BARBARIANS

Written by:

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INT. MUSTANG - DAY

Sunlight peers through the towering woods sandwiching a dark, isolated road.

A banged up MUSTANG rips down the road, leaving behind clouds of dust and gravel.

A woman with bruises on her face, ASHLEY PEARSON, drives. A one-year-old boy is in the backseat, JACOB HAND.

JACOB Where are we going?

ASHLEY Away, sweetie.

JACOB Is Buddy coming?

ASHLEY We won't be seeing "buddy" for a long time.

Next to Ashley is a brochure for the PROMISE SPRINGS. Ashley looks at it, has a conflicted expression on her face.

GIRL (O.S.) I was downer than down. I was at my rope's end.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Ashley has a table with a 20-something girl named JEZ, as said on the name-tag pinned above her right breast. The most distinctive thing about Jez is her bright red eyes.

JEZ Seriously. I was so out of it. But I got better.

ASHLEY

How?

Jez hands Ashley a brochure for the Promise Springs.

JEZ It sounds retarded, but this place really helped me. I feel like a whole new person.

Ashley reads the brochure, mildly interested.

All I did was stand in a spring, and my whole life was different. I suggest going there. I mean, you have nothing to lose.

INT. MUSTANG - DAY

Ashley stares at the brochure.

ASHLEY I hope you're right, Jez.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - PARKING LOT - DAY

The mustang pulls in and parks in the parking lot. She exits the car with Jacob in her arms.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - LIVING AREA - DAY

There are mini-trailers all over of the place. Ashley doesn't know where to go, so she keeps heading straight.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - SPRINGS - DAY

Ashley creeps to a spring. She makes a face at how brown the water is.

She looks around and finds a piece of paper pinned to a tree. She takes it and reads it, discovers that the note is handwritten. She rolls her eyes.

> ASHLEY Why am I doing this?

She sits Jacob on a tree stub and strips to her bra and panties. She puts her clothes by her son and walks to the nearest sprig. Stands there. Nothing happens.

Ashley grows impatient. Still, she waits. Thinks closing her eyes will help manners.

After she inhales, the water around her glows. Not before long, she becomes drenched in beautiful light. She MOANS.

Behind her, is a RUSTLING SOUND. She swings behind her and discover that Jacob is gone.

ASHLEY

Jake?

She charges out of the lake, gets dressed, and searches the

woods for her son.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - WOODS - DAY

Despite all her searching, Ashley doesn't find Jacob anywhere, which makes her panic more, but what she finds is a hole. She looks up to find many other holes, a trail of them.

They are all wide, like something crawled out of them.

From not so far away, she hears GRUNTING. Following the sound shows her a MONSTER eating her son.

The MONSTER has a human shape, but extremely large arms. It bends over, perhaps because of its short legs, and it's yellow. It's skin is rocky and looks it. The left side of its brain is exposed, and it has sharp, jagged teeth.

Ashley falls down and CRIES. The creature puts Jacob's remains down, and makes its way to Ashley, who gets up and runs. She hides somewhere, but the creature pursues her.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - WOODS - DAY

Ashley hides behind the largest tree she sees. The creature is right behind her. He finds her, and she hits it in the face before running away again.

The creature picks up its pace. Everywhere Ashley tries to hide, the creature finds her. The creature is drawn to her FRANTIC BREATHS. When Ashley realizes this, it's too late. The creature is staring into her eyes.

She tries to run again, but the creature punches her which brings her to her knees. The creature hits her in the face, and she cannot get on her feet.

She turns on her back, looks the creature in the face, CRYING. That's when the creature bites her.

INT. JILL'S SANDWICHES - NIGHT

A GUY sits at a table. He's wearing sunglasses and a big leather jacket. His face is hard, like he's pissed off at what is on the television.

A handsome guy with a big smile appears on screen, along with the caption, TEEN IDOL EXPOSED.

Two older man seated at the bar LAUGH.

MAN #1 I don't see why this is news.

Aren't all actors gay?

The sunglasses-wearing guy shrinks in his seat. His name is MATTY LARSON.

A waitress comes over. She looks an awful lot like Jez.

JEZ

Are you ready to order?

MATTY

Yeah. I'll uh, start with a corona.

JEZ

ID?

He holds up his shades, revealing himself to be the "exposed" teen.

MATTY I could buy this place with the snap of a finger. Now, if you want to keep your job. I suggest you give me what I ordered.

JEZ

Threaten me again, and I just might lose my job anyway. Now, ID?

Matty SIGHS and sits back in his seat.

MATTY Gimme a Fruit Punch.

JEZ Fruit Punch coming right up.

She goes into the kitchen. Matty puts his shades back on.

- LATER -

Matty's table is filled with plates, with the only thing on them is ketchup.

A different program is on TV, people talking in a round table. A photo of MATTY appears on screen, and he looks very annoyed at it.

He hides his face behind his hands in shame.

MATTY How long are they gonna stay on this?

Jez comes back to his table carrying a plate of chicken tenders and french fries. She looks at the TV, the guys LAUGHING, and fixes on Matty.

She sits down the plate.

to the kitchen. Matty p

JEZ Sounds like you could use a hug. MATTY I'm fine. JEZ Then why are you hiding? Matty opens his mouth to protest while Jez sits down. JEZ You are totally hiding. Why else would you be wearing shades in doors? MATTY I didn't actually --JEZ No, but you were going to. Jez looks back at the laughing duo. JEZ I used to be really miserable. Thought my whole life was over. Matty has begun working on his third plate of food. MATTY Why are you telling me this? JEZ I figured two miserable people could use some company. Jez smiles and leans forward. JEZ Hey, it's a phase. Next week, the media will be on someone else. I think you're doing a good thing by not saying anything. Matty looks around. A few customers are looking at him like he has an ass on his head. This causes him to sink deeper in his seat. JEZ They always stare at people like that. Don't take offense to it.

> MATTY I wish I could just disappear.

JEZ Listen. You haven't lost. I mean,

you experienced more than people dream of. Hey. Jez takes off his shades, which staggers him. She looks lost in his blue eyes. JEZ Wow. You look sadder than I thought. She digs in her apron. JEZ I got something that will cheer you right up. She whips out a pamphlet to the Promise Springs. Matty reluctantly takes it, looking at Jez like she has two heads. Jez just smiles. JEZ I was in a really bad place. Drugs, abusive boyfriend, that whole thing. But coming here really helped me out. Gave me sort of a shoulder to lean on. Matty reads the pamphlet. JEZ Going back to church was the best thing I ever did. My pastor's program changed my life. Matty brings the pamphlet down so that he can see Jez. JEZ If you're looking for an escape, I can't think of a better one. MATTY I dunno. JEZ Give them a call. It's only a hundred bucks but, I mean, you can't put a value on your life. Jez stands up. JEZ Think about it. She leaves. On the last page of the pamphlet is a number. Matty stares at it.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - NIGHT

Matty sits with his arms crossed, like he's cold, shades and all. He looks up and see a goofy-looking man giving a huge smile, REVEREND NELSON, as said on the poster.

It's advertizing the Promise Springs Christian Retreat, which looks like a tropical paradise. START HEALING TODAY! is wrriten on the ad.

Matty's stare softens. Two TEEN GIRLS point at him and WHISPER. They LAUGH.

INT. MATTY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The only things in Matty's room has is a mattress, a phone atop a night stand by the mattress, and Matty himself, sitting on the mattress. Trash bags with clothes inside are scattered about the room.

He's on Reverend Nelson's official website, which is as egotistical as egoistical gets. He clicks on "Testimonials." He skims through the page. So many people are gushing about the retreat.

Matty stares at the number at the bottom of the page. He grabs his phone and dials the number.

NELSON (V.O.) Hey there! Welcome to Reverend Nelson's, "Gates of Promise." If you are a convict, press 1. If you're a fornicator, press 2. If you're a drug abuser, press 3. If you are multiple or all of the abuse, or have lost your way, please stay on the line.

Matty doesn't press a number. DAVID NELSON himself answers.

NELSON Hello? How can I help you?

Matty's eyes are about to pop out of his skull.

NELSON

Hello?

MATTY Yes, I'm here. Just wasn't expecting the reverend to come to the phone.

NELSON Well, who were you expecting? Jesus? Nelson LAUGHS, but Matty just forces a smile.

NELSON How may I be of service?

MATTY I, um, lost my way. Can you fix me?

NELSON Well, that depends on you in a particular direction. What I can do is give you a push. Are you interested in coming to the retreat in July?

MATTY

Uh...

He opens a new tab on his web browser and goes to yahoo.com. MATTY LARSON is a trending topic. He clicks on it, and sees many articles about his scandal -- leaving a gay bar with a guy.

He reads the comments. They're really harsh, and a few them call him a fraud and hypocrite "like most Christians."

MATTY Sure. I'm interested.

NELSON Super! That'll be --

INT. BUS ONE - DAY

At the very front of the bus are four adults, two on each row.

There's OLUCHI OKORO, at the front of the bus, combing her long dark hair and admiring her reflection.

