he pleads:

JEREMY

...please. Don't take the shadow away from me. The shadow is the only thing that keeps me safe from him.

And for just a moment, Abigail hesitates, a look of real concern on her face - a glimmer of Maria in her eyes...

Then with a terrible SHRIEK -- VARYN'S TRUE FORM BURSTS FORTH FROM JEREMY'S MOUTH, SEPARATING FROM THE BOY. SWIRLING, ETHEREAL AND BLOODY ALL AT ONCE -- LIKE A FLAYED SHADOW, AN ANGRY CLOUD OF GLISTENING MUSCLE AND VEINS --

The shrieking spirit barrels past Abigail, still distracted by Jeremy's haunting plea. It knocks Abigail to the ground, and then bursts through the room's window, transforming into a SWARM OF MOSQUITOES AS IT SMASHES THROUGH THE GLASS. Abigail rushes after it, but the black cloud of insects is already disappearing into the fog. Abigail stares out the shattered window, GROWLING with rage.

JEREMY (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Mom!

Turns to see Jeremy huddled on the floor -- just a scared kid waking from some horrible nightmare. He stares up in fear at the demonic Abigail.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Mom? What's happening?!

The bedroom door opens and David steps into the room.

DAVID

Sounds like we're all done here, sis?

Abigail turns on him with a SNARL and he stops in his tracks, startled to see the demon still in control of his sister.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Shit! Abigail..!

She leaps at him, nailing David with a nasty left cross, sending him sprawling across the room. Abigail leaps on top of David, pinning him to the wall as she straddles him...

ABIGAIL

Oooh...big, big brother...

Abigail runs her tongue over David's lips, moaning like a porn star.

DAVID

Get the hell off me! Bring back Maria.

ABIGAIL

...or what?

She grabs his crotch. David, out of breath and scared.

DAVID

Or I let you do whatever you want to me. And then I tell Maria and then she blows her brains out, and sends you straight back to Hell.

Checkmate. Abigail SNARLS -- and then all at once her entire body relaxes. Her face returning to human once again as the demon relinquishes control to Maria, who slumps to the floor with a whimper...

JEREMY

Moooommmmm!!

Brenda and Tory dash into the room. Brenda rushes to Jeremy.

BRENDA

Jeremy!

David wipes his sister's spit from his lips, then lays his jacket over her shoulders. Her eyelids fluttering as she struggles to hold onto consciousness.

MARIA

David...

DAVID

Shhh, it's okay now, sis.

Tory eyes his cowering step child as he pulls a wad of cash from his inside pocket.

TORY

Is the boy back to normal?

Maria looks at Tory and Brenda, eyes hardening.

MARIA

What have you been doing to him?

TORY

(icy)

I beg your pardon?

Maria's body is fading fast from the struggle with Varyn.

MARIA

(fading)

There's still a monster in this house, but it's not the boy...It's you.

TORY

(to David w/venom) -

Get your white trash sister out of here, before I kick you both in the ass.

DAVID

(leaping at him)

You freakin' sadist!

And David punches him hard across the jaw. The bills in Tory's hand scatter across the floor. Maria sinks back down, slipping out of consciousness...

MARIA

... The demon got away... Varyn...it can still come back...

Maria's eyelids close and all goes -- BLACK.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

INT. MARIA AND DAVID'S TRAILER HOME - DUSK

The inside of their cramped trailer looks like someone has taken Maria's entire flea market stand and packed it into a phone booth. Despite the clutter of exotic trinkets, the decor strives for a sad sort of normalcy. Amulets and gator skulls share shelf space with "Home Sweet Home" needle-points and a Garfield calendar. A shitty old TV plays a "Reality Show" in the background.

Find Maria asleep on a couch in the trailer's small common room. We hear a grinding ELECTRIC WHINE coming from outside as she slowly blinks awake, looking like a cold plate of refried hell. A demon-hangover will do that to a girl...she rubs her aching temples, glances out the window...

We see that we are in a sprawling, run-down trailer park. Two trailers down, she spots the source of the noise. A handsome young man named DUSTY, late 20's, stands hunched over a buzzing chain-saw outside his single-wide trailer, cutting up an old table. He has a kind face and a "SEMPER FI" tattoo on his right shoulder. Arms glistening in the twilight as he guides his saw over a fresh piece of pine wood. He glances up, catches Maria looking at him. Gives her a shy smile...

DAVID (O.C.) Welcome back, sunshine.

Maria turns away from the window towards David, as he drops a plate of fried PBJ onto the TV tray beside her. She takes a huge bite, ravenous.

MARIA (mouth full)
Mmmph. Glass of--?

David sets a cold glass of milk in front of her, answering her question before she's even asked.

DAVID

The kind you like, that makes your ass all fat.

