

OUT THE WOODS

Written by

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EXT. WOODS - DAY

Eerie quiet forest. Footsteps crunch leaves in the distance.

A shy, timid teen, SHY MOORE (17), treks through the woods with her brave, humorous best friend, LEANDRA GÓMEZ (17). They wear camping backpacks with sleeping bags attached.

Shy's hands cover her ears as Leandra tells a scary story.

LEANDRA

(midstory)

She walked through the hall,
trembling. She thought to herself,
"Where is he?" She didn't know he
was right behind her until --

Leandra grabs her. Shy jumps, startled.

SHY

You're always telling scary
stories, Leandra. Stop. Please.

Leandra hugs her.

LEANDRA

I'm sorry, Shy. I won't tell any
more scary stories.

SHY

Thanks. Can you hold up a minute?

Shy takes off her backpack, pulls out a compass and map.

LEANDRA

We've walked through here a
thousand times. We don't need
those.

SHY

Better safe than lost.

Shy puts on her backpack. They walk. Leandra takes a
cellphone out her pocket.

SHY (CONT'D)

Who are you calling?

LEANDRA

Your crush.

Shy's eyes shoot open wide.

SHY
I can't talk to Rik!

LEANDRA
Just talk to him.

Shy shakes her head.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)
I'm calling Rik.

Leandra tries to turn on her phone. It doesn't come on.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)
Argh, my phone's dead.

Shy smiles, relieved.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)
Don't look so happy. Where's your
phone?

SHY
My sister broke it.

WOODS (DIFFERENT AREA)

Shy laughs as Leandra acts silly. Leandra reaches for Shy's
compass and map. Shy pulls them away.

LEANDRA
Put those away, Shy. We're going
the right direction.

Shy keeps the compass and map out.

They spot a fierce, sinister MASKED WOMAN (48) in the far
distance digging with a shovel.

AT MASKED WOMAN

The woman wears a ski mask and business suit. Her long,
bright red hair comes out from under the mask. She's almost
done digging a hole.

AT TEENS

The teens watch the woman. They whisper:

SHY
Let's leave.

LEANDRA
Why is she wearing a mask?

SHY
Come on, Leandra. Let's leave.

Leandra steps forward curious. Shy steps back, scared.

AT LEANDRA

Leandra hides behind a tree, peeks out at the woman.

AT SHY

Shy hides behind a different tree, eyes Leandra.

AT LEANDRA

Leandra looks at Shy. Leandra points at the woman, then grins at Shy mischievously.

AT SHY

Shy shakes her head at Leandra.

AT LEANDRA

Leandra nods at Shy, grinning.

LEANDRA
(to woman's direction)
Yo!

AT MASKED WOMAN

The woman stops digging and looks around, panicked. She listens a while.

AT SHY

Shy watches Leandra. Shy points in the direction they came, signaling they should leave.

AT LEANDRA

Leandra shakes her head at Shy.

LEANDRA
(to woman's direction)
Why you wearing a mask!?

AT MASKED WOMAN

The woman looks around, glaring at trees.

LEANDRA (O.S.)
I'ma call the cops!

She sprints toward Leandra's direction with the shovel.

AT SHY

Shy hears the woman's feet running. Shy trembles.

AT LEANDRA

The woman sprints by Leandra, not seeing her.

AT SHY

Frozen with terror, Shy watches the woman running.

AT LEANDRA

Leandra watches the woman.

AT SHY

Shy looks at Leandra.

AT LEANDRA

Leandra points at the hole.

AT SHY

Shy shakes her head at Leandra.

AT HOLE

Leandra runs up. Shy hurries to her, looking back to see where the woman is.

SHY
Let's go, Leandra.

Leandra looks at **something unseen** by the hole, ignoring her.

LEANDRA
Look.

Shy sees what Leandra sees. A small box lies by the hole.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)
Wow, it's a box.

Shy smiles, not afraid for a sec. Leandra examines the box. No labels. She shakes it. Something bounces around inside.

SHY
We should go before she comes back.

LEANDRA
Ok, but I'm taking the box.

They turn around to go the way they came. The woman stands a few feet away, grasping the shovel. Shy hides behind Leandra. Leandra stares at the woman, a bit amused.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)
A real-life scary story.

SHY
What do we do?

LEANDRA
(to woman)
Hey, we're leaving. Don't try anything. I know how to box.

SHY
(whisper)
No you don't.

The woman cuts her eyes at the box, holds out her hand. Leandra looks at the box.

LEANDRA
You want the box?

The woman nods.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)
Let me open it first.

The woman shakes her head.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)
Come on, please. I'm wanna know
what's inside.

Shy turns Leandra around so Leandra faces her.

SHY
Stop playing around and give her
the box.

LEANDRA
I really wanna know what's in it.

Leandra turns around. The woman is charging at them with the
shovel drawn back to swing.

Shy screams. She drops the compass and map, runs away.

