

HAIN'T BLUE

Written by

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EXT. OKEFENOKEE SWAMP - NIGHT

Moonlight illuminates and ripples on the dark waters. On a cypress trunk a snow white ghost orchid appears to float with its body-like petals swaying with the wind.

(O.S.) Bloodhounds bark.

SUPER: 1855

EXT. SWAMP SHANTY - NIGHT

A FEMALE SLAVE (30's) stumbles through a swamp bog toward the door. She is covered in mud.

Barking bloodhounds chase her with SLAVE CATCHERS and PLANTATION OWNERS following. They carry torches.

INT. SWAMP SHANTY - NIGHT

The Slave stumbles into a trapper's shanty where traps and chains are on the walls. A trunk is near a table.

She hides behind the trunk as Slave Catchers explode in.

They punch her and pin her down on the floor.

An angry Plantation Owner enters with a handful of dripping wet roots.

PLANTATION OWNER

You killed the children. My child.

SLAVE

You took my baby.

A Slave Catcher kicks her head. The Slave spits blood on the Owner's boot.

PLANTATION OWNER

It was a devil's child. A bastard born of a witch.

SLAVE

I curse you all and your offspring.

PLANTATION OWNER

Let your evil roots strangle you.

The Owner rams roots into her mouth and down her throat. A ghost orchid is part of those roots. He suffocates her.

PLANTATION OWNER (CONT'D)

Get me more. Her spells will be  
silenced forever.

EXT. REMOTE CAMPGROUND - NIGHT

DALE ADAMS (mid 30's) pokes a campfire near an old RV which  
tows a small pickup with the bed full of tools, bikes,  
suitcases, and a gas canister. Red hot ambers reflect in his  
eyes as he guzzles a beer. He is a ruggedly handsome  
construction worker in his Levis and Las Vegas Raiders  
baseball cap.

(O.S.) One child sobs while a boy comforts her.

ERIC (O.S.)

I miss her too. C'mon out. Dad's  
here for us.

Dale adds more logs onto the fire.

(O.S.) The sob calms down to a sniffle.

ERIC (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I'll make you a smore.

The RV door opens as fourteen year old ERIC ADAMS exits. He  
is a miniature version of his father in his Levis, but with a  
Los Angeles Rams baseball cap. However, unlike his father,  
Eric's eyes are filled with shame.

DALE

How's she doing?

ERIC

She's coming out.

Eric sits in a lawn chair around the campfire and inserts a  
marshmallow on the end of what was a wire hanger.

ERIC (CONT'D)

She wants a smore.

Seven year old KARYN ADAMS coyly exits the RV dressed in  
pajamas wrapped in a Peppa Pig blanket. She holds her pet  
bunny in her arms. Her chopped, uneven hair cut makes her  
appear like an unkept boy. In her eyes are sadness as she  
wipes and hides a tear from her dad.

DALE

I need to work on my haircutting  
skills.

She shrugs.

DALE (CONT'D)

Let me make your smore for you.

KARYN

You forgot the chocolate last time.

Dale nods his head as Karyn sits on a log near the fire where a marshmallow is in flames.

Eric blows out the marshmallow and inserts it between graham crackers and chocolate. He offers it to Karyn.

ERIC

It's hot.

DALE

Don't get it in Peppa's fur.

She takes a gooey bite and speaks with her mouth full.

KARYN

Can we have a funeral?

Eric studies his father through the flames.

DALE

Sure. Yeah, sure. But let's wait until we get to the house. We're almost there.

Dale nods his head as Eric deflects his gaze into the flames.

EXT. BOAT DOCK - DAY

BOOKER DANIELS (mid 30's) tosses raw chickens into the swamp channel between the old rotted dock and an overgrown island with a small forest. He is an African-American who is muscled from working most his adult life on a farm.

Two alligators emerge in a feeding frenzy on the chicken.

He tosses two more chickens in with a splash.

As the alligators eat, he takes a gander across the channel to the island. There is a glowing bottle tree where old blue bottles are tied by roots onto limbs. His phantom family stands amongst the bottles. His dad CHARLES (early 30's) and his mother, MINTY (early 30's) stands with his sister, CAROL (age 6). They yearn for him to join them. They appear to be poor sharecroppers from the seventies.

CAROL

Play drip, drip, drop with us.

Booker gives the sign of the cross and they vanish.

INT. SMALL WAREHOUSE - DAY

Prada heels echo and click on the cement floor speckled and colored with dried paint drops. A price tag is dragged from the back of one heel.

KRISTINA CARMICHAEL (mid 30's) is well dressed in her tight fitting pencil skirt and suit. She is Ann Taylor catalog worthy. The misplaced price tag reveals she is new to money.

A rough and stout, TONI WOLFE (mid 40's) barrels toward her. She looks more like a plumber than an investigator. She appears always ready to brawl with hands always clenched in fists.

TONI

Emptying a construction business and accounts takes a lot of planning. Maybe six to ten months at most.

She hands Kristina her business card.

KRISTINA

Wolfe is a good name for what you do.

Toni shrugs.

TONI

Spade was already taken. Mrs. Carmichael, I'm the one who is hired to ask questions. I'm the investigator you need.

KRISTINA

My husband and I have already done our due diligence. After twenty-four years you were fired from LAPD for using secured computers to track down your ex-wife.

TONI

She was a con and a criminal. She stole all my savings. Took our child and nobody was helping. The department I worked for didn't help a fellow cop.

KRISTINA

That's why we are hiring you. You will do what is necessary even if it breaks the law. Your wages will be wired into your account and all the details will be emailed to you. If there are no developments in two weeks, the contract will be void.

TONI

Again, this is well planned. It may take awhile to sniff out a trail through the woods.

KRISTINA

Dale is not a perfect man. He is a fucking excuse for a man. And surely not a Hannibal Lecter of crime. A painter is never perfect. Rest assured, there will be drops of paint to follow. Keep me posted.

Kristina spins leaving Toni to listen to her heels click along the speckled cement. Toni notices the dragging price tag and smirks to herself.

INT./EXT. RV/OKEFENOKIE SWAMP ROAD - DAY

Dale drives as Eric and Karyn stare in wonder at the dark waters and moss draped cypress trees.

ERIC

We are going to live in a swamp? So cool.

DALE

Not exactly in the swamp.

They pass old porch homes with a shade of light blue.

KARYN

Why are they all blue? And no fences?

Dale shakes his head.

DALE

Dunno, it's ugly though.

ERIC

They don't need fences.

KARYN

Why?

A billboard reads, "Welcome to Okefenokee Swamp."

DALE

The famous Okefenokee swamp.

ERIC

What is it famous for?

KARYN

Why?

Dale is annoyed by Karyn's constant questions and sighs.

DALE

There's space between the houses.

ERIC

No need for privacy when you don't have close neighbors.

KARYN

Oh.

DALE

The Adamms family would summer vacation here in the swamp.

ERIC

Who's the Adamm's Family?

DALE

It's an old TV show.

KARYN

Us. Is that why our name is Adams now?

Dale deeply sighs and Eric diverts his focus on the swamp passing by.

EXT. REALTOR OFFICE - DAY

The RV parks in front of an old store front where a worn wooden boardwalk connects other stores. There are benches and old wood chairs for tourists to relax along the boardwalk.

Dale exits with Eric lifting his sister out of the passenger seat.

DALE

This may take a bit. I have a shit-load of papers to sign. Eric, take your sister down to get some ice cream or something.

He hands Eric ten dollars.

EXT. SWAMP THINGS CURIO SHOP - DAY

Eric walks Karyn down to a touristy gift shop. A seven year old African-American boy, SONNY ARMSTRONG plays cards under the light blue porch on a wooden barrel on the boardwalk. He is dressed in overalls like he came out of a *Little Rascals* episode.

KARYN

Hi. What are you playing?

Sonny cocks his head with a smile. He's a cute slight kid with a couple of teeth missing.

SONNY

Tarot.

KARYN

What's tarot?

Eric shoves Karyn into the shop.

ERIC

It's a voodoo game.

KARYN

Voodoo?

INT. SWAMP THINGS CURIO SHOP - DAY

Eric slides open an ice cream freezer as Karyn walks through the aisles of swamp flowers, stuffed gators, tarot cards and t-shirts.

ERIC

Do you want a sandwich or a fudgesicle?

The store owner and clerk, KOKO ARMSTRONG surprises him from behind.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I was yelling at my sister.



Koko (late 30's) is exotic and captivating in her flowered dress and head wrap. She is an African-American hoodoo priestess and entrepreneur.

KOKO

Don't take too long darlin' my stock is going to melt.

He quickly slides close the freezer door.

ERIC

Sorry.

A slingshot on the wall strikes his attention.

Karyn studies a ghost orchid growing on a stump in a terrarium. She doesn't notice Sonny has snuck up behind her and a sign above warns of "No Touching."

SONNY

Boo!

Karyn jumps in fright as Sonny giggles.

SONNY (CONT'D)

Scared you.

KARYN

No, you didn't.

SONNY

Did too. That flower is called the ghost.

He comes beside her and they both stare at it.

KARYN

It's no ghost.

SONNY

Yes, it is. If you try and catch it, it will float away. Poof.

KARYN

No way.

SONNY

Dare you. Stick your hand in and catch it.

Karyn timidly takes his dare and lowers her hand into the terrarium.

SONNY (CONT'D)  
You better hurry before it  
disappears.

KARYN  
Poof.

Her open palm surrounds the delicate orchid.

SONNY  
I see it moving. Hurry!

Karyn grasps the flower in her clenched fist.

KARYN  
I did it.

She yanks out the crumpled flower.

KARYN (CONT'D)  
I caught it.

Koko furiously walks up to them.

KOKO  
You killed it. Give it here.

Karyn timidly drops the mashed petals into Koko's hand. Karyn is frightened and about to cry.

KOKO (CONT'D)  
You ugly little girl. Do you know  
how rare this orchid is?

KARYN  
He told me it was a ghost. He dared  
me. I'm sorry.

Sonny vanished and is nowhere to be seen.

KOKO  
You killed it. Didn't your parents  
teach you to read? "Do not touch."

She points to a "No Touching" sign over the terrarium as Eric shows up behind her.

ERIC  
Don't talk to my sister that way.  
She said she was sorry.

Koko spins to him.

ERIC (CONT'D)

How much was it? I can pay for it.

KOKO

It wasn't for sell. There's no cost for the ghost orchid. It is rare.

ERIC

All I have is ten.

He offers the ten dollar bill. She glances at Karyn who is sad and scared.

Koko snatches the bill from his hand.

KOKO

Oh, pick out two ice creams for Christ's sake.

Eric protectively puts his arm around his sister.

EXT. REALTOR OFFICE - DAY

Eric and Karyn eat ice cream leaning on the RV. Dale exits the office dangling keys and holding a thick envelope.

DALE

Sorry it took so long. Ice cream looks good. Did you get me one?

ERIC

You didn't ask for one.

Karyn is about to talk about what happened at the store, but Eric leans into her.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Shush. Dad doesn't need to know.

INT. VACANT HOUSE - DAY

Toni searches through the house while on her phone.

TONI

Bank accounts closed out eight months ago. Alright, thanks for your help. I may have to call again. The trail is cold on this one.

She hangs up and searches a bag of trash in a corner.

TONI (CONT'D)  
Obviously you knew you were going  
to lose in family court.

She finds an oily pizza box with a receipt taped to the top.  
She rips it off.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - DAY

The RV pulls up in front of a one story fixer-upper. The three-step raised screen porch has ripped screens and light blue chipped paint. A large willow tree shrouds it. Grass grows ankle high around the house. On the far side is a swamp channel with the rotted dock where alligators ate chicken days before.

Dale, Karyn, and Eric exit the RV and glare at their new home.

ERIC  
Needs a lot of work, dad.

DALE  
With your help, we'll have it  
completed by start of school year.

KARYN  
School?

DALE  
They have school here too.

KARYN  
Yuck.

Karyn skips back to the RV.

KARYN (CONT'D)  
I'm gonna let Peppa eat the grass.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - KITCHEN - DAY

Eric carries a toolbox and sets it near other hardware supplies. Dale starts a gas generator which in turn flips on the cobwebbed ceiling lights.

DALE  
We can work at night now.

ERIC  
I'm tired.

The generator sputters and the ceiling lights go out. The generator stops.

DALE

There's more gas in the bed of the truck. We'll call it a day. Where's Karyn?

ERIC

Playing Dora the Explorer.

Dale wipes the dust from the sink window and watches Karyn chase Peppa.

DALE

Keep her from the water. It's time to eat anyway.