As he pulls away she notices the bruise on his cheek.

MARIA

Shit, did I do that to you?

DAVID
(playing it down)
Not your fault.
(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

Abigail didn't feed, so she was still in control when I walked into that room.

(off Maria's guilty look)
Please, don't do that. You promised
you wouldn't blame yourself again.
Believe me, I'm fine.

He kisses her on the top of her head, the way a parent might.

DAVID (CONT'D)

There's some eggs in the fridge if you're still hungry. I'm taking the truck, gotta go check about another job.

There's a nervous energy to David's movements as he opens the door to his sparsely furnished bedroom, grabs his jacket and keys. Been a while since his last fix...he's half-way out the door when Maria realizes...

MARTA

Since when did we have any food in the house?

David stops in the doorway. Turns and pulls a slim wad of cash from his pocket, trying too hard to play it casual.

DAVID

Today was a payday, right? I'll pick us up a bottle of wine - or, you know, whatever for you. We can divvy up the rest when I get back.

SMASH! Maria throws the glass of milk at David, shattering it against the wall beside him.

DAVID (CONT'D)

What the hell, Mar!

MARIA

You took that bastard's money?

DAVID

Why wouldn't I?

MARIA

Because we didn't finish the job. That demon got away and it could still come back. You know that.

DAVID

The cheap prick only had half the money we agreed to anyway! Now, do you want your cut or not?

MARIA

I'm the one cutting <u>you</u> in, David. That means we play by my rules.

DAVID

What am I, your charity case? I work hard for you, I look out for you. What if Abigail had turned on that kid's family, huh? You really want another situation like what happened back in Memphis?

MARIA

(hard and furious)
STOP IT!

DAVID

(flustered, quickly)
I'm sorry...I didn't mean...
 (recoups)

...Look, don't forget how bad it was before we came back to Savannah. That demon bitch is the parasite here, not me.

MARIA

I told you, don't call her a bitch.

DAVID

Or what...

(points to his bruise)
You'll knock my ass across the room
again?

Maria looks away, stinging with guilt. David softens, hates to see her feel bad.

MARIA

I'm trying to control her.
 (sits on the couch)
I'm just flat out exhausted.

DAVID

(plaintive)

And I'm trying to take care of you...Doing the best I can.

MARIA

(almost defeated)
Why the hell did Dad do this to us?

DAVID

(pained)

Don't start thinking about him...

The air seems to cool at the mention of his name. Behind them, their old TV suddenly switches from "Reality Show" to a CREEPY COMMERCIAL shot in a cheap black-box studio. A MAN IN A BAD WIG smiles at the camera.

BAD WIG MAN

If you plan on satisfying multiple partners tonight, the last thing you want to worry about is blood flow - rise to the occasion with Enduranol, E.D.! From A.G. Pharma --

Sensing something off, Maria turns towards the TV - but the strange commercial has already switched back to "The Reality Show." Still, a bad feeling lingers in the air...

MARIA

It's like I can still feel that sonof-a-bitch in this city sometimes. Like I can smell him in the damn tap water.

DAVID

(gently)

I know...If there was any other place with enough demons to keep Abigail fed...

He lays out the money again, gentle ...

DAVID (CONT'D)

So let's not make things any harder for ourselves than they are already.

(counts it out)

Forty percent for you. Thirty for me. Thirty for the "Magna Grimoire" fund.

David takes both of the "Thirty-Percent" piles and puts them in his jacket pocket, stands to leave.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Love you, sis. I'll be back late.

David exits, leaving Maria alone in her trailer.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

(mocking)

"Magna Grimoire fund..." Don't tell me you still believe his shit about that mystical book.

ON MARIA: LONG WHITE FINGERS gently stroking her hair...

Reveal Abigail, but not the way she looked as the demon fighter. Ruby red lips, longer hair and a sultry, un-accented voice, sitting behind Maria at the table. Abigail looks like Maria would, if Maria were on the cover of "Maxim." (A demonic doppelganger whom only Maria can see and hear - and in this fashion we will bring the internal dialogue between Maria and Abigail to life.) Abigail caresses Maria's hair and shoulders...

MARIA

I do and the next time you lay a finger on my brother, I swear I'll kill you and me both...something I probably should have done a long time ago.

ABIGAIL

The only thing you're funding is his bad habits.

MARIA

Like I trust anything you ever say.

ABIGAIL

(laughs)

You still think saving your pennies for some mystical old spell book, your precious Grimoire, is really gonna get rid of me?

MARIA

I'll do whatever it takes because this relationship isn't working for me. And don't you say anything bad about David. He may be a lot of things but he's not a liar and he's not lying about the Grimoire.

ABIGAIL

Come on, Maria, don't fool yourself. Besides...