Next to her is APRIL WHITE, a blonde-haired girl wearing no make-up and dressed sporty.

In the middle of the bus is MIRIAM BLACK, a black-haired girl dressed like a puritan writing things in a journal. She looks very young, no older than 14.

Matty Larson is closer to the back of the bus. In front of him is KRISTOPHER SONG, a titan of a guy who isn't too shy to show off his muscles, wearing a wife beater and skinny jeans.

Matty is dressed like the prep that he is. He stays to himself, looks nervous while the other kids socialize. He takes out the cross on his necklace and squeezes it. EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - PARKING LOT - DAY

Three buses pull in. They park, and adults, DEACONS, exit them, the kids following them. Matty is among the last in line.

Miriam approaches Matty.

MIRIAM

Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god. Tell me you aren't Matty Larson.

MATTY I'm not Matty Larson?

MIRIAM Oh my god! I love Scotty! In fact, I stopped watching Dr. Morrison's Manor when they let you go.

MATTY Aren't you a little, I dunno, big to be watching that show?

MIRIAM It's educational for kids and teenagers. You were one of the

stars, you should know that.

Kris Song flashes a grin at Matty. Approaching the kids is a skinny, funny looking man, DAVID NELSON. The adults get behind him, as well as a 19 year old, CHRISTOPHER BOLTON.

NELSON God bless you all! Thank you for taking the first step to recovery by coming on this retreat.

Kris Song rolls his eyes. Oluchi is similarly disinterested. In fact, the only two who are invested in Nelson's words are Matty and Miriam.

NELSON

By the end of this retreat, you all will be different people! The devil won't win. That I can guarantee.

MIRIAM

Amen.

NELSON

Coming here was a brave choice. You're here because someone loves you very much. Acknowledging your demons is the first step in your spiritual journey.

Oluchi YAWNS.

NELSON

I see potential for goodness inside each and every one of you. We all have the capability to change, but it must first begin inside here.

Nelson points to his heart. April and Oluchi try not to laugh by putting their hands to their mouths.

NELSON Let me introduce some of the staff. This here is Deacon Charles.

Nelson points to each person he's referring to.

DEACON CHARLES is an old fellow. Lots of gray hair.

NELSON This is Deacon Huntington.

DEACON HUNTINGTON looks sort of like an even older version of Deacon Charles. He walks with a cane.

NELSON

Deacon Burke.

Deacon Burke is a female. Her hair is thin and she wears glasses.

Nelson makes a wide smile.

NELSON And this is our deacon-in-training, Christopher Bolton.

Nelson throws an arm over Christopher's shoulder. Chris B smiles at the kids.

CHRIS B

Hallelujah.

RORY WILSON, a short, nerdy-looking fellow with dark skin GIGGLES to those near him. Nelson and Chris B look at him, and he CLEARS HIS THROAT.

NELSON Well, why don't we get started

Deacon Burke takes the girl. Chris B motions for six guys to follow him. Deacon Charles and Deacon Huntington take the remaining guys.

Rory looks at his neighbors, and they smile and follow Chris B. Matty is also with Chris B.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - GUYS' TRAILER - DAY

Chris B takes Rory, Matty, Kris S, and three other guys to a trailer. CHRIS B And this is where you'll be staying for the next four weeks. Go on, take a look. INT. PROMISE SPRINGS - GUYS' TRAILER - DAY Rory opens the door. He looks blown away by how fancy it is. RORY Can I, like, live here? The guys are slow coming in, too busy looking around. CHRIS B I'm Christopher Bolton. I guess I'll be you co-deacon. Chris B LAUGHS. RORY I think I need a session now. What do you say, Christopher? CHRIS B Um, why don't you get to know your roommates? KRIS S. Hey Chris. You a top or bottom? CHRIS B What? KRIS S. Bottom, then. RORY So Chris, are you seeing anyone? CHRIS B Only, uh, the lord. RORY I see. What does this "Lord" look like? CHRIS B I-I'll see you guys later. Goodbye! Chris B leaves. The guys MOAN and GROAN. The guys all turn their attention to a shy Matty.

RORY Oh my gosh. I can't believe I'm staying with Scotty Scooter.

MATTY Please don't call me that.

RORY Was he cute? The guy that you left the club with? And why are you with us, you're not a teenager.

MATTY I d-dunno. I-I guess you have to ask the reverend. And I don't know! D-Don't ask me questions like that!

RORY Why? Are you ashamed? Do you actually think the reverend is going to pray the gay away?

MATTY

H-He may! And I'm not...

Kris S gets behind Matty.

KRIS S. Hey, knock it off, will you?

RORY Okay. I see you, Scotty.

The guys go their separate ways. Matty faces Kris S.

MATTY

Thanks.

KRIS S. Don't mention it.

Kris S pulls out a hand for a handshake.

KRIS S. I'm Kristopher.

MATTY You too?

KRIS S. Kristopher Song. If it helps at all, you can call me Kris S.

Matty shakes his hand.

MATTY Matty. Er. Matthew Larson. Whichever, really. KRIS S. Well, it's nice to meet you, Matty.

MATTY Thanks. Same here. Oh, you can have your hand back now.

Matty puts his hands in his pockets.

KRIS S. I wonder what they're gonna do.

MATTY Who knows? But I'm really looking forward to it.

KRIS S. Me too. I don't even have to crack jokes. The jokes pretty much write themselves.

Matty forces a smile. Kris S TALKS to the other guys. When he leaves, Matty looks sort of mortified.

INT. PROMISE SPRINGS - GIRLS' TRAILER - DAY

Deacon Burke takes Oluci, Miriam, April, and three other girls to a trailer. The girls enter, and Miriam has an awed look on her face.

MIRIAM Wow! This is incredible!

DEACON BURKE Just wait until the retreat really starts. If you aren't screaming and shouting, then we'll have to question if you even have a soul.

Deacon Burke and Miriam LAUGH. Oluchi has a look of disinterest on her face.

Deacon Burke leaves. April approaches Oluchi.

APRIL I can't believe you're here. What are the odds, huh?

Oluchi LAUGHS with April.

OLU

It makes sense, my dad being the bible-thumper that he is. Who knew your folks were so religious?

Are you kidding? They have bible study at our house. Makes me wanna barf. Oluchi puts a hand to her mouth like she's going to vomit. She speaks loud so that everyone hears her. OLU So! Why don't we all get to know each other? I'm Oluchi, Olu for short, and as long as you don't piss me off, we'll be besties. MIRIAM I'm, uh, Miriam Black. And --OLU You're really young. I thought my dad was shitty for sending me here. At least he waited until I was 17. How old are you? MIRIAM F-Fourteen. But --OLU Goodness! What do your parents expect? What do all of our folks expect? That a silly retreat is going to make us like peen? Every girl but Miriam LAUHGS. Miriam looks uncomfortable. APRIL Hey Miriam. It gets quiet. April gets in Miriam's face. APRIL If you break the rules, I will hunt you down and burn you alive. Miriam looks shocked, even more so because April is LAUGHING. APRIL I so kid. Break all the rules you want. We are. EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - FOOTBELL FIELD - DAY

Chris B plays football with the guys. Some of them won't stop fumbling the ball, or the ball drops from their hands -- if they catch it at all.

Matty sits on a hill. He can't take his eyes off Kris S, who's a natural on the field.

Matty gets up. He's approached by JIM, a pasty-faced plumped guy. He has a pack of similar people behind him. They all carry bibles. JIM You're Matty Larson, correct? MATTY Y-Yeah. Why? Jim extends his hand. JIM Jim Carson. Jim and Matty shake hands. JIM I see you're having trouble fitting in. Who needs them? They're going to Hell in a handbasket. You should stick with us. MATTY Don't you think that's a little harsh? JIM The truth often can be. As the bible says, "the truth will set you free." Jim's gang nod. JIM FRIEND #1 Amen. Matty smiles. MATTY Everyone always recite that verse. JIM But do they know --A football hits Jim in the gut. The people playing football fall over LAUGHING. Kris S runs to Matty and Jim and approaches them with his hands out. KRIS S. I'm so sorry about that. Ball? JIM You can get it yourself. Matty picks up the ball and hands it to Kris.

