

THE BLACK LIST

AURELIA

C.J. Giltner

Genre: Alien Invasion, Horror, Horror Comedy, Sci-Fi Horror

Aurelia

By

C.J. Giltner

Cjgiltner@gmail.com

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FADE IN:

EXT. SMALL TOWN - DAWN

A battered signpost reads: "Welcome to Aurelia"

A one-horse town with creep in heavy supply. Leftover from a mining boom a century ago. Its streets, vacant. Its windows, haunted.

But beyond the town lies...

A FOREST

Trees thick with suspicion. *Something lurks deep within.*
Through the trees we find...

A PRISON

A cold fortress of stone and barbed wire, simmering in the cool morning mist. Seemingly unattached from the natural world. Its universe internalized. But then...

...A RIOT SIREN blares to life.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: AURELIA

EXT. FROZEN LAKE - DUSK

The last red hues of the sunset glint off the icy surface.

Subtitle: December, 1999

Standing at the edge of a DOCK are three young teenagers. Wrapped in thick winter gear. Reeking of the excesses of their binge-filled youth.

The tallest of the bunch is HUNT, a pure redneck and defacto leader.

HUNT

Go on, Frank. You wanted to be part of the gang. Well, here's your shot.

FRANK, the shortest and dorkiest of the bunch, shivers nervously. He peers dreadfully out at the frozen lake.

FRANK

Do I have to?

WINSTON, the median in both size and bravado stands next to Hunt. These two are clearly best friends. The preppy, pretty boy to Hunt's brainless jock. (The Zach Morris to Hunt's AC Slater, which would make Frank the Screech)

WINSTON

You heard the man, Frank. All the way out to the island and back.

FRANK

What if I fall through?

WINSTON

The key is to go really fast. Trust me. You don't wanna fall through that ice. Just ask Ryan Jensen.

FRANK

Ryan Jensen? He transferred.

HUNT

That's just what the teachers told everyone to keep 'em calm. Truth is, he fell through that ice last winter and never came back to the surface. Never saw him again.

WINSTON

They say his body is still down there.

FRANK

What if I have an asthma attack?

HUNT

Christ, Frank. You're either gonna do it or not.

WINSTON

Don't be a pussy about it.

Frank looks out at the tiny ISLAND far out in the middle of the lake. He takes a deep breath and steps off the dock-

HUNT

Hold on there, Frank. What do you think you're doing?

FRANK

You told me to-

HUNT

That's only one part of it.
There's two more parts!

WINSTON

Yeah, kid! You gotta do it
blindfolded.

HUNT

In nothing but your britches.

WINSTON

Let's see those tighty-whiteys!

FRANK

What? That's impossible!

WINSTON

Hunt's done it.

HUNT

Winston's done it.

WINSTON

And now *you're* gonna do it.

Clearly they are making this up on the fly, but Frank is none the wiser. Off Frank's horrified reaction we-

CUT TO:

FRANK BLINDFOLDED IN HIS TIGHTY-WHITEYS

Edging his way carefully across the ice.

HUNT

(Calls after him)

It's thinnest in the middle, Frank!

Winston drapes an arm over Hunt and they laugh uproariously.

OUT ON THE ICE

Frank shuffles his feet rapidly, making decent time. But the sun is setting quickly.

He scrunches his nose and the blindfold lifts. He glances back. He's a couple hundred yards from shore already --

-- He TRIPS, lunging forward and falling flat on his face.

He slides to a stop.

...Creak...

The ice *splinters* around him.

He holds as still as possible, panic written on his face.

ON THE DOCK

Winston passes a flask of vodka to Hunt. At this distance, Frank is just a tiny dot laying on the ice. They hear a *distanced, muffled yell*.

WINSTON

What do you suppose he's doing out there?

Suddenly, Frank disappears from view, leaving only a small black hole behind.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

Holy shit!

They jump up --

-- TEAR across the ice, Hunt leading the way.

BENEATH THE SURFACE

Black and cloudy. Frank claws the blindfold off his face. He's sinking fast, quickly losing all light.

...But then, beneath him...

A beacon of faint glowing light.

Frank looks down. There beneath him, a *shimmering beacon* expands across the bottom of the lake until it almost resembles an object. Something not of this world.

Frank panics -- He *fans* desperately toward the surface, but only seems to be sucked down further, closer to the light.

...But the light evaporates.

Frank loses consciousness and drifts away --

-- Two HANDS wrap around Frank's body and pull him up-

ON THE ICE

Hunt *breaks through* the surface with Frank in his arms.

Winston pulls them up and out of the water. They collapse in a frozen heap.

WINSTON

He's not breathing. Do you know
how to do CPR?

But Hunt can hardly breathe either. The bitter wet cold clenched like a vice around his lungs.

Winston hesitates for a moment. Then leans in and gives Frank CPR as best he can...

...Frank coughs, spitting out water and gasping for air. He rolls over and looks at them. They stare back at him.

(A tense, "holy shit I'm alive" beat)

FRANK

Am I in the gang?

Winston and Hunt look at each other. Then burst out laughing.

CUT TO BLACK.

Subtitle: 15 Years Later

FADE IN:

A PHOTO

Of Frank, Hunt, and Winston from that same summer. Best of friends. Trophy fish hanging from their fishing rods. A rustic cabin in the background. Happy and vibrant...

...But the photo is old, with a good layer of dust on the frame. *The photo hangs inside-*

INT. COMIC BOOK STORE - DAY

A shrine to the pillars of geekdom. Action figures, posters, and memorabilia adorn the shelves and walls. Our photo is smashed between UFO and Lord of the Rings posters.

FRANK, all grown up, sits at his desk deep into *World of Warcraft*. Complete with gaming headset and vintage "The Truth Is Out There" shirt.

...A phone rings...

FRANK

Frank's Comics. You got Frank.

He continues playing WOW, engaged in a serious sword fight.

WINSTON (PHONE)

It's me.

FRANK

Morning Winston! Excited about the trip?

INT. HIGH RISE CONDO - CONTINUOUS

Spotless. A monument to the success of its owner. That owner happens to be WINSTON. Filled out into full G.Q. model good looks. He hangs from a pull-up bar in his underwear with a bluetooth headset.

WINSTON

You know what they say about letting sleeping dogs lie.

We cut back and forth between them.

FRANK

And the sleeping dog in this example is...

WINSTON

He doesn't deserve another chance.

FRANK

Come on Winston. This is our fifteenth anniversary.

WINSTON

What?

FRANK

It was fifteen years ago that we first went up there together. We're returning the to the place where it all started. Where the greatest friendship of the third millennia was first forged from granite in the fires of-

WINSTON

You keep track?

Winston drops down from the pull-bar. Behind him, a SEXY SHIRTLESS BLACK MAN strides into the room in only a towel. He stops at the fridge and comes out with a coconut water.

FRANK

It was kind of a big day for me. I tasted alcohol for the first time, I had my first close encounter, I had friends-

WINSTON

Still with the alien thing?

FRANK

Did you know Hunt's cabin is located in the county with more UFO sightings than any other in the Northern Hemisphere between 2003 and 2005?

WINSTON

Of course Frank, everyone knows that.

The Sexy Shirtless Black Man interjects quietly:

SEXY SHIRTLESS BLACK MAN

You know alien abduction is no laughing matter. My boyfriend in college was abducted.

WINSTON

(Aside)

And you believe him?

SEXY SHIRTLESS BLACK MAN

Why would he lie?

FRANK (PHONE)

Who are you talking to? Is that Trish?

WINSTON

What? Trish was over years ago, Frank.

FRANK

See, Winston. That's exactly why we need this trip. I hardly know a thing about you anymore. And Hunt even less. We owe it to each other to go on this trip. Heck, we owe it to ourselves.

WINSTON

You really believe that?

FRANK

I know it.

WINSTON

You are one naive s.o.b. Frank. We don't owe that man anything.

FRANK

Maybe he's changed.

INT. WHITE TRASH APARTMENT - ?

Thoroughly lived-in. Musty and damp. We pass through the apartment. Past scattered take-out bags and crushed beer cans to a beat up old recliner.

HUNT is passed out in the chair. Somewhere on the tail end of a who-knows-how-many-days-long bender. Pants off with a CINEMAX porn channel playing silently on the TV.

Brrrrriiiiiing -- Somewhere in the mess, an old landline phone shows signs of life...

HUNT (ANSWERING MACHINE)

Yeah... This is Hunt. Leave one after the robot orgasms.

BEEP!

FRANK (ANSWERING MACHINE)

Rise and shine, Hunt. Today's the big day!

Hunt stirs slowly. He fishes the phone out from the sea of garbage. Picks up the receiver and drops it again, silencing Frank-

INT. WINSTON'S CONDO - DAY

Winston, bags packed, pulls his stylish winter coat on. The now shirt-wearing sexy black man eyes him warily.

SEXY SHIRTLESS BLACK MAN

Are you sure about this trip? Do they even know about you?

Winston avoids his gaze.

WINSTON

If it comes up in conversation, maybe I'll mention it.

SEXY SHIRTLESS BLACK MAN
 If it comes up in conversation?
 Winston, you're better than that.

WINSTON
 It's better they not know *who I*
really am.

INT. COMIC BOOK STORE - DAY

Frank wistfully takes one last look out at the comics.

FRANK
 (To his comics)
 It's gonna be okay. Poppa will be
 back in a couple days, alright?
 You'll see. No reason to be scared
 or upset or nothing.

He dries a (fake) tear. He turns to a life-size CARDBOARD
 CUTOUT of XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 (In his sexiest voice)
 And I'll see you in a couple days
 my love.

He gives her a peck on the (cardboard) cheek. Then he turns
 off the lights and pulls the door shut.

EXT. REST STOP/PARK AND RIDE - DAY

Frank pulls in his Ford Fiesta next to Winston's BMW. They
 both get out of their respective cars and greet each other
 warmly.

After the initial greeting, they both look around for Hunt,
 who is nowhere to be seen.

INT. HUNT'S PLACE - ?

Hunt sits up in his recliner, rubbing the sleep (and whiskey)
 out of his eyes.

He stands and pulls up his pants. Picks out a half-spent
 cigarette out of a makeshift ash tray made from a sliced open
 beer can.

He pushes through the sea of litter and out the door --

EXT. HUNT'S PLACE - [DAY] CONTINUOUS

A BLAST OF BLINDING DAYLIGHT and a country guitar *twang* greets us.

Hunt steps out his door to reveal he lives in a TRAILER, hooked by the tailgate to a battered, mud-plastered pick-Up, parked in a snow-patched gravel lot.

He pulls a pair of shades low over his bloodshot eyes and lights the cigarette.

He treks across the gravel lot, a man comfortable in his own skin (as dirty and thin as that skin may be) until we start to see the familiar signs of a country dive bar.

THE COUNTY LINE TAVERN

To be exact. An old Hank Williams song plays on a gravelly loudspeaker. Hunt pushes through the front door-

INT. THE COUNTY LINE TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

A rat-infested dive. Besides Hunt there are only two other occupants: a senile old DRUNK, and a fat, white supremacist BARTENDER with a visible swastika tattoo on his neck.

HUNT

Gimme' a man-mosa.

WHITE SUPREMEICST BARTENDER

We speak English here shit-tard.

HUNT

Triple whiskey with a finger of O.J.

WHITE SUPREMEICST BARTENDER

As you like. Beer chaser?

HUNT

Wouldn't have it any other way.

He slides Hunt the dirnk.

HUNT (CONT'D)

Breakfast of the Gods.

WHITE SUPREMACIST BARTENDER

I hear that.

Hunt slides a stack of bills onto the counter.

HUNT
For your troubles.

With a cautious glance at the drunk down the bar, the Bartender exchanges the money for a small manila envelope. Hunt slips the envelope into his pocket.

WHITE SUPREMACIST BARTENDER
Where you say you were heading again?

HUNT
Up north. Pop's old hunting cabin.

WHITE SUPREMACIST BARTENDER
With some friends of yours?

HUNT
Just a couple guys I used to know. Grew up with 'em. Grew apart. Sob story of all sob stories.

WHITE SUPREMACIST BARTENDER
Three men in a cabin. You into some sort of queer *menage-a-trois* shit?

HUNT
They're not queers; just democrats.

WHITE SUPREMACIST BARTENDER
(Grunt laughs)
One in the same, brother.

HUNT
Amen.

Hunt pounds his drinks. Boom. Boom. One after the other.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. REST STOP/PARK AND RIDE - DAY

Hunt's pick-up truck *screeches* to a halt (Sans trailer).

Winston and Frank are sitting on the back of Frank's Ford Fiesta, waiting impatiently.

WINSTON
Jesus Christ, look at you. You're a walking redneck cliché.

Hunt spits tobacco out his window.

HUNT

You gonna get in the truck or you gonna stand there and eye-fuck me all day.

WINSTON

The fuck took you so long?

HUNT

Your mother couldn't get me off, try as she might.

WINSTON

You having dick problems, Hunt? I hear they got a pill for that.

