

"T H E     K I L L I N G     S E A S O N"

written by

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Based on the characters created  
by Thomas Harris

Address  
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FADE IN:

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE - DUSK

A winding road cuts through misty vineyards and autumn forests. Wind whistles. The sky bruises purple.

A secluded CHÂTEAU rises from the hillside - stone walls weathered with centuries, ivy crawling across its towers. Lights flicker faintly inside.

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INT. CHÂTEAU - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A grand but fading room. Walls lined with books, paintings of saints and monsters. A roaring fire keeps shadows alive.

At the table: three settings. Silverware gleams. Bordeaux breathes. A pheasant roasts on a spit.

HANNIBAL LECTER (80s), elegant though frail, adjusts the table. His movements deliberate, hands trembling slightly with age.

LECTER  
(to himself, softly)  
Perfection is only ever fleeting.

A KNOCK at the great oak doors. Hannibal smiles faintly.

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EXT. CHÂTEAU - NIGHT

Two figures stand at the threshold:

WILL GRAHAM (60s), weathered, haunted eyes.

CLARICE STARLING (50s), rigid, weary but unbroken.

The door creaks open. Hannibal stands there, candlelight haloing him.

LECTER  
Will. Clarice.  
(after a beat)  
Welcome home.

Neither moves.

LECTER (CONT'D)  
No weapons, please. This house is  
older than your fears.

Slowly, Will lowers his sidearm. Clarice follows, holstering hers.

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INT. CHÂTEAU - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They step inside. The smell of woodsmoke, herbs, roasting meat. Hannibal gestures to the table.

LECTER  
Sit. Eat. We have years to digest.

They sit - tense, but drawn in by the gravity of the moment.

Wine poured. Glasses raised. Silence stretches.

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THE DINNER SCENE

LECTER (CONT'D)  
Jack Crawford is gone. He carried  
his guilt longer than most carry  
breath.

Will lowers his gaze.

WILL  
Molly left me. Years ago. She took  
Walter. I see him when I can.  
(beat)  
Mostly, I teach now. Abnormal  
psychology. A safer distance from  
the abyss.

Lecter studies him with soft amusement.

LECTER  
You lecture about monsters while  
one of them still breathes beside  
you.

Will doesn't answer.

Clarice sets her glass down.

CLARICE

I resigned. Not long after you ran.  
The Bureau became... heavy. Every  
room a reminder.

Lecter tilts his head, genuinely curious.

LECTER

And yet you're still a hunter,  
Clarice.

CLARICE

I was engaged. He was New Mexico  
State Police. Task force against  
the cartels. They cut him down in  
an ambush — meth, fentanyl, desert  
road.

(beat, harder)

So no, I'm not hunting anymore.

The fire pops. A long silence.

LECTER

(grave, almost kind)

You both wear grief like a second  
skin. But grief... makes for a finer  
cut of meat.

Will's hand tightens on his fork.

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CLOSE ON - LECTER'S HANDS

They tremble. He steadies them  
against the table. His eyes glint,  
but his body betrays him.

WILL

(snarling)

What's wrong with you?

Lecter exhales, calm.

LECTER

Adenoid cystic carcinoma. A rare  
cancer. Slow, but certain.

(beat)

I have perhaps... fifteen months.  
Sixteen, if fortune is indulgent.

Clarice and Will exchange a glance.

LECTER (CONT'D)  
I won't fight you. Not tonight. Not  
ever again.

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EXT. CHÂTEAU - GROUNDS - SAME TIME

Red lights pulse in the mist. Armored vehicles crawl silently into position. Dozens of operators - JSOC, INTERPOL, FBI - surround the château.

Through the windows, scopes glint. The house is in their sights.

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INT. CHÂTEAU - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Lecter sips his wine, unhurried.

LECTER  
And so the season ends. Not with  
violence, but with courtesy.

CRASH! The doors BURST open. Armed men flood in. Commands barked. Weapons raised.

Will and Clarice stand frozen. Hannibal doesn't move. He calmly extends his wrists.

LECTER (CONT'D)  
(to the soldiers)  
Shall we?

Handcuffs snap shut. Hannibal rises with a frail dignity.

He turns once more to Will and Clarice.

LECTER (CONT'D)  
Thank you for supper.

