

SHE MUST BLEED

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. WOODS - DUSK

Two obscured figures dart through the snowy thickets. They slow as they approach a clearing. The couple are revealed:

A man, JACK (35), a bloody, slipshod bandage around his arm, and a girl, EMILY (13). They're both filthy and not dressed for the cold. Jack, overweight, labors to keep up.

He stops, leans on a tree to catch his breath.

JACK

Wait! Emily, wait.

Emily pauses, runs back to where Jack now rests. Panicked and crying, she tries to pull him forward.

EMILY

C'mon, Uncle Jack! Please! They're coming!

He takes her face in his hands, comforting yet firm.

JACK

Yeah, they're coming, and they're gonna find us, eventually.

She breaks down, he wipes away her tears. She looks up.

EMILY

I don't want this.

They hug.

JACK

There's some cabins not far from here.

He pulls her away, picks her chin up to look into her eyes.

JACK (CONT'D)

All we can do is fight. You ready for that?

She hesitates. Takes a composing breath and nods. They hurry down the path.

EXT. CAMPSITE - LATER

Moonlight illuminates three small cabins, apparently unoccupied from the lack of interior lights. Jack and Emily stumble into view.

INT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

The glass from a side window shatters. Jack breaks away the pane with a branch, reaches for the lock. Pushes the frame open. Boosts Emily up and into the cabin.

EXT. CABIN DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Jack waits by the door. The cabin's lights pop on. The door opens to reveal Emily, a weary smile on her face.

EMILY

The power's on. That's good, right?

JACK

Yeah, but let's not make it easy for them.

He steps past the threshold, reaches inside and turns off the lights.

INT. CABIN - LATER

Emily sits on the floor, a small desk lamp by her side. The lamp and the moonlight are enough to see the sparsely furnished space.

Jack roots around inside the desk by the wall, finds a flashlight. Turns it on. The column of light bounces across the room as Jack surveys the cabin.

EMILY

Did you know?

He doesn't turn her way, steps to a large cabinet in the corner.

JACK
Know what?

Jack opens the cabinet, finds hanging coats. Sets the flashlight down.

EMILY
Did you know this would happen tonight?

He pulls out a coat, puts it on. Grimaces in pain while doing so. Picks up the flashlight. Turns and points it at Emily.

JACK
How could I? No. This is not what I thought I'd be doing tonight.

Emily hangs her head.

EMILY
I'm sorry.

Jack pulls another coat from the bureau.

JACK
Hey, no.

She gazes up at him.

JACK (CONT'D)
This is not on you. Okay?

She nods.

JACK (CONT'D)
I mean, you didn't know. Right?

Emily averts her eyes. Hesitates to answer. Looks up.

EMILY
Thank you. For helping me.

Jack smiles, tosses the coat to Emily. She catches it.

JACK
Happy birthday.

EMILY
I've had better.

She lays the coat beside her.

EMILY (CONT'D)
I'm not cold.

Emily has beads of sweat on her forehead. Jack takes on a slight quizzical look. Turns back to the cluttered cabinet, reaches inside.

Finds a broken crossbow, looks to be a child's toy. Throws it aside. Finds a sledgehammer, weighs it in his hand. Reaches in with his other hand to find

A rifle. He drops the hammer to the floor, the thud catches Emily's attention.

JACK
Here we go.

He opens the top drawer to find a case of bullets.

EMILY
You're going to shoot them?

Jack spins around, puzzled.

JACK
Well what do you expect me to do, Emily?

Jack checks his anger.

JACK (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. But, what? What do you want me to do? Ask them politely? "Pretty please don't kill us".

Emily stares coldly at Jack.

JACK (CONT'D)
What?

EMILY

They don't want to kill me.

Jack steps forward. Rifle in hand, by his side.

JACK

Emily? I'm sure you don't know what's going on here, not totally, but you know more than me. You know something, don't you?

Jack takes a few more steps. He's in the center of the room, caught in the moonlight emanating from the window.

EMILY

Something.

Emily hangs her head.

JACK

What, Emily?

She doesn't respond or raise her head.

JACK (CONT'D)

Emily!

Jack shines the flashlight directly at Emily's face. She gazes up, a sinister look in her eyes.

EMILY

I know...

Jack takes a half step forward when

Boom! A shotgun blast disintegrates the window and tears through Jack's leg. The rifle spins across the room as Jack crashes to the floor. Emily screams.

Jack moans in pain. He collects himself enough to look for the rifle - it's too far to get to in his condition.

But the sledgehammer - maybe. He reaches for it when

Boom! The front door knob is torn away by another blast. The door is kicked open to reveal

GEORGE (40), handsome in a middle-aged, suburban way. He carries a smoking shotgun.

Jack inches toward the sledgehammer. George flicks on the light switch. Finds Jack on the floor.

GEORGE

Jackie.

George kicks the hammer out of Jack's grasp. Kneels to meet Jack's gaze.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

You weren't invited to the party.

EMILY (O.S.)

Yes he was.

George looks up to find Emily. She cowers under the desk. Creeps out slowly. She stands, breathing heavily. Sweat drips from her face.

EMILY (CONT'D)

I invited him, Daddy.

GEORGE

That was a mistake then, wasn't it?

George grabs Jack by the lapel of his coat. Jack groans as he is dragged across the floor toward the back wall of the cabin. Emily watches before her attention is stolen by

SUSAN (35) a beautiful, intense woman. She steps through the doorway.

SUSAN

But we're going to make the best of it. Uncle Jack will be your gift, Emily.

Jack pulls himself up, painfully.