Eric bangs out the rear screen door.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - SIDE YARD - DAY

Peppa hops toward the swamp channel as Karyn gives chase.

KARYN

Bad Peppa.

The bunny hops near the edge of the dark water near the dock.

In the middle of the channel, two alligators raise up like logs with their hungry eyes focused on the bunny.

Eric runs up to Karyn.

ERIC

Time to eat.

Karyn looks across the channel to the island and discovers ghost orchids slow dancing on the cypress trunks.

KARYN

Look!

Eric joins her as the bunny eats grass closer to the water's edge. The alligators move closer.

Karyn points to the orchids.

KARYN (CONT'D)

It's the ghost flowers.

Eric focuses on them and notices the bottle tree.

KARYN (CONT'D)  
They're dancing.

This time the orchids float off the trees and dance around the blue bottles.

An alligator explodes from the channel and chomps on Peppa.

Karyn screams as Eric yanks her away and falls to the ground. His feet are inches away from the alligators snout. He crab legs backward.

Dale comes running as the alligator retreats with the bloody bunny and submerges back in the channel.

ERIC  
It's an alligator!

Karyn cries as Dale lifts his son to his feet.

DALE  
Are you hurt?

Eric shakes his head while clearly frightened.

DALE (CONT'D)  
Take her to the RV. It could have eaten either one of you. Fuckin' realtor should have warned us. Get inside.

Eric walks Karyn away as Dale backups staring at the dark water and the bottle tree.

He stops as he catches a glimpse of a sexy nude African-American (early 30's) female, KUFWA, with ghost orchids floating about her like pixies. She is the slave from the first scene.

INT. PIZZA STORE - NIGHT

Toni hands a receipt to a STORE CLERK where WORKERS are busy making pizza.

TONI  
I'm trying to find the delivery person so I can provide them a tip. I didn't have the money at the time and I promised my daughter I would pay him. Honestly, I think she found him cute.

Toni pulls out a twenty dollar bill. The Store Clerk reads the receipt.

STORE CLERK

I'll check the employee calendar.

The Store Clerk leaves as Toni goes outside and smokes.

EXT. PIZZA STORE - NIGHT

The Store Clerk opens the door for a FEMALE DELIVERY DRIVER.

STORE CLERK

I think your daughter may be a lesbian.

The Delivery Driver meets with Toni.

TONI

Thank you. My daughter is fluid.

DELIVERY DRIVER

I don't remember that exact delivery.

Toni hands her the twenty dollar bill.

TONI

You delivered to a man in his thirties with two children. A boy about fourteen and a girl seven. A house on Jackson Street.

The Delivery Driver ponders and shakes her head.

DELIVERY DRIVER

Don't remember.

TONI

Father worked construction?

The Delivery Driver perks up upon remembering.

DELIVERY DRIVER

I remember, but he gave me a tip. Not much at all.

TONI

I lied to your manager. I'm actually a police investigator. Can you provide me any details?

DELIVERY DRIVER  
I delivered the pizza to a RV.

TONI  
RV?

DELIVERY DRIVER  
Yeah, in front of the house. They  
were moving and staying in the RV.

TONI  
How do you know they were moving?

DELIVERY DRIVER  
They were packing the bed of a  
small truck attached to the RV.

Toni slowly nods.

DELIVERY DRIVER (CONT'D)  
Do you want change?

TONI  
I'll take a five back and any  
descriptions of the RV and truck.

Toni extends out her hand.

INT. RV - NIGHT

Karyn, Eric and Dale sleep in the beds.

(O.S.) Loud calls like a hoot owl.

All three wake by the loud hoots.

KARYN  
Dad, what is that?

DALE  
It's only an owl. Go back to bed.

(O.S.) Two owls hoot now.

ERIC  
Dad, now there's two.

(O.S.) Four owls hoot out at separate intervals.

Dale rises up and puts on his boots as more hoots grow  
louder. Karyn and Eric cover their ears.



KARYN  
Dad! Make it stop.

DALE  
I'll scare them away. Try to sleep.

Dale exits the RV.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - SIDE YARD - NIGHT

Under moonlight, Dale grabs up some rocks and follows the sound of the hoot owls. More owls join in bringing about a thunderous chorus of hoots.

The hoot trail leads him to the channel. He discovers the hoots aren't from owls, but the wind blowing into the moon glow blue bottles.

Dale cocks his head and steps onto the dock. The hoots from the bottles grow louder.

Dale throws all the rocks at the bottles. They strike a few bottles and the hoots cease to silence.

Dale notices a dark figure sitting crosslegged under the bottle tree. The refraction off the swaying blue bottles glows across the attractive Kufwa. She holds a blue bottle covering her crotch. She lifts the bottle and blows into it. The "hoo" sounds.

Dale rubs his eyes and Kufwa vanishes. The blue bottle she was holding drops and shatters.

INT. REALTOR OFFICE - DAY

Dale points Karyn and Eric down to other stores as he opens the door.

DALE  
Get some more ice cream.

ERIC  
For breakfast?

DALE  
Donut. Get donuts.

Karyn and Eric leave as Dale erupts in. The small realtor office is manned by two REALTORS.

DALE (CONT'D)

Can someone tell me why I wasn't notified my property was home to alligators?

REALTOR 1

You bought swamp property.

REALTOR 2

Alligators live in swamps.

DALE

No shit! My daughter and son could have been killed by those things.

REALTOR 1

We sent you the satellite images. It clearly showed your property had an island with a swamp channel surrounding it.

DALE

The island is mine too?

The Realtors look at each other and nod.

DALE (CONT'D)

Well my daughter is just getting over her mother's death and now a gator killed her pet bunny.

REALTOR 2

I do have a number for a wrangler I have used before.

DALE

Wrangler?

REALTOR 2

Alligator wrangler. To take out the gators from the channel.

DALE

I heard of pest control, but not a damn wrangler. Can I get that number?

Realtor 1 goes through his desk drawers searching for the number. Dale rolls his eyes and shakes his head.

INT. SWAMP THINGS CURIO SHOP - DAY

Koko teaches Sonny the tarot cards at the counter. Koko randomly extracts a card.

KOKO  
Which card is this?

Before she can hold it up to Sonny he answers blindly.

SONNY  
That's easy, death. Or major  
changes in a person's life.

Koko looks at the death card depicting the grim reaper on a stallion. She holds it up to the light making sure Sonny didn't see through it.

Karyn stands before them with Eric picking out packaged donuts nearby.

KARYN  
Good morning, ma'am.

Koko is surprised by her.

KOKO  
Good morning. I must apologize for  
my anger yesterday little girl.

Eric stands behind his sister with donuts and a slingshot.

ERIC  
Her name is Karyn.

KOKO  
Well, Karyn. I had a discussion  
with Sonny and he spilled the beans  
that he manipulated you to grab the  
ghost orchid.

KARYN  
Man-nip...

ERIC  
Pushed. Lied.

KOKO  
Sonny, what do you say to Karyn?

SONNY  
I'm sorry.

KARYN

I know where I can get another ghost flower.

Koko studies her.

ERIC

Our new house. In the swamp we saw a couple of the flowers floating.

KOKO

Floating? Where is your mother?

KARYN

She died in a car crash.

ERIC

My father bought a house with a swamp in our backyard.

KARYN

It has gators. It ate Peppa.

ERIC

Her pet rabbit.

KARYN

We are having a funeral for her and my mom.

KOKO

I'm sorry. Does this swamp have a tree with blue bottles tied to its limbs?

Karyn and Eric nod their head as Koko worries. She glances down at the tarot card depicting death.

INT. REALTOR OFFICE - DAY

Realtor 1 hands Dale a hand written phone number.

DALE

Thanks. Oh. Can you call and set up a time to wrangle the gators? I'm without a cell now. I'm trying to teach my kids to live without a cell phone. A family bonding thing. Live off the grid.

Dale turns to leave and stops.

DALE (CONT'D)  
What does it mean to hang bottles  
from tree limbs?

REALTOR 1  
It's a bottle tree.

REALTOR 2  
Are the bottles blue?

Dale nods.

DALE  
Why?

REALTOR 2  
It's an old Southern belief going  
back to African slaves. They  
believed bottles catch evil spirits  
and keep them captive.

DALE  
Evil spirits?

Dale nods his head and whispers to himself.

DALE (CONT'D)  
Unbelievable.

INT. TONI'S APARTMENT - DAY

Toni is on the cell phone while scanning recreational vehicle  
sales sites. Her sparse studio apartment is furnished with  
only a desk and bed.

TONI  
Hello, hello Mrs. Carmichael?

There is static due to a bad connection.

KRISTINA (O.S.)  
Hello?

TONI  
Mrs. Carmichael, can you hear me?

KRISTINA (O.S.)  
I'm on a cruise. How can I help  
you?

TONI  
I'm calling you to update the  
investigation.  
(MORE)

TONI (CONT'D)

Your ex-husband bought a RV and small truck. Would you know where he would have bought it?

KRISTINA (O.S.)

I have to go. We have an excursion.

TONI

Would you know where he would buy it?

KRISTINA (O.S.)

Craigslist. That's where that cheap bastard bought his tools. That's where he found sex too.

TONI

I have more information. He emptied his accounts.

KRISTINA (O.S.)

I have to go.

The call is dropped as Toni rolls her eyes and enters "Craigslist" on her laptop search.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Karyn and Eric scrape off the old light blue paint from the porch roof and pillars.

KARYN

This is hard.

ERIC

It's like four coats thick.

Dale enters the porch guzzling a beer. He tosses a crowbar near some rotted floorboards.

DALE

You barely made a dent. Once your done scraping off paint, pull the rotted floor boards.

Dale steps on a couple of floor boards that crack.

A four wheel ATV drives up the front yard with Sonny driving and Koko piggybacking behind him. They both wear helmets.

DALE (CONT'D)

Who's that?

KARYN  
That's Sonny and Koko.

Karyn runs out to them as they take off the helmets

Koko and Sonny dismount. Koko extracts a loaf of sweet potato bread and a large black candle from the back storage box.

KARYN (CONT'D)  
Hi Sonny.

SONNY  
Hi.

Koko walks up to the porch where Dale studies her.

KOKO  
Hello neighbor.

KARYN  
Do you want to see the gators?

Sonny nods his head as Karyn grabs his hand leading them away. Dale looks worried.

KOKO  
Don't worry. My son knows about alligators.

DALE  
Eric, look after your sister.

Eric is happy to stop working and chases after the kids.

DALE (CONT'D)  
Who are you again?

KOKO  
I own Swamp Things. Where your children bought ice cream and donuts. Really good kids.

DALE  
We're still getting our bearings.

KOKO  
I live a couple of miles down the road.

Dale nods and an awkward silence is between them.

Koko hands out her bread and black candle.

KOKO (CONT'D)  
House warming gifts.

Dale accepts both and sniffs the bread.

KOKO (CONT'D)  
Sweet potato bread.

DALE  
Smells good.

KOKO  
Old family recipe.

Dale studies the candle and turns up his nose.

KOKO (CONT'D)  
I know, it's black. It's to ward  
off bad spirits.

DALE  
Bad spirits? Second time I heard  
that. Superstition is a common  
theme around these parts.

KOKO  
More tradition. A Southern house  
warming gift. Where you from?

DALE  
West Coast area.

KOKO  
It's a long coast.

DALE  
California.

Koko nods and glances at the paint removal.

KOKO  
Haint blue.

DALE  
Huh?

KOKO  
The color of your porch. It's  
painted a Haint blue.

DALE  
It's ugly. An ugly tradition. I'm  
going to change it.



KOKO

It's painted that color for a reason. Haint is the color of water which keeps evil spirits from coming into the home. Some believe evil spirits aren't able to cross water.

DALE

Third time is a charm for evil spirits. It's still ugly. Anyway, I have a candle now.

KOKO

You do.

Koko pulls out a folded photocopy of an article from her pocket.

KOKO (CONT'D)

I'm sure Richard didn't inform you of the history of your property.

DALE

Richard?

KOKO

The realtor.

She hands him the folded paper.

KOKO (CONT'D)

I'm sure they gave you a deal on this property. Better than just a fixer-upper.

DALE

It was a foreclosure.

(O.S.) A bottle shatters on the island.

Their eyes go toward the swamp channel.

EXT. DOCK - DAY

Eric sling shots stones at the bottle tree. Karyn and Sonny celebrate by clapping and jumping upon every striking and breaking of glass.

Ten feet away Koko and Dale watch.

KOKO

Are you going to stop it?

DALE

Why should I? Looks fun. Hell, I may join him.