Abigail slides a hand between Maria's legs.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

If it wasn't for me, you'd never have any fun at all.

MARIA

(shudders w/pleasure)

Stop it. Please...

But she doesn't push Abigail's hand away...Maria arches her back and GASPS as Abigail presses her fingers down harder and runs her tongue sensuously up Maria's neck...

MARIA (CONT'D)

Oh God, don't stop...

KNOCK KNOCK at the trailer door.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Damn it.

Maria stands up and Abigail vanishes as suddenly as she appeared. Maria quickly buttons her jeans and wipes the sweat from her face and opens the door — revealing a repulsive man in jeans and no shirt: this is CORKY, late 30's.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Hi Corky. New shirt?

CORKY

We gonna do this every month or what? Where's the rent, Abascal?

MARIA

We paid you last week.

CORKY

Is that what your brother told you?

MARIA

(to herself)

Goddamnit, David ...

She pulls the small bit of cash from her pocket.

MARIA (CONT'D)

This is all I got right now. We'll get you the rest soon.

Corky gives her a sleazy grin and steps through her doorway.

CORKY

You know my offer from last month still stands, baby.

Not too hard to guess what <u>that</u> offer was. Maria struggles to keep control of herself, keeping her demon in check...

MARIA

For your own good you should leave now, otherwise you might see a side of me you won't like.

CORKY

You gonna hurt me? Maybe I like that.

Maria starts to tremble, fighting to keep Abigail inside...

MARIA

I'm trying to warn you, creep...

CORKY

(smiles)

Maybe you're into that kink.

But before Maria can transform -- a pair of strong hands suddenly GRABS CORKY'S HAIR FROM BEHIND, reaching in through the open trailer door.

CORKY (CONT'D)

The hell --!

Corky turns to see Bledsoe standing behind him. The Reverend smashes Corky against the trailer door, splintering the flimsy wood. Then tosses him out of the trailer onto the gravel outside.

Dusty rushes over from his wood-saw, concerned. Maria puts a hand up, waving him off - she's got this.

CORKY (CONT'D)

(spitting blood)

You broke my damn nose!

BLEDSOE

Saved your ass, is more like it.

Corky gets the hell out of there, and fast. Bledsoe turns back to Maria, standing in the doorway of her trailer. A gentle rain begins to fall.

BLEDSOE (CONT'D)

Now -- how about that sermon?

INT. "SPUNK SHACK" DIVE BAR - NIGHT

A greasy hand sinks into a paper bowl full of boiled shrimp. Reveal David as he lifts the spicy crustacean to his lips.

We pull back and sitting a few bar-stools down from David sits a middle-aged CHINESE MAN, drinking boiler makers. Pull back further and --

We're in a sleazy Southern shack. Corrugated tin walls, sawdust floor. The air so thick with sweat that you can taste the salt on your lips. Among the crowd, we see a man with the same EBONY CANE we saw at the flea market...and in the corner, a SWAMP METAL BAND fills the bar with sludgy distorted guitar drones. David eyes the old Chinese Man sneezing, when suddenly, a hand dips into David's bowl, grabbing a shrimp. David turns and finds himself staring up into the dark eyes of SWEETMOUTH, a cold-blooded white boy, who thinks he's a black guy with a massive 52 inch chest and a "silver grill" covering his not so pearly whites.

SWEETMOUTH

Mah niggah...Peace be unto you.

DAVID

(nervously)

Sweetmouth...I was just looking for you.

SWEETMOUTH

Always here.

David watches uncomfortably as Sweetmouth begins peeling the shrimp, membrane tearing between his thick fingers...

DAVID

You got anything for me?

SWEETMOUTH

Good feelings ain't free. And you still owe me for the last get go.

Sweetmouth leans closer and presses the peeled shrimp to David's lips. David reluctantly opens his mouth, lets Sweetmouth feed him...and then looks down to see the tip of a Leatherman utility knife pressed against his groin. The Chinese Man sitting nearby remains oblivious.

DAVID

Hey, whoa, easy! I got your money.

David reaches into his pocket and hands him a bundle of cash.

SWEETMOUTH

Not enough.

DAVID

It's all I got. Next time, I --

The Chinese Man SNEEZES LOUDLY and Sweetmouth turns to him.

SWEETMOUTH

Hey, what's wrong witchoo? Damn, cover your mouth...

(and then nicely)

Please.

He turns back to David again. Presses the tip of the blade back into David's thigh.

DAVID

Alright! Okay, just...here, what about this?

David reaches into his pocket again. Pulls out the bejeweld antique hairpin that he stole from the Culland house.

SWEETMOUTH

I look like I'm working for Antique Roadshow? This is a cash or ass business, baby. Same as it ever was.

DAVID

I'm sick, man, please. How bout just a teener, just to give me back a little swagger.

