

"EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW"

by

Robert Skotte

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rob@whackthetale.com

FADE IN:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

A Chevy Suburban cuts through pouring rain. Two canoes secured to its luggage rack. A well-used Buick Roadmaster follows suit.

The highway almost deserted, only a couple of eighteen wheelers pass by. Hills, sprouting tall fir trees, enclose the road on both sides.

INT. SUBURBAN

The rain hammers against the windshield, the wipers working overtime. Soft music fills the car.

FINGERS

tap the steering wheel to the music, the rhythm's off a bit.

BRAD ANDERSON (40's) sits behind the wheel. He is a tad overweight, clean shaven and wears glasses.

His brown and black flannel shirt looks brand new. He move his shoulders around in discomfort.

Next to him, HELEN ANDERSON (40's), attractive in a down-to-Earth way, smiles.

HELEN

Problems with the shirt?

BRAD

Didn't think it was gonna feel like this.

HELEN

Feel like what?

BRAD

Like...you know.

HELEN

Like not Armani?

Brad shoots a glance at her. Helen chuckles.

HELEN

What?

Brad turns his attention back to the highway. He squints his eyes. The rain obscures most of the road in front of him.

He checks the rearview mirror.

BRAD
What's she doing?

Behind them sits DANIELLE ANDERSON (17), a looker. She types away on a BlackBerry while listening to her iPod. Her expression focused, completely absorbed.

HELEN
I think it involves --
(dramatic)
-- a boy.

Brad grunts.

HELEN
Or several.

BRAD
Hey!

EXT. HIGHWAY

The cars continue along the highway. They pass a sign that reads: "HOLLOW POINT, 6 MILES".

INT. ROADMASTER

A Little Tree dangles from the rearview mirror. Rock music booms from the speakers.

SEAN ANDERSON (30's), ruggedly handsome and casually dressed, bobs his head to the music. An empty passenger seat next to him.

Sean sings along to the tune.

BOY (O.S.)
Dad.

He continues singing.

BOY (O.S.)
Yo, dad!

Sean stops singing and turns the volume down.

Behind him, dressed in a RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE T-shirt and sprawled out across the back seat, lies LUCAS ANDERSON (16). A weathered copy of a novel rests on his chest.

SEAN
What?

LUCAS
You sound like a dork when you sing.

Sean chuckles.

SEAN
A dork?

LUCAS
Uh-huh.

SEAN
And I thought I was gonna be the next American idol. What a gyp.

LUCAS
Dream on. Simon Cowell would totally booh you.

SEAN
Yeah well, Simon Cowell can kiss my --

Lucas looks up.

SEAN
-- keester.

Sean's cellphone rings. He checks the display, it says: "BRAD". He puts it on speaker.

SEAN
Breaker, breaker, Papa Duck. What's your twenty, over?

Lucas rolls his eyes.

BRAD (O.S.)
(filtered)
It's Rubber Duck. Not Papa Duck, Sean.

SEAN
Right.

BRAD (O.S.)
Listen, we're starving up here and
this...uh Hollow...something is just a
couple of miles up ahead. What do you
say?

SEAN
(to Lucas)
You hungry?

LUCAS
Fuck, yeah.

SEAN
Hey, watch the tongue.

Lucas sighs in a way only a teenager can.

SEAN
(to Brad)
We're hungry.

BRAD (O.S.)
Alright, follow my lead.

SEAN
Right behind you.

EXT. HIGHWAY

They get on an off-ramp and leave the highway behind.

EXT. HOLLOW POINT

The cars bump along a wet gravel road plastered with potholes of various size.

A few buildings appear in the horizon just as the sun breaks through the clouds. A rainbow forms over the small town.

The cars get on a semi-paved road that leads straight into

HOLLOW POINT

About two dozen small, more or less run down buildings, make up this little community.

Blinds turn and curtains close as the cars pass the buildings.

An older couple stops as the cars approach. The rollators in front of them appear as ragged and dirty as their clothes.

They stare as if in a trance as Brad's SUV rolls up. Brad sticks his head out of the window.

BRAD
Hi there. Is there a diner around here?

The old and wrinkled man opens his mouth and reveals a set of decaying teeth.

The man simply stands there with his mouth open. Saliva drips from his lips. He rocks back and forth. His eyes twitch.

BRAD
Oh-kay.

The nearly bald woman, her face turned away from Brad, tugs the man's sleeve.

The couple turns and walks away.

INT. SUBURBAN

Brad turns to Helen. They stare at each other.

BRAD
What the hell was that?

Helen burst out into laughter. Brad follows suit.

DANIELLE
What?

EXT. DINER

Large snow filled mountains serve as background for the two cars parked in a small lot next to a diner.

The face of the diner could use a paint job. What little remains of the original paint is faded and smeared.

The families exit the vehicles.

LUCAS
Talk about the middle of nowhere.

An "OPEN" sign dangles behind the spotted glass door entrance. Sean pushes it open.

INT. DINER

The inside of the diner looks just as worn as its outside. Dirty floors, crumbling wallpaper and not a person in sight.

HELEN

Maybe we should find another place.

BRAD

The nearest town is over twenty miles away. I'm hungry.

SEAN

Me too.

The party proceeds toward a grease stained counter. Sean taps the reception bell, it lets out a hollow DING.

They wait. Nothing happens. Sean taps it again.

SEAN

Hello?

Still nothing.

LUCAS

This sucks. Can't we just like go to a McDonald's or something?