KOKO

Karyn said she was having a funeral for her mom. I'm sorry.

DALE

We were divorced.

Koko studies his insensitivity.

KOKO

She said she lost her pet too. I can say a few words to memorialize her loss.

Dale points to a small homemade cross stuck in the lawn.

DALE

It's already done.

Koko stares at the cheaply made cross.

KOKO

Well, I hope you can let her play with my son. There's not many children their age nearby.

DALE

It's up to her.

Koko sighs.

KOKO

Sonny! We need to go.

Koko spins to the ATV.

EXT. DOCK - DAY

The bottle tree now has two remaining bottles attached to the limbs. Shattered blue glass and stones lay on the ground.

Exhausted, Eric stretches the slingshot back and releases a stone toward the bottle tree. The stone plunks in the water by an alligator.

KARYN (O.S.)

Eric! Dinner!

Eric treks back to the house.

KARYN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Dinner!

ERIC  
I hear you.

KARYN  
Dad wants you to get the bread off  
the porch.

ERIC  
OK!

Eric walks to the porch to find the bread.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Eric enters and searches for the bread. He picks up the black candle next to the bread. The photocopy left by Koko falls by his feet.

He picks up the paper and unfolds it.

The headline reads, "Family Goes Missing" with a photo of their cottage.

He sits down on a ladder and reads it.

KARYN (O.S.)  
Eric!

He folds the paper and stuffs it in his pocket.

INT. TONI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Toni clicks her mouse on a Craigslist RV ad on her computer.

A picture shows a small RV.

She closes the window and clicks on another.

A picture of Adam's RV and truck appear.

She studies the RV and reviews her notes. Amongst the notes are copies of school pictures of Karyn and Eric.

TONI  
That's it.

She clicks on the attached link to the seller's email.

INT. RV - NIGHT

Eric and Karyn dry dishes while Dale watches TV with a beer.

(O.S.) Hoot sounds from outside.

KARYN

Not again.

ERIC

I broke all but two.

Dale mutes the TV.

(O.S.) Hoot sounds again.

Dale grabs a beer and heads out the door.

DALE

I'll take care of it.

Eric gives him a flashlight.

ERIC

Bring this.

Dale takes it and bangs out the door.

Karyn grabs the TV remote control.

KARYN

My turn.

Eric sits at the table and takes out the folded article from his pocket. He opens it and reads it by the black candle.

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT

The flashlight bounces as Dale walks toward the dock.

(O.S.) A hoot is heard on the island.

Dale chugs his beer and shines the flashlight toward the island. Pairs of alligator's eyes shine in the channel and the two remaining bottles glow on the tree limbs.

Ghost orchids float around the tree.

A seductive African beat is heard being played off the bottles. The nude Kufwa dances in and out of the flashlight beams striking the bottles with her nails.

Dale tries to keep the beam on her, but she dances out of the light.

He rubs his crotch as she seductively comes back into the flashlight beam.

An alligator lunges at Dale from the channel. It's massive jaws barely miss his feet as he falls and clamors back.

DALE

Aw fuck!

Dale scampers away as the gator retreats back in the dark water.

DALE (CONT'D)

Motherfuckers.

He swigs his beer and throws the can at the gator.

EXT. REMOTE DESERT HOME - DAY

Toni interviews a seventy year old, ROBERT. He's basically a crusty old desert rat.

ROBERT

He's a prick.

TONI

Prick?

ROBERT

Excuse me. A dick. He had the nerve to offer to buy the RV and my pickup for two thousand below the asking price. He asked if I'd bundle it like he's on a fuckin' *Flea Market Flip* episode. A real dick.

Toni nods.

TONI

But, you took it?

ROBERT

Hell yes. He paid cash. After he gave me a sob story about his wife passing and taking the kids on a vacation to help them forget. My wife just passed a year before. He took advantage of my emotions.

(MORE)

ROBERT (CONT'D)

The ol' lady was the one who wanted to hit the highway. See trees and waterfalls. Fuck we have Yucca trees outside our front door. Flash floods every spring.

TONI

Did he tell you where he was going on vacation?

ROBERT

See trees. I don't know. I even allowed him to use my Thousand Trails camping pass until it expired at year's end.

TONI

Is that like the Good Sam Club?

ROBERT

Yea, you can only use it in their own campsites. Too fancy and corporate for me, but the ol' lady liked them.

TONI

Do you have a directory and your membership number?

ROBERT

Sure. He do something bad?

TONI

He ripped me off too.

ROBERT

Motherfucker.

TONI

Can I see the bill of sale too?

Robert shuffles toward the house.

ROBERT

Hell for sure.

INT. KOKO'S FARM - BOOKER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A nine year old YOUNG BOOKER is included in a family photograph of a picnic. It is framed near his bed where sleeps. His eyelids twitch from a dream.

BEGIN DREAM SEQUENCE:

EXT. UNDER THE WILLOW TREE - DAY

Young Booker and his family picnic on a blanket near the cottage which was once theirs. Young Booker giggles with a cup of water. He walks in a circle around his family playing Drip, Drip, Drop. He drips water on his sister and mother.

When he gets to his father he drops the full cup of water on him. Everybody laughs as his father chases Young Booker around the family. Young Booker giggles until he discovers he is going around the bloody dead bodies of his family.

He keeps circling them. He becomes dizzy and stops. However, the dead bodies keep spinning around as roots grow out of the ground and entrap them.

DREAM SEQUENCE ENDS:

INT. KOKO'S FARM - BOOKER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Booker wakes frightened and drenched in sweat.

Sonny stands near the bed with a glass of milk and cookies.

SONNY

I thought you might want this.

Sonny sets it on the night stand and hugs Booker.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Eric and Karyn are back scraping off the paint from the ceiling and posts.

Dale slams out of the RV tired and hungover.

ERIC

He's finally up.

Dale stands before the porch.

DALE

What's taking you so long?

KARYN

It's hard.

ERIC

There's like four coats of paint. We need more paint remover. What took you so long to get up?

DALE  
What did you say?

KARYN  
You're drinking beer.

DALE  
I'm your dad. Did you forget that?

A large pickup drives up next to the RV. In the bed are alligator cages and on the side reads "Alligator Annie."

DALE (CONT'D)  
Bout time. Be respectful at least to her.

EXT. DOCK - DAY

ALLIGATOR ANNIE (mid 30's) studies the two alligators in the channel. She is handsome and strong in her military fatigue pants and tight t-shirt proclaiming "Alligator Annie."

Dale stands next to her and studies her body. Karyn and Eric stand back about twenty feet.

ALLIGATOR ANNIE  
Do they look four feet to you?

Dale takes his focus off her ass and to the gators.

DALE  
I'm sure.

Annie shakes her head with a smirk.

ALLIGATOR ANNIE  
They appear to be well fed. Have you fed them? Georgia law prohibits feeding alligators in the wild.

DALE  
One ate my daughter's pet bunny and another tried to eat me last night.

ALLIGATOR ANNIE  
So, you would say they are a "nuisance?"

DALE  
Hell yeah. Fuckin' Godzillas.

ALLIGATOR ANNIE  
You own the property?



Dale nods his head.

ALLIGATOR ANNIE (CONT'D)  
Since you deemed them a nuisance  
and a hazard to your family, as a  
licensed agent slash trapper, I can  
harvest them.

DALE  
Just kill them. Nuke'em for all I  
care.

ALLIGATOR ANNIE  
That's how Godzilla came to life  
and that's not how things work in  
Georgia, mister...

DALE  
Adams. Call me Dale. Is your real  
name Annie?

ALLIGATOR ANNIE  
Only when on a job.

Annie stomps on the dock and the alligators swim over.

ALLIGATOR ANNIE (CONT'D)  
Somebody feeds them.

DALE  
Hey, have you fed the gators, kids?

Karyn and Eric shake their heads.

ALLIGATOR ANNIE  
You just moved here. These two are  
old and well trained before you  
came. Pets most likely. Easy-peasy.  
If I can get your help carrying  
them to the bed of truck, I can  
harvest them now.

DALE  
The kids can help too.

Annie cocks her head and glances at the children.

ALLIGATOR ANNIE  
You want to see how to catch a  
gator?

ERIC AND KARYN  
Yes!

EXT. CHANNEL BANK - DAY

Annie quickly piggybacks and mounts an alligator like riding a horse. She secures the mouth and snout with her hands so she doesn't get bitten.

Karyn, Eric, and Dale clap for her a few feet away like it is a zoo performance.

Annie becomes a performer and pries open the gator's jaw. She bends down and inserts her head between the open jaw.

The family claps wildly for her.

EXT. ANNIE'S PICKUP - DAY

Dale, Annie, and Eric shove the tied up alligator into the truck bed where the first one lays secured. Karyn excitedly jumps up and down.

KARYN

What are you going to do with them?

DALE

Make shoes.

KARYN

Nah.

Annie bends down to her.

ANNIE

I'm going to give them a good home where they don't bother people or eat their pets. And where people won't bother them.

Annie wipes the sweat from her brow as the kids touch the gator's skin. Dale comes up to her.

DALE

You are amazing. You put on quite the show. Where did you learn that?

ANNIE

My father was a wrangler and I've always lived around them. They were like dogs or cats in our family. Sometimes I perform at gator farms for extra side gigs.

DALE  
You hungry? I was going to put some  
burgers on the barbecue.

ANNIE  
Hmmm...

DALE  
C'mon. The kids would love it.

ANNIE  
Where's their mother?

Dale sadly glances at the children.

DALE  
She past away a few weeks ago.

Annie feels empathy for the kids with a concerning look.

ANNIE  
Sure. Add another patty to the  
grill.

EXT. RV - DAY

Burgers sizzle on the charcoal grill. Dale flips the burgers as Annie tells the children stories as they sit in collapsable lawn chairs nearby. Karyn and Eric are mesmerized.

EXT. RV - DAY

The charcoal pieces have turned to gray dust. Eric and Karyn take the used plates from their dad and Annie. They go into the RV while Dale is left alone with Annie.

ANNIE  
Your kids are great. I can remember  
when I lost my father. I was  
devastated. My mother sent me to a  
shrink to help me cope.

DALE  
Yes, I want to thank you for taking  
their mind off of it. You are like  
a swamp superhero to them.

ANNIE  
It's my job.

DALE

You do it damn good too. Hey, do you want another beer?

ANNIE

I should go. The gators are waiting.

DALE

C'mon. One last one for the road.

ANNIE

Alright.

DALE

The gators will understand.

Annie nods as Dale pats her leg before leaving for the RV.

INT. RV - DAY

Dale goes to the refrigerator and pulls out two beers while Eric washes and Karyn dries the dishes.

DALE

Hey, Karyn. Can you take the beer to Annie?

KARYN

Sure.

Dale gives the cans to Karyn and she blasts out of the RV.

ERIC

She was drying.

Dale picks up a towel and dries.

DALE

Eric. I need you to do me a favor.

Eric stops washing dishes and looks down into the sink water.

ERIC

What's that?

DALE

I need you to come out and say you are taking Kayrn on your bike down to that black kid's house.

ERIC

We don't know where he lives.

DALE  
Just take your sister on a bike  
ride. That's all I'm asking.

Eric nods as his father pats him on the back.

DALE (CONT'D)  
That's my boy.

He exits as Eric sighs.

EXT. RV - DAY

Eric exits and grabs his BMX bike which lays on the ground.

ERIC  
Hey dad, can Karyn and I ride over  
to Sonny's house?

Karyn sits near her father and Annie in lawn chairs.

KARYN  
I want to hear another gator story.

DALE  
Go with your brother. You have worn  
Annie down with your questions.

KARYN  
We don't even know where he lives.

ANNIE  
Sonny? Koko Armstrong's boy? They  
live on a small farm bout two miles  
yonder down the road.

ERIC  
C'mon.

Karyn rises to her feet and runs over to Eric.

KARYN  
OK. No bumps.

Karyn stands on the back bike pegs holding onto Eric's  
shoulders.

DALE  
Be careful.

Eric rides off with Karyn.

ANNIE

You know Koko is into hoodoo.

DALE

Voodoo?

ANNIE

No, hoodoo. It's an offshoot of voodoo. Root remedies. Tarot readings. That stuff.

DALE

Hoodoo, you-doo. Who cares? Karyn needs new friends.

ANNIE

When did your wife die?

DALE

My ex-wife. A few weeks ago. In a car crash. The kids weren't involved thank god.

ANNIE

It still must be hard on you.

Dale rises to his feet.