(A tense macho beat)

But then Hunt grins. And so does Winston. They clasp hands. Old friends reunited again, bull-shitting as boys will do.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

It's been a while.

HUNT

Far too long. Let's make sure it don't happen again.

Winston tosses their bags in the truck bed. It's packed to the brim with bags, beer, and camping gear. Frank climbs in.

FRANK

Hey Hunt.

HUNT

Looking good Frank. The comic book business is treating you mighty fine. You find yourself a luscious little Lois Lane yet?

FRANK

Not quite yet. How's plumbing?

HUNT

It's a shitty job but someone's gotta do it.

Winston climbs in and slams the door.

HUNT (CONT'D)

And we are off like a blacked out sorority girl's pants in a room full of frat boys.

Hunt guns it. The truck *peels out*.

INT/EXT. TRUCK - DAY

The truck tears down a frostbit county road.

HUNT

-And as I told my boss, God did not intend for man to fix toilets on a Saturday, no sir. Man's got to have his principles and so forth. Frank, how bout you reach through that back window and grab me a beer? Help yourself while you're at it.

WINSTON

You're driving.

HUNT

Three hour trip and I'm three hours late. That means I'm six hours behind, *hermano*.

Frank slides open the back window and retrieves a PBR. Hunt pops it open. Chugs a healthy amount.

WINSTON

Will you just pull over and let me drive?

HUNT

Nobody driving old Mary Ann but me. What's the matter Winston? You never used to have a problem with me having a roadie.

WINSTON

Is this how this weekend is gonna go? Cause if it is, you might as well let me out right here.

HUNT

Well that's up to you and your God, Winston. But my God's telling me to roll a fatty, chug a beer, and have one hell of a weekend. Am I right Frank?!

Frank sits like a child stuck between two bickering parents.

FRANK

Umm... Yeah?

HUNT

Love your enthusiasm Frank! *Love*
it. Yee-haw. Let's fuck some shit
up this weekend.

The truck grinds down the old county highway as snow flakes start to fall.

EXT. AURELIA, MAIN STREET - DAY

They drive past the same battered signpost we saw in the opening: "Welcome to Aurelia"

The few citizens left scurry about, stopping only to shoot suspicious glances as the truck *scuttles* past and pulls into-

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

A rundown relic. Hunt parks next to an ancient gas pump. Frank looks skeptically at the *downright creepy* station.

FRANK

I think I'll wait in the truck.

DING --

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Hunt and Winston push through the grimy door. *An old Woody Guthrie song plays on the radio.*

The station is empty except for the STORE CLERK. A stark contrast to the station itself. Bubbly. Blonde. Young.

Winston looks at the drink options in the cooler. The station clearly hasn't been restocked in a while. The few bottles inside are dusty and stale.

AT THE COUNTER

Winston sets down his water and a pack of sugar-free gum. The Store Clerk smacks her own gum and eyes him hungrily.

WINSTON

Do you have anything cold?

STORE CLERK

What you see is what we got.
Is there *anything* else I can help
you with?

Hunt emerges from the bathroom. He tosses an assortment of junk food on the counter.

HUNT

Really splurging this weekend, aye there Winnie?

WINSTON

We're not as young as we used to be. You may be okay with putting shit in your body, but I'm not.

HUNT

Shit? Wouldn't dream of it.

(to the Clerk)

Lemme get a tin of skoal and a liter of your finest cheapest vodka.

Winston stares at Hunt, but Hunt just smirks.

The Guthrie song ends. A NEWS REPORT comes on the radio.

RADIO

In the wake of this morning's prison break, the Aurelia Sheriff's office announced today they are extending the parameters of their search to ten miles from the site of the prison. All citizens are urged to stay vigilant and alert them immediately with any evidence as to the fugitive's whereabouts --

-- The radio cackles to a high-pitched static.

STORE CLERK

You boys heard about the prison escape?

HUNT

No. Hadn't heard nothing. Near here?

She sets the vodka and tobacco on the counter. Bats her fake eyelashes at Winston.

STORK CLERK

They got dogs and everything. Searching the woods. No one in or out. It's scary to think about. Some *nutjob* just running around out there...

Winston rolls his eyes.

WINSTON
I'll be in the truck.

Winston leaves and the door bell *dings* to prove it. She turns her attention to Hunt.

STORE CLERK
It's gonna be fourteen-forty.

Hunt forks over a credit card. He checks her out good from head to toe as she runs the card. A tightly tuned body, but heavy make-up covers up an obvious black eye.

HUNT
What happened to your eye?

STORE CLERK
Got too close to an asshole.

HUNT
You into assholes?

STORE CLERK
No...

She looks at him with the scintillating smirk of a girl in newfound possession of her sexuality.

STORE CLERK (CONT'D)
But men sure are into mine.

Hunt raises an eyebrow.

EXT. GAS STATION - CONTINUOUS

Winston exits and takes a lap around the truck.

In a PHONE BOOTH at the corner of the lot is a TOWNIE WOMAN standing very still. Phone to her ear but not talking. Nor does she appear to be conscious except for the fact her eyes are open. Zombie-esque, you could say.

Winston stares at her, deeply *unsettled*...

Ding! Hunt struts out the door, breaking Winston out of his trance.

WINSTON
What was she like 14?

HUNT

Hadn't the heart to ask. But bless my lucky stars ya only gotta be 16 in this state.

WINSTON

I didn't think I'd ever have to tell you this Hunt, but *you can do better.*

They hop in the car. Hunt turns the ignition and pulls the truck into gear.

Winston takes one last look at the frozen woman in the phone booth. She's staring right at him. Dead behind the eyes.

Winston quickly looks away, unsettled.

They pull out of the lot. *The woman's eyes flicker after them and she mumbles into the phone.*

INT/EXT. TRUCK - DAY

Frank is immersed in the video game on his phone. *His character beheads another character.*

FRANK

Oh ho! Nice one.

Hunt leans back and snatches the phone out of Frank's hand.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Hey!

HUNT

Frank, I'm gonna do you a favor.

He tosses the phone in the glove compartment.

HUNT (CONT'D)

Now, if you drink your beer like a good boy, you'll get it back on Sunday.

FRANK

What if a customer calls me? What if I miss a sale?

HUNT

Those comic books ain't going nowhere. Still be there when y'all get back.

WINSTON

Hunt's right, Frank. This whole trip was your idea. You're not about to spend it with your face buried up a troll's ass.

FRANK

I'll have you know my character is a wood elf. We're a highly respected, intelligent race.

HUNT

There ain't no elves in these woods but what we do got is rabbits and deer, which we will kill in due course. It's time for you to live in the real world, Frank. Fresh air and dead animals.

Frank stares indignantly out the window at the frostbit landscape.

FRANK

The real world is boring.

Hunt holds up his beer to toast.

HUNT

That's what the beer is for.

Just then, they pull into view of a:

ROADBLOCK

Teeming with EMERGENCY LIGHTS. Police cars, ambulances, and fire trucks. And off the road:

THE PRISON

From the opening scene. A cold, stone fortress. A black SWAT TEAM clearly visible on the periphery of the grounds.

HUNT (CONT'D)

What the fuck...?

WINSTON

What'd that girl say about a prison break?

FRANK

(Sitting up)
A prison break?

Hunt pulls his manila envelope out of his jacket pocket. Discretely hands it back to Frank.

HUNT

Frank, you mind sliding this under the backseat.

WINSTON

What is that?

Frank peeks in the envelope. Marijuana, pills, and a small bag of white powder.

FRANK

Oh my god!

He tips it down so Winston can see.

WINSTON

What the fuck is this shit?

HUNT

That amigos, as the classic song says, is the "time of your life." Now, I would advise putting that outta sight before we converse with these super troopers up here.

WINSTON

Put it the fuck away!

Not knowing what to do, Frank quickly sits on the envelope as Hunt pulls the truck up to-

THE ROADBLOCK

A POLICE OFFICER holds up a hand. Hunt eases the truck to a stop on the gravel.

The Officer takes a measured lap around the truck. He scans the bags and camping gear packed in back.

He approaches Hunt's window. Expressionless and cold with great big sunglasses reflecting back at them.

HUNT

Evening officer. Pleasant night don't ya think?

It's very clearly daytime. Frank tenses up. Winston casts a wary glance at Hunt.

OFFICER

Not from town are you?

HUNT
What town would that be?

OFFICER
Aurelia?

HUNT
No sir.

OFFICER
Where ya from then?

HUNT
South.

OFFICER
Where you boys headed?

HUNT
North, naturally.

OFFICER
You being smart with me?

HUNT
Just stating the facts as they
stand.

The Officer leans down in the window. Takes a good look at both Winston and Frank.

OFFICER
Listen up good... There's been an
escape.

FRANK
What kind of escape?

The Officer disregards Frank.

OFFICER
We're looking for this man.

He holds up a PICTURE: A standard prison intake photo of a clean cut, middle-aged man with glasses and a cheap hair part. A *dork* by normal standards.

HUNT
Diabolical.

OFFICER
Seen him?

HUNT

I have not. Boys, you seen anything?

WINSTON

Haven't seen anything, sir.

OFFICER

How 'bout you in back?

Frank shakes his head (*Nervous as fuck*).

FRANK

What did he do?

Again, the Officer ignores Frank. He pockets the photo.

OFFICER

You see him, you notify the Sheriff's office straight away. Consider him extremely armed and extremely dangerous.

(A suspicious beat)

You'd be wise to keep moving. The townsfolk here don't appreciate outsiders. Especially with a fugitive on the loose.

He turns abruptly and walks back to his car. Frank lets out a sigh of relief.

Hunt puts the truck in drive. Pulls the truck through checkpoint as the Officer waves them through.

The Officer stares them down as they pass. The police radio up to his mouth. Glasses reflecting the gray surroundings.

The stone fortress prison looms in the background.

FRANK

How do you think he escaped? You think he killed a guard? Do you think he had outside help?

WINSTON

Not everything is a conspiracy, Frank. People have been escaping prisons for centuries.

Hunt guns it. The truck rumbles down the road, leaving the chaos of lights and cops behind them.

EXT. TRUCK - DAY

The air is heavy and the trees are thick, stretching on for miles as far as the eye can see.

The truck whips around a turn and down a barely visible, one-lane country road. Snow drifts piled high on either side.

They pull up to a private road with a rusted metal gate and a "No Trespassing" sign, half buried in the snow.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The truck pulls down a suffocatingly narrow driveway. Trees and snow blanket them on either side. Growing darker quick. Any real sense of the time quickly evaporating.

FRANK

I forgot how far out this place is.

HUNT

Only one other cabin for ten miles in every direction.

The driveway opens up on the grounds of a modest-

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Half buried by snow and overrun by nature. Peeling paint. Tattered shutters. A sizable tree has fallen on it, giving the foundation a noticeable lean. Seemingly abandoned.

Hunt stops the truck. Kills the engine.

One by one they step out of the truck and look around. *The silence is overwhelming.*

(Beat)

WINSTON

Next time we go to Vegas.

FRANK

Oooh, then we could go to Comic-Con.

HUNT

No one's going to comic-con, Frank.

FRANK

You know I think you'd like it
 Hunt, there's a lot more to it than
 just comic books.

Hunt tries the front door but it won't budge.

HUNT

(Sarcastic)

Oh Yeah? You should tell me about
 it sometime.

He rams this shoulder into the front door --

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

-- *THUD!* The door *flies* open. Light spills inside. A dense fog of dust lingers in the air.

Winston steps in first. The floor *creaks*, seemingly in a constant state of settling. He immediately covers his mouth.

WINSTON

Smells like death.

He switches on a flashlight. The small ray of light illuminates the cabin bit by bit...

...It's small. Only a kitchen/dining/living area and one tiny bedroom visible through a doorway. Table. Couch. Radio. Mounted deer head.

The flashlight passes over a DEAD ANIMAL. Half skeleton, half rotten flesh.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

What do you think that was?

FRANK

Wow, look at its head. What in the world would've done something like that?

The animal's head looks like it exploded from the inside out.

HUNT

Rats. Probably ate him alive.

Frank investigates the thick layer of dirt on the windowsill.

FRANK

When was the last time anyone came here, Hunt?

HUNT

When's the last time we did one of these weekends?

FRANK

Five years ago.

HUNT

Then I'd say about five years.

WINSTON

Surprised it wasn't condemned.

CUT TO:

THE FIREPLACE

Crackling to life. The flames grow quickly and we get our first real look at the cabin:

50's decor. Ugly mounted animal heads of all species. Everything in a state of disrepair.

Winston turns on the old radio. We are met with the *yooper-tones* of an over-joyous weather reporter:

RADIO DJ (V.O.)

-The local weather service has issued a severe winter weather advisory for the area over the next forty-eight hours.

Hunt scoops up the dead animal with a shovel. Carries it out the door.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Hunt's thick boots stomp through the snow. He carries a chain-saw out into the woods.

RADIO DJ (V.O.)