He's led away.

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CUT TO BLACK.

MAIN TITLES / NEWS MONTAGE -

Broadcasts announce the capture of Hannibal Lecter.

Interviews with survivors of the Harris universe.

Shots of ADX Florence preparing a cell.

INT. CNN STUDIO - NIGHT

A polished host sits with ALANA BLOOM (50s) - calm but visibly shaken.

ALANA

(quiet)

I told myself if this day ever came, I'd feel relief. But Hannibal Lecter was never just a man. He was... gravity. And gravity never really goes away.

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INT. SMALL TOWN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

REBA McCLANE (late 50s, blind) sits in soft light.

REBA

He had a way of making you feel seen. Not as prey - but as possibility. That's what made him more dangerous than any monster.

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INT. FBI AUDITORIUM - DAY

A much older CHILTON (on archival video) sneers from a decades-old interview clip.

CHILTON (V.O.)

Hannibal Lecter was an egotist, nothing more. And like all egotists, his downfall was inevitable.

(cut to a modern placard: "Frederick Chilton - deceased")

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EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A convoy snakes along a winding French road. Rain slicks the asphalt, headlights cutting through mist.

Lead SUV.

Armored transport van (Lecter inside).

Rear guard SUV.

Two helicopters overhead.

Inside the forest: silence.

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INT. TRANSPORT VAN - NIGHT

The hum of the engine. The clink of shackles.

HANNIBAL, shackled, sits with his back straight. Even in chains, he radiates control.

Beside him: WILL GRAHAM (William Petersen) leans forward, eyes never leaving him. CLARICE STARLING (Jodie Foster) sits across, bruised but unflinching.

WILL  
(quiet, to himself)  
Feels like déjà vu.

LECTER  
(smiling faintly)  
Because you always come back to me,  
Will. You can't help yourself.

Clarice bristles.

CLARICE  
Save the riddles, Doctor. This ride  
ends in Florence. You'll never walk  
free again.

LECTER  
Ah. But freedom is not a place,  
Clarice. It is a state of mind.

He leans in, voice soft.

LECTER (CONT'D)  
One last journey, together. For old  
times' sake.

The engine roars louder, masking her reply.

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INSERT - OUTSIDE THE TRANSPORT

The convoy hums through mist. Rain lashes the windshields.  
Operators scan the tree line. Nothing but shadows.

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BACK INSIDE THE TRANSPORT

Will stares at Lecter.

WILL  
(quiet, almost to himself)  
I should've killed you years ago.

LECTER  
And yet... you didn't. Because you  
knew we'd arrive here. Together.

He smiles, pale, but with fire still burning.

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EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

The rain suddenly stops. A hush over the road.

BOOM! - the lead SUV erupts into fire, metal raining across  
the road.

Gunfire rips from the treeline. Bullets slam into armored  
plating. Helicopters scramble overhead.

A SECOND EXPLOSION takes out the rear SUV. The convoy is  
boxed in.

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INT. TRANSPORT VAN - CONTINUOUS

Alarms blare. Operators shout. Clarice grabs her sidearm.  
Will braces.

RPG STRIKE! The van tips, skids, and slams into the  
guardrail. Sparks shower.

Smoke fills the cabin. The doors are ripped open by masked  
figures - THE LECTER LEGION.

They wear animal skull masks, tattered ceremonial robes,  
carrying rifles and machetes.

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EXT. ROAD - CHAOS

The firefight rages. Operators fall one by one, overwhelmed by fanatics who fight with suicidal devotion.

In the center of it all, a towering figure emerges - ZARADIAK MANN (Michael Shannon). His eyes burn with fanatic fire, his voice deep, resonant.

CULT LEADER  
(bellowing)  
Deliver the Saint of Flesh! Deliver  
our Father of Teeth!

INT. TRANSPORT VAN - CONTINUOUS

Will fights off a masked zealot with brutal punches. Clarice fires, taking down two attackers.

A burst of gunfire rips through the door - Clarice is hit. She's thrown back, body armor absorbing most, but one round punctures through, snapping ribs. She gasps, choking, lung collapsing.

WILL  
Clarice!

He dives toward her, but is clubbed across the head.

The cult swarms. They grab Hannibal, lifting him like a relic.