DALE

We weren't on the best of terms. She cheated on me with a client a year ago. I was working a great gig, painting his five thousand square foot mansion while the bastard worked on my wife. I needed her help painting the kitchen. Instead she helped him in his master bedroom.

ANNIE

That sucks.

DALE

She divorced me and she tried to steal the kids from me. She went from piss-poor to rich and could afford fucking attorneys. Who then tried to fuck me.

ANNIE

Human relationships are not my thing.

DALE

You're not married?

ANNIE

I'm not much of a catch. Look at me. I catch gators for a living.

DALE

Do you want a tour of the house? It needs a lot of work. But it has good bones.

ANNIE

You know this area has some haunted history.

DALE

I read about the family who disappeared. You can't believe what you read sometimes. It's not always what you think it is.

ANNIE

The family up and left a child.

DALE

Maybe he was a bad seed.

Dale rises.

EXT. TEXAS ROUNDUP RV PARK - OFFICE - DAY

Toni sits on a picnic table outside the old west decorated office. She is on her cell phone.

TONI

Hello, Ms. Carmichael. This is Toni. I discovered a trail to follow. He bought an RV and is going across country. He's using an alias. I'm heading to Georgia to the last camping site where he stayed. Give me a call for more details. It's a positive direction.

Toni hangs up the phone and calls another number.

TONI (CONT'D)

Hey Laura, don't hang up. I'm working a case which got me thinking about us. Is there anyway I can speak to our daughter?

LAURA (O.S.)  
 She's not your biological daughter.  
 She is mine.

TONI  
 Please. She lived with me, us for  
 five years.

There is an awkward silence as Toni walks to her car.

LAURA (O.S.)  
 Let me talk to her first. If it's  
 alright with her, I may allow it.  
 She's at soccer practice now.

Toni opens the car door.

TONI  
 That would be nice, Laura. How are  
 you?

LAURA (O.S.)  
 You understand the restraining  
 order is still in effect. You  
 shouldn't even call me. I gotta  
 run. Bye.

(O.S.) Phone clicks off.

Toni sits in the car and hangs up.

TONI  
 I'm doing great and fuck you.

She tosses the phone on the passenger seat.

EXT. KOKO'S FARM - DAY

Eric rides his bike with Karyn standing on the back pegs.

KARYN  
 There's the farm. They have  
 chickens.

A few hundred feet away Sonny feeds chickens in a coop. She  
 jumps off the bike and races over to Sonny.

KARYN (CONT'D)  
 Sonny! Sonny! A lady wrestled and  
 caught our gators.

She joins Sonny as Eric rides near the farm house.



Koko stands on her porch.

KOKO  
Isn't this a pleasant surprise.

ERIC  
Hello.

Sonny shows Karyn how to feed chickens. She lets out a scream. Eric glances to her in worry.

KOKO  
She'll be fine. They are only chickens and she's with my Sonny. Come up. I made fresh lemonade.

Eric drops the bike and steps up to the porch where two glasses of lemonade wait.

KOKO (CONT'D)  
You can take Sonny's. He'll be busy showing her around the farm. Have a seat.

Eric drinks while sitting with her.

KOKO (CONT'D)  
Is it true? Your father had the gators captured.

ERIC  
Yes. Alligator Annie wrangled them and took them.

Koko nods her head in contemplation.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
We enjoyed the sweet potato bread. Thank you.

KOKO  
I'm glad you liked it.

ERIC  
Thanks for the candle too. It'll help in the house when we lose electricity.

KOKO  
It's to ward off bad spirits.

ERIC  
Bad spirits. I read the article about the family who up and left.

KOKO

They vanished. They didn't just up  
and go.

ERIC

How do you know?

KOKO

Booker, the child, the only  
survivor told me. Just whatever you  
do, never go on that island. Never  
make a bridge or take a boat across  
to it.

ERIC

Why?

KOKO

There's an evil spirit that wants  
to get across the water. Do you  
know why porches are painted blue?

ERIC

No. My dad says it's ugly.

KOKO

It is the color of water so evil  
spirits can't cross into the house.

ERIC

He wants me to take off the blue  
paint. When my dad wants something,  
I can't really change his mind.

KOKO

Does he hurt you? Karyn?

Eric makes eye contact with her.

KOKO (CONT'D)

If he ever should, I'll give you my  
number.

ERIC

We don't have a phone.

KOKO

No phone?

Eric shakes his head.

KOKO (CONT'D)

If anything happens to your family,  
please come here. I can help you.

ERIC

Thank you.

KOKO

Let's see what kind of trouble  
those two have gotten into.

She rises from her chair.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - KITCHEN - DAY

Dale leads Annie on a tour of the fixer-upper. He shows her  
the new kitchen faucet.

DALE

I've done some cosmetic touches.

ANNIE

You've done this before?

DALE

Had my own painting and  
construction company back out west.

ANNIE

Why did you move to the swamps of  
Georgia?

DALE

Taxes and regulations. Get my kids  
out of that liberal environment.

He leads her down the hall.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - BATHROOM - DAY

Annie reviews the refurbished bathtub and shower. Dale  
follows behind her almost breathing down her neck.

DALE

I have the water heater hooked up.

ANNIE

You do good work.

He leans from behind her with a hand on her waist and turns  
on the shower. Annie becomes uncomfortable to his touch.

The hot steam rises as he puts both hands on her waist.

DALE

Why don't we get the smell of gator  
off us?

ANNIE

I think you are misinterpreting  
what is happening here.

Dale leans in and kisses her neck while moving his groping  
hands up toward her breasts.

Annie resists by moving her head away from his kiss. She  
tries to turnaround, but he blocks her from moving. His hands  
are inches from her breasts.

DALE

It's just us.

Annie shoves her elbow into Dale's stomach. Dale recoils  
while losing his breath as Annie shoves him against the wall.

She escapes out of the bathroom.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Annie slams out the door as Dale follows wincing in pain.

ANNIE

I should put the gators back.

DALE

Come back. I'm sorry.

ANNIE

I'll mail you my bill, asshole.

Annie slams into her truck and speeds away. Dale bends over  
with his hands on his knees still in pain.

DALE

Fuckin' ugly bitch!

Annie's truck leaves a cloud of dust.

EXT. KOKO'S FARM - HOG PEN - DAY

Karyn and Sonny are petting a fat hog as Koko and Eric walk  
up to the pen.

KARYN

Look, Eric. It's a hog.

ERIC  
He's fat alright.

Booker joins them from the barn nearby.

KOKO  
Booker, meet the children who live  
at your old house.

Eric's eyes target right on Booker who focuses on Karyn.

KOKO (CONT'D)  
They took out the gators from the  
channel.

Booker turns a leery eye to Koko upon the information.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - DOCK - DAY

Dale swings four beers by the plastic rung. He chugs the last  
beer in his other hand and tosses it into the channel.

(O.S.) Hoot of a blown bottle.

Dale looks across to the island. The nude female he saw  
before shows herself briefly and hides behind cypress trees.

He walks along the bank to see if he can see her from another  
view point. He runs into a dead tree which is only a rotted  
tall wood stalk. His eyes travel up the stalk.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - SIDE YARD - DAY

Karyn searches for her dad as Eric follows.

KARYN  
Dad! Dad! I saw chickens and pigs.

(O.S.) Wood chops.

Karyn and Eric discover Dale chopping the rotted tree with an  
axe. Empty beer cans are strewn about and he is sweaty and  
shirtless.

KARYN (CONT'D)  
Dad?

He keeps chopping at the tree as if possessed.

ERIC  
Karyn, get into the RV and make us  
some peanut butter sandwiches.

KARYN  
What's wrong with him?

ERIC  
Just go. You know how he can get  
when he drinks.

Kayrn walks back to the RV as Eric moves closer to his father.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
Dad?

Dale stops chopping and wipes the sweat from his brow.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
Why are you chopping down the tree?

DALE  
Alligator Annie is a cock tease.  
Get me another beer.

Dale goes to the channel and pisses into it. Eric looks at the tall tree and then the channel.

ERIC  
Dad, you can't go on the island.

DALE  
It's my island. Dale's island.

He finishes pissing and goes back to chopping the tree.

DALE (CONT'D)  
Get me a beer, son.

Eric backs away toward the RV.

EXT. ALABAMA - ARLINGTON PLANTATION - SIDE OF THE ROAD - DAY

Toni gets out of her car in front of a grand antebellum plantation home. The beautiful landscape and refurbishing disguise its ugly past.

Toni stretches and drinks a Circle K coffee after an all-night drive.

(O.S.) Cell phone rings in the car.

Toni reaches across to the passenger seat. She searches through empty wrappers of Moon Pies and empty coffee cups.

She finds the cell phone and answers it.

TONI

Hello.

KRISTINA (O.S.)

Hello, Toni. This is Kristina Carmichael. Sorry I didn't get back to you right away.

TONI

You're on vacation. I understand. I wanted to update you on quite a few things I have discovered...

KRISTINA (O.S.)

Sorry to interrupt, but I no longer require your services.

TONI

What?

Toni faces the plantation.

KRISTINA (O.S.)

I no longer need your help.

TONI

I just drove across country. I'm in Alabama.

KRISTINA (O.S.)

I'll pay for your services to get you back home.

TONI

You understand I must go to the authorities with the information I have obtained.

KRISTINA (O.S.)

There's no need for that. No crime has been committed, Ms. Wolfe.

TONI

I'm going to the police.

KRISTINA (O.S.)

I dropped the case against my ex-husband. I changed my mind.

TONI

They are your children.

KRISTINA (O.S.)

No need for dramatics, Ms. Wolfe.

TONI

I'll send you my report when I get back. If you don't know what I found, you may never see them again.

There is a silence as Toni awaits a response.

KRISTINA (O.S.)

Quite unnecessary, but if you feel the need. Let Dale believe he won. He'll bring them back to me once he finds it's too hard to raise two kids on his own. That was my life, Ms. Wolfe. I'll wire the last wages into your account.

The cell phone goes dead.

INT. RV - DAY

Karyn and Eric eat peanut butter sandwiches and watch an animated movie.

(O.S.) Tree cracks by the channel.

Eric peers out the window in worry.

EXT. DEAD TREE BY CHANNEL - DAY

The chopped dead tree falls across the channel and reaches across to the island. It forms a bridge to the other side.

Dale smiles proudly at his accomplishment.

INT. KOKO'S FARM - DAY

Booker chops the roots of a tree stump with an axe as Sonny watches. He whacks into a thick root and fresh blood seeps from the cut. He studies the blood and wipes the sweat from his eyes. The blood vanishes from sight.

Booker looks up at the house and Koko stands on the porch staring back at him.

EXT. CHANNEL BANK - DAY

Dale crawls along the dead tree toward the island. He glances down into the water to catch a quick glimpse of a water moccasin snake swimming by.



Even though he is drunk and wobbly, he makes it to the bank of the island.

He steps into the peat moss and sinks. He quickly jumps to muddy land.

He gets his bearings and steps over glass to what remains of the bottle tree.

(O.S.) A bottle hoot is heard deep in the wooded island.

He walks toward the woods as ghost orchids float past him.

He swooshes and misses them with his hand as they lead him on.

EXT. BOAT DOCK - DAY

Eric stands on the edge of the dock and sees his father disappear into the woods of the island.

ERIC

Dad! Dad!

He runs to the fallen tree bridge. He glances back at the RV where Kayrn waits in worry.

INT. ISLAND - DAY

Dale follows the ghost orchids through the cypress trees.

The ghost orchids lead him to a rustic moss covered, wood shanty half way submerged in a bog. It is the same shanty from the first scene, but with over a hundred years of weathered degradation and neglect.

EXT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

The ghost orchids float into the broken glass windows.

He measuredly walks toward it.

DALE

Hello! Hello!

The door of the shanty creaks open. In the shadows, Kufwa stands naked inside.

Dale steps up to the door.

DALE (CONT'D)

Hello.

INT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Dale swings the door wide open. A possum hisses and snaps at his feet as it scurries leaving Dale frightened.

He peers into the shanty and discovers it in ruin. Rotted walls and roof are missing planks.

A secured rusted chain is bolted on the floor that leads into a large broken hole in the floor boards. Beside the hole is the black soot remains of a fire long burned.

Ghost orchids float and droop over the hole.

Dale goes to the edge of the hole and peers into the dark water bog underneath.

Kufwa's nude reflection is seen behind him. Dale jumps back and discovers nobody.

He goes back to the hole and grips the chain links. He yanks at it and it doesn't budge. He bends down and tugs with his whole body weight and it loosens. He uses all his muscles to lift it link by link.