Temperatures are expected to drop dangerously low. We're talking as low as negative thirty by nightfall and only getting colder.

He *REVS* the chain-saw -- SLICES into a tree.

Nearby, Frank shovels a path to the outhouse.

RADIO DJ (V.O.)

We advise you folks out there to keep yourselves warm and for Pete's-sake, stay indoors! Please do not attempt to travel.

He open the door and sets a roll of toilet paper inside. He closes the door. Turns and finds himself face to face with the frozen lake. He stifles a *shiver* and hustles back to the cabin.

EXT. THE SHED - MOMENTS LATER

The metal shed DOOR flies open -- Revealing a militia's worth of guns and ammunition.

RADIO DJ (V.O.)

To them hunters out there, we hope you reconsider hunting this weekend. But if you do, make sure to bundle up nice and cozy.

Winston unhooks a hunting rifle off the wall and loads his pockets with ammunition.

INT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Frank takes the photo of them fishing as kids out of his bag. He smiles nostalgically and sets it on the mantel.

RADIO DJ (V.O.)

And if you're gonna be driving on them roads don't forget to pump those brakes. You'll wanna winterize your car otherwise your gas tanks'll freeze right up.

EXT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

The guys trudge out of the cabin bundled up in thick hunting gear, hunting rifles slung over their backs, beer in hand.

RADIO DJ (V.O.)

Load up on firewood and stay safe out there. It's gonna be a cold one.

FADE TO BLACK.

CROSS-HAIRS

Pass over the pale winter landscape, Dusted with snow and dead trees. Nothing could live out here but scavengers.

A COYOTE scampers into view. It sniffs around for a moment, then seems to look up directly into the rifle scope.

Steam crosses in front of the scope.

INT. DEER STAND - DAY

The cross-hairs belong to Winston's rifle. His breath *icy*. He sighs and lowers the rifle.

WINSTON

Just a coyote.

Hunt relaxes with a beer and *joint*. Frank stares out at the field, uninterested and shivering. A sizeable pile of empty beer cans between them.

FRANK

Do you think deer have their own language? Like, "Hey you white-tail, stay out of that field," or "Hey you elk, is this the best place to cross the highway?"

HUNT

Whatever they're doing, be it by accident or not, they're doing it right.

WINSTON

What did we even come here for if you two aren't gonna shoot anything?

HUNT

Good company? You know, companionship and revelry and all that bullshit.

FRANK

Come on you guys. This used to be our tradition.

HUNT

Frank, tradition just a fancy excuse to do shit you don't wanna do no more.

WINSTON

It's fucking freezing up here. I didn't come up here to have a shriveled-dick circle jerk. Are we here to hunt or not?

Hunt looks skeptically at Winston.

HUNT

I don't know, Winston. Hunting often ends same way as a circle jerk. Lot of shot wads and a whole hell of a mess.

Winston wipes the fog off his binoculars and refocuses them on the field. Frank pulls his coat up tight around his face. Hunt snuffles repeatedly.

A cold, bitter beat as the snow picks up.

FRANK

I wish I had my phone. What happens if we have another extraterrestrial encounter? How are we supposed to document it?

HUNT

High time we have that intervention we always talked about.

FRANK

Extra-terrestrial life exists, Hunt. The evidence is overwhelming. We are not alone.

Hunt crushes an empty beer can. Pops open a new one and takes a swig -- SPITS it out.

HUNT

What the fuck is this shit?

WINSTON

It's a gluten-free Black IPA from a brewpub in Chicago. Rated four stars at the Great American Brewing Convention.

Without a word, Hunt tosses the still-full bottle over his shoulder, out of the deer stand.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

Fuck you. I paid three dollars a bottle for that.

Hunt stands and undoes his pants. Starts pissing over the edge.

HUNT

Here you go Winston. I got a gluten-free, A+, Hunt-rated pilsner with your name on it.

WINSTON

Have you ever sought professional help?

HUNT

Have you ever sucked a dick?

WINSTON

If I did, yours would be the last one.

HUNT

I think you just inferred you suck cock.

WINSTON

And so what if I have?

HUNT

Well, then I'd call you a queer.

WINSTON

Well then technically you wouldn't be wrong.

A stunned beat, permeated only by the sound of Hunt's urine raining in the snow below.

FRANK

Winston, are you gay?

Winston's face says it all.

Hunt hurriedly stuff his junk back in his pants.

HUNT

You mean to tell me I'm splitting a room with a fucking faggot all weekend?

FRANK

Hunt! You can't use the F-word.

HUNT

Fuck I can't. I been fucking using it all my fucking life.

(MORE)

HUNT (CONT'D)

And now I can't just cause fucking
Winston decides to switch teams?

WINSTON

I didn't decide anything-

HUNT

So, what? You always been queer?

WINSTON

Yeah.

HUNT

This whole time? High school?
Middle school? Fucking summer
camp?!

WINSTON

Yeah.

HUNT

Fuck! I shared a sleeping bag
with you when we were kids, man!

WINSTON

We were kids. I didn't know yet.

HUNT

Fuck that. You've seen me naked,
you sick fuck. Fuck this.

Hunt opens the trapdoor and descends the ladder.

(Beat)

FRANK

That could've gone worse.

BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG -- Hunt unloads a round of
anger shots below them.

Winston looks at Frank, who shrugs.

FRANK (CONT'D)

So... So, what's it like?

WINSTON

What's what like?

FRANK

Being gay?

Winston sighs and refocuses his scope on the field.

EXT. FOREST - DUSK

Hunt storms through the trees and the thickening snow, rifle slung over his back, joint pinched between his lips. In complete silence except for the pound of his boots --

-- *Crunch, crunch, crunch.*

He stops suddenly. He digs desperately into his jacket and finds his drug envelope. He pokes it open and sniffs a bit of the white powder.

The relief is immediate. He closes his eyes and revels in the moment.

-- *Snap* --

Hunt opens his eyes. He looks back.

But there's no one there. (At least that he can see)

He takes a deep, unsettled breath and edges forward, scanning the area. Trees and brush so thick, it's impossible to see beyond them.

EXT. CABIN - DUSK

Hunt stalks out of the woods cautiously and hoofs it around the cabin.

He approaches THE SHED. Reaches down to grasp the door handle, but stops short...

It's covered in BLOOD.

THE JOINT

Drops from his mouth and *sizzles* into the snow.

He checks his body up and down for a wound but finds none.

In the snow nearby, more BLOOD. A light trail leading away into the woods.

He holds his breath... Listening... The wind *swirls* through, *rustling* the surrounding trees.

He inches toward the shed --

-- *Crunch, crunch, crunch* --

He clutches the rifle tight. Dead aim on the shed door. Leans down and GRASPS the door handle firmly.

(Beat)

He RIPS the shed door upward, jumps back, and AIMS!

HUNT

Shit.

The *rusty* door went up only a foot before getting stuck.

He backs away. Squats down and aims at the gap.

It's too dark to see anything.

He backs to the truck cautiously. Opens the door with his eyes on the shed. Reaches into the glove compartment. Feels around til he finds a flashlight.

He crouches down once more, balancing the rifle from his hip. He shines the flashlight...

INSIDE THE SHED

The beacon of light illuminates the shed bit by bit. Beer, guns, ammunition --

-- SOMETHING MOVES --

A quick flash across the back of the shed.

Hunt stumbles back on his ass. The flashlight scatters across the icy ground. *What the fuck was that?*

INT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Like a gunner in a fortified bunker, Hunt watches the shed. Front door held ajar. Rifle trained on the gap beneath the door. Fresh cigarette perched on his lips.

HUNT

I can play this game all day.

...Gunshots in the distance...

Hunt turns his head towards the sound. *As his head is turned we see something flash past in the background.*

He turns back to the shed -- Jolts upright.

The shed door is OPEN.

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Hunt edges out of the cabin, rifle aloft. He clocks the area. The truck. The treeline. *No sign of life.*

He eases quietly to the edge of the shed. Back against the side. He takes a deep breath...

(Beat)

...WHIPS around the corner -- Aims inside.

Weapons hang on their hooks untouched. Mounds of ammunition and hunting gear remain in place.

He arcs inside cautiously. Spotting the trail of blood on the floor. He follows it deeper.

In the corner, a puddle of blood, smeared around like something sat in it. Tangled up in the blood is a camouflage hunting vest, torn to shreds.

Hunt pokes at it with his rifle.

A shadow flashes behind him.

Hunt senses the movement. He whips around, rifle raised-

WINSTON

Whoa!

HUNT

Winston -- God dammit.

Hunt lowers the rifle and stares venomously at Winston.

WINSTON

What's going on?

HUNT

We got problems.

INT. CABIN, KITCHEN - DAY

The guys stand around the shredded hunting vest.

FRANK

What do you think did it?

WINSTON

I've seen three coyotes today.

HUNT

This weren't no coyote. I'm telling you whatever did *this* opened and closed that shed door. You ever seen a coyote do that?

He looks pointedly at Winston.

WINSTON

You're saying...

HUNT

That's exactly what I'm saying.

(Beat)

FRANK

Wait, what are you saying?

WINSTON

Hunt's saying, that there's some escaped *convict* gallivanting around in the trees out there.

Frank laughs nervously.

FRANK

You're kidding... Right?

Hunt just stares at them, dead serious.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Well we need to do something. We need to call the police -- Somebody call the police! That cop said to call the Sheriff's office -- Why aren't we calling the police?

WINSTON

You realize this is more idiotic than Frank being abducted by aliens?

HUNT

Well in that case there weren't any evidence to the contrary, Winston.

WINSTON

I mean fuck, I'll buy you a new vest, Hunt, if money's the problem-

HUNT

This ain't about money, assblaster. Just cause you got more'n everybody-

FRANK

We're talking about a crazed,
psychopathic, axe-wielding maniac!
Our lives are in danger! We need
to call the police right now!

WINSTON

Who said anything about an axe?

HUNT

If anything he probably has a 12-
gage shotgun he stole from my shed.

WINSTON

Personally, I would've gone for the
A.K. if I were him.

FRANK

SOMEBODY CALL THE FUCKING COPS!!!

Winston and Hunt stare at Frank.

WINSTON

Okay okay. Who has a phone? I
don't have mine on me. I think I
left it in the deer stand.

HUNT

Don't got one.

WINSTON

You don't have a phone?

HUNT

I had a burner last month but I ran
out of minutes.

WINSTON

What are you, a corner boy in
Baltimore?

HUNT

Sorry Rich Uncle Nickel-tits, are
you gonna pay for my cell phone
plan?

WINSTON

Frank?

FRANK

Hunt confiscated mine.

The guys simultaneously look out the window at:

THE TRUCK

Sitting idle, 30 yards from the cabin. A blanket of white now covering it.

EXT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

The door *creeks* open. Hunt pokes his head out. He checks both ways.

Seeing nothing, he nods and emerges fully. Rifle tight to his chest. Frank and Winston in tow.

Frank edges forward. He creeps quietly toward the snow covered truck. Shooting quick glances at the tree line. He grabs the door handle and pulls -- *It's locked.*

FRANK

(Whispers)

It's locked.

HUNT

(To Winston)

Go inside and get the keys.

Winston sighs and slips inside.

Frank backs against the truck. He glances nervously at the quickly darkening treeline. As does Hunt. A serene *quiet* surrounds them. Just them and the falling snow. *Is something out there? Watching them?*

Winston returns. He hurls the keys to Frank --

-- Who promptly drops them. They sink into the snow.

Frank drops to his knees and digs, growing panicked.

...A gust of wind blows in, rustling the trees...

Hunt re-clutches his rifle. Eyes vigilant.

Frank finds the keys. He turns the lock and opens the door. Slides inside and opens the glove compartment.

His phone is missing.

INT. CABIN - DUSK

Hunt stands at the window watching vigilantly. Rifle clung tight to his chest. Outside, darkness creeps nearer. The snow *beating* hard against the cabin.

FRANK

We *all* saw the phone go in there.

WINSTON

Why don't we just go out to the deer stand and find my phone?

FRANK

That psychopath is out there!

HUNT

(Cryptic)

Ain't being out there we got ta worry 'bout.

Hunt detaches himself from his window post. He taps the thermometer on the kitchen window. It reads *-20 degrees*.

HUNT (CONT'D)

It's when that son bitch starts to freeze to death. Realizes he only has one thing he can do. Only one alternative. And that's making his way in here.

Frank and Winston exchange a worried look.

HUNT (CONT'D)

I say we pack up what's in the cabin. Then nice and calm-like we walk to the truck and drive away. If we don't leave now we may not get another chance. Snowstorm's coming hard.

They regard each other candidly. Hunt, serious. Frank, terrified. Winston, annoyed.

WINSTON

(To Frank)

I don't mind saying, I told you so.

-- A truck engine ROARS --

THROUGH THE WINDOW:

The lights on Hunt's pickup truck flick on. A shadowy figure in the drivers seat.

HUNT

Mother fucker-

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

The truck PEELS OUT.