The Chinese Man SNEEZES again and without warning, Sweetmouth turns and punches the man in his face, dropping him to the ground with a thud. The crowd around them pretends not to notice, afraid of incurring Sweetmouth's wrath.

SWEETMOUTH

You believe these f'kaying people? Never cover their damn 'mouf,' coming here hacking avian bird flu or some crap all over this fine land. I swear, these immigrants will kill alla us.

Without missing a beat, Sweetmouth slides his knife up David's thigh, slicing through his jeans, slowly reaching up towards his balls. SWEETMOUTH (CONT'D)

You feel like bleeding? No cheddah, no cheese.

DAVID

Okay...I'll get it for you. I know where I can get the money.

SWEETMOUTH

Alright dawg, then we cool.

(folds up his knife)

Now I gots to go cause my lady

Diversi-Tay's recording her demo
an' she be callin' me all day

long..."I need ya, Sweetmouth. I

needs ya, baby."

(smiles proud of the

(smiles, proud of the grill)

Everybody needs Sweetmouth...

INT. MARIA AND DAVID'S HOME - NIGHT

Bledsoe examines the collection of fetishes and charms that clutter Maria's home.

MARIA

How'd you know where I live?

BLEDSOE

I guess I know a lot of things.

(re: charms)

Do any of these trinkets actually help with your...condition?

MARIA

Chronic bullshit fatigue? Nope, bad as ever.

BLEDSOE

And how about that "wudu, hoodoo, love charm" from this morning? Get you any suitors? Because from the looks of this place I'd say you don't have a man in your life other than your brother.

MARIA

(haunted)

I tried giving love a chance -- just isn't in the cards for me.

She shakes off the dark memory, turns back to Bledsoe.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Not that it's any business of yours, padre. Look, you aren't the first holy roller to catch wind of some wild rumor about the spooky flea market witch. I'll let you brag to your bible buddies that you were the first one I ever offered a root beer, but only if you keep your spiel short and sweet.

She places two cans of soda onto the table.

BLEDSOE

Fair enough. I have a job for you.

MARIA

Told you this morning, twenty bucks a reading. Except now it'll cost you fifty, after-hours and all.

BLEDSOE

This job is for her.

(smiles)

A girl has to eat, isn't that right? Abigail has to eat.

She lunges across the table, pins him against the wall -- IRISES RED, HALFWAY TO THE DEMON ABIGAIL and says real hard.

MARIA

How do you know about her?

BLEDSOE

(stays cool)

I know all about you, Maria.

MARIA

(right back, even harder)
What do you know..? Huh? What?

BLEDSOE

(pulls back)

I know your brother's been asking around about some make-believe "Magna Grimoire" to help exorcise your own demon. And I know that book is nothing more than a damn hoax.

MARIA

(threatening)

Blow me, preacher man.

BLEDSOE

Your daddy teach you to talk like that?

Maria bristles at the mention of her father.

MARIA

My daddy was a degenerate drunk and that's all you need to know.

BLEDSOE

Come on, now. We both know that isn't true.

He reaches into his jacket and pulls out a pendant: A BLACK METAL STAR WITH A GLASS EYE SET INTO ITS CENTER. Maria pauses at the sight of it - the Black Star reflected in her eyes.

BLEDSOE (CONT'D)

Enos Abascal was something much, much worse.

ENOS (O.C.)

Easy, princess...

QUICK FLASHES:

EIGHTEEN YEAR OLD MARIA struggling against the shadowy shapes of several strong women.

A face like granite stares down at us, a face we will never forget -- THE FACE OF HER FATHER, ENOS ABASCAL. He looks familiar and that's because he's the man from the strange 'Enduranol commercial,' but without the bad wig. Enos places a hand over young Maria's mouth.

ENOS (CONT'D)

It will only make it harder if you fight it.

Maria bites his hand. It pulls away from her mouth and we see that ITS PALM IS TATTOOED WITH THE SAME BLACK STAR ONLY THIS ONE HAS A REAL LIVING EYE STARING UP AT US FROM THE MIDDLE.

ENOS (CONT'D)

Begin the ritual ...

THE GIRL SCREAMS AS THE ONE-EYED HAND PRESSES DOWN ON US, PLUNGING THE SCREEN INTO DARKNESS...

ACT III

EXT. FEDERAL-STYLE MANSION - NIGHT

Through the falling rain, we recognize this as the house across the street from the Cullands. The house whose owners David watched leave in a towncar earlier today...

We find David at the back door. Jimmying two bent paperclips into the lock until it pops open with a satisfying click.

INT. FEDERAL-STYLE MANSION - MOMENTS LATER

David finds himself standing in an opulent living room. He grabs a large pillow off the lavish couch and removes the pillow case - an improvised burglar's sack.