HANNIBAL  
(softly, almost pleased)  
Ah. My faithful.

The Cult Leader steps forward, lowering his skull mask. ZARADIAK MANN (Michael Shannon)'s cold eyes stare at Lecter with reverence.

ZARADIAK MANN  
(whispers, awestruck)  
Guide us.

Hannibal simply smiles.

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EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Clarice, bleeding, crawls through broken glass. She raises her pistol with trembling hands.

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! She drops three cultists before collapsing, gasping for breath.

Will is dragged, unconscious. Hannibal is carried aloft.

The Legion retreats into the forest, vanishing with their prize.

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EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

Rain begins again, washing blood into ditches. Helicopters hover overhead, too late.

Clarice lies on the asphalt, body broken, chest heaving. Medics rush in.

MEDIC

Collapsed lung! She's fading!

Her hand shoots up, gripping his wrist.

CLARICE

(whispering)

Not... done yet.

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INT. ABANDONED MONASTERY - SANCTUARY - NIGHT

The Legion gathers in candlelight. Dozens kneel in skull masks. Incense smoke coils.

At the altar - ZARADIAK MANN, tall, severe, robes spattered with blood. Behind him, bound but upright, sit WILL and HANNIBAL.

The crowd chants:

LEGION

Lecter. Lecter. Lecter.

Zaradiac raises his hands. Silence.

ZARADIAC MANN  
 Brothers. Sisters. Seekers of  
 truth.  
 Tonight the blood of the old world  
 flows again. And He... the Saint of  
 Flesh... walks among us.

The zealots bow their heads.

ZARADIAC MANN (CONT'D)  
 (to Hannibal)  
 Doctor. You refined the hunt into  
 art. You peeled back the skin of  
 society and showed us what lived  
 beneath.  
 (beat, trembling with  
 fervor)  
 You are the Father. And I am your  
 son.

Hannibal studies him, amused.

LECTER  
 You mistake appetite for divinity.

ZARADIAC MANN  
 No, Doctor. You gave us clarity.  
 He who feeds on the corrupt is  
 clean.  
 He who consumes the impure is  
 sanctified.

(leans close, whispering)  
 You showed us how to ascend.

Will coughs blood, glaring.

WILL  
 He's not a prophet. He's a  
 predator. And predators rot like  
 everything else.

Zaradiac turns to him, calm but cutting.

ZARADIAC MANN  
 And yet you followed him, didn't  
 you?  
 Across oceans. Across lives.  
 Even your hatred is devotion.

Hannibal smiles faintly at Will — as if to say: he's not  
 wrong.

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## CULT FEAST PREPARATION

Zealots drag in a slaughtered goat. They gut it before the altar, smearing blood across their masks. Ritualistic.

Zaradiac lifts a blood-stained chalice.

ZARADIAC MANN (CONT'D)

We eat tonight, not for hunger... but  
for worship.

The Legion cheers. Hannibal only watches, cold, calculating.

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## EXT. HIGHWAY - DAWN

The rain has stopped. The wreckage smolders. Bodies lie scattered, covered in tarps.

Paramedics work frantically. Helicopters thrum overhead.

Among the wounded: CLARICE STARLING, gasping for breath, pale and shaking. A medic leans over her.

MEDIC

Collapsed lung! She's fading--

Her hand shoots up, grabbing his wrist. Her eyes burn with fury.

CLARICE

(whispering through blood)  
I'm... not... done.

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## INT. FIELD HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Clarice lies on a gurney. Tubes snake into her ribs. Monitors beep. She struggles to sit up.

An FBI HANDLER enters, grim.

FBI HANDLER

Starling... you're grounded. You're  
half-dead. You go after them again,  
you'll finish the job for the  
cartel.

Clarice stares at him, breathing ragged.

CLARICE  
They took him. And they'll kill  
Graham too.

FBI HANDLER  
We'll handle it. You're not fit for  
duty.

She rips the IV from her arm. Blood drips down her elbow.

CLARICE  
I'm not asking for permission.

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INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

Clarice braces herself against the sink, stripped to the waist. Her ribs are black and purple, wrapped tight. She injects herself with morphine.

Her reflection in the cracked mirror: sweat-soaked hair, eyes burning.