Hunt bursts out the door. Cocks his rifle.

WINSTON

Hunt, stop!

Hunt FIRES -- HITS the rear fender.

The truck SLIDES through the snow.

Struggles to gain traction as it *barrels* down the driveway.

Hunt gives chase. FIRES again --

-- The back right TIRE explodes!

The truck loses control. CAREENS off the driveway into the forest --

-- Clips a tree --

-- ROLLS OVER --

-- SLAMS to a halt.

(Beat)

Hunt dashes out into the woods, rifle aloft.

HUNT

Show yourself mother fucker!

The shadowy figure inside the truck dips out of sight.

Hunt FIRES --

-- The shot chips the bark off the tree.

Hunt flanks the truck...

...But the door is open and the driver seat is empty.

Hunt turns his aim to the woods. The rifle quakes in his hands. *Breathing hellfire.*

HUNT (CONT'D)

SHOW YOUR PALE ASS MOTHER FUCKER!

Hunt scans the forest desperately.

Snap --

-- Hunt rips toward the sound and unloads --

HUNT (CONT'D)
 AHHHHHHH!

-- *BANG! BANG! BANG!* The shots flail aimlessly into the woods, *echoing* through the vacant trees.

WINSTON (O.S.)
 Hunt! He's gone.

Hunt breathes heavy, the cocaine adrenaline running wild. He lowers his weapon and retreats to --

THE TRUCK

Beat to shit. Smoke pours out of the engine. The wires are exposed and hot-wired. Footprints lead away from the truck into the trees but quickly disappear into the darkness.

WINSTON (CONT'D)
 It's dead, you idiot. Now we're stuck out here with him.

HUNT
 Oh, *now* you believe me? What gave it away?

Hunt storms back to the cabin. Winston watches irritably. Frank just stares, wide-eyed and frightened.

A gust of wind blows in. The snow picks up noticeably. Winston pulls his collar tight.

WINSTON
 Let's get back in the cabin.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Hunt bursts inside. He turns over his manila envelope. Pours out the rest of his coke.

He dives in nose first -- SNORTS it with deep satisfaction.

The cabin door creaks open... Hunt looks round. Winston and Frank stare at him from the doorway.

HUNT
 The fuck you want?

Winston slams the door shut and flips the lock.

WINSTON
Perfect. You're a junkie.

Hunt sneers and turns away.

WINSTON (CONT'D)
This weekend just keeps getting
better.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

The thermometer reads -25 degrees. Frank fiddles with the radio. Trying to get a signal, but only getting static. Their complete stock of food, water, weapons, and ammunition is piled on the table.

WINSTON
The truth of the matter is we're
trapped out here. We're miles from
anyone else and with the snowstorm
what it is, we wouldn't make it
far. We have enough food and water
to wait out the storm. We can
board up the windows and hunker
down til it passes-

Hunt *slams* a crate on the table. He pries it open. It's
filled with WW2 era GRENADES.

WINSTON (CONT'D)
Holy fuck.

FRANK
Was your father an arms dealer?

HUNT
Gramps was always ready for the
Soviet invasion.

He pockets two.

WINSTON
What do you think you're doing?

HUNT
Goin' hunting.

He picks up his shotgun. Reloads it.

WINSTON
The fuck you are.

HUNT
I ain't gonna sit in here and wait
to get fucked like a Frenchman.

(MORE)

HUNT (CONT'D)

Man's gotta get inside this cabin if he wants to live. He ain't got nowhere else to go.

WINSTON

You ever hear the phrase "the best offense is a good defense?"

HUNT

That some of your gay logic?

FRANK

I think it's the other way around, actually.

Hunt presses a rifle into Frank's hands.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(Panicked)

What am I supposed to do with this?

HUNT

Anyone sides me comes through that door ya shoot 'em.

Hunt pulls on another jacket. Hat and gloves too.

WINSTON

You have no idea what you're dealing with. We don't know if this guy is crazy. We don't know if he's a murderer or a rapist.

FRANK

Maybe he just forgot to pay his taxes.

HUNT

I aim to find out. Better out there than in here.

WINSTON

Do you have a death wish, or are you really just this stupid?

FRANK

You guys-

HUNT

You lie to me for 20 years, and you still think I give a damn what you have to say?

STORE CLERK
Hey there fellas.

WINSTON
Holy shit.

Winston sticks his head outside and checks both ways
incredulously.

WINSTON (CONT'D)
What is *she* doing here?

STORE CLERK
He invited me.

WINSTON
You what?

HUNT
Sorry to disappoint you Winston. I
know you were looking forward to
the sausage-fest and all.

Winston slams the door shut.

WINSTON
How did you get here?

STORE CLERK
I drove.

FRANK
You drove?! Where's your car? We
can use it!

STORE CLERK
Broke down about a half mile up the
road. I was kinda hoping one of
you boys could come jump me.

WINSTON
Did you see anybody else out there?

STORE CLERK
No. Why, what's going on? You
guys are acting strange.

FRANK
What's going on? We're all about
to be murdered by a crazed psycho -
who may or may not be wielding an
axe - is what's going on!

HUNT

Calm down, Frank. Nobody gonna get murdered by no one. Four of us and one of him out there.

STORE CLERK

Are you saying that maniac is outside?

HUNT

Appears that way. You okay?

STORE CLERK

Yeah. I'm just scared.

Hunt puts an arm around her. Pulls her tight.

HUNT

Don't you worry darling. Ain't nothing to be frightened of. Everything's gonna be okay.

FRANK

What about a phone? Does she have a phone?

STORE CLERK

Sorry, my stupid parents took it away.

Hunt's grasp instinctively slackens. Winston stifles a laugh.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

The last hints of the sun have gone. Snow *pummels* the distressed planks of the cabin.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Hunt overturns a coffee table. He stomps on a leg, breaking them off one at a time.

He presses the table up covering the window and NAILS it against the wall.

BEDROOM

Winston pries apart a dresser drawer. He holds a piece up to the window. Hammers in a nail, boarding up the window.

KITCHEN

Frank sits Indian-style in the middle of the room, hugging the old radio, rocking nervously. He turns the knobs, searching for any semblance of a station.

The cabin *groans* under the gathering weight of the snow. Frank glances nervously overhead. The Store Clerk sits opposite him, watching him curiously.

STORE CLERK

Are you scared?

FRANK

No... Well... Sort of, I guess.

STORE CLERK

What's your name?

FRANK

Frank.

STORE CLERK

I'm Panama.

FRANK

Like the country?

PANAMA

Like the Van Halen song.

FRANK

Oh... Right, of course.

Frank stands and scrambles to the fireplace where Winston feeds the last couple pieces of wood into the fire.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(Discreetly)

Winston, what do we really know about this girl?

(Off Winston's look)

How do we know she's not working with the fugitive out there?

WINSTON

Jesus, Frank. What is wrong with you?

FRANK

I'm just saying. We should keep an eye on her is all. We don't know anything about her.

They look across the cabin as Hunt puts a blanket around Panama's shoulder. Wrapping her up in his arms.

HUNT
You sure you aren't cold?

PANAMA
No. I don't really feel the cold.

He stares into her dark, clouded eyes. *Getting lost...*

WINSTON
Hunt!

The trance breaks.

HUNT
What?

WINSTON
We're out of firewood.

Hunt glares at Winston. But he stands and snatches his coat.

PANAMA
You're not going out there, are you?

HUNT
Sorry darling. Duty calls.

MOMENTS LATER

The guys gather at the reinforced door. Heavy winter gear on. Weapons in hand. Flashlights duct taped to the barrels of their weapons. *With the window boarded up they have no idea what's on the other side.*

HUNT
Lights.

They click on their flashlights.

HUNT (CONT'D)
On my lead.

Winston nods affirmatively.

FRANK
(Panicked)
Couldn't we just burn the furniture instead?

Hunt picks up the chainsaw. He turns the lock. Pulls open the door with a gust of *howling* wind --

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Pitch black.

Hunt lifts his rifle, throwing a beacon of light on their surroundings. Snow, snow, and more snow fills the air. Almost a foot already fallen.

Hunt steps outside. He swings the light around to either side. Catching a load of trees and not much else.

HUNT

Okay. Let's go.

He stomps through the snow, around the cabin to the fallen tree he cut down earlier. Winston and Frank take protective positions nearby, guns ready.

Hunt sets down his rifle carefully so the light hits the downed tree.

He looks at Winston... Then Frank...

...A silent beat broken only by the wind...

He *rips* the chainsaw cord --

-- The motor ROAR echoes through the clearing.

But the clutch didn't catch.

He *rips* it again --

-- Another ear-shattering ROAR reverberates through the trees. But still it doesn't catch.

He *revs* it a third time --

-- The clutch catches and the chainsaw ROARS to life.

Hunt slices into the wood. Cutting at a lumberjack's pace.

Frank pans his flashlight across the darkened treeline, fidgeting nervously.

Winston aims his over the totaled truck. It's completely covered in snow with no way to see inside. He stays on it.

HUNT (CONT'D)
 (Over the noise)
 WINSTON!

Hunt waves Winston over. Winston turns away from the truck. He shoulders his rifle and races over. Gathers up as many cut logs as he can. Then hustles them around to the front of the cabin and runs --

INSIDE

-- Winston drops the logs next to the fireplace.

OUTSIDE

Hunt works the chainsaw feverishly. *Cut. Rip. Cut. Rip.*

Winston runs out of the cabin as Frank passes with the next round of logs.

As the chainsaw roars away, we focus on the front door:

Frank runs into the cabin with a pile of wood.

(Beat)

Frank runs back out of the cabin.

(Beat)

Winston runs inside with another load.

(Beat)

Winston runs out.

(Beat)

Frank runs in.

The door slowly shuts from the inside.

INSIDE

Frank drops his load of logs onto the growing pile. He turns to leave but stops short and looks around...

FRANK
 Panama?

He glides over to the bedroom door and pushes it open.

Panama lays UNCONSCIOUS on the floor. The boards over the window pried off. The window open.

HOARSE VOICE (O.S.)
Don't move.

Frank freezes.

OUTSIDE

Winston picks up another load of logs. He looks to where Frank should be, but the spot is conspicuously empty.

INSIDE

The end of a rifle pokes Frank in the back. Frank slowly raises his hands.

HOARSE VOICE (O.S.)
Sit down.

Frank is too stunned to speak or move.

HOARSE VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I said sit down.

Frank quickly falls into the chair.

Knock-knock-knock!

OUTSIDE

Winston kicks the door, his arms full of wood.

WINSTON
Frank? Frank, open the goddam door!

INSIDE

HOARSE VOICE (O.S.)
Don't make any sudden movements.

The rifle in Frank's back moves out of frame. *Floorboards creak*. Frank cautiously looks up.

A man walks into view. It's the FUGITIVE from the picture. Frostbit and shivering. His hair ragged. Face gaunt and hollow. His arm hangs in a makeshift sling made of the remnants of the hunting vest.

He trains his rifle on Frank and sits calmly opposite him.

Knock-knock-knock!

WINSTON

Frank! What the fuck?

FUGITIVE

Tell him you can't let him in.

Frank's stares wide-eyed, mumbling.

FUGITIVE (CONT'D)

Speak up.

OUTSIDE

Winston drops the wood and tries the door knob. It's locked. He pounds on the door.

FRANK (O.S.)

I can't let you in, Winston.

WINSTON

What?!

Winston rushes around the side of the cabin and motions to Hunt to kill the chainsaw.

INSIDE

The chainsaw turns off. The Fugitive's eyes dart sideways.

FRANK

Wh-what are you going to do to me?

FUGITIVE

Tell them if they try to get inside I'll shoot you.

HUNT (O.S.)

Frank! What the fuck is going on?

FRANK

He says if you try to get inside he'll shoot me.

HUNT (O.S.)

Who says that?

FRANK

The fugitive -- He's standing right in front of me.

HUNT (O.S.)

Frank, don't fuck around!

FRANK

Please just do what he says! He's got a gun in my face. Panama is unconscious-

FUGITIVE

That's enough.

Frank shuts his mouth tight.

OUTSIDE

Winston tries to see through the boarded up windows. He can just barely make out Frank's back.

WINSTON

I can't see him.

Winston stares at Hunt helplessly.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

What do we do?

Hunt picks up the chainsaw and *REVS* it back to life.

INSIDE

The Fugitive fidgets nervously at the sound of the chainsaw. He paces through the cabin, checking the windows and doors. One eye on Frank.

FRANK

Please don't kill me.

FUGITIVE

I'm not here to kill anyone.

FRANK

What do you want from us? What did you do? Why were you in prison?

He sticks the shotgun back in Frank's face.

FUGITIVE

You ask too many questions. Better
for us all if you stop.

OUTSIDE

Hunt takes the chainsaw and cuts into the boards at the base of the cabin wall. He cuts a square. Kicks out the wood, revealing... A crawl space.