A trunk wrapped in roots reaches the surface. The swamp water seeps out making the trunk lighter to lift.

Dale pulls it out of the water and scoots it on the floorboard. The trunk is secured from opening by the chain locked by a late 1800's lock. He tries to pry open the lock, but it does not give. He presses on the top of the wood trunk. The wet-soaked wood is pliable and he peels back the layers on top.

He discovers a layer of entwined roots hiding a bulky mass. Dale rips away the roots revealing a skull. It's jaw is tied shut with roots.

Dale falls back in disgust and stares at the trunk. The chains begin to rattle as the trunk expands like it is breathing. Kufwa's hand reaches out and grips a side. The other hand follows.

Like a contortionist, the nude Kufwa Dale witnessed before rises. He is mesmerized by her beauty as she stands before him.

He raises to his feet and faces her. She steps toward him dripping swamp water and garbles her words.

KUFWA

Masters always come for the women  
they enslave.

She steps a breath away from him.

DALE

Who are you?

KUFWA

You'll provide me a name. Give me a  
name.

She holds his arms and leans in to kiss him. He brings his  
lips to hers.

Her fingers grow into roots and grips around his arms. He  
pulls his head back and roots grow from her mouth. They go  
into his mouth and down his throat.

Everywhere on her nude body roots grow out and consume Dale.  
Roots go into his eyes and ears as blood pours from his  
rooted crevices.

He is killed by the real appearance of Kufwa, a hoodoo  
priestess and evil spirit.

INT. RV - SUNSET

Karyn watches cartoons on TV as Eric enters.

KARYN

Is dad back?

Eric grabs the flashlight.

ERIC

He's working on the house.

KARYN

Why are you taking the flashlight?

ERIC

He told me to bring it. Stay in the  
RV until we get back.

She giggles at the cartoon as Eric exits.

INT./EXT. TONI'S CAR/REMOTE CAMPGROUND - NIGHT

Toni drives and pulls into the campground from the second  
scene. She parks in front of the office.

EXT. DEAD TREE OVER CHANNEL - NIGHT

Eric shines the flashlight across the tree bridge.

(O.S.) Bushes move across on the island.

Eric shines a beam on the bushes.

ERIC

Dad?

The bushes move like a person is coming. Ghost orchids float out of the bushes and head toward Eric.

Eric takes a step back. A dark figure, Kufwa stands across the bank.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Dad?

He shines a light on the figure. It is Kufwa covered in twisted roots.

Eric keeps the light on her as she kneels on the tree with her roots growing like claws hanging onto the tree. It crawls along the tree toward Eric. She growls.

Eric spins and sprints to the RV.

He gets to the door and turns the flashlight back to the fallen tree. Kufwa reaches the end and rises on the bank. She screeches like an owl.

Karyn opens the door scaring Eric.

KARYN

What is that?

ERIC

A screech owl. Get inside.

Eric follows her inside.

INT. RV - NIGHT

Eric locks the door and checks the locks on both front doors.

KARYN

What's going on?

He looks out a window and sees a shadowy figure coming toward the RV. He slides the curtains closed. He sits Karyn in front of the TV. He grabs some headphones.

ERIC  
Watch TV while I clean.

He covers her ears with the headphones.

KARYN  
Why do I need these? We aren't  
driving.

ERIC  
Just wear them.

He flips up the TV volume. She focuses on the TV and pays him no attention. He flips up a secret floor tile revealing a large key safe. He tries to open it, but it is locked.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
Dad, dad, dad. Need your help here.

Eric goes to the kitchen and grabs a chopping knife. He stands before the side door with the knife.

Eric flips on the outside lights and turns off the inside lights. He peeks out the door window.

Kufwa stands before the door. She has moving roots draped on her body like fur. He falls back with the knife ready to strike if she enters.

The door knob turns and the door is pulled. The door doesn't give and there is a terrifying silence.

(O.S.) Roots scratch and move up and down the door and window.

Roots sneak through the crack under the door. Eric swings the knife down and chops the roots. The chopped off tips wiggle and die.

(O.S.) Kufwa screeches like an owl.

Karyn yanks down her headphones.

KARYN  
What was that?

ERIC  
Screech owl. Put them back on.

KARYN  
OK!

Eric slaps them back on her ears.

(O.S.) A screen window falls to the floor in the bathroom.

Eric runs and opens the bathroom door.

The screen window is on the floor and roots grab hold of the window sill. The roots pull Kufwa up to the window.

Eric attacks by chopping at her roots. His hand grabs the sill to get balance to chop at the roots.

The roots are growing and gripping more quickly.

Kufwa's head rises into the window. Roots come out of her mouth and secures his other hand. Eric raises the knife and chops the roots from her mouth.

Kufwa screeches as her roots are cut like a tongue. Eric escapes the roots clutch and retreats out of the bathroom.

He slams the door shut and looks for something to block the door. His eyes travel around the RV and focuses on the black candle.

He searches the kitchen for blue tip matches. He finds them in a drawer.

He glances back at the bathroom door and it opens slowly.

He snatches the black candle off the table and scrapes a blue tip match along the table. The match breaks in half.

Kufwa's roots reach out the bathroom door.

Eric takes a blue tip match and strikes it across his jeans metal zipper. It ignites and he lights the candle wick.

He carries the lit candle toward the bathroom door. Kufwa comes out of the bathroom and faces the lit candle. Kufwa's brown eyes grow large and Eric extends the candle flame to her face. She screeches as a root is lit on fire.

Kufwa retreats to the bathroom as Eric attacks her with the lit candle. Kufwa quickly retreats out the window. Eric slams the window closed.

Eric rests on the toilet with the candle burning on a counter.

Karyn enters.

KARYN (CONT'D)

Whew. Smelly. You're taking a poo.

EXT. RV - DAY

The morning sunshine tries to permeate through a cloud covering. Eric snaps up a hammer from the bed of the truck. He decides it is the wrong weapon and exchanges it for a hatchet.

He surveys the surroundings while gripping the hatchet.

Karyn exits the RV with a door bang. Eric jumps startled.

KARYN  
Where's dad?

ERIC  
He, he's working on the house. He wants me to take you to Sonny's.

KARYN  
I want to tell him about the chickens.

ERIC  
I already told him. He's happy you have a friend to play with. Take a quick shower and I'll ride you down there.

KARYN  
OK.

She scampers back into the RV.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - DAY

Eric grips the hatchet and checks every room. He comes out of the patio and glances up at the Haint blue paint.

KARYN (O.S.)  
I'm ready.

Eric yells into the empty house.

ERIC  
Dad, we're leaving. I'll be back to help.

Eric exits the porch.

INT. REMOTE CAMPGROUND - OFFICE - DAY

Toni questions the MANAGER at the front desk.

TONI

Is there anything else you may remember? Anything odd?

MANAGER

He asked for directions.

Toni studies the Manager.

MANAGER (CONT'D)

It's odd. He didn't have a cell phone to get his own directions.

TONI

Do you remember where?

MANAGER

Sure. Okefenokee swamp. He made a joke about how the Adamms family vacationed in the swamp. I didn't get the joke, but he laughed at himself. He said he bought a house.

TONI

Do you know the city?

MANAGER

I gave him directions to Folkston. Only city I knew close to the swamp. It seemed to ring a bell with him.

Toni takes out her phone and types in the town.

MANAGER (CONT'D)

See. Everybody has a cell phone nowadays. You just type it in and ta-da, directions.

EXT. KOKO'S FARM - DAY

Koko and Sonny head to the car. Booker carries a bag of feed to his own ATV.

Eric rides up on his bike with Karyn piggyback.

KARYN

Hi!

KOKO

Well hello. You're up early with the chickens.



KARYN

We don't have chickens.

ERIC

It's a saying like the early bird catches the worm. Dad and I are working on the roof of the house and was hoping Karyn could play with Sonny today.

Karyn and Booker stand next to each other.

KOKO

I have to open the store. Sure. I can have her dust shelves. Hop in the car.

Karyn and Sonny jump into the back seat.

ERIC

Thank you.

KOKO

Why didn't your dad bring her down here?

ERIC

He was busy.

She nods her head and catches Booker's eyes who overheard.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Eric ties his boots and secures a tool belt to his waist. It holds a hatchet and hand saw. He snaps a battery pack onto a nail gun and shoots a nail into a pillar.

EXT. DEAD TREE OVER CHANNEL - DAY

Eric stands at the fallen tree that connects the channel. He is armed with the nail gun and tool belt.

He steadies himself on the tree and measuredly takes one step in front of the other.

EXT. ISLAND - DAY

Eric leaps off the tree to the island. He secures the belt to keep it from sliding down his waist.

He steps through the peat to the bottle tree. He takes out the hatchet and breaks the last two bottles. Glass shatters to the ground. He crumples glass upon each step away from the tree.

Ghost orchids float past and lead him into the woods.

EXT. REALTOR OFFICE - DAY

Toni exits her car and is unable to turn the door knob. She glances at the window and a hand written sign reads, "Back at 11."

She checks the time on her phone and window shops toward "Swamp Things."

EXT. SWAMP THINGS CURIO SHOP - DAY

Sonny and Karyn play tarot cards on the bench.

SONNY

I win. King beats the queen.

KARYN

You're making this up.

Toni walks in front of the store window.

KARYN (CONT'D)

I'm going to ask your mom.

Karyn rises and bumps into Toni who immediately recognizes her.

TONI

Karyn?

Karyn stops and looks at the strange woman. Toni kneels down to her.

TONI (CONT'D)

Is your father and brother here?

KARYN

They are working on our house.

Koko opens the door to both of them talking.

KOKO

Karyn, do you know this lady?

Karyn shakes her head.

TONI  
No, she doesn't. I'm looking for  
her father. I'm a private  
investigator.

Koko studies her.

KOKO  
Go in the store kids. No trouble  
making.

The kids run in the store leaving Koko and Toni alone.

KOKO (CONT'D)  
Do you have any license or  
anything?

Toni hands her an ID.

TONI  
Is he here?

KOKO  
What did he do?

TONI  
He stole his kids from their  
mother.

Koko studies her.

KOKO  
Their mother?

TONI  
Yes.

KOKO  
Their mother died in a car crash.  
Who are you?

TONI  
No. I just talked to her a day ago.  
She hired me.

Koko peeks her head into the store.

KOKO  
Karyn, can you come here for a  
minute?

Karyn runs up to her.

KARYN  
We're dusting.

KOKO  
When did your mother pass away?

KARYN  
When we camped in Texas.

KOKO  
Did your dad tell you that?

KARYN  
Eric told me. Dad was too sad to.

KOKO  
Get Sonny for me. We are going home.

Koko looks at Toni.

KOKO (CONT'D)  
I knew that son-of-a-bitch was shady. Follow me in your car.

INT./EXT. KOKO'S CAR/SWAMP ROAD - DAY

Koko drives Sonny and Karyn in the back seat. Koko glances in the rearview mirror and makes sure Toni's car is behind her.

KARYN  
We can go over and hunt ghost flowers now.

Koko glances back at Kayrn.

KOKO  
Ghost orchids?

KARYN  
Yep. Dad built a bridge across to the island.

Horror and worry occupy Koko's eyes.

KOKO  
Did he cross over?

Karyn shrugs unsure.

Koko quickly snaps up her cell phone and makes a call.

KOKO (CONT'D)

Booker, the kid's dad made a bridge to the island. Get over there quick. Change your phone to walkie talkie since service there sucks.

Koko glances in the rear view mirror.

EXT. ISLAND - DAY

Eric is weaponized with his tool belt and nail gun as he follows the floating ghost orchids. He gets close to one by a tree. He shoots a nail through it and secures it to a tree trunk. It flutters like a pinned moth.

DALE (O.S.)

Eric! Hurry up with those tools. We have work to do.

Eric quickly runs past the ghost orchids and discovers the shanty where his dad was killed.

ERIC

Dad!?

DALE (O.S.)

We don't have all day. Hurry your ass up.

Eric slogs through the bog and peat moss to the open door.

ERIC

Dad?

It is eerily quiet as he steps on the creaky wood.

INT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Eric measuredly advances toward the open trunk. He doesn't notice his dead father near the wall. He jumps back in fright upon seeing the skeleton. He slips on blood and falls next to his dad. His hands keep him from hitting the floor.

He raises up his hand and finds his palm smeared with blood.

ERIC

Dad?

He turns his head and discovers his father dead in a pool of blood.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Dad.

He begins to cry as he checks his father's pulse.

ERIC (CONT'D)

You can't die.

The trunk and chain rattle. Eric spins back to the trunk with his nail gun ready.