Here you go. Kris takes the ball. KRIS S. Are these people giving you a hard time? MATTY Not at all. KRIS S. If they are, you can always tell 'em to fuck off. MATTY Ha ha. No, it isn't like that. KRIS S. All right. I guess I'll see you around. MATTY Yes. See you. Kris flashes a smile at Matty, and goes back to the people playing football. Jim gives Matty a hard look. EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - BASEBALL FIELD - DAY Olu and most of the girls are playing softball. Miriam sits under a tree, writing in her journal. April hops down next to Miriam. APRIL Hey. Why are you always by yourself? MIRIAM Hi! I like being alone. Really. APRIL I see. What're you writing? MIRIAM Nonsense. Really, I appreciate you coming here but I'm fine. Honest! APRIL Are you really 14? Miriam looks offended. MIRIAM Yes. Why? Do I look older? APRIL

No. You're just... well, how can I say this while being PG? Miriam blushes. MIRIAM Your um, friend, seems to be really social. APRIL Who? Olu? She sure knows how to make an impression, for better or worse. Anyway... April moves closer to Miriam. APRIL I'm not here to talk about her. MIRIAM T-Then why are you here? APRIL I'm looking at her. Miriam CRACKS UP, but her laugh is full of nerves. MIRIAM Okay! Well, what do you want to talk about? APRIL Politics. MIRIAM Um... APRIL I'm kidding. God, why can't anyone tell when I'm joking? MIRIAM I didn't mean to offend --APRIL I'm not offended. Trust me, it takes a lot to offend me. I guess it's the Aquarius in me. Miriam gives April a confused look. APRIL Aquarius. As in horoscopes. You don't...? Oh, boy. Well, we'll talk about whatever you want to. Mariam has a wide smile, which Olu doesn't seem to like too much.

INT. PROMISE SPRINGS - CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Girls are seated at one side of the room, and the guys are seated on the other side. There's a platform for someone to speak up front.

Miriam eats her food without saying much, though occasionally she looks up at Olu and April. April catches her stare.

> APRIL What are you looking at?

MIRIAM Um, I'm, I'm sorry --

APRIL Relax. I'm fucking with you. Again.

OLU Why are you so quiet? You have something to hide?

MIRIAM No! I have nothing to hide. I'm hiding nothing. Absolutely nothing.

OLU

Uh huh.

Olu whispers something to April, and they GIGGLE. Miriam shrinks in her chair.

David Nelson comes on the platform. Jim is behind him.

NELSON Everyone, settle down!

It gets quiet. Eventually.

NELSON Jim Carson has volunteered to say grace.

April pretends to stick a finger in her mouth.

APRIL If I wasn't already a bull dyke, I'd be one just looking at him.

Jim steps forward, and closes his eyes.

JIM

Thank you for this food we're about to receive for the nourishment of our bodies. Forgive us of our sins, and bless the less fortunate. Amen. Olu stands up and CLAPS. OLU The spirit of the lord is penetrating right through me! NELSON That's, er, nice, but can we not use that word? OLU But it's true, reverend. I feel the light penetrating my nether regions. Olu starts MOANING. Nelson does not look pleased. NELSON That's wonderful. Miss Okoro. Now, can you please sit down? Olu starts to sit. OLU Oh em gee! Who knew the light was so, so, so long! NELSON Okay, that's enough. - LATER -Everyone is eating but Miriam, who plays with her food. Deacon Burke comes to their table. DEACON BURKE Is everything all right over here? Olu nods like a sweet girl. Miriam has gained Burke's attention. DEACON BURKE What's wrong, sweetie? You don't like your food? Let's see if they have something else in the back. Deacon Burke takes Miriam to the back room. Olu glares at Miriam. EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - SRPINGS - DAY Olu and a group of girls are in a spring. Deacon Charles splashes water on them.

> DEACON CHARLES And he said to him, "Rise and go

your way; your faith has made you well." Olu can't stop LAUGHING. DEACON CHARLES Oluchi. Come here, please? Olu walks before Deacon Charles. OLU Yes, daddy. I bet you like seeing us girls soak and wet. DEACON CHARLES That is enough! I'll call your father. OLU And what is he going to do? Spank me? I bet you would like to take care of that. Wouldn't you, deacon? APRTI. Olu, quit it. He really will call your dad. Deacon Charles is red with fury. DEACON CHARLES You are excused. Report to Reverend Nelson's office immediately. Olu exits the spring. April looks downward. Miriam looks at Olu until she leaves. INT. PROMISE SPRINGS - NELSON'S OFFICE - DAY Olu sits in front of Nelson's desk. On his desk is a picture of a WOMAN and an eight-year-old GIRL. Nelson is looking through a cabinet. He pulls out a folder with Olu's name on it and sits down. NELSON So, Miss. Okoro. How are you today? OLU Peachy. NELSON I see, and, well, hear, too, I suppose, that you like giving people a hard time.

> OLU Pissing people off is arguably the

only thing I do right.

NELSON Please don't use that word. Say, "making people angry."

OLU Sure, Reverend.

NELSON Perhaps that tough exterior of yours is just a way to hide the fact that you're a sad girl.

Olu's body language suggests she doesn't want to hear it.

NELSON Maybe all of this is just a cry for attention. Do you need a hug?

OLU Why would my dad hug me? He was just like you. Always shoving a bible in my face.

NELSON I can't help but wonder what your cool new friends would think of your second Summer home in Miami?

Now Nelson has Olu's attention. She leans forward.

NELSON

A lot of the kids here don't come from much. Even your friend. What's her name, April? But you don't quite have that problem.

OLU You wouldn't. That is so petty.

NELSON

You're right. On both accounts. But I'm not above dropping a hint or two.

OLU What do you think is going to happen? They're going to stop being my friends because my dad has money?

NELSON I think no such thing. But maybe that's how you see it.

Olu clams up.

You're not nice.

NELSON Is that all you got, Olu?

OLU I have an urge to storm out of here.

NELSON By all means, don't let me stop you. Just don't stop others from finding salvation because you think you're too good for it.

Nelson folds his hands.

NELSON One more interruption, and I'm afraid I'll have to send you home.

Olu glares at Nelson, then rushes out of his office, slams the door behind herself.

INT. PROMISE SPRINGS - GIRLS' TRAILER - DAY

Olu enters wearing an angry expression. She starts to smile when she sees Miriam writing. Olu speaks up so that all six girls can hear her.

> OLU Hey Miriam. What are you writing?

MIRIAM Just stuff.

Olu snatches Miriam's journal.

OLU Let's have a look, shall we?

Olu flips to an entry near the back of the journal.

OLU "Dear diary. I found out today that the cute blonde is named April White. I think she likes me, which is totally okay, because I think I like her, too."

Olu shoots Miriam a taunting look.

OLU Do you, now? Well, what do you want to know about April White?

April steps forward.

APRIL Olu, knock it off. Olu looks bewildered at April. OLU Excuse me? APRIL I don't know what you think you have to prove, but leave Miriam alone. OLU I see. A girl writes about you in her diary and you get all tingly inside. APRIL Stop being such a bitch. If you insist on being one, at least be a bitch to the right people. The other girls gather around Miriam. They pat her on the shoulder. GIRL #1 Are you all right? Olu looks at April, then at the other girls. OLU Fine. Love her all you want. Olu storms out of the cabin. Miriam and April crosses looks and smile. INT. CHAPEL HALL - DAY People exit the sanctuary. Miriam runs into April. MIRIAM Oh my god! I'm sorry. I'm so, so, sorry. APRIL It's okay. Was that a lame service or what? MIRIAM I liked it. APRIL You did? MIRIAM

No. It was so, um, "lame." I mean, how lame can a service be? APRIL Wanna make-out? MIRIAM What? APRIL There's not much else to do and I know you like me. So let's make out. MIRIAM Um, I, uh--April grabs Miriam's hand. APRIL Come on. EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - STREAM - DAY Miriam and April sit by a stream. MIRIAM You and Olu seemed to hit it off. APRIL Olu's been my friend since forever. Our folks think we're bad influences on each other. MIRIAM Why? APRIL I dunno. I guess because we both speak our minds. Sad as it is, Olu's one of the few people I hang out with that's my age. Older people tend to have their shit together. MIRIAM Well, not necessarily. APRIL I know. That's why I said, "tend to." April moves closer. APRIL

So why are we talking about Olu? Do you really like her or something?

MIRIAM No! I was just curious, that's all. I wonder why she's so mean.

APRIL Don't worry about her. As long as I'm here, nobody's gonna hurt you.

April goes in for a kiss. While they french, Miriam GIGGLES.

APRIL

What?

MIRIAM That was my first kiss. I always thought it would happen more... romantically?

APRIL I don't even remember when I had my first kiss, or who it was by.

MIRIAM Well. I think I'll always remember mine.

They kiss again. There's a RUSTLE behind the bushes. Miriam tries to end the kiss.

MIRIAM Do you hear that?

APRIL

Hear what?

MIRIAM I think, I think there's someone in the bushes.

APRIL

So what?

MIRIAM So I think we should check it out.

April leans back.

APRIL You serious?

MIRIAM

Yeah.

April SIGHS and rolls her eyes.

APRIL Wait here.

Miriam looks more and more worried after each bush April investigates. April turns to Miriam.

APRIL

No one's here --

April is tackled by a HUMANOID BEAST with long arms, sharp teeth, and a scaly, rocky body.

Miriam SCREAMS and jumps back.

APRIL

Miriam, get outta here!

April tries to crawl away but the beast drags her to it. It punches her until she's toothless. April reaches for Miriam.

APRIL

Miriam --

Another beast comes out of the bushes. One beast grabs her legs, and the other grabs her arms. They tear her in two and start eating her organs by the time Miriam runs. One of the beasts chases her.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - TRAIL - DAY

Miriam runs down the trail as fast as she can. She has no idea that a monster is chasing her.