INSIDE

The Fugitive sits down opposite Frank. He sticks the rifle in Frank's chest. With the barrel, he peels back Frank's jacket revealing his X-Files t-shirt beneath. The Fugitive's face softens.

FUGITIVE

Listen to me, because we have
precious little time...

(Beat)

My name is Dr. Brad Stanton. I
wasn't in a prison... I was in a
concentration camp.

FRANK

What?

FUGITIVE

There's something terrible
happening in this town and I'm the
only one who knows about it.
They've taken control of the
prison, of the town, of these
woods... You and your friends are
in great danger here.

FRANK

In danger from what?

A hesitant beat as he appraises Frank.

DR. BRAD STANTON

The creatures.

FRANK

What?!

DR. STANTON

Aliens perhaps. Parasitic in
nature. I don't know their origin.

Frank's eyes light up at the mere mention of aliens.

DR. STANTON (CONT'D)
 They've held me captive for months.
 At the camp. They're administering
 tests on human subjects. They were
 holding me... Forcing me to keep
 their other *patients* alive...

The chainsaw turns off. Stanton's eyes nervously dart around the cabin.

DR. STANTON (CONT'D)
 They have complete control of the
 town. They'll come for me.
 They'll come here to this cabin.
 And they won't stop until we're all
 dead... Or worse.

FRANK
 Worse than death?

DR. STANTON
 Enslavement.

A hidden trapdoor in the floor slowly opens up behind the Fugitive. Neither notices as Hunt slowly rises from the trapdoor with a shotgun.

DR. STANTON (CONT'D)
 The town, Aurelia. Didn't you
 notice anything strange? Like it
 was from a different world? A
 different place and time? Every
 single person in that town is a
 slave; a parasitic host. And I'm
 the only one who knows-

Stanton sees motion out of the corner of his eye --

-- Hunt TACKLES him. Stanton's rifle *scuttles* across the cabin floor.

Hunt WRESTLES Stanton onto his back. Mounts him --

-- STRIKES with the butt of his shotgun, SMASHING Stanton in the mouth.

HUNT
 Frank, get the rifle!

Frank hesitates a moment, then dives for the rifle.

Stanton *spits blood* into Hunt's face and pushes him off. He too dives for the rifle --

-- Grabs hold of one end. Frank, the other.

They struggle for control. The rifle BACKFIRES, *splintering* the front door --

OUTSIDE

The SHOT blows through the door -- Winston hits the deck.

INSIDE

Hunt springs into position and cocks his shotgun.

HUNT
Frank get down!

Frank lets go of the rifle -- Stanton slingshots backward.

Hunt FIRES --

-- BLASTING Stanton off his feet, off the boarded up window, landing in the kitchen sink. (*His wayward rifle FIRES into the bedroom door*)

Hunt stomps across the cabin. Unlocks and opens the door. Winston barrels inside with a gust of wind and snow, rubbing himself vigorously.

WINSTON
God damn it, what was--
(Surveying the damage)
Holy shit. What the hell, Frank?

FRANK
He was *inside* the cabin. He came out of nowhere!

They gather around Stanton. He *whimpers* like a wounded animal. Riddled with buckshot. Blood *spooling* out of his mouth.

HUNT
We were afraid of this guy?

FRANK
We have to help him.

HUNT
Ain't lifting a finger for this
fucker.

DR. STANTON
(To Frank)
...*Tell them...*

WINSTON
Tell us what? Frank?

Frank considers for a moment. *Does he believe this stranger?*

FRANK
Nothing... He's crazy. He thinks
aliens are coming here to kill him.

DR. STANTON
Not just me. They'll kill you all.

Hunt jams his shotgun in Stanton's face.

HUNT
Say another goddam word and I'll
finish what I started.

Stanton fades out of consciousness.

FRANK
He'll die. We need to treat his
wounds.

HUNT
I say we let him.

FRANK
Think about what you're saying.

HUNT
Man breaks out of prison, steals my
truck, tries to kill me, and I'm
the asshole?

FRANK
He's a human being.

Frank tries to lift the Fugitive out of the sink but can't.

WINSTON
Frank's right, Hunt.

HUNT

What happened to him being a *crazed psychopath*? I've seen how this ends. *We've all* seen how this ends.

Winston gives him a hand. They lift him onto the kitchen table.

HUNT (CONT'D)

For fuck's sake, tie him down at least -- Wait a second... Where's Panama?

Frank and Winston look up.

FRANK

She was knocked unconscious... In the bedroom.

They all look to the bedroom door. It's riddled with bullet holes.

Hunt strides across the room and pushes it open.

THE BEDROOM

Panama sits on the edge of the bed, waiting patiently, as if nothing has happened. She looks at Hunt, serene as can be.

PANAMA

Hi there.

HUNT

You okay?

PANAMA

Why wouldn't I be?

Hunt glances at the gunshots in the door... Then at the damaged window... Then back at Panama.

She simply smiles.

KITCHEN

Frank opens the Fugitive's shirt. He has three gunshot wounds. One shoulder. One arm. And one buckshot wound to the chest. Blood seeps heavily from the chest wounds.

Winston pulls items out from under the sink: kitchen tongs, rags, seran wrap, alcohol, buckets...

WINSTON

Do you know how to treat gunshot wounds?

FRANK

How hard can it be?

Hunt returns.

HUNT

She's alright... Think she got knocked cold. Doesn't seem to remember anything happening.

Hunt looks back through the door:

Panama slides up the bed, staring right at him. With measured calculation, she spreads open her legs.

Hunt's jaw slackens ever so slightly. He holds up a finger. Turns back to the guys.

HUNT (CONT'D)

I'm... I'm just gonna get her situated.

Hunt slips inside the bedroom.

The lock clicks. Winston and Frank exchange a glance.

WINSTON

Forget him. Let's focus, Frank.

FRANK

Right... This'll have to do.

Frank picks up a years old bottle of Everclear. First, he chokes down a swig. Then pours it over Stanton's body. Rubs it into his own hands.

Winston sets down a bucket of water next to Frank. Frank soaks a handful of rags, then puts them on the chest wound.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Put pressure here.

Winston changes places. Frank goes to work on the shoulder wound. Dabs at it, cleaning it. Then he picks up the-

KITCHEN TONGS

He holds them over the open fire. Douses them in everclear. Then, with a pitiful glance at Dr. Stanton, pries them deep into the shoulder wound -- Even unconscious, Stanton convulses.

Frank yanks out a FRAGMENTED BULLET --

An onrush of blood follows it. Winston winces and looks away. Frank presses a rag to the wound, stemming the tide.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(Amazed)

Cool.

He looks at his patient, contemplating his next move. He looks around the cabin quickly. His eyes fall on:

A BOX OF SERAN WRAP

Frank grabs the box. He rips off a lengthy piece. Places it over the shoulder wound -- Wraps it down under the armpit and around again, sealing the wounds shut. Then --

DUCT TAPE

Wraps around. Over the shoulder and beneath the armpit. Holding the bandages tight.

WINSTON

You kidding me?

FRANK

Theoretically, it'll keep the wounds shut and infections out. Well, any *more* infections.

(Off Winston's stare)

I watched a lot of MacGuyver.

In a series of shots, we see Frank, with help from Winston, do the same process to the arm wound.

Clean it -- Wrap it -- Duct tape it.

And then again to the chest wound.

Clean it -- Wrap it -- Duct tape it.

Frank unwinds the last bit of duct tape from the roll. Pats it tight to the Fugitive's chest.

FRANK'S BLOOD COVERED HANDS

Shake from the adrenaline. He quivers a bottle of vodka to his lips -- But he stops.

He turns the Fugitive's head. On the back of his neck is a laser-embedded BRAND.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Come look at this.

WINSTON

Looks like the tattoo of a wack-job.

FRANK

I've never seen a tattoo like this.
It has ridges.

Winston runs his hand across the brand.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You know. What he said makes a lot
of sense.

WINSTON

Really, Frank? In what world does
anything he said make sense?

FRANK

The people in that town. They
don't act normal.

WINSTON

The people in *this cabin* don't act
normal. This is fucking paranoid,
even for you, Frank.

FRANK

But what if I'm not. Think about
the Drake equation, Winston.

WINSTON

The what?

FRANK

The Drake Equation. It's a
mathematical formula scientists use
to calculate the number of
extraterrestrial civilizations in
the Universe. Scientists estimate
there are nearly one hundred
million alien civilizations in the
Milky Way Galaxy alone. It's
mathematically sound that at least
one of those would be advanced
enough to contact earth.

WINSTON

You know, you might be on to
something Frank.

FRANK

Really?

He punches Frank in the arm.

WINSTON
Of course not!

FRANK
Oww.

WINSTON
Even if your formula is accurate,
even if intelligent life exists out
there, and even if aliens could
somehow reach earth, what makes you
think they would choose this
backwards ass piece of real estate
to launch some full-scale covert
invasion?

Frank thinks about it for a moment...

FRANK
...I don't know.

WINSTON
And here I thought you were the
expert.

FRANK
We can never have the answers for
everything, but we can have *the*
questions.

WINSTON
What does that even mean, Frank?

FRANK
It means we have to consider that
what he's telling us is true. And
what it could mean ramification-
wise for the human race.

WINSTON
What ramifications?

FRANK
That a person -- somebody you know --
-- could be an alien host. That
anybody, at any time could be not
what they appear to be.

-- A girlish squeal leaks through the bedroom door --

They both look sharply at the door.

WINSTON
 Everything that just happened, and
 he's in there, doing that.

Winston puts on his jacket.

FRANK
 Where are you going?

WINSTON
 We need to call the police. I'm
 going to find my phone. Then we
 can end this once and for all.

FRANK
 I don't think that's a good idea.
 What if the police are in on it?

WINSTON
 God bless you Frank, but I'm going
 to end this.

Winston picks up a flashlight. He turns it on-

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The flashlight beacon pierces the darkness revealing an
 avalanche of snow pummeling the earth.

Winston pushes vigorously through the trees. Bundled tight
 from head to toe.

He shines the flashlight up to see:

THE DEER STAND
 He grabs hold of a ladder rung. Pulls himself up. One step
 at a time.

Hssssssss --

INT. CABIN, KITCHEN - MEANWHILE

Frank fiddles with the radio but gets only *static*.

Behind him, Dr. Stanton is strapped to the table with thick
 rope, still unconscious.

Frank looks fretfully to the thermometer. *-28 degrees*. He
 gives it a tap to make sure it's working. It noticeably
 drops another couple degrees.

DR. STANTON (O.S.)

Water.

Frank jumps --

Stanton holds up a hand weakly. Frank grabs a jug. Quickly pours some water into his waiting mouth. He's in rough shape. Each breath a struggle.

DR. STANTON (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Frank glances nervously at the closed bedroom door, then discreetly leans closer.

FRANK

I want you to tell me more...
About the aliens.

DR. STANTON

What's your name?

FRANK

Frank.

DR. STANTON

I thought I was crazy, Frank.

FRANK

I want to believe you, but how can
I?

Stanton stares at him, considering...

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - MEANWHILE

Panama straddles Hunt. Their lips locked. Their bodies intertwined. She pulls back, breathlessly.

PANAMA

How does that feel?

HUNT

You are just what the doctor
ordered.

PANAMA

(Confiding)

Have you had sex before?

HUNT

Yeah. Of course I have.

PANAMA

(Bashfully)

I haven't. Would you be my first?

She kisses Hunt again, as his eyes bug out.

HUNT

(Through locked lips)

No pressure then.

THE DEER STAND - CONTINUOUS

Winston grabs the last rung and hurls himself up into the deer stand.

A fierce wind *whips* around him. He crouches low, flashlight examining the floor.

Snow, Beer cans, bottles, cartridges... His cell phone!

Winston rips his gloves off and grabs the phone. He hits a button and to his relief, it lights up.

WINSTON

Ha ha!

He dials 9-1-1 and presses send.

Beep-Beep-Beep... No service.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

Dammit.

THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

DR. STANTON

I was the only doctor in town. At first I didn't notice anything. Business was slower. Regulars stopped showing up. I noticed a rash of untreated frostbite going around. It didn't make any sense, why someone would just freeze a foot or a hand off and not come see me about it. So I inquired further.

He takes a deep breath, comes up *coughing*.

THE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Panama slips Hunt's shirt off over his head. She takes her own shirt off, revealing the pink bra underneath. She latches her mouth back onto his, guiding Hunt onto his back as she grinds down on him.

DR. STANTON (V.O.)

Next thing I knew I woke up in a cell with a dozen other people from town... Nobody knew how they'd gotten there or where we were...

THE DEER STAND

Winston descends the ladder. Slowly. Carefully. One rung at a time. The wind and snow *beating* hard against him.

DR. STANTON (V.O.)

Over the course of the next two days our numbers dwindled. These dead eyed guards would come and take one person at a time. We didn't know who they were; CIA, KGB, the military. They wouldn't give us any answers... Then they came for me...

THE KITCHEN

Stanton stares 1000-yards away. Frank is absorbed.