SEAN

Looks like we have --

The swing doors to the kitchen burst open and GUNTHER (30's), a mountain of a man, enters.

SEAN

Whoa.

Fat yet muscular, he wears a stained apron that was once white. The man towers over the counter. His short black hair oily and unkept.

GUNTHER

Yes?

The Andersons stare at the giant.

GUNTHER

Yes?

BRAD

Uh...we would like something to eat.

GUNTHER
We be closed.

BRAD
Oh, it's just that the sign says
'open'.

GUNTHER
Nots' from where I sees.

Brad turns. The back of the sign at the door says "CLOSED".

BRAD
Yeah, that's because you're seeing it
from the wrong --

GUNTHER
I be what?

Brad swallows.

SEAN
Look, you're open or what?

The kitchen doors swing open again and EARL (50's), a stocky man with a harelip, slithers in. A long vertical scar dons his wrinkled face.

EARL
Boy, I be telling you. You don't talks
to peoples.

GUNTHER
Pa?

EARL
Get, boy. You got chores. Your brother
need helps.

Sean and Brad exchange glances. The giant bows his head and trots into the kitchen. Earl smiles.

EARL
Sorry 'bout that, folks.
(taps his forehead)
He ain't all there. So, what can I's
get you fine looking folkses'.

BRAD
Something to eat would be nice.

EARL

Yous' came to the right place then.
We's got the bestes' burger in towns.
Only a dollar twenty-fives.

DANIELLE

You don't have like a salad or
something?

EARL

I's could probably throw together some
lettuce.

HELEN

Me too.

EARL

Three burgers and two plates of sprout
com'n up.

The two families cram into a booth. Brad looks over to Danielle who still types away on the BlackBerry.

BRAD

Can I have it back now?

DANIELLE

Come on, dad. Kevin is --

BRAD

Now.

Danielle rolls her eyes.

DANIELLE

Whatever.

She pushes it across the table. Brad puts it in his shirt pocket.

BRAD

Kevin can wait. Table manners can't.

Danielle folds her arms, leans back and mopes.

HELEN

Why don't you read a book once in a
while, like your cousin.

Lucas, nose buried in his book, looks up.

LUCAS

What did I do?

Danielle gets up.

DANIELLE
I need to use the restroom.

She bumps into Lucas on her way.

LUCAS
Hey.

DANIELLE
Teacher's pet.

LUCAS
Blow me.

SEAN
Enough.

She disappear through a door with a man and woman DOT pictogram on it.

Earl arrives with the food.

EARL
Whens' thou sittest to eats with a ruler, consider dil'gently whats are before thees'.

LUCAS
And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite.

Sean looks at his son.

LUCAS
What? It's just the Proverbs, dad.

SEAN
Pretty impressive.

Lucas shrugs.

LUCAS
Whatever.

EARL
Enjoys'.

He returns to the kitchen. Sean sniffs the large steaming burger on his plate.

SEAN

I hate to say it but this looks pretty delicious.

Lucas takes a big bite. Ketchup and mustard drips from his mouth.

LUCAS

Aw man, that's awesome.

The four of them dig in.

SEAN

I can't wait to get up to the cabin and get those rods out. There's a thirty pound trout up there with my name all over it.

BRAD

In your dreams, little brother. You'd be lucky if you catch a two pound bass.

LUCAS

I stand corrected, dad, you're not a dork.

SEAN

Told you.

LUCAS

You and uncle Brad, you're both total geeks.

Helen grins.

BRAD

Look who's talking, bible-boy.

Brad looks to the restroom door, turns to Helen.

BRAD

You wanna go see what's taking her so long?

HELEN

Alright.

Helen gets up, heads for the restroom.

BRAD

If she's smoking again, I wanna know about it, Helen.

STAIRCASE

The door closes behind Helen. She proceeds along a short narrow corridor that ends in a set of dimly lit stairs. The stairs lead downward.

Helen squints her eyes.

HELEN

Dani?

No response. She descend the stairs.

DINER

Brad takes a big bite on his burger, chews it around. Stops. He puts two fingers in his mouth and pulls out a flat thumb-sized object.

He turns it over, studies it.

BRAD

'The hell?

It is a nail. A whole human nail.

Brad drops his burger and spits a mouthful of chewed food out on his plate.

SEAN

Whoa, the manners on you.

Sean sees the nail too. He drops his own burger, turns to Lucas. His eyes widen.

LUCAS

What?

Thick strands of long black hair hang from Lucas' mouth like gooey cheese.

Lucas looks down, spots the hair. He drops his burger, coughs and vomits at the same time.

The three of them stare at each other.

SEAN

What the hell is going on here?

He gets up, walks toward the kitchen door, Brad right behind him. Lucas motions to follow but Brad waves him back.

BASEMENT

Helen tiptoes along a narrow passage. She sidesteps small pools of water on the soggy ground, careful not to touch the mold and mildew covered walls.

The passage splits in two, a misspelled hand drawn sign that says "TIOLET" points to the right. Helen follows the passage.

KITCHEN

Sean punches the door open. The small kitchen fumes. Meat sizzles on cast-iron pans, water boils in casseroles.

A large deep red, almost purple, chunk of raw meat - a liver - rests on a chopping block, next to a half-chopped onion.

An old fashion meat grinder secured to the kitchen table, wisps of meat hangs from its nozzle.

No Earl. No Gunther.

Sean steps inside. Brad follows, cautious steps. He looks around. Sean barges forward.