JACK

What the holy fuck does that mean?

George slams the stock of the shotgun into Jack's temple. He collapses, unconscious.

Susan finds Emily's gaze and locks in. The woman and girl meet in the center of the room.

SUSAN

I know you were scared, Emmy, but you can't run from this. But I don't think you want to anymore.

Susan bends to meet Emily's eye-line.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Can you feel it yet?

Emily grins, but like she doesn't want to.

EMILY

Yes, ma'am.

SUSAN

Enjoy it. Embrace it.

Emily looks over to Jack, concerned.

Susan grasps Emily's jaw, yanks her face forward.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

No, ma'am.

GEORGE

(Laughs)

Pretty soon, fun Uncle Jack will be fun Uncle Snack.

SUSAN

Shut up, George.

EXT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

An SUV pulls up in front of the cabin.

INT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Susan turns toward the door and back to Emily.

SUSAN

Time to grow up, sweetie.

George steps over to the ladies, places the gun down. He stands behind Emily, puts his hand on her shoulder. Bends down a bit to whisper in Emily's ear.

GEORGE

This next part's going to be pretty rough. I love you.

Emily glances sideways at her father. Begins to speak but stops to find the approaching noise before her.

EMILY

Nana?

MAGGIE (60) as she enters the room. A matronly yet well-maintained woman, she carries a small purse on one shoulder.

Susan pivots to find the matriarch, takes a step back.

SUSAN

She's ready, mom.

MAGGIE

Is she?

Maggie steps closer to Susan, Emily and George. For a moment they look like the perfect family.

GEORGE

(nervous)

Good evening, Maggie. How are...?

MAGGIE

Shut up, George.

He does. Maggie steps closer still.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

(to Susan)

Is she ready? You said that last year.

SUSAN

Yes, ma'am, I thought she would be. But Emmy hadn't quite - blossomed - yet.

Susan turns to Emily. Strokes her hair warmly. Emily breathes coarse, throaty breaths.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

It's time.

MAGGIE

George.

George bear hugs Emily from behind, her arms pinned. She looks to her mother, shakes her head "no".

EMILY

Please, I'm not...

Susan shushes her.

Maggie reaches into her purse, and retrieves a small dagger. Tosses the purse away.

Maggie steps within arm's length of Emily and pauses.

CLOSE ON Maggie's eyes. They change.

Susan grabs Emily's jaw, forces her head back and her mouth open.

Maggie positions her empty hand over the girl's mouth, pulls the dagger across her palm. Blood pours from the wound into Emily's mouth.

Emily's spasms, chokes. Swallows. She calms, takes an unnaturally deep breath. George loosens his hold.

Maggie holds the dagger vertically and upside-down over Emily's open mouth. Susan wraps her hand around the blade and pulls it downward.

Her blood now pours into Emily's mouth. Emily swallows it without hesitation.

CLOSE ON Emily's eyes. They change.

George releases Emily, steps away sheepishly. Susan steps back too, but not as far.

Maggie still holds the dagger above her granddaughter's head. Emily peers up, places a palm around the blade and pulls downward. The girl swallows her own blood and

Screams! A piercing, wild howl that snaps Jack into full consciousness.

Emily descends into a crouch, like an animal ready to pounce. And she does.

Emily propels herself forward, upward. Ricochets off Maggie, who falls backward to the floor. Emily lands on all fours, back arched. Her clothes tighten. Seams pop.

CLOSE ON Emily's face. It changes. A jagged-toothed snarl emerges.

Again, she pounces. Now toward Susan - but she is ready for it. Susan catches Emily, by the neck. Pulls her close. Emily is now more wolf than girl.

SUSAN

Don't fight this.

So she stops fighting. Susan releases her.

Emily's full lycanthropic form quickly manifests.

The glorious wolf pup prowls around the cabin. Sniffs at Maggie, still on the floor. Maggie smiles.

Emily finds George, cocks her now canine head.

GEORGE

(smiling proudly)

That's my girl.

Uninterested, she turns away, toward Jack. Emily scampers over to him, sniffing. Pauses, sits.

JACK

Emily?

Susan follows, kneels beside Emily. Strokes her head.

SUSAN

One more step, sweetie. This part's fun.

Susan whispers in Emily's ear.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Feed.

Emily's turns to her mother, then back to Jack. She growls, inches toward him. He shakes his head "no".

JACK

(whispered)

Fight.

Emily pauses. Snarls. Turns to Susan, now angered by the girls' inaction.

Emily growls and lunges at her mother. They fall as one.

Emily gnaws Susan's throat with unfettered ferocity. Too quickly to allow a scream.

Emily vomits a torrent of blood into Susan's face.

Maggie rises, in the process of transforming.

MAGGIE

Emily! No!

EXT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Maggie's screams are heard from inside. Blood sprays across the windows.

INT. CABIN - LATER

George is in shock, traumatized. Speechless.

Emily steps up, blood-soaked, clothes in tatters. She faces him, cool and confident.

EMILY

You understand what this means,
don't you?

GEORGE

Yes, ma'... Emily.

EMILY

No, say it.

GEORGE

Yes, ma'am, I understand.

EMILY

Good. Let's go.

(nods to Jack)

Pick him up.

I/E - MAGGIE'S SUV/CABIN - LATER

Emily sits in the passenger seat, draped in her father's coat. She looks out the window toward the cabin. George helps Jack to the vehicle.

Emily turns away. A moment of reflection. She licks the inside of her lips, and smiles.

EXT. CABIN - LATER

Fire consumes the cabin. The SUVs tail-lights fade into the distance.

FADE OUT.

THE END