He begins moving through the dark and empty house, tossing anything that looks valuable into the pillow case.

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)

"...the homosexual conspiracy will tell you that anything goes..."

INT/EXT. BLEDSOE'S CAR - TRAVELING - NIGHT

A radio sermon CRACKLES up from the cheap stereo, barely audible under the sound of pounding rain.

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)
"...but the Bible tells us it's an express ticket to the furnaces of hell!"

Maria sits in the passenger seat, listening. The RADIO VOICE sounds familiar...could it be the same as the announcer from the Enduranol commercial, the voice of Enos? Troubled, Maria switches off the radio - then gazes down at the "Seeing Star" pendant in her hand.

MARIA

(re: "Seeing Star")
Where did you get this?

He hesitates before answering.

BLEDSOE

I was there. When the police raided your father's compound.

Maria turns to him, eyes burning with rage.

BLEDSOE (CONT'D)

Believe me, it wasn't supposed to be a --

MARIA

A massacre?

QUICK FLASHES:

Flames roaring -- people screaming as their flesh blackens.

BACK TO:

MARIA (CONT'D)

Me and my brother were the only two people to make it out of there alive! I watched two hundred of our family burn.

BLEDSOE

The House of Everlasting wasn't a family, it was a doomsday cult.

QUICK FLASHES:

Enos stands at the head of his flock of FOLLOWERS in a dark hall lit by candles. Addressing the crowd.

ENOS

My gorgeous chosen people! This is the beginning of <u>our</u> time!

A Young Maria screams as more and more hands hold her down.

ENOS (CONT'D)

Aren't you happy, princess? You get to be the first.

BACK TO:

INT/EXT. BLEDSOE'S CAR - SAME

BLEDSOE

And if it wasn't for that raid there would have been more of you. But you're special and you took that curse and turned it into a gift.

(beat)

Water into wine.

MARIA

Spare me the idiotic hyperbole. I didn't want this "gift," I just want a normal life and I want my demon out of me.

BLEDSOE

Could be I can help you with that. But first you need to do something for me.

That gets Maria's attention.

BLEDSOE (CONT'D)
This job I have for you...
(pained)
It's my daughter...

Maria looks up to see where they've just arrived: THE CHATHAM COUNTY PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL.

INT. FEDERAL-STYLE MANSION - NIGHT

David rummages through an antique cabinet, checking drawers for valuables.

STRANGER'S POV:

Watching David from the upstairs landing as he pilfers his way through the living room. Unaware that he's being watched, and not alone in this house.

INT. STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Maria spits into her beat up old flip-phone as she follows Bledsoe down a long drab hallway -- the wild SOBBING and LAUGHTER of unseen patients echoing down the corridor.

MARIA

(leaving a message)
Goddamn you, David - answer your
phone! We got a job at the Chatham
bughouse, I need your ass here. And
sober too, if that ain't asking too
much.

INT. FEDERAL-STYLE MANSION - NIGHT

David finds an old wooden jewelry box, opens the lid to find a silver necklace.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
My parents bought me that for my eleventh birthday. It's junk.

David startles and spins around, dropping the necklace to the ground. A nineteen year old girl in a chiffon floral dress lounges on the stairway. Blonde, beautiful and broken. A half-empty bottle of expensive cognac dangling from her porcelain fingertips. This is CHARLOTTE.

David stares like a deer in headlights as she takes a slug of cognac and rises to her feet. Smiles at him.

CHARLOTTE

Come on. They keep all the expensive stuff upstairs.

David moves to follow her, enchanted, when he feels a BUZZ in his pocket. Pulls out his cellphone to see FIVE MISSED CALLS.

INT. STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL - COMMON ROOM

MENTAL PATIENTS AND THEIR LOVED ONES sit together at tables spaced throughout the long cheerless room. Maria lingers in the doorway, watching a PARANOIAC scream obscenities at his family...a DELUSIONAL CASE whisper secrets to his dolls...A WILD-EYED WOMAN plays a silent requiem on an invisible piano...every strain of pain and loss imaginable weighs heavy on these faces.

Bledsoe turns - Maria still hasn't set foot into the room.

BLEDSOE

Maria?

MARIA

It's been too long since Abigail's eaten. Makes her hard to control. Bringing her into a room full of ripe tortured souls like this is like walking a wolf through a butcher shop.

BLEDSOE

God gave us free will for a reason. You control what's inside you.

MARIA

Took a long time, Rev.

Bledsoe turns and walks into the room and we hear Abigail's off-screen voice...

ABIGAIL (O.C.)

He's hot. I always get a little tingly when I'm around priests.

MARIA

(between her teeth) Shut up.