The trunk moves again.

Eric quickly checks his father's pants pockets and pulls out his keys.

The rooted hand grips outside of the trunk.

Eric has seen this before. He puts the keys into his pocket and yanks out the hatchet. He has a nail gun in one hand and the other a hatchet.

Kufwa rises in her root covered body.

While Eric focuses on her, his father's hand clenches Eric's ankle. His dead father speaks with garbled blood.

DALE

What took you so long?

Eric tries to pull his foot away as Kufwa steps out of the trunk.

ERIC

Let me go! You aren't my dad.

DALE

You are my son. Join me.

ERIC

Dad! Don't!

Eric whacks at his father's wrist with the hatchet. His dad's grip loosens for him to release his foot. His father tries to grab his foot again and Eric nails the hand down to the floor.

Kufwa steps toward him with her roots stretching from her hands and feet.

She is between him and the door to hinder his escape.

The door slams shut with a bang.

EXT. DEAD TREE OVER CHANNEL - DAY

Booker glares across to the island as he holds a machete. He remembers another time.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. CHANNEL BANK - DAY

A Young Booker pretends to be a pirate with a wooden sword. His sister wears an eye patch.

CAROL

They said we can't ever go over.

YOUNG BOOKER

That's where Black Beard hid his gold. I see it at night.

CAROL

Those are fireflies.

YOUNG BOOKER

Anyway, they won't be back until after church. Eye, don't be a scaredy cat.

They get into a two-man blow-up raft and Young Booker paddles them across.

FLASHBACK ENDS:

EXT. DEAD TREE OVER THE CHANNEL - DAY

Booker crosses over with his machete.

EXT. KOKO'S FARM - DAY

Koko kneels down to Sonny and Karyn as Toni comes from behind.

KOKO

You listen. Listen good. I want both of you to stay in the house. Keep the doors locked. If you hear any noises light the black candle.

SONNY

They are to ward off bad spirits.

KOKO  
That's right.

KARYN  
Eric used one last night.

Koko sighs deeply.

KOKO  
There's cookies in the jar. Run off  
now.

Sonny and Karyn run into the house.

KOKO (CONT'D)  
Lock the door!

TONI  
What was that about?

Koko steps toward the barn.

INT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Eric moves around the walls to escape Kufwa. Roots grow from her fingers and reach out for him.

Eric tomahawks the roots away from him and goes past the back broken window. He quickly looks out the window at a drop into the swamp. He leans his back against the rear wall planks.

(O.S.) Wood planks crack.

He spins around and pushes on the rotted wood. The wood cracks upon his pushing, but doesn't give way.

Kufwa's mouth opens with roots coming out and she garbles.

KUFWA  
Stay with your daddy. He loves you.

Her roots grab Eric's shoulder and he spins with the hatchet and chops her roots. The other hand shoves the nail gun into her head and shoots a nail into her forehead.

Kufwa screeches and backs away. Eric gains confidence and steps toward her whizzing the hatchet at her head.

Kufwa glares at him with growing anger and lunges at him. Roots come out of her mouth and fingers like spears. Eric jumps back startled and slams into the wall. His weight breaks the wall planks and he falls out of the shanty back first.



EXT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Eric falls back first through the hole in the wall. He splashes into a swamp bog where his whole body submerges in the dark water. The nail gun sinks underwater.

EXT. ISLAND - WOODS - DAY

Booker chops through reeds with the machete.

FLASHBACK BEGINS:

EXT. ISLAND - WOODS - DAY

Young Booker chops through the reeds with his wooden sword with his sister trailing.

(O.S.) Kufwa screeches.

FLASHBACK ENDS:

EXT. ISLAND - WOODS - DAY

Booker moves faster toward the screech.

INT. BARN - DAY

Toni trails Koko who opens a floor door leading to a root cellar.

KOKO

There's evil on the island where  
they bought.

TONI

What?

INT. ROOT CELLAR - DAY

Koko climbs down into a root cellar which is more like a workroom for a hoodoo witch. It contains shelves of mason jars with roots and spells. There are candles and candle making equipment.

Toni climbs down and studies the room and mason jars.

TONI

What is this, voodoo?

KOKO  
It's hoodoo.

Koko unlocks a trunk and pulls out a dusty jar filled with resins and herbs which appears like a trail mix. She grabs a small rolled scroll.

TONI  
What are you going to do?

KOKO  
We. Years ago, my mother performed an exorcism and sent the demon away. She always told me, she would be back one day. She foresaw it and made me this jar for an exorcism spell. I never thought I'd ever need it. Grab me a black, red, and white candle.

Toni grabs the candles and stuffs everything into a backpack.

TONI  
Demon? How bad is this demon?

KOKO  
My mother never recovered. She died a year after the exorcism. We need to grab some tools.

Toni pulls out a gun from her side holster.

TONI  
Does this work on your demon?

KOKO  
Not this time, darlin. If you want to see that family alive we are going to require my weapons.

TONI  
Stop. Stop. I'm going along with this hocus pocus, mumbo jumbo long enough. I need some resemblance of reality.

Koko grabs Toni's hand.

KOKO  
Proof. You need evidence.

Koko goes into a trance state.

KOKO (CONT'D)

I see an X on a wall. I see a husky girl alone in her room watching TV. You aren't sad, but appear more confused. You are watching TV for many hours and nights. It's an obsession for you. Your focus is not on the leading man, but the leading lady.

Koko shakes her head in a trance.

KOKO (CONT'D)

No. You want to be the leading man. Now I see Humphrey Bogart holding a black falcon. You wanted to become that man. Not that man, but a man. You're older now. You wait at a doctor's office. Not a general practitioner. But, a psychologist.

Toni yanks her hand away.

TONI

So I watched a lot of *X-Files* and Sam Spade movies as a kid. So what?

Toni is out of her trance.

KOKO

The truth is there and it's evil. We need to confront it.

EXT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Booker appears from the woods where ghost orchids float. He notices a ghost orchid fluttering while attached to the tree trunk by a nail. He grips his machete and peers over to the shanty.

FLASHBACK BEGINS:

INT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Young Booker and Carol stand over the hole in their pirate outfits. They see gold glistening below the water.

YOUNG BOOKER

Black Beard's treasure.

Together Young Booker and Carol pull on the chain links to raise the trunk.

EXT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Young Booker screams out and runs for his life. He runs past Booker who is now older.

INT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Carol lays dead in a pool of blood. Kufwa stands over her.

FLASHBACK ENDS:

EXT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Booker grips the machete handle tight.

His little sister Carol stands waiting for him. She is only a phantom.

Koko explains to Toni about Booker's phantom family while Booker measuredly walks toward the shanty.

KOKO (O.S.)

The island has always been consumed  
with evil since slavery.

Tears fill Booker's eyes.

INT./EXT. KOKO'S CAR/FARM - DAY

Koko drives Toni out of the farm.

KOKO

Before the Civil War there was the  
Townsend Plantation just west from  
here. Every year Master Townsend  
and the misses would have a harvest  
ball. All the masters and their  
children came from as far as  
Virginia and Louisiana to attend.

They drive past the swamps.

KOKO (CONT'D)

The slaves would entertain the  
children with a puppet show  
upstairs while the parents danced  
below. However, one slave, a hoodoo  
priestess, was angry after her  
child was sold off to another  
plantation. She planned her revenge  
just for that night.

(MORE)

KOKO (CONT'D)

She baked ginger snaps for the white children and added hemlock root. As the masters danced downstairs the children died a excruciating and horrible death from poison.

They drive up to the RV which Toni recognizes.

KOKO (CONT'D)

After they discovered their children dead, they whipped the truth from the slaves. They told them it was the priestess. However, she already escaped and ran off into the swamps.

They both leave the car with Koko carrying the backpack.

EXT. RV - DAY

Toni knocks on the scratched door.

TONI

Anybody in there?

Koko stands outside as Toni enters with her pistol leading.

Koko glances around as Toni exits.

TONI (CONT'D)

Nobody.

Koko tries the walkie talkie.

KOKO

Booker, are you there? We are almost there. Where are you?

They wait and Booker answers.

BOOKER (O.S.)

I don't see anyone. I'll wait outside the cabin for you. My sister is at the door.

Koko looks scared.

TONI

What's wrong?

KOKO

His sister is dead.

Toni follows Koko toward the island.

KOKO (CONT'D)

The priestess became known as  
"Kufwa," meaning "to die."

Koko points to the island.

KOKO (CONT'D)

She hid back past the woods, but  
the hounds found her. The master's  
and their men shoved roots down her  
throat and tied her mouth shut so  
she could never cast a spell again.  
They tied her feet and hands and  
sunk her below the water in a  
trunk. Later they had their slaves  
dig channels and make her grave an  
island. An island where her evil  
spirit can never cross water and  
harm others. Ever since, the island  
has held Kufwa captive. Her own  
personal Alcatraz.

They walk to the downed tree bridge.

KOKO (CONT'D)

Eric and his father must have  
crossed. She will use it too.

EXT. DEAD TREE OVER CHANNEL - DAY

Koko balances on the tree with the backpack. Toni steps up on  
the tree.

KOKO

My mother took Booker into our home  
years ago after she killed his  
family and her demon exorcised. I  
remember helping build the bottle  
tree with Booker and my mother. We  
added alligators to keep people  
from crossing.

TONI

Alligators?

Koko is almost to the end of the tree on the island. Toni  
looks in the water for gators.

KOKO

They are gone now. Their father  
took them out.

Toni stops in horror as she sees splashing in the swamp coming toward her. She points.

TONI

Gator!

Koko follows to where she points.

KOKO

It's a boy. It's Eric.

Eric tiredly swims closer.

ERIC

Don't go!

Koko steps back on the log as ghost orchids float a few feet away on the island.

Eric grabs onto the log and is helped up by Toni.

ERIC (CONT'D)

It killed my dad.

EXT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Booker stands about a hundred feet from the door and Carol.

CAROL

Come play with me.

Booker speaks to himself.

BOOKER

You aren't real. She's not real.

The walkie talkie comes on.

KOKO (O.S.)

It's too dangerous. Kufwa was released from her grave.

Booker focuses on the Shanty.

BOOKER

We must send her back.

KOKO (O.S.)

You can't do it alone. Come back!

FLASHBACK BEGINS:

INT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Minty and Charles lay dead in blood on the floor. Red, black, and white candles are lit beside the burning resin of an exorcism spell. Sonny's GRANDMOTHER (50's) is frail and bloody, yet relieved as she pushes the trunk back into the hole with a splash.

FLASHBACK ENDS:

EXT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

The ghost orchids come out of the windows and doors. Carol walks toward him.

CAROL

Don't be scared, Booker. We can play forever. Let's play Drip, Drip, Drop with mom and dad.

Carol walks ten feet from him.

BOOKER

You aren't Carol. You killed my family.

Roots come from the peat moss under Carol and entwine her feet.

CAROL

Booker, help me! She is taking me under with her. Help me!

Carol cries as she is tugged down in the peat moss. Like quick sand she is pulled down to her knees.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Help me!

Booker backs away.

CAROL (CONT'D)

It's all your fault.

Booker spins and confronts his zombie-like mom and dad.

MINTY AND CHARLES

Drip, drip, drop.

Booker runs past them into the woods.



EXT. WOODS - DAY

Booker runs through the trees. Minty and Charles appear around tree trunks.

MINTY AND CHARLES

Drip, drip, drop.

Booker swings his machete at them, but the blade slices into a tree as they vanish.

BOOKER

Stop it!

CAROL (O.S.)

Drip, drip, drop.

Booker spins madly around with the machete.

MINTY (O.S.)

Drip, drip, drop.

CHARLES (O.S.)

Drip, drip, drop.

Booker covers his ears.

BOOKER

I don't want to play!

Deathly silence as Booker looks around. No one is in sight.

Roots wrap around and secure his feet. Kufwa rises from the ground and her roots secure his hands. They stare at each other.

She is only inches close. In her garbled voice she speaks.

KUFWA

Drip, drip, drop.

Roots from her eyes go straight into his eye sockets.

EXT. RV - DAY

Eric exits the RV drying his hair with a towel as Koko and Toni come from the house. Koko speaks into the phone.

KOKO

Booker, answer me.

There is static coming from the phone.

KOKO (CONT'D)

He must be over there somewhere.

ERIC

That root lady will get him. She's deceiving. After it killed dad, it used his body and, like, became him. I had to hurt him.

Eric gets teary eyed upon reflection and Koko hugs him. Walkie talkie comes on with static as Kufwa garbles.

KUFWA

Your mother waits for you.