SEAN
Hey, old man?

BRAD
Let's just get out of here. Hit the road.

SEAN
Hang on.

BRAD
I don't like this, Sean.

SEAN
Would you man up.

The door to the pantry shrieks open. Earl stands in the doorway, a SEVERED HUMAN ARM in his hands. He looks up.

The brothers freeze, their jaws drop.

EARL
Yous ain't supposed to be here. 'Tis off limits.

Brad backs away, right into a row of shelves. A jar wobbles off and shatters against the floor. A murky liquid spills out and small sphere-shaped objects roll across the floor.

BRAD
Boy, don't be making messes in my kitchen.

Brad looks down. EYEBALLS stare back at him.

BRAD
Jesus.

Earl's eyes dart from Sean to Brad to the large chopping knife on the table. He goes for it.

Sean leaps forward, tackles Earl in the chest. The two men crash into the table. Pots and pans CLANG against the wet floor.

EARL
Gunther! Hank!

Sean slams his fist into Earl's face. The old man staggers back, holding his bleeding nose. Sean grabs the knife, holds it out in front of him.

SEAN
Back up.
(over his shoulder)
You alright?

Brad stares in disbelief.

BRAD
What is this place?

BASEMENT

Helen looks up, the commotion upstairs startles her. She slips, twists her ankle and falls against the wall.

A section of the wall GLIDES inward. A door, its hinges buried below crusted mildew.

The door opens wide into a storage. Helen covers her mouth and nose, almost regurgitates.

RATS squeal across the floor but Helen doesn't notice. Her petrified eyes fixed on the gruesome vista in front of her.

Fourteen carved up HUMAN BODIES hang from meat hooks, like slaughtered cattle, drained of blood.

A HAND

comes up behind her, grabs her shoulder.

Helen jumps, lets out a scream. She spins around.

DANIELLE

Mom?

Helen catches her breath.

HELEN

Christ, you scared me.

She embraces her daughter, hugs her tight.

DANIELLE

Mom, what is it?

Danielle sees the bodies. Her expression changes.

KITCHEN

Earl removes his hand from his face, spits out broken teeth, they hit the floor like pennies.

He looks up at Sean, fury in his eyes.

EARL

Them's my good tooth.

SEAN

You just stay right there, old timer.

Earl jumps with the speed of youth, Sean doesn't react in time. The old man claws at Sean's face. They tumble to the ground, Earl hisses.

Sean blocks and punches Earl but the old man fights on in a violent rage. Sean yelps as Earl bites down hard on his shoulder, tearing out flesh and fabric.

Sean brings the large knife around, slices Earl across the thigh. Earl grabs the wound, blood oozes through his fingers.

Sean eyes the chance and kicks Earl off him.

Brad runs to his brother and helps him to his feet. Sean winces in pain, blood soaks his shirt.

Panting like a winded boxer, Earl leans against the wall.

EARL
I'ma get Gunther.

SEAN
Shut the fuck up.

He knees Earl in the groin, shoves him into the pantry and slams the door shut.

Earl pounds the door from the other side.

EARL (O.S.)
(muffled)
Gunther! Daddy needs you, boy! Daddy hurts! Hank!

Sean looks at the carnage on the floor, eyeballs and severed limbs. He grabs his wounded shoulder, catches his breath.

SEAN
We're leaving.

Brad walks nearer to the kitchen table, peeks at the salt and pepper sprinkled liver on the chopping block.

BRAD
Is that...?

SEAN
Yeah, I think it is.

Brad brings a hand up to his mouth.

BRAD
Was that even beef we ate?

The two brothers exchange glances. Brad vomits.

LUCAS (O.S.)
Dad!

BASEMENT

Helen pulls Danielle along the passage. They reach the corner and

WHAM

runs straight into HANK (30's).

Though a smaller version of Gunther, Hank still towers over them in his all black outfit.

His sunken face twisted and lumped, a menacing look in his eyes. An even more menacing CLEAVER in his hand.

DINER

Sean and Brad burst through the doors. Lucas retreats as he sees his farther's bloody shirt.

LUCAS
The hell happened to you?

SEAN
Forget about it. We're getting out of here. Where' the others?

LUCAS
Look.

He points to the stained windows.

Outside, about thirty people - men and women - surround the diner. They don't move, they all just stand there, observing the three of them.

SEAN
Fuck me.

They hear Helen's muffled SCREAM.

BASEMENT

Hank grabs Helen by the hair, pulls her close. She pushes his deformed face away. Hanks grip tightens around her neck. Helen gasps for air.

Danielle retreats to the wall, tears stream down her cheeks.

HELEN
(strained)
R...un.

Hank swings the cleaver, Helen blocks it with her bare arm. The blade slices through the flesh, splinters the bone. Helen screams.

Her nearly-severed arm dangles around, held in place by only a thread of meat. Blood spurts from exposed veins. It showers the ground.

DANIELLE
Mom!

Hank rips off the dangling limb, tosses it at Danielle. It strikes her across the face, smears her in blood. She falls to the ground unconscious.

Helen looks on in terror as Hank grabs her wounded arm and sticks the stump in his mouth. He sucks it hard, blood gushes from the corner of his mouth.

His eyes flare up.

He pulls the stump from his mouth. With his foot he spreads Helen's legs wide apart, slams her hard against the wall.

The cleaver swings and smites Helen between the legs, blade first.

Her eyes pop open.

Hank jerks the blade back and forth. Helen's body trembles.