She arrives at a wall of bushes. She looks behind her. When she sees the beast, she runs sideways and hides behind a tree.

She watches the beast. The creature sniffs all around the area Miriam was.

Miriam GASPS when she and the creature's stares intersect. But the monster sniffs around, which puzzles Miriam.

MIRIAM

Is it...?

Miriam eases out of her hiding place without making a sound. She maneuvers behind the beast. When she starts to run, she STEPS on a twig, alerting the beast who runs to her.

She jumps back. She and the monster are face to face. The monster sniffs the air but doesn't seem to find her.

Miriam picks up the largest log near her. When the monster turns its head, Miriam SWINGS. She doesn't stop until she hears a CRACK.

The monster falls down, motionless. Miriam takes a step forward, and finds herself on the dirt. Another monster has jumped on top of her. He tries to bite her but she moves her head far enough so that it bites dirt instead. It spends some time splitting dirt out, which opens a door for Miriam to attack.

MIRIAM

Here goes.

Miriam digs her thumbs in the creature's eyes. The creature MOANS before flipping on its side, devoid of movement.

In shock, Miriam pushes the creature off her. She gets up, dusts herself off.

MIRIAM

April.

She runs the way she came.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - STREAM - DAY

Miriam enters with caution.

MIRIAM

April?

Miriam looks around, and stops at a limb. She backs up, starts to SCREAM but can only make SOUNDS.

She runs off SCREAMING when she sees parts of April's upper body.

INT. PROMISE SPRINGS - BOYS' TRAILER - NIGHT

Rory Wilson talks with a group of guys. Matty watches him from one of the beds, reading the bible.

RORY

I've reached the conclusion that religion bring out the worst in humans. I haven't met a single Christian who wasn't self righteous.

MATTY

Maybe you're not meeting the right ones.

Everyone looks at Matty.

RORY Say something, Matty?

MATTY I'm just saying. I'm Christian, and

I don't think I'm self-righteous. RORY But you believe prayer will make you straight. Matty is shocked at Rory's remark. MATTY M-Maybe it will if you give a chance. RORY I gave it plenty of chances. Coming out to my church was the bravest thing I've ever done. My parents showed their support by sending me here. MATTY I'm sorry to hear that. RORY It's whatever. The past is the past. Hey, why are you here? Shouldn't you be with the adults? If feel like I asked that before. MATTY You did. And I guess I'm here because I'm under twenty. Isn't Kris S also nineteen? Technically, he's also an --Kris S enters. RORY Speak of the devil. Kris makes himself comfortable on one of the beds. KRIS S. What's up? RORY Matty was just talking about you. KRIS S. Oh yeah? What did he say? RORY He thinks you're a total stud and he wants your big...er, white...er, Asian? male reproductive organ. Kris LAUGHS. Matty looks mortified.

> MATTY He's lying! I did not!

Matty turns to Kris, pleading. MATTY I did not say that. I swear. Kris makes a face. KRIS S. Why do you have that? MATTY Have what? Kris points to the bible. KRIS S. That. RORY He reads it all the time. It grosses me out, too. Matty closes the bible and holds it tight. MATTY It isn't gross. And Jim gave it to me. RORY Jim? Ugh. He's like, the king ass kisser. Kris gives Matty a sly smile. He gets up and leans in front of Matty. He grabs the bible. MATTY What are you doing? KRIS S. Were you reading this? I'm sorry. Hey Rory. Got anywhere I can put this? RORY Sure. Rory points to the trash bin. Kris tosses it there. MATTY You shouldn't have done that. KRIS S. Why? Am I going to Hell? MATTY Well... no, but still. It was a gift.

KRIS S.

It was filth.

MATTY

It was not! Look, you all shouldn't take out your frustrations on Christianity. You're here because someone loves you. It's a good thing.

KRIS S. That why you're here? That why you have an army of supporters?

MATTY It was a sudden decision, I made. Maybe my parents don't know. They can be slow, sometimes.

KRIS S. They know. I know, and I don't even follow celeb gossip.

RORY I know. But then again, I follow celeb gossip.

KRIS S. And they didn't call once. Did they?

MATTY What's your point?

KRIS S. My point is that you need to learn how to say fuck 'em. I did, and look at me.

RORY Never completing high-school is really sexy.

Kris swings around at Rory.

KRIS S. Shut up! Who's talking to you?

RORY No one. But that didn't stop me in the outside world, and it won't stop me now.

Kris rolls his eyes. Matty almost laughs.

MATTY I'm still really mad at you for throwing away my Bible.

KRIS S.

I'll make it up to you. Come with me, tonight. MATTY How? Where are we going to go? KRIS S. A place. MATTY What place? KRIS S. By the springs. I'll show you. It's... pretty, for lack of a better word. Jim Carson charges in the room. JIM Olu said she saw April and Miriam go into the woods yesterday and they're still not back yet. KRIS S. Maybe they wised up and found a way out of this joint. JIM Seriously. Olu's really worried about April. I propose we look for her. And Miriam, too. KRIS S. You can look for them all you want. I got other stuff on my mind. JIM Come on! You guys are the biggest guys here. I already have Chris B on the search. RORY Me? Big? Well, I am big, but not the kind of big you're thinking about. Jim gives Rory a look. He then focuses on Matty. JIM Come on, Matty, back me up. MATTY Maybe we can have a little snoop. KRIS S. Okay. If that's how you want to spend our date--

MATTY Date? Who said anything about a date? KRIS S. I did. Oh, should I have said, "hanging out?" Jim leaves for a second, then comes in behind Chris B. CHRIS B So you guys are gonna help us look for April and Miriam?

> KRIS S. Do we have a choice?

> > CHRIS B

In theory.

Kris shrugs.

KRIS S. Whatever. I'm game.

Kris shops off the bed. He and Rory follow Chris B out.

RORY What, exactly, am I expected to do?

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - TRAIL - NIGHT

Nelson moves his flashlight all around the trail. Deacons Charles and Burke is behind him. So is Chris B, who leads Kris S, Matty, Jim, Rory, and a group of guys.

> NELSON April! Miriam! Are you here?

CHRIS B Answer us! We're worried sick about you!

Kris seems over the search.

KRIS S. I don't think they're here.

NELSON They have to be somewhere here! Lawsuits are the last thing I need.

RORY That's all you're worried about?

NELSON Of course not! I am genuinely concerned for their well-beings.

Beside Deacon Charles, the leaves RUSTLE. He motions for everyone to get quiet and behind him. When they do so, he proceeds to check out the sound. What he finds behind the trees is a dog.

The grown-ups jump back.

MATTY

A dog?

RORY Ooh! Can I keep him?

The dog runs away. While the group deliberates, Nelson takes a few side-steps.

NELSON This isn't good. Where did those girls go?

KRIS S.

Hey Rev.

Nelson turns around.

NELSON

Yes?

KRIS S. Isn't that April's shoe?

Nelson goes to see what he's talking about. A shoe is high up in a tree.

KRIS S. Maybe the two girls are fu...er, getting it on.

RORY Or maybe they've been kidnapped and brutally murdered.

Everyone looks at Rory.

RORY Was I not supposed to say that?

NELSON Aye. Let's head back. Maybe they'll turn up in the morning.

They start to leave.

RORY If it helps at all, I was only joking. KRIS S. Be quiet. For once.

INT. PROMISE SPRINGS - CHAPEL - DAY

Chris B preaches to a chapel full of bored teens, except Jim, who SHOUTS. Matty looks mostly invested in the service. Kris S is nonchalant, as is Olu, who looks worried. Rory is asleep.

CHRIS B Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

JIM

Amen!

CHRIS B That's all for now. Please go to your next workshops.

People start getting up. Rory wakes up.

RORY I thought he'd never shut up.

He follows them out. Matty threads through the herd of teens to find Kris S.

MATTY

Hey.

KRIS S. What's up?

MATTY Where do you go next?

KRIS S. I dunno. To be honest, I was thinking about skipping it.

MATTY You can't do that.

KRIS S. Why not? What're they gonna do, spank me?

MATTY It's just that after April and Miriam never returning, they may take that sort of thing seriously. You don't want them on your case,

do you? KRIS S. I don't want anyone on my case. (winks) Except you. Matty blushes and looks downward. He and Kris S leave. Jim walks up to Chris B. JIM Christopher, I am truly amazed by your... uh, work. CHRIS B Thanks. That's really nice of you, Jim. JIM How do you stay holy when the world is filled with so much darkness? CHRIS B I just keep having faith in Him. That He will take the righteousness home. JIM I do that. My faith couldn't be stronger. Jim is hypnotized by Chris B's build. JIM But sometimes I get discouraged. CHRIS B Listen. We all get discouraged sometimes, but we just have to remember that through Him, anything is possible. Chris B packs up. CHRIS B Cheer up, Jim. You'll be cleansed in no time. JIM U-huh. EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - CHAPEL - DAY

Chris B leaves the chapel with a huge bible in his hands. He waves at a few teens.
Make sure you don't miss your workshop, now.