The woman reaches Leandra, swings. Leandra backs up, avoiding
the shovel. Leandra backs away to a safe distance.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)
You almost hit me, you crazy bitch!

AT SHY

Shy runs through the woods, never looking behind her. The
backpack slows her down. She throws it off.

AT LEANDRA AND MASKED WOMAN

The woman charges at Leandra. Leandra throws off her
backpack, getting ready for her. Leandra holds the box.

The woman swings down at her. Leandra dodges the shovel. The
woman swings wild. Leandra dodges a few swings.

LEANDRA
Forget this!

Leandra runs away.

AT SHY

Shy runs for her life.

AT LEANDRA

Leandra sprints.

AT MASKED WOMAN

The woman chases the teens with the shovel. They're far ahead of her.

AT SHY

Shy ducks behind a tree, hides. She gasps for air.

AT LEANDRA

Leandra slows up to look back. The woman isn't behind her.

SHY (O.S.)
Hide, Leandra.

Leandra sees Shy's head sticking out from behind the tree. Leandra hides behind a tree across from her.

AT MASKED WOMAN

The woman catches her breath, looks around at the woods for the teens.

A burner phone in her pocket vibrates. She looks at a text:
"Is the box buried?"

She replies: *"Two teenagers took it"*

Someone texts: *"Get it back!"*

She replies: *"Don't tell me what to do"*

She shoves the phone in her pocket.

AT SHY

Shy hides behind the tree, her entire body shaking with fear.

SHY
We should've camped in my backyard.

AT LEANDRA

Leandra holds the box behind the tree. She sticks her head out, checking the way they came.

LEANDRA
I don't see her.

AT SHY

Shy freaks out.

SHY

She's going to find us and kill us.
We still have so much to do. I
never got to be Rik's girlfriend.

AT LEANDRA

LEANDRA

Calm down. We're not gonna die, and
you're gonna be Rik's girlfriend.
And if not Rik, you'll find someone
else. A really great guy.

AT SHY

Shy smiles, calming down a little.

AT LEANDRA

Leandra checks the way they came, looking for the woman.

AT TEENS

Leandra rushes to Shy.

LEANDRA

Let's get outta here.

SHY

I dropped my compass and map.

LEANDRA

We'll just walk till we're outta
here. The highway is somewhere.

SHY

What if she finds us?

LEANDRA

We'll fight her. Two against one.

SHY

I'm not fighting.

LEANDRA

Then I'll kick her ass myself.

Shy nods. They head deeper into the woods.

AT MASKED WOMAN

The woman stomps through, searching for the teens.

Her phone vibrates in her pocket. She looks at a text: "*Did you get it back?*"

She replies: "*Not yet. Stop bothering me.*"

Someone texts: "*Why didn't you destroy it!?*"

She replies: "*I might want to start up again*"

AT TEENS

The teens wander around lost.

LEANDRA

We need that compass and map.

They walk a little while, then Leandra stops. She looks around, trying to decide where to go.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)

Let's just... Keep walking.

Shy looks back for the woman. Shy looks ahead and hugs herself, wanting to cry.

AT MASKED WOMAN

The woman marches through the woods, losing her patience.

MASKED WOMAN

Where are those girls?

She spots the teens walking in the far distance.

AT TEENS

The teens don't notice the woman sneaking toward them from behind.

LEANDRA

Let's rest.

The teens stop. The woman creeps toward them, getting closer. Shy looks ahead.

SHY

I don't see the highway.

The woman gets closer.

LEANDRA

We will.

The woman tiptoes toward them, a few feet away. Leandra shakes the box.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)

I'm about to open this.

The woman draws back the shovel to swing at Leandra. Shy looks back, screams. Leandra spins around.

The woman swings. Leandra grabs Shy, runs aside.

The woman lifts the shovel high over her head, swings down. The teens dodge.

Shy sprints away, heading in the direction they were going.

Leandra glares at the woman, pissed off. Leandra drops the box, puts up a fight guard.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)

I'm sick of you and your shovel!

The woman swings at Leandra. Leandra dodges and punches at her, missing.

AT SHY

Shy races through the woods. She sees a car drive by on the highway and smiles, relieved.

AT EDGE OF WOODS

Shy runs up. One step from being out the woods -- Leandra screams far away.

AT LEANDRA AND MASKED WOMAN

Leandra backs up, holding her injured left arm. The woman stands a few feet from her with the shovel.

Leandra puts up her right arm, ready to fight.

LEANDRA
Come on, lady.

AT EDGE OF WOODS

Shy looks back at the woods, then looks at the highway, trying to decide whether to go help Leandra or run.

AT LEANDRA AND MASKED WOMAN

The woman strikes Leandra's left leg with the shovel.

AT EDGE OF WOODS

Looking at the highway, Shy hears Leandra scream. Shy spins around, looks at the woods. She freaks out.

SHY
(to self)
Leandra.

Shy turns to the highway. She starts to go help Leandra but stops. Shy struggles with what to do.