INT. STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL - ISOLATION WING - MOMENTS LATER

Maria and Bledsoe arrive outside the door to a private holding room. Bledsoe pauses, his hand on the door.

BLEDSOE

The fire that took your father's compound incinerated almost everyone. You and David weren't the only survivors. There was another.

P.O.V - SOMEONE WATCHING

As he pushes open the door and they enter a small room. The door closes behind them.

INT. SMALL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

We see a single bed — in which lies a serene-looking 22 year old WOMAN, completely sedated beneath a forest of drips and tubes. Her eyes shut in a chemically-induced coma. As we get closer we see how very extraordinarily beautiful she is — her skin, an almost Mocha color and Maria's eyes go wide as she recognizes the girl...

MARTA

Robin...? Robin, do you remember me? It's Maria, from Everlasting...

But Robin can't even hear her through the sedatives.

BLEDSOE

We found her hiding under a pile of sixteen other bodies. The flames never reached her there. But the trauma of the fire awakened something inside of my daughter...a demon that had been slumbering inside her since she was just a little girl. Ever since her mother...

His voice breaks off. He gently strokes Robin's hair, his eyes moist with pain.

BLEDSOE (CONT'D)

...my poor Robin...

He gently pulls the intravenous needles from Robin's arms.

BLEDSOE (CONT'D)

It won't take long for the sedatives to wear off.

Maria stares at the girl with pity as Bledsoe backs away towards the door.

BLEDSOE (CONT'D)

Be careful with her, Maria. She's all I have left.

Bledsoe slams the door shut behind him, locking Maria inside the room.

MARTA

Hey! What do you think you're doing? Open the door!

She tries to open the door, bangs her fist against its reinforced glass window.

ON ROBIN -- her eyes still shut as thin tendrils of BLACK SMOKE begin curling up from her nostrils...

ROBIN

(as if waking from dream)
...mmm...is that you mommy..?

Maria slowly turns to see Robin sitting up in bed. The girl opens her eyes, which BURN LIKE MOLTEN ROCK. Ash and embers dripping down her cheeks like tears from Hell. Her voice takes on the eerie tone of UKOBACH, the demon inside her.

ROBIN/UKOBACH

You're not mommy. You're dinner.

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT

David bursts through the doors and rushes past the front desk, calling out his sister's name.

DAVID

Maria!

The CLEFT-LIPPED RECEPTIONIST rises from his perch.

RECEPTIONIST

Hey, you gotta sign in!

David pushes past him, rushing down the hallway, calling out:

DAVID

Maria! You in here?

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL - ROBIN'S ROOM - SAME TIME

WHAM! Abigail SLAMS back against the door before dropping to the ground. She shakes off the blow, a bit stunned...not used to getting thrown around like that.

ROBIN/UKOBACH

Where's mommy?

Robin/Ukobach stands over her, the heat from her body making the air shimmer around her like a mirage.

ROBIN/UKOBACH (CONT'D)

When's mommy coming home?

ABIGAIL

Ukobach, you old devil...haven't seen you in a few hundred years. Don't you think it's time you outgrow the baby talk shtick?

Abigail leaps at Robin/Ukobach. Their fight is terrifying: picture the frightening bodily distortions seen in *The Exorcist* or *The Last Exorcism* — now imagine those abilities used in a no-holds-barred brawl.

The demons allow their host bodies to unnaturally stretch, bend and break as they exchange blows -- causing only temporary damage to Maria and Robin. Robin/Ukobach grabs Abigail by the neck, gazes deeply into her eyes as if searching her very soul.

ROBIN/UKOBACH

Maria...

ABIGAIL

(ala "The Shining")

Maria's not here right now, Missus Torrance...

ROBIN/UKOBACH

Maria's mommy left too...

ABIGAIL

Her mother died in a car accident, you prying bitch.

ROBIN/UKOBACH

(laughing)

No...not an accident ...

QUICK FLASHES:

Close on a shard of mirror piercing a pulsing blue vein. Droplets of crimson spattering onto pure white sand, then washed away by the churning tide --

BACK TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY OUTSIDE ROBIN'S ROOM

Bledsoe watches through the window -- David suddenly grabs him by his collar, slams him up against the door.

DAVID

You're that goddamn cross-peddler from the flea market! Unlock the door, that's my sister in there!

BLEDSOE

(violently pushes him off)
Not now, it isn't.

DAVID

(desperate)

She needs me.

BLEDSOE

(eyes him)

Just calm down, tough guy and trust me.

ROBIN'S ROOM

Bledsoe and David watch helplessly through the window as Robin/Ukobach gains the upper hand, slamming Abigail around the room like a rag doll.

ROBIN/UKOBACH

Not an accident at all ...

ABIGAIL

(between blows)

Shut up...it would kill Maria if she knew the truth about her...