Something in the woods catches Chris B's attention. Trees rumbling.

CHRIS B Hey! No playing in the woods!

Chris B runs to the rumbling trees. He walks past the trees and sees nothing, which concerns him.

CHRIS B Is someone there?

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Chris B walks around the woods. Nothing suspicious jumps out at him. Yet.

CHRIS B If you don't come out now, I'll call your parents.

RUSTLING LEAVES from the right. It snatches Chris $\ensuremath{\mathsf{B's}}$ attention.

CHRIS B

Someone there?

Chris B cautiously goes to investigate the movement.

CHRIS B Come out at once. Unless you want to be sent home.

A monster jumps down behind him. Chris B swings behind him. He SCREAMS. Once on the ground, he forms a cross.

CHRIS B

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done. On Earth, as it is in Heaven --

Chris B backs into the rumbling bush. A pair of arms extend from the brush and wrap themselves around his neck.

Chris B WHEEZES. The monster brings itself forward and prepares to bite Chris B., but the second monster grabs his legs and PULLS them from Chris B's torso.

The monsters SCREAM at each other, jumping around and throwing their hands in the air in anger. They look at both halves of Chris B, and eat them.

The bush SHAKES, which the monsters notice. One of them goes

to investigate, which earns it a pointed stick in its eye.

The monster MOANS AND GROANS until it kneels down and stops moving. The second monster sniffs its companion, and, in anger, looks at the brushes.

Miriam slowly comes out, doesn't make a sound. The monster swings its arms about.

Miriam takes the pointed stick out of the creature's eye. The SOUND it makes alerts its buddy. She puts the stick in front of her, and slowly approaches the monster. He swings and swings and in the process, BREAKS the stick.

> MIRIAM There isn't an "oh crap" big enough.

Miriam dodges the monster's punches. She digs in her pockets and pulls out a pen. She gets her bearings and quietly positions herself in front of the beast.

The monster sniffs and goes berserk. Miriam swings her pen any which way. It ends up slicing the creature's throat. It falls down and dies.

Miriam looks at Chris B's mutilated body.

MIRIAM

Poor guy.

She runs in the direction he came. Then four other monsters emerge from the treetops and bushes. Miriam jumps behind the nearest tree and hides.

INT. PROMISE SPRINGS - NELSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Nelson sits at his desk, stress written all over his face.

NELSON Where is Christopher?

Deacon Huntington enters.

DEACON HUNTINGTON Need something, Reverend?

NELSON Christopher missed all of his workshops today. I need you to cover for him. That's so unlike him.

DEACON HUNTINGTON Where did he go?

NELSON

I don't know. Wherever he went, he couldn't have gone far.

DEACON HUNTINGTON Did you look for him?

NELSON

No.

DEACON HUNTINGTON Well, maybe you should.

NELSON Alright. You're right. I'll look with the other deacons.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - WOODS - DAY

Nelson, Deacons Charles and Burke look around. The deacons are behind Nelson.

NELSON Christopher? Christopher?

Deacon Burke spots something horrifying.

DEACON BURKE Oh, God. Oh, heavenly father.

There is a corpse. Split and eaten. It belongs to Chris B.

NELSON

No... No...

DEACON BURKE It's like someone...ate him.

Deacon Burke looks away from the pieces. Deacon Charles looks mortified. Nelson is crying.

NELSON Why? Why him, too? This isn't supposed to be happening.

DEACON CHARLES

Nelson.

Deacon Charles picks Nelson off the dirt.

DEACON CHARLES Let's go back.

NELSON This shouldn't be happening.

DEACON CHARLES I know. Let's head back to your office, and figure out what to do.

Deacon Charles help a frantic Nelson to exit the way they came. Deacon Burke follows them, crying while putting the bottom of her shirt to her mouth.

INT. PROMISE SPRINGS - NELSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Deacon Charles addresses Deacons Burke and Huntington, and Nelson, who sit around the office, stressed out and in the case of Deacon Huntington, afraid.

NELSON I just want to help people. I don't know why He keeps testing me. Just when I start to give in.

DEACON CHARLES You know what we have to do, right?

NELSON

What?

DEACON CHARLES We have to cancel the retreat and inform everyone.

NELSON Inform everyone? Inform the parents, sure, but everyone?

DEACON CHARLES David, these kids have a right to know how dangerous these woods are.

NELSON What do we tell them? That Christopher was eaten?

DEACON CHARLES If we have to.

NELSON That could be really dangerous.

DEACON CHARLES So could keeping them in the dark.

NELSON We'll inform April and Chris' parents and end the retreat, but we aren't telling the kids anything they don't need to know.

DEACON CHARLES You found a boy eaten in the woods. You don't give a damn about

Christopher. You're just out to protect yourself. Nelson gets in Deacon Charles' face. NELSON How can you say that? I loved that boy. I love all of them. (gets teary-eyed) Do you know what he wanted to be when he graduated college? He wanted to be a pastor. Don't you see? He modeled himself after me. You have no idea how responsible I feel. DEACON CHARLES So do the right thing. Deacon Burke cries. Nelson looks very stern. EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - LAKE - DAY Kris S and Matty sits by the lake. Kris S smokes weed, and Matty cringes at it. MATTY Do you have to do that? Kris S takes a drag. KRIS S. Why? Does it bother you? Matty nods. Kris S puts out the cigarette and blows out smoke. KRIS S. Then it bothers me. MATTY Why do you... KRIS S. What? MATTY You know. Like me. KRIS S. I dunno. Maybe I always had a crush on Scooter. Matty gives him a look. KRIS S.

Kidding. I guess you kind of remind me of myself. When I was young.

MATTY Really? Why do I find that hard to believe? KRIS S. Seriously. I might not have been as uptight, but I was scared of everything. Especially myself. MATTY What changed? KRIS S. I stopped being afraid. MATTY You make it sound so easy. KRIS S. I didn't say all that. But I guess you reach a point when you get tired of the bullshit. I like what I like, and fuck anyone who has a

MATTY I wish I could be like that.

Kris S gets closer.

KRIS S. Like what?

problem with it.

MATTY So nonchalant, I guess.

Kris S just stares at Matty.

MATTY I think this is the part when we kiss.

Kris S pulls Matty close and kisses him.

KRIS S. What's stopping you?

MATTY I don't know.

Matty gets closer and loses himself in the kiss. They stop when they hear a WHISTLE. Looking up tells them that it was from Jim Carson.

> JIM Assembly time. Reverend says it's an emergency.

Jim leaves. Kris S kisses on Matty's neck.

KRIS S. Come on. Skip it.

MATTY No. We should go.

KRIS S. Am I not keeping you entertained?

Matty hits Kris S.

MATTY I'm serious. What if it really is an emergency?

Kris S smiles and nods. He climbs up the hill. Matty tries to get up the hill but can't. Kris S lends him a hand and pulls him up the hill. Matty finds himself in Kris' arms.

MATTY This is surely a compromising position.

Kris kisses him. After a while, Matty stops it.

MATTY Maybe we should get up?

Kris CHUCKLES. They get to their feet and walk upward.

KRIS S. Who was that guy, anyway?

MATTY

I'm not giving names, but he was also an actor. I guess since he wasn't on a hit show, nobody cared.

INT. PROMISE SPRINGS - CAFETERIA - DAY

Teens fill up every row. The Deacons occupy the first row. Nelson speaks to the mike.

> NELSON Due to, um, budgetary reasons, we have to cancel the retreat for the summer.

Everyone CLAPS. Jim's mouth hits the floor.

NELSON Excuse me, everyone. The buses are on their way to take you home. The teens CLAP HARDER.

NELSON Trust me. This is no laughing manner.

Nelson runs off the stage in tears.

RANDOM TEEN What's his deal? Did he finally have enough of us?

RORY Either that, or someone died.

Rory looks up.

RORY Speaking of which, where's Chris B?

RANDOM TEEN #2 April and Miriam still didn't come back, either.

RORY He can't just leave them. Though, it would be so funny if he did. I always wondered about the people who get left behind by buses.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - PARKING LOT - DAY

Three buses pull up.

NELSON Kids! Please stay in line!

People get in line, then abroad the buses. Kris S, however, stays right where he is. Matty looks at him.

MATTY Aren't you coming?

KRIS S.

No.

MATTY Don't be like that. Who's gonna find you?

KRIS S. Who's gonna look?

Matty whispers to Kris.

MATTY Don't you trust them? KRIS S.

You do?

DEACON HUNTINGTON

Hey!

Matty and Kris turn to Deacon Huntington.

DEACON HUNTINGTON Don't think you won't get left!

Matty and Kris face each other.

DEACON HUNTINGTON (O.S.) Kids, these days. Think they're entitled to everything. Well, they won't get over on me. I'll tell 'em --

MATTY Kris, please. Get on the bus.

KRIS S. I'm not leaving without the others.

MATTY Well, they're not leaving without us.