She straps on a bulletproof vest, grimacing in pain. Loads a pistol. Shoves extra mags into her jacket.

Every movement is agony — but she forces herself forward.

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EXT. BORDER CROSSING - NIGHT

Clarice bribes a contact — a French gendarme — with a wad of cash. He hesitates.

GENDARME  
These men you hunt... they are not  
men. They are wolves.

Clarice slides a photo of Hannibal Lecter across the table.

CLARICE  
Then I'll be the butcher.

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MONTAGE - CLARICE'S CRUSADE

Interrogation: Clarice presses a bloodied cult follower against a wall, breaking his arm until he screams the monastery's location.

Gunfight: She raids a safehouse, shooting her way through masked zealots.

Silent kill: In a forest, she ambushes two cultists with a knife, muffling one's scream as she drags him into the dark.

Pain: In between, we see her collapsing in pain, taping her ribs tighter, coughing blood into her hand.

Through it all, she grows harder. More ruthless.

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INT. ABANDONED FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Clarice cleans her weapon. Maps spread before her. Photos of cult symbols. Circles and arrows.

She stops, pressing a shaking hand to her ribs. Blood stains her shirt. She winces, but refuses to slow down.

She whispers to herself:

CLARICE  
Hold on, Will.

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EXT. MONASTERY - HILLSIDE - NIGHT

The silhouette of the ruined monastery looms in the moonlight. Candles flicker in the windows.

Clarice crouches in the brush, binoculars raised. She sees the cult gathered, chanting, the long table being prepared.

Her breath hitches. The final hunt has begun.

INT. MONASTERY - CELL - NIGHT

A stone chamber. Damp walls. Candles gutter in iron sconces. Chains rattle against stone.

WILL GRAHAM slumps against the wall, wrists bound, bruised and bloody. Across from him sits HANNIBAL, shackled but upright, posture regal even in captivity.

Silence. Only the distant chanting of the Legion.

WILL  
(hoarse)  
You enjoying this?

LECTER  
(enigmatic smile)  
I am flattered, Will. Entire  
generations... devoted to my palate.

WILL  
They don't worship you. They  
worship an idea of you. A story.

LECTER  
All gods are stories.

Will stares at him, pained, exhausted.

WILL  
You're dying.  
(beat)  
That's not divine. That's human.

Hannibal's faint smile falters for the first time. His hands  
tremble slightly, betraying weakness.

LECTER  
Even a god may wither, Will. But a  
god's shadow endures.

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INT. MONASTERY - SANCTUARY - LATER

ZARADIAK MANN enters, robes drenched in animal blood. His  
eyes blaze with fervor. He kneels before Hannibal, despite  
the chains.

ZARADIAK MANN  
You've come to us in your twilight.  
The Father among his children.  
(beat)  
Let us carry your gospel into  
eternity.

Hannibal studies him, almost amused.

LECTER  
And what gospel would that be, Mr.  
Mann?

Zaradiac rises, spreading his arms.

ZARADIAC MANN  
That to eat is to conquer. To  
consume is to cleanse.  
That the weak must be devoured, and  
the impure carved away.

He points to Will.

ZARADIAC MANN (CONT'D)  
And he... he is your final meal.

The Legion erupts in cheers.

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INT. MONASTERY - CELL - LATER

The chanting echoes through the walls. Will sits against the  
stone, chest heaving. Hannibal sits beside him, calm.

WILL  
They want you to kill me.

LECTER  
They want me to sanctify you.  
(beat, almost wistful)  
But I could never consume you,  
Will. You are the mirror. Without  
you, I'd see nothing.

Will glares, hatred and something deeper.

WILL  
I should've ended you when I had  
the chance.

LECTER  
And yet... you never do.

Their eyes lock in flickering candlelight. Silence heavy with  
years of obsession.

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INT. MONASTERY - SANCTUARY - NIGHT

The Legion prepares a "Last Supper" ritual. A long table, set  
with slaughtered animals, organs arranged like sacred  
offerings. Candles in skulls.

Zaradiac presides at the head, eyes fever-bright.

ZARADIAC MANN

Tonight, the Father feasts upon his  
chosen son.  
And through this, he shall ascend.

The zealots chant louder, rhythmic, fanatical.