ROBIN/UKOBACH

And me.

ABIGAIL

What the hell are you talking about now?

ROBIN/UKOBACH

(beat, smiles)

Poor Abigail. Trying to protect Maria. You've been living in this world too long. It's made you soft.

ABIGAIL

I'll remember that when I'm picking you out of my teeth.

ROBIN/UKOBACH

(smiles)

Arrogant until the end. I'll never understand why Enos chose you as his first.

Robin/Ukobach grabs Abigail by her hair, bending her neck back for the kill.

DAVID (O.C.)

Maria!

Abigail can see David banging against the glass, caring about nothing right now except for his sister's life.

ROBIN/UKOBACH

Time for you to go meet mommy now.

Robin/Ukobach spreads her jaws for the kill, the inside of her mouth smoldering like the heart of a volcano...

And in that split-second moment, Abigail plunges her hand down Robin/Ukobach's wide open throat and <u>rips the struggling DEMON out from her body</u>. Not black and shadowy like Varyn, THIS DEVIL RIPPLES AND RADIATES LIKE FIRE as Abigail holds it tight between her fists.

ABIGAIL

I never could stand all that babytalk crap.

Demon blood the color of magma splatters the walls as she rips the devil to pieces. A wild animal devouring its prey. Robin's body now lying unconscious on the floor beside her.

Abigail finishes feeding and falls to her hands and knees, satisfied and exhausted, hair hanging down over her face.

Bledsoe produces a key, unlocks the door and rushes into the room, followed by David. Bledsoe runs straight for his daughter, while David rushes to his sister.

DAVID

Maria!

Maria spins around -- <u>still wearing the face of Abigail</u>. The demon lunges for Bledsoe, pinning him against the wall. She grinds her body against him with a lusty grin, oozing sex...

ABIGAIL

Oh forgive me, father, for the things I'd like to do to you...

Abigail breathes heavily -- aroused, but also struggling to keep command of Maria's body. Her eyes flickering between human and demon, face morphing between the two as Maria fights to regain control...holding on just long enough to cry out for her brother --

MARIA

David, stop her...!

David runs to her, but Abigail shakes Maria away again, her face settling back into its demonic guise.

DAVID

Back off, Abigail! Feeding time's over, now hand the reins back to Maria.

ABIGAIL

A girl can't live on bread alone.
Just one kiss from the priest and
Maria's all yours.

(MORE)

ABIGAIL (CONT'D) (flicks her tongue) With feeling...

Abigail presses her greedy lips against his, stealing her forbidden kiss.

DAVID

Maria!

David grabs Abigail with all his strength, pulls her off of the stunned Bledsoe - who now finds himself staring at Maria again, all traces of the demon gone...innocently blinking awake as if from a deep sleep.

MARIA

(groggy)
...Bledsoe?

Maria realizes how close she's standing to the rattled priest, and as usual she's left to deal with the consequences of Abigail's actions. Maria shoves Bledsoe away from her.

MARIA (CONT'D)

How bout a little personal space? (to David, vulnerable)

David!

DAVID

I've got you. It's okay now, sis.

David puts a comforting arm around her, letting her lean on him, helping her stand.

MARIA

...Where were you?

DAVID

I'm here now.

ROBIN

(blinking awake, distant)

...Maria...?

Bledsoe rushes to his daughter, kneels down and takes her in his arms. His face flush with emotion. But Robin just keeps staring up at Maria, as if her father isn't even there...

END OF ACT IV

ACT V

EXT. TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

The rain has stopped. Maria and David trudge from their truck to their trailer, the day weighing heavy on their shoulders.

DAVID

Come on, sis. I'll make you something to eat.

He heads inside, but Maria pauses at the front door -- which is now back on its hinges, good as new. A fresh piece of pine wood where the old one had been splintered.

She turns and walks down the path to the trailer two doors over, and knocks. A moment later, Dusty opens the door, standing there in a faded T-shirt and jeans. Smiles when he sees her.

MARIA

You fix my door, Dusty?

DUSTY

Had the right tools...and maybe one of these days I'll have the right ones to fix Corky too.

MARIA

(smiles)

Thanks, but I can take care of him myself.

DUSTY

(beat, almost awkward)
You, uh...you wanna come in?

Maria takes a beat. Attracted, but still afraid of letting anyone get close enough to truly see what's inside her...afraid that he'll just wind up getting hurt too.

MARIA

I'd like to, but I don't think it's a good idea.

She smiles as she turns and walks back towards her trailer. Maybe there are some good people left in this town after all...

INT. MARIA AND DAVID'S TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Maria enters to find a fresh plate of fried eggs waiting on the TV dinner tray and David grabbing his jacket on his way towards the door.

MARIA

Where are you going?