He lets go of her. She slides down the wall to a sitting position. Hank brings up the blade to his mouth, licks it clean.

He tilts his head, observes Helen. A pool of blood grows between her legs. Her head rests on her chest.

With an almost disappointed expression he rams the cleaver into her skull.

The impact makes a wet and crunchy sound.

He plants his foot on her shoulder as leverage and yanks the cleaver out. The top of her head pops off along with it.

Hank steadies himself and swings again.

WHACK

Brad rams him. Hank and the cleaver slide across the floor. He looks up just as Sean kicks him in the face.

Brad kneels beside Helen's limp body.

BRAD

No. No. Oh, God. Helen...

His voice breaks as tears burst from his eyes. He takes his wife's lifeless hand in his and caresses it gently.

Lucas looks away, covers his mouth.

Sean stomps on Hank's bloated face. Again and again.

SEAN
You fucking freak!

Hank's left eye pops out, his skull cracks. A thick grey substance squirts from his ear, blood from his torn face.

Sean stops, out of breath.

Lucas gently taps Danielle on the cheek. She comes around, recoils in fear.

LUCAS
It's okay. It's me. Lucas.

She sits up.

DANIELLE
Mom? Where's --

LUCAS
Don't look.

KITCHEN

Gunther pulls the pantry door open. Earl stares at him, takes a step forward.

GUNTHER
Pa? What --

Earl backhands him across the face. Gunther cowers, blocks his face with his massive arms.

EARL
Took you long, boy.

He limps out of the pantry, his hand pressed against his thigh wound.

EARL
Looks' what they do to Pa.

Earl spits, his nostrils twitch. He turns to the table, opens a drawer and pulls out a long chef's knife. He hands it to Gunther.

EARL
Find thems'.

BASEMENT

Brad covers Helen's corpse with his flannel shirt and wipes his bloody hands against his T-shirt.

Danielle runs to him. He wraps his arms around her and they cry in each other's arms.

Sean waves his cellphone around.

LUCAS
Anything?

SEAN
Can't get a signal.

LUCAS
Me neither.

A door creaks open somewhere, the sounds echoes through the basement. Something heavy stumbles down the stairs.

Sean looks up.

SEAN
Brad.

BRAD
I'm not leaving her here. Not like this.

SEAN
Brad, we gotta go.

Footsteps reverberate against the walls.

LUCAS
Let's go, come on.

Danielle sniffles, her wet mascara forms long black lines down her face.

DANIELLE
There's...a door.

STORAGE

The four of them scuttle into the enclosure. The faint light reveals the corpses that dangle from meat hooks.

Sean closes the door. Darkness blankets the room.

BASEMENT

Gunther squats next to Hank's mangled body. His hand trembles as he runs it through his dead brother's hair, caressing him affectionately.

The giant man takes in deep breaths. He throws his head back and belches out a blaring howl.

A hand pats Gunther on his back. Earl kneels next to him, tears in his eyes.

EARL

Looks what they did to my boy.

The small wrinkled man pulls Gunther close, rests his head on the giant's shoulder.

STORAGE

Darkness. A flame ignites, fizzles out. It pops back to life, bathes the room in an orange glow.

Danielle holds up a disposable lighter, her arm outstretched. Brad gives her disappointed stare but lets it go.

The flame reveals a myriad of junk; decaying mattresses, piles of moth-eaten clothes, old bicycles rusted to the wall and pools of caked blood.

The flame also betrays their fear-laden faces.

Lucas rummages through the debris, knocks a rotten mattress out of the way. The mattress keels over and a nest of roaches spill out and scatter across the dirty floor.

Sean leans close to one of the corpses. Its pale skin dry and caked with puss. Several crude incisions scar the blood-spattered abdomen, chunks of meat missing from the thighs.

BRAD (O.S.)

Poor bastards.

Sean looks up at his brother. Brad's eyes still wet and puffy. He wipes his nose with the back of his hand.

SEAN

Yeah.

Danielle holds the lighter up and provides Lucas with illumination. Lucas angles his head close to the wall and slides a hand along the wall's curvature.

His feet stumbles against an incline in the floor, finds his footing on another incline.

Steps.

He crawls forward on all four, ducks as the angled ceiling closes in on his head.

He stops.

A whisper of light shines through a crack in a wooden frame.

LUCAS
Turn it off.

The flame extinguishes.

DANIELLE
You've found something?

Lucas waves his hand in front of the crack, the beam of light much clearer now.

LUCAS
You guys? I think I've found a way out.

EXT. DINER

A fungus infested basement door lifts a bit, its rusted hinges whine. Sean peers out through the small opening.

An old chain hangs from handle to handle and blocks their escape.

INT. BASEMENT - STORAGE

Sean puts his weight against the door and pushes. The wood moans but doesn't budge.

SEAN
Gimme' a hand.

Brad joins him and together they ram the door.

CRASH

The door at the other end shatters open. Gunther's massive silhouette looms in the doorway.

DANIELLE

Dad!

SEAN

Shit.

Gunther charges forward. He knocks the corpses out of the way, stampedes straight at the Andersons, knife raised.

Sean and Brad throws themselves at the basement door. It blasts open. They grab the kids and jerk them out in the open.

Gunther swings the long chef's knife just as Brad slams the door shut. The wooden door splinters against Gunther's cranium, knocking him backwards down the steps.

EXT. DINER

With Sean on point, the party bolts across the dirt road, turns right at the nearest corner. They screech to a halt.