STANTON

They took me to this room. It was pitch black, but I could feel them. I could sense their presence. Watching me. All of a sudden the lights came on. I was in some sort of laboratory. There were two-way mirrors on all sides of me. I was strapped to a metal table. There was a man on the table next to me. I recognized him from our cell. The guard unclasped my restraints and said that I was responsible for keeping this man alive.

THE BEDROOM

A buckle clatters to the floor. Followed closely by a pair of pants.

STANTON (V.O.)

The man's body was in shock. His system was completely shutting down. I asked what had been done to him? But I received no answers. I asked what would happen if I couldn't save him. But they wouldn't give me any answers. I suppose in the end I didn't need one.

But there's something wrong with Hunt. He pushes Panama up into a sitting position.

PANAMA

(Absolutely devastated)
What is it? What's wrong.

HUNT

I just need a little kick.

He smiles at her reassuringly.

WOODS

Winston fights through wind and snow, holding his phone high, glowing in the darkness, looking for a bar of service but finding nothing.

STANTON (V.O.)

It took everything in my power to keep him from dying, but I saved him.

KITCHEN

STANTON

After I stabilized him, they brought me another patient. Again, I was tasked with saving her life. Then it happened again... and again... and eventually I realized what was happening... I was helping them refine their technique. I was a *prisoner*...

BEDROOM

Hunt leans over and measures out lines of coke, hunger in his eyes.

STANTON (V.O.)
 And my patients... They were
slaves.

Panama wraps her bare legs around him from behind.

WOODS

Shivering, Winston pockets the phone and puts his glove on.
 He raises his flashlight-

A COYOTE. Stands twenty feet away, staring at him, the eyes
 glowing ominously.

WINSTON
 Go on! Shoo!

It *snarls*.

Winston hurriedly takes the rifle off his back.

But the coyote is gone. Disappeared into the night.

A *gust of wind* presses down hard on Winston. He battens
 himself against it, waving the flashlight around... *But the
 woods are seemingly empty.*

With a brief glance over his shoulder, he pushes onward-

CABIN

Stanton seems more alert, watching Frank pace.

FRANK
 How do you know they were aliens?
 You could've been part of some
 weird government experiment.

STANTON
 There is a telltale sign. An
incision at the base of the head
 near the back of the neck. Not
 overtly large, but not a bee-sting
 either. It's where they inject
 you... As far as I can tell, it
 plants some sort of egg. In due
 time, the egg hatches. At which
 point you cease to exist. You are
 a *vessel*.

BEDROOM

Before Hunt can snort, Panama pulls him backward, kissing his neck intensely. But we focus on the distinct scar on her neck.

PANAMA

I need you *now*.

She pushes him onto his back and mounts him. Grinding down hard. Writhing on top him like an animal.

But he's still having trouble. His face scrunched up with grim determination.

HUNT

Sorry.

She takes his head and guides him back to the coke. He happily obliges.

She stares at Hunt without emotion. Waiting. Breath heavy.

STANTON (V.O.)

They will come here... The cold, the snow, will not stop them. It may be too late for me. But you...

KITCHEN

Frank stares at Stanton with wide-eyed intensity.

FRANK

I need proof.

STANTON

I can show you. But you need to help me up.

FRANK

(Skeptically)
I can't.

STANTON

Frank, I'm dying. This isn't about me anymore. This is about humanity. Persevering through this adversity. And you and I are on the same side here.

With some trepidation, Frank relents. He begins to loosen the rope binding Stanton.

BEDROOM

Panama's eyes roll back in her head. She tips her head back. Unlocks her jaw and opens her mouth...

KITCHEN

Frank finishes untying Stanton. He supports his back and head. Helps him into a sitting position.

STANTON

I'm cold. Can you please bring me that jacket.

Frank crosses the room. He kneels down and picks up the jacket in question. He turns around --

-- Stanton is standing over him. AXE IN HAND.

Frank's eyes go wide.

Stanton STRIKES --

-- Frank falls face first against the table, knocking the radio to the ground. *It comes to life, kicking out a pattern of computerized beeps.*

Stanton looks sharply at the radio.

BEDROOM

Hunt SNORTS a line. Hungrily rubs the residue against his gums. Drugs rapidly coursing through his system.

Panama *coughs profusely*, like she's choking. Something appears to be emerging out of her mouth. Something dark. Something large...

THE DOOR BURSTS OPEN!

Hunt swings his head around.

Stanton races inside with the AXE raised. He SWINGS --

-- CHOPS INTO PANAMA'S NECK!

Blood *streaks* across Hunt's face.

Stanton rears back and SWINGS again --

-- SLICING clean through her neck!

Her HEAD rests uncomfortably for a split second... Then drops down onto Hunt's chest. Her mouth smashes shut, concealing the emerging object.

HUNT'S POV

Panama's decapitated head stares at him. BLOOD *ripples* down her body from the neck like a fountain, showering him in red. The colors swirl as the drugs seep into his consciousness.

HUNT
(Delayed panic)
Ahhh!

He tosses the head in the air. Falls to the ground, panic-gasping for air.

Panama's headless torso topples to the floor. Her head rolls to a stop on the ground, the entrails hanging out.

HUNT'S POV:

The room vibrates violently around him. Colors pulsate in and out of focus. Stanton stands over him like a DEMON.

Stanton leans down and picks up the head with both hands. He turns it over in his hands, investigating with a medical eye.

HUNT (CONT'D)
You mother fucker.

Hunt LUNGES at Stanton -- Stanton quickly sidesteps as Hunt flies into the dresser.

Stanton turns around and waits.

Hunt flies at him again. Stanton sidesteps him once more -- SMASHES him in the head with the blunt face of the AXE-

CUT TO BLACK.

FRANK (PRELAP)
(Panicked whispers)
Hunt! Hunt, wake up!

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Hunt opens his eyes. Ropes bind him tight to the wall. He's in his underwear. Covered in dried blood.

He looks over. Frank is bound next to him, eyes panicked.

FRANK
Hunt! Oh my God. You're alive.

HUNT

(Dazed)

What's going on? Where's Panama?

FRANK

You don't remember?

HUNT

Remember what?

Hunt looks to the bedroom. Panama's lifeless torso lies there. He blinks hard, fragmented memories flooding back.

FRANK

We need to get out of here, right now, Hunt. Hunt, listen to me. We have to get out of here-

Stanton stalks into the room. Frank quiets.

Stanton has adopted some of their clothing and seems to be preparing for war. Gathering guns and ammunition. He glances at them pitifully.

STANTON

I'm sorry I have to do this to you, Frank, but I can't take any chances. Not with *them* out there.

HUNT

(Gathering his senses)

What are you doing to us?

STANTON

Well that depends.

He kneels down. Looks Hunt over with a doctor's eye.

STANTON (CONT'D)

Did she get to you? Have you been turned? Some are not even aware until the moment it hatches.

HUNT

Fuck you.

STANTON

You may seem yourself. Or your simpleton persona may be easily replicated.

HUNT

Fuck. You.

FRANK
You said you had proof.

HUNT
Proof of what? That he's insane?

STANTON
I AM NOT INSANE!

He flies off the handle, getting right in Hunt's face. Handgun waiving dangerously.

STANTON (CONT'D)
I am not insane... You, you have no idea, what I've been through. No, I am *far too sane* for what I have seen.

Vrooooooom -- A distant car motor.

Stanton looks wildly toward the sound. He grabs a rifle and ducks down behind the table. Holds up a finger for silence.

A pair of headlights flash against the cabin, casting slits of light through the boarded windows.

HUNT
HELP! WE'RE IN HERE-

Stanton lunges and SWATS Hunt across the face.

He GAGS Hunt's mouth with a collection of bandages. Runs duct tape around his head as Hunt roars through the gag.

STANTON
(To Frank)
Not a word. Our lives depend on it.

Frank nods.

Stanton slips through the trapdoor into the crawl space.

Hunt roars at Frank, imploring him to do something. Frank bends awkwardly, gaining a view through cracks in the boards.

FRANK
Hunt. I can see a car!

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

A POLICE JEEP parks at the top of the driveway overlooking the cabin. Its headlight beams *pierce* the falling snow.

The driver door opens... Out steps the OFFICER from the roadblock. No hat. No gloves. A look of menace, even in the brittle cold.

He illuminates a flashlight and proceeds towards the cabin. He surveys the scene cautiously, his dead-eyed stare taking in everything. The truck crashed into the tree. The bloody shed. The cabin itself; boarded up, leaking dim firelight.

OFFICER
(Calls out)
Is anybody in there?

THE KITCHEN

Hunt and Frank look at each other, listening carefully.

THROUGH THE CRACK:
A glimpse of the officer, silhouetted by headlights.

OFFICER (O.S.)
If you are injured or in danger,
call out to me. I am an officer of
the Aurelia Sheriff's office. I
can help you.

Hunt grunts, imploring Frank to get his attention.

FRANK
What if he's one of them?

Hunt *screams* through his gag with eyes of fury.

FRANK (CONT'D)
We're in here!

A tense beat while they listen for a response.

OFFICER (O.S.)
Hello?!

FRANK
We're inside! He's got us tied up!

OFFICER (O.S.)
Do you know where the fugitive is?

FRANK
I don't know! Please hurry.

Crunch-crunch-crunch. Through the cracks in the boards, they see the silhouette of the Officer. He pushes against the door. He *rams* his shoulder into it --

-- *Thud!* But it doesn't budge.

OFFICER
I need to check the perimeter.
Stay where you are.

The Officer disappears from view. Hunt hangs his head.

FRANK
It's okay. He'll be back.

...*THE ROOF GROANS*...

Hunt and Frank's eyes drift upward. *Is someone up there?*

As they look up, the trapdoor opens behind them. A figure emerges --

WINSTON
Guys!

Frank screams-

FRANK
AHH! Winston?!

Winston climbs out. Slams shut the trapdoor behind him. He starts stacking objects on top of it, logs, cases of beer, anything to keep it weighted down.

That's when he sees Panama. He pauses momentarily, stunned.

WINSTON
Be quiet. We don't have long.

He rips the tape from Hunt's mouth. Hunt spits out the gag.

HUNT
Ah, what the fuck took you so long-

Winston puts the tape back over Hunt's mouth. *Hunt roars.*

WINSTON
Nice to see you too.

Winston pulls on Frank's ropes.

FRANK
It's all my fault, Winston. I shouldn't have believed him.

WINSTON
No, it's not your fault, Frank.

FRANK
You found your phone. You called
the cops!

WINSTON
I didn't.

FRANK
What do you mean?

WINSTON
I didn't call them.

They stare at each other. *A moment of unified clarity.*

WINSTON (CONT'D)
Frank, something isn't right here.

...A figure appears outside the door...

FRANK
Winston-

Winston ducks out of sight. The silhouette hovers there,
silently.

(A tense beat)

BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG --

-- Bullets splinter the door frame.

Winston dives for cover.

THUD -- The DOOR bursts open!

The Officer steps into view. He walks forward into the
cabin, a look of serene nothingness on his face.

He PLUMMETS --

-- Face first. Lands at their feet. His back bloody.

STANTON stands in the doorway. Gun in hand.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Oh god.

STANTON
That's twice you've sold me out,
Frank. I can guarantee there won't
be a third time.

Winston dives -- KICKS the door shut in Stanton's FACE.

WINSTON
 Help Frank!

Winston presses his body against the door --

-- Stanton *heaves* from the other side.

Frank drags himself across the floor (His legs still tied up). Leans his body up against the splintered door.

OUTSIDE

Enraged, Stanton *hurls* his body at the door --

INSIDE

-- The DOOR SPLINTERS further.

Winston and Frank hold themselves desperately against it.

The DOOR SHAKES as Stanton hits it again.

AGAIN!

And AGAIN!

They close their eyes and prepare for another volley...

(Beat)

...But it doesn't come.

They make nervous eye contact, listening intently. *Silent except for the continued thrust of the snowstorm.*

(Beat)

Winston cautiously crawls across the cabin and picks up a shotgun and a handgun. He tosses the handgun to Frank.

WINSTON
 Where did he go?

BOOOOOOOM --

-- AN EXPLOSION RIPS OPEN THE FRONT OF THE CABIN --

-- WINSTON IS THROWN CLEAR ACROSS THE ROOM.

The entire front of the cabin is torn open. A mass of flaming wreckage left behind.

(Beat)

Hsssssssss... Somewhere in the rubble, the radio sputters to life, spitting out static.

Hunt surveys the damage. Winston is unconscious and wounded on the floor. Frank is buried out of sight. But then-

STANTON

Steps through the wall of smoke and fire. GRENADE in one hand. RIFLE in the other.

STANTON

Looks like it's just you and me,
kid. I tried to warn you. But you
wouldn't listen.

He rips the tape off Hunt's mouth.

HUNT

You're insane.

STANTON

Insanity is just a matter of
perspective. Would you like some?
Some perspective?

He points at Winston.