CLOSE ON — Hannibal's face. Calm. His eyes glint. A decision forming.

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INT. MONASTERY — TRANSEPT — SAME

Clarice moves like a shadow between columns. Two masked zealots patrol.

She ghosts up behind the first: hand over mouth, knife under the jaw — quick, clean. The second turns—

PFFT PFFT — suppressed shots. He drops.

Clarice winces, nearly buckling. She presses a palm to her ribs, breathes through it, keeps moving.

INT. MONASTERY — SANCTUARY — NIGHT

Candles crowd the space like a forest of fire.

A LONG TABLE has been laid: bowls of heart and liver, roasted game, bitter herbs, antique silver. A butcher's block at one end. A carving blade gleams.

At the head stands ZARADIAC MANN, robes dark with blood, eyes alight.

LEGION (whispering, rhythmic)  
Lecter. Lecter. Lecter.

Zaradiac raises his hands. Silence falls.

ZARADIAC MANN

Tonight we are made pure.

Hannibal is placed at the head, shackled to an iron ring bolted to the floor. Will is forced into a chair opposite, wrists bound to armrests.

ZARADIAC MANN (to Lecter)

Father. Consecrate the feast. Take your chosen son into yourself and step beyond pain.

Hannibal regards the table as if critiquing a restaurant service.

LECTER

Your mise en place is clumsy. Your herbs are bruised. Your knives — poorly loved.

A flicker of irritation crosses Zaradiac's face. Then the smile returns.

ZARADIAC MANN

Then show us. Teach us.

He nods. A zealot unlocks Hannibal's right wrist only, chain still looped through the floor ring — a short radius of motion. The blade is placed before him.

Hannibal rests trembling fingers on the handle. The tremor stops.

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INT. MONASTERY - TRANSEPT - SAME

Clarice edges closer. She crouches near an archway, eyes on the ritual through smoke.

Her breath hitches as she sees Will bound at the table.

She tightens her grip on her pistol, lips pressed white.

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INT. SANCTUARY - CONTINUOUS

Hannibal considers Will, then the blade, then the assembly.

LECTER

You confuse appetite with apotheosis, Mr. Mann.

ZARADIAC MANN

Appetite is the ladder. Climb.

Hannibal lifts the blade, examines the edge, tests it on his thumbnail.

LECTER (to the room, almost lecturing)

The first cut is not for hunger. It is for respect.

(beat; looking at Zaradiac)

Allow me to begin... with the priest.

A ripple of uneasy laughter. Zaradiac spreads his arms.

ZARADIAC MANN (CONT'D)  
Begin with me, then. If you can.

He steps within the blade's radius.

In a blur Hannibal hooks the chain around Zaradiac's forearm, yanks him off-balance, and drives the blade up under the breastbone, angled to the heart. The movement is surgical, inevitable.

Zaradiac freezes, shocked breath leaving him in a whisper.

ZARADIAC MANN (CONT'D)  
(fading)  
Father—

HANNIBAL  
No.  
(soft)  
Just a man.

Hannibal twists. Zaradiac collapses.

A beat of stunned silence — then pandemonium.

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INT. MONASTERY - TRANSEPT - SAME

Clarice hears the eruption — chants breaking into screams. She breaks into a run, each step a shot of pain.

She slams a smoke canister through a lattice into the sanctuary. White bloom sweeps the nave.

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INT. SANCTUARY - CHAOS

Smoke churns. Zealots shout. Some charge Hannibal; others fall to their knees, wailing.

Will kicks his chair backward, shattering an armrest on stone, tearing his wrist bloody but free. A zealot lunges — Will head-butts him, then wrenches a knife free and cuts the other wrist.

Hannibal uses Zaradiac's falling body as a shield, ripping the blade free.

A zealot grabs him from behind — Hannibal opens the femoral with a swift downward draw. The zealot crumples, spurting.

Through smoke — Clarice bursts in low and fast.

CLARICE

WILL!

She plants double taps into two advancing silhouettes. One falls; the other staggers; she finishes him with a third round, coughing, nearly choking.

Will rises, dizzy, blood in his eyes.

WILL

Ritual's canceled.

LECTER (wry)

How unfashionable of us.