They glare at the phone.

ERIC

The root lady.

KOKO

I'll be there alright. To send you back to hell.

Kufwa laughs on the other end as Koko hangs up. Koko focuses on Eric.

KOKO (CONT'D)

Tell me everything you saw.

EXT. DEAD TREE OVER THE CHANNEL - DAY

Eric whacks the tree with an axe while Toni and Koko stand at the end on the side of the house. The chopped section is only a quarter in. Eric wears his tool belt with hatchet. Toni puts on gloves.

TONI

My turn.

Eric steps down from the tree as they exchange the axe.

ERIC

Who are you?

TONI

I'm a private detective.

Koko tries to change the subject.

KOKO

If we keep Kufwa on the island, we can plan the exorcism.

ERIC  
You hunted us down?

TONI  
I trailed your father. He didn't  
make it easy to find you.

ERIC  
My mom hired you, didn't she?

KOKO  
I thought your dad told you she  
died.

ERIC  
It was his plan once we hit the  
road.

TONI  
You knew of his plan?

He nods.

ERIC  
I didn't know he was going to make  
me be the one to lie to her. He  
didn't even want to bring her, but  
I insisted. She's my sister.

Eric sighs.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
They were so angry. Mom and dad  
wanted to see who could hurt each  
other more. They went to court all  
the time. Arguing and lying about  
custody and child support. They  
never saw we were the ones hurting.  
I need to tell her the truth.

Toni climbs on the tree.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
I worry my mom might not want me  
back.

Koko and Toni meet eyes.

KOKO  
I'm sure she does.

Toni swings the axe and chops into the tree.

ERIC  
My mom says I'm just like my dad.  
She hated him.

Koko messes with his hair.

KOKO  
You're better than your dad. You  
survived Kufwa.

Toni stops chopping and swooshes away floating ghost orchids.

TONI  
What are these things? Go away.

Koko and Eric see them floating around her.

ERIC  
It's a warning. She's coming.

Across the island, Booker stands like a zombie yielding his machete.

BOOKER  
If you don't come to us, we'll come  
for you. Drip, drip, drop.

He steps onto the log.

KOKO  
Run! She has Booker.

Toni stands her ground on the tree with the axe.

ERIC  
Let's go!

TONI  
You said we can't let her cross.

Booker swings the machete as he stalks closer to Toni.

Toni pulls out her revolver from the holster and shoots into Booker. The bullets strike him, but only stuns him.

TONI (CONT'D)  
Ah shit!

She scampers across the tree and slips. She drops the axe to keep balance and it ricochets off the tree into the swamp. She gains her balance and joins Eric and Koko running away.

EXT. TONI'S CAR - DAY

Toni, Koko, and Eric run toward their vehicles.

ERIC  
I have my dad's keys.

TONI  
We'll take mine.

Booker runs toward them with the machete.

KOKO  
Hurry!

They get to her car as Booker is a couple of feet behind.

Koko and Toni jump in the front seat as Eric jumps in the back.

The doors slam shut as Booker reaches the rear tire. He plunges the machete into the tire and it blows out.

INT. TONI'S CAR - DAY

Koko is frantically forcing the key into the ignition as Eric and Toni watch Booker go to the other rear tire.

TONI  
Hurry! He's going to pop them all.

(O.S.) Second rear tire blows.

Koko slams the key in the ignition and turns the motor on.

Booker slams the blunt machete handle through the driver's side window and glass shatters on Koko.

TONI (CONT'D)  
Put it in drive!

Roots grow from Booker's hands and attach to the steering wheel and shifter.

Koko screams as roots come out of Booker's mouth and attack her face.

Toni yanks Koko toward the passenger seat.

EXT. KOKO'S CAR - DAY

Eric exits the rear door and swings his hatchet into Booker's back.

Kufwa screeches as Toni and Koko leave out the front door with the backpack.

KOKO  
Go to the house.

Koko and Toni run toward the house.

ERIC  
I have to go to the RV first.

The roots retreat into Booker and he chases Koko and Toni with the machete.

Eric runs into the RV.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Koko and Toni slam into the screen door of the porch. Koko picks up the crowbar to use as a weapon.

TONI  
What are we going to do?

KOKO  
Pray for Haint Blue.

TONI  
Haint what?

Toni aims the gun at Booker. She shoots and hits Booker in the head. Like before it only stuns him.

Koko tosses the crowbar aside.

KOKO  
This won't stop her.

Koko rummages through the backpack and yanks out a black candle. She stops.

KOKO (CONT'D)  
What the hell? How does a hoodoo  
witch forget matches?

Booker busts through the screen door and is immediately thrown back from the porch. He lands on his back and screeches.

KOKO (CONT'D)

It worked.

TONI

What worked?

Koko points to the Haint Blue color of the porch.

KOKO

Superstition. Southerners paint their porches Haint Blue to keep away bad spirits. It has the appearance of water. Spirits can't crossover into the house.

Booker spins with his machete and heads to the RV.

TONI

Eric! He's coming!

INT. RV - DAY

Eric snatches the lockbox, matches, and the remaining black candle.

(O.S.) The RV tire blows out.

Eric peeks out the rear door as he finds Booker stabbing another tire. He swings out the rear door with a crash, but doesn't leave.

Eric scampers to the passenger seat and watches the side mirror as Booker enters the open RV door. At the same time Eric escapes from the passenger door.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Eric races up to the patio with the lockbox and candle. Booker is ten feet behind him.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Eric jumps onto the porch.

Koko and Toni watch as Booker stands a few feet away from the door.

Booker screeches.

Toni checks her cell phone.

TONI  
There's no service.

ERIC  
That's one of the reasons dad  
bought this place.

KOKO  
Did your dad hook up the gas?

ERIC  
Not sure.

KOKO  
We need matches or a lighter.

Eric tosses the box of blue strike matches to her.

ERIC  
Is Karyn safe?

KOKO  
As long as I'm here, I think that  
bitch will stay. She is safe with  
Sonny.

Eric goes to the door and stares at Booker who stands like a  
zombie guard with the machete.

KOKO (CONT'D)  
She's going to wait us out. She  
waited years to escape. What is a  
few hours or days?

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Dusk falls as Booker still stands in front of the patio with  
his machete.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Eric sits far away from Koko and Toni. He opens the lock box  
and makes sure Koko and Toni can't see inside.

KOKO  
Does the mother know where they  
are?

Toni shakes her head.

TONI  
No. She doesn't care.



Koko studies her.

TONI (CONT'D)

I was fired days ago. She didn't want to know where he took them. She did at first. Paid me some good money to hunt them down. But she changed her mind while on a cruise.

KOKO

Why did you keep investigating?

TONI

I wanted to make sure they were safe.

Eric pulls out a pistol from the lockbox and inserts bullets into the chamber.

KOKO

Your hunch or premonition was spot on.

TONI

Too much.

KOKO

Maybe you have a gift.

TONI

No, past experience. My spouse ran off with our child and I had to track her down too.

KOKO

Men can be assholes.

TONI

So can women. I always liked Scully more than Mulder. He is a she.

Eric aims the pistol toward Booker.

KOKO

Evidence anybody can be an asshole. Sonny's father sold drugs without my knowledge. He was killed in prison.

TONI

You didn't see that coming?

Koko glances away slightly hurt.

TONI (CONT'D)  
Sorry. But, like, don't you read  
tarot cards?

KOKO  
One can't live the everyday knowing  
what the future may hold.

TONI  
TMI.

KOKO  
Right.

(O.S.) ATV engine is heard coming.

They all rise to their feet.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Sonny drives the ATV with Karyn piggyback. Both of them wear  
helmets. They drive directly toward Booker.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Koko and Eric are at the door. Eric with his pistol and  
hatchet.

KOKO  
Stay away from him! Sonny!

ERIC  
They can't hear you.

KOKO  
Give me the hatchet.

ERIC  
You can have the gun.

Koko grabs the pistol as Toni holds her pistol behind them.

TONI  
He'll kill them.

The ATV drives right to Booker.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Sonny and Karyn drive the ATV and stop a few feet from Booker. Sonny and Karyn jump off the ATV as Booker glares at them.

SONNY

Where's mom? We're worried.

Koko and Eric rush out of the house.

KOKO

Don't hurt my son!

Booker swings the machete and hits Sonny on the side of his motorcycle helmet. Sonny falls to the ground from the hit as his helmet flies and rolls away.

Karyn freezes in horror. Booker raises the machete as bullets strike him. The bullets don't stop him from swinging the machete down on Karyn's helmet. It slices into the helmet, but doesn't hurt her.

Eric slams the hatchet into Booker's back over and over while Koko shoots Booker at point blank range.

Booker screeches and swings the machete back across barely missing Eric who jumps back. However, the machete strikes Koko in the arm causing blood to gush out.

Toni raises Sonny to his feet as Eric lifts Karyn into his arms. They all run for the safety of the patio.

ERIC

Koko, let's go!

Koko has vengeance in her raging eyes and shoots into the head of Booker, but nothing happens.

Booker swings the machete into Koko's leg and she collapses to the ground.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Sonny watches outside as her mother lies helpless on the ground.

SONNY

Why is Booker hurting us? Mom!

Eric holds Karyn tight as Toni tries to keep Sonny from watching.

TONI

There's an evil spirit inside him.

Sonny looks around and discovers the black candle.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Booker stands above Koko who is wounded on the ground. She tries to scoot toward the patio door, but she is in too much pain. Her leg wound gushes blood.

KUFWA

It was your mother who banished me.

Booker's skin begins to protrude all over like hundreds of bugs are trying to escape. From a protruding bump a root breaks out. More roots follow from his face, arms, hands, and feet.

Koko watches in horror as Booker is transformed into Kufwa with rustling roots. She speaks in a garbled voice from her rooted mouth.

KUFWA (CONT'D)

You aren't as powerful as your mother.

KOKO

Go to hell.

Kufwa's roots extend from her fingers and wrap around Koko's neck. The roots tighten and strangle her.

KUFWA

I'll keep you here for eternity.

They both don't notice as Sonny appears holding out a lit black candle. Tears stream down his cheeks.

SONNY

Get away from my mother.

Kufwa and Koko look at Sonny as he moves closer.

KUFWA

You have a little one.

SONNY

Through fire I cleanse you.

Kufwa laughs as she tightens the roots around Koko's neck.

SONNY (CONT'D)

Through air, thrice I charge you.

Sonny extends the candle flame under the outstretched roots strangling her mother.

The flame explodes and burns the roots like they were doused in gasoline.

Kufwa screeches in agony as her roots burn toward her body.

Koko gasps for air as the untethered roots release her. She painfully rises and grabs Sonny by the hand. She limps with her son to the patio and is helped in by Toni.

Kufwa is now engulfed in flames as she rolls to the ground extinguishing the lit roots. She rises with her roots smoldering and glares into the house.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - NIGHT

The black candle is lit as the only source of light.

Koko wears tied towels and rags around her wounds while sitting next to Sonny. Eric comforts Karyn with his arm around her. She tightly holds a crowbar for security.

KOKO

Thank god you wore helmets.

KARYN

Why does she want to hurt us?

SONNY

If Kufwa was once a slave why does she want to hurt black people?

KOKO

My mother, your grandmother told me curses can take a life of their own over time. Her vengeance and spirit survival has become so strong it only knows how to kill. Everybody becomes an enemy of evil.

KARYN

A monster?

ERIC

Something like that.

KARYN

Did she hurt our dad?

Eric sighs deeply and glances at Koko.

ERIC  
He's still on the island.

KARYN  
We can't let her hurt him.

Eric hugs her tighter as Toni enters the patio from the house.

TONI  
There's nothing to eat in there.  
Just half a can of warm beer.

ERIC  
The RV has food.

TONI  
Just how to get there.

ERIC  
I have my dad's keys. There's the truck.

SONNY  
What are we going to do mom?

Koko moves and winces from the pain.

KOKO  
She's only going to get stronger.  
Smarter and more cunning.

TONI  
She can't get us all at one time.  
What if we all gather around the candles and take the pickup truck.

ERIC  
I want to sink her bones back into the swamp forever.

KOKO  
I can't make it there to perform the exorcism.

TONI  
Did you see how she reacted when your son lit her on fire? She was scared. He really damaged her. Does he have that "it" inside him?

Koko and Sonny meet eyes.

TONI (CONT'D)

We can take the fight to her. She won't expect Sonny.

KOKO

You are asking my seven year old son to exorcize the demon?

ERIC

She never followed me once I fell into the water. I know how to get there through the swamp water.

TONI

We'll need to keep her preoccupied.