STANTON (CONT'D)

Reality is a constantly shifting
creature. The reality you thought
you knew doesn't even exist
anymore. Your friend is an alien.
That cop. Your *almost hero*, is an
alien.

HUNT

You been in prison too long, buddy.

Stanton carelessly grabs Winston by an arm and a leg --

-- SWINGS his body up. LANDS him hard on the table.

Stanton open the toolbox and pulls out a rusty, jagged SAW.

HUNT (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

He straps Winston to the table with the same ropes he was bound with. Rips off Winston's winter hat and scarf revealing a large bloody gash on Winston's neck.

STANTON

As much as I don't want to admit it, I may need your help if I'm going to make it out of here alive. And since Frank and I didn't work out... Well, you're all I've got. So I'm gonna prove to you once and for all.

He presses the saw to Winston's FOREHEAD.

HUNT

If you touch him I'll kill you.

STANTON

(Appraising Hunt's situation)

I'll have to take that risk.

He DRIVES the blades of the saw into Winston's FOREHEAD --

-- RIPPING OPEN FLESH.

HUNT

You mother fucker! I'll fucking kill you!

STANTON

Yes, that's the spirit. We're going to need that rage when they arrive.

Stanton drives the saw --

-- BACK AND FORTH, BACK AND FORTH --

-- SPECKS OF BLOOD FLY WITH EVERY PASS --

-- The SICK SCRAPE OF METAL ON BONE.

Hunt tears at his restraints, *roaring* in the process.

STANTON (CONT'D)

I wouldn't wake him up if I were you.

Winston's EYES FLICKER OPEN. He mumbles incoherently.

STANTON (CONT'D)

Too late! Say hello to the enemy!

Stanton drives the SAW harder against Winston's skull --

CRACK --

-- The saw breaks through the last bit of bone.

Stanton tosses the saw into a pile of debris. From the toolbox he retrieves a CROWBAR.

He hoists himself up on the table. He stands over Winston and positions the crowbar in the freshly cut opening in Winston's forehead.

Hunt TUGS at his restraints like an *unhinged animal*.

Stanton looks down into Winston's delirious eyes.

STANTON (CONT'D)

You may feel a slight pressure.

He PUSHES DOWN ON THE CROWBAR -- *CRACK!!!*

Winston's skull snaps and bends backwards.

Stanton pulls the broken chunk up, revealing the BRAIN.

Winston's eyes flicker shut. His head tips to the side, looking straight at Hunt.

Hunt stares back. *For the first time, a bit of raw human emotion flashes across his face.*

HUNT

Winston?

Stanton tosses the crowbar into the debris. Hunt hangs his head dejectedly, utterly helpless. Defeated. His eyes well with tears.

HUNT (CONT'D)

Why are you doing this to us?

STANTON

You're not a very good listener are you kid?

Stanton hovers his hands over the brain nervously, preparing to plunge his hands inside. Hunt watches closely.

STANTON (CONT'D)

(To the unseen "Alien")

We meet again.

He plunges his hand inside Winston's skull. He feels around the side of the brain with a disgusted but confident half-smirk...

...His face drops. He digs DEEPER, anger growing.

STANTON (CONT'D)
Where is it?

He rips his hand out --

STANTON (CONT'D)
Dammit.

HUNT
I told you. I told you, you son of
a bitch.

STANTON
No. I was wrong about him, but I'm
not wrong.

He looks around wildly.

STANTON (CONT'D)
Where's that little slut's head?

FRANK (O.S.)
AHHHH!

FRANK RUSHES AT STANTON WITH THE CROWBAR --

-- SMASHES STANTON IN THE CHEST!

HUNT
Frank!

Frank's face is blackened. Half his skin burnt away. A
large gash on his head where his ear should be.

He rears back and SWINGS --

-- Stanton rolls away. Frank connects with the floor.

Stanton scrambles back to his feet. He dives for a HANDGUN.

Frank TACKLES Stanton into the debris.

The saw is knocked near Hunt. He leans back, trying to grab
it with his feet.

Frank POUNDS Stanton in the face.

Stanton propels him off.

Hunt gets a foot on the saw. Drags it closer.

Stanton crawls to the table. Pulls himself up.

Frank is on him instantly. He SWINGS again, *grunting* and displaying aggression we didn't know he possessed -- Stanton ducks.

Hunt rubs his wrist restraints against the saw, catching his own skin.

Frank roars and SWINGS --

-- HITS STANTON IN THE RIBS! Stanton crashes to the ground.

Frank crouches over Stanton and raises the crowbar high over his head --

-- *Click!*

Frank freezes...

Stanton lifts a HANDGUN into frame, cocked and pointed right at Frank's heart.

STANTON
(Coughing up blood)
Off.

(Beat)

The floorboards creak...

PANAMA'S DECAPITATED HEAD rolls into the room and stops in front of Hunt.

Hunt stops sawing. Frank and Stanton look over in disbelief.

One at a time, her eyes open.

They blink and straighten, looking directly at Hunt.

HUNT
What the fuck?

A large *pulsating* bump appears on her forehead.

STANTON
Quickly. Get off me. We have to
burn the head.

The head *vibrates.*

Stanton struggles to break free, but Frank can't take his eyes off the head.

Hunt resumes sawing, his wrists bloody.

Stanton pushes the gun deep into Frank's stomach --

STANTON (CONT'D)
Get off me! We have to burn it!

Frank holds him tighter. Eyes consumed.

The head *pulsates* faster, throbbing incessantly.

STANTON (CONT'D)
Get off me, you idiot!

PANAMA'S HEAD EXPLODES --

-- BRAINS and BLOOD spew everywhere.

Sitting in the very same spot, inside the remains of Panama's jaw, a small, coiled CREATURE. A foot long, covered in scales, with a tiny suction-like mouth. *Something out of this world.*

Hunt and Frank stare at the creature, absolutely stunned.

FRANK	HUNT
(Giddy with excitement)	(Overcome with fear)
Holy shit.	Holy shit.

STANTON (CONT'D)
Kill it! Kill it now.

The creature opens its tiny mouth and expands like a snake, revealing an embedded stinger.

It *SNARLS* at Hunt.

Stanton heaves Frank off him. He crawls out and raises the shotgun.

STANTON (CONT'D)
Out of the way.

The creature LUNGES at Hunt!

Stanton FIRES --

-- The shot misses. The creature changes course with incredible speed.

Hunt saws at his restraints, getting more skin than rope.

Stanton FIRES -- The shot misses wildly.

The creature LEAPS at Stanton -- LATCHES onto his leg.

Stanton claws at it, but it *slithers* up his body and suction onto the back of his neck.

Stanton thrashes through the room, COLLIDING with Frank --

STANTON (CONT'D)
Get it off!

Frank pushes him away.

STANTON (CONT'D)
Take him instead!

Stanton pins Frank tight to the floor. He grabs at Frank's neck, pulling him closer to the creature. But the creature only tightens its grip.

STANTON (CONT'D)
I won't be a slave!

Hunt sees his ropes feverishly. He PULLS -- The last strands of rope break!

Stanton squeezes Frank around the throat.

Frank pushes away, the creature inches from his face --

-- *CHUNK!*

Stanton's face registers pure shock. A single streak of BLOOD drips down his forehead. He slumps forward, revealing...

...An AXE lodged into the back of his head. And WINSTON standing tall, holding the other end of the axe. Half his skull missing and all.

HUNT
Winston!

Winston steps on Stanton's back. Pries the axe out.

THE CREATURE, still suctioned to Stanton's neck -- *Worms* its way inside Stanton's neck, leaving nothing but a large throbbing red puncture wound.

Winston raises the axe and swings -- LODGING it right in Stanton's back with a sickening *thwack*.

HUNT (CONT'D)
Winston?

Winston stares at them, delirious, eyes glazed. He stumbles backward into the corner and falls to ground.

...A great silence descends over them...

The thermometer reads -40. The wind rips fiercely through the cabin, kicking up snow in their faces.

Frank stares at Stanton's throbbing neck wound. Almost subconsciously he brings a hand up to his own gaping wound.

Winston clumsily picks up a bottle of vodka strewn nearby. He tries to take a drink but simply drops the bottle.

Hunt quickly pulls on some clothes. As he does, his eye catches something...

...Smashed amongst the cabin debris is the picture of the three of them as kids. Hunt looks at their faces. Young and relatively innocent.

He turns and looks at them now: Frank, vacant and war torn. Winston, delirious and disintegrating.

He brings his foot down on the picture, SMASHING it further.

The shattering breaks the silence. Frank looks sharply at Hunt.

He indicates Winston. Hunt looks over with conflicted pity.

Winston twitches, eyes clouded and rolled back in his head. It seems virtually impossible that he's conscious, but somehow he is.

FRANK

Hunt, you've seen what I've seen.
We don't know how many of these
things are out there. Or how many
of these things have already
infiltrated humanity.

HUNT

Winston ain't no alien.

FRANK

No human could stand what he's been
through. We need to do the right
thing.

Hunt looks at the handgun laying on the floor.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Look at him, Hunt. You'll be doing
him a favor. He needs to be put
out of his misery.

Begrudgingly, Hunt leans down and picks up the handgun.
He approaches slowly. Winston's dazed eyes flicker up at him.

WINSTON

Stop.

He opens his jacket, a GRENADE hidden inside. He *slides* his thumb through the pin, ready to pull.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

Don't think about it.

They freeze.

HUNT

What are you doing?

WINSTON

(Emotionally)

I came back for you.

HUNT

Why? Why would you come back for us? To infect us?

WINSTON

To save you, you fucking idiot!

HUNT

Tell us the truth. You been an alien all along, haven't you? When did they turn you?

The grenade pin *wiggles* dangerously.

WINSTON

All I've ever been is a friend to you, Hunt. Stupid of me. I knew you'd never accept me for who I was. Even after everything, you still hate me. But it's not *me* you need to be worried about.

HUNT

What are you talking about?

WINSTON

It's him, Hunt. It's Frank. Look at his neck. Look at him.
(Indicating Stanton)
It's the same wound.

Hunt looks at Frank. The gaping wound. The missing ear. Then at Stanton. Comparing the two.

FRANK

Don't listen to him, Hunt. It's him or us.

WINSTON

He brought us here. Five years, out of the blue, he suggests we come *here*. He was setting us up this whole time!

Hunt backs up a step, eyes on both.

HUNT

For all I know, it's both ya.

Frank stares at Hunt as if seeing him for the first time.

FRANK

And for all we know... It's you.

Frank turns his rifle on Hunt.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You were the only one alone with her.

HUNT

Back off! I'm not the fucking alien! If anybody here's an alien it's you, Mr. I-was-abducted-as-a-child.

Hunt points the handgun at Frank.

FRANK

And what? I've just been biding my time for fifteen years?

HUNT

All you done is make this situation worse at every damn turn, Frank. Maybe you been an alien so long, ya don't even remember you is one.

FRANK

That sounds like alien logic if you ask me.

HUNT

Shut up.

FRANK

No! I'm on to you. And your coke!
I bet it's not even real.

HUNT

Shut the fuck up, Frank!

FRANK

It's probably some highly refined
alien food source for your brain
buddy in there.

Hunt gets in Frank's face:

HUNT

I TOLD YOU TO SHUT YOUR FUCKING
FACE!

WINSTON

Now let's just everybody calm down.
Now the odds are that none of us is
an alien. But we've all three been
alone at various times and in a
position where the other two can't
know for sure that we haven't been
turned-

HUNT

You're not gonna logic your way
outta this one, Winston. HALF OF
YOUR HEAD IS MISSING!

Hunt swings his gun back and forth between Frank to Winston.

HUNT (CONT'D)

I'm walking out of here alive, one
way or another.

Frank levels his shotgun at Hunt.

FRANK

Don't do anything crazy, Hunt.
We're all friends here-

HUNT

I don't give a damn about
friendship, I just wanna live.

WINSTON

I think we know at least one person
who's not an alien, Frank. He's
just being himself.

Hunt glares at him.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

You're a deluded, self-aggrandizing asshole. Alien or not, you deserve to die, alone in these woods.

FRANK

Winston-

WINSTON

This whole situation is his fault, Frank. And if I die in this hell hole, I'm gonna take him with me.

He grips the grenade pin, ready to pull it.

HUNT

Don't you fucking pull that pin, Winston!

WINSTON

Fuck you!

FRANK

Everybody calm down!

HUNT

Drop that grenade, right the fuck now!

WINSTON

Or what?

HUNT

You pull that pin, I shoot you.

FRANK

You shoot him, I shoot you, Hunt.

They stare at each other. Eyes locked. Triggers tense.

A GUST OF WIND rushes into the cabin, throwing up snow, temporarily blinding them --

-- Hunt ducks down. Covers his face.

A flashlight lays on the floor. Hunt turns it on and shines the light through the swirling mass of snow:

Winston and Frank cover themselves woefully. He aims the light past them, through the hole...

HUNT

Holy shit.

Off Hunt's look, Frank and Winston turn to see:

PEOPLE creeping out of the woods from every side. TOWNIES from Aurelia.