DAVID

You got your fix tonight, Maria... (beat)

And...I got a date.

MARIA

(eyes him suspiciously)

You sure?

DAVID

(quickly)

Yeah, like I said.

MARIA

Stay tonight. Please?

He kisses her on the top of the head on his way out the door.

DAVID

(as he exits)

Least it stopped raining, right?

And with that, he takes out his harmonica, blows a few notes of a "blues tune," and he's gone, leaving Maria alone in the trailer. She sinks back into the couch. Exhausted to the bone. Alone now, she reaches into her wallet and unfolds an old worn photograph of a handsome man, with just the ghost of a smile. (While we don't know it yet, we will learn that this is SPENCER...the love of her life.)

ABIGAIL (O.C.)

Stop torturing yourself. The past is the past - you learn to accept it after a few thousand years.

We SEE Abigail curled up beside her, tired and fed.

MARIA

I loved him and I'll never forgive you for that.

(tears)

You broke my damn heart. Now get the hell out of here.

Abigail closes her eyes and lays her head down on Maria's lap. But Maria still looks troubled, as if trying to remember something hazy but important...

MARIA (CONT'D)

Abigail? Did Robin...did her demon say anything to you? Something about my mom?

ABIGAIL

(beat)

Not a thing.

Maria lets her eyes fall shut. And for just a moment, it's almost peaceful.

BLEDSOE (O.C.)

You left before I could thank you.

Maria startles up, sees Bledsoe standing inside her doorway.

MARIA

Jesus Christ - you don't <u>ever</u> sneak up on a possessed girl like that!

BLEDSOE

Robin says hello, Maria. It's the first thing she's said in a very, very long time.

MARIA

She was asking for her mother... (beat)

Who was she?

BLEDSOE

(beat)

I'm ashamed to say.

(says softly)

Robin's mother was a one night stand.

MARIA

(wryly)

So, the devil made you do it. You hypocrites are all the same.

BLEDSOE

I haven't always been a man of God.

MARTA

Save it for confession. I helped your girl, now what about your half of the deal? You said you could help me get rid of Abigail.

BLEDSOE

You really want to get rid of your demon? The only way that's going happen is by facing the man who put her there.

MARIA

My daddy died in that fire. And if there is a God, then I hope He damned his soul straight to Hell.

BLEDSOE

That was God's mistake, I'm afraid. You see, sending a soul like Enos to Hell is just like sending a thief to prison. He'll only come back a better thief.

MARIA

What do you mean "come back?"

BLEDSOE

I know that you can feel it. The darkness taking over this city. You came back to Savannah to feed Abigail on its demons...well now - who do you think is letting all those demons out?

(beat)

Enos is back. I promise you. Back from the depths of Hell -- and this time, his spirit could be inside anybody, wearing any face he chooses.

(beat)

You'll never know where he is.

Off Maria, the blood turning to ice in her veins...

INT. CHARLOTTE'S CAR - NIGHT

P.O.V - SOMEONE WATCHING

And the CAMERA moves toward the driver's side window until we see --

Inside - David and Charlotte sprawled across the backseat of her sporty BMW. Silk scarves tied above their elbows as they slip needles into each other's arms...

INT. CULLAND HOME - JEREMY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Brenda watches helplessly as Tory kicks Jeremy to the ground.

JEREMY

...Please stop hitting me, please stop hitting me...

BRENDA

Tory, don't --!

Tory's fists rain down on the cowering, defenseless child.

TORY

Are you ready to behave again now, you little maggot?

Tory turns and storms out the door, dragging Brenda along with him. We stay with Jeremy as he lies curled on the floor...

A familiar BLACK MOSQUITO drifts through his open window, lands on his cheek...slips its needle-tipped mouth under his skin...

Jeremy opens his eyes - NOW GLEAMING DEMON RED.

EXT. SAVANNAH RIVER FRONT - NIGHT

Maria walks alone along the river. Her face weary from the weight of her new burden. The pale lights of shipping barges beckoning through the fog like will-o-the-wisps as Bledsoe's words echo through her head.

BLEDSOE (O.C.)

Savannah is one big graveyard -don't have to travel too far south
to get to Hell from here. We're
coming on dark days, Maria. What
the old books call End Times.

She stares out over the river and as the fog begins to lift we see the opposite bank...

And there, lined straight along the other side of the river, STAND TWO HUNDRED SHADOWS staring right back at her... Enos' army of demons.

BLEDSOE (O.C.) (CONT'D) And it's up to you to stop it.

As Maria's eyes go wide with terror, we --

CUT TO:

P.O.V - SOMEONE WATCHING

Maria -- as she remains standing on the river bank, the shadows in the background -- until Maria and the shadows slowly disappear as the fog rolls back in.

FADE TO:

BLACK