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INT. SANCTUARY - CONTINUOUS

A massive zealot — Zaradiac's Lieutenant — charges with a ceremonial axe. Clarice pivots and fires. The rounds hammer his chest armor; he keeps coming.

Will grabs the butcher's hook from the table, meets the Lieutenant — they crash into a pillar. Will hooks the axe haft, wrenches, then drives the hook into the man's throat. A gout of blood. The Lieutenant collapses.

Clarice coughs hard, almost drops to a knee. Will catches her with his free hand.

WILL

You shouldn't be standing.

CLARICE

Neither should you.

INT. CRYPT STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Narrow, slick stone. Wax drips from sconces. Clarice stumbles, clutching her ribs. Will shoulders her weight.

Hannibal lingers behind, chain still wrapped around his wrist, listening to the echoing pursuit above.

LECTER (soft, almost to himself)

At last... a quiet room.

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INT. CRYPT - DAWN BLEEDING IN

Low arches. Sarcophagi line the space. A single broken window glows faint with first light.

Will helps Clarice to a stone bench. She fights a cough, blood on her lips.

WILL  
Hold pressure. Short breaths.

He turns - Hannibal is already easing himself down beside a sarcophagus, blade resting across his knees. The tremor in his hands is worse now.

CLARICE  
On your feet, Doctor.

Hannibal looks up, eyes lucid, oddly gentle.

LECTER  
I am... on my feet, Clarice.  
(beat)  
In here.

He taps his temple.

Above, bootfalls echo. The Legion searches the catacombs.

WILL  
We move. Now.

Hannibal studies Will - sees the old fire still burning beneath exhaustion. A faint smile.

LECTER  
You have always been the only man  
who could insist on my life.

CLARICE (pained, angry)  
Then stand up and prove I didn't crawl across a country to bury you here.

From the stair mouth - two zealots appear. Will snaps up the stolen pistol.

PFFT PFFT - both drop.

More footsteps. A chorus now.

Hannibal eases the blade to the floor.

LECTER (CONT'D)  
There is another truth.  
(beat)  
It ends here.

He looks at them both – something like pride flickering through the illness.

LECTER (soft)  
Thank you... for my last supper.

He exhales, slow. His eyes flutter, shoulders softening. For a moment, it seems he's gone—

CLARICE  
No— Hannibal—

He opens his eyes again, forces himself upright with a small, stubborn effort. He clasps Will's forearm – an old warrior's grip.

LECTER  
Go.

Above, explosions crack – charges breaching stone. Dust rains.

Will's jaw tightens. He grabs Hannibal under one arm.

WILL  
I don't leave the mirror behind.

Clarice slings Hannibal's other arm over her shoulder despite the pain. Together, they move toward the far passage.

From the stairs, the Legion pours into the crypt, ululating.

Bullets spark against tombs as the trio disappear into the dark corridor.

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EXT. MONASTERY - LOWER GARDEN - DAWN

They spill out through a half-collapsed door into wild rosemary and dew-wet grass. Dawn ignites the horizon.

Behind them, the monastery bell clangs off-kilter, mad.

Hannibal sags to his knees. Will drops with him; Clarice covers their rear, coughing blood but still on her feet.

In the distance: sirens. Interpol armored vans and JSOC helicopters close in.

LECTER (barely above a whisper)  
A fitting hour... for endings.

CLARICE  
Not yet.

She turns to Will – sees his resolve and the tears he hides.

WILL (to Hannibal)  
You don't get to choose every ending.

LECTER (ghost of a smile)  
No. But I chose... this one.

He tilts his head toward the rising sun.

LECTER (to Clarice, gentle)  
Your fiancé... would have approved.  
(soft)  
You hunt for love. That is... rare.

Her jaw tightens; wet eyes, furious to be wet.

CLARICE (CONT'D)  
Save your breath.

Hannibal looks to Will one last time – the old recognition, the endless argument finally at rest.

LECTER  
Goodbye, Will.

Will can't answer. He nods once, small and breaking.

Hannibal's breath leaves him in a long, measured exhale. His shoulders soften. The tremor stops.

For a suspended moment, the garden holds still.

Then the world crashes back: boots, shouts, sirens, the Legion roaring through the arch.

Clarice squares up, raises her gun, ribs aflame.

CLARICE  
On me.

Will rises beside her.