KOKO

You'll need to keep everything dry. Listen to me. I'm sending my son to fight a monster.

SONNY

I'm not afraid mom.

KOKO

You should be.

ERIC

We can put everything in the lockbox. It's waterproof.

TONI

There. You can teach Sonny how to perform the exorcism. She won't be expecting children.

ERIC

I'll watch over Sonny, if you watch over Karyn.

TONI

We both will watch over her.

Toni goes to the door and discovers Booker staring back at her with ghost orchids floating around him.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - NIGHT

The candle burns inside the patio. Eric opens the lockbox and takes out bundles of cash. Everyone stares in wonder at each bundle he takes out. He replaces the bundles with the candles, matchsticks, paper scroll, and exorcism mason jar.

Booker stands guard in the moonlight. The floating ghost orchids surround him.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - NIGHT

Eric hugs Karyn and whispers.

ERIC

Be good. I'll be back shortly.  
Remember to follow Koko and Toni.

KARYN

Find dad.

Eric gives her a kiss on the cheek.

ERIC

I'm sorry.

He crawls to the house wearing his tool belt as Toni comforts Karyn.

Koko hugs Sonny tight. Sonny wipes a tear from his mom's eye.

SONNY

I got this mom.

He gives her a kiss and scoots on all fours over to Eric. Koko wipes tears from her eyes as Eric picks up the lockbox.

Toni and Karyn sit next to Koko by the screen.

TONI

She is most threatened by you. We  
need to show her you are still  
here.

Toni strikes a match and lights the black candle.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - NIGHT

The lit candle reveals Toni, Koko, and Karyn. However, Booker lies on the ground in a dead state.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - BACKYARD - DAWN

Eric and Sonny sneak out the back door and silently run down to the channel. Eric carries the lockbox and wears his tool belt with hatchet.

The sky is a crimson red.



EXT. CHANNEL BANK - DAWN

Eric pulls up some mud from the bank and applies it to his face.

ERIC  
Put this on your face.

SONNY  
I'm already black.

Eric applies it to Sonny's face anyway.

ERIC  
I saw this on my Navy Seals game.

Eric and Sonny submerge themselves in the dark water.

They slowly dog paddle to the log bridge.

Ghost orchids float near the entrance of the bridge.

Eric motions to Sonny with his hand to go under the log.

(O.S.) Boot scrapes the log.

Eric grips Sonny and looks up onto the log.

Dale walks across the log with floating ghost orchids.

Eric holds his breath and yanks Sonny underwater with him.

Dale walks across the log onto the other side.

Eric and Sonny rise on the other side of the log catching their breath. They swim silently away from the bridge.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAWN

Toni, Koko, and Karyn peek outside the screens as Booker lays dead.

KOKO  
She left his body.

TONI  
Where is she?

Ghost orchids float past the body. Like a zombie, Dale walks across the yard to the pickup truck.

KARYN  
It's my dad! Dad! Dad!

Karyn bangs on the screen.

KARYN (CONT'D)  
HELP US!

Toni grabs Karyn.

TONI  
That is not your dad. He may look  
like your father, but it is the  
demon who has taken control. She is  
inside him.

KARYN  
That's my dad.

Karyn begins to cry.

TONI  
It's not.

KARYN  
Then where is he?

KOKO  
On the island. That is not your  
father.

TONI  
She's taking out a gas can from the  
bed of the truck.

They peer out the screen.

EXT. RV - DAWN

Dale carries the gas can into the RV.

EXT. SWAMP - DAWN

Eric and Sonny dog paddle through the dark waters.

An alligator rises in front of them with its reptile eyes  
glaring at them.

ERIC  
Shit. It's another gator.

SONNY  
Don't splash. I'm going to get on  
your back.

ERIC

Why?

Sonny wraps his arms around Eric.

SONNY

They're stupid and will think we  
are one large animal.

Eric dog paddles quietly by the glowing eyes of the  
alligator.

ERIC

Alligator Annie said if it does  
attack, hit it in the snout.

SONNY

Or eyes.

They measuredly and quietly pass the gator.

EXT. RV - DAWN

Fire breaks out from the front windows and doors. Black smoke  
bellows out.

EXT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAWN

Eric and Sonny are submerged to their necks in swamp water.  
They whisper to each other as they see the shanty. They can  
see the hole Eric fell out of.

SONNY

That's hers?

Eric and Sonny slowly dog paddle up to the shanty like  
special ops.

SONNY (CONT'D)

I'll climb up first and make sure  
there's no ghosts floating around.

EXT. RV - DAWN

In a cloud of smoke, Dale exits from the side door with the  
gas can and a lit torch made of a broom handle and belted  
flaming towels.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Toni, Koko, and Karyn watch as the RV goes up in flames and Dale walks around the house with the lit torch.

TONI  
He's going to burn us out.

Toni goes into the house.

TONI (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
He's going to light the back door  
on fire.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - BACKYARD - DAY

Dale douses the gasoline on the door and the back walls and windows. He sets it all ablaze.

He throws the open gasoline can into a window and follows it with the torch. The inside of the room explodes in flames.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Toni joins Koko and Karyn as they hunker down on the patio as smoke rises in the house and patio.

TONI  
Stay low.

KOKO  
You two need to get out now. I'll  
keep her preoccupied. She really  
wants me.

TONI  
We need to give them time.

DALE (O.S.)  
Karyn, come to daddy.

Karyn starts to rise, but Toni yanks her down.

TONI  
It's not him. Your dad wouldn't  
burn your RV and your house knowing  
his own daughter is inside. It's  
not him. Evil is inside him.

The smoke thickens and lowers as the fire grows.

EXT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Eric pulls himself up and peers into the hole. He lowers himself and whispers to Sonny.

ERIC

No sign of her or the ghosts. I'll go in first and you hand me the box. I'll help you up after.

Eric climbs into the hole.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Dale stands guard with the machete. He waits as the fire has totally engulfed the house. Burnt wood crackles and pops. The smoke has consumed the whole patio.

INT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

A small layer of fresh air covers the bodies of Koko, Toni, and Karyn. They lay stomach down on the floor in sooted sweat.

On the ceiling the Haint Blue paint bubbles and melts from the wood.

INT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Eric opens the lockbox and takes out the exorcism jar, candles, matches and scroll.

Sonny peers into the trunk which holds the bones of Kufwa. Eric pulls him away and points to the burnt markings on the floor.

ERIC

This is must be where your grandmother did it before. I'll stand guard and you that hoodoo thing.

Eric takes out the hatchet from his tool belt.

Sonny opens the jar and empties the resin and herbs in a pile. He sets up the three candles around the pile. He opens the scroll.

Eric scouts out the front door with his hatchet ready.

Sonny strikes a match and lights the black candle. The flame sputters and glows.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

The patio is in flames and the roof collapses.

Dale stands guard with the machete. He begins to twitch and shiver.

INT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

Sonny lights the white candle and follows with the red. The shanty begins to creak and rattle. Eric hangs onto the door frame to stay steady.

ERIC

Hurry! She feels us here.

Sonny lights the resin on fire.

The shanty shakes.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

The house collapses in flames.

Dale screeches as roots come out of his body.

Kufwa leaves his body and screeches. Like a phantom her body flies across toward the island bridge.

EXT. DEAD TREE OVER THE CHANNEL - DAY

The ghost orchids quickly lead Kufwa across the bridge.

INT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

The exorcism resin and herbs burn into a sparkling flame as Sonny reads from the scroll.

SONNY

Through the fire I cleanse you.

The wind swirls as it tries to extinguish the flames.

Eric sees the ghost orchids floating toward the shanty from the woods.

ERIC  
She's coming. Hurry!

SONNY  
Through the air, thrice I charge  
you.

Eric sees Kufwa rushing out of the woods like a floating phantom. Her roots stretching out as weapons.

ERIC  
She's here.

The black candle flame goes out and Sonny strikes another match. He lights it again.

Eric prepares to swing his hatchet as Kufwa screeches and races toward him.

Eric swings the hatchet as Kufwa bull rushes him. The hatchet lands into her skull, but she carries Eric across the room past Sonny.

Kufwa screeches and her roots wrap around Eric.

Sonny is scared into silence as Eric keeps swinging the hatchet into Kufwa as her roots squeeze his legs and arms. Eric opens his mouth.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
Finish it!

Roots come out of Kufwa's mouth and go inside Eric's mouth to silence him.

One of Kufwa's roots slaps the scroll from Sonny's hand. He reaches for it, but it is gone.

Kufwa's mouth roots go down Eric's throat.

Sonny clenches his fist and closes his eyes to remember. His grandmother's voice speaks to him.

GRANDMOTHER (V.O.)  
Say it with me. Through water, I  
purify you.

SONNY  
Through water, I purify you.

GRANDMOTHER (V.O.)  
Through earth I ground you.

Kufwa screeches and focuses her wraith on Sonny. Sonny opens his trance-like eyes to see his Grandmother before him. She is a gentle hoodoo priest wrapped in a head wrap and dress.

SONNY

Through the earth I ground you.

Kufwa releases Eric and thrust herself toward Sonny.

GRANDMOTHER (V.O.)

Through my will, be it done.

Kufwa's roots reach out an inch from Sonny, but Eric wraps the chain around her neck and yanks her away.

SONNY

Through my will, be it done.

Kufwa's roots grab onto Eric and the planks break underneath them. They fall into the swamp water below. Kufwa screeches as Eric's momentum and weight yanks Kufwa into the water below the shanty. Eric is unable to swim away wrapped in roots.

Kufwa tries to rise in the water with harrowing screeches, but she is tugged below the surface in bubbling silence.

Sonny watches as the chain links keep going down into the water until the trunk and Kufwa's bones are dragged into the hole.

Sonny stands beside the hole as the trunk and Kufwa's bones disappear in the depths of the dark water.

Sonny walks out the front door and watches as the ghost orchids vanish into the sky.

EXT. ADAMS COTTAGE - PATIO - DAY

Sonny stands in the front yard witnessing the smoldering ruins of the house and RV.

Tears begin to well up and drip past his cheek.

(O.S.) A banging of iron to wood is heard.

Under the patio, a burnt wood panel breaks out from the three-step tall crawl space. Toni scoots out on her stomach yielding a crowbar. She cracks open more space by prying the wood side panels with the crowbar.

Sonny runs up to her.



TONI

Help me.

Together they pull out Koko from underneath and Karyn worms out after.

KOKO

You did it.

SONNY

Grandmother helped me. I saw her.

She hugs him tight as Karyn and Toni scan for Eric.

KARYN

Where's Eric?

Sonny gives Karyn a kiss on the cheek.

SONNY

He went down into the swamp with the monster. He wants you to know he is sorry and never meant to hurt you.

Sonny hugs her tight.

INT. SWAMP SHANTY - DAY

The chain is taut as it leads into the murky water from the hole. The still lit candles melt down.

INT. SWAMP - DAY

The chain leads through the murky waters to the depths below. Further below the chain secures the lifeless body of Eric wrapped in roots. Below him is the open trunk with Kufwa's bones. Beside that is Booker's lifeless family.

EXT. ISLAND - BOTTLE TREE - DAY

Sonny and Koko pray next to Toni and Karyn in front of a pretty well-made cross. New blue bottles are tied on the limbs of the bottle tree behind them.

EXT. DEAD TREE OVER THE CHANNEL - DAY

Koko and Sonny drive the ATV and use its wench to pull a chain secured around the dead tree.

The tree breaks at the chopped section and both sides splashes down into the channel. The bridge is no more.

EXT. KOKO'S FARM - DAY

SUPER: TWO WEEKS LATER

Sonny and Karyn giggle as they chase and feed the chickens.

INT. KOKO'S BARN - ROOT CELLAR - DAY

Koko uses her cane to go down the steps.

Toni has a trunk open on the table.

TONI  
You are healing.

Koko nods her head as she opens a couple of mason jars.

KOKO  
Have you decided?

TONI  
I've tried to call her mother, but she refuses to answer or return my call.

KOKO  
It appears you made your decision.

TONI  
I'll take you up on your offer.

KOKO  
Sonny needs a friend.

TONI  
I always wanted my own daughter.

KOKO  
I told you it was in the cards.  
However, you will have to pay rent.

TONI  
I think we can pay our fair share.

In the trunk is the bundles of cash which were in Eric's lockbox. Toni closes the top.

TONI (CONT'D)  
What are you making?

KOKO

Always plan ahead she said. Found  
my mother's exorcism recipe in her  
cookbook. It was just behind her  
sweet potato bread.

She unfolds a worn recipe.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END.