A dozen men and women block the twenty some feet that separate the Andersons and their cars.

Sean waves his family back, turns his attention to the mob. Their clothes tattered and too large, their bodies grossly malnourished.

SEAN

Listen, we just wanna get out of here
is all. Nobody has to --
(takes a step forward)
-- get hurt.

The mob tighten up its rank in front of the cars. Their eyes reveal nothing but sick lust. Without uttering a word, they move toward Sean in unison.

SEAN

Whoa, whoa.
(over his shoulder)
Back up.

Pandemonium erupts. The mob charges full force at Sean, screaming unrecognizable gibberish at the top of their lungs.

Sean backs up.

SEAN

Take off.

Brad pulls Danielle and Lucas away from the corner and points them toward a two-story school building several blocks down the road.

BRAD

Go!

LUCAS

Dad!

SEAN

Lucas, go!

The kids take off and sprint down the road. Their shoes kicking up dust.

Sean turns just as the first attacker - a woman - approaches. He takes a step to the left and clotheslines her with his right arm.

The woman nearly performs a backflip before crashing to the ground head first.

Sean swing his fists at the oncoming mob. A middle-aged man takes a left to the jaw, another a kick to the stomach.

Brad throws himself into the fight but three attackers tackle him to the ground. They claw at his face, bites his hands. Brad struggles loose, turns over, punches and kicks his way free.

EXT. GAS STATION

Danielle and Lucas dash right and slump to a cover behind a ancient gas pump. Out of breath, the two teens suck in large gulps of air.

DANIELLE

Oh, God.

Lucas takes her hand and squeezes it tight.

EXT. DINER

Blood pours from a tear on Sean's arm, he throws another punch but misses. Two men wrestle him to the dirt, one bites down hard on his exposed calf.

Sean screams but fights back with renewed rage. He pulls the man close and headbutts him square across the nose. The man reels backward and whimpers like a dog.

The second man jumps Sean from behind, grabs him in a choke hold. Sean throws himself backwards to the ground and knocks the wind out of his attacker.

Sean leaps to his feet and stomps a foot against the man's throat, crushing his larynx.

Brad grabs a hold of his brother just as more townspeople rush to aid their friends.

Bleeding and battered, the brothers make tracks. The mob hot on their heels, mouths foaming.

EXT. GAS STATION

Lucas rolls on to his knees and sneaks a peek around the pump.

DANIELLE

You see them?

LUCAS

Yeah, they're coming this way.

As they struggle to their feet, the door to the manager's office swings open behind them.

The owner, GUS (40's), wears a pair of greasy blue coveralls, a size too small. He juggles a heavy duty wrench in his right hand, a vacant look in his eyes.

Lucas turns just as Gus swings the wrench with venom. The wrench barely grazes his face but it still strikes with enough force to shatter a pair of his pearly whites.

The boy collides with the ground. He sprawls around in agony while blood gushes from his gums.

Danielle backs against the pump, ducks as Gus continues his onslaught. The wrench dents the pump, chips its paint. The nozzle falls out of its socket from the impact.

Danielle trips on the hose, lands on her knees but scuttles back to her feet.

Gus charges again, aims a blow at the back at her head but Lucas sticks out his leg and kicks him sideways to the ground.

Lucas grabs the nozzle, points it at Gus and squeezes the trigger. Gasoline shoots from the nozzle, sprays Gus from head to toe.

LUCAS
Your lighter!

Danielle fumbles through her pockets, whips out the lighter, brings it close to the gushing nozzle. Her shaking fingers squeeze the igniter. Nothing happens.

Gus gets to his feet.

LUCAS
Come on!

The lighter sparks.

WHOOF

The gasoline transforms from a harmless fluid to liquid fire. Using the nozzle as a flamethrower, Lucas showers Gus with pain.

Gus twirls around, ablaze and screaming. Lucas releases his grip around the trigger. The fire subsides.

Sean and Brad reach the gas station. They sidestep Gus The Human Torch who sprawls out into the street.

SEAN
Gimme' that.

Sean jerks the nozzle from Lucas' hand and entrenches himself behind the pump.

SEAN
Lighter.

Danielle throws it to him.

SEAN
Go!

BRAD
C'mon.

Brad and the kids take off down the street toward the school.

The ferocious mob gallops straight at the gas station. Sean pops up behind the pump. He ignites the lighter and pulls the trigger.

Fire jets out onto the street. The attackers run straight into the blazing tsunami. Their clothes sizzles, their hair evaporates, their skin bulges and peels back.

Smoke and cries fill the street.

Sean backs away and turns the nozzle against the pump and the office.

With the gas station engulfed in flames he turns on his heel and heads for the school.

Moments later the gas station explodes with a thunderous roar.

EXT. SCHOOL

The two-story building, scarred and defaced by time and man, rests near the outskirts of the town. Surrounded and partially covered by thick patches of weed, the school looks like it was abandoned decades ago.

Old wooden boards cover most of the windows, some of them decorated by graffiti. Trash and junk lay strewn about the yard.

Brad jerks the verdigris covered brass handle and shoulders the door open on his second try.

INT. SCHOOL - HALL

Aged newspapers and garbage cover the floor of the dark rectangular passage.

Rusted lockers align the left side of the hall. Blood smears stain a couple of them.

Brad lead the kids forward with Sean at the rear. They stop at a door and carefully slip inside.

CLASSROOM

Tables and chairs lay toppled over on the floor amidst newspapers and debris.