KRIS S. If you want to get on the bus, go. But I'm staying right here.

MATTY

Kris.

BUS ONE BEEPS. Matty gets on it, but looks at Kris before he does. Bus One BEEPS again, and Kris gets on itwith an attitude.

INT. BUS ONE - DAY

Deacons Burke and Huntington sit up front. Matty and Kris sit together.

MATTY Kris. Kris.

Kris looks out the window.

MATTY Are you gonna ignore me forever?

The bus suddenly goes out of control. Teens SCREAM and grab a hold of something. When the bus is still, the deacons look at each other, fear stamped on both of their faces.

DEACON HUNTINGTON Well, you're healthier than me.

DEACON BURKE But you're a guy!

DEACON HUNTINGTON So? I'm practically skin and bones.

The Deacons then look at the driver, who's younger and fit. He knows what they want just from the look in their eyes.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Bus One is inactive. The driver gets out of the bus with Deacons Burke and Huntington behind him. Deacon Burke looks at the tires.

Buses Two and Three are also inactive. The deacons meet up with Nelson and Deacon Charles, and two other guys wearing the same uniforms.

> DEACON CHARLES Busted tires?

DEACON BURKE Busted tires.

Deacon Burke glares at the woods.

DEACON BURKE Whoever's out there, I suggest you come out now. We have the police.

NELSON (mouthed) Do we?

DEACON BURKE (mouthed)

Leaves RUSTLE. Trees and bushes SHAKE. Everyone looks shocked and afraid.

NELSON

H-Hello?

No!

RUSTLING and SHAKING again. The Fit Driver creeps to some bushes to investigate.

FIT DRIVER

Who's there?

Nothing. Then out of nowhere, a pair of arms grabs the driver and pulls him in the bushes. Some RESISTANCE IS HEARD, but then, everything becomes still.

Deacon Hunting's mouth quavers.

DEACON HUNTINGTON Uh, Mr. Driver? You can come out now.

Deacon Charles approaches the bush. When he gets there, he pushes the leaves and branches aside and sees nothing.

DEACON CHARLES Show yourself!

At least eight monsters come out of the woods. Nelson runs back in bus three. The remaining drivers and deacons try to run to a bus, but the monsters grab them and RIP them to pieces.

INT. BUS ONE - DAY

The teens are gathered at the front. They watch the monsters slaughter the drivers and deacons like they were paper.

A monster then PUNCH the bus, which SHAKES. Teens SCREAM.

RORY What are we gonna do?

The monster PUNCHES the bus again. Teens SCREAM and fall down.

MATTY What are those things?

RORY Lemme see, MONSTERS!

MATTY Besides that.

KRIS S. Somebody's gotta do something.

MATTY You think? But our options were just slaughtered.

Kris approaches the front of the bus. Matty grabs his arm.

MATTY

No, Kris!

KRIS S. Sit here with the others. I'll be back. Think about what you're doing.

KRIS S. Don't start crying. I said I'll be back. I may do alotta shit, but I don't break promises.

Kris leaves the bus.

MATTY Kris! KRIS!

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Kris exits bus one. He sees the monster. He and the monster face each other, but another monster leaps into him from the side.

Kris turns over. The monster tries to bite into him. He reaches up and grabs both ends of the creature's mouth. The creature tries to bite down, but Kris pulls upward, and doesn't stop until he's holding the creature's jaw.

He pushes the creature off of him. He stares down a second creature, who gets away from bus three and faces his direction.

Kris gets into a stance, like he anticipates the creature charging into him. When it runs, he manoeuvres out of the way and jumps on its back. It HOLLERS, but it doesn't get Kris' large bicep from around its neck.

Kris pulls as hard as he can and hears a CRACK. The creature's body slumps, and Kris gets off.

A third creature is leaving bus two, but that's because Olu is cutting it up. When its dead, she kicks it off the bus.

Kris and Olu exchange stares.

KRIS S. Where'd you get a knife?

OLU This thing? (holds up blade) I always carry it. Makes me feel safe from predators.

Olu looks at the dead monsters.

OLU Although, I was thinking of a different predator.

Slowly, teens start getting off the buses. Rory walks to Kris, awestruck.

RORY You were amazing. More than amazing. He looks at the monsters. RORY What were they? Kris doesn't speak until he finishes PANTING. KRIS S. Your guess is as good as mine. OLU I wonder if those sons of bitches had something to do with April disappearing. I knew the reverend had something to do this. JIM Hey! Jim faces all of the teens. He stands by the bushes. JIM The reverend is a man of God. How could you insinuate that he summoned those creatures? OLU You said it, not me. JIM I miss Chris B as much as all of you, but it's obvious what happened to him. RORY He was slaughtered? JIM He went home. Now, I think what we should do is --RORY Find out who can drive and go home? JIM No! And stop interrupting me! What we need to do is pray. A lot. RORY We can do that, too. OLU I can drive. KRIS S.

I don't have a license, but I can drive, too. RORY Who's going to drive bus two? JIM If we're going to drive, we definitely need to pray. RORY Can't we do that indoors? Not that it stopped that one creature from getting inside that bus, but still. JIM Don't you know why we survived? Rory points to Kris and Olu. RORY Because of these two? JIM No! Because of God! This was a miraculous act! RORY I was thinking nightmare. But if that's what you want to call it. Jim shakes his head. He lowers his head. JIM Anyway. Our, um, father, who art? in heaven --Two other creatures emerge from the bushes and grab Jim's arms. They pull, ripping Jim in two. The teens SCREAM and get inside their buses. INT. BUS ONE - DAY Teens rush inside the bus SCREAMING. Kris hops in the driver's seat. Matty sits behind him and leans forward. MATTY I imagine that driving a bus is a lot different from driving a car. KRIS S. You wanna walk?

> MATTY Well, no. But --

Kris starts the bus up. KRIS S. Then sit tight. OLU Wait! Olu goes to the front. OLU We can't leave without April. KRIS S. We who? OLU Kris. Kris GROANS. EXT. ROAD - DAY Buses one and three turn around. EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - PARKING LOT - DAY The buses pull up and park. Kris, Matt, Rory, and Olu exit Bus One. Nelson exits bus three. NELSON Now you kids just hold tight. I'll get to the bottom of this. Nelson runs off. OLU Adults are fucking useless. RORY Amen. Bushes RATTLE behind the teens. Miriam steps out of them, wearing skins from a monster. She has their blood all over her. OLU Miriam? The guys are freaked out by her, but Olu rushes to her.

OLU Miriam. Do you know what happened to April? Miriam CRIES. Tears well up in Olu's eyes.

OLU

No.

Miriam nods and CRIES HARDER. Olu also BREAKS DOWN.

INT. BUS ONE - DAY

Kris sits down at the driver's seat. Matty and Rory sit behind him. Miriam goes in the back.

RORY I'm just saying. What if we are alive for a reason?

KRIS S. Coming back here was a mistake.

RORY Look, we're here, so we might as well fix the situation. I mean, what if those things spread?

KRIS S. Then they spread. Not my problem.

MATTY Kris. You don't mean that.

KRIS S. Don't tell me what I don't mean. I only say what I mean.

Matty and Rory turn to each other.

MATTY I'll help you investigate.

Matty and Rory leave the bus.

KRIS S.

Matty!

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - PARKING LOT - DAY

Rory and Matty leave bus one. Kris S comes up right behind them.

KRIS S. Do you even know where you're gonna start?

MATTY No. But we'll figure it out. Kris grabs Matty by the shoulders. Looks at him with pleading eyes.

KRIS S.

Please.

OLU (O.S.)

Hey!

Miriam leaves Bus One. Olu leaves bus three. Miriam walks to Kris and Matty.

MIRIAM If you're going to fix this, you have to take me with you.

KRIS S. It's dangerous. I'm not even sure these guys know what they're doing.

RORY It's true. We don't. You still wanna come?

MIRIAM Hello! I lived in the woods with them for two days!

Miriam gets serious and looks at Kris that way.

MIRIAM I watched them rip April apart like she was nothing. I'm helping you take them out whether you want me to or not.

Olu stomps up to Kris and Miriam.

OLI Are we solving this or what?

Everyone looks at Kris.

KRIS S. I hate you all so much right now.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - CABIN AREA - DAY

Led by Kris and Olu, Matty, Rory, and Miriam approach a particular cabin.

OLU I'm telling you. The Reverend is behind this.

Which is why we need to check his office. We could find clues. Or something. OLU If he ran there, he's really retarded. INT. PROMISE SPRINGS - NELSON'S OFFICE - DAY Matty, Kris, Olu, Rory and Miriam enter. Matty and Miriam check Nelson's desk, while Olu and Rory check his cabinets. Miriam holds up the picture of the woman and the girl. She takes the picture out of the frame and reads the back. MIRIAM "Katherine and Allison. The joys of my life." Is this his wife and daughter? OLU He isn't married. At least, I don't think so. And if he does have a kid, she's well hidden. Rory is confused by the papers he finds. RORY I don't understand any of this. Ooh, what if he's a witch? KRIS S. What? RORY Warlock, whatever. Do you have an explanation for all these weird pictures? Kris looks in the cabinet with Rory. KRIS S. They look like Christian stuff. Ick. A THUMP in the closet. Instantly, it snags the group's attentions. With Kris and Olu leading them, the teens approach the closet. Kris grabs one handle while Olu grabs the other. They PULL. Miriam, Matty, and Rory get ready to fight until

they see who's hiding inside, with his knees drawn up to his chin.