They move silently and ominously, like a slow moving zombie herd. Eyes only for the three of them.

WINSTON

Now, I know I'm hallucinating.

Behind them, a HAND grips Hunt's shoulder --

-- Hunt yells and throws it off.

The hand is STANTON'S. Eyes rolled back in his head. Axe still lodged in his back. His head leans back and his jaw unhinges -- The creature's STINGER emerges out his mouth?

The STINGER dives at Hunt --

-- Hunt FIRES! Unloading his entire clip.

Stanton plummets backward. The creature withdraws and coils back up inside Stanton's mouth.

TOWNIES start to climb through the hole.

Frank makes a beeline for the bedroom.

HUNT

Time to go.

He looks at Winston. Winston stares back at him. A lifetime of animosity briefly passing between them.

HUNT (CONT'D)

Can we save this Mexican standoff for another time.

Winston nods and holds up his arm. Hunt picks Winston up with one arm. The crate of grenades with the other.

BEDROOM

They slam the door shut. Barricade themselves against it, all three squashed next to each other.

Boom-boom-boom! The townies pound against the door.

WINSTON

Does anybody have a hat? I'm really cold.

HUNT
Come on. We gotta take our
chances.

Hunt holds open the window. Frank slips through head first.
Hunt lifts Winston. Helps pass him through to Frank outside.

The DOOR BURSTS OPEN --

-- Hunt SHOOTS the first townie through the doorway. They
tumble over, but more stream in.

Hunt grabs two grenades out of the crate. Pulls the pins --
ROLLS THE GRENADES to the bedroom door. Dives out the window--

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

HUNT
Get down!

Winston and Frank hit the ground --

-- The cabin EXPLODES! Fire plumes out over their heads and
into the night air. A giant fireball illuminates the area.

Flaming bodies stagger out of the cabin's wreckage.

The smoke clears. More townies streak out of the woods and
down the driveway. *A seemingly endless army.*

Frank and Hunt pull Winston back to his feet. Hunt leads
them in the direction of--

EXT. FROZEN LAKE - CONTINUOUS

Frank and Hunt carry Winston onto the surface, fighting
howling wind and snow. The cabin lit up behind them. A
dozen silhouetted townies chasing after them.

Frank trips -- Pulls Winston and Hunt down with him.

WINSTON
Go on.

The townies close in...

HUNT
Get up! Come on!

Hunt pulls them both back up. AIMS with his free hand --

BANG! BANG! He strikes a townie in the chest.

BANG! BANG! Another in the face.

Click -- The clip is empty.

FRANK

We're not gonna make it.

They rush forward. A townie dives -- Tackles Hunt around the ankles.

Hunt kicks the townie off and scrambles to his feet.

But the horde rushes at him.

Frank pulls Winston back up. Winston sways, struggling to keep balanced. He looks back. *Inadvertently, Hunt's given them a chance to get away.*

A townie JUMPS at Hunt --

-- Hunt PISTOL WHIPS it to the ground.

He elbows one -- Kicks another away.

But they keep coming. Swarming him. Quickly overtaking him. He's losing ground quickly. *All hope seems lost...*

FRANK (CONT'D)

Winston, let's go!

WINSTON flies in like a guided missile --

-- Launching himself into the middle of the melee -- Knocking Hunt away from the pile.

The townies swarm Winston and pin him to the ground.

Hunt stumbles away. Frank grabs Hunt and picks him up.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Hunt! Let him go. Save yourself.

HUNT

(Dazed)

Winston-

Hunt fights through Frank's grip. He steps back toward the swarm with purpose --

-- *A grenade pin click* --

-- Hunt stops short...

BOOM! An explosion *ripples* across the surface --

-- THE ICE CAVES-IN!

UNDERWATER

We plunge beneath the icy surface. Sinking deeper and deeper into the black, quickly losing all light...

THE SURFACE

Hunt lunges out of the water!

With every ounce of adrenaline and grit he scrapes himself onto the ice.

Flops onto his back and GASPS for air --

-- HYPERVENTILATING. Unable to breath.

He claws at anything around him, needing air, needing anything. He rolls over onto his stomach and blinks hard...

...His eyes come back into focus: The cabin burns in the distance. A giant hole of inky black water and floating ice chunks and next to him. Body parts and torsos strewn about.

He lumbers to his knees, shivering fiercely. Finally, his breath settles. The cold *bites* at him as the adrenaline wears off.

EXT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Collapsed in on itself and burning haphazardly.

Hunt struggles up the pathway. He draws close to the flames. His whole body *quivers*, hardly able to function.

He sifts through the wreckage. Clumsily picks out a bottle of *whiskey* and a *handgun*. He pours the whiskey over his head, drenching himself and letting the whiskey drizzle into his stinging lips.

But the flames are already growing dim. He looks around helplessly: the lake, the woods, the ruined truck...

...The cop car.

He hoofs it up the driveway, one agonizing step at a time.

The car is completely covered in snow. The windows frosted over. No way to see inside...

Hunt pulls on the door, ice *crackles* off as it opens --

-- The POLICE OFFICER is sitting inside.

Hunt jumps back.

The Officer turns his head and smiles, revealing the other half of his face is missing, blown off in the explosion.

Hunt lifts the gun and FIRES --

-- ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR, FIVE times, right into the cop's face --

-- SCREAMING like an unhinged animal as he does.

He grabs the bloodied corpse -- Wrenches him out of the car. Throws his limp body to the ground. Shoots him once more in the face for good measure. Jumps inside-

INT. COP CAR

Locks the door. His frostbit hands fumble to turn the key...

...But nothing happens.

HUNT
Come on, come on.

He turns it again. Presses the gas --

-- A glimmer of hope, but then... *Nothing*.

HUNT (CONT'D)
Fuck!

He slams the steering wheel in frustration.

He switches on the radio. Presses the buttons. Slams the receiver against the dash.

But nothing works...

He slams the steering wheel again. Smashes his head against it. Beats his fists against it rapidly. Venting. Steaming. Crying. All in vain.

He hangs his head, all hope lost. Shivering uncontrollably. Struggling to breath.

The car's thermometer reads -45 degrees.

He takes another hefty drink, whiskey blending with his tears. *A momentary reprise from the inevitable.*

KNOCK! KNOCK! KNOCK!

Hunt raises his gun --

-- Through the frosted-over passenger window we can just barely make out Frank's face.

FRANK (MUFFLED)
Let me in, Hunt! Please!

Hunt just stares.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Please! Hunt! I'm dying out here!

Hunt considers the gun in his hand. Then looks at Frank's pleading face. Cautiously, he leans over --

-- Flips the lock.

Frank rips open the door and jumps inside, shivering something fierce. Like Hunt he is soaking wet.

HUNT
You're alive...

FRANK
So are you...

Hunt grips the gun tightly. Resting on his lap. Aimed precariously in Frank's direction.

HUNT
(Looking behind Frank)
Lock your door.

Frank slams his non-gloved hand down on the door lock.

HUNT (CONT'D)
Winston?

Frank shakes his head.

HUNT (CONT'D)
Guess we really got what's coming to us.

Hunt offers him the whiskey. Frank fumbles the bottle up to his lips. Drops it, spilling what's left on the floor. Hunt shakes his head, incredulous.

FRANK

Any ideas?

HUNT

(A desperate thought)

The fire... Somehow... If we could push this car down the hill. Might be able to melt the gas tank 'nough to start.

FRANK

Isn't that dangerous?

HUNT

'Less you wanna huddle naked and pray for divine intervention.

Hunt uses both frozen palms to shift the car into *neutral*.

HUNT (CONT'D)

Frank. One more thing...

Hunt looks at him seriously. *The moment of truth.*

HUNT (CONT'D)

You were a good friend... So was Winston.

FRANK

So were you.

HUNT

We both know that's not true.

They lock eyes. *Maybe finally trusting one other.*

EXT. COP CAR - CONTINUOUS

They exit the car and hustle to the back. They lean into the back bumper and PUSH...

HUNT

Come on, Frank!

...It won't budge. The tires packed too deep into the snow to make it over the slight incline.

HUNT (CONT'D)

We need traction.

Hunt kneels down and starts digging with his hands at the base of the driver side front tire.

But he's getting nowhere. He looks at the cop's dead body.

CUT TO:

THE COP'S DEAD BODY

Pressed underneath the front tires. Hunt and Frank put their backs into it and HEAVE -- The car ekes up precariously, digging the body into the ground. Ever so slowly, it rolls forward over the body and down the other side --

-- Frank and Hunt stop pushing but the car keeps rolling --

-- Down the hill --

-- SMASHING into the cabin and coming to a dead halt among the smouldering wreckage.

They limp down the driveway. Jump inside.

INT. COP CAR

The driver's side window has cracked but otherwise the car remains intact.

Hunt immediately turns the key... *Again, nothing happens.*

HUNT

Dammit.

FRANK

Give it time.

HUNT

WE AIN'T GOT TIME, FRANK!

The ice on the windows starts to thin and melt. Their visibility increasing.

But fresh TOWNIES are creeping out of the woods.

HUNT (CONT'D)

Come on, come on.

He turns the key again... *Nothing.*

FRANK

They're here! THEY'RE HERE!

The Townies crowd the car -- POUNDING on the car windows.

Hunt turns the key, pumps the gas -- *A glimmer of hope! The engine gives a faint wheeze for life.*

A TOWNIE appears out of the crowd with the AXE. He rears back --

-- SMASHES into Hunt's side window. The glass cracks further.

HUNT
Bullets Frank!

He hands Frank the handgun. Frank digs into the glove box and finds a fresh clip.

Hunt pumps the gas -- *The car struggles faintly!*

The car is completely surrounded. The axe-man winds up and SWINGS --

-- Hunt covers his face. The window SHATTERS, raining glass shards down on him.

HUNT (CONT'D)
Shoot 'em, Frank!

Frank points the gun out the now open window. The gun shakes in his hand. He can't bring himself to do it.

The townies reach in -- GRABBING hold of Hunt.

Hunt pushes away. He rips the gun out of Frank's hand and FIRES aimlessly into the crowd --

-- The townies fall back. But the axe-man jumps up on the car hood.

Hunt turns the key and hits the gas...

VROOOOOOOOM --

-- *The car starts!*

HUNT (CONT'D)
HA HA!

Hunt shifts into drive -- Hits the gas!

THE CAR LURCHES OUT OF THE CABIN, PLOWING THROUGH TOWNIES!

The axe-man balances on the hood and strikes the front wind shield --

-- THE GLASS SPLINTERS!

The car rumbles sideways, sliding through snow.

Hunt sticks his head out the shattered window to see. Frank holds on for dear life as the car *rumbles* up the driveway.

HUNT (CONT'D)
We're gonna make it.

The axe-man surfs -- Winds up and STRIKES --

-- SHATTERING THE WINDSHIELD --

-- SPRAYING GLASS SHARDS EVERYWHERE --

-- SHOWERING HUNT IN THE FACE!

Hunt *howls*. Instinctively reaches for his bloodied face.

The car SWERVES --

-- CAREENS off the path --

-- BARRELS into a snowbank. Hunt and Frank rocket off the dashboard. And comes to a dead halt.

(Beat)

Hunt gropes around blindly.

HUNT (CONT'D)
Frank. Frank, I can't see.

Frank shakes his head in a daze.

HUNT (CONT'D)
Is it bad?

He claws helplessly at Frank. *His face littered with glass, bleeding profusely.*

HUNT (CONT'D)
Frank, you gotta drive. 'Fore they get here.

Frank looks around. The car is stuck deep in a snowbank. *It's not going anywhere.*

Behind Hunt, the dark outlines of people approach.

HUNT (CONT'D)
Come on, Frank! Where are they?
Talk to me buddy.

Frank stares at the approaching horde with a stunned expression.

Hunt gropes around on the floor and finds the gun. He holds it up defensively. Pointing at enemy he cannot see. An enemy approaching *en mass*.

HUNT (CONT'D)
Where are they Frank?!

Frank stares at Hunt. His eyes wide and stoic. *Either a million things running through his head, or nothing at all.*

HUNT (CONT'D)
Frank?! Frank, where are-

HANDS shoot in through the windows --

-- GRAB HOLD OF HUNT.

He squeezes the trigger --

Click... An empty clip.

HUNT (CONT'D)
Frank!

He thrashes violently... But there are too many of them. They pull him out the window and into the bitter night air.

HUNT (CONT'D)
Fuck you! Frank! Frank!

Frank watches from the passenger seat, completely ignored by the townies. Oddly calm. Serene even. *No longer shivering.*

They drag Hunt through the snow and into the woods...

...Disappearing into the black.

(Beat)

Frank leans over and turns the key, killing the engine...

He opens his door and calmly steps out of the car, his face an unreadable cypher.

We pull back to see the carnage. The cop car, truck, and cabin destroyed.

The wind swirls through violently, blowing snow up into our view, leaving us only with the sound of Hunt's distant screams.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END

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