They turn to face the oncoming storm.

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EXT. MONASTERY - COURTYARD - MINUTES LATER

JSOC OPERATORS flood the gardens, laying down suppressive fire. INTERPOL flanks through the cloister.

The Legion breaks — some fight and die, some tear off masks and kneel, others scatter into the hills.

A gurney rolls Hannibal past under a tarp. Will watches, jaw clenched. Clarice keeps her weapon up a second longer, then lowers it with shaking hands.

EXT. MONASTERY - COURTYARD - DAWN

The battle is over. Bodies litter the flagstones. Zealots kneel zip-tied, heads bowed. A few sob. Most stare blankly into the morning.

An INTERPOL INSPECTOR lifts the tarp covering ZARADIAK MANN, confirms the face.

INSPECTOR (into radio, flat)  
Primary cult leader expired. Site secured. Send forensics.

Across the yard, Will sits on a low wall, bloody knuckles resting on his knees. Clarice stands wrapped in a thermal blanket she won't close, ribs bandaged rough.

They share a look that is not a smile, but isn't its opposite.

WILL  
We carried him long enough.

Clarice doesn't reply, just watches Hannibal's gurney roll away.

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INT. ADX FLORENCE - SEGREGATION RANGE - DAY

Fluorescent hum. A SUPERMAX CELL awaits: poured concrete perfection. Stainless toilet, narrow bed bolted to the wall.

The door is open; a red tag hangs from the lock.

A guard checks his clipboard. The tag reads: LECTER, H. —  
INTAKE CANCELED.

He tears it off, tosses it into a bin with a dozen others.  
The door swings shut on the empty cell.

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INT. UNIVERSITY LECTURE HALL - DAY

A chalkboard reads: ABNORMAL PSYCH - GRAHAM. Students murmur.

WILL GRAHAM enters with a limp you'd miss if you didn't know him. He chalks a single word:

EMPATHY

Silence. He stares at it a long beat, then underlines it once, hard.

WILL  
If you spend too long inside a  
wolf, you learn how it thinks.  
(beat)  
The trick is learning how to come  
back.

He puts the chalk down. It breaks in two. He doesn't pick it up.

WILL (CONT'D)  
That's all for today.

Confused whispers ripple as he steps away from the board, eyes on a sound only he hears.

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INT. REHAB GYM - NEW MEXICO - SUNSET

CLARICE STARLING works a breathing device, ribs banded tight. Sweat beads her brow. An orderly offers to help; she waves him off.

She sets the device down, crosses to a window. The desert outside stretches flat to a thin, burning strip of sun.

From her pocket she takes a scuffed state police challenge coin-her fiancé's. She closes her fist around it until her hand shakes.

CLARICE  
(soft, to the glass)  
I kept my promise.

She tucks the coin back into her pocket, shoulders squaring.

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INT. ARCHIVE INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

ALANA BLOOM

Relief feels like grief when the  
absence was a force. He was...  
weather.

REBA McCLANE

I learned to be seen without being swallowed. That was the  
lesson I kept.

BARNEY MATTHEWS (older, steady)

He said once the only prison that mattered was memory.  
(beat)  
Guess he finally found parole.

ARDALIA MAPP

He was never a myth. He was  
paperwork. Body bags. And the way a  
good agent forgets how to sleep.

The tape warbles, ends on static.

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EXT. FRENCH CHÂTEAU - NIGHT

Wind presses the ivy against stone. The house sits the way it  
did the first night we saw it - older than fear, silent,  
patient.

Through the window: the dining room. The table is still set  
for three. Dust motes drift in stale air.

Candles burn low, forgotten. The fire long dead.

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INT. CHÂTEAU - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The pheasant bones are cold. The wine glasses half full, dust  
clinging to the rims.

A single candle sputters, wick drowning in wax.

CLOSE ON - THE FLAME

It gutters. Struggles. Then dies.

Darkness swallows the room.

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FADE TO BLACK

TITLE CARD: THE KILLING SEASON

In memory of JACK CRAWFORD

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CREDITS ROLL

Over faint echoes of:

Sirens.

The click of chalk on a board.

A woman's ragged breath, steadying.

And at the very end – the faint scrape of a chair being  
pulled out from a table.

FADE OUT.