Reverend Nelson? Nelson looks up at them with sorrowful eyes. NELSON This is my fault. All my fault. I shouldn't have listened to her. Should've known she was up to no good. Confused, the teens look at each other. - LATER -Nelson sits in his swivel chair. Kris, Matty, Olu, Rory, and Miriam circle him. NELSON When I was a boy, I wanted to be like my parents. A pastor. That changed in college, when I... Nelson GULPS. NELSON When I had affairs with countless women. I lost my faith. My friends, at the time, were jailed for drug possession. RORY I'm sorry, how is this going to help us beat the monsters?

Matty, Olu, Kris and Miriam SHUSH him. Tears well up in Nelson's eyes.

NELSON After my parents bailed me out of jail, I devoted my entire life to God. I became a deacon at a local church, then pastor. For the first time, my parents were proud of me.

Nelson wipes his eyes.

NELSON I found what I felt was an amazing opportunity in the city. My parents were unhappy. Thought I'd lose my faith again. But I had to go.

MATTY

What happened?

NELSON

I went. I met my wife, Katherine. Even though I practically built another church from the ground up,

my parents still didn't attend my wedding. Kris and Olu cross their arms. INT. PATIENT ROOM - DAY Young Nelson and KATHERINE hold a BABY GIRL. NELSON (V.O.) One year later, Kathy gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, Allison. It was the happiest day of my life. EXT. PARK - DAY People stand about, shocked. A car engine ROARS in the background. NELSON (V.O.) Allison died at eleven years old. Hit and run. Kathy left me soon after. I suppose we both couldn't handle it. INT. BASEMENT - DAY Darkness everywhere. NELSON (V.O.) The stock market crashed, and I had move back in with my parents. Was God punishing me? Did I do something wrong? Why else would He do this? - LATER -Nelson hangs from the ceiling. NELSON (V.O.) I tried to...end myself, but it didn't work. Was it an act of God? I thought so, at the time. INT. PUB - DAY Young Nelson sits at a table. Jez sits with him. NELSON (V.O.)

The following evening, I went to a

pub near me. To figure things out. Jez hands Young Nelson a pamphlet. NELSON (V.O.) I was so down. But a waitress knew a place that could make me feel better. Restore my faith. INT. PROMISE SPRINGS - NELSON'S OFFICE - DAY Kris, Matty, Rory, and Miriam watch Nelson, who is looking at the floor. RORY And that place happened to be the Promise Springs? Nelson tearfully nods. NELSON I thought she was nuts. But coming to the springs changed my life. I left with such a renewed sense of purpose. I wanted everyone to have that feeling. OLU That was how the retreat started. NELSON In short. MATTY The waitress. Was her name Jezzie? Or Jez? Nelson's ears shoot up. NELSON

Yes. Yes, I think.

MATTY That's the same waitress I met. She gave me a pamphlet to this place.

NELSON Oh my goodness. She has to be behind this.

MIRIAM The monsters. I saw them come from the dirt. Maybe there's a connection between them and the springs?

RORY Maybe we're feeding it. Whatever

"it" is. MIRIAM We need to check the springs. Something there could be the reason this is happening. Nelson stands up. NELSON I'm coming with you. This is my blunder, I should be the one to fix it. They head out. EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - SPRINGS - DAY Rory, Matty, Kris, Miriam, Olu and Nelson approach a spring. RORY So what do we do? If Miriam is right, getting in could create more monsters. NELSON I feel something. A force. I thought it was God, but perhaps I was wrong. RORY Maybe something is at the bottom of the lake. Any swimmers? Everyone shakes their heads. KRIS S. I guess I'll do it. RORY No, it's all right. Let me. It's about time I made myself useful. Rory gets into the spring. MIRIAM Be careful, Rory! Rory INHALES and DIVES in.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - UNDERWATER - DAY

All around, are RUBIES, Rory sees. Inside them, are light, that expand and contract, like a glow. Some rubies store bright light, some rubies store dull light. There are a few black stones.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - SPRINGS - DAY Rory pops up from the spring, gasping for air. Miriam leans forward. MIRIAM What did you see? Rory gets water out of his face, then turns to her. RORY Rubies. But that isn't the weird part. They had light inside them. Well, most of them did. KRIS S. Glowing rubies? Don't rubies already glow? RORY Not like this. The light was big. And incredibly round. OLU What do you think it means? RORY No clue. The light could be souls, or... That's pretty much all I got. The teens glare at Nelson, who looks astonished at Rory's discovery. OLU You had us go in there everyday. And who knows how many other people you've brought to these springs. NELSON I didn't know! Are you sure they're souls? Rory shrugs. Six monsters materialize from the earth. They approach the group. MIRIAM Six? RORY Do I duck?

Rory knits his brows. He goes up for air.

Rory! Hurry and get outta there!

Rory does so. The monsters move faster, alerted by him getting out of the sprig. They put their arms forward, and drag their bodies.

KRIS S.

Run!

The group runs out of the springs.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - WOODS - DAY

Kris, Miriam, Matty, Olu, and Nelson run as fast as they can. Miriam turns to Kris.

MIRIAM I don't think they can see. So maybe we should keep our voices down?

KRIS S. You saying this was my fault? They can still smell, you know.

Moments pass in silence. Then a monster appears before the group. They could try to turn around, but they won't all make it.

Miriam knows this, so she jumps on its back. While it tries to get her off, she digs her fingers into its eyes. It then falls on the dirt and dies.

The group looks stunned by Miriam's victory.

NELSON You were like an animal.

MIRIAM If you want to beat a monster, you have to think like one.

OLU What did I get myself into?

RORY Oh, cheer up. You could be saving the world.

That doesn't cheer Olu up. Glaring at Rory, she almost get whacked in the face by a branch.

A monster is ahead, but it's preoccupied with where it's going. Doesn't give the group any attention.

KRIS S.

Shh!

The monster goes on.

MIRIAM Should we follow it?

OLU Into a trap? Sounds great.

KRIS S. Let's just see where it's going. We'll keep ourselves distant.

The group silently follows the monster.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - SPRING - DAY

The monsters are gathered around a particular spring. The group hides in the woods, where they see the spring glow.

A NUDE WOMAN comes out of the spring, JEZEBETH. She looks a lot like Jez, except even more beautiful. She comes out as a pillar of water, then turns into a person.

The monsters bow to her, and she smiles.

JEZEBETH My babies. There are a lot of you. How many people did I bring here?

Jezebeth looks at the woods.

JEZEBETH Oh. I know who I should thank.

The monsters look straight at the group.

RORY Are you guys thinking what I'm thinking?

KRIS S. We run, and fast.

The group runs into the woods.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - WOODS - DAY

Nelson, Kris, Olu, Rory, Miriam and Matty run as fast as they can. Matty is dead-last. He trips. Kris runs toward him. When the others slow down, he yells at them.

> KRIS S. Keep going!

Kris kneels before Matty. He looks up at the seven monsters on their tails.

KRIS S. Don't look behind you. MATTY How many? KRIS S. A lot. MATTY More than two? KRIS S. Just get up.

Kris helps Matty stand and the two dash down the woods. But they aren't fast enough; the monsters are gaining on them.

Matty looks behind him and almost chokes.

KRIS S. I thought I told you don't look behind!

MATTY I guess I couldn't help it! (looks at Kris) What are we gonna do? At this rate, we aren't gonna make it.

KRIS S. You're gonna make it.

MATTY

What? Kris!

Kris pulls Matty close and kisses him on the lips.

KRIS S. It was great knowing you. Never forget how special you are.

MATTY No! Whatever you're thinking about doing, don't do it!

Kris S YELLS and runs to the left. The monsters follow him.

From behind the bushes, Matty watches the monsters rip Kris to shreds, despite his best efforts to resist them, and devour him.

Devastated, Matty shakes. Olu, tears in her eyes, pulls him up.

Come on!

Matty and Olu join the others. They run down the woods but stop when Jezebeth materializes before them.

JEZEBETH

There you are.

She grabs Nelson by his throat.

JEZEBETH I should thank you. You brought me more than I needed. It's because of you my babies exist.

NELSON Because of me?

JEZEBETH Any last words?

Nelson spits on Jezebeth. She drops him. He and the teens run past her.

JEZEBETH How gross! So rude and so misguided.

The monsters surround Jezebeth.

JEZEBETH After them!

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - TRAIL - DAY

Olu, Nelson, Rory, Miriam and Nelson run. Matty is wide-eyed and seems to be in a state of disbelief.