AT LEANDRA AND MASKED WOMAN

Leandra lies on her back, crying. Her left arm and left leg are injured.

AT SHY

Shy bolts through the woods. She stops, looks around lost.

LEANDRA (O.S.)
Help, Shy!

Shy sprints toward Leandra's direction.

AT LEANDRA AND MASKED WOMAN

The woman stands over Leandra with the shovel.

LEANDRA
Shy!

The woman lifts the shovel to stab Leandra's throat -- the phone in the woman's pocket vibrates.

The woman looks at a text: "*You get it!!!?*"

She eyes the box on the ground, replies: "*Yes. Getting rid of the girls.*"

The woman puts her phone away, raises the shovel to impale Leandra's throat.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)

Please.

The woman thrusts the shovel down at Leandra's throat --

Shy tackles the woman to the ground. The shovel flies out the woman's hands.

The woman gets on top Shy, punches the girl. Shy guards her face, but punches get through.

Leandra pushes herself into a stand with her right arm, watches helplessly.

The woman pummels Shy's face. Shy's blood covers the woman's fists.

The woman stops punching Shy, gets off her. The woman picks up the shovel. Shy stares at the shovel, trembling.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)

(to woman)

Take the box and leave! Since you like that damn shovel so much, take that too! We won't say anything!

The woman thinks about what Leandra said. Just a moment. The woman storms toward Shy, murder in her eyes. Shy curls into a ball, sobs.

A rock hits the woman's head. She cuts her eyes to Leandra. The woman charges at her. Leandra backs up, limping.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)

You won't get away with killing us!

SHY

Do something, Shy.

Leandra limps backward. The woman gets inches from her.

The woman draws back the shovel to swing at Leandra -- Shy pulls the back of the woman's mask, jerking her head back.

Shy punches the woman's face wild, enraged. The woman drops the shovel, guards her face. Shy draws blood.

Leandra watches Shy hit the woman, shocked by what she's seeing.

The woman shoves Shy off her. Shy stumbles.

The woman touches her bloody face. Her mask and hair -- a wig -- are messed up.

The woman balls her fists and screams. Shy hits her head with the shovel, knocking her out.

LEANDRA
Way to go, Shy!

Shy holds the shovel, a scared hero. She looks at the shovel, drops it like it's something nasty. She runs to Leandra.

SHY
Are you ok!?

LEANDRA
No, but least I'm alive. See who she is.

Shy cautions toward the woman. Shy kicks her, making sure she's unconscious. Shy pulls off the mask.

SHY
Principal Reid!?

LEANDRA
What!?

Leandra limps over.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)
That's not Principal Reid. She doesn't have red hair.

Shy sees the woman's wig is messed up, takes it off.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)
That is Principal Reid! What the fuck!?

Shy takes the woman's phone out her pocket.

SHY
I'll call the police. They'll track her phone.

LEANDRA
Cool. Give me the box.

Shy picks up the box, gives it to Leandra. Shy dials 911.

OUTSIDE OF WOODS

The teens exit the woods, see the highway. Shy holds the phone to her ear. Leandra limps, toting the box.

SHY
 (to phone)
 We're at a safe distance from
 Principal Reid... I won't hang up.
 (to Leandra)
 The police are a few minutes away.

LEANDRA
 While we wait...

Leandra rips the tape off the box, opens it. She pulls out a small hardcover notebook.

LEANDRA (CONT'D)
 A notebook?

SHY
 Can I see?

Leandra gives her the notebook. Shy opens it to a page.

SHY (CONT'D)
 "*Tyler Greene.*"

LEANDRA
 I know Tyler!

SHY
 "*555-0153. Molly. One pound.*"

LEANDRA
 Drugs!

Shy flips through pages.

SHY
 It's full of customers. Students
 and adults.

LEANDRA
 Wow. Our principal's a drug dealer.

Shy flips pages. She looks up, shocked.

SHY

Some of the teachers are working
with her.

LEANDRA

I bet Mr. Lewis is a drug dealer.

Shy checks a page.

SHY

He is.

LEANDRA

I knew it!

Holding her shovel in one hand, the woman jams a pocket knife
into Leandra's side.

Leandra howls in pain and drops to the ground, leaking blood.

Shy hurls the notebook at the woman. It hits the woman's
face, making her lower the shovel. Shy snatches the shovel
from her.

The woman holds her knife out to her side. Shy grasps the
shovel. They stare each other down.

The woman charges at Shy. Shy swings the shovel, misses.

The woman slashes Shy. Shy backpedals, screaming.

The woman rushes at Shy to stab her. Shy strikes her with the
shovel, knocking the woman down.

Clutching the knife, the woman tries to get up. Shy knocks
her down, stands over the woman.

Shy stabs the woman's throat. Blood shoots up on Shy.

Leandra gawks at the dead principal. Shy stares down at the
body, grasping the bloody shovel.

END