Exhausted, the four of them slump to the dirty floor. Danielle cuddles up in Brad's arms and he gently rocks her back and forth.

Lucas tries his cellphone.

LUCAS
Dammit'. Still no signal.

Sean pries off his bloody T-shirt and inspects his shoulder wound.

Lucas picks up an old newspaper clipping from the floor. He turns it over, stares at the headline.

INSERT - NEWSPAPER CLIPPING, which reads:

"FAMILY OF FOUR MISSING"

BACK TO SCENE

Lucas picks up another newspaper clipping.

LUCAS
Hey, look at this.

SEAN
What?

LUCAS
(reads the clipping)
"Montana state police officials say that they have found no evidence of foul play in connection with the disappearance of Tom Watson, who has not been heard from since May 9."

SEAN
Let me see that.

His eyes scan the clipping.

SEAN
This is from ninety-eight.

LUCAS
I found another one from nineteen eighty-four.
(hands Sean another clipping)
And this one's from last year. They're all the same, someone's gone missing, no evidence.

SEAN
Of course there's no evidence. These psychos eat the evidence.

Danielle raises her head.

DANIELLE
They're gonna eat mom?

Brad's eyes shoot venom at his brother.

BRAD
No one's gonna eat mom, honey. Right,
Sean?

Sean looks away.

SEAN
Right.

LUCAS
So what's the plan? I mean, we can't
stay here. They're gonna find us.

Sean puts his T-shirt back on.

SEAN
It'll be dark in an hour or so. I say
we wait here, catch our breath, and
slip out in the night.

BRAD
I don't know.

SEAN
Me neither. But I need a rest.

LUCAS
If we're gonna stay here, we should at
least have a lookout or something.

Sean gets to his feet. He grimaces and moans in pain.

SEAN
I'm on it.

LUCAS
I'll go with you.

SEAN
I think you should --

LUCAS
Whatever. I'm coming.

Sean observes his son, manages a smile.

SEAN

Okay.

EXT. GAS STATION

Earl watches the burning debris that lies scattered across the street. Black smoke gushes into the air.

Gunther stands next to him, a crusted cut on his forehead.

Around them, townspeople engage the fire with crude water-filled buckets. They put out the fires and gather behind Earl.

Earl shakes his head and spits on the ground. His lips curl into a scowl.

EARL

I wants 'em found. You hears me, boy?

GUNTHER

Yes, pa.

Earl turns to the crowd. The setting sun forms a halo behind his head.

EARL

Y'all's hear me?

The crowd nods and murmurs its agreement.

EARL

Y'all's hear shit. Yous let them
'scape, yous fail. Yous crud.

They bow their heads and look nervously at each other. Earl fills his lungs with air. In the crowd's eyes, he grows a foot in height.

EARL

But...yous will redeem. Yous will
avenge.

Earl raises his hand, the crowd goes silent.

EARL

Look unto mes, and be ye saved, for it
is writtens, as I live, say the Lord --
(lowers his hand)
-- that unto me, every knee shall
bow...

The crowd kneels before him.

EARL
... ands every tongue shall swear.

The crowd looks up -- flaming passion fill their eyes.

Earl clenches his teeth.

EARL
Get them.

INT. SCHOOL - SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT

Lucas stares out into the darkness through cracks in the boarded up window. Sean surveils from another window.

In the streets below them, a couple of stragglers probe around, flaming torches in their hands.

LUCAS
You see anybody else?

SEAN
No. It's time.

LUCAS
What're you gonna do?

SEAN
Sneak down to the cars, drive one of them back here, pick you guys up and haul ass. Basically.

LUCAS
I guess that's, like, a plan.

Sean nods to his son and moves to the nearby staircase.

LUCAS
Hey, dad?

Sean stops.

SEAN
Yeah?

LUCAS
I know we don't get to spend much time together, I mean after you and mom's divorce, and I know I'm no day at the beach either but...
(looks down)
I'm kinda glad you're here.

SEAN

Kinda?

Lucas smiles.

LUCAS

Yeah, kinda. And don't take this the wrong way but I would much rather be at mom's right now.

SEAN

(snickers)

You and me both, kid.

CLASSROOM

Brad, still seated with his back to the wall, caresses Danielle's hair. His daughter sleeps, her head rests against his chest.

Brad's eyelids slide shut. His head bobs up and down until his jaw hits his chest. Brad's eyes pop back open. He shakes his head and runs a hand across his face, fights to stay awake.

Danielle shifts next to him, her tired eyes open.

DANIELLE

You okay, dad?

BRAD

Sorry, hon', didn't mean to wake you.

She sits up straight and wipes her eyes, then her nose. Her lips quiver and she succumbs to the sorrow.

Brad puts an arm around her, kisses the top of her head.

BRAD

It's okay.

DANIELLE

I wanna go home.

BRAD

We will, sweetheart. We will.

Her tears stains his T-shirt. She hugs him tight.

DANIELLE

I don't wanna die, daddy.

BRAD
Nobody will hurt you. I won't let
them.

He lifts her chin. His gaze hard as steel.

BRAD
I mean it.

The door blows open. Brad and Danielle jolt.

Sean enters.

BRAD
Jesus, Sean.

SEAN
Oh, sorry.

He holds out his hand.

SEAN
Car keys.

Brad tosses them to Sean.

SEAN
You' ready to get the fuck outta
Dodge?

BRAD
Just say when, brother.

EXT. SCHOOL

The door creaks open. Sean crouches and scuttles through the yard, ducks behind the tall weeds.

Crickets chirp in the quiet moonless night. He scans the horizon. No one in sight.

Sean scales a low fence, crosses a gravel patch and pushes his back against the wall to a house. He risks a peek around the corner.

Still nothing.

He spots the cars parked near the diner, a hundred or so yards away.

Sean slides around the corner.

Stops.

An orange glow spills onto the street from a nearby alley.

He ducks back around the corner, goes prone against the wall.

The orange glow moves closer, footsteps right behind it. Sean peeks up just as a pair of well-worn leather shoes stops a few feet from him.

A man, his body so thin it looks like a skeleton with skin vacuformed around the bones, glances around.

He holds up the burning torch, moves it from side to side like a flashlight.

He grunts and retrieves a pack of smokes from his flannel shirt, Brad's flannel shirt. He lights a cigarette with the torch, puffs it hard and blows smoke into the night.

Sean's eyes rest on the shoe's rubber sole mere inches from his face.

The man farts and lets out a satisfied moan before proceeding down the street.

Sean waits until the glow from the torch disappears in the darkness and then gets to his feet.

EXT. DINER

Sean approaches the two cars, both appear to be unscathed. He huddles next to the Roadmaster and brings out the keys.

He weighs them in his hand, contemplates, and changes his mind.

Sean moves around to the Suburban and kneels next to the driver's side door. He presses a button on his brother's car key.

The car unlocks, loudly. Sean squints from the noise.

Carefully he opens the door and gets to his feet.

EARL (O.S.)

Boy, yous must tink' we be dumb.

Sean spins around.

Earl, flanked by Gunther, leans against the entrance to the diner. He scratches his harelip, spits a gooey chunk of slime at the ground.

SEAN

The thought did cross my mind.

Sean throws himself into the car. Gunther charges at him.

EXT./INT. SUBURBAN

Sean slams the door and locks it just as Gunter's broad fist shatters the driver's side window.

Shrapnel showers Sean. Gunther's fingers clutch his shirt but he manages to rip loose.

Lying across both front seats, he kicks vigorously at Gunter's flailing hands.

Gunther grabs a hold of Sean's right leg and pulls him through the opening.

Sean latches on to the seat, fights with every muscle in his body. He slides further out of the car.

Halfway through the window, Sean grips the steering wheel and rams the key into the ignition. His hands puts the car in reverse and with his last ounce of strength, he reaches down and smacks the gas pedal with his hand.

The tires shriek as the SUV shoots backwards. Gunther loses his grips on Sean's leg and tumbles to the ground.

The car speeds across the street and barrels into the house on the opposite side.

INT. SUBURBAN

Sean pulls himself inside, shifts the gear to drive and floors it.

The car wobbles as he turns it onto the street. In the rearview mirror, he sees Gunther charging after the car on foot.

EXT. STREET

The flatulent man with a torch storms into the street. The headlights from the Suburban grows in front of him.

INT. SUBURBAN

Sean's grip on the wheel tightens. He bows his head a bit and rams the guy full force.

The man's head explodes against the windshield like a watermelon, creating a web-like crack in the glass.

INT. SCHOOL - SECOND FLOOR

Lucas spots the approaching SUV and bolts down the stairs.

LUCAS
He's coming.

HALL

The three of them gather at the door. Brad opens the door a bit and peers out.

BRAD
It's clear.

EXT. SCHOOL

The SUV screeches to a halt in front of the school yard. Brad, Danielle and Lucas runs toward the car.

From out of nowhere, an angry torch-carrying mob descends on the vehicle, howling like an Indian war party.

Brad shields his daughter from a barrage of clawing hands while he tries to push her into the car.

One of the men grabs Lucas and pulls him down an alley. Sean burst out of the car and pursues the attacker.

EXT. ALLEY

Sean kicks the man above the ankle and he releases his grip on Lucas. Sean helps his son to his knees just as Gunther's massive hand spins him around.

A BLADE

slices across his stomach. Sean groans and staggers back, drops to his knees.

He looks down.

A large tear in his shirt reveals a deep cut in his abdomen. He grabs the wound. Dark red, almost black blood gushes through his fingers. His intestines pour from the opening.

LUCAS

Dad?

Sean tries to pop his internal organs back inside but Gunter grabs the intestines and yanks them hard.

The bloody tubes spill out on Sean's lap and the ground. Sean moans, his eyes roll back.

LUCAS

No!

Lucas jumps to his dad's aid but Gunther brushes him away like a nuisance. The boy flies through the air and slams against a concrete wall.

The giant man wraps the intestines around Sean's neck and strangles him. Sean fights back but without strength. His hands grasp pathetically at his throat as his life withers away.

Sean's head keels forward and his body goes limp. Gunther lets go of him and kicks his dead body to the ground.

EXT. STREET

Brad opens the passenger's side door and nudges Danielle inside. Nails scratch his face and arms as he fights the mob back.

He rams the door shut and blocks it with his body. Arms grab at him, pull him from both sides.

INT. SUBURBAN

Danielle watches with horror as her dad's figure disappears beneath the window frame.

Her hand clasp the window from the inside as the mob pummels Brad.

EXT. SUBURBAN

Held down by the mob, Brad struggles in vain to free himself. A woman in a frenzy plows a pickaxe into Brad's left leg, just above the knee.

Brad wails but his words die out as a man sinks his teeth into Brad's chin and tears his face apart.

Another man rips Brad's right ear off, sending blood spurting to the ground.

Brad moans and groans as the mob picks him up and carry him away.

INT. SUBURBAN

Danielle covers her mouth as she sees her father's mangled body.

DANIELLE

Daddy!

Her face contorts in pain, anger and sorrow. Through the bloody windshield she sees Brad's scarred and bludgeoned face, his eyes strain too see her.

They lock eyes. For a moment, time stands still.

Brad's mouth form the words "I love you". A tear rolls from the corner of his eye. His eyes close.

Danielle screams, more in anger than in pain, and jerks the car in gear.

EXT. STREET

The Suburban catapults backward and plows through the remaining mob. Men and women bounce off the car like bowling pins.

The car wobbles as the tires use the townsfolk as pavement.

EXT. ALLEY

Danielle backs the car into the alley, stomps the break pedal so to avoid hitting Sean's dead body.

DANIELLE

Jesus.

She looks around, doesn't see Lucas - or Gunther.

DANIELLE

Lucas?

INT. DINER - KITCHEN

Gunther slams Lucas down on the kitchen table. The boy coughs and moans.

Earl limps inside, sporting a cane for support. Gunther stands aside and proudly shows his father the catch.

GUNTHER

See, pa.

EARL

Well, well. Looksy - looksy.

He pinches the boy's cheek, arms and belly. Lucas squirm.

EARL

He be nice, boy. Firm 'n tender.

Lucas spits Earl in the face, a mixture of blood and saliva lands across his eyes and nose.

LUCAS

Fuck you, retard.

He struggles but Gunther holds him tightly secured.

LUCAS

(to Gunther)

You too, you motherfucking inbred cocksucking cunt. Fuck you. Fuck all you psychos.

He spits Gunther in the face too. The giant elbows him in the gut. Lucas coughs and gasps for air.

EARL

Boy, you best seal them lips, ya' hear? Gunther be mad.

LUCAS

Fuck you!

EARL

Suit yourselfish.

He opens a drawer and pulls out a hefty cooking needle and thread.

EXT. DINER

The SUV moves slowly down the empty street.

INT. SUBURBAN

Danielle shivers as cold wind blows into the car through the missing driver's side window. Mist forms around her mouths with each exhale.

Danielle scans the surroundings. Not a creature in sight.

She hears something and stops the car. She concentrates, leans her ear closer to the missing window. She hears it again.

A muffled scream.

DANIELLE

Lucas.

INT. DINER - KITCHEN

Lucas sprawls on the table, his feet twitching while Gunther uses his weight to subdue him.

Earl, his fingers clasped around Lucas' lips, drives the cooking needle through the lips, sealing them for good.

EARL

Told ya', boy.

He yanks the needle through the upper lip and tightens the thread. Lucas squirms and muffles something inaudible as blood trickles down chin.

Earl punctures the lower lip again. A rustling sound from inside the diner distracts him. He looks up at Gunther.

EARL

Go see, boy.

DINER

Gunther enters the dark diner through the swing doors and looks around. Nothing. The doors are both closed - but the "OPEN/CLOSED" sign dangles back and forth.

He tilts his head and moves around the counter for a closer look. Gunther stops as a small object on the floor grabs his attention.

The object emits low volumed but high trebled music. Gunther bends down and retrieves Danielle's iPod, the headphones dangles from their wire.

He gives the iPod a confused stare, turns it around in his large hands.

An engine revs outside. Gunther stands up. Through the window, the Suburban grows large.

Glass shatters and wood splinters as the massive SUV crushes through the diner. Gunther doesn't move in time and the Chevy's grille guard hits him with the power of a freight train.

KITCHEN

Earl jolts back as half the kitchen collapses. Lucas jumps him immediately. The old man staggers on his wounded leg and falls to the floor.

Lucas shower him with kicks and punches until the old man doesn't move. Lucas pulls Earl to his feet and slams him against the table.

He grabs Earl's right hand and sticks it into the old fashioned meat grinder. Earl's battered face looks on in horror.

EARL

Wait.

Lucas turns the handle. Earl yelps as the grinder crushes his hand. The grinder's nozzle spews out blood, meat and bone fragment.

DANIELLE

Come on!

Lucas stops, gives Earl a last venomous look and throws him a left to the jaw. Earl collapses.

The boy stumbles to the car while pulling out the sewing thread from his swollen lips.

He jumps into the car and Danielle backs it out of the diner.

EXT. STREET

The Suburban hits the road with tires screeching and speeds out of town. On the way, the car pass a sign the reads: "YOU ARE NOW LEAVING HOLLOW POINT. HOPE TO SEE YOU AGAIN SOON".

INT. SUBURBAN

Lucas holds his shirt against his bleeding mouth and leans back in the seat. Danielle takes his hand a gives it a squeeze. The two teens look at each other.

EXT. HIGHWAY

The car pulls onto the highway and disappears into the night.

INT. DINER - KITCHEN

A bloody Gunther pulls himself from the rubble and limps toward the partially caved in kitchen. Earl lies beaten and broken on the floor in a pool of his own blood.

Gunther falls down next to his father, strains closer. He caresses his hair. Earl looks up with drowsy eyes.

EARL

Gunther's a good boy. Always was.

A man steps inside the kitchen followed by another, and another. Soon, ten people fill the kitchen. One of them, the woman with the pickaxe.

EARL

Help. We hurt.

The woman moves closer, studies the pair on the floor. Earl reaches out for her.

His eyes widen.

She swings the pickaxe.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END