A monster jumps from the woods and tackles Rory. He SCREAMS and tries to fight the monster, but Nelson pulls it off him. Nelson stabs it in the neck with a letter opener.

OLU You carry that?

NELSON What? I fled before I started opening fan-mail.

Nelson picks Rory off the ground.

NELSON I wonder what she meant by "because of me."

RORY The sprigs are mystical. They

absorb souls, which I'm guessing is how she got here. The group runs again. RORY Maybe the energy of the springs somehow created the monsters. Perhaps the springs were "full," so to speak. So the unneeded souls created other entities altogether. Guilt envelopes Nelson. NELSON I created this. RORY Well, not on purpose. Miriam looks at Matty. MATTY When does it get easier? MIRIAM When you find out, let me know. The group keeps running. EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - LIVING AREA - NIGHT Matty, Rory, Nelson, Olu and Miriam run out of the woods. Nelson PANTS. NELSON Who is that woman? More importantly, how do we defeat her? RORY No clue to both questions. Jezebeth appears a few meters ahead of the group. As she approaches them, Olu jerks up. OLU Oh, shit. We got company. Everyone looks terrifed. Jezebeth LAUGHS. JEZEBETH Don't you get it? These are my woods. I can see your next move

> even before you make it. MATTY

Why? Why are you terrorizing us?

JEZEBETH Feeling brokenhearted, are we? Aww, that's so cute.

Matty charges at Jezebeth, but the others pull him back. Nelson squeezes his letter opening. Jezebeth glares at him.

> JEZEBETH I'll rip out your heart before you even think about doing it.

Jezebeth smiles at Matty.

JEZEBETH Isn't it obvious? You're His chosen creations. Killing you all would be the ultimate "fuck you," yes?

MATTY The world is a big place. That's a lot of killing.

JEZEBETH Oh, I'm not doing this by myself. Others may already be here, walking among you. Or doing what I did, whichever one.

NELSON

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Who are you?
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Jezebeth walks to Nelson with a nasty grin.

JEZEBETH Jezebeth. But you can call me --

MATTY

Jez.

Jezebeth looks pleased that Matty remembered her name.

JEZEBETH Yes! Do I know you?

MATTY You're going to pay for what you did to him.

JEZEBETH I did a lot of things to a lot of people. I need you to be specific.

Nelson is on his knees CRYING.

JEZEBETH What are you whining about? I haven't even cut you yet. Olu helps Nelson stand.

OLU Get a hold of yourself. We have to run.

JEZEBETH It won't do you any good, but you're more than welcomed to try.

The group runs.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - NELSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Matty, Olu, Rory, and Nelson run with everything they have. Jezebeth appears before them. They attempt to turn around, but Jezebeth grabs Matty.

> JEZEBETH Don't worry. You'll see your boy toy very soon.

Fueled by anger, Matty kicks Jezebeth. She drops him, holding her stomach.

JEZEBETH I have to stop doing that. (looks up) Okay, now you've pissed me off.

Jezebeth raises her left arm. It turns into a massive claw. The parts of the claw that isn't muscle are bone.

The group backs away from her.

NELSON Surely we can talk this out?

JEZEBETH Waiting to die may be your thing, but that isn't our cup of tea. First we're gonna take this world, and then we're gonna bring the battle to Him.

NELSON He is all powerful. How do you expect to win?

JEZEBETH Everybody's got a weakness, babe. Even Him.

From her claw, Jezebeth shoots steel that slices across the air like dirks.

The group SCREAMS as they dodge the steel plates. Jezebeth

looks vaguely impressed.

NELSON Mmmm. Impressive.

Her claw turns into a long sword.

JEZEBETH Thankfully, that isn't all I can do.

Jezebeth swings her sword at the group. Matty and Olu are far out of range, but Rory, who's crawling backward, is right in its path.

Jezebeth smirks. She knows she's got this.

JEZEBETH How do you do?

Rory shuts his eyes.

NELSON

No!

Jezebeth swings. The blade doesn't hit Rory. It hits Nelson, who has jumped in its way to protect Rory.

When Rory opens his eyes, his face becomes a mask of shock.

RORY

Reverend!

NELSON Go! While you still can!

Jezebeth takes her sword out of Nelson, and his body flops to the ground. Olu and Matty pull Rory up.

OLU Let's go! Don't let his death be in vain!

Matty, Olu, Rory, and Miriam run from the area. Jezebeth stands still, smiling.

JEZEBETH I can see you, you know.

She GIGGLES.

EXT. PROMISE SPRINGS - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

Matty, Olu, Rory, and Miriam run down the path. Right before they enter the woods, two packs of monsters steps out of the woods. The group manages to stop themselves and backtrack. Maybe there's a ritual or something that'll eject her from our world.

OLU

Do you know one?

RORY Not quite.

OLU

Then shut up.

Matty looks behind him.

MATTY

Oh, great.

The group turns around. Jezebeth walks towards them.

JEZEBETH This is where you die. Feeling sad?

Olu looks at Jezebeth in anger. Matty sees what she's about to do.

MATTY

No!

Olu runs behind Jezebeth and jumps on her back. She throws her arm around her neck.

JEZEBETH Hello! I don't breathe!

Jezebeth reaches behind her and grabs Olu. She throws her on the ground. She prepares to stab her, but Olu moves to the side, dodging the assault.

Jezebeth looks up to see Miriam coming right at her. Miriam leaps and lands on the demon's back. Miriam attempts to dive her fingers through Jezebeth's eyes.

JEZEBETH

What are you doing?

Jezebeth grabs Miriam and throws her off.

RORY I beseech Thee, O Lord God of Heaven the great and awesome God.

Jezebeth tries to cover her ears.

JEZEBETH

Shut up!

Rory walks toward her.

RORY

Let Your ear now be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of your servant.

The monsters shudder. They explode into dust except for one, who charges at Rory.

OLU Not in this life!

Olu gets up and swings her blade at the monster. She cuts it, but it isn't enough to keep it from throwing her back on the ground. It grabs her neck.

> OLU You're uglier than I thought.

The monster starts to bite into Olu. Matty and Miriam throw the monster off her. Olu hops atop it and sinks her blade into its neck.

RORY Lord there is no one besides You to help in the battle between the powerful and those who have no strength; so help us our God, for we trust in You and in Your name.

Jezebeth drops on one knee.

JEZEBETH

I said stop!

Her hand turns back into a claw. She shoots steel at Rory. They stop in midair, and turn into doves.

This stuns Jezebeth, who looks at her claw as though she doesn't know what it is.

RORY Although our iniquities testify against us, O Lord, act for Thy name's sake.

Jezebeth grabs the dirt. She shrinks a size.

JEZEBETH What are you?

RORY To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, in you I trust, let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies triumph.

Jezebeth SCREAMS and withers away to a skeleton. Miriam, Matty and Olu look impressed.

MATTY Is it over? Is she dead?

MIRIAM That was awesome, Rory. How did you know to do that?

RORY

I was desperate. I used to pray at my church before I discarded my membership. I figured if demons are real, then...

Olu looks down at the ground. Blood splashes on Matty, Miriam, and Rory. Olu looks down at the steel penetrating her chest.

MATTY

No!

Jezebeth may be a skeleton, but red light is where her eyes would be, and she's holding up her claw.

From where Olu is standing, the steel was headed right for Rory.

MATTY

Olu!

The lights fade away and Jezebeth's skeletal remains sink to the ground.

Olu drops to her knees. Matty, Miriam and Rory circle her. Olu smiles at Rory.

OLU

Thank you.

She closes her eyes. Miriam shakes her, but she doesn't respond.

MIRIAM

Olu! Olu!

Miriam stops shaking her. She wipes her eyes.

RORY

You're welcome, Olu.

Rory looks at the sky.

RORY You have another angel joining you, soon. Please take care of her.

Matty wipes tears from his eyes as well. He looks at the woods around the group. No sign of monsters anywhere. He gets up.PROMISE SPRINGS -

MATTY It's over. It's really over. He smiles at Rory. MATTY You saved us. And maybe the whole world. RORY Well, if she's right, then she isn't alone. But hopefully other people are taking care of that. Miriam lays Olu down. MIRIAM What do we do from here? RORY Live our lives. We should probably keep this to ourselves. MIRIAM No way! People have a right to know what's really out there. RORY Okay, if you don't mind being thrown in the looney bin... MATTY I see your point, Miriam, but I think Rory's right. Besides, we could make ourselves targets for people who worship those things. RORY And I've been prey enough in a lifetime, thank you very much. MIRIAM You're right. Both of you. But... (looks at Olu's body) How do we explain all of this?

Rory shrugs.

RORY Animals did it?

MATTY We'll figure it out.

Rory gets up, and after him Matty and Miriam. They leave the area.

RORY So, uh, what's the nearest town? MATTY Who knows? But the road is sure to lead somewhere.

MIRIAM I should probably take this skin off me.

RORY Probably.

With the exception of Olu's body, the woods look peaceful and serene in a way they haven't before.

The threesome leaves